

AGENDA
FOR
SYNOD


1981

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1981

JUNE 9 TO 19, 1981

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.

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Preface

The special prayer service for the Synod of 1981 will be held Monday evening, June 8, 1981, at 8:00 P.M. in the Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church, 960 Alpine Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The pastor of this congregation, the Rev. John H. Bergsma, will be in charge of the prayer service.

The synod will begin its sessions Tuesday morning, June 9, at 9:00 P.M. in the Fine Arts Center on the Knollcrest Campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The pastor of the convening church will serve as president pro-tem until the Synod of 1981 is duly constituted and its four officers have been elected.

Our congregations are also requested to remember the synodical assembly in intercessory prayers on Sunday, June 7. Let us together pray that God may bless our denomination in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and send his Holy Spirit to endow our synod with love and wisdom.

Stated Clerk
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560

DELEGATES—PLEASE NOTE

1. Delegates who travel by automobile are reminded of the decision of synod, that traveling together will effect considerable savings to synod.
2. Plane travel is the most economical for delegates, since expenses for lodging and meals are not incurred.
3. Bring with you your copy of the *Agenda for 1981* and all other supplementary materials that may be sent to you.

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DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD OF 1981

Delegates	Classis	Alternates
	Classis Alberta North	
Ministers Gordon Pols Mel Pool		Ministers Kenneth Baker Jacob Kits
Elders John Woudstra J. Henry Debbink		Elders George Abma Albert Tiemstra
	Classis Alberta South	
Ministers Peter Meyer Jacob Corvers		Ministers James Joosee Gilbert Kamps
Elders Tim Slomp Durk DeJong		Elders Al Meyer Wiebe Wagenaar
	Classis Atlantic Northeast	
Ministers James Vanderlaan Berton Van Antwerpen		Ministers F. John MacLeod William De Vries
Elders Pieter Geldermans Louis Visser		Elders Harold Youngsma Gerhardus Haagsma
	Classis British Columbia	
Ministers Henry Numan, Jr. Albert VandenPol		Ministers Richard Stienstra Jacob Binnema
Elders James Poelman Albert Wisselink		Elders J. Bandstra N. Spier
	Classis Cadillac	
Ministers Ronald de Groot Robert Walter, Jr.		Ministers Warren Lammers Bernard Den Ouden
Elders John De Ruiter Henry Drenth		Elders Richard Kramer Willard Vander Ark
	Classis California South	
Ministers Larry Van Essen James Howerzyl		Ministers Edward Cooke Russ Palsrok
Elders Maurice Slegers Peter Suwyn		Elders Peter Drenth Gerrit Boerfyn
	Classis Central California	
Ministers Louis Dykstra Nelson Gebben		Ministers Earl Marlink Merle Bierma
Elders Eugene Vander Wall Ralph Lindeman		Elders Gerrit Visser Paul Van Dyken
	Classis Chatham	
Ministers Ralph Koops John Kerssies		Ministers Ronald Fisher Peter Hogeterp
Elders C. Feyen Ralph Bos		Elders Enno Ennema John Kraayenbrink
	Classis Chicago South	
Ministers Neal Punt John De Kruyter		Ministers David Zylstra Richard Hartwell, Sr.
Elders William Weidenaar Marvin Hooker		Elders Cornelius Dykstra Jacob Voss, Jr.

Classis Columbia

Ministers Orlin Hogan
 Laryn Zoerhof
 Elders Harry Faber
 Cornelius Warmenhoven

Ministers George Vink
 Allen Petroelje
 Elders Harley Dykema
 Bert Van Dyken

Classis Eastern Canada

Ministers Martin Geleynse
 John Visser
 Elders J. Oegema
 A. Miedema

Ministers Jack Quartel
 James La Grand
 Elders H. Uittenbosch
 E. Tenyenhuis

Classis Florida

Ministers Jack Vander Plate
 Ralph Pontier
 Elders Nicholas Jelles
 Peter Borduin

Ministers Jack Vander Laan
 John Van Hemert
 Elders Howard Vander Laan
 Kenneth Schrader

Classis Grand Rapids East

Ministers John Vriend
 Roger Van Harn
 Elders Henry Baron
 John De Haan

Ministers Vernon Geurkink
 Clarence Boomsma
 Elders Harold W. Hartger
 Donald Huizinga

Classis Grand Rapids North

Ministers John Bergsma
 William Vander Hoven
 Elders Ralph Koll
 Charles Cheslek

Ministers Harvey Ouwinga
 Fred Gunnink
 Elders H. Geers
 Arthur Peelen

Classis Grand Rapids South

Ministers Roger Greenway
 Gerald Van Oyen
 Elders Albert Bel
 George Jager

Ministers John Hofman
 Marvin Vander Vliet
 Elders Harold Huizenga
 Louis De Jong

Classis Grandville

Ministers Charles Steenstra
 Milton Doornbos
 Elders William Van Zalen
 Harold Zondervan

Ministers Roger Kok
 Herman Hoekstra
 Elders Walter Kruis
 Edward Boer

Classis Hackensack

Ministers Dennis Boonstra
 Andrew Rienstra
 Elders George Monsma
 Richard Van Hoff, Sr.

Ministers Robert De Vries
 Cecil Van Dalfsen
 Elders Henry Fortuin
 Daniel De Block

Classis Hamilton

Ministers Jacob Kuntz
 Henry Katerberg
 Elders Klaas Terpstra
 William Spoelstra

Ministers Bastiaan Nederlof
 Jerry Hoytema
 Elders Kees Hensen
 Fred VanderVelde

Classis Holland

Ministers Harlan Roelofs
 Rensselaer Broekhuizen
 Elders Neal Berghoef
 Samuel Greydanus

Ministers John Fondse
 Edward Meyer
 Elders Raymond Naber
 Gus Van Den Berge

- Classis Hudson**
- Ministers Donald Wisse
Barry Blankers
- Elders John Vander Goot
Peter Moen
- Ministers Robert Boertje
Vernon Luchies
- Elders Nicholas Hengeveld
Peter Sluiter
- Classis Huron**
- Ministers Arie Vanden Berg
John Hellinga
- Elders Hilbert Rumph
Ralph Lubbers
- Ministers Harry Bout
Dirk Velthuisen
- Elders B. Haverkamp
W. De Haan
- Classis Illiana**
- Ministers Isaac Apol
Calvin Bremer
- Elders Willard Vander Zee
Bernard Van Keppel
- Ministers Lugene Bazuin
Rein Leestma
- Elders Case Dykstra
Edwin Holman
- Classis Kalamazoo**
- Ministers Gilmer Compaan
Stanley Bultman
- Elders John Vander Ploeg
John Hofman
- Ministers Gerrit Veenstra
Douglas Aldrink
- Elders John VanDer Meulen
Marvin Hoekstra
- Classis Lake Erie**
- Ministers Duane Kelderman
Douglas Warners
- Elders Peter Arends
David VanderHaagen
- Ministers Alvin Hoksbergen
Raymond Opperwall
- Elders Engel Knapper
Glenn Ploegstra
- Classis Minnesota North**
- Ministers C. William Flietstra
Jelle Nutma
- Elders Harvey De Groot
Wayne Kanis
- Ministers Rodger Buining
Clarence Bishop
- Elders Willis Beckering
Wayne Van De Riet
- Classis Minnesota South**
- Ministers Peter Brouwer
Ronald Fyneweever
- Elders Peter Krosschell
Nick De Boer
- Ministers James Petersen
Henry Bajema
- Elders Walter Burgers
Stan Hartog
- Classis Muskegon**
- Ministers Andrew Zylstra
James Scholten
- Elders Henry Ottens
John E. Witt
- Ministers Douglas Kamstra
Kenneth Wezeman
- Elders Bob Dirkse
Vernon Nyhoff
- Classis Northcentral Iowa**
- Ministers Thomas Niehof
Ronald Van Zomeren
- Elders Byron Ruter
Kenneth Vanden Hoek
- Ministers Leslie Kuiper
Alfred Hannink
- Elders Lee Bakker
Herman De Berg
- Classis Northern Illinois**
- Ministers Donald Negen
Case Admiraal
- Elders Donald Greenfield
Stanley Bushhouse
- Ministers Kermit Rietema
George Vanderhill
- Elders George Mulder
Andrew Diepstra

Classis Orange City

Ministers	Marvin Heyboer Alvern Gelder	Ministers	John Sittema Thomas Vanden Heuvel
Elders	Lewis Arkema Jerry Bonnema	Elders	Wayne De Young Dean Schmidt

Classis Pacific Northwest

Ministers	Nicholas Vogelzang William Vanden Bos	Ministers	Menno Jorritsma Walter Ackerman
Elders	Walter Werkhoven James Van An del	Elders	Lue De Jong Orville Vander Griend

Classis Pella

Ministers	Robert Holwerda Peter Vander Weide	Ministers	Carl Klompjen Jerome Julien
Elders	John Hugen Tunis Fynaardt	Elders	Arie Boot Harold Slings

Classis Quinte

Ministers	Jacob Geuzebroek John Koole	Ministers	Lambertus Mulder Anthony De Jager
Elders	C. Aay Bernard de Bruyn	Elders	J. Rekker Martin Van Harmelen

Classis Rocky Mountain

Ministers	Albert Veltkamp Albert Helder	Ministers	Gerald Erffmeyer Sampson Yazzie
Elders	Herbert Thomas, Jr. Martin VanDyke	Elders	Stanley Siebersma Julius Den Bleyker

Classis Sioux Center

Ministers	Harold De Groot Leonard Stockmeier	Ministers	David Smit Franklin Steen
Elders	Donald Holwerda Lane Bonnema	Elders	Ted Maas Jack Vanden Berg

Classis Thornapple Valley

Ministers	Angus MacLeod Roger Timmerman	Ministers	Durant Van Oyen Fred Bultman
Elders	Bernard Engbers Gerrit Meekhof	Elders	Evert Katerberg Peter Paap

Classis Toronto

Ministers	John Klomps Peter Nicolai	Ministers	Carl Tuyl James Evenhouse
Elders	Bert Polman George Vandervelde	Elders	Hendrik Hart William Ubbens

Classis Wisconsin

Ministers	John Hoeksema John Kroon	Ministers	Lawrence Howerzyl Gerald Frens
Elders	Dennis DeKok Joseph Eggebeen	Elders	J. Gabrielse Fred Oosterhouse

Classis Zeeland

Ministers	Henry Vanden Heuvel Calvin Vander Meyden	Ministers	Theodore Brouwer Edward Tamminga
Elders	Peter Osterbaan Clarence Boerman	Elders	Kenneth Vander Veen Fred Grassmid

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Reports of Boards and Standing Committees

REPORT 1

BACK TO GOD HOUR

The men who stood on the hill of ascension with the risen Lord had come to believe in the almighty power of their sovereign God. The events of the forty-some days just past had proved that God's victory over Satan was sure. So they asked Jesus: "And now what are you going to do—will you restore the kingdom to Israel?" After all they had observed, we cannot blame them for wondering what God would do next.

But God looked them in the eye and said, "It's not what I am going to do; it's what you are going to do: you are going to be my Spirit-filled witnesses." What a momentous shift this was: the work which Christ had been doing would now be done by these men; that is, it would be done by the church which would be built upon the foundation of the apostles. Those men were the church; they were in a real nonfigurative sense the very same church which now in synodical meeting receives this report from one of its agencies. Jesus said to them and he says to us: "From now on, you will be the ones who will act on the stage of history in my name." And when he declared that they would be his Spirit-filled witnesses, he did not mean only that Christian people would talk to others about the magnificent acts of God, but he meant that the church itself would be the great sign of God's salvation bringing power.

We are the witness to God's great act of salvation, and our mission extends our sights beyond Grand Rapids, Chicago, and Toronto to the ends of the earth. Jesus is in heaven now, and he has commissioned us to do his work; this means that the mission of his church is enormously important—it is the most important single event that is occurring in the world at this moment. We carry on our work with fear and with immense exhilaration, for it is great and utterly significant. But most of all we are thrilled to take up our task because along with the great commission there is always the great companion: Jesus himself. Jesus, through his Word and Spirit, is with us every moment. Christ laid the foundation for the great, great temple and he made all the building materials ready for our use; he now equips us to bring the nations in.

You are my witnesses—we are now the sign of God's salvation; we are now the carriers of the Savior's presence to the world. How can this be? How can mere human beings like us be involved in bringing Christ to the nations? We can be involved as we proclaim the Word; when the Word of the cross is purely preached, Christ is there. . . he is there, wherever it is heard. The Word actualizes the presence of God: Deuteronomy 30 carries the record of God's declaration that this was so to the people in the desert (vv. 11–14), and Romans 10 tells us who live today that the word of faith which is preached is the great presence of Christ in our age (vv.

5-9). Now the announcement of the finished work of God in Jesus is that which God uses to bring human beings to confession of faith.

We of the Back to God Hour want to begin our report to you by testifying that we feel ourselves to be a part of this work of God through his church, a work established by Christ on the day of his ascension and continued by Christ today as he arranges all of the affairs of men and continuously equips his servants so that his church may be gathered and his own return may be hastened. We express our testimony not only to blend ours with the testimonies of all others who rejoice in their role in Christ's mission, but also to express our perception of the reason why God has prospered and advanced the broadcast ministry of our church, both in radio and television. His blessings upon this work throughout 1980 have been extremely impressive, and the Back to God Hour now confronts new opportunities, long prayed for but scarcely expected; sometimes we feel like the ancient people of God must have felt when they saw the sea fall back to allow them to pass; astonished, fearfilled, and overjoyed. God has prepared dry land for us to walk on, and the path ahead is most encouraging.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE MINISTRY

Domestic

Back to God Hour ministries began with a program designed to reach out to our fellow citizens with a call to conversion and with a description of the broad implications of the Bible's message. Today, English domestic programming consists of the following program offerings:

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR—A weekly 30-minute radio program, using a modified worship format, and carried by 256 stations, among which are some of the top stations in the country; for example: WGN, Chicago; WOR, New York; KOA, Denver; and WSB, Atlanta.

FAITH/20—A weekly 30-minute television program, carried by all North American cable systems, and by several major broadcast stations, including WGN, Chicago; this program features a Bible presentation.

FAITH/20 SPECIALS—30-minute talk show format programs dealing with subjects such as Islam, alcoholism, et cetera; these are inserted from time to time into the regular FAITH/20 schedule.

DOCUMENTARIES—30-minute television programs which deal with subjects of current concern such as illegitimacy, child abuse, and marriage.

INSIGHT—a 4½-minute radio program carried by more than 100 stations on a public service basis; this program deals with topics of general interest.

RADIO SPOTS—30-second radio spots.

TELEVISION SPOTS—30-second television spots.

MEDIA PACKAGES—special radio and television packages put together for churches who request them, designed to alert a community to a special church program; these consist of both radio and television elements.

The growing complexity of Back to God Hour programing in North America reflects the growing complexity of the broadcasting picture here. One looks back with more than nostalgia to the good old days when radio was the only broadcast possibility; then one station, WLW in Cincinnati, had 500,000 watts and dominated the airwaves for miles around. Such simplicity no longer characterizes the broadcasting industry and as we today duplicate the vision and action of our forefathers, we are required to prepare several kinds of programs for use on both radio and television.

Overseas English Broadcasting

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR—A modified version of the domestic program is prepared for overseas; programs which are too North American in orientation are not released overseas, and even acceptable programs are carefully censored before being sent overseas. These programs are heard on many of the great missionary stations, and they constitute the denominational broadcasts of the Reformed Churches of Australia.

RADIO TODAY—A 30-minute daily program prepared especially for transmission to India and eastern Africa.

In addition to the broadcast releases of the English Department there are also several publications which are available to listeners. *Today* is the best known of all, and its circulation is now more than 300,000; it is distributed overseas as well. Single copies of the Back to God Hour messages are also sent to those who request them; and the monthly messages are collected into a booklet called the *Radio Pulpit* which has a circulation of 45,000. In addition, transcripts of FAITH/20 programs are available. RADIO TODAY programs are also available in print. Printing and postage costs for 1980 totaled \$342,298; and with increased postage and the need for expanding printing related to strengthening our follow-up, we expect that these costs will rise considerably.

In the report to the Synod of 1980, special attention was given to describing the impact of the English language ministries; the data in that report continues to be generally the same, though with increased program offerings and with an increased acceptance of FAITH/20 there is a gradual increase in audience response. In the report to the Synod of 1980, a conservative estimate of the annual audience reached by Back to God Hour English ministries was approximately 67,600,000. This audience, we feel sure, has grown during 1980.

We would also call attention to the detailed discussion of Back to God Hour goals and the specific elements of the programing designed to accomplish these goals found on pages 114 and 115 of the *Acts of Synod 1980*.

ARABIC LANGUAGE BROADCAST

We should not describe broadcasting's effectiveness solely in terms of its ability to cover vast distances and to reach large populations. There is also an audacity about it; it is almost impolite. For it penetrates everywhere, even where it is not wanted. In the Arab world, for exam-

ple, the broadcast message of the gospel can be heard continuously, though the prevailing dogmas of the region are anti-Christian. May we smile somewhat as we think about this? Islam on the march, Islam disdaining anything that is tainted with a Christian odor, cannot isolate its followers from the message of Jesus. Islam is haughty. Never mind. Jesus still speaks to the followers of the prophet.

Recently Harvey Cox pointed out the great similarities between Islam and Christianity (*Atlantic Monthly*, December 1980). Others with him are beginning to spotlight what they think is the relationship of these two religions, perhaps the first exercise in comparative religion ever fueled by petroleum. The Rev. Bassam Madany is not impressed. It is his conviction that Islam and Christianity are incompatible, that the insidious doctrines of Islam are a greater threat to Christianity than is Marxism. He views the anthropology of Islam as totally false, and is not impressed with the nice things Muslims say about Abraham and Jesus Christ; their message in fact undercuts the exclusive saviorhood of our Lord. So, with relentless persistence, and with great skill (for Bassam Madany grew up in the Middle East and he knows Islam thoroughly) the Arabic ministry of the Back to God Hour, *Saatu-L-Islah*, brings the message of salvation through the greatest prophet, the last prophet who was also priest and king, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The program offerings of *Saatu-L-Islah* are the following:

SUNDAY SERMONS—30-minute programs.

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES—15-minute programs released Monday through Friday.

TOPICAL PROGRAMS—15-minute programs dealing with church history, Catechism, and cultural matters, released on Saturday.

These programs are released over Trans World Radio both in Monte Carlo and on Cyprus; over Radio Cyprus itself; over ELWA in Monrovia, Liberia; over FEBA in the Seychelles; and over the powerful short wave station WYFR in Florida.

The stations used by the Arabic Department provide this ministry with the opportunity to develop a continuous and dominant presence in the Middle East. The two stations on Cyprus, for example, carry the programs at times when there are few other powerful stations on the air, in the late evening; consequently, those listening to radio in Egypt at the times of these program releases are very apt to listen to this ministry.

The fighting and upheaval in the Middle East impose great difficulties on this ministry, especially in terms of establishing ongoing contact with the listeners. In some instances it is difficult to get literature into certain countries; Jordan is a case in point. Yet, the mail response to this broadcast held up during 1980, with nearly 7,000 letters received, more than 2,800 of which were from Egypt alone. Even the fiercely Muslim nation of Libya responded with 47 letters, and Iraq, in spite of its conflict, sent 443. What about Iran? It's the only Muslim nation where Arabic is not the major language, so there were no letters from that country; yet the program can be heard there, and the hostages have told how Iranian students pride themselves with being able to speak some Arabic—per-

haps some of them are sharpening their Arabic by listening to *Saatu-L-Islah*.

This ministry, too, is supplemented by an extensive literature offering. During 1980, 24,000 books and 46,000 tracts were mailed to *Saatu-L-Islah* listeners, most of which dealt with messianic prophecies of the Book of Isaiah. In addition, the Arabic Language Ministry has continued to expand its ministry to Arabic students in the United States. Working with InterVarsity, our Arabic offerings have been advertised extensively on college and university campuses. During 1980, 1,262 books and 4,203 tracts were sent to North American Christians who were eager to witness to Muslims.

The Rev. Victor Atallah, an Orthodox Presbyterian minister assigned to work with the Rev. Mr. Madany, made two trips to the Middle East during 1980 to meet with listeners to the Arabic broadcast. The goal of these visits is to collect the listeners into groups in which they can study the Bible and help one another. As a result of these journeys, we are developing a list of *Saatu-L-Islah* listeners who could well develop into some kind of church structure over the next several years. Mr. Atallah, a native of Egypt, makes these trips at considerable personal risk; we admire his courage, and invite your continued prayers for his unique ministry carried on both in our office and overseas.

SPANISH LANGUAGE MINISTRY

When we talk about the Spanish speaking world today, we are talking about an extremely diverse and dynamic area. The Spanish language radio and television ministry, carried on under the direction of the Rev. Juan Boonstra, is our denomination's response to the great challenges and opportunities that presently exist in this world. His ministry is heard in Spain itself, in the United States where more and more Hispanics live, and throughout Central and South America.

In some of the countries this ministry reaches there is enormous tension and even fear: right- and left-wing components of the nation vie for position, or squash all opposition that threatens them. In at least one of the countries, El Salvador, it is nearly impossible to make anything at all out of the protracted conflict—it seems as if anarchy prevails. Yet in each of these lands there are the sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ who earnestly desire to hear the voice of the Shepherd. They faithfully listen to programs that bring the gospel and eagerly read the literature that is available to them through our Spanish language work.

With all of its problems, the Spanish speaking world presents the Mr. Boonstra and his colleagues with an exciting field of broadcast mission. The Spanish Department produces the following programs in response to the challenge of this vital mission field:

LA HORA DE LA REFORMA—a 15-minute preaching program

ALPHA Y OMEGA—a 30-minute daily radio program

REFLEXION—a 4½-minute radio program dealing with contemporary themes

REFLEXION-TV—a 4½ minute television program dealing with contemporary themes

CHRISTMAS SPECIALS—30-minute television programs

Latin America provides the Spanish ministry with a large number of local radio stations; this makes the broadcasting situation somewhat similar to that found in North America. The Spanish network consists of:

TWR/Bonaire, which provides broad continent-wide coverage

Approximately 135 local stations throughout South America

TWR/Monte Carlo, which provides broad coverage in Spain

4 local stations in Spain

8 stations within the United States

During 1980, ability to serve listeners was upgraded by broadening the literature offerings. In addition to supplying listeners with printed copies of the messages, a series of select books is being made available. Mr. Jack Roeda, who came to the Spanish Department after many years of service within Latin America as a missionary, has been strengthening the department's ability to minister to listeners by developing this book ministry.

It has become increasingly clear during this past year that the Spanish language ministry will have to expend greater efforts to reach the growing Hispanic population within North America itself. (New York and Los Angeles alone have nearly four million Spanish speaking people.) This will involve strengthening the television offerings of the department, for Spanish language television stations are very eager to air our Spanish television materials. Mr. Roeda arranged for many airings of the Spanish language Christmas specials on the Spanish International Network, a television network that services all of the United States, with particular emphasis on the Southwest.

CHINESE LANGUAGE BROADCASTING

There is no other way—surely this is clear when we talk about the necessity of broadcasting in the church's mission to China. China will soon become the first nation to have a population of a billion; this is almost an incomprehensible number—there are approximately a billion minutes in 2,000 years. How do you reach this many people with the gospel? Remember, each of them is an image bearer of God who during the course of his or her sojourn on earth will either become a follower of Jesus or not. The Rev. Isaac Jen has the awesome responsibility of producing programs for this vast multitude.

He produces a variety of programs in various languages. Yes, to reach the Chinese it is necessary to use dialects of the language, dialects so widely spoken they constitute languages in themselves. Some of his programs are in Cantonese, some in Mandarin, and some in both Cantonese and English, and Mandarin and English. Some are preaching programs, some bring the gospel by means of a dialogue. Each is specifically designed to penetrate the nation in which Mr. Jen grew up, which he visited extensively in 1979, and to which he continuously stays close by means of radio, magazines, and newspapers.

In the providence of God, at the same time that China itself underwent the internal upheavals that brought new freedoms to the people, powerful radio stations were in place which could blanket nearly all of its large population. The stations used by the Chinese ministry are: HLDA on Cheju Island; HLKX, Inchon, Korea; TWR on Guam; FEBC in Manila; a station in Macao; and one in Hong Kong. Using these stations, the Chinese language ministry brings a continuous proclamation of the Word of God to those who listen regularly. How many do? Who can say? We do know the broadcasts come in loud and clear in areas in which more than 75 percent of the population of the country live. The Rev. Isaac Jen has now heard from every province in China with the exception of Tibet.

In addition to the Chinese mainland coverage of this broadcast, the Chinese language ministry of the Back to God Hour is also heard on Taiwan, and in parts of North America. Classis British Columbia has expended notable efforts in ministering to Chinese listeners in Vancouver, and other areas of British Columbia; through their work there is now a Chinese speaking congregation there.

Mr. Jen also provides his listeners with an expanding offering of literature; much of this is being delivered within mainland China itself. He provides his listeners with a bilingual lesson book by which they can learn about the scriptural doctrine; since many Chinese want to learn English, these bilingual publications are very popular. He also produces *Today* in a bilingual version for his listeners. A copy of the Heidelberg Catechism in Chinese, with the Scripture quoted in full, is also sent to Chinese listeners, as well as copies of Rev. Jen's own *Systematic Theology*, made available through the kind services of the Reformation Translation Fellowship. This book is being used as a textbook at the China Evangelical Seminary on Taiwan and at the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong.

In many respects China is an awakening nation...politically and economically. But it is also awakening in connection with religion. As we think of the enormous hunger for the gospel in that land it is heartwarming to know that our church is so actively engaged in meeting this need.

In connection with the expanding ministry to mainland China, and with the increased mail response and growing mailing list for that country, Mr. Jen completed arrangements to establish a supplementary office for his ministry in Hong Kong; we are presently involved in making the final arrangements for this office.

FRENCH LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The Rev. Aaron Kayayan is carrying on a broad-ranging ministry in the French language which touches lives throughout the continent of Europe, in French speaking nations of Africa, in the Caribbean, and in French speaking regions of Canada. The French language program, PERSPECTIVES REFORMEES, has succeeded in developing an appreciative audience among people who are culturally different from one another; some of Mr. Kayayan's listeners live in Zaire, others in France itself. But

apparently the straightforward announcement of the gospel can find its way into the hearts of people all over the world.

Stations which carry the Rev. Mr. Kayayan's program are: in Europe — TWR, Monte Carlo; Radio Luxembourg; and Radio Andora. In Africa — ELWA, Monrovia, Liberia; and TWR in Swaziland. In Canada, PERSPECTIVES REFORMEES is carried on the following stations: in Ontario, CFIX (Cornwall) and CFCL (Timmons); and in the Province of Quebec, CHRS and CKLM (Montreal), CKCV (Quebec City), and CHLN (Three Rivers).

Our French language ministry was hampered somewhat by Mr. Kayayan's health problems during 1980. He suffered from a severe bout with hepatitis; we are grateful, however, that he has recovered and is able to continue his work. In spite of his illness, his spirited ministry has continued to make an important impact, and the following paragraphs from one of his letters to us catches some of the excitement that accompanies what he is doing:

"Did you know that John Calvin is alive and well? At least, this is suggested by a listener from Zaire who wrote saying: 'Please give my greetings to Rev. Kayayan for his book: *Believe & Understand*; and please give my greetings also and my gratitude to Mr. John Calvin for the book he wrote on *Holy Communion*.'

"Of course, we know better and we may already be laughing about the ignorance of this young man from Africa who knows so little about the Reformer! Yet, let us rejoice for such a 'happy ignorance' since he would not have been told the truth about Calvin had he heard about him from some biased Westerners!

"I wish I could share with you the contents of the two hundred letters received in October and November from our African listeners in French speaking parts of the continent. In a way, they could have all been written by one person. They show the same thirst, the same searching for truth, the same earnest longing for spiritual help, and the same eagerness to share the Good News with others. They are all so grateful for hearing the gospel through the ministry of our radio programs and literature. We are thankful for all of you in America for your help and also to our dear friends in South Africa who sponsor part of our ministry in Africa.

"In addition to the African continent, Europe and French speaking Canada remain also as a very important area for our ministry. In the West, we face a different world, the climate is very dangerous. We are witnessing the resurgence of paganism with its slogan: Back to Rome and to Athens! There are so many people today who are extremely bold in criticizing Christianity and especially the Protestant heritage. So what can we do with the small means that we have at our disposal?"

An important element of the French language ministry is the literature which is made available to listeners. As is clear from the letter quoted above, the material it provides, dealing with basic elements of Christian life and with ecclesiastical matters, is considered valuable. Mr. Kayayan's literature output consists of book-sized publications which contain in-depth treatments of major theological themes. This is sorely needed among those who have lost the heritage of the Christian faith and who are accustomed to dealing with faith questions on a theoretical level.

As the Rev. Aaron Kayayan mentions in his report, he carries on his work in his own country against the background of growing neopaganism; this is a hideous phenomenon, for it carries with it a resurgence of the Fascism that brought devastation to the continent forty years ago. When one sees unbelief take this shape, it is clear that the counter message furnished by Christianity is desperately needed.

INDONESIAN LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The Rev. Junus Atmarumeksa conducts his ministry in a land which has a rich heritage, which is unimaginably large and diverse, and which is not particularly supportive of a Christian broadcast ministry. Elements of the rich heritage include strong religious development both of Islam and in Buddhism, along with a long-established Christian presence. Mr. Atmarumeksa and his wife are of the Chinese element within Indonesian society, and from time to time there is a movement against Chinese people there.

In spite of difficulties, the Indonesian ministry of the Back to God Hour continues to produce regular programs in several formats which are aired throughout this vast land by means of local radio stations—approximately 65 of them. In addition, the Rev. Mr. Atmarumeksa's programs cover the entire country through transmissions from Manila and Guam. Our Indonesian work is closely tied into the ministry of Far East Broadcasting in Indonesia, and close cooperation with their staff results in many advantages for both their ministry and ours. Recently the headquarters building has been expanded, and it is possible now to enjoy more spacious facilities for program production and for serving the listeners who write in.

Over the years, the circulation of the *Today*-like publication *Wasiat* has grown so that now more than 14,000 copies are being circulated. This publication, along with the distribution of other printed materials, enables the Indonesian language ministry to give many of the listeners direction beyond that which they receive from the broadcast alone.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE MINISTRY

In 1980 there was a change in personnel in our Japanese language ministry, as the Rev. Henry Bruinooge, who had supervised this work since 1969, came to our Palos Heights office as the Minister of Listener Contact. Replacing him in Japan is the Rev. Shojiro Ishii, a minister of the Reformed Church of Japan. Working under the supervision of the Rev. Isaac Jen in our office, and under Mr. Ishii's direction, we expect that the Japanese language ministry will continue its aggressive response to the Japanese nation.

The Japanese work produces two main program formats. One of them, a 5-minute early morning program called MORNING WORD, is broadcast over Radio Kanto and blankets the entire Kanto Plain where approximately 15 percent of Japan's population is found. Another, called WINDOW ON TOMORROW, is a 15-minute presentation which blankets the entire nation from two major stations outside Japan: FEBC's from Cheju

Island off the coast of Korea; and TWR's in Guam. The 15-minute program is also heard in South America from HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, and is aired in Los Gatos, California, and Honolulu. Japanese is truly an international language these days and thus the broadened expansion of the ministry became necessary.

The Japanese ministry has been characterized by the development of several types of broadcasts, designed to provide variety in the program offerings.

The 15-minute format, for example, includes the following types of programs: worship service, Bible reading, youth program, housewife program, and one which answers listeners' questions. The Japanese language ministry has also developed great skill in finding ways of introducing people to the churches; listener Bible conferences have been held, and telephone counseling has been set up; there have been baptisms and confessions of faith as a result.

Given the increased costs in Japan, radio, and possibly someday television, provide our church with a relatively economical way to reach the nation. We can anticipate that there will be added costs associated with this ministry in the years ahead, but as the ministry becomes even more closely associated with the Reformed Church of Japan through Rev. Ishii's efforts, we can expect even greater benefits from this work in the future.

PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE MINISTRY

When one examines the map carefully, it is clear that South America is Brazil, surrounded by several other countries; and this means that the Portuguese language is one of the major languages spoken in that large continent. Brazil is one of the most important nations in the world; some say that it is duplicating in our hemisphere what Japan did in the Far East. Its economic growth is impressive, and it is pushing forward with modernization and change on several fronts. Already in 1963, synod authorized a Portuguese language ministry, and in 1969 it began. Today it is truly flourishing.

God provided the men to give direction to this work through the years: the Rev. Luiz Piere; the Rev. William Muller, a Board of World Missions missionary; the Rev. Wilson Castro Ferreira; and now the Rev. Celsino Gama. With the exception of Mr. Muller, each of the men who has contributed to the growth of this broadcast mission has been from the Presbyterian Church of Brazil; as Mr. Celsino carries the work forward, he builds on a strong foundation.

Today the Portuguese language ministry of the Back to God Hour is headquartered in Campinas, Brazil. From that headquarters a work is carried on which covers the entire country; Trans World Radio on Bonaire is used to achieve blanket coverage of the entire nation, and in addition to this there are eleven local stations throughout the country. One of the gratifying elements of this ministry is the deep interest which the Presbyterian Church of Brazil is taking in it. The local stations are sponsored by the Presbyterian Church of Brazil itself; the church also takes a strong responsibility for follow-up activities and through its

ministry, listeners to the broadcast are integrated into the regular life of local congregations.

On October 14, 1980, a delegation from the Presbyterian Church of Brazil visited the Back to God Hour offices in order to discuss the possibility of increasing our broadcast activity in their country. This delegation consisted of: Dr. Paulo Breda Filho, moderator, Presbyterian Church of Brazil; Dr. Boanerges Ribeiro, vice-moderator, Presbyterian Church of Brazil and president of MacKenzie University; Jose' Arantes Costa, treasurer, Presbyterian Church of Brazil; and Misael De Albowetave Vasconcelos, president, North Presbyterian Seminary Committee.

The delegation from the Presbyterian Church of Brazil expressed the deep appreciation of their denomination to the Christian Reformed Church for the work which has been carried out in their country by our Board of World Missions, and encouraged our denomination to continue to remain involved in their nation in that way. The delegation also told us of their conviction that it is important to strengthen theological education in their land and told of plans which they had while in the United States to visit several educational institutions with a view to securing help for their church.

But the main reason for which they came to the Back to God Hour office was to request the Back to God Hour to consider the possibility of expanding its broadcasting activity in their country in terms of the production of a television broadcast which would present the Reformed faith.

The men who spoke with us were deeply impressed by the fact that within the large cities in Brazil, such as Sao Paulo, even the poor find ways to listen to television, and thousands of them hear a program like Rex Humbard's program every week. These men from Brazil asked us to consider the possibility of producing a program that could be used in their country on a regular basis. They pledged their cooperation and assured us that they would have monies available for this venture if we would begin it.

The Back to God Hour Committee is presently considering various elements related to their request. For the present we simply wish to report this meeting and present it as an indication of the warm relationships between the Christian Reformed Church and the Presbyterian Church of Brazil. We may be encouraged to remember that our close relationship with this denomination has been forged by the opportunity we have had to work with them through the years in a common broadcast mission.

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The Russian language ministry began to be aired over TWR on July 6, 1980. We are very pleased with the cooperation that we have received from the staff of TWR in the airing of this broadcast. We have also benefited a great deal from the Slavic Missionary Service which has provided the translations and the productions of the Back to God Hour messages which are considered suitable and useful for the Soviet Union.

At this time the Back to God Hour is in the process of evaluating the

value and effectiveness of the Russian language ministry. Because of the unusual arrangements related to production and airing of this program it has been difficult to engage in the kind of evaluation which we usually apply to our programing. As soon as hard data is available regarding this program we will make it available to the denomination.

LISTENER CONTACT

As the Back to God Hour ministries expand throughout the world, it becomes increasingly important to develop a capability of maintaining listener contact. There are many regions where the only contact we can have is by means of the airwaves and we are grateful that it is possible to use the airwaves to conduct a continuous ministry of the Word of God. However, we sense instinctively that it is important to supplement our broadcast activities with useful literature; it is also necessary if possible to introduce listeners to the fellowship of the church. Back to God Hour broadcasts not only represent the church but they have as their ultimate goal the enjoyment of the fellowship of the people of God in the lives of those who hear about the Savior over the airwaves.

The listener contact capability at the Back to God Hour has been strengthened significantly with the addition to the staff of a broadcast minister for listener contact, the Rev. Henry Bruinooge. The Rev. Mr. Bruinooge comes to the Back to God Hour from a lengthy and rich service with the Board of World Missions in Japan. As a Japanese missionary he was deeply involved in church planting and is well acquainted with the various elements involved in bringing a person who has come to know Jesus into the full fellowship of the church. For fourteen years Mr. Bruinooge supervised radio missionary activity for the Christian Reformed Japan Mission, and during that time developed significant methods which were effective in bringing listeners to Japanese gospel broadcasts into the church.

As minister of listener contact for the Back to God Hour, Mr. Bruinooge is now concentrating his attention on examining present follow-up procedures at The Back to God Hour, and developing new procedures with a view to enabling The Back to God Hour to minister more effectively to those who respond to its broadcasts. In connection with this, Mr. Bruinooge maintains close relationships with personnel in both the Home Mission Board and the World Mission Board who are in a position to integrate the work of the Back to God Hour with the work they are doing in various areas.

Mr. Jack Roeda, who has recently come to the Spanish Department, also has as part of his responsibility the development of important listener contact techniques for the Spanish language ministry. And the Rev. Victor Atallah's ministry in the Arabic Department is also concentrated almost exclusively on serving Arabic speaking listeners even more comprehensively than they can be served by radio broadcasts alone.

With the availability of individuals like these within the Back to God Hour organization, we expect that the Back to God Hour will be able to develop its listener contact capabilities significantly over the next several years.

RADIO DOMINICA

For several years the Back to God Hour has felt it important to gain the control of a broadcasting facility in order to present an integrated message. While we presently benefit from the use of several exceptionally fine missionary stations, it is our conviction that the Reformed message as such cannot be fully expressed unless we can develop a full spectrum of broadcasting on a given station. In the light of these convictions the Back to God Hour Committee instructed its staff to investigate possibilities for the acquisition of a station which could be programed by The Back to God Hour itself.

In the providence of God it became possible recently and rather unexpectedly to program a station located on the southern coast of Dominica in the Caribbean. This possibility became a reality when RACOM International acquired this station and approached the Back to God Hour with the request that it program this station in English, Spanish, and French.

Programing this station will require that the Back to God Hour upgrade its program production capabilities significantly. At the same time it was felt by the committee and the staff that this opportunity presented our organization with a challenge that should not be ignored.

At its present power Radio Dominica can achieve a significant impact on Dominica itself, the Island of Martinique, Tobago, Trinidad, and reach part of the northern coast of South America. The potential audience in this area is presently estimated at 5,000,000. Discussions have been carried on with the government of Dominica and we have been assured that the power of this station could be increased to 50,000 watts. When this occurs the potential audience for Radio Dominica will be expanded significantly.

Because of the nature of the transactions involved in this it was necessary for the Back to God Hour Committee to approve our involvement in Radio Dominica at its February meeting. At the same time we do feel that our becoming involved in daily programing does represent a departure to a certain extent from the activities in which we have engaged up to this point. We therefore would like to bring this matter to the attention of synod for its examination and reflection. It is our hope that synod will ratify this action so that we will be able to continue this ministry for 1982.

TELEVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE

During the year 1980 the Back to God Hour concentrated its attention on the evaluation of our television ministries. In order that this could be accomplished the committee erected the Television Review Committee which examined the television work of the Back to God Hour with a view to determining whether or not the directions thus far established were appropriate. The Television Review Committee conducted its work by reviewing a number of options related to our television activities, even considering whether or not the television ministry should be continued. At the February meeting of the Back to God Hour Committee,

the Television Review Committee brought its final recommendation to the Back to God Hour Committee. The recommendations of the Television Review Committee which were adopted at the committee meeting held in February were the following:

1. That the goals of CRC-TV be formulated as follows:

a. to bring the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ to an unsaved world that men may come to know Jesus as Savior and affiliate with the Christian church.

b. to communicate all the implications of the gospel from a Reformed world and life perspective as it relates to all areas of society and life.

2. We recommend that we continue the shape and direction of CRC-TV as it is at present, seeking to improve its quality through creative outside productions systems, and that the Back to God Hour Committee commit itself to review the shape of its television ministry again in two years.

3. We recommend that we continue and expand our efforts in the weekly FAITH/20 programs to tie them into the local church wherever possible in order to assist the local church in its community contacts.

In connection with the recommendations of the Television Review Committee, the Back to God Hour Committee also reviewed an invitation from WGN Television in Chicago to have FAITH/20 broadcast on their station on a daily basis. This television release would be costly but it would enable FAITH/20 to reach a very substantial audience in the greater Chicagoland region on a daily basis. In addition the signal would be carried by satellite to cable networks throughout the United States and Canada. The daily release of FAITH/20 would be at 5:30 in the morning; while this is an extremely early hour, this broadcast would be the only available television program in the Chicagoland region at that time. It is our feeling that given the high concentration of population in this area (approximately 10 million), we can expect a significant viewing of the program in spite of the early hour. The Back to God Hour Committee evaluated this offer in the light of the Television Review Committee's recommendation and judged that it would be wise to concentrate the resources of CRC-TV on this venture for the immediate future. The Back to God Hour Committee contracted to begin broadcasting on WGN-TV on a daily basis beginning the first of April 1981.

While the acceptance of the WGN opportunity will involve the concentration of available resources on the production of FAITH/20 for some months, it is the plan of the Back to God Hour to gradually move in the direction of having FAITH/20—WGN become a relatively self-supporting venture. It is hoped that the opportunity for developing a significant broadcast ministry in this area will also be an encouragement to many who view the program to participate in the support of this ministry.

As we move forward into this new venture we will be the only Christian television broadcast which will be heard on a daily basis on a commercial television station in the continental United States. It is our feeling that we will have access to a very significant group of people, and it is our hope that the Back to God Hour along with local churches will be

able to develop various techniques which will enable us to have an important in-depth ministry to many within the Chicagoland region. The presence of the Rev. Henry Bruinooge on the staff of the Back to God Hour provides the organizational resources for moving forward in developing a significant listener contact ministry in connection with FAITH/20—WGN

As our television activity is developing within our organization it is becoming more and more an integral element of total Back to God Hour activities. At present not only do we have productions of various kinds in the English language, but the Spanish language ministries are utilizing television as well. The Christmas specials in Spanish enjoyed widespread enthusiastic reception when released near the end of last year. There is a significant network of Spanish television stations within North America and we have been assured that any program offerings which we produce will be given high priority for release on these stations.

As we continue to move forward into television we are becoming deeply involved in an extremely complex and costly form of broadcast mission activity. Because of the necessity of maintaining careful scrutiny of our productions and responding to evaluations made both within our staff and outside it, the development of a television ministry demands a great deal of our organization. We do feel however that we are gradually making progress and it is our hope that with increased exposure of the public to our programs there will also be a greater revenue to support this work. We are very concerned that our television ministries do not overshadow the extremely important radio mission which we continue to carry on. Radio has its own singular effectiveness and is especially attractive because of the economies associated with radio production. Nevertheless we are continuously confirmed in our conviction that millions of people on the North American continent are receiving a great deal of their information, their education, and their entertainment from television. This conviction compels us to continue to develop a television presence.

The Back to God Hour Committee will continue its evaluation of its television activities along with the other evaluations which continuously occur with respect to all the ministries which are carried on.

ADMINISTRATION

Anyone who has read the reports of the Back to God Hour Committee to synod over the last decade will be deeply impressed by the growth of the organization. The opportunities for reaching the world with electronic media seem to be increasing. And with a growing maturity within our own organization more and more people are turning to us and asking that we become involved in various broadcast mission activities. In addition to the electronic programs that we must produce, the Back to God Hour is also involved in an extensive print ministry; it also maintains a listener contact ministry which seeks to lead listeners to local churches whenever possible. Over the years the Back to God Hour staff has grown to include ministers from a variety of language backgrounds, some of whom are headquartered in Palos Heights, but others who have their of-

fices overseas. Presently, in addition to the office in Palos Heights, we have offices in Paris, France; Tokyo, Japan; Campinas, Brazil; Jakarta, Indonesia; Madrid, Spain; and in Hong Kong. Obviously, an organization which has expanded as the Back to God Hour has throughout the years, has developed a growing complexity so far as administration and management are concerned.

At the end of last year the Back to God Hour suffered a serious loss when Mr. Harry Vander Meer, who had been operations manager of the Back to God Hour, felt led by the Lord to accept the appointment to become the denominational financial coordinator. During his relatively brief stay at the Back to God Hour Mr. Vander Meer upgraded administrative procedures within the organization a great deal. With his leaving, the Back to God Hour Committee decided that it was time to place the administrative events of the Back to God Hour under an administrative director who would report directly to the Back to God Hour Committee.

Consequently we have divided the activities which occur within the Back to God Hour into two major categories: administrative activities and ministerial activities. While these activities are in the nature of the case closely connected, it was deemed advisable to make a distribution between these two kinds of functions, somewhat in the same way that a publishing venture divides itself into two parts: publishing and editing.

In the providence of God, Mr. Ira Slagter, a vice-president of Time, Inc., felt led by the Lord to accept the appointment of the Back to God Hour Committee to the position of executive director of the Back to God Hour. Mr. Slagter has had a long record of experience within the business world and also within our denomination. He brings to this new Back to God Hour post a wealth of experience which we feel will ultimately be extremely beneficial for our organization. Dr. Nederhood has now been given the responsibility more specifically for the ministerial dimension and carries the title "director of ministries." Both the executive director and the director of ministries report directly to the Back to God Hour Committee and have a peer relationship to one another. It is our expectation that the new arrangement will enable the Back to God Hour to respond more efficiently and creatively to the many broadcast opportunities presently available to it.

* * * * *

When one surveys the many activities carried on by the Back to God Hour during the course of a year, it is important to remember that a host of people have been involved in making this work a reality. We think of those who work in the Palos Heights headquarters of the Back to God Hour—most of the broadcast ministers, administrative people, and those who work in production and mailing services. And the work moves forward under the direction of the Back to God Hour Committee which represents our denomination effectively and well. Members of this committee expend long and intense hours in deliberating about the various elements which are a part of the Back to God Hour ministry. Members of the Back to God Hour Committee are: Rev. H. Dexter Clark, Rev. Jacob Eppinga, Mr. Abe Geurkink, Dr. Jack Hielema, Mr. Harold Kooy, Rev.

Eugene W. Los, Dr. Raymond Seven, Mr. Robert Struyk, Rev. Anthonie Vanden Ende, Rev. Howard Vanderwell, Mr. Stanley Vermeer, Mr. William Voortman, Mr. Wayne Vriesman, and Rev. Sampson Yazzie. At our February meeting Mr. Wayne Vriesman resigned from our committee; since the Back to God Hour now has contracts with WGN Radio and Television, Mr. Vriesman, an officer of Continental Broadcasting Corporation, which controls WGN Radio and Television, felt that he could no longer serve on the committee.

The Back to God Hour also depends to a large degree upon various service organizations which are dedicated solely to furthering the work of this ministry. These agencies are: Ad/Mark Group Inc., our advertising agency; RACOM Associates, which serves us well in fund raising and public relations; and RACOM International, an entity which provides the Back to God Hour with an opportunity to control large blocks of broadcast time and even radio stations themselves. The Back to God Hour Committee, the staff, and these specialized agencies working together, constitute an efficient body of men and women who are thoroughly dedicated to maintaining and advancing an effective broadcasting ministry. And in addition to those who work within our country, there are the many dedicated people who are working in the offices overseas: in Paris, France; in Tokyo, Japan; in Jakarta, Indonesia; and in Campinas, Brazil. There are also supplementary offices for the Back to God Hour located in Madrid, Spain; and in Hong Kong. We think too of the many people who are "church reps"; those in Canada work under the direction of Mr. Arend Kersten who is the RACOM representative in that country—he maintains offices in our denomination office complex in Burlington, Ontario. There is clearly a large body of men and women who are working day in day out in order that this ministry may be carried forward. All of us should be deeply grateful to God for the concerted effort expended by this throng of individuals who have caught the vision for broadcast missions. Within this synodical report those of us who work in this ministry on a day-by-day basis want to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the great work which all others involved in this enterprise are doing.

At the beginning of this report we spoke of the great opportunities which God has given to the Back to God Hour, and now as we close this report we trust that those who have read it share to a certain extent the high sense of privilege which we feel as we participate in this work. Surely this is the work of our entire denomination. By means of it we can be a part of the great mission activity of our Savior on a scale which far exceeds what we might expect in terms of our denomination's size. We may be sure that, through the broadcast mission we are performing, millions and millions and millions of people are hearing the Word of God. We are people who are afraid of millions; we should not be. A million is just a small percentage of the great population that must be reached today with the message of grace. We must encourage one another to think more and more in terms of such vast numbers, for only then will we be able to press on to even greater levels of activity. We may not become satisfied with the work we are presently doing but we must view it as a founda-

tion upon which to build in order to reach even more with the message of grace.

As we do this we will find ourselves stretched to the limit. We think first of all of the money necessary to carry on the kind of mission we are now performing and that which we must perform in the future. Surely monetary considerations are extremely important, but we will also be stretched in terms of the fact that as we are called upon to serve more and more people in the name of Christ, we will have to develop techniques and ways that will make this a reality. We will have to critically examine procedures which have become obsolete or are no longer efficient; we will have to think imaginatively and creatively as we attempt to design new approaches to those who must hear of Christ. And we will be stretched to the utmost as we will be called upon to use all of the spiritual resources within our community; our own faith must remain strong and from out of it we must minister to the sheep of God who have yet to hear the voice of the Shepherd, and who hearing it will come into the fold of the Master.

As we conclude this report we express this earnest request: please remember the Back to God Hour in your prayers. Each of us who works in this ministry on a regular basis is so very aware of his own weaknesses—unless we are supported by the prayers of God's people we will not be able to do what is demanded of us. And we must pray together for those whose lives will be changed by the proclamation of the Word of God through the Back to God Hour. No one can hear the message of the cross of Jesus without being changed by his encounter with God's love and grace. For some, alas, the change will be for the worse; but for many, it will be a change for the better as they respond in faith and receive the grace of the Lord. As we together are faithful in our intercessions on behalf of one another and on behalf of those who hear, we may be sure that our Lord will further his cause in response to our petitions. To God alone be the glory!

MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

1. The committee requests that the president, the Reverend J. Eppinga; the director of ministries, Dr. J. Nederhood; and the executive director, Mr. Ira Slagter be given the privilege of the floor when the Back to God Hour matters are discussed.

2. The committee requests that the Reverend Shojiro Ishii be given permission to address synod on behalf of the Back to God Hour.

3. The committee recommends that the Back to God Hour action in accepting the opportunity to program Radio Dominica be approved by synod.

Grounds:

a. The programing of an entire station represents a new departure for the Back to God Hour and should be reviewed by synod.

b. The opportunity to program an entire station enables the Back to God Hour to create a range of programing which will authentically communicate the Reformed faith.

c. It is felt that the resources within our Reformed community will make it possible to provide the programing necessary for this venture.

d. Having control over an entire day's broadcasting of Radio Dominica will provide our denomination with a strong voice in the Caribbean area.

4. Nominations:

Chicagoland Area: (unexpired term of Mr. Wayne Vriesman),
two years:

Mr. William Post
Mr. William Van Staalduinen

Michigan Area: Mr. Jerry Hertel
Mr. Douglas Tjapkes

Northern Midwest Area: Rev. Bert De Jong
Rev. Frank Pott

Pacific Northwest Area: Rev. Kenneth Koeman
Rev. Donald Recker

California Area: Mr. Ted Kok
Mr. Gilbert Van Mourik

Eastern Canada Area: Rev. H. Uittenbosch
Rev. H. Van Niejenhuis

Rocky Mountain Area: Dr. Dick Anema
Mr. Edward T. Begay

5. The committee requests that the proposed budget for 1982 be approved and the quota of \$38.00 be adopted for Back to God Hour ministries, and the quota of \$13.00 be adopted for CRC-TV ministries.

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
Joel Nederhood, director of ministries

REPORT 2
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

This report covers actions of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary from June 1980 to February 1981. A supplementary report will follow after the May 1981 meeting of the board.

I. INFORMATION

A. *The Board of Trustees*

1. The semiannual session of the board of trustees was held February 2-4, 1981. The board is composed of forty-eight members, of whom thirty-nine are classical trustees and nine are district trustees. Thirty-two ministers and seven laypersons (including one woman) represent the classes and the nine district representatives are all laypersons (including one woman).

2. The following trustees were elected as officers at the February board meeting:

President	Rev. John C. Medendorp, Jr.
First Vice-President	Mr. Jay Morren
Second Vice-President	Mr. Harry Bloem
Secretary	Rev. John M. Hofman
Assistant Secretary	Rev. Donald Van Beek

3. Class visits were assigned and were carried out in keeping with the regulation that the classes of college and seminary faculty members eligible for reappointment be visited.

4. Faculty-Board Conference

The faculty-board conference held during the February meeting brought trustees and members of both faculties together for discussion and fellowship. The conference centered on a presentation by Dr. Evan Runner entitled "The V.U. Centennial and Calvin College and Seminary." Respondents to the address were professors Henrietta Ten Harmsel, Fred Klooster, and Peter De Vos. The conference was concluded with dinner in the Commons.

5. Dr. Allan Boesak

At its May 1979 meeting, the board approved the introduction of the Multi-Cultural Lectureship Program. At this session the board was privileged to hear the inaugural lecturer in this new program. On Tuesday afternoon Dr. Allan Boesak, Campus Minister of the University of the Western Cape, Republic of South Africa, gave a stirring and challenging address which was followed by a question-and-answer period.

B. *The Seminary*

1. Faculty and Staff Matters

a. General Information

The personnel of the faculty remains unchanged from a year ago. Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen and Dr. Fred H. Klooster are on leave for part of the current year. Dr. David Engelhard began his extended leave at the end of February. During his absence Dr. Andrew J. Bandstra will serve as Academic Dean.

Auxiliary teaching services are provided by the following: Melvin Berghuis, Anthony Hoekema, David Holwerda, Kenneth Konyndyk, Harvey Smit, Henry Stob, and Dorothy Westra.

b. Appointments, see Part II, Recommendations

c. Reappointments, see Part II, Recommendations

d. Sabbatical Leaves

The board approved the following sabbatical leaves of absence:

- 1) Harold Dekker, for the first and second quarters, 1981-82
- 2) Melvin Hugen, for the second quarter, 1981-82
- 3) Carl Kromminga, for the first and second quarters, 1981-82
- 4) Robert Recker, for the second quarter and summer, 1981-82
- 5) Marten Woudstra, for the academic year 1982-83

2. Academic Matters

a. Lectureship in Philosophical Theology

The board approved the establishment of a Lectureship in Philosophical Theology with a view to providing instruction in the required courses in that area and securing information as a basis for possible future nomination.

b. New Courses

The board approved the following new courses:

- 1) The Art of Cross-Cultural Ministry—Staff
- 2) The Offices of the Church—Professor Richard De Ridder
- 3) The Book of Proverbs—Mr. Ray Van Leeuwen
- 4) The Book of James—Mr. Ray Van Leeuwen

c. Alliance Reformée Evangelique

The Alliance Reformée Evangelique (Evangelical Reformed Alliance), an organization based in Quebec, has as one of its main projects the establishment of a school or training institute for lay leaders and pastors for the Francophone churches and groups. De Conseil de la Faculté, which is the organizing and supervising committee on behalf of the ARE, has requested that the First Christian Reformed Church of Montreal release the Rev. Martin Geleynse to become full-time coordinator of its Faculté Libre de Theologie in Quebec City.

The Montreal consistory has requested the board of trustees to appoint the Rev. Mr. Geleynse to this position, with the understanding that the salary and related expenses be carried by the board of trustees. A request for financial support has also been sent to the Board of Home Missions and the Board of World Missions.

The Board of Trustees has requested the faculty of Calvin Seminary

to advise the trustees at their May meeting with respect to the feasibility of sponsoring an education program in Quebec City. The results of that study will be presented in the Supplementary Report.

3. Administrative Matters

a. Presidential Nominating Committee

The board approved the appointment of a presidential nominating committee in view of the retirement of Dr. John Kromminga in August of 1983.

b. Center for Calvin Studies

The board approved the plans for an additional wing to the library building to house the Center for Calvin Studies. The board was informed of a possible donor to supply the funding for this project.

C. *The College*

1. Faculty

a. Faculty Profile, September 1980

During the current academic year the college faculty consists of 213 full-time persons, plus 63 persons who teach on a part-time basis. Of these 28 are on leave of absence (10 on sabbatical leave) all or part of the year; 22 are teaching at Calvin on a full-time appointment for the first time; 150 have an earned doctorate (70 percent); and 118 have tenure (55 percent).

b. Staff needs

The student-faculty ratio of 19:1 is used as a guideline for staffing in 1981-82. Using this ratio, there are staff openings for 7 regular positions and 16 temporary positions.

c. Leaves of absence

Sabbatical leaves of varying lengths were approved for 14 faculty members and nonsabbatical leaves were approved for 6 faculty members for 1981-82.

d. Appointments, see Part II, Recommendations

e. Reappointments, see Part II, Recommendations

2. Academic Programs

a. The board approved the following:

1) Six new courses

2) MAT Concentration in School Administration and one new course

3) MAT Concentration in Language Arts (Restructured) and four new courses

4) Two Supplementary Concentrations

a) German Studies

b) Church Education

b. Calvin Research Fellowships

The board approved the establishment of a program of Calvin Research Fellowships to begin in the spring semester of 1982.

D. *Business and Finance*

1. The board approved tuition rates for the year 1981-82 as follows:

Category	81-82	80-81	\$ Incr.	%Incr.	Denominational Grant-in-Aid		
					81-82	80-81	Increase
Non-CR	3,480	3,000	480	16.0	-	-	
Grand Rapids CR	3,220	2,800	420	15.0	260	200	60
Outstate CR	3,120	2,720	400	14.7	360	280	80
CR outside MI							
within 300 miles	2,860	2,500	360	14.4	620	500	120
300 to 1,000 miles	2,780	2,420	360	14.9	700	580	120
over 1,000 miles	2,680	2,350	330	14.5	800	660	140

2. The board approved the fees for room and board for 1981-82 at \$1,720, an increase of \$200.

3. The board approved the adoption of the revised operating budget for 1980-81, which shows a total projected income of \$13,907,000 and total projected expenditures of \$13,904,300.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *Seminary*

1. Staff Appointments

The board of trustees recommends the following staff appointments:

- a. Henry Schuurman, Ph.D., Lecturer in Philosophical Theology for one year
- b. Ray Van Leeuwen, B.D., Lecturer in Old Testament Studies for one year

2. Faculty Reappointments

The board of trustees recommends the following faculty reappointments:

- a. Richard De Ridder, Th.D., Professor of Church Polity and Church Administration with tenure
- b. J. Marion Snapper, Ed.D., continuing appointment as Professor of Church Education

B. *College*

1. Faculty Appointment

The board recommends the following faculty appointment:

Delvin Ratzsch, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy for two years

2. Faculty Reappointments

a. The board recommends the following two-year reappointments: (italics indicate raise in rank)

- 1) Claude-Marie Baldwin, M.A., Visiting *Associate Professor* of Romance Languages
- 2) Bette Bosma, M.A., Assistant Professor of Education
- 3) Kenneth Bratt, M.A., Assistant Professor of Classical Languages

- 4) Barbara Carvill, M.A., *Associate Professor* of Germanic Languages
 - 5) Bradley Class, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Romance Languages
 - 6) David Diephouse, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of History
 - 7) Derald De Young, Ph.D., *Visiting Associate Professor* of Music
 - 8) Eugene Dykema, M.B.A., *Associate Professor* of Economics
 - 9) Daniel Ebels, M.S., *Assistant Professor* of Economics
 - 10) Edna Greenway, M.A., *Assistant Professor* of Romance Languages
 - 11) Thomas Hoeksema, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Education
 - 12) Carl Kaiser, M.Mus., *Associate Professor* of Music
 - 13) Corrine Kass, Ph.D., *Professor* of Education
 - 14) Kenneth Kuipers, M.B.A., *Assistant Professor* of Economics
 - 15) Arie Leegwater, Ph.D., *Professor* of Chemistry
 - 16) Carl Mulder, Ed.D., *Professor* of Education
 - 17) James Penning, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Political Science
 - 18) Shirley Roels, M.B.A., *Instructor* in Economics and Business
 - 19) Corwin Smidt, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Political Science
 - 20) LeRoy Stegink, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Education
 - 21) John Tiemstra, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Economics
 - 22) Timothy Van Laar, M.F.A., *Assistant Professor* of Art
 - 23) Nancy Van Noord, M.A., *Instructor* in Physical Education
 - 24) Gerard Venema, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Mathematics
 - 25) Glenn Weaver, Ph.D., *Visiting Associate Professor* of Psychology
 - 26) Karla Hoesch Wolters, M.A., *Visiting Assistant Professor* of Physical Education
- b. The Board recommends the following one-year reappointment:
Gertrude Huisman Huizenga, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Music
- c. The board recommends the following terminal reappointments:
- 1) Gordon Bordewyk, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor* of English for one year
 - 2) John Snapper, M.A., *Assistant Professor* of English for one year
 - 3) Charles Strikwerda, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Political Science for one year
 - 4) William Vande Kopple, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor* of English for one year

3. Staff Reappointments

The board recommends the following staff reappointments:

- a. Dale Cooper, B.D., *College Chaplain* (with faculty status) for two years
- b. John L. De Beer, Ed.D., *Director* of the Instructional Resources Center (emeritus status) for one year

- c. Marilyn De Boer, M.S.W., Dean of Women (with faculty status) for two years
- d. Peter A. De Vos, Ph.D., Dean of the Faculty for three years
- e. Donald Distelberg, B.A., Director of Development for two years
- f. Richard Eppinga, Ph.D., Director of Alumni Relations for two years
- g. Thomas Ozinga, Ph.D., Director of College Relations (with faculty status) for four years

Board of Trustees
Calvin College and Seminary
John M. Hofman, secretary

REPORT 3

BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS

It is time for us to become global Christians. Though the human family articulates in seven thousand languages, through Jesus Christ the barriers between peoples may be broken down. Though 60 percent of them are as yet unable to read and write, the church of Jesus Christ must spring up among them to give them purpose for life today and hope for eternity. Though millions exist under oppression and tyranny, they must know the One who said, "The truth shall set you free." Across this teeming and chaotic world, the kingdom is coming! The peoples and lands, their occupations and institutions, are being brought into line for the Day of days.

Mission today is often conducted in the midst of tension and uncertainty. More and more the effort is geared to pass on the torch to the younger churches so that they may reach their own societies and witness there of God's justice and love. CRWM missionaries are now on site in eighteen countries. Personnel under CRWM supervision are also at work by synodical mandate in Jordan, Australia, and New Zealand. CRWM also continues to have commitments to Cuba and to associate missionaries at work in Belize. Thus, CRWM is involved on behalf of the CRC in twenty-three nations overseas. The report that follows is CRWM's accounting of that sending.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. *The Board*

The annual meetings of the board took place from February 17-19, 1981. The executive committee met bimonthly in accordance with the Mission Order. The officers during 1980 were: Rev. Eugene Bradford, president; Rev. Jacob Vos, vice-president; Mr. Nelson Gritter, treasurer; Mr. John Brondsema, recording secretary; Dr. Eugene Rubingh, executive secretary.

The eighteen members of the executive committee are elected annually by the board. Each serves on certain administrative subcommittees which bring recommendations to the executive committee. CRWM's administrative commitment is to recognize that missionary expertise is located on the front lines and that recommendations for continuing operations are generated from the field councils. More and more the field councils are coordinated with the national churches and in certain cases dissolved into national church structures. Thus the administrative system is designed to hold in high regard the findings and recommendations of the missionary councils and the national churches. A CRWM Global Outreach Committee meets twice yearly to assess overall deploy-

ment of resources and to coordinate current and future strategies for the total enterprise.

Administrative positions and personnel are as follows: executive secretary, Dr. Eugene Rubingh; Africa secretary, Rev. William Van Tol; Asia secretary, Rev. Edward Van Baak; Latin America secretary, Rev. Bernard Dokter; business secretary, Mr. Donald Zwier; communications secretary, Rev. Louis Tamminga. Ten support persons function in the communications, business, personnel, and the secretarial aspects of the work.

B. Representation at Synod

The board requests that its president, executive secretary, treasurer, and business secretary be authorized to represent the board on all matters pertaining to Christian Reformed World Missions.

C. Nominations for Board Membership

Certain vacancies exist in the positions prescribed in the Mission Order for members-at-large. The following slate of nominees is presented for synod's consideration. Profiles of each nominee will be provided to the appropriate synodical committee.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Eastern Canada | Mr. John Oegema (incumbent)
Mr. Bruce Dykstra |
| Eastern Canada, Alternate | Person not selected above
Mr. David H. Bakker |
| 2. Central United States | Mrs. Jean Brooks
Mr. Harold Padding |
| Central United States, Alternate | Person not selected above
Mr. David Radius |
| 3. Eastern United States, Alternate | Miss Marie Schaap
Mrs. Mary Last |

D. Reappointment of Executive Secretary

Dr. Eugene Rubingh has served as executive secretary since 1976. He completed an initial term of two years and a second term of four years. The prescribed CRWM evaluation process was conducted and the board now recommends that he be reappointed as executive secretary for a four-year term.

E. Reappointment of Latin America Area Secretary

The Rev. Bernard Dokter was appointed by the Synod of 1979, and is in the process of completing his initial term as Latin America secretary. The prescribed CRWM evaluation was carried out and a thorough interview was conducted with Mr. Dokter. The board now recommends that Bernard Dokter be appointed to a term of four years as Latin America Area secretary.

F. *Presentation of Missionaries*

Synod has consistently received members of its missionary family through representatives on home service who have carried greetings to synod. In this way, synod may become personally acquainted with these representatives of the churches' missionary enterprise. Therefore, CRWM again requests permission for those missionaries on home service or under appointment to be introduced to synod.

II. GENERAL MATTERS

A. *Communications*

The support service aspect of the Communications Department was in no small manner affected by rising interest rates, inflation, and the erosion of the United States and Canadian dollar. These adverse conditions were successfully challenged through the increased giving of God's people.

As of January 1, 1981, 449 congregations participated in direct missionary support. Under this program an individual church agrees to "adopt" one or more missionaries, which involves personal, moral, spiritual, and financial support. We consider it the backbone of our above-quota support system. Of the total budget 52 percent is defrayed from quota income; the remaining 48 percent comes from congregational and individual giving. It is our hope that many more congregations will agree to support their own missionary in this way. It is of great personal encouragement to the missionaries, and of direct spiritual benefit to the churches. Our goal for the current year for above-quota giving via the churches is \$1.9 million, and for personal giving: \$1.35 million. In the latter area deferred giving through estate planning becomes of ever greater significance.

We realize that this necessitates our every effort to keep the denomination effectively informed about mission events—the struggles and the victories. This we are trying to do in a variety of ways. Extensive correspondence about direct mission involvement is carried on with consistories, church groups, and individuals. Articles have been published regularly in periodicals; audiovisual programs have found a ready use. A poster contest captured the imagination of hundreds of children and young people. Calendars indicating the birthdays and addresses of our missionaries have aided personal contact with our missionaries immensely. And, as in past years, the cutting edge of our communication effort was the deputation work of the missionaries themselves making personal appearances in a variety of settings. Our new communication secretary, the Rev. Louis Tamminga, provides direction and counsel for this varied and crucial ministry.

We keep close contact with our board members, with whom we discuss, every two months, communications goals and practices. We make grateful mention of the helpfulness of these committee members. They have consistently brought the mind of the church to bear upon missions, and carried the good tidings of God's great doings back to the churches.

B. *Delegation from World Missions Related Churches*

Each year representatives from churches overseas who are related to CRWM are invited to be represented at the CRC synod. In 1980, the Christian Reformed Churches of Nigeria were represented and this year an invitation has been extended to the Reformed Church of Japan. This year marks thirty years of the missionary involvement of the CRC in that nation where the Christian church exists as a small but vibrant minority. We have also continued an invitation to the churches in Cuba to be present at synod as they find themselves able.

C. *Long-range Planning*

In 1976, the board adopted a General Field Mandate embodying basic principles and aims for our missionary endeavor overseas. On the basis of this document each field has been requested to prepare a specific mandate covering its own operations. In addition to this mandate, each field has been asked to provide a strategy statement covering its planning for the next five- to ten-year period. These strategy statements are given a regular update as situations change. It is our hope that through this process the mission will be able to do more than react to events which develop but, instead, may be itself creative in the establishment of long-range goals.

This emphasis on long-range planning also involves the board which at its most recent session gave particular attention to the next three-year period. On the basis of this direction the staff is now engaged in the preparation of comprehensive planning documents covering the years 1983 through 1987. These projections for staffing and funding will be presented to the 1982 board so that an overall coordination for this period may be set forth.

At the same time the ability to be flexible and to respond to change is clearly increasing in priority. The past year has warned us again that on the political scene situations can swiftly arise where resources must suddenly be redeployed. Church/mission relationships can also have sudden complexities and we are constantly required to consider the future implications of current decisions.

D. *Church/Mission Relationships*

For many years three stages of missions were delineated: the stage of the pioneer missionary; the stage of the parent missionary supervising the growth of the young church; and the stage of the partner where mission and church work together in obedience. It is now clear that in many lands we are also in the stage where the mission is a participant, where the autonomous church assumes leadership and describes those ministries it desires the mission to perform on its behalf.

Particularly in Mexico and Nigeria, church/mission relationships during 1980 entered a very delicate stage. In Mexico the newly formed Synod of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico requested the removal of several of our missionaries without warning or without opportunity to respond to charges made against them. Emergency visits to Mexico were thereupon arranged and the operations of Mexico Field

Council suspended. The precipitous action of the IPIM was protested, even though the legitimate desires of the IPIM for involvement in those decisions pertaining to its own life and ministry were recognized. A new interdependence agreement has been drafted and at this writing we are hopeful that a fruitful era of cooperation and mutual understanding may be in the offing.

The church/mission relationships in Nigeria will be more fully discussed in the sections of this report specifically devoted to Africa. In general, it may be said that national churches on several fields have indicated their intention to assume authority over certain mission programs and in some cases demand the dissolution of mission field councils and the integration of missionaries into their church structures. These problems sometimes boggle the mind, but we must recognize that the very existence of a vigorous and assertive national church, interested in determining their own policies, is an indication of the Lord's blessing on the missionary's efforts.

While emergency situations frequently command more attention, we can record that on most fields the relationships between church and mission are cordial and productive. In November, the operations of the SUM/CRC in the Tiv area of Nigeria were turned over to the Synod of the Tiv Church of Christ and control of these operations passed out of the hands of the mission after three decades of CRC work in that area. Also a visit of representatives from the Reformed Churches of Argentina was crowned with the drafting of an interdependence agreement governing the ongoing work of our mission in that country.

As CRWM now finds itself midstream in the era of transition of authority to national churches, general guidelines were adopted by the board at its 1981 meeting. This policy for interdependence provides a means for the direct funneling of mission monies to church treasurers, and at the same time it attempts to discourage dependence on North American funding. The policy recognizes that mission is not a "one-way street" but that mission and church are mutually dependent upon one another under God. Thus the aim of CRWM assistance to national churches is the furtherance of those ministries carried on by the church for her nourishment and outreach. Mission resources thus used are aimed to stimulate rather than obviate the use of indigenous resources. Basic to the policy is the recognition that the resources required to carry out the Great Commission are bestowed by Christ upon his whole body, making all branches of the church interdependent.

E. Mission Order Revision

As we continue to move into the stage of mutuality and interdependence, the nature and function of the missions' field councils becomes a burning issue. Its authority and composition are the objects of ongoing study. In the course of this study it has become apparent that the Mission Order may be improved through the realignment of two sections in Article III. The current reading of Article III, Section 3, b, can be more accurately understood when it is combined with its sister section in Article III, Section 4, c. The board therefore proposes that these two sections

be combined into a single section. The current and proposed reading are here presented side by side.

Current Reading

Section 3, b. Membership on the field council is by election or delegation of eligible personnel and ceases at the expiration of the term in office. Section 4, c. Where the total representation on the field council becomes impractical for the efficient conducting of business, provision shall be made for representation from each department and/or mission station.

Proposed Reading

Section 3, b. Where the total representation on the field council becomes impractical for the efficient conducting of business, provision shall be made for representation from each department and/or mission station. In this case, membership in the field council shall be by election from among eligible personnel or by delegation of eligible personnel from the department and/or mission station.

Section 4 shall be renumbered to omit 4.c.

F. CRWM/CRWRC Field Test

Attempts continued during 1980 to resolve the unsettled status of our on-field relationships with CRWRC. CRWM has always felt that a single field council should administer the work on each field in order to provide a unified address of word and deed and to coordinate the total CRC ministry as it reaches out to the national church and community. CRWM's commitment to frontline administration provides the field council with basic administrative prerogatives where decisions are reached by mutual dialogue and consensus. CRWRC has felt, however, that its staff should not be subject to both the authority of the CRWM field council and its own administration. CRWM has protested what it regards as a tendency to separate the on-field thrust of the CRC work into word and deed segments with separate administrative control over each emanating from Grand Rapids. CRWRC and CRWM are both committed to the unity of word and deed outreach and to the presentation of a single CRC face to the national church and society. In an effort to harmonize these positions, a plan for cooperative administration was mandated for field testing in Central America and the Philippines. The field test is now in place in these two fields. The field test mandates a semi-annual staff conference of all CRWRC and CRWM missionaries for fellowship and the discussion of current challenges and problems. Annual contracts between the field director of CRWRC and the field secretary (as signatory for the field council) delineate the interaction and responsibilities of each agency. The board of CRWRC and CRWM will be called upon in 1982 to assess the results of this field test and to prepare a recommendation for the Synod of 1982, so that the issue may be resolved.

G. Australia, New Zealand, and Jordan

Synod has assigned the supervision of CRC personnel working in Australia/New Zealand and Jordan to CRWM. The board decided that the request of the Consistory of the Toowoomba Reformed Church for the continued services of the Rev. and Mrs. John Houseward be granted, and that the Rev. and Mrs. Paul Stadt continue in their ministry at Christchurch, New Zealand.

The board gave considerable discussion to the ministry being conducted at the Amman International Church, Jordan. Since the ministry was undertaken, CRWRC has ceased its operations in that country. The ministry itself is a valuable one and it affords the CRC an opportunity for on-site contact with the Muslim world and some analysis of opportunities and problems for a CRC ministry in the Arabic speaking world. It was decided, however, to inform the Amman International Church that we plan to conclude our ministry there in July of 1982, and to inform synod that the original conditions of our involvement in Jordan no longer pertain. The ministry now involves a pastoral work to a largely expatriate group and does not appear to be the beachhead for a larger ministry into the Middle East. Meanwhile, however, the on-field research will be used to obtain information for the purpose of constructing recommendations for the Global Outreach Committee regarding a potentially wider CRWM ministry to the Middle East. The advice of the Back to God Hour and CRWRC will be obtained through the forum of the Missions Coordination Council, so that this work may be a united ministry wherever this proves feasible.

III. FIELDS

A. Africa

1. Missionaries

Liberia

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Bosserman*
 Dr. & Mrs. Herman Gray*
 Miss Margaret Enter
 Mr. Henry Haarsma*
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Owens

Rev. & Mrs. Mark Scheffers
 Mr. Edward Schering*
 Rev. & Mrs. Donald Slager
 Mr. & Mrs. Perry Tinklenberg*
 Mr. & Mrs. Larry Vanderaa

Nigeria

Rev. & Mrs. Sidney Anderson***
 Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Arends
 Mr. & Mrs. LeRoy Baas
 Rev. & Mrs. Ralph Baker
 Rev. & Mrs. Willem Berends
 Mr. & Mrs. Albert Bierling
 Dr. & Mrs. Wim Bijl****
 Dr. & Mrs. John Boer
 Miss Diana Boot**
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Boswell*
 Miss Bonnie Brouwer
 Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Buys
 Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Cok
 Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Cremer

Mr. & Mrs. John De Jager
 Miss Grace De Ruiter*
 Mr. & Mrs. David Dykgraaf
 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Geerlings
 Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Geerlings*
 Mr. & Mrs. John Gezon
 Dr. Hilda Gritter*
 Mr. Mark & Dr. Giny Hoekman
 Mr. Mark Hoekstra
 Mr. William Hart*
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Horlings
 Mr. Keith Johnson*
 Miss Elizabeth Jolly*
 Miss Mary Kaldeway

Miss Fran Karnemaat	Mr. & Mrs. Paul Theule
Rev. & Mrs. Harvey Kiekover	Dr. & Mrs. John Van Dorp
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Kooiman	Rev. & Mrs. Lester Van Essen
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Koop	Miss Tina Van Staalduinen
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Koops*****	Mr. & Mrs. Case Van Wyk
Mr. & Mrs. Cornie Korhorn	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Van Zee
Dr. Truis Kramer****	Mr. Mike Van Der Dyke
Miss Alie Kuipers	Miss Gerry Vanden Berg
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lobdell*	Miss Julie Vander Laan
Rev. & Mrs. Timothy Nelson	Mr. & Mrs. Dick Vander Steen*
Mr. & Mrs. Pieter Niessink****	Miss Wilma Vander Steen
Dr. & Mrs. Koen Oosterhuis****	Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Vander Weide
Mr. & Mrs. Allen Persenaire	Miss Frances Vander Zwaag
Dr. & Mrs. Keith Plate**	Mr. & Mrs. Leland Vanderaa
Miss Christine Roos	Dr. Fred & Dr. Hazel Veenstra
Mr. & Mrs. Otto Rouw	Miss Ruth Veltkamp
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Schemper	Mr. & Mrs. Norman Viss
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Schepel	Dr. & Mrs. Hendrik Visser
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Seinen	Mr. & Mrs. Abe Vreeke
Mr. & Mrs. John Sjaardema	Mr. James Wayne*
Miss Sandra Sjaardema	Mr. & Mrs. William Zeilstra*
Rev. & Mrs. George Spee	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Zuiderveen
Miss Leny te Nyenhuis*	

Key:

*Short term, volunteer or seminary intern

**Associate missionaries

***On loan from PCA

****On loan from Dienst Over Grenzen

*****On loan to United Bible Society

Sierra Leone

Rev. & Mrs. Paul Kortenhoven

Rev. & Mrs. Roger Kraker

Islam-in-Africa Project

Mr. & Mrs. George Whyte

2. General Events

The number of Christians in Africa at the beginning of 1980 reached 203 million (total population: 470 million), and is growing at a rate of 4 percent per annum. This growth consists of 1.5 million conversions and 4.7 million by natural increase annually. The majority of conversions are from traditional religions. The number of conversions from Islam remains small.

Good news from statistics must be tempered by other sober facts. The number of Christians who are actually members of a church is less than 100 million. A majority of those who claim to be Christian cannot read or do not have a Bible in a language they can read.

Africa remains desperately poor. Most of its people live in countries which have annual per capita incomes of less than \$300. Drought has again hit parts of East and West Africa. War or political unrest disturbs Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Chad, and Angola. Political unrest both helped and hindered the growth of the church. Nigeria, enjoying its first year of civilian government after thirteen years of military rule, reported rapid church growth in this year of peace. Sergeant Doe's military coup replaced 133 years of Americo-Liberian rule in Liberia.

As the fragile fabric of African traditional culture is broken down by urbanization, the introduction of money and salary systems, mimicry of deleterious Western habits, individualism, and consumer mentalities, the church can and must speak out. The liberty of Christ's Spirit brings hope for both eternal life and immediate human development.

3. Francophone Africa

In February 1980, CRWM approved a two-year research and development project for Francophone (French speaking) Africa. This decision assigns five tasks to a French speaking missionary to be appointed by mid-1981. The major task is: "Conduct a church growth survey with a view to selecting an unreached people, establishing a specific mission strategy and beginning a church planting."

There are twenty-four African countries who were formerly under French and Belgian colonial influence and can be classified as Francophone. Countries of primary interest to us are in West Africa. The mandate given this project also requests investigation of the challenges presented by independent churches in countries such as Zaire. It is also necessary to consider the challenge of the upper two tiers of countries, most of which are Islamic republics. Generally, Francophone countries have much lower percentages of Christians and need urgent attention. We are confident that a missionary can be appointed in the latter half of 1981 to begin this project.

4. Liberia

Our fifth year of official work in Liberia was a dramatic one. Politically it was a year of abrupt change for the country. In April the government of William Tolbert was overthrown by a military coup. Tense days followed. CRWM had approved an evacuation policy for our mission in March but after frequent contact we concluded that the safety of our missionaries was not jeopardized and no evacuation took place. There appears to be little change in the government's attitude toward missions but this profound event has been a strong impetus for Liberianization of mission programs in the country.

CRWM's work is focused in Grand Bassa County among the Bassa people who number about 250,000. An integrated ministry to stimulate the development and witness of small independent churches includes programs of Theological Education by Extension (TEE), literacy, literature production and distribution, evangelism, community (health and agricultural) development, and scholarship assistance.

A mandate and strategy outlining these programs was approved in 1979. In 1980 an agreement between the Christian Education Foundation of Liberia (CEFL) and the Liberia mission was approved. The CEFL will assume complete administrative responsibility in 1993.

The first TEE class completed its three-year course and was graduated in November 1980. Land was purchased in Buchanan and mission outreach is beginning there in addition to our locations in the villages of Compound Two and Compound Three. By the end of 1982 the mission hopes to have seventeen TEE classes functioning and nearly three hundred church leaders involved in some form of theological training.

5. Nigeria

a. General

In Nigeria we have two mission efforts which report separately to our board although the entire mission is served by one general secretary and one treasurer. Both dimensions are supported by a joint service program, which also reports to CRWM.

One mission effort serves the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) located in South Gongola State where Miss Johanna Veenstra began her work in 1920. Another group, known as "EKAN Takum," separated from the CRCN in 1973. Together they comprise 50 congregations, over 240 worship places and 60,000 church attenders. Thirty missionaries and associate missionaries from CRWM (teamed with one CRWRC missionary) serve in this area.

A second mission effort serves the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST), located primarily in Benue State but spreading to the larger cities. Begun by the Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa in 1911, this work was transferred to us in the late 1950s. NKST now has 77 congregations, 1,558 places of worship, and over 200,000 church attenders. Forty-five missionaries and associate missionaries serve with NKST in a variety of ministries.

Supporting services such as the aviation program (SUMAIR), construction and maintenance, Hillcrest School and Mt. View Hostel, and Christian Central Pharmacy are administered through the Nigeria Mission Services Committee. The Lord's blessing on the work of the church and mission was evidenced by the fact that ten new congregations were organized in Nigeria in 1980, 3,000 adults and over 2,000 children were baptized, and at least 25 new ministers were ordained.

b. Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN)

Events in 1980 can be summarized in three words: *reconciliation, transfer, and outreach.*

1) RECONCILIATION

In 1973 a group of Christians separated from the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) and formed a new church called "EKAN Takum." In 1975 there was a public reconciliation during which both EKAN Takum and CRCN acknowledged that the root cause of the separation was ethnic. About one-third of the communicant membership of the CRCN had separated and they are predominantly Kuteb people. The public reconciliation in 1975 did not end the matter because reunion did not follow. CRCN continued to insist that reunion was conditional on EKAN Takum's willingness to first return to the fold of CRCN after which their complaints would be considered. EKAN Takum continued to insist that reunion was neither desired or necessary and the way of wisdom was for both groups to recognize each other as churches with an agreement to work together.

The mission, while continuing to encourage reunion, proceeded with its plans to transfer all mission ministries and property to CRCN. Lupwe station was excluded from this since it is located in Kutebland, but each group wondered whether the mission was

making arrangements with the other to transfer ownership of Lupwe.

In mid-1980 EKAN Takum sent letters to CRWM requesting that Lupwe be transferred to EKAN Takum by August 31. Additional requests were made about other mission property including the former Takum Christian Hospital and the airfield operated by the mission at Takum. In response to the requests of EKAN Takum, CRWM made the following decision: Lupwe station will be transferred to EKAN Takum on September 1, 1981. The transfer is contingent upon satisfactory negotiations for the continued use of facilities at Lupwe by our mission.

In November, CRCN accepted the decision of CRWM regarding Lupwe with regret, and pledged to provide EKAN Takum with a fitting share of any compensation received for Takum Hospital. EKAN Takum, however, protested the decision as a half-step and called again for formal recognition of itself by CRWM. The executive committee responded in January by reaffirming its September decisions and by respectfully offering to arrange meetings of CRCN and EKAN Takum pastors to explore all possibilities which may lead to complete reconciliation.

2) TRANSFER

The part of the Nigeria Field Council known as SUM/CRC Benue no longer has any work to administer since all programs and property (except Lupwe) have been transferred to the church. The CRCN is now fully responsible for all evangelization, church education and development, leadership training, literature production and distribution, and various segments of community development such as health and agriculture. The missionaries listed are loaned to CRCN on the basis of Conditions of Secondment approved in 1980. We help finance various programs of CRCN through grants given on the basis of guidelines for interdependence.

The significance of this event has not been ignored by the church. For them it means that the mission as an organized entity is no more. The church has now fully arrived.

3) OUTREACH

CRCN has been dynamically involved in outreach to its non-Christian neighbors through a three-year series of dry season evangelism campaigns. During these campaigns 6,356 people accepted Christ and the Christian way. Thirty-three villages have made requests for evangelists. This year's campaign will be devoted to follow-up. The CRCN Mission Committee hopes to raise enough money to place full-time evangelists in half of these villages. If this happens, the committee will increase its number of "home missionaries" from twelve to twenty-five in 1981. Some of our CRCN-related missionaries work full- or part-time for the CRCN mission committee. All of them are involved in some way in this great outreach to the peoples of Gongola State.

c. *The Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST)*

Three words summarize the 1980 events in relation to the NKST: *transfer, training, and growth.*

1) TRANSFER

On November 20, 1980, a transfer ceremony witnessed by NKST church leaders, missionaries, and distinguished guests, including the Governor of Benue State, took place. Mkar Christian Hospital, the Rural Health, Literature and Scholarship programs, and SUM-CRC property were handed over to NKST. Except for the Benue Leprosy and Rehabilitation Center, former mission work is now administered by the church. The NKST, just as the CRCN in its field, is now fully responsible for all evangelization, church education and development, leadership training, literature production and distribution, and various aspects of community development such as health and agriculture. The missionaries listed are being loaned to NKST on the basis of Conditions of Secondment approved in 1980.

2) TRAINING

The training which church leaders are receiving is demonstrated by the fact that Nigeria now has the third highest national enrollment at Calvin College and Seminary. Some of these are partially financed by scholarship grants given to the Nigerian churches. In addition, substantial assistance is being given to develop Bible schools and seminaries in Nigeria. In 1980 CRWM decided to use the money budgeted for three missionary positions to assist NKST in expanding facilities at Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, which now has an enrollment of over fifty students. The Benue Bible Institute has an enrollment of about seventy students. NKST operates seven secondary schools. Mkar Hospital trains nurses, midwives, and laboratory assistants. The Rural Health Program trains village health workers.

3) GROWTH

Tiv people are migrating to the cities in unprecedented numbers. The church is following these people and many worship centers and congregations are being opened there. In Benue State, places formerly reached by our missionaries and, more recently, by Nigeria missionaries of the NKST Mission Board, have become organized congregations. In the last few months large numbers of people have been baptized on a single Sunday. The NKST Mission Board employs seven "home missionaries." One works among the Ibibio people in southern Nigeria, one among the Fulani people, and one among the Utange people with the Rev. George Spee. But much work remains since only about 20 percent of the Tiv people are identified with the Christian church.

d. *Nigerian Mission Services Committee*

Several missionaries are active in the support services aspect of mission. Mr. Tom Koop is assigned to supervision of language and culture study, assisting missionaries as they learn Nigerian languages. Our goal of having most missionaries function adequately and fluently in other cultures is gradually being realized. The amount of construction in which the churches are involved in Nigeria is enormous. Large churches seek architectural help for new buildings; training facilities expand rapidly. New bookstores are being built. Three mis-

sion builders each supervise many projects, but they cannot keep up and need volunteer help. In spite of enormous fuel price increases, the aviation program continues efficient service with two airplanes. The Twin Comanche will be ten years old and due for replacement in 1982.

Hillcrest School now has five hundred students. Over half are Nigerian or non-Mission expatriates. The number of teachers we must provide has decreased from ten to seven or eight. Our children will in 1981 be entirely housed at Mountain View Hostel.

We conclude the report on Nigeria by mentioning important work being done by Dr. John Boer with the Institute of Church and Society and Mr. Lee Baas with New Life For All. These interdenominational programs of training and evangelism are equipping Nigerians to witness by word and deed, and through various media, including radio and TV.

6. Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone the joint program of CRWRC and CRWM is called Christian Extension Services (CES). A cooperative agreement between CRWRC and CRWM as well as sites, strategy, and missionary recruitment were approved in 1980.

We are presently seeking two additional missionaries for Site Two among the Krim people.

The primary goal for the Koranko site is to stimulate the growth of Christian worshiping communities and village development groups in eighty-seven Koranko villages.

The Kortenhovens and Krakkers are engaged in language and culture study. They report immediate interest in the gospel and pressure from village groups to begin worship services. This exciting news pictures an age-old problem: Do they first learn Koranko and then begin preaching? Do they preach through interpreters and risk becoming so busy that they will never have time for adequate language study? Or do they compromise these two? Exciting days lie ahead in Sierra Leone.

7. Islam in Africa (IAP)

Many evangelical churches and missions cooperate in the Islam in Africa Project. With headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, it reaches across sub-Saharan Africa to train African Christians to reach out to the Islamic community. In 1980 we appointed Mr. and Mrs. George Whyte and offered their services to IAP. Mr. Whyte is a graduate of Calvin Seminary and is presently completing a Master's Degree in Islamics. They are also studying French. IAP has accepted the services of the Whytes and their likely location will be Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

B. Asia

1. Missionaries

Guam:

Mr. & Mrs. Conrad Douma

Rev. & Mrs. John Van Ens

Japan:

Rev. & Mrs. Michiel De Berdt
 Mr. & Mrs. Alan Herweyer*
 Rev. & Mrs. Ray Hommes
 Mr. & Mrs. Jack Jones
 Rev. & Mrs. Arnold Kress

Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Norman
 Rev. & Mrs. Larry Spalink
 Rev. & Mrs. William J. Stob
 Rev. & Mrs. Richard D. Sytsma
 Rev. & Mrs. Richard E. Sytsma

Philippines:

Mr. & Mrs. Vicente Apostol
 Rev. & Mrs. Gary Bekker
 Rev. & Mrs. Henry De Vries
 Mr. & Mrs. Joe Fox
 Rev. & Mrs. Art Helleman
 Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Hofman**
 Rev. & Mrs. Mark Knoper

Rev. & Mrs. Gerrit Koedoot
 Rev. & Mrs. Dick Kwantes
 Mr. & Mrs. Alex Munro
 Rev. & Mrs. Henry Smidstra
 Rev. & Mrs. David Stravers
 Rev. & Mrs. Edward Vander Berg
 Rev. & Mrs. Maas Vander Bilt

Taiwan:

Rev. & Mrs. Carl Afman
 Rev. & Mrs. Peter Tong

Rev. Gary Roest
 Rev. & Mrs. Mike Vander Pol

Papua New Guinea:

Rev. & Mrs. Tom De Vries
 Rev. & Mrs. Erik Schering

Missionaries on Loan:

Rev. & Mrs. Philip V. De Jonge
 (Jordan)
 Rev. & Mrs. John Houseward
 (Australia)
 Rev. & Mrs. Paul Stadt
 (New Zealand)

Bangladesh:

Rev. & Mrs. Albert Hamstra

*Associate missionaries

**Seminary interns

2. General events

The generally lower profile which Asia had in the news during 1980 was a good indicator of less war, less natural disaster, and also less substantial and electrifying news of progress in the fight against maldistribution of the considerable assets in minerals and productivity which Asia has to share with the world. Some countries have registered progress in control of population growth, but these are the best educated and the richest. Japan now appears on all the lists of richest nations, sometimes at the top. Korea is named among the nations sending the most missionaries overseas. Martial law was lifted in the Philippines after seven years of tight control. China continued its policies of increased communication with the rest of the world, expanded trade, and the exchange of personnel in diplomacy and education.

3. Effects on missions

One of the largest gatherings of Christians ever assembled filled an old airfield in Korea with more than two million people. The enthusiasm of the churches in Korea is one of the most exhilarating events in the history of the church. Predictably, this results in a Korean lay movement overseas, including the establishment of Korean congregations in the United States. Japan remains the nation with the highest number of missionaries from other countries. The churches in the Philippines struggle to maintain a working relationship with the government while voicing dissent with the immense pockets of social injustice and economic distress experienced by large groups of disenfranchised peoples. The political stance of India makes it difficult to establish a closer liaison with many churches there.

4. Reports from Asia Missions

a. *Japan*

Seven more congregations begun by the Japan mission have been transferred to the Reformed Church in Japan. Chapels were dedicated in new areas of work, in Tsukuba by the Rev. Michiel De Berdt and in Koshigaya by the Rev. Richard E. Sytsma. Plans were approved for expansion of the work in Narita by the Rev. William J. Stob, northern Japan by the Rev. Arnold Kress, and in Tanashi by the Rev. Ray Hommes.

Replacement missionaries for the four men who left Japan in 1979 (three are reassigned to the Philippines, and one to the Back to God Hour, Chicago office) are being found. The Rev. Larry Spalink is already in Japan and the Rev. Philip V. De Jonge will arrive in Japan at the end of 1981. A third missionary replacement is being interviewed. The fourth person may be assigned in 1983, if funds permit. These are being sent at the urgent request of the Reformed Church in Japan that we maintain our staff level at twelve positions. Thus the plans reported in 1980 are virtually all accomplished in 1981. The inception of new areas of work by the new group of missionaries may be expected in 1983. In the last decade the mission has lost several men with invaluable experience in language and mission work. But it has gained considerably as well—the age level of most of the missionaries is lower, thereby assuring more years for service, and thus broadening considerably the scope of the work; we have relationships with three presbyteries instead of one; and the Reformed Church of Japan has made a deeper commitment to its responsibility for missions in Japan.

b. *Guam*

During the year the Cooper family completed ministry in the Faith Presbyterian Reformed Church and among the Micronesians; the Schuring family supplied a timely and helpful volunteer ministry until a new pastor was able to arrive on Guam; and then the Rev. and Mrs. John Van Ens began their work at midyear. Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Douma continued their ministry by witness and book sales in the Faith Bookstore. At year-end plans were being formulated for the next several years of ministry, involving greater responsibility by the church, expansion of the work among Micronesian students, and continued contact among the island churches which feel a strong kinship with Faith Church.

c. *Philippines*

New additions to the staff in the Philippines give cause for high expectations, and new recruits will be added again in 1981. The number of positions for 1982 will grow to twenty, the Lord willing. The seminary and Bible college enrolled thirty-two persons, nine of them in the seminary division. Leadership will be needed in the churches that have been established and in the two others that have been approved for organization: Murcia and Pavia—bringing to seven the number of established churches.

The need for medical and nutritional help continues: This is being met by the Luke Society ministry begun during the year. A visit by

Dr. Peter Boelens and the appointment of a local doctor, Russel Atonson, eventuated in medical help which will be supervised by missionaries David Stravers and Henry De Vries. The CRWRC added three new persons to the field to replace two experienced persons who terminated services. Significant progress was made in the planning of new work by the staff, which has grown to a total of eighteen CRC positions. Administratively, a one-year field test is underway in a search for coordination of CRWM and CRWRC outreach.

d. *Chinese people*

The two presbyteries of Reformed Presbyterian churches on Taiwan continue separate existences. The missionaries have continued their contacts with both presbyteries, making neither one entirely happy with the mission. The Rev. Peter Tong's radio work has been clearly defined by the broadcasters who encourage its continuation. A literature program involves persons in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and North America in a unique plan of cooperation which took concrete form and made excellent progress in 1980. Synod's new TEAC approved the formation of the Chinese Literature Subcommittee, which will use the insights and expertise of many Chinese pastors and the Taiwan mission personnel.

The visits of many of the personnel to the mainland provinces was a major development in 1980. The observations of all those who have visited have been compared with reports from many other evangelical Christians who observed both the "open" and "house" churches in China. During October 1980, report was made of the recent gatherings of the Three Self Movement leaders, the opening of a seminary in Nanking with forty to fifty students, and the distribution of 135,000 Bibles printed in China. Toleration (perhaps even approval) of the house churches may now be assumed, and the beginning of official contacts with the churches in the West. World Missions is cooperating in the development of a united evangelical approach to help the Chinese churches make contact with churches overseas.

e. *Papua New Guinea*

The two missionary families on loan to the Sepik Christian Akademies in Papua New Guinea arrived while SCA was developing outreach ministries in Maposi and Wayawas. Their immediate immersion in language study has helped them enter the word and deed ministries to which they are appointed and involvement in the leadership training programs of the four schools now in operation. Locally trained men are teaching in each of the schools along with the limited staff of SCA.

An organizational plan for the mission, demanded by the department of labor, was completed in 1980 by Mr. and Mrs. Neal Kooyers and presented to the government. The work of missionaries De Vries and Schering, loaned by CRWM to SCA, is carefully defined in this document.

f. *Bangladesh*

After a half year of pastoral work in Sri Lanka while waiting for visas to Bangladesh, the Rev. and Mrs. Albert Hamstra were granted entry permission to Bangladesh. They completed work in Sri Lanka at

year end, spent some weeks in India as representatives for World Missions at a missions conference of the church of South India, and then proceeded to Bangladesh, arriving in March 1981.

A long period of preparation in Islamic studies and cultural orientation to South Asia has thus been exactly timed to their arrival in Bangladesh. This assures us of the Lord's guidance in this project. At the same time the cassette player project, being developed by Portable Recording Ministries, and the cassette Scripture project, to be done for the Bangladesh Bible Society, have been developed more specifically. The Hamstras will also be working with CRWRC staff in Bangladesh.

C. Latin America

1. Missionaries

Argentina

Rev. & Mrs. John Hutt
Rev. & Mrs. Jack Huttinga
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Ritsema*

Dr. & Mrs. Sidney Rooy
Rev. & Mrs. Harvey Stob
Rev. & Mrs. Jim Zondervan

Belize

Miss Helen De Vries**

Miss Dorothy Meyer**

Brazil

Rev. & Mrs. Carl Bosma

Rev. & Mrs. Charles Uken

Central America

Honduras:

Rev. & Mrs. Paul Bergsma
Rev. & Mrs. Wayne De Young
Miss Laura Hekman**
Rev. & Mrs. Tom Klaasen
Miss Coba Koene
Mr. & Mrs. Veryl Kooi**

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mulder
Rev. & Mrs. Bill Renkema
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Schipper
Miss Kathy Vander Goot**
Mr. & Mrs. John Wind

Nicaragua:

Miss Thea Alsum***
Miss Joan Kamphouse

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Teja

Guatemala:

Rev. & Mrs. Jim Dekker
Dr. Derk Oostendorp (temporary)

Rev. & Mrs. Arnold Rumph

Dominican Republic:

Rev. & Mrs. Ray Brinks

Rev. & Mrs. Neal Hegeman

Mexico:

Mr. & Mrs. Ed Aulie***
Mr. & Mrs. John De Young
Miss Winabelle Gritter
Mr. & Mrs. Lou Korf
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Kroeze
Rev. & Mrs. Dan Kuiper
Mr. & Mrs. Abe Marcus

Rev. & Mrs. Gerald Nyenhuis
Mr. & Mrs. John Paul Roberts
Rev. & Mrs. Larry Roberts
Rev. & Mrs. Jan Van Ee
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Visser***
Dr. & Mrs. Hans Weerstra

Puerto Rico:

Rev. & Mrs. Merle Den Bleyker
Rev. & Mrs. Tom De Vries

Rev. & Mrs. Arie Leder
Rev. & Mrs. Ron Sprik

*Seminary intern

**Associate Missionaries

***Volunteer

2. Introductory remarks

Latin America continues to be a vibrant and volatile area in which to work. It is an area that continues to need the holistic gospel of Jesus Christ touching both men's need for spiritual salvation and for a world and life view here and now.

It is one thing to have a carefully articulated theology and quite another to teach it so that it is understood in a strange culture and put into practice in the difficult and sometimes dangerous situations in which our missionaries live. The following is the story of what our CRC missionaries are doing in Latin America.

3. Argentina

A significant change in our relationship to the Reformed Church of Argentina (IRA) occurred in 1980. In October a delegation from the church visited North America and a new agreement was drawn up. This marks two rather significant changes: (1) The missionary, after a period of orientation, will be fully integrated into the life and organization of the church; (2) the field council will cease to be a body which deals with the work and assignment of CRWM missionaries. In its place will be a direct contact between the mission committee of the IRA and the CRWM.

A problem has been the radical change in CRC personnel in Argentina in a few years. It appears likely that in a short time only two veteran missionary families will remain.

Significant activities of the mission in Argentina include:

- a. Church planting—a chapel ministry is maintained in several areas.
- b. Theological education—Dr. Sidney Rooy is loaned, through the IRA, to the Evangelical Faculty of Theology in Buenos Aires.
- c. Leadership training—Rev. Harvey Stob will begin a program of lay training by extension.

4. Brazil

We are no longer working as a mission with the Reformed (Dutch) Church in Brazil. We do not have a formal agreement with the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, although our missionaries are working with them at this time.

Some of the matters for concern in Brazil are: A working agreement with the church will have to be adopted and a strategy drawn up in the next year if work is to be continued in Brazil. The attainment of visas continues to be a problem. The next year will be a critical one in the establishing of our work in Brazil.

5. Central America

Because of the common language, culture, and geographical boundaries, CRWM has chosen to work in Central America through a single field council. However, in the interest of clarity, we will discuss the countries individually, in the order that we entered them as a CRWM mission.

a. *Honduras*

An agreement has been formed between the missionaries and the national church. The missionaries will be making regular reports to the national church on the work they are doing, and placement of new missionaries and the location of new works will be decided by the national church, with subsequent agreement of the missionary.

The goal is to have the national church involved from the very beginning, to avoid a later problem—that of a national church feeling it must take control by force.

The political situation in Honduras is stable and the military government is moving toward an election, therefore the Klaasen and Schipper families have been moved to Honduras from El Salvador.

Prognosis for growth and continued relationship with the national church is good. It is hoped that the political violence found in several Central American countries will not affect Honduras. However, because of close borders and political and economic ties, this hope is far from assured.

b. *Nicaragua*

During 1980 the Christian Reformed Church in Managua has had to pass through several trials. First of all, it needed to learn how to live with the new regime in power there. The proof of acceptance was sealed when the church received legal recognition by the junta. This settled, at least for the time being, the right of the CRC to work in Nicaragua.

The national church is, however, divided and confused at the present time. It is divided because the Rev. John Van der Borgh, returning to Nicaragua under his own authority, has organized the Granada group into a church. The July 1980 executive committee of the CRWM, upon the recommendation of the Central American Field Council, had declined to approve the return of Mr. Van der Borgh to the field. In February 1981, the board carefully reviewed this matter and concurred with the executive committee decision.

c. *Guatemala*

In spite of a very tense political situation with terrorists both of the right and left spreading death and destruction, the church continues to grow in Guatemala. It is undoubtedly stronger there than in any Central American country and perhaps stronger than in any Latin American country. Due to the political situation, it became necessary to evacuate the Rumph family in March of 1981.

d. *El Salvador*

In late 1980 the political situation became so acute that it was thought advisable to evacuate our missionaries. They will continue to make visits from their base in Honduras as the situation permits, and hope to be able to return as peace is restored to that troubled country.

Even though the church is young, good leadership has arisen, and the missionaries are convinced that the church will continue to grow in spite of their not being able to be present. The plan is to continue the leadership training by extension through occasional visits on the part of the missionaries.

e. *General Conclusions on Central America*

Central America is one of the most politically troubled areas in the

world today. Yet, because it has given so many proofs of openness to the gospel, we shall, as a church, continue to reach out a compassionate and instructive hand to this needy part of the world, although because of the political instability the future of our work there remains in jeopardy. The Central American Field Council has decided to reopen its investigation of the possibility of work in Costa Rica, the one stable democracy in the area.

6. Dominican Republic

In 1979 Synod decided to approve the beginning of a CRC mission in the Dominican Republic, to provide training and assistance to the existing groups. In September of 1980 the Rev. Ray Brinks and family arrived on the island and are working at setting up a mission strategy. They will soon be joined by the Rev. & Mrs. Neal Hegeman.

The national church is obviously very weak at this time, and has no clear understanding of its identity. The challenge of the missionaries will be to teach the essentials of the Reformed faith while maintaining the identity of the group with its own culture.

The next year will be one of learning language (since both missionaries are mandated to learn Patois, the local French dialect) and one of writing a strategy. It is hoped that a deed ministry can be fully integrated into the ministry of the Word.

7. Mexico

The work in Mexico has expanded greatly in recent years and has centered mainly around theological education and church planting. Our missionaries teach in the seminary and Bible schools, and there is an active bookstore and film ministry. There has also been a Bible distribution program in the Yucatan. Recently, leadership training by extension has been an important part of the work.

The relationship with the IPIM (Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico) has been the most difficult interchurch problem we have had to face in Latin America this year.

In mid-1980 the IPIM asked several of the CRC missionaries to leave the field. Dr. Derk Oostendorp, though invited to continue to work with the seminary, resigned in protest of the church's action. The executive committee of the CRWM also protested the procedures used against these missionaries.

It is hoped that by the time synod meets, progress will have been made in establishing a new agreement for interdependence with the IPIM and that peace will have been restored.

8. Puerto Rico

The national church is organized and is being encouraged to take a greater role in the government of the mission outreach of the church.

A new field strategy was adopted by the board. It calls for parallel programs for the development of a strong church: that of church planting and seminary training for leadership.

D. Budget for 1982

CRWM budget for 1982 is based on an eight-month period—January through August 1982. This is necessary so that CRWM may change from a calendar year to a fiscal year as adopted by Synod 1980. A complete breakdown of the eight-month budget for 1982 will be submitted to the officers of synod and to members of its finance advisory committee when synod meets. A summary of the budget follows:

DISBURSEMENTS

Personnel costs:		
Salaries	\$2,175,224	
Missionary expenses	259,035	
Medical expenses	81,500	
Travel and freight	196,930	
Housing and inland travel	518,690	
Total personnel costs		\$3,231,379
Program costs		1,035,113
Capital costs		343,252
Field expansion		233,335
Administration		439,771
Fund raising		158,000
Total 1982 budget disbursements		<u>\$5,440,850</u>

INCOME

Quota receipts at \$69.00 per family	\$2,726,800
Missionary support	1,413,325
Gifts and offerings	995,050
Miscellaneous income	66,675
Estates and fund balance	239,000
Total 1982 budget income	<u>\$5,440,850</u>

E. Quota requested for 1982 per family is \$69.00.

F. Request for Special Offerings

CRWM is requesting approval of a budget of \$5,440,850 and quota income of \$2,726,800. The balance of \$2,714,050 must be raised through missionary support, gifts and offerings, and other income. In order to meet this financial need, it is urgently necessary that CRWM be recommended for special offerings. Therefore CRWM requests that synod continue CRWM on the list of denominational agencies for one or more offerings during 1982.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The opening year of the new decade exhibited a complexity of emerging trends, problems, and blessings. During the year, CRWM missionaries took up residence for the first time in Papua New Guinea, Dominican Republic, and Sierra Leone. Far-reaching changes in the relationship with national churches took place. The appeal of the Rev. John Van Der Borgh against his field council and the CRWM executive committee demanded extensive involvement of the board. Political unrest

continues to mark Central America. The evacuation of CRWM personnel in El Salvador was mandated and these missionaries were relocated to Honduras. In February 1981, it also became necessary to authorize the evacuation of the Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Rumph and their family from Guatemala.

The attention of the world has been drawn to Central America and also to the issues of justice and liberation as these focus now on that sector of the world. Often these issues become intertwined with critiques of capitalism and of the exporting of North American ideologies, and analyses of the inhumanity of multinational corporations. On the other hand, there are calls for the buttressing of the governments of these small nations as they seek to maintain order in the face of leftist infiltration, sometimes coupled with a strongly atheistic call for revolution. Missionaries are asked to discern these currents and test the spirits whether they be from the Lord. It may be forthrightly said that in general our missionaries identified themselves with the cause of those who have been victimized by the rich and powerful elite. As is so often the case, it is among the poor and struggling ones that the gospel finds entrance. This gospel is by no means simply a call to quietude in the postponement of the blessings of salvation into the future.

The churches so planted become yeast and ferment and are enabled to address the injustices of their societies in the name of Christ. On some occasions our missionaries have been in extreme danger because of their courage in this context. At the same time, it should be clear that missionaries may themselves become an embarrassment to the national groups they nurture. If their presence among these groups becomes counterproductive to the effect of their Christian witness, then it is prudent for them to labor elsewhere. We make no apology for the evacuation of our missionaries from El Salvador and Guatemala. In those situations it was clearly and completely necessary and the missionaries themselves concurred. The action was responsible and did not dim their witness. Now the First Christian Reformed Church of El Salvador continues by word and deed to speak in its society. At this writing the Rev. and Mrs. James Dekker continue to work in Guatemala—a very troubled and turbulent country.

It may be observed that the call to testify against injustice is not one that lies only on missionaries, though they often become the focus of this responsibility. Each agency, each congregation, and the church in solemn assembly must speak. We are faced with the drama of the coming of God's kingdom and must all be hammered into more effective instruments of mission.

We keep before our eyes the unreached of our planet. There are still over two thousand such groups of unreached people in the world today, but we have been joined with the worldwide church which now has more potential than ever before to reach these peoples. Our 260 missionaries around the world are privileged to share their allegiance to Jesus Christ and their outrage at the evil which tears our world with tyranny and godlessness. We face the militancy of a resurgent Islam and the nearly one billion of Mainland China. In taking seriously those challenges we become more and more global Christians and through our missionaries

have fresh glimpses of the coming of God's kingdom. Through their sending we ourselves are helped to know the Truth that sets men free.

VI. SUMMARY OF ITEMS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

- A. Representation at synod (Section I, B)
- B. Nominations for board membership (Section I, C)
- C. Reappointment of executive secretary (Section I, D)
- D. Reappointment of Latin America secretary (Section I, E)
- E. Presentation of missionaries (Section I, F)
- F. Delegation from World Missions related churches (Section II, B)
- G. Mission Order Revision (Section II, E)
- H. Continue Australia/New Zealand and Jordan (Section II, G)
- I. Financial Matters:
 - 1. Budget for 1982 (Section IV, D)
 - 2. Request for basic quota of \$69.00 (Section IV, E)
 - 3. Request of special offerings (Section IV, F)

Board for Christian Reformed
World Missions
Eugene Rubingh, executive secretary

REPORT 4

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSION

I. INTRODUCTION

"Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him," said the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 2:14, NIV). The church today also praises God for the assurance that he is leading his people victoriously and using them to spread the gospel throughout the world. Home Missions again rejoices that it has the responsibility to give leadership to the Christian Reformed Church in its effort to spread the knowledge of God throughout the United States and Canada. The needs and the diversity of the inhabitants of these two lands present the Christian Reformed Church with a tremendous challenge. The church must witness for Christ right where it is as well as to the ends of the earth. Recognizing this challenge Home Missions, as it entered its second century of activity, urged the denomination to pray "Lead On, Lord." While the church prayed for the Lord's leading, there were many indications that the Lord was leading and using his people wonderfully. During the past year, desirable pieces of land were purchased, church facilities were constructed, people were converted, Christians were growing in faith and service. Evidences of the work of the Holy Spirit were seen as refugees responded to the gospel, Native American church leaders assumed increased responsibility, a variety of people joined the church, and church members took training in evangelism. Statistics for 1980 showed growth and reports from churches and Home Missions fields revealed that those statistics were just one indication of God's blessing.

During 1980, the Home Missions staff and regional home missionaries engaged in some intense review as well as planning for the future. They took inventory and evaluated the overall program and policies of Home Missions. In an attitude of stewardship and prayerful reflection, they were led to certain conclusions which were presented to the board in February 1981, in a report entitled "Partners in Mission." This report observed that Home Missions is a healthy organization being used by God for his glory, for the salvation of people, the building of the church and the extension of the kingdom. Home Missions has an important role in the denomination, a role which can be defined as that of enabling partner. The underlying concept is simple, yet profound. Home Missions is involved in mission as a partner with people who live in various situations. These people are the primary persons involved in the ministry or mission, whether they are in established congregations, in emerging Home Missions churches, or involved in specialized ministries. The role of enabling partner has ramifications for the stance that Home Missions assumes in its administration, the way it exercises its stewardship and the expectations it may have for its various partners. It must do its utmost to

promote the mission of God as the various partners proclaim and progress together. Home Missions is the link between the resources of the denomination and the needs of those engaged in ministry. The board, after reviewing the report thoroughly, responded by affirming the following: "Knowing that God leads his people in triumphal procession and through them spreads everywhere the fragrance of the gospel, Home Missions rejoices that it is a partner with others in the mission of God. Within the Christian Reformed Church, Home Missions has the role of enabling partner. The churches of the denomination are the doers. They, in their own communities, are to be assisted by Home Missions which is the link between the resources of the denomination and the needs of those who are engaged in outreach ministries." The board went on to describe further its relationships thus: "Partners with established congregations: Home Missions must challenge the Christian Reformed denomination to build evangelism into the entire life of every church. It must provide the training, materials, program, and counsel which will assist the churches to use the gifts of their members in outreach ministries which proclaim the gospel to the people of their communities and receive new believers into the church. Partners with Home Missions fields: Home Missions shall govern all its administrative relationships with fields in a manner which recognizes the primary responsibility of the Christians in the local situation. These relationships must be adjusted as the group develops.

Local responsibility: The people of God in the local situation under the leadership of the home missionary shall develop the concept of ministry and carry on the program to accomplish the mission in their community. The whole program, personnel, and financial concern shall be integrated to accomplish this mission. Local resources are primary.

Denominational resources: The services of staff and regional home missionaries, as well as financial resources, shall be provided to help fields as is appropriate to the needs of the place and in a manner which will promote the development of the ministry there. Good stewardship of denominational resources requires that Home Missions carefully evaluate proposed ministries and regularly monitor existing ministries to determine where denominational support will be most effective."

The board went on to approve the further development of a new design for church planting ministries (cf. this Report Section V, G) and instructed staff and regional home missionaries to work with missionaries and others to further refine the design and develop whatever changes and policies and practices may be necessary.

II. THE BOARD

The board, which consists of a delegate from each of the classes plus eleven members-at-large, met February 24-26, 1981. Between the annual board meetings, the executive committee met seven times.

A. Officers of the Board

Mr. Marvin Van Dellen, president
 Rev. Milton Doornbos, vice-president
 Rev. John G. Van Ryn, executive secretary
 Rev. Edward Tamminga, assistant secretary
 Mr. Gerard J. Borst, treasurer
 Mr. Joseph T. Daverman, assistant treasurer

B. Subcommittees of the Executive Committee

Administration committee: Mr. M. Van Dellen, Rev. M. Doornbos, Mr. J. Daverman, Rev. E. Tamminga
 Evangelism committee: Rev. W. Leys, Rev. R. Walter, Jr., Rev. R. Fisher, Mr. G. Vander Bie, Rev. G. Postema
 Finance committee: Mr. H. Nieman, Mr. J. Daverman, Mr. H. De Haan, Mr. H. Soper, Mr. M. Van Dellen
 Fields committee #1 (Indian): Rev. M. Doornbos, Rev. W. Swets, Rev. E. Tamminga, Rev. M. Groenendyk, Miss G. Vander Ark
 Fields committee #2: Rev. R. Opperwall, Rev. G. Hutt, Rev. L. Bazuin, Mr. B. Sharpe, Rev. J. A. De Vries, Mrs. Nancy Olthoff
 Personnel committee: The staff

III. OFFICE PERSONNEL

A. Staff

Executive secretary Rev. John G. Van Ryn
 Minister of evangelism Rev. Dirk J. Hart
 Treasurer Mr. Gerard J. Borst
 Fields secretary Rev. Peter Borgdorff
 Personnel secretary Rev. Duane E. VanderBrug
 Associate minister of evangelism Rev. Henry M. De Rooy

B. Support Personnel

Communications coordinator Mr. R. Jack De Vos
 Church relations secretary Mr. Stanley Koning
 Controller Mr. Howard Meyers
 Graphic artist Joe Vriend
 Planned giving consultant Mr. Edward Berends*
 Bookkeeper Miss Jeanne Faber
 Secretaries: Julie Koster, Wilma Vanden Bosch, Karen Talsma, Gert Rotman, Lori Vis, Vicki Johnson
 *volunteer

C. Developments

The Rev. Mr. Wesley Smedes had planned to serve the denomination as minister of evangelism until April 1981. Being relieved of those responsibilities, he intended to turn his attention to writing and some other activities. In the summer of 1980, Mr. Smedes learned that he had a malignant brain tumor. The surgery, which removed the major portion of the tumor, was followed by various treatments. The Rev. Mr. Dirk Hart, who was appointed by the Synod of 1980 to be the new minister of evangelism, assumed the majority of the responsibilities as brother Smedes was compelled to reduce his activities. The board, at its annual meeting, declared Wesley Smedes to be minister of evangelism emeritus and at a dinner on February 25, honored him for his excellent service.

Those gathered that evening acknowledged the stimulating leadership that the Rev. Mr. Smedes had given to the church as minister of evangelism since 1964 and thanked him for the ways he challenged the church to proclaim the good news of the gospel everywhere, beginning at home. Those gathered that evening also rejoiced with Wes and his wife, Marian, in the mercies of the Lord.

The position of communications coordinator remained unfilled for another year. During the year, other office persons assumed extra responsibilities and were assisted by various people, including board member, Mr. Bernard Sharpe who volunteered many hours and Seminarian Dirk Buursma who worked part time. However, in March 1981, Mr. R. Jack De Vos assumed the responsibility of communications coordinator, bringing to the position a love for the church and a background in business.

D. Reappointment of Two Staff Persons

The administration committee did a thorough evaluation of the work of the Rev. Peter Borgdorff as field secretary and the Rev. Duane VanderBrug as personnel secretary. This personnel assessment included input from fields, missionaries, and staff. The committee reviewed the process and reported that both of these men have served excellently. The board heartily recommends that synod reappoint Peter Borgdorff to a term of four years as field secretary and Duane VanderBrug to a term of four years as personnel secretary. Both of these men were originally appointed to these staff positions by synod in 1975 for two years and in 1977 for four years. They are now eligible for another four-year term, (cf. Home Missions Order, Art. 4, Sec. 4).

IV. REGIONAL HOME MISSIONARIES

Canada and the United States are divided into regions and each region is served by a regional home missionary who lives within the area he serves. The RHM, as he is frequently called, functions as an enabler in the Home Missions effort. He is referred to as the first point of contact between the board and its fields and personnel. He is the liaison between the board and classical home missions committees. As one who has expertise in missions and evangelism, he provides counsel and instruction to classes and churches of his region. RHM's have proven to be extremely valuable resources within the denomination. For several years, six men have been serving the following areas:

Canada—Rev. John Van Til
Eastern United States—Rev. Ron Peterson
Mid-East United States—Rev. Paul Vermaire
Rocky Mountain—Rev. Dirk Aardsma
Western United States—Rev. John Rozeboom
Southwest (Indian Field)—Rev. Earl Dykema

After reviewing the regions and responsibilities of the RHM's, the board decided to approve a seventh position which will possibly be designated Columbia and include northwestern United States and western Canada.

V. FIELDS

A. General Information

The term *field* is used to refer to the ministry or mission activity in a particular place which is administered by the Board of Home Missions. In addition to regular denominational fields, there are Grant-In-Aid fields which are given denominational assistance while a local church or classis is primarily responsible for administering the work. Among both kinds of fields there are two types of ministries. One is church development or church planting; the other is specialized ministry. Specialized ministries include campus, harbor, and such activities which extend the church of Christ but are not expected to result in a new Christian Reformed congregation. The total number of fields currently is 141 of which 38 are Grant-In-Aid fields. The scope of ministries is varied and involves core cities, suburbs, reservations, campuses, military bases, and seaports. While Home Missions ministries typically reach out to a variety of people within their communities, most of these ministries are focused on a particular racial, ethnic, or language group. An examination of how the Home Missions dollar is invested reveals a sizable commitment in ministry among minority people. Of the eighty-five cents of the Home Missions dollar which is used for field activity, thirty-seven cents is invested in minority ministries. The largest portion of this is for work among Indians.

B. Present Fields and Personnel

INDIAN MINISTRIES

Reservation Churches

Church Rock, NM—Mr. B. Garnanez
 Crownpoint, NM—Rev. G. Stuit, Mr. A. Becenti
 Farmington, NM—Rev. S. Yazzie
 Ft. Wingate, NM—Rev. G. Haagsma, Miss S. Clahchischilli
 Gallup, NM—Rev. A. Mulder, Miss E. Vos
 Naschitti, NM—Mr. C. Brummel, Mr. A. Henry
 Navajo, NM—(vacant)
 Red Valley, AZ—Mr. H. Begay
 Sanostee, NM—Mr. F. Curley
 Shiprock, NM—Rev. A. Koolhaas, Mr. B. Benally
 Teec Nos Pos, AZ—Rev. P. Redhouse, Mr. J. Talley
 Toadlena, NM—Mr. G. Klumpenhower, Mr. F. Frank
 Tohatchi, NM—Rev. E. Henry
 Tohlakai, NM—Mr. M. Harberts
 Window Rock, AZ—Mr. C. Grey
 Zuni, NM—Rev. R. Posthuma

Specialized Ministries (on-reservation)

Crownpoint, NM; Christian School—Miss M. Hieman, Mr. R. Donkersloot
 Rehoboth, NM; Christian Education Office—Miss H. Nyhof
 Rehoboth, NM; Christian School:

Houseparents: Miss J. Ensink, Mr. and Mrs. S. Gonzales, Mr. and Mrs. S. Hirdes,
 Mr. and Mrs. R. Kamps, Mr. and Mrs. J. Lee, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. J. Lineweaver
 Dining and kitchen staff: Mr. W. Hoekstra, Miss N. DeKleine, Mr. A. Johnson,
 Mrs. K. Savino

Educational staff: Mr. R. Polinder, Supt.; Miss A. Boyd, Mr. J. De Korne, Mr. M. De Young, Mr. K. Faber, Mrs. G. Hendricks, Mr. G. Hendricks, Miss L. Jelgerhuis, Miss J. Kaemingk, Mr. C. Kloosterman, Mr. K. Kuipers, Mr. S. Pikaart, Miss R. Posthuma, Mr. D. Van Anandel, Mr. K. Vander Laan, Mrs. L. Vander Laan, Miss R. Vander Woude, Mr. J. Van't Land, Mr. T. Weeda, Mr. E. Yazzie

Maintenance supervisor—Mr. R. Kerr
 Rehoboth, NM; Industrial staff—Mr. E. Oppenhuizen, Mr. A. Bosscher, Mr. J. Den Bleyker, Mr. P. Goudzwaard, Mr. T. Tibboel, Mrs. V. Henry
 Zuni, NM; Christian School—Mr. A. De Jong, Prin.; Mrs. B. Berghuis, Mr. S. Chimoni, Miss M. Klay, Mr. S. Vander Molen, Miss S. Vander Wulp, Miss W. Van Klompenberg

Churches off-reservation

Albuquerque, NM—Rev. A. Veltkamp
 Chicago, IL—Mr. H. Bielema, Mrs. M. Strouse
 Denver, CO, Chr. Indian Center—Rev. H. Van Dam
 Salt Lake City, UT, Chr. Indian Center—Mr. N. Jonkman, Mrs. S. Haswood
 San Francisco, CA, Friendship House—Rev. D. Klompeen

Specialized Ministries (off-reservation)

Phoenix, AZ, Cook Chr. Training School—Rev. H. deJong
 Regina, SK (GIA)—Rev. H. Kuperus
 San Francisco, CA, Friendship House—Mr. J. Richards, Mr. N. Baker

CITY AND SUBURBAN

Church Development

Anaheim, CA (Spanish)—Rev. C. Nyenhuis
 Appleton, WI (GIA)—Rev. D. Steenhoek
 Atlanta, GA—Mr. W. Curnow (interim)
 Boise, ID—Rev. D. Lagerwey
 Brigham City, UT—Rev. E. Boer, Mr. M. Anderson
 Burbank, IL (GIA)—Rev. L. Meyer
 Burke, VA—(recruiting)
 Calgary, AB (GIA)—Rev. K. Verhulst
 Cedar Rapids, IA—Rev. K. VanDeGriend
 Champaign, IL—(recruiting)
 Chicago, IL
 Hispanic (to be opened)
 Hyde Park (Chinese)—Rev. P. Han
 Lawndale (GIA)—Ms. B. Clayton
 Pullman (GIA)—Rev. C. Kromminga, Jr.
 Roseland (GIA)—Rev. A. Van Zanten
 Cochrane, ON—Mr. A. Vanden Akker
 Colorado Springs, CO (GIA)—Mr. J. Hart
 Columbia, MO—Rev. R. Steen
 Corvallis, OR—Rev. H. Spaan
 Dallas, TX (GIA)—Rev. D. Zandstra
 Davenport, IA—Rev. R. Goudzwaard
 Dayton, OH—Rev. A. Arkema
 Denver, CO, Sun Valley (GIA)—(vacant)
 Detroit, MI, Nardin Park Community—Rev. N. Newell
 East Grand Forks, MN—Rev. J. Lion
 East Islip, NY—Rev. M. Davies
 El Paso, TX—Rev. W. De Vries
 Enumclaw, WA (GIA)—Rev. W. Ackerman
 Fairfield, CA—Rev. G. Hofland
 Flagstaff, AZ—Rev. D. Klop
 Flanders Valley, NJ—Rev. J. Vander Ark
 Ft. McMurray, AB—Rev. W. Smit

Ft. Wayne, IN—Rev. E. Holkeboer
 Fredericton, NB—Rev. J. Klumpenhouwer
 Fresno, CA—Rev. M. Reitsma
 Gaylord, MI (GIA)—Rev. J. Vanden Hoek
 Helena, MT (GIA)—Rev. J. Moes
 Honolulu, HI—Rev. R. Palsrok
 Houston, TX—Rev. J. Holleman, Rev. K. Tanis
 Indian Harbour Beach, FL—Rev. J. G. Auplerlee
 Jackson, MS (GIA)—(vacant)
 Jacksonville, FL—Rev. H. Karsten
 Kalamazoo, MI, Lexington Green (GIA)—Rev. M. Buwalda
 Kamloops, BC—Rev. D. Tigchelaar
 LaCrosse, WI—Rev. J. Osterhouse, Rev. A. Louwerse
 Lake City, MI (GIA)—Mr. W. Vander Heide
 Los Angeles, CA
 Chinatown (Vietnamese)—Rev. J. Tong
 Crenshaw—Rev. G. Van Enk
 Community—Rev. S. Verheul
 Sun Valley, Hispanic (to be opened)
 Loveland, CO—Rev. H. De Young
 Mason City, IA—Rev. M. De Young
 Meadowvale, ON—Rev. H. Lunshof
 Miami, FL, Good Samaritan (Spanish)—Rev. R. Borrego, Mrs. S. Menchaca
 Montreal, PQ—Rev. H. Kallemeyn
 Nanaimo, BC—Rev. A. Likkel
 Nashville, TN—(recruiting)
 New Glasgow, NS—(recruiting)
 Norfolk, VA—Rev. J. Rickers
 Ogden, UT—Rev. A. W. Heersink, Mr. T. Koeman
 Paterson, NJ
 Madison Ave. (GIA)—Rev. J. Algera, Miss J. Gill
 Northside (GIA)—Mr. G. Onugha
 Richfield Springs, NY (GIA)—Rev. F. J. Macleod
 Riverside, CA—Rev. L. Van Essen
 Roseville, MI (GIA)—Rev. J. Busscher
 St. Louis, MO—Rev. W. Stroo
 Salem, OR (GIA)—Mr. V. Schaap
 Salt Lake City, UT, Immanuel—(recruiting)
 San Francisco, CA, Golden Gate—Rev. P. Yang
 Syracuse, NY—(recruiting)
 Tacoma, WA (GIA)—Mr. H. Bauer
 Terre Haute, IN—(recruiting)
 Tri-Cities, WA—Rev. A. Machiela
 Vanastra, ON (GIA)—Rev. P. Mantel
 Vancouver, BC (Chinese)—Rev. S. Jung
 Virginia Beach, VA—Rev. W. Ribbens
 Washington, PA—Rev. D. Bouma
 Windsor, ON—Rev. P. Hogeterp
 Winnipeg, MB, Hope Centre (GIA)—Rev. D. Habermehl
 Yakima, WA, Summitview—(recruiting)

SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES

Campus

Akron, OH (GIA)—Mr. K. Hermann
 Ames, IA (GIA)—Rev. F. Walhof
 Bellingham, WA (GIA)—Rev. D. Bosscher
 Big Rapids, MI (GIA)—Rev. K. Zorgdrager
 Boulder, CO—Mr. A. De Jong
 Columbus, OH—Rev. E. Lewis
 Detroit, MI—Rev. J. Natelborg
 Edmonton, AB (GIA)—Rev. T. Oosterhuis

Guelph, ON—Rev. E. Den Haan
 Hamilton, ON (GIA)—Mr. A. Geisterfer
 Iowa City, IA—Rev. J. Chen
 Kingston, ON—Rev. W. Dykstra
 Lafayette, IN—Rev. W. Lenters
 London, ON—(recruiting)
 Madison, WI—Rev. K. Bulthuis
 Minneapolis, MN—Rev. R. Drake
 Mt. Pleasant, MI (GIA)—Rev. R. Bouwkamp
 Paterson, NJ—Rev. K. Vander Wall
 Tempe, AZ—Rev. M. Nieboer
 Toronto, ON—Rev. D. Pierik
 Vermillion, SD (GIA)—(recruiting)
 Waterloo, ON—Dr. R. Kooistra

Seaway

Los Angeles Harbor (GIA)—(to be opened)
 Montreal, PQ (GIA)—Rev. H. Uittenbosch
 Vancouver, BC (GIA)—Rev. J. Dresselhuis

Servicemen's Homes

Honolulu, HI—Mr. and Mrs. G. Ellens
 Norfolk, VA—Mr. and Mrs. B. Frens
 San Diego, CA—Mr. and Mrs. D. Rottenberg

Unclassified

Middlesboro, KY, Appalachia—Rev. T. Limburg

In addition to the personnel listed above three long-term volunteers and five seminary interns are also serving.

C. Developments in 1980

1. New fields

New church development ministries were begun in Nanaimo, British Columbia; Montreal, Quebec; Los Angeles, California; and Nashville, Tennessee. The work in Montreal marks the beginning of Christian Reformed church planting efforts among the French people of Canada. Virginia Beach, Virginia, was scheduled to be opened in 1980 but was postponed until 1981. Though work among Hispanics in Chicago and Los Angeles was also scheduled for 1980, these activities were also postponed until 1981, for financial reasons.

2. Graduating churches

Three Home Missions churches showed sufficient growth and maturity to leave the ranks of Home Missions churches during 1980. The churches in Bakersfield, California; Olympia, Washington; and Iowa City, Iowa, are congratulated for their progress.

3. Statistical Information

Statistics gleaned from the annual reports of Home Missions church planting ministries provide good reason for rejoicing. The following totals include church development ministries being assisted through the Grant-In-Aid program:

	1979	1980	Change
Number of families in HM churches	1850	2269	+ 419
Number of nonmember families attending	549	558	+ 9
Average morning attendance	7395	8752	+1357
Average evening attendance	3188	3318	+ 130
Church school enrollment	3744	4757	+1013
Adult baptisms	64	168	+ 104
Professions of faith	193	245	+ 52
Reaffirmations of faith	156	123	- 33
Infant baptisms	245	333	+ 88

The attendance statistics do not include persons who worship on twenty two campuses supported in whole or part by denominational funds. Approximately two thousand persons attend these worship services, therefore on an average Sunday morning, well over ten thousand people hear the gospel preached by home missionaries. While the quality of ministry cannot be reflected in numbers, statistics do provide one indication of the scope and effectiveness of the activity.

D. Plans for 1981

1. Graduations

Present plans indicate that three or four churches will graduate during 1981 and still others in 1982. Considerable effort is expended in assisting developing churches to reach the goal of independence from the supervision and subsidies of Home Missions.

2. New fields

Two new church planting ministries were approved by the board in February 1981. They are Kanata, Ontario; and Southern Orange County, California. Kanata, located near Ottawa, is a city of about twenty thousand and is projected to have a population of a hundred thousand people within twenty years. Southern Orange County has a population of approximately a hundred fifty thousand people and is growing rapidly. Investigation indicates that both communities have need of and opportunity for a Christian Reformed church.

The challenge of Islam must be addressed by the church. In response to an excellent report prepared by Dr. Peter Ipema, World and Home Missions have decided to jointly begin a ministry among Muslims in Chicago. It is hoped that Dr. Ipema can begin this activity, which will focus primarily on college and university students, in June 1981.

Other new activities are reflected in the list of Grant-In-Aid Fields (cf. Section V, E).

E. Grant-In-Aid Fields

The Board approved the following Grants-In-Aid:

1. Renewals	1981	1982
Akron, OH	\$10,000	\$10,000
Appleton, WI	10,000	—
Bellingham, WA	2,000	—
Big Rapids, MI (campus)	13,200	14,500
Burbank, IL	8,000	7,500
Calgary, AB	8,000	7,000

Chicago, IL/Lawndale	9,000	9,000
Chicago, IL/Pullman	11,000	10,000
Chicago, IL/Roseland	11,000	10,000
Colorado Springs, CO	5,500	5,000
Dallas, TX	8,000	7,500
Denver, CO/Sun Valley	7,500	7,500
Edmonton, AB (campus)	7,500	7,000
Enumclaw, WA	5,000	2,500
Gaylord, MI	6,000	5,000
Hamilton, ON (campus)	4,350	4,200
Helena, MT	10,000	10,000
Jackson, MS	10,000	8,000
Kalamazoo, MI/Lexington Green	2,000	1,500
Lake City, MI	1,750	—
Los Angeles/Long Beach, CA (harbor)	17,400	17,400
Montreal, PQ (harbour)	4,500	4,500
Mt. Pleasant, MI	4,000	3,500
Paterson, NJ/Madison Ave.	19,520	20,980
Paterson, NJ/Northside	15,600	15,000
Regina, SK	4,000	2,000
Richfield Springs, NY	9,000	8,500
Roseville, MI	10,000	10,000
Salem OR	4,000	3,000
Tacoma, WA	4,800	4,000
Vanastra, ON	2,400	1,200
Vancouver, BC (harbour)	4,500	4,500
Winnipeg, MB/Hope Centre*	15,000	To be determined

*This amount is for six months. Alternative funding arrangements are being considered.

2. <i>New requests</i>	1981	1982	1983
Ames, IA (campus)	10,000	10,800	\$11,700
Chicago, IL/Tinley Park	10,000	9,000	8,000
Visalia, CA/Porterville*	12,000	10,000	8,000

*Scheduled for a five-year phase-out at a minimum reduction of \$2,000 per year.

3. *New requests—special arrangements*

These requests were for 1981-83. Budget restraints required that the starting date be postponed to 1982.

	1982	1983	1984
Fort Collins, CO	\$16,200	\$16,200	\$16,200
Puget Sound, WA (harbor)	16,000	16,000	16,000

F. *Development of Indian Churches*

1. *Progress report*

The 1980 Synod mandated the Council of Indian Churches, in consultation with Classis Rocky Mountain and Home Missions, to develop a proposal for the Synod of 1981 which would lead to the formation of a new classis. The basic work for that proposal was done by the Indian Church Growth Task Force which submitted its report to the Council of Indian Churches and the Board of Home Missions early in 1981. The discussion surrounding this proposal has had a significant impact upon the life of the churches in New Mexico and Arizona as they have struggled together with Home Missions to discover what constitutes and what hinders the development of a healthy church. Much work will need to be done during the next year.

2. *Approval recommended*

In February 1981, the Board of Home Missions reviewed the report of the Council of Indian Churches which is being submitted to the Synod of 1981. The board is very appreciative of the work of the council, expresses its concurrence with the conclusions in the report and humbly requests that synod approve the recommendations. The Indian congregations and the denomination together are standing at the brink of some very significant developments.

G. *New Design for Church Planting*

To promote the healthy development of emerging congregations, a new design for church development has been approved and is being refined. This design reflects an effort to recognize local authority and responsibility in stages which are appropriate to the development of the group. It requires careful integration of program, leadership, and financial concerns in accomplishing the mission intended in a particular place. The design expects growth through evangelism, the spiritual maturing of the members, the development of leadership, and good stewardship. It builds in local decision-making at important junctures in the development. It promotes local ownership of the program and should provide healthy development toward Stage IV and continual growth beyond. The four stages of phases of development are as follows:

Stage I—Exploration: The home missionary arrives on the field, ministry begins, and it is determined whether the need and opportunity in the community provide the potential for the development of a congregation. When the local group numbers at least fifteen families or two years have elapsed, it shall be determined whether a church shall be established.

Stage II—Organization: The local group is organized as a congregation, expands its program, assumes local program costs and contributes denominational quotas, begins salary support of the missionary, and proceeds with land purchase and construction of facilities. The group grows to twenty-five families within three years after entering this stage.

Stage III—Maturation: The emerging church assumes the responsibility of calling and employing its pastor, expands its program to meet its opportunities, assumes responsibility for all its ministry costs while receiving financial assistance from Home Missions according to its need and on a timeline negotiated when the church enters this stage.

Stage IV—Graduation: The congregation has grown in numbers, maturity, and financial ability and is able to function with the direct supervision or financial resources of Home Missions. It may qualify for assistance through the Fund for Needy Churches and the consultation services of Home Missions will be available to it.

Presently this design is being discussed with the leadership of Home Missions churches, problems are being identified, and solutions are being sought together. It is sincerely hoped that this will promote the develop-

ment of emerging congregations and the general outreach of our denomination. The future of the Christian Reformed Church requires that a high priority be given to church planting ministries.

VI. PERSONNEL

God has blessed the Christian Reformed Church with 238 gifted, dedicated people serving the cause of Home Missions. These personnel serve in five areas indicated in this graph:

Ministerial Services	Ordained 94	Lay 58	Total 152
Educational Services	51		
Supportive Services (and Clerical)	16		
Administrative Supervisory and Consultants Services	14		
Industrial Services	5		
Home Missions Personnel			
Total 238			

Volunteers are included in figures.

Each one is constantly challenged to bring the best efforts possible to obey creatively and faithfully the mission mandate.

The "Partners in Mission" theme with its emphasis upon local responsibility will call these personnel to a new depth of dedication and spirit of Christian adventure. Faith and trust will have to be exercised by all Home Missions people. In developing the partnership, there are going to be changes in relationships. Some are going to feel uncomfortable in their new roles because they feel less in control of the situation or because previous guarantees cannot be assumed. Everyone will need to grow and adjust to catch a vision of that mission, to generate new energy for that mission and to work believing the possibilities. Nothing short of excellence will be expected of each.

Home Missions is consciously changing the role that training will play in the life of mission personnel. Previously individualized training was available as was time for in-service training with a modest amount of money. Conferences usually focused on the development of general ministry skills. All of that was good and much of it will be continued. But an added ingredient will be the close integration of leadership training with field development. The training of the missionary will be specifically tied to the development of the field where the missionary is working. Since church planting fields especially will be expected to take more responsibility for their own future, concentrated efforts will be placed on the training of those involved in church planting ministries. An

initial conference reflecting this new emphasis will be provided for all of those involved in church planting ministries in the spring of 1981. Training programs will be deliberately designed and policies devised so that this partnership instills a spirit of expectation. Unhealthy dependence will be confronted at all points. A healthy independence which fosters an interdependence that is essential to the communion of the saints will be sought. The work will be done prayerfully, in the expectation that God will help all of those involved to work creatively and in a Christian manner through the difficulties and even the disharmony that may come. Home Missions is committed to the task of equipping missionaries to meet the challenge of their own ministries.

Home Missions is grateful for the appointment of the Rev. Mr. William Ipema as director of Multi-Racial Leadership Development and the evident desire of the denomination to promote the multiracial development of the church. There is hope that considerable significant progress in the development of minority leadership will be seen in the near future.

VII. EVANGELISM

Home Missions continues to fulfill its mandate to stimulate all our churches in their outreach orientation and ministries.

A. *Education and Training*

1. Much work has gone into the completion of the Discover Your Gifts program. Underlying this project is the conviction that God, through the Holy Spirit, has given special abilities to each member of his church for ministry in Christ's name. The program has the enthusiastic endorsement of a number of pilot churches who have given valuable advice and encouragement. This dynamic program will be made available to all churches in August 1981.

2. Numerous "Witnessing Where You Are Conferences" were held throughout the denomination in the past year. Home Missions is currently working on a revised model of this popular conference.

3. On-the-job training in evangelism was provided for fifty-five churches in intensive Congregational Evangelism Training Seminars. In addition, several more compact weekend CET seminars for churches were conducted. Five "R and R" conferences (Review and Renewal) designed to assist churches in more effective use of CET also took place during the year. An informational newsletter called "etCETera," is sent twice a year to all churches involved in this ministry.

4. Leadership Training Seminars in Coffee Break Evangelism were conducted throughout the United States and Canada. Mrs. Laurie Deters coordinates this program and edits the quarterly newsletter, "Coffee Times." There is close cooperation with Discover Your Bible, Inc.

5. Summer Workshop in Ministry (SWIM) continues to be a valuable program for training young people and assisting churches in their outreach. With the cooperation of the Young Calvinist Federation, 268 young people were recruited to assist in the ministry of sixty-one fields.

6. Six issues of "Reach," a newsletter for evangelism committees and pastors, were published and *Home Missions News* was sent to all homes in the denomination.

7. Other seminars and training events were conducted for the churches as requested.

B. Consultation and Encouragement

Consultation on evangelism was provided by Home Missions staff and regional home missionaries through correspondence, telephone contacts, and meetings with evangelism committees. Many churches have studied *Close-Up*, a self-guided study and evaluation of the church, and found it a helpful tool for analysis and goal setting. Several other churches requested and received an intensive and in-depth analysis of the church program through the MAP process (Missions Analysis and Projection).

C. Resources and Materials

Home Missions is grateful for the wide acceptance and use of *Our Home*, a bimonthly publication for distribution in the church's neighborhood. This attractive and inexpensive eight-page tabloid demonstrates the church's concern for families and frequently opens doors for further ministry. A full range of discipleship and follow-up aids is also available from the Home Missions office. Samples will be provided upon request. Smaller churches are helped by our pricing policy of giving a discount to the small church.

By these and other means, Home Missions is eager to cooperate with churches and assist them in making a more effective entrance into the world around us with the cutting edge of the gospel.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND CHURCH RELATIONS

A variety of communication avenues is being vigorously used to make people aware of what God is doing in denominational Home Missions.

Since Home Missions activities are within reasonable traveling distances, many Christian Reformed people visit these ministries in person. In the other direction, home missionaries sometimes plan their vacations to include visits to the supporting churches and groups to relate their activities and progress in their work. Churches everywhere hold mission emphasis events and mission fests and rallies. Women in many places sponsor missionary union mass meetings.

Churches are invited to support missionaries in a general way but considerable effort goes into developing very specific support relationships between missionaries and churches. The response to these specific invitations in 1980 was very gratifying. This year 56 new relationships were established between missionaries and churches—a record number. In 1980, 279 churches participated in the support of 167 home missionaries. In addition, 41 Home Missions churches provided partial support for their own missionary pastor. Receipts for support topped the million dollar mark for the first time, \$1,011,000. In 1979, \$853,000 was collected. The steady increase of churches organizing mission emphasis weeks is encouraging; 40 asked for materials to be used in planning and

implementing such events in 1981. Great effort is being put forth to have the nonquota portion of the Home Missions budget increase at a more rapid pace than the above-quota portion. To make this possible, churches must give the above-quota support of Home Missions a high priority. Relationships between well-established churches and the young churches, specialized ministries, and home missionaries have great impact upon the prayer life of God's people.

Special attention should be drawn to the efforts that women of the missionary unions have put forth to raise funds for the new work in Virginia Beach, as well as the involvement of a small group of men to raise money for the purchase of property in Houston, Texas. Such efforts are making possible things that otherwise would have been very difficult, if not impossible.

God blessed the effort of Home Missions people to write, duplicate, print, and send thousands of messages to consistories, churches, societies, families, and individuals. Church related periodicals as well as personal reports and letters were used. Two major mailing pieces, one celebrating the opening of the second century of Home Missions and the other an informational map of Home Missions, were sent to individual addresses throughout the denomination. Two issues of *Home Missions News* were produced and distributed. Four issues of the *Mission Courier* were produced in cooperation with World Missions, CRWRC, and the Back to God Hour.

An eleven-minute slide production "Lead On, Lord," which gives an overview of the Home Missions effort at the beginning of its second century, gained a wide circulation. Low-key exploration of cable television communication continued during the year with interviews and appearances of people involved in Home Missions interests being telecast over the 60,000-subscriber Grand Rapids cable system.

There is the conviction that the Christian Reformed Church will support enthusiastically through its prayers and gifts all well-planned and well-executed outreach activities designed to challenge the citizens of the United States and Canada with the gospel. The task of the communications department is not to "sell" something but simply to communicate the needs and opportunities of Home Missions.

IX. FINANCE

The year 1980 began with a very small cash balance—working capital for less than two days. During the year a concerted effort was made to improve the cash position. Through careful management, including cuts in various expenditures and postponement of some programs, the cash position was improved during the year. All obligations to missionaries and most obligations to approved programs were met on schedule. While the delaying of funds for property or new programs disappointed those directly involved, we trust no long-term difficulties will be experienced. The budget for 1980 was in excess of \$5,000,000. A full, audited report for the year ended December 31, 1980, by Seidman and Seidman, Certified Public Accountants, has been given to the Synodical Interim Committee with the request that it be presented to synod.

A. General Information

Actual income rose \$492,082 over the previous calendar year. While the above-quota gifts were \$8,000 less than had been anticipated, overall income exceeded budget expectations by \$113,681. The board is very grateful for the willingness of many churches to undertake direct support of home missionaries and to respond to the need for above-quota gifts.

1. The percentage of total quota income received in 1980 was approximately 1½ percent less than the amount received in 1979. While the quota participation by Canadian churches rose approximately six tenths of 1 percent in 1980, participation by the U.S. churches decreased by 2 percent.

2. Income from direct missionary support increased during 1980 over 1979 in the amount of \$128,283 or 14.5 percent.

3. Income from above-quota sources other than direct missionary support increased by \$38,000 in 1980, a 9.7 percent increase over 1979. A comparative analysis of the number of churches taking offerings for above-quota needs in 1979 and 1980 reveals the following:

	U.S. Churches		Canadian churches		Total	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
1979	355	54	42	22	397	47
1980	329	53	70	36	399	49

In addition, \$66,454 was raised for the Houston Property Fund through a special solicitation for this nonbudgeted need.

4. Income from real estate repayments was approximately \$67,000 over the budgeted amount during 1980 as a result of unanticipated payments from churches. About 60 percent of this total resulted from a special appeal to the debtor churches for an extra payment on their indebtedness. The response was very gratifying.

5. The following compilation lists the loans outstanding to those Home Missions churches which have been developed with denominational assistance (as of December 31, 1980).

a. Former Home Missions churches (Stage Four)

UNITED STATES

Akron, OH.....	\$ 53,200	Greeley, CO.....	65,694
Albuquerque, NM (Chelwood).....	73,219	Hayward, CA.....	50,000
Anchorage, AK.....	111,585	Inver Grove Heights, MN.....	46,365
Anaheim, CA.....	2,623	Iowa City, IA.....	50,000
Bakersfield, CA.....	63,200	Jackson, MI.....	22,584
Bellevue, WA.....	78,500	Madison, WI.....	7,325
Bellingham, WA.....	22,500	Miami, FL.....	19,788
Binghamton, NY.....	60,000	Minneapolis, MN (Calvary).....	30,000
Boca Raton, FL.....	52,000	New Brighton, MN.....	42,500
Boulder, CO.....	45,351	Olympia, WA.....	78,000
Colorado Springs, CO.....	27,937	Orlando, FL.....	52,339
Columbus, OH.....	15,155	Palo Alto, CA.....	26,849
Ft. Lauderdale, FL.....	21,200	Philadelphia, PA.....	17,973
Farmington, MI.....	59,329	Pinellas Park, FL.....	24,400
Fort Collins, CO.....	45,000	Pompton Plains, NJ.....	5,000
Fountain Valley, CA.....	72,000	Portland, OR (Calvin).....	28,500
Franklin Lakes, NJ.....	10,710	Portland, OR (Oak Hills).....	56,000

Queens, NY	71,563	South Windsor, CT	50,000
Quincy, WA	2,085	Tacoma, WA	37,500
Richton Park, IL	26,012	Toledo, OH	29,976
Sacramento, CA	19,750	Tucson, AZ	63,192
Salem, OR	35,713	Visalia, CA	25,873
Salt Lake City, UT (First)	9,700	Wappingers Falls, NY	50,000
Scottsdale, AZ	64,316	Washington, DC	20,560
South Bend, IN	12,537	Webster, NY	60,000

CANADA

Charlottetown, PEI	\$27,500	Prince George, BC	45,177
Grand Prairie, AB	22,264	Stratford, ON	10,178
Halifax, NS	42,500	Vernon, BC	7,809
High River, AB	5,975		

b. Present Home Missions Churches

UNITED STATES

Atlanta, GA	\$ 126,400	Indian Harbor Beach, FL	60,894
Boise, ID	126,000	Jacksonville, FL	142,000
Brigham City, UT	40,825	Kennewick, WA	50,000
Burke, VA	148,000	LaCrosse, WI	124,180
Cedar Rapids, IA	81,000	Loveland, CO	16,000
Champaign, IL	35,118	Mason City, IA	55,276
Columbia, MO	130,000	Norfolk, VA	50,800
Corvallis, OR	36,350	Ogden, UT	50,595
Davenport, IL	63,728	Richton Park, IL	11,823
Dayton, OH	50,000	Riverside, CA	48,500
East Grand Forks, MN	30,000	St. Louis, MO	66,500
East Islip, NY	51,005	Salt Lake City, UT (Immanuel)	50,000
El Paso, TX	48,500	Syracuse, NY	67,920
Flagstaff, AZ	75,500	Terre Haute, IN	63,416
Flanders Valley, NJ	58,052	Washington, PA	58,000
Ft. Wayne, IN	69,000	Yakima, WA	65,930
Fresno, CA	63,129		

CANADA

Guelph, ON	\$ 78,585	New Glasgow, NS	64,900
Kamloops, BC	10,000	Toronto, ON	49,176
Fredericton, NB	47,494	Windsor, ON	128,800
Meadowvale, ON	100,000		

URBAN FIELDS

Albuquerque, NM—Indian	\$ 78,753	Los Angeles, CA—Spanish	31,000
Chicago, IL—Chinese	118,779	Miami, FL—Spanish	150,526
Chicago, IL—Indian	104,615	Norfolk, VA	55,353
Detroit, MI	24,710	Salt Lake City, UT—Indian	17,750
Harlem, NY	34,000	San Francisco, CA—Indian	224,275
Honolulu, HI	70,000	San Francisco, CA—Chinese	54,659
Los Angeles, CA—Chinese	59,500		

6. Site selection and building programs

Activity on-field in site selection and building programs continued at a rapid pace during 1980. The following reflects 1980 activity:

Site selection in progress

Kamloops, BC
Navajo, NM
Fairfield, CA

Corvallis, OR
Los Angeles, CA—Chinese

Site selection completed

Houston, TX
Loveland, CO

Albuquerque, NM

Building programs in progress

Loveland, CO
Albuquerque, NM
Boise, ID
Columbia, MOAtlanta, GA
Shiprock, NM
Cedar Rapids, IA
Norfolk, VA

Building programs completed

Burke, VA

Church Rock, NM

B. Proposed Budget for 1982

On the basis of the proposed budget for 1982, which is summarized below, the board requests synod for a per-family quota of \$75.00. A more detailed budget will be submitted to the finance committee of synod.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

Summary of Proposed Budget

Period January 1 to December 31, 1982

	AMOUNT	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
SUPPORT FROM QUOTAS		\$4,660,000	68.8%
ABOVE QUOTA			
Church collections and donations	\$ 540,000		
Church missionary support	<u>1,260,000</u>		
TOTAL ABOVE QUOTA		1,800,000	26.6
OTHER RECEIPTS			
Real estate repayments	\$ 140,000		
Indian field payments	40,000		
Interest	<u>75,000</u>		
TOTAL OTHER RECEIPTS		255,000	3.8
FROM CASH BALANCE		<u>58,000</u>	0.8
TOTAL SUPPORT AND OTHER RECEIPTS		<u>\$6,773,000</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
EXPENDITURES			
PROGRAM SERVICES			
Evangelism	\$ 265,700		
Regular fields	2,483,000		
Minority and youth fields	1,376,800		
Indian fields	1,195,800		
Indian schools	<u>757,900</u>		
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES		\$6,079,200	89.8%
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES			
Management, general	\$ 454,600		
Fund raising	<u>239,200</u>		
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE SERVICES		\$ 693,800	10.2%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		<u>\$6,773,000</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

C. Salaries

1. Field personnel

The following schedule for 1981 is intended to provide a fair compensation to missionaries for the work they perform. By granting certain allowances, e.g., children's allowance, the intent is to assist those with extra responsibilities and thus fulfill the mandate from synod to adequately provide for missionaries. Housing, hospitalization insurance, and pension are provided, as well as mileage allowance for church business.

Ordained ministers

D.Min./Th.D.	\$15,700
B.D./M. Div.	15,500
A.B. or less.	14,900

Unordained (layworkers)

Ph.D. Degree.	15,500
M.A. Degree.	14,900
A.B. Degree.	14,400
No degree.	12,000—13,900

Service allowance: \$100/year to 20 years

Children's allowance

Ages 1-6.	350
Ages 7-14.	450
Ages 15-21.	550

Christian school tuition allowance, per child
(lesser of \$350 or 1/3 of tuition)

Social Security allowance (ordained—U.S. only) 50%

2. Office Personnel

Staff and administrative persons are being paid within the guidelines set by synod. More specific reporting is provided in the Home Missions financial report to synod which is processed through the denominational financial coordinator.

X. 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 respectfully requests permission to present to synod, at one of its sessions, home missionaries who may be present.

C. The board requests that synod reappoint Peter Borgdorff as field secretary for a four-year term (see Section III, D).

D. The board requests that synod reappoint Duane VanderBrug as personnel secretary for a four-year term (see Section III, D).

E. The board requests synod to approve the inclusion of the delegate of Classis Thornapple Valley to the executive committee of Home Missions (cf. Home Missions Order Article 3, Section 4).

F. The board humbly requests synod to act favorably on the report of the Council of Indian Churches and its recommendations.

G. The board requests that synod approve the Armed Forces Fund for one or more offerings from the churches.

H. The board urgently requests synod to place the Board of Home Missions on the list for denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings.

I. The board requests that synod approve a quota of \$75.00 per family for the year 1982.

J. The board requests synod to receive and act upon the following nominations for board members-at-large:

1. Central United States

a. Regular

Mr. John Simerink

Mr. Dale Sall

b. Alternate

Mr. Richard Vander Zyden

Nominee not elected as regular delegate

2. Central United States

a. Regular

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman*

Mr. Calvin Lane

b. Alternate

Mr. Peter Van Putten*

Nominee not elected as regular delegate

3. Western Canada

a. Regular

Mr. Dick Van Dyke*

Mr. William Havinga

b. Alternate

Mrs. Janny Bekker*

Nominee not elected as regular delegate

4. Western United States

a. Regular

Mr. Steven Youngsma*

Mr. Don Visser

b. Alternate

Mr. Bill Taylor*

Nominee not elected as regular delegate

5. Eastern Canada

a. Regular

Mr. John Rekker

Mr. Andrew Van Andel

b. Alternate

Mr. Andy Verboom

6. Eastern United States

a. Mrs. Beverly Vander Molen

Mr. William Vander Werf

b. Alternate

Mr. Richard Vander Plaats

*Denotes incumbent

Christian Reformed Board of
Home Missions

John G. Van Ryn, executive secretary

REPORT 5
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS
OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

I. INTRODUCTION

Unlike the poor, denominational boards have not always been with us. In the Christian Reformed Church they're a relatively late invention. Calvin College and Seminary have been ruled by regents (now called "trustees") for one hundred years, and both World and Home Missions trace their roots—but not their boards—to turn-of-the-century days. Early "boards" were regional (a classis or two), or broadly representative (a few members each representing many classes: East Coast, Midwest, etc.). In the Back to God Hour one finds that structure still today. When CRWRC emerged from two deacons conferences in the early 1960s, it was given a denominational board and mandate. Then came the Board of Publications.

The 1968 Synod decided the Christian Reformed Church needed a Board of Publications "responsible to synod, whose task it shall be to supervise the church's consolidated program of education and publication." There had been ministries before there was a board to supervise them. Both *The Banner* and *De Wachter* were born in the 1800s. *The Banner (of Truth)* was an English language magazine brought to Grand Rapids in 1887 when its editor became the pastor of the first English speaking Christian Reformed congregation (LaGrave Avenue). *De Wachter* is the only Dutch language magazine sponsored by our denomination to survive first the Americanization and now the Canadianization of the CRC. Catechism training and the materials by which it is accomplished have been specified by the Christian Reformed Church since its founding (1857). And Sunday school papers have been published here since the early 1900s. So what was *new* about the 1968 decision?

What was new was the *form of organization*. Until that time, each publication had an independent supervisory body with its own internal staff structure. Now a new central organization was given (in some instances, imposed) with arguments such as this:

The various educational committees of our church in their separate coexistence have been unable to implement the often expressed desire for greater unification and coordination in our educational ministry, and there is further the obvious overlap and lack of coordination of functions in the work of the two committees manifested in the fact that the Sunday school committee, while presumably being primarily concerned with evangelistic educational materials, serves mostly covenantal children; whereas the commit-

tee on education publishes Daily Vacation Bible School materials, while presumably having as its primary task the publication of materials for covenantal youth.

(*Acts of Synod 1968*)

The Board of Publications was, therefore, less a new creation than a merger of existing pieces. The common denominator in the merger was printer's ink: all ministries in question required publishing, even if they had nothing else in common.

Within the new organization, many of the old divisions were retained. "Periodicals" was the name assigned a standing committee which supervised the denomination's magazines. An "education committee" was formed under the board to supervise territory previously belonging to at least two and sometimes as many as five separate committees. "Business" was the work and name given another committee, designed to supervise finances in all programs and the work of the "printing plant" (which had, in the mid-1950s, become the first occupant of the then-new denominational building).

Each committee in the 1968 structure inherited one or more staff members. "Periodicals" received monthly reports from the Rev. John Vander Ploeg, editor of *The Banner*; and the Rev. William Haverkamp, then as now, editor of *De Wachter*. The Rev. William Vander Haak, then director of education, reported to the education committee. And Mr. Peter Meeuwsen, who had supervised the printing plant and periodicals finances for many years, came to monthly business committee meetings.

During the 1970s there were changes. The Rev. John Vander Ploeg was replaced as *The Banner* editor by Dr. Lester De Koster (elected by the 1969 Synod, he took over the editor's desk in 1970). The Rev. Mr. Vander Haak left the Education Department in 1971 and was replaced by the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven. In 1976, Mr. Kuyvenhoven left and Mr. A. James Heynen became director of education. Mr. Peter Meeuwsen eventually proved to be the major point of constancy between the old and the new.

Especially in the arena of church education, there were major changes. Beginning in 1972 a new ("Unified Church School") curriculum was produced under the title BIBLE WAY. This material was intended to provide a cradle-to-grave curriculum incorporating the strengths of both Sunday school and catechism. Its aim was to demonstrate that covenantal education is always evangelical, and that evangelical education is focused on God's covenant in Christ. As the curriculum grew, so did the budget. The year of the merger (1968), the annual income for education programs was less than \$100,000; in 1980, annual sales totaled approximately \$1,000,000.

And toward the end of the 1970s, the board's printing plant was serving the printing needs of *all* Christian Reformed agencies—not only the periodicals and educational programs. As a result, an important part of the Board of Publications' ministry became the delivery of services to other boards and agencies.

In 1979 there were major changes both in the staff structure and in several staff positions. During our first decade, the various programs had learned to live under one roof. But there were almost no working rela-

tionships between various parts of the board's ministry. Only the printing presses and the board itself provided points of connection; *The Banner* and the Education Department, for example, were not more related to one another—in staffing, programing, planning—than they had been in 1968. The 1979 Synod moved to change that, on the recommendation of our board, with the creation of an executive director's position. The goal of the new staff structure was "a unified work force to serve as a publications ministry for the denomination," and there was a good deal of talk about better coordination, increased efficiency, and staff accountability. Heynen, then director of education, was relieved of his old position and named executive director for a two-year stint.

The same synod (1979) elected the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven to become *The Banner's* fifth editor. Dr. Harvey Smit, previously theological editor in the Education Department, was named director of education. Mr. Allen Van Zee, until then the accountant in our business office, became business manager when Mr. Peter Meeuwssen retired in 1979.

And between all these changing people and offices flowed a steady stream of publications. While many denominational periodicals have faded in frequency and in potency, *The Banner* continues to speak weekly and freely within our church. Amid denominations that have long given up publishing educational material which is theologically distinctive, our BIBLE WAY curriculum has received international recognition of its adherence to and teachings of the Reformed confessions. *De Wachter* continues to be published—not because we wish to preserve a language from another time or place, but because we are committed to a ministry for those who best understand issues of faith in the Dutch tongue.

Institutions, like people, sometimes fall into an unbecoming self-centeredness. May we be strengthened against that temptation, knowing that the character of our publications is more important than the structure of our agency. After all, we'll be judged in the end not by how clearly we've rearranged the offices in our institutions, but according to how solidly we've built upon the Cornerstone that was once rejected.

II. EXISTING BOARD ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

A. The Board of Publications consists of thirty-nine delegates, one from each classis in the denomination. The board meets annually in February and is served throughout the year by three standing committees (the executive, the education, and the periodicals) which, together with a subcommittee on finance, supervise the various ministries of the board.

B. Subcommittees

Executive Committee:

Miss Beryl Bean (1981)

Rev. Alvin Beukema (1981)

Mr. Hero Bratt (1981)

Mr. Jack Brouwer (1981)

Rev. William D. Buursma (1982)

Rev. Alvin Hoksbergen (1981)

Mr. Kenneth Horjus (1981)

Mr. Henry Kuntz (1981)

Rev. Neal Punt (1981)

Mr. Bernard Scholten (1982)

Rev. Charles Steenstra (1981)

Dr. Roger Van Harn (1982)

Executive Business Committee:

Mr. Jack Brouwer (1981)
Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus (1981)

Mr. Henry Kuntz (1981)
Mr. Bernard Scholten (1982)

Education Committee:

Rev. Alvin Beukema (1981)
Mr. Roger Bratt (1982)
Rev. George Brown (1983)
Rev. Dirk Hart (Home Missions
representative)
Rev. Alvin Hoskbergen (*ex officio*)
Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus (1981)

Mrs. Joann Knierim (1982)
Mr. Henry Kuntz (1981)
Rev. Neal Punt (1981)
Dr. J. Marion Snapper (1983)
Dr. Gordon Spykman (1982)
Rev. Charles Steenstra (1981)
Miss Cora Vogel (1981)

Periodicals Committee:

Miss Beryl Bean (1981)
Mr. Hero Bratt (1981)
Mr. Jack Brouwer (1981)
Rev. William Buursma (1981)
Rev. Alvin Hoksbergen (*ex officio*)

*Mr. Jon Pott (1981)
Mr. Bernard Scholten (1982)
Dr. Henry Stob (1981)
Mr. Marlin Van Elderen (1983)
Dr. Roger Van Harn (1981)

*Mr. Pott serves as an alternate for Mr. Marlin Van Elderen who is on a one-year leave of absence.

C. The Board of Publications respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to the following people when matters of the Board of Publications are discussed:

For the Board:	Rev. Alvin Hoksbergen, president Rev. William D. Buursma, secretary Mr. A James Heynen, executive director
For <i>The Banner</i> :	Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, editor
For <i>De Wachter</i> :	Rev. William Haverkamp, editor
For Education:	Dr. Harvey A. Smit, director of education
For Business:	Mr. Allen Van Zee, business manager

III. RECOMMENDED REORGANIZATION OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**A. Background**

In October of 1977 a "Committee on Structure" was appointed by the executive committee of the Board of Publications and given the following mandate:

...study the current organizational structure of the Board and Staff of the Board of Publications, examine alternative models of organization and recommend an organizational structure that will best enable us to carry out our responsibilities.

The original committee filed a report which (after board deliberation) resulted in another committee mandate to examine both the staff structure and the role of so-called experts in the board structure.

Recommendations from the 1978 committee on staff structure was approved by the Board of Publications (February 1979) and synod (June 1979) and resulted in a substantially altered organization for the board's staff. At the same time the staff structure recommendations were submitted to synod, this note was appended:

After some deliberations we concluded that it would be best to postpone consideration of the board's committee structure until the newly structured staff will be able to function with the present makeup of the committees. After one year of experience the executive director together with the heads of staff will be able to advise the board as to the kind of committee and board structure which would be most helpful (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 259).

At its meeting in June of 1980 the board's executive committee appointed a new committee to suggest ways in which the committees of the Board of Publications could best be structured to most effectively serve the board and respond to the needs of the staff. What follows is the report of this committee as amended and adopted by the Board of Publications in its February 1981 meeting.

B. *History of Committee Structure*

The need for restructuring the committees of the Board of Publications is reflected in the charts presented on pages 87-89. These diagrams depict the way committees within the Board of Publications evolved from directives and decisions made by various synods from 1914 through 1980.

There is no doubt that in establishing a denominational Board of Publications the Synod of 1968 intended to consolidate the work of the former Sunday school, education, and publication committees. The Sunday school and education committees were consolidated and became the education committee. Work previously assigned to the publications committee was now divided between two new committees, periodicals and business. All three new committees were then put under a single board.

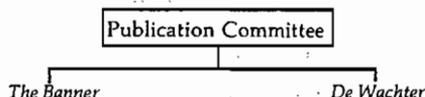
However, the relationship of the education, periodicals, and business committees to each other, to the executive committee, and to the Board of Publications was never clearly defined. Part of the uncertainty can be traced to the 1968 Synod itself. That synod received a proposal for a Board of Publications which would be relatively small and would meet at least semiannually (see page 88). A committee structure was proposed which fit with that board concept. What the 1968 Synod approved, however, was quite different. The synod turned down the recommendation for a twenty-member board meeting at least twice annually, and substituted what has now become a thirty-nine-member board which meets annually. The 1968 Synod did not, however, alter the proposed committee structure. The result, therefore, was a committee structure designed to match a board structure which was never approved.

The line of responsibility between the committees themselves, and between the committees and the board, have been further clouded in the past twelve years. There have been moments when it was unclear which committee "spoke for the board"; with regard to *The Banner*, for example, it was not certain that the executive committee had the authority to

BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS' COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

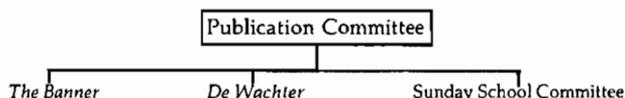
1914-1980

1914



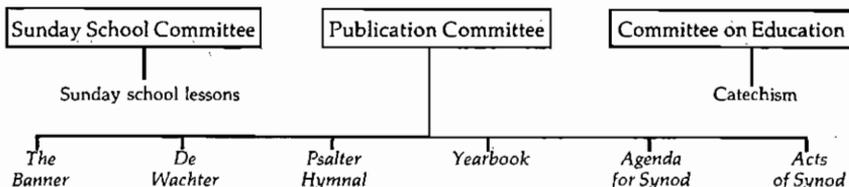
Publication committee formed in 1914 when, for \$5,000, the CRC took over the English language magazine from "The Banner of Truth Publishing Company."

1937



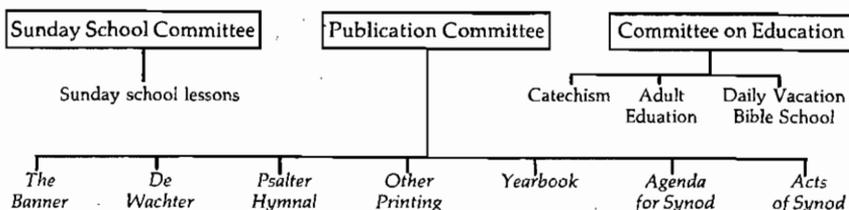
Sunday school committee added to the publication committee following the 1937 purchase by the CRC of the Instructor Publishing Company.

1953

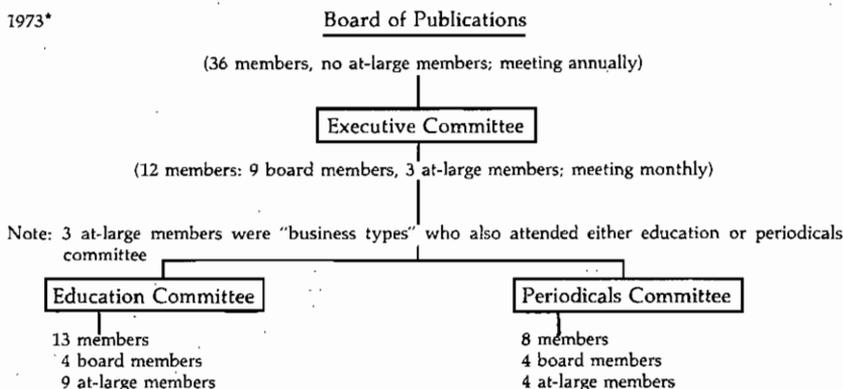
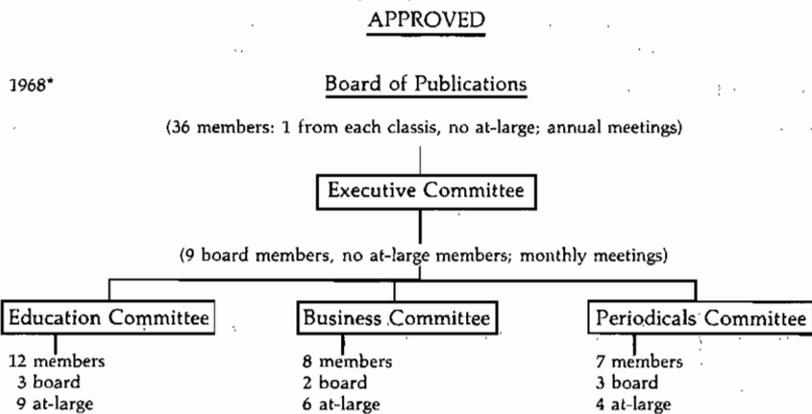
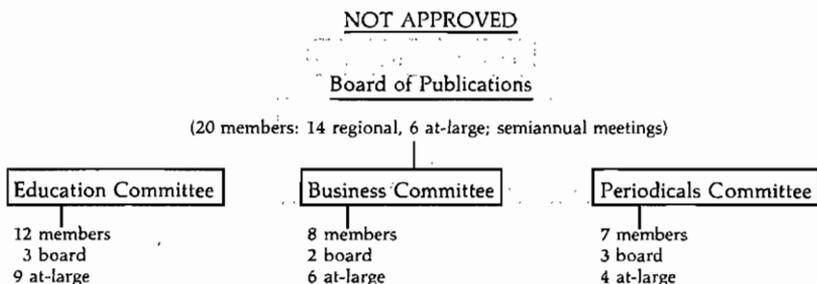


The Sunday school committee was made an independent, standing committee in 1953. The committee on education was made a standing committee of synod in 1947 with its membership drawn from "the New Jersey area."

1967

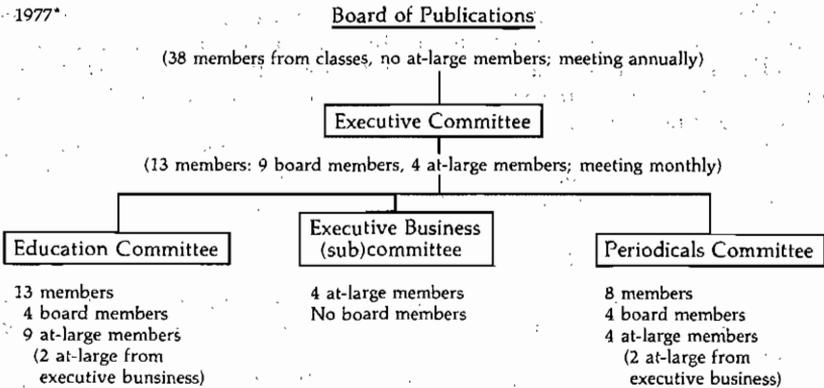


A COMPARISON OF 1968 PROPOSALS



*Members of all committees must be "conveniently located to enable them to meet monthly."

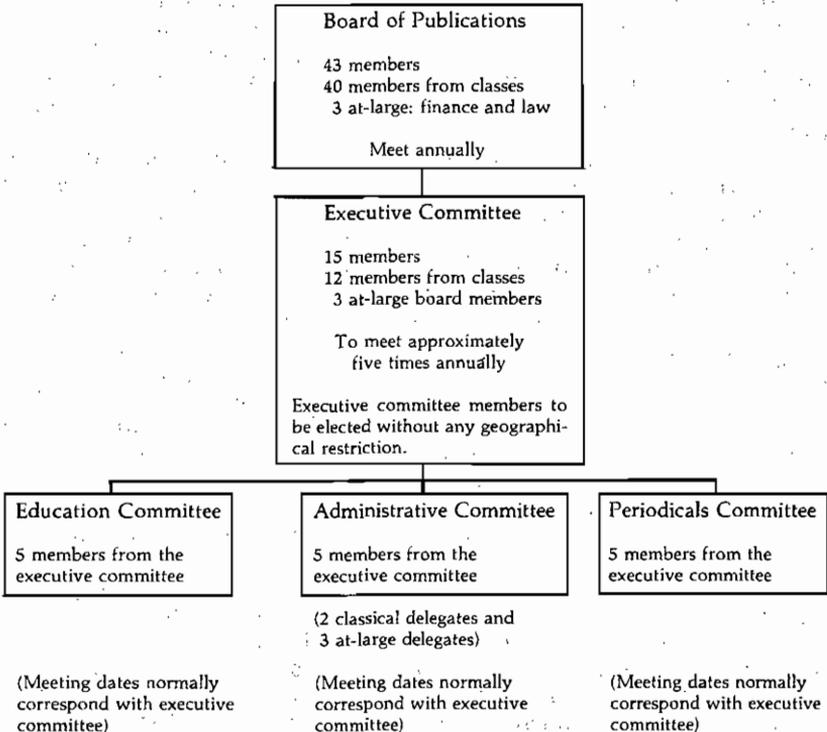
1977*



*Members of all committees must be "conveniently located to enable them to meet monthly."

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

(Assuming 40 Classes in Denomination)



overrule periodicals committee decisions. Moreover, synods since 1968 have from time to time given mandates directly to the education and periodicals committees, thus raising additional questions concerning the lines of responsibility between these committees, the Board of Publications, and synod itself.

Lack of well-defined roles for the various committees has created the potential for serious misunderstandings in recent years. We are grateful to observe that the potential has been so seldom realized.

C. *Current Assessment*

After extended study of the history and function of the Board of Publications' committee structure, our committee came to the following conclusions.

First, the committee structure approved by the 1968 Synod does *not* fit the current board structure. Less than 25 percent of the current board members can be members of the business, education, periodicals, or executive committees in which much of the board's work is actually carried out. Conversely, a majority of *non*-board members make up both the education and periodicals committees; there are *no* members of the Board of Publications on the business committee (which recommends and supervises all financial and business policy); and approximately one-third of the board's executive committee is composed of persons who are not, in fact, members of the board itself. We believe a committee structure should assure that those who make and guarantee policy decisions should be themselves members of the board. We also believe that more than 25 percent of the board members ought to be involved at a committee level.

Second, the committee structure approved by the 1968 Synod does *not* fit the current staff structure. The committee structure originally created assumed there would be very limited staff expertise in certain areas. So, for example, journalists and theologians were assigned to an education committee. In the past decade, however, specialists in those same areas of expertise (journalistic editor, theological editor) have been needed at a staff level so work could be done on a day-to-day basis. Staff members are encouraged to—and do—consult regularly with experts throughout the Christian Reformed Church, not limiting their sources of expert advice to the members of a few committees meeting in Grand Rapids. Therefore, our committee concluded that the staff and our ministry would benefit most from a committee structure geared less to giving technical advice and more to making policy decisions.

Third, our history since 1968 has demonstrated that classes regularly elect board members with solid credentials in education, journalism, evangelism, and theology (or, "the church"). Understandably, however, classes seldom select delegates with expertise in the areas of law or finance to represent them in a ministry dealing with publications. Since the knowledge of persons in these professions is important to the board's work, since classes seldom select such persons, and since we desire to have those who make policy for the board also be members of the board, our committee is recommending that three such persons (with expertise

in finance and law) be elected by the board and approved by synod on an at-large basis. We believe that three out of forty-two or forty-three board members does not compromise the ecclesiastical sensitivity of the board's composition.

D. *Proposed Committee Structure*

The chart on page 89 depicts the proposed new committee structure for the Board of Publications. The number of board members will vary with the number of classes within the Christian Reformed Church. At this time there are thirty-nine classes, though it appears that another classis (largely composed of Native American churches) will be formed in the near future. Therefore, the projections of our plan have assumed forty classes.

1. Operational Description

a. The executive committee will normally be convened to receive the staff report as information, review the agenda (including additional items as necessary), and assign items to the appropriate subcommittees. The executive committee will then be recessed so its subcommittees can conduct their business and formulate their recommendations which are then presented to the reconvened executive committee.

b. Regarding Subcommittees:

- (1) The subcommittees serve the executive committee in those aspects of its ministry relating to education, periodicals, and administration respectively.
- (2) The decision-making authority rests with the executive committee as it discharges its responsibility to the Board of Publications. The executive committee retains the prerogative of overruling subcommittee decisions.
- (3) The subcommittees shall meet on the same day as the executive committee and may schedule additional meetings as needed.

2. Narrative Description

a. *Board of Publications*

The board will be as presently structured plus three at-large members chosen by board election and synodical approval for their expertise in the field of finance and law.

b. *Executive Committee*

- (1) Membership: Twelve classical delegates plus the three at-large members of the board, elected annually by the board. Officers of the board hold those offices also on the executive committee.
- (2) Executive committee to meet normally five times a year (exact dates determined by agenda needs).
- (3) Executive director serves as primary staff representative to this committee and is *ex officio* member of it. Director of education, editor-in-chief of *The Banner*, and business manager attend.

c. *Subcommittees of Executive Committee*

(1) *Education Committee*

- (a) Membership: Five members from the executive committee, appointed annually by the officers of the executive committee.

(b) Meeting dates normally correspond with those of executive committee.

(c) Director of education serves as primary staff representative to this committee and is *ex officio* member to it; executive director attends.

(2) *Periodicals Committee*

(a) Membership: Five members from the executive committee, appointed annually by the officers of the executive committee.

(b) Meeting dates normally correspond with those of executive committee.

(c) Editor-in-chief of *The Banner* serves as primary staff representative to this committee and is *ex officio* member of it; executive director attends.

(3) *Administrative Committee*

(Finances, personnel, outside printing, and sales)

(a) Membership: Five members from executive committee, including the three at-large members of the board, appointed annually by the officers of the executive committee.

(b) Meeting dates normally correspond with those of executive committee.

(c) Business manager serves as primary staff representative to his committee and is *ex officio* member of it. Executive director, director of education, and editor-in-chief of *The Banner* attend.

E. Recommendation

The Board of Publications has adopted the new committee structure as outlined above and respectfully requests synod's approval of this structure.

(If the synod approves the new structure, the Board of Publications has instructed its executive committee to see to an orderly transition from the existing committee structure to the new committee structure, and has mandated a report to the Board of Publications in 1983 concerning the effectiveness of the committee structure.)

IV. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

A. If the synod approves the proposed committee structure as outlined above, the board respectfully requests that synod also approve the following persons elected by the Board of Publications to serve as members-at-large (with expertise in finance and law):

1. Mr. Henry Kuntz
2. Mr. Gordon Quist
3. Mr. Bernard Scholten

B. If the synod does not approve the proposed committee structure as outlined above, the board respectfully requests that synod approve the

following persons elected by the Board of Publications to serve as members of the education, executive, business, and periodicals committees.

1. *Education committee*
 - a. Mrs. Joy Witte
 - b. Mr. Robert Pohler
2. *Executive business committee*
 - a. Mr. Arthur Frens
 - b. Mr. Henry Kuntz
 - c. Mr. Gordon Quist
3. *Periodicals committee*

Dr. Kenneth Kuiper

C. The 1980 Synod authorized the Board of Publications to create an "advisory position on the education committee to be filled by a Presbyterian person of one of the NAPARC churches in 1981" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, Art. 29, pp. 26, 27). The board respectfully requests that synod approve the Rev. Allan Baldwin to fill this advisory position.

1. The Rev. Mr. Baldwin is pastor of Christ Church (Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod) in Grand Rapids. He serves as a member of "Christian Training, Inc.," the educational agency of the RPCES, and is also a member of the board of Covenant Theological Seminary.

2. If the synod approves the proposed committee structure as outlined above, advisory persons will meet regularly with Education Department staff members, and will be invited to attend (as fraternal delegates) those sessions of the annual meeting of the Board of Publications dealing with educational program matters.

V. PROGRAM MATTERS

A. *Education*

The Education Department produces church school resources designed specifically for use in the Christian Reformed Church. Each year the actual audience for those materials becomes wider and wider (though it is almost entirely limited to churches in the Reformed tradition).

During the past year, another course in the adult curriculum was released. *Beyond Doubt*, written by Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., is already being widely used throughout Canada and the United States. Before synod convenes in June (1981), the next adult curriculum offering should be ready. It will be called *To All Generations*. The author of this course is Frank Roberts, and the material itself will provide a one-year survey of general church history. When that course is finished, the staff will go to work on the course intended to help us celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Christian Reformed denomination: a history of the CRC, written by Herbert Brinks and A. James Heynen. In addition to these major course offerings, the Education Department has also released (for use by adults) a second edition of the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Govern-*

ment (Brink and De Ridder), a Revelations Series Bible study of the *Acts of the Apostles* (Timmer), and a Heidelberg Catechism with printed scripture references (publication date: April 1981).

For young adults, a course entitled *Decisions* was released last summer. The material provides a one-year study of Christian ethics and is designed to teach young adults how to make Christian ethical decisions. *Group* magazine recently named that course as the best of its kind, and a good many pastors and teachers evidently endorse that assessment. By the fall of 1981, the next young adult course should be ready. Its title: *Reasons*. This final course in the young adult core curriculum is a one-year study in Christian apologetics, intended to help students (upper high school or post-high) determine their reasons for holding to the Christian and Reformed faith.

For little children, the Education Department is now preparing take-home papers to be used with the "3's" course published some years ago. This project is in response to persistent requests from the churches. And all the lower level courses in the BIBLE WAY curriculum are scheduled for total revision in the coming few years. The first to be replaced will be BIBLE STEPS (grades 1 and 2), BIBLE TRAILS (grades 3 and 4), and BIBLE GUIDE (grades 5 and 6). According to the current schedule, new material at these levels will be available for use in the fall of 1982.

For the fourth consecutive year, teacher training services were available to congregations throughout the Christian Reformed Church. Where these services are used, they are generally praised. Mrs. Joanne Van Wageningen came from Australia to become a teacher trainer for congregations using BIBLE WAY material in that region of the world. And for the first time a training conference was held specifically for directors of Christian education in local congregations.

Meanwhile, a curriculum for mentally impaired persons (authorized by the 1980 Synod) is being developed. The material will be divided into various age groupings (youth, adult) and will be segregated for use with special audiences. Most material will be aimed at the mentally impaired ("MI"). A special set of goods is being prepared for the severely mentally impaired ("SMI"). Other agencies are now being invited to participate with us in the use of this program.

But new material was not the only focus of concern during the past year. A good deal of attention was also given to the so-called 1960s material, an extensive collection of material produced during the 1960s intended to teach the basic tenets of faith to children and adolescents. At its February (1981) meeting, the Board of Publications received the following report concerning those materials and adopted the resolutions below.

Continuation of Older Material

The Synod of 1970 mandated the new Education Department of the new Board of Publications to produce an even newer unified, core church school curriculum. But before that decision we were not wholly lacking in materials; in fact, we had (besides regularly produced Sunday school materials) a sizable and eminently usable curriculum of doctrinal

materials which had been produced in the 1960s. These materials are still available, still listed in the BIBLE WAY catalog under the appropriate age groups identified as "parallel materials."

When in 1972 the first three courses of the new unified curriculum appeared, some churches feared this was a signal that the Education Department would promptly cease producing the 1960s courses, thereby forcing all Christian Reformed churches to use the new BIBLE WAY materials. There was even an overture from Classis Zeeland concerning this question, and in 1973 the Board of Publications replied to the overture, stating:

The board has adopted the policy to make available all existing catechism materials as long as there is sufficient demand for them, as determined by the board at its annual meeting.

(Acts of Synod 1973, p. 242)

In another part of the same report the board said:

Only when the sales of a particular book fall to such a low point that it is no longer feasible to reprint a new supply will the board consider whether a certain title should now be removed from the market.

(Acts of Synod 1973, pp. 247, 48)

In the eight years since that decision was made the sales of 1960s materials have fallen substantially. But a goodly number of CRC and RCA congregations still continue to use these older courses either in place of or in addition to BIBLE WAY.

Questions related to "sufficient demand" and "feasible to reprint" seem basically economic ones; these could probably be answered by studying projected demand and cost of reprint and estimating if we would break even or not. That would vary with each course.

However, there are some added questions which make the matter far more complex. Some churches, pastors, and teachers who wish to continue using the materials have asked us to update them, providing more contemporary examples, pictures, language, and so forth. By doing this, they feel, we could improve use of these courses in their church school classes. If we do not do this, by default, the use of these materials would continue to decline as they get more and more out of date.

In 1979 the special curriculum review committee spent several sessions discussing this matter. Opinions were rather sharply divided. Some advocated an early termination of the 1960s materials. Others pointed out that the Education Department provides in the BIBLE WAY only enough material for a single church school class each week of the year. Churches which desire additional weekday classes must turn to the 1960s materials. Therefore, we are obliged, some have argued, to keep these materials available and to improve them as much as possible.

Lacking sufficient information on how (and how many) churches use these parallel materials, this committee suggested and the education committee requested a survey of the use made of parallel materials in the churches. That survey, conducted in early 1980, was inconclusive. From the fifth grade through high school levels, a fairly large number of churches

queried use 1960s materials, though some use it in place of, some use it in addition to, their use of BIBLE WAY. About two-thirds of those now using parallel materials wished for an update of them, while another third preferred that we continue to print these items without change.

During 1980, the education committee decided to study and evaluate separately each of the courses of the 1960s materials and on that basis to bring recommendations as to which should be updated, which reprinted "as is," and which (if any) no longer printed. From September through December committee members gave hours of their time to reading through the 1960s materials, and a goodly part of each monthly meeting was given over to this study and evaluation.

As a result of that study, the education committee recommended and the Board of Publications adopted the following resolutions:

1. That the Education Department be instructed to edit, lightly, the following courses so as to bring them up to date in language, examples, questions for discussion, version of Scripture, and art illustrations:

Light upon My Path (3rd grade)

With All My Heart (4th grade)

Teach Me Thy Way (5th grade)

(eliminating the filmstrips)

That I May Know (7th grade)

(eliminating the teacher's manual and transparencies)

Never on Your Own (9th and 10th grades)

(eliminating teacher's and students' manuals A & B)

Grounds:

a. These courses are being used in sufficient quantity to warrant the expense of such editing.

b. A light editing would improve these courses and extend their use.

2. That the Education Department be instructed to continue to reprint, without change, the following courses as long as there is sufficient demand for them:

Steps in Faith (6th grade)

Christian Life Series (11th grade)

Living Members (12th grade)

What Must I Know? (7th to 9th grades)

Saved from Sin (10th to 12th grades)

Saved to Serve (10th to 12th grades)

Grounds:

a. There is at present still sufficient demand for these courses to warrant reprinting them.

b. The Christian Life Series and Living Members do not seem particularly out of date as yet, and if revised would require complete "rewrites."

3. That the Education Department be instructed not to reprint "My Church" (7th grade) when the present stock of that course is exhausted.

Grounds:

- a. Nearly all this material is duplicated in the BIBLE WAY curriculum for the same grade level.
- b. Demand for this course is lowest of any of the major courses.
- c. The content of some sections of the textbook is completely out of date and would need to be fully rewritten.

B. The Banner

Since last the synod met, *The Banner* received a new editor-in-chief. The Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven showed the church his first *Banner* in September 1980. Sandra Vander Zicht has been his assistant since that first issue.

The production schedule of *The Banner* has been changed to allow insertion of late news items; a two-week lag in the schedule has been reduced to several days (twenty-eight hours, if necessary). New columns and new columnists have been tried. One issue each month is devoted to a special topic or concern and wears a full-color cover.

With a change of editors comes a change of style, tone, direction. Most *Banner* readers have, so far at least, liked the changes. But readers, like editors, need a year or two to find out what they really like and dislike. Two indicators suggest that *The Banner* is sparking lively reader interest: subscriptions are steadily increasing, and letters to the editor are being received at an unprecedented rate.

The Board of Publications was instructed two synods ago (cf. *Acts of Synod 1979*, Art. 29, VI, pp. 36, 37) "to appoint, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, four associate editors, who shall serve on the staff for a limited time without remuneration... and shall meet on a regular (quarterly or bimonthly) basis to assess with the editor-in-chief the editorial challenge of *The Banner*, to identify areas of need and concern in the life of the church in our times and to contribute editorials for possible publication. These persons shall assist the editor in producing a magazine which speaks effectively to the diversity of the church without in any way compromising the editorial responsibility and/or the editorial freedom of the editor-in-chief." The synod went on to suggest that this innovation be given "a three-year trial period subject to evaluation at that time."

In compliance with this directive, the Board of Publications at its most recent meeting appointed four persons. To avoid confusion, they will be called "consultant editors." Those named by the board are:

Mr. Jon Pott—editor at Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Dr. James De Jong—professor at Dordt College

Rev. Morris Greidanus—pastor in London, Ontario

Rev. William D. Buursma—pastor in Kalamazoo, Michigan

C. De Wachter

Rev. William Haverkamp continues to edit and produce a remarkably vigorous biweekly magazine. Subscriptions do not overwhelm us, but their number is steady (a little over 2,300). Reader appreciation seems high, and there are no plans to cease publication of *De Wachter* in the near future.

D. Additional Program Items

1. The Board of Publications serves two functions for the denomination: it is the church's *publisher* for periodicals and educational material, and it operates as the church's *printer*. As printer, we serve all other agencies. This is not an incidental part of what we do. Millions of dollars of printing services are performed annually in our production unit where the majority of our employees work; and approximately one-half the total volume of printing this year will be on behalf of other agencies.

2. The last two synods have given directives concerning the publication of a "Service Book" containing liturgical forms used in worship. A model of the final product should be available when synod meets and production is scheduled for later in 1981. The Liturgical Committee has been deeply involved in this project.

3. There are some minor but irritating inconsistencies in the existing *Psalter Hymnal*, mostly among the forms in the back of the book, which ought to be corrected. In addition, there is currently a committee at work to give the church a new *Psalter Hymnal*. The role of the Board of Publications in these projects is uncertain. Representatives from the Liturgical Committee, *Psalter Hymnal* Revision Committee, Synodical Interim Committee, and the Board of Publications plan to meet for discussion of these matters. A supplementary report concerning both *Psalter Hymnals* will be presented to the 1981 Synod.

4. Together with some other denominational agencies, the Board of Publications has begun working from a Canadian office (Burlington, Ontario) with part-time Canadian staff to improve our services to Canadian churches.

5. Denominational agencies were instructed by the 1978 Synod to include in annual reports what they have "accomplished in alerting the church to the issues of social justice" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, Art. 50, p. 64). During the past year, especially three areas of publication were specifically concerned with matters of international social justice:

a. *The Banner* has, in addition to providing regular news and features on social issues, paid particular attention to South Africa. Articles, interviews, and an editorial focused attention on involvements of the Reformed community, and especially identified the agony of many Reformed people who suffer under a policy of apartheid.

b. Several sections of the book *Beyond Doubt* were committed to issues of burning social concern (notably: "World and Covenant Community: How Do We Fit?", "How Shall We Handle Our Wealth?", and "How Is the Church Related to State and Kingdom?").

c. The young adult course entitled *Decisions* dealt with a great many social issues and provided guidelines for Christian responses to those matters.

6. *The Banner* has for many years published promissory note advertisements through which churches, schools, and other institutions have secured funds at low interest rates. During the past months a new policy was developed and approved which will better insure that any organiza-

tion placing such advertisements in *The Banner* is known and trusted within its own community.

VI. PERSONNEL

A. *Appointments*

Since its founding, the Board of Publications has had no clear policy specifying the process by which staff members are to be appointed or reappointed to their various positions. In the absence of a policy, the practices have become muddled.

The board has now developed and adopted, and respectfully requests synod's approval of, the following process for appointment and reappointment of staff members.

1. Positions and Appointing Bodies

a. To be elected (reappointed) by the synod:

- (1) Director of education
- (2) Editor of *De Wachter*
- (3) Editor of *The Banner*
- (4) Executive director

b. To be elected (reappointed) by the board at the annual meeting:

- (1) Business manager
- (2) Managing editor
- (3) Pedagogical editor
- (4) Theological editor

c. All other editorial positions are to be approved by the executive committee.

d. All noneditorial positions (business, clerical, composition, production, shipping, etc.) are to be approved by the executive director upon the recommendation of the appropriate supervisor or department head.

e. Statements of qualifications, job description, salary range, and accountability are to be approved before any position is filled, and may be reviewed before any reappointment.

2. Length of Terms

All persons serving positions subject to election or reappointment by the synod or the board shall serve initial terms of two years. Thereafter, reappointment may be for terms of two, three, or four years.

3. Process of Reappointment

a. During the year in which an appointee's term is expiring (September–August), a committee shall be formed to consider reappointment. In the case of the executive director's reappointment, the committee shall consist of the officers of the board and one member of the staff council selected by the officers of the board. In the case of all other positions subject to reappointment, the committee shall consist of the officers of the board, the executive director, and any other immediate supervisor. The board president shall convene and chair this committee. The board secretary shall prepare and present the committee's report.

b. Schedule

(1) October:

Committee is formed and appointees whose terms are expiring are notified. Appointees may submit written information to the committee. The opinion of the relevant staff working with an appointee is to be considered in an open meeting. A recommendation with grounds is to be formulated as a result of such a meeting.

(2) November:

Committee evaluates the work of appointees whose terms are expiring and meets with appointees to discuss their evaluations. A written summary of the evaluation will be provided the appointee; a copy of the summary shall be retained on file.

(3) December:

Committee submits its report to the executive committee which is responsible to forward appropriate recommendations to the board for its action.

4. Relationship between Reappointment and Evaluation

All persons serving positions filled by synodical action will receive annual evaluations of their work from this committee.

All other staff members will receive regular performance evaluations from their immediate supervisors.

B. *Reappointments*

1. The Board of Publications wishes to inform the synod that the Rev. Robert Meyering has been reappointed managing editor, Education Department, for a four-year term beginning September 1, 1981.

2. The board also wishes to inform the synod that Mr. Allen Van Zee has been appointed business manager, Board of Publications, for a two-year term beginning September 1, 1981. (Note: Mr. Van Zee has served as business manager for several years, but without a specific term of office. His appointment conforms to the process for staff appointment outlined above.)

3. The board respectfully requests that Mr. A. James Heynen, the Board of Publications' executive director, be reappointed for a two-year term beginning September 1, 1981.

VII. FINANCE

The financial aspects of the Board of Publications' work is in a variety of ways different from that of other denominational agencies. Our work is not like that of a college or seminary, but neither are we a central administrative unit for field personnel. In most regards (except ecclesiastical structure and nonprofit status) we are organized very much like a Christian commercial publishing house. The majority (94 percent) of our employees are unordained and perform services in our employ which are

also performed in other printing and publishing firms. In matters of finance, the same phenomena are true. We are deeply subject to "market-place economics." Nearly all (95 percent) of our income in the coming year will be via sales of products, subscriptions, advertising, and printing services.

The Board of Publications has in recent years steadily reduced its requests for and reliance on quota support from the Christian Reformed Church. Again this year, our request will be less than the amount granted last year. If our request is approved, and if all other projections are accurate, quota support for *all* Board of Publications' ministries in the coming year will represent less than 1 percent of total denominational quotas and less than 5 percent of total Board of Publications' income.

In view of the minimal quota support now being requested, the Board of Publications has instructed its executive committee to "make a recommendation to the next board meeting concerning the role of quota support in the Board of Publications' enterprises."

In addition to the financial data summarized below, the board annually reviews all program costs and projected revenues. Any synodical delegate desiring additional financial information on this work is welcome to request it.

The Board of Publications' fiscal year runs from September 1 through August 31. That financial calendar was inherited during the history of our publishing work when our fiscal year was made to parallel the program year of congregations we served (since church schools, for example, typically started in the fall, so did our fiscal year). Careful readers of our board's budgets will notice that adjustments for our fiscal year must always be made when calculating income from quota receipts.

A. The Board of Publications respectfully submits for synod's information audited financial statements for the fiscal year which ended August 31, 1980, and the budgets for fiscal years 1981 and 1982. These reports have been submitted to the stated clerk and will appear in the *Agenda for Synod 1981—Financial and Business Supplement*.

B. The Board of Publications respectfully requests that synod approve a quota of \$2.25 per family to support the ministries of the Board of Publications during (calendar year) 1982.

C. As it did in 1980, the Board of Publications wishes to inform the synod of its salary schedule for all employees. A complete report on salary schedules for office personnel, editorial/administrative personnel, and production personnel has been submitted to the stated clerk and will be published in the *Agenda for Synod 1981—Financial and Business Supplement*.

VIII. *Matters for Synodical Action*

A. Board of Publications' representation at synod (Section II, C)

B. Reorganization of committee structure (Section III, E)

- C. Board of Publications' committee/board membership (Section IV)
- D. Process of appointment of staff members (Section VI, A)
- E. Reappointment of Mr. A. James Heynen as executive director (Section VI. B)
- F. Quota request of \$2.25 per family for 1982 (Section VII, B)
 - Board of Publications of
the Christian Reformed Church
 - A. James Heynen, executive director

REPORT 6

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

The last year has been a blessed one for CRWRC. The staff reports indicate that work in the field is going well, with most of the goals being met. Financially, CRWRC is on a solid base. One area that remains a concern is that of staffing the programs. Finding mature, qualified, long-term staff is difficult, but without them our long-term development programs will not be effective. We are especially pleased with the increasing integration of our programs with those of Christian Reformed World Missions.

A. *Hunger Alleviation Program*

1. Hunger Alleviation Education

We were extremely pleased with the progress of the Hunger Education Program during 1979-80. This was the first full year of operation under the direction of Michael Bruinooge.

Through this program CRWRC assists the church in responding compassionately and effectively to world hunger. Hunger alleviation coordinators at the classical and congregational levels work with deacons to answer questions like these: What causes hunger? What guidance do the Scriptures give us on how to respond? How can hunger be alleviated? What can I do to help?

The annual Day of Prayer and Fasting (first Sunday in November) brings the entire denomination together in worship and prayer that "pours ourselves out for the hungry" (Isa. 58:10). Last year the third such day was held. Of churches responding to a survey done by CRWRC board members, 92 percent said they participated in some way in the Day of Prayer and Fasting. This was an increase over the year before. However, since only 37 percent of churches responded to the survey, it is impossible to know exactly how many churches took part denomination wide.

CRWRC continues to distribute copies of the two reports of the synodical Task Force on World Hunger, *And He Had Compassion on Them* (1978) and *For My Neighbor's Good* (1979). Three hundred and eighty-five hunger alleviation coordinators receive specially designed materials to assist them in education, including a quarterly publication, "Hunger Program News," that contains news of the Sierra Leone Hunger Project of CRWRC and CRWM.

The people of the CRC have responded generously to alleviate hunger by word and deed in Sierra Leone. The World Hunger Fund received \$731,000 in 1979-80, and over \$634,000 in the five-month period, September 1980-January 1981.

2. Hunger Alleviation Action

Sierra Leone is the Christian Reformed Church's "target country" for its "special world hunger project." The Sierra Leone program is designed to be a fifteen-year involvement addressing the problems of food production, health care, literacy, and church development in three separate regions of the country. The strategy calls for research and development during the first year of operation, including the deployment of the first team to the field. During the second year of operation, the first team will become effective and the second team will be sent.

During 1979-80 CRWRC and CRWM recruited and placed the first members of the first team in the Koranko area. The goal had been to place all the members of the team by December 1980, but the last members did not actually arrive on the field until March 1981. During this first year the first villages within the site area were chosen, government approval was negotiated, visas were secured, equipment and vehicles purchased, housing leased and remodeled, and staff recruitment continued for future teams. Team One consists of field director: Bob and Linda Bosch; church developers: the Rev. Roger and Yvonne Kraker, and the Rev. Paul and Mary Kortenhoven; agriculturist: Ron and Tena Prins; community developer: Barry and Tammy Meyer; literacy worker: Marc and Jo Hiemstra; and health care worker: Angie Hoolsema.

Between September 1980, and January 1981, CRWRC and CRWM continued recruitment for the second team. The agricultural worker was appointed in January, but by March, no other appointments had been made. We asked for the denomination's work and prayers in finding experienced, mature, qualified staff persons for this special program. Team Three is slated for late 1982, if staff can be found.

B. *Relationships with Other Agencies*

During 1979-80 CRWRC and CRWM drew up and agreed to a joint working agreement for Sierra Leone. We continued working on the problem of administrative responsibility and cooperation between the two agencies, and in September 1980, an agreement was reached. This agreement is being tried in the Philippines and Central America for one year.

As we reported to synod last year we believe that the most desirable relationship between CRWRC and the Board of Home Missions would be one in which joint planning took place. Last year we reported that by this year our domestic programs would enable us to engage in this kind of planning. Our programs have not developed to that extent and we now believe that mutual planning with the Board of Home Missions can begin this year. The Board of Home Missions has been responsive to CRWRC in the last year and we believe the same cooperation will continue.

Generally, the Back to God Hour has been responsive in helping our society realize God's mandate about demonstrating love in response to world hunger. Because of some scheduling difficulties and a failure of communication between CRWRC and the BTGH, the Rev. Joel Nederhood was unable to preach a sermon on world hunger on the Day of Prayer and Fasting this year. We hope that better planning and coor-

dination will occur in the future. Also, we believe that joint planning would be desirable in regard to future programing.

The Mission Coordination Council continued to meet this year and was very helpful in discussing with CRWRC and CRWM the joint agreement which they eventually reached. The MCC also continues to encourage joint publicity by the agencies, as they publish the *Mission Courier*.

Many agencies, some denominational and others independent, have contributed to the success of the world hunger education program. These include United Calvinist Youth, Christian Schools International, Calvin College, Dordt College, Reformed Bible College, Trinity Christian College, and the Education Department of the Board of Publications.

CRWRC meets annually with the NAPARC churches to discuss diaconal matters. This year Dr. Lester De Koster presented a paper on the work of deacons. CRWRC representatives thought the paper was excellent and were proud to know that our denomination is offering leadership in these diaconal matters.

C. Social Justice

CRWRC continues to explain to churches and school and community groups that hunger and poverty have a structural (or justice) dimension. *For My Neighbor's Good*, the second report of the Task Force on World Hunger, focuses on this dimension, and CRWRC has urged deacons and hunger coordinators to use the book in hunger education. Free copies were distributed to CRC pastors. New hunger coordinators also receive the book free of charge.

In addition, CRWRC last year prepared and distributed two new resources for groups, called "Paring and Sharing" (on discovering stewardship) and "Salting" (on promoting concern about world hunger). These illustrate that the practice and promotion of justice is one element of the Christian's response to human need.

In April 1980, CRWRC sponsored a "miniconference" for a small group of CRC laypeople to determine readiness in the church for further CRWRC work on social justice and structural change. In June 1980, CRWRC participated in a conference of Reformed people interested in structural change.

In action taken last winter, CRWRC's board approved two social justice proposals: (1) the preparation of two social justice issue papers for use in churches; and (2) the scheduling of a social justice conference at which CRWRC will encourage the formation of a coalition of Reformed groups that seek to bring the Word of God to bear on structural problems.

Finally, CRWRC has continued to encourage members of the CRC to join organizations like Bread for the World (in the United States) and the Committee for Justice and Liberty (in Canada) whose purpose includes communal Christian action for political or vocational justice.

II. OFFICERS

The officers who served the board last year are:

John Vander Ploeg—president
Dr. Norman Boeve—vice-president
Bruce Hulst—secretary
Edgar Westenbroek—treasurer
Dave Gabrielse—assistant secretary/treasurer
Rev. Jacob Boonstra—ministerial advisor

New officers elected in February are:

Dr. Norman Boeve—president
James K. Haveman Jr.—vice-president
Dave Gabrielse—secretary
Edgar Westenbroek—treasurer
Dr. James Hoekwater—assistant secretary/treasurer
Rev. Jacob Boonstra—ministerial advisor

III. DISASTER AND EMERGENCY RELIEF

A. Domestic Disaster

Although CRWRC responded to no new disasters in the United States and Canada during 1979-80, we continued our help to disaster stricken communities to bring about complete recovery from disaster losses. During this period CRWRC was blessed with tens of thousands of volunteer hours of work, including 162 volunteers who gave 28,800 hours in Wichita Falls, Texas; 20 volunteers who gave 6,300 hours in Jackson, Mississippi; 46 volunteers, 4,000 hours in Grand Island, Nebraska; 9 volunteers, 1,250 hours in Houston, Texas; 18 volunteers, 4,650 hours in Mobile, Alabama; and 10 volunteers who gave 100 hours in Mount St. Helens, Washington.

CRWRC reorganized its disaster response services around classical coordinators during 1979-80. Further information is presented in Section V, D of this report.

B. Foreign Disaster

CRWRC finished its disaster commitment to the Dominican Republic and Dominica in the wake of Hurricane David during 1979-80 with an additional \$25,000 to the Dominican Republic and \$10,000 to Dominica. In both cases these funds were given to evangelical church organizations for recovery needs in their own communities.

The largest foreign disaster response during 1979-80 was in Cambodia/Kampuchea. The Christian Reformed Church donated \$90,000 for feeding the hungry in this stricken area of the world, and CRWRC forwarded this money to Church World Service, who in turn used it for feeding in Cambodia. Church World Service was one of only three or four North American agencies allowed to distribute food in the country.

Aid continued to CEPAD, the Evangelical Committee for Relief and Development in Nicaragua, some of it being funded by CRWRC and some by grants from the Province of Alberta.

The attention of the denomination was caught by earthquakes late in 1980, one in Algeria and one in Italy. In both cases European governments were generous with their response, and in the case of Italy, Catholic Relief Services donated more than \$3,000,000 for recovery. CRWRC did no special appeal for either of these disasters. We did forward funds for Italy as they came from the denomination. As of December 31, 1980, \$1,782 had been collected and forwarded to the evangelical churches in Italy.

Generally speaking, CRWRC disaster response during 1980 was less extensive than usual.

IV. FOREIGN PROGRAM OUTREACHES

A. *Asia*

1. *Bangladesh*

Staff: Peter and Peggi Vander Meulen, director
Paul Brink, agriculturist
Martin Mostert, agriculturist
Doug Seebeck, extensionist
Jim Spee, irrigation specialist
Peter and Olive Vander Kooy, agriculturist

CRWRC is attempting to increase the economic welfare of the marginal farmer in the Bogra area of Bangladesh. This involves careful selection of "clients" at the lower end of the farmer spectrum (those who are in danger of losing their land to creditors), identification of the major barriers to increased production and income, and the execution of programs to breach those barriers.

There are four major barriers that the CRWRC is attempting to counteract in the Bogra area: (1) lack of production credit, (2) lack of irrigation, (3) need for adequate extension services to marginal farmers, and (4) the need for research geared to the small farmer's problems.

The negative aspect of the Bogra project is the complete lack of an evangelism program. Humanly speaking, it appears that evangelism will never be successful in the highly Muslim target population of Bogra.

Corrective action is being taken with the newly appointed person from CR World Missions. He will make feasibility studies for new locations in Bangladesh. Locations will be sought where there is receptivity to the gospel and a joint Word/deed ministry can be carried out.

As a result of CRWRC's work, 1,737 farmers were much better off this year than last year. This is 63 percent above the target figure of 1,100 farmers. The actual income increase for the target population was 36 percent and the tonnage increase of crops was 37.6 percent.

2. *India*

Staff: No expatriate staff

The India program is a diaconal outreach to the poor and suffering, administered by the Rev. Joseph Wycliffe. The project consists of three midday feeding programs in the Adoni area, and two medical clinics among the hills people in the Tekkali area, some five hundred miles east of Adoni. It is difficult to actually determine the number of people served

by means of the \$12,600 contribution of the CRWRC. From reports received, it appears that over 5,000 people benefit annually.

3. *Jordan*

Staff: No expatriate staff

In February 1980, CRWRC closed its Jordan program. As reported to the Synods of 1979 and 1980, CRWRC was disturbed by its inability to incorporate an evangelical witness into this program. In its last six months in Jordan, CRWRC worked with 190 families.

Looking back over its eight years in Jordan, CRWRC believes some good things were accomplished. Twenty-two separate projects were part of the program; all but a few of these continue but, unfortunately, are not part of a Christian witness. In addition, CRWRC helped 753 families attain self-sufficiency by setting up self-help projects.

However, CRWRC has also learned some lessons:

- a. When negotiating with a foreign government to carry out a CRWRC project in the host country, we must firmly state our intent to engage in programs with a Christian witness.
- b. We must prepare detailed strategy and schedules for the project before sending staff to the field.

4. *The Philippines*

Staff: Ivan and Joy De Kam, director
 Bill and Dorothy Fernhout, community developer
 Janne Ritskes, community developer
 Andy and Kris Ryskamp, community developer
 Dave and Cindi Veenstra, community developer

CRWRC in the Philippines is closely linked with CR World Missions. During 1979-80 the program had four areas of work: (1) nutrition; (2) sanitation; (3) self-help projects, and (4) diaconal development and training. Projects included feeding/nutrition centers for malnourished children, immunizations, nutrition education, potable water, sanitary toilets, cottage industry, swine fattening, small business loans, and diaconal development and training.

Of 1,730 families CRWRC worked with in the Philippines, 1,108 reached the goals set. Of 1,300 malnourished children, 780 were brought to normal weight range, and of 330 families participating in income generation projects, 182 increased their income by 20 percent or more.

CRWRC continued to work with seven diaconal groups of the CRC of the Philippines.

B. *Africa*

Staff: Louis and Janice Haveman, Africa director

1. *Niger*

Staff: Pat and Eveline Franje, reforester

The CRWRC involvement in Niger is the result of an effort to respond to the severe famine in the sub-Sahara region of West Africa during the early 1970s. CRWRC agreed with the Sudan Interior Mission to lend an agriculturist to their program in Niger. Marcus and Mary Ann Frei were subsequently sent to Niger, where they served on loan to the SIM for two terms.

Toward the close of the Freis' first term of service in Niger, they requested a second staff person. With the approval of SIM, Pat Franje was given an appointment to serve in reforestation. The Freis have now returned home and Pat Franje remains, serving his second term. CRWRC anticipates ending its commitment to SIM by 1982.

2. *Nigeria*

Staff: Bulus Ali, field director
Steve Nikkel, agriculturist

Christian Rural Development became an entirely independent entity during 1979, with CRWRC's Steve Nikkel serving as an advisor to Nigerian director Bulus Ali. The program served 521 farmers in 1979-80, increasing their crop production and improving their poultry production.

Effort is being made to make the poultry and stock aspect of CRD self-supporting—i.e., salaries, travel, spoilage, and a proportionate share of CRD's overhead being paid by that aspect of the work.

C. *Latin America*

Staff: Peter and Paula Limburg, Central America director
Jim and Kathy Boldenow, Central America director designate

1. *Costa Rica*

Staff: Stan and Kitty De Voogd, literacy advisor

As in 1980 CRWRC provides financial assistance to Alfalit, International, a Christian organization which promotes reading and writing skills among adults throughout Latin America. Use of the funds and the results achieved are monitored by CRWRC staff in Central America.

The objective for 1979-80 was to have 4,840 people attain a higher degree of literacy, as measured by testing. Actually, 15,729 achieved this goal. The reason for the outstanding achievement was that the government of Dominican Republic officially endorsed Alfalit and used university students to train and support national teachers.

CRWRC believes, however, that Alfalit should make more progress toward financial independence and should tie its literacy efforts to comprehensive community development programs. To help make this happen, CRWRC appointed Stan and Kitty De Voogd to work with Alfalit, International. They will be finished with language training by late summer.

2. *Guatemala*

Staff: No expatriate staff

CRWRC had three goals in Guatemala in 1979-80. One was to increase income for 275 families by \$160 per family. The actual result was that 492 families increased their income by this amount.

Another goal was to improve health care for 1,600 families by training paraprofessional health workers for rural villages. That goal was not met.

Because of an inexperienced manager in the literacy program, only 776 adults were trained rather than the 3,410 originally planned.

Political unrest and violence contributed to the difficulties in this program.

3. *Haiti*

Staff: Jim and Judy Zylstra, director
 Dick and Mary Both, agriculturist
 Julia Frazier, nurse
 Nick and Fanny Geleynse, agriculturist
 Dave Kobes, agriculturist
 Lavon Tinklenberg, nurse

The goals for CRWRC in Haiti in 1979-80 had three aspects—food production, health care, and literacy.

CRWRC's agriculture work benefited 300 farm families from increased food production brought about through the techniques learned in CRWRC agriculture classes. Health care given by rural health workers trained by CRWRC staff benefited 150 families. In addition, staff members produced a health manual written in Creole, the local language. Only 50 families were involved in the literacy work carried on by CRWRC staff, although 5,000 benefited from CRWRC's support of a national literacy organization.

All three aspects of the program were hampered by the fact that the target population for each was different. CRWRC hopes to correct that this year.

4. *Honduras*

Staff: Darryl and Donna Mortensen, agriculturist
 Betty Roldan, nutritionist
 Joel and Patti Zwier, agriculturist

CRWRC has three staff people in Honduras, all of whom work with the Evangelical Committee for Development and National Emergency (CEDEN). The staff agreed to help 1,020 families in the literacy program; only 580 were actually reached. The agriculture program had planned to involve 110 farm families in crop and animal production for a gain in income of \$200 per family. The Central American field director reports that 315 families actually achieved such a gain. In the health and nutrition program the goal was to help 120 of 240 children achieve normal weight. This was achieved. Some confusion in the reporting of these figures makes them less certain than those of other fields.

5. *Mexico*

Staff: Clare and Shirley De Boer, director
 Sam Vander Ende, agriculturist
 Bill and Hilda Vander Klippe, agriculturist/nutritionist

The Mexico staff reported helping 200 families in the isolated villages surrounding the Oaxaca Valley during 1979-80 and 60 families within the valley itself. In addition, the field director continued to offer consultant services to an independent committee in the Yucatan. This committee helped 250 farm families with loans. The increased income for these families ranged from \$50 to \$200 per year.

6. *Nicaragua*

Staff: No expatriate staff

When the objectives for 1979-80 were set, CRWRC staff in Nicaragua expected to increase the income of each of 850 farm families by \$100 per year, and to improve the nutrition of 185 children and bring them to nor-

mal weight. Because CRWRC staff had to leave Nicaragua during the year, and subsequently operated only as consultants to the program which was resumed after the civil war, no firm reports are available on whether these results were accomplished. We know that the development work continued to be carried on by the Evangelical Committee for Relief and Development, with consultation and financial help from CRWRC.

7. *El Salvador*

Staff: No expatriate staff

CRWRC had designated \$50,000 for El Salvador during 1979-80 to do the research and development that would allow us to request synod's approval for a regular development program there. However, because civil strife produced a need for disaster relief, the \$50,000 was reallocated to meet the needs of war victims.

V. DOMESTIC PROGRAM OUTREACHES

A. *Appalachia*

Staff: Del and Judy Willink, director

Don and Janna Zeilstra, community worker

The Appalachian field made major changes during the 1979-80 fiscal year. Because the Kentucky field director was transferred to a foreign program assignment, the Kentucky and Virginia fields were consolidated at least one and a half years ahead of schedule. The program is now headquartered in St. Charles, Virginia. Programs started by CRWRC in family services and housing in Middlesboro and Pineville, Kentucky, are progressing toward full indigenization. The St. Charles community, through CRWRC's consulting services, is identifying and solving some of their major problems. CRWRC is providing, under contract, staff consulting services to 23 of 29 projects supported by the Commission on Religion in Appalachia. This provides CRWRC with a unique opportunity to share its principles of Christian programming. The combined efforts of CRWRC and the Board of Home Missions in Appalachia continues to be a mutually beneficial experience.

B. *Mississippi Christian Family Services*

Staff: Elvinah Spoelstra, director

Susie Evans, school program supervisor

Under the able leadership of Elvinah Spoelstra, the MCFS program continues to gain support in the Rolling Fork community. The most significant improvement during 1979-80 was in the area of local board control. The local board of directors made several decisions this year that indicate their willingness to assume major responsibility for the entire MCFS program.

One or more handicapped members in 133 families made progress toward self-sufficiency or greater independence in 1979-80.

C. *Diaconal Ministries*

During 1980, consistent with its long-range plan regarding domestic programming, CRWRC began to implement a closer working relationship with deacon conferences and deacons of the Christian Reformed Church.

Under this new program, five conferences interested in increasing their level of diaconal activity especially benefited from technical assistance provided by CRWRC. We hope to establish even closer ties with diaconal conferences in the next five years and to offer them additional resources for training and technical assistance.

One way CRWRC assists diaconal groups in meeting needs in their local communities is through grants. Under this program, diaconal groups are encouraged to give increased amounts of support to their local projects as CRWRC funding decreases.

During 1979-80, CRWRC continued funding for the following:

1. *Denver Diaconal Conference*

Project: Native American Urban Transition Program—ministry to Indian girls and families migrating to the Denver community.

Assistance: Funds for director's salary and partial program support costs.

2. *Chicago Area Classes*

Project: Roseland Christian Ministries Center—a comprehensive workshop, training, service program in the former Back to God Hour building.

Assistance: Cooperative ministry with the Board of Home Missions, SCORR, Chicago classes, and CRWRC, with each contributing approximately one-fourth of total program costs.

3. *Denver Third Christian Reformed Church Diaconate*

Project: Sun Valley Christian Family Services—a ministry to Spanish Americans in the Sun Valley and Las Casitas community, based at the Sun Valley Community Church (a BHM church).

Assistance: Total project costs, including director's salary and program support costs.

4. *Midwest/Canadian Conference*

CRWRC began funding for a project for native Canadians in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. During 1979-80 organizational matters were dealt with and plans made; a director was hired and began work on January 1, 1981.

D. *Disaster Response Services*

During 1979-80, the Classis Disaster Coordinators' program was established with the appointment of ten coordinators; all were involved in a week-long training program. This new program will provide opportunities for more persons to serve with the Disaster Response Service program on a local level. DRS trainers had their second training week, with emphasis on training team supervisors. DRS managers meet regularly each month. Several DRS training manuals and resource materials were written and published. CRWRC also helped establish a church response program whereby main-line United States denominations are enabled to work more effectively and efficiently in times of disaster.

During this year, reporting formats were developed for all levels

within the DRS program. These will produce statistics that will document the activity of the DRS program, and allow cost/benefit analysis.

E. Refugee Resettlement

Refugee resettlement became less of a disaster relief program and more of a regular domestic program during 1979-80, with the hiring of a full-time refugee resettlement coordinator. In the calendar year (January through December 1980), Canadian churches resettled 1,120 people; United States churches, 903 Indochinese and 365 Cubans. A heartwarming aspect of this program is that 230 Cuban refugees were resettled by Spanish speaking CR churches—churches which themselves are the result of refugee resettlement during the 1960s.

VI. ADMINISTRATION, MATERIAL RESOURCE CENTER, FINANCE

A. Administration

The Grand Rapids office includes John De Haan, executive director; Karen De Vos, director of communications; Merle Grevengoed, finance director; Gary Nederveld, foreign program director; Neil Molenaar, domestic program director; Wayne Medendorp, planning, training, and evaluation director; Jane Ritsema, executive secretary; Michael Bruinooge, World Hunger educator; William Haverkamp, communications assistant; David Genzink, refugee coordinator; Chris Cok, accountant; Art Schaap, office assistant; secretaries Helen Linders, Pam Prins, Barb Van Dyk and Marcia Van Popering; and clerk/receptionist, Trudie Ribbens. Harry Veldstra serves as director of CRWRC of Canada with Sandy Van Rijn, secretary.

1. *Salaries*—All salaries of executive, administrative, and office staff in our 1981-82 budget are within the SIC recommended salary ranges under the Denominational Agencies Uniform Salary Policy.

2. *Audits*—The audit firm of Touche Ross & Company was appointed to audit the books in the United States and Canada. The 1981-82 field audits, wherever feasible, will be done by firms which have an affiliation agreement with CRWRC's primary audit firm. In addition to financial audits, CRWRC has agreed to work toward auditing field performance on a small, random basis to insure that both baselines and results have been recorded at all levels.

B. Material Resource Center

The board decided in 1979 to phase out the used clothing operation of the Material Resource Center because used clothing is much less in demand than formerly and because a cost analysis showed that CRWRC could purchase whatever it needs from other organizations at less cost than maintaining the Resource Center.

In February 1980, the board voted to close the Material Resource Center altogether. Both disaster relief and development aid have changed over the years. The demand for material goods is considerably less than in previous years and those goods that are needed can generally be shipped

directly from the supplier. The need for storing large quantities of material goods is largely gone.

C. Finances

Financially, CRWRC did quite well in 1979-80, especially in view of the troubled state of the Canadian and United States economies.

General fund income increased by only 8 percent, not enough to keep pace with inflation, but World Hunger and disaster gifts brought total income substantially higher.

General fund	\$2,708,000
Special World Hunger fund	758,000
Disaster fund	375,000
Canadian grants	243,000

The following budget represents CRWRC's plan for 1981-82:

Foreign program	\$3,754,849	<i>Source of Funds:</i>	
Domestic program	602,959	Gen'l fund	\$3,477,906
Board approved contingency	152,523	World Hunger fund	963,335
World hunger education	92,090	Grant fund	427,800
Recruitment	28,230	Field income	377,400
Administration	365,295	Interest income	50,000
Fund raising	249,850		<u>\$5,296,441</u>
Resource Center	30,645		
Deferred giving	20,000		
	<u>\$5,296,441</u>		

D. Feasibility Surveys

CRWRC hopes to work with Christian Reformed World Missions to conduct feasibility surveys to determine whether joint programs can be carried on in more countries. In the next five years, we hope to study Liberia, new areas in Nigeria, Dominican Republic, and Argentina. Should studies indicate that programs are feasible, CRWRC will return to synod with its plans.

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.

VII. ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

CRWRC will present names, by means of a supplemental report to synod (6-A), of nominees for two board member-at-large positions and two alternates.

VIII. SUMMARY MATTERS REQUIRING SYNOD'S ATTENTION

A. Representatives at synod—CRWRC requests that its president, Dr. Norman Boeve; minister board-member, the Rev. Jacob Boonstra; and its executive director, John De Haan; be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

B. Approval of plans for 1981-82 (VI, C—Budget)

C. Approval for offerings (VI, E)

D. Election of board members-at-large (VII)

Christian Reformed World
Relief Committee

John De Haan, executive director

REPORT 7

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

Since its inception in 1945 this synodical committee has endeavored to produce tracts, in accord with its mandate, whose contents are "definitely Reformed," whose literary form is in "faultless English," and whose style is "direct, concrete, simple, forcible." The committee labored toward that goal this year as well.

However, as we worked together this year several matters became increasingly clear. While the effectiveness of other committees of outreach (i.e., World Missions, Home Missions, CRWRC, Publications) is increasing, the distribution of our publications actually declined by 75 percent during the past decade, despite sincere and dedicated efforts to produce material of meaningful quality.

The advantage of having a full-time secretary was fully discussed. This need first surfaced three years after the formation of the committee and was made into a recommendation to the Synod of 1948 (*Acts of Synod 1948*, p. 352). Since then there has been more or less continuing discussion of the same topic, but never the appointment of such a secretary. As a result, the work of the committee through the years has been on a "time available" basis. As the Tract Committee of 1949 already mentioned in their report, "a setup such as ours. . . does not lend itself to maximum efficiency" (*Acts of Synod 1949*, p. 179).

A situation that has great influence on our committee's work today did not exist at the time of the formation of our committee: other denominational agencies are now well able to produce their own materials, and often do. Originally our mandate was seen as "instructing our own people more thoroughly in our doctrines and practices" (*Acts of Synod 1946*, p. 209). This is now being carried out by the Publications and Home Missions committees in ways which could not be foreseen at that time. We were also mandated to produce literature which would "interest the unchurched and careless people in the Gospel" (*idem*). This is also being done today by the Home Mission Board, with great effectiveness.

New printing operations at the Denominational Building are resulting in proportionately higher costs for the small number of tracts actually printed. This effectively removes us from the competitive market.

In our continuing discussion we formulated a question and faced it forcefully: Is there a place for the Back to God Tract Committee in the 80s? The answer that we adopted was, "No," for the following reasons:

1. The committee represents at present needless duplication. There are existing agencies which produce acceptable tracts, such as Faith, Prayer and Tract League, American Bible Society. "To obviate unnecessary duplication, the committee above mentioned is to investigate existent tracts

that can be used. . . " (*Acts of Synod 1945*, p. 30). "Investigation of tracts published by other organizations will be recommended to the churches, thereby eliminating overlapping and needless work" (*Acts of Synod 1946*, p. 211).

2. If a need should become apparent, synod could equip the Board of Home Missions with the finances and/or personnel to do the job right.

3. In the thirty-five years that our committee has existed it has been clearly demonstrated that tracts as such have little priority in the CRC. The committee is staffed by 90 percent non-tract users, the tracts are written by 90 percent non-tract users, and are produced for a denomination of 90 percent non-tract users.

Therefore, we make the following *recommendations*:

1. That synod recognize that each denominational agency has the responsibility and capability of producing its own tracts and pamphlets.

2. That synod give primary responsibility to continue an *evangelistic* tract ministry to the Board of Home Missions—Department of Evangelism.

3. That synod instruct the DFC to work with the Home Mission Board and others in the transfer of inventory and assets from the Back to God Tract Committee.

4. That synod express thanks to the Back to God Tract Committee for its efforts throughout the past years.

Grounds:

1. A separate committee function is no longer needed in view of diminishing usage.
2. A tract ministry under separate committee function, which gave rise to the Back to God Tract Committee, now appears to be better served by our existing agencies.
3. The work properly fits the mode of operation of our existing agencies.

Back to God Tract Committee
R. O. Broekhuizen, secretary

REPORT 8
BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

Last year synod adopted the committee's recommendations concerning the use of the New International Version. The committee has now begun the process of reviewing the New American Standard Bible. This is in response to the mandate given by the Synod of 1978: "That synod request the Bible Translation Committee to consider the New American Standard Bible with a view to its approval for use in the worship service" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 49). We plan to submit our recommendations regarding the NASB to the Synod of 1982.

For some time the committee had hoped that it would be possible to publish in booklet form its reviews of the various Bible versions. The cost of such a publication indicates that the project is not feasible. However, we thought it would be useful for ministers and others to have a convenient list of the reviews this committee has published. The reviews are as follows:

1. The Revised Standard Version, *Acts of Synod 1969*, pp. 265-279.
2. Good News for Modern Man (or Today's English Version-New Testament), *The Banner*, Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 1971.
3. The Living Bible: Paraphrased, *The Banner*, Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 1972.
4. The New English Bible, *The Banner*, June 20, 27, 1975; *Calvinist-Contact*, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, 1975.
5. The New International Version-New Testament, *The Banner*, July 23, 30, 1976; *Calvinist-Contact*, June 14, 21, 1976.
6. The Good News Bible, *The Banner*, July 20, 27, 1979; *Calvinist-Contact*, May 18, 1979.
7. The New International Version, *Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 252-271.

Bible Translation Committee
Andrew Bandstra, chairman
David Holwerda, secretary
Stanley Bultman
David Engelhard
Bastiaan Van Elderen
Clarence Vos
Louis Vos
Marten Woudstra

REPORT 9
CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

The Chaplain Committee is a standing committee appointed by synod to promote and monitor chaplaincy and to provide pastoral care for chaplains and their families. During 1980, the committee met regularly, carrying out the responsibilities previously assigned to it.

I. ORGANIZATION

The synod has appointed the following persons (dates indicate end of term) to serve on the Chaplain Committee:

Rev. Duane Visser, chairperson, 1981; Rev. Marvin Baarman, vice-chairperson, 1982; Mr. Harold Mast, treasurer, 1982; Mr. Donald Swierenga, vice-treasurer, 1981; Rev. John Van Til (Canadian representative) 1982; Mrs. Jean Ettesvold, 1982; Mrs. Gay Newhof, 1982; Mr. Evert Vermeer, 1982; Mr. Jerald Hop, 1983; and Rev. Robert Recker, 1983. The Rev. Harold Bode has served the committee as executive secretary since 1974.

II. MILITARY CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

The Christian Reformed Church currently has sixteen ministers serving full time as chaplains on extended active duty with the military and seventeen serving part-time with Reserves on National Guard units of the military. Some of our full-time chaplains serve in unique and highly important assignments; all of them serve the denomination well.

During 1980, two of our chaplains left military service. Chaplain Henry Guikema was separated from the United States Air Force for medical reasons, having suffered two heart attacks. Chaplain Marinus Vande Steeg left the U.S. Army chaplaincy, having accepted a call to serve a church outside the denomination. The Rev. George Cooper, a Reservist, went on extended active duty with the Navy. The Rev. James Vande Lune was to have entered the USAF chaplaincy but was judged to be medically disqualified. The committee is exploring with Mr. Vande Lune other options for service. A roster of active duty chaplains with their branches of services, assignments, and date of induction follows:

Air Force

Chaplain, Major Ralph W. Bronkema, Hessisch Oldendorf, Germany (1966)
Chaplain, Lt. Col. Louis E. Kok, Izmir, Turkey (1962)

Army

Chaplain, Capt. Anthony Begay, Ft. Hood, TX (1978)
Chaplain, Major William Brander, Ft. Hamilton, NY (1968)

Chaplain, COL John Hoogland, Ft. Monmouth, NJ (1959)
 Chaplain, Major Herman Keizer, Ft. Monmouth, NJ (1968)
 Chaplain, LTC Marvin Konyonenbelt, Ft. Knox, KY (1965)
 Chaplain, Capt. Philip Touw, Gelnhausen, Germany (1977)
 Chaplain, LTC Paul Vruwink, Ft. Bragg, NC (1958)
 Chaplain, Capt. Karl K. Willoughby, Ft. Bragg, NC (1967)

Navy

Chaplain, LTC Donald Belanus, Guam (1979)
 Chaplain, CDR Herbert Bergsma, USS Fulton (1966)
 Chaplain, LT George Cooper, Naval Regional Medical Center, PA (1980)
 Chaplain, CDR Donald den Dulk, USN Credo, San Diego, CA (1975)
 Chaplain, CDR Albert J. Roon, Alcohol Rehabilitation Center, VA (1966)
 Chaplain, LCDR Raymond Swierenga, Great Lakes, IL (1960)

III. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

During 1980, three ministers accepted positions to serve as full-time institutional chaplains. The Rev. Ronald Hempel serves as chaplain at the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil, WA. The Rev. Fred Rietema serves as chaplain at the Comprehensive Mental Health Center in Tacoma, WA. The Rev. James Van Der Schaaf is a correctional chaplain in the Grand Rapids area. The Rev. Jerry Dykstra resigned as minister and member of the Christian Reformed Church and, therefore, is no longer on the roster.

Many of our institutional chaplains serve in positions of leadership and influence. Some of them have gained higher standing in professional pastoral organizations during the past year. The following chaplains serve full time in a variety of institutional settings and have received ecclesiastical endorsement from the Chaplain Committee:

Chaplain Louis Baker, Evanston General Hospital, Evanston, IL
 Chaplain Robert Brummel, Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami, FL
 Chaplain Arlo Compaan, Near North Side Counseling Center, Chicago, IL
 Chaplain Harold T. De Jong, St. Peter's Hospital, Olympia, WA
 Chaplain Sidney Draayer, Christian Counseling Center, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain Edwin Dykstra, Larue D. Carter Memorial Hospital, Indianapolis, IN
 Chaplain William Dykstra, State Prison of Southern Michigan, Jackson, MI
 Chaplain A. Dirk Evans, Harper-Grace Hospital, Detroit, MI
 Chaplain Eric Evenhuis, Voorman Psychiatric Medical Clinic, Upland, CA
 Chaplain Jan Friend, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, CO
 Chaplain Terry Hager, Community Counseling and Personal Growth Ministry, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain Ronald Hempel, Washington Veterans Home, Retsil, WA
 Chaplain Marvin Hoogland, Christian Counseling Center, Chicago, IL
 Chaplain Gordon Kieft, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, CO
 Chaplain James Kok, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain Philip J. Koster, Pontiac General Hospital, Pontiac, MI
 Chaplain John H. Lamsma, Federal Correctional Institution, Milan, MI
 Chaplain William Lenters, Calvary Rehabilitation Center, Phoenix, AZ
 Chaplain Peter Mans, Mary Free Bed Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain Gerald Oosterveen, Dixon Developmental Center, Dixon, IL
 Chaplain Elton Piersma, Life Enrichment Ministries, Muskegon, MI
 Chaplain Henry Post, Foote Memorial Hospital, Jackson, MI
 Chaplain Fred Rietema, Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Tacoma, WA
 Chaplain Howard Sponholz, Cabrini Medical Center and St. Vincent's Hospitals, New York City, NY

Chaplain Robert Uken, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
Chaplain Adrian Van Andel, VA Chaplain, Palo Alto, CA
Chaplain Larry Vande Creek, Family Practice Dept., OSU, Columbus, OH
Chaplain Thomas Vanden Bosch, VA Chaplain at Sioux Falls, SD
Chaplain Samuel Vander Jagt, Mercy Hospital, Davenport, IA
Chaplain Nicholas Vander Kwaak, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
Chaplain James Van Der Schaaf, Correctional Chaplaincy, Grand Rapids, MI
Chaplain Siebert Van Houten, Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital, Hamilton, ON
Chaplain Peter Van Katwyk, Interfaith Counseling Center, Cambridge, ON
Chaplain Duane Visser, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
Chaplain Ronald Vredevelde, Regional Developmental Center, Mt. Pleasant, MI
Chaplain Peter Winkle, Rehoboth Hospital, Gallup, NM
Chaplain Benjamin Ypma, Koinonia Medical Center, Muskegon, MI

IV. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

The Rev. Jack Vander Laan, while serving as pastor of the Ft. Lauderdale Christian Reformed Church and with the concurrence of the council, served as part-time industrial chaplain at Waste Management, Inc. for the past two years. During the later part of 1980, he felt called to serve full time as an industrial chaplain. The Chaplain Committee is sincerely appreciative to the Ft. Lauderdale Christian Reformed Church and its council for the fine cooperative spirit they have manifested in this new form of ministry. Although there have been ministers who have served in situations somewhat analogous to this, the committee presents to the denomination her first industrial chaplain:

Chaplain Jack Vander Laan, Waste Management, Inc., Ft. Lauderdale, FL

V. A NEW DECADE IN CHAPLAINCY

Chaplaincy is a ministry of, from, and by the church in specialized settings. The church owns that ministry as part of her mission in and to the world. Denominations in general, and the Christian Reformed denomination in particular, have had difficulty in owning chaplaincy as part of the mission of the church. Traditionally, the Reformed theology of the church has embraced more of a world and life view; however, in historical development, the church's life has focused on the local parish.

In contrast, the chaplaincy ministry functions outside of the local church in various kinds of institutions and organizations. Chaplains often have membership in two institutions. A military chaplain has full membership in the church and in the institution of the military, or a hospital chaplain has membership in the institution of the church and in the staff as a member of a hospital. Not only does the church have difficulty understanding chaplaincy ministry in specialized settings, but the institution often has difficulty understanding the polity, policies, and function of the church. Recently, on the national level, both in Canada and the United States, this issue has been receiving considerable attention and the Chaplain Committee has been involved.

On the denominational level, the Chaplain Committee and our chaplains have been giving consideration to the chaplains' relationship to the local church and the local churches' relationship to its chaplain. Some local churches have developed systems in which mutual support and

supervision takes place between chaplains and their calling church. The Chaplain Committee genuinely appreciates the efforts of both the chaplain and the consistories in this endeavor. Through such efforts the church owns the ministry of chaplains as being part of the mission of the church. A word of appreciation is also in order to those classes which have taken a genuine interest in the ministry of chaplains. Some classes have a policy of paying one-half of the traveling expenses of chaplains attending a classical meeting.

During 1980, the development of chaplaincy from a personnel point of view has slowed down considerably, due in large part to the instability of the economy. Some institutions which ordinarily would make a decision about hiring a chaplain in a few months have now delayed it for as long as a year. Other institutions have put a freeze on hiring a chaplain or expanding a pastoral care department. Furthermore, fewer ministers are taking advantage of opportunities for specialized training due to the economic risks involved.

The Chaplain Committee maintains membership in various national and provincial organizations which have to do with the development and placement of chaplains. These organizations either advise governmental agencies on chaplaincy issues or assist in the screening and evaluation of chaplains serving in governmentally controlled institutions. For example, recently, the Rev. Carl Tuyl was seated on a very important commission which advises the provincial government on chaplaincy. Likewise, the executive secretary serves on a number of governmental and professional agencies dealing with chaplaincy issues.

As we move along in this decade, chaplaincy will expand in several areas. The trend continues for more hospitals to have full-time trained chaplains. Chaplaincy will also develop in other areas.

The church will face the need of placing more chaplains in the area of mental institutions. Persons now institutionalized will be sent back to their home communities and placed in appropriate community homes. Churches interdenominationally will need to provide pastoral care for these people through chaplaincy. The intention is to integrate those people into the highest possible level of community life.

Another area where chaplaincy will expand is with the communities for the aging. Some denominations in large metropolitan areas now provide chaplains to care for the pastoral needs of the aging who are no longer able to live in their own homes.

Still another area where chaplaincy will expand is with the growing hospice movement. The intention of the hospice movement is to provide a variety of services to terminally ill patients so that they may die with dignity. Evidence supporting the importance of providing pastoral care for such persons continues to grow.

Finally, business and industrial chaplaincy will expand, but this depends largely on the status of the economy.

Through chaplaincy, the mission of the church will provide witness at the crossroads of culture.

VI. BUT THERE ARE CONTINUING CONCERNS

A. *Housing for Chaplains*

The Chaplain Committee first presented this issue to the 1980 Synod and since that time has given it much thought. Chaplains who accept a new position often endure a couple of years of economic hardship while in specialized training; consequently they find it extremely difficult to purchase an adequate home or to find one they can afford to rent. Currently, the denomination does not have a way to assist chaplains in providing a loan for a down payment. This may happen when the denomination establishes a more broadly based loan fund. Meanwhile the Chaplain Committee is, on a small scale, opening a way to assist newly placed chaplains. This is an interim arrangement and it affects our quota request.

B. *Standards of Pastoral Services in Hospitals*

Last year we reported that in the United States the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAH) had deleted "the standards of pastoral services" from the 1979 edition of its *Consolidated Standards*. This action was widely protested by denominational representatives, chaplains, and hospitals. The 1980 edition of the *Consolidated Standards* does include a rather watered-down statement on standards of "pastoral services." The Chaplain Committee has taken part in a concentrated effort to upgrade these standards on "pastoral services" which will be more consistent with the primary mission of JCAH to provide "optimal patient care," including the significant role of religious faith and practice in the overall healing process.

VII. THE CANADIAN CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE REPORT

The Canadian Committee is a subcommittee of the denominational committee and is served by pastors John Van Til, chairman; Carl Tuyl, secretary; and Peter Van Katwyk. This committee is of vital importance in developing and meeting the needs of chaplaincy in Canada. Knowing what and where the pastoral care and chaplaincy needs are in a large country like Canada places great demands on this committee. The opportunities are many and recruiting CRC ministers and assisting them in gaining specialized training is a continuing challenge.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Our executive secretary continues to divide his time, energy, and talents among ever expanding and demanding aspects of chaplaincy ministry. During 1980, prime time was focused on two areas: administrative duties and providing care for chaplains and their families.

In spite of efforts to curb administrative duties they continue to expand. Each year not only are more reports required within the denominational structure but these reports become more extensive. During this year the Chaplain Committee has written policy guidelines for moving, housing, salary supplements, and bookkeeping. Writing policies on the varied kinds of ecclesiastical endorsements and strategic positions was

also begun. Added to these administrative duties, the executive secretary has served on the executive committees of several national organizations.

The primary task of our executive secretary is that of developing a personal relationship with and pastoral care for chaplains and their families. This ministry, demanding in both time and energy, requires many days and nights away from home. Reports from chaplains and their families indicate the worthwhileness of this ministry. This most important task of our executive secretary is one for which he is exceptionally qualified. This contact also serves to tie the work of our chaplains into the mission of the church.

The Chaplain Committee is concerned about the increasing demands being placed on our executive secretary, as well as the work load demanded of the staff. For that reason the committee engaged, without cost, a consultant with expertise in time/life management to study the work load of our executive secretary and to make recommendations to the committee. An *ad hoc* committee has been appointed to work with the consultant.

Meanwhile, the Chaplain Committee has hired Chaplain Henry Guikema to work part time to assist our executive secretary. Although medically retired from the Air Force Chaplain Guikema is able to work part time. His experience in chaplaincy matters is most helpful. This is, however, an interim arrangement and the committee will keep the synod(s) apprised on future needs in this area.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *Representation at the Synod*

We request that our executive secretary, the Rev. Harold Bode, and Professor R. Recker be permitted to speak at the synod on matters affecting the Chaplain Committee.

B. *Presentations of Chaplains*

We request that full-time chaplains who may be present while synod is in session be presented to synod and that two of them be allowed to speak briefly to synod. The annual Chaplains Retreat is set for June 11 through 13 and we request that permission be given to present the chaplains immediately after the noon recess on June 12.

C. *Committee Personnel*

1. Replacing two members

Two members of the Chaplain Committee, Mr. Donald Swierenga and Chaplain Duane Visser, have completed their second three-year terms with the committee and are not eligible for reappointment. Both have served the committee with faithful, competent leadership and wise counsel.

To replace Mr. Swierenga on the committee, we present Mr. Donald Dekker, a sales representative at Steelcase Corporation, and Mr. James Doezema, an accountant with Professional Management. Both of these

men are members of the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids.

To replace Chaplain Visser on the committee, we present the names of Chaplain A. Dirk Evans, clinical pastoral education supervisor at Harper-Grace Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, who serves as an elder at the Dearborn Christian Reformed Church; and Chaplain Marvin P. Hoogland, serving as pastoral counselor at the Chicago Christian Counseling Center, a member of the Hope Christian Reformed Church, Oak Forest, Illinois.

2. A personnel problem and a proposed three-step solution.

In 1982, five of the ten members of the committee will have completed their second three-year terms, making them ineligible for reappointment. A sixth member will have completed his first three-year term—he is eligible for reappointment.

In order to provide for better continuity of membership on the committee, the committee proposes that synod elect three new members in 1981. This will provide an eleven-member committee in 1981 through 1982. The committee proposes that in 1982 synod elect three new members instead of five—this will provide a nine-member committee for 1982 through 1983. The committee proposes that in 1983 synod elect three new members, which will provide a regular ten-member committee thereafter.

a. The committee requests synod to approve this proposed three-step solution to our personnel problem.

b. The committee submits the names of Mr. Gerald Folkerts, a social worker at the Veterans Administration District Office and member of the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church; and Mr. Cal Mulder, administrator at Butterworth Hospital and member of the Covenant Christian Reformed Church at Cutlerville, Michigan.

D. *Change in Fiscal Year*

We request synod to recognize that the Chaplain Committee, in compliance with the 1980 Synod's action, switched from a calendar year to a fiscal year with August 31 as the closing date.

E. *Financial Matters*

The Chaplain Committee requests synod to approve the quota of \$5.25 per family for fiscal year 1982. Fiscal year 1982 will begin September 1, 1981, and end August 31, 1982. Please note that approximately \$1.50 of the quota will be used to pay pension premiums for chaplains.

X. FINANCIAL STATEMENT, AUDITORS REPORT, AND PROPOSED BUDGET

The financial statement for 1980 is submitted and will appear in *Agenda for Synod 1981, Financial & Business Supplement*. The auditor's report and proposed budget for 1982 will be available at the time of the synod.

Chaplain Committee
Harold Bode, executive secretary

REPORT 10
CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

The Church Help Committee met periodically throughout the year to conduct its business. We considered twenty-seven requests for loans. Twenty-four were approved for a total of \$401,155. Three requests were denied. Two were denied because of the size and financial stability of the congregations requesting the loans. The other request was denied because the group requesting the loan was not an organized church. Approximately \$100,000 more was loaned in 1980 than in 1979. Most of the loans were ten-year loans. Fifteen- and twenty-year loans are exceptional. This provides for a more rapid turnover of funds and allows us to be of assistance to more congregations.

Nearly all of the churches are prompt in the repayment of their loans. We are grateful for this as the fund is a revolving fund and this enables us to assist churches who are in need of funds.

The Church Help Committee has opened a Canadian account and the by-laws have been changed to reflect the opening of the account and the repayment of these loans in Canadian currency.

We await the report of the committee appointed by the Synod of 1980 to study the feasibility of establishing a Denominational Loan Fund. With the establishment of such a fund, we could be of assistance to many more churches.

We would call to the attention of synod that Mr. Marion Wiersma has retired and for this reason has terminated his service as acting treasurer of the committee. Mr. Wiersma has served our committee as treasurer and acting treasurer for twenty-six years. He has given many hours and great dedication to the work of the committee throughout these years. We thank him for his willingness to be of service to our denomination in this way and we wish him and his wife God's blessing in their retirement years.

The term of Mr. Elmer Huizenga expires this year. A nomination will be prepared and sent to synod.

Inquiries concerning loans from the Church Help Committee should be sent to the secretary, the Rev. John T. Ebbers.

MATTER REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

We request that our secretary, the Rev. John T. Ebbers and/or our treasurer, Mr. Elmer Huizenga, be consulted on matters pertaining to the

Church Help Committee when considered by synod or its advisory committee and that they be given the privilege of the floor.

Church Help Committee

E. Knott, president

J. T. Ebberts, secretary

E. Huizenga, treasurer

L. Bouma

M. Breems

B. De Wit

Note: Financial statements and reports will be placed in the Financial & Business Supplement—Agenda for Synod 1981

REPORT 11

TRANSLATION AND EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE
COMMITTEE (TEAC)

I. ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

The Synod of 1979 established an umbrella-type organization called the Translation and Educational Assistance Committee (TEAC). Two committees, the Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad (CEACA) and the Spanish Literature Committee (SLC) were assigned to TEAC as subcommittees. Synod also approved the composition of TEAC's membership (*Acts of Synod 1979*, Art. 74).

The Synod of 1980 tentatively approved the proposed structure, mandate, and task of TEAC, deferring finalization of approval until 1981; and mandated the SIC to work with TEAC in the coordination of its programming and the determination of its relationship to other CRC boards and standing committees.

II. RELATIONSHIP OF TEAC TO CEACA

Prior to 1979 CEACA functioned as a standing committee of synod. CEACA is reluctant to become a subcommittee of TEAC because its mandate to provide scholarship assistance appears to be distinctly different from the major thrust of TEAC's mandate: Translation and production of Reformed literature in major world languages. A number of meetings, called by the stated clerk and DFC, were held with representatives of TEAC and CEACA. These meetings have had the following results:

1. TEAC expresses preference for the tentative relationship it has: a standing committee of synod similar to SCORR and the Chaplain Committee. It is open to the possibility that CEACA continue to function as one of its subcommittees but also willing to acquiesce to a request from CEACA that it return to its former status.

2. CEACA reports that it desires to return to its previous position of a standing committee directly responsible to synod (see Section VIII of this report).

3. The SIC, having heard the positions of TEAC and CEACA, will be making its own recommendations to synod regarding this relationship.

III. MANDATE, COMPOSITION, TASK, AND MEMBERSHIP OF TEAC.

If the SIC recommends that CEACA continue to be a subcommittee of TEAC we recommend that the following mandate, task, terms of office, subcommittee composition, and subcommittee task descriptions be approved:

A. *The Mandate of TEAC*

The mandate of TEAC is to be responsible to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church for:

1. Providing for the translation and publication of needed Reformed literature in the major languages of the world. This will involve:
 - a. Determining the need for Reformed literature within the various major world language groups.
 - b. Developing plans to meet these needs.
 - c. Receiving the present Spanish Literature Committee as a subcommittee.
 - d. Organizing other subcommittees to develop and carry out specific programs.
 - e. Coordinating these efforts with other denominational and church-related agencies working in literature translation and publication.
2. Providing for educational assistance to churches abroad. This will involve:
 - a. Arranging for and providing the financial support of academic training and ecclesiastical internships for qualified and duly endorsed theological students, professors, pastors, and lay leaders from Reformed churches abroad.
 - b. Providing library assistance for Christian education institutions abroad.
 - c. Receiving the present CEACA as a subcommittee.
 - d. Coordinating the work of CEACA with other agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church.

B. *The Task of TEAC*

The task of TEAC will be to ascertain needs among churches that use major world languages for the translation and publication of Reformed literature and to identify needs for educational assistance among churches abroad, to determine which of these needs the Christian Reformed Church is able to meet, and to develop ways in which this ministry may be carried out through TEAC's subcommittees. To carry out this task TEAC will be responsible for:

1. Central administration
 - a. Electing new members for existing subcommittees from nominations by the particular subcommittee.
 - b. Setting up new committees for translation and publication of Reformed literature in major world languages and select initial members for these committees.
 - c. Preparing a coordinated report for synod.
 - d. Providing requested secretarial services.
2. Coordination of the efforts of its subcommittees
 - a. Informing subcommittees of each other's activities in areas of mutual interest.

b. Providing possible workshops or conferences on needs of churches using major world languages and/or churches abroad in the areas of education and translation.

c. Periodically surveying the churches we assist in the above areas to determine continuing or developing needs and informing the proper subcommittees of such findings.

3. Fiscal planning, bookkeeping, and accounting

a. Planning an overall budget based on requests from subcommittees and projected new programs.

b. Receiving financial reports from subcommittees, providing central auditing, and consolidating these reports for synod.

c. Requesting synod for quota funds and for permission to solicit offerings from the churches.

d. Receiving quota income and providing disbursements according to the requests of subcommittee treasurers.

4. Fund raising and promotion

a. Raising money needed above quota funds to meet the approved budgets of subcommittees.

b. Preparing, in consultation with subcommittees, appropriate promotional materials and arranging for their distribution.

C. TEAC Terms of Office

1. TEAC representatives from Calvin College and Seminary, CRWRC, CRWM, the Back to God Hour, the Board of Publications, and the Board of Home Missions will be appointed by Synod for three-year terms (initially staggered so that all terms do not expire at once) after nomination by the agencies themselves.

2. Members-at-large will be appointed by synod for three-year terms (initially staggered so that both terms do not expire at once) after nomination by TEAC.

D. The Composition of TEAC Subcommittees

1. The members of each subcommittee should be persons with special competence in the particular areas in which the subcommittee functions.

a. For the educational assistance subcommittee (CEACA) special knowledge of educational institutions and/or special knowledge of the cultures from which the students come is desirable.

b. For translation subcommittees competence in the particular language involved is desirable.

2. Members of TEAC may serve on subcommittees.

3. Subcommittee members will ordinarily be members of the Christian Reformed Church; however, when subcommittees or parts of subcommittees will be functioning in countries other than those in North America, members of Reformed/Presbyterian churches in those countries may be asked to serve.

4. When new subcommittees are formed, TEAC will appoint the members.

5. Replacement or additional members will be selected by TEAC from nominations prepared by each existing subcommittee.

6. Each subcommittee will select its own officers.

7. Terms of members, and terms and functions of officers, will be determined by a general policy drawn up by TEAC.

E. The Task of TEAC Subcommittees

1. Determine the needs for ministry within their particular area of responsibility.

2. Develop programs that will meet these needs and carry them out within the approved budget.

3. Direct and monitor the disbursement of funds.

4. Prepare and propose an annual budget for inclusion in the overall TEAC budget.

5. Keep TEAC informed of their activities through the submission of minutes and reports.

6. Prepare an annual report on program and finance for inclusion in the TEAC report to synod.

7. Encourage the cooperation of denominational and church related agencies in approved projects.

8. Designate one of its members to assist TEAC in promotion and fund raising.

The membership of TEAC under the above mandate includes the following:

Rev. I. Jen, BTGH (1981)

Rev. J. Heerema, CEACA (1982)

Rev. P. Borgdorff, treasurer, CRBHM (1982)

Dr. H. Smit, chairman, CRBP (1981)

Mr. M. Bruinooge, CRWRC (1983)

Rev. W. Van Tol, secretary, CRWM (1981)

Rev. R. Recker, Calvin College & Seminary (1981)

Dr. E. Roels, member-at-large (1983)

Dr. R. Vander Vennen, member-at-large (1982)

The terms of the representatives of the Board of Publications, CRWM, and Calvin College and Seminary expire on August 31, 1981. These agencies have been requested to provide to synod a nomination for membership. These will come to your attention either through the reports of these agencies or by way of a supplementary report of TEAC.

If the SIC recommends that CEACA be restored to its previous position of a standing committee directly responsible to synod, TEAC will submit a revised proposal on its composition, mandate, task, and name in a supplementary report.

IV. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Since June 1980, TEAC has met three times. It wishes to report the following decisions and recommendations:

- A. TEAC will ordinarily meet in the months of December and June each year.
- B. TEAC decided to establish a program and fiscal year of September 1 to August 31.
- C. TEAC approved the establishment of a subcommittee called the Chinese Literature Committee (CLC).
- D. TEAC approved the establishment of a subcommittee called the Arabic Literature Committee (ALC).
- E. TEAC adopted guidelines which further describe the structure, task, publication policy, financial policy, and fund raising and promotional responsibility of itself and its subcommittees.
- F. TEAC decided not to accede to the request of the American Calvinist Fellowship (ACF) that it become a subcommittee of TEAC:

Grounds:

1. Portuguese and Indonesian are Priority Two languages for consideration in the establishment of language subcommittees. A realistic assessment of our capacity to expand our budget suggests that we should concentrate on Priority One languages before approving a committee for two Priority Two languages.
 2. AFC, as its membership is presently composed, does not meet our criteria for composition of subcommittees.
- G. TEAC decided to encourage ACF to continue its important work of translation and publication in these two languages until such times as we are able to establish subcommittees for them; to be open to the possibility of providing ACF with grants to assist in publication; and to respectfully request synod to place the ACF on the list of nondenominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.
- H. TEAC approved a revised budget for 1981 (8 months).
- I. TEAC approved a proposed 1982 (Sept. 1, 1981–Aug. 31, 1982) budget.
- J. TEAC respectfully requests synod to place TEAC and its language subcommittees—and to continue CEACA—on the list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

V. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE SPANISH LITERATURE COMMITTEE (SLC)

The purpose of the Spanish Literature Committee is to prepare materials in the Spanish language, usually through translation. Distribution or sales are done through the good offices of TELL. Forty-four titles have been prepared and most of these are still in print and available to the Spanish speaking world.

Through the hard work and fine cooperation of SLC's editorial supervisor, retired Latin American missionary, the Rev. J. Jerry Pott and production supervisor, Mrs. Lydia Moes Dokter, the staff of the Christian Reformed Board of Publications, plus various and sundry editors, proof-readers, and translators the following books were published in 1980:

Commentary on I, II Timothy; Titus	Hendriksen
Commentary on I, II Thessalonians	Hendriksen
The Plan of God	Packer
Introduction to the New Testament	Harrison
Crises of Jesus (sermon outlines)	Steigenga
The New Life (sermon outlines)	Borrego
Knowing God (sermon outlines)	Arnold Brink

Especially the publishing of the Hendriksen commentaries is a result of a great deal of effort on the part of our staff and we want to express the gratitude of SLC for this achievement.

Because of the demand, the following books were reprinted in 1980:

Teachers' Manual No. 1	Hermeneutics
Contemporary World Theology	Homiletics
D.V.B.S. Material	Stewardship
Decision Making	Worship
Authority and the Bible	Romans, Hebrews, Calvin

The following is a list of works now in one of the several phases of publication, together with the estimated date of publication:

Glorious Body of Christ	R. B. Kuiper	1981
Commentary on John	Hendriksen	1981
Commentary on Philippians	Hendriksen	1981
Promise and Deliverance, Vol. 1	De Graaf	1981
Apostles to the City	Greenway	1981
Commentary on Colossians	Hendriksen	1982
Commentary on Philemon	Hendriksen	1982
Commentary on Ephesians	Hendriksen	1982
Reformed Doctrine on Predestination	Boettner	1982
Commentary on Mark	Hendriksen	1983
Commentary on Galatians	Hendriksen	1983
Commentary on Matthew	Hendriksen	1983
Promise and Deliverance, Vol. 2	De Graaf	1984
The Bible and the Future	Hoekema	1984
Commentary on Luke	Hendriksen	1984

SLC has met according to the need during the past year. One of the important items of business always before the committee is the selection of those works that ought to be translated. Therefore, SLC has been formalizing the criteria which it has been using for the selection of new projects. This has not been an easy task, since there is always a certain amount of personal judgment or taste involved, as well as guesswork as to what will have a good reception by the public.

One of the projects under consideration by SLC at the present time is the publishing of a three-year cycle of good Sunday school materials. This has been a frequently mentioned need by our missionaries and would reach a large number of people each week. Work is being done with some of the people who are preparing extension training material. Miss W. Gritter has prepared a series of lessons for children following our book, *El Gran Libro* by Anne De Vries. Christianity continues to grow in Latin America, but it is often theologically weak and uninformed. Therefore, SLC feels that publication of worthwhile Sunday school material can make a real contribution to the formation of the evangelical church in Latin America. We ask your prayers for God's guidance in this important work.

SLC members, with their terms of office, are:

Rev. P. Borgdorff (1981)
 Rev. J. Boonstra (1981)
 Rev. B. Dokter (1982)
 Mr. H. Baker (1982)
 Mr. A. J. Heynen (1983)
 Dr. R. Greenway (1983)

TEAC decided to incorporate the SLC request for \$1.50 in quota into its 1982 budget requests.

VI. REPORT OF THE CHINESE LITERATURE COMMITTEE (CLC)

After a preparatory meeting between the Revs. Ed Van Baak and Isaac Jen to lay the groundwork, the first CLC meeting was called. It took place on Sept. 26 and 27, 1980, in Chicago with all five members present.

CLC members with their terms of office, are:

Rev. I. Jen (1983)
 Mr. Lin Lih (1983)
 Rev. Samuel Ling (1982)
 Rev. Paul Szto (1982)
 Rev. E. Van Baak (1981)

CLC is working on the selection of book titles and possible translators/writers. Four books were chosen as initial projects. They are: (1) *An Introduction to the Science of Missions* (first 100 pages), by J. Bavinck; (2) *Holy Spirit Baptism*, by A. Hoekema; (3) *Christian Meditation*, by E. Clowney; and (4) *Use of Scripture in Counseling*, by J. Adams. The variety of subject matter was intentional. A list of prospective translators is being developed. Several manuscripts and offers to write on certain topics have been received. In order to get an objective assessment of value and quality the manuscripts have been sent to two qualified Chinese persons for evaluation.

In November, the Rev. Isaac Jen met with two Chinese ministers of Reformed persuasion and the Revs. Carl Afman and Peter Tong of the Taiwan Mission of CRWM for consultation. Pastors Tong and Afman explained the Taiwan Mission's plans in literature production, and they

indicated their willingness to cooperate fully with the plans of the CLC. A list of books to be translated by the Tien-dao Publishing House in Hongkong, which includes a number of books written by Reformed authors, has been received.

CLC plans to contact prospective translators soon to start on the first set of projects. CLC hopes to contact prospective writers for future projects during 1981.

VII. REPORT OF THE ARABIC LITERATURE COMMITTEE (ALC)

In December 1980, TEAC established an Arabic Literature Committee. Three members were appointed:

Rev. Victor Atallah (1982)

Dr. Bert De Vries (1982)

Rev. Bassam Madany (1983)

Two additional members will be appointed in June 1981. The committee is only in the beginning stage of organization.

VIII. REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD (CEACA)

The year 1980 began for our committee on a somewhat depressing note, but as time went on we experienced the joy and confidence that comes from seeing God's grace and provision in abundant measure, and we are convinced that the program synod has outlined for us is one of high priority for the church. We began the year with a significant financial deficit and had to borrow funds in order to maintain our support to churches overseas who have entrusted the advanced training of personnel to our denomination in order to advance the work in their homelands after their return. The timely, generous support of churches, individuals, foundations, and denominational agencies made it possible for us to repay borrowed funds and to begin the year 1981 with an adequate balance that relieves tensions as to whether or not we can honor our commitments.

The work of the committee members was faithfully carried out. Members of the committee spend much time in assisting the students in the period of cross-cultural adjustment, housing, clothing, scheduling, and general orientation. In the period of their initial stay with us the committee seeks to be the bridge from their homeland and friends who have been left behind until they form meaningful, supportive new friendships with congregations, school, and community. Informal social hours in which the committee and students learn to know one another is one way we use to bridge that gap. Transportation and other assistance demands a great deal of the time of some members as well.

CEACA has again had opportunity to enjoy joint support and sponsorship with other denominational agencies. We mention specifically our cooperative, joint working with SCORR, World Missions, the Back to God Hour, as well as Calvin Seminary. Through a more aggressive program of promotion CEACA has become better known to our churches.

The response of the churches to our needs has indicated that this ministry is one which arises from the heart of the church. While our name—Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad—is very accurate from a principal viewpoint, we have considered whether for purposes of clear understanding of the focus of our work a change of name (to something like "Foreign Student Scholarship Committee") would better express what is the nature of our service.

We wrestle also with the increasing tensions between the alternatives of supporting more students who must leave their wives and children to come to the United States versus supporting fewer students whose wives accompany them. The latter alternative represents one of the vast changes taking place in other cultures with respect to the relationships within the family, but the added costs of transportation, housing, and maintenance continues to skyrocket. While our committee holds firmly to the objective that sponsored students must first complete the highest level of training available in their homeland before coming to the United States we nevertheless recognize the problems here and abroad which result from forced separation of spouses for a year and sometimes two.

A. Programs Completed and Supported in 1980

1. Programs completed in 1980

This past year a number of students completed their studies, returned to their homelands, and entered designated service with their home churches on whose behalf assistance was granted.

a. Emmanuel Ade (Nigeria) completed a two-year program for the MTS degree at Calvin Seminary and in June 1980 returned to his homeland to teach at TCNN.

b. Mariano Avila's (Mexico) two-year program for the Th.M. degree was completed in May 1980, and he and his family have returned to Mexico.

c. Waldir Berndt (Brazil) and family returned to their home church in January 1980. A program of research and study was made possible through cooperation with and a generous grant from the Board of World Missions.

d. David Bura (Nigeria) also received the MTS degree from Calvin Seminary and returned to Nigeria to teach at TCNN. He was sponsored for a two-year period.

e. Mano and Shirin Daniel (South India) returned to work in their home church, the Church of South India, in May 1980. Their stay in the United States included a period of study at RBC followed by a two-year program at Calvin Seminary from which Mano received the MCE degree. They are active in pastor's training and evangelism with the Madras diocese.

f. Celsino Gama (Brazil) completed his course work for the Th.M. degree from Calvin Seminary and has returned to work in his home country. His sponsorship was funded to a significant degree in cooperation with the Back to God Hour.

g. Fezile Benjamin Mbenenge (South Africa) and family returned to their homeland in January 1980, and to service with his home church.

2. Programs presently supported

a. Humberto Casanova (Chile) will complete a one-year program of study in November 1981. The Back to God Hour has made possible his sponsorship in cooperation with CEACA, as well as generous assistance so that his wife could join him with their two children. He will return to serve part time in the John Calvin Seminary in Chile.

b. Peter Fomusoh (Cameroon) will complete a two-year program leading to the MCA degree in May 1981, and will resume his pastorate and denominational ministries upon his return to Cameroon.

c. Handwell Hara (Malawi) will complete work for the M.T.S. degree in the biblical languages in June 1981. The cooperation of the Westminster Presbyterian Church has made it possible for his wife to be with him for his two-year study program.

d. Siphon Hlakanyana (South Africa) is jointly sponsored by SCORR and our committee for a Th.M. program in Church History. He will return in June 1981. His wife has recently (Dec. 1980) joined him in joint arrangement with SCORR.

e. Charles Jansz (Sri Lanka) arrived in August 1980, to begin a one-year program specializing in Church Education and the M.Div. degree at Calvin Seminary. The kindness of the Fuller Avenue Church has made it possible for his wife to join him. They will return to Sri Lanka in June 1981.

We are happy to report that these students have done well academically. All are associated with local churches, some taking very active interest in and actively participating in the life of local congregations. Calvin Seminary is enriched by their presence and contributions. The students likewise speak frequently with appreciation for the assistance given by the Christian Reformed Church.

3. Projected sponsorships

Our committee is once again contacting Third World RES churches with information regarding the program assigned us. At present we have approved the following to begin in September 1981:

a. Edward Namukoa (Kenya) will graduate from the RBC in May 1981. He will begin a one-year program at Calvin College and Seminary leading to the Master's degree in teaching (M.A.T.) in the summer of 1981.

b. Yukio Kanata (Japan) is an instructor at Kobe Seminary and will return to this position and a pastorate after completing the work toward a Th.M. degree at Calvin Seminary.

c. Judi Jesmon Zingoni (Rhodesia-Zimbabwe) will also begin a program of study this September 1981, leading to the MCE degree at Calvin Seminary.

We are also in correspondence with others whose applications are presently incomplete. The churches represented in these applications include those located in Indonesia, South India, South Africa, Kenya, Korea, Cameroon, Rhodesia, Zambia, and Botswana. A unique circumstance presented itself to our committee to give formal sponsorship (financial sponsorship is being arranged by an *ad hoc* committee) to Lu

Fengming from the People's Republic of China to study English at Calvin College. The special circumstances in China make impossible the application of our guidelines in her case. She is employed in the Foreign Language Institute, Beijing, as an English translator. Her superiors endorse her study at Calvin College, knowing it is a Christian college and its staff deeply committed to the Christian faith and perspective.

B. Library Assistance

Mr. Peter De Klerk, theological librarian of Calvin Library, continues to provide theological books to libraries of Third World seminaries and Bible institutes. Donations of books are very welcome, and every year several hundred books are sent overseas to strengthen the library holdings of schools which ordinarily could not afford them. Since many of these institutions can also use selected theological books in languages other than English, donations of books in other languages are appreciated. Donations and correspondence should be addressed as follows:

Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad
c/o Mr. Peter De Klerk, Theological Librarian
Calvin Theological Seminary Library
3233 Burton Street, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

C. Housing

Providing housing for our students involves much work for the committee. For several years a house on Sigsbee St. SE, in Grand Rapids served as a home for those who were not married. This year, however, we were able to lease a home on Oakhill, SE, owned by one of our missionaries. Under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Fomusoh, this home has proved to be a real blessing. It is more difficult to secure adequate housing at reasonable rates for married students. The assistance of church members who have or know of available units will be appreciated. Contact can be made with Mr. Mark Muller, 1101 Breton Rd., SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, chairman of our Housing Committee.

D. Relationship to TEAC

This past year has been for TEAC a year of organization and development along the lines of synod's mandate. Our representatives to TEAC speak with appreciation of the cordiality and cooperation between TEAC and CEACA. We reported to last year's synod that we would address Synod of 1981 on this matter and wish to do so in the context of our great appreciation for TEAC's consideration of CEACA's unique character and mandate. The Synodical Interim Committee is likewise concerned about the relationship of TEAC and CEACA and mutual discussions have been held on that level.

In its own review of the relationship of TEAC and CEACA, our committee judges that there is no principal reason for CEACA to be merged

with TEAC since the focus and program of CEACA is distinctly different from the other committees that come under TEAC. In addition, CEACA has a long history of active coordination and cooperation with varied denominational agencies as is detailed in our reports through the years. We therefore request that CEACA be permitted by synod to return to its long-held previous position of standing committee directly responsible to synod. Our representatives to synod are prepared to serve synod with full information concerning this matter.

E. Committee Memberships

Whereas we understand that at present we must seek to work within the guidelines established by TEAC, we propose that the following be appointed to serve for three years as members of our committee:

1. Mr. Peter De Klerk has completed his first three-year term and is eligible for an additional term.
2. Mr. Aldrich Evenhouse has completed his first three-year term and is eligible for an additional term.
3. The Rev. Jacob Heerema has completed six years on our committee and by synodical rules someone else must be nominated in his place. Our committee recommends that the Rev. Jacob Hasper be appointed to a three-year term as his replacement.

F. South Africa Scholarship

We have been in consultation with SCORR and representatives of All Nations CRC (Halifax) with reference to the establishment of a permanent South Africa Scholarship Fund. In response CEACA has given assurance that the endorsement and sponsorship of worthy South African applicants endorsed by their denomination is a high priority for our committee and that we will endeavor to continue to sponsor students from the black churches of South Africa so long as this priority exists. The presence of these students among us is valued highly by all.

G. Financial Matters

We have already detailed the matters concerning the change in our financial condition during the year. Our account now shows an adequate balance because of (1) funds on hand pledged for certain students and programs, (2) a cutback early in the year in active recruitment of applications, (3), anticipated high expenses for travel costs which we must meet midyear 1981. We are adjusting our proposed budget for travel, tuition, insurance, and living allowance for 1981 because of the greatly increased expense due to inflation.

We do occasionally find some difficulty arising from students soliciting funds for their personal needs, or from individuals and churches giving our students assistance of which we are not aware. We do encourage churches to accept responsibility to sponsor specific students and are ready to give full information and make recommendations. We appreciate very much if churches and individuals check with us before committing themselves; we are also prepared for channeling such love gifts through our committee.

COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

Balance Sheet

December 31, 1980

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash in bank	\$25,294.96	
Quota receivable	<u>6,893.66</u>	
Total current assets		\$32,188.62
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>\$32,188.62</u>

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Tuition payable	\$ 741.00	
Deferred income	6,000.00	
Reserve for budgeted scholarships	<u>20,000.00</u>	
Total current liabilities		\$26,741.00

FUND EQUITY

Fund equity, January 1, 1980	\$ (5,610.71)	
Receipts over expenditures for 1980	31,058.33	
Unspent budgeted scholarships	<u>(20,000.00)</u>	
Fund equity, December 31, 1980		\$ 5,447.62
Total liabilities and fund equity		<u>\$32,188.62</u>

COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements

For Year Ended December 31, 1980

RECEIPTS

Quota receipts	\$27,956.12	
Voluntary collections and donations	35,574.86	
Special Contributions:		
Agency grants	13,346.62	
Foundation grants	<u>1,000.00</u>	
Total quota and support gifts		\$ 77,877.60
Less: Canadian exchange losses		<u>(1,143.25)</u>
Net quota and support gifts		\$ 76,734.35

EXPENDITURES

Program services:			
Student support program	\$44,582.10		
Library assistance program	358.96		
Total program services		\$44,941.06	
Supportive services:			
Management, general	\$ 523.53		
Fund raising	211.43		
Total support services		\$ 734.96	
Total expenditures			\$45,676.02
Receipts over expenditures			31,058.33
Less: Unspent budgeted scholarships carried over to 1981			20,000.00
Net receipts over expenditures			\$11,058.33

CEACA

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET

January 1 to December 31, 1982

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>% OF TOTALS</u>
SUPPORT FROM:			
QUOTAS— Total		\$ 34,000.00	40%
Voluntary contributions (direct)	\$ 11,700.00		
Church collections & donations	30,000.00		
Church missionary support	.00		
Special contributions:			
Endowments, legacies, grants, etc.	10,000.00		
NONQUOTA		\$ 51,700.00	60%
OTHER RECEIPTS			
Describe		\$.00	0%
TOTAL SUPPORT & OTHER RECEIPTS		\$ 85,700.00	100%
EXPENDITURES:			
PROGRAM SERVICES:			
Student scholarship	\$ 83,700.00		
Library assistance	500.00		
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$ 84,200.00		98%
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES			
Management, general	\$ 400.00		
Fund raising	1,100.00		
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	\$ 1,500.00		2%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$ 85,700.00	100%

H. Items Requiring Synodical Attention

1. We request that the Rev. Jacob Heerema and Wayne Medendorp be recognized as our representatives at synod and that they be given the privilege of meeting with the appropriate advisory committees at synod and of speaking at synod when our report is under consideration.

2. We request synod to express its approval of the work of the committee.

3. We request synod to reply to our request (see Section VIII, D) to permit CEACA to continue as a standing committee of synod under our original mandate.

Note: Items under committee membership and budget we assume will be included in the report of TEAC to the synod.

Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad

Jacob Heerema, chairman
 Richard R. De Ridder, secretary
 Wayne Medendorp, treasurer
 Peter De Klerk
 Aldrich Evenhouse
 Edna Greenway
 Ruth Hoekema
 Mark Muller
 Edward Van Baak

IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. The financial report and proposed budget of CEACA have been included previously in its report.

B. The 1980 committee expenses of TEAC, CLC, and ALC were submitted to the office of the DFC since no budget for 1981 had been established.

SPANISH LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Financial Report

December 31, 1980

JANUARY 1 BALANCES:

Checking account	\$10,851.58	
Savings account	<u>46,359.57</u>	57,211.15

INCOME:

Quota	59,343.48	
Interest	2,097.45	
Sale of typewriters	400.00	
Gifts	44.04	
Sales	18,124.46	
Norberto Wolf, on account	<u>50.00</u>	
Total income		<u>80,059.43</u>

TOTAL INCOME AND BEGINNING BALANCE

137,270.58

DISBURSEMENTS:

Administrative:		
Secretary	\$ 1,674.70	
Accounting	1,000.00	
Travel	376.18	
Total administrative		\$3,050.88

General:

Supplies/books/postage	1,140.01	
Typewriter	935.00	
TELL book discount	449.79	
Insurance on inventory	660.00	
Auditing fees	1,700.00	
Roeda travel	786.58	
Total general		\$5,671.38

PRODUCTION:

101 - DVBS manuals		
Reprint (partial)	9,184.00	
104 - <i>El Gran Libro, Manual 1</i>		
Reprint 1010 copies	850.00	
112 - <i>Teología Contemporánea</i>		
Reprint 1000 copies	1,250.00	
113 - <i>Hermenéutica</i>		
Reprint 2,500 copies	1,500.00	
114 - <i>Homilética</i>		
Reprint 2525 copies	1,300.00	
115 - <i>Mayordomía</i>		
Reprint 2080 copies	900.00	
116 - <i>El Culto</i>		
Reprint 2040 copies	1,075.00	
140 - <i>Introducción al Nuevo Testamento</i>		
Proofreading and printing (2000)	17,341.50	
141 - <i>I y II Timoteo/Tito</i>		
Proofreading and printing (3114)	16,458.50	
142 - <i>I y II Tesalonicenses</i>		
Proofreading and printing (3157)	12,555.00	
144 - <i>Cuerpo Glorioso de Cristo</i>		
Editing and art work	1,816.75	
148 - <i>Romanos</i> (Calvino)		
Reprint 2100 copies	4,030.08	
149 - <i>Hebreos</i> (Calvino)		
Reprint 2016 copies	3,709.44	
152 - <i>Promise and Deliverance</i>		
Editing	397.50	
156 - <i>El Plan de Dios</i>		
Proofreading and printing (3250)	1,382.50	
159 - <i>Commentary on John</i>		
Editing	2,542.25	
160 - <i>Commentary on Philippians</i>		
Editing	1,218.25	
161 - <i>Commentary on Matthew</i>		
Translation	4,529.50	
162 - <i>Commentary on Colossians/Philemon</i>		
Editing	404.50	
164 - <i>Commentary on Galatians</i>		
Translation	243.00	
165 - <i>Apostles to the City</i>		
Editing	102.50	

166 - <i>Commentary on Mark</i> Translation	3,411.00	
167 - <i>The Bible and the Future</i> , Vol. 1 Translation	100.00	
168 - Sermon Outlines, Steigenga Printing 2100 copies	810.00	
169 - Sermon Outlines, Borrego Printing 2200 copies	800.00	
179 - Sermon Outlines, Brink Printing 2175 copies	882.50	
Total Production		<u>88,793.77</u>
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		97,516.03
December 31, 1980 Checking account	6,297.53	
December 31, 1980 Savings account	<u>33,457.02</u>	
TOTAL December 31, 1980 Balance		<u>39,754.55</u>
		137,270.58

D. 1981-82 Proposed Budget

Income:

Quota income	<u>126,953.00</u>
Total income	\$126,953.00

Expenditure:

Administration	8,857.00
Arabic Literature Committee	14,762.00
Chinese Literature Committee	14,762.00
Spanish Literature Committee	<u>88,572.00</u>
TOTAL expenditure:	\$126,953.00

E. Quota Requests

TEAC respectfully requests that synod approve the following per-family quota for 1982:

1. TEAC administration	.15
2. Arabic Literature Committee	.25
3. Chinese Literature Committee	.25
4. Spanish Literature Committee	1.50
5. CEACA	<u>.50</u>
TOTAL QUOTA REQUEST:	\$2.65

X. SUMMARY OF MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. Approval of representation:

1. For TEAC: H. Smit and P. Borgdorff
2. For CEACA: J. Heerema and W. Medendorp

B. Approval of the mandate, task, terms of office and composition of TEAC and its subcommittees, Section III (unless the SIC recommends CEACA's return to its previous position as a standing committee in which case TEAC will submit a revised proposal in a supplementary report).

- C. Approval of the work of TEAC and its subcommittees (including CEACA).
- D. Response to the request of the American Calvinist Fellowship to be placed on the list of nondenominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings (see Section IV, G).
- E. Approval of request that synod place TEAC, and its literature subcommittees and continue CEACA on the list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings (see Section IV, J).
- F. Approval of committee membership on CEACA (see Section VIII, E).
- G. Response to CEACA's request that it be a standing committee of synod with its original mandate (see Sections VIII, D and II).
- H. Approval of budget requests (see Sections VIII, G and IX, D).
- I. Approval of quota requests (see Section IX, E).

Translation and Educational
Assistance Committee,
William Van Tol, secretary

REPORT 12
FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

I. ORGANIZATION

In keeping with the decision of the Synod of 1958, the committee is composed of three laymen and two ministers. The present membership of the committee is as follows: president—Mr. John R. Swierenga of Elmhurst, Illinois (1981); vice-president and comptroller—Mr. George Vande Werken of Westchester, Illinois (1983); secretary—the Rev. George Holwerda of Highland, Indiana (1983); treasurer—Mr. H. Ray Schaafsma of Elmhurst, Illinois (1982). The Rev John Vander Lugt (1981) served until December of 1980, when he left the Chicago area to serve the church at Bunde, Minnesota.

The terms of Mr. John R. Swierenga and the Rev. John Vander Lugt will expire this year. Neither are eligible for another term. The committee will present nominations for these two positions.

II. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

FNC Statistics for 1980

Applications processed—153

Assistance granted—152

Children's allowances—298

Years of service allowance—1,354 (8.85 average)

Average size of church—36 families

III. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

A harmonious relationship continues between FNC and HMB. In order to maintain effective communication and cooperation between the two boards, the HMB has appointed the Rev. Peter Borgdorff, field secretary, to serve as permanent liaison. He receives a copy of all minutes and is informed of all meetings, attending whenever necessary.

The purpose of this liaison is to maintain close cooperation in areas of mutual concern—concerns such as churches that receive Grants-in-Aid from HMB and also funds from FNC; churches that are working toward Stage IV, at which point they normally leave the supervision of HMB and come under FNC; churches under FNC that desire a MAP (Mission Analysis Projection) as a means of evaluating their potential and stimulating growth awareness.

IV. FINANCIAL MATTERS

As the Synod of 1980 was informed, FNC has been placed in the position of deficit financing. We have been forced to borrow a substantial

amount in order to meet our obligations to the churches. Undoubtedly, we shall have to borrow additional monies to meet our first quarter payments for 1981, due to smaller quota payments from the churches in the first quarter. We are hopeful that the deficit may be erased by the end of 1981. We are anticipating approximately ten new churches from HMB from July 1981 to January 1982. This does not take into account additional churches that may need FNC assistance.

Your committee has dealt responsibly with the requests that we have received within the framework of the rules that synod has adopted. The aim of this committee, by mandate of synod, is to urge churches to become self-supporting as soon as possible. We are determined to seek this goal in order to diminish the demands made on FNC. However, we realize that this goal is made more difficult by our highly inflationary times.

V. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. *Representation at Synod*

We request that our secretary and treasurer be consulted on matters pertaining to FNC when considered by synod or its advisory committee, and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of the secretary or treasurer, we request that the same privilege be given to other members of the committee.

B. *Recommendations—Financial Matters*

1. That the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from FNC be set at \$15,000 for 1982 (1981—\$14,000).
2. That a service increment of \$100 per year up to twenty years of service continue to be granted.
3. That a child allowance of \$500 continue to be granted for every child up to twenty-two years of age, excluding those who have reached the age of nineteen and are no longer enrolled in an educational institution.
4. That a car allowance of \$2,000 continue to be granted (FNC to pay \$1,000—church to pay \$1,000).
5. That a salary allowance for stated supplies of \$175 per week be granted (\$160 per week in 1981).
6. That the per-family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from FNC in 1982 be not less, and if possible more than \$270 (\$235 in 1981) in both the United States and in Canada.
7. That the quota for FNC for 1982 be set at \$23.00 per family (\$24.50 in 1981).

C. *Recommendation—Committee Membership*

That synod elect two members to the committee from the following nominations:

Ministerial member:

Rev. Isaac Apol of the First Highland (IN) CRC

Rev. John Meppelink of the First Oak Lawn (IL) CRC

Nonministerial member:

Mr. Calvin Walstra—member of the Winfield (IL) CRC, a former deacon and treasurer as well as elder and vice-president; served on Trinity College Finance Committee for long-range planning; he is an insurance sales representative and has served for seven years as advisor to Woodmen's Accident and Life Company's Board of Directors.

Mr. Mark Van Beveren—member of Western Springs (IL) CRC, former deacon and treasurer; currently elder; C.P.A. in State of Illinois; retired from International Harvester Company in 1976 as manager of Corporate Financial Reports; former board member of Christian school; presently serves as a corporate archivist with International Harvester Company.

Fund for Needy Churches Committee
George Holwerda, secretary

REPORT 13

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Your committee continues to enjoy the support and loyalty of its duly appointed members, although our able chairman has been absent from the country for a time this past year. Policies and programs of a continuing nature, however, allow the functions of the committee to continue. Valuable advice and direction is received from Dr. Herbert J. Brinks, archivist, and E. R. Post, field agent.

Efforts in the direction of securing regional representatives in the various classes continue with only partial success at the time of the writing of this report. Initial requests addressed to stated clerks produced responses, a couple in the negative, from half of our classes. Follow-up letters have produced some more responses with the result that we believe this is a good and viable method and program.

A long-standing gap has existed in relationships between the operation at Heritage Hall and the local scene on the classical level. It is anticipated that eventually the entire church will benefit through the efforts of these representatives, especially as they keep their eyes peeled for materials that should find place in the growing collection of memorabilia in the Colonial Origins' collection. We are happy that some classes have appointed whole committees whom they have also mandated to supply the desired materials as they become available.

Translation work continues as materials originally existing only in the Dutch language are finding form in the English language. Through the courtesy of retired individuals in the main, we are reaping the fruit of efforts that contribute to the denomination and to the kingdom.

The responsibilities of the field agent are gradually being assumed by another individual. Synod was informed last year of the fact that we were seeking for Dr. Henry Ippel of Calvin College a decreased teaching load which would allow him to assume duties until now performed by Mr. Post. We are happy to report that the college has agreed in concept with our request, although some incidental though important considerations remain to be completed. For that purpose, we ask the help and approval of synod.

Dr. Ippel is enthusiastically engaging in the work as he finds the time and ability. At the same time, Mr. Post continues to serve to his heart's content on the local scene. Dr. Ippel, on the other hand, has visited a number of the more distant classes, seeking the cooperation of congregations and consistories with the goals of your committee. We are pleased to note that the number of reluctant ones is decreasing. We continue to entertain the hope that, one day, all our churches will be included in the holdings of the denomination as it concerns official minutes and incidental records.

Your committee reports that an increasing financial responsibility must be assumed by it, since our costs and obligations have increased as a result of recent developments. As we procure the services of Dr. Ippel in addition to those of Mr. Post, a natural increase in costs must be absorbed. Furthermore, we have seen a gradual swing from emphasis on procurement of materials to the current need for organizing our holdings according to acceptable methods so that it can be useful to scholars in the future. Accordingly, we are asking that synod significantly increase the allocation provided in support of the work of the committee. It has impressed us that our requests for the past number of years have not been increased even though "everything else has gone up!" However, it is clear the time has come to accept the inevitable.

Your committee has been engaged in a study of the proportionate share of the necessary expenses incurred by the library in the interest of the denomination as a whole. We regret our inability at this writing to have any finalized facts and figures to present to synod, but anticipate completing the task between now and the time when synod convenes. By means of a supplementary report, we hope to offer as well a recommendation for the consideration of the synod.

In future issues of *The Banner*, we plan to publicize the methods of accumulation and long-range goals of the committee, by which we seek to be effective in our denomination's work. Our "main" work, however, appears to keep us busy enough without taking on the incidental task of preparing for publication such articles as might be required and helpful.

By means of general discussions from time to time, your committee also continues to take the bird's-eye view of its mandate and responsibilities so that we do not get caught up in merely incidental programs at the expense of our primary purpose for existence. We labor on in thankfulness for the privilege.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod note developments and efforts as being attempted by the Denominational Historical Committee and its supporting personnel.

B. That synod commend Messrs. E. R. Post and P. Van Vliet for their selfless labors and commend Dr. H. Ippel to God's grace and protection as he assumes the duties and responsibilities of the function.

Denominational Historical Committee

L. Oostendorp, chairman

J. Leugs, reporter

H. Ippel

H. Zwaanstra

REPORT 14
INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE
TO THE CRC SYNOD OF 1981

Our committee of nine, which met monthly throughout the year (and much more frequently in subcommittees), reelected the officers of the preceding year: the Rev. Clarence Boomsma as president; Prof. John Stek as vice-president; and Dr. John Bratt as secretary. The amount of work in the hopper was voluminous; the spirit of cooperation and industriousness on the part of the committee members was admirable; and the actions taken will, we believe, promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ. We have sought to keep in mind Paul's words to the Ephesians, "There is one body," and our consequent obligation to work for the goal of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:4-5).

Mr. Keith Knight is the new member on the committee. Since Mr. Van Elderen is spending the year in Geneva, Switzerland, Mr. Albert Bel, former member of the committee, has been appointed by the Synodical Interim Committee to serve in his stead.

I. FRATERNAL DELEGATIONS

Every year we, or one of our surrogates, bring the greetings of the Christian Reformed Church to those denominations with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship. We find these personal contacts rewarding and helpful in the prosecution of our central task. They enable us to get somewhat into the inner workings of these other churches, noting the progress they are registering in advancing the cause of the kingdom and the problems that face them. We trust that the bonds that unite us in Christ will be strengthened in this way. We are also, as the Synod of 1980 directed, keeping abreast "of current developments within those churches with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship to assure that such fellowship continues to be warranted."

A. Churches at Home

Three members of our committee were delegated to the following major assemblies: Paul Han to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church at Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, on May 15-22, 1980; Marlin Van Elderen to the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America at Union College, Schenectady, New York, on June 16-20, 1980; and John Bratt to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America at Savannah, Georgia, on June 16-23, 1980. In addition, the following served as representatives of the committee: the Rev.

Kenneth Vander Heide of our Terra Ceia, North Carolina, church to the Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at Bonclarken, North Carolina, on June 2-5, 1980; the Rev. John K. Tuinstra of Minneapolis to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, on August 6-13, 1980; and Dr. Jin-Tae Lee to the General Assembly of the Korean American Presbyterian Church in San Francisco meeting August 20-23, 1980.

B. Churches Abroad

Two members of our committee, Jacob Kuntz and William Buursma, represented the Christian Reformed Church and brought our greetings to the Synod of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in the Netherlands meeting at Amersfoort in September of 1980. They also met with "*het moderamen*" of the Gereformeerde Kerken there (see Section G).

In addition the following men served us as surrogates: the Rev. William Van Tol to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in Nigeria in May of 1980; the Rev. Paul Stadt to the Synod of the Reformed Church in New Zealand in May of 1980; Dr. Clarence Vos to the Algemeene Synode of the Doppe Kerken in South Africa in August of 1980; the Rev. Jack Huttenga to the Synod of the Reformed Church in Argentina in October of 1980; and the Rev. Edward Van Baak to the Synod of the Reformed Church in Japan in October of 1980. We appreciate greatly the willingness of our colleagues who are either stationed in the area or plan to visit there at the time of the meeting of the assemblies to serve us in this way.

As to the reception of fraternal delegates by our synod, the innovation we introduced at the Synod of 1980 of receiving them on a designated evening met with a favorable response and we plan to follow the same procedure at the Synod of 1981. We would therefore recommend that the Monday evening (June 15, 1981) of the second week be set for that purpose.

II. CHURCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL FELLOWSHIP

The following denominations are Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship with us and we are maintaining relationships with them in accordance with the rules established by synod (dates in parentheses indicate the year in which this relationship was officially established):

1. Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (1977)
2. Christian Church of Sumba (Indonesia) (1974)
3. Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (1974)
4. Church of Christ in the Sudan Among the TIV (1974)
5. Dutch Reformed Church in Afrika (NGKA) (1979)
6. Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland (1980)
7. Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) (1974)
8. Evangelical Reformed Church of Brazil (1974)
9. Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika (1974)
10. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (1974)
11. Orthodox Presbyterian Church (1975)

12. Korean American Presbyterian Church (1979)
13. Presbyterian Church in America (1975)
14. Reformed Church in America (1976)
15. Reformed Church in Argentina (1974)
16. Reformed Church in Japan (1974)
17. Reformed Churches of Australia (1974)
18. Reformed Churches of New Zealand (1974)
19. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (1978)

III. THE NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL (NAPARC)

The annual NAPARC meeting was held October 24-25, 1980, at the Best Western Airport Motel in Philadelphia. Delegates from the five member churches were present and there were observers from the Reformed Church in the United States (Eureka Classis) and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. William P. Brink, Albert Bel, Keith Knight, and John Bratt represented the Christian Reformed Church. Dr. Jack White of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America was elected president and the Rev. John Clark of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod vice-president. Dr. Morton Smith of the Presbyterian Church in America was reelected secretary; Mr. Albert Bel of the Christian Reformed Church was reelected treasurer, and the Rev. Jacob Eppinga was named assistant treasurer.

Once again the spirit was cooperative and congenial. Delegates recognized each other as brothers in Christ who were growing in understanding and appreciation of each other and dedicated to the ideal and goal articulated by John Calvin of "communicating our advantages to one another."

Each member church apprised the council of the main decisions taken by their most recent major judicatory. In June of 1980 the General Assembly of the PCA issued an invitation to the OPC, RPCES, and RPCNA "to effect and perfect one church among us," under the doctrine and order of the PCA. The first two to whom this overture was sent have responded favorably while the RPCNA indicated that, although it is not ready at this time to consider the invitation, it is open to continued discussion and cooperation. On the synodical level some similar actions were taken in response to the challenges of our day. The RPCES followed the suit of the CRC in taking appreciative note of the *Koinonia Declaration* in South Africa. Both the CRC and the RPCNA sense the need of a *Contemporary Testimony* to our twentieth-century world and are proceeding to draft such a testimony. Covenant College is now under the joint governance of the PCA and the RPCES; and a joint study conference on "The Application of the Regulative Principle to Song in Worship," arranged by the OPC and the RPCNA, is scheduled for June 5-6, 1981, at Geneva College. Such moral problems as abortion, capital punishment, and the use of alcoholic beverages also found place on the dockets of the synods and assemblies.

NAPARC sponsored conferences and consultations including con-

ferences held by the home missions agencies and diaconal agencies of the five churches. A meeting of the Hermeneutics Study Committee, designed to explore and evaluate the various hermeneutics in operation in the council, is scheduled for February of 1981. The PCA, OPC, RPCES, and RPCNA are anticipating our concurrent meetings on the Calvin campus in June of 1982 and have expressed the desire that there be more interaction and more joint sessions than was the case in 1978. We will attempt to realize that objective.

The Interchurch Relations Committee recommends that the Synod of 1981 designate the following allocation of time for the Synod of 1982: Two hours of one evening in the second week for joint worship services; and one evening for discussion and fellowship, for which a topic will be selected by the NAPARC Committee.

We find our continued contacts with the other NAPARC churches to be rewarding and fruitful. Our common convictions, our commitment to the Presbyterian order, and our ideals of the lordship of Christ over all of life give promise of deepening and broadening the unity that is ours in Christ.

IV. THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA (RCA)

Subcommittees of the two denominations, so closely akin, since they have a similar background and the same set of confessions and church polity, met bimonthly during the year exploring avenues of closer fellowship and mutual service to Christ and his kingdom. The five members of the CRC Interchurch Committee who served in this capacity are: William D. Buursma, Arnold Brink, Albert Bel, William P. Brink, and John Bratt. We have written all of the classes in the CRC urging them to form such a subcommittee, if one is nonexistent, and, if they have one, to activate it in all possible ways.

Once again in the interests of calling attention to our common roots in the Protestant Reformation the following notice was placed in *The Banner* and in *The Church Herald* prior to Reformation Day:

On Sunday, October 26, many RCA and CRC pastors in the United States and Canada will be exchanging pulpits. May this cooperative venture be blessed by our Lord in bringing us to a deeper awareness of our common faith and heritage.

Both denominations are in the process of revising their official hymnals and their hymnal committees are keeping in touch with one another.

THE REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD (RES)

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1980 was held in Nimes, France, from July 15-25. Three conferences under the auspices of synod were held in the week prior to the formal session of synod: (1) Youth Leaders Conference (July 6-9, 1980); (2) RES Nimes Missions Conference (July 7-10, 1980); and (3) the RES Theological Conference (July 11-12, 1980). This report will not deal with the conferences except to note that the conference held by the youth leaders and the one on missions did submit recommendations to the RES, both of which were adopted. In that sense

the conferences were at least indirectly related to the RES. It should be noted further that details about these conferences are presented in *The Message of Nimes*, a digest of the acts of the RES, Nimes, 1980. This report is based upon the reactions given our committee by the official CRC delegates: Dr. A. Hoekema, Dr. John Timmer, and Dr. John Vandenberg; and by the observers: the Rev. James Lont, Dr. Eugene Rubingh, and the Rev. John Van Ryn.

The major issues handled at the synod were: race relations, homosexuality, membership in the WCC, and the social calling of the church. It was the judgment of some of the delegates that since the first three named focused on the inward rather than the outward look and were concerned with internal relationships and possible disciplinary action, the synod was veering from the original purpose of the RES, namely "to occupy itself exclusively with such ecclesiastical matters as demonstrate a clear ecumenical character." Some of them also detected an imbalance in that considerably more attention was given to the Delft homosexuality decision of the GKN than to the *apartheid* problem in South Africa.

The subject of *race relations* (particularly the problem of *apartheid*) was not handled in depth by the synod. This was due to two factors:

One, the actions of the synod on this issue were based in the main on a report of the Interpretative Commission (the synodical interim committee served as this commission) on "South Africa Race Relations." This report was couched in terms of exercising patience and promoting pacification and did not set forth any specific issue with which the synod could come to grips. A brief review of the actions taken by synod relative to race relations (*apartheid*) in South Africa will illustrate why this was the case.

The synod approved the work of the interim committee (decision 1); referred its report to the RES member churches in South Africa for consideration and response (decision 2); noted with gratitude that a regional conference of RES member churches in South Africa had been held (decision 3); urged those RES member churches to do all within their power to work for such changes in their country that would remove the structures of racial injustice still present, and use their influence with the South African government to effect such changes (decision 4).

The third and fourth decisions warrant special attention. In the third the synod, among other things, commended the South African RES member churches for "giving serious attention to the 'problems involved in creating dissatisfaction and unrest in South Africa' (*RES Acta 1976*, Art. 12)." The entire debate on this action centered on the question of whether or not the attention given to this problem by the South African member churches was a "serious" one. The basic questions involved in *apartheid* were as a consequence sidetracked. In the fourth decision, an amendment was proposed that the word *White* be inserted into the statement "that synod urgently request the 'White' RES member churches in South Africa to do all that is in their power to work for such changes in their country that would remove the structure of racial injustice. . . ." This motion of amendment did enlist some support but it evaporated when, almost to a man, the Black and Colored delegates from South

Africa rose to speak against it on the ground that substantial progress is being made in bringing about reconciliation in South Africa.

Another factor which undoubtedly contributed to the lack of meaningful discussion on the question of *apartheid* was the absence at RES Nimes 1980 of those South African leaders most likely to speak forthrightly on the issue. For instance, the Reformed Church of Africa (Indian) refused to send delegates to the synod, judging that to do so would be to acquiesce in the events taking place in South Africa and also assuming that discussion on the subject at Nimes would not be fruitful. Furthermore, the meeting was boycotted by Dr. Allan Boesak of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (Colored) and the Rev. Sam Buti of the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa (Black). Both of them felt that engaging in discussion on *apartheid* at Nimes would be an exercise in futility. Both of these factors operated in hindering RES Nimes 1980 in coming to grips with the issue of *apartheid*.

The second problem treated at the synod was that of *homosexuals within the church*. It was occasioned by the pastoral statement entitled "Homophilical Members of the Congregation" that was adopted by the 1979 Delft Synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (GKN) and distributed to the member churches in that denomination. RES Nimes 1980 came down rather hard on the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, probably because some of the RES member churches had taken positions on the question of homosexuality prior to Nimes and had instructed their delegates to speak out critically on the Delft decision. RES 1980 declared that all homosexual practice is sin and that any advice or counsel that weakens the resistance to that sin does not help but actually harms both the struggling person himself and others who might be affected through him. It also expressed concern about the ambiguous nature of the Delft decision, asked for a clarification of it, and requested, through its interim committee, that the GKN give assurance that no known practicing homosexuals shall be allowed to partake of the Lord's supper or hold ecclesiastical office. Finally, synod appointed a study committee to study "the biblical data and hermeneutical questions related to the problems of *homophilia* (homosexuality)" as a means of giving further assistance to the GKN in resolving its problems in this area.

The third problem discussed was *membership in the World Council of Churches*. According to *The Message of Nimes* "the question of membership in the World Council of Churches by RES churches has been a topic for discussion at every synod since 1953" (p. 16). At every RES meeting since that date member churches were advised not to affiliate with the WCC. RES Nimes 1980 reasserted that advice. It went beyond that, however. It determined "that a final decision whether or not member churches of the RES may also be members of the WCC, must be made by RES 1984 and not delayed beyond that meeting."

We and the other member churches of RES have been asked to react to the report of the RES Study Committee on Ecumenical Relationships. We have been asked to do so before February of 1981. Consequently, we have drafted and sent on to the RES executive secretary the following letter:

RES Study Committee on Ecumenical Relationships

Dear Brothers:

In response to the request of the General Secretary of RES, and in view of the urgency of his request, the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church hereby addresses you in the name of the Christian Reformed Church relative to the matters of your commissioned study.

In our judgment, we can do no better than to forward to you copies (enclosed) of two study reports submitted upon two separate occasions to the General Synod of the CRC, together with copies of the actions of the synods to which the reports were submitted.

The report to the Synod of 1944 was a landmark in the history of the ecumenical endeavors of the CRC. It still constitutes the basic framework for our ecumenical activities. The 1967 report addresses itself specifically to the issue of membership in the WCC, and, as you will see, represents two minds on that issue. We are persuaded that you will find these two reports on ecumenical issues significant resource materials for your study.

We call especially to your attention two pertinent considerations that the reports and the subsequent decisions of the synods take into account: (1) Reformed churches have made it a practice to accept the baptisms of virtually all churches, thus acknowledging a basic unity with them in Christ; and (2) the local circumstances of a church within its own national sphere has bearing on decisions concerning specific ecumenical relationships. In our judgment, your study should take account of these factors.

Regarding the Second Report of the RCN to RES Concerning Membership in the WCC, it is our judgment that the "Plea for Reflection" deserves serious consideration. Specifically:

1. Concerning the matter of "co-responsibility" for the toleration of "another gospel," the "Plea" cogently argues that the past judgment of the RES "goes too far." Ecumenical fellowship with non-Reformed churches inevitably involves fellowship with churches having different theological conceptions of the church and correspondingly different ways of dealing with errors in the church. This complicates ecumenical relationships and introduces relativizing factors into the issue of co-responsibility for toleration of falsehood. We believe that your study needs to weigh this matter carefully.

2. Concerning the historic RES position that unity in the church is "restricted by the truth," the "Plea" rightly alerts the RES that insufficient attention has hitherto been given to the fact that the given (in Christ) unity of the church is "rooted in justification," that appeal to incomplete sanctification has been too easy, that the "truth" of justification by grace through faith should be recognized as a "unity-promoting" truth, and that the "truth" of justification by grace through faith is really denied in confession-through-practice whenever the churches unwarrantedly divide the body of Christ. We judge that your study needs to address itself to these matters so that the RES and its member churches may be guided in ecumenical practice to do full justice to the whole gospel.

We pray the Spirit's leading in your deliberations.

Yours in Christ,

CRC Interchurch Relations Committee

The fourth main problem facing the synod was that of the *social calling of the church*. RES Cape Town 1976 had appointed an international study committee on the question. Headed by Dr. Klaas Runia this committee prepared a fine report entitled *The Church and Its Social Calling*. It is out of the context of this report that recommendations were made to RES Nimes 1980. Consequently, the synod: (1) adopted a twenty-one point statement on the social calling of the church and referred it to the member churches for study and use (implementation) and (2) determined to continue the study of the social calling of the church by appointing a new committee to further the study with special emphasis on "the spiritual crisis resulting from the overwhelming development and influence of science and technology in our culture."

The individual delegates and observers were asked for their personal suggestions and recommendations. We are passing them on to synod. They are:

1. Work for the perpetuation of the RES. Since it is the only international ecumenical venture that we have, we should not allow it to disintegrate. It is good for the smaller churches in the RES to be part of a body that thinks in bigger and broader terms and it is good for the larger churches to feel a responsibility for the wider body.
2. Change the name from the *Reformed Ecumenical Synod* to the *Reformed Ecumenical Council*. The RES acts as a synod, disciplining those members who are out of line and causing some members to threaten to leave if others do not conform, while at the same time it has none of those powers normally associated with a synod. Since it has no binding authority the term *council* is preferable for a body of this nature. As a council it can serve as a forum to discuss issues of common interest and concern, and give advice to fellow members. If it persists in acting like a synod, it is bound to founder on the shoals of inner tension and conflict.
3. Strengthen the influence of the CRC in the RES. Up to this point it has been termed a "moderating" influence; perhaps it would do better to assume vigorous leadership. Certainly the CRC should react seriously to the reports emanating from the RES and take a positive position with respect to them.
4. The position of the executive secretary should be strengthened.
5. The CRC should insist that financial obligations be assumed by all of the members.
6. Assure continuity in the CRC delegation. At least one of the delegates to Nimes 1980 should be named as delegate to the 1984 RES.

The Interchurch Relations Committee will take note of these suggestions and recommendations in its further work.

VI. THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES (WARC)

The Christian Reformed Church has been sending "observers" to various meetings of this international body of churches in the Reformed tradition for many years. It is, perhaps, the largest alliance of Reformed, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches in the world, representing denominations, large and small, in the Third World as well as the Western World and the Orient.

The leadership of the alliance has expressed repeatedly their earnest desire that our church affiliate with it because they feel the need of our definitive Reformed stance. Various persons who have attended meetings of the alliance or of its executive committee or of the North American-Caribbean section of the alliance have spoken of the cordiality with which they and their Reformed testimony have been received.

Dr. Fred Klooster has been serving, at the request of the alliance leadership, on the council on theology which is currently attempting to formulate a position on the doctrine of the covenant.

Your committee seeks the encouragement of synod to engage in concentrated study of this organization with a view to arriving at a definite recommendation next year.

VII. THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN THE NETHERLANDS

A. *De Gereformeerde Kerken (GKN)*

Again in 1980, the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands sent a fraternal delegation to the Christian Reformed Synod. Delegates at synod had an opportunity to discuss problems and issues which had arisen within this Reformed body with whom we have had the longest relationship of any church in the world.

The concern expressed by our synod about the GKN decision re homosexuals was addressed by the Christian Reformed fraternal delegation assigned to the synodical meetings at Amersfoort of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk. That delegation met with members of "*het moderamen*" in an afternoon session at Lunteren. A detailed report is on file with the office of the stated clerk. No official response has been received from the *moderamen* at this date. The matter is being further investigated by the Interchurch Relations Committee.

We have also received a letter from Dr. A. Kruiswijk, secretary of the *Deputaten Oecumene Buitenland* of the GKN, in which he asks clarification concerning a reputed stipulation by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN) that Christian Reformed ministers from North America conducting services in their churches refrain from preaching in other Dutch communions. We have written him that his source of information is accurate and that this stipulation was made. We have also informed him that we are not happy with this structure, that our delegates at the recent synod of Amersfoort expressed their misgivings with it, and that it is our hope that this stipulation will soon be excised.

B. *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk (CGK)*

Two members of our committee (the Rev. Mr. W. D. Buursma of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and the Rev. Mr. Jacob Kuntz of St. Catharines, Ontario) were delegated to one of the 1980 sessions of the CGK meeting in Amersfoort. The specific purpose of the visit was to encourage that denomination to implement its 1977 decision "in principle" to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church.

After animated debate, the CGK synod decided to enter into such a relationship; therefore our churches are now in ecclesiastical fellowship. The delegation from our denomination was warmly received. It is our hope and prayer that this new relationship may be of mutual profit and serve for the strengthening of the Reformed faith both here and in the Netherlands.

The decision taken by the CGK to formally enter into this new relationship was opposed by a fraternal delegate from the Free Reformed Church of this continent. Your committee believes that it is appropriate for us to explore better relationships and closer contact with this small group of Reformed believers in North America.

C. *Gereformeerde Kerk Onderhoudende Artikel 31 (Buitenverband)*.

No contact was made with this group which is currently engaged in delicate negotiations with the CGK. Decisions made concerning fraternal relationships with other churches by the CGK are honored by the Buitenverband group.

VIII. THE SOUTH AFRICAN REFORMED CHURCHES

The committee has attempted to monitor as closely as possible the developing situation among the Reformed churches in South Africa. It has seized every opportunity to interview members of those churches who have been present in this country as well as members of the CRC who have had occasion to visit South Africa. Assessments of the situation there, as can be expected, vary considerably. But all agree that the country and the Reformed churches face a growing crisis that calls for urgent and bold action in accordance with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the biblical requirement of full brotherly relations between believers, and God's command for love and justice in all social, economic, and political relationships.

Both the churches and the government have taken some steps toward the relaxation of a dogmatic *apartheid* policy. But many voices from within the churches, White as well as Black, protest that the White churches are still doing far too little to promote justice in government policy and reconciliation between the churches. The IRC is convinced that the CRC must do all it can to support and encourage efforts toward healing and reformation within the Reformed churches there.

One issue of immediate concern to the IRC is the status of the relationship between the CRC and the Reformed churches in South Africa. Since 1979 the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (Black) has been a church in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC. And, as we have reported to earlier synods, the 1978 General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (NGK in SA) (White) decided to seek ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC. Till now, however, the synods of the CRC have not acted on that request; the IRC has been attempting to evaluate the situation in the NGK in South Africa and its relationships with its daughter churches (the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa [Black], the Dutch Reformed Mission Church [Coloured], the Reformed Church in South Africa [Indian]) before formulating specific recommendations to synod in that regard. The matter has been complicated by the strained relations between the NGK in South Africa and its daughter churches.

Because of the great complexities of the situation, the high importance of the issues at stake, and the great urgency that surrounds them, the IRC has decided that it cannot responsibly carry out its mandate as regards the Reformed churches in South Africa or advise synod concerning ecclesiastical relations with those churches without direct consultations with their representatives. For that reason it has decided to send a delegation of two, the Rev. C. Boomsma (chairman of the IRC) and Dr. J. Kromminga (past member and chairman of the IRC) to South Africa to meet directly with the representatives of the Reformed churches there. The delegation will be in South Africa for three to four weeks in March, 1981.

Matters of special concern which the delegation is to pursue are:

1. the sisterly relations between the NGK family of churches;
2. access to the table of the Lord irrespective of race;
3. status of the declaration *Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture*;
4. participation in oath-bound commitments that interfere with brother relations within the body of Christ.

The results of their consultations will be sent to synod in a later communication.

IX. MEMBERSHIP ON THE INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The terms of two of our committee members, Paul Han and John Stek, expire at this time. The latter has served for six years and is not eligible for reelection. The former has indicated that he is not interested in standing for reelection. Consequently we would recommend that synod:

1. Thank Prof. John Stek and Dr. Paul Han for their work on the committee, and
2. Elect two members from the following slate (one from each couplet):

Thelma Meyer (Mrs. Galen)
Dante Veneges

John Malestein
John Primus

X. 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 interchurch relations are being considered.

XI. HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Again we have named a hospitality committee to care for the proper reception of fraternal delegates to synod and to be attentive to their needs while they are our guests. This committee, as previously, will work closely with synod's reception committee. We request that the members of this committee be given meal privileges while serving at synod.

XII. SUMMARY OF ITEMS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. Reserve Monday evening, June 15, 1981, for fraternal delegates—Section A

B. Allocation of time for NAPARC meetings—Section C

C. Election of committee members—Section I

D. Committee representation at synod—Section J

Interchurch Relations Committee

Clarence Boomsma, president

John Stek, vice-president

John Bratt, secretary

William Buursma

Keith Knight

Paul Han

Arnold Brink

Marlin Van Elderen

(Albert Bel serves as his substitute
for 1980-81)

William P. Brink, *ex officio*

REPORT 15
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE

The Liturgical Committee met three times since our last report to synod. We continue to function under the mandate given to the committee in 1964:

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. (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1964*, p. 60.)

As we worked on prayers, services, and forms, it became clear to us that the work of the last seventeen years is beginning to add up. Many of the church's forms have been rewritten and the Service Book is slowly becoming a reality. The past years have seen lengthy debates in committee and painstaking word-by-word editing; our work has not always been received with rejoicing. Increasingly, however, our correspondence indicates that the churches are using the newer liturgical materials. That spurs us on to do careful, responsible work in the next several years.

Still to come from the committee are a new form for the ordination of ministers of which we have seen two drafts, and final versions of the new forms for the ordination of elders and deacons, for the ordination of evangelists, for excommunication, and for readmission. We hope to have these materials for the Synod of 1982 and ask synod to urge the churches to send their reaction to us by September 1, 1981.

During the past year we have maintained liaison with the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee, the Board of Publications, and the "Music and Liturgy Newsletter." There is a good deal of liturgical activity in our churches and even though one may sometimes wish for better coordination and communication, the activity indicates that many members and churches take seriously the privileges and responsibilities of worshipping God.

One of our members, Dr. Ronald Wells, found it necessary to resign due to other commitments. We regret his resignation, but understand the reasons. We have thanked him for the significant contribution he made during his four years on the committee. Two other members have served six years and will also need to be replaced.

We present the following items for synodical action and information.

- I. AN EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORM AND SERVICE
- II. SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

- III. SEASONAL VARIATIONS OF THE ABOVE SERVICE
- IV. PREPARATORY EXHORTATION FOR COMMUNION
- V. PRAYER FOR THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY
- VI. A NEW COLLECTION OF PRAYERS
- VII. READINGS OF THE LAW
- VIII. BAPTISMAL SERVICES
- IX. THE SERVICE BOOK
- X. NOMINATIONS
- XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

I. AN EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORM AND SERVICE

The Synod of 1980 adopted the following recommendation: "that synod instruct the Liturgical Committee to study and evaluate the difference between a synodically approved form for the celebration of the Lord's supper and a liturgy for a worship service which includes the Lord's supper" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 48).

A *form* is a synodically approved liturgical statement which is to be used in its entirety, without changes. Examples are: forms for baptism, forms for public profession of faith, forms (One, Two, and Three) for the Lord's supper.

A *service* (also called "liturgy" or "order of worship") is a model for a worship service which can be changed (by deletion, addition, rearrangement, or substitution) according to local needs. Examples are the models for morning worship in the 1968 report of the Liturgical Committee.

A complication arises when a form is incorporated into a service. An example of this is the incorporation of forms One, Two, and Three into an order of worship (*Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 328-56). Other examples are the baptismal services found in this year's report to synod. It should be understood that the original forms, as they are distributed throughout the order of worship, are to be read complete and unchanged. Other features, such as the opening of worship, the number of hymns to be sung, the prayers for illumination, and so forth, may be changed.

A third example, the one which has caused the most confusion, is the "service of Word and sacrament" provisionally approved in 1978 and presented for final adoption this year. This service also has seasonal variations; two of these were presented last year and two are presented this year. These communion services do not make use of Lord's supper forms One, Two, or Three, but use new formulations, making it appear as if the entire service may be changed to meet local needs. Such, however, is not the case. The Liturgical Committee has made clear in its recommendations (*Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 329-37) that these services in effect incorporate new forms whose components are to remain unchanged, both in the "standard" and in the seasonal variations. These services thus have "fixed" components and "variations." The "fixed" components are of the nature of a form. These components are the introduction spoken by the minister ("Brothers and sisters in Christ. . ."); the first part of the thanksgiving (through "Christ our Lord."); the institution; the memorial; the preparation; the preparation of the elements; the communion. In the proposed Service Book, these "fixed components" will be printed in a different color.

Last year's synod also instructed us "to provide a summary statement of the conclusions drawn from the above study to accompany the published forms." Following is that summary:

"The service of Word and sacrament" and its seasonal adaptations are intended as model orders of worship, which may be adapted to local needs. The Lord's supper section in each service, however, contains components which have the status of a synodically approved form; these components are always to be read complete and unchanged.

These components are the following: the introduction spoken by the minister ("Brothers and sisters in Christ..."); the first part of the thanksgiving (through "Christ our Lord"); the institution; the memorial; the preparation of the elements; the communion. These "fixed" components will be printed in a different color.

In addition, churches should ordinarily use all the various rubrics of the communion, even if the wording is varied. Examples of such rubrics are "the prayer of consecration," "the invitation," and "the dedication."

II. SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

In 1978, synod provisionally approved the following "Service of Word and Sacrament." We have carefully noted the comments of the churches on this form and have made a number of editorial revisions. We have been especially sensitive to the complaint of some churches that there was too much "standing up and sitting down" and too many responsive readings. On the other hand, we had to take into consideration the many churches who have used a service like this for many years and who find it an edifying and joyful way to celebrate communion. Churches which find it necessary to introduce the reading of congregational responses gradually may wish for a time to use only the first part of the service, followed by Form One, Two, or Three of the Lord's supper. Alternatively, they may wish for a time to use their accustomed order of service and celebrate communion as set out in the following service. It goes without saying that additional material may be inserted in this service. For example, it would be appropriate for a profession of faith to take place just before "the creed."

We now recommend that synod give final approval to the following "Service of Word and Sacrament."

*THE OPENING

Minister: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

People: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Minister: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

Minister: And now as our Lord gives to us his peace, so let us pass the peace to each other, saying "The peace of the Lord be with you." [optional]

(*indicates congregation stands)

[Here the people express their unity by greeting each other with these or similar words.]

All: [Hymn]

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Minister: God is light and in him is no darkness
at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him
while we walk in darkness,
we lie and do not live according to
the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in
the light,
we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us
from all sin.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive
ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.

(1 John 1)

The Confession

All: Most holy and merciful Father,
We confess to you and to one another,
that we have sinned against you
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole
heart and mind and strength,
We have not fully loved our neighbors as
ourselves,
We have not always had in us the mind of Christ.
You alone know how often we have
grieved you
by wasting your gifts,
by wandering from your ways,
by forgetting your love.
Forgive us, we pray you, most
merciful Father,
and free us from our sin.
Renew in us the grace and strength of
your Holy Spirit,
for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son,
our Savior.

Amen.

The Declaration of Pardon

Minister: To each who confesses himself to be a sinner, humbling himself before God and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation, I declare this sure promise: "If we confess our

sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(1 John 1)

The Response

All sing: Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.

The Dedication

Minister: Let us, God's forgiven people, now listen to his law for our lives.

[Here the minister proclaims God's covenant law as a guide for our lives, as it is found in the Decalogue or some other Scriptural passage.]

*All: [Hymn]

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Minister: Let us pray:

Almighty God, grant us your Spirit,
that we may rightly understand and truly obey your Word
of Truth.

Open our hearts that we may love what you command,
and desire what you promise.

Set us free from private distractions that we may hear,
and from selfish pride that we may receive
the promise of your grace.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister or other Member: [Scripture Readings]

Minister: [Sermon]

Minister or other Member: [Prayer for blessing on the Word]

THE RESPONSE

*All: [Hymn]

**The Creed*

Minister: Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and in all places:

All: [Say or sing the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed.]

The Intercessory Prayer

[Prayers led by the minister or by some other member.]

The Offertory

Minister: Let us present our gifts to God.

[Here the offerings are received. At the conclusion the people sing.]

* All sing: Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
 Praise Him all creatures here below,
 Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Minister: Brothers and sisters in Christ, the gospels tell us that on the first day of the week, the day on which our Lord rose from the dead, he appeared to some of his disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of bread. Come then to the joyful feast of our Lord.

[If the communion elements are not already on the table, they may be brought forward at this point.]

The Thanksgiving

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right for us to give thanks,
 It is our joy and our peace,
 At all times and in all places
 To give thanks to you,
 Holy Father,
 Almighty, everlasting God,
 through Christ our Lord.

Minister: We bless you for your continual love and care for every creature.

We praise you for forming us in your image and calling us to be your people.

We thank you that you did not abandon us in our rebellion against your love, but sent prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation.

Above all we thank you for sending Jesus your Son to deliver us from the way of sin and death by the obedience of his life, by his suffering upon the cross, and by his resurrection from the dead. We praise you that he now reigns with you in glory and ever lives to pray for us.

We thank you for the Holy Spirit who leads us into truth, defends us in adversity, and out of every people unites us into one holy church.

Therefore with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy.

All sing: Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty!
 All thy works shall praise Thy Name,
 in earth and sky and sea.
 Holy, Holy, Holy, Merciful and Mighty!
 God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity!

The Institution

Minister: We give thanks to God the Father that our Savior, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice, until his coming again. For the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Memorial

All: We shall do as our Lord commands.

We proclaim that our Lord Jesus was sent by the Father into the world,

that he took upon himself our flesh and blood,
and bore the wrath of God against our sin.

We confess that he was condemned to die that we might be pardoned,

and suffered death that we might live.

We proclaim that he is risen to make us right with God,

and that he shall come again in the glory of his new creation.

This we do now,

and until he comes again.

Prayer of Consecration

Minister: Heavenly Father, show forth among us the presence of your life-giving Word and Holy Spirit, to sanctify us and your whole church through this sacrament. Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ may be one in him, and remain faithful in love and hope.

And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf, and these grapes from many hills into one cup, grant, O Lord, that your whole church may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

Now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray:

All: Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be

Preparation of the Elements

[as the minister breaks the bread and pours the cup]

Minister: The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

People: We who are many are one body,
for we all share the same loaf.

Minister: The cup for which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

People: The cup which we drink
is our participation in the blood of Christ.

The Invitation

Minister: Congregation in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and who desire to live in obedience to him, are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord.

The Dedication

All: Holy Father, in thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, in the joy of his resurrection, in the hope of his coming again, we present ourselves a living sacrifice and come to the table of our Lord.

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Communion

[when the people are ready to eat the bread]

Minister: Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for a complete remission of all our sins.

[when the people are ready to drink the cup]

Minister: Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for a complete remission of all our sins.

The Thanksgiving

Minister: Congregation in Christ, since the Lord has fed us at his table, let us praise his holy name with thanksgiving.

All: Bless the Lord, O my soul;

and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you
with steadfast love and mercy.

Who satisfies you with good as long as you live.

(Psalm 103)

All: [Hymn—optional]

***THE DISMISSAL**

Minister: The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

People: Amen.

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: [Hymn—optional]

III. SEASONAL VARIATIONS OF THE ABOVE SERVICE

Last year we presented two seasonal variations to the above service: Advent and Christmas. Synod approved these for trial use and instructed that these variations not be published outside of the *Acts of Synod* "until the new form (provisionally) approved in 1978 is reviewed by synod in 1981."

Subject to synod's favorable action on the "standard" Service of Word and Sacrament, we now recommend that the Advent and Christmas as well as the following Lent and Pentecost variations be approved for inclusion in the Service Book.

LENT

The season of Lent is a period of recollection for the whole church. It continues for forty days, from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday. In the Bible, the number forty has a symbolic meaning—signifying a spiritual struggle, to which God promises victory. The church is called to partake in forty days of purification, of setting aside, of discipline, of meditation and prayer, before celebrating Easter.

*THE OPENING

Minister: Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father (*Gal. 1:3, 4*).

People: Amen.

Minister: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (*Isa. 53:6*).

People: He sat where we sit.
He walked where we walk.
He died in our place.

Minister: His way was to Jerusalem
to a supper,
to betrayal,
to the Garden,
to denial,
and to judgment.

People: He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (*Isa. 53:3a*).

All: [P.H. 381 or other appropriate hymn]

*(indicates congregation stands)

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Minister: Hear the call of the Lord:

"Come now, let us reason together,
says the Lord:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
But if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be devoured by the sword."

(*Isaiah 1:18-20*)

The Confession

All sing: My transgressions I confess,
Grief and guilt my soul oppress;
I have sinned against Thy grace
And provoked Thee to Thy face;
I confess Thy judgment just,
Speechless, I Thy mercy trust.

I am evil, born in sin;
Thou desirest truth within.
Thou alone my Savior art,
Teach Thy wisdom to my heart;
Make me pure, Thy grace bestow,
Wash me whiter than the snow.

(P.H. 94, vv. 2, 3 [or other appropriate hymn])

The Declaration of Pardon

Minister: To you who have confessed your sins
there is reconciliation through our Lord Jesus Christ.
For he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,
and with his stripes we are healed.

(*Isaiah 53:5*)

The Response

All sing: All glory be to Thee, Most High,
To Thee all adoration;
In grace and truth Thou drawest nigh
To offer us salvation;
Thou showest Thy good will to men,
And peace shall reign on earth again;
We praise Thy Name forever.

[P.H. 319, v. 1]

The Dedication

Minister: As God's forgiven people we dedicate ourselves to live our lives by the guide given to us in the Scriptures:
 [Here read the Decalogue or other appropriate passage.]

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Minister: Let us pray together for illumination in the words of the hymn:

All sing: Spirit divine, attend our prayer
 And make our hearts Thy home;
 Descend with all Thy gracious power;
 Come, Holy Spirit, come.
 Come as the light; to waiting minds
 That long the truth to know
 Reveal the narrow path of right,
 The way of duty show.

[P.H. 392, vv. 1, 2]

Minister or other member: [*Scripture readings*]

Minister: [*Sermon*]

THE RESPONSE

*All: [*Hymn or sing the Apostles' Creed*]

The Intercessory Prayer

[*Led by the minister or some other member*]

The Offertory

Minister: The psalmist exclaimed:
 "What shall I render to the Lord
 for all his bounty to me?
 I will pay my vows to the Lord
 in the presence of all his people."

(*Psalm 116:12, 14*)

In the spirit of the psalmist we present our gifts to God.

[*Here the offerings are received*]

*All sing: With thankful heart I offer now
 My gift, and call upon God's Name;
 Before His saints I pay my vow
 And here my gratitude proclaim.
 Within His house, the house of prayer,
 I dedicate myself to God;
 Let all His saints His grace declare
 And join to sound His praise abroad.

(P.H. 230, vv. 4, 5 [*or other doxology*])

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Minister: Brothers and sisters in Christ, the gospels tell us that on the first day of the week, the day on which our Lord rose from the dead, he appeared to some of his disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

Come then to the joyful feast of our Lord.

[Communion elements are brought forward at this point if they are not already on the table.]

The Thanksgiving

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right for us to give thanks,
It is our joy and our peace
At all times and in all places
To give thanks to you,
Holy Father,
Almighty, everlasting God,
through Christ our Lord.

Minister: Holy and gracious Father, in your infinite love you made us for yourself; and when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you in your mercy sent Jesus Christ, your only begotten Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, and to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. Amen.

Jesus stretched out his arms upon the cross and offered himself in obedience to God's will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world. By his suffering and death he became the source of salvation for all who put their trust in him.

So with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth, with all creation in all time, we sing a hymn to your glory:

All sing: Unto God Almighty, Sitting on the throne,
And the Lamb, victorious, Be the praise alone.
God has wrought salvation, He did wondrous things;
Who shall not extol Thee, Holy King of Kings?

[P.H. 469 v. 3 [or other appropriate hymn]]

The Institution

Minister: We give thanks to God the Father that our Savior, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice, until his coming again. For the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Memorial

All: We shall do as our Lord commands.
We proclaim that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent by the
Father into the world,
that he took upon himself our flesh and blood,
and bore the wrath of God against our sin.
We confess that he was condemned to die that we
might be pardoned,
and suffered death that we might live.
We proclaim that he is risen to make us right with God,
and that he shall come again in glory to his
new creation.
This we do now,
and until he comes again.

Prayer of Consecration

Minister: O Father, send down your Spirit,
so that through this bread and wine
we may be united more fully with your Son
and so with each other.
Strengthen us in our service to him.
Encourage us so that in the
troubles and sorrows of life,
we may continue because of the
hope laid up for us in heaven.

Preparation of the Elements

[as the minister breaks the bread and pours the cup]

Minister: The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

People: We who are many are one body,
for we all share the same loaf.

Minister: The cup for which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

People: The cup which we drink
is our participation in the blood of Christ.

The Invitation and Dedication

Minister: Hear the word of our Lord:
Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you
will find rest for your souls (*Matt. 11:28, 29*).
Come, then, for all is ready.
Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.

- People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.
 Minister: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 People: Hosanna in the highest!
 Minister: Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
 (John 1:29)

The Communion

- [when the people are ready to eat the bread]
 Minister: Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for a complete remission of all our sins.
 [when the people are ready to drink the cup]
 Minister: Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for a complete remission of all our sins.

The Thanksgiving

- Minister: Congregation of Christ, since the Lord has fed us at his table and confirmed his promises to us, let us rise and praise his holy name with thanksgiving.
 *All sing: "Hosanna in the highest!"
 That ancient song we sing,
 For Christ is our Redeemer,
 The Lord of Heaven, our King.
 O may we ever praise Him
 With heart and life and voice,
 And in His blissful presence
 Eternally rejoice (P.H. 349, v. 3)

*THE DISMISSAL

- Minister: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory forever and ever.
 People: Amen.
 Minister: People of God,
 Go forth into the world in peace,
 be of good courage;
 Ponder on the wonder of God's way,
 Hold fast that which is good;
 help the afflicted; honor all men;
 love and serve the Lord,
 rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All sing: Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 Fill me with life anew,
 That I may love what Thou dost love,
 And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 So shall I never die,
 But live with Thee the perfect life
 Of Thine eternity. Amen.

(P.H. 391, v. 1, 4)

Pentecost

Pentecost celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of Christ's promise that he would be with his church until the end of the age. Pentecost is a feast of harvest and as such has always been associated with the mission of the church in the world.

*THE OPENING

Minister: May the love of God the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship born of the Spirit be among you all.

People: Amen.

Minister: Lord, send out your Spirit,

People: And renew the face of the earth.

Minister: How manifold are your works, O Lord!

People: The earth is full of your creatures.

Minister: If you take away their breath, they perish;

People: They return to their dust.

Minister: When you send forth your Spirit, they are created;

People: And you renew the face of the earth.

Minister: May the glory of the Lord endure forever;

People: May the Lord rejoice in his works.

All: [Hymn]

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Minister: Do not marvel that Jesus says to us: "You must be born again." That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit, he who convicts us of sin and leads us into all righteousness.

(*indicates congregation stands)

The Confession

All: Most merciful God,
 we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word,
 and deed, both by what we have done and by what we have
 left undone.
 We have not loved you with our whole heart. Too often we
 have failed to welcome into our hearts your quickening Spirit
 of love and power.
 We are truly sorry and humbly repent. Wash away our sins;
 send rain on our dry ground; bend our rigidity; inflame our
 cold hearts; anoint us for witness, and direct our wandering
 feet into your ways. Amen.

The Declaration of Pardon

Minister: There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in
 Christ Jesus.
 For the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ has set us free from the law
 of sin and death.

The Response

All sing: Man's work faileth,
 Christ's availeth;
 He is all our righteousness;
 He, our Savior,
 Has forever
 Set us free from dire distress.
 Through His merit
 We inherit
 Light and peace and happiness.
 [P.H. 361, v. 2]

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Minister: Let us pray for the presence of the Spirit as we listen to the
 Word of God.

People: Come, Holy Spirit of Truth, lead us into all truth.

Reader: [*Scripture Reading*]

Minister: [*Sermon*]

Minister or other member: [*Prayer for blessing on the Word*]

THE RESPONSE

*All: [*Hymn*]

**The Creed*

Minister: Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and
 in all places.

All: [*Say or sing the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed.*]

The Intercessory Prayer

[Prayer led by the minister or some other member.]

The Offertory

Minister: Let us present our gifts to God.

[Here the offerings are received, then all sing.]

* All sing: Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Minister: Brothers and sisters in Christ, the gospels tell us that on the first day of the week, the same day on which our Lord rose from the dead, he appeared to some of his disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of bread. Come to the joyful feast of the Lord.

[If the communion elements are not already on the table, they may be brought forward now.]

The Thanksgiving

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right for us to give thanks,
It is our joy and peace,
At all times and in all places
To give thanks to you,
Holy Father,
Almighty, everlasting God,
Through Christ our Lord.

Minister: We praise you and give you thanks for your Spirit: Who in the beginning moved over the face of the waters and without whose breath every living creature would die, who inspired the prophets of old with power to speak your word, blessed the virgin Mary and made her womb the dwelling place for your Son, descended as a dove on him and anointed him with grace and truth; who appeared as tongues of fire on the apostles and martyrs, empowering them to be your faithful witnesses; who guides and sanctifies the whole church throughout history.

Therefore, with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy:

All sing: For His favor,
 Praise forever
 Unto God the Father sing;
 Praise the Savior,
 Praise Him ever,
 Son of God, our Lord and King.
 Praise the Spirit;
 Through Christ's merit,
 He doth us salvation bring.

[P.H. 361, v. 4]

The Institution

Minister: We give thanks to God the Father that our Savior, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice, until his coming again. For the Lord Jesus on the night on which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Memorial

All: We shall do as our Lord commands.
 We proclaim that our Lord Jesus was sent by the Father into the world,
 that he took upon himself our flesh and blood,
 and bore the wrath of God against our sin.
 We confess that he was condemned to die that we might be pardoned
 and suffered death that we might live.
 We proclaim that he is risen to make us right with God,
 and that he shall come again in the glory of his new creation.
 This we do now,
 and until he comes again.

Prayer of Consecration

Minister: Heavenly Father, show forth among us the presence of your holy and life-giving Spirit, to sanctify us and these elements in this sacrament. Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ may be made one in him and remain faithful in hope and love.

People: Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.

Preparation of the Elements

Minister: The bread that we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

People: We who are many are one body, for we all share the same loaf.

Minister: The cup for which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

People: The cup which we drink is our participation in the blood of Christ.

The Invitation and Dedication

Minister: Congregation in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and who desire to live in obedience to him, are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord.

People: Let us keep the feast.

Minister: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: Hosanna in the highest.

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Communion

[when the people are ready to eat the bread]

Minister: Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for a complete remission of all our sins.

[when the people are ready to drink the cup]

Minister: Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for a complete remission of all our sins.

The Thanksgiving

Minister: Congregation in Christ, since the Lord has fed us at his table, let us praise his name with thanksgiving.

All sing: Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to the Three in One:
To the Father, and the Savior, Who the victory has won;
Glory to the Holy Spirit, Fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia! Alleluia! To the Triune Majesty.

[P.H. 360, v. 3]

**The Dismissal*

Minister: Remember, the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

People: Amen.

Minister: Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you overflow with love and hope.

People: Amen.

All: [*Hymn—optional*!]

IV. PREPARATORY EXHORTATION FOR COMMUNION

The 1980 synod instructed our committee to "produce a preparatory exhortation to accompany the new form for the Lord's supper and its variations."

Churches which have used the new "Service of Word and Sacrament" have thus far used the "preparatory exhortation" of one of the older forms on the Sunday prior to communion or their own preparatory exhortation or no such exhortation at all. The Church Order does not require a preparatory exhortation but a preparatory *sermon*. The use of a preparatory exhortation on the Sunday prior to communion was begun in the fifties with the adoption of Lord's supper forms Two and Three. The old Lord's supper form Number One is not divided into a "preparatory exhortation" and a "formulary."

Last year's synod, however, pointed out that all other forms for the Lord's supper are preceded by a preparatory section and that preparatory exhortations are regularly read in many churches but none are available in the style of the new form. We are, accordingly, happy to be able to present a preparatory exhortation in the style of the "Service of Word and Sacrament." *We recommend* that synod not elevate this new preparatory exhortation to the status of a synodically approved form, but simply approve it for inclusion in the Service Book.

PREPARATORY EXHORTATION FOR COMMUNION

Minister: As we prepare to celebrate Holy Communion, let us remember that Scripture calls us to examine ourselves before God. We are taught that eating and drinking unworthily brings judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28, 29). Let us therefore ask God for the proper spirit in which to celebrate the sacrament.

[Prayer]

Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deeds, grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost thoughts as you know them.

Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him.

May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy to us and glory to you.

All: We thank you, heavenly Father, for the atoning power of our Savior's death and for our share in his victory over sin. Open our hearts as we prepare for this celebration, that it may strengthen us in our faith, establish us in our hope, and confirm us in our love. In his name, Amen.

Minister: Brothers and sisters, let us first examine our faith. We all confess the truth of God as taught by Scripture and summarized in the creeds of the church. By this faith we take to ourselves Christ and all his benefits, so that for us to live is Christ.

All: Lord God, Author and Finisher of all true believing, confirm our faith as we prepare for the holy sacrament.

Minister: Let us, further, examine our hope. All Christian hope rests upon the finished work of Christ as Savior. The holy Gospel teaches that all our righteousness is in him alone.

God's children rely wholly upon the merits of Christ, find in him their strength and victory, and confidently expect his return in glory. They look forward to celebrating this holy supper anew with him in the kingdom. They will surely be received by God at his table.

All: Most merciful Father, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope.

Minister: Let us also examine our love, both for God and man. Remember the great and first commandment to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let us consciously determine to live a life of loving service to him, through Christ our Lord.

Let us also search ourselves to determine whether we love our neighbors as Christ commands. Do we unselfishly live for the welfare of our fellowman? Do our lives reflect the godly virtues of obedience, fidelity, integrity, justice, humility, and contentment? Do we seek reconciliation with our neighbors in all cases of offense?

All: Dear Father, daily increase in us the greatest gift of all, our Christian love.

Minister: If these marks of spiritual life are not evident in us, we may not presume to approach his table. Those, therefore, who live in self-righteousness, who hope in works or virtues of their own, and who do not show love to God and neighbor, have no true place at the Lord's supper.

Yet we should not be deterred by any sin lingering within us against our will. As we find faith, hope, and love within us, we ought gladly to obey our Lord's command and come with full expectation to God's open house of mercy.

All: [Prayer]

Gracious God, we love and adore you in Christ our Lord. We thank you for reconciling us to yourself in him. We rejoice in being received as your children.

Prepare us by your Holy Spirit for the sacrament. Help us to come in the assurance that by it we shall be spiritually revived, and strengthened in faith, hope, and love, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

[An appropriate hymn may be sung.]

V. PRAYER FOR THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

In 1979, synod gave final approval to a new form for marriage but asked that our committee write a different concluding prayer. We recommend synod approve the following prayer, with the understanding that a prayer of the minister's or the couple's own choosing may also be substituted.

PRAYER FOLLOWING A MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Father in heaven,
 Give today your blessing
 Upon the marriage of _____ and _____.

We thank you for the vows
 they have spoken
 And the love in which
 they are now united.

Keep them faithful and strong
 in every trial.
 Sustain their joy and affection
 for many years.

We pray, Lord Jesus,
 that you will be acknowledged
 head of their home
 and master of their lives.

Equip them, Holy Spirit,
 with patient endurance,
 sacrificial service, unflinching courtesy,
 endless trust, and lasting love.

Grant that their home
 will often be a place of laughter;
 and in times of difficulty or trouble,
 a haven of healing and forgiveness.

May they and their children
 give constant praise to you,
 Eternal Father, who with the Son and the Spirit
 is God, blessed and exalted forever. Amen.

VI. A NEW COLLECTION OF PRAYERS

Last year our committee submitted the first two of three parts of a new prayer collection to synod. This year, as promised, we submit part three. Section One was called "Prayers Commonly Used in Worship" and contains several selections for the parts of weekly public worship which commonly call for prayers (opening, confession, illumination, pastoral, etc.). Section Two consisted of opening prayers or collects for special worship days throughout the year (Advent, Christmas, etc.). The final third of the collection now being submitted is entitled "Section Three: Prayers for Special Needs." We are suggesting that this section be adopted for two years' trial use, so that the deadline will coincide with that assigned the first two sections last year.

We remind synod that we have undertaken the work of supplying a new prayer collection in response to encouragement to do so from the Synod of 1975. Since then we have carefully determined the criteria for a new collection, outlined the project in *Banner* articles, solicited contributions for it from members of the denomination, and done a good deal of work in narrowing and editing the collection. What is presented below consists of prayers for ecclesiastical assemblies, substitute prayers for use

at baptism, the original prayer used at the conclusion of the marriage form, and prayers on a wide variety of perennial concerns. The latter are designed for use alone or as components of pastoral prayers.

A paragraph is in order about the relationship of this new collection to the present collection in the *Psalter Hymnal*. Our recommendation last year was that the new collection be substituted for the present prayers. Our reasons for making that recommendation were several. First, unlike liturgical forms, liturgical prayers are neither prescribed nor required by the Church Order: they have a *quasi*-official, largely historical sanction rather than a prescribed use, therefore. Second, they are never used in most congregations and only rarely used in the rest of the churches. Third, since the growing bulk of our liturgical literature will eventually require that we substitute rather than simply add to our liturgical literature, we judged that the prayer collection was the most likely place to begin making such substitution of new for old materials. The Synod of 1980 referred "the collection of prayers of the Liturgical Committee to the churches for study and provisional use for a period of three years with a view to these replacing or supplementing the present collection." We indicate this development in our report to you this year as background information.

PRAYER FOR ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES (1)

Our gracious and eternal God, whose faithful church is a tribute to your saving grace, bless the work we are about to do. We have come here in the confidence that you will guide, preserve, and defend your people. We claim your promises to equip, inspire, and use us for your work in this world. Though sinful and limited, we confess that our strength and our purposes are in you.

By your guiding and purifying Spirit lead our discussions to fruitful conclusions. Clarify our thought and direct our speech that your will may be done in a spirit of unity and love. Inspire us with a vision of your kingdom. May our decisions promote its coming. Deliver us from apathy to the truth of your Word so that we may work enthusiastically. May your name be honored and your church strengthened through our efforts here today.

We pray this in the name of your dear Son and our precious Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES (2)

Heavenly Father, our eternal and merciful God, we rejoice that it pleases you, in your unending wisdom and love, to gather to yourself a church from all people of the earth. To know that you govern the church by using human service, humbles us. Now help us, whom you have called to this office of government, to guard ourselves and to care properly for the flock which Christ has purchased with his precious blood.

We confess that in ourselves we are not capable or worthy of doing any spiritual good. Yet, as your apostolic church, we claim your blessing on our work. May it build your church and promote its health.

Therefore, our faithful God and Father, we ask you to be with us through your Holy Spirit. May he lead us into all truth.

Remove all misunderstandings and protect us from the influence of our sinful hearts. Give us grace to accept your Word as our only guide and standard so that our efforts may bring your name glory, your people strength, and our consciences peace.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit, the only true God, deserves everlasting praise and glory. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE BAPTISM

Father in heaven,

We hear the words of promise, and we pray that these
may now be sealed to us in this sacrament.

You promise to surround your people with your love and care,
and you faithfully keep your covenant. By this baptism
we are reminded that you are true to your word.

We praise you for your faithfulness.

We confess that we have not always been faithful.

We have not served you with our full heart and mind and life;
we have often been more loyal to other gods
than to Christ our Lord.

Nor have we always kept faith with our brothers and sisters;
instead we have often put ourselves first.

We ask you for your forgiveness, as assured in this sacrament.

We pray that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit.

May our hearts and lives be rekindled
so that we rid ourselves of spiritual dullness,
and shine as lights in a dark world.

We give thanks for this baptism.

May it be a constant reminder
of your gift of the new life. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER BAPTISM

Our Father in heaven,

We are grateful for this sacrament of your forgiveness and grace.

We thank you for your covenant love shown to your people
from generation to generation.

We thank you for that same love shown to your people
in this congregation.

We thank you especially for that love shown to _____.

We pray that you will keep them under the protecting
wings of your care,

that they may experience Christian nurture in home and church,
and that they may give their hearts and lives to your service.

Help us now as we dedicate ourselves to your service.

This reminder of your faithfulness prompts us to be faithful to you.
This expression of your love spurs us to renewed love for each other.

We promise especially to surround _____ with our love,
to uphold them in prayer,
and to sustain them with our care. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FAMILY

We thank you, our Father, for the blessings of home life:
For a place in which we may double our joys by sharing,
and strengthen our characters by caring;
for a center in which we may support others in life's
high duties,
and for the enriching experiences
of loving and being loved,
providing and being provided for.
As you are the creator and keeper of the home, empower us
to fulfill with pure and constant affection
the vows of marriage,
the obedience of childhood,
and the keeping of family unity and honor.
Especially we pray for those who have left the family circle;
keep them evermore in your household of faith.
We thank you for those who have lived before us;
may we leave our sons and daughters a heritage in your covenant
as we have received blessings from our forefathers.
For the unmarried, the widows and widowers, for
orphans and all the homeless,
we implore the comforting ministry of your Holy Spirit.
In the name of him who is the head of the home,
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYER FOR EDUCATION

Lord God, creator of our minds, source of all truth,
end of all learning,
we thank you for the gift of knowledge.
We adore you as we contemplate the wonders we see revealed
both in your Word and in your creation.
For science and history,
for the arts and our understanding of self and neighbor,
we thank you.
But especially do we thank you for that knowledge of you
which is ours in Christ,
in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Bless all those who teach in public and Christian schools.
Open the minds of all peoples to receive and understand
truth as it is in Christ Jesus.
Safeguard the freedom of Christian education, and use it
as a force for righteousness, justice, and virtue.
We thank you, eternal Father, for the glad assurance
that we shall some day know fully
as we are fully known.
Hear us in the name of him whom to know is life eternal. Amen.

PRAYER FOR LABOR, INDUSTRY, AND AGRICULTURE

We praise you, creator of heaven and earth, and all things
in them, for your vast and beautiful creation.

We extol you as provider, and sustainer of us all.

You are the God of the open hand, by which we become
the people of the overflowing cup, and we praise your name.

We thank you also for giving us work to do, and strength
in which to do it.

You have called us to diligence;

give us the enthusiasm to be faithful at work.

Give us to see the dignity and nobility of honest work
faithfully done in your name.

Make us faithful stewards of the resources
of your creation.

For those who work in fields and orchards of the land,
give a glad harvest.

For those in shops, factories, and offices,
grant protection from accident,

Christian spirit between management and labor,
and your blessing upon our products and services.

For those who promote industry and organize enterprise,
grant the gifts of responsible leadership,
integrity,

and concern for the welfare of all mankind.

To you we dedicate all the abundance of the fields,
the products of industry,

and the efforts of heart and mind in your service.

May your glorious kingdom come through our daily work.

Remember in your grace also the unemployed who have no work,
and those handicapped who cannot work. May their lives
be valuable and constructive in ways
opened by you.

In the name of him for whose sake we do all things. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE DISTRESSED AND SUFFERING

Lord Jesus, compassionate Savior,
have mercy upon all suffering ones.

To the ill in body and mind,
be the great physician.

To the grieving,
be the understanding comforter.

To the lonely,
be the reassuring companion.

To the slandered,
be vindication.

To the prisoner,
the liberator from all sin and wrong.

To the wanderer,
the light by which to walk.

Be the solace of the widowed,
 the provider for the orphan,
 and to those alone,
 the friend closer than a brother.
 We praise you, Lord Jesus, for your fullness
 by which our emptiness may be replenished.
 May we and all suffering ones always find in you
 every need supplied,
 every day sanctified by your presence,
 and every experience enriched as we live in you.
 In your love and mercy. Amen.

PRAYER FOR GOVERNMENT

Lord Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords,
 give the nations a spirit of obedience to your Word.
 Rule over all, that your glorious kingdom may come.
 Grant peace and justice among the nations of the world.
 May the powers that be, both of state and province,
 nations and world,
 acknowledge that they are ordained by you.
 Give to the world
 great statesmen,
 law-abiding citizens,
 honest courts,
 and impartial police.
 Give wisdom and good judgment to those who shape
 the affairs of the nations.
 And may the truth and light of your Word ever guide us all.
 We pray for the peace and security the coming of
 your kingdom brings.
 In the royal name that is above every name. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

For your worldwide church we thank you, Jesus.
 For a church so holy she may bear your own name,
 so preserved that hell's gates cannot prevail against her,
 so devoted that her sons and daughters
 are evangelizing all the world,
 so warm in faith, hope, and love that to belong to her
 is a foretaste of heaven,
 we thank you, Lord Jesus.
 You have called us to be members of her;
 may our membership be alive and enriching.
 You have entrusted to her your Word and sacraments;
 may she ever keep that sacred trust.
 To her you have given the gifts and ministry of your Spirit;
 may she ever use them to your glory
 and the salvation of all peoples.

You have given her a fellowship
 and the inheritance of the saints in light;
 sustain her in keeping these gifts.
 Lord Jesus, keep your church pure:
 ever diligent in service,
 ever faithful in her great commission,
 ever upholding those who stumble,
 ever receiving those who repent,
 ever watching and praying for your return in glory.
 In times of persecution,
 keep her faithful;
 in times of prosperity,
 humble;
 in times of crisis,
 steadfast.
 To the glory of your name as her head and king. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PROPER RECREATION

Teach us, our Lord, properly to celebrate
 the element of recreation in our busy lives.
 May we so order our lives that,
 with all fidelity to our tasks,
 we rise above the tedium of toil
 to the joy of its rewards.
 We thank you for the gift of enjoyment,
 and for all you have given us to enjoy.
 Give us time to develop mind and body
 by activities beyond study and work.
 And may we use recreation to develop ourselves,
 the more to serve you,
 the more to delight in your gifts,
 the more to keep ourselves fit.
 Give us grace to keep your day of rest
 as may please you.
 We thank you for the joyous prospect
 of everlasting peace and rest
 in the new heavens and the new earth,
 forever with you,
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God of our life. Amen.

A WEDDING PRAYER

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 they may responsibly 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. Should 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 a 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.

Amen.

VII. READINGS OF THE LAW

Early in the seventies, our churches received in the mail a grey booklet with a number of readings of the Law. We have taken some of these readings, edited them with care, and added other readings.

While the reading of the Ten Commandments in our worship services is not required by the Church Order, it is a commendable and nearly universal custom in the morning services of our churches. The Law is sometimes read as a teacher of sin and sometimes as a rule of gratitude. In some of the churches the Law or its summary is sometimes read at the conclusion of the evening service by way of a parting dedication or commitment of the congregation. In submitting the following readings of the Law, we have taken these various practices into account. The minister may wish to conclude some of the following readings with the summary of the Law and an appropriate hymn may be sung following the reading.

We recommend that synod approve the inclusion of the following readings for the Service Book. It does not seem appropriate that synod adopt these readings provisionally, since their use is entirely optional and a number of churches have used similar readings in the past.

(1) FROM THE GOSPELS

Minister: You shall have no other gods before me.

People: Jesus said, It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.

Minister: You shall not make for yourself a graven image.

People: God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

- Minister: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
 People: I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool. . . . Let what you say be simply Yes or No; anything more than this comes from evil.
- Minister: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 People: The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath.
- Minister: Honor your father and your mother.
 People: For God commanded, he who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die.
- Minister: You shall not kill.
 People: I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.
- Minister: You shall not commit adultery.
 People: I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
- Minister: You shall not steal.
 People: For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery . . . theft. . . . These are what defile a man.
- Minister: You shall not bear false witness.
 People: For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.
- Minister: You shall not covet.
 People: Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

(2) FROM THE EPISTLES

- Minister: You shall have no other gods before me.
 People: For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever.
- Minister: You shall not make for yourself a graven image.
 People: In Christ we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- Minister: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
 People: Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.
- Minister: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall

labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God.

People: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Minister: Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

People: Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Minister: You shall not kill.

People: Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Minister: You shall not commit adultery.

People: You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Minister: You shall not steal.

People: Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may be able to give to those in need.

Minister: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

People: Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

Minister: You shall not covet your neighbor's house, or anything that is your neighbor's.

People: I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content.

(3) FROM THE PSALMS

Minister: God spoke all these words, saying: I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before me.

People: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight.

Minister: You shall not make for yourself graven images. . . you shall not bow down to them or serve them.

People: O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Minister: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

People: O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Minister: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

People: How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

Minister: Honor your father and your mother.

- People: Remember not the sins of my youth, or my transgressions; according to thy steadfast love remember me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord!
- Minister: You shall not kill.
- People: Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me.
- Minister: You shall not commit adultery.
- People: Thou has set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
- Minister: You shall not steal.
- People: Have mercy on me, O God, blot out my transgressions.
- Minister: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- People: Put false ways far from me; and graciously teach me thy law!
- Minister: You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.
- People: Incline my heart to thy testimonies, and not to gain! Deliver me from all my transgressions.
- Minister: The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. He fulfills the desire of all who fear him, to all who call upon him in truth. He fulfills the desire of all who fear him, he also hears their cry, and saves them.
- People: My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

(4) AS A TEACHER OF SIN

- Minister: Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways!
- People: Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- Minister: Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments!
- People: Lead me in the path of thy commandments, for I delight in it.
- Minister: And God spoke all these words, saying,
 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.
 You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

People: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Minister: Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

People: If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

(5) AS A RULE OF GRATITUDE

Minister: Hear, O people of God, the Law which the Lord speaks in your hearing this day, that you may know his statutes and walk according to his ordinances.

People: Teach us, O Lord, the grace of your Law, and give us life by your Word.

Minister: The God who saved us in Jesus Christ gave this Law, saying: I am the Lord your God! You shall have no other gods before me.

People: We will worship the Lord our God and serve only him.

Minister: You shall not make yourself an image of anything to worship it.

People: Living no more in bondage to earthly gods, we will worship the Lord our God in spirit and in truth.

Minister: You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.

People: We will use the holy name of God with reverence, praising him in everything we do and say.

Minister: You shall observe the sabbath and keep it holy, for six days you shall labor and do all your work.

- People: This is the day which the Lord has made: we will rejoice and be glad in it.
- Minister: The first part of the Law is this great commandment:
- People: That we love the Lord, our God, with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our strength.
- Minister: The second part of the Law is similar to the first: you shall honor your father and mother, that your days may be blessed in the land which the Lord your God gives to you.
- People: As children we will be obedient to our parents in the Lord; as parents we will correct our children and guide them in the fear of the Lord; we will respect the lawful authorities appointed by God.
- Minister: You shall not kill.
- People: We will be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave us.
- Minister: You shall not commit adultery.
- People: We will use our bodies in ways that are holy and honorable, and abstain from immorality and impurity.
- Minister: You shall not steal.
- People: We will do what we can for our neighbors' good, and work faithfully so that we may share with the poor.
- Minister: You shall not bring false witness against your neighbor.
- People: We will speak the truth with our neighbor in love, render judgments that are true and make for peace, and not devise in our hearts any evil against anyone.
- Minister: You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.
- People: We will be content in whatever state we are, through the strength of Christ within us.
- Minister: Thus we must love our neighbor as ourselves.
- People: For the Lord requires of us to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. Amen!

(6) AS SUMMARIZED IN MATTHEW 2:37-40

- Minister: What is the great and first commandment?
- People: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
- Minister: What is the second commandment like it?
- People: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
- Minister: What does this mean?
- People: Love is the fulfilling of the Law.
- Minister: To what does this call us?
- People: To a life of faith working through love.

VIII. BAPTISMAL SERVICES

The following services are intended as illustrations of how our baptismal forms may be used in a service of worship. In some of our churches, there is a baptism at least once a month. Such churches may wish to use one of these services by way of variety. In other congregations, baptism is relatively rare. Such churches may wish to use one of these services by way of highlighting the importance of baptism. This is all the more the case when the sermon also deals with baptism. Insofar as the following material is illustrative, a minister or worship committee may wish to write similar services. It should be observed that in every case the entire form for baptism is to be incorporated.

There is nothing new in the services. The forms used are in general use and are already approved by synod. Accordingly, we recommend that synod approve the inclusion of this material in the Service Book. It should be pointed out that if synod gives provisional approval to the two baptismal prayers in the prayer collection, these prayers may be substituted for the prayers in the services.

CLASSIC FORM FOR INFANT BAPTISM
NEW TRANSLATION

THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Declaration of Dependence and Greeting

Minister: Not to us, O Lord, not to us
but to thy name give glory
for the sake of thy steadfast love and thy faithfulness!
You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!
He is our help and our shield.

People: The Lord has been mindful of us; he will bless us;
he will bless those who fear the Lord,
both small and great.

Minister: May the Lord give you increase,
you and your children!
May you be blessed by the Lord
who made heaven and earth!

People: We will bless the Lord
from this time forth and forevermore.
Praise the Lord!

(*Psalm 115:1, 11-15, 18*)

Minister: Grace be to you and peace from God our Father
and from the Lord Jesus Christ:

People: Amen.

[*A Hymn of Praise*]

(* indicates congregation stands)

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Minister: 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.

All: [*Hymn of Penitence*]

The Assurance of Pardon

Minister: 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.

All: [*Hymn of Thanksgiving (optional)*]

The Call to Obedience

Minister: 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.

All: [*Hymn of Dedication (optional)*]

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Minister: Our children should not be denied the sacrament of baptism because of their inability to understand its meaning. Without their knowledge, our children not only share in Adam's condemnation, but are also received into God's favor in Christ. God's gracious attitude toward us and our children is revealed in what he said to Abraham, the father of all believers: "I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7). The apostle Peter also testifies to this with these words, "For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him" (Acts 2:39). Therefore God formerly commanded that children be circumcised as a seal of the covenant and as a declaration that righteousness comes by faith. Christ also recognized that children are members of the covenant people when he embraced them, laid his hands on them, and blessed them (Mark 10:16). Since baptism has replaced circumcision, our children should be baptized as heirs of God's kingdom and of his covenant. As the children mature, their parents are responsible for teaching them the meaning of baptism. Let us turn to God, asking that in this baptism his name may be glorified, we may be comforted, and the church may be edified.

Minister: [*Prayer*]

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 upon these your children with favor by bringing them into union with your Son, Jesus Christ, through your Holy Spirit. May they be buried with Christ into death and be raised with him to new life. Give them true faith, firm hope, and ardent love so that they may joyfully bear their cross as they daily follow Christ. Give these children the full assurance of your grace so that when they leave this life and its constant struggle against the power of sin they may appear before the judgment seat of Christ without fear. We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

[*Address to the Parents*]

Minister: People of God, as you have now heard, baptism is given to us by God as proof that he does make a covenant with us and our

children. We must, therefore, use the sacrament for the purpose that God intended and not out of custom or superstition. You are asked to give an honest answer to these questions as a testimony that you are doing what God commands.

First: Do you acknowledge that our children, who are sinful from the time of conception and birth and therefore subject to the misery which sin brings, even the condemnation of God, are made holy by God in Christ and so as members of his body ought to be baptized?

Second: Do you acknowledge that the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, summarized in the Apostles' Creed, and taught in this Christian church, is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third: Do you sincerely promise to do all you can to teach these children, and to have them taught, this doctrine of salvation?

Parents: [*Answer*]: We do.

The Baptism

Minister: _____, I baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: [**A Hymn*]

Minister: [*Prayer (this prayer may also be combined with the intercessory prayer)*]

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 always govern these children by your Holy Spirit. May they, through your guidance, be so nurtured in the Christian faith and godliness as to grow and develop in Jesus Christ. Help them see your fatherly goodness and mercy which surrounds us all. Make them champions of righteousness under the direction of Jesus Christ, our only Teacher, King, and High Priest. Give them the courage to fight against and overcome sin, the devil and his whole dominion. May their lives become an eternal song of praise to you, the one only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

All: [*A Hymn*]

The Prayer for Illumination

Minister: Almighty God, grant us your Holy Spirit, that we may rightly understand and truly obey your Word of Truth. Open our hearts that we may love what you have commanded and desire

what you promise. Set us free from private distractions that we may hear and from selfish pride that we may receive the promise of your grace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister: [*Scripture Reading*]

Minister: [*Sermon*]

THE RESPONSE

All: [*Hymn*]

Minister: [*The Intercessory Prayer*]

All: [*Offering*]

All: [**Doxology*]

Minister: [**Summary of the Law*]

THE DISMISSAL

Minister: [**Benediction*]

NEW FORM FOR INFANT BAPTISM

THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Call to Worship

Minister: O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples!

People: He is mindful of his covenant for ever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.

Minister: Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

People: Praise the Lord! (*Psalm 105:1, 8, 3, 45*)

Greeting

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And the Lord be with you.

Minister: Grace, mercy, and peace be to you, from God the Father and from his Son, Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

All: [**Hymn of Praise*]

The Institution of Baptism

Minister: Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ: Let us hear the Lord's command concerning the sacrament of holy baptism. After he had risen victorious from the grave, Jesus said to his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them

(*indicates congregation stands)

in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20). In obedience to this command the church baptizes believers and their children.

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

Minister: Before we proceed with the baptism, let us hear what the law of God requires of us, that it may convince us of our sin and incite us to seek his mercy. Christ teaches this in summary: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40).

People: We confess to you, our God, and before one another that we have sinned greatly, in thought, word, and deed. We have offended your holiness. We have failed to love our neighbor. We have followed the devices of our own hearts, and have spurned the promptings of your Spirit. Through our own fault, we have deserved your judgment. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us and hear our prayer. Amen.

Minister: Let us hear the promises of God which are confirmed in baptism. The Lord made this great promise of Abraham: "I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7). In later years, though Israel was unfaithful, God renewed his promise through the prophet: "This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: "I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. . . , for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:33, 34). In the fullness of time God came in Jesus Christ to give pardon and peace through the blood of the cross, the "blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:28). After Jesus had risen from the dead, the apostles proclaimed: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and your children and to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him" (Acts 2:38, 39). Anticipating the fulfillment of God's promises, Paul assures us, "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him" (I Tim. 2:11, 12). These are the unfailing promises of our Lord to those who are baptized.

All: [*A Hymn of Thanksgiving*]

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Minister: Let us recall the teaching of Scripture concerning the sacrament of baptism. The water of baptism signifies the washing away of our sin by the blood of Christ and the renewal of our lives by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). It also signifies that we are buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4). From this we learn that our sin has been condemned by God, that we are to hate it and consider ourselves as having died to it. Moreover, the water of baptism signifies that we are raised with Christ (Col. 2:12). From this we learn that we are to walk with Christ in newness of life. All this tells us that God has adopted us as his children, "and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). Thus in baptism God seals the promises he gave when he made his covenant with us, calling us and our children to put our trust for life and death in Christ our Savior, deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him in obedience and love. God graciously includes our children in his covenant, and all his promises are for them as well as us (Gen. 17:7; Acts 2:39). Jesus himself embraced little children, and blessed them (Mark 10:16); and the apostle Paul said that children of believers are holy (1 Cor. 7:14). So, just as the children of the old covenant received the sign of circumcision, our children are given the sign of baptism. We are therefore always to teach our little ones that they have been set apart by baptism as God's own children.

The Prayer of Preparation

Minister: Father in heaven, we pray that you will never destroy us in our sin as with the flood, but save us as believing Noah and his family and spare us as the Israelites who walked safely through the sea. We pray that Christ, who went down into the Jordan and came up to receive the Spirit, who sank deep into death and was raised up Lord of Life, will always keep us and our little ones in the grip of his hand. We pray, O Holy Father, that your Spirit will separate us from sin and openly mark us with a faith that can stand the light of day and endure the dark of night. Prepare us now, O Lord, to respond with glad hope to your promises so that we, and all entrusted to our care, may drink deeply from the well of living water. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Vows

Minister: Since you have presented this child (these children) for holy baptism, you are asked to answer the following questions before God and his people:

First, do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, accept the promises of God, and affirm the truth of the Christian faith which is proclaimed in the Bible and confessed in this church of Christ?

Second, do you believe that your child, though sinful by nature, is received by God in Christ as a member of his covenant, and therefore ought to be baptized?

Third, do you promise, in reliance on the Holy Spirit and with the help of the Christian community, to do all in your power to instruct this child in the Christian faith and to lead him by your example into the life of Christian discipleship?

Parents: We do, God helping us.

Minister: Do you, the people of the Lord, promise to receive this child in love, pray for him, help care for his instruction in the faith, and encourage and sustain him in the fellowship of believers?

People: We do, God helping us.

[*The minister may say: Our Lord said: "Let children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14.)*]

Minister: *In administering the sacrament the minister shall say:*
 _____, I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: [*A Hymn (optional)*]

The Baptismal Prayer

Minister: Lord our God, forever faithful to your promise, we thank you for assuring us again that you will forgive us and receive us as children in Christ. Grant wisdom and love to the parents and to us all as we carry out the vows just made. We pray that you will guide our little ones throughout their lives. Enable them to respond in faith to the gospel. Fill them with your Spirit and make their lives fruitful. Uphold them in their hour of trial, and when Christ returns, let them celebrate with all the people of God your greatness and goodness forever, in the joy of your new creation. Amen.

All: [*A Hymn*]

THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Minister: O God of all truth, be pleased to grant us your Spirit as we attend to your Word. Open our minds that we may understand what you have revealed to us. Release us from self-will that we may be ready to obey. And open our lips that our mouths may show forth your praise. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister: [*Reading of the Scriptures*]

[*Sermon*]

[*Post-Sermon Prayer (optional)*]

THE RESPONSE

All: *[*A Hymn*]

Minister: *Intercessory Prayer*

All: [*Lord's Prayer in Unison*]

All: [*The Creed (optional)*]

All: [*Offering of Gifts*]

Minister: [*Dedication prayer (optional)*]

All: * [*Doxology Hymn*]

*THE DISMISSAL

Minister: Go in peace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: Amen.

NEW FORM FOR ADULT BAPTISM WITH BAPTISM FOLLOWING THE SERMON

THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Invocation

Minister: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

People: Who made heaven and earth.

Minister: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Greeting

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And the Lord be with you.

Minister: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

All: [*A Hymn of Praise*]

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Confession

Minister: Let us acknowledge before the Lord that we are sinners and seek his mercy in Christ Jesus.

People: Almighty and most merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the desires of our own hearts. We have ignored your will and turned aside from our neighbors' needs. Our words have not always been true nor our thoughts pure. We have sought other gods before you, and have coveted the things that belong to others. Have mercy on us, O Lord. Be gracious to us according to the promise of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*(indicates congregation stands)

The Promises

Minister: Let us hear the promises of God which are confirmed in baptism. The Lord made this great promise to Abraham: "I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7). In later years, though Israel was unfaithful, God renewed his promise through the prophet: "This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people . . . , for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:33, 34). In the fullness of time God came in Jesus Christ to give pardon and peace through the blood of the cross, the "blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:28). After Jesus had risen from the dead, the apostles proclaimed: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him" (Acts 2:38, 39). Anticipating the fulfillment of God's promises, Paul assures us, "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:11, 12). These are the unfailing promises of our Lord to those who are baptized.

All: [A Hymn]

(*indicates congregation stands)

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

The Prayer for Illumination

Minister: Holy Father, take full possession of our hearts, raise there your throne, and command there as you command in heaven. Being created by you, let us live to you. Being created for you, let us ever act for your glory. Being redeemed by you, let us give to you what is yours, and let our spirits ever cleave to you alone. To that end help us be attentive to your Word and accompany it by the Spirit of Truth. Amen.

[Sermon]

THE RESPONSE

Minister: [Intercessory prayer]

All: [A Hymn]

All: [Offering]

All: [A Hymn (optional)]

PROFESSION AND SACRAMENT

The Instruction

Minister: Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ: since we are to hear the profession of faith of _____ and he is to receive the sacrament of baptism, let us hear the words of institution of this sacrament and scripture's teaching concerning it, so that we may dedicate ourselves anew to God as his baptized people.

After he had risen victorious from the grave, Jesus said to his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20). In obedience to this command the church baptizes believers and their children.

The water of baptism signifies the washing away of our sin by the blood of Christ and the renewal of our lives by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). It also signifies that we are buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4). From this we learn that our sin has been condemned by God, that we are to hate it and consider ourselves as having died to it. Moreover, the water of baptism signifies that we are raised with Christ (Col. 2:12). From this we learn that we are to walk with Christ in newness of life. All this tells us that God has adopted us as his children, "and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). Thus in baptism God seals the promises he gave when he made his covenant with us, calling us and our children to put our trust for life and death in Christ our Savior, deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him in obedience and love.

The Vows

Minister: _____, will you stand now, and in the presence of God and his people respond to the following questions:

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent to redeem the world, do you love and trust him as the one who saves you from your sin, and do you with repentance and joy embrace him as Lord of your life?

Confessor: I do.

Minister: 2. Do you believe that the Bible is the Word of God revealing Christ and his redemption, and that the confessions of this church faithfully reflect this revelation?

Confessor: I do.

Minister: 3. Do you promise to do all you can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to strengthen your love and commitment to Christ by sharing faithfully in the life of the church, honoring and submitting to its authority; and do you join with the people of God in doing the work of the Lord everywhere?

Confessor: I do.

[The questions may be changed into statements and said by the confessors. Opportunity may also be given here for additional self-expression on the part of the confessors. The response may be asked after the last question only.]

The Prayer of Preparation

Minister: Father in heaven, we pray that you will never destroy us in our sin as with the flood, but save us as believing Noah and his family, and spare us as the Israelites who walked safely through the sea. We pray that Christ, who went down into the Jordan and came up to receive the Spirit, who sank deep into death and was raised up Lord of life, will always keep us and our little ones in the grip of his hand. We pray, O Holy Father, that your Spirit will separate us from sin and openly mark us with a faith that can stand the light of day and endure the dark of night. Prepare us now, O Lord, to respond with glad hope to your promises so that we, and all entrusted to our care, may drink deeply from the well of living water. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament

Minister: Do you now wish to be baptized in the name of the triune God, and will you receive your baptism as a sign and seal that God accepts you in Christ, forgives all your sins and incorporates you into his church?

Confessor: I do, with all my heart.

Minister: Do you, the people of the Lord, promise to receive _____ into your fellowship as members of the body of Christ, and do you promise to encourage him in the Christian faith and help him in doing the work of the Lord?

People: We do, God helping us.

[In administering the sacrament the minister shall say]:
_____, I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Minister: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I now welcome you to all the privileges of full communion. I welcome you to full participation in the life of the church. I welcome you to its responsibilities, its privileges, its sufferings, and its joys. Let us now, together with _____ confess our Christian faith [here follows the Creed, spoken or sung].

The Baptismal Prayer

Minister: Our Father in heaven, we thank you for Jesus Christ, for the new life given in him, and for the one faith, one hope, and one baptism which your people have shared through the ages. We rejoice that _____ is now one with your church and that we may receive him as a member of this con-

gregation. Guide him in the Christian way and sustain us all in the fellowship and service of our Lord. Amen.

All: [**A triumphant hymn*]

*THE DISMISSAL

Minister: Receive the benediction.

People: May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, rest upon us, and upon all our work done in his name. May he give light to guide us, courage to support us, love to unite us, now and forevermore.

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: Amen!

IX. THE SERVICE BOOK

We have made frequent reference to the proposed Service Book. Synod has given this project into the hands of the Board of Publications. We have been in frequent contact with the Board of Publications and are pleased with the cooperation we have enjoyed and the progress of the board with their project.

X. NOMINATIONS

The volume of material we have handled this year did not permit time for making nominations for our committee membership. We regret this is the case and expect to work on this in our May 1981 meeting. We hope to submit the nominations to you in a supplementary report.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Representation at synod: we request that our chairman, Dr. James A. DeJong, and our secretary, the Rev. Dirk J. Hart, be given the privilege of the floor when the report of the Liturgical Committee is considered.

B. We recommend that synod approve the inclusion of our statement on "form and service" in the Service Book.

C. We recommend that synod give final approval to the "Service of Word and Sacrament."

D. Subject to favorable action on the above recommendation, we recommend that synod approve the inclusion of the seasonal variations of the "Service of Word and Sacrament" in the Service Book.

E. We recommend that synod approve the inclusion of the preparatory exhortation for communion in the Service Book.

F. We recommend that synod approve of the "prayer for the marriage ceremony" with the understanding that the form will say, "another prayer may be substituted."

G. We recommend that synod give two years' provisional approval to Part Three of the prayer collection.

H. We recommend that synod approve the inclusion of the "Readings of the Law" in the Service Book.

I. We recommend that synod approve the inclusion of the baptismal services in the Service Book.

J. We recommend that synod urge the churches to send us reactions to the new form for the installation of elders and deacons by September 1, 1981; new form for ordination of evangelists, September 1, 1981; new form for excommunication, September 1, 1981; new form for readmission, September 1, 1981; the entire collection of prayers, September 1, 1982.

Liturgical Committee

J. DeJong, chairman

D. Hart, secretary

H. Boonstra

R. Kooistra

N. VanderArk

W. VanderHoven

S. VanZanten

R. Wells

REPORT 16

MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

I. PERSONNEL AND NOMINATIONS

A. *Committee Members*

The committee members are the Rev. Harold Hiemstra, chairman; Mr. Lawrence Van Noord, secretary; Mr. John Verhoeven, treasurer; Mr. William De Groot; the Rev. Gareth Kok; and the Rev. Richard Venema.

Mr. Carl Vander Brug continues to perform the duties of records secretary and attends all committee meetings. We are indebted to Mr. Vander Brug for his willingness to assist the committee in this detailed and heavy task.

B. *Nominations*

Position 1

—Rev. Donald Draayer, pastor at the First Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, CA.

—Rev. John Hollebeek, pastor emeritus at Highland Christian Reformed Church of Redlands, CA.

Position 2

—Mr. John Verhoeven,* committee treasurer, former consistory member of the First Christian Reformed Church of Chino, CA, former school board member, businessman.

—Mr. Peter Hoekstra, Executive Director Inland Christian Home, Ontario, CA, former council member, C.P.A, member First Christian Reformed Church of Chino, CA.

The Rev. Gareth Kok has served three years and would be eligible for reelection; however, he requests that he not be considered for reelection due to advancing age. The committee expresses its gratitude to the Rev. Mr. Kok for his valuable services to the committee these past three years.

*denotes incumbent

II. STATISTICS

During the year 1980 we mailed a total of 1857 ministers profiles to 145 vacant churches. These figures breakdown as follows:

Committee suggestions of ministers—1354

Requested profiles by vacant churches—503

We also received requests from vacant churches for 122 profiles which were not in our files. We sent profile forms to 239 ministers requesting

them to complete the profile and return them to us. These were for updating previous files or for an initial profile.

We have expanded our services to include furnishing to vacant churches the names of ministers willing to serve as stated supply for a limited time. We invite any minister who is able to serve a vacant church as stated supply to correspond with us and we will serve as an information bureau for them.

Inquiries to our committee regarding the pastoral exchange concept has been limited. However, we still feel that the concept is viable and invite interested ministers to correspond with us.

III. PASTORAL CONCERN AND SERVICE

For the past few years the Ministerial Information Service has been aware of the presence of tension in quite a number of relationships between pastors and their congregations. This led the Ministerial Information Service in 1978 to bring this to the attention of synod. In response the Synod of 1978 requested the Synodical Interim Committee to continue to research "the matter of a healing ministry for ministers, consistories, and congregations in situations of stress." In 1979 the Ministerial Information Service requested that "synod broaden the mandate given to the Synodical Interim Committee concerning 'Healing Ministry' to include: (1) a study of our calling system and possible modification thereof, and (2) a study of appointing a 'Healing Ministries' committee, with a full-time executive secretary." Those matters are still of concern to us as we continue to hear of situations approaching the intolerable stage. We anxiously await the report of the Synodical Interim Committee.

In view of the tension that exists and the fact that this committee is now over eight years old we have begun a study of the purpose and effectiveness of the Ministerial Information Service. We see this committee's mandate as being basically twofold: (1) to provide churches which are vacant with the names of men available for call who might be willing to accept a call to serve that church; and (2) to assist ministers who need a change in obtaining a call from a vacant church. There are some built-in problems with such a dual mandate. While there are men who need a change for various reasons, churches seldom see it as a priority to help a minister who "needs to move." They are interested in obtaining the best possible man they can for their congregation. Part of our struggle is to reconcile these two mandates.

In order to ascertain something about our effectiveness, we recently sent out questionnaires to all the vacant churches we served in the past twelve months. We asked for suggestions on ways to improve our services. We asked them to help us identify areas of weakness in our service; and we requested their opinion of the information we provided them. Of the responses received to this date many state that they were not very satisfied with the names of the men we provided. They did not feel these were the men they wanted to serve their church. This points up how difficult it is for us to fill both roles.

This is important because of synod's decision in 1979 to allow the Ministerial Information Service to computerize its files. We are now in the

process of investigating the use of a computer in our work. We fully intend to use one in the near future. In preparation for that we intend to produce new profiles for both churches and ministers which will be far more detailed than are the present ones. We are thinking of three basic categories of information: Resumé—Profile—Evaluation. We bring this to the attention of synod because using a computer is going to shift the emphasis very one sidedly in favor of supplying the vacant churches with the names of men from our files who can best fill those requirements—and it will not be very helpful to those ministers who need a call but who may not rate very high on the computer printout.

At present we are not certain of the implications of these changes. We anticipate that another year will pass before we will have the new system ready to go. We hope to use the results of the work of the Synodical Interim Committee in finalizing our new procedure.

IV. FINANCES

The operating expense for the year totaled \$1,208.96. An audited financial report is attached. We anticipate an increase in expenses for the year 1981 due to establishing a computerized program.

V. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The committee will not have a representative at synod this year. We do stand ready to discuss matters with you by phone, or to send a representative in person, if you so desire. Please contact the committee secretary at (213)867-8323 or the committee chairman at (213)866-1812.

VI. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

That synod appoint two committee members from the list of nominees that the Ministerial Information Service presents to synod to replace retiring members.

Ministerial Information Service
L. R. Van Noord, secretary

REPORT 17

MINISTERS' PENSION FUND

I. INTRODUCTION

The Pension Committee supervises four distinct plans, namely:

1. The Ministers' Pension Fund
2. The Supplemental Fund
3. A Voluntary Group Life Insurance Plan for ordained ministers.
4. A Voluntary Group Health Insurance Plan for ministers, certain lay workers, and their dependents.

The Ministers' Pension Fund was established by synod to provide honorably for the support of our retired ministers and their dependents. Report 17 deals primarily with the Ministers' Pension Fund.

Retired ministers are those who are emeritated because of reaching retirement age or disability. Ministers' dependents are their widows and orphans as defined in the plan.

Synod of 1969 established the present plan to be effective January 1, 1970. Subsequent synods have adopted certain modifications and clarifications. The current printed copy of the plan includes the revisions through July 1, 1978. Requests for copies should be addressed to the administrator at:

CRC Ministers' Pension Fund
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560

The Ministers' Pension Fund is managed by a Pension Committee of seven men appointed by synod. Two of the members are CRC ministers. The Pension Committee employs an administrator to execute policy. A secretary also serves as group leader of insurance.

II. THE QUOTA AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The principal source of income for the Ministers' Pension Fund is the *per-family* quota. The quota is not a *per-congregation* matter but a *per-family responsibility*. Thus the retired minister's pension and the widow's benefit is assured, God willing, to ministers, whether they served large congregations or small congregations. *Per-family* quotas are established annually by synod.

Ministers serving in synodically approved ministerial capacities (but who are not the "principal" ministers of organized churches) need to have contributions paid into the Ministers' Pension Fund to be active participants. Synod annually sets the amount of such contributions.

III. CENSUS

A. Participants

Near the close of the year, there were 1,228 participants in the Ministers' Pension Plan. (Additionally the office maintains files on 27 indefinite withdrawals from the plan plus 44 files on former ministers of the Christian Reformed Church.)

Of the 1,228 participants, there are some interesting statistics. First, a national breakdown is as follows:

1,021	United States ministers and widows
207	Canadian ministers and widows
<u>1,228</u>	Total

A second breakdown is as follows:

758	United States active ministers
186	Canadian active ministers
<u>944</u>	Total active ministers
171	United States retired ministers
13	Canadian retired ministers
<u>184</u>	Total retired ministers
92	United States widows (includes 1 orphan)
8	Canadian widows
<u>100</u>	Total widows

The age distribution of our retired ministers and widows is of special interest:

Age Ranges	Retired Ministers	Widows #
Under age 65	8*	9
Age 65 to 70	51	9
Age 70 to 75	52*	14
Age 75 to 80	35	18
Age 80 to 85	20	23
Age 85 to 90	14	18
Age 90 and over	4	9
	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>100</u>
	184	

*Disabled Ministers # Includes one orphan

B. Deaths in 1980

Mrs. Dora Smit	January 4, 1980
Rev. Ralph Goeneboer	February 6, 1980
Rev. Karel de Waal Malefyt	February 16, 1980
Rev. Hubert De Wolf	March 4, 1980
Rev. Marvin Doornbos	March 15, 1980
Rev. Harry Vander Ark	March 20, 1980
Rev. Elton Holtrop	April 18, 1980
Rev. Jacob Smith	July 20, 1980
Dr. William H. Rutgers	July 31, 1980
Mrs. Charlotte De Waal Malefyt	September 16, 1980
Dr. Edwin Palmer	September 28, 1980

Mrs. Ella Zwaagman	September 28, 1980
Mrs. Dorothy Vander Ark	October 8, 1980
Rev. Clyde Van Winkle	November 4, 1980
Rev. John T. Holwerda	November 5, 1980
Rev. Arthur W. Schaafsma	November 5, 1980
Rev. Joseph Vande Kieft	November 20, 1980

C. Emeritations

- Rev. John A. Mulder, because of age
Classis Kalamazoo, effective June 25, 1979
(inadvertently omitted from 1979 Report)
- Rev. Walter Hofman, because of age
Classis Florida, effective February 28, 1980
- Rev. Peter Dekker, because of age
Classis Alberta North, effective April 22, 1980
- Rev. John Hollebeek, because of age
Classis Lake Erie, effective June 2, 1980
- Rev. Edward Bossenbroek, because of age
Classis Illiana, effective June 6, 1980
- Rev. Peter De Jong, because of age
Classis Grand Rapids East, effective June 30, 1980
- Rev. Henry Petersen, because of age
Classis Pella, effective July 15, 1980
- Rev. Arthur Hoogstrate, because of age
Classis Muskegon, effective September 30, 1980
- Rev. Cecil W. Tuininga, because of age
Classis Alberta North, effective September 30, 1980
- Rev. Alexander C. De Jong, because of health
Classis Chicago South, effective October 1, 1980
- Rev. Peter Y. De Jong, because of age
Classis Orange City, effective October 28, 1980
- Rev. Eugene Bradford, because of age
Classis Holland, effective November 30, 1980

IV. AUDITORS

The Pension Committee appointed the public accounting firm, Seidman and Seidman, to audit the books for the twelve months ended December 31, 1980.

V. MINISTERS' PENSION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Pension Committee met in six full-day sessions in 1980. At one of these meetings, the subcommittee to develop a separate Canadian Pension Plan made a plan-draft presentation to the Pension Committee. The Canadian subcommittee met *twice in 1979 and five times in 1980* in full-day sessions. The members of this committee are:

- John T. Ebbers, chairman, Richmond, BC
- Albert J. Bakker, Q. C., secretary, St. Catharines, ON
- Rev. Henry R. De Bolster, M.Div., St. Catharines, ON

Cornelis W. Hartog, F.S. A., E.G.I.A., Willowdale, ON
Hendrik Kreeft, C.A., Sarnia, ON

and to serve as resource person, Garrett C. Van de Riet, administrator of the CRC Ministers' Pension Plan.

After the draft presentation, the Pension Committee appointed a special subcommittee:

1. to better understand the Canadian draft.
2. to define the differences between the Canadian draft and the present plan.
3. to ascertain whether it is possible to blend the two plans into one with only legal and governmental differences being spelled out in Plan A (say the U.S. version) and Plan B (say the Canadian version).

Kenneth Olthoff serves as chairman of this special subcommittee. C. W. Hartog is the Canadian member. J. F. Mellema and G. C. Van de Riet serve as resource persons. This special subcommittee, with both resource persons, met *eight times in 1980*. Substantial statistics and research materials were brought to each of these lengthy study sessions.

VI. CANADIAN AND UNITED STATES PENSION PLANS

In view of the complexity of the issues and despite the many meetings described in V (above), the Pension Committee is not yet ready to present a definite structure of a "new" plan to Synod 1981. However, the Pension Committee wishes to advise the Synodical Interim Committee, the Advisory Committee to Synod, and the Synod of 1981 that certain basic concepts in the plans under study differ from the current plan in the following important respects:

Present Plan—Basically all eligible ministers receive the same annual pension amount (provided they have been active ministers continuously from the time of their ordination to the time of their retirement at age sixty-five and provided that this period of active service was not less than thirty years). This applies to those retiring as well as to those retired. The dollar amount of annual pension is established from time to time by synod.

"New" Plan—Ministers would receive different annual pension amounts, with the dollar amount of annual pension for those retiring each year determined by the plan formula. This amount would be based upon these variables:

- (a) Credit would be given for each year of pensionable service up to age 71.
- (b) Average "cash salaries" paid to CRC ministers as a group in the three years prior to the year of his retirement would be the base to which a uniform percentage is applied.

The pension for a particular minister would be arrived at by multiplying (a) times (b) above. (Thus all ministers in, say, 1983 would receive the same pension provided they all had the same years of pensionable service. Those retiring in 1984 would most likely receive a higher pension than the 1983 retirees because the average "cash salaries" paid to ministers as a group in the three years prior to 1984

would likely be a higher amount [see (b) above].)

Increases in pensions for those already retired would be determined by synod from time to time.

The rationale of the "new" plan under study involves the following concepts:

- (1) Pension levels for those retiring currently should be adjusted automatically to more closely relate to the average minister's purchasing power at the time of retirement than provided for under the present plan.
- (2) While the committee favors a corresponding maintenance of the purchasing power of retirees, it recognizes the church's inability to guarantee the funds needed to reach this objective at all times. Therefore, post-retirement adjustments are contemplated to be on an *ad hoc* basis.

The above changes in determining retirement benefits are the main differences between the present plan and the "new" plan under study. It is contemplated that the "new" plan will likely be presented to the Synod of 1982. This would involve not only a "new" Canadian version but also a "new" United States version of the plan.

VII. FUNDING

The Synod of 1979 reaffirmed the decision of the Synod of 1969 that the Ministers' Pension Plan is by synodical decision formulated in terms of funding. (*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 47, paragraph 3; *Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 105, item 5.) The present pension plan became effective January 1, 1970, and at that moment of time the Christian Reformed Church assumed a significant pension obligation to active and retired ministers for *past services already rendered*. This was based on a maximum pension level of \$3,620 per year. Subsequently, modest pension increases have been approved by synod and these, of course, raised the obligation as of January 1, 1970. Additionally, each year thereafter, during the minister's career, funding is stipulated so that at retirement there will be sufficient monies to pay retirement benefits as needed to sustain the minister and his family for the remaining years of his life. As of December 31, 1979, *the liability for prior service rendered by CRC ministers* amounted to \$26,722,830, for which assets (funding) in the amount of \$9,101,237 were provided. This still left the unfunded liability for prior services rendered at \$17,621,593, a significant portion of which results from benefit increases granted since 1970.

VIII. INVESTMENTS

On February 15, 1981, by which time this report must be submitted, the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 1980, were not yet completed. (These 1980 reports will be available well before synod convenes.) In view of this, we present investment data as of December 31, 1979.

Approximately \$24,000 of the fund's assets were in the form of operating cash on December 31, 1979. Additionally, about \$866,000 repre-

sentent receivables which were collected during the first quarter of 1980. Actual investments then on December 31, 1979, amounted to \$8,420,959. These were held by financial institutions which invested them as follows:

	United States	Canadian	Total
<u>Fixed income securities at cost:</u>			
U.S. and Canadian government obligations	\$2,984,914	\$ —	\$2,984,914
Corporate bonds	1,901,675	127,942	2,029,617
Term and certificates of deposit	8,000	1,761,712	1,769,712
Investment contract	545,162	—	545,162
	5,439,751	1,889,654	7,329,405
<u>Equity investments at market:</u>	1,091,554	—	1,091,554
Total carrying value	<u>\$6,531,305</u>	<u>\$1,889,654</u>	<u>\$8,420,959</u>

The table shows that 87 percent of the investments were in fixed income securities. The fixed income securities are stated at cost, which exceeded the market value of \$6,878,013 by \$451,392 at December 31, 1979. (This results from increases in interest rates subsequent to the purchase of these securities.) Equity investments are stated at market and were less than the original cost of \$1,109,178 by \$17,624 at December 31, 1979. In this connection it is important to note that 69 percent of the fixed income securities mature in less than seven years. At maturity, of course, all fixed income securities are redeemed at par and not at market.

Investment income amounted to \$634,573 in 1979 which represented a return of 8.3 percent on an average investment in 1979 of \$7,596,140. (In 1978, investment income amounted to \$426,442 which was a return of 6.8 percent on an average investment in 1978 of \$6,217,231.)

IX. INFLATION

Periodically synod has increased pensions to recognize, in part, the constant increase in the cost of living. Inflation continues at a high rate in both the United States and Canada and it has substantial adverse impact on our retired ministers and widows. The Synod of 1977 (in Article 72, p. 113, item c) advised the Pension Committee "of the desirability of increasing Ministers' Pension benefits annually in accordance with the increase of the actuarial cost of living." Since then, the Pension Committee has requested synod to approve pension increases at approximately half of the cost of living index increases.

X. SUPPLEMENTARY PAYMENT AND FINAL MOVING EXPENSE FUND

The Pension Committee proposes for synod's approval a change in name and a formal write-up of the purpose and administration of the present Supplemental Fund (see Appendix A). As the references on the top of the write-up shows, the present fund is an outgrowth of several decisions of synod. The proposed write-up introduces three new concepts:

1. A name change designating it as a supplementary payment and also to

- include in the name of the "once in a lifetime" moving expense allowance of the retired minister or his widow.
2. Eliminating the necessity of local consistory approval of the application for supplementary payments.
 3. Introducing inclusion of women who, after serving the Christian Reformed Church for ten years or more with their minister-husbands, were divorced but have not remarried.

XI. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. *Privilege of Floor*

The committee respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to members of the committee, the administrator, and to Counselor Donald Oosterhouse when matters pertaining to the Ministers' Pension Fund are discussed.

B. *New Members*

The committee requests synod to elect three committee members for three years or less from the following:

<i>Incumbents</i>	<i>New Nominees</i>
Rev. Marinus Goote	Rev. John Medendorp
Gerald Knol	Mr. Gerald Van Wyk
Julius F. Mellema	Mr. Stephen Tuuk

One of those elected should be a CRC minister.

The three members should be elected to serve until such a time as there is a separate Canadian Pension Plan but not longer than three years. When there is a separate Canadian Pension Plan there will be five members on the United States subcommittee and five members on the Canadian subcommittee, with the ten members then constituting the CRC Ministers' Pension Committee. (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1979*, Article 92, Item IV, 3, Ground 2, b, page 102.)

C. *United States and Canadian Pension Plans*

The committee requests synod to grant a one-year extension in the preparation and presentation of separate plans.

Ground:

The Synod of 1979 had set a tentative date of January 1, 1981, for beginning the separations and the separate plans. The Synod of 1980 granted an extension to January 1, 1982. In view of the complexity of the issue and despite many meetings and substantial work already accomplished (see V and VI above), the committee could not be ready by February 15, 1981, to present the plans to the Synod of 1981. Therefore, the committee will try to have the plans ready by February 15, 1982, for the Synod of 1982 so that the separate plans, if approved by synod, would become effective January 1, 1983.

D. *Housing Allowance*

The committee requests synod to designate up to \$3,600 of the

minister's pension for 1981 as a reasonable housing allowance for United States income tax purposes (IRS Revenue Ruling 1.107-1).

E. Supplementary Payment and Final Moving Expense Fund

1. The committee requests synod to approve the write-up referred to in X above (see Appendix A).

Grounds:

- (a) At present there is no formal write-up in one document which states the purpose and the administration of the fund.
- (b) A name change from Supplemental Fund to Supplementary Payment and Final Moving Expense Fund takes away some of the onerousness of the present name and the name change also includes the final moving allowance expense.
- (c) The write-up eliminates the necessity of local consistory approval of the application for supplementary payments.
- (d) The new plan proposes that women who, after serving the Christian Reformed Church for ten years or more with their minister-husbands, were divorced but have not remarried may make application for financial assistance.

2. The committee requests synod to continue for 1982 a quota of 75 cents per family for this Fund.

Ground:

Since there is insufficient experience with the needs of the fund, the present quota may be sufficient.

F. Benefits, Quotas, and Contributions

The Pension Committee, desiring to meet some of the needs of retirees and widows arising from inflation (see IX above) and at the same time trying to keep the quota increase reasonable, recommends to synod the following for 1982;

Resolved, that this committee recommends to synod that Part 5, subpart 2-B II of the RETIREMENT PLAN for ministers of the Christian Reformed Church be amended, effective January 1, 1982, to read as follows:

II. One-twelfth of \$6,075.

provided that synod increases the per-family quota from \$34.00 to \$36.00 for 1982 and that synod increases Contributions—Other from \$1,485 to \$1,650 for 1982.

Ministers' Pension Committee

Julius F. Mellema, chairman

Henry R. De Bolster

Gordon Dornbush

Marinus Goote

Gerald Knol

Hendrik Kreeft

Kenneth E. Olthoff

Garrett C. Van de Riet, Administrator

Appendix A

**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN N.A.
SUPPLEMENTARY PAYMENT AND FINAL
MOVING EXPENSE FUND**

(formerly Supplemental Fund as defined in the *Acts of Synod 1939*, Art. 42, II, p. 21, 22, Supplement XII-b, Art. IX, pp. 230, 231, as amended, in *Acts of Synod 1940*, p. 314. *Acts of Synod 1969*, Art. 71, V, C, 7, p. 48; *Acts of Synod 1970*, Art. 71, III, B, 1, p. 35 and Supplement 15, B, 4, p. 223; also *Acts of Synod 1978*, Supplement 17, VIII, D, p. 365)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Supplementary Payment Fund is to provide payments in special circumstances as determined by the Pension Committee to emeritated ministers, to eligible ministers' widows, to women who, after serving the Christian Reformed Church for ten years or more with their minister-husbands, were divorced but have not remarried, and to orphans of CRC ministers. Another purpose of the fund is to pay the "once in a lifetime" moving expenses for the emeritated minister, or, if the minister has not been paid such an allowance, then for his widow.

QUOTA:

This fund shall be maintained by an annual per-family quota. The Pension Committee shall present the quota needs to synod annually.

A. Administration of Supplementary Payments**APPLICATION:**

1. Any person described under Purpose above, if special circumstances warrant it, may apply for supplementary payments from this fund. This application shall be made on a form provided by the Pension Committee. The form shall state the reason for and the extent of the need for supplemental payments. The applicant shall show on the form all sources of annual income, including Social Security payments, and a budget of annual expenses.

EVALUATION:

2. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Pension Committee will evaluate the application and need and may approve supplemental payments to the applicant. Application for supplementary payments must be renewed annually.

SYNOD:

3. Upon request to the Pension Committee, the supplementary payments from this fund shall be reported to the Advisory Committee of synod, and if synod desires, to synod itself in executive session. These payments shall receive no further publicity.

B. *Administration of Moving Expenses*

APPLICATION:

1. The emeritated minister shall advise the Pension Committee of the contemplated move upon emeritation. A minister's widow also may apply for moving expense allowance if the minister has never received such an allowance.

RULES:

2. The Pension Committee, under authority of synod, shall print a sheet setting forth the portions of the move which will be paid by the fund. The printed sheet of inclusions and limitations will be given to the emeritated minister (or his widow) prior to the move.

PAYMENT:

3. Upon receipt of the moving bill, the Administrator for the Pension Committee will determine the portion of the moving bill payable from the fund and he will invoice any overages to the minister (or his widow).

REPORT 18

SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

Our records show that 165 CRC congregations subscribed to *The Living Word*, Volume 25 (1980). In addition, 10 congregations outside of North America and 9 individuals subscribed. There are at present 184 subscribers, a net gain of 17 over 1979. A very large majority of the sermons continue to be sent to our Canadian churches; there are only 20 subscribers in the United States. In addition to our subscriptions we continue to fill a number of requests for individual sermon booklets.

With the excellent assistance of our printers, K. Knight Publishing of St. Catharines, our project was self-supporting. Even though the churches are often slow to pay the fee and six churches had their subscriptions discontinued for nonpayment, all the bills have been paid.

In reviewing our work during 1980, the committee believes that thirty English sermons, published in six booklets of five sermons each, have served our subscribers well. It was decided to adopt the same program for 1981, providing a balance of sermons for "special" services and "regular" services. We shall charge the same fee as last year (\$30.00), and continue to mail the sermons out via first-class mail. Pastors who have sermons published will receive a copy of their printed sermon and an honorarium of \$30.00. This is an increase of \$10.00.

In addition to the thirty English sermons, we have made a booklet of five Dutch sermons available to the churches. Since only twenty-three subscribers used this service, the committee has decided to discontinue it. Contributing to this decision is the fact that such limited circulation is very costly, Dutch sermons are still published by J. Kok of Kampen, and there are numerous books of Dutch sermons available. This being the case, there does not appear to be sufficient justification to continue this service.

A few churches and individuals have asked for Catechism sermons to replace those published by this committee in 1970. We request synod's advice in this matter. If synod determines that it is time to provide a new series of Catechism sermons for the churches and for her students and pastors, this committee is prepared to initiate this project. It would likely take close to two years to bring such a project from the planning stage to the final publication stage.

Recommendations

- A. That synod approve the publication of the *Living Word* sermon series from January 1, 1982 to December 31, 1982.
- B. That synod commend the use of this sermon series to our churches.

- C. That synod determine the advisability and necessity of publishing a new book of Catechism sermons.
- D. That synod appoint the Rev. John De Jong as a regular member of the committee to replace the Rev. Martin Contant, who has moved. Mr. De Jong's term runs to 1984.
- a regular member to replace the Rev. Morris Greidanus, whose term expires in 1981, from the nomination of the Rev. John Klomps and the Rev. Jack Westerhof.
 - an alternate committee member from the nomination of the Rev. John Cooper and the Rev. Peter De Bruyne.

Sermons for Reading Services Committee

M. N. Greidanus, chairman

P. Nicolai, secretary-treasurer

J. De Jong

M. Lise

REPORT 19

SCORR

I. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Herbert Van Denend, chairman; Hawthorne, NJ (1982)
 Mr. Ted Taylor, vice-chairman; Washington, D.C. (1982)
 Rev. Jason Chen, secretary; Iowa City, IA (1982)
 Mr. Gary Avalos; San Diego, CA (1982)
 Mr. Richard Bandstra; Grand Rapids, MI (1983)
 Mr. Edward T. Begay; Gallup, NM (1983)
 Ms. Sylvia Clahchischilli; Fort Wingate, NM (1981)
 Ms. Barbara Clayton; Chicago, IL (1983)
 Mr. Calvin J. Hulst; Holland, MI (1983)
 Ms. Jeannie (Rodriguez) Huyster; Denver, CO (1981)
 Dr. John Kromminga; Grand Rapids, MI (1982)
 Mr. Lyle N. Longclaws; Winnipeg, MB (1981)
 Mr. John Orkar; Halifax, NS (1983)
 Rev. Gerald D. Postema; Big Rapids, MI (1981)
 Rev. John G. Van Ryn; Kentwood, MI (1981)

II. INTRODUCTION

“... the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations”
 (Rev. 22:2).

A beautiful picture as the Bible comes to a close—the river of the water of life flowing through the City of God, and on its banks a tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. The CRC is participating in the healing of the nations as it carries out the ministry of racial reconciliation.

This past year contained some disturbing signs for those concerned about racial healing; the attempted murder of a national black leader, increasing visibility of the Klan, an attempt to strike a blow at busing for desegregation, talk of the repeal of the Voting Rights Act, an economy that squeezed the poor hard and that set the stage for budget decisions that squeezed them even harder, Constitutional revisions in Canada that threaten the Treaty rights of Natives

During that year the CRC continued its work toward the healing of the nations; the ministry of racial reconciliation is still urgently appropriate for North American society and the CRC continues to set forth signposts of the healing power of the gospel. With gratitude to God and his people, SCORR reports on the ministry of racial reconciliation in the CRC.

III. SCORR PROGRAM

A. *Minority Leadership Development*

The Christian Reformed Church has been faithful in bringing the gospel to the reservations and the cities across North America for eighty

years. This history of evangelism has resulted in well over one hundred churches and schools which have substantial multiracial membership or are located in communities experiencing racial transition. While God has blessed richly with diverse membership, the leadership, pastors, and teachers continues to be Caucasian.

The Body of Christ in the CRC, and the ministry carried out, would be more whole and more effective if there were an abundance of leaders who reflected the cultural heritage of this diverse membership. We carry out our mission in the diversity of North American society, and in metropolitan centers increasingly characterized by "majorities" of "minorities." We must have dedicated, Reformed multiracial leadership in this mission.

At the Synod of 1980, the Rev. William (Bud) Ipema was appointed because the church recognized the need and was determined to respond to God's call. Under God's blessing, this new initiative is going ahead.

Several specific efforts are underway. A comprehensive review is being conducted at Calvin Theological Seminary with the view of developing curriculum, learning experience, and environment which will reinforce recruitment and retention of minority students. The Rev. James White, with SCORR staff, is conducting this review as well as doing special lectures and class appearances. Each of the colleges has been visited to encourage minority students to consider leadership in the Christian Reformed Church. SCORR is working closely with Home Missions and the youth agencies regarding multiracial leadership and ministry in their agencies.

SCORR has initiated cooperation with the Department of Education of the Board of Publications and Christian Schools International in developing two conferences on urban and multiracial Christian education. In the first, administrative concerns were identified and worked on. In the second, a set of guidelines for curriculum design for urban and multiracial schools is being produced.

The most fruitful arena in which leadership is developed is the local churches and schools. SCORR staff has thus visited most of the churches and schools with substantial multiracial membership. The purpose of these visits was threefold. First, to hear what the churches are saying regarding the work and potential of developing multiracial leadership. Second, program and resource assistance are offered by SCORR to aid the local schools and churches in their development of leadership. Third, task forces are being established in each local church and school to work at identifying and developing multiracial leadership.

Finally SCORR's program of Multiracial Leadership Development involves recruitment and career planning with a large number of people. College faculty, pastors, school teachers, administrators, and students are among the individuals being recruited and given career counseling.

God is, indeed, blessing the beginning of the development of multiracial leadership in the Christian Reformed Church. We are grateful to him for giving the vision and supplying the resources.

B. Multiracial Congregations

There are over sixty minority ministries carried out in the CRC, reflecting the racial diversity of North American society from Asia to Zuni, from New Mexico to Nova Scotia. These ministries are the fruit of faithful obedience; God has blessed our denomination's work with the variety of races. These ministries are also a vital resource as the CRC carries out its work in a society of racial diversity. They are the vanguard in the ministry of racial reconciliation.

As these congregations carry out their work, a variety of issues faces them: What are the unique characteristics that need to be nurtured in them to enable them to grow in strength and maturity? How can they effectively develop leadership? What resources do they need to increase the effectiveness of their outreach?

SCORR is committed to assist these churches, to help them build their vision, to clarify their goals and the resources they need, and to pursue their ministries, building on the strengths and resources available to them.

C. Churches in Racial Transition

Another group of churches of special importance in the CRC's work of racial healing is the forty mainly white congregations in communities that are either racially changing or where change has already taken place. As these churches face the question of how to witness to the gospel with increasing effectiveness, they are facing questions about staff, about appropriate music for worship, about increasing diversity in class and club, about relating to a neighborhood in which most of their members do not live, about how to do effective evangelism across racial differences, about how to identify resources for meeting needs in a transitional neighborhood.

Pastors, consistories, committees, and discussion groups in churches in transitional settings received assistance from SCORR during the past year. In some cases the request was for a presentation on the subject of ministry in a changed or changing neighborhood; in other cases the request was for consultation on how to solve a particular problem, assistance with program evaluation, and sometimes simply to exchange ideas and celebrate together what God is doing! In some cases the request was for intensive onsite assistance with the work of a particular aspect of ministry, such as evangelism in a cross-cultural setting; in two cases SCORR cooperated with Home Missions in providing MAP to congregations in transition, including scheduled follow-up sessions. During the past year SCORR has also made available a resource material for churches to assist them to incorporate music from the black worship tradition into Reformed worship services. This year we will be following that up with a workshop on music for churches in racial transition.

These churches also form a key part of the CRC's ministry of racial reconciliation, providing as they do an opportunity to carry out ministry in the racial diversity of the church's own neighborhood. SCORR has a committee to serve these churches, to assist them to plan for effective

ministry in their community, to help them shape the programs and identify the resources they need to be faithful stewards where God has placed them.

IV. SCORR SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

To carry out the programs listed above, SCORR has available a variety of resources:

A. *Minority Student Scholarship Fund*

The MSSF has served 130 students over the past decade. This past year SCORR assisted 20 students at Seminary, Calvin, Dordt, RBC, and Trinity. During the current school year 24 applications were received and 13 students were awarded grants. This program makes assistance available when the resources of the student and the college are not quite enough and there is still unmet need. The offerings and gifts of God's people are used in this program to help students seeking a Christian higher education on their way to the ministry, teaching, and a variety of other professions.

Important changes have been made in the scholarship program which will increase its effectiveness as a tool for developing minority leadership, including a new policy and new criteria for recipients, as well as increased contact with students by both staff and SCORR committee members. Students on their way to the ministry, to teaching, to social work, to positions on church staffs; students who are Native American, Asian, Black, Hispanic; students at Calvin, Dordt, Trinity, RBC, Calvin Seminary; SCORR scholarship recipients are a vital part of the CRC's effort to build multiracial leadership in the kingdom. During the past year SCORR scholarship grants totaled \$15,000 for an average grant of \$750 per student. All of this amount was raised by above-quota gifts and offerings, and we are grateful to God for the generous support of his people.

B. *Grants*

SCORR provides grants to selected applicants who are beginning new programs of racial reconciliation. Intended as "seed money," these grants are available to local churches, schools, or other groups whose application indicated that they are eligible under SCORR's guidelines. These grants are intended to serve SCORR's goals in the areas of leadership development as well as ministries in multiracial and transitional churches. During the past year SCORR provided the following grants:

Dawntreader School in Paterson. SCORR assisted Dawntreader in a program to develop ties between home, church, and school in their multiracial urban Christian education enterprise.

Inner City Christian Federation. This was the phase-out year for a grant to this program of rehabilitating abandoned housing in old urban neighborhoods. SCORR assisted ICCF in operating a job training component for minority young people.

Roseland Christian Ministry Center. SCORR continued to provide

funding to RCMC for the training dimension of its multifaceted urban ministry program.

Chicago West Side Christian School. This past year SCORR concluded its grant arrangement with CWSCS. SCORR had worked for several years with this fledgling urban Christian school, assisting it to hire minority staff for its ministry of covenant nurture in the neighborhoods of Chicago's Garfield and Lawndale congregations.

C. SCORR Advisory Council

One of the very important resources available to SCORR is its advisory council, made up of the heads of staff of the agencies participating with SCORR in the area of leadership development. In addition these agencies share with SCORR in the costs of the program and each agency also designates one of its staff persons as liaison with SCORR staff for program development. Participating agencies are: Calvin College, Calvin Seminary, Dordt, Trinity, RBC, Cadets, Calvinettes, Young Calvinists, Home Missions, CSI, and the Synodical Interim Committee.

D. Business and Professional Council

A new resource which SCORR is just beginning to develop is a council of Reformed business and professional people to take the initiative in leadership development in the area of professional placements. During this year SCORR will be organizing this group to assist in placement and in the development of positions for minorities in a wide variety of kingdom work.

E. Agency Internships

Scheduled to begin in 1982, SCORR is now developing a program to place minority staff persons in staff positions for training and orientation in denominational agencies.

V. OTHER SCORR CONCERNS

A. South Africa

While SCORR's focus is North America, we are constantly reminded that CRC ties to White denominations in South Africa have implications for our work with Black North Americans. SCORR has worked with CEACA in making it possible for South African Black pastors to study at Calvin Seminary. The presence of Dr. Allan Boesak at Calvin during this school year is a rich resource for the CRC; SCORR has been delighted to learn from him, and to cooperate with the college in hosting a day of dialog between Dr. Boesak and Black church leaders from across the country.

B. Transracial Adoptions

The presence in this part of the family of God of many covenant children who have been adopted transracially is a rich blessing and an important reminder of our covenant responsibilities to all of God's fami-

ly. Families and congregations who have made covenant vows to nurture transracial adoptees face important responsibilities and rich opportunities. SCORR seeks to offer assistance to all God's family so that we together may provide faithful covenant nurture for these children and young people.

VI. COMMITTEE MANDATE

Originally in 1971, SCORR's mandate was given to it for a three-year term. Every three years since, the committee has simply followed this precedent and requested synod to renew the mandate for another three years. That degree of tentativeness about the mandate seemed appropriate for a newly formed agency, though it did not serve to encourage planning nor to build the morale of the committee.

In 1979 SCORR made several recommendations to the synod, including the formation of an advisory council, expanding the committee, and adding a second staff position. All these plans were approved, and the Synod of 1980 appointed the Rev. Mr. Ipema to fill the proposed new position. Synod also renewed the committee mandate for a fourth three-year period.

With these plans now well underway, and with good evidence of growing support for the work of the committee among the agencies as well as among the churches, it seems fitting no longer to think in terms of three-year extensions of the mandate. Your committee believes that the tasks which the synod has set for us, and the plans which the synod has approved, are not consistent with three-year renewals of the mandate. The committee, therefore, respectfully requests the synod to grant SCORR the status of standing committee, with its present mandate. (See Recommendation B below.)

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the quota for SCORR for 1982 be approved for \$2.70.

B. That SCORR be granted the status of standing committee with its present mandate.

Ground:

The mandate, the decisions of the synod in the past two years, and the programs in which SCORR is engaged all seem to imply standing committee status.

Synodical Committee on Race Relations
Karl J. Westerhof, executive secretary

REPORT 20
SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH SYNOD TRUSTEES

The Synodical Interim Committee, meeting corporately as the trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees, is happy to present this report as a summary of the activities carried on in behalf of synod during the interim between the synods of 1980 and 1981.

I. ORGANIZATION

The following synodically elected persons have served as corporate trustees and members of the Synodical Interim Committee during the present church year:

Rev. N. B. Knoppers (Western Canada); Rev. J. Klomps, Mr. W. Posthumus (Eastern Canada); Mr. J. Van Andel, Rev. L. J. Dykstra (Far West United States); Mr. F. Velzen, Rev. J. R. Kok (Mississippi River to Rocky Mountain); Rev. D. Wisse (East Coast United States); Rev. A. J. Vander Griend, Mr. G. Raterink, Mr. A. Van Tuinen, Rev. L. J. Hofman, Mr. M. Ozinga, and Mr. I. Slagter (Central United States). The stated clerk, W. P. Brink; denominational financial coordinator, H. J. Vander Meer; and synodical treasurer, L. Ippel, serve *ex officio* as corporate trustees and members of the Synodical Interim Committee.

The committee elected the following officers and committees to serve for the current year:

A. *SIC Officers*: president, Leonard J. Hofman; vice-president, Ira R. Slagter; and recording secretary, Alvin J. Vander Griend.

B. *Corporation Officers*: president, Leonard J. Hofman; vice-president, Ira R. Slagter; secretary, William P. Brink; assistant secretary, Alvin J. Vander Griend; treasurer, Lester Ippel; and assistant treasurer, Jack A. Peterson.

C. *Alternate Stated Clerk for 1980 to 1981*: Alvin J. Vander Griend.

D. *Church Polity and Program Committee*: L. Hofman, I. Slagter, A. Vander Griend, J. Klomps, M. Ozinga, W. Spoelhof, and *ex officio* members, H. Vander Meer and W. P. Brink.

E. *Finance Committee*: C. Ackerman, M. Ozinga, G. Raterink, H. Rempe, A. Van Tuinen, M. Veltkamp, and *ex officio* members, H. Vander Meer, J. Peterson, and W. P. Brink.

The Synodical Interim Committee meets three times each year and its subcommittees meet each year, with additional meetings when necessary.

II. NOMINATIONS FOR SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members and trustees whose terms expire in 1981 are the following:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Eastern Canada	Rev. J. Klomps	Rev. H. De Bolster
Mississippi River to Rocky Mountain	Mr. F. Velzen	Mr. G. Vermeer
East Coast	Rev. D. Wisse	Dr. J. Timmer
Far West	Mr. J. Van Anandel	Dr. A. Pauw

All the above members and alternates are eligible for reelection. The Synodical Interim Committee will consult with the classes of the various districts involved with respect to nomination for election at the forthcoming synod. The nominations will be finalized at the May meeting of the SIC and forwarded to synod in the supplementary report of the SIC.

III. INTERIM APPOINTMENTS

During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee has approved the following appointments to boards and committees where vacancies have occurred.

A. Board Appointments

Board or Committee	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term	
Synodical Deputies	Cen. Calif.	Rev. L. Dykstra	Rev. H. Petroelje	1983	
	Columbia		Rev. L. Zoerhof	1983	
	E. Canada		Rev. M. Geleynse	1983	
	G.R. East	Hudson	Rev. T. E. Hofman	Rev. J. Timmer	1981
				Rev. B. Averill	1983
				Rev. C. Niewenhuis	1984
	Sioux Center	Thornapple V.	Rev. L. Stockmeier	Rev. J. C. Medendorp	1983
				Rev. D. Vander Veen	1983
				Dr. S. Greidanus	1983
	Calvin College Board of Trustees	Alta. N.	Rev. W. M. Van Dyk	Mr. J. De Leeuw	1983
		Brit. Col.		Rev. D. Tigchelaar	1982
		Florida		Rev. R. Westenbroek	1982
G.R. East		Holland	Rev. B. Blankers	Rev. V. Geurkink	1983
				Rev. H. Roelofs	1983
				Rev. P. Zylstra	1983
Kalamazoo		Minn. S.	Rev. J. Bultman	Mrs. J. Jeltema	1982
				Rev. H. Vanderaa	1983
				Rev. A. Hannink	1983
NC Iowa		Pac. N.W.	Rev. E. J. Knott	Mr. P. Van Zanten	1982
				Rev. H. Vander Kam	1983
				Rev. J. C. Medendorp	1981
World Missions	Thornapple V.	Mr. C. Spoelhof	Rev. J. Vigh, Jr.	1981	
	Atlantic NE		Rev. P. W. Brink	1983	
	Columbia		Rev. D. W. Lagerwey	1983	
	Florida	G.R. East	Rev. G. J. Hogan	Rev. R. Borrego	1982
				Rev. D. Vander Wall	1983
				Mr. J. De Kruyter	1983
	Hamilton	Lake Erie	Rev. R. Sikkema	Rev. H. Katerberg	1983
				Mr. J. Kremers	1983
				Rev. C. W. Fliestra	1983
	Minn. N.	Thornapple V.	Rev. A. MacLeod	Mr. H. Padding	1981

Home Missions	Alta. N.	Rev. P. Boodt	Mrs. P. Doornenbal	1983
	Eastern Can.		Rev. J. Visser	1983
	G.R. East	Mrs. N. Olthoff	Mrs. L. Klooster	1983
	G.R. North		Rev. J. W. Dykstra	1981
	Illiana	Rev. L. Bazuin	Rev. C. Bremer	1983
Board of Publications	Thornapple V.	Rev. J. E. De Vries	Rev. F. Bultman	1983
	Calif. S.	Rev. G. Van Enk	Rev. D. Draayer	1984
	G.R. East	Rev. R. Van Harn	Miss N. Vander Ark	1982
	Hackensack		Mr. T. Plantinga	1983
	Rocky Mtn		Mrs. W. Klop	1983
CRWRC	Thornapple V.	Rev. E. Schipper	Mr. P. Boonstra	1983
	Toronto	Dr. H. Hart	Rev. P. De Bruyne	1983
	Alta. N.		W. Schoonderbeek	1983
	G.R. East	R. Mulder	Dr. H. Brinks	1983
	Minn. S.		P. Boer	1981
Thornapple V.	Toronto	D. E. Gabrielse	J. Zomerlei	1983
		J. Brouwer	A. Goodhoofd	1984

Board of Publications—In accord with the decision of the Synod of 1980 (*Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 26, 27), the Rev. George Brown of the Reformed Church of America was appointed to serve as an advisory member of the Board of Publications representing the RCA.

B. Committee Appointments

1. Ministerial Information Service—The SIC, in accordance with a request from the above committee, named the Rev. Richard Venema as a replacement for the Rev. B. Niemeyer. A previous appointee, Rev. L. Van Essen, was unable to accept an appointment to replace Rev. B. Niemeyer.

2. Synodical Liaison Representative—Mr. Hubert Van Tol was appointed the synodical liaison representative for TELL to fill a vacancy.

3. 125th Anniversary Committee—The Synod of 1980 instructed the SIC "to appoint a 125th anniversary committee to plan an appropriate observance of that event throughout the denomination" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 23).

In accord with the mandate above the SIC appointed the following committee: John H. Primus, chairman; Bernard J. Haan, corresponding secretary; Aileen Van Beilen, recording secretary; Andrew Kuyvenhoven, and Henrietta Ten Harmsel; and William P. Brink, *ex officio*. The report of the committee is presented in the *Agenda for Synod 1981*.

IV. DENOMINATIONAL PROGRAMING

A. Planning and Coordination

During the past year the stated clerk, the denominational financial coordinator, the Synodical Interim Committee, and its polity and finance subcommittees have held many conferences and consultations with executive staff members and board, or committee, representatives of our denominational agencies. The SIC staff and its subcommittees have been happy to serve denominational agencies with advice when requested. In accord with the synodical mandates for planning, coordination, and setting of priorities of programs by the synodical agencies individually and together, the agencies are truly seeking to realize the

oneness of the mission of the church. In the development of the various programs of the denominational agencies there is an increasing awareness of the need of consultations and coordination of efforts.

The Interagency Advisory Council, made up of executive directors of denominational agencies, held meetings regularly for the discussion of mutual objectives. Staff directors have presented their programs for the coming year and discussions have been made as to mutual goals. The sharing of information enhances the oneness of the work of the Lord in which the agencies are engaged.

Regular meetings of the Missions Coordination Council have also been held during the past year. The council is comprised of the presidents and heads of staff of the Back to God Hour, the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, the Christian Reformed Board for World Missions, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, and the Synodical Interim Committee.

The objectives of the Missions Coordination Council include the exchange of information, joint communication projects, joint formation of work to be undertaken with respect to new ventures or major expansion, and aid in the resolution of interagency difficulties.

During the past year the Missions Coordination Council has enabled the missions agencies to continue the publication of the *Mission Courier*, a periodical regarding the total mission endeavors of our agencies.

Through the work of the Missions Coordination Council during the past year, CRWM and CRWRC were assisted in the coordination of their work through the adoption of a document entitled, "The Interdependence Agreement." This document, approved by the executive committees of both agencies, is being field tested in Central America and the Philippines.

The Missions Coordination Council has also held discussions with respect to the relationship of official denominational agencies and par-ecclesiastical agencies.

Discussions have been held with the agencies once again with respect to the commonly adopted program guidelines (evangelism, education, benevolence) and supporting services. The agencies have together supplied information that will enable the SIC to construct an agency employee analysis, an agency interrelationship analysis, and diagrams of agency staff structures.

All agency chairmen and staff executives met with the Synodical Interim Committee on February 17, 1981. At this session attention was given to our basic commitment to the program guidelines centering around evangelism, education, and benevolence. The agencies together discussed the following questions: (1) What do you consider to be the major objectives of the Christian Reformed Church? (2) In what ways do you believe the church should be pursuing the objectives? (3) What role does your agency play in seeking to achieve these objectives? (4) With what other Christian Reformed agencies are you cooperating, or should you be cooperating, in order to reach your particular objectives as well as the denominational objectives?

Efforts were put forth in the joint meeting described above to find a meeting of minds and a sharing of our common program goals as

representatives of the Christian Reformed Church.

God has richly blessed the denominational work of our Christian Reformed Church. His leading is evident in the work of our boards, our staffs, and all who are serving our denomination at home and abroad. Our members have real reason to express gratitude to God for the ministries that are being carried on by the boards and committees of the Christian Reformed Church in behalf of all of us.

B. *Back to God Tract Committee*

At the request of the Back to God Tract Committee, a committee representing the Synodical Interim Committee met several times with officers of the Back to God Tract Committee. The committee reviewed with these officers the work being carried on at present by the Back to God Tract Committee, and also discussed the fact that many agencies of the denomination are in effect producing tracts and literature with respect to their own fields.

The subcommittee reported to the Synodical Interim Committee the position of the Back to God Tract Committee. It was noted that there is an apparent shift in our evangelism and outreach style. This shift, as well as the development of our denominational agencies and their capability of producing materials, seems to indicate that the function formerly occupied by the Back to God Tract Committee might now better be served by existing agencies.

The Synodical Interim Committee concurs with the judgment of its subcommittee and endorses the recommendation of the Back to God Tract Committee presented in the *Agenda for Synod 1981*, Report 7. The Synodical Interim Committee will be happy to give any assistance that may be requested with respect to the transfer of responsibilities pertaining to tract ministries.

C. *Translation and Educational Assistance Committee (TEAC)*

"The Synod of 1979 established an umbrella-type organization which is called the Translation and Educational Assistance Committee. It assigned to it as subcommittees the existing Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad (CEACA) and the Spanish Literature Committee (SLC)." (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 53.)

At the Synod of 1980, having received the report about the organization of this new committee, it was decided "that synod tentatively approve the proposed structure, mandate, and task of TEAC, deferring finalization of approval until 1981, and mandate the Synodical Interim Committee to work with TEAC in the coordination of its programming and the determination of its relationship to other CRC boards and standing committees" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 53).

In accord with the mandate above, a subcommittee of the SIC has worked with the officers of TEAC and its CEACA subcommittee during the past year. To understand the nature of this newly formed committee involved a study of some of the background out of which the committee was appointed.

The development of TEAC arose from a report of the World Mission Board to the Synod of 1979. This report noted that the "Synod of 1977 authorized a study regarding the feasibility of forming a permanent committee to plan, organize, and publish needed Reformed literature in the major languages of the world.

"In fulfillment of its mandate on this matter, CRWM recommends to synod that the present Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad (CEACA) be reorganized under a broader mandate to become an umbrella-type organization as a Translation and Educational Assistance Committee (TEAC), and that synod designate CEACA as the implementing agent for this reorganization after which the present CEACA, with its present mandate for educational assistance to churches abroad with its present membership will become a subcommittee, with other divisions to be the various translation subcommittees (Spanish Literature Committee, etc.)" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 190). In response to the report of the World Mission Board, the Synod of 1979 adopted the following recommendations proposed by its advisory committee:

"1. That synod establish an umbrella-type organization called the Translation and Educational Assistance Committee (TEAC) with various subcommittees, such as CEACA and SLC.

"2. That synod designate the CRWM as the implementing agent for the establishment of TEAC."

Synod further decided that "the task of TEAC, as well as the composition and task of its subcommittees, is referred to the newly formed committee for study and implementation" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 85, 86).

The Translation and Educational Assistance Committee formed itself as mandated by synod and reported to the Synod of 1980. It will be noted from the report to the Synod of 1980 that the report consisted of two parts: I. Report of TEAC, and II. Report of CEACA. The CEACA section of the report dealt with problems arising out of the new relationship of CEACA and TEAC:

"In spite of concerted efforts on the part of CEACA to clarify for the Synod of 1979 and its advisory committee the developments which led to the proposal to relate CEACA to a new umbrella-like committee, TEAC, we feel keenly disappointed with the decisions and direction the Synod of 1979 adopted. The plan adopted by synod regarding the relationship of our ministry of educational assistance to the production and distribution of literature in major world languages was a far cry from the initial discussions on this matter. However, our committee through its appointed representatives on TEAC has participated fully and cooperatively in discussions and meetings since the Synod of 1979. However, the meetings have been inconclusive in regard to our committee's assignment and the relationship this has to world literature. Not desiring to have our work thwarted, or subsumed under other structures so that it becomes only a sideline, and not wishing to be loaded with additional burdensome, unnecessary administrative details, we are open to continued consultation with TEAC. However, we feel that the delineation and definition of our respective tasks is sufficiently clear to warrant the continued, separate existence of CEACA apart from the concerns of world literature.

"Synod is able to see from the above that CEACA's concerns revolve around a number of matters: (1) the relationship of CEACA's synodical mandate to that of TEAC; (2) the provision of financial resources for carrying out the various and separate programs of the agencies presently involved in TEAC according to synodical decision; (3) CEACA is committed to working in cooperation with TEAC as established by the Synod of 1979, but looks to this year as a year of testing the feasibility of this relationship. This latter concern arises from the indefiniteness of the mandate of synod and the uncomfortableness we experience when discussing this matter with representatives of TEAC. We wish to reserve the privilege of addressing this matter to the Synod of 1981 should we feel that after a year's trial relationship our mandate as well as the relationship to TEAC does not best serve the cause we represent for the Christian Reformed Church" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, Report 11, F, p. 296).

The questions raised by the CEACA membership led to the mandate of the Synod of 1980: "That synod tentatively approve the proposed structure, mandate, and task of TEAC, deferring finalization of approval until 1981, and mandate the Synodical Interim Committee to work with TEAC in the coordination of its programming and the determination of its relationship to other CRC boards and standing committees" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 53).

Representatives of the Synodical Interim Committee have met with representatives of TEAC, representatives of the CEACA subcommittee, and with representatives of both TEAC and CEACA. A study of the mandates given to TEAC and CEACA indicate that, although they both work with persons abroad, the work of translation and the work of educational assistance to students has very little in common. One segment of the committee deals largely with translation and publication, whereas the other deals with education, housing, and assistance for the persons to be educated.

Conferences of the SIC representatives with the members of the committee indicates no strong desire to be organized one way or another.

The members of TEAC point out that a tentative arrangement to bring these two committees together was made by synod. TEAC stands ready to function in accord with this agreement.

CEACA members, on the other hand, request that synod grant them permission to revert to their separate status. While the committee members of TEAC are willing to continue under one committee structure, they nevertheless are ready to acquiesce in the request of CEACA for separate status.

The CEACA subcommittee recommends in their report to synod that CEACA revert to its former status as a separate committee of synod in view of the fact that the work of educational assistance and literature translation in foreign languages has very little in common.

The Synodical Interim Committee, after careful consideration of the reports of TEAC, CEACA, and its subcommittee, agrees that the functions of the translation committee and the educational assistance committee have very little in common.

The Synodical Interim Committee, therefore, recommends that permission be given to the World Literature Translation Committee and the

Educational Assistance Committee to revert to separate status. If this recommendation is adopted, both the World Literature Translation Committee and the Educational Assistance Committee will revert to separate status as standing committees of synod.

Since each of the two contemplated committees has its own membership, and since the work has not been effectively merged up to this time, the formation of each of the committees should not be difficult. The Synodical Interim Committee will be happy to provide assistance to the committees.

V. SYNODICALLY APPROVED AGENCIES

The Synodical Interim Committee is conducting its annual review of the various programs of the agencies accredited by synod for financial support. An analysis of the program of each agency is made, and program charts are maintained and updated for each agency. All changes of program are studied and noted.

In accord with synodical mandates, all agencies seeking accreditation must present to the SIC a complete statement with respect to their program as well as all financial materials required by synod. The program materials are reviewed by the Church Polity and Program Committee and the financial materials by the Finance Committee before presentation to the SIC for recommendation to synod.

When reviews have been completed and decisions on agencies requesting accreditation have been made by the Synodical Interim Committee, recommendations will be presented to synod. These will appear in the SIC supplementary report.

VI. SYNODICAL MANDATE RE HEALING MINISTRIES

The Synod of 1978 mandated the Synodical Interim Committee to continue research into the matter of a healing ministry for ministers, consistories, and congregations in situations of stress, utilizing in the study the assistance and expertise of leaders in our denominational agencies and others who have indicated their willingness to serve. Synod requested the SIC to report its findings and recommendations to synod (*Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 27, 28). Reports of the committee were presented to the Synod of 1979 (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 431-32) and 1980 (*Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 258-60).

The Synodical Interim Committee herewith presents another report of its Healing Ministries Subcommittee. Synod is requested to receive this report as information. The Healing Ministries Committee will appreciate all suggestions that our members and consistories may contribute with respect to the mandate with which they are dealing. Your prayers for the committee in its difficult task will be greatly appreciated.

REPORT OF THE HEALING MINISTRIES COMMITTEE TO THE SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Healing Ministries Committee (HMC) has continued to function throughout the past year and held a total of five meetings in 1980. All

members appointed by the SIC have continued to serve, each accepting responsibilities for areas of the committee's research and study as was necessary.

I. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Questionnaire

One of the major tasks completed in 1980 was that of an analysis of the replies of consistories and pastors to the questionnaire sent out near the close of 1979. A copy of the analysis is available to the SIC. Compilation and analysis occupied a great deal of time for the Rev. and Mrs. L. Hofman and the Rev. and Mrs. J. Hasper. The responses were and will be helpful in many ways in clarifying and pointing up matters of concern with respect to our mandate.

We wish to share some of the conclusions that can be drawn from the 328 replies that were received. The respondents (consistories and pastors) pointed up a number of areas of difficulties and potential problems, as well as the need for some form of assistance other than those provided in our present church structure. Approximately 25 percent of the consistories and ministers recognized that in many instances sources of help for pastor and congregation simply were not available. A large number of replies (29 percent) felt the need for some kind of "healing team" to assist when problems are beginning to arise or have already become full-blown. The responses were also helpful in identifying a number of specific areas of potential and actual difficulty.

Our committee is convinced, therefore, that something needs to be done. A number of possible directions surfaced, especially in view of the number of resignations from ministry and an increasing number of instances in which Church Order Article 17 is implemented. The Christian Reformed Church seems to conform to the average denomination in America in which about one out of one hundred ministers (1 percent) resign or are discontinued from ministry each year. Our concern has been, therefore, to devise ways by which trouble can be averted and healing begun before serious and incurable circumstances develop, as well as to provide assistance and counsel so that healing can take place for ministers, congregations, and consistories.

B. Miscellaneous Concerns

A number of other matters received attention during the year, such as:

1. *Calling procedures in the CRC.* A memorandum on this is currently under consideration by the HMC. A study, "How to Call a Pastor," has been revised and it is hoped that this will provide significant guidance to our consistories.

2. *Vocational education* for ministers leaving the ministry as well as evaluation of ministers and congregations has been investigated and will continue to receive our attention.

3. *Consultations and studies.* The HMC also consulted with representatives of the Ministerial Information Service Committee. These consultations were helpful in providing a clearer picture as to the specific

focus of each committee and will hopefully prevent overlapping of responsibilities.

The HMC also reviewed a number of studies done by others in areas related to our concerns. The NAPARC study of seminary graduates and seminary education was helpful, as were other surveys.

The CRC Home Mission Board and the Reformed Church in America have been most generous and ready to share materials with us. We are especially interested in the RCA's attempts to find solutions to concerns similar to our own and we look forward to closer liaison with each other.

4. *Church Order Misapplications*

Our committee has noted with some concern the misuse of Church Order articles. This misuse has come to our attention from our studies, the responses received from agencies, the answers in the questionnaire, and the information from churches in general. This abuse (or misapplication) especially relates to the granting of leaves of absence, lack of supervision of such leaves of absence, and the application of the Church Order in cases involving "intolerable situations." In general, problems continue to surface with respect to Articles 16 and 17 of the Church Order. There is also real need for guidelines in matters relating to the calling of ministers. We shall continue to deal with these areas and hope to come with some specific recommendations re Church Order revision or supplements.

II. SPECIFIC HEALING MINISTRIES

A large part of our effort was directed toward the urgent need expressed throughout the church for providing assistance to pastors, consistories, and congregations when difficulties in their relationships begin to surface. There are many complex factors involved to which simplistic solutions do not apply. Matters such as the following need attention: What can be done to prevent difficulties from growing into crisis situations? What resources are available to pastors and churches in seeking the resolution of problems? Can ministerial "burnout" be prevented and the number of resignations from ministry be reduced? How can a healing ministry be initiated? After a break in the relationship of pastor and congregation takes place, what help must be given to both the church and the pastor?

Having identified the crucial periods in which difficulties emerge, what preventative approaches can be initiated for our ministers? How can we best serve our young pastors in their first or second charges to cope with the frustrations and problems of ministry?

The answers have been difficult to discover. They may well be even more difficult to implement given our strong sense of congregational autonomy and the way in which many interpret and apply the prerogatives of ordination. Our committee has thus far considered proposals which look in two directions, but which may, or may not be, complementary.

A. *Regional Pastor*

In conversation and correspondence with various Reformed and Presbyterian churches we have looked with strong favor on the value of the appointment of a "pastor's pastor," "pastor in general service," or "regional pastor." Our committee came to a unanimous understanding that a ministry needed to be and could be designed which would aid either in reducing the possibilities of crises developing between ministers and congregations or in decreasing the negative social and spiritual impact of problem situations.

Some of our denominational agencies already make provision for some such ministry. Area secretaries of Christian Reformed World Missions as well as field visits by board representatives is one such example. Another is the Regional Home Missionary of Christian Reformed Home Missions. The Chaplain Committee provides a similar ministry to our chaplains. All these have a preventative dimension which has worked well.

But what is there for the pastor of the congregation, or what help is there available to pastors and congregations outside of Church Order provisions such as church visitors? We are looking with great interest into the field testing of such a model. We do not believe the denomination should be locked into such an arrangement before we have thoroughly investigated and synod has approved the field testing of such a ministry. A position description, the qualifications of such an appointee, as well as the way such a ministry can function will continue to be studied.

B. *The Mentor System*

A second option would involve the development of a "mentor system" in the denomination.

By the mentor system we mean the appointment of an experienced and mature minister(s) with natural gifts and abilities willing to be of assistance to pastors in need of counsel, fraternal support, and collegial fellowship, especially to a minister in his first charge or to one in need of counsel in a subsequent charge.

This form of ministry has been successfully initiated in the Netherlands and looks to our committee like an option that can be easily developed alongside of the regional pastor concept.

We shall continue to explore this option also before making our final recommendation.

C. *Adjunctive Services*

A part of our mandate includes "the identification of resources which are presently available to assist in the problems of ministers and congregations." The questionnaire sent out to ministers and consistories inquired concerning available resources in the geographical area of the congregation. Although a number of such resources were identified, it must be noted that while 24 percent of the *consistories* responding identified institutions of one kind or another, 14 percent reported that no help or resources were available. Of the responding *ministers*, however, 22 percent said there was neither help nor resources available; 20 percent identified institutions of one kind or another as possible resources of help.

Our conclusion is that there is a need for assistance. We have had contact with Pine Rest Christian Hospital, whose response was helpful and looks encouraging. We will continue to look into these matters.

We ask your continued prayerful support in our assigned ministry, and especially that together we may serve the church and its servants well in our day.

Leonard Hofman, chairman	Jacoba Hofman
Richard R. De Ridder, secretary	Fred Hollebeek
Harold Bode	Jim Kok
William P. Brink	Ira Slagter
Joanne De Jong	David Vander Ploeg
Gladys Hasper	

VII. PUBLICATIONS AND SERVICES

One of the responsibilities of the Synodical Interim Committee and its staff members is the publication of books and materials which will be of assistance in the life of our denomination and its congregations.

A. *The Yearbook*

The *Yearbook 1981* has been published under the editorial surveillance of the stated clerk. The compilation of the materials for the *Yearbook* is a difficult task. In this task we express our deep appreciation for the work of the staff of the publications committee and of the synodical office. We express our particular appreciation for the work done on the *1981 Yearbook* by Dot Kuperus, copy coordinator of the Board of Publications. She served also as the project coordinator for the *Yearbook*. The work of planning questionnaires and processing them is a taxing one. We are grateful for the competence that has gone into the publication of the *Yearbook*.

It is disappointing when some of our consistories present incomplete or inaccurate responses to the questionnaires for the *Yearbook*. It is important that our church have a picture of itself, and this can only be gained when our consistories carefully assemble statistics of our congregations and present them promptly for use in the *Yearbook*.

B. *Acts and Agenda*

The *Acts of Synod 1980* and the *Agenda for Synod 1981* were edited and prepared by the stated clerk with the assistance of his staff.

C. *Index of Christian Reformed Church Synodical Decisions 1857-1980*

The Synodical Interim Committee was happy to present to our churches a new *Index of Synodical Decisions of the Christian Reformed Church*. This volume is a completely revised edition and covers all decisions of the synods of the Christian Reformed Church.

The purpose of the *Index* is to indicate where decisions on various matters can be found in the official minutes of the denomination, the *Acts of Synod*. The material is arranged by subject matter. Under each subject the date of the *Acts* is listed, and a brief reference notation is added

whenever possible. The numbers following the reference indicate the page or pages of the *Acts* of the designated year.

Once again we acknowledge the excellent service performed by Mr. M. H. De Vroome. His services as a staff assistant on this project have been most valuable.

D. *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*

The Synodical Interim Committee takes grateful notice that a 1980 edition of the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, by the stated clerk and Dr. Richard De Ridder, was published by the Education Department of the Christian Reformed Board of Publications. It is our hope that this tool may be profitably used by all of our consistories and congregations.

E. *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure*

The *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure* have once again been updated by the stated clerk and a new edition has been published by the Board of Publications.

The new pamphlet style replaces the loose-leaf notebook that was in use for the past few years. One copy of the volume has been supplied to each consistory of the Christian Reformed Church and a copy will also be sent to each delegate to the Synod of 1981.

In addition to the copies supplied to our consistories and synodical delegates, the *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure* are now available from the Board of Publications. The pamphlet will be updated annually for such use.

F. *Agenda for Synod—Financial and Business Supplement*

For the Synod of 1980 the Synodical Interim Committee once again compiled an extensive business agenda. At this time another such agenda is being compiled for the Synod of 1981. This volume will be sent to all delegates appointed to the Synod of 1981. It is also available to all of our consistories upon request.

G. *Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church*

During the past church year, the Synodical Interim Committee has again sent to all of our consistories updated materials for the Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church, "Your Church in Action," a loose-leaf notebook provided for each consistory. Once again this year several consistories ordered a new notebook because the old one had been lost, misplaced, or had never been used. This large blue notebook should be kept available in every consistory room.

The Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church contains the following sections:

1. *Quotas and Offerings*—This section of the booklet contains financial data and a description of the programs carried on by all of our boards and agencies as well as by accredited agencies. Suggestions are made to assist in the scheduling of special offerings, and suggested announcements are offered for use when such offerings are received.

2. *Denominational Insights*—After a brief statement on the nature of the church and some of the principles of Reformed church government, information is provided about the nature of our assemblies, the function of major assemblies, the agenda for synod, and the denominational program structure.

3. *Congregational Helps*—This section contains helps which are available for consistories and congregations; suggested rules of procedure; model agendas for general consistory, elders' meetings, and deacons' meetings; suggestions for congregational committees; helpful information on the use of members' gifts; and other helpful information.

4. *Ministers' Compensation Guide*—By mandate of synod the Synodical Interim Committee has presented each year since 1974 a compensation guide for ministers of the Word. This compensation guide is updated and approved by synod each year. It is sent to our congregations with the urging of synod that it be used in computing a fair salary for ministers of our denomination.

Work sheets are included for the use of the finance committee of each congregation in computing the minister's salary. A worksheet is also sent to each of our ministers for an annual review of compensation in the Christian Reformed denomination. All of our ministers are urged to assist the denominational financial coordinator in the compilation of this material.

5. *Sight-Sound Programs*—Every congregation should avail itself, when looking for interesting program materials or information, of the wealth of artistic and effective presentations of the work of our Lord being carried on by our denomination through its agencies. The handbook for the consistory contains a complete directory of sight-sound programs available from our denominational agencies for showing in our congregations.

6. *Doctrinal and Ethical Decisions*—This section is indispensable for all who wish to know the stand of the Christian Reformed Church on various matters of doctrine and ethics.

7. *Your Church in Action: a slide/cassette program*—Each year since 1974 the Synodical Interim Committee has published a slide/cassette program to go with the handbook. These programs are used at congregational meetings and in other meetings of the church. They help our members to become more completely informed about the work being carried out by our denomination and the blessings of the Lord upon this work.

We are grateful that a very large percentage of our congregations this year sent in a favorable response as to the helpfulness of our slide/cassette program. The current and past sets of the visual programs are also being used in many churches in their educational program.

VIII. CANADIAN DENOMINATIONAL OFFICE AND INCORPORATION

A. The denominational office of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, located at 760 Brant Street, Burlington, Ontario, became a reality during 1980. At present, the Back to God Hour, the

Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee have representation in the office. In addition, Coordinated Services also provides assistance for the Board of Home Missions, the Board for World Missions, the Board of Publications, Calvin College and Seminary, and others, facilitating the Canadian activities of these agencies. An open house was held on January 16 and 17, 1981. The office staff continually strives to be of service to the churches in Canada as well as to the increasingly larger functions of the boards and agencies.

B. During 1980, the incorporation in Canada of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (Ontario Corporation) also became a reality. CRC in NA (Ontario Corporation) received official notice that by "Letters Patent a charter has been issued constituting the applicants named in the application... a corporation without share capital in accordance with the provisions of the Corporation Act." Legal work continues in the registration of CRC in NA (Ontario Corporation) as a charity.

IX. THE STATED CLERK

The stated clerk is an *ex officio* member of the Synodical Interim Committee as well as its secretary. He also serves as the general secretary of the denomination's corporate entities, the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Christian Reformed Church synod trustees.

All official publications authorized by synod and/or the Synodical Interim Committee are edited by the stated clerk. His office has also processed all correspondence, surveys, questionnaires, reports, minutes, and materials produced by and for synod. He is responsible for the filing and preservation of all synodical materials.

Each year thousands of letters are received in and sent out by the office of the stated clerk of synod. Each day telephone calls are received from individuals and organizations. To the best of his ability, the stated clerk gives advice and information to all who write or call with respect to the provisions of the Church Order and the decisions of synod.

During the course of the year the stated clerk receives progress reports and/or minutes from all of the committees that have been appointed by synod. He also provides these committees with help or information when requested.

Conferences with representatives of our boards and agencies are handled by the stated clerk and callers are received regularly for consultation or information. The stated clerk also provides advice to our classes, consistories, committees, and to all the members of our denomination asking his assistance.

Reports and minutes of our classes are sent to the office of the stated clerk by the stated clerks of the classes. These are surveyed by the stated clerk and he keeps the Synodical Interim Committee abreast of various decisions, activities, and problems of the denomination.

The stated clerk has many opportunities to represent the Christian Reformed Church in contact with other denominations as well as with the general public. He serves as an *ex officio* member of the Interchurch Relations Committee and represents our church at various interchurch gatherings.

Contacts with national, state, and local government leaders and agencies are maintained by the stated clerk as occasion indicates or permits.

As time and circumstances have allowed, the stated clerk has preached in many of our churches, conducted conferences, and, upon invitation, has delivered addresses to congregations and organizations both within and beyond our denomination.

X. DENOMINATIONAL FINANCIAL COORDINATOR

A. *Appointment of New Denominational Financial Coordinator*

Mr. Anthony Vroon, who served as the DFC since the position's inception in 1973, retired at the end of 1980. Mr. Harry J. Vander Meer, formerly the operations manager at the Back to God Hour, was appointed by the Synod of 1980 to fill the position. Mr. Vander Meer began his work in September of 1980. The Synodical Interim Committee is grateful that God has again provided a competent and dedicated leader to serve as DFC.

B. *Denominational Building*

1. The denominational building houses the offices of the following denominational agencies:

- Christian Reformed Church in North America
- Christian Reformed Church in North America, Coordinated Services
- Christian Reformed Church in North America, Chaplain Committee
- Christian Reformed Church in North America, Ministers' Pension Fund
- Christian Reformed Church in North America, SCORR
- Christian Reformed Church Home Missions
- Christian Reformed Church Publications Offices
- Christian Reformed Church World Missions
- Christian Reformed Church World Relief

2. During the year 1980, the cost of operations of the building exclusive of the printing plant amounted to \$168,100. In addition an amount of \$95,700 was expended in major building capital improvements in the area occupied by the Board of Publications.

3. On October 1, 1980, a contract was awarded for the construction of a building addition of approximately 3,800 square feet to provide added space for CRWRC, Home Missions, and World Missions. Additional parking area was also provided. Total cost will approximate \$200,000. First mortgage bond indebtedness has been increased to provide funds for the expansion. Indebtedness balance on December 31, 1981, was \$521,500. Payments of principal are in accordance with amortization terms. Interest payments are current.

4. In 1980 the City of Grand Rapids appealed the decision of the Michigan Tax Tribunal which had ruled in favor of the CRC in NA in its suit for recovery of real estates taxes paid for the years 1977, 1978, and 1979. A hearing was held by the Michigan Court of Appeals in January, 1981. On February 19, Attorney B. Sevensma was notified of the court's

decision. "Based on the foregoing authority and the testimony and exhibits in the instant case, we find that the petitioner qualifies for exemption for each of the three years at issue as a charitable institution under the provisions of MCL 211.7(D); MSA 7.7(D)." The City of Grand Rapids has requested a rehearing.

C. *Coordinated Services*

Coordinated services for our denominational agencies are performed in the following areas: duplicating, short-run printing, copying, mailing, purchasing, service contracts, mailing list usage, building services and management, fund accounting, and payroll. We continue to look for additional opportunities for cost-saving coordination which will serve to improve the functioning of individual agencies while enhancing their spirit of cooperation.

D. *Denominational Financial Policy Manual*

The Synod of 1980 adopted the recommendation of the Synodical Interim Committee which had approved the Manual of Denominational Financial Policies. Items for implementation have since been identified; the first having to do with the transfer of church contributions from the churches directly to the denominational finance office rather than through the classical treasurers. The financial coordinator is currently holding discussions—through meetings and correspondence—with the classical treasurers to determine the best methods and procedures to be used in response to this policy. Implementation of other policies contained in the manual is being carried on.

E. *Agenda for Synod 1981—Financial and Business Supplement*

This portion of the Synod of 1981's agenda deals with the financial concerns of our denominational agencies and nondenominational accredited causes. The following denominational agencies' uniform financial reports will be presented:

1980 Balance Sheet

1980 Statement of Activity Compared to the 1980 Budget

1981 Proposed Budget (Revised)

1982 Proposed Budget

Statements of Activity and Proposed Budget will show breakdown of program functions and supportive services.

Reports on Salary Schedule for Budget Year 1982 showing salary ranges for executive and administrative positions.

Quota Schedules for Budget Year 1982

This detailed supplemental agenda and its contents represent the denominational agencies' response to requests for greater accountability and disclosure in the use of denominational funds.

F. *Church Help Committee Study* (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 83, C-3)

The Synod of 1980 directed the "SIC with representatives of CHC and BHM to continue the former study committee for the purpose of enlargement of this much-needed church assistance program..." with the

ground that "the committee wishes to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Denominational Loan Fund. . . ."

The establishment of such a fund is an encompassing one which has far-reaching implications. The SIC finance committee is currently considering a report and presenting certain observations as an initial effort in the possible establishment of a denominational loan fund. A progress report will also be contained in the SIC Report 20-A.

G. Fund for Needy Churches Study (Cf. Acts of Synod 1980, p. 84, B, 7)

The Synod of 1980 mandated the SIC, "in cooperation with the representatives of the Fund for Needy Churches and the Board of Home Missions, to continue the study of FNC's mandate, function, operations, and its interrelationship with the Board of Home Missions."

In a progress report to the SIC Finance Committee the subcommittee takes note of the following:

1. FNC and BHM have established a permanent liaison to address themselves to matters of mutual concern as they pertain to needy churches in the broad sense of the word. They are encouraged by the number of requests of churches receiving FNC support for MAP studies.

2. The determination of a church's need as related to FNC's mandate and function is an ongoing one, and calls for a continuing examination on an individual basis, not relying necessarily on a prescribed set of guidelines.

3. Needy churches should not look solely to denominational agencies for assistance. Where local problems exist and additional help is needed, classes and neighboring churches who are more closely identified with the situation and needs have a responsibility to assist.

4. There are more areas for consideration and complexities evident in measuring need together with the denomination's obligations to meet these needs. FNC must maintain a continuing awareness of these factors.

5. FNC's financial reports and budgets show considerable improvement over those submitted one year ago.

The SIC's finance committee has accepted the progress report with the request that, because of the ongoing nature of several of the items referred to, a similar report be prepared later at the discretion of the financial coordinator.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod honor the request of the SIC that the Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, its president; the Rev. William P. Brink, stated clerk; and Mr. Harry Vander Meer, denominational financial coordinator, represent the committee before synod and its advisory committees when matters pertaining to its report are discussed; and that finance committee representatives also represent the committee when matters of finance are discussed.

B. That synod approve the SIC interim appointments to various boards and committees (see III).

C. That synod take note of the efforts of the denominational agencies and the Synodical Interim Committee to effect coordination of programing, planning, and the setting of priorities (see IV, A).

D. That synod take note of the recommendations of the Synodical Interim Committee with respect to the Back to God Tract Committee and its recommendations (see IV, B).

E. That synod adopt the recommendations of the Synodical Interim Committee and of the Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad in accord with the recommendations they have made (see IV, C).

F. That synod take note of the progress report of the Healing Ministries Committee and encourage our members and consistories to submit any suggestions they may have to this committee (see VI).

G. That synod take note of the establishment of the denominational office in Canada and the incorporation in Canada of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (see XIII).

Synodical Interim Committee
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees
William P. Brink, secretary and stated clerk

REPORT 21

UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION FUND COMMITTEE

The committee continues to supervise the administration of the Unordained Employees' Pension Fund which services eligible employees of all the denominational boards and agencies, employees of 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.

Pursuant to the system of rotating representation of the agencies on the committee, the term of a Board of Home Missions representative will expire September 1, 1981, and is to be replaced by a Board of Publications representative.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY SYNOD

A. 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.

B. Your committee recommends that Mr. Allen Van Zee be appointed to the committee for a three-year term, as representative of Board of Publications.

Unordained Employees' Pension
Fund Committee

Gerard J. Borst, chairman
Lawrence D. Bos
Merle Grevengoed
Lynwood Vanden Bosch
Donald Zwier

Reports of Denominationally Related Agencies

REPORT 22

ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

The phrase "advancement of Christian scholarship" reflects the aim of the Institute for Christian Studies, which is the major project of the AACCS. This is seen in the fact that the Institute makes a special effort to work closely with teachers at many colleges, universities, and seminaries, as well as professionals in various fields. It invites these people to join it in a network of communal research and discussion, the purpose of which is to promote Christian reformation of scholarship. The results of such communal effort can then benefit Christian teachers and be a constantly reforming influence in our society.

EXPANDED CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

In order to stimulate this kind of communal scholarly effort a decision was made in 1980 that the Institute would expand its program of organizing and hosting academic workshops and conferences. This has resulted in plans for two working conferences in 1981, both initiated and hosted by the Institute but cosponsored with other institutions. Scheduled for June 22-26 is a theological conference jointly sponsored with Fuller Theological Seminary on the topic, "Interpreting an Authoritative Scripture." At this conference people who accept the authority of Scripture will try to understand more clearly how to apply it in the practice of our lives. Scheduled for August 3-8 is a conference jointly sponsored by the Institute, Calvin College, and the Free University of Amsterdam on the subject, "Rationality in the Calvinian Tradition." This is probably the first time that Calvinist philosophers have come together—from North America, the Netherlands, South Africa, England, and from Presbyterian as well as Dutch Reformed traditions—to discuss the differing ways in which they think philosophers should work in response to their Reformed Christian convictions. We hope such conferences will result in the publication of books and papers that will give leadership to many Christians.

The AACCS continues to sponsor a number of more popular conferences for families, held from coast to coast, which annually attract a total of approximately two thousand people.

BOOK PUBLICATIONS

The results of our work and of those who work in close relation with us have come to expression in a number of recently published books. Calvin Seerveld's book *Rainbows for the Fallen World* contributes to our thinking about art and living with art in our lives. His significant biblical study on Numbers 22-24 has been republished under the title *Balaam's Apoca-*

lyptic Prophecies. A course given at the Institute by Dr. M. D. Stafleu on a Christian philosophy of physics has been published as a book entitled, *Time and Again*. Egbert Schuurman's substantial book, *Technology: A Philosophical Challenge* helps us gain biblical perspective on the place of technology in our society. The Curriculum Development Centre has published *The Number and Shape of Things: An integrated math curriculum for the elementary school* with assistance from the AACCS.

CAMPUS OUTREACH MINISTRY

A special ministry to churches and the denomination, as well as to individuals, is our program of reaching out to college and university students, especially those who study on secular campuses. We regularly support the work of our campus pastors and Christian professors by sending them materials which help develop Christian perspective on academic study. We teach courses on university campuses near Toronto for students who wish to develop Christian insight into their studies, and we serve as consultants to people who wish to teach such courses at other places. Much of this work is carried out in close cooperation with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, as well as with Christian Reformed campus pastors. Recently we have been trying to help Christian Reformed congregations minister to the students who are members of their churches, and we ask congregations who are already working with student members to contact us to share their experiences with us.

GOVERNMENT PRESSURE ON DEGREE-GRANTING RIGHTS

Different governments regulate Christian schools and colleges in different ways, and in ways that sometimes change. Ontario regulates colleges and universities quite tightly with much control over who may grant degrees. By *tradition* an institution can offer a degree only if it receives permission through a special act of the legislature, but the government of Ontario has a policy of not approving any more applications for degree-granting charters. The Institute and a few other schools have been violating that tradition by granting degrees. Now, however, the government is trying to change that *tradition* into *law*. Appeals and complaints to the government by Christian Reformed people have contributed greatly to the slowdown in the government's efforts to enact Bill 4, as this piece of legislation is called. If the government pursues this effort, the Institute will need to push hard to get a degree-granting charter from the legislature at the same time. In that case the Institute will need all the help it can get from those who wish to see its work continue.

Christian Reformed people demonstrated in 1980 that they will rally to protect the Institute. We heartily thank all churches which have helped through prayer and contributions, and all persons who supported our struggle in various ways, including political action.

Association for the Advancement of
Christian Scholarship
Robert E. VanderVennen,
executive director

REPORT 23
DORDT COLLEGE

We at Dordt College are again privileged to report to the Synod of 1981 concerning the progress and developments of this institution in the past year. As we look back, we rejoice in the blessings the Lord has seen fit to bestow upon Dordt College. We are especially reminded of our Lord's faithfulness and the support of his people as we continue to celebrate Dordt's twenty-fifth anniversary. A commemorative film has been produced in honor of this festive occasion. This film is not merely a reminiscence of Dordt's years; rather it traces the training and education of the covenant child as God has instructed. An anniversary kickoff celebration took place on May 3, 1980, in the Dordt Chapel. The college is sponsoring twenty-fifth anniversary programs throughout the denomination which allow the constituency of the college to join in the celebration of thanksgiving for Dordt's first twenty-five years. All supporters and friends of Dordt are cordially invited to attend the program in their area.

In 1980, Dordt College continued to expand its program offerings by taking the first step in establishing the Agriculture Stewardship Center. Land previously purchased by Dordt was traded for 162 acres located near the college on a main highway. Preliminary planning has begun; the center will include animal husbandry facilities, crop experiment and demonstration areas, a pro-Third World crops area, a visitor center, and a pavilion.

The Agriculture Stewardship Center will provide a resource center for lab experience in agriculture courses, an agriculture research facility, a practicum placement in farm management, and a paid work-experience program for Dordt students.

Commitments have been made for the development of two new majors: Computer Science and Social Work. Dordt computer facilities were expanded during the summer months and staff additions are planned which will enable Dordt to offer all the courses made possible by the new equipment.

Social Work is being phased in gradually with the introduction of new and/or more thorough courses, and the use of area professionals to augment the teaching staff. The current Social Services program is being "fleshed out" and expanded in accordance with demand and with the suggestions of the staff and former students of the program.

Dordt is currently conducting a self-study program in accordance with the NCA requirements (Northcentral Association of Colleges and Schools); this accrediting body is responsible for all the schools in the Midwest and accreditation involves two steps. First, Dordt is required to compile a report including all useful data available. Facets covered in-

clude college goals, staff, library facilities, curriculum, purpose, and administration. The college is asked to examine and describe itself, its purpose, and how it goes about achieving its goals. Following the submission of the report, an examining team will be sent on campus to evaluate the college community firsthand and assign the next examination period.

Dordt will also be hosting the Third International Conference of Institutions for Christian Higher Education on August 13 through 20. The general theme of this conference will be "The Challenge of Marxist and Neo-Marxist Ideologies for Christian Scholarship." This is the third such conference (they have been held in 1975 and 1978 previously) and gives institutions of Christian higher education an opportunity to systematically get together for the purpose of learning, sharing information, and stimulating interest. It is of great significance to Dordt as a means of broadening its outlook and allowing other institutions to get a sense of the Dordt community. Of even greater significance is the fact that these colleges, universities, theological seminaries, and associations of higher learning and research will have the opportunity to act globally and ecumenically in the area of Christian higher education. The theme is also of great importance, since two-thirds of the world is in some way influenced by the Marxist and Neo-Marxist ideologies; this is a challenge that needs to be confronted by Christian scholars.

Having concluded twenty-six years of service to Christ's kingdom, Dordt College would like to take this opportunity to give thanks. First, we offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for his rich blessings and mercies during those twenty-six years. We can only stand in awe as we reflect upon his providential guidance. Second, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Christian Reformed churches for their encouragement, support, and prayers over the years. It has made us deeply aware of the fact that God works through his people to serve his divine purposes. It is our prayer and solemn commitment that Dordt will do all in its power to remain an academic community which provides a thoroughly biblical, Reformed, Calvinistic perspective and a wholesome Christian environment for the young people of our denomination.

Dordt College
B.J. Haan, president

REPORT 24
REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE

For another year, Reformed Bible College has experienced the grace and blessing of God upon its ministry. We thank God for the spiritual and financial support of Christian Reformed congregations in Canada and the United States as well as for the privilege of educating a growing number of young people from these churches.

Highlights of the past year can be summarized under a number of headings. These are listed in the report below:

Program

RBC retains its distinctive character as a Reformed institution providing postsecondary education in Bible and preparation for service in evangelism, missions, church education, and other religious vocations. It is the only place in the world where persons can pursue the study of Bible, doctrine, evangelism, missions, and related subjects on the college level from the Reformed viewpoint. Entering students may choose the four-year Bachelor of Religious Education degree course (BRE), the two-year Associate in Religious Education (ARE) or Associate of Arts (AA) degree courses, or the postgraduate one-year Certificate of Biblical Studies course (CBS). During the past year, RBC submitted a proposal for the Master of Religious Education degree program (MRE) to the Michigan Department of Education, with favorable recommendation on the part of the evaluating team to the state Board of Education. The new master-level program is to be introduced gradually in the areas of Biblical Studies, Evangelism and Missions, and Christian (Church) Education.

Faculty

During the past year, several new faculty members began their work at RBC: Rev. Jacob Heerema, as vice-president for Student Administration; Dr. Lyle Bierma, Bible Department; Kenneth Bos, Music Department. The faculty now has sixteen members, the highest level thus far. Several faculty members are pursuing postgraduate studies on the doctoral level: Rev. George Kroeze, in the field of Church History; Rev. William Shell, in Missions; Burt Braunius and James Ritsema, in Education.

Enrollment

Although the total number of credit full-time students declined a bit during the past academic year (undoubtedly reflecting the economic recession), the actual number of students attending RBC classes increased. During fall semester, 272 students were attending (including 60 community students); by winter semester, the total had risen to 292 (with 80

community students attending). These totals do not include the additional attendance during spring session (May) or June session.

Field Training Programs

Beginning with Mexico Summer Training Session in 1968, and Middle East Training Session in 1979, RBC's pioneering efforts in college-sponsored orientation to Christian missions expanded for 1981 to include seven areas—Egypt, Honduras, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Taiwan, and United States (Grand Rapids). A revised program for these academic and practical summer courses calls for academic studies at RBC campus in June, when a veritable "Institute of International Studies" is being conducted. Christian Reformed World Missions staff members are sharing teaching responsibilities with RBC faculty members, and CRWM appointees likewise are enrolled as students for this June session at RBC. Other CRC agencies—Home Missions and CRWRC especially—were also invited to participate.

Finances

Every Christian institution (along with business and industry in the public sector) labors under tremendous pressures in the economic realm: constantly rising costs and proportionally shrinking sources of revenue due to dropping volume of business. RBC has felt these factors keenly. Although the deficit in General Fund was only about \$15,000 at close of fiscal year on 30 June 1980, the low-income summer following forced RBC to borrow heavily from local banks in succeeding months. Thanks to God, the generous gifts of his people during the Thanksgiving-Christmas season provided substantial income so that short-term debt was retired completely. Effective cost-control measures remained in effect during the first part of 1981 while additional sources of income were explored, in dependence upon the Lord. The continuing financial support of the Christian Reformed congregations is an indispensable part of RBC's ability to serve Christ and his church.

Anniversary

In January, RBC marked the forty-first anniversary of its first classes. The milestone was observed publicly at the forty-first anniversary dinner on Thursday, 5 March 1981, at the Welsh Civic Auditorium in downtown Grand Rapids. A record attendance of about sixteen hundred persons heard Dr. D. James Kennedy, pastor of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, give the anniversary message.

Administration

RBC is operated by the Reformed Bible College Association through a board of trustees, composed of thirty members—men and women, pastors and lay persons (including alumni)—drawn from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The board meets in annual session during the first week of March, and an executive committee of fifteen persons meets on an average of once per month. RBC faculty and staff are served by Dr. Dick L. Van Halsema as president, who completes fifteen years in this assignment as of mid-1981.

Through the years of its ministry, RBC has experienced the blessings of God and the love of his people. At a time when both the church in its mission and the world in its needs cry out for a vastly greater number of well-trained workers, RBC offers its varied services to the Lord's people so that the number of evangelists, missionaries, teachers, and workers in the gospel may increase.

We thank the Christian Reformed churches for their love, prayers, gifts, and students. We covet their continued support in the days to come.

Reformed Bible College
Dick L. Van Halsema, president

REPORT 25

THE KING'S COLLEGE

The King's College is a Christian liberal arts college beginning its third year of operation. Located in downtown Edmonton, Alberta, the college's student enrollment for the past year was 140 regular daytime students. This was an increase of almost 100 percent over its first year of operation. Next year, enrollment is expected to increase once again.

The educational philosophy of the King's College is rooted in the historic Christian faith and seeks to work out concretely what the Christian faith means for a liberal arts education. The college and its constituency believe that all teaching and learning occurs within contexts of fundamental views of life and society. The context for education at The King's College is a specifically Christian world and life view, that is, a view informed by the Bible, the authoritative Word of God as confessed by the early church and in the creeds of the Protestant Reformation. The college is committed to offering a Reformed biblical perspective to its students, most of whom are from the Christian Reformed Church.

Chartered by the Alberta government, the college may grant degrees in theology up to the doctoral level. Additional legislation enables the college to offer courses and degrees in the liberal arts, education, and science. In Canadian tradition, the latter degree work takes place in co-operation with a major university to guarantee academic quality control.

This fall, the college will immediately move on to adding third-year courses. Areas of study will include: biology, chemistry, economics, education, English, history, interdisciplinary studies, mathematics, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology, and theology. At this time, the three-year program is limited to area concentrations in the humanities and the social sciences with a variety of discipline emphases within each concentration. A unique feature at King's is its two-year Church Music Certificate Program. It is a very demanding program of theoretical and practical study. Those who wish may apply this certificate program toward a professional degree in music. The science program is developing more slowly, because it demands additional planning and money in a highly technological society.

The faculty will consist of thirteen full-time and some fifteen part-time professors. The requirement that all faculty must possess the Ph.D. in their area of specialization is strictly maintained. In addition, sixteen administrative, clerical, and support people contribute to a Canadian model of Christian higher education.

Both faculty and students are encouraged to assume an appropriate degree of responsibility and freedom as they seek to fulfill their calling to develop the earth and to serve God and their neighbour in education.

The college's downtown location allows the students to enjoy and ben-

efit from the cultural and service opportunities of the city. The students confront and grapple with the spirits of our day. Not only are they helped with the answers, but they are tested with the questions all the way through.

In addition to its regular credit courses, King's offers noncredit extension courses in various communities throughout western Canada. Last semester, over two hundred people enrolled in these courses. The college choir as well as the drama club have already toured and built new links with the college constituency.

Very likely the college will be housed in different and much larger facilities by the upcoming term. This will provide an even greater opportunity for the college to serve the students and the Christian communities through the regular credit courses, as well as through facilities for local artists, and other Christian organizations or groups.

Thus far, King's is financed by private sources. Churches, church groups, tuition, businesses, corporations, and individuals throughout Canada, all join together in supporting this urgently needed work for Christ.

The King's College has only just begun. We celebrate God's blessings in our short history. We anticipate the future that will open up new possibilities for growing beyond our present limitations. We pray for faithfulness to the commitments we have made.

The King's College
Sidney DeWaal, president

REPORT 26

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

We are grateful for the opportunity to report to the Synod of 1981 concerning the Lord's work in Christian higher education as it comes to expression at Trinity Christian College. While synod represents the institutional church and we—Christian education, our common commitment to the Reformed faith binds us together in a unity of service for the Lord. While it is the church's task to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, it is our calling to bring the reality of God's rule to concrete expression in the sphere of higher learning. To the extent that the church is faithful, we can expect God's people to catch the vision of the lordship of Christ in other areas of human life.

With a deep sense of gratitude to the Lord, we report again an enrollment increase for the present academic year. Financial support from the churches and individuals also has exceeded that of the previous years.

Last year we reported that the increasing popularity of our courses of study in the health science field necessitated expansion of facilities. This expansion will prove to have been well timed now that the board of trustees has decided to proceed with the Nursing Education Program which will prepare students to receive a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. The state board has approved our program and, upon inspection, has found our facilities adequate to commence with the program. Mrs. Maxine Groen has accepted the appointment as Director of Nursing Studies. She already has demonstrated her interest, enthusiasm, and abilities by her participation in the planning for the program. Additional faculty members are now sought. Recruitment of students for this program is well under way since the program commences, D.V., in September 1981.

Additional courses of study are being developed also in teacher training programs in industrial arts, home economics, and business education. This was done specifically in response to the request from administrators of Christian schools who found such teachers difficult to acquire. Plans are being developed to set up a computer services center on the campus; the search for a supervisor of computer services is under way. Mathematics/computer science courses are now offered. With expanded facilities and faculty, specific courses of study can be added.

Two major decisions were made recently. The board approved a long-range study project; this study will address every facet of the college—that is, the academic, administrative, development, recruitment, and facilities. In addition, the board approved the recommendation to proceed with a capital expansion program. Library and student services facilities are inadequate. Other special needs must be met. A consulting firm was engaged to do a feasibility study regarding the capital expansion.

sion program; the report it gave to the board was positive.

A survey by Trinity Christian College of the positions, places, and roles that Trinity Christian College alumni occupy has shown that former students are busy in many areas of service to Christ. Geographically, they are spread far and wide; they are in almost every profession and vocation. We are thankful to God that the training received at the college is enabling them to serve to the praise of God and the strengthening of his kingdom.

Trinity Christian College is blessed with a competent faculty and has a dedicated staff. The student body, reflecting the ratio of 40 percent non-Christian Reformed students, is on the whole studious and responsive to the education offered.

Trinity Christian College seeks to carry out the Lord's mandate to instruct the young people according to his covenant mandate. As it does so, it appreciates the prayers and financial support of the churches. It desires further and, if possible, greater support in every possible way. Most of all the prayers of God's people are coveted. For all know, a praying people are an effectual means on behalf of all institutions serving in the kingdom of God.

Trinity Christian College
Dr. G. Van Groningen, president

REPORT 27

UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH

CALVINETTES

The Lord continues to bless the ministries of Calvinettes. Girls in almost seven hundred Calvinette clubs throughout North America are being ministered to by over forty-two hundred dedicated Christian women.

Counselor training continues to receive a large amount of our attention. A new counselor manual became available in 1980; our annual convention was held in Seattle, Washington, with over three hundred counselors attending. This summer we expect to see an even larger group at the convention being hosted by counselors in the Niagara area. Presidents of twenty-two councils in the United States and Canada attended a three-day training seminar in Grand Rapids and returned to their councils better equipped to encourage, train, and lead counselors in their areas.

Touch magazine continues its ministry to girls, with the circulation reflecting the steady growth in membership. Girls have indicated that it is helping them to discover how God is at work in their lives and in the world around them. The *Cable* for counselors helps to maintain communication within the organization and provides helps and suggestions for counselors involved in this vital ministry. *In Touch with Calvinettes* continues to keep our supporting community informed of the ministries of Calvinettes.

A conference on "Youth Ministry in the Urban Church" was again cosponsored with Cadets. This conference has received increasing interest of our leaders ministering to girls in multiracial clubs.

Much of our activity in the past year has been directed to the revision of the achievement program. The work is now complete and the new materials will be introduced at the 1981 counselors' convention in Ontario.

During this current year we plan to explore new ways for our counselors to reach the unchurched girl with the love of Christ.

We thank God for the opportunity he has given the Calvinette organization to serve him. We are grateful for the support and interest the Christian Reformed Church has shown in youth ministry and we ask for your prayers that Calvinettes will continue to be effective in sharing Christ's love with girls in your church family.

Joanne Ilbrink, executive director

CALVINIST CADET CORPS

We praise God for the multitude of blessings we experienced during 1980! During the past year the number of churches using our material exceeded six hundred. The R-P-B program for nine- to eleven-year-old boys and the Guide Trail for twelve- to fourteen-year-old boys were both expanded this past year. A program for second and third grade boys was developed and is currently being field tested. It is our intention to complete the field test and make revisions in time to market this program in the fall of 1981.

The training of leaders continues to receive high priority. New counselor aid booklets and newsletters continue to be published. The Vancouver Counselors' Convention was inspiring and educational for those who attended. Regional weekend conferences were held in Ontario, Michigan, Washington, and Montana. Most local Cadet councils meet monthly for workshops and special presentations.

Over six hundred men and boys will assemble in South Dakota's Custer State Park this summer for the sixth tri-annual International Camporee. This week-long wilderness camping experience provides a fast-paced arena where a boy can grow closer in his relationship to Christ as he grows closer to the men and boys in his cadre.

As an organization we thank the Christian Reformed Church for the support we have felt throughout our history. Our prayer is that God will continue to allow us to assist you as you share Christ's love with the boys from your church community.

Calvinist Cadet Corps

David J. Koetje, executive director

YOUNG CALVINIST FEDERATION

1980 has been a year of change in many ways for the Young Calvinist Federation. Robert S. Hough, YCF's third director in over sixty years, began his ministry with a concerted emphasis on servant leadership and YCF's role as servant to the church in its ministry with youth.

A major in-house emphasis during the past year has been departmentalization. The present structure allows for a greater capacity to serve the church in YCF's two major functions: publications and program. In the area of publications, *Insight* magazine receives continued positive response from adults as well as youth. It is not unusual for an elderly person to note his or her faithful reading of this youth-oriented publication. This may well be one of a number of cues to support the research that youth and the aged have more in common than any other two segments of society. *Input*, YCF's leadership magazine, serves as a supplement to *Insight*, but stands on its own in providing valuable resources for the areas of faith, fellowship, and service. In addition to these two major publications, YCF published a host of other information pieces and resources which are invaluable aids to youth leadership.

With respect to program, volunteer services is a growing dimension of YCF's ministry. Youth in general are increasingly interested in humanitarian service. At the same time, the tension between youth's desire to

serve and the pragmatic concern about dollars for college and summer job opportunities offers a never-ending challenge for YCF's ministry and planning. YCF's expanding involvement with young adults (posthigh singles) also remains a cutting edge for new and exciting opportunities in ministry. YAM is YCF's quarterly newsletter to leaders of young adult fellowships. Leadership training and resources continue to be a major element in YCF's program department. New opportunities in this area will be forthcoming in the immediate future.

YCF's Servicemen's Ministry, though somewhat reduced during peacetime, remains a viable and person-centered tool for communicating with service personnel, plus those segments of youth who find themselves incarcerated or simply living away from family and our churches.

Finally, the annual YCF convention is a singular opportunity for youth from across Canada and the United States to come into a living relationship with each other. The 1981 convention will be held at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, and will develop the theme "Search for Your Gifts." Youth will be offered a broad range of opportunities for reflecting on their own God-given talents and gifts. This emphasis on the demonstration of the gospel is an appropriate sequel to last year's YCF convention theme "Anchor Life in Christ."

The Young Calvinist Federation's sole justification for existence is to serve the church in its ministry with youth. To the degree that we have that blessed privilege in and through the Christian Reformed denomination, we remain thankful. Your continued support of our youth continues to translate into support for YCF and its ministries. We, with you, anticipate yet another year of spiritual growth and development on behalf of those we serve.

Young Calvinist Federation
Robert S. Hough, director

Reports of Study Committees

REPORT 28

SERVICE COMMITTEE FOR USE OF MEMBERS' GIFTS

I. BACKGROUND

For a full report of the work of this committee see *Acts of Synod 1980* (Report 31, pp. 559-571).

The Synod of 1980 extended the life of this committee for one year to deal with the following mandate:

"To recommend to the Synod of 1981 a method for the ongoing collection and dissemination of advice, materials, and names of resource persons to churches and groups to help them bring about fuller use of the gifts of all members of the local congregations" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, Art. 50, p. 45).

II. COMMITTEE ACTION

We met several times during the course of the year. The Resource Booklet prepared for the delegates is an illustration of the kinds of advice, materials, and names of resource persons which have been collected by our service committee. The booklet can serve to stimulate congregations or individuals to try these programs or projects. It can also suggest that others share their successful ventures in an ongoing program of collecting and distributing materials.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. We ask that the privilege of the floor be given to Mrs. Rose Van Reken, chairwoman, and the Rev. Jim Kok, reporter, when this report or matters relating to it are discussed.

B. We recommend that synod appoint a small committee (two or three), representing Canada and the United States.

C. We recommend that synod instruct the committee to:

1. Distribute the Resource Booklet prepared for synodical delegates, with a cover letter, to all congregations.

2. Engage in the ongoing collection of advice, materials, and names of resource persons. Ways might include:

- a. periodic correspondence with consistories and classes,
- b. placement of *Banner* ads,
- c. research of publications for new ideas,
- d. compilation of a list of names of resource persons in various areas of church life.

3. Engage in the ongoing dissemination of advice, materials, and names of resource persons. Ways might include:

- a. writing of a *Banner* column,
- b. relaying of new materials to congregations,
- c. maintaining contacts with other agencies to stimulate and promote different ideas through their publications,
- d. responding to requests for resource persons.

D. We ask that the members of the Service Committee for Use of Members' Gifts be discharged.

Service Committee for Use
of Members' Gifts

Rose Van Reken, chairwoman

Jim Kok, reporter

Donna Tinholt Hekman

John Kerssies

Margaret Kleis

Lammert Slofstra

William Stob

Bernice VandenBerg

REPORT 29

VOLUNTEER RESOURCE BANK

I. BACKGROUND

The service committee for the Volunteer Resource Bank, appointed by the Synod of 1980 for a three-year term, is an outgrowth of the Service Committee for Use of Members' Gifts and its efforts to develop a system for matching abilities of volunteers in the CRC with denominational needs.

Appointed to continue the work of developing volunteerism in the CRC, we received the following mandate:

a. to bring together the members of the CRC who desire to volunteer their time and skills with boards, agencies, churches, and organizations of the CRC which need and can make effective use of the services of these volunteers;

b. to serve as an information and resource center to coordinate the services of volunteers with the needs of the boards, agencies, churches, and synodically or classically approved organizations of the CRC or supported by the CRC;

c. to encourage members of the CRC to volunteer their services to these boards, agencies, churches, and organizations;

d. to provide services at no cost to these boards, agencies, churches, and organizations;

e. to devise a system of data recording and retrieval for use of these boards, agencies, churches, and organizations;

f. to record needed data regarding volunteers, their skills, work histories, education, and availability as to time;

g. to record requests for the services of volunteers and any action taken with the volunteer;

h. to refer volunteers to the respective boards, agencies, churches, or organizations, which will then make all arrangements for the services of the volunteers.

In the spring of 1980, ten churches took part in a pilot program conducted by the Calvin College Social Research Department to evaluate interest in volunteering in the CRC. This survey clearly indicated interest in volunteering among the members of our denomination.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

Our monthly meetings have focused at length on the development and promotion of the Volunteer Resource Bank and on the organization of responsibilities in handling the work load efficiently. Of the eight overlapping points above, three main areas have received much attention:

A. *Development, Promotion, and Recruitment*

1. Outreach to the denomination

An article "How Can I Help?" written by the committee was published in the *Banner* of June 27, 1980, and a full-page inside back cover ad was placed in the September 29, 1980, issue. This ad has been copied on single sheets to be used in correspondence. An article "A Different Kind of Bank," by the Rev. John Kerssies, was published in the *Calvinist Contact* of November 21, 1980. Mr. Kerssies is in charge of an overall plan for promotion and information in Canada.

2. Contacts with denominational boards and agencies

Both letters and personal contacts have been used to establish and maintain communication between these groups and the VRB committee.

3. Contacts with the local church

Every church council or consistory has been asked to appoint a contact person who would be a liaison between the VRB and the congregation. By January 1981, a total of 252 contact persons had been appointed. They have received correspondence from us and we depend on them to keep their congregations informed about the services of the VRB. Supplies of the Volunteer Information Form are handled by each contact person. These forms are filled out by prospective volunteers and returned to the VRB.

4. Contacts with classes

Since the establishment of the VRB in 1979, every stated clerk has received two letters from us, asking for information on projects and programs on the classical level which could make use of volunteers.

B. *Referrals of Volunteers to Agencies and Placement Procedures*

When received, the completed Volunteer Information Forms are screened. Volunteers whose availability and competency might meet needs of an agency or board are referred to that agency or board for possible placement. The agency or board establishes and maintains contact with the volunteer. If the volunteer is not placed with a first attempt, his form may be forwarded to another agency.

Negotiations for placement have been and are being carried on with major boards and also with local agencies.

Some examples of volunteer placements through the VRB have been with the Cary Christian Health Center, the Rehoboth Mission Field, and the Hawaii Service Center.

We request boards and agencies to submit needs for volunteers, we keep an up-to-date list of all needs submitted, and we attempt to maintain regular contact with boards and agencies.

C. *System of Data Recording and Retrieval*

A manual filing system may eventually be supplemented with a computerized system.

Upon receipt of a completed volunteer information form we reply to

the volunteer, informing him that his form is now on file. By January 1981, we had about two hundred volunteer forms on file. A master list of all volunteers, their age, availability, and competency is maintained and offered to boards and agencies for their information.

III. OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

We have achieved some of our expectations, especially a ready response from volunteers. Their enthusiasm has not been totally matched by the requests from agencies for volunteer personnel.

The availability of a small office in the denominational building should facilitate and improve contacts with the agencies we seek to serve. We are finding that contacts with them can best be made by personal visits during the regular working day. It appears necessary that minimal staff be maintained in such an office to make this possible.

To continue to implement our mandate we will need a budget. There will be continued expenses for office supplies, postage, and telephone. An estimate of expenses for 1982 is as follows:

Office equipment	\$ 1,500.00
Telephone	1,000.00
Postage & Supplies	2,500.00
Informational Material	4,000.00
Travel	2,000.00
Office Personnel	4,000.00
Miscellaneous	1,000.00
TOTAL	<u>\$16,000.00</u>

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the privilege of the floor be granted to Dr. Ralph Vunderink, chairman, and to Louis Van Ess, reporter, when this report is discussed.

B. That synod approve the budget as presented in this report for the continuation of the Volunteer Resource Bank.

Grounds:

1. Regarding office personnel, we feel that we can work more effectively through an office which has minimal staff available during the normal working day, for personal contacts with boards and agencies.
2. Regarding travel expenses, we feel that personal visits to classes may promote the services of the VRB more effectively.

Service Committee for the
Volunteer Resource Bank
Dr. Ralph Vunderink, chairman
Louis Van Ess, reporter
Bernice VandenBerg, secretary
James Hoekenga
John Kerssies
Vonnie Poortenga

REPORT 30

COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND

I. MANDATE

The present discussion of the Ministers' Pension Fund has its roots in several overtures and appeals to synod in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, the Synod of 1980 appointed a study committee "to perform an independent evaluation of the Ministers' Pension Fund and report the results to the Synod of 1981." The following grounds were given to support this mandate:

1. Good stewardship requires this.
2. Several classes have requested it.
3. There has been much misunderstanding of this plan and its purposes.

(*Acts of Synod 1980, Art. 98, p. 86*)

II. HISTORY OF THE CURRENT PLAN

The current plan has been in existence since January 1, 1970. It was adopted by the Synod of 1969. A key feature of this plan, subsequently reaffirmed by the Synod of 1979, is the concept of advanced funding.

It is useful to trace the development of the plan through its four phases of existence.

A. Phase I—The Period 1940-1966

The following comments are selected from the *Acts of Synod 1967* (Supplement 37, pp. 367-70):

1. Numbers

"When the plan began in 1940, there were 300 pastors in the Christian Reformed Church. In 1966, there were 817."

2. Purpose

"The Pension and Relief Fund as instituted in 1940 was a credit to the Christian charity of the denomination. This venture, which had its emphasis on faith to provide for emeriti pastors and widows, fulfilled an excellent plan and purpose to care for those who had given their lives for the service of the King. However, with the growth as indicated above, the inadequacy of the plan should be reckoned with."

3. Quota

"The quota increases were about six times that of 1940, as compared to a twofold increase in families."

4. Funding Introduced

"There has been an increasing actuarial concern over the existing plan. It is difficult to determine how long the existing plan could be financially met with its growing commitments. If we were to place our plan on an actuarial basis, our past service liability would be approximately 17 million dollars. In other words, we would need this amount of money on hand to insure payment of pensions to those now active in the ministry."

5. Social Security Recognized

"Social Security implications for ministers in Canada and the United States should be recognized since this source of money can be included as pension revenue."

B. Phase II—The Period Prior to the New Plan—1968

The following comments are selected from the *Acts of Synod 1968* (See Report 28, pp. 394-98, and pp. 42-44):

1. Financial

Cash in the fund on February 1, 1967, was only \$197,124. However, benefits accumulated for services rendered prior to 1967 were estimated at \$17 million.

2. New Plan

"Synod instructs the augmented study committee to carry out its 1967 mandate, namely, to submit a finalized plan."

3. Advanced Funding

"Synod requests that this plan be formulated in terms of an advanced funding concept so that the church may have an opportunity to study the plan before it considers a major policy change."

4. Hire Actuary

"That synod authorize the committee to expend the necessary funds to hire an actuarial firm to do a complete actuarial study."

5. Self-Administration

The Pension Committee surveyed the consistories in August 1967, relative to the use of an insurance company. By December 31, 1967, 353 replies had been received. Only 78, or 22 percent, indicated approval whereas 185, or 52 percent, positively opposed the so-called Occidental Insurance Plan.

C. Phase III—Adoption of the New Plan—1969

The Synod of 1969 adopted a plan written in contemplation of advanced funding. The effective date of the plan was January 1, 1970.

Excerpts from the *Acts of Synod 1969* (pp. 46-48) follow:

1. Advanced Funding

"The study committee has considered all these guidelines and proposes a plan in response to them. Synod should take careful note of the fact that the proposed plan cannot be easily compared with the present plan because the proposed plan is by synodical decision formulated in terms

of an advanced funding concept and differs basically in this respect from the present plan. The present plan provides for the payment of pensions from funds received each year without provision for the building of reserves to pay pensions when they come due."

2. Specific Conditions Included . . .

- " a. Synod instructs the Ministers' Pension Committee to review annually the adequacy of the pension benefits in relation to the cost of living during the ten-year transition period and at intervals of not less than three years thereafter.
- b. All present participants who continue in the ministry until age sixty-five shall be deemed to have a minimum of thirty years participation.
- c. If a minister ceases to be a participant he shall be entitled either to a pension upon attaining age sixty-five based on his years of participation in accordance with the same vesting schedule used in the unordained workers' plan, or 25 percent of his contributions under the former plan, as the rules now provide.
- d. Synod instructs the Synodical Deputies, in granting permission to ministers to engage in extraordinary service, to determine that suitable arrangements have been made for defraying the cost of his pension."

D. Phase IV—Subsequent to 1970

The original pension plan was adopted by synod in 1969 to be effective January 1, 1970. Since that time synod has adopted various revisions of the plan, the most comprehensive of these adopted by the Synod of 1978, effective July 1, 1978.

III. OVERTURES AND APPEALS

A. Since 1970 several overtures and appeals were presented to synod. These were:

Year	Classis/Church	Overture	Issue(s)
1971	Muskegon	61	Amend Ministers' Pension
	Calvin, Grand Rapids	79	Re Ministers' Pension Fund
	1st, New Westminster, BC	80	Re Ministers' Pension Fund
1972	1st, New Westminster, BC	28	Re Ministers' Pension Fund
1973	Minnesota North	20	Change Ministers' Pension Fund Rules
1974	California South	25	Revision of Ministers' Pension
1975	Hamilton	11	Tie ministers' pension benefits to cost of living increases

	British Columbia	20	Request to increase pension benefits of retired ministers
1977	British Columbia	22	Increase pension benefits
1978	British Columbia	13	Increase pension benefits
	Lake Erie	24	Do not revise Ministers' Pension Fund; confusing language
1979	Grand Prairie-La Glace	23	Discontinue funding
	Chatham	24	Review and modify Ministers' Pension Fund
	British Columbia	49	Appoint study committee
1980	Alberta South	13	Reappraise Ministers' Pension Fund
	Alberta North	Printed Appeal	Scriptural proof of funding
1981	Alberta North	2	Reappraise Ministers' Pension Fund

B. Other Correspondence

There has been other correspondence between various churches and the MPF. The study committee regrets that not all of this correspondence can be included in the *Acts of Synod*. The committee feels that many concerns have been adequately addressed through written communication.

C. Nevertheless, the study committee has determined that there are several factors which have caused concern about the current pension fund. Although there may be other motives for questioning the fund, the study committee is sensitive to the following expressed concerns:

1. Inflation

No one could have projected the devastating rates of inflation experienced in the past few years. Very few wage earners and professionals were able to maintain their purchasing power during this period of time. Inflation affects different parts of Canada and the United States with varying degrees of intensity. In locations where the economy is bristling with activity, where goods and services are in short supply, and where incomes keep up with price increases, demand for goods remains high—and inflation results. People who have to live on a fixed income are hurt financially.

2. Quotas

The perceived growth of quotas to support the MPF has raised the question, "Why can't benefits keep up with quotas?"

3. Liabilities

The stated liability for benefits accumulated by ministers to date does not seem to be declining. Can this keep up this way?

4. Language

The Ministers' Pension Plan is written in legal language. All plans are—but such confusing language casts an aura of suspicion over the whole plan.

5. Returns

Some may see the high interest rates published in the paper, (e.g., "the prime rate today is 20 percent") and wonder why we are not earning a similar rate on our investments.

6. Borrowing

So many churches, schools, and agencies would like to borrow money for various purposes. Why can't we use some of the \$9 million in Pension Fund assets for such investments?

7. Management

Some may question how a volunteer administrator and elected board members can effectively manage a \$9 million pension fund. Is the fund managed well?

D. Although there may be other hidden issues, the study committee is sensitive to these stated issues. The study committee has summarized the primary issues for discussion as follows:

1. Advanced funding versus pay-as-you-go
 2. The adequacy of ministers' pension compensation
 3. Ministers' contribution to their own retirement
 4. Cost of quota support
 5. Investment policies
 6. Investment guidelines and results
 7. Management, administration, and control
- Recommendations

IV. ADVANCED FUNDING VERSUS PAY-AS-YOU-GO

A. *What Is Advanced Funding?*

1. Definition

"Advanced funding" is a term that has appeared in several overtures. A more descriptive concept is, "funding for services previously and currently being rendered." Another way to say this is that each year an amount is set aside for a minister's service.

2. Example of Normal Cost

An amount of money is set aside each year which results from that particular year of service. Suppose a minister is credited for deferred

compensation in 1981 in an amount of \$1,000. Suppose he does not get that amount until 1986—five years later. It does not require that \$1,000 be set aside now. The question is, how much is required to be set aside in 1981 so that the investment will grow to \$1,000 by 1986? With the use of investment tables, assuming a 10 percent interest rate, that amount is \$621. In pension fund language, the \$621 is the “normal cost” for 1981. The \$1,000 is the accrued benefit or liability. The \$379 difference is the “actuarial liability.” This amount will be funded by investment income—not by quota.

In other words, if \$621 will earn interest at the rate of 10 percent each year compounded, the \$621 will grow to \$1,000 in five years. The formula is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Amount in five years} &= \text{Investment } (1 + \text{rate})^5 \\ &\text{or} \\ \$1,000 &= \$621 (1.10)^5 \end{aligned}$$

3. Example of Past Service Costs

Suppose a minister has served a congregation for a number of years. He has earned \$10,000 in deferred compensation as a result of his many years of service prior to 1970—the date the plan started. He plans to retire in 1986—five years hence. How much money must be put aside today in order to have a fund of \$10,000 in 1986? Suppose we plan again to earn a 10 percent return on our investment. We need to consult present value tables and understand again the concept of compound interest—earning interest on interest. Tables will show that setting aside \$6,210 at the beginning of 1981 will result in \$10,000 at the beginning of 1986. Note the following:

Year	Investment		Interest		Investment available
beginning	available	+	earned 10%	=	end of year
1981	\$6,210	+	\$621	=	\$6,831
1982	6,831	+	683	=	7,514
1983	7,514	+	751	=	8,265
1984	8,265	+	826	=	9,091
1985	9,091	+	909	=	10,000
1986	10,000				
	Interest earned		<hr/>		\$3,790

In pension fund language, the accumulated benefits in this case are \$10,000. However, the \$6,210 will, if invested at 10 percent compounded, result in \$10,000 available to pay in 1981. The \$3,790 difference in 1981 is called the actuarial liability. It will be funded by investment income, not quota. Several items need to be noted:

- a. The higher the interest rate, the less you have to set aside currently to pay the future benefits (and vice versa).
- b. The greater the future liability, the more you have to set aside. For example, if synod agrees to pay \$11,000 in the previous example instead of \$10,000, this will require an additional deposit.

c. Therefore, the liability as stated will always be more than the amount in the fund. This results from the fact that interest earnings will be added during the years the fund is accumulating. In our example, the liability is \$10,000, the funded portion at the beginning of year 1981 is \$6,210, and the unfunded portion is therefore \$3,790 at that time. This amount does not, therefore, have to be set aside all in one year, nor does the \$6,210. The key is that enough is set aside so that there is at least \$10,000 available in benefits in five years. Past service cost is, therefore, the cost assigned to years of service prior to 1970.

4. Total Invested Each Year

The amount which is set aside each year consists, therefore, of two parts:

- a. The "normal cost" based on the current year of service.
- b. The past service cost which is used to pay for accumulated benefits earned prior to the date the plan started—1970.

The total actuarial liability, or accumulated benefits, at that time was \$23,409,539. The amount required to be set aside, i.e., the present value of the actuarial liability, or accumulated benefits, was \$16,532,758. Because the actual assets on hand amounted to only \$491,693, the actuarial liability, or accumulated benefits, which were not yet funded was \$16,041,065.

It is *this* amount which is being reduced in real dollars by setting aside some current dollars to pay for these accumulated benefits earned prior to 1970. Approximately 50 percent of quota is used to pay for pre-1970 accumulated benefits.

5. How Much Is Set Aside Each Year?

Determinants of how much to set aside each year are therefore:

- a. Current assets on hand
- b. The forecasted rates of return
- c. The benefits which will be paid in future years based on past service costs and expected future service costs

B. *Is Current Funding Adequate?*

Actuaries are people or companies which help a pension fund determine the amount to be set aside each year. The Wyatt Company is the current actuary. The company has an excellent reputation for accuracy. The study committee has examined the reports and correspondence from the actuary, and is confident that the plan is being funded adequately and responsibly.

The plan's current funding policy provides for an annual normal cost based on benefits earned that year. The policy also includes payments based on accumulated benefits earned prior to 1970. These payments are based on amortizing these accumulated benefits over a thirty-year period. However, recent investment gains suggest that the unfunded liability may be amortized over twenty or fewer years!

The Wyatt Company assures the study committee that the current funding policy, if maintained, will result in the plan being able to meet all its obligations when due.

Theoretically, if synod did not increase the annual pension to retired ministers, the accumulated benefits earned prior to 1970 would all be paid for within the thirty-year period. Only the normal annual cost would remain. As a practical matter, synod will probably increase benefits in the future. If so, there will usually be some unfunded accumulated benefits which will need to be amortized in future years. Such changes in benefits have, therefore, contributed to the high actuarial liability.

Most of the approximately \$16 million actuarial liability is, therefore, attributable to the accumulated benefits earned prior to 1970 when the plan was adopted.

C. *Pay-As-You-Go*

Before 1970, the pension plan was on a pay-as-you-go basis. Funds on hand were always low and that was small comfort to both retired and active ministers. The pay-as-you-go method was formulated in the context of "Christian charity." In the late 1960s, the denomination began to shift to the "deferred compensation" concept of a minister's pension. With such a concept, the need developed to adopt an actuarially sound plan which recognized the need for funding.

Private pension plans, Keogh Plans for self-employed persons, and IRA (Individual Retirement Accounts) are United States examples of funding programs. The United States Social Security System is an example of a pay-as-you-go system. Current taxes are used to pay current benefits. Many people, including governmental authorities, are concerned about the soundness of this system because there is no actuarially sound fund available to pay future benefits.

D. *Advanced Funding Versus Pay-As-You-Go*

The initial outlay under a pay-as-you-go arrangement is relatively low. As the number of ministers grows, and as retired ministers become older, the annual payment becomes extremely large.

Without funding, ministers are completely dependent on the denomination's future willingness and ability to honor its claims. When there is no provision made in advance to pay accumulated benefits, the denomination's ability to meet pension claims may be weakened with the addition of each new name added to the pension list. On the other hand, if accumulated benefits are being funded, ministers can look to a fund, irrevocably committed to the payment of accumulated benefits, to pay these benefits. It could be argued, however, that the denomination will never let its pastors suffer economic hardship.

The pension plan represents a long-term commitment. It promises pensions to ministers who may retire forty or more years later and whose pensions may be paid for twenty-five years beyond that.

It appears to this study committee somewhat imprudent, perhaps even irresponsible, to undertake such a commitment without taking the necessary steps to assure that these promises are fulfilled. Pension legislation in Canada and the United States has made funding the norm.

Synod has adopted a policy which allows the annual benefits each year paid to pensioners to increase at a certain rate. If these benefits become more liberal, advanced funding allows the purchasing power of future retirees to hold constant. When synod changes the annual pension amount, the effect is considered in determining the annual normal cost to be paid into the fund. Such is the nature of an actuarially sound plan. Investment gains in reserves help to pay for postretirement adjustments.

E. Scriptural Basis for Stewardship

A thorough search of the Scriptures indicates neither a prescription for advanced funding nor for pay-as-you-go. The Bible does advocate good stewardship. It also mandates that those who serve the church in the office of minister are to be provided for responsibly.

Scriptural references related to the concept of stewardship are:

1. 1 Corinthians 9:13-14 and Galatians 6:6

Here the principle presented is that those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel. In the Old Testament period those who ministered in the temple were supplied by the temple offerings of God's people. In New Testament times the people of God present their contributions in various forms. In our culture, monetary support is provided the ministers of the gospel. The scriptural passages do not inform us how to distribute support from the members of the churches nor what to do with accumulated sums, whether they are collected in a shorter or longer period.

The funding concept is based on the principle that those who ministered in the Word should be supported as long as they live, and that the funds for that support should be in reserve when ministers reach retirement. Those who administer the fund seek to maintain adequate support for retired ministers.

Another principle is that each generation should be responsible for the obligations assumed by it, and to avoid the development of an excessive burden of support from future generations.

2. 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Three principles are established:

- a. Offerings are to be made regularly.
- b. Every member contributes.
- c. The contributions are to be made in proportion to the means of the giver.

The funds regularly received were gathered together and brought to the poor in Jerusalem. Both references reveal a deep concern for the needy. Obviously, the cause of Christian benevolence went beyond the immediate congregation. To conclude from the passages that we have a scriptural ground *against* funding is incorrect. The funding concept, which is *not* a matter of benevolence, may enter into this situation only very tangentially in that the regular weekly offerings accumulated over a period of time before the sum was distributed in the area of Jerusalem.

3. Matthew 21:12

The use of the temple area by the money changers was severely condemned by Jesus. It is, however, incorrect to conclude from the incident, as well as from the word of Jesus, that he condemns the institutional church for investing accumulated monies. The duty of the church is to do its business wisely, whether that be on a congregational or denominational level. Money is not barren but can be a productive item and should be used accordingly. Sometimes the "people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light" (Luke 16:8).

4. 1 Corinthians 14:14

The scriptural ground for the Church Order is this passage: "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." Perhaps good stewardship should be judged on that basis. Is it a fitting and orderly way to support the ministers in their retirement? This is the principle by which we can judge the funding concept. The Ministers' Pension Committee is conscious of its accountability on the matter of stewardship. Synod has also been conscious of its responsibility for good stewardship. Both are determined that advanced funding is good stewardship.

Observations of the ethics of interest are useful because so much of future benefits will be paid from accumulated interest.

In Israel commercial loans were practically unknown. From the sixteenth century, scholastic analysis (e.g., Luther, Zwingli) condemned interest because the concept was based on the "sterility" of money. It was unjust to charge for the use of money.

The New Testament makes no direct statement on the ethics of interest. It does include, however, the parable of the talents.

Calvin and Beza distinguish between loans for production and those for consumption. Where loans were made for production, capital was productive or *quasi*-productive. Interest was therefore justified.

From Georgia Harkness in *John Calvin: The Man and His Ethics*, come the following additional observations:

1. He declared that taking of interest was not forbidden by the Scriptures.
2. Calvin recognized that it was legitimate to accept interest on certain loans. In that sense, he probably contributed to the growth of the capitalistic system. Some may argue, however, that Calvin was misinterpreted on this matter.
3. Calvin's fullest and clearest statement on the question of taking interest is found in a letter he wrote to his friend Sachinus in 1545. Among other statements, note the following:

For if we wholly condemn usury, we impose tighter fetters on the conscience than God himself. . . . In the first place, by no testimony of the Scriptures is usury wholly condemned, . . . the saying of Christ (Luke 6:35) has been perverted. . . . the words of Christ meant that he commends serving the poor rather than the rich. Thus we do not find all usury condemned. Now it is said that today, too, usury should be forbidden on the same grounds as among the Jews. . . . our relationship is not at all the same. . . .

Calvin's recognition that a change in economic situation justified a change of policy with regard to usury is most significant.

4. Harkness observed that Calvin took the question out of the sphere of ecclesiastical restriction and made it rest on the Golden Rule.

The modern concept of interest is that it is a price paid for the use of money. Monies are borrowed from some and loaned to others. Interest is the price you pay to have money at different points in time. Interest is earned by those who give up present consumption and invest their excess money at interest.

Summary

Scripture clearly teaches that ministers are to be adequately supported. A pension assures that this support will extend into their time of retirement. The church is responsible to have funds available to support her retired ministers. The funding concept does assure both the church and her ministers that these funds will be available. One could argue that "provided for adequately" means more than physical assets (i.e., cash). It also means providing for the emotional and mental well-being of ministers who are retired or are close to retirement. Aging and the prospect of retirement have a way of accentuating everyone's concern for their own total well-being. If the certainty of a pension payment is in question each year (as it could be in a pay-as-you-go system), ministers may be subjected to a stress which the church wants to keep from those who have served her so faithfully.

Although the passages do not tell us directly what to do with accumulated sums, Scripture does not forbid charging reasonable interest on money loaned for productive use. Like all of God's resources, money must be handled with a sense of responsibility for good stewardship. Every church that has borrowed money to build a sanctuary knows that money can be used (it is often necessary) to accomplish good things. Because the money in the pension fund is invested according to a careful policy, it is not perceived correctly when it is seen as an idle fund. As an investment it is accomplishing good in society and in the church; as a part of the pension fund, such money is available to the church for payment to its retired ministers when it is needed.

F. Other Private Pension Plans

Private pension plans have grown considerably in the United States and Canada. Advanced funding is recognized as necessary by these plans because the average age of the population is increasing. Whereas in 1935 people over sixty-five constituted only 6 percent of the population, in 1980 they numbered 12 percent, and that figure is expected to be between 16 and 22 percent by 2030.

Nearly one-half of all people who work in private industry in the United States and three-fourths of all governmental civilian personnel are participants in retirement plans other than Social Security. That amounts to over 50 million covered workers who have an interest in the financial health of retirement plans.

Assets have been increasing along with participation. The assets of the one thousand largest plans in the United States were over \$500 billion last year (Council of Life Insurance). In Canada, the Financial Executives Institute reports that the market value of thirty-three hundred trustee plans in 1977 was \$30 billion and in 1978 was \$36 billion!

The governments of both the United States and Canada have recognized that many people are not included in pension funds. In the United States, for example, a person who is not currently in a pension plan may elect to contribute up to 15 percent of earnings (up to \$1,500) annually into an IRA (Individual Retirement Account). This amount is deductible on an income tax return so that there are fewer taxes to pay.

In Canada such persons may contribute to a private Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) annually the lesser of \$5,500 or 20 percent of taxable income.

G. *Concept of Employment and Deferred Compensation*

The idea that a pension may be a reward given by the denomination for long and faithful services by a minister has gradually been replaced by the view that a pension is a form of deferred compensation for services previously rendered.

The denomination must help those ministers, widows, and orphans who cannot help themselves. For the majority of retired ministers, however, it would be a pity if their pensions depended solely on the "relief" philosophy for their pensions which have been earned.

Private pension funds have accepted that philosophy (i.e., deferred compensation), too. To argue that the concepts of "funding" and "deferred compensation" are secular in nature, begs the question.

The Synods of 1969 and 1979 have affirmed the concept of funding. "An actuarially sound plan is based on the principle that the cost of providing a pension for a person is incurred *while one is actively employed*. Therefore, an amount is set aside each year during one's career so that at retirement there will be sufficient monies to pay the pension benefits in accordance with the terms of the plan" (*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 451).

The principle of advanced funding is therefore to earmark a portion of current resources in order to meet future retirement needs. It is like a church which, when confronted with a need for a building, is willing to take both current resources in the form of a building fund, and then borrow additional money, so that future generations will help bear part of the cost of the building.

The concept of advanced funding is the principle which seeks to balance the needs and pensions of current and future retirees, the amount of current quotas required, and the amount required to fund accumulated benefits earned prior to 1970.

The fund also assures equity between generations and among members of the denomination who share the cost.

H. *ERISA*

References have been made in various overtures and previous reports to synod about ERISA. The study committee feels there was some misunderstanding of what ERISA is, and isn't.

ERISA (the Employer Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) constituted a massive, complete, and extremely technical overhaul of the entire private pension system in the United States.

The legislative intent of ERISA was to protect the rights and interests of participants in various employee benefit plans. In order to do that, ERISA created rules for participation, vesting, funding, and detailed reporting and disclosure requirements.

How does ERISA affect the Ministers' Pension Fund? It should be noted that it is not "advanced funding" which creates the reporting and disclosure problems; rather, the opposite is true. ERISA does not permit pay-as-you-go financing.

A "church plan," as defined in paragraph 1.414(e)-1 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), is generally exempt from most of the requirements of ERISA, including the funding requirements. However, effective January 1, 1983, church plans will also be required to comply with ERISA's requirements in the same manner as other employee benefit plans.

Synod has complied voluntarily with most of ERISA's requirements already. This is as it should be. It is the consensus of the study committee that even if congress extends the effective date for church compliance, which it is not likely to do, the Ministers' Pension Committee is to be commended for putting our church plan on a sound basis before it was legally required to do so.

The Pension Commission of Ontario has asked that church plans be registered and that proper documents should be filed. There is no exemption in the law for the church plans, and, therefore, where there is non-compliance there is a violation of the law.

Registration in Canada implies advanced funding, sound investment policies, and specific vesting rules.

The study committee notes again that the committee to implement a separate Canadian Pension Plan is cognizant of Canadian requirements and is seeking to balance the competing elements involved in formulating a plan. The study committee recommends that, because of the legal requirements in Canada, advanced funding is the soundest way to balance stewardship responsibilities in the plan.

I. Can the Current Plan Be Terminated?

It is a legal principle that a pension plan may not be amended to reduce the benefits and rights that have already accrued. This implies that the funds already accumulated could not be turned back to the general fund of the denomination. Such funds must be preserved for the benefit of the participants in the plan. The plan requires advanced funding.

Should the current plan be terminated by some future synod, there would be no truly equitable distribution of the assets in the fund. Benefit levels would be frozen and eventually phased out. Winding down a plan's assets will be extremely difficult.

V. ADEQUACY OF MINISTERS' PENSIONS

A controversial aspect of the Ministers' Pension Fund is that the payments to retired ministers have not kept up with the rate of inflation.

A. *Philosophy*

It is assumed, we suppose, that a pension should be perceived in terms of the goods and services it will purchase. Accordingly, pensions may be thought of in terms of purchasing power rather than in terms of a number of dollars—the value of which has been eroded in the past decade.

If pension is deferred compensation, in terms of current purchasing power, then it is clear that an obligation exists to maintain the purchasing power of the deferred compensation. But the distinction must be made between maintaining purchasing power and maintaining standard of living.

It is reasonable, therefore, for ministers to expect that their deferred compensation will retain its value. However, it is not reasonable for them to expect that their deferred compensation will increase—enabling them to keep up with a generally rising standard of living in society.

It is the obligation of the government to maintain the value of money. Deferring compensation or savings and current spending should be acceptable economic alternatives.

The Ministers' Pension Fund has been aware of the decline in the value of the dollar. However, advanced funding is *not* the cause of erosion in purchasing power. It is merely the shifting of costs for past and current services.

B. *The 50 Percent Concept*

The pension plan concept in effect before the 1970 plan was adopted was that the pension should be "50 percent of salary." The new plan does not make reference to this formula. The goal of the plan was to provide a "realistic benefit formula." On page 451, *Acts of Synod 1969*, it is stated:

It was felt that the present formula of 50 percent of the average active minister's salary was developed under conditions that are not applicable any longer. Mandatory social security for ministers requires a reexamination of the present plan. Many companies strive to provide pension benefits which, when coupled with Social Security benefits, will give their retirees approximately 50 percent of their active pay.

It should be noted that "50 percent of active pay," included housing costs. However, percentages alone will not produce the desired result because a certain minimum is required to maintain an adequate standard of living. If this income level is marginal, the ratio of pension/salary must, of necessity, be higher.

Nevertheless, it appears that the present level of benefits is adequate since expenditures from the Supplemental Fund have been minimal.

C. *Altered Benefits*

Synod has altered the benefits during the past ten years in an effort to help defray the erosion of purchasing power of the two currencies caused by inflation.

Church Order requires proper support for ministers. This may require that some retired ministers receive pension benefits greater than 50 percent of average pay; some may receive less than 50 percent. In both cases, housing costs must be considered.

Synods have adopted the principle that where a major source of revenue for retirees is provided by governmental programs, which are mandatory, the duty of the church is altered.

D. Current Pensions—A Survey

The Ministers' Pension Committee surveyed our retired ministers and widows in August 1980. A vast majority responded to the questionnaire.

The average retired minister, age sixty-five and over, where both he and his wife were receiving Social Security benefits, had an annual income of \$12,149 (Canadian dollars) in Canada and \$13,045 (U.S. dollars) in the United States. The incomes reported included only Social Security and church pensions.

The 1980 Compensation Survey for Ministers in the denomination showed that as of December 31, 1979, average compensations, including a cash salary, housing, and utilities, was \$21,235 (Canadian dollars) for Canadian ministers and \$19,398 (U.S. dollars) for United States ministers.

Therefore, pension income as a percentage of salary for Canadian ministers was 57.2 percent; for United States ministers it was 67.4 percent!

The United States sample included 122 couples; the Canadian sample 7 couples.

It should be noted that the Canadian Social Security benefits are lower than those in the United States, but the Canadian benefits are rising quite rapidly.

E. Current Pensions—Real Income

When compared with average salaries, ministers' pensions plus Social Security compared quite favorably.

However, when comparing ministers' pensions plus Social Security increases with purchasing power, we get a different picture.

Tables A and B show the erosion of purchasing power of both the United States and Canadian currencies. "Real income" is a term used to express dollars received in a given year with what those dollars were worth in terms of a base year's purchasing power. In other words, if a minister received \$5,400 pension and \$10,296 Social Security in the United States—a total of \$15,696—these 1980 dollars represented an equivalent of \$7,124 1970 base year dollars.

Real income in the United States declined from \$10,758 in 1970 to \$7,124 in 1980—a decrease of one-third due to inflation! Nominal income, or current income, rose from \$10,758 to \$15,969—an increase of 46 percent!

While real income in Canada is somewhat less than in the United States, real income barely declined—from \$6,080 to \$6,026. Nominal income, however, rose from \$6,080 to \$13,057 or 115 percent!

MINISTERS' PENSION FUND BENEFITS
PLUS MAXIMUM SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME
IN TERMS OF 1970 DOLLARS

UNITED STATES

YEAR	CRC MAXIMUM MIN. PENSION	+	MAXIMUM SOCIAL SECURITY (1)	= TOTAL	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (2)	REAL INCOME IN 1970 \$ (3)
1970	\$3,620		\$7,138	\$10,758	116.3	10,758
1971	3,620		7,286	10,906	121.3	10,456
1972	3,620		7,389	11,009	125.3	10,217
1973	3,873		7,580	11,453	133.1	10,006
1974	3,873		7,821	11,694	147.7	9,208
1975	4,400		8,116	12,516	161.2	9,029
1976	4,400		8,644	13,044	170.5	8,897
1977	4,400		9,211	13,611	181.5	8,721
1978	4,840		9,688	14,528	195.4	8,646
1979	5,040		9,959	14,999	217.4	8,023
1980	5,400		10,296	15,696	256.2	7,124
1981	5,724					

- (1) Assumes: couple both age 65 and receiving maximum social security, i.e., one primary plus one 50% of primary. The 1970 recipient receives the 1970 maximum plus subsequent increases to 1980, inclusive. Social Security increases each July 1 in agreement with the cost of living increase in a current calendar quarter compared to the corresponding quarter in the previous year.
- (2) 1967-1969=100. U.S. City Average—all urban consumers.
- (3) Deflated to 1970 purchasing power.

MINISTERS' PENSION FUND BENEFITS
PLUS MAXIMUM SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME
IN TERMS OF 1970 DOLLARS

CANADA

YEAR	CRC MAXIMUM MIN. PENSION	+	MAXIMUM SOCIAL SECURITY (1)	= TOTAL	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (2)	REAL INCOME IN 1970 \$ (3)
1970	\$3,620		\$2,460	\$ 6,080	97.2	6,080
1971	3,620		2,607	6,227	100.0	6,053
1972	3,620		2,814	6,434	104.8	5,967
1973	3,873		3,489	7,362	112.7	6,349
1974	3,873		3,988	7,861	125.0	6,113
1975	4,400		4,573	8,973	138.5	6,297
1976	4,400		5,204	9,604	148.9	6,269
1977	4,400		5,694	10,094	160.8	6,102
1978	4,840		6,287	11,127	175.1	6,177
1979	5,040		6,913	11,953	191.2	6,076
1980	5,400		7,657	13,057	210.6	6,026
1981	5,724					

- (1) Assumes: couple both age 65 and each receiving the Old Age Security benefits plus the minister receiving maximum Canadian pension—which increases 12% annually.
- (2) Canadian—1971=100
- (3) Deflated to 1970 purchasing power.

E. Special Problem of Inflation

Many will argue that pension benefits are too small to provide an adequate retirement income. On the other hand, the inadequacy of benefits is no doubt more significantly true in Canada, and especially in parts of British Columbia.

The study committee commends the Ministers' Pension Committee for being sensitive to the disparities that exist in terms of real income differences. It should be noted that because of these differences synod recommended that two separate plans be set up—one for United States participants, the other for Canadian participants (Report 17, *Agenda for Synod 1979*, and Report 17, *Acts of Synod 1980*).

The study committee also commends the Ministers' Pension Committee for seeking to balance current quota requests with the special needs of retirees and widows which arise from inflation and with the income from investments. Increases in quota in line with experienced rates of inflation should be accepted as normal.

VI. MINISTERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

A. Prior to 1970

The pension plan prior to 1970 required ministers to pay 3.5 percent of their salary into the pension plan (4.5 percent for new arrivals from the Netherlands or from other denominations). This practice was abandoned in the new plan for several good reasons:

1. There were too many administrative difficulties encountered (*Acts of Synod 1968*, p. 295, Part III, items 2-3).

2. Self-Employment Tax for ministers just began. This required that ministers had to pay 6.9 percent self-employment tax in the United States.

The following quotation from the *Acts of Synod 1969* (page 453, item 5), points out the key reasons why the practice was discontinued:

No contributions will be required from ministers serving organized churches.

This aspect of the plan is a departure from the guidelines approved by the Synod of 1968. Your committee recommended a continuation of the present 3.5 percent contribution by ministers last year principally because the responses from the churches indicated that the ministers' contribution should be continued. However, your committee has changed its position for the following reasons:

- (a) The 6.9 percent self-employment tax required to be paid for Social Security plus the 3.5 percent contribution to the Ministers' Pension Plan represents an inordinate amount of the average salary of ministers allocated for retirement benefit. It is believed that few ministers will be able to afford this burden without great discomfort.

- (b) Administrative problems are multiplied by requiring contributions from all ministers.

The consulting actuaries strongly advised against ministers' contributions for both the reasons mentioned above.

It is noteworthy that the Salary Information Blanks submitted to the present Ministers' Pension and Relief Committee reveal that an increasing number of churches and other employers are presently

paying the minister's contribution. Since Social Security has just become effective, many of the churches are also paying the self-employment tax or have given the minister a raise which is equivalent to the new tax. Preliminary estimates reveal that approximately 40 percent of the churches are paying one or both of these amounts. Since the trend is toward the payment of the minister's contribution by the church anyway, your committee judges that it would be better to dispense with ministers' contributions altogether and raise the entire amount by the quota method. Churches which have not become a part of this trend could take the elimination of the minister's contribution into account in determining future salary policy. The total of the contributions received from the ministers is approximately equivalent to \$4.00 per family in quota. Therefore, an increase in the quota of \$4.00 coupled with the elimination of contributions by the ministers does not really represent an increase in overall costs, but only a change in the method of payment.

The study committee concurs with this policy but suggests that ministers should also be responsible for some of their own savings for retirement.

B. Current Situation

Table C below relates the full cost to a congregation for self-employment tax in the United States and the employer-employee tax in Canada.

UNITED STATES SELF-EMPLOYMENT SOCIAL SECURITY TAX AND THE COSTS OF THE CANADIAN PENSION PLAN

UNITED STATES				CANADA			
YEAR	PERCENT	×	MAXIMUM BASE	=	TOTAL COST	MAXIMUM BASE	MAXIMUM EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER TAX
1970	6.9%		\$ 7,800		\$ 538.20	\$ 5,300	84.60
1971	7.5		7,800		585.00	5,400	86.40
1972	7.5		9,000		675.00	5,500	88.20
1973	8.0		10,800		864.00	5,600	90.00
1974	7.9		13,200		1,042.80	6,600	106.20
1975	7.9		14,100		1,113.80	7,400	120.60
1976	7.9		15,300		1,208.70	8,300	135.00
1977	7.9		16,500		1,303.50	9,300	151.20
1978	8.1		17,700		1,433.70	10,400	169.20
1979	8.1		22,900		1,854.90	11,700	190.80
1980	8.1		25,900		2,097.90	13,100	212.40
1981	9.3		29,700		2,762.10		
1982	9.53		29,700*		2,776.95*		

* Planned

- (1) In Canada, the Old Age Security Pension is noncontributory. It is paid at age 65 to each male and female irrespective of employment. O.A.S. is increased each calendar quarter in agreement with the cost of living increase.
- (2) In Canada, the Canadian Pension Plan benefits are increased 12% annually.
- (3) In the United States, Social Security increases each July 1 in agreement with the cost of living increase in a current calendar quarter compared to the corresponding calendar quarter in the prior year.

C. *Tax-deferred Annuities*

The study committee discussed at length the idea of requiring ministers to supplement quota contributions. However, after the committee studied the increased costs to churches and ministers from rising self-employment taxes, the committee decided that this would be too costly to ministers.

It should be noted that current United States legislation is not clear on the issue of whether ministers can implement their own tax-deferred annuity plan. Canadian law is clearer. In Canada, for example, ministers may contribute to a private registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) annually the lesser of \$5,500 or 20 percent of taxable income.

A tax-deferred annuity plan occurs when a minister agrees that a portion of his salary should be invested in a tax-deferred annuity. This amount would not be subject to current income taxes, but would be subject to income taxes when the benefits are withdrawn.

The Minister's Pension Committee is currently researching the technical and legal aspects of tax-deferred annuities for ministers. Any plan that is developed will, of course, be completely voluntary for ministers.

VII. COST OF THE PENSION PLAN

A. *"Per-Family" Quotas*

It is necessary to stress that the Ministers' Pension Fund quota is "per family." This denominational method enables the larger congregations to help pay the way for smaller congregations. It is a helpful way of Christian sharing in providing honorable pensions for all ministers whether they serve large or small churches. Another advantage of quota support arises from the concept of portability. In a practical sense, ministers need not concern themselves about changing plans when they are called to serve several congregations during their career.

It may be considered paternalistic for a denomination to withhold wages from a minister and defer current compensation by investing these benefits into a fund. It is, however, the efficient and orderly way to deal with deferred compensation. Larger funds can obtain a higher collective return with a lower percentage management fee than can smaller, individual funds.

The concept that ministers' pensions should be based on a "per-family" basis does not seem to elicit any disagreement. The principle of the quota system as a strength of our denomination has been adequately documented.

B. *Quota Cost*

The solution to the problems of inadequate pensions and funding versus pay-as-you-go might well be answered by simply increasing the pensions.

However, the quotas would have to be increased if pensions are raised. As cited earlier, the current quota amount for any given year depends upon several elements:

1. Current and projected retirement benefits,
2. Investment income,
3. Number of participants in the plan and their ages,
4. The amount of social security costs and benefits,
5. How much quotas for pensions can be raised in the light of the many other demands on our denomination's resources.

Table D below summarizes the quota for the Ministers' Pension Fund from 1970-1982. The table also lists the total quotas per family approved by synod, and the percent of the pension quota to total quotas.

The Ministers' Pension quota as a percent of total quota has been declining ever since 1974. This is noteworthy because it shows that while pension benefits have increased, pension quotas as a percent of total quotas has declined to only 11 percent in 1981.

C. Real Decrease in Quota Cost

Table D also takes the effect of inflation out of the quota amounts. While each family paid \$16 for the Pension Fund in 1970 and \$34 in 1981, the "real" costs in 1970 dollars per family declined from \$16 to \$14.31—a decline of 11 percent. Using the Canadian price index results in a 13 percent reduction in quota amount.

In both instances, therefore, pension costs to families has actually declined—both in terms of the pension cost as related to total quotas, and also in terms of real or 1970 dollars.

The study committee is aware of the sense of denominational stewardship exercised by the Pension Committee. Some future synod may require pension increases higher than that required by the rate of inflation. The study committee feels that a proper balance has been achieved between current costs, ministers' accumulated benefits, and projected growth rates of each.

MINISTERS' PENSION QUOTAS AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL QUOTAS AND IN TERMS OF REAL UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN 1970 DOLLARS

YEAR	MINISTERS' PENSION QUOTA	TOTAL CRC QUOTA	MPF AS A % OF TOTAL	U. S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX(1)	MPF QUOTA IN REAL 1970(2)	CANADIAN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (1)	MPF (2) QUOTA IN REAL 1970 (2)
1970	\$16.00	\$129.00	12.4%	116.3	\$16.00	97.2	\$16.00
1971	17.00	137.90	12.3	121.3	16.30	100.0	16.52
1972	20.00	149.00	13.4	125.3	18.56	104.8	18.55
1973	22.00	158.25	13.9	133.1	19.22	112.7	18.97
1974	22.75	162.60	14.0	147.7	17.91	125.0	17.69
1975	22.75	173.10	13.1	161.2	16.41	138.5	15.97
1976	24.50	188.15	13.0	170.5	16.71	148.9	15.99
1977	24.50	214.05	11.4	181.5	15.70	160.8	14.81
1978	28.50	232.95	12.2	195.4	16.96	175.1	15.82
1979	30.45	251.30	12.1	217.4	16.29	191.2	15.48
1980	32.00	274.97	11.6	244.6	15.22	210.6	14.77
1981	34.00	308.90	11.0	276.4	14.31	238.0	13.89
1982	36.00 (3)						

(1) 1967-1969=100—U.S. City Average—All Urban Consumers; Canadian—1971=100

(2) Annual average for United States and Canada. 1981 figures assume a 13% increase in prices.

(3) To be requested from the Synod of 1981.

VIII. INVESTMENT POLICIES

A. The study committee commends the Pension Committee for recently adopting a set of investment policies. These policies will help guide the investment decisions in the future.

Particularly noteworthy are the statements regarding social responsibilities and human rights. Several overtures called attention to the potential for investing in organizations which practice seemingly un-Christian conduct in its affairs.

The specific policies follow:

A. *Introduction*

The Ministers' Pension Committee is given investment powers and duties which are described in the Plan's Administration Provisions, Part 15, items 2, f and g. In carrying out these responsibilities, the committee establishes this investment policy to guide its investment decisions. In establishing this investment policy, the committee recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to the church as noted in Part 15, item 2 of the plan. Though the committee has the right to amend it from time to time, the policy is intended as a long-term guide.

B. *Long-Term Investment Objectives*

The basic investment objective of the committee is to preserve the principal value of the fund while maximizing return on investments in order that the financial and actuarial soundness of the fund may be maintained.

The committee, recognizing the erosion of purchasing power of the dollar, will strive to minimize the harmful effects of inflation on the fund through investment results.

C. *Investment Instruments*

The fund shall be invested and reinvested, without distinction between principal and income in such items as are described in Part 15, 2f of the plan. The committee may hold a reasonable portion of the fund in cash balance to meet the expense and distribution needs of the fund, or pending investment.

Emphasis shall be on high quality investments, diversified over a broad selection of securities in terms of industry representation, individual issues, and types of securities. In the case of corporate securities, the companies must have good balance sheets, a history of consistent earnings and dividends, internal diversification, and broad marketability for their securities.

D. *Investment Managers*

The services of one or more professional investment managers to manage any or all of the assets of the fund may be engaged as deemed advisable by the committee.

E. *Social Responsibility*

The Ministers' Pension Committee will witness to the fund's investment managers regarding opposition to investments in companies which discriminate on the basis of race or color; and those which are major violators of environmental and pollution regulation; and those whose business activity centers around such un-Christian endeavors as gambling. The committee believes that such witnessing does influence the decisions of investment officers and that it calls to their attention the need for purchasing securities in companies which have regard for social issues, human rights, and obedience to the laws of the government and our God.

F. Investment Subcommittee

An investment subcommittee is appointed to ensure that the investment policy is being followed. This subcommittee shall monitor the investments, make appropriate recommendations to the full committee and to the investment advisers, and report to the full committee on investment matters.

B. Fixed Income Philosophy

The study committee has determined that the investment subcommittee of the Ministers' Pension Fund is guided by the following principle: to preserve principal and achieve an above average rate of return over a normal interest rate cycle, with a minimum volatility of principal, and selection of specific investments as based on these criteria:

1. Only issues with maturities or average lives of fifteen years or less are purchased.
2. Only issues rated at least "A" by one of the major rating agencies are purchased.
3. No more than 25 percent is invested in securities of any one industry.
4. Only publicly issued, marketable obligations of the United States or Canadian governments, their agencies, and United States or Canadian corporations are purchased.

The average maturity date of United States fixed income securities was six years; the yield of United States fixed income investments was 10 percent in 1980.

The Supplement to the Agenda for the Synod of 1981 will contain more details regarding types of fixed income securities held and their respective returns.

C. Equity Philosophy

The Ministers' Pension Fund does not hold a high portion of its portfolio in equity or common stock securities. This is as it should be. Equity securities are by nature more risky over a short period of time. However, the intent of equity investments is to allow the value of a portfolio of common stocks to increase along with the rate of inflation.

Common stock prices are determined by the outlook of the general economy, on the outlook for the specific industry, on monetary and fiscal policy, and on the company's management and performance.

Because the size of the pension fund has increased to over \$9 million, the study committee feels that the objectives of stewardship, risk, and return can best be accomplished by investing a higher proportion of future dollars in denominational causes and equity securities. This can be accomplished at a relatively low cost.

D. *Denominational Causes*

Several overtures have raised the issue of using some of the pension fund to help denominationally related investments. Why should a church have to borrow money at high rates of interest while the Pension Fund is invested in other organizations?

The Denominational Financial Coordinator is currently investigating a plan to establish a denominational loan fund. Such a fund would be financed through the sale of debt obligations (e.g., bonds). A part of the financing could come from the Ministers' Pension Fund.

The Pension Committee must, by law, invest prudently for the sake of the pension plan participants. Any such denominational loan fund must be established properly so that investments in such a fund are deemed to be not only legal, but prudent as well. The study committee encourages this development. Such a loan fund could, for example, assist Home Missions churches, churches, and possibly parsonages.

E. *Social Responsibility*

The study committee wishes synod to note Section E of the investment policy, dealing with social responsibility.

While all businesses and governmental units are managed by sinful creatures, both institutions and their actions are likely to be tainted with sin.

But God calls us to redeem the whole world for himself, not to ignore the world. This mandate requires more than merely deciding *not to invest* in socially undesirable organizations. For example, a decision not to invest in United States government securities because we feel some governmental activities are tainted with sin, does not help to promote God's kingdom.

It appears to the study committee that the mandate to redeem also carries with it the mandate to use our investments positively. This implies that the body of Christ should use investment opportunities as a means of confronting secular but socially desirable organizations with Christian principles.

When we invest in an organization, we should let the management of that company know why we have chosen to invest in it. Even though our investment in any given organization may be negligible, as a church we can still use this opportunity to make positive statements about our Christian principles. For example,

1. We can write letters to the managers of the organizations and explain to them our investment principles.

2. We can use the opportunity to let them know in detail the kinds of actions we support.

3. We can invite leaders of these organizations to present seminars to our colleges and to interact with students and faculties on social issues.

4. We can use the opportunity to witness for Christ.

The study committee does not expect the Pension Committee to do all this, of course. Various denominational agencies can use the list of investments for their own purposes.

Where pension funds are relatively small (under \$5 million), investments are normally made in "pooled" funds. This means that the funds are commingled with others and invested as a group. With smaller funds, therefore, it is difficult to control exactly where the dollars are invested.

As the pension fund gets larger, however, there will be more opportunity for the current pension committee to act more like trustees who can determine more directly where the dollars should be invested.

In summary, the study committee feels that we have a real opportunity to witness as a church; and this witnessing requires *more* than merely deciding *not* to invest in certain organizations.

IX. INVESTMENT GUIDELINES, PORTFOLIO AND PERFORMANCE

A. Portfolio

The *Agenda* and *Acts of Synod* contain the list of investments and their market values. Detailed lists of securities may be found in the Financial and Business Supplement to the *Agenda for Synod*.

B. Guidelines

Because the Pension Fund is now of a size where diversification is possible, the study committee recommends that the Ministers' Pension Fund adopt a set of guidelines to follow during the coming years as it chooses its investment.

A balanced portfolio will achieve the objectives of stewardship, risk, and return. In that connection, the study committee encourages more investments in equities and denominational related causes.

It should be noted that common stocks tend to outperform fixed securities when held for long periods of time. Note the following table of comparison:

ANNUALIZED RATES OF RETURN
INFLATION VS. COMMON STOCKS VS. BONDS
PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1979

	<u>1 year</u>	<u>5 years</u>	<u>10 years</u>	<u>24 years</u>
Inflation rate	13.2%	8.1%	7.4%	4.3%
S & P 500	18.5	14.7	5.8	8.4
Corporate bonds	-4.2	5.8	6.2	3.1
Treas. bonds	-3.9	3.8	5.3	2.3
Treas. bills	10.0	6.6	6.3	4.5

Previously, the size of the fund and the costs of such investments were prohibitive.

Synod should not be involved in developing the specific guidelines. However, to illustrate what the study committee means when it recommends guidelines, it offers the following as an illustration only. The study committee feels strongly that the Pension Committee must remain independent and manage the assets of the Pension Fund for the benefit of the plan participants.

ILLUSTRATIVE GUIDELINES
PERCENT MARKET VALUE OF INVESTMENT POLICIES IN

	Low	Median	High
Fixed income securities	40%	50%	60%
Equity securities	25	30	35
Cash and equivalents	3	5	7
Denominational loan fund	10	15	20
TOTAL MARKET VALUE		100%	

C. Investment Performance

It is difficult to make an evaluation of the performance of any pension fund. The assets of one fund are different from those of any other fund. If one compares one pension fund with a similar portfolio held by another fund, the results would differ only by the amount of administrative costs.

Different funds have different objectives. An evaluation must, therefore, be made to determine if those objectives are met. In that sense, the study committee has determined that the investment performance has been excellent. Objectives were reached.

It is more complex to compare our fund with others. There are various organizations which compare one fund's performance with that of another. Because our Pension Fund does not contain many equity securities, we examined only fixed income fund performance.

Our study indicates that investment performance in the last year ranked in the top quartile of performance when compared with 163 bank pooled funds, ten insurance company accounts, and twenty-three mutual funds who have invested in fixed income securities.

The Ministers' Pension Committee is well aware of its stewardship responsibilities in the matter of investment returns.

D. Administrative Costs

The present fund is administered in a very efficient manner at low cost. On page 99 of the June 1980 Financial and Business Supplement of the *Agenda for Synod 1980*, are listed actual administrative expenses for 1979.

Administrative fees (expenses) amounted to \$46,791 or 1.5 percent of total support and other receipts of \$3,061,950. If we included the actuary fee and bank trustee fees, the ratio is 2.6 percent of receipts. It is this percent which must be compared to the costs of administering all other private pension funds—the expense for which averages 5 percent.

The administrative fraction (\$46,791) includes payroll and office expenses incurred to collect the quotas and execute investment policy as directed by the Pension Committee. There is a good deal of correspondence and telephone work connected with questions to be answered, records to be updated, and reporting to the accountants and to the actuary. There is the pension check-writing function as well as the need for control. Finally, committee meetings and travel expenses are incurred.

Budgeted amounts for 1980 were: administrative \$50,100 or 1.6 percent, and total, including actuary and bank trustees fees, \$78,600 or 2.5 percent—of total receipts of \$3,184,750. Actual expenses are close to budgeted expenses for 1980.

It should be noted that these expenses must be reported as a matter of law. The 2.5 percent cost is a comparable figure with other private pension costs of approximately 5 percent.

X. MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION, AND CONTROL

A. *Self-Administration*

The current plan is self-administered. This means that the investment committee makes most of the policy decisions regarding the type of investments. Another decision relates to the employment of investment managers to perform the actual investment function.

The business of serving as investment managers is very competitive and costs remain relatively low as a result. The study committee feels that its Pension Committee has chosen its investment managers wisely.

The National Bank of Detroit and the Michigan National Bank currently serve as investment managers for the United States. Money is also invested in Canada. It should be noted that there are no conflicts of interest among members of the Pension Committee and either of these banks.

The Pension Committee should evaluate the prospect of recommending a Trustees' Pension Plan. Such a plan places increased responsibilities for investment decisions on the members of the Pension Committee.

In evaluating the prospect of becoming trustees, the committee must, of course, consider the needs of the denomination and the plan's beneficiaries.

B. *The Committee*

The Pension Committee is elected by synod for a period of three years. Two ministers and five laymen serve. Current members include:

Two ministers in the Christian Reformed Church—one serving in Canada, the other in the United States.

The business manager of Christian Schools International who is also on the Teachers' Pension Committee of both the United States and Canada. He is the treasurer of the Ministers' Pension Committee.

The recently retired executive vice-president and treasurer of the National Bank of Detroit, one of the top twenty-five banks in the United States. He was on the bank's pension committee. He is the chairman of the Ministers' Pension Committee.

A chartered accountant with his own practice in Canada. He knows pensions extensively.

The office manager of the United Calvinist Youth. He was formerly in investments with a large Michigan bank.

The director of Employee Fringe Benefit programs for the General Motors Corporation in the United States and abroad.

C. *The Administration*

The administrator, currently Mr. Garrett C. Van de Riet, reports to the committee. He was the vice-president of finance of a large United States corporation. He also served for twenty years on that corporation's pension committee before his retirement. He has chosen to serve without remuneration for his services.

A full-time secretary writes the pension checks; she also does the machine bookkeeping.

D. *Control*

Incoming and outgoing cash is very carefully controlled. Incoming cash is first recorded by the denominational accountant who reports to the Denominational Financial Coordinator.

Primary accounting (routine audits and the preparation of quarterly financial statements) is done by an independent outside accounting firm.

Annual auditing and reporting is done by a national certified public accounting firm—currently Seidman & Seidman. The reports are prepared annually in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Four basic categories of information are required to be presented.

1. Net assets available for benefits.
2. Changes in net assets during the reporting period.
3. The actuarial present value of accumulated benefits.
4. Significant effects of factors such as plan amendments, changes in benefits or assumptions, and their effects on the year-to-year changes in the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits.

E. *Communications*

The language of the Pension Plan appears to be very complicated because it is written in legalese—much like current income tax laws.

When one first reads the provisions of the plan, he wonders how in the world anyone can comprehend it. However, nothing is really clear upon first reading if there is not an immediate "need to know." Retirees who need to know the plan's provisions and benefits have no difficulty understanding them.

Persons who do not have a direct "need to know" have a difficult time understanding the plan. The Pension Committee has made numerous attempts to clarify the plan's provisions with various documents, brochures, and visual presentations.

It is not fair to assume that the only information available is the legal statement of the plan.

The study committee has examined much correspondence to and from churches, and to and from ministers, and has determined that communications have been very good and complete.

Members of the Pension Committee and the administrator are always available to answer questions and to interpret provisions.

Communication works both ways. The study committee encourages the Pension Committee to continue to improve communication and understanding of its Pension Plan with churches, consistories, and ministers.

F. Conflict of Interest

Because Pension Committee members are elected to a position of fiduciary responsibility, they are required to sign a "Conflict of Interest Questionnaire." This questionnaire reads as follows:

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

As used in this questionnaire:

"CORPORATION" means the Christian Reformed Church in N.A. including but not limited to the Ministers' Pension Fund.

"SUPPLIER" means any person, partnership, trust, agency, bank, corporation, or other business entity which provides services, supplies, machinery or other materials to the CORPORATION.

"FINANCIAL INTEREST" means any stock, bond, or other debt, obligation, option or right to purchase stock, share in profits, investment, partnership interest, or other interest of any nature. Ownership in securities in a corporation shall not be considered to constitute a FINANCIAL INTEREST therein for this purpose provided *all* the following conditions are met: (1) the securities are traded on a national securities exchange, or regularly reported in over-the-counter quotations in the financial press and (2) the securities owned by you and, to your knowledge, and belief, owned by your near relatives do not exceed 1% of the outstanding securities of such corporation of the same class.

"NEAR RELATIVE" means your spouse and your children, the parents, sisters and brothers of yourself and your spouse, and the spouses of your brothers and sisters. It is not necessary to interrogate the members of your family. It is sufficient to give the facts as you know them to be or believe them to be.

1. At any time since becoming a paid or voluntary employee or a committee member of any agency or entity of the CORPORATION, have you or, to your knowledge and belief, has any NEAR RELATIVE of yours had any direct or indirect FINANCIAL INTEREST in any SUPPLIER of the CORPORATION?
YES _____ NO _____

If the answer is "yes," attach a statement giving full details.

2. At any time since becoming a paid or voluntary employee or a committee member of any agency or entity of the CORPORATION, have you or, to your knowledge and belief, has any NEAR RELATIVE of yours had any direct or indirect FINANCIAL INTEREST in any bank or agency of any bank?
YES _____ NO _____

If the answer is "yes," attach a statement giving full details.

3. At any time since becoming a paid or voluntary employee or committee member of any agency or entity of the CORPORATION, have you been a director, officer, sole proprietor, partner, agent, representative, employee, or the paid consultant or advisor to, or the recipient of any fee, commission or gift from any business enterprise with the exception of the CORPORATION?
YES _____ NO _____

If answer is "yes," please give details on reverse side of this page.

Nature of Affiliation (Owner, Partner, Officer, Director, Consultant)	Name and Address of Business or Concern	Was your remuneration or gift in excess of \$50 per year?
_____	_____	*YES _____ NO _____
_____	_____	*YES _____ NO _____
_____	_____	*YES _____ NO _____

*If your response is "yes," are you willing to discuss this further with the appropriate authorities? YES _____ NO _____

4. At any time since becoming a paid or voluntary employee or a committee member of any agency or entity of the CORPORATION, have you been indebted on either a secured or unsecured basis to any individual, firm or corporation including banks and trust companies? *Borrowings from the CORPORATION should include outstanding balances on Master Charge, VISA, Unibank, and Checkmate accounts as of date of completion of this form if such individual account balances exceed \$1,000.00.*

YES _____ NO _____

If the answer is "yes," attach a statement giving full details.

5. To your knowledge and belief, has any NEAR RELATIVE of yours, at any time since your becoming a paid or voluntary employee or a committee member of any agency or entity of the CORPORATION, been a director, officer, consultant, agent, employee or representative of, or acting in any capacity for, any SUPPLIER or BORROWING CUSTOMER of the CORPORATION?

YES _____ NO _____

If the answer is "yes," attach a statement giving full details.

It is important to the CORPORATION that you make accurate and complete answers to the above questions. It is not satisfactory to answer questions "same as last report." Instead, any question that cannot be answered "yes" or "no" should be completed in whatever detail is necessary either elsewhere on this form or by attachment.

Please sign and date below:

"I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the answers I have given and the statements attached are true and correct."

_____ (L.S.)

_____ Please type or print name below signature

DATE _____ Name of agency or entity of the CORPORATION _____

G. Decision Making

There are two levels of decision making involving the Ministers' Pension Fund.

One level is the election by synod of Pension Committee members. These members serve for a three-year period. They must employ investment managers, who, in turn, must act prudently in a fiduciary capacity as they make investment decisions. Legal and accounting rules circumscribe the reporting requirements of the plan.

The second level is through the following levels:

1. The Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee—This committee includes the Denominational Financial Coordinator. This committee studies all the financial and actuarial reports and makes recommendations to the full Synodical Interim Committee.

2. Synodical Interim Committee—This committee also includes the Denominational Financial Coordinator and the chairman of the MPF as *ex officio* members, and makes major policy recommendations to synod.

3. The Synodical Advisory Committee on Finances—This committee meets during synod and advises synod on actions it should take. This committee usually consists of laymen, many of whom are experienced in financial affairs. This committee studies and evaluates all the reports of the Synodical Interim Committee, interrogates the administrator and committee members, and makes its recommendations for policy changes and quota amounts to the full synod. The denominational financial coordinator serves this committee as a consultant.

4. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church—The synod hears explanations and responses from the Administrator, the DFC, the members of the Advisory Committee, its chairman, or the plan's attorney.

The study committee feels that these levels of decision making are more than adequate in assuring the churches, the active ministers, the people of God, and the retired ministers that the Pension Fund is being administered decently, in good order, in accordance with the laws of the land and principles of good stewardship.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study committee to evaluate the Ministers' Pension Fund recommends that synod:

A. Recognize Ray Vander Weele—or any other member of the committee, the administrator of the fund, the Denominational Financial Coordinator, and the fund's attorney—at synod, and that they be given the privilege to speak when this report is under consideration.

B. Reaffirm its position of meeting the financial needs of retired ministers through advanced funding.

Ground:

The rationale provided adequately demonstrates that advanced funding is preferable to the pay-as-you-go method of financing accumulated benefits.

C. Take note of the recently developed investment policies of the Ministers' Pension Fund, and urge the committee to establish investment guidelines to implement these policies.

D. Urge the Synodical Interim Committee to investigate the legality and wisdom of establishing a denominational loan fund, and to urge the Pension Fund to invest up to 20 percent of its assets in such a fund should one be established.

Grounds:

1. Good stewardship includes investments in denominationally related causes.
2. As the Pension Fund gets larger, a part of that fund can safely be invested in denominational assets.

E. Encourage the Ministers' Pension Fund to continue to communicate the plan in a positive and simplified form to plan participants, the consistories, and the denomination at large.

F. Express appreciation to the Pension Fund Committee, and particularly the administrator, Garrett Van de Riet, for their devotion to the exercise of good stewardship in balancing the competing elements included in the Pension Plan.

G. Declare the committee's mandate fulfilled and, therefore, discharge the committee.

Committee to Evaluate the Ministers' Pension Fund

Ray Vander Weele, chairman and secretary

Larry Alsum

Cornelius Hartog

Edward Knott

William Suk

John Van Lopik

REPORT 31

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

MANDATE

The Synod of 1976 considered an overture from Classis Orange City which requested the synod to address our national governments urging them to continue (or reinstitute) capital punishment. Synod did not accede to the request but decided to place the matter into the hands of a study committee with the following mandate:

1) to study the matter of capital punishment and make appropriate recommendations to synod.

2) to answer such questions as:

- a. What is the biblical view of justice?
- b. Is retributive justice a biblical idea?
- c. Who has the authority and responsibility to exercise punishment?
- d. Has capital punishment been a just form of punishment?
- e. In the light of the fullness of New Testament revelation and redemption, should we assume that capital punishment is a just form of penalty for crimes (murder in particular) which the state must implement in the New Testament era?
- f. What is the responsibility of the church in the light of the above?

The study committee appointed to fulfill this mandate submitted a report to the Synod of 1979. The report was referred for preliminary consideration to synod's Advisory Committee, and in plenary session synod adopted the following recommendations of that committee:

1. That synod express its appreciation to the study committee for the very extensive work of the committee in preparing this study report for the churches.

2. That synod refer the report with its recommendations to the churches for study, reflection, and response to the study committee by October 15, 1980, and that synod ask the study committee to continue its work, with the assignment of reporting to the Synod of 1981 on the substance of the responses received from the churches, the committee's reaction to those responses, and with such additions to or changes in the study report as may be warranted in the light of the responses.

Grounds:

a. This report has been before the churches for too limited a time for the mind of the church to be ready to deal with it in a fully responsible way.

b. This report speaks to an issue very current in our churches and it is appropriate that the churches be drawn into the study in some way before a position is adopted by synod.

c. The recommended procedure has had precedent with other study committee reports and has shown itself to be an effective means of developing a clearer consensus.

RESPONSES TO THE 1979 REPORT

In the period that ended on October 15, 1980, the study committee received a total of twenty-one communications. (Two communications, one from Covenant Christian Reformed Church, St. Catherines, Ontario, and one from Woodlawn Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, were received after the due date and after the report was revised. These were read before our report was submitted.) Addressing the committee in one way or another were the following:

Classes

- A. Classis North Central Iowa
- B. Classis Orange City

Consistories

- A. Canada
 - Edmonton, AB—Maranatha Christian Reformed Church
 - Lethbridge, AB—First Christian Reformed Church
 - Lindsay, ON—Lindsay Christian Reformed Church
 - Richmond, BC—Richmond Christian Reformed Church
 - St. Catharines, ON—Maranatha Christian Reformed Church
 - Wellandsport, ON—Riverside Christian Reformed Church
- B. Illinois
 - Lansing—First Christian Reformed Church
- C. Iowa
 - Hartley—Hartley Christian Reformed Church
- D. Michigan
 - Holland—Calvin Christian Reformed Church
 - Graafschap Christian Reformed Church
 - Hudsonville—Bauer Christian Reformed Church
 - First Christian Reformed Church
 - North Blendon Christian Reformed Church
 - Muskegon—First Christian Reformed Church
 - Zeeland—Haven Christian Reformed Church
- E. New York
 - Monsey Christian Reformed Church
- F. Wisconsin
 - Sheboygan—Calvin Christian Reformed Church
 - First Christian Reformed Church
 - Waupun—Waupun Christian Reformed Church

Some of the responses received by the committee expressed simple approval or disapproval. Others pointed out areas of strength and weakness, and several made concrete suggestions for improvement. The committee gave due attention to all the responses, and in the light of them introduced both some modifications of language and expression, and some shifts in emphasis and nuance. However, after calling upon its own resources of heart and mind, systematically consulting the communications received, and carefully reviewing every page of its original report, the committee found itself unable in good conscience to alter the substance of it. We did nevertheless alter significantly our account of the conditions under which judicial executions may be considered desirable. We come to synod, therefore, with a report which we hope has gained in clarity and persuasiveness.

APPROACH TO THE QUESTION

Your committee supplemented its study of the Scriptures with a consideration of various ecclesiastical statements. We discovered that there is a considerable divergence in the way in which churches understand the Scripture's teaching with respect to capital punishment. This is by no means novel. The esteemed English Presbyterian divine, John Brown, writing in 1853 said,

Whether in any case it be either lawful or expedient to take away life as punishment of crime, is a question on which wise and good men are not agreed.

(*Discourses Suited to the Administration of the Lord's Supper*, p. 125)

Although one may hardly expect unanimity on this subject in the church, we hope that our report will be useful in promoting careful and clear thinking in furthering our continuing effort to know more perfectly the will of the Lord for social and political behavior. We are grateful for the spirit of understanding which prevailed in the committee and the fraternal spirit which led us to agreement on the subject.

The committee agreed that the subject could be discussed most effectively by asking three questions. The questions supply the outline of our report.

I. Does the biblical data *require* that capital punishment be administered for murder?

II. Does the biblical data *permit* the administration of capital punishment for murder?

III. Is the administration of capital punishment for murder *desirable*?

We judge that our address to these three questions is also an address to the specific questions asked in the mandate.

In summary form the question may be stated as follows: In the Christian view ought, may, or should an enlightened and well-ordered state punish by death a person who after due process is adjudged guilty of first-degree murder?

INTRODUCTION

Capital punishment is a species of the genus *punishment*, but, unlike the punishment a parent may inflict upon a child, or a teacher upon a pupil, it is judicial punishment inflicted by the *state*. It is punishment inflicted, not necessarily or exclusively for religious or moral faults, but for legal offenses, i.e., for *crimes*. This being the case, it appears desirable, before considering the specific issue of capital punishment, to make a brief preliminary inquiry into the nature and function of the state, of crime, and of punishment.

A. *The State*

1. It is not necessary, in this context, to determine when civil government was ordained or instituted; whether it is a creation ordinance, or whether it is a postlapsarian or even a postdiluvian provision for the regulation of the public affairs of fallen man. What is necessary to observe is that the state is not in itself an evil, but a divinely sanctioned thing, the governing authorities having been instituted by God (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14).

2. The state, it should be noted, is not to be equated with *society*. Society is variously organized, and each of the organizations within it—family, church, school, and the like—has its own relatively autonomous sphere and function. Yet, as Josef Pieper rightly says, "The state . . . occupies a unique place in the scale that extends from the individual to the whole of mankind; more than anything else it represents the 'social whole.' . . . A nation ordered in a state is a proper, historically concrete image of man's communal life. . . . Political community is community in the highest (i.e., broadest) degree."¹

3. The *function* of the state can be variously described. Its chief task, it appears, is to harmonize and integrate the legitimate interests of the various individuals and organizations comprised within it, and in so doing to establish the rights and freedoms of every social component. Another way of putting this is to say that the state is required to establish and preserve a just order, within which every citizen is given opportunity for self-fulfillment and by which each is enabled to lead "a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way" (1 Tim. 2:2).

4. The *authority* to establish this order of freedom and justice, and to preserve the rights and impose the duties relevant thereto is, as has already been noted, vested in the state by God. Not being the result of a social contract, the state does not exist by the sufferance of its citizens, but by the will of God. Although the state is the representative of the "social whole," its governors are even more basically the representatives of God, who is the source and guarantor of their authority.

5. There is no effectual authority without *power*, and the Lord has accordingly put a sword into the hands of the state. Whether the sword of Romans 13 may be employed to execute capital offenders is a matter to be considered in Part II of this report. Here it suffices to observe that this

1. J. Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1965), p. 85.

sword need not necessarily kill; it may simply wound, as, for example, in the exacting of a simple fine. Whatever be the extent of its legitimate use, the sword of the magistrate is a veritable symbol of power and its conferment licenses and enables the state to exercise coercion. Such coercion is rendered necessary by the existence of evil. There are those in the commonwealth who disobey the laws and disrupt the existing order, and these, because they are not restrained by conscience, law, or education, must be restrained by force. This forcible restraint must be exercised because without it the order of society is destroyed and every right that creation affords the human person is by lawlessness put in jeopardy.

6. The power and force at the command of the state is, when things are rightly ordered, exercised in behalf of the "common good." It has, as it were, a utilitarian function: the welfare of all concerned, including the offender. But the power accorded the state has another function as well. It is by God's design appointed to "avenge evil and reward the good." The state, it appears, has a judicial as well as a merely regulative assignment. It must be concerned not only with the protection of itself and its citizens; it must, as an agency of God, make a judgment about good and evil, and *recompense* the evil with evil, and the good with good. This means that it must inflict *punishments* and accord *rewards*. It must, in justice, deal with merits and demerits. It must do this because, according to the Scriptures, God does this and because God has appointed magistrates to implement on the earth his judgments upon good and evil doers. As Peter says: "Governors are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right" (1 Pet. 2:14).

B. *Crime*

1. In the matter of wrongdoing a distinction should be made between injuries, crimes, and sins. We do an injury to an individual, commit a crime against the state, and sin against God. Now, it frequently happens that in a single act we do all of these things at once. Nevertheless to obscure the difference between them is to introduce unallowable confusion.

2. In cases where we suffer personal injury, we are forbidden by the apostle to avenge ourselves. "Beloved," he says, "never avenge yourselves but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom. 12:19). There is no such thing as punishment in purely nonauthoritative, interpersonal relations. In these contexts we are forbidden to repay evil with evil (v. 17). We are enjoined instead to forgive, and to overcome evil with good (v. 21).

3. Vengeance belongs to God, and also, by his delegation, to the state. But the wrongs that the state is authorized and empowered to avenge are limited in number. The state may punish only crimes. What shall count as a crime is determined by political legislation and enactment. In many instances offenses that are thus designated as crimes are in themselves neither moral faults nor sins against God, except of course indirectly, by virtue of the fact that we are to be "subject to the governing authorities." Parking for twenty minutes in a fifteen-minute zone is a "crime," but not in and of itself something forbidden by the moral law. It is an offense created on grounds of expediency. It should be further observed that

there are genuinely moral faults and religious offenses that in enlightened states are not, and in any state ought not to be, posited as crimes. To falsify one's golf score is a moral offense, and to take the Lord's name in vain is a religious offense, but the state has no proper jurisdiction over these. It has no authority over private morals or religious practices, except as these manifestly affect the common weal. Idolatry is a sin, but in and of itself it should nowhere be made into a crime subject to penal sanctions.

4. It remains true, however, that the state has wide jurisdiction over public behavior. Commissioned to preserve a just order, to protect the rights of all its citizens, and to enhance the well-being of society, the state is authorized and enjoined to attach penal sanctions to a long list of actions, which by that token become crimes subject to punishment. In the course of history some crimes have by royal decree or legislative enactment been designated as capital, that is, of such seriousness and magnitude as to be punishable by death. The Old Testament Mosaic Code lists a great many of these, many of which we should regard not only as not capital, but not even as crimes, for example, picking up sticks on the Sabbath and reproaching parents. In medieval times heresy was a capital crime, and for it one could be sent to the gibbet or the pyre. In eighteenth-century England, pickpocketing and a hundred other crimes were punishable by death. In most contemporary penal codes the list of capital offenses has shrunk to include only three or four: murder, piracy, treason, and sometimes kidnaping and rape.

5. In the discussion of capital punishment which is to follow, the committee will restrict itself to a consideration of the crime called "murder." The justification for this restriction lies in the fact that, as John Murray rightly observes, "Of all the sins which are concerned with our relations to our fellowmen, murder is *the* capital sin." It is this because as he further points out, "It is in a unique category because, as far as this world is concerned, there is no way of being reconciled to the victim of our wrongdoing."²

Before proceeding to a discussion of capital punishment it is necessary, however, to attain a clearer understanding of what is meant by "punishment."

C. Punishment

1. There is an ongoing dispute among moral theologians concerning the nature and function of punishment, and also concerning the warrant for it. Two fundamental theories occupy the field, and whether one favors the one or the other depends, it appears, on whether one sponsors a law-oriented or a people-oriented ethic.³ The law-oriented ethicist asks what is "right"; the people-oriented ethicist asks what is "good." The one

2. J. Murray, *Principles of Conduct* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 118-119.

3. This distinction corresponds to the distinction made by ethicists between deontological ethics and teleological ethics. Deontological ethics is the theory of study of moral obligation or commitment approached from the perspective of that which is the necessary or binding duty of man; teleological ethics is the theory or study of moral obligation or commitment approached from the perspective of the ultimate end or purpose for action.

seeks to satisfy the demands of justice; the other seeks to satisfy the demands of love. The one believes that punishment is dictated by a binding compensatory rule; the other believes that it rests upon the utilitarian principle and that its exercise depends upon pragmatic considerations. The one thinks that punishment is an end in itself; the other thinks it is a means to some further end. The one thinks that punishment need do nothing more than balance accounts; the other thinks that its only concern is to further the welfare of society. The one thinks that punishment is justified if it redresses wrongs, even though it serves no ancillary purpose; the other thinks it is justified only if it serves to deter prospective criminals, protect society, or reform the offender.

2. Where in this conflict ought the Reformed Christian to stand? Is there a position which transcends both of these alternatives? The committee thinks there is. It would appear that all that is required is the recognition of a distinction between two quite different questions. The one question is: What is the *ground* of punishment? The other question is: What is the *purpose* of punishment? When these two questions are distinguished a real possibility of rapprochement is created.

3. What, then, are we to say to the question concerning the *ground* of punishment? What *justifies* the state's judicial interference in the lives of certain of its citizens? What *allows* the state to impose a penalty upon some? What *entitles* the state to fine, imprison, or execute a citizen? The people-oriented utilitarian has, it appears, no good answer to these questions. If the state punishes merely to *deter* others from committing crimes, what happens to punishment if its deterrent force turns out to be nonexistent or minimal, as seems to be the case in the instance of capital punishment? On the other hand, if judicial executions do in fact deter prospective murderers, and if this fact constitutes a veritable ground entitling the courts to inflict capital punishment, what is to prevent the state from punishing people at random, regardless of their guilt or innocence, in order by the deterrent force of such inflictions to reduce the incidence of criminality? Again, if the state punishes merely to *reform* or *rehabilitate* the offender, what is to prevent it from trying to "cure" a citizen who, on ideological or religious grounds, rightfully opposes the inequities and discriminations sponsored by the state? Finally, if the state is entitled to punish people merely to *protect* itself and the citizens under its care, what is to prevent it from adopting radical preventive measures and punishing not only the guilty but also criminally prone people who, though they have as yet committed no offense and are not plotting one, are considered to be "dangerous"?

4. It appears, therefore, that punishment cannot be *grounded* on utilitarian considerations. What entitles a state to punish a citizen is the simple fact that he is an actual offender. If, in full possession of his faculties, a citizen violates the law, disturbs the social order, or subverts justice, he has incurred guilt, and it is this liability which licenses the state to inflict punishment. What authorizes the state to punish such a person is the divinely imposed requirement it is under to satisfy law, to redress wrongs, to balance the scales of justice. Punishment, therefore, is at the center retributive. When the *ground* of punishment is under considera-

tion it is not the utility of punishment that is centrally in view, but rather its compensatory nature. In this context it must therefore be said that in punishment, principally considered, it is not the sick that the state is out to *cure*; in punishment it is not the potential but as yet nonactual criminal it is out to *deter*; in punishment it is not the protective political structure it is out to *preserve*; in punishment it is only justice that it is out to satisfy.

5. When once it has been established that only the guilty shall be punished, and when the principle of such punishment is recognized to be retribution, compensation, expiation, satisfaction, and the like, what of the other question, the question concerning ends? If punishment is once grounded on the principle of retribution, cannot the kind, quality, and quantity of it be accommodated to the ends of deterrence, societal protection, and rehabilitation? The committee thinks it can. It thinks so because it believes that Christian ethics sponsors a morality in which law and love, justice and benevolence, obedience and mercy, have coalesced in the principle of obedient love.

After these preliminary observations on the state, crime, and punishment, the issue of capital punishment awaits determination. In what follows we shall, in the light of Scripture, address ourselves to three questions:

I. Is capital punishment *mandatory*? That is, is the state unconditionally required to execute every person found guilty of murder in the first degree?

II. Is capital punishment *permissible*? That is, is the state, under appropriate conditions, authorized or licensed to deprive a citizen not merely of his liberty, but also of his life?

III. Is capital punishment *desirable*? Is it, when all things are taken into consideration, desirable that capital punishment be routinely inflicted upon persons guilty of murder in the first degree?

I. IS CAPITAL PUNISHMENT MANDATORY?

Is the state *unconditionally required* to execute a person judicially found guilty of murder in the first degree?⁴

A. General Observations

1. The issue here is not whether the Scriptures and Christian principles permit or prohibit capital punishment. The issue is whether they *demand* it, whether states are *obliged by God* to punish the responsible and guilty murderer with death. The issue is whether capital punishment for those who deliberately kill a human being is an *inviolable law of God*.

2. The question whether states are *obliged*, are in duty bound, to execute persons guilty of murder in the first degree is a complex and ambiguous question. It therefore can be answered only after it is restricted by definition and reservation.

4. In this report, "murder in the first degree" shall refer to the act in which the death of the victim was coldly calculated (premeditated) and carried out by a morally responsible individual.

3. If the established and operative criminal law of any state does *in fact* attach the penalty of death to the act of deliberate murder, then a faithful judge is by that very law *obliged*, after due process, to pass the death sentence upon the offender. The state is obviously *obliged*, by the principles of logic and prudence, to *enforce* through its courts and its police agents the laws it has enacted, as long as they are legally *in force*.

4. If neither the law of God nor the law of the land *requires* a judge to impose the death sentence upon a deliberate murderer, but if these laws do *permit* him to do so under extraordinary circumstances, he, even though "freed" from necessity, may be prudentially or pragmatically "obliged" to inflict the death penalty in certain instances. That is, wisdom or discretion may "dictate" that a particular verdict be felled, and by this alone a magistrate will be placed under a moral "demand."

5. If it is asked whether states are by God *obliged* and therefore in duty *bound* to provide in law for the execution of murderers guilty in the first degree, the answer is complicated by the following consideration.

It is a sound principle of jurisprudence that no law should be enacted which has no or very little prospect of finding moral support and consequent observance within the community. Such a law should not be imposed upon the people, even though it be in theory a good law, which from an ideal point of view *ought* to be enacted. This sound jurisprudential principle was applied in the construction of the Israelitish penal code. In an ideal or near-ideal state slavery *ought* to be outlawed, polygamy prohibited, and divorce strictly regulated. However, when Moses, under divine direction, framed laws for the people of Israel, he did not in fact enact such legislation. Although God wills monogamy, detests slavery, and is against divorce, Moses, who among the saints is eminent for faithfulness and obedience, recognized *no obligation* to embody these divine judgments in legal enactments. As a legislator he did not in fact prohibit all divorce, nor allow it only on the ground of adultery, willful desertion, or extreme cruelty. As the chief magistrate of a "stiff-necked" people he had to suit his legislation to the level of that people's moral awareness (cf. Matt. 19:7, 8). And this he did, allowing easy divorce on what appears to us the slimmest of grounds (Deut. 24:1-4). No doubt for the same reason, he did not—nor felt *obliged* to—prohibit by law such things as polygamy and slavery. Moses apparently understood that not everything that is "right" in God's sight need be incorporated in civil and criminal law.

6. But, it may still be asked, is not a morally disciplined people, alert and responsive to the will of God, and are not its magistrates who are similarly disciplined and responsive, *obliged* so to structure the laws of the state as to provide for the death penalty upon the crime of murder? Is it not God's will that, in a well-ordered state shaped by Christian principles, the murderer should not merely be imprisoned, but executed? And is it not his will that the murderer be executed, not merely because his death keeps him from repeating his crime, or because in some general way it enhances the stability of the state, but simply because it is *right* that he die? In other words, should he not be executed because the divine righteousness *demand*s his death? Indeed, has the Lord not explicitly *commanded* his execution?

7. In the tradition of Reformed theology and ethics these questions have usually been answered in the affirmative. The literature, from ancient times up to the present, abounds with assertions that states which have abolished capital punishment are not merely unwise or imprudent; they are unmindful of or disobedient to the divine *command*. It is repeatedly said that capital punishment, at least in the case of murder, is *mandatory*; it is not only the right, it is the *duty* of states both to enact capital punishment laws and conscientiously to enforce them.

8. The arguments advanced in support of this thesis are formidable, and they are often conducted by men eminent for wisdom and piety. But now that we are considering the issue anew these arguments must be subjected to critical review and responsible assessment. What, then, are the arguments for the mandatory character of capital punishment?

B. *The Old Testament*

1. Some Evangelicals, though very few Calvinists, seek to establish the case for compulsory capital punishment by citing the provisions of the *Mosaic Code*. In this code, they argue, murder was punishable by death, and since this penal provision enjoyed divine sanction, it should be incorporated in the legal structure of contemporary states. The argument does not hold.

2. In the first place, it proves too much. Its force compels one to attach the death penalty to a host of other offenses, almost all of which the Christian would consider unworthy of this extreme punishment. If this should be denied, and it should be maintained that, while the penalty of death for witchcraft, blasphemy, Sabbath desecration, and the like has been canceled, such penalty for murder remains in force, the reply would be that then one is not basing one's argument upon the Mosaic Code, but upon some other principle or instruction which entitles one to be selective relative to the code's provisions.

3. In the second place, it must be remembered that the civil code was intended for Israel's theocracy, not for our society. The moral law articulated in the Old Testament remains in force, but the civil law fell with the theocracy, just as the ceremonial law fell with the coming of the promised Savior (cf., *The Letter to the Hebrews*). As Richard Bodey says (in the *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Vol. II, p. 347): "The civil jurisprudence of the Mosaic economy was a provisional aspect of the Jewish theocracy not binding outside ancient Israel." With this every responsible Reformed theologian would agree. No argument for capital punishment can be based upon the Mosaic Code as such.

4. The provisional nature of the Mosaic Code, it may be noted, bears also upon the arguments sometimes advanced by *opponents* of capital punishment. Adultery was punishable in Jewish law by death (cf. Lev. 20:10). There are abolitionists who therefore maintain that Jesus repudiated capital punishment when he did not deliver the woman taken in adultery into the hands of the authorities, but forgave her and sent her home with the admonition "sin no more" (cf. the disputed text, John 8:1-11). But this conclusion is untenable. Jesus did not address himself in

the instance cited to the question that engages us. At the most his action testifies to the fact that in the Christian era the civil prescriptions of the *Torah* do not apply.

5. This does not mean, of course, that the law books of the Old Testament have nothing to teach Christians. These books form part of the authoritative Canon, and in them God speaks to men of all times and cultures. Embedded in the provisions of the Mosaic law are divinely revealed principles which have permanent validity and applicability. But, as has already been indicated, these laws have, *in their concrete specificity*, been superseded by the revelation in Jesus Christ.

6. When the Old Testament is invoked for support of the thesis that capital punishment for murder is divinely enjoined, the passage massively relied upon is contained in the Book of Genesis, chapter 9, particularly verse 6. This text, it is observed, relates to a time and circumstance which predates the Sinaitic covenant with Moses; it reports provisions included in the covenant made with Noah. Since Noah is the second father of the human race, the covenant made with him is in essence made with all mankind. Its provisions are therefore universally relevant; they confer benefits and enjoin duties upon all peoples throughout all times. Among the duties it enjoins, so it is asserted, is the duty of men to execute murderers. The Genesis text—and its context—accordingly deserves the closest scrutiny.

C. *Genesis 9:6a*—“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.”

1. On its face this text has for centuries seemed to provide a clear mandate for the imposition of the death penalty upon murderers. One can accordingly generate initial sympathy for the traditional interpretation of it. Expressions of this interpretation abound, and to quote them all would take volumes, but the following may be taken as typical: “This passage gives man a *charge* to execute the death penalty” (J. Murray). “Genesis 9 establishes the fact that God has laid upon governments the duty to impose the death penalty” (M. Noordtzy).⁵ “Capital punishment was divinely *decreed* for first-degree murder in Genesis 9:6” (G. A. Carey). “The government which fails to inflict the extreme penalty on the murderers is *sinning against God*” (H. J. Kuiper). “The Bible imposes upon the state the *solemn duty* to execute all persons duly convicted of murder” (C. Pronk). It is not pleasant to differ with one’s brethren, and it is not comfortable to challenge an established tradition, but it is questionable whether the reigning interpretation of this sacred text can really stand up. There are several considerations which cast serious doubt upon it, and these considerations will now be passed in review.

2. Contextual Considerations

a. The pericope (Gen. 9:1–7) in which verse 6 stands has to do with human life (and death). Analysis seems to disclose that it deals with (1) the *propagation* of human life (vv. 1 and 7), with (2) the *status or rank* of human life (vv. 2 and 6b), with (3) the *sustenance* of human

5. All quotations from Dutch writers have been translated by the committee.

life (vv. 3 and 4), and with (4) the *protection or preservation* of human life (vv. 5 and 6a).

b. If this analysis is correct, it would appear that the *focus* of meaning in verse 6a (the passage we are considering) is not on retribution, but on societal *protection*. The emphasis is not on the shedding of the murderer's blood, but on the *purpose* (human preservation) which such shedding of blood may serve, and which in Noachian times, when prisons were nonexistent, it no doubt did serve.

c. It is plain from verse 6b—"for God made man in his own image. . ."—that God places a high value on human life and that he wishes to safeguard it even at the price of executing those who destroy it. But if this goal of making life secure could be attained by the imposition of restraints short of execution, would not God's gracious intent still be honored and his central purpose still be served?

d. Light is cast upon this issue by what is said in verse 5a. There we are told that God will require of every *beast* a reckoning of man's life blood. In other words, the text says that if an animal kills a man the animal is to be slain by man. But why? To *punish* the animal? To satisfy *retributive justice*? Of course not! Animals, especially those who slay and devour, act from impulse, and are not morally responsible. Quite obviously the animal is to be slain as a *safety measure*, in order to protect human life, and not to satisfy law. But the "command" concerning the offending animal is couched in the same terms as that concerning offending man. What, then, are we to conclude? Are we not entitled to conclude that we are here confronted not with a *command*, but with an allowable way in which we are enabled to serve God's purpose of protection and preservation? Certainly, we are *permitted* to kill animals that violate the human right to life, but are we *compelled* by a solemn divine *commandment* to put them to death? If the offending animal can be suitably restrained, or rendered docile, are we yet *required* to end its life? It is unlikely that we are. By the same token we are not *required* to take the life of the human murderer.

3. Dietary Considerations

One wonders about the provisions in the pericope about eating strangled animals whose blood has not been poured out. Verse 4 is couched in the same absolute terms as is verse 6. But what does it command? It seems to exclude blood in any form from the diet of mankind, and the Jews apparently understood the verse in this way. One cannot conclude that the Jerusalem Council so understood it; it was probably trying merely to effect a temporary truce between Jews and Gentiles when it bade the latter to abstain from "what is strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:20). However that may be, to go "kosher" cannot be a universally binding command of God. If there is a command in verse 4, as there doubtless is, it is the command to treat *life* ("blood") in any form with respect, and to manifest this respect by refraining from the savage habit of eating live flesh. Respect for life is indeed the theme throughout the whole pericope, but just as this respect need not take the form of eschewing the consumption of blood (as in "blut-wurst"), so it need not take the form of inflicting capital punishment.

4. *Historical Considerations—The Case of Cain*

a. It is said by those who find a timeless command in Genesis 9:6 that God wills every deliberate murderer to forfeit his life in recompense for his crime. But they encounter trouble when they consider the case of Cain. God, it will be remembered, sheltered Cain. The first murderer was banished indeed; he was ostracized from his erstwhile community; but he was not slain: "the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest anyone who came upon him should kill him" (Gen. 4:15).

b. There are those who say that before the time of Noah God dealt with murderers according to his own good pleasure, but that after the flood he commissioned *men* to vent his wrath upon them. This reasoning seems forced, but if it be valid it would still indicate that God considers times and circumstances, and that his will cannot in Greek fashion be statically eternalized.

c. J. P. Lange, accordingly, finds in the Cain incident "a proof that in the Christian humanitarian development the principle [that the murderer has forfeited his right in human society] may be realized in another form than through the literal, corporeal shedding of blood" (*Commentary on Genesis*, p. 331). This opinion is shared by Gordon C. Clark who, respecting the issue at hand, declares: "God's dealing with Cain . . . indicates that it is not absolutely necessary to execute every murderer" (*Christianity Today*, February 1, 1960, p. 353).

5. *Historical Considerations—The Pre- and Post-Flood Periods*

Professor Aalders in *Korte Verklaring (in loco)* suggests that if God did actually prescribe capital punishment in the immediate post-deluge era, this may have been for prudential reasons: to discourage resumption of the pre-deluge violence. These are his words: "The explanation may well lie herein that in the pre-deluge era violence had so dominated that it was now necessary, in order to prevent a recurrence of such violence, to still murderous passion with the threat of execution." The implication is, of course, that in other times, and in other circumstances, such measures may not be necessary.

6. *Historical Considerations: Be Fruitful and Multiply*

a. If there be in Genesis 9:6 an inviolable and universally binding command to execute murderers, then there is in Genesis 9:1 and 7 a similar command to "be fruitful and multiply and to bring forth abundantly on the earth." But the latter command (if indeed it is a command!) is obviously time conditioned, and it would appear that, by the same token, so is the former one (if indeed it is a command).

b. The statement "be fruitful and multiply" occurs several times in the Bible: It is first addressed to animals (Gen. 1:22) then to two people at the very beginning of human history (Gen. 1:28), then again to the animals as they disembark from the ark (Gen. 8:17), and then to the eight people who alone survived the Flood (Gen. 9:1, 7). The very fact that these words are addressed to animals makes it very doubtful that they should be viewed as a command; it is better to understand them as a blessing. But if one interprets them as a command (and many do) then in the days of Adam and Noah the command was eminently meaningful; God surely willed to have the nearly empty earth

populated with human beings (and with animals). And no doubt he still so will; to compensate for the toll that death regularly takes he wants the human race to reproduce itself.

c. But human reproduction, from the nature of the case is always individualized; it occurs when in free association within the marriage bond two individuals, male and female, engage in sexual relations. Are we then to declare that a contemporary husband and wife who are joined in sexual union are *obliged* by God not only to reproduce but to "bring forth abundantly"? Surely not! A Christian couple has every right, by the employment of contraceptive means, to limit the number of children to be born. Indeed, in a day when overpopulation threatens to compromise the true quality of human life, many Christians feel that their duty to society requires such limitation upon reproduction.

d. In analogous fashion, a contemporary state may, in the exercise of its discretionary powers and with due regard to the historical situation, hold as nonbinding what has sometimes been understood as the injunction of Genesis 9:6. It is important to recognize that our response to divine revelation is not to be mechanical, but rather such that the letter of the law does not destroy the spirit of it.

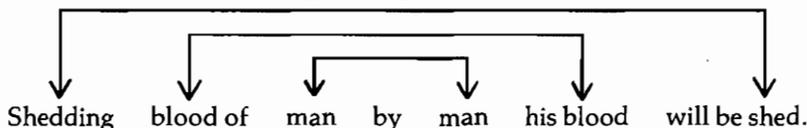
7. Juridical Considerations

a. When Genesis 9:6 is considered from a juridical point of view the first thing to be observed is that the death penalty is here attached exclusively to the offense of killing, or murder. If capital punishment be advocated for other crimes—e.g., for kidnaping, rape, mutiny, or treason—such advocacy cannot rest upon the text under consideration. It could, of course, be argued on other grounds that there is more than one offense against society which deserves the penalty of death. It could even be argued that, since it tends to put many lives in jeopardy, treason is a *form* of murder and therefore within the purview of this text. But, strictly speaking, only the actual spilling of blood is contemplated in Genesis 9. Warrant is here provided neither for the wide-ranging penal provisions of the Mosaic Code, nor for the non-homicidal capital crimes embodied in the codes of many modern states.

b. That we are not dealing in our text with a strictly *legal* prescription divinely imposed upon modern states is evident from the fact that the "blood-spilling" which is to be avenged lacks juridical specification. No distinction is made between accidental, negligent, and willful homicide; and within willful homicide no distinction is made between crimes of passion and those which are planned with scheming malice. Those, however, who consider Genesis 9:6 to be a *law* binding upon magistrates tend to ignore this fact. Almost without exception they modify the text and read it as saying that only deliberate first-degree murder deserves the death penalty. For this there is no excuse. This is to put into the text what simply is not there. If we are dealing here with a law, a legal enactment, then, without any qualification whatever, "whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed." But no one really believes that this is God's will. It will, of

course, not do to appeal to the Israelitish criminal law for a more specific commentary on this text. It will not suffice to cite the distinction made in the Mosaic Code between accidental and nonaccidental homicide, and declare that in these later disclosures God clarified the previously unspecified intention he embodies in the Noachian covenant. We should in that case be bound to declare that by these same later disclosures God exempts from capital punishment a man who beats his slave to death (Ex. 20:13; 21:20, 21) or commits a homicide in which there are less than two witnesses (Num. 35:30). God no doubt wills us to distinguish between accidental and nonaccidental homicide. But neither Genesis 9:6 *as such*, nor Israelitish legislation *as such*, provide warrant for the distinction. An argument *based* on the Mosaic penal code commits the one conducting it to more than one can Christianly bear. An argument *based* on Genesis 9:6 commits one to demand the death penalty for any and every homicide, whatever the circumstances may be. The latter cannot therefore be taken as a law, or as a juridical requirement. If it were so taken it would license unjust executions and subvert righteousness.

c. If Genesis 9:6 is not to be taken as a law or legal enactment, how is it to be taken? The *form* of the expression, "Whoever sheds the blood of man by man shall his blood be shed," suggests an answer. The text embodies the chiasmic *structure* typical of Hebrew wisdom literature, as the following literally translated order demonstrates:



Many translators of the Bible clearly indicate that Genesis 9:6 is poetry. We note among others, the New International Version and the New American Standard Bible both of which are well known for their careful scholarship. The Hebrew Bible (Kittel) also gives it a clearly poetic arrangement. It may be categorically stated that the laws in the Bible never are put in poetic form. This is a very convincing argument why Genesis 9:6 must not be understood as an imperative, commanding any state to administer capital punishment. We seem to be dealing here, accordingly, not with a piece of legislation but with something like a proverb. Expressions falling into this literary genre are familiar to all, and are not foreign to the Bible. We are told, for example, that "he who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword"; or again, "what a man sows that shall he reap." There is profound truth in these utterances, and a wise man will give them due heed. Such proverbs are a part of the inspired and infallible Word of God, but they are ill-used when given legal application. Proverbs are not juridical in nature, and are not to be taken as legal prescriptions. By the same token, neither is Genesis 9:6a.

d. Of singular juridical interest and importance is the question concerning the *agent* of the vengeance contemplated in our text. "By *man* shall his blood be shed," we are told. Now it is a curious fact that

those who discover in this text a mandate to execute murderers almost invariably translate "man" by "duly constituted governmental authorities." It is recognized, of course, even by them, that there is no warrant in the text for such a translation. They accordingly find warrant for it in other biblical passages, notably in Romans 13:4, where the governing authorities are declared to be "the servants of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer." No Bible believer would, of course, care to call into question the plain teaching of Romans 13, but he might well ask whether justice is done to the Genesis passage by ignoring or slighting its historical context. It is clear from the account in Genesis 9 that no state furnished with a penal code and judicial system was in existence. The word that came to Noah about "man" as "avenger" could therefore not have been taken by him as meaning "established government," even though he must have retained in memory a knowledge of the artistic and industrialized city states established by Cain's descendants (Gen. 4:17-22). What Noah understood, and what the word addressed to him really meant *at the time*, was that the vindication of justice lay in the hands of the *goél* (the avenger), the nearest relative of the victim of the crime. As is stated in *Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. I, p. 422):

The avenger of blood is a figure that appears in primitive justice.

By ancient custom it was the right, indeed the duty, of persons (the nearest of kin) to avenge the slaying of a relative. This is perhaps why Cain feared for his life after slaying Abel (Gen. 4:23, 24). It also is likely that Jehovah sanctioned this kind of retributive justice in the still uninstitutionalized society of the immediate post-flood period when he announced the principle of reckoning and reprisal reported in Genesis 9:5, 6.

Since individual blood vengeance was widespread in the Near East before the formation of the people of Israel, it is evident that Moses did not institute the custom. The Mosaic legislation did, however, recognize and allow (regulate) it (Num. 35:19, 21; Deut. 19:12; Judg. 8:18-21); the Avenger of Blood was a figure well known in Israel at least until the time of David (2 Sam. 14:7, 8).

Of course, no Christian would today sponsor the ancient "avenger of blood." By the same token every Christian should hesitate to ground a case for mandatory capital punishment on Genesis 9:6.

e. In considering whether in Genesis 9 a specific law ("murderers *must* be executed") is imposed upon modern states by God, we might ask, finally, whether God is truly honored or rightly conceived of when he is apprehended as a political legislator or as a framer of penal codes. God is indeed the King of kings, and for their guidance he enunciated truths and published principles which he wills that they observe. Human magistrates could know, accordingly, that they are obliged by God to esteem men highly, to cherish personal life, to protect the innocent, to curb violence, to punish criminals, to maintain order, to foster peace, to establish justice and equity, and the like. But they could also know that God does not supplant them, depriving them of their responsibility to arrange the affairs of state in accordance with divinely revealed principles of equity and order. God wills

that people should be governed by human agents responsive to his will, but he accords these agents freedom to enact legislation suitable to time and circumstance, and he leaves them in full possession of their *discretionary* powers in the administration of distributive and punitive justice. God, in short, does not dictate penal laws or prescribe court procedures. He leaves this in the hands of his appointed servants.

It is gratifying to observe that this is widely recognized by those in the Reformed community who have been most active in Christian politics—the Dutch Calvinists. Professor Aalders, for example, while acknowledging that the state has the *right*, and even in *some* cases the *duty*, to inflict capital punishment upon murderers, concedes that “one is not entitled to say that every one who deliberately deprives another of his life *must* be executed. The state has the right to delineate in its penal laws the cases in which it shall or shall not impose the penalty of death. It may and must reckon with time, place, and circumstances” (*Korte Verklaring*, Comm. on Gen. 9:6). It should be noted, too, that in the Program of Principles enunciated by the Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands it is declared: “Punishment is administered primarily in the interest of restoring the order of justice that has been violated. To this end the death penalty may if *necessary* (*zonodig*) be applied.” The platform of the Christian Historical Union says virtually the same thing, but employs the Dutch word *desnoods* (“if necessary” or “in a pinch”). Commenting on these declarations Professor Klaas Runia observes: “It is clear how *careful* both programs are. One should notice the words ‘if necessary’ (*zonodig*—*desnoods*). Neither party pleads for a multifarious application of the *right* to administer capital punishment” (*De Wachter*, 8 Maart 1977).

8. Other Considerations

a. The committee is, of course, aware of the fact that the Hebrews verb *yishshaphik*, translated “shall be shed,” may also be translated “will be shed.” Being in the imperfect tense it can be understood in the descriptive or predictive as well as in the prescriptive sense. The committee has not wished, however, to exploit this circumstance or rest its case, even in part, upon the latitude which the grammar affords. While denying that Genesis 9:6 imposes a timeless and unqualified (and unqualifiable) obligation upon states, it concedes that the imperative form of the ambiguous word is most consonant with the thrust of the entire passage. But the imperative form *alone* is not decisive. Many utterances, like “Be careful” or “Take Route 80” are in this form but they are hypothetical imperatives; they say, “If you want to avoid injury, be careful,” or “If you want to get to Des Moines, take Route 80.” Utterances like these are quite unlike *categorical* imperatives, which impose unconditional obligations. As we have contended in the foregoing, there is no warrant for regarding Genesis 9:6 as a categorical imperative.

b. The committee is also aware of the fact that in the Mosaic legislation the execution of the murderer had an expiatory or cleansing

function. The death of the criminal served to "purge the guilt of innocent blood from Israel" (Deut. 19:11 ff). Also, as is well known, the Israelites abstained from the consumption of blood, presumably on the ground that it was the seat of life, and as such belonged to its Giver; wherefore it was offered in sacrifice to God. With this in view some have argued that since "blood" figures prominently in the Genesis passage, capital punishment is there also meant to be expiatory. And therefore, so the argument continues, capital punishment is not only not mandatory, it is not—or is no longer—permissible, for "the sacrifice of Christ is the end of all expiatory killing."⁶ The committee wishes not to employ this argument, nor even to endorse it. As has at several points been made clear, no good purpose is served by confusing the Mosaic and pre-Mosaic areas. And, in addition, it is unwarranted to hold that the suffering incident to punishment serves to expiate the guilt either of the criminal or of the society that penalizes him.

In Summary

Not taking recourse to the *grammatical* and *theological* arguments which we have considered in the immediately preceding paragraphs, and which are sometimes employed by those who contest the traditional interpretations of Genesis 9:6, the committee nevertheless holds that on the other grounds adduced (i.e., 2. Contextual Considerations, 3. Dietary Considerations, 4-6. Historical Considerations, 7. Juridical Considerations—cf. above) it is clear that Genesis 9:6 may not be appealed to as providing a timeless, universal, and unqualified divine mandate upon the civil magistrate to execute the murderer.

D. *The New Testament*

1. Those who hold that modern states are *obliged* by God to execute criminals found guilty of murder in the first degree, do not normally base their case on the New Testament. For them Genesis 9:6 is basic and determinative. If they do appeal to the New Testament at all it is usually to Romans 13:1-4. We shall, accordingly, have to deal seriously with this crucial passage. But before doing so we shall consider certain other New Testament texts which are sometimes cited in support of mandatory capital punishment.

2. Matthew 5:31, 32

John Murray mounts a *general* argument for mandatory capital punishment on the basis of this text. He declares: "Nothing in the New Testament pertaining to this institution [of capital punishment] is parallel to what must be interpreted as our Lord's abrogation of the death penalty for adultery" (*Eternity*, June 1961, p. 23). Murray is here saying that, while at least one New Testament text abrogates the death penalty for adultery, no New Testament text abrogates the death penalty for murder. This is doubtless true, but the fact is not germane. The argument *assumes* that Genesis 9:6 *demand*s the death penalty for murder and then

6. Cf. John Howard Yoder, *Christianity Today*, February 1, 1960, pp. 347ff.

concludes that since the New Testament does not cancel the Genesis text the *command* still stands. However, all that Murray's argument in fact establishes is that the Genesis passage is not in the purview of the New Testament writers, and that no New Testament judgment is made concerning it.

3. Matthew 5:21, 22

This passage is adduced by Jacob C. Vellenga in an article in *Christianity Today* (12 October 1959). He argues: "Christ speaks of hate and murder: 'You have heard that it was said of old, You shall not kill, and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment [capital punishment]. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment [capital punishment].' It is evident that Jesus was not condemning the established law of capital punishment" (p. 8). The speciousness of this argument is patent. The equation here of "judgment" with "capital punishment" is totally gratuitous and exegetically absurd. Certainly magistrates are not hereby obliged to execute a man for being angry with another.

4. Matthew 10:28

The same Dr. Vellenga judged that on the basis of this text people who challenge the alleged mandatoriness of capital punishment display an undue squeamishness about the death of a criminal, and a certain blindness to the redemptive value of penal executions. He says: "We, who are supposed to be Christian, make too much of physical life. Jesus said, 'And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.' Laxness in law tends to send both soul and body to hell." Whatever may be the case respecting the overvaluation of physical life and the consequences of laxness in law, nothing in the text cited bears upon these issues. Jesus is here saying that we should fear God rather than man, since our ultimate destiny rests in divine rather than in human hands. However, in the proffered interpretation Jesus is, by a most curious exegetical move, made to pronounce on the desirability of capital punishment, and to do so on the ground that the soul is worth more than the body. The argument is spurious and is not unlike that employed by some medieval theologians who alleged that soul-destroying heretics are more deserving of capital punishment than body-destroying murderers. But who would today plead for the execution of religious dissenters?

5. Matthew 26:52

In a rather recent article C. Pronk writes: "Christ said to Peter: 'Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' Jesus refused to be defended by the sword. . . . Yet, notice that in the same breath he asserts that there is also a proper use of the sword" (*The Outlook*, April 1976, p. 29). But does Jesus so assert? Here, in this place? It would appear that he does *not*. Jesus is here making a generalized statement to the effect that rashness usually has dire consequences. He is asserting that men of violence may expect to be paid back in kind. Or, if not this, he is saying that under existing Roman law an assault upon the emperor's law enforcement agents, to say

nothing of their slaying, will subject a man to the death penalty. There is here no reference at all to the propriety or nonpropriety of capital punishment.

6. Mark 7:9-13

In an unsigned essay entitled *Should the Death Penalty Be Retained in Canada?* the writer cites Jesus in support of mandatory capital punishment. He says: "In Mark 7:9-13 he [Jesus] referred to the Law's penalty of death for evil speech against parents as 'the commandment of God.'" The author goes on to say: "While claiming authority to amend the Jewish legal and moral code, Jesus. . . never amends it by way of relaxation. . . but by tightening up, declaring that God requires more" (p. 5, 6). In this long essay a number of admirable things are said, but the author's interpretation of this Markan passage is seriously mistaken. Is Jesus now to be enlisted as a sponsor not only of the death penalty for evil speech against parents, but for even more besides? All Jesus declares in this passage is that the Mosaic law did in fact require the death penalty for the verbal abuse of parents. He does not enjoin a similar prescription upon modern magistrates. He reports; he does not oblige. Is it even remotely possible that there is a jurist among us who, in obedience to Christ, would advocate imposing the death sentence upon disrespectful children?

7. Luke 23:41

John Vriend cites the words of the penitent thief on the cross in support of the thesis that capital punishment for thieves is only just. He says: "When his eyes and heart opened to the Sin-bearer next to him he acknowledged the justice of his own execution and rebuked the mocker on the other side. . . . This is the judgment of a sanctified conscience" (*Christian Courier*, April 22, 1966). We doubt whether the writer would wish to make thievery a capital crime. In any case, all the thief was doing was acknowledging that Roman law attached the death penalty to theft and that his own execution was in accordance with that law, and therefore *legally* just.

8. John 19:10-11

The text reads: "Pilate said, . . . 'Do you not know that I have power . . . to crucify you?' Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above.'" These words have been construed by some as indicating that Jesus *approved* of capital punishment and even that he considered the infliction of such punishment a *duty* laid upon magistrates by God. The anonymous essayist cited earlier, remarks: "Our Lord's acknowledgment. . . involved a measure of *approval* of some of the sanctions employed by Roman administrators. . . including the use of the sword in the execution of murderers" (p. 5). Another commentator remarks, "Jesus refers to this power [to execute a man] as a divinely given power in order to impress upon Pilate his *duty* to exercise it in accordance with the canons of justice" (J. Vriend, *Christian Courier*, April 22, 1966). But this is surely to read into the text what is not to be found in it. It is a fact, of course, that God opposes anarchy, wills government, and empowers magistrates. The power they possess is

not in the last instance derived from the governed through a social compact; it is derived from God. Jesus in this passage acknowledges this fact, or better, he discloses it. But he does not here express himself on the use (or abuse) of this God-given power. He does not impose on Pilate the *duty* to use this power in the way Pilate proposes to use it; nor does he *approve* (or disapprove) of such use. He merely accepts at face value Pilate's claim that he is authorized and empowered by Roman law to crucify offenders, and reminds (or informs) him of the fact that behind all states and all law is the God who wills government and who empowers governors even when they abuse power and do evil, as e.g., when they crucify the sinless Savior of the world.

9. Acts 25:11

Paul said to Festus, "If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death." On the basis of this text several writers have recruited Paul in support of capital punishment. John Murray thinks that in this utterance "Paul recognized that some crimes were *worthy of death*" (*Eternity*, June 1961, p. 23). C. Pronk endorses this view by declaring that Paul's statement "clearly implies that in his judgment there were offenses for which the appropriate penalty is death" (*The Outlook*, April 1976, p. 30). These writers are joined by a writer in the *Sunday School Times* (April 22, 1966). There is, however, no warrant in this text for these conclusions. It seems clear that in this place Paul is merely declaring, as most Christians today would declare in similar circumstances, that his respect for God-instituted government and its tribunals is such that if he were found guilty of some offense he would obediently submit himself to the verdict of the court, even though the death sentence were attached to the alleged offense he would obediently submit himself to the verdict of the court, even though the death sentence were attached to the alleged offense and he knew himself to be innocent of the charge (cf. v. 10). Lewis B. Smedes puts the matter quite accurately and succinctly when he declares that Paul is here saying that "if he has indeed committed what was in fact a capital offense (according to existing law) he would not run. . . . All it tells us is that Paul had no intention of being a fugitive from martyrdom" (*Action*, December 1964, p. 19).

10. There remains to be considered as the last item in this section an argument which rests, not on some one New Testament text, but on a momentous *event*, the central event in redemptive history, *the crucifixion of our Lord*. The cross of Christ, it is said by some, validates the institution of capital punishment. The argument goes something like this: Since without the shedding of blood there is no redemption, and since redemption is the goal of God's saving plan, God sanctions the judicial shedding of blood, and is in fact dependent on it for the realization of his beneficent purposes. We accordingly find Dr. Vellenga saying: "It is significant that when Jesus voluntarily went the way of the Cross he chose the capital punishment of his day as his instrument to save the world" (*Christianity Today*, October 12, 1959, p. 9). To this Gordon Clark adds the following: "Dr. Vellenga's reference to the crucifixion as a point in favor of capital punishment is not so irrelevant as the opposition

alleges, for the death penalty was not merely Pilate's decision to be regarded as mistaken; rather it was God who had foreordained that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin!" (*Christianity Today*, February 1, 1960, p. 9). In an almost unbroken series of dubious arguments for capital punishment this is surely among the most unacceptable. There is a mystery in redemption that eludes our comprehension, and we cannot penetrate with our finite intelligence the secrets of God's providential arrangements, but we do know that in a broken world God often attains his good ends by making men's evil deeds serviceable thereto. And we also know that such evil deeds are not on this account rendered any the less evil. The sin of Adam remained a sin even though it became the gateway for a new and wondrous display of God's love for mankind. The sale of Joseph into Egypt was a sin even though it made possible the physical and spiritual salvation of God's elect people. These things being so, we are emphatically not entitled to declare that God approved of Pilate's judicial verdict and his cruel sentence, or sponsored capital punishment, on no other ground than that it became the channel of redemption. Was not our Lord's crucifixion, in fact, the world's greatest crime, even though it mediated God's greatest gift?

E. Romans 13:4

1. Romans 13:4 with its companion text (1 Pet. 2:13-14) is not in a class with those just passed in review. It quite obviously bears centrally on the issue of capital punishment. The message of the text is not apprehended in the same way by all, but there are few, if any, who deny its relevance to the question under consideration. It therefore deserves careful attention. Because it does, it will be considered not only here, but also in the second main division of this report. At this point in our discussion, however, we shall, in accordance with the basic outline which has been established, inquire, not whether Paul (and Peter) *authorize* states to execute criminals, i.e., confer on them the *right* to inflict capital punishment, but whether they, as messengers of God, impose upon states the *duty* to do so.

2. There are those who find capital punishment *mandated* in Romans 13. The controlling word and phrase underlying and ostensibly sustaining this view are "sword" and "not in vain." The argument goes something like this: The "sword," while symbolizing also lesser punishments and sanctions, extends by every rule of language and logic to beheading or some other forms of execution. The phrase "not in vain" signifies that the magistrate must make the sword *effective*, i.e., the phrase obliges him to *exercise* the power of death with which he has been furnished; it obliges him to *practice* capital punishment. Thus J. C. Sikkel is quoted in *De Wachter* of April 5, 1960 as saying, "It is the duty of the state to bear the sword. . . in order to shed the blood of those who shed the blood of man." And C. Pronk declares, "As the ancient symbol of the civil magistrate's power over life and death, the sword has its necessary function in human society. . . . The Bible imposes upon the state the solemn duty to execute all persons duly convicted of murder" (*The Outlook*, April 1976, pp. 29f.). These contentions are supported by John Vriend,

who says: "The sword is a symbol, as it was once an instrument, of the power to take the life of a wrongdoer. This sword the government is to make effective, as is implied in the words 'not in vain'" (*Christian Courier*, April 22, 1966).

3. Leaving aside for the moment the question whether the state is *authorized* by Romans 13 to execute criminals, can it rightly be said that the state is *obliged* by this Scripture to execute even the most deliberate and responsible murderer? It would seem not. It may be conceded that the word "sword" indicates the *obligation* the state is under to avenge wrongs and inflict punishments. It may also be conceded that the phrase "not in vain" *obliges* the state not to be remiss or lax in the administration of penal justice. But these expressions do not oblige the state to "go the limit" when in its responsible judgment the ends of justice and security can be attained by lesser restraints. We maintain, therefore, that there is nothing in Romans 13 (or in 1 Peter 2) which says that every state, in every time, and under any and every circumstance *must* execute a first-degree murderer, or else become guilty of disobeying a divine command.

F. *The Creeds*

Since we should regulate our life and thought not only by the sacred Scriptures, but also by the Creeds to which we have freely assented, we shall here set down the credal pronouncements which bear upon the issues of justice, punishment, and civil government, and, by indirection, upon the death penalty in modern jurisprudence.

1. *The Heidelberg Catechism*

a. Lord's Day 4—Answer 11

God's justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty—eternal punishment of body and soul.

b. Lord's Day 5—Answer 12

God requires that his justice be satisfied. Therefore the claims of his justice must be paid in full. . . .

c. Lord's Day 6—Answer 16

God's justice demands it: man has sinned, man must pay for his sin. . . .

d. Lord's Day 36—Answer 100

No sin is greater [than blasphemy], no sin makes God more angry than blaspheming his name. That is why he commanded the death penalty for it.

e. Lord's Day 40—Answer 105

I am not to belittle, insult, hate, or kill my neighbor. . . rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. . . . Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

2. *The Belgic Confession*

a. *Article 20*

We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, sent his Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed,

to make satisfaction in the same, and to bear the punishment of sin by his most bitter passion and death. . . .

b. *Article 36*

We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose he has invested the magistracy with *the sword for the punishment of evildoers and for the protection of them that do well.*

3. *The Canons of Dort*

a. *Second Head of Doctrine—Article 1*

. . . His [God's] justice requires. . . that our sins committed against his infinite majesty should be punished, not only with temporal but with eternal punishments, both in body and soul. . . .

b. *Second Head of Doctrine—Article 2*

. . . He [God] has been pleased. . . to give his only begotten Son for our Surety. . . that he might make satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf.

4. *Comment*

a. In the creeds we clearly profess that God is just, that his justice requires satisfaction, and that his justice is satisfied only when sin is duly punished.

b. By the Catechism we are committed to declare that God commanded the death penalty for blasphemy (L.D. 36). Subscribers to this creed will doubtless acknowledge that this commandment pertained to the Israelitish theocracy, and does not oblige Christian legislators and magistrates to make blasphemy a capital crime.

c. It is interesting and instructive to observe to what extent the deterrence principle colors the language of the creeds when the civil government is under discussion. The Catechism (L.D. 40) arms the government with the sword for the purpose of *prevention*, and the Belgic Confession does so for the purpose of *restraint* (Art. 36).

d. Most germane to the inquiry we are presently conducting—whether modern states are obliged by a divine command to execute first-degree murderers—is the fact that the creeds commit no one to an affirmative answer.

G. *Justice—"An eye for an eye"*

1. If no biblical text or group of texts *demand* that murderers shall be executed, and if no article in the creeds requires such punishment, perhaps some fixed principle does; for example, the principle of justice. After all, at the heart of justice is the notion of *equality* or balance, and it seems only fair that he who takes a life should forfeit his own. There is also in justice the notion of *desert*, and it can plausibly be argued both that the murderer deserves to die, and that he should be given what he deserves. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in the literature on capital punishment a steady appeal to the principle of justice, particularly by those who favor the retention of the death penalty, and especially by those who regard the retraction of that penalty as a God-imposed duty.

2. Typical of such appeals are the following: "It is just that the killer must himself be killed . . . to restore the just order of society which he has made unstable by his bloody deed . . . 'as a man soweth so shall he reap' (Gal. 6:7)" (H. Taylor, *The Biblical View of the Death Penalty*, p. 4). "The whole idea of a just sentence . . . is to inflict upon the wrongdoer an injury, symbolic or real, equivalent to that of which he is guilty" (J. Vriend, *Christian Courier*, April 22, 1966). "The Word of God . . . clearly teaches that the murderer deserves to die. . . . *Any punishment short of the taking of life leaves the crime of murder unavenged and unatoned* (H. J. Kuiper, *The Banner*, April 3, 1931, p. 309). "Capital punishment is the only way whereby the justice of God can vindicate itself against the murderer. . . . Because the murderer has forfeited his right to live in human society, divine justice demands that he die" (R. Bodey, "Capital Punishment," *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Vol. II, p. 348). "God is just and . . . he rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked in exact proportion to their deeds. And he demands the same from his ministers, and civil authorities. Any nation therefore which allows the murderer to live in its midst . . . is held guilty before God of that very crime" (C. Pronk, *The Outlook*, April 1976, p. 30). A full response to these representations would require such a thorough treatment of the complex question of justice as would draw this report out to inordinate lengths. Perhaps the following comments will suffice to clarify the issue, and assist the reader to assess the force of the proffered arguments.

3. There are three basic kinds of justice, corresponding to the three basic relations or fundamental structures of communal life. These are: (a) *reciprocal*, contractual, or commutative justice, which orders the relations between individuals; (b) *distributive* or ministering justice, which orders the relations between the community as such and the individuals who are its members; and (c) *general* or legal justice, which orders the member's relation to the social whole (cf. J. Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, pp. 71-72). *Retributive* justice is, as is evident, a branch of distributive justice. What is worth noting is that distributive (and retributive) justice do not, like reciprocal or commutative justice, aim at exact equality. The latter, which deals with exchanges, seeks to establish a strict balance of accounts. Distributive or retributive justice does not do this. In the words of R. C. Mortimer, "It endeavours to assess what is the just *proportion* of the total wealth, or honor, or whatever it may be, of the community which an individual should receive, having due regard to the amount to be distributed and to the value and need of the recipient" (*Elements of Moral Theology*, p. 198). What this means, relative to the current discussion, is that in retributive justice (just punishment) attention must be given not only to the individual, nor only to some abstract law, but also to the social whole, in particular to the "good" of that whole. In determining what punishment is just one may not ignore either the complicity of society in the crime, or the effects the proposed punishment will have on the welfare of the social whole.

4. Justice requires that every man be given his "due." In general, what is due a man is that he be treated as a "person." As a person he is both "like" and "unlike" every other person: "like" in that as a creature made

in God's image he enjoys with all men an "equal" dignity and worth; "unlike" in that as a unique *individual* he enjoys an unshared particularity which requires that he be treated "differently" and "unequally." What is "due" a man is thus a quotient of both his generic nature and his specific identity. In distributive justice what is due a man is such a share of goods, services, offices, rewards, and punishments as is commensurate with his generic-specific status and achievements. In retributive justice what is due a man is such punishment for offenses against the moral or legal order as will "right" the imbalance his offenses have created, or such mitigation of penalties as shall enable the offender to redress, by positive contributions, the wrongs he has committed. In general, retributive justice requires that the punishment "fit" the crime. In no case should it exceed what is commensurate with the ill-desert incurred. There is nothing in retributive justice as such which requires that punishment be *identical* with the offense. Retributive justice is satisfied when the punishment *symbolizes* the offense and is proportional to it, or when the punishment, if shortened, leads to social healing.

5. This may be the place to give attention to the Old Testament law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21).

a. The first thing to be observed is that this law is not to be taken literally. No one is by this law entitled to suggest that if a man assaults another and deprives him of his sight, the offender's eye should be removed. The justice which the law enunciates is not the "justice" of "life for life" which the supporters of mandatory capital punishment usually rely upon. The expression "an eye for an eye" enunciates a principle, the *principle of compensation*, the honoring of which is accomplished in commensurability; it does not enunciate a policy, or make a concrete practical proposal.

b. The second thing to be observed is that the law of retaliation was from the outset a *negative* law. It was designed to *restrict* punishment. It said to magistrates, "exact *no more* than an eye for an eye." It said, "no penalty may be in *excess* of the crime." It did not lay down a *positive* rule, a rule authorizing and compelling magistrates to demand the last farthing. It was because the Pharisees mistakenly interpreted the law in this strict way that they aroused the anger of our Lord. As D. Martin-Lloyd Jones says in his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, the Pharisees whom Jesus addresses in Matthew 5:38-39 "regarded it, in their typical *legalistic* manner as a matter of *right* and *duty* to have 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' To them it was something to be insisted upon rather than something which should be restrained. They were turning a negative injunction into a positive one" (pp. 272-73).

6. A good deal of confusion has been introduced into ethics by those who fail to discriminate between *love and justice*, and we have no wish to compound that confusion. But one or two things pertaining to the love-justice relation may here be suitably considered.

a. It may be pointed out, in the first place, that in the dispensing of justice one cannot go by law alone. As Emil Brunner says: "Law of

necessity generalizes; it embraces in one rule a multiplicity of cases. Every law is a *scheme*. It does not discriminate, and therefore can never 'do justice' to the single human being as a unique individuality. Only love can do that" (*Justice and the Social Order*, p. 22). The biblical term *righteousness* connotes a similar profound commingling of justice and love (cf. Ps. 31:1, "in thy righteousness deliver me"; cf. also Ps. 37:21; 71:2; 85:10; 116:5; etc.). As Joseph Sittler says, "Righteousness is a term used to designate human life springing from, determined by, and accountable to the life of God. It is a thoroughly theonomous term. That is why, although faith-active-in-love ought to relate itself to all in human life which seeks justice, this faith can never . . . be at rest with the achievements of justice" (*The Structure of Christian Ethics*, p. 79).

b. There is, in the second place, the matter of *forgiveness* or *pardon*. One hears it said that the pardoning of a guilty criminal is not within the competence of a magistrate; for him to forgive and not to punish is, we are told, to grossly subvert justice. Hebden Taylor, for example, declares: "Only God . . . can forgive murderers and for any civil or criminal judge or ruler to exercise such prerogatives of forgiveness in the sense of letting the convicted criminal free without first having made proper expiation and satisfaction is blasphemous, since God alone has the moral authority to forgive men of their trespasses" (*The Biblical View of the Death Penalty*, p. 7). Ignoring the fact that the last clause in this statement is irrelevant, since the issue is not that of "forgiving sins" but of "remitting punishment," we may rightly ask whether "judicial pardons" are really "blasphemous." To pardon means to accuse; it is only the guilty who can be forgiven; it is only he who has been convicted of an offense who can be treated with judicial mercy. Does justice outlaw such mercy? Can forgiveness never be lawful? Does the retributive theory of punishment—which we endorse—preclude all remission of the due punishment? Is it not rather the other way around? Is it not the case that, if punishment were exemplary alone, forgiveness would always be wrong, and that only on the basis of retributive justice can it ever be right? We believe that there is room for judicial mercy and pardon, although we acknowledge that they must be exercised to promote and not subvert justice.

7. It would appear from all this that justice cannot be made to sponsor the mandatoriness of the death penalty in every case of deliberate murder.

H. *The Sanctity of Human Life: The Image of God*

1. Another principle appealed to in support of mandatory capital punishment is that of the dignity and worth of human life.

a. Basic to the argument here conducted is the admitted fact that man is made in the image of God. Human life is not only God-given, it is God-like. If a murderer slays a man, he assaults not only man, but also God who is uniquely manifest in man. As Calvin says "Men are indeed unworthy of God's care, if respect be had only to themselves;

but since they bear the image of God engraven on them, he deems himself violated in their person" (*Commentary* on Gen. 9:6).

b. From these basic facts—that man is made in the image of God, and that an assault upon man is an assault upon God—an inferential argument is framed concerning legal punishments. Ignoring or minimizing the fact that even the slightest assault upon man (usually unattended by legal sanctions) violates his dignity and demeans both him and his Maker, it is contended that a mortal assault upon man is so utterly demeaning that God's honor and man's dignity can be vindicated and restored only by putting the murderer to death. The contention centrally is that only by imposing the death penalty upon murderers can society and the state keep alive in the public consciousness an awareness of man's true dignity and stature. Expressing this view is Leonard Verduin, who says: "... human life is so precious (because man is the image bearer of God) that he who takes it must make amends by forfeiting his own." And he asks "Have we begun to think so lightly of the image of God that we are prepared to ask no more than a year or two in jail (perhaps), when a lifetime in jail is still too short in the sight of God?" (*The Reformed Journal*, Sept. 1976, pp. 8f.). In like fashion, Dr. Hebdon Taylor declares: "Deliberate destruction of this image in man is not only an act of rebellion against God's sovereignty, but an assault on the life of God in man, for which no punishment can be too drastic." And he adds: "If we abolish the death penalty... [society will take] a less serious view of the sanctity of human life" (*The Biblical View of the Death Penalty*).

c. But there is more. Besides the socio-political argument that capital punishment witnesses to and enhances man's dignity while fostering respect for human life, there is the biblico-theological argument which makes a direct appeal to special revelation. When God spoke to Noah—so the argument goes—he did not merely issue a command requiring the death penalty for murder and then leave to theologians the task of fashioning a suitable rationale for the injunction. In the very moment that he instituted capital punishment, God himself supplied the *ground* for it: "for God made man in his own image" (Gen. 9:6b). John Murray states the matter quite explicitly: "The final clause in verse 6, 'for in the image of God made he man,' when taken in conjunction with the requirements expressed in verse 5, provides the reason why man is to inflict the death penalty upon the murderer" (*Eternity*, June 1961, p. 18). With this Gordon Clark concurs. He says: "The death penalty for murder is a most proper form of wrath for the revenger to impose... because the man murdered was made in the image of God" (*Action*, September 15, 1957, p. 10).

2. As respects 1a, above, that God made man in his own image is for Christians beyond dispute. Although the image-bearing character of man is infrequently declared in specific terms within the Bible, it is openly declared in Genesis 1:26, 27; Genesis 9:6; and James 3:9, and it is everywhere presupposed (cf. Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; and many other places). This image is no doubt mal-affected by the fall, but it is not erased, and through Christ it is being renewed in all believers. To men of every class and condition it accords a high dignity which serves to distinguish

them from the animals, to place them in a special relationship to God, and to impose upon them unique responsibilities. The image also erects before the face of all despisers a barrier against discrimination, oppression, slander, violence, and kindred evils. On this we are agreed.

3. As respects 1b, above, it is doubtful that capital punishment either enhances the public's regard for man's special status in God's world, or is one of the better ways in which the state can give expression to its esteem for humankind. Plausible reasons have been adduced for sentencing murderers to death—reasons involving the security of the state, or the claims of justice, and the like—but the sociopolitical reason which asserts that capital punishment witnesses to and enhances man's inherent stature is certainly to be numbered among the least convincing of these reasons. The deep fault inherent in the argument is that it is two-edged; it cuts both ways. If proponents of capital punishment argue for their position by citing the value of human life, opponents may reasonably point out that the criminal too is human, and that his life is also sacred. There is no doubt a moral difference between the innocent and the guilty, but there is no ontological difference between them: both are image bearers of God, and each is endowed with dignity. Penal execution is, however, an odd way of witnessing to this fact. Judge John Feikens puts the matter succinctly:

... to rest the ethical or moral justification for the death penalty upon the sanctity of human life is to state a paradox. Murder is the greatest of crimes because the life of the victim is considered sacred. Is the life of the murderer any less sacred because he has taken life? Does society properly respect the sanctity of one life by taking another? However deliberate and premeditated a murder might be, it cannot surpass in deliberateness and cold-bloodedness the execution of a death sentence by the state. It is not passion murder but murder in cold blood—where the killer "could have done otherwise"—that is most severely condemned. Should not those who share a belief in the sanctity of human life similarly approach the death penalty by asking, "Can the state not do otherwise?" (*Reformed Journal*, July-August 1976, p. 17).

4. As respects 1c, above, the biblicotheological argument outlined there is clearly of great importance. Its direct appeal to the covenant with Noah is challenging, since it compels Bible believers to give careful attention to Genesis 9:6, which everyone acknowledges to be the classical biblical text bearing upon capital punishment. This report (under section I, C) has already devoted many pages to a consideration of the first clause of this text ("Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed"), and it has judged that these words do not oblige modern states either to institute capital punishment or to practice it. But this report has postponed until now a consideration of the second clause in Genesis 9:6, believing that it could be best studied at this juncture and under this heading. How, then, are we to interpret the words, "For God made man in his own image"? Does this sentence present us with a God-given *reason* for executing murderers, or does it give expression to something quite different?

a. What was said under point 3 above naturally gives rise to an initial doubt that God could present as a *reason* for the death penalty the fact that man is made in the image of God. If human life is sacred, as it manifestly is, and if it should not be deliberately terminated except to preserve or enhance other human life, it seems aprioristically unlikely that God should establish these facts as the basis for capital punishment, when the whole aim of the latter is to extinguish life, and to do so without regard to the possible enhancement of other life. With eyes opened by these considerations certain features of the text take on a new significance.

b. The first thing to be noticed is the *difference in grammatical form* between Genesis 9:6a and Genesis 9:6b. Genesis 9:6a, as has been previously pointed out (cf. C-7-c), falls into the genre of wisdom literature and bears a consequent proverbial cast. Genesis 9:6b, on the other hand, is a straightforward theological statement enunciating a simple, though profound, matter of fact. In addition, 6b is unique in that it is written descriptively in the third person, whereas 6a and the entire rest of the pericope is written in the first person as a direct address by God. It is not our purpose to consider all the ramifications of these facts; it will suffice to say that the one thing they do entail is that the connection between 6a and 6b is not as close, or as exclusive, as it would on first sight appear to be.

c. What then is the *connection* between 6b and 6a? The answer is that 6b is no closer in meaning and warrant to 6a than it is to the entire pericope (Gen. 9:1-7). Genesis 9:6b is grammatically distinct from the whole pericope in which it stands in order to alert us to the fact that it undergirds the *whole* pericope. It is because man is made in the image of God that he must be creative (reproductive, vv. 1, 7), exercise sovereignty over the lower creation in management and use (vv. 2, 3, 7), and protect himself and his fellows against the violence of man and beast (vv. 5, 6). By engaging in these activities, man imitates God or acts in behalf of God who is the sovereign creator and governor of the universe, and who, while he jealously guards his exclusive deity, appoints man as his agent.

d. It is interesting and instructive to note in this connection the marked similarity between Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 9:1-7.

Genesis 1:26-28	Genesis 9:1-7
26—let man have dominion (over fish, birds, cattle)	2—relationship with animals established
27—so God created man in his image	6—for God made man in his own image
28—and God blessed them and said, Be fruitful	7 (also v. 1)—God blessed . . . and you be fruitful.

The absence in the Genesis 1 passage of provisions for punishments and protections stems, of course, from the fact that the fall had not yet occurred; man still lived in Eden. But this circumstance in no way affects the meaning of "image bearer" in both places. The substantial parallelism between Genesis 1 and Genesis 9 justifies the conclusion

that 6b reiterates the reason why God has a concern for the life of man, its care, its propagation, and its protection. The "image of God" does not give a rationale for the death penalty; it highlights the sanctity of life, and the reason for God's interest in it. As was previously noted (cf. C-2-b), the focus of meaning in Genesis 9:5, 6 is not on retribution, but on societal protection. That man is made in the image of God is the reason why his life should, wherever possible, be preserved, redeemed, fulfilled. In a broken world this is always difficult, and sometimes impossible. Sometimes, as in war, or in organized crime and political terrorism, people will be, and frequently must be, killed in order to secure the public good. But these killings are a desperate measure of last resort. They are not something either God or man can posit as a goal or establish as a plan. They cannot be this, for human life is God's gift; and because this life in some sense resembles his own, it is precious in God's sight.

I. Conclusion: Capital Punishment Is Nonmandatory

1. We have arrived at the end of this section. In it we have been considering a single question: Is the state unconditionally required to execute a person judicially found guilty of murder in the first degree? In an effort to answer this question responsibly we have investigated every source known to us, and have passed in review every argument which through diligent search has come to our attention. In subsection A we sought to analyze the meaning of "obligation." In B we inquired into the relevance of the Mosaic Penal Code. In C we subjected the classical text of Genesis 9:6a to a close and detailed scrutiny. In D we considered a variety of New Testament texts advanced in support of obligatory capital punishment, and in E we considered the chief of these, Romans 13:4. In F the creeds were consulted. In G we sought to disclose the bearing upon our subject of the principle of justice, and in H we considered the significance of the fact that man was created in the image of God. In this long process of study and reflection we have tried to confront all available data. And, as is now well known, we have concluded that the single question we were constantly asking must be answered in the negative. We have concluded that modern states are *not obligated* by Scripture, creed, or principle to institute or practice capital punishment.

2. We have in the course of this study quoted many writers who have adopted a view different from ours. We respect their opinion and take no pleasure in differing with them, but we do think they are mistaken. And, of course, we are not alone in so thinking; many evangelical and Reformed scholars share our view. We end this section by calling upon a few of them to bear witness.

a. J. O. Dykes says: "Death by public justice is permissible. . . yet it is by no means obligatory" (*The Law of the Ten Words*, 1884, p. 130).

b. W. Elert says: "Notwithstanding the biblical text, we cannot convince ourselves that capital punishment should be continued as a permanently valid divine command" (*The Christian Ethos*, 1957, p. 114).

c. Edward J. Carnell says: "There is no specific biblical evidence to prove that premeditated first-degree murder must automatically carry the death penalty" (*Eternity*, June 1961, p. 20).

d. C. S. Lewis says: "I do not know whether capital punishment should or should not be abolished; for neither the natural light, nor Scripture, nor ecclesiastical authority seems to tell me" (*The Church Times*, December 1, 1961).

e. Lewis B. Smedes says: "The Bible does not give us clear and sufficient evidence for saying that God wills the state to take the life of murderers. Christians should not insist on capital punishment as if there were a divinely given mandate for it. If they claim God's Word requires the state to inflict the final, irrevocable, absolute form of punishment on any man, they will have to find far more support in Scripture than anyone has given to this day. I believe it is safe to say the Bible does not prescribe capital punishment for anyone" (*Action*, Dec. 1964, p. 19).

f. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod says: "Neither the Scriptures nor the Lutheran Confessions state that the government must impose the death penalty in order to serve as the minister of God by punishing flagrant wrong doing, including murder. Therefore Lutheran Christians may have their own reservations concerning the necessity of government exercising the right of capital punishment as it strives to carry out its responsibility to provide a quiet and peaceable life for society. Should government decide that justice and order, as well as the general welfare, would best be served by some other form of punishment, this would not necessarily constitute a denial of God's will for government or a surrender of its mandate" (Received by the 1977 Convention).

g. With these sentiments your committee concurs.

II. IS CAPITAL PUNISHMENT PERMISSIBLE?

Is the state morally licensed to execute murderers?

A. General Observations

1. The issue here is not whether states are obliged to execute murderers, but whether they have a right to do so. Also, the issue is not—or is not yet—whether the actual infliction of capital punishment is desirable, but whether it is in principle *allowable*. At issue is the question of basic *authorization*.

2. That there is *legal* authorization for the death penalty in many states is a simple matter of fact. Although some states have outlawed capital punishment, most states make provision for it in their penal codes. In these states judges and juries are accordingly *permitted* to impose the sentence of death upon a murderer; the law allows it.

3. We are here concerned, however, not with existing law, but with desirable or permissible law. We are considering not whether states *do* allow capital punishment, but whether they *may* allow it. We are asking whether there is *moral* warrant for the legalization of capital punishment.

4. Your committee takes the position that there is such warrant. In doing so it joins the vast majority of Christians who throughout the ages have held that capital punishment is in accord with the Scriptures and, by that token, with the highest moral principles.

5. There are those, of course, who take the opposite view and vigorously oppose capital punishment. Among them are humanists who regard capital punishment as a relic of barbarism; ethical utilitarians who believe it is disharmonious with the nature and function of penal restraint; and Christians who are convinced that it is in conflict with the law of life and with the gospel of redemption.

6. This being the situation, we shall in what follows attempt first to establish the biblical and moral permissibility of capital punishment and then to estimate the weight of the objections that are raised against it.

B. *Capital Punishment Is Permissible*

Introduction

As was stated above, the question in this section is whether states have the right, the authorization, the permission to execute murderers. We judge that on the basis of the Scriptures and the creeds that capital punishment is permissible.

1. *The Witness of Scripture*

a. The Old Testament

1) We have already discussed Genesis 9:6 extensively above (I, C, 1-8 and H, 1-4). We can therefore be brief at this point. While denying that Genesis 9:6 lays any mandate upon persons or governments to administer capital punishment, we do conclude, however, that this passage allows for capital punishment. The passage proceeds on the assumption that murder is a grave crime which must be appropriately punished. We have no doubt that in certain times and in certain cultures capital punishment was and is the appropriate penalty.

2) Moreover, we have concluded (I, B, 1-3) that no argument for capital punishment can be based upon the Mosaic Code as such. The Mosaic Code prescribes a variety of punishments for a variety of crimes. The inclusion of a particular type of punishment, e.g., capital punishment, in the Mosaic Code ought not, in itself, to be reason for the promotion of the same type of punishment today. Therefore we do not advise basing the argument for the permissibility of capital punishment on the fact of its inclusion in the Mosaic Code.

b. The New Testament

1) For many Christians the key text which authorizes the state to execute murderers is Romans 13:4 which reads, "... for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer."

2) This passage occurs within the pericope which has become the classical passage for the biblical perspective on the state. The text and its context establishes, at least, the following:

a) The individual Christian has no right to punish violators of the judicial codes but is rather to repay evil with good (Rom. 12:19-21).

b) The state does have that right because it is invested with that authority by God (Rom. 13:1-2).

c) The state is God's servant for the good of society (Rom. 13:4).

d) The state also functions as God's servant in the punishment of evildoers, in which activity the state is said to "execute his [i.e., God's] wrath on the evildoer" (Rom. 13:4).

e) The state, thus, *may* punish evildoers and is remiss in its duty if it does not (Rom. 13:4).

f) This punitive function of the state is described in terms of "bearing the sword," which symbolizes the authorization of punishment but not necessarily its form or extent (Rom. 13:4).⁷

3) Romans 13:1-4 certainly establishes the right, authority, and even the duty of the state to punish wrongdoers. But does the state have the right to punish capitally, i.e., with capital punishment? The key consideration in answering this question is the interpretation given to the word *sword* in Romans 13:4, "for he [the state] does not bear *the sword* in vain." Certainly in the New Testament the word *sword* [*máchaira*] is used not just in a figurative sense of "power" or "authority." The word is also used to describe violent death: Jesus warns all who take the sword that they will *perish* by the sword (Matt. 16:52b); Hebrews 11:34 recalls the Old Testament saints who "escaped the edge of the sword"; the fate of the Judeans in the last days is described in these terms, "they shall fall by the edge of the sword" (Luke 21:24); and Herod is reported to have *killed* James the brother of John with the sword (Acts 12:2). Michaelis further states that "*máchaira* is also a pregnant term (perhaps for execution) in Romans 8:35 [Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation . . . or persecution . . . or sword?]; hence its use for the dreadful bloodshed of Rev. 6:4" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, IV, p. 525).

Consequently it would seem appropriate to conclude that the *sword* used in Romans 13:4 may also be interpreted to embrace capital punishment. Your committee is of the opinion that the scriptural *permissibility* of the state to execute murderers lies precisely in this interpretation.

4) With this John Murray concurs, ". . . the teaching of the New Testament regarding the power and use of the sword as the prerogative of the civil magistrate carries with it express warrant for the infliction of death. To suppose that the sword (Rom. 13:4; cf. 1 Pet. 2:14) can be restricted to lesser forms of punitive infliction and does not imply the extreme penalty is to go in the face of that

7. Cf. Michaelis, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, "Máchaira," IV, p. 525, n. 11, "the sword as a symbol of the penal power of the state."

which 'the sword' properly and obviously symbolizes. This passage (Rom. 13:4), therefore, distinctly implies that the civil magistrate is given not only the power but, as the minister of God, the right, the authority, to use the sword for the infliction of death as the penalty for crimes which merit this retribution" (*Eternity*, June 1961, p. 23; cf. *Principles of Conduct*, pp. 119-120).

5) The 1 Peter 2:13-14 passage likewise establishes government as an arm of the Lord, his emissaries "sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right." These verses, however, while supporting the punitive right and duty of government vis-a-vis wrongdoers does not in any way spell out the form which such punishment may take. The passage does not prescribe nor limit the form of legitimate and permissible punishment.

However, given the interpretation of Romans 13:4 above, this passage speaks to the issue of capital punishment insofar as punishment is related to the role and function of the state.

2. *The Witness of the Creeds*

We have argued above that the Reformed creeds do not *obligate* modern states to execute first degree murderers (cf. I, F.). We now confirm that the creedal statements of the Reformed faith do *permit* modern states to execute first-degree murderers. The pertinent material is found in the Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 40, Answer 105 and the Belgic Confession, Article 36, both of which use the language of Romans 13:4, i.e., the "government is armed with the sword" (Heidelberg Catechism) or "invested...with the sword" (Belgic Confession). While the Heidelberg Catechism declares that the government is armed with the sword for the purpose of prevention and the Belgic Confession emphasizes the purpose of restraint, this one perspective is clear: the government *may* according to the Reformed Confessions inflict capital punishment on first-degree murderers.

3. *The Nature and Function of Punishment: Retributive Justice*

a. We have seen that one function and duty of the state is to punish wrongdoers, and that this authorization of the state to requite evil permits the exercise of capital punishment. In this section we are concerned with the legitimacy of capital punishment vis-a-vis our notion of the nature and function of punishment. We are asking, does retributive justice *permit* the exercise of capital punishment?

b. In I, G, 4 it is said that "justice requires that every man be given his due, and that in retributive justice what is due a man is such punishment for offenses against the moral or legal order as will 'right' the imbalance his offenses have created, or such mitigation of penalties as shall enable the offender to redress, by positive contributions, the wrongs he has committed." Retributive justice demands that order be reestablished by the criminal being required to pay for his crime, that he be required to suffer some loss so that he will not gain from his breaking of the just order, and that the hurt he did to society will be balanced by a hurt suffered from society. Thus the concept of fairness and proportionality are central in retributive justice. But there is nothing in retributive justice which requires that punishment be

identical with the offense. Retributive justice, as we said above, is satisfied when the punishment *symbolizes* the offense and is proportional to it, or when the punishment, if modified, leads to social healing. Consequently retributive justice does not *demand* or prescribe capital punishment for those found guilty of first-degree murder, but *neither does it prohibit it*. We therefore conclude that, in terms of retributive justice, capital punishment is *permissible*.

4. *The Right of the State to Protect Itself* (self-defense)

a. Reformed scholars are in general agreement regarding the question of the purpose and function of the state—the God-given role of government in society is to pursue justice. In the pursuit of justice the state has been entrusted with “the sword,” which we have interpreted as meaning that capital punishment is a legitimate or permissible exercise of the state according to the Bible. Are there other or additional bases upon which to establish the *permissibility* of the exercise of capital punishment by the state? We judge there are—one of them being the state’s right to societal self-defense.

b. If the very nature and function of the state is threatened and the carrying out of its task is in jeopardy, what is a state to do? It is the judgment of this committee that in such a case the state may kill—not now in the sense of going to war, but in the sense of being permitted to execute criminals. The state possesses this right, says E. Brunner, “for the sake of its necessary function. But this function does not *require* the killing of the murderer. . . . Under certain circumstances the state may have no other means [than capital punishment] at its disposal, therefore the state ought not to be deprived of this altogether” (*The Divine Imperative*, p. 477).

c. Lewis Smedes agrees that the state has this right. He says, “. . . may not a *society* defend itself from attack against itself? . . . An orderly, civilized community is undermined by today’s wave of violence and terrorism. Civilization needs defense. . . . If executing murderers is an effective means of self-defense, the Christian would have to approve” (*Reformed Journal*, July–August 1976, p. 20).

5. *Conclusions*

Your committee concludes on the basis of the above study that states do have the right, the authorization, the permission to execute murderers—in other words, capital punishment is permissible. It does so *primarily* on the basis of Scripture, especially the word of the Lord regarding the role and function of government as this is spelled out in Romans 13:1–4. Furthermore we find this to be correctly reflected in the Reformed Confessions. Moreover, both the ideas of retributive justice and the right of the state to defend itself *allow* for the exercise of capital punishment. We therefore do not agree with those who would argue for the total abolition of capital punishment. We address the objections to our position in the next section.

C. *The Objections Considered*

Introduction. The position we have just defended, that it is permissible for the state to execute murderers, is rejected by many. Typical is the position adopted by the Protestant Episcopal Church in General Convention in 1958 and reaffirmed in 1969: "The church believes that each individual is sacred, as a child of God, and that to legalize killing of an offender is to deny the basic Christian doctrines of forgiveness of sin and the power of redemption, and that mercy is a Christian duty."

Positions such as this have often been defended in the name of Christianity. Thus we believe it important to consider some of the key objections which have been raised to our position. We consider five.

1. *Capital Punishment Violates the Sixth Commandment.* One objection to capital punishment starts with the fact that persons are created in the image of God, or, as the Episcopal Church declared, "each individual is sacred, as a child of God." Thus God has commanded: "You shall not kill." It is hard to think of killing which is more fully premeditated, and self-conscious, than the judicial execution of an individual. And, therefore, so it is argued, capital punishment should be strictly forbidden. But such a position suffers from at least three defects.

First, almost all biblical authorities are agreed that the key word in the sixth commandment as given in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 can best be translated "murder" rather than "kill." Many of the more recent translations of the Bible, such as the New English Bible, translate it thus. The clear intent of the Ten Commandments is not to forbid all killing, but the type of killing which can be considered murder. Throughout the era of Bible history and down to the present, the execution of a person through judicial decision, following due process of law, has not been considered murder.

A second difficulty with the above position is, as we have argued in Section B, that the state is specifically entrusted with the power of the sword, i.e., with the power to punish wrongdoers, which punishment may include capital punishment. The Bible clearly teaches that capital punishment is among the array of punishments God has entrusted to his servants, the state.

Finally, the fact of the sacredness of human life, that persons have been created in the image of God, cuts two ways. It points to the extreme seriousness and the grave nature of executing a human being, but by the same token it also points to the extreme seriousness and the grave nature of the crime committed by a murderer. In light of retributive justice, one balances the other since the taking of a human life is involved in both murder and in capital punishment.

2. *Capital Punishment Ignores the Atoning Work of Christ.* The argument has been made that to execute a murderer is to require someone to pay for a crime whose penalty Christ has already paid by his atoning death on the cross. Christ has already died, the righteous for the unrighteous. Therefore, the unrighteous no longer need die.

But such a position rests upon very shaky ground. It confuses civil justice and God's justification. There is no basis to presume that when a person sins, and then experiences God's forgiveness on the basis of

Christ's substitutionary death, that this satisfies the demands of civil justice if the sin involved breaking the civil law. To argue otherwise would be to argue that the state has no authority to punish the repentant wrongdoer, which conclusion runs directly counter to the teaching of Romans 13:1-6 and to the whole nature of retributive justice. God calls all his children to forgive the wrongdoer—even when they have been the ones wronged—but he calls the state to heal or restore the fracture the wrongdoer has caused in society. One may experience God's forgiveness, but that does not mean the wrong and the hurt one has done to another person and to society as a whole has been made right. To accomplish this God has instituted the state and established its role in enforcing retributive justice.

3. *Capital Punishment Contradicts the Principle of Love.* Some have argued against capital punishment on the basis that it is incompatible with the teachings of the Bible to love one's neighbors and to show forgiveness and mercy. In 1965 the Synod of the Reformed Church in America took this position when it stated: "The taking of a person's life, even within the context of the law, is a denial of the command to love your neighbor as yourself." The law of God can be stated in one word, love. Love God above all and one's neighbor as one's self (see Matt. 22:37-40). In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught us not to insist on our rights, but to turn the other cheek, and to love our enemies (Matt. 5:38-48). Surely, it is argued, the deliberate, premeditated killing of a person by the state cannot be squared with this ethic of love.

To respond to this line of reasoning we must carefully examine the relationship between love and justice. At the outset it is clear that love and justice are not mutually exclusive. Both Christ and Paul have said that love is the fulfillment of God's law. If love and justice were mutually exclusive one could love and thereby fulfill God's law and yet practice injustice. Yet God requires justice. Thus at the least we know the two are related.

But they are different. Justice involves fulfilling one's duty and giving another what in fact that person deserves. Emil Brunner says: "When we are just, and deal justly, we render to the other what is his due. Justice makes no free gift; it gives precisely what is *due* to the other, no more and no less" (*Justice and the Social Order*, p. 127).

Love—in the sense of agape—goes beyond justice; it goes beyond extending to another what that person deserves. Love unselfishly accepts another as he is and seeks his good. Love does not ask what the object of one's love justly deserves, but what that person needs or desires.

Yet justice and love are related. First, love goes beyond justice; it does not replace it. "Love can only do more, it can never do less, than justice requires. . . . True love is always more than just, it fulfills first the important law of actual justice" (Brunner, p. 129).

Second, love is a powerful force compelling the Christian to act justly. Under some circumstances the Christian's love will compel him to go beyond justice in treating his fellow human beings, but it will always demand that at least justice be done.

The issue then becomes whether the state in punishing murderers ought to act on the basis of justice, love, or both. Although we believe that both love and justice should be involved, justice should be the guiding factor. Brunner asserts, "The man of love can only serve the state with justice. He must transform his love entirely into justice for as long and insofar as he acts in the state" (Brunner, p. 129). Love should be a motive requiring the state to act on the basis of justice, yet it is justice which guides the state.

The basic problem with the state acting on the basis of love beyond the requirements of justice lies, we believe, in the nature of political actions. For a judge or legislator to act on the basis of love and not justice would be to act on the basis of a "cheap love" quite different from the love of the Bible. For the political official does not act for himself and at a cost to himself. He acts for society and society bears the cost.

The judge who in love forgives and imposes no penalty on the rapist, or a policy maker who allows a struggling business to continue to pollute the air out of love and concern, both get off cheap—the consequences or costs of their "love" are borne by society, not by themselves. Yet the very essence of love is its self-giving, self-sacrificing nature. In such circumstances the love or mercy the state shows a rapist or polluter turns into an injustice for those in society who must bear the consequences. One is driven back to the conclusion that the state must be guided in its decisions by justice and not by love or mercy in violation of justice.

Thus biblical passages such as the Sermon on the Mount which require forgiveness and forbearance do not apply or apply differently to the state and the political official in his official capacity than to the individual Christian. A Christian judge, whose wife has been murdered, would be required as a husband, to forgive and to show acts of kindness to the murderer, and at the same time as a judge to mete out punishment to the same person—in special circumstances perhaps even the death penalty.

The issue or question is not what mercy or love demands, but what justice demands. Justice must be true justice—it must take into account particular circumstances and conditions. Love requires that it do so. But when extenuating circumstances have been taken into account, it is then a love-inspired justice and not a love void of justice—which must be followed. Thus we conclude it is too simple to say that the biblical ethic of love forbids the state to execute murderers.

4. *Capital Punishment Is Inherently Unjust.* There are those who argue that capital punishment is inherently unjust. We believe, however, that capital punishment is not in principle unjust.

The concept of retributive justice has its roots in the law of retaliation of the Mosaic Code and is reflected in Romans 13:4 and elsewhere in Scripture. It is based on the principle that persons are morally responsible beings who can and should be held accountable for their actions. Under this principle it is held that convicted criminals have taken something to themselves they have no right to take. They have failed to live up to their God-given duty as persons and have thereby denied others their rights and have hurt all society by breaking the just order that makes human well-being possible. Therefore, retributive justice demands

that order be reestablished by requiring criminals to pay for their crimes, that they be required to suffer some loss so that they will not gain from their breaking of the just order, and so that the hurt they did to society will be balanced by a hurt they suffer from society. It is the state which has been called by God to be his agent of retributive justice.

Central to the concept of retributive justice is proportionality. To be truly just the state, in punishing the criminal, must assure itself that the punishment fits the crime. Thus it is unjust to hang a pickpocket, or to fine a murderer.

But is it unjust to take the life of a person who has with premeditation taken the life of another person? It is hard to answer that question with a flat yes or no since circumstances and conditions vary greatly. On the one hand there can be a situation where a person accepts \$5,000 in order for him, willfully and calculatingly, to stalk a person and then shoot him down. On the other hand, there can be a case of a person with a history of mental instability getting into a violent argument with someone who has grossly wronged him, rushing next door to get a gun, and shooting the other person. In both of these cases premeditated murder in a technical sense was committed. Yet the circumstances and conditions varied greatly.

Under the concept of proportionality we believe retributive justice would not permit capital punishment in all cases of premeditated murder, but that it would in some. It is impossible to draw an exact line between permissible and impermissible use of capital punishment since the variety of circumstances are infinite. Each case must be considered on its own. Nevertheless, to say it is inherently and necessarily unjust to require that one forfeit his life in cases of even the most heinous, cold-blooded killings is clearly not warranted.

But this is not to say that retributive justice requires capital punishment to satisfy the principle of proportionality even in cases of the most heinous murders. There is, we believe, an area of overlap where either life imprisonment (if truly for life or for forty or fifty years) or death could satisfy retributive justice's principle of proportionality. In either instance the punishment, the loss, suffered by the murderer is sufficiently severe that justice is satisfied.

5. *Capital Punishment Preempts God's Prerogative.* The Bible says "Repay no one evil for evil. . . . Beloved never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom. 12:17-19).

It is argued that in exercising capital punishment man is taking to himself that which God has reserved to himself. It is God's prerogative to judge the murderer; he in his own good time will mete out the murderer's just punishment. For man to attempt to do so takes unto himself what God has reserved to himself.

But this position suffers from a fatal flaw. It totally ignores the state as God's agent for the punishment of wrongdoers. Romans 12:17-19 is quickly followed by Romans 13:1-6, which states that the authorities are "God's agents for punishment, for retribution on the offenders."

The clear teaching of Scripture is that we are to eschew personal vengeance or personal retribution. As individuals we are to forgive and to repay evil with good. As noted earlier we are to act on the basis of love, not in anger which delights in the hurt and humiliation of others.

But the state is called by God to be his agent of justice. However, even the state should not act on the basis of a revenge which is motivated by anger and delights in extracting the maximum hurt. Instead, the state is to act on the basis of love. In its role this love must be translated into justice. Thus should conditions exist which lead the state, in its pursuit of justice, to conclude that even the extreme penalty of death is called for, it is not preempting God's prerogative; it is fulfilling its God-given role as his agent here on earth.

III. IS CAPITAL PUNISHMENT *DESIRABLE*?

Is it, when all things are taken into consideration, desirable that capital punishment be routinely inflicted upon persons guilty of murder in the first degree?

A. *The Issue*

1. In Section I, we concluded that modern states are *not obliged* by Scripture, Creed, or principle to institute or practice capital punishment. In Section II, we concluded that modern states *are permitted* by the same standards to institute and practice capital punishment. At issue here, now, is whether states and societies should routinely exercise this scriptural permission and regularly practice capital punishment.

2. It should be noted that when this issue is confronted a shift must be made from principle to practice; and it must be further noted that practice, even when principled, must be suited and fitted to time and circumstance. Where there is permission, but no obligation, there *discretion* comes into play; there *practical wisdom*, informed by principle, yet sensitive to situational and pragmatic considerations, must decide the issue.

3. Having respect, therefore, to the conditions prevailing on the North American continent, to the complexities of human existence, to the vagaries of jurisprudence, to the creaking machinery of the courts, to the changing attitudes of juries, to the pathology of criminality, to the variable force of social conditioning, to the possibilities of repentance and amendment among offenders, to the need for societal self-defense, and to other matters of this sort, we must in all seriousness ask: What *practice* should states follow in dealing with those who commit murders within their boundaries?

B. *Abolition*

1. Not being *bound* to execute murderers, states could decide *never* to do so. This decision could take either of two forms. It could be made by simple resolution or by legal action.

2. Judges and juries, aided and abetted by popular sentiment, could decide, by simple resolution, never to *apply* the existing capital provisions of the penal code. Juries could simply refuse to find anyone guilty

of a capital crime. A societal resolution of this sort would, however, be unfortunate, and most unwise. In matters of grave concern courts cannot decide, without loss of integrity, *never* to do what the law permits. Nor should they aprioristically and prematurely foreclose the possibility or necessity of imposing the death sentence in extraordinary circumstances.

3. States could enact new legislation totally *prohibiting* capital punishment. This too would be unwise. By such legislation discretion would be abandoned, courts would be unduly bound, and society would be deprived of at least one means of restraint and deterrence. States should not completely surrender their God-given jurisdiction over life and death; they should not totally give up their *right* to exact the ultimate penalty for crimes. We believe, therefore, that states should, through enabling legislation, retain the legal right to exercise capital punishment.

C. Alternatives

1. When it is asked, however, what practical policy states and their courts should adopt in dealing with first-degree murderers, we have entered another arena of inquiry. When states have not, by social resolution or legal action, decided to sheath the fatal sword, the question of its use remains, and in particular that of the frequency of its use. Being *permitted* both by moral principle and by legal statute to execute murderers, but being under no religious or moral *obligation* to do so, states are forced to inquire how their *freedom* to spare or take life should be used. They are forced to inquire why in any given instance they should or should not resort to capital punishment. Things being what they are, states, in short, are thrown back upon their discretionary powers, and must ask what grounds for action are relevant and germane. Faced with the question whether or not a convicted murderer should be executed, states are bound to ask: What good would it do? What ends would it serve? And, conversely, they are bound to ask: What indignities might such action entail? What values might it destroy? Once it is granted that capital punishment is *not mandatory*, there is no escaping these questions. Where there is *freedom* of action, there the *consequences*, as well as the grounds, of action must be seriously considered.

2. Now, it is possible even on utilitarian grounds, to maintain that every person found guilty of first-degree murder should be executed. It is possible to maintain that capital punishment should be a regular and constant element in our judicial system on the ground that the prompt and routine execution of the criminal will best serve the ends of justice, and will best secure the safety and stability of the state. It is also possible, however, to maintain that these ends are best served by a sparing use of the destroying sword. It can, in particular, be argued that scriptural principles and Christian compassion point in the direction of judicial restraint toward the minimal use of the sword, toward the bracketing of capital punishment as a rarely used weapon of last resort.

3. Moved by what it considers to be the thrust of Scripture and Christian devotion, and moved as well by the force of moral values and social concerns, your committee believes that capital punishment should not

pertain to the routine administration of justice, but only to those exceptional instances of such administration as are called forth by a substantial threat to the foundation and structure of a free and responsible democratic society, and thus to the safety and welfare of the people.

It is difficult, and perhaps improper, for an ecclesiastical statement or position paper to specify with exactness the precise conditions under which the courts should impose the penalty of death. The church will have fulfilled its duty if it entreats legislators and magistrates to use the fatal sword with uttermost restraint, and to surround the administration of justice with such safeguards as will tend maximally to preserve and enhance life. An entreaty of this sort is dictated, we believe, by Christian considerations, a few of which we adduce below.

D. Considerations

1. Human life is sacred, and the sixth commandment demands that wherever possible it should be preserved and enhanced. This weighs the scales against all killing that is not required for the preservation and enhancement of other human life. By this token, wars are justifiable only as a last resort (when arbitration fails), and only insofar as they preserve the rights and freedoms of a people and maintain society in being. Likewise, the slaying of criminals can be justified only as a last resort (when other restraints fail) and only insofar as it is required to secure the continuation of a viable state charged with maintaining a just order within which its citizens can find protection.

2. The magistrate is a servant of God, but he is not God, and his judgments are fallible. It can and does happen, therefore, that innocent persons are put to death by judicial procedures. But in such instances no effort can be made to right the wrong committed; the victim of the court is dead. On this account alone capital punishment should be most sparingly used. Only in rare and special instances should the risk of irremediable judicial error be hazarded.

3. States are not called upon to convert sinners or even to reshape them, but they ought, insofar as possible, to leave room for repentance and amendment, and not unnecessarily shorten the time in which these wholesome things can occur. Death should therefore not be visited upon a person unless this extreme measure is necessitated by overriding social considerations.

4. Justice alone does not require the death of the murderer. Justice requires only that he be punished, and that his punishment be, not equivalent to, but in proportion to his crime. Justice can be served when the murderer is appropriately imprisoned.

E. Conclusion

Given that human life is sacred, that the magistrate is fallible, that time for repentance is desirable, and that imprisonment will normally satisfy the demand for justice, we conclude that, though judicial executions may sometimes be divinely sanctioned and be in society's best interest, it is not desirable that capital punishment be routinely inflicted upon persons guilty of murder in the first degree. Only under exceptional circumstances should the state resort to capital punishment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Your committee recommends:

1. That the synod refer this report to the churches for study and guidance.
2. That the synod declare:
 - a. that the Scriptures lay no general mandate on modern states to exercise capital punishment.
 - b. that the Scriptures do permit modern states to inflict capital punishment.
 - c. that according to the spirit of Scripture capital punishment is prudently exercised only under special circumstances and not as a general rule.
3. That synod urge the members of the church, working as individuals and through appropriate organizations, to eschew all motives of revenge, and to use their influence to encourage their respective governments to adopt criminal justice systems in keeping with the scriptural principles presented in this report.
4. That synod adopt the following guidelines for individual action relative to the issue of capital punishment:
 - a. Christians in states which have statutes providing for the death penalty should urge the government to exercise capital punishment with utmost restraint. They should also urge their legislatures to incorporate such safeguards into law as will provide for the death penalty for first-degree murderers only in exceptional cases.
 - b. Christians in states which have no statutes providing for the death penalty should support only such proposals to introduce capital punishment as would limit its application to exceptional cases of first-degree murder.
 - c. Christians who hold public office should do all in their power to prevent the state from abusing its authority in the exercise of capital punishment. At the same time, they should recognize the state's right to employ capital punishment, but they should cooperate only in such efforts to enact capital punishment legislation as will limit its application to exceptional cases of first-degree murder.
5. That synod discharge this committee.

Committee on Capital Punishment

Henry Stob, chairman
Clarence Vos, secretary
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REPORT 32

SYNODICAL STUDIES ON WOMEN IN OFFICE AND
DECISIONS PERTAINING TO THE OFFICE OF DEACON

OUTLINE

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 - A. *The Mandate*
 - B. *The Committee's Work*
- II. Review of the 1978 Report and Synodical Decisions
- III. The Office of Deacon
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 - B. *Historical Development*
 - 1. Before the Reformation
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 - C. *The 1973 Guidelines on Office and Ordination and Subsequent Developments*
- IV. Delegation of Deacons to Major Assemblies
- V. Recommendations of the Entire Committee
- VI. Majority Report and Recommendations
- VII. Minority Report I and Recommendations
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I. BACKGROUND

A. *The Mandate*

The Synod of 1979 appointed this committee with the following mandate:

a. To review without prejudice the 1978 report on "Hermeneutical Principles Concerning Women in Ecclesiastical Office" and the decisions of the Synod of 1978 regarding the ordination of women as deacons;

b. To study and define the office of deacon in the light of Scripture, the Confessions, its historical development, especially within the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition, and the 1973 "Guidelines for

Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 62-64);

c. To study the implications of the ordination of women to the office of deacon in the light of Church Order Article 35, giving specific attention to the concept of male headship and the nature of that authority;

d. And to report its recommendations to synod by 1981.

(*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 121-22)

Synod's action was motivated in part by the large number of overtures and appeals to the decision of the Synod of 1978 which permitted women in the diaconate. In the light of denominational concerns and questions, further study and clarification was deemed necessary. Synod of 1979 specifically referred to the need to clarify the 1978 decision with respect to Article 30 of the Belgic Confession, Article 35 of the Church Order, and the distinction between the work of elders and the work of deacons when women serve in the diaconate.

The Synod of 1980, in dealing with Overture 17, assigned this committee the further task of "... study[ing] the material of Overture 17 and [considering] whether its own conclusions concerning the nature of the office of deacon have any bearing on the delegation of deacons to major assemblies, and to spell them out for synod."

(*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 105)

B. *The Committee's Work*

Not until its third meeting, in May of 1980, did the committee finally meet with its full membership. This occurred because of the resignation, for various reasons, of three of the original appointees and two replacements. Despite its slow start and its awareness of the deep emotions which were running through the denomination on this issue, the committee began its work in good faith. While public discussion continued on the manner in which Synod of 1979 determined membership on the committee and on how it was possible to review a synodical decision "without prejudice," we assigned papers and critiques to one another and began the task of understanding and testing one another's contributions in the light of God's Word. Meanwhile one of our classes overruled the Synod of 1980 to disband our committee and to appoint an entirely new one. Synod declined. In July and September particularly substantive meetings were held. It was obvious by then that our committee reflected the spectrum of opinion and emotion present in the church on the issue entrusted to us for study and recommendation. That made our task both arduous and challenging. But as our work continued we dared to hope that if we could find a common position, held by all in good conscience, the members of our denomination could also. A number of consistories and individuals sent us their opinions and studies of the problem assigned us. We were assured of the interest and of the prayers of many. Thus throughout our work we were very aware of denominational concern about this issue. That brought its own pressure. In December 1980, another member of our committee resigned. As discussions continued to the February deadline for agenda materials, we

struggled for that elusive unanimity which might give clear guidance to the church. What follows is the result of our seven meetings together and of our individual effort between times.

II. REVIEW OF THE 1978 REPORT AND SYNODICAL DECISIONS

The first part of our mandate called for us to review the 1978 report and synodical decisions (see *Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 484-533).

Our committee notes with deep appreciation the careful and thorough work done by the 1978 study committee. Their report is clearly marked by a desire to be faithful to the Scriptures on the issue before us. We believe that both the committee's treatment of hermeneutics and their exegesis have moved the CRC closer to a resolution of the question of women in ecclesiastical office. The report is marked by assiduous attention to exegetical detail, by an open and precise acknowledgment of problems that seemingly defy solution, and by a clear and responsible struggle to come to as much unanimity of position as possible. Like the two prior reports of 1973 and 1975, this one contributes significantly to a denominational understanding of the complexity of the issues involved.

Although we have spent long hours assessing and discussing the 1978 report, we believe that a lengthy review of its strengths and weaknesses will serve no constructive purpose at this point. The strengths of the report are readily apparent to anyone who reads it carefully and with an open Bible. Its weaknesses have been documented by several sources. The committee itself acknowledged that the report is limited by an inability (1) to distinguish precisely "whether the headship of man over woman is that of any male over any female, or whether it is only the headship of the husband over the wife"; (2) to correlate with precision the biblical strand of the female's equal worth with the male with the other biblical strand of a certain subordination of the woman/wife to the man/husband; (3) to resolve completely certain perplexing facts which "emerge from the study of the biblical data" regarding women in ecclesiastical office; and (4) "to formulate rules" governing this issue "on the basis of Paul's teaching taken only from a few of his explicit statements." (see *Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 528-29). The 1978 advisory committee to which this report was assigned raised several other concerns needing fuller treatment: (1) the pre-fall, post-fall and redeemed relationship of man/husband and woman/wife; (2) the definition of headship and its implications for women in ecclesiastical office; (3) "the meaning and significance of the 'equal worth' that men and women have in Christ"; and (4) how contemporary issues should or should not shape biblical interpretation and application (see *Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 103). The following year (1979) the advisory committee—assigned the task of dealing with the flood of overtures, appeals, and communications precipitated by the 1978 report and synodical decisions—moved on to another problem. It struggled with "the question of male headship, and the precise nature of the authority that this involves." "What 'authority' resides in ordination to the office of deacon and/or becoming a member of the consistory?" Their question became whether a woman ordained as deacon can legitimately (biblically) be involved in consistorial work,

therefore. On this issue neither the 1978 committee nor the 1978 Synod had spoken with sufficient clarity or precision.

The members of our committee in their own ways and with their individual emphases share the concerns and questions raised by the three sources just documented. To these we could add other specific questions and problems that each of us has raised in committee. But we feel that the uncertainty of 1979 was only partly the result of theological and exegetical questions, and mainly caused by the ambiguity of the phrase "provided that their work is distinguished from that of the elders." Our review of 1978 focuses on what we regard as the root of the problem, therefore.

Let us briefly reconstruct the dynamics of the 1978 Synod. After eight years and three tries at answering the question of women in office from an exegetical and theological point of view, synod convened. It had on its table a report that was precise and careful. That report had been done by a committee of recognized CRC exegetes. Their conclusions were much more guarded than those of the two preceding committees. Moreover, both the majority and the minority of that committee concurred on most of their report. The minority position wanted to be more explicit in distinguishing the work of elders from that of deacons where women were envisioned in the diaconate. But both sides acknowledged that there were neither exegetical nor theological reasons for prohibiting women from serving in the CRC diaconate if certain organizational questions could be answered. Encouraged by the level of concurrence in the report and feeling the pressures from within the churches for some action on this matter, the advisory committee observed "that the church would not be served by postponement of all action and the appointment of another study committee at this time." Synod agreed, adopted the minority recommendation after extensive debate, and recommended a change in Church Order Article 3 which it thought would accommodate the new policy. The procedural miscalculation is that in their apparent optimism at having cut through the theological and exegetical problems on this issue, the advisory committee and the synod did not reckon with the intricacies of implementing their decision to admit women to the diaconate, provided that the work of deacons is clearly distinguished from that of elders. The synod also appears to have miscalculated the depth with which a large section of the church held certain attitudes and convictions about the place of women in leadership roles. Had that synod anticipated the reaction of 1979, it is safe to suggest that it would have been much more explicit and detailed about how its decision was to be implemented.

Can the 1978 decision be implemented in ways that avoid the turmoil of the last two years? We believe that it can. After looking at the office of deacon in the light of the factors assigned us by the Synod of 1979, we will present several procedural options with their attendant pros and cons. Then we will present our recommendations.

III. THE OFFICE OF DEACON

The second aspect of our mandate requires that we study and define the office of deacon in terms of Scripture, Confessions, church history,

and the 1973 guidelines on ecclesiastical office and ordination. We present a section on each, except the Confessions, and conclude with a definition. We treat the Confessions in the historical section rather than separately because the material devoted to the diaconate in them is limited to a few articles in the Belgic Confession and because what is found there can best be seen in historical perspective.

A. *Biblical Material*

In the Old Testament there are many evidences that the care of the poor was one of the prerequisites for a blessed social and religious community. The Book of Deuteronomy is particularly characterized by strong social compassion. In the five books of Moses we find twenty-one specific exhortations to the people of Israel to take care of the needy. Fifteen of these can be found in the Book of Deuteronomy and five of them in Leviticus 25.

The very existence of the poor among Israel is clearly indicated as being the result of sin and disobedience. Deuteronomy 15:4-5 reads, "But there will be no poor among you. . . if only you will obey the voice of the Lord your God." However, in view of the reality of sin and greed, the message continues in verse 11, "For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore I command you, you shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor in the land."

References to God's people's obligation to take care of the needy are also numerous in the Prophets and the writings of the Old Testament.

It should be noted that the exhortations in the Torah which deal with the support of the needy are not to be considered as civil in character. Nowhere is mention made of a penalty prescribed for someone who fails to show compassion for the poor. These "laws" rather had the nature of a strong appeal to the religious commitment of believing Israel. God's people were challenged to show their faithful relationship with their covenant God by the way in which they dealt with the needy.

When the people failed to show God's mercy by their actions, the prophets pronounced judgment on the nation as a whole. Thus, in Ezekiel 16:49, where the sins of Sodom are declared to be the sins of Israel, it is stated, "She and her daughters had pride, surfeit of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy." On the other hand, if someone shared his bread with the hungry, brought the homeless under his own roof, or covered the naked, then his light would break forth like the dawn and his righteousness would go before him (Isa. 58:7).

The requirement to show compassion is so inherent in the covenantal living of God's people that in the Old Testament there is no indication of persons whose specific function it was to see to it that those prescriptions were carried out in the community. There were no specially designated caretakers of the needy. Every Israelite was mandated to serve God by serving his fellowman, particularly the destitute.

Turning to the New Testament, we find that the Greek words *diakonos* and *diakonia* are used for such a variety of functions and persons that one wonders how *diakonos* ever became a designation for a particular ministry or office in the church. Jesus admonishes his disciples that to be great each must be a *diakonos* to the other (Matt. 23:11). The

diakonoi of the king had to cast out the man not wearing his wedding garment (Matt. 22:13). At the wedding in Cana the *diakonoi* filled the jars with water (John 2:5, 9). The civil governor is called God's *diakonos* "for your good" and the *diakonos* of God to execute his wrath (Rom. 13:4). Christ is said to have become a *diakonos* to the circumcised (Rom. 15:8). The apostles are called *diakonoi* "through whom you believed" (1 Cor. 3:5), *diakonoi* of God (2 Cor. 6:4), of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23), and of the new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6). Paul calls himself a *diakonos* of the gospel (Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23) and a *diakonos* of the church (Col. 1:25). He calls Phoebe a *diakonos* of the church (Rom. 16:1), Timothy a good *diakonos* of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 4:6) and God's *diakonos* in the gospel of Christ (1 Tim. 3:2). Tychicus is called a beloved brother and faithful *diakonos* in the Lord (Eph. 6:21 and Col. 4:7). Epaphras is a faithful *diakonos* of Christ (Col. 1:7). Satan is said to have his *diakonoi*, who disguise themselves as *diakonoi* of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:15). Paul asks the question whether Christ can be a *diakonos* of sin (Gal. 2:17).

It is evident from these examples that the concept of "service" is always present in the usage of the word *diakonos*. The kind of service rendered is of great diversity, and the specific service has to be determined in every case from the immediate context. This variety in the use of the term should also warn us not to draw too easily the conclusion that in a certain instance a special "office," let alone an ecclesiastical office, is meant. There are actually only two instances where this is evident. And an investigation of them both might help us in arriving at a definition of "the office of deacon."

The Epistle to the Philippians is Paul's only letter in which he includes in the address both the congregation as a whole and specific office-bearers: "to all the saints in Christ Jesus" and "the overseers (*episkopoi*) and deacons (*diakonoi*)." Why he chose to mention the overseers and deacons here has been discussed at length by many scholars. The best conclusion seems to be that in this letter Paul gives thanks for the gift he received from this church through Epaphroditus, and that the overseers and deacons had been instrumental in taking this collection and forwarding it to the apostle. Yet, even if this conjecture is correct, it does not help us in distinguishing the function of the *episkopoi* from the function of the *diakonoi* in the Philippian church.

In 1 Timothy 3 Paul mentions both the overseer (*episkopos*) and the deacons (*diakonoi*). Here he gives the requirements for both these offices. And it is obvious that he is referring to certain qualified men within the church to whom official functions have been or will be entrusted. As in Philippians, Paul does not here describe the actual tasks associated with these offices. Perhaps the functions could be deduced from the respective requirements for the offices, but deductions based on understandings of elder and deacon as known today should not be made from these passages without good cause. What is said explicitly is that the overseer must care for God's church (v. 5), while of deacons it is twice said that they are required to serve well (vv. 10 and 13). The overseer should be an apt teacher (v. 2), a requirement not mentioned for the deacon. The requirements and rewards for deacons that they "must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience" and "be tested

first," and that they by serving well "gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith" do not shed light on their *specific tasks*.

It has been observed that Paul says of deacons that they should not be greedy for gain (v. 8), and that this might indicate that deacons dealt with money. However, in verse 3 Paul states that the overseer should be "no lover of money." And in Titus 1:7 he uses exactly the same expression for the overseer that he does for the deacon in 1 Timothy 3: he should not be "greedy for gain." Paul further claims that the overseer must not be "a recent convert," must be well thought of by outsiders, and must beware of such dangers as falling "into the condemnation of the devil" or "into reproach and the snare of the devil." It is striking that Paul does not mention those dangers for the deacons, but on the contrary depicts only the rewards for serving well. Did the deacons, for whatever reason, need more of a boost in the eyes of the congregation than did the overseers?

Our conclusion is that 1 Timothy 3 does not bring us very close at all to a definition of the office and tasks of the deacon. If we were to do a New Testament survey of the office of elder, we would find that by contrast that office has a much clearer definition. The elder's task is to rule, to teach, to take heed to the flock, to shepherd God's people, and to be an overseer of the church's affairs.

The most substantial material for defining the deacon's role in the early church probably exists only by way of inference. In the two passages just studied, deacons are linked with the *episkopoi*, but mentioned second. This might imply that they were considered as assistants and helpers under the authority of the overseers. The fact that they are called "deacons" or "servants" might justify this conclusion.

Still, the actual function of the *diakonoi* is uncertain. The best assumption may be that in the course of the development of the church it became necessary that special men be appointed to take care of the table service (the Lord's supper and accompanying love feast), to tend the needy, and in general to show Christ's mercy in deeds done on behalf of the congregation as a whole. While the list of qualifications for deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8ff. is useful for testing the fitness of prospective deacons today, the list as such does not tell us what duties of the deacons Paul has in view. Nor does it indicate what the duties of deacons should be in our time. No doubt the church today has the right to assign the task of caring for the poor to certain office-bearers which it designates "deacons." But we may not simply identify a diaconate defined by such a function with the diaconate referred to in the New Testament.

Excursus on Acts 6

Since there is a widespread assumption, particularly on a popular level, that the seven men appointed in Acts 6 represent the biblical institution of the office of deacon, we must take a look at this passage. It should be noted that this interpretation in the CRC does not enjoy the sanction of the Confessions. A direct link between this passage and the office of deacon is made in our liturgical literature, however. The form for the ordination of elders and deacons inherited from the sixteenth cen-

ture via the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) finds in Acts 6 "the origin and institution" of the diaconal office. The revision of this form in 1934 is much more circumspect and biblically faithful on this point. Noting that the apostles initially ministered to the needy, the 1934 form observes that they then delegated "the special responsibility of exercising this ministry" to the seven. It concludes, "Since that time the Church has recognized this service as a distinct office." The "since" is ambiguous. It might mean "from that time on" or it more likely was intended to say "sometime after that time." If the former meaning had been intended, the committee and the Synod of 1934 would have had no real reason for revising the form. We note these developments and differences at some length since the pre-1934 interpretation still seems to have credibility in the CRC and will therefore likely be raised in connection with our report.

But the link between Acts 6 and the office of deacon as we know it is, to say the least, based on very superficial grounds. It should be noted that Scripture nowhere refers to the seven as "deacons." Also, their activities were much broader than those we commonly assign to the diaconate. Stephen "did great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8). He disputed with certain Jews as a Christian polemicist (v. 9). He was an exegete of the Old Testament and an orator, as his speech to the Sanhedrin indicates (Acts 7). Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5) and taught the Scriptures to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:35). He even administered the sacrament of baptism (v. 38). When these observations are linked with the fact that the famine fund sent by Christians in Antioch was given to the elders in Jerusalem (apparently not to the seven), the complexity of the problem regarding church organization and offices in Acts is reinforced (see Acts 11:30).

What can be concluded from Acts 6 is that *one* of the duties assigned the seven by the apostles later came to be institutionalized in the office we now know as "deacon." But it should be noted with just as much emphasis that other duties performed by the seven have later come to institutionalized expression in the offices we now know as minister of the Word and evangelist (and, we might also add, home missionary, foreign missionary, and even professor of theology!). Because of the breadth of duties assigned the seven in Acts and for various other exegetical reasons that need not concern us here, it has been suggested with a great deal of plausibility that the apostles assigned to the seven a rather complete care and supervision of the Hellenist Christians in Jerusalem while they themselves continued to exercise most of these duties among the Hebrew Christians. Even if disproven, however, such an explanation does not detract from the main point that at the time portrayed in Acts 6 church leadership was not differentiated into clearly distinguishable offices as we know them in the Reformed tradition. Without doubt, the fact that the care for the widows of the Hellenists was among the tasks assigned the seven indicates the importance of the work of mercy in Christ's name. It shows that such demonstration of mercy may also receive an institutional expression among God's New Testament people. It also anticipates the development of this work of mercy into a specific office. This development, however, took place at a later stage. And it is not

possible to trace directly "the origin and institution" of the office of deacon as we know it to the seven in Acts 6.

B. *Historical Development*

1. Before the Reformation

The earliest Christian sources outside the New Testament confirm its recognition of deacons as office-bearers or ministers in Christ's church. The *First Letter of Clement* (pre-96 A.D.), *The Shepherd of Hermas* and *The Didache* (early to mid-second century for the latter two) contain brief references to the diaconate. Clement, for example, attempted to ground the positions of bishop and deacon not only in apostolic appointment but also in Isaiah 60:17. In his *Epistle to the Corinthians* Clement saw parallels between the chief celebrant of the Lord's supper and the Old Testament high priest, between the elder and the priest, between the deacon and the Levite. *Hermas* recognizes apostles, bishops, teachers, and deacons as leaders of the church. This document also contains what some regard as a reference to deacons who had used their office to exploit others. Likewise, it regards bishops as trustees of widows and the poor. Many scholars hold that *The Didache* treats bishops and deacons with apparent parity; both are to be elected by the people and are worthy of honor from Christians.

This early literature is vague with respect to specific duties assigned to deacons, although *Hermas'* reference to exploitation suggests that deacons may have handled revenues and/or goods. Attempts to find in this early material deacons as teachers or servers of the Lord's supper are speculative and inferential.

Fortunately, the early second-century letters of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, are more explicit on the relationship of ecclesiastical offices to one another. He instructed the Christian of Magnesia in his letter to them, "Let the bishop preside in God's place, and the presbyters take the place of the apostolic council, and let the deacons (my special favorites) be entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ. . . ." Earlier in the same letter Ignatius spoke approvingly of a deacon who submitted to the bishop and to the presbytery. While an official in the church, the deacon is under the direction of the bishop, said Ignatius. Numerous references in this patristic father's letters show that deacons functioned as the bishop's couriers, helpers, and confidants by this time in the second century. They were also ministers of the sacramental "mysteries," although Ignatius reminded them that they ministered more than "mere food and drink." Because sacrament was closely associated with love feast at this time in the early church, historians have seen a strong suggestion in this reference to deacons as ministers of mercy to those in need. But that is, it should be recognized, a diaconal function which is deduced from this statement.

Subsequent second- and third-century church fathers make more explicit two thoughts already encountered. First, the care of the poor, orphans, widows, and visitation of the sick is primarily the responsibility of the bishop and in some cases of the presbyter. Second, the deacon assists the bishop in his duties, including the ministry of mercy. The

literature becomes more specific regarding the variety of duties and functions assigned to deacons in differing locales and circumstances: take communion to those absent from the worship service, administer baptism in certain situations, hear confessions and absolve the dying in the absence of the bishop, perform specified liturgical duties as the bishop's assistant, care for strangers and the sick, catechize new Christians, maintain order in the churches.

Irenaeus, toward the end of the second century, appears to be the first theologian to associate the seven of Acts 6 with the office of deacon. This interpretation was soon reinforced by Hippolytus, Cyprian, and others.

One aspect of the deacons' responsibilities was their role at the church councils. W. B. Maddan gives a two-point summary of such duties prior to emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D.:

1. Normally deacons attended their bishops at general councils and acted as their scribes; sometimes at the bishop's behest, they acted as his mouthpiece. But they were inferior in status to the presbyters. . . .
2. At provincial and consistorial synods, they were sometimes allowed to vote in their own name. ["The Office of Deacon in the Church from the Time of the Apostles," *The Indian Journal of Theology*, Vol. 9 (1960), 59-66. p. 63.]

The well-known patristic and liturgical scholar Dom Gregory Dix judges that the importance of the office of deacon began to wane in the fourth century. The deacons' function became increasingly ceremonial; he was a liturgical assistant. Some of his tasks, such as guarding the church doors against intruders during the Lord's supper, disappeared with changes in Christian practice. Other functions were assigned to the minor orders (lectors, acolytes, and others), which had begun to flourish by the mid-third century. Competition with the presbyterate, out of which the priesthood developed, further curtailed the deacons' significance, particularly in the West. In time the office, while still commissioned by the bishop, became a stepping-stone to the priesthood for young men in seminary. It held the latter position throughout the Middle Ages and, in the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, into the modern period.

Within the patristic setting the origin and definition of order of deaconess is highly interesting. Pliny's letter to Trajan has been suggested as the earliest extra-canonical reference to deaconesses. The material is not without problems, however. Literally Pliny wrote, "I have judged it necessary to obtain information by torture from two serving women (*ancillae*) called by them 'deaconesses' (*ministrae*)." Scholars have suggested that the Latin *ministra* is a translation of the Greek word *diakonos*, which would be rendered *deaconess*. *Ancilla* has suggested to some that these supposed deaconesses served in a lesser office or minor order. Conclusions drawn from such meager material, however, are at best tenuous.

The earliest unmistakable reference to deaconesses is in the Syriac church order from the first half of the third century, the *Didascalia Apostolorum*. In it deaconesses are charged with visiting sick women, particularly when social conventions would frown on a deacon doing so.

They administered holy unction or oil to women converts prior to their baptism and instructed them more fully in its implications afterwards. Subsequent sources show the deaconesses keeping the women's door of the church, serving as a liaison between the bishop and women seeking his counsel, and administering the Lord's supper to sick women. J. G. Davies concludes that the work of deaconesses was a substitute for the deacons' ministry to women, was narrower than that of deacons, and did not enjoy the same official status, and was until the fifth century restricted to the Eastern church, where the cultural context dictated a much more rigid seclusion of women than in the West. Some sources give strict conditions for becoming a deaconess: a widow, one who had children, over sixty (others said forty) years of age, the possessor of certain virtues, commissioned by appointment rather than ordination by laying on of hands. Others, particularly later patristic sources in the Eastern church, were somewhat more lenient, although the deaconesses definitely belonged to the growing number of minor orders and not the regular clergy, as the deacons did. Nevertheless, George H. Williams believes that between Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (451) we find "the most significant period in the expansion and elaboration of the ministry of women before modern times" (from "The Ministry in the Later Patristic Period [314-451]," in H. R. Niebuhr and D. D. Williams, *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*. New York: 1956. p. 64). His judgment can stand if we use "ministry" in its looser, modern sense and not as referring to the higher orders of clergy during the patristic period.

In summary, we see that deacons played a vibrant and many-faceted role in the life of the early church. They are regarded in the earliest sources as belonging to the major offices or ministries of the church, even though it is apparent that their role very soon evolved into being the bishop's assistant. Undoubtedly the seeming confusion in Protestantism regarding the deacon and his tasks can be explained by noting that different groups have appealed to and emphasized different aspects of the variegated diaconal office in the early church. By the end of the early church period the diaconate had become a rung on the ladder to the priesthood, one with almost exclusively liturgical dimensions. The office of deaconess was most dynamic and visible in the church after 325. Initially restricted to the Eastern church, it was carefully circumscribed as a ministry to other women.

Studies indicate that the diaconate was ritualized and stagnant during the Middle Ages. Very soon deacons were required to take a vow of celibacy. By the eleventh century it had ceased being a permanent office in the church and it continued only as the last phase of preparation for the priesthood. It was devoid of a sense of service to the poor. Thus it was a quite different office than what we know as the diaconate in the Reformed tradition. In this period the order of deaconess disappeared altogether. This disappearance undoubtedly reflects the degeneration of the office of deacon as well as the increased participation of women in monastic orders.

2. In Non-Reformed Churches since the Reformation

The Roman Catholic Council of Trent, meeting in session in July 1563,

summarized the functions of deacons: (1) present the elements of the mass to the priest, read the gospel, lead the people in their participation in the service, maintain order in worship, and guard the bishop; (2) preach, baptize, and effect reconciliation of penitents and church in the priest's absence; (3) attend widows, orphans, prisoners, and the poor with spiritual and material assistance. Trent likewise advocated that Rome restore a permanent diaconate in the church. This recommendation went unheeded until recently, however, and a diaconal appointment remained a temporary position held until one qualified for entrance to the priesthood. Subsequent to Vatican II, which repeated Trent's recommendation, the National Catholic Conference of Bishops in the United States voted in 1968 to admit laymen of proven maturity to a permanent diaconate. Catechesis and preaching in the absence of a priest were seen as important functions of this office, though the dioceses were mandated to define it and to train participants. The 1968 decision has been controversial, since it has been used by many as a step toward opening all ecclesiastical positions to women.

In Anglican circles the deacons, who are not restricted to celibacy, are aspirants to the priesthood. As in Catholicism, the Anglican diaconate is temporary. Deacons assist priests in worship, particularly holy communion, read Scripture and homilies in the service, catechize youth, preach when licensed by the bishop, baptize in the priest's absence, and administer alms to the poor and the sick. Both the Roman Catholic and the Anglican diaconates retain many of the diverse functions assigned deacons in the patristic period.

The diaconate was downplayed in Lutheranism until the nineteenth century, when it took a very different form from either the Catholic-Anglican or the Reformed interpretations. Luther stressed preaching to the virtual exclusion of some other functions of the church. Early in his work as a reformer he advised city councils to assume responsibility for the poor. Thus in Lutheran countries diaconal forms of service independent of the state were paraecclesiastical. Lack of an official diaconate as part of the church's ministry made Lutheran countries ripe for movements like Spener and Francke's pietism, including its varied and imaginative diaconal ministries. The spirit of pietism continued and was manifested in new diaconal options by nineteenth-century evangelicals. Johann Wichern is regarded as the founder of the male diaconate, and Theodor Fliedner of the female diaconate, usually known as the "Kaiserswerth movement." At the outset both movements were communal, regulated by a common rule and devoted to a great variety of social, educational, evangelistic, and parish service. Deacons and deaconesses rendered their services professionally in the public sector of life, as employees of a church, a Christian organization, or even of the state. What characterized deacons and deaconesses in all forms of service was an evangelical sense of self-denying love and service in the name of Christ. These Lutheran diaconal movements, while not ecclesiastical, greatly influenced the thought and practices of other European and American church and parachurch structures. The Kaiserswerth movement, for example, contributed an example and an impetus to deaconess movements not only in major American Lutheran bodies, but also in the

Evangelical and Reformed Church, among General Conference Mennonites, Episcopalians, and Methodists. Beginning in the 1860s the Church of England ordained deaconesses to a lifelong position by the laying on of hands by the bishop. In that denomination deaconess houses or institutes were subsequently founded on a diocesan level. Methodists and the Church of Scotland implemented the same approach in the 1880s. Deaconess movements associated with all of these groups today are, where still extant, generally more flexible regarding entrance and living policies than in the nineteenth century. At the same time forms of service have become much more diverse and sisters more highly skilled and trained, as the sophistication and technicality of modern society obviously demand. The influence of Kaiserswerth has been so pervasive that it has virtually determined the modern understanding of "deaconess" in many circles. What is most noteworthy in this survey of the Lutheran understanding of the diaconate is the tenuous ties it has with the instituted church. Not only is Luther's view of church-state relations largely responsible for this, but this reality has fostered the notion of commissioning or consecrating deacons and deaconesses rather than of ordaining them to an ecclesiastical office. It also has produced a notion of diaconate barren of the liturgical functions belonging to deacons historically. A dimension of the diaconate prominent in the patristic period and among Catholics and Anglicans is simply missing in Lutheran circles and in evangelical groups influenced by pietist Lutheranism.

The earliest statements and confessions of Baptists consistently maintain a very simple, clear-cut distinction between two ecclesiastical offices. The first office is that of pastor, bishop, elder or teacher—all were seen as essentially the same office—who were charged to feed, govern, build up, watch over, visit, and oversee the church. Only men might hold this office. The second was the office of deacon, open to both men and women. Deacons were to serve tables and to wash feet, which included, according to eighteenth-century theologian John Gill, both the liturgical function of assisting at communion and the benevolent task of putting bread on the poor man's table. However, undoubtedly due to Baptists' strong congregationalism, diversity of understanding and practice has developed. Today in effect there is only one elder-minister serving most Baptist congregations. He is assisted by a board of deacons, who really have become church administrators. In the judgment of Baptist scholars social and material assistance have become a very low priority aspect of the diaconate in Baptist circles. It is strictly a lay person's office and even the idea of ordination seems virtually absent. Regarding deaconesses, actual seventeenth-century ordination services for them included a vow of celibacy, a declaration of their diaconal status, and a description of their duties. These included visiting the sick, meeting their material needs, and giving a word of spiritual encouragement. Following John Smyth's earlier instructions which classified deaconesses and widows in the same office, these services admitted only women over sixty to the diaconate. In colonial America there appears to have been an increase in the number of deaconesses up to the Revolutionary War. Their numbers dwindled in the nineteenth century. In current, twentieth-century practice it is common though not universal for

Baptist churches with deaconesses to organize them into a separate board paralleling the board of deacons. This frees the women from administrative responsibility and allows them to devote themselves strictly to practical service.

Among modern, non-Reformed churches, therefore, we find great diversity in thought and practice regarding the diaconate. Until recently both Catholic and Anglican churches have stressed the liturgical and temporary character of the office. Lutherans have emphasized assistance as the essence of diaconal work, but this has been service divorced from the essence of the church and its structures; this view prevails in the parachurch mentality of contemporary evangelicalism. Among Baptists deacons have become administrators. Interestingly, each of these traditions can appeal to aspects of the diaconate in the early church for justification. In the Reformed tradition yet another option can be found.

3. In the Reformed Churches

On the diaconate, Zwingli's policy was close to Luther's. Care of the poor was a civil matter in Zurich, though for a time sisters—former nuns—continued their hospital service.

Although never implemented because of the dominant German approach of assigning diaconal functions to civil authorities, Lambert of Avignon's theory is noteworthy. Leader of the Hessian Reformed church, Lambert drafted a church order in 1526 in which he recognized two types of deacons. The first sort were designated as bishops' assistants, particularly in the work of preaching, and were appointed according to the criteria of 1 Timothy 3. The second kind of deacon was assigned care of the poor according to the Acts 6 model. Aspects of Lambert's thought anticipated Calvin by fifteen years.

Diaconal service in Geneva must be seen against the background of social, political developments there. As elsewhere in Europe during the late Middle Ages, care of the poor and sick shifted gradually from the ecclesiastical and monastic to the civil authorities. Since 1508 the Little Council in Geneva had made attempts to coordinate the dozen or so benevolent institutions found in the city. In 1535 success came, when the Little Council appointed five *procureurs* to fulfill this mandate and when the General Council appointed a chief administrator.

Silent on the nature of the Christian ministry before his Strassbourg stay, Calvin immediately thereafter endorsed Bucer's fourfold division of the church's permanent ministry: pastor, teacher, elder, deacon. This appeared in the 1539 edition of the *Institutes*. The same year, in his commentary on Romans 12:8, he advocated two types of deacons: one type was assigned responsibility for "contributing to the needs of others," and the other for "showing mercy." The *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, 1541, called the first sort "procurators" and the second "hospitaliers." The former were established to collect, hold, and disburse public and private aid for the needy in the form of alms, rents, and pensions. They also supervised the hospital, set diaconal policy, and made calls with pastors and elders. The hospitaliers aided the poor and tended the sick. Interestingly, the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* provided that deacons should also assist pastors in administering the Lord's supper, particularly the cup. A 1542 consistory minute named four deacons to help prepare and administer the

sacrament. Thus at this time Calvin affirmed the older, more widespread Christian practice of giving deacons a liturgical, even sacramental task. The definitive edition of the *Institutes* (1559) affirms the tradition of Irenaeus which grounds the diaconate in Acts 6 and also, following 1 Timothy 5:9-10, restricts women to the public office of caring for the poor. The letter provision, in IV.3.9, is an obvious reference to hospitaliers.

John Calvin, therefore, accommodated his definition of the diaconate to historical developments in Geneva particularly and in the Christian tradition more generally. His approach to the diaconate reflects his flexible approach to ecclesiastical office in general, with his distinction between permanent and temporary offices and his recognition that apostles and evangelists might again appear in the churches if God deemed them necessary. His exegesis of Romans 12:3 was compatible with the civil policy regarding benevolent institutions. If this approach seems somewhat pragmatic, it must be balanced with the realization that Calvin went further than any of his contemporaries in reforming ecclesiastical office according to the spirit and the letter of Scripture. He restored the dimension of mercy as the dominant characteristic of the diaconate. He gave this office a biblical foundation and an ecclesiastical expression ignored by Luther and Zwingli. And while deacons continued to be elected by the two town councils, these selections were made on the basis of pastoral advice and recommendations. A child of his times, Calvin lived with the intertwinement of church and state: every three months a delegation of consistorial appointees and a designated town council member inspected the work of deacons. In Geneva the deacons remained outside the consistory, which consisted of elders and pastors.

Unlike Geneva, the French and Walloon Reformed churches did not enjoy civil approval and support. Hence deacons were elected, like elders, by the church itself and relied solely on offerings for their revenues. They were part of consistory, and as such were delegated to broader assemblies. There was only one type of deacon, though specified deacons enjoyed a wider range of functions than in Geneva. These included catechizing, conducting worship services, and performing weddings. The main task of deacons, however, was the care and counsel of the poor and sick, widows, and orphans. In this role French and Walloon deacons were under a measure of supervision and advice of pastors and elders. Alongside the regular diaconate, apparently without consistorial representation and by no means a permanent or universal institution, were French Reformed deaconesses. When the Prince of Sedan, for example, turned Reformed in 1559, he established the "Sisters of Mercy" with formerly monastic revenues. Similarly in La Rochelle there was a deaconesses' house. Women in these Protestant "orders" lived communally by an agreed upon order or rule. They were not bound by lifelong vows, but for however long they were part of the movement they devoted themselves to the care of the sick, the aged, and the poor. Aspects of the French and Walloon diaconate influenced the Dutch Reformed tradition.

Dutch Reformed definition and practice of the diaconate were largely the work of Johannes a Lasco and the sixteenth-century synods in the

Netherlands. During a Lasco's stay in Emden from 1541 to 1550, particularly after Princess Anna appointed him ecclesiastical superintendent, the church order for that area was dramatically revised. From a liturgical assistant to a compassionate servant of the poor was a major change in the understanding of the deacon. Dimensions of the office were specified in some detail. What a Lasco's hand in this revision was is unknown, but its spirit regarding the diaconate is compatible with his later work among Dutch refugees in London. Having left Emden because of a changed political climate, a Lasco had been in England scarcely two months when Edward VI made him superintendent of refugee churches. The groups under his care included a Dutch-Flemish congregation, a French-Walloon congregation, and an Italian group. Each had its own pastoral leadership. The French-Walloon contingent followed Calvin's 1541 *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* in large measure until 1552, when Poullain, their pastor, provided one of his creation. But a Lasco, along with such leaders as M. Micronius and J. Utenhove, shaped Dutch church order. It was not until a Lasco fled London after the king's death, returned with his Dutch refugees for a time to Emden, and then settled in Frankfort am Main that he recorded the Dutch refugee church order and liturgy in his *Forma ac Ratio*, 1555. Micronius had provided an abbreviated version the year before.

The *Forma ac Ratio* distinguished office of the Word, office of the sword, and office of the table or service of the poor. A Lasco often combined Word and sword as the *presbyterium* of the church, which was charged with biblically instructing the congregation and with maintaining the church. Deacons were not part of the *presbyterium*, although they met with it once every month or six weeks to report on their work and for mutual censure. Qualifications for the diaconate were explained in terms of 1 Timothy and Acts 6. The duties of deacons were outlined, and a Lasco included a pastoral treatment of poverty and wealth as conditions in which Christians must assist one another to bear responsibility before God. Procedure for selection included a pulpit explanation of the office, a period of fasting and prayer for God's guidance, a week when the congregation could suggest candidates to the consistory, selection—preferably unanimous—of deacons by the *presbyterium* and deacons, announcements to the people with an appeal to register objections, and finally installation by the laying on of hands by pastor and elders. No form as was later developed was provided for this occasion. However, four questions to be put to each diaconal candidate were specified and a fixed prayer was provided. Absent from a Lasco's work is any hint of deacons performing liturgical duties; they were seen as men who gathered and dispersed alms to poor, aged, sick, and others in need or distress.

Following the appearance of *Forma ac Ratio* and until the adoption of the Dutch Reformed form for the ordination of elders and deacons by the Synod of The Hague, 1586, is a thirty year formative period regarding the diaconate. A conglomeration of ecclesiastical influences was exerted on transient refugees abroad and underground Christians in the Netherlands. The French influence was pronounced in the southern provinces. A Lasco brought his Polish background, Emden experience, and

Zwinglian tendencies to his work. Poullain and his followers were neighbors to the Dutch in Frankfort after the latter had been forced to leave Emden. Here young pastors Casper Vander Heyden and Peter Datheen fell heir to a Lasco's leadership of Dutch refugees. Datheen visited and exchanged letters with Calvin in the late 1550s. Later he and his people were forced to leave Frankfort for Frankenthal, where they found the sympathy of the Palatinate ruler Frederick the Pious and interacted with the reformers of Heidelberg. That interesting differences as well as shared ideas regarding the diaconate emerged from these circumstances and contacts is to be expected. Looking at Geneva but especially France, Poullain and the Walloon synodical decisions of the early 1560s, John Van Lonkhuizen (in *Het Diaconaat*) attempted to summarize the differences between the French and the Dutch Reformed diaconates. The French included deacons in consistory and delegated them to major assemblies. In addition to helping the poor, their deacons catechized, led in worship, performed weddings, and tended the sick. For a Lasco, deacons were basically helpers of the poor and were not part of consistory. Among the Walloon, the consistory elected them; among the Dutch, the congregation was involved in the selection process. There were also differing methods between the two groups of collecting funds, holding them, and giving account.

Another important Dutch Reformed leader, Guido de Bres, and his Belgic Confession must be understood against the background just sketched. Written in 1559/61, in the midst of persecution and isolation and during this same formative period, it bears a decidedly French flavor because of de Bres' closer proximity to the Walloon than to the Dutch refugee groups in Frankenthal and elsewhere in Germany. In defining church offices Article 30 includes "elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the Church." Later descendants of de Bres, spiritually speaking, have needlessly puzzled over the discrepancy between this article and the Dutch church order and liturgical form for ordination of elders and deacons. The latter documents, particularly the order, defined *consistory* along a Lasco's line of *presbyterium*. Simply stated, the problem's resolution is that confession and church order were shaped rather simultaneously and in isolation from one another by two different groups in the 1550s and 1560s continental Reformed movement. The French-Walloon influence is more pronounced in the confession, the a Lasco influence in the church order. Another fascinating example of the French influence in these formative years, it would seem, is the case of the Amsterdam deaconesses. In 1556 the Reformed leaders in Amsterdam designated twelve deaconesses to run a home for aged women, an orphanage, and to do a form of house visitation two by two and to report anything needing their attention to the Amsterdam deacons. These were elderly women of proven Christian virtue. As in France, however, the deaconesses of Amsterdam seem to have been an institution which was not part of, yet which was in some sense under the direction of, the consistory.

What ultimately emerged in the Dutch church order was a different emphasis and formulation than that found in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession. But during the formative period of Dutch Reformed church

life, the definition of both the diaconate and the consistory in the church order was the result of a process of adopting and adapting materials in various broader assemblies. That process is worth summarizing.

The Convent of Wesel, 1568, chaired by Datheen, marks the generally accepted point of departure for the shaping of the Dutch church order. Formulations from earlier Walloon assemblies gave way for various reasons to those of Wesel and subsequent gatherings. Wesel's nineteen statements on deacons included such positions as defining the office as a ministry of mercy, recognizing Calvin's two types of deacon, and allowing local latitude on many issues related to implementing the office. Because of its significance for today's discussion of women in office, Wesel's provision for women deacons is noteworthy. It allowed that where appropriate, older women of proven and honorable behavior could, following apostolic example, be appointed as deacons. ("Op die plaatsen, waar dit gelegen zal komen, oordeelen wij, dat ook vrouwen van beproefd en eerbaren levenswandel en die van gevorderden leeftijd zijn, naar het voorbeeld der Apostelen terecht tot dit ambt kunnen aangenomen worden.") It is important to note that Wesel defined *consistory* as elders and pastors. Thus the gathering that admitted women to the full diaconate excluded them from the consistory, which by definition excluded all deacons. Technically Wesel had no binding authority on the Dutch churches, for those who participated in this assembly were not delegated by their consistories. Their actions were designed to advise and to guide the churches until a proper synod could be convened.

Beginning with Emden, 1571, the Dutch began to convene genuine synods which in turn took steps toward shaping a binding church order. Emden included ministers, elders, and deacons in consistory and advocated weekly meetings of this body (Article 6). It can legitimately be questioned, however, how heavily this decision ought to be emphasized, since the focus of the Emden synod's decisions was on completely different concerns. It was preoccupied with such matters as a policy for church discipline, a valid ministry to transients, and getting the record-keeping procedures and archives of the emerging Dutch congregations on a proper footing. The synod was not concerned to define the offices and their duties. Nor was it interested in housekeeping organizational policy. Thus the statement on consistory is incidental, perhaps borrowed without much reflection or discussion from the Belgic Confession or the French churches. What role a Lasco's thought, the guidelines of Wesel, or French practices played in the church life of the respective delegations present is impossible to determine. But given the situation in the Dutch churches at this time, it is not rash to judge that all of these elements were present in Dutch church practice in the early 1570s. That a strong strain of French influence was present at Emden is undeniable both from the already mentioned statement on consistory and from an appended statute on classical representation. That action provided that each classis should send a delegation to provincial synods that consisted of two ministers and the same number of elders and deacons, or at least one minister and either an elder or deacon if the former requirement could not be met. At this stage in Dutch church life, therefore, allowance was

made for diaconal representation at broader assemblies. But what must be stressed is that the Emden decisions do not qualify as a church order. Their actions are random decisions on a diverse number of pressing practical problems and questions.

It was the Synod of Dordrecht, 1574, which adopted ninety articles which constitute a complete church order. During the intervening three years, article 6 of Emden had raised questions and caused confusion in the churches. Classis Zeeland accordingly requested clarification. Dordrecht responded with an article that defined consistory as ministers, elders, and deacons but went on to add other qualifications. It provided for separate meetings for elders and ministers on the one hand, and for deacons on the other. It also stated that in places where there were few elders, deacons might be admitted (to the consistory), if the consistory desired ("na de begheerte der Consistorie"). Finally, the same article said that deacons were compelled to appear before them whenever the consistory summoned them. In the last two provisions it certainly seems that the word *consistory* is being used in the more limited sense of elders and ministers. If so, this article contains within it the two historically different senses of *consistory*. The opening statement employs the term in the sense of Emden and France; the latter two qualifications use it, then, in the sense of Calvin, Laasco, and Wesel. Even if that interpretation should be discredited, 1574 is the date when Dutch Reformed church order clearly stipulated what has since come to be known as the general and the restricted consistory. This distinction was officially sanctioned in the church order itself when it was introduced into the revised Christian Reformed Church Order in 1965.

Subsequent to 1574 the common phrasing in Dutch church orders and in the liturgical form for the ordination of elders and deacons was to speak of "the consistory and the deacons." This is the case in the Synod of Dordrecht, 1578, articles I/4 and I/14. That synod also restricted delegations to classis and synod to ministers and elders (articles II/11, 12, and 19). The Synod of Middelburg clarified the ambiguity of Dordrecht, 1574, by defining consistory as ministers and elders (article 28). After 1581 that perception remained unchanged until 1965, although in the 1930s there was the beginning of a movement in the CRC to change that formulation to include the deacons. That Middelburg carried its definition through consistently can be seen in articles 4 and 15. The National Synod of The Hague, 1586, functioned with the same definition of consistory (article 8), and it is the synod which provided the conditions by which deacons in small congregations might be made members of the consistory as an exception to the general policy (article 35). It was also the Synod of The Hague which adopted the ordination form for elders and deacons which was used in the CRC until 1934. The form defines consistory as elders and ministers, and it bases the office of deacon on Acts 6. Its twofold task of gathering alms and of dispersing them has strong echoes of Calvin, even though it no longer recognizes two types of deacon.

By 1586, therefore, the nature of the diaconal office and its function in the life of the Dutch Reformed churches had received fairly explicit, refined formulation. Even the famous Synod of Dordrecht, 1618-1619,

which adopted the church order which was definitive for centuries afterward, did not essentially change the formulations developed through the Synod of The Hague, 1586, as far as the diaconate is concerned. This is not to say that the diaconate did not receive vigorous discussion. In *Onze Eeredienst*, 1911, Abraham Kuyper argued convincingly for a deeper theological understanding of the diaconate than that which was reflected in the official form and church order. His assessment was shared by many others in the revived Calvinism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Perhaps it was appeals such as Kuyper's that awakened it, but in the 1920s and 1930s a number of CRC thinkers developed a theological explanation of church offices that had significant implications for the understanding of the diaconate. Whereas Dutch Reformed Christianity since Middelburg, 1581, had recognized four ecclesiastical offices (article 2), men like Heyns, Monsma, and Van Dellen argued that the threefold office of Christ was reflected in the special ecclesiastical offices of minister, elder, and deacon. The implications drawn from this model were that there could be three and only three special offices in the church, that deacons fully and properly belonged in consistory, and that the official literature of the church had to be reexplained and/or reworked. The ordination form was changed in 1934, as noted above. Theological explanations from this era made the separation and distinction of deacons and consistory an exception or "concession" rather than the rule it had been since 1581. This position was adopted by a synodical decision in 1937. By 1941 Monsma and Van Dellen contended in their *Church Order Commentary* that there were three and only three special or particular offices in the church. By 1965 these ideas were written into the revised Church Order.

The logical outcome of this line of thinking can be seen in Klaas Dijk's *De Eenheid der Ambten*, 1949. Dijk argued that there is really only one special office in the church of Christ. All special offices as we know them are really specialized derivations from the one office of apostle. This points to the essential unity of the offices. Dijk went so far as to espouse simply electing office-bearers and letting them determine among themselves how they would divide the functions that have to be carried out in the service of the church. It will be obvious from the thrust of our report that such positions rest on theological conjecture that ignores the historical development of the office of deacons generally and the dominant formulations explaining that office in the Dutch Reformed tradition particularly. But it was this unifying theological interpretation that influenced the revised Church Order of 1965.

In the last two decades the CRC has felt a new awareness of the opportunities for diaconal service. The establishment of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee both reflects and fosters a willingness to face the global dimensions of showing Christian mercy in the name of Christ. A new, provisional form for the ordination of elders and deacons is currently under scrutiny in the denomination. It attempts to overcome some perceived weaknesses in both the 1586 and 1934 forms where the deacons are concerned by reflecting a sense of what it means for God's people to have deacons in an affluent, welfare-dependent world such as ours.

In the Presbyterian tradition the diaconate has never been confused and mingled with the eldership in consistory or presbytery. Deacons are under the supervision and direction of the elders of the congregation. But they do not function in the consistory or presbytery and thus are freed from the administrative or governing functions in the church. Since this position lends itself to a clear distinguishing of the traditional interpretation of male headship from the diaconal office, Presbyterians have not had the complications that the Dutch Reformed have faced in considering admission of women to the diaconate.

The Reformed tradition has developed and consistently maintained both a theory and a practice of the diaconate which is distinct among the branches of the Christian faith. It stresses benevolence and the demonstration of mercy as the official, ecclesiastically rooted task of deacons. Within this area of agreement there have been differences of accent and even of interpretation, particularly of sixteenth-century developments at some points. But the basic thrust of the office has always been understood to be the demonstration of Christ's mercy to those in need.

C. The 1973 Guidelines on Office and Ordination and Subsequent Developments

Another factor that our committee was asked to consider in working toward a definition of the office of deacon is the set of twelve guidelines adopted by the Synod of 1973 with respect to ecclesiastical office and ordination. In studying those guidelines and the six observations adopted by synod as a framework for understanding the guidelines, we feel that the office of deacon as traditionally (i.e., before 1978) known and practiced in the CRC can be rather aptly defined in terms of the guidelines.

The particular ministry of the deacon exists as a special task within the context of the service or ministry given by Christ to all members of his church (guidelines 1 and 2). As a specially designated office or ministry of mercy, it "is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing" among all believers (guideline 3). Rather, to set aside deacons for a specifically defined ministry of mercy recognizes that some believers have been unusually gifted by the Spirit in this area and that the church can "carry out Christ's work in the world most effectively" by ordaining or designating some of these individuals to do this work (guidelines 3, 4, and 9). The work of mercy should be done in a spirit of loving service and not one of "dominance or privilege" and those who are served by deacons, as well as the entire people of God, ought to respond to the work and ought to recognize the gifts of deacons in a spirit of "obedience and respect" (guideline 5). The work of deacons is functionally distinct from the assigned tasks of the other particular ministries or offices (guideline 6).

The guidelines treating the Word and sacraments (7 and 8) and the laying on of hands (11 and 12) are not pertinent to the definition of the office of deacon, although the latter do allow for the ordination of deacons by the laying on of hands, it would appear. Guideline 12 "leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its particular ministries in order to carry

out effectively its service to Christ and for Christ in all circumstances." The ministry of deacon could, according to this article, presumably be changed or adjusted to suit new challenges and opportunities if the church so decided. According to the observation adopted in 1973, such changes in the office of deacon could be "introduced only by way of revision of the Church Order as decided by synod." Following the prescribed procedure, synod could, after weighing all other pertinent factors, make the kinds of changes in the office of deacon that it did in 1978. We point out that the guidelines allow also for the kind of action that the church took when it created the office of evangelist.

The problem does not come in attempting to define the office of deacon in the light of the 1973 guidelines, therefore. Rather, it emerges when the 1978 decision to open the office of deacon to women as well as to men is considered in the light of the observations adopted in 1973. It will be remembered that in 1972 synod asked the study committee on ecclesiastical office and ordination to continue their work for another year and to focus specifically on the question of authority as it relates to ecclesiastical office. The committee presented its completed work in 1973. In that year synod's advisory committee observed that the notes of authority and service had not been integrated in the guidelines. Synod subsequently adopted six observations "as the framework within which the 'guidelines for understanding the nature of ecclesiastical office and ordination' are to be understood." Those observations affirm that with the appointment or ordination to particular ministries is given the authorization or authority to fulfill Christ's call to serve in those capacities. Observation 2 attempted to balance the biblical emphases of service and authority when it said, "Nowhere in the New Testament is there a conflict between authority and service, or between ruling and love. Christian authority involves service in the name of the authoritative Christ, and Christian service involves authority in the name of the serving Christ." In the light of these observations the question before us becomes whether women can legitimately—that is, biblically—assume particular ministries that inherently contain both the dimensions of authority and service. The advisory committee in 1979 puzzled over this and similar questions. It asked, "Is it necessary that women who serve as deacons be ordained? What 'authority' resides in ordination to the office of deacon and/or becoming a member of the consistory?"

The question is further complicated by the difficulties which the 1978 committee admitted and which our committee has, admittedly, not been able to resolve. The 1978 report noted that there are two strands of biblical thought on male-female and/or on husband-wife relationships. One strand "sets forth the female's equal worth with the male, the other enjoins a certain subordination of the wife (woman) to the husband (man)." The committee was perplexed about how the two emphases ought to be correlated and saw this difficulty as a real obstacle preventing clarity on the issue of women in ecclesiastical office in general. The problem roots in the limitations of the biblical languages, which employ the same words for both sexual differentiation (man, woman) and social roles (husband, wife). While Scripture clearly teaches the headship and

thus the authority—for “headship involves an element of authority”—of husband over wife, it may also do so for man as the head of the woman. The committee was uncertain about the latter.

In attempting to unravel the intertwining motifs that have emerged in the various study and advisory committee documents in the last number of years, we make the following points. Clarity of thought and precision of expression on these matters will better enable us to answer some of the remaining questions.

First, the nettlesome idea of authority deserves comment. The 1973 report on office and ordination and that year’s advisory committee talked about and used that term without providing a crisp definition. Perhaps none can be given. But we are convinced that more clarity is needed on this idea. Particularly the 1973 “observations” indicate that all the particular ministries or services in the church bear a certain authority to serve. The committee rightfully stripped that notion, when used ecclesiastically, of such associations as unloving domination, status for its own sake, exploitation, and mere prestige of title or position. Yet, it failed to distinguish how authority as a valid dimension of the particular ministries and offices might be qualified by the functions comprising those ministries. We note that authority can be defined as the designation, authorization, empowerment, or “enablement” of an individual to do a certain task. Thus Paul as an apostle claims the authority given him by the Lord for building up the Corinthian Christians (2 Cor. 10:8). In fact he writes his second letter to them that he might not have to be harsh in his use of this authority when he comes to visit them (2 Cor. 13:10). Included in the biblical word for *authority* are the related connotations of “right,” “power,” “ability,” and “freedom” (see such contexts using *exousia* as John 1:12, Revelation 2:26-27 and 22:14, Acts 8:19, Hebrews 13:10, and 1 Corinthians 6:12 and 8:9). It follows from these brief biblical references and from what 1973 affirmed that the minister or pastor has received from Christ the authorization, the designation, the power, the right, the freedom to do his designated duties. In the same way elders and deacons and evangelists receive from the Lord their authority to do these services or ministries.

Second, we hold with 1973 that ordination is “the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for special ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church’s total ministry” (guideline 9). It is the public occasion or event at which the ministry, with both its prescribed functions and its authority to do them, commences. All the particular ministries recognized by the Church Order should commence with an ordination service, at which the laying on of hands may or may not be employed. Neither such a service itself nor the specific action of laying on hands is sacramental in nature. No special grace is conferred. Rather, at such a service and by such a rite the church recognizes and affirms that the person ordained has been called by the Lord through the church for a specific ministry or office. If the church decides to amend its Church Order either to admit women into the present diaconate or to reinstitute the office of deaconess, there is no valid biblical or historical reason why ordination should not become a part of designating persons for such service. Rather, the onus would be on those

who would suggest that ordination would not be needed or appropriate in such situations. To our way of thinking such a suggestion is contradictory, for in effect it would be saying that the church designates certain persons for particular ministries but that it does not want to recognize them in those positions!

Headship, we suggest in the third place, is a specific and a limited function and position which has its own uniquely qualified authority. Animated debate about the nature and the extent of headship continues in exegetical discussions. Differences of accent can be found even in the three CRC study committee reports on women in ecclesiastical office—1973, 1975, 1978. The first report leaned more heavily toward an interpretation of headship as "source or origin." The 1978 report, emphasizing the complexity of the term, explicitly pointed out that headship of the husband over the wife contains a dimension of authority as rule which predates the fall into sin and thus ought to be upheld in marriage and by the church. At the same time the same report admitted that because it could not determine exegetically whether this headship extended beyond the husband-wife relationship, it could not say whether women could or could not hold all ecclesiastical offices. We admire the 1978 report's candor and precision in focusing the church's attention on this problem. We affirm the pastoral wisdom of the minority report and of synod in wanting to clearly distinguish the work of elders from that of deacons, when women serve in the diaconate, so long as ambiguity about the extent of headship remains. What everyone responsible for the 1978 decision apparently saw was that headship as the specifically qualified function of exercising rule did not preclude women from serving as deacons, even if headship had wider application than the marriage relationship. With the early church and segments of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches they understood that headship functions did not inherently apply to the particular ministry of deacons. If deacons' work could thus be carefully distinguished from the work of elders, the possible risk of contradicting the biblical teaching on headship would be avoided. What remained only implicit in 1978 was a carefully worked out understanding on the supervising, ruling, directing work of elders as being precluded for women deacons since they might be expressive of the headship principle more widely applied. The Church Order includes in its definition of the work of elders the "supervision over the congregation and their fellow office-bearers, exercising admonition and discipline and seeing to it that everything is done decently and in order" (Article 24). Rightly or wrongly, these have historically been perceived as ruling and headship functions. As long as the extent and the application of the headship idea are as ill-defined as they now are, the church is well-advised not to admit women to the offices which may embody headship functions.

A fourth area needing comment is the Reformed definition of *consistory*. As presently constituted in the CRC the consistory embraces a variety of functions. It is responsible for a wide and dynamic assortment of services. Some of these tasks are more clearly of a supervisory and governing character, others of a serving, helping, advising nature. Supervision has been seen as the work of elders; works of mercy, the duty of deacons. The elders' responsibilities are compatible with a wider ap-

plication of the headship principle to ecclesiastical organizations. The confusion comes because the CRC (and the tradition on which it is based) has historically not sharply distinguished in its structure these two types of functions. It has tended to blend them rather than to isolate them. Thus deacons, according to the church order in force from the 1580s until 1965, had to concur in such governing tasks as the calling of a minister, the nomination of office-bearers, granting permission to a minister to accept a call, discipline of office-bearers, and mutual censure. Elders have likewise long been instructed to perform their tasks with a deep sense of service and compassion for the flock of Christ. Since 1965 and in the early French Reformed congregations, and thus by derivation in the Belgic Confession, the organizational lines of distinction between elder and deacon are even less explicit.

In discussing which course of action to recommend to the churches in the light of the above, our committee could not come to unanimity. We thoroughly explored the following possibilities:

1. That the CRC introduce a form of government which would distinguish the consistory (elders and ministers) from the diaconate (deacons), to which women could then be admitted;
2. That the CRC employ the present distinction between "general consistory" and "restricted consistory," specify the functions involved in each, and admit women to the office of deacon and to service on the general consistory;
3. That the CRC not permit women to serve in any of the ecclesiastical offices;
4. That the CRC introduce the office of deaconess but not allow deaconesses to serve on the council or consistory of the church.

Positions 1, 2, and 3 all found advocates on our committee and are developed as appended recommendations to this main, unanimously adopted section of our report.

A word of explanation is in order at this point about number 4 above. After extensive discussion, none of our members was ready to recommend this solution as their first option. Some members are strongly opposed to this option—one because he is strongly convinced that women may hold no office in the church, others because they believe that this approach unbiblically subordinates women to men. Other members were willing to regard this suggestion as a second or perhaps a third preference. It does allow our present Church Order to stand with changes required only in Article 2, 3, 23, 25, and 35. It has also been employed by the church in the past. It would distinguish the work of deaconesses from that of elders, as 1978 required. It should also be pointed out that a serious problem with this suggestion is that it, by removing deaconesses from the consistory and placing them under the direction of deacons, subordinates one office to the others and thus violates Article 95 of the Church Order. By removing this office from consistory, the church might be isolating one office from the others in such a way as to impair its effectiveness and render a tacit judgment on its relative unimportance in the life of the church. Our committee, therefore, is not inclined to recommend this approach.

IV. DELEGATION OF DEACONS TO MAJOR ASSEMBLIES

A final matter that requires our attention is the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. The Synod of 1980 instructed our committee to consider an overture it received from Classis Muskegon regarding the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. We were asked to demonstrate the implications which our report and recommendations would have for delegating deacons to major assemblies and to spell these out for synod in our report.

Our survey of biblical and particularly of historical material shows that deacons have played an infrequent and minor role at the church's synods and councils. In the early church they were sometimes present as the bishop's assistant or designated spokesman. In the French Reformed churches they were for a time delegated to synods. But it should also be noted that in that communion they also performed other functions not commonly associated with the diaconal office (evangelizing, performing weddings, etc.), and the character of the diaconate in Reformed sections of France bears a highly exceptional character. In some traditions deacons were understudies for the priesthood, in others they function outside the organized church; in both instances they did not contribute as regular representatives to synods and councils to the government of the church.

Our reflections on such vital ideas as "authority," "headship," "consistory," and "ordination" have led several of us to a position which has distanced the deacons even more than they presently are in the CRC from the governing and policy making functions within the church. By distinguishing the work of all deacons, not just female deacons, more clearly from the work of elders in our recommended changes in the Church Order, we feel that we have clearly moved away from delegating deacons to major assemblies. By recommending the establishment of the diaconate as a universal, distinct structure within our churches, some of us have even removed the deacons from the consistory. This conclusion would clearly move in the opposite direction from the course of action recommended in the overture from Classis Muskegon.

One member approaches the problem by taking into consideration that at major assemblies the offices as such are not functioning but the consistories through their delegations. He sees in principle no obstacle to also delegating deacons to act on behalf of consistories at major assemblies. Since in that function deacons represent the consistories as the governing bodies, the concept of headship as presently understood would exclude female deacons from being delegated to major assemblies.

For a third opinion on the issue of delegating deacons to major assemblies we refer you to the concluding section of the first minority report.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the chairman, Dr. Richard R. De Ridder, and the reporter, Dr. James A. De Jong, and a representative of each minority position be given the privilege of the floor at synod.

B. That in the light of our biblical and historical survey synod affirm the historic Reformed understanding of the office of deacon as the church's official ministry of mercy to the church and to the world.

C. That synod refer this report to the churches for their information and study.

D. That synod discharge our committee.

Committee re Studies on Women
in Office and Decisions Pertaining to the
Office of Deacon

Richard R. De Ridder, chairman

James A. De Jong, reporter

Edward Van Baak, secretary

John De Haan

Peter M. Jonker

Carl G. Kromminga

Henry Vander Kam (with certain
reservations)

Mary Vander Vennen

VI. MAJORITY REPORT

As the majority of the committee, we offer a solution based on two premises. First, with three study committees and the 1978 advisory committee, we are convinced that all confessing members who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon. Second, we are equally convinced, in the light of the uncertainty regarding the extent and application of the "headship principle," that the office of deacon must be sharply and clearly distinguished from the office of elder if women are to be ordained as deacons.

Our present church polity, based on very recent trends, leads to a sharing of tasks and a blurring of distinctions between elders and deacons. Such a structure would place women in a context of participating in the spiritual government and supervision assigned to the consistory. This poses the real problem of possibly violating the headship principle. The best solution, it seems to us, is the long-enduring and tested practice in the Reformed tradition of distinguishing the consistory (elders and ministers) from the diaconate (deacons).

Not only would this proposal return the church to a long-standing Church Order distinction, but it would also provide a clean, unambiguous way of distinguishing the work of the offices. More importantly, it would eliminate the almost impossible task of distinguishing which discussions and decisions in our present consistorial structure are governing or ruling in nature and where, consequently, the legitimacy of female participation is in doubt. To narrow the unique tasks of spiritual supervision on the part of the elder to the three marks of the true church as proposed elsewhere, strikes us not only as a questionable application of

Belgic Confession, Article XXIX, but it is also a far narrower restriction of the elder's work than is specified by our present Church Order Article 24. Our suggestion has the further advantage of not distinguishing between the work of male and that of female deacons; it would not introduce two levels of deacon, which would be the case if deaconesses would be introduced. Our proposed solution gives the church opportunity to develop both the office of elder and that of deacon to their full capacities and provides these offices with the freedom to function in ways which are responsible and appropriate to our age. It is finally noteworthy that this suggestion requires relatively few changes in the Church Order. We emphasize that our proposal in no way obligates any congregation to admit women to the office of deacon.

The Church Order changes would appear as follows:

The Present Church Order

Required Change

Article 3

Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for office-bearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

- a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister, elder, and evangelist.
- b. All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon.
- c. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

SUPPLEMENT, ARTICLE 3

Women as Deacons

The work of deacons is to be distinguished from that of elders.

Heading of Articles 35-38

B. The Consistory

B. The Consistory and Diaconate

Article 35

- a. In every church there shall be a consistory composed of the office-bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church.
- b. Where the number of elders is at least four, a distinction may be made between the general consistory, to which all office-bearers belong, and the restricted consistory, in which the deacons do not participate.
- c. When such a distinction is made, the supervision and discipline of the congregation shall be vested in the restricted consistory. The work of Christian mercy shall be the task of the deacons, who shall render account of their work to the general consistory. All other matters belong to the general consistory.

- a. In every church there shall be a consistory composed of the elders and the minister(s) of the Word. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church.
- b. In every church there shall be a diaconate composed of the deacons of the church. The diaconate is responsible for the work of Christian mercy. The diaconate shall render account of its work to the consistory.
- c. Wherever the number of elders is small, male deacons may be added to the consistory according to local regulation. This shall be the rule wherever the number of elders is less than three.

Article 36

- a. The consistory shall meet at least once a month, at a time and place announced to the congregation. Ordinarily the meeting shall be presided over by the minister, or in the absence of the minister by one of the elders.
- b. The consistory, at least four times per year, shall exercise mutual censure, which concerns the performance of the official duties of the office-bearers.
- a. The consistory and the diaconate shall both meet at least once a month, and at a time and place announced to the congregation. Ordinarily consistory meetings shall be presided over by the minister, or in the absence of the minister by a designated elder. The meetings of the diaconate shall be presided over by a chairperson elected by the diaconate from among its membership.
- b. Both the consistory and the diaconate, at least four times a year, shall exercise mutual censure, which concerns the performance of the official duties of the office-bearers.

Article 38

- a. Groups of believers among whom no consistory can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring consistory, designated by classis.
- b. When a consistory is being constituted for the first time the approval of classis is required.
- a. Groups of believers among whom no consistory and diaconate can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring consistory, designated by classis.
- b. When a consistory and diaconate are being constituted for the first time, the approval of classis is required.

In the light of the above discussion and proposals, *we make the following recommendations:*

A. That synod decide to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders, by adopting the Church Order changes outlined in our proposal above.

Ground:

These proposed changes are consistent with and follow from our argumentation in this report.

B. That synod restrict the churches from actually appointing/electing and ordaining/installing women deacons until the Church Order revisions contained above are ratified by the Synod of 1982.

Grounds:

- 1) This will give the churches the necessary time to study adequately the changes called for.
- 2) This action is consistent with the intent and the letter of Church Order Article 47.

James A. De Jong
Richard R. De Ridder
Peter M. Jonker
Edward A. Van Baak

VII. MINORITY REPORT I

The committee was unable to come to clarity on the question of headship. This was due not only to a lack of agreement on what it means and how it applies to the question of women deacons, but even more basically, a lack of agreement on how to get hold of the issue. Though most seemed to agree that Scripture does not speak with complete clarity on the issue, there was a difference of opinion as to how much social and historical developments within the New Testament period and afterwards should be taken into account in interpreting the headship principle today. There was also disagreement as to how the church today should proceed, given the ambiguity around the headship principle.

We are not willing, without further compelling evidence, to assume that (1) the headship principle extends beyond the husband-wife relation to man-woman, and (2) that whatever authority resides in headship is directly applicable to the question of women in ecclesiastical office.

Though we believe with the rest of the committee that the work of deacons needs to be distinguished from that of elders, we believe that that distinction should be made on the basis of the functions of the offices, not on the basis of a male-female distinction.

In addressing the problem assigned to our committee, we proceeded on the fundamental assumption that the consistory has the task of insuring that God's grace is proclaimed and demonstrated adequately both within the church and in the community. Therefore, both elders and deacons have functions properly belonging to the consistory.

It is our conviction that the Christian Reformed Church should clarify the *basic* or *ultimate* authoritative role of eldership and should encourage the structuring of the offices in such a way that the elders' specific (or generic) calling is unambiguous. We propose to link closely the teaching of the Belgic Confession, Article XXIX, regarding the marks of the true church, and the specific task of the ministers and elders. Although Article XXX of the Confession does not clearly distribute the functions of the "council" over the three offices (for reasons see the full report, above, III, B, 3), it appears from Article XXXI that the maintenance and securing of good order "according to the pure Word of God" (Art. XXIX) is located in the offices of the minister and elder. The language of the third paragraph of Article XXXI supports this contention.

It is our conviction that there is a clear area of authority which is the specific responsibility of the eldership. We propose, therefore, that Article 35 of the Church Order be amended to read as follows:

A. In every church there shall be a consistory of the office-bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church.

B. The minister(s) and elders constitute the restricted consistory charged with the ultimate maintenance of the marks of the true church: the preaching of the pure doctrine of the gospel, the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ, and the exercise of church discipline. This responsibility may not be shared or delegated.

C. The deacons constitute the board of deacons charged with the ministry of mercy.

D. All matters which are not the specific responsibility of the restricted consistory or the board of deacons belong to the general consistory.

This revision of Article 35 clearly specifies the responsibility of the restricted consistory. In this way the concept of the elder's office as a ruling office is significantly clarified and made concrete. No doubt the "general government" of the church spoken of in Article 35a both in its present form and in this proposed revision involves an element of rule and authority. It is important to note, however, that there, as in other areas of life—the family, for example—the concept of "ruling" is capable of being construed narrowly or broadly. The strictest sense of the concept of "ruling" is represented by the description of the responsibility of the restricted consistory in our proposed revision.

We must now ask what implication this proposed revision of Article 35 has for the question of ordination of women in the office of deacon. Under our system of church government a certain *limited* ruling function is accorded all confessing members of the church. In 1957, when synod decided to allow women to vote in congregational meetings, the study committee in this matter argued that in the congregational meeting the congregation had *limited* authority and *helped* the consistory govern. Relating this conception of the authority of the congregational meeting to the question of women voting in such meetings, the report went on to state:

For the subject in hand, namely, the voting of women at congregational meetings, this conclusion regarding the nature of congregational meetings is of importance. The fact that these meetings have only a *limited* authority and are a matter of *helping* to govern the church is significant. In the exercise of the right of approbation, we also have an act of helping to govern the church, and this right has always been accorded to women in the Reformed churches. (*Acts of Synod 1957*, p. 311.)

The framers of that report took a clear position against women holding a teaching or ruling office in the church (cf. *Acts of Synod 1957*, pp. 311-14). Nevertheless, the concept of "collaboration" or "helping" in some aspects of the governance of the church by women as well as men was carefully set forth.

There is, however, an even more telling bit of evidence that women, in principle, have not been excluded from certain aspects of the governing of the church. The Reformed churches have repeatedly affirmed that when a congregation is to be organized, or when office-bearers in an existing congregation are unfaithful to their charge and refuse to amend their ways, the office of all believers must function *directly* in the government of the church with a view to its formation or reformation (cf. M. Monsma and I. Van Dellen, *The Revised Church Order Commentary*, p. 149). Although historically such action was probably initiated and carried out primarily or exclusively by the male members of the congregation, the fact that this right and duty is anchored in the office of all believers—that office in virtue of which women vote at congregational meetings—indicates that sexual identity is not a criterion for establishing this right.

It is our contention that women may function in the office of deacon if the reading of Article 35 of the Church Order proposed above is adopted. In the general consistory *various* kinds of authority are represented and they function by *collaboration*. In this situation the authority of the women deacons would be limited not by reason of their being women but by reason of their being deacons. Along with the male deacons they *assist* the elders in specified aspects of the government of the church.

Our proposed revision of Article 35 gives specific content to the unique authority of the restricted consistory. Whatever tasks deacons engage in—with the elders—constitute collaboration with and assistance to the eldership and should not be construed as compromising the unique responsibility of the ministers and elders as set forth in Articles 12 and 24. If women serve in the office of deacon it is clear that they, like the male deacons, are excluded from this specific dimension of authority described in these articles.

Therefore, the following wording of Article 3 of the Church Order adopted by the Synod of 1978, should be ratified:

Article 3

a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister and elder.

b. All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon.

Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that the following articles of Church Order be changed and ratified:

1. That Article 35 of the Church Order be amended to read as follows:

a. In every church there shall be a consistory of the office-bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church.

b. The minister(s) and the elders constitute the restricted consistory charged with the ultimate maintenance of the marks of the true church: the preaching of the pure doctrine of the gospel, the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ, and the exercise of church discipline. This responsibility may not be shared or delegated.

c. The deacons constitute the board of deacons charged with the ministry of mercy.

d. All matters which are not the specific responsibility of the restricted consistory or the board of deacons belong to the general consistory.

Grounds:

(1) This wording makes a clear distinction between the offices of the ministers and elders on the one hand and deacons on the other.

- (2) This wording makes the distinction between the restricted and general consistory on the basis of function and not size.
 - (3) This wording expresses a distinction which removes an obstacle to the implementation of the decision of the Synod of 1978 allowing women to serve in the office of deacon "providing their work is distinguished from that of elder."
2. That the following wording of Article 3 of the Church Order, adopted by the Synod of 1978, be ratified:

Article 3

- a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister and elder.
- b. All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon.
- c. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Grounds:

- 1) This is the wording adopted by the Synod of 1978 and is in line with the conclusions of the study committees reporting to the synods of 1973, 1975, 1978.
 - 2) This wording restricts nomination to the office of elder to confessing male members.
3. That in the following articles of Church Order the word "consistory" be replaced with the words "restricted consistory": Nos. 53, 55, 56, 59, 60, 66, 69, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91, and 92.

Ground:

This will bring the wording of the Church Order into conformity with the distinction adopted in 1 above.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. In view of the considerable ambiguity around the headship principle, we feel that progress will not be made in clarifying the possible role of women in the office of elder and minister until a comprehensive study is made by a committee composed of theologians and historians, men and women, on (1) what the Bible says about the relationship between men and women before the fall, after the fall, and after the accomplishment of redemption in Christ, and (2) the various interpretations by the church from the New Testament to the present day of what the Bible says and the practices the church has adopted through history based on these interpretations.

2. Concerning the question of the delegation of deacons to major assemblies: As long as the work of deacons is clearly distinguished from that of elders, we cannot see any fundamental reason why deacons should not be delegated to major assemblies along the lines suggested by the plan of Classis Muskegon. However, there are many practical considerations that need to be addressed before a final decision is made.

John De Haan
 Carl G. Kromminga
 Mary Vander Vennen

VII. MINORITY REPORT II

Because there is a substantial difference of opinion between myself and the rest of our committee, I feel conscience bound to submit this minority report.

The question of women serving in ecclesiastical office has been before us for a decade. It did not come to synod by way of a consistory or a classis, but came by way of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to our Synod of 1970. This synod decided to appoint a committee "to examine in the light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church." This committee reported in 1973 and concluded that "the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office cannot conclusively be defended on biblical grounds." The Synod of 1973 decided to refer the report to the churches for study and to appoint a new study committee.

This committee reported to the Synod of 1975 and recommended that "synod declare that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready or willing to open her offices to women." It also recommended "that synod adopt the following guideline regarding women in ecclesiastical office: biblical teaching is not opposed in principle to the ordination of women to any office that men may hold in the church." The Synod of 1975 stated "that Synod declares that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice." It also declared "that sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order." Moreover, this synod adopted the recommendation "that synod appoint a committee composed of Old Testament and New Testament scholars to undertake a study of the hermeneutical principles which are involved in the proper interpretation of the relevant Scripture passages, and to present synod with the results of their study."

This committee to study the hermeneutical principles reported in 1978 and the majority recommended that "consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon as delineated in the Church Order Article 25." The recommendation of the minority of the committee was adopted by Synod 1978: "That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders."

The Synod of 1979 was faced with a large number of overtures, appeals, and communications concerning this matter; and the advisory committee dealing with these communications was not able to come to a clear decision. Upon recommendation of this advisory committee, synod appointed a committee (the present one) "to review without prejudice the 1978 report on 'Hermeneutical Principles Concerning Women in Ecclesiastical Office' and the decisions of the Synod of 1978 regarding the ordination of women as deacons." This committee was also asked to study and define the office of deacon and to study the implications of the ordination of women to the office of deacon in the light of Church Order Article 35.

From this brief survey of the history of this question over the last ten years it becomes clear that (1) an enormous amount of time and energy has been expended on it; (2) we have benefited from a great amount of exegetical work; (3) the focus has shifted from office in general to the office of deacon.

The mandate given to the present committee by the Synod of 1979 asks for a critical evaluation of the report submitted to Synod in 1978. This critical evaluation is to be made especially of the exegesis given on the basis of the hermeneutical principles which have been applied to the relevant Scripture passages. Our view of Scripture and our understanding of the relevant passages will, in the final analysis, determine our solution to the problem.

The committee which dealt with hermeneutical principles has performed a valuable service to the church in spelling out the principles which must guide us in the interpretation of the Scriptures. However, the committee itself warns that we must not expect too much of such hermeneutical guidelines. "Simply to have a sound hermeneutics does not insure uniformity of results; neither does it preclude some uncertainty as to what a given passage means or does not mean" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 490).

Although the committee (1978) states that 1 Timothy 2:9-15 "is the only New Testament passage which addresses itself directly to the question of the teaching and/or ruling function of women," there are various other New Testament passages, as well as Old Testament passages, which must be considered to give a background and understanding of the problem in its broadest dimensions. The committee first calls our attention to Genesis 1:26-28. In this passage the inspired writer speaks of the fact that God made man in his own image and that he created them male and female. He speaks of their rule over creation and nothing is said about the rule of the one over the other. Both the man and the woman are made in the image of God.

Concerning Genesis 2:18-24 the committee states that "Genesis 2 quite clearly implies that chronologically and biologically man (the male) has priority." Also: "To give a name to a person—and this is certainly true in oriental society—is to exercise a degree of authority over that person." My greatest difficulty with the committee's interpretation of this passage is the statement: "In the light of both the immediate and the broader context it appears to us that the relationship between woman and man expressed by this word 'help(er),' is to be understood in terms of parity." They then speak of an equality of worth. However, the worth of the individual is not in question. The man is not a helper to the woman, but the woman to the man! This view of the meaning of the word *helper* is also not consistent with their interpretation of the priority, chronologically and biologically, of the man. Nor with the interpretation given of the naming of the woman by the man. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 11:8-9 "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." This does not speak of a parity but, rather, a definite order.

In commenting on Genesis 3:16 "he will rule over you," the committee proceeds on the basis of the interpretation given of Genesis 2. "We conclude that, whatever parity existed between husband and wife, with the

wife being her husband's 'helper,' is structured in such a way that the husband is first among equals." Of course, this relationship receives a post-fall expression in this text. The rule of which the text speaks no doubt reflects something of the results of man's sinful condition. The committee then intimates that redemption will remove this rule. Lenski comments on this text: "Man's position in reference to woman is now fixed: he bears the rule. When all is done in the spirit of Christ, such rule is not harsh or unnatural; nor is it cancelled."

The committee then refers to "the patriarchal family in the light of 1 Peter 3:6." No exegesis is given of this important passage. Rather, the committee is satisfied to say that Peter believes that pattern of obedience found in the patriarchal family carries over into the Christian families of the churches to which he is writing. We are cautioned to keep in mind that these words were written in a missionary context. What does this mean? Are these words not normative? This is an application of a dangerous hermeneutic.

Galatians 3:28 is another passage considered. Here the apostle speaks of the fact that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek; bond nor free; male nor female. The committee admits that this passage does not address itself directly to the question of women in ecclesiastical office. However, the committee adds that it "does go beyond the consideration of making us acceptable to God in that it has implications in the area of interpersonal relationships within the church." However, may one draw such implications from this text? The apostle is speaking of the salvation of men. Before him there is no distinction. To say that "Paul treats the men and women in the early Christian fellowship as of equal worth" says nothing concerning *interpersonal relationships*. This text, though often quoted in connection with the question of women in ecclesiastical office, says nothing about this subject. Whenever reference is made to this passage for this purpose, the danger is that one proves too much and the equality in Christ becomes a sameness among human beings.

In its interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, the committee states that the emphasis here differs from that of 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2. "While in the two just mentioned passages Paul instructs women (wives) to be silent, in 1 Corinthians 11 he sets no limits on their praying and prophesying, as long as they are veiled when they do so (11:5)." However, is this correct? Would a difference in emphasis allow the apostle to contradict the statement he makes here only three chapters later? The committee's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:5 makes it difficult to give a logical interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14. Calvin states: "The answer can be given that when the apostle disapproves of the one thing here, he is not giving approval to the other. For when he takes them to task because they were prophesying bare-headed, he is not giving them permission, however, to prophesy in any other way whatever, but rather is delaying the censure of that fault to another passage (chap. 14:34ff.)."

Concerning 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36, which speaks of women keeping silence in the churches and, if they would learn anything, to ask their own husbands at home, the committee gives this interpretation: "The main thing to be noted about women being forbidden to speak in the church assemblies is that this speaking pertained to asking questions."

However, in the "Conclusions Drawn from the Biblical Materials" (B, 3, c) the same committee says: "While one passage in 1 Corinthians (11:5) allows women to pray and prophesy at worship, another passage in 1 Corinthians (14:34) states that a woman (wife) is 'not permitted to speak' at worship." This statement in the "Conclusions" would suggest that the apostle is contradicting himself. The same statement is repeated in the recommendations C, 3, c.

Re 1 Timothy 2:9-15 the committee states: "This is the only New Testament passage which addresses itself directly to the question of the teaching and/or ruling function of women." In this passage Paul states: "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (v. 12). This teaching refers to official teaching in the assembly of God's people. The apostle bases this injunction on the creation and fall. "The committee is not sure as to the precise way in which verses 13 and 14 are supposed to elucidate and validate the injunction of verse 12." In the "Application" of this section, the committee sees, on the one hand, the equality of the role of both male and female in imaging God (Gen. 1 and 2). On the other hand, Genesis 2 implicitly gives to the man a degree of authority over the woman, at least in marriage, and Genesis 3 affirms that the husband will rule over the wife. However, the matter of "equal worth" as image bearers of God has never been in dispute. As creatures they are certainly equal before God. But, in their relationship to each other the Scriptures speak of the one ruling the other.

After a thorough explanation of the hermeneutical principles which ought to be followed and an interpretation of the relevant passages of Scripture dealing with the question of women in ecclesiastical office, the committee makes its recommendations. One is amazed to read the first recommendation of the majority: "There is adequate biblical evidence for opening the office of deacon to women"; and of the minority: "There is some evidence in the Bible for opening the office of deacon to women. At least two passages in the New Testament (Rom. 16:1 and 1 Tim. 3:11) indicate that women may serve as deacons (deaconesses)." This is amazing because these passages of Scripture are treated only incidentally in the report as an implication of the interpretation of Galatians 3:28. Interpreters are by no means united in the committee's view of these texts. Hendriksen says: ". . . the fact that no special and separate paragraph is used in describing their necessary qualifications, but that these are simply wedged in between the stipulated requirements for deacons, with equal clarity, indicates that these women are not to be regarded as constituting a third office in the church, the office of daeconesses, on a par with and endowed with authority equal to that of deacons" (on 1 Tim. 3). Again: "The simplest explanation of the manner in which Paul, not yet finished with the requirements for the office of deacon, interjects a few remarks about women, is that he regards these women as the *deacons' assistants* in helping the poor and needy, etc. These are *women who render auxiliary service*, performing ministries for which women are better adapted" (Hendriksen on 1 Tim. 3). Calvin believes that the apostle is here referring to the wives of both bishops and deacons. In regard to Romans 16:1, Hendriksen states that "no adequate reason has been given

to prove that there the term used in the original does not have its far more usual meaning *servant* (correctly thus rendered in A.V. and in the text of the A.R.V.) or *assistant*, one who *ministers lovingly*; in this case, to the cause of the gospel."

There are two theological problems which must be considered:

1. The Headship Principle

Whenever the question of women in ecclesiastical office is considered the headship principle plays an important role. Each one of the study committees has made mention of this problem.

The term *head* is used various times in the New Testament to reveal the position of Christ in relation to the created order and his position in regard to the church. In Colossians 2:10 Christ is revealed as the "head of all principality and power." This fact must be recognized and confessed by the believer for only thus "are ye made full." In Ephesians 1:22 the apostle speaks of the fact that God "gave him to be head over all things to the church." In Colossians 1:18 Christ is spoken of as the "head of the body, the church." Ephesians 4:15 counsels the believers to "grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ." In Colossians 2:19 Paul warns the believers not to walk according to the manner of the heretics who do not hold fast to the "head" from whom the whole body is supplied and who knits the entire body together.

More specifically to the question before us, the apostle says in 1 Corinthians 11:3: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." It might be argued that the term *head* may mean "source" in the sense in which the term is used in the passages quoted in the previous paragraph. However, in this particular passage this meaning does not do justice to the term. Here the term is used in the sense of authority, rule, giving direction. Christ came to do the will of him who sent him. Man must be subject to Christ. It is in this connection that he speaks of the man being the head of the woman. Ephesians 5:22-24 emphasizes this same idea and adds others: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything." The relation of Christ to the church is here shown to be the example for the relation of husbands and wives. Here he indeed speaks of authority, but it is not the authority of a harsh rule. It is a relationship of love.

I agree with the committee that it is very difficult to ascertain whether the apostle is always speaking of husband-wife relationships, or whether there are times when he speaks more generally of the man-woman relationship. The Greek words for man (*aner*) and woman (*gune*) can be used for both (man-husband) and (woman-wife). However, the headship principle is clearly taught and may not be violated. In the world of the New Testament the distinction did not have to be made because the marriage relationship was not only the normal one, it included virtually everyone. The only exception Paul makes to this relationship is the order of widows.

2. The Office of Deacon

The recommendations of the Minority Report of 1978, which synod adopted in substance, read: "(1) There is some evidence in the Bible for opening the office of deacon to women. At least two passages in the New Testament (Rom. 16:1 and 1 Tim. 3:11) indicate that women may serve as deacons (deaconesses). (2) That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders."

The ground (a) states: "The headship principle in which the woman (wife) is to be subject to the man (husband) is not violated as long as the office of deacon is expressed in terms of assistance and service."

The Belgic Confession (Art. 30) teaches: "We believe that this true church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his Word; namely, that there must be ministers or pastors, to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church; that by these means the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated, likewise transgressors punished and restrained by spiritual means; also that the poor and distressed may be relieved and comforted, according to their necessities. By these means everything will be carried on in the church with good order and decency, when faithful men are chosen according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy."

From this article of our Confession it becomes clear that the offices in the church are three in number and that the work which the church has been given to do will be accomplished when these offices function properly.

In Lord's Day 12 of the Heidelberg Catechism (Q. 31), the offices of Christ are clearly presented. He has been anointed as Prophet, Priest, and King. As the anointed One he has accomplished the glorious salvation of his people. In question 32 of the same Lord's Day the characteristic marks of the Christian are taught. These stand in close relation to the triple office which their Lord has revealed. This is understandable because the church, his body, will reveal the same characteristics as her Lord and Head. The offices in the church are the offices of Jesus Christ. The church, through her offices and her membership, must represent her Lord in every way. The one office of Christ is not more important than the other, and in the church, too, the one is as important and necessary as the other.

Much attention has been given to the nature and function of the office of deacon in our circles in recent years. This has resulted in a renewal of appreciation for this office. The diaconal work carried on locally and by the CRWRC bears testimony to this fact. Of course, the office of deacon is distinct from the office of elder. But, to say that the headship principle is not violated if women serve as deacons provided that this work is distinguished from that of elders, assumes that the authority of the deacon's office is minimal or nonexistent.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the present practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office be maintained.

Grounds:

1. Biblical teaching does not warrant a change (1 Cor. 11:2-16; 14:33-36; 1 Tim. 2:9-15).
2. The headship principle would be violated if women held such office.
3. The nature of office prohibits a change in practice.

Henry Vander Kam

REPORT 33
CHRISTIAN CARE TO RETARDED PERSONS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Synod of 1978 instructed this committee "to study the need of institutional Christian care for covenant members of the CRC who are so profoundly retarded as to be uneducable and/or untrainable beyond the mental and functional level of a one year old; to determine the availability and adequacy of such care in the United States and Canada, having regard to the type of care now available, and to present and future needs for it within the CRC; to recommend appropriate action, if required, taking into account the burden such action would impose for future years on the financial resources of Christian Reformed families" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, Art. 49, p. 61).

We reported our findings to synod the following year in Report 38 (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 662-78). Synod responded by adopting the following recommendations (Art. 69, pp. 79, 80):

1. "That synod declare that the severely and profoundly retarded covenant members mentioned in the synodical mandate of 1978 are entitled to quality Christian care, especially when quality public alternatives are not available."

2. "That synod declare that the churches have the responsibility to support families as they seek quality Christian care for a severely or profoundly retarded child or adult."

3. "That synod request the deacons to share the financial burdens imposed upon individual families by the care of a severely or profoundly retarded member, urging the deacons to read this report and familiarize themselves with the problem."

4. "That synod urge diaconal conferences and/or classes to address this need where it exists and provide financial support as needed."

5. "That synod request Pine Rest Christian Hospital to continue to pursue alternatives to its decision to phase out twenty-four-hour inpatient hospital care, which might allow it to continue to provide such care in a more appropriate program and facilities."

6. "That synod authorize the committee to continue its work for one more year, in order that the committee may:

- a. Monitor the effectiveness of the synodical decisions of 1979;
- b. Study the needs of the larger group of mentally retarded persons who are members of the Christian Reformed Church;
- c. Study the ways in which there can be more effective involvement of the churches in meeting the needs of the mentally retarded and their families;

d. Pursue other concerns and unfinished items listed in the addendum to their report."

We understand the last point (6), listed above with its subpoints, to be our current mandate and thus made that the focus of deliberations during this phase of our work. We assume that, despite greater public initiative and availability of funding, the church's role in ministry to retarded persons should not be diminished. The church must remain committed to its covenantal obligations toward all members. This is consistent not only with the above-mentioned recommendations, but also with the many responses that the committee received from pastors and parents.

Two new members joined the committee, Mr. Ron Gruizinga, who filled the place of a person previously nominated but unable to serve, and Dr. Tom Hoeksema, who replaced Mr. John Dykstra. We note with gratitude the contributions Mr. Dykstra made to the committee's work, and report with sorrow his sudden death on January 1, 1980. He frequently and eloquently voiced concerns from a parent's perspective, particularly what the future might hold for his child should he or his wife pass away, a concern reflected in several communications which we received from other parents.

Here, then, is the second chapter in our efforts to carry out synod's mandate with respect to mentally retarded persons in our denomination.

II. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1979

1. *Pine Rest*, although continuing to provide care for a small group of profoundly retarded persons in the East Wing of the Children's Retreat, is still desiring to phase out that program for the same reasons presented to synod in 1978 and 1979. Several alternate possibilities have been explored but none have been found acceptable thus far. The process of examining options will continue until proper placement for this population can be found or developed.

2. *Bethshan*, an organization formed under auspices of Elim Christian School in Palos Heights, Illinois, hopes to break ground for its first group home during the summer of 1981. This intermediate care facility will become a home for perhaps ten mentally retarded adults who require some supervision.

3. *Cascade Christian Home* has been organized in Lynden, Washington, as a living facility for retarded persons.

4. *Rehoboth* in Edmonton, Alberta, has come into existence as a group home.

5. In *Holland, Michigan*, the Diaconal Conference has undertaken to establish and operate a home for six adults as soon as approval and funding can be obtained.

6. In *Rochester, New York*, a small group of parents is exploring the possibility of establishing a group home.

7. *Christian Horizons*, a nondenominational association in Waterloo, Ontario, operates several group homes and receives considerable support from Christian Reformed congregations and individuals in that province.

8. The Education Department is working on a *curriculum* for use with retarded persons.

It may not be entirely accurate to claim that all of this activity is a direct result of the decisions of the 1979 synodical recommendations. Some planning may have preceded that synod. Undeniably, however, the increased interest and support indicated by the 1979 Synod gave much-needed impetus to all programs. Other programs have been in existence for several years longer: the Eastern Christian Children's Retreat in Wyckoff, New Jersey; Elim in Palos Heights, Illinois; in Iowa, Hope Haven in Rock Valley and Christian Opportunity Center in Pella; Salem in Ontario, California; Bethesda in Mount Lehman, British Columbia. Mentioning these brings along with it the risk that some others are inadvertently omitted. A great deal of concern, interest, and support is obviously evidenced by this long list of active associations for retarded persons.

III. GATHERING CURRENT DATA

As we stated in our previous report, according to commonly held statistics there could be within the Christian Reformed Church as many as eighty-two hundred persons with mild or moderate retardation (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 667). In order to learn where these people live and how satisfactory their living situation is, we prepared a questionnaire. Since we expected a great number of replies, we asked the Calvin College Social Research Center to design the questionnaire in such a way that the response would be meaningful and could easily be tabulated with the help of their computer.

Copies of the questionnaire were sent to all pastors in the denomination with the request they be given to those families and/or guardians within the congregation where there was a person meeting the disability characteristics. Pastors were also asked to inform the committee directly as to the number of such persons within their church. To publicize these efforts further, Gerald Oosterveen prepared a series of articles on the work of the committee which were published in *The Banner* and in *Calvinist Contact* on May 30, June 6, and June 13, 1980.

The objectives of the questionnaire were to learn

1. Age, level of functioning of the person, and additional handicaps
2. Availability of services and type (e.g., school, workshop, etc.)
3. Whether the services were public, private, or church related
4. The quality of the services received
5. Satisfaction with the services received
6. Relationship with the church
 - a. the congregation's attitude toward the handicapped person
 - b. the extent of the handicapped person's involvement in the church program and activities
 - c. church support for the family

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

A. Responses

The results of the questionnaire were quite different than we had anticipated. We appreciate the cooperation of the 572 pastors who took the time to respond to our questionnaire. That was a return rate of 68 percent. It means, however, that one in three pastors did *not* reply. Perhaps some busy pastors did not give the questionnaire adequate attention. It is also possible they did not know which persons in their congregation are mentally retarded. In some cases a determination of retardation is very difficult. Or, again, they may have been reluctant to give a questionnaire to a family where a child actually is mentally retarded but where the condition has not quite been accepted. Completing a questionnaire may set a stamp of finality upon what otherwise can perhaps be avoided.

From the pastors who did reply to our mailing prior to the November 1, 1980, deadline we learned, first of all, that there are at least 285 churches within the denomination that have *no* identified member with mental retardation. We also obtained from them, further, the names of 597 retarded persons. That is only *one-fifth of 1 percent* of the total denominational membership. Because an estimated *3 percent* of the American and Canadian population is commonly considered to be retarded, we assume that the figures we obtained do not by any means include all our retarded members. One committee member, moreover, is aware of 27 retarded persons in his district, yet only 10 of those were identified to the committee through the questionnaires. Appendix I gives the numbers reported for each classis.

Perhaps most surprising was the low response from parents or guardians. Though we had received those 597 names, family members or guardians of only 369 of them responded to the committee. That is a response rate of 62 percent, meaning that in this group also one in three who received a questionnaire chose not to reply. Despite the concerns and enthusiasm expressed by those parents/guardians who completed the questionnaire—providing us in the process with valuable information—we perceive a sense of apathy or resignation on the part of those from whom we did not hear. Or perhaps parents did not respond because they no longer see the church and its agencies as valuable and necessary resources in meeting the needs of their family member. The growing availability of public programs may have dulled in some parents the determination that their child should receive care, training, or supervision in a distinctly Christian environment.

B. Age Levels

The 369 persons identified to us as retarded fall in the following age groups:

68 persons (18 percent)	0 to 10 years
124 persons (34 percent)	11 to 21 years
136 persons (37 percent)	22 to 39 years
19 persons (5 percent)	40 to 49 years
17 persons (5 percent)	50 and older
5 persons (1 percent)	no response to this question

We note from these figures that 88 percent of these persons are under thirty-nine years of age, suggesting that there will likely be an increasing need for alternate housing for them in the future.

C. Degree of Retardation

According to the information received, our retarded members are distributed in these categories as follows:

- 48 persons (13 percent) profoundly retarded (IQ less than 20)
- 65 persons (18 percent) severely retarded (IQ 20-35)
- 185 persons (50 percent) moderately retarded (IQ 36-50)
- 54 persons (15 percent) mildly retarded (IQ 50-70)
- 17 persons (5 percent) no response to this question

We call attention to the surprising discrepancy between the numbers in the mildly retarded category and the other three groups. Nationwide, the mildly retarded make up 90 percent of the retarded population. Yet in our sample they comprise only 15 percent. (For a more detailed discussion about distribution of retarded persons in the various categories see the 1979 report, especially Appendix I.)

It is possible that this group, because of their relatively high level of functioning, is so well integrated into the life and programs of the church that it was felt there was no need to identify them. It may also be that in our denomination, being primarily middle class with mostly stable families, there are far fewer instances of the social neglect and environmental deprivation which sometimes can lead to this level of retardation. Also, it is with this group that the process of denial may be most prevalent; the child is called "slow," and the label "retarded" is avoided to escape possible stigma. Finally, this group may provide the least concern because of the greater availability of public services for this population. We suspect, however, that especially in this category of the mildly retarded there are many more than these numbers indicate.

D. Living Arrangements

As we learned from the questionnaires, this is where our retarded members live:

- 254 persons (69 percent) live at home full time
- 29 persons (8 percent) live at home part time
- 35 persons (10 percent) live in group homes
- 46 persons (13 percent) live in institutions
- 9 persons (2 percent) live in foster homes

Of those living away from home, approximately half live in public facilities, the other half in Christian facilities. Regarding the living arrangements, 88 percent of respondents indicated they were satisfied or mostly satisfied. This includes those where the handicapped person is living at home. Those who were dissatisfied gave as reasons that (1) the child needs constant care; (2) the child needs (and apparently does not have) friends of his own level; (3) parents are concerned for the child's future; (4) no respite care is available; (5) the child causes stress in the family; (6) the institution's staff is unsatisfactory; (7) there is no Christian emphasis.

The committee was surprised at the high level of satisfaction with present living arrangements, especially since half of the persons living outside of the home reside in public facilities. More respondents may have indicated dissatisfaction had they been aware of alternatives to the services they were already receiving. Or it is possible that some parents could not admit dissatisfaction because no alternatives were available to them. In addition, the degree to which a retarded family member is viewed as being capable of responding to Christian care and nurture also would affect the level of satisfaction with a public facility.

E. Day Programs

Most of the handicapped are reported as being involved in some form of daytime educational or work program, almost all of which are public. (Summer camp, with 13 percent, was the activity most likely to be Christian.) Four out of five respondents nevertheless said they were satisfied or mostly satisfied with this arrangement for day programs.

F. Church Programs

When it comes to church programs the retarded have been or are involved in these activities:

- 167 persons (45 percent) in church school
- 66 persons (18 percent) in catechism
- 24 persons (7 percent) in preprofession class
- 41 persons (11 percent) in Cadets or Calvinettes
- 206 persons (56 percent) attend worship services
- 353 persons (96 percent) have been baptized
- 84 persons (23 percent) have made profession of faith

Here satisfaction levels drop drastically. *Only 40 percent of respondents indicated they were satisfied or mostly satisfied with the services which the church provided for their child.* Of those who were dissatisfied, more than half did not indicate the reason for their dissatisfaction. Forty percent simply stated that the church had no special activities for their handicapped member, no Sunday school class, no materials, or no interest. Furthermore, 67 percent of the parents said that there were no other social, educational, or religious activities in their community for the child. In other words, if the local church does not provide the programs, the child's religious stimulation is neglected except for what the parents themselves can supply.

The question "In what ways has the church assisted you in coping with the mental retardation of your family member?" uncovered this:

- 28 percent circled, "provided support when retardation was first diagnosed"
- 8 percent circled, "assisted in finding the services this family member needed"
- 25 percent circled, "offered financial support for payment of services"
- 10 percent circled, "provided occasional assistance in caring for family"

9 percent circled,	member to give us relief" "provided special religious instruction or materials suitable for this member"
41 percent circled,	"really made an effort to make our retarded member feel accepted in the church"
22 percent circled,	"provided support to us (later) as family members of a retarded person"

These responses, again, do not indicate great parental satisfaction with the church's ministry to them and their child. Whether the church is in reality not doing anything, or whether parents are not aware of the assistance when it is offered, we do not know. It is apparent, however, that the church's ministry is ineffective, coming either at the wrong time, in the wrong form, or coming not at all. It may be added, at this point, that these findings are not unique to the Christian Reformed Church. Other surveys, taken by researchers outside of our denomination, have uncovered the same ineffective or nonexistent ministry of the church to the retarded and their families.

G. Identified Needs

In their response to our questionnaire, parents indicated that there is a need for *congregational* education. They mean by this that they wished other members of the church would know more about the unique character of the mentally retarded, about their potential, and about the difficulties parents may encounter in caring for them. This could be accomplished, presumably, by a concerted and sustained effort to publicize these issues.

A need for improvement in *pastoral education* was also mentioned frequently. Parents perceive that pastors are uncomfortable with handicaps and uncertain how best to relate to handicapped individuals, especially those with mental retardation. Pastors are seen, consequently, as showing little interest and concern. Parents, on their part, are often reluctant to approach their pastor if they perceive this. Consequently, little or no opportunity arises for meaningful spiritual and emotional assistance. Much of this distance between pastors and parents would diminish if pastors were better informed about the continuing crisis usually provoked by mental retardation in a family member.

Religious education, or rather the lack of it, was a concern as well. The overwhelming majority of respondents said they had not seen any materials suitable for use with their child nor were they aware of any being available. Only 13 percent said materials were available or somewhat available. Of that small group, 15 percent deemed what was available adequate for use. Church school classes and social opportunities are also greatly needed. The committee is aware, as has been mentioned previously, of the Education Department's efforts to produce a curriculum for a partial group of retarded persons.

F. *Need for facilities*

Of concern also is the availability of facilities where the retarded family member can spend all or part of the time away from the family when that becomes necessary or desirable. We asked about four specific services and received the following information:

	Available	Not available but needed	not needed	Don't know	No response
24-hr. foster care	42%	11%	4%	5%	38%
24-hr. group home care	58	12	2	4	25
24-hr. institutional care	36	11	8	5	40
Brief respite care	35	22	3	5	35

Although facilities are becoming more available, a need continues to be felt. Respite care in particular, where someone else takes over temporarily the care of the retarded person either in or outside of the home, is of crucial importance. Where occasional relief is provided, parents may be much better equipped to provide long-term care and supervision themselves. It is the chronic, unrelieved strain that often leads to a decision to send the child away permanently. Respite care may make it possible to postpone or avoid that traumatic decision. But respite care is frequently very expensive. We call attention, again, to synod's recommendation that the deacons provide financial assistance to families where it is needed, even if the family may not take the initiative to request such assistance.

Of concern to the committee also is the large number of persons who did not know what facilities are available in their communities and those who did not respond to this question. We wonder whether the no-response category means, "We don't know but are ashamed to admit that," "We don't care," or "We don't expect much from this committee of the church."

As with the daycare activities mentioned earlier, it appears that the majority of facilities available are publicly owned and operated. There are very few Christian living facilities in existence in the United States and Canada at the present time. The picture is changing, to be sure, but the change is very gradual. We believe it cannot be said that our congregations are insensitive to the needs of mentally retarded persons and their families. Congregations are, however, often unaware of what should and could be done. They may also be overwhelmed by the magnitude of the responsibility. They lack, specifically, informed leadership to begin the process of greater involvement with the retarded.

V. CONCLUSIONS

As was mentioned in Section II, the committee notes with gratitude the existence of many fine Christian organizations through which the members of our churches seek to minister to the mentally retarded. An increasing number of articles in our periodicals also continue to call attention to the existence of these persons and the need for action by the church.

It may be expected that parents of the mentally retarded, given the climate of growing acceptance, will feel greater confidence to state what the church can do for their child. As the stigma of retardation disappears, they will bring their child more readily to congregational activities—worship, church school, picnics, societies—and expect that the child be included in those activities. Where there is reluctance to accommodate the child, parents may well demand, and with justification, that the church carry out its baptismal promise to “receive this child in love, pray for him, help care for his instruction in the faith, and encourage and sustain him in the fellowship of believers.”

For the physically handicapped—a group that is perhaps not specifically part of our mandate but which certainly includes some retarded persons as well—this sustaining may well take the form of creating a barrier-free building: wheelchair ramps wherever steps create obstacles; bathrooms with doors wide enough and sufficient space to maneuver a wheelchair in privacy; drinking fountains low enough to accommodate a seated person. Laws exist to demand such barrier-free access in all public buildings. The church, it would seem, should hardly lag behind in this area even though thus far no such laws govern church buildings. Other steps may need to be taken as well. To illustrate, we call attention to the very fine program in existence at the Ebenezer Church in Berwyn, Illinois, where sign language interpreters make the entire service understandable and meaningful to the deaf.

For the mentally retarded the baptismal promise means, at the very least, that the pastor and elders make a special effort to support parents when a child's condition is first diagnosed. It means, further, that pastor and consistory members together carry out continuing dialogue with the parents to ascertain at every step of the child's development what special needs there may be for which assistance is required. Where parents take the initiative for such dialogue, they should be received in love. Where parents are reluctant to reach out to the church, their inactivity should not be interpreted to mean that all is well.

The survey the committee conducted as background for the report presented to synod two years ago indicated that, with very few exceptions, the respondents felt that the mentally retarded should have the same opportunities for Christian education as other children. Though this is a principle which the committee wholeheartedly endorses, the reality may be that Christian day school for the retarded cannot be carried out everywhere. We note from the current survey that most parents seem satisfied with the public day programs their child receives. Perhaps this is because they dare not expect anything better. Or again it may be because there are simply not enough students to make such a program feasible and parents accept this.

For the church school, however, the obstacles are not nearly as formidable. The mildly mentally retarded can usually be part of regular classrooms. Some accommodation may need to be made to ensure that assignments will not exceed their ability to memorize or read and write. The more severely impaired can sometimes be included with somewhat younger children, unless they are so large or active as to overwhelm or frighten the younger ones. Then a special class may be required. The

committee calls attention to the disconcerting fact that *only 45 percent of the mentally handicapped have been included in church school programs, and only 18 percent in catechism*. It is difficult to determine whether this is due to the retarded person's level of functioning or the church's inability to respond.

There is a need also for greater inclusion of the retarded in social activities. They are often very lonely, especially in the teen years and beyond when they have so little in common with their normal peers. The retarded are easily ignored when there are so few in a congregation, a problem that may be compounded if they are somewhat sheltered by their parents. An effort should be made to make them feel fully part of the congregation. Interchurch activities should be encouraged as well.

We note that 69 percent of the retarded live at home, a tremendous tribute to their parents as well as an indication of changing approaches to the long-term care of the retarded. No longer are they automatically sent to an institution to be isolated and ignored there. The trend now is *mainstreaming*, involving the retarded in all activities and social customs common to all other citizens. This includes living in a home.

Living *in* a home should not necessarily be equated with living *at* home, however. While no criticism is intended of devoted parents who give their entire lives to the care of a child living at home, professionals in the field are questioning whether living at home indefinitely is actually in the best interest of retarded adults. They may be considerably more sheltered and receive less opportunity to develop their abilities than if they lived in a group home. Also, parents may reach the point where they can no longer provide proper care for their child. When one parent dies, moreover, the child often suffers the double loss of the parent *and* the parental home, since it is a rare instance where a surviving single, elderly parent is capable of meeting the child's needs adequately.

The ideal for most retarded adults would be to live in a group home, if totally independent living is impossible, where they have regular interaction with others who have similar characteristics and needs. Rather than remain in the child role forever, they would be encouraged and enabled to develop a measure of independence. They would have greater social involvement with others in activities more suited to their temperament.

The need for such housing seems obvious from our data. Nearly three-fourths (71 percent) of the retarded persons in our sample are between eleven and thirty-nine years old. If the younger children are included the figure becomes 89 percent of the total. Two-thirds of those are still living at home. Where parents are satisfied with this arrangement, there is no difficulty, yet. But where parents are becoming elderly, or where for one reason or another it would be better for the retarded child or his family if the child lived elsewhere, some form of alternate housing becomes crucial. To assure parents that the church will not abandon their child, and to carry out the obligations the congregation assumed at the time of the child's baptism, some type of group home should be established.

The current trend in the field of mental retardation is toward the elimination of all institutions and, instead, the location of small homes, for six to ten individuals, in ordinary residential areas where they will have access to employment and recreational opportunities. They will

receive here the amount of supervision that their level of disability requires. The residents, ideally, will be sufficiently close to home to make regular visits possible. The relationship and contact with parents will be much like that of nonretarded children who leave the parental home. The operating costs for such homes can in many instances be met from the residents' earnings, Supplemental Security Income payments, or other resources. Only construction and starting funds would need to be raised by the group organized to operate the home.

To safeguard the retarded persons' spiritual well-being, the homes must be Christian. That could mean Christian Reformed in areas with a heavy concentration of our families. It could mean ecumenical in other areas. In either case, the atmosphere will be more like the parental home environment than is likely in a public facility. Much of the parents' concern about what will happen to their child when they themselves have passed away will be alleviated if their child lives in a Christian home.

One parent so aptly described public group homes as the place where "all faiths are represented, none presented." Many parents are greatly concerned about this matter. The committee feels that the covenantal relationship between the retarded member and the church is placed in jeopardy if no proper environment is provided. While mentally retarded persons frequently express trust and faith in God, they are also easily led or misled. Some parents are perhaps too quickly satisfied with public facilities instead of demanding Christian homes for their retarded children. The church may bear some responsibility as well by not insisting that its covenant members learn and live in a Christian environment.

As is evident from the activity in Classis Holland, the Diaconal Conference is an ideal organization to undertake the planning and/or construction for a group home and oversee its proper operation in areas where no other organization for the mentally retarded exists. Where organizations have already been formed, the deacons can support them financially, in keeping with synod's directive. Equally as important as the actual establishment and operation of proper homes is a long-lasting commitment that no member of our churches will be expelled from a group home for the mere reason that he or she no longer has the financial resources to pay the rent. While public funding sources may be utilized to the fullest extent possible, the church should always remain willing to supplement such sources when and where necessary. This may require financial sacrifices. Such sacrifices are in keeping, however, with the scriptural principle that we bear each other's burdens, the strong helping the weak, and the able assisting the disabled. Synod already addressed itself to this issue of financial support in 1979.

A major obstacle to almost every type of involvement with mentally retarded persons appears to be the lack of resources, or ignorance on the part of otherwise concerned persons, as to where to obtain information on how to proceed. There is also a lack of communication between various geographic areas of the denomination. We feel that the cause of the retarded and the ministry of the church to them can be greatly enhanced through a well-defined and consistent effort to share information with those seeking it. Parents, pastors, and other leaders in the

church could be constantly kept informed of new developments, of curriculum materials available, of programs successfully operating elsewhere—whether in our denomination or outside it—of effective means to incorporate retarded persons more fully into the life of the church.

There is a great potential for ministry with the mentally retarded. It cannot be done effectively through the efforts of temporary committees such as ours. We feel that both the denomination and the mentally retarded among us would be well served by the appointment of a standing committee of persons who are knowledgeable in the area of mental retardation, including some parents, and representing various areas within the denomination. They could meet together and provide on-going advice and consultation.

In addition, the committee should have a full-time executive secretary. With the increased availability of government-sponsored programs, involving greater and greater bureaucracy and complexity, the expertise of a specialist in mental retardation seems necessary. For example, the following represents a partial list of housing programs or services which are potentially available for the mentally retarded:

- Skilled nursing facilities
- Intermediate care facilities
- Community living facilities
- Supervised living arrangements
- Adult foster care facilities

All of the above resources, which we list for illustration only, have unique funding sources and licensing requirements. Some represent minimal risk to private, church-related agencies. Some present great risk to a Christian agency, either in terms of financial responsibility or by-law restrictions.

Other questions which the current study committee has not been able to address deal with recent changes in guardianship laws for retarded persons over eighteen which bring concern to parents; estate planning, and marriage and birth control are other areas of concern which have specific ramifications for the family and the retarded person.

The standing committee, and especially its executive secretary, could provide consultation, for example, to the Education Department as it develops a curriculum for retarded persons. The seminary could be assisted in the orientation of prospective pastors to the unique concerns of parents of the retarded, as well as the challenges posed by the incorporation of the retarded into the local congregation. Any group within the denomination interested in establishing a group home could be provided with information and guidelines or put in contact with others who have successfully completed such a project. Parents with specific concerns about which they dare not approach their pastor would perhaps feel free to approach the committee's secretary for counsel and advice. The potential for changing attitudes and approaches to the retarded is great.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the analysis and conclusions presented in this report, your committee makes the following recommendations:

- A. That Dr. Richard E. Houskamp and Rev. Gerald Oosterveen be permitted to represent our committee when synod discusses this report.
- B. That synod record its appreciation for the many individuals and organizations now serving mentally retarded persons.
- C. That synod appoint a standing committee to be called "The Committee on Mental Retardation," directly answerable to and funded by synod.

Grounds:

1. We have provided a biblical rationale for the church's involvement with and responsibility for its retarded members in Report 38 to the Synod of 1979.
 2. Not only the profoundly retarded, who were the focus of the 1979 report, but also all the other retarded persons have unique needs that cannot be solved through a one-time action on the part of the church but that must be continually addressed since mental retardation is a permanent condition where different responses are needed at different times.
 3. The rapidly changing approach of government and consumer agencies to the habilitation and integration of retarded persons requires the attention of a continuing committee that can provide consistent direction to the church.
 4. There is no existing committee or agency in the denomination whose members possess the experience and professional competence needed to function in this complex and specialized area.
- D. That the Committee on Mental Retardation shall continue for a period of three years, at the end of which synod shall determine its future.

Ground:

This will give sufficient time to judge whether the committee's mandate should be continued or revised.

- E. That synod instruct the Committee on Mental Retardation to carry out the following mandate:
- To design, organize, and implement avenues through which the denomination, individual congregations, members, and agencies can effectively use all available resources to eliminate those barriers which hinder the full participation of retarded persons in the life of the church and of broader society.
- F. That synod instruct the Committee on Mental Retardation that its duties include but are not limited to the following:
1. Education of the church through
 - a. production and/or distribution of informational materials
 - b. pre-service and in-service training of pastors
 - c. sharing of regional programs and activities
 2. Ministry to disabled members of the church and their families through
 - a. providing counseling where possible
 - b. assisting in obtaining legal and financial aid

3. Consultation on matters such as
 - a. guardianship
 - b. estate planning for retarded persons
 - c. marriage and family planning
 - d. development of living facilities
 - e. services available from and through other denominations
 - f. increasing the visibility of retarded persons in denominational publications
- G. That the Committee on Mental Retardation be composed of twelve persons chosen in terms of competence in the field of mental retardation and regional representation, each with a named alternate. Ideally, the committee should include parent(s), clergy, educator(s), legislator(s), attorney(s), administrator(s), social worker(s), etc. (We will endeavor to have some names available for synod's consideration, if necessary.)
- H. That the Committee on Mental Retardation be empowered to hire a full-time executive secretary with training and competence in this field, whose salary shall be in accordance with synodical guidelines.

Grounds:

1. The committee by itself will not have the continuity needed to carry out all the tasks specified in its mandate.
 2. The executive secretary would serve as the focal point of the committee's functioning between meetings and be the readily available resource person for interested parties.
- I. That the matter of clerical help and location be left to the decision of the committee.
 - J. That the present study committee on Christian Care to Retarded Persons be discharged.

Committee on Christian Care
for Retarded Persons
Richard E. Houskamp, chairman
Harry Brands
Ronald Gruizinga
Thomas Hoeksema
Kenneth Ooms
Gerald Oosterveen
Bruce Tuinier

APPENDIX

Listed below are the various classes of the denomination with the number of mentally retarded persons identified to the committee. As stated in the report, we do not believe these numbers to be in any way complete.

Number	Name	Number	Name
9	Alberta North	5	Huron
0	Alberta South	4	Hudson
1	Atlantic	12	Illiana
4	British Columbia	5	Kalamazoo
5	Cadillac	7	Lake Erie
6	California South	7	Minnesota North
7	Central California	10	Minnesota South
14	Chatham	10	Muskegon
12	Chicago South	2	North Central Iowa
2	Columbia	6	Northern Illinois
2	Eastern Canada	10	Orange City
1	Florida	10	Pacific Northwest
24	Grand Rapids East	7	Pella
6	Grand Rapids North	8	Quinte
18	Grand Rapids South	4	Rocky Mountain
15	Grandville	5	Sioux Center
2	Hackensack	12	Toronto
6	Hamilton	6	Wisconsin
17	Holland	18	Zeeland

REPORT 34

BELGIC CONFESSION TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

A Belgic Confession Translation Committee was initially appointed in 1977. After two years of intensive work, the committee submitted a provisional report in 1979 informing synod of a particularly knotty problem concerning the *textus receptus* of the Belgic Confession, and asking for authorization to complete our work using the 1561 De Bres text as the authentic *textus receptus*. The Synod of 1979 referred the matter back to the committee, with instructions to publish in side-by-side columns both a translation of the De Bres text and a translation of the revised text of the Synod of Dort. Several additional assignments were also given to the committee. In order to help to fulfill this expanded mandate synod added two members to the committee. One of the new appointees found it impossible to serve, but Dr. Henry Zwaanstra has joined the original committee and has served diligently for the past two years.

After a great deal of initial translating work by some individual members of the committee, and after fifteen full committee sessions, we have now nearly completed the major part of our mandate—the laborious translating task. More meetings will be required, however, before we are able to bring to completion the additional aspects of our mandate. We hope to submit a final report to the Synod of 1982.

The Belgic Confession
Translation Committee
John H. Primus, chairman
Henry Zwaanstra, secretary
Philip C. Holtrop
Arthur J. Otten
Lois Read
Leonard Verduin

REPORT 35

COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF THE SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

The Synod of 1980 appointed "a committee to review the effectiveness of the functioning and mandate of the SIC" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, Art. 22, M, 2, p. 23). This action fulfilled a mandate remembered from the Synod of 1976: "That the effectiveness of the functioning and mandate of the SIC be reviewed after five years by a committee to be appointed by the Synod of 1980 and to report in 1981" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 50, C, 8, p. 52).

After initial orientation and discussion, our committee agreed to three basic guidelines by which to complete our analysis and report.

First, we understood our mandate to be focused on the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) itself, not on persons or programs supervised by that committee. Although we briefly reviewed the work of the stated clerk and the denominational financial coordinator, and although we solicited an evaluation of the coordinated services program, our attention was focused on how those staff members and programs were related to, governed by, and made accountable for the work of the SIC.

Second, we assumed that our mandate required of us not merely a statement of evaluation but also concrete recommendations which would reasonably flow from such an evaluation. Therefore, this report contains both analyses and recommendations.

Third, we paid attention to the lone ground for the 1976 mandate: "An important part of the SIC's mandate, that of promoting the program planning, coordination, and the setting of priorities, is just now being undertaken. Therefore, the fruitfulness of the SIC's work in this area cannot now adequately be determined" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 50, C, 8, p. 52). We looked at all parts of the SIC's mandate and work, but we stressed in our evaluation and recommendations the concerns singled out by the 1976 mandate.

II. BRIEF HISTORY

(A detailed history tracing the development of what is now the SIC from 1857 to 1970 can be found in the *Acts of Synod 1971*, Report 37, pp. 496-503.)

Until 1971, the primary purpose of a synodical (interim) committee was to act in the name of synod in the absence of synod. It was, quite literally, synod in the interim (i.e., between synods). Its authorities and responsibilities were governed first by guidelines adopted in 1890 and later by rules approved in 1936.

The 1956 appointment of a full-time stated clerk had sizable impact on the work of this committee. Indeed, it appears that between 1956 and 1971 the committee did less and less as the stated clerk did more and more. But that was changed in 1971 when synod was persuaded that a need existed "for an administrative unit to manage the office of the stated clerk and increase the effectiveness of synod's work between meetings of synod" (*Acts of Synod 1971*, Report 37, p. 503). The Synodical Committee with three members (plus the stated clerk in an *ex officio* capacity) became in 1971 the Synodical Interim Committee with more than a dozen members representing various regions of the denomination. The stated clerk was assigned an *ex officio* role on the new Synodical Interim Committee, and was outfitted with an extensive job description (*Acts of Synod 1971*, pp. 75-77).

The 1971 report to synod stressed the need for coordination, especially between synodically created agencies. Synod was presented with a set of rules by which the (new) SIC should be governed. The proposed rules made it clear that, for the first time, an agency was being brought into existence which would have as part of its mandate responsibility to monitor the work of other denominational agencies. That move was applauded by some who saw millions being spent annually by various agencies and felt an urgent need to guarantee the absence of competition and the presence of efficiency. But the rules were roundly attacked by others who raised the specter of a "super board" riding roughshod over historic ministries and synodically approved structures. These critics noted that the proposed SIC would have extensive authorities, encompassing territory previously governed by the Synodical Committee, the Standing Advisory Budget Committee, and the Synodical Trustees. In the end, the critics lost the argument. But they achieved some softening of the mandate, and they won the condition that the new arrangement would only be put "into effect for a period of five years. A review of the effectiveness of this arrangement shall be presented to the Synod of 1976."

Accordingly, the Synod of 1975 appointed a review committee and the 1976 Synod received that committee's report (cf. *Acts of Synod 1976*, Report 44, pp. 611-20). At the heart of the 1976 report was the matter of program coordination and planning. The review committee lamented the imprecise 1971 wording with regard to this part of the SIC's mandate. Even more, it had "principal as well as practical objections" to the SIC's approach to coordination which, allowed the 1976 report, turned synodical agencies into "objects" of the coordination "rather than the primary agents involved in doing it." The review committee recommended that synod "remove certain ambiguities in the SIC's mandate" and make it clear that the agencies were themselves primarily responsible not only for program planning and administration, but also for coordination.

The 1976 Synod took decisive action (cf. *Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 50, pp. 48-52). Through charts, notes, an up-dated mandate for the SIC, and directives to the other synodical agencies, synod gave a clear message: It is expected that the agencies will coordinate their programs. The SIC is responsible to promote that work of coordination, tell synod whether or

not it is taking place satisfactorily, and assist when possible. But the agencies themselves, not the SIC, should assume the work of program coordination. To see that this direction was followed, the 1976 Synod called for another review committee which should report to the 1981 assembly.

III. ANALYSIS

Our committee met with the president of the Synodical Interim Committee, Leonard J. Hofman; the stated clerk, William P. Brink; and the outgoing and incoming denominational financial coordinators, Anthony Vroon and Harry Vander Meer. One of our members met with representatives of the various agencies involved in the coordinated services program. The presidents, secretaries, and directors of our various synodical agencies were requested to submit written evaluations of the work of the SIC and to meet with our committee if they wished to do so. In all these conversations, we were impressed by the cordiality and frankness with which these people aided us in our work.

The analysis consists of four parts:

A. The SIC's increased membership (from the previous three to the current fourteen) and the committee's widened geographic representation have proven helpful. In particular, this pattern of membership has evidently aided the SIC when the committee was asked to adjudicate issues related to church polity and local or regional practice. Our committee observed that the SIC might wish to take steps to assure a more orderly rotation in the expiration of its members' terms, and that the advice of the 1976 Synod regarding increased participation of all the SIC members in subcommittee functions could still be appropriate. Generally, however, it appeared to us that the SIC was sound in its membership, organization, and ability to deal with issues of church polity and practice.

B. The SIC—and, perhaps, synod itself—may not fully have come to grips with the evident agencylike character of the SIC. It is not merely the case that the SIC works *among* the synodical agencies; during the past ten years, the SIC has come to function as a board responsible for a sizable agency with a growing staff, program, offices, and budget. When addressing the SIC's mandate, therefore, we worked at encouraging the SIC to become more accountable to synod (and, through synod, to the church) for its own agencylike functions: personnel policies, program guidelines, financial reporting, and the like. Similarly, the SIC staff members should function not as "faculty advisors" to committees at synod, but in the same consulting role assumed by other agency staff members.

C. The SIC's work at program planning and coordination with the agencies appears to be still (or to be again) upside down. Despite the 1976 Synod's clear directives and unmistakable intent, the SIC appears to have taken to itself, as it did before, the role of *the coordinator*. And the other agencies have let the SIC do it, thereby absolving themselves of the

responsibility to coordinate their own efforts. We were struck by the fact that representatives of the SIC generally thought the work of program planning and coordination was going well, and cited as evidence the various steps being taken *by the SIC*. At the same time, representatives of other agencies were frequently critical of coordinating efforts, and cited as evidence what was (or was not) being done *by the SIC*. Both groups seemed to think coordination was the SIC's responsibility, not the agencies'. The point emphasized by the 1976 Synod, which our committee would like to stress again, is: the SIC should *promote* the work of coordination by the agencies themselves and should *inform* synod as to whether or not coordination is being satisfactorily achieved. Instead of doing that, the SIC has assumed the work of coordination and has been reporting its own efforts to synod. This situation guarantees neither of the two goals the Synod of 1976 had in mind: (1) coordination among the agencies *by the agencies*, and (2) reporting to synod *by an unbiased body*. Our committee believes the SIC must exert more leadership to assure that agencies themselves vigorously pursue their tasks in coordinating, planning, setting priorities, and evaluating results.

D. The rules governing the SIC seem imprecise, and they reflect little or no awareness of the fact that the SIC has become a substantial programming agency requiring administrative guidelines and procedures. Our committee saw little in the rules we thought should be removed, but we were persuaded the rules needed to be clarified by a reorganization and restatement. We decided, therefore, to submit our primary set of recommendations to the 1981 Synod in the form of a restatement of the Rules for the Synodical Interim Committee.

IV. PROPOSED RESTATEMENT OF RULES FOR THE SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

A. *Existing Rules*

For the sake of clarity the existing collection of Rules for the Synodical Interim Committee are reproduced here. An initial version of these guidelines was adopted by the 1971 Synod. Since then, other synods have approved statements which have been incorporated into the Rules. The entire collection has remained unchanged since the 1976 Synod.

I. MEMBERSHIP

The Synodical Interim Committee shall be composed of fourteen (14) members, elected by synod from nominations submitted by the Synodical Interim Committee. Synod has the right to add to the nominations presented by the Synodical Interim Committee.

- A. One-half of the Synodical Interim Committee shall be ministers and one-half non-ministers who are or who have previously served as office-bearers in the church. The terms shall conform to the synodical rules which apply.
- B. The alternate member will take the place of the regular member when a member moves outside his area or is incapacitated. The terms of the alternate shall conform to the synodical rules which apply.
- C. Each of the following regions shall be represented as follows:
 1. Far West (United States)—two
 2. Western Canada—one
 3. Rocky Mountain to Mississippi River—two
 4. Central United States—six

5. Eastern Canada—two
 6. East Coast—one
- II. OFFICERS: The Synodical Interim Committee shall elect its own officers, with this exception: that the stated clerk shall function as general secretary of the Synodical Interim Committee.
 - III. MEETINGS: The Synodical Interim Committee shall meet at least three times a year: in October, February, and May.
 - IV. ORGANIZATION: The Synodical Interim Committee shall designate at least two subcommittees from within its membership (including alternates):
 - A. Church Polity and Program
 - B. Finance
 - V. CORPORATE FUNCTION

The Synodical Interim Committee shall function as the Corporate Trustees of Synod.

 - A. Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees—All members of the Synodical Interim Committee shall serve as the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees. (See *Acts of Synod 1972, Supplement—Report 50*, pp. 614–15, and Article 11, B and C, pp. 13–14.)
 - B. The Christian Reformed Church in North America—The members of the Synodical Interim Committee shall serve as the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
 1. The incorporation of the Christian Reformed Church in North America is certified by the State of Michigan, and group exemption under the Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3) is approved for the denomination and all of its boards and committees along with the classes and congregations in the United States who have obtained Federal Identification Numbers and have given written authorization requesting their inclusion (*Acts of Synod 1975, Article 86, p. 85*).
 2. The title of the Denominational Building is held by the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The trustees are also charged with the financing and management of the Denominational Building. (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1974, Article 43, VII, pp. 38–39, 388–89*; and *Acts of Synod 1975, Article 86, pp. 85, 379–80, 395*.)
 - VI. Mandate
 - A. The Synodical Interim Committee shall execute all matters committed to it by definite instruction of synod.
 - B. The Synodical Interim Committee shall execute all synodical matters which cannot be postponed until the next synod.
 - C. The Synodical Interim Committee shall supervise the work of the stated clerk and the denominational financial coordinator, and advise them in respect to the discharge of their work.
 - D. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for expediting the work which synod does directly.
 - E. 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 analyses and overall reviews of programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies.
 - F. The Synodical Interim Committee shall receive regular financial and program reports from the agencies of synod and approved by synod so that it can evaluate budget requests in the light of current projects and future goals and make appropriate recommendations to synod. Any new organization requesting support must first submit to the Synodical Interim Committee a statement of its aims and goals, and be approved as to program (*Acts of Synod 1973, p. 20*).
 - G. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of the *Synodical Agenda*, the *Acts of Synod*, the *Yearbook*, and such other official publications as synod shall authorize.
 - H. The Synodical Interim Committee shall prepare for synod an annually updated survey of minister's compensation to be distributed to all consistories for their guidance as a supplement to the Guidelines for Ministers' Salaries adopted by the Synod of 1970.

- I. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for administering the denominational master address list in keeping with the instructions of synod.
- J. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be available for consultation with standing committees and denominational agencies.
- K. The Synodical Interim Committee shall present a full report of its actions to each synod.

VII. PROGRAM PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND SETTING OF PRIORITIES

With respect to program planning, coordination, and setting of priorities by the synodical agencies, synod decided:

- A. To instruct the 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. The 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 the 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 the SIC; and
- 4. To keep the SIC regularly and fully informed on both the need for and progress in program coordination with other agencies, and to seek the 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. The SIC can promote coordination only when it is kept fully informed and is regularly consulted.

- C. To instruct its agencies and the 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 1971*, pp. 74-75; 1976, pp. 49-51)

(Quoted from Brink & De Ridder, *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government: 1980*, Board of Publications, pp. 155-58)

B. Proposed Rules

The following is a restatement of the rules as they now exist. Please note the following changes.

- 1. Organization: We enlarged and reorganized the "Mandate" section. As we propose the mandate, it includes a variety of functions, some cor-

porate, some "interim," some planning and coordination, some dealing with management.

2. Management: Consistent with our committee's conviction that the SIC has become a significant agency in its own right, we have proposed items within the restated mandate which assure adequate administration and supervision of this agency's personnel, programs, and finances, and which will enhance the accountability of the SIC and its staff to the synod.

To avoid confusion, we have deleted from the following rules most source references (*Acts of Synod, Supplemental Reports*, and so forth) which can be found in the existing rules. Interspersed among the proposed rules are notes in brackets which explain the nature of and/or ground for any change, or restatement of the existing rules.

I. MEMBERSHIP:

[*Note:* This section is taken without change from the existing rules.]

II. OFFICERS:

[*Note:* This section is taken without change from the existing rules.]

III. MEETINGS:

[*Note:* This section is taken without change from the existing rules.]

IV. ORGANIZATION: The Synodical Interim Committee shall designate at least three subcommittees from within its membership (including alternates):

- A. Church Polity and Program
- B. Finance
- C. Administration

[*Note:* Existing rules stipulate only the first two subcommittees. The purpose of an administrative subcommittee would be to supervise the personnel and programs of the SIC itself. Program and planning guidelines; personnel policies, standards of performance and evaluation; general administrative issues relating to the SIC's work as an agency—all would be the concerns of this subcommittee.]

V. MANDATE:

[*Note:* The existing rules divide between "Corporate Function," "Mandate," and "Program Planning, Coordination, and Setting of Priorities." Items from all three sections have been subsumed under the following statement of mandate.]

A. *Corporate Functions*

The Synodical Interim Committee shall function as the Corporate Trustees of Synod.

1. Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees—All members of the Synodical Interim Committee shall serve as the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees.

2. The Christian Reformed Church in North America—The members of the Synodical Interim Committee shall serve as the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

a. The corporation, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, is certified by the State of Michigan, and group exemption under the Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3) is approved for the denomination and all of its boards and committees along with the classes and congregations in the United States who have obtained Federal Identification Numbers and have given written authorization requesting their inclusion.

b. The title of the Denominational Building is held by the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The trustees are also charged with financing and management of the Denominational Building.

[*Note:* Material in this section is taken without change from existing rules. By placing these items within this setting, it becomes clear that the SIC has been *mandated* to perform certain corporate functions on behalf of the synod and the church.]

B. *Interim Functions*

[*Note:* Functions listed here are appropriate to the work of the SIC in its most traditional role, that of doing synod's work between synods.]

1. The Synodical Interim Committee shall execute all matters committed to it by definite instruction of synod.

2. The Synodical Interim Committee shall execute all synodical matters which cannot be postponed until the next synod.

3. The Synodical Interim Committee shall identify, analyze, and make recommendations to synod with respect to matters of denominational concern, but which do not fall within the mandate of existing denominational agencies.

[*Note:* The first two interim functions are taken without change from existing rules. The third function is new and reflects our belief that the SIC has been too timid in tackling new concerns. It would encourage the SIC to analyze issues and present proposals to synod regarding matters which now either go untouched or require the appointment of study committees.]

C. *Management of Its Own Functions*

[*Note:* Functions listed here are appropriate to the SIC in its own work as an agency of synod.]

1. Administration and Execution

a. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for expediting the work which synod does directly.

b. The Synodical Interim Committee shall receive regular financial and program reports from the agencies of synod and approved by synod so that it can evaluate budget requests in the light of current projects and future goals and make appropriate recommendations to synod.

c. The Synodical Interim Committee shall review the program, aims, and goals of any organization requesting synodical support for the first time, and shall recommend to synod the approval or disapproval of each such request.

d. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of the *Synodical Agenda*, the *Acts of Synod*, the *Yearbook*, and such other official publications as synod shall authorize.

e. The Synodical Interim Committee shall prepare for synod an annually updated survey of ministers' compensation to be distributed to all consistories for their guidance as a supplement to the Guidelines for Ministers' Salaries adopted by the Synod of 1970.

f. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for administering the denominational master address list in keeping with the instructions of synod.

[*Note:* With the exception of "c" above, these items are taken without change from the existing rules. The exception ("c") is a clarification of an existing rule (cf. VI, F, as amended by the 1973 Synod).]

2. Coordinated Services

a. The Synodical Interim Committee shall, in conjunction with representatives of the various synodical agencies, supervise the personnel and functions of the coordinated services program.

b. The Synodical Interim Committee shall provide regular reports to synod detailing the operations of the coordinated services program.

[*Note:* Existing rules do not cover the SIC's administrative responsibility for the staff, financing, and operation of coordinated services. In view of the increased size of that program, both in staff and budget, the SIC should function within a clear administrative mandate.]

3. Supervision of Personnel

a. The Synodical Interim Committee shall supervise the work of the stated clerk and the denominational financial coordinator, and advise them in respect to the discharge of their work.

b. The Synodical Interim Committee shall establish guidelines for and regularly evaluate the work of the stated clerk, denominational financial coordinator, and all personnel within the agency's employ.

[*Note:* The first of these two items is taken without change from the existing rules. The second reflects the increased need for the SIC to serve as a supervisory body for an administrative staff.]

4. Accountability

a. The Synodical Interim Committee shall present a full report of its actions to each synod.

b. The Synodical Interim Committee shall make periodic evaluations of its own programs and goals, and shall submit appropriate recommendations to synod.

c. The Synodical Interim Committee shall report according to standards and forms adopted for use by all agencies.

[*Note:* Of these three items, only the first is taken without change from the existing rules. The second and third items assure that the SIC will be accountable to synod for its program as all other agencies must be accountable for theirs.]

D. *Planning, Coordinating, Priority Setting Functions*

[*Note:* Material in this section is based on the existing rules. By placing these items in this setting, it is clearer that the SIC carries these functions as a *mandate* from the synod.]

1. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be responsible for promoting the planning, coordinating, and the setting of program priorities by each of the synodical agencies and by all of them together, in keeping with synodical guidelines, and shall serve synod with periodic analyses and overall reviews of programs and resources of the denomination after consultation with the agencies.

[*Note:* This item is taken without change from the existing rules.]

2. The Synodical Interim Committee and all other synodical agencies shall address themselves to long-range planning and the setting of priorities by each agency and by all agencies together; in fulfilling this mandate, the following pattern of program coordination shall be observed:

a. The synodical agencies themselves shall engage in mutual consultation to formulate a common set of guidelines to be used by all agencies for analysis of their own mandates and programs.

[*Note:* This item redirects a 1976 mandate to the SIC and puts responsibility for developing guidelines on the agencies themselves. The SIC should function with the other agencies, should develop guidelines for its own program, and should inform synod of progress in this regard. Our committee believes the existing Interagency Advisory Council could initiate this process by electing its own leadership and setting its own agenda, rather than by receiving both from the SIC as it currently does.]

b. The synodical agencies shall individually and collectively

(1) Engage in a thorough analysis of mandate, program, finance, and office operation, in keeping with the formulated guidelines and according to a mutually agreed-upon schedule;

(2) Keep the Synodical Interim Committee regularly and fully informed on the progress of this analysis.

(3) Engage, after completing the analysis, in a joint evaluation of it with the Synodical Interim Committee; and

(4) Provide annual reports to the Synodical Interim Committee in which the progress in program coordination with other agencies is fully described.

[*Note:* This item is a restatement of material in the existing rules.]

3. The Synodical Interim Committee shall be available for consultation with standing committees and denominational agencies.

[*Note:* This item is taken without change from the existing rules.]

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our committee respectfully recommends that synod

- A. Give the privilege of the floor during discussion of this report to members of the committee who may be available at that time.
- B. Adopt the proposed restatement of Rules for the Synodical Interim Committee.
- C. Discharge the committee.

Committee to Review the
Effectiveness of the SIC
Ray Vander Weele, chairman
A. James Heynen
John Vander Aa
David Vander Ploeg
Wilbert Van Dyk
Arie Van Eek

REPORT 36

PSALTER HYMNAL REVISION COMMITTEE

From the beginning of our work in 1977 "to review and improve the Centennial Edition of the *Psalter Hymnal*" we have had three major areas of concern.

One is the obvious assignment to recommend to synod the *contents* of a "revised and improved" *Psalter Hymnal*. This is the area of our most intense efforts and the one about which the members of our churches most frequently inquire. We report again this year our progress with both the psalms and the hymns for the new book.

The two other areas are less publicly obvious, but no less important. They have been present in our reports from the start, but in terms often less precise than the first area. These two areas are education and production. By *education* we mean shaping the use of the approved principles and guidelines for music in the churches. By *production* we mean the steps by which the approved contents of the book are made ready for publication.

Before reporting on the first and most typical area of our work, we call attention to these other two in order to clarify for synod some important questions. After that, we turn to the work on psalms and hymns.

I. EDUCATION

The Synod of 1977 rightly asked that our work and reporting begin with the principles governing music in the churches, and the Synod of 1979 adopted a restatement of the 1953 Statement of Principle, presumably to function not only as a guide for our committee in the production of the *Psalter Hymnal*, but also as a guide for the churches in all their church music practices. *Banner* articles, public discussions, and the use of materials in selected churches—all these are methods of education in matters of church music.

We are convinced that preparing the churches for the *Psalter Hymnal* is as important a task as preparing the *Psalter Hymnal* for the churches. To these ends we produced a series of *Banner* articles this past winter and have pressed educational concerns in our continuing conversations with the liturgical committee and the education department of the Board of Publications. The whole area of education in liturgy and music needs attention.

II. PRODUCTION

The area of production has become an increasingly persistent and often frustrating concern. Every meeting of our committee includes agenda

items like copyright issues, both for securing permissions and for legally guarding our own work, and the editing of the finally adopted materials. It is noteworthy that production details such as these took at least two years in the case of the 1959 Edition, two years from synod's final approval of the content to the actual appearance of a book for sale. The increasing sophistication of the music publishing business calls for careful planning.

III. PSALMS

A major part of our work on the psalms will be nearly complete by the time synod meets this year. We have been blessed by the diligent efforts of several poets, including Cor Barendrecht, Marian Battles, Helen Otte, Marie Post, Calvin Seerveld, Paul Shuart, Robert Swets, Claire Walhout, and Stanley Wiersma. A subcommittee of Bert Polman and Cal Seerveld brought this work forward.

For each of the 150 psalms we have, with few exceptions, either the best of the materials in the current edition, or a fresh amplification from the poets to be used with a Genevan Psalm tune, or recommended metrical version from other English sources. Each psalm has been studied at least twice, once in our review of the current collection, and once in the work of the subcommittees which compared various versions. Poets have been assigned to work on psalms for which no adequate versifications were found.

IV. HYMNS

We have also completed a major step in our search for new hymns to be added to the book. From a study of the hymnals of many other denominations and church groups we produced a list of over seven hundred songs to be reviewed as possible additions to the book. We are carefully studying this list.

In the same way we are now in the process of examining songs from less traditional sources, as well as those submitted to the committee by members of the churches. We are gratified to report that more than four hundred churches responded to a brief inquiry from our committee and that many sent materials they are already using in their services. Over 80 percent of the responding churches are using materials supplementary to the *Psalter Hymnal*. All of this material is being studied.

Our next steps with these materials will be to compare all the worthy new songs with the needs as expressed in a study of the structure and proposed contents for the collection.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and reporter of our committee when matters pertaining to this report are discussed.

B. That synod take note of our progress with both the psalms and hymns for the new collection.

C. That synod take note of the discussions regarding education and production matters, specifically with a view to receiving procedural recommendations as appropriate.

Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee

Jack Van Laar, chairman

Jack Reiffer, reporter

Emily Brink, corresponding secretary

Verlyn Schultz, recording secretary

Shirley Boomsma

Dale Grotenhuis

John Hamersma

Anthony Hoekema

Bert Polman

Marie Post

Calvin Seerveld

Dale Topp

REPORT 37

CONTEMPORARY TESTIMONY COMMITTEE

Our committee is steadily working toward the goal of reporting to the Synod of 1983. We appreciate the time we have been given for our work. At the same time we try not to let the pressure of more immediate duties dull our enthusiasm for the glad task of stating the faith for our times. We hope too that the church will not forget that it has assigned this work to us. Therefore we are happy to submit this brief progress report, trying in it to share a bit of our deliberations so that the churches will have some idea of what we are doing.

I. MANDATE

The mandate we were given by the Synod of 1979 is the following:

That synod implement further the decision to move in the direction of formulating a contemporary testimony in view of the secularization of modern life and culture by appointing a committee with the mandate to draft such a contemporary testimony, taking into account the suggestions and guidelines as outlined in the report (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 75, 76).

A schedule for our work was also proposed and adopted. This calls for a draft of the testimony in 1983, followed by three years of further study and work with reactions to the draft, leading to the final version in 1986.

We continue to find this an exciting mandate, and we expect that such a testimony will be useful for the life and witness of the church.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Our secretary, Henry DeMoor, moved to the Netherlands to serve a church there. Robert Recker has taken over from him as secretary, and the Synod of 1980 added Miss Aileen Van Beilen to the committee. The rest of our membership remains the same.

III. RESOURCE PERSONS:

We have had very useful meetings with Dr. E. Heideman of the RCA and with the Revs. Peter Y. DeJong and John Piersma. Dr. Heideman was the one-man committee for the RCA which produced its recent confessional document "Our Song of Hope." Pastors DeJong and Piersma were contributing authors to "Our Testimony." All three persons provided helpful information on writing such documents for the church and wished us well in our work.

IV. PROGRESS

We are at a stage now where all committee members are writing drafts of the preamble or of various sections of the testimony. In the process of

working through these drafts together and while comparing them with other recent efforts at confessional writing we are becoming more set on our theme, structure, and approach.

This may all change again, of course, but at the moment it seems to us that the most direct address to current secularism is the reassuring testimony: "Our world belongs to God!"

That is our working theme. We plan to develop it in a creation-fall-redemption structure.

We may begin our testimony with a summary statement of the faith. This summary could have liturgical and educational uses. It would then be followed by more detailed paragraphs on each section, in which a fuller explanation would be given and more detailed concerns could be addressed.

One of our working documents contains this summary:

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in a world which many think they control, and which others fear has run wild, we declare with joy and trust:

Our world belongs to God.

He made it, not chance or accident. He did it by his good power.

When people steal the world for themselves, closing their eyes to Maker and neighbor, destruction comes.

But God does not give up on the world that tries to lose him.

In grace he came to Adam. He called Israel to be his people.

God came in Jesus, announcing that the world is still his.

He poured his Spirit on the church.

God uses those he has found to keep reclaiming the world as his:

His church worships him and goes to all nations with his message.

His people follow their Lord in homes and schools, in work and recreation, in national and international affairs, seeking his justice and peace.

And, when the time looks right to God, he will make us fully his again.

That is our hope, sure and safe, for we trust God.

V. RECOMMENDATION:

Trusting that it will be helpful to the churches that we give you a glimpse of what we are doing, we ask you to accept this report as information.

Contemporary Testimony Committee

G. Spykman, chairman

M. N. Greidanus, reporter

R. Recker, secretary

L. Den Besten

C. Hoogendoorn

R. Mouw

B. Nederlof

A. Van Beilen

G. Vander Velde

REPORT 38

THE COUNCIL OF INDIAN CHURCHES RE
FORMATION OF NEW CLASSIS

I. BACKGROUND MATERIALS

- A. Report of Committee for Indian Church Growth, December 1978.
- B. Report of Committee for Indian Church Growth, December 1979.
- C. *Acts of Synod 1980*, pages 35-36.

II. HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION

Since early 1978 the Council of Indian Churches (hereafter referred to as CIC) and the Board of Home Missions (hereafter referred to as BHM) have been giving special consideration to the *indigenous* ecclesiastical development of the Christian Reformed "Indian churches" on or near the Navajo and Zuni reservations. This effort was led initially by a jointly appointed Study Committee for Indian Church Growth. In December 1978, this committee presented a major report that identified some of the unique cultural, educational, and economic characteristics of the Indian (especially Navajo) people. It also was in response to this report that the CIC and BHM adopted biblical guidelines for the ecclesiastical development of the churches of CIC, and mandated the Committee for Indian Church Growth "to work closely with the Indian churches to develop the implications of [the] report, giving special attention to the questions of:

1. the organization of Indian congregations;
2. the possible formation of a classis of Indian churches;
3. increasing the effectiveness of salaried personnel;
4. local responsibility for real and physical properties.

In response to subsequent recommendations of the Committee for Indian Church Growth, early in 1980 both the CIC and the BHM concurred regarding a series of recommendations pertaining to personnel and properties. In addition, the CIC decided to request Classis Rocky Mountain to overture the Synod of 1980 to approve the concept of the CIC taking steps toward becoming an officially recognized classis in the Christian Reformed denomination. It was in response to this overture that Synod took the following action:

1. It approved "the concept of the Council of Indian Churches organizing as a classis of Indian churches within the Christian Reformed Church."

2. It recognized "the validity of modifying the regulations of synod and the Church Order, with the approval of synod, in order to affirm the cultural uniqueness of the Indian churches."

3. It authorized "the Council of Indian Churches, in consultation with the Board of Home Missions and Classis Rocky Mountain, to develop and refine the concept and plan for becoming a classis, and report to the Synod of 1981.

The complete action of the Synod of 1980, along with a brief background statement and grounds for its action, are found in the *Acts of Synod, 1980* pages 35-36.

Following this action of the Synod of 1980, and with the assistance of a newly appointed Indian Church Growth TASK FORCE (replacing the Committee for Indian Church Growth), the CIC continued to develop a plan for organizing as a classis. Its efforts to date are reflected in the following material, which is reported as background for its recommendations to the Synod of 1981.

III. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION REGARDING THE NEW CLASSIS

A. *Tentative Name*

The CIC has given tentative approval to the use of the name "Classis Red Mesa" when referring to the proposed new classis.

B. *Use of English and Navajo*

It is expected that for the foreseeable future, all meetings of Classis Red Mesa will be conducted in two languages—English and Navajo—as has been the prevailing practice in the Council of Indian Churches. Although English is the official language for minutes and reports, free use of the Navajo language is necessary for meaningful participation by many of the delegates. Discussions are held in both English and Navajo. Ordinarily minutes and reports are presented in English and interpreted or summarized in Navajo.

C. *Participation in Denominational Functions*

At present three delegates from Classis Rocky Mountain to denominational boards are nonministerial persons from the Red Mesa area. The BHM member-at-large from the Indian field also is a nonministerial delegate. Especially if qualified nonministerial persons are utilized, Classis Red Mesa should be able to fulfill all denominational functions as a classis without difficulty.

D. Listing of Probable Member Churches

Name of Church	Date Opened as "Field"	Date of Organization	Member Families	Percentage of Indian Members
Albuquerque Valley	1960	1978	20	25%
Church Rock	1957		10	90%
Crownpoint	1912	1971	32	90%
Farmington	1925	1962	21	100%
Fort Wingate	1965		11	40%
Gallup Bethany	1932	1956	36	40%
Naschitti	1924		31	90%
Navajo			10	80%
Red Valley	1953		30	100%
Rehoboth	1903	1906	38	5%
Sanostee	1942		15	95%
Shiprock Bethel	1936		24	95%
Tee Nos Pos	1936		38	100%
Toadlena	1925		23	95%
Tohatchi	1898		19	100%
Tohlakai Bethlehem	1930		34	90%
Window Rock	1966	1980	17	100%
Zuni	1897		13	75%

Note: The Chelwood Christian Reformed Church of Albuquerque, New Mexico, has indicated its initial preference to remain with Classis Rocky Mountain. The Task Force also corresponded with the Christian Reformed Church of Flagstaff, Arizona, but has not received an indication of their preference.

E. Payment of Denominational Quotas

The CIC will be able to meet its own classical expenses, with the likely exception of maintaining an adequate aid fund. With regard to synodical quotas, the position of CIC is that its churches shall be expected to contribute to such quotas at a level(s) recommended by the new classis.

Grounds:

1. This enables them to establish their identification with the denomination in its total program.
2. Participation in the payment of denominational quotas is an established feature of Reformed policy and practice.
3. Recognizing the uniqueness of the "Indian Field" with its own local mission challenge, its present dependence upon denominational funds, and the general economic level of its membership, the level of quota participation can best be determined by the classis involved.

The Synod of 1981 is being asked to concur in this position of CIC regarding the payment of synodical quotas.

IV. DECISIONS OF CIC REGARDING THE ORGANIZING OF EMERGING (UN-ORGANIZED) CONGREGATIONS OF THE CIC

A. *Local Training for the Organizing of Churches*

1. The CIC and BHM approved the sponsoring of a special workshop on church organization for all designated BHM personnel serving the churches of CIC to be held in the Gallup area on March 16-18, 1981. The purpose of this workshop is to address the *WHAT* (nature), *WHY* (principles), and *HOW* (practices) of church organization. The personnel are to be trained to conduct similar workshops for their own steering committees and congregations in April and May of 1981.

2. The workshop is designed to accomplish the following specific goals:

a. Personnel will understand the biblical nature of the church and her offices.

b. Personnel will understand reasons for organizing as a congregation in the Christian Reformed Church.

c. Personnel will *OWN* (believe and promote) the concepts of the biblical nature of the church and the advisability/necessity of organizing in the Christian Reformed Church.

d. Personnel will understand the method/process of becoming organized in the Christian Reformed Church.

e. Personnel will be able to train the new consistory to function as an organization in the Christian Reformed Church.

f. Personnel will be able to teach these concepts in their own congregations.

D. *Guidelines for the Organizing of Emerging Congregations*

1. That an emerging congregation meeting the minimum requirements for organization should seek to organize (with a consistory) as soon as possible.

Grounds:

a. This was the apparent practice of the early New Testament church. (See Titus 1:5.)

b. This is a necessary implication of the Biblical Guidelines for Church Growth, Statements 8 and 9. (See Report of Committee for Indian Church Growth, December 1978, pages 25-26.)

2. That an emerging congregation seeking to organize meet the following minimum requirements:

a. Twenty-five (25) adult professing members.

b. A sufficient number of male members who meet the qualifications for office (at least two elders and one deacon—in addition to the missionary).

c. Reasonable assurance of a continuing church program and potential for growth.

d. Readiness to contribute to classical and synodical quotas, according to local ability and the advice of classis.

3. That not later than December 1, 1981, all emerging congregations of CIC which meet the minimum requirements for organization shall:
 - a. Select a target date for organization.
 - b. Outline the steps and timetable for achieving organization by the target date.
 - c. Report its decisions to the CIC/CC and the BHM.
4. That the missionary(ies) and steering committee shall include the following in their outline of steps for achieving organization:
 - a. Schedule a brief teaching series for the congregation and potential leaders regarding the WHAT, WHY, AND HOW OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION, preferably in April and/or May 1981.
 - b. Compile specific information which demonstrates that the emerging congregation meets the minimum requirements for organization.
 - c. Decide to and make official request to the classis (Rocky Mountain or the new classis as applicable) for approval to organize. The request shall include the following:
 - (1) Information which demonstrates that the minimum requirements for organization have been met.
 - (2) Written endorsements from the CIC/CC and the Board of Home Missions.
 - (3) The naming of a neighboring consistory to effect the organization.
 - (4) The signatures of all professing members.
 - d. After the approval of classis, the consistory appointed by classis shall conduct the service of organization, including the following:
 - (1) Nominations shall be received for elders and deacons from the steering committee and/or congregation.
 - (2) Elders and deacons shall be elected by the congregation.
 - (3) The presiding minister shall ordain those elected.
 - (4) All those ordained shall sign the Form of Subscription.
5. That in the case of an emerging congregation which does *not* meet the minimum requirements for organization, consideration shall be given to assigning it to the care of a neighboring consistory designated by CIC or the new classis. Ordinarily such an arrangement shall include the following:
 - a. All memberships of the emerging congregation shall be held by the neighboring consistory.
 - b. Whenever possible the missionary and (one or two) members of the emerging congregation shall hold office as members of the neighboring consistory, although exercising their office especially in regard to the emerging congregation.

Note: An arrangement as described above still assumes movement toward eventual organization. At any rate, it will include periodic review by the BHM as regards appropriate staffing, BHM subsidy, etc.

V. DECISIONS OF CIC REGARDING THE CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES OF FINANCIAL SELF-SUPPORT BY THE CHURCHES OF CIC

A. *Background*

The 1978 Study Report of the Indian Church Growth Committee concluded that indigeneity, if it is going to be meaningful for the Indian churches, must include self-support as well as self-government and self-reproduction. It was observed that an attitude of paternalism on the part of the BHM and the dependence mentality of many Indian church members have combined to hinder the healthy indigenous development of the congregations. Financial and decision-making practices over the years have contributed to the notion that the work of the Lord in Arizona and New Mexico belongs to the Board. So ingrained is this notion in many Christian Reformed Indian people that they regard themselves as recipients of, rather than participants in, the Lord's work of "Indian missions."

To overcome this attitude the congregations must develop a sense of "ownership"—toward their program and property, and toward the personnel appointed to serve among them. From their earliest stages of development the congregations must think of themselves as *the church*. The program and property, *and* the personnel *belong* to them. Together they are God's people, doing God's work in their place, using their God-given resources. Ideally the BHM is involved only to assist and enable. That is the attitude that must permeate all the relationships between the churches and the BHM.

Consistent with this concern, early in 1980 the CIC and BHM mandated the ICG Task Force, "in consultation with the CIC and BHM, to seek to develop the necessary steps and time line by which *all* ministry expenses for each specific field/congregation be included in a direct funding arrangement with the BHM, and further that the Task Force submit a progress report to the BHM and CIC by January 1, 1981, and a final report by January 1, 1982."

The following constitutes the initial recommendations of CIC on this very important and very complex matter.

B. *Guiding Statements Regarding Financial Self-support*

1. Responsible Christian stewardship of finances must be taught and learned as a direct implication of Christian discipleship. Members of the body of Christ are to earn their own living whenever possible, and are expected to contribute meaningfully and sacrificially to the financial support of the work of God (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10; 2 Cor. 8:7-9). This includes the providing of financial support for those who are appointed to serve as ministers and evangelists (Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18).

2. Responsible Christian stewardship of finances requires proportionate giving. The people of God in the Old Testament were required to give a tithe (10% of their income) and occasional contributions beyond the tithe as gifts of gratitude. The New Testament commands the people of God to give in proportion to what they have been given (1 Cor. 16:2).

Those who have been given more should give more (certainly in amount and perhaps in percentage) than those who have been given less (Luke 12:48; 2 Cor. 8:12-14; Gal. 6:2).

3. There is biblical precedent for those appointed to serve as pastors or evangelists to choose to obtain primary or supplementary financial support from other employment (1 Cor. 9:6, 11; 1 Thess. 2:9-12; 2 Thess. 3:8)

4. All congregations of CIC should seek to be financially self-supporting as soon as possible. Great care should be given during the early stages of church development to keep local expenses within the attainable limits of the congregation. All decisions regarding local program, property, and personnel should be made in light of the ultimate goal of self-support.

5. All congregations of CIC should teach and expect their members to give first priority to the financial responsibilities of their own congregation.

6. All congregations of CIC should teach and expect their members to provide financial support for those who are appointed to serve among them as pastors or evangelists.

7. All congregations of CIC should teach and expect their members to give at least 5 to 10% of their income to the support of their own congregation (toward program, property, and personnel).

C. CIC also decided that before December 1, 1981, the Indian Church Growth Task Force should seek to arrange a meeting with each consistory/steering committee to discuss the above statements regarding financial self-support *and their implications* in the light of the congregation's local budget, estimated financial resources, percentage of giving based on income of members, and the amount of subsidy received annually from the BHM. The rationale for this additional consultation is that the Task Force needs more information from the churches before it can proceed in its assignment to "seek to develop the necessary steps and time line by which all ministry expenses for each specific field/congregation be included in a Direct Funding arrangement with the BHM" as was mandated by CIC and the BHM.

VI. TIMETABLE FOR FORMATION OF NEW CLASSIS

1981	January	CIC adopts report and forwards recommendations to BHM, Classis Rocky Mountain, and synod.
	March	Workshop for BHM personnel on organizing of churches.
	April/May	Workshops for the congregations on organizing of churches.
	June	Synod considers progress report and recommendations of CIC regarding formation of new classis.
	September	Emerging congregations begin to develop plan for organization, and report plan to CIC and BHM not later than December 1, 1981.

1982	January	CIC decides to make request/recommendation to the Synod of 1982 regarding the proposed formation of the new classis.
	February	BHM reviews CIC request/recommendations to synod.
	March	Classis considers requests of emerging congregations to organize, and reviews the request/recommendation of CIC to the Synod of 1982 regarding the proposed formation of the new classis.
	April	Several emerging congregations will organize.
	June	Synod considers report and recommendations of CIC regarding the formation of the New Classis.
	September	Final joint meeting with Classis Rocky Mountain and first official meeting of new classis.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SYNOD OF 1981

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Council of Indian Churches representatives, the Revs. Paul Redhouse and Al Mulder, when matters pertaining to this report are discussed.

B. That synod approve the following modifications to the Church Order for the member churches of the proposed new classis:

CR Church Order

Proposed Modification

ARTICLE 4a

In calling to an office, the consistory shall present to the congregation a nomination of at least twice the number to be elected. In special circumstances the consistory may submit a nomination which totals less than twice the number to be elected, giving the reasons for this departure from the rule.

ARTICLE 4a

In calling to an office, the consistory shall present to the congregation a nomination of one or more persons for each position to be filled.

ARTICLE 5

All office-bearers, on occasions stipulated by consistorial, classical, and synodical regulations, shall signify their agreement with the doctrine of the church by signing the Form of Subscription.

All office-bearers, on occasions stipulated by consistorial, classical, and synodical regulations, shall signify their agreement with the doctrine of the church by signing the Form of Subscription or its approved modification.

ARTICLE 15

Each church shall through its consistory provide for the proper support of its minister(s).

ARTICLE 23

b. The evangelist shall be acknowledged as an elder of his calling church with corresponding privileges and responsibilities. His work as elder shall normally be limited to that which pertains to his function as evangelist. His office will terminate when the group of believers is formed into an organized church.

ARTICLE 40a

The consistory of each church shall delegate a minister and an elder to the classis. If a church is without a minister, or the minister is prevented from attending, two elders shall be delegated. Office-bearers who are not delegated may also attend classis and may be given an advisory voice.

ARTICLE 40c

The ministers shall either preside in rotation, or one shall be chosen to preside; however, the same minister shall not be chosen twice in succession.

ARTICLE 15

Each congregation through its consistory shall provide for the proper support of its minister(s). By way of exception and with the approval of classis, a congregation and minister may agree that he obtain primary or supplemental income by means of other employment.

ARTICLE 23

b. The evangelist shall be acknowledged as an elder of his calling church with corresponding privileges and responsibilities. His work as an elder shall normally be limited to that which pertains to his function as evangelist.

c. Ordinarily the office of the evangelist will terminate when the group of believers is formed into an organized church. However, by request of the new consistory and with the approval of classis, the evangelist may continue to serve the newly organized church for a limited period of time as designated by classis.

ARTICLE 40a

The consistory of each church shall delegate a minister and two elders to the classis. If a church is without a minister, or the minister is prevented from attending, three elders may be delegated. Office-bearers who are not delegated also may attend classis and may be given an advisory voice.

ARTICLE 40c

The presiding officers of classis shall be selected from office-bearers within the classis. The same presiding officers shall not be chosen twice in succession.

ARTICLE 52

a. The consistory shall regulate the worship services.

b. The consistory shall see to it that the synodically approved Bible versions, the liturgical forms and songs are used, and that the principles and elements of the order of worship approved by synod are observed.

c. The consistory shall see to it that if choirs or others sing in the worship services, they observe the synodical regulations governing the content of the hymns and anthems sung. These regulations shall also apply when supplementary hymns are sung by the congregation.

ARTICLE 53

a. The ministers of the Word shall conduct the worship services.

b. Persons licensed to exhort and anyone appointed by the consistory to read a sermon may conduct the worship services. They shall, however, refrain from all official acts of the ministry.

c. Only sermons approved by the consistory shall be read in the worship services.

Note: Rationale for the proposed modifications will be provided by the representatives of the CIC. The CIC also is studying proposed modifications to Church Order Articles 67, 83, 86, and 87, and may present additional recommendations to the Synod of 1982.

C. That Synod authorize the new classis and its member churches to use the following modified Form of Subscription:

FORM OF SUBSCRIPTION (modified)

We, the undersigned, office-bearers of the Christian Reformed congregation of _____, of the classis of Red Mesa, in good conscience before the Lord, declare that we heartily believe that all the teachings contained in the doctrinal standards of the Christian Reformed

ARTICLE 52

a. The consistory shall regulate the worship services.

b. The consistory shall see to it that the Bible versions, liturgical forms, and hymnals used are approved by synod or classis.

c. The consistory shall see to it that the principles and elements of

worship approved by synod or classis are observed.

d. The consistory shall see to it that all hymns used in the worship services are faithful to the Word of God.

ARTICLE 53

a. The minister of the Word or the evangelist shall conduct the official worship service. In his absence, the consistory shall appoint a person licensed to preach or one of the elders.

Church do fully agree with the Word of God.

We promise therefore to teach and defend these teachings, without contradicting them by our public preaching or writing.

We declare, moreover, that if any different views respecting these teachings should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately promote such views, either by preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such views to the consistory, classis, or synod for examination; ready to submit to the judgment of consistory, classis, or synod.

We reserve for ourselves, however, the right of appeal in case we should believe ourselves wronged by the judgment of the consistory or classis; and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will yield to the judgment already made.

Grounds:

1. The official version of the Form of Subscription renders meaningful translation impossible.
2. The proposed modification is somewhat more readable and capable of translation, while retaining the essence of the official version.

D. That synod concur in the position of the CIC that the proposed new classis shall expect its member churches to contribute to synodical quotas only at a level(s) recommended by the new classis.

E. That synod authorize the Council of Indian Churches, in consultation with the BHM and Classis Rocky Mountain, to continue to develop and refine the plan for becoming a classis, and report to the Synod of 1982.

Al Mulder, reporter

Note: The above report of the Council of Indian Churches was endorsed by Classis Rocky Mountain at its meeting in March 1981.

REPORT 39

125TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

The Christian Reformed Church will celebrate its 125th anniversary in 1982. The Synodical Interim Committee, following the instructions of the Synod of 1980 (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 23), has appointed an anniversary committee to plan and coordinate appropriate observances for this occasion. Since it is not a major anniversary, the committee wishes to keep the celebration rather low-keyed and decentralized with emphasis on observance at the local congregational level. To that end, and in order to establish a focus and to set a proper tone for the commemoration, the anniversary committee makes the following *recommendations*:

1. That synod urge the congregations to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Christian Reformed Church on Sunday, October 3, 1982, by means of appropriate sermons, prayers, offerings, and other activities.

2. That synod adopt the following statement of purpose regarding the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Christian Reformed Church.

The purpose of our 125th anniversary observance is threefold: grateful celebration of God's blessings on the Christian Reformed Church, humble acknowledgment of our weaknesses and needs, and thoughtful reflection on the challenges we face in the closing years of the twentieth century. The celebration of our blessings need not be limited to, but may well focus upon, the last twenty-five years of growth and development in the life and ministry of our denomination. The acknowledgment of our weaknesses should not foster self-disparagement, but should rather encourage a new resolve toward more faithful obedience to the will of God. The reflection on our challenges should not make us fainthearted, but should rather develop in us an expanded vision of our calling as a Reformed community to minister to a needy world, through word and deed, in the name of our Savior and King. As we celebrate our anniversary, we should be sensitive to the brokenness of the church of Christ and to the need for closer communion with other Christians around the world. Such celebration will not be self-centered and self-laudatory, but God-centered and God-glorifying.

The 125th Anniversary Committee

John H. Primus, chairman

B. J. Haan, corresponding secretary

Aileen Van Beilen, recording secretary

Andrew Kuyvenhoven

Henrietta Ten Harmsel

William P. Brink, *ex officio*

Overtures

Overture 1 — Revise Basis of Quota System

Classis Grandville overtures synod to revise the quota system so that the amount to be contributed by a church would be based on the number of communicant members rather than on a per-family basis.

Grounds:

1. There is a long-standing dissatisfaction with the present method. The subject of quota equalization has been to synod by way of overtures in 1949, 1954, 1962, and 1965. In 1972, synod decided to continue the present quota system using as a basis for its decision the report of the Quota Equalization Committee, supported in part by a questionnaire analysis received from only 85 consistories out of the 658 churches in the denomination.
2. The present method does not take into consideration the growing number of single adults maintaining a separate residence today.
3. The present definition as to what constitutes a family has led to confusion and irregularities in counting. The communicant membership basis would reduce problems in this area.

The exhibits on pages 431-32 show how this change would affect the amount to be contributed by each classis based on 1979 and 1980 statistics.

Classis Grandville

Leonard Van Drunen, stated clerk

Overture 2 — Terminate Ministers' Pension Funding

The last several years, Classis Alberta North has continually been confronted with concerns raised about the Ministers' Pension Fund. We have received overtures to request synod to discontinue the advanced funding concept that presently undergirds the fund. Committees have been appointed to study alternatives to the present plan, and thus to analyze the principles that underlie the plan, and to test such principles in the light of Scripture. Proposals have been made and tested. Against this background classis adopted the following observations, summary statements, declarations, and overture:

OBSERVATIONS

1. The Scriptures do not prescribe either an advanced funding concept or a pay-as-you-go approach to retirement needs. The Bible advocates good stewardship. The Bible also makes it clear that those who serve the church in the office of minister are to be provided for responsibly.
2. Economic factors, such as inflation, militate against advanced funding. Whereas under the old system, retired ministers received 50 percent of the average salary paid to active ministers, the maximum pension recommended for 1981 is \$5,724 (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 85). This is significantly less than 50 percent. Morally the present plan does an injustice to the many retired ministers in the denomination who paid for years under the old plan.

Also, advanced funding:

 - makes our Pension Plan subject to strict government regulations.
 - requires the setting aside of funds to be invested in a way that cannot be used in the work of our church *now*.
 - gives us presently a rate of return on our money less than the rate of inflation.
 - involves us in investing in "questionable" enterprises.
3. Retirement income is now measured in terms of work performed (years of service). Unless one has worked 360 months, his retirement income will only be a portion thereof. Is that an adequate way of caring for ministers? Does length of service determine the benefits, or is it need? Does this not reflect an economic and individualistic approach?
4. It was originally argued, in favor of advanced funding, that this would be financially

Exhibit A

CHRISTIAN REFORMED DENOMINATION

(BASED ON 1979 YEARBOOK)

CLASSES	CHURCH FAMILIES	\$251.30 QUOTA PER FAMILY	COMMUNICANT MEMBERS	\$100.05 PER MEMBER	MORE (LESS)
Alberta North	1,718	431,733	3,916	391,796	(39,937)
Alberta South	1,152	289,498	2,781	278,239	(11,259)
Atlantic Northeast	793	199,281	2,104	210,506	11,225
British Columbia	2,322	583,519	5,471	547,374	(36,145)
Cadillac	729	183,198	1,821	182,191	(1,007)
California South	2,207	554,619	5,710	571,286	16,667
Central California	1,307	328,449	3,269	327,063	(1,386)
Chatham	2,337	587,288	5,275	527,764	(59,524)
Chicago South	1,394	350,312	3,705	370,685	20,373
Columbia	918	230,693	2,303	230,415	(278)
Eastern Canada	1,046	262,860	2,423	242,421	(20,439)
Florida	598	150,277	1,544	154,477	4,200
Grand Rapids East	3,750	942,375	9,782	978,689	36,314
Grand Rapids North	2,264	568,943	6,084	608,704	39,721
Grand Rapids, South	2,418	607,643	6,252	625,513	17,870
Grandville	3,355	843,112	8,212	821,611	(21,501)
Hackensack	1,027	258,085	2,935	293,647	35,562
Hamilton	2,751	691,326	6,472	647,524	(43,802)
Holland	2,964	744,853	7,672	767,584	22,731
Hudson	1,073	269,645	2,953	295,448	25,803
Huron	1,484	372,929	3,195	319,660	(53,269)
Illiana	2,481	623,475	6,392	639,520	16,045
Kalamazoo	1,887	474,203	4,739	474,137	(66)
Lake Erie	1,136	285,477	3,085	308,654	23,177
Minnesota North	1,793	450,581	4,501	450,325	(256)
Minnesota South	1,116	280,451	2,872	287,344	6,893
Muskegon	1,845	463,649	5,055	505,753	42,104
North Central Iowa	766	192,496	2,056	205,703	13,207
Northern Illinois	1,333	334,983	3,543	354,477	19,494
Orange City	1,628	409,116	4,096	409,805	689
Pacific Northwest	1,816	456,361	4,474	447,624	(8,737)
Pella	1,766	443,796	4,223	422,511	(21,285)
Quinto	1,436	360,867	3,313	331,466	(29,401)
Rocky Mountain	1,732	435,252	4,396	439,820	4,568
Sioux Center	1,901	477,721	4,770	477,239	(482)
Toronto	1,913	480,737	4,630	463,232	(17,505)
Wisconsin	1,278	321,161	3,440	344,172	23,011
Zeeland	3,045	765,209	7,515	751,876	(13,333)
TOTALS	66,479	16,706,173	166,979	16,706,249	

Exhibit B

CHRISTIAN REFORMED DENOMINATION

(BASED ON 1980 YEARBOOK)

CLASSES	CHURCH FAMILIES	\$274.97 QUOTA PER FAMILY	COMMUNICANT MEMBERS	\$109.11 PER MEMBER	MORE (LESS)
Alberta North	1,806	496,595	4,267	465,572	(31,023)
Alberta South	1,205	331,338	2,902	316,637	(14,701)
Atlantic Northeast	790	217,226	2,123	231,640	14,414
British Columbia	2,380	654,428	5,405	589,739	(64,689)
Cadillac	747	205,402	1,843	201,089	(4,313)
California South	2,200	604,934	5,626	613,743	8,809
Central California	1,350	371,209	3,398	370,755	(454)
Chatham	2,418	664,877	5,619	613,089	(51,788)
Chicago South	1,441	396,231	3,787	413,199	16,968
Columbia	949	260,946	2,322	253,353	(7,593)
Eastern Canada	1,044	287,068	2,443	266,555	(20,513)
Florida	631	173,506	1,605	175,121	1,615
Grand Rapids East	3,758	1,033,337	10,028	1,024,155	(9,182)
Grand Rapids North	2,302	632,980	6,043	659,351	26,371
Grand Rapids, South	2,384	655,528	6,223	678,991	23,463
Grandville	3,265	897,777	8,128	886,846	(10,931)
Hackensack	1,042	286,518	2,923	318,928	32,410
Hamilton	2,792	767,716	6,741	735,510	(32,206)
Holland	3,048	838,106	7,913	863,387	25,281
Hudson	1,073	295,042	2,969	323,947	28,905
Huron	1,550	426,203	3,439	375,229	(50,974)
Illiana	2,502	687,974	6,459	704,741	16,767
Kalamazoo	1,905	523,817	4,868	531,147	7,330
Lake Erie	1,163	319,790	2,963	323,292	3,502
Minnesota North	1,801	495,220	4,588	500,596	5,376
Minnesota South	1,129	310,441	2,889	315,218	4,777
Muskegon	1,842	506,494	5,046	550,569	44,075
North Central Iowa	750	206,227	2,039	222,475	16,248
Northern Illinois	1,319	362,685	3,481	379,811	17,126
Orange City	1,667	458,374	4,203	458,589	215
Pacific Northwest	1,859	511,169	4,538	495,141	(16,028)
Pella	1,788	491,646	4,326	472,009	(19,637)
Quinte	1,482	407,505	3,419	373,047	(34,458)
Rocky Mountain	1,727	474,873	4,607	502,669	27,796
Sioux Center	1,926	529,592	4,929	537,803	8,211
Toronto	2,006	551,589	4,838	527,874	(23,715)
Wisconsin	1,299	357,186	3,430	374,247	17,061
Zeeland	3,183	875,229	7,791	850,076	(25,153)
TOTALS	67,523	18,566,799	170,161	18,566,266	

less burdensome to the churches than the former pay-as-you-go method. The rapid and substantial MPF quota increases, required by the rate of inflation of recent years, do not bear this out. Given the level to which the fund must be raised, the end is not yet in sight.

More significantly, the principle underlying the present funding concept (and which presumably is to make the care of our retired ministers less burdensome in the future) is that the present MPF be built up to such a level that the interest accrued would substantially meet future retirement payment needs. One of the arguments adduced in the past in favor of the present MPF was that it was not right for the present generation to saddle future generations with retirement payment obligations incurred by the present generation. This is a dubious argument. This generation passes on to the next generation, not only obligations but also benefits in the way of resources, buildings, and so forth. What is more, to the extent that the MPF plan succeeds, we will actually alleviate future generations of a good part of their financial obligations for *their* retired ministers. The prudence, or justice, of *that* is highly questionable. Thus we deprive future generations of carrying out their obligations in the matter of their ministers' retirement care.

Each generation must seek the kingdom of God first and trust the Lord to provide for daily necessities in the future. To tie up many millions of dollars of *this* generation in the light of all the responsibilities for good stewardship and support of church and kingdom causes, as evident *today*, seems to us not good stewardship. We may be confident that the Lord will enable the church of the future to discharge its pension obligations just as surely as he enables the church to do so today. Surely that is in keeping with our Lord's injunction in Matthew 6:34.

5. The MPF has not generally been perceived by our people (and we believe with some good reason) as a stewardly and trusting response to discharge our ministers' pension obligations.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF CLASSIS ALBERTA NORTH POSITION

1. The church must take care of its ministers, whether they be active or retired (when ministers retire they do not lose their ministerial status). The best way to discharge this responsibility is by way of the pay-as-you-go method. This method ties up fewer funds, assumes that the Lord will provide each generation with what it needs to meet its obligations, can more easily adjust to economic factors such as inflation, and minimizes administrative costs.

2. To determine retirement income obligations, the church should annually take into account the cost of living and the provisions made by the state (Social Security, Canada Pension).

3. It is not the length of service but *needs* which determine the benefits.

DECLARATIONS

1. The church has the obligation to provide adequately for its retired ministers.

2. This obligation can, in our judgment, best be met by way of the pay-as-you-go method.

3. Each year retirement income needed is to be reviewed and adjusted on the basis of the prevailing cost of living.

4. Retirement income paid is to be supplementary to the provisions made by the state.

5. The cost of providing retirement income is to be borne by the denomination by way of a per-family quota.

OVERTURE

Classis Alberta North overtures synod to terminate the present Ministers' Pension Fund and adopt a plan based on the pay-as-you-go approach.

Grounds:

1. The present plan has been the object of repeated principal criticism going back as far as 1967 (see Overture 40, *Acts of Synod 1967*; Overture 14-14H, *Acts of Synod 1968*; Overture 13, *Acts of Synod 1978*; Overtures 23, 24, *Acts of Synod 1979*).

2. The present plan is serving the denomination poorly. Retired ministers are underpaid and quota costs continue to rise.

3. The plan may be terminated by synod under the provisions stipulated under part 14, 3, (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 390).

Classis Alberta North
Henry Jonker, stated clerk

Overture 3 — Examine Mailing Practices

Classis Alberta North overtures synod to look critically into mailing practices, related fund raising efforts, and collection of statistics, and the way the denominational address lists are being used by the various denominational agencies of the CRC, in order to promote a more responsible use of our resources (materials, time, and money) and an ethical use of the addresses of the individual members of our denomination.

Grounds:

1. There is an enormous duplication of items sent in the mails to one address. Efforts to change this by individuals receiving such mail have little or no result. The recommendations in the *Acts of Synod 1975* (Report 20-A, V, B, 4a and c) seem to have had no effect in stemming the barrage of the mails. This unnecessary and irritating duplication is an extravagant waste, flying in the face of all responsible Christian stewardship.
2. More and more mailings of the various denominational agencies are being considered as "junk mail" and dealt with accordingly, contrary to the intentions of synod (cf. *Acts of Synod 1975*, Report 20-A, V, B, 3d). The result is that the work of the denominational agencies loses its urgency and importance in the minds and hearts of many church members who receive this "junk mail."
3. The mailing practices of the denominational agencies may not be modeled (as they seem to be at present) after the practices of commercial agencies and organizations which, as a rule, tend to bombard potential clientele in the hope of having a certain percentage respond to their appeals. Although this is, undoubtedly, not the principle of our denominational agencies, it certainly seems to be the accepted practice, contrary to the intentions of Report 20-A, referred to above.

Classis Alberta North
Henry Jonker, stated clerk

Overture 4 — Recognize and Utilize Gifts of Women Members

The Southern Heights Christian Reformed Church of Kalamazoo overtures synod once again to recognize officially and utilize the gifts of women members and encourage the use of their talents to further the kingdom of God.

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1975 urged 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" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 3, p. 78). This was reaffirmed by synod in 1976.

"*Grounds:* 4, b. Some of the gifts and talents given to women are presently not being fully used within the context of our Church Order" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 48, p. 47).

2. When women make public profession of faith, the minister welcomes them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to "all the privileges of full communion," "to full participation in the life of the church," to "its responsibilities, to its privileges, to its joys and its sufferings."
3. The Heidelberg Catechism in answer 55 states that all members "of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts," and "that each member should consider it his duty to use his gifts readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment of the other members." (It should be noted that the word *his*, in "his duty and his gifts," means women as well as men since he refers back to the words *each member*.) The following Scripture references support this section of the Heidelberg Catechism:
 - a. Romans 8:32—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"
 - b. Phil. 2:2-4—"... complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 21—"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

... The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'"

4. The Heidelberg Catechism (Question 90) asks, "What is the coming to life of the new self?" It speaks to women members as well as men members when it answers thus: "It is the wholehearted joy in God through Christ and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to." The following Scripture references support this section of the Heidelberg Catechism:
 - a. Romans 14:17—"For the kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
 - b. Galatians 2:19, 20—"For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
5. The Heidelberg Catechism (Question 110) asks, "What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?" It answers, "He forbids not only outright theft and robbery. . . . In addition he forbids all greediness and pointless squandering of his gifts." The following Scripture references support this section of the Heidelberg Catechism:
 - a. Luke 17:10 (addressing itself to our gifts)—"So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"
 - b. Matthew 16:27—"For the Son of man is come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done."

Women will have to give an account of their gifts and should be encouraged to use their talents to further the kingdom.
6. Further progress could and should be made in this regard, for the enrichment of the church, and for the recognition and utilization of the Spirit's gifts to women, as well as to men.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. The Synod of 1979 received an overture which contained a request for a study of denominational boards and stated, "Out of a total of 256 board members in the seven boards mentioned above, only ten are women. This compared poorly with the large role they play in the day-to-day work of the denomination." (See *Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 685 #4, Overture 16—Request for a Study of Denominational Boards.) We must nominate more qualified women to serve on our boards and must once again affirm and recognize their talents.
2. Fifteen gifts of the Spirit are listed in one of the publications of the Christian Reformed Church (see *The Gifted Church*, Discipleship Series #7, Evangelism Department, Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, p. 16). Women also have been given these gifts, but the churches have not encouraged women to use many of them. Peter states in 1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." The workbook entitled *The Gifted Church* asks the question, "What is your spiritual gift?"; and it is highly recommended as a study guide for the churches to help women affirm themselves as full members of the church.
3. In a report to the Synod of 1979 concerning world hunger, we read the following about stewardship: "The concept of stewardship extends beyond managing the money one has earned. All people are stewards of human life and talents, of time, and of the earth's resources." We also read the following about respect: "This criterion focuses on the quality of the treatment of people. Decisive here is that all people are image bearers of God. Since people are God's creatures and bear his image, they are full members of the human family and should be treated with respect. They are people with responsibility and should be accorded the opportunity to exercise that responsibility. Focusing on respect, we should ask the following questions about a given system: Does the system convey respect for people to participate in decisions that have a direct bearing on their life now and in the future? . . . Does the system promote a spirit of mutual dependence and cooperation between people?" And as part of the Christian's response in these areas, we read the following: "Christians are reformers like the apostle Paul, who did not tell slaves to rebel against their masters, but nevertheless lit the torch that would eventually spell the end of slavery when he told Philemon to receive Onesimus as 'more than a slave, a beloved brother' (Philemon v. 16)." (See *Acts of Synod 1979*, Report 36, Task Force on World Hunger, pp. 629 ff.) Of the 1 Corinthians 12 chapter on spiritual gifts, Karen De Vos says the following, "If the church lived by that passage instead of by a few texts chosen here and there throughout the

Pauline letters (the so-called verses about women), the church would look very different from the way it now looks. If we really assigned jobs according to people's gifts, the way jobs are divided would change" (*CW-CRC Newsletter*, January/February 1980, p. 5). Ursinus at Dortrecht, author of our Heidelberg Catechism, said 450 years ago that "the glory of God is a man fully alive." The Christian Reformed Church is a reforming church and should today include that the glory of God is a person fully alive.

4. On social justice, we read the following: "The Scriptures speak plainly and directly to the need of God's people to be concerned with the proclamation and practice of God's demands for justice in society. God's prophets frequently sound God's demands and speak "Thus saith the Lord" for justice in society. The Christian is noted to be a wellspring of action when motivated for justice. The Scriptures reveal that seeking justice is an integral part of Christian life" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 636, Social Justice).

5. Heidelberg Catechism question and answer 105 reads: "What is God's will for us in the sixth commandment? I am not to defame, insult. . . my neighbor. . ."

"Note the following: In God's all wise and sovereign providence he has seen fit to create mankind with a commonly known psychological difference between men and women. Men are more active; women more passive. Men, as a rule, excel in leading; women usually prefer to follow. Men normally excel in strength and defensiveness; women in love and compassion. . . . Now in keeping with these differences between men and women, and the unique calling and qualifications of each, men and not women are charged to hold office in the Church of God" (*The Revised Church Order Commentary*, by Van Dellen and Monsma, 1967, p. 26).

The statement above does not affirm women as full church members. It has, however, been our traditional thinking. Psychologists tell us that women who have been well educated, as most all of our Christian Reformed women are, and who then are asked to fit themselves into a dependent, easily influenced role can result in psychological problems.

If a male is logical and powerful in the presentation of his evidence, he is admired for his strength. If a woman is equally logical and powerful in the presentation of her evidence, she is often criticized as being tough or pushy. If God built such psychological differences between the sexes, then there should be uniform expectation of sex roles all over the world. Virginia Mollenkott, professor of English at Wm. Patterson College, said this: "In 12 societies it is expected that men should always carry the heavy burdens while in 57 other societies it is expected that women should carry the heavy burdens. In 14 societies houses are always built by women, but in 86 other societies, house building is exclusively male." God calls us as Christian men and women to a harmonious relationship with each other. We must stop categorizing human traits as being male or female. In the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22—"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"—one would consider almost every one of the traits to be feminine. Men should be encouraged to develop tenderness and compassion, traits which Jesus Christ showed many times. We should all develop our gifts out of love and fear of God, not out of fear of how society may stereotype us.

6. *The Place of Women in the Bible*, by Rev. Verlyn Verbrugge, is a study guide of six lessons and is recommended to help churches look at the Bible to better examine the present-day situation with the view of helping the church affirm women and encourage them in the use of their talents.

Southern Heights Consistory
Ralph Slager, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Kalamazoo on September 9, 1980, but was not approved.

Overture 5 — Sever Relations with Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland

Having taken note of our synod's alarm that the Synod of Delft of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland had seemingly spoken with approval of homosexual expression on the part of members of the Congregation of Jesus Christ (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 50); and

Having taken note that our synod instructed the Interchurch Relations Committee to seek clarification of the language and implications of the decision of the Synod of Delft, of the GKN, concerning homosexual practice (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 50); and

Having taken note of the clarification rendered in November 1980 by the Synod of Delft of the GKN, in response to an inquiry of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) of Nimes 1980, in which the Synod of Delft states that practicing homosexuals are acceptable and not censurable within the fellowship of the Christian church,

Classis Grand Rapids South overtures synod to sever our relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKN.

Grounds:

- A. The decision of the GKN regarding practicing homosexuals, together with its clarification, in response to the request for clarification from the RES, is contrary to Scripture.
- B. The synod of the GKN has not heeded the concern expressed by our synod.
- C. The GKN has neglected the stipulations of ecclesiastical fellowship such as "communication on the major issues of joint concern" (*Acts of Synod 1974*, p. 57).

Classis Grand Rapids South
H. J. Kwantes, stated clerk

Overture 6 — FNC Staged Withdrawal Procedure

Classis Lake Erie calls the attention of synod to what we believe is a problem in the administration of the Fund for Needy Churches. We request that synod seek a solution to this problem, and we suggest one solution which we believe would be workable.

The problem is in the transition by which a congregation moves from FNC subsidy in the support of its pastor to the point of carrying his full support. The experience of our classis indicates that in the transition to full self-support there is a hurdle which sometimes delays maturation to that full self-support.

The hurdle is the large final step in the process. That final step is intimidatingly large because in one step the congregation must give up not only the salary subsidy figure, but also all the allowances that accompany FNC subsidy, including children's allowance, service allowance, and car allowance. The result is that churches tend to hang on to the salary subsidy beyond the point at which they could manage without it, because they feel they cannot manage with the loss of both salary subsidy and all allowances in one year.

The chart below illustrates what happens to a church which is trying to reduce its FNC assistance each year. For purposes of illustration we have chosen the hypothetical case of Pastor X who now has eight years of service and four children eligible for children's allowance. The chart is written as though present allowances will remain fixed for the next four years, which may not be the case.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Salary subsidy	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$-0-
Children's allowance	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	-0-
Service allowance	800	900	1,000	1,100	-0-
Car allowance	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	-0-
	<u>\$7,800</u>	<u>\$6,900</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>\$5,100</u>	<u>\$-0-</u>

Please note that in 1984 this church, which has been reducing its salary subsidy by \$1,000 suddenly drops off a \$5,100 cliff if it lowers its subsidy request by another \$1,000, because the FNC rules abolish all allowances when salary subsidy ends. The result tends to be that churches find that last step so threatening that they just go on asking for subsidy year after year.

We submit that what is needed is a decompression chamber of some kind, a procedure by which a congregation may be challenged to stage its withdrawal in more manageable steps. We ask that synod provide such a procedure.

We suggest that an acceptable solution would be for synod to set up an "FNC Staged Withdrawal Procedure" by which a congregation shall:

1. Commit itself to the goal of withdrawing from all FNC support over a period of the next two years and so notify the FNC committees of classis and synod.
2. Receive full FNC allowances but no salary subsidy during the first year of the withdrawal.
3. Receive one half of FNC allowances without salary subsidy during the second (final) year of withdrawal.

Summary recommendations:

- A. That synod set up an FNC procedure by which a congregation may be challenged to commit itself to a staged withdrawal from FNC assistance that has more manageable steps than the procedure presently in effect.
- B. The synod consider the two-year transition procedure mentioned above as a possible answer to the need.

Classis Lake Erie
George Vander Weit, stated clerk

Overture 7 — Ratify 1978 Change in Church Order, Article 3

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to ratify the change in the Church Order, Article 3, as adopted by the Synod of 1978:

"Article 3

- a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister and elder.
- b. All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon.
- c. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church."

Grounds:

1. Three previous study committees (*Acts of Synod 1973, 1975, and 1978*) concluded that biblical teaching is not opposed in principle to women serving in the office of deacon.
2. The Holy Spirit has given "gifts" to all members of the church, young and old, men and women (1 Cor. 12:4-11). The use of all the gifts that the Spirit has given to all of its members must be the ongoing goal of the church.
3. Many congregations are ready and have, in fact, ordained women to the office of deacon consistent with the previous decisions of synod. For such congregations now to be required to preclude gifted persons from serving in the office of deacon based solely on gender is inconsistent with:
 - a. The spiritual equality of women and men,
 - b. The pastoral responsibilities of the church toward its women members, and
 - c. The church's responsibility to faithfully use the gifts of all its members.
4. Ratification of the above Church Order article will allow all our congregations to live according to their Christian conscience by neither requiring nor prohibiting the ordination of women to the office of deacon. However, failure to ratify the 1978 decision will violate the conscience of those congregations which have already ordained women to this office.

Classis Lake Erie
George Vander Weit, stated clerk

BACKGROUND PRESENTED TO CLASSIS LAKE ERIE BY THE OVERTURING CHURCH

In 1973 a study committee advised synod that "the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office cannot be conclusively defended on biblical grounds" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 588). Synod then decided to "refer the entire report to the churches for study and reactions" and appointed a new committee to receive those reactions and to continue study of the question (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 86).

In its report to the 1975 Synod, the second committee concluded that "biblical teaching is not opposed in principle to the ordination of women to any office that men may hold in the church" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 593). In response, synod declared that "sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 78). Synod then appointed another committee with the mandate to study "the hermeneutical principles which are involved in the proper interpretation of the relevant Scripture passages, to apply these principles in an exegetical study of the relevant passages, and to present synod with the results of their study" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 79).

Synod was presented with the results of this study in 1978 (*Acts of Synod 1978*, 484-533). The report reflected agreement regarding common conclusions as well as unresolved difficulties, including the "perplexing fact" that "no biblical passage speaks directly to the question of women in ecclesiastical office as presently understood" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 529). This synod at last decided "that consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 104).

Following the action of the 1978 Synod, various consistories in the denomination implemented this decision of synod by ordaining women to the office of deacon.

The Synod of 1979 decided to "defer decision with respect to ratification of the proposed wording of Church Order Article 3 and its Supplement, and instruct consistories to defer implementation of the 1978 decision, until the study committee has rendered its report to synod, and the churches have had opportunity to consider its recommendations" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 122). The churches now await further word from synod as to what may be done in this area.

River Terrace Christian Reformed Church has a total of eight deacons, three of whom are women. These three persons were placed on a nomination by the council, a nomination which contained the names of men and women, and were elected to the office of deacon by the congregation. They were subsequently ordained and have served, and continue to serve, faithfully and capably in their office.

River Terrace Church has women in these offices for at least two fundamental reasons. The first is that it believes this action in no way violates any scriptural injunction but is instead in keeping with the spirit and intent of the biblical message. Second, it took this action because our synod, after having heard three study reports declare that having women in this office would not violate Scripture, at last granted permission to the churches to proceed with their election and ordination.

We now feel compelled to inform synod that a reversal of the decision taken in 1978 would place River Terrace Church in a most difficult position. To go back to an all male diaconate is not merely returning to a former practice, but a mandate from synod to do so would be a mandate that we violate our biblical conscience. We, therefore, at this time inform synod that River Terrace Church and others with a similar practice stand at a most serious point in our history.

We recognize that many of our churches do not agree that the Bible permits the ordination of women to the offices of the church. To demand that they ordain women to the offices would require them to violate their conscience. We are convinced that synod would not make such a requirement and assure the churches that our overture in no way seeks to impose an action on churches to which they would be opposed. However, churches which have ordained women to the office of deacon would be required to violate their conscience if they had to say to the women in their congregations that they may no longer serve in this office because the Bible prohibits them on the basis of their femaleness.

Overture 8 — Revise Synodical Rules of Order

Classis Grandville overtures synod to change the Rules for Synodical Procedure, Section VIII, Rules of Order, pp. 57-60, to read as follows:

Rules of Order

A. Closed Sessions of Synod (present paragraph will remain)

B. The Main Motion

1. *Purpose*: the main motion sets business before the assembly in a form that can be debated, amended, passed, referred, or rejected.
2. *Qualifications*: a main motion is in order if,
 - a. It is made by a member of the assembly, who
 - b. Is recognized by the chair;
 - c. It is seconded by a member of the assembly, and
 - d. Presented to the body by restatement from the chair.
3. *Disqualifications*: a main motion is out of order if,
 - a. It is not made by a member of the body, or
 - b. If the member has not been recognized by the chair;

- c. If another main motion is already on the floor;
- d. If the motion conflicts with the Scriptures as interpreted by the Confessions, conflicts with the Church Order or with the rules of parliamentary procedure;
- e. If the motion duplicates a motion already passed or rejected at the same session of the body.

C. Discussion

1. *Purpose*: to bring the body to a position where it can declare its mind on the motion before it.

- 2. *Qualifications*: a member may speak to the motion if,
 - a. The motion is debatable;
 - b. The member is recognized by the chair;
 - c. The member's remarks are, in the judgment of the chair, apropos to the motion.
- 3. *Disqualifications*: a member may not speak to the motion if,
 - a. The motion is undebatable;
 - b. The member has not been recognized by the chair;
 - c. The member's remarks are, in the judgment of the chair, unduly lengthy, repetitious, or not germane to the subject.

D. Decision

Purpose: By means of a vote, the assembly declares its mind on the motion before it through:

- 1. *Vive voce* (the living voice): a voice vote by "Yea" (or "Aye") and "Nay."
- 2. *A show of hand*, first by those "for," and then by those "against."
- 3. *Rising at their seats*.
- 4. *Ballot*: when the rules call for, or a majority mandates.
- 5. *Roll call*: when the rules call for, or a majority mandates.

E. To Amend

1. *Purpose*: to modify the main motion by the addition of word(s) or phrase(s), or by the deletion of same, or by the combination of deletion and addition through substitution of word(s) or phrase(s).

- 2. *Qualifications*: a motion to amend is in order if,
 - a. The motion before the assembly is subject to amendment;
 - b. The motion to amend is addressed to the motion before the assembly, or to an amendment already proposed to that motion;
 - c. It is made by a member of the body, who
 - d. Has been recognized by the chair;
 - e. It is seconded by a member of the body, and
 - f. Presented to the assembly by restatement from the chair.
- 3. *Disqualifications*: a motion to amend is out of order if,
 - a. The motion before the assembly is undebatable or otherwise not subject to amendment;
 - b. The motion to amend follows upon a motion to amend an amendment already on the floor (only one motion to amend a pending amendment is in order at one time).

F. To Defer Action

Purpose: the following subsidiary motions may be offered to defer action on a main motion before the assembly:

- 1. *To commit to a special committee*, or refer or recommit to an already existing committee (Qualifications and Disqualifications as under main motion, and so hereafter).
- 2. *To table*: setting aside the motion before the assembly until such time as the body moves to take it up again.
- 3. *To postpone indefinitely*: to set the motion permanently aside.
- 4. *To postpone definitely*: to set the motion aside until a specified time, when, business permitting, it is again before the assembly.
- 5. *To make special order of business*: to set the motion aside until a specified time when business will be interrupted to continue its consideration (requires two-thirds vote to pass).

G. To Consider a Matter a Second Time

1. *To take from the table*: by a majority vote to place once again before the assembly a motion previously tabled.

2. *To Reconsider*: a motion to reopen discussion, and come to decision, regarding a motion already passed or rejected at the same session (must be made by one who voted with the prevailing side).

3. *To Rescind*: to expunge from the record a decision already made regarding a motion before the assembly (requires a two-thirds vote to pass).

H. Recess and Adjournment

1. *Recess*: an intermission in the day's proceedings, provided by a motion to take a recess, usually for a specified time. If made when other business is on the floor, the motion to take a recess is not debatable, but may be amended to change the length of time being proposed. If made when no other business is immediately pending, it is treated like a main motion.

2. *Adjournment*: the motion to adjourn is a privileged motion, and can neither be debated nor amended. If lost, it may be repeated after further business has been conducted by the assembly; if, however, the motion to adjourn is persistently repeated to the annoyance of the assembly, the chair should rule it out of order.

I. Special Purpose Motions

1. *Division of the Question*: if the question before the assembly consists of two or more natural divisions, any of which might be passed or defeated without prejudice to the other, the chair must, on the request of any member, divide the question into its constituent parts, presenting each for discussion and decision.

2. *Division of the Assembly*: on the request of any member, the chair must order a confirmation of a voice vote by more tangible means, such as rising, show of hands, or roll call, as he chooses.

3. *Parliamentary Inquiry; Point of Order*: any member of the assembly may ask the chair for parliamentary advice as to how to accomplish a purpose for which he does not know the proper parliamentary means. Any member may query the chair as to the propriety of a procedure or decision by raising a point of order. Ordinarily, such matters are then referred to a parliamentarian for advice and the chair for final decision.

4. *Withhold Action*: it may become apparent, after discussion, that a motion before the assembly is best dealt with by simply moving to withhold action on it; this has the effect of tabling indefinitely.

J. Etiquette of Discussion: the chair is obliged to require of the members of the assembly strict adherence to the normal obligations of charity, courtesy, discretion; and may require anyone who offends these proprieties to give up the floor. The member so censured may resume speaking only with majority permission of the assembly, to which he may appeal.

K. Modification of the Rules of Order: once adopted, these rules of order prevail until amended or changed as follows:

1. Proposed changes shall be presented to synod of one year for ratification by synod of the next.

2. Changes are made only by two-thirds vote of the ratifying synod.

Grounds:

1. The present rules of order, while serving adequately for a time, are no longer sufficiently clear and unambiguous to serve as guidelines in this time of increasing complexity and divergence.

2. Insufficient guidelines for procedure in ecclesiastical gatherings lead to disunity and distrust, both of which are intolerable in meetings where God's people seek to do his will.

3. Ecclesiastical assemblies such as synod, which receive a high degree of visibility, must be a model of orderliness and proper procedure as a Christian witness to those observing our fellowship.

4. The proposed Rules of Order are clear, concise, unequivocal, and will promote a deeper and broader understanding of proper ecclesiastical procedure while preserving the spirit of Christian love and unity.

Classis Grandville

Leonard Van Drunen, stated clerk

Overture 9 — Appointment of a Synodical Parliamentarian

Classis Grandville overtures the Synod of 1981 to make provision for a parliamentarian appointed by the Synodical Program Committee to be present at all plenary sessions of synod to serve as a consultant to the president of synod when requested regarding matters of procedure and interpretation of synodical rules.

Grounds:

1. Synod is too busy with important business to be encumbered unnecessarily with determining proper order and procedure.
2. The present structure puts undue responsibility and stress on the elected president.
3. The Lord commands his people to deal with one another in love and equity and it is detrimental to denominational peace and unity when ambiguous rules of order allow widespread subjective interpretation of proper procedure.
4. A parliamentarian serves to build trust and confidence in the rules and order of synodical procedure, thereby enhancing a spirit of Christian unity and brotherhood.

Classis Grandville
Leonard Van Drunen, stated clerk

Overture 10 — Declare January 22 a National Day of Mourning, Prayer, and Fasting

Classis Florida overtures the Synod of 1981 to declare every January 22 a National Day of Mourning, Prayer, and Fasting as a Christian expression of opposition to legalized abortion in the United States, and as endorsement of the passage of the pro-life amendment to the United States Constitution.

Grounds:

1. Abortion is nothing less than a national sin of mass murder, abhorrent to our Lord.
2. Informed Christians cannot idly stand by as uninvolved spectators. They must exercise their prophetic office to call our nation to repentance, and to obedience to God's Word if we expect his continued blessing upon our land.
3. January 12, 1973, is the date the United States Supreme Court legalized abortion.
4. Synod and the CRC would thus declare their solidarity with other churches in this crucial endeavor.

Classis Florida
Walter Hofman, stated clerk

Overture 11 — Change Yearbook Membership Listings

Classis Toronto overtures synod to change its manner of indicating membership in the annual *Yearbook*. It is our request that membership be indicated on the basis of persons, *communicant* and *baptized*, with the congregational statistics. The present practice is to indicate the number of families only.

Grounds:

1. Presently the *Yearbook* only lists the number of families in each congregation. This figure does not accurately or properly reflect the large number of single members in our congregations who do not live within a "family" as defined by synod. The census based on families is useful primarily for the determination of quota support.
2. Although it would be desirable to implement some kind of "per capita" basis for quota payments, the number of families could still be indicated for these purposes.
3. Single people, whether *communicant* or *baptized*, are also members of the church. In fact, it is *persons*, not families, who are inducted into the life of the church both by baptism and profession of faith. This ought to be more properly recognized.
4. The churches already submit figures indicating their total membership to the *Yearbook* committee; it would require only a slight change of reporting and printing procedures to include the number of all persons in the *Yearbook*.

Classis Toronto
James M. Evenhouse, stated clerk

Overture 12 — Clarify and Explain Nature of Quotas

The Consistory of the Walker Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1981 to clarify and explain the nature of the quotas which are collected from the various churches in the denomination.

Grounds:

1. There is some confusion and difference of opinion within the denomination as to whether a quota is to be construed as an "ecclesiastical tax" which *must* be paid, or as a recommended amount which serves as a guide to voluntary giving to kingdom causes. In the interest of good order and harmony within the denomination, synod should explain and clarify the nature of quotas so that there is no longer any question on this important matter.
2. In 1939, a synodical study committee maintained that "we *may* and we *must*" meet our financial commitments to the denomination; that is, there is a sense in which they are voluntary and at the same time a sense in which they are obligatory (*Agenda for Synod 1939* Part I, p. 26). Since then, the voluntary aspect of quotas has largely been ignored by the classes and by synod itself (cf. *Acts of Synod 1972*, pp. 85-86). In practice, quotas have come to be a "tax"; something synod wanted to avoid in 1939.

Those congregations that decline payment of specific quotas, because they cannot in good conscience before God endorse or condone the activities and beliefs supported by a specific quota recipient, are usually coerced into paying, both by the various classes and by denominational functionaries. If quota payments are not voluntary in that one may decline payment on the basis of conscience, the quota has in fact become a tax, regardless of the name one uses to describe it.

In the light of this situation, we would submit "... that there is no discoverable authority in the New Testament for the church to levy 'assessments' on its members or congregations. On the contrary: whatever we do read about the methods of raising money for carrying on the work of the church, points in the direction of voluntary gifts, prompted by the sacred obligations of love and gratitude" (*Agenda for Synod 1939* Part I, p. 24).

Furthermore, we agree that "... consistories must certainly abide by the decisions of the classis, as well as the classes by the decisions of the synods. But—these broader ecclesiastical gatherings must also see to it that in their decisions they do not go beyond the pale of their jurisdiction. And this (jurisdiction) does not include that they may with compelling authority impose upon anyone gifts of Christian love. They may permissibly designate a quota for these *in this sense*, that they say how much in their estimation each one ought to give for these causes; but this can never be more than *moral* compulsion; a decision, therefore, of an entirely different nature from decisions that *must* be executed, even with ecclesiastical compulsion" (quoted from Dr. F. L. Rutgers' *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 1, p. 264 in the *Agenda for Synod 1939*, Part I, p. 23. Italics found in report.)

3. Synod has never directly addressed the issue of withholding quotas because of conscience. To simply demand payment in such an instance avoids the underlying issues which brought about the action, and ignores the question of the nature of quotas. Until this matter is dealt with in a forthright manner, discontent, ill will and frustration can only be increased within the body of Christ.
4. Synod is best able to speak definitively on this matter, since it is the broadest assembly of the denomination, and is itself responsible for setting the greater part of the quota recommendations each year.

Walker Consistory
John R. Jackson, president
Peter Dykstra, clerk

Note: Classis Grand Rapids North considered this overture at its January 20, 1981, meeting, but rejected its endorsement.

Overture 13 — Clarify Area Computation for Calvin Quotas

Classis Chicago South overtures synod to clarify its declaration that "areas which benefit from the quota reduction should employ monies saved to finance their present area colleges" (*Acts of Synod 1962*, Art. 97, II, B, 3, p. 54).

Ground:

Confusion results when some areas use the area one (regional) quota and others the average quota to compute the amount that should be given to area colleges.

Classis Chicago South

Richard M. Hartwell, stated clerk

Overture 14 — Local Option re Women Serving as Deacons

Classis Hackensack overtures synod to declare that the question of women serving in the office of deacon shall be decided on the congregational (consistorial) level.

Grounds:

1. Three previous study committees (cf. *Acts of Synod, 1973, 1975, 1978*) support the fact that biblical teaching is not opposed in principle to women serving in the office of deacon.
2. Individual churches should be allowed to exercise their freedom of conscience to nominate, elect, and ordain women as deacons. The gift of being able to show the love and compassion of Christ is not limited to men.
3. There are evidences of God's blessing on the work of those women who are serving or have served as deacons in the Christian Reformed Church.
4. Strong precedent exists in Reformed church government to leave such substantive matters on which the Bible does not clearly or directly speak, and on which there is sincere disagreement among the churches, to the decision of local congregation/consistory. This was true of the question of female member's right to vote and fully participate in congregational meetings: "The question as to whether and when the women members of any church shall be invited to participate in the activities of its congregational meetings is left to the judgment of each consistory" (*Acts of Synod 1957*, Art. 155).
5. The pastoral concern of synod for the churches calls for this solution. A number of our congregations are disturbed because existing policy does not comport with the church's promise to confessing women members that "all the privileges of full communion are now yours." Other congregations are disturbed by the proposed changes from their traditional understanding of the Bible. By adopting this overture, synod will encourage the attitude that there can be diverse understandings within a community of Christian love and common confessional commitment.
6. The Madison Avenue CRC has had to give serious consideration to the fact that over the past years there have been more women members qualified to serve in the office of deacon than men. What has happened is that, while ignoring the larger part of the church membership, this consistory has had to present a slate of one nominee, and nominate a young man just out of high school simply to satisfy the Church Order requirement that a nominee be of male gender. This has at times hampered an effective diaconal ministry, and prevented some very spiritually gifted and mature members from serving in this important ministry of our local church.

Classis Hackensack

Cecil N. Van Dalfsen, stated clerk

Overture 15 — Request for Declaration of Candidacy

Classis Hudson overtures synod to declare Mr. Raynard Vander Laan a ministerial candidate in the Christian Reformed Church and to waive the requirement that he spend one year at Calvin Seminary prior to his candidacy.

Grounds:

1. He has received his seminary training at Westminster Theological Seminary (transcript available).
2. He has had licensure to exhort in Classes Hackensack and Hudson for the last four years and has preached in many of our churches in the East. This preaching ministry has been received very favorably.
3. He has served as Youth Pastor and Minister of Education in the Christian Reformed Church of Midland Park, New Jersey, for over two years on a part-time basis.
4. He has taught Bible in the Eastern Christian High School for five years and his teaching abilities have been widely acclaimed.
5. His service of exhortation of the Word and his pastoral and educational ministries will be more effective if he has full ministerial status.
6. There has been a perennial need for Christian Reformed ministers to serve in this area. Many of our churches use men who are not licensed by our denomination to preach.

Classis Hudson
Oren Holtrop, stated clerk

Overture 16 — Accreditation of The King's College

Classis Alberta South overtures synod that The King's College in Edmonton, Alberta, be included in the category of the educational agencies recommended for financial support by synod.

Grounds:

1. The King's College is a Christian liberal arts college teaching from a reformational philosophy of learning since September 1979.
2. The King's College has received a charter from the province of Alberta and, by God's grace, will become eligible to receive student grants in the near future.
3. The King's College is an educational institution for students from Canada and the United States.
4. The King's College plans to grow into a degree granting college in the future.
5. Since the Canadian churches for years have been supporting educational institutions in the United States, we urge, on the basis of equality, the churches in North America should now also support such institutions in Canada.
6. The King's College receives support of Classes Alberta North, Alberta South, and British Columbia through the quota reduction as a regional college, in accord with the rules adopted by the Synod of 1962.

Classis Alberta South
Stanley A. Drenth, stated clerk

Overture 17 — Local Option re Women in the Office of Deacon*Introduction*

The council of the Waterloo CRC presents the following overture to synod in order to help promote an attitude of tolerance and harmony with regard to a sensitive issue within our denomination.

Report 46 (*Acts of Synod 1975*) found that "biblical teaching is not opposed in principle to the ordination of women to any office that men may hold in the church," but recommended nevertheless that "synod declare that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready nor willing to open her offices to women." In 1978, however, synod decided: "That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders." Since then, some twenty congregations were both ready and willing to have women serve in the office of deacon, but other congregations protested against synod's decision of 1978. This led to a moratorium in 1979 and was

reinforced in 1980. Thus there appears to exist among us a spirit of division with regard to this matter.

Furthermore, it seems obvious that synod should not decide on divisive matters in which the principle of the freedom of the churches to make their own decision may work well. If the Synod of 1981 decides to allow for the ordination of qualified women to the office of deacon, a number of congregations will be upset. If, on the other hand, synod decides that qualified women may not be ordained to the office of deacon, other congregations will be upset. It would be unfortunate if this issue would divide the mind of the churches even more than it has in the past few years. Some congregations are eagerly waiting to be allowed to continue the practice of ordination of qualified women to the office of deacon, or to initiate such action, whereas other congregations are still far removed from this posture.

In 1957, synod decided to leave the decision regarding the voting rights of women in congregational meetings to the decision of the consistories. Many church councils have since then decided that it was time to let women participate in the congregational vote, whereas others may still not have introduced this practice. Nevertheless, this decision has been proved to be a wise one and has restored peace and harmony within the churches.

Many women in our denomination are serving in positions that involve a caring attitude which developed much insight and expertise in matters of compassion and diaconal care. The individual congregations should be allowed to profit from this situation by being allowed to elect women for the office of deacon.

Waterloo Christian Reformed Church overtures Synod 1981 to declare that the ordination of "qualified women to the office of deacon" be left to the discretion of the individual congregations and church councils for decision and action.

Grounds:

1. Three synodical study reports agree that there is not sufficient evidence in Scripture to deny women the privilege of serving in the diaconal office.
2. The Waterloo congregation has been served very ably by a woman deacon during these last three years. The congregation is eager to give other women the same opportunity in the future. The church council is convinced that this may prove to be a lasting blessing in our church life.
3. Many women in our denomination have been educated for the helping professions and have developed much insight and expertise in matters of compassion and diaconal care. Christian Reformed congregations should not be denied the opportunity to benefit from their gifts.

Waterloo Christian Reformed Church
H. Langendoen, clerk

Note: The overture of the Waterloo Consistory was presented to Classis Huron on January 14, 1981, but was not adopted.

Overture 18 — Amend Manual of Denominational Financial Policies

Classis Sioux Center overtures synod to amend the Manual of Denominational Financial Policies (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 423, par. 1, "In response to this policy, quota, above-quota collections, contributions, and gifts from the churches for denominational agencies and for other worthy causes shall be transferred from the churches directly to the denominational finance office. . .") to provide that:

1) All quotas, above-quota offerings, contributions, and gifts from the churches for denominational agencies shall be transferred at least quarterly from the churches to their respective classical treasurers, and that

2) These funds shall be transferred in their entirety by the classical treasurers to the denominational finance office on a monthly basis.

Grounds:

- a. These provisions would provide for the expeditious forwarding of all funds collected for an approved agency or committee, as is required in the Policy Manual goals.
- b. These provisions would acknowledge the proper place of the classis in the Reformed church structure, thereby better reflecting the provisions of Church Order, Article 27.

- c. These provisions would guarantee that classis received the information necessary for the maintenance of files and archives and conducting the financial affairs of the classis (Church Order, Article 32c) and for the use of the church visitors as they attempt to ascertain the health of the churches (Church Order, Article 42). The present manual only specifies that this information should be forwarded to the classical treasurer.

Classis Sioux Center
Edward J. Knott, stated clerk

(Synodical action on this matter is found in the *Acts of Synod 1980*, IV, Synodical Interim Committee, B, pp. 86, 87.)

Overture 19 — Change Name of Fund for Needy Churches

Classis Atlantic Northeast overtures synod to change the name of the Fund for Needy Churches Committee to the Fund for Subsidized Churches Committee.

Grounds:

1. The word "subsidized," and not the word "needy," is used consistently throughout the "Subsidy Application Form."
2. The present title is not descriptively accurate. The purpose of the committee is not primarily to make a judgment as to whether or not a church is "needy," but to determine its eligibility for subsidy.
3. The present terminology often places the church at a psychological disadvantage at a high point in its career, as demonstrated by churches graduating from Home Missions and then having to prove financial "need" under FNC.

Observation:

Such a change would cause the committee to see its task in a more positive and benevolent light. While financial need should be considered as requests are evaluated, a higher priority should be the legitimacy of assistance for expanding ministries.

Classis Atlantic Northeast
Richard M. Hartwell, stated clerk

Overture 20 — Admit Women to Ecclesiastical Offices

OUTLINE OF OVERTURE

- I. HISTORY OF WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT AT HOPE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
- II. INDIVISIBILITY OF THE ISSUE (ELDERS AND DEACONS)
- III. CRITERIA FOR JUSTIFYING A CHANGE IN POLICY
- IV. A BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
 - A. *Creation: The Defining of Relationships*
 1. Genesis 1
 2. Genesis 2
 - B. *The Fall: The Inversion of Relationships* (Genesis 3)
 - C. *Redemption: The Restoration of Relationships*
 1. The Old Testament
 2. Christ
 3. The Apostles
 4. The Principle of Male Headship
- V. Conclusion: Criteria Fulfilled
- VI. Overture

WOMEN IN ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

I. HISTORY OF WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT AT HOPE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Men and women have increasingly been assuming roles of equal leadership in the life and work of Hope Christian Reformed Church over the past five years. This process began with attempts in various areas of the church's life to find persons qualified for tasks regardless of their sex. The result was that women began to serve on the building and grounds committee, for example, and on the finance committee, while men in turn began volunteering to serve on the library committee, to work in the nursery, to teach small children in church school, and to help with cooking and washing dishes for church suppers. Men and women discovered they could work together by respecting and using each others' gifts where best suited. With no sense of impropriety, for example, we now have a female chairperson on the building and grounds committee, while a male serves as chairperson of the committee on women. Our adult education committee has a majority of men on it, but a woman was chosen chairperson because she is effective as a committee leader. In the same way, women and men alike have been asked by the liturgical committee to participate in the worship services by praying, reading the Scriptures, or speaking on some issue of concern. Together men and women have participated on our "Care Teams" which have assisted the elders and deacons in serving the needs of people at Hope Church.

In 1976 a study committee on the use of women's gifts in the church was appointed by the consistory. Emerging from this study was a recommendation, which the consistory adopted, to commission female adjunct deacons and adjunct elders, who would not be ordained and would not have the right to vote but in every other way would participate in the tasks of the deacons and the elders. After long discussion at a congregational meeting in May 1977, the congregation endorsed this proposal by a greater than two-thirds majority vote. The first female deacon and elder adjuncts were elected in June. The consistory decided to wait with commissioning them, however, until after a series of Sunday evening discussions of the biblical issues involved could be held during the summer months. Since September 1977 women have been participating along with men in consistory meetings, in family visiting, in distributing communion, in calling on the sick and needy, in gathering and counting the offerings, and in serving on the various consistory committees. When Synod 1978 gave the churches approval to ordain women as deacons, Hope Church was ready and eager to do so.

In the fall of 1978 the consistory decided to appoint a new committee on women in office to keep abreast of the issue both at Hope Church and in the wider denomination. On this committee's recommendation, the consistory sent an informative communication to the Synod of 1979 supporting ratification of the changes in the Church Order for women as deacons. An overture was also sent to synod requesting synod to continue studying the issue of women's ordination to the office of elder. When Classis Chicago South voted against endorsing this overture, classis also voted to instruct Hope Church to make its own biblical study of the issue of women's ordination as elders. The Synod of 1979 postponed ratification, appointed a new committee to reconsider the issue of women as deacons, instructed the churches to defer implementation of the 1978 decision, and also rejected our request for further study of the issue of ordaining women as elders.

The movement toward involving women and men on an equal basis in all aspects of the life of Hope Church arose out of the life and fellowship of the congregation. The study report which follows is a biblical and theological reflection which both underlies and emerges from the experiences and discussions that have occurred in Hope Church. This study has been written on behalf of the consistory's Committee on Women in Office at Hope Church by its chairperson, Dr. Marvin P. Hoogland, and has been adopted by the consistory as its response to the advice of Classis Chicago South that Hope Church initiate its own study of the issue. In addition to submitting this report to classis for its reflection, study, and endorsement of the overture that appropriately flows from it, the consistory also decided to send a copy of the report to the current synodical study committee which will report to the Synod of 1981. It is our hope and prayer that Christ's church and God's glory may be served through this effort.

II. INDIVISIBILITY OF THE ISSUE (ELDERS AND DEACONS)

The manner in which the Synod of 1978 gave approval to ordaining women as deacons has become a matter of deep concern to us. Synod qualified that approval by adding what

appears to be a restrictive clause: "providing that their work is distinguished from that of elders." The Synod of 1979 refused to consider further the issue of women serving as elders, on the ground that a further study of that would be inappropriate "in view of unresolved issues pertaining to the ordination of women as deacons" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, Article 97, p. 122, pt. 4).

It may be a reasonable and responsible tactic to allow the churches first to become accustomed to ordaining women as deacons before moving on to ordaining women as elders and eventually as ministers of the Word. We have no quarrel with this process as a positive and helpful strategy. We recognize that change most effectively takes place one step at a time and that the timing of those steps is often a crucial aspect in their becoming widely accepted and integrated into the life of either an individual or a community such as the church.

What is a matter of concern, however, is that in giving restricted approval to the ordination of women as deacons, synod may now be defining the issue in such a way that the possibility of eventually ordaining women as elders is becoming more rigidly excluded than ever before.

Prior to the synodical studies begun in the early 1970s, women were excluded from all the offices of the church, but not so much as a result of deliberate study of the issue as it was a matter of that policy involving the largely unquestioned assumption of women's lower status, an assumption shared for the most part by the church and by society alike. The three synodical study committee reports of the 1970s, however, opened up the entire question of the ordination of women to all the offices of the church, without synod's resolving the issue. But the Synod of 1978, in adding its restrictive clause, and the Synod of 1979, in refusing to look directly at the issue of women as elders, may in effect be more firmly closing the door to the ordination of women as elders than ever before, and doing so without even directly bringing the issue of women as elders into focus, that issue being excluded from the new committee's mandate.

The effect of defining the admission of women to the office of deacon in such a way that their work somehow must be more sharply distinguished from that of the elders would be detrimental both to women and to the office of deacon. Such a definition of the issue would simply reinforce the attitude of discrimination against women. It would entrench the notion that women are inherently inferior to men, unfit to serve as elders and ministers. At the same time, admitting women to the office of deacon with this understanding of their relationship to men would invariably degrade the office of deacon. Women would gain nothing; the diaconate would further lose prestige and importance in the life of the church. Rather than elevating women to a level of equality with men, such a position simply downgrades the office of deacon to the currently lower level of women.

We urge, therefore, that any consideration of women being ordained to the office of deacon be viewed as essentially inseparable from a further consideration of their being eventually admitted also to all the offices of the church.

III. CRITERIA FOR JUSTIFYING A CHANGE IN POLICY

The Advisory Committee of the Synod of 1979 points out that synod in 1975 declared that "sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 118). That committee also noted (p. 120) that some of the overtures to the Synod of 1979 argued that Scripture does not "require" ordination of women and that synod did not produce "sufficient" or "compelling" biblical grounds to warrant a change in policy.

These observations raise the question of what would constitute "sufficient" or "compelling" biblical grounds that would "require" ordination of women. It appears to us that the question of criteria is an important one and needs to be explicitly addressed if progress toward consensus in the church is to be made.

If the only acceptable criterion would be the presence of direct statements in the Bible instructing the church to ordain women, there is hardly room for further discussion. All agree that no such statements are to be found—any more than direct biblical statements can be found telling the church to admit women to the Lord's supper or to baptize infants.

On the other hand, if the only criterion would be the absence of direct statements in the Bible which explicitly exclude women from office, then too the issue would be fairly easily settled, for no such statements can be found either.

The former criterion appears to foreclose discussion by deciding the issue *a priori* or legalistically. The latter criterion gives rise to the impression that advocates of women's ordination are really trying to "get around" certain biblical passages that appear by implication to exclude or restrict women, and that they are possibly more influenced by current secular thinking than by submission to the biblical Word. In any case, the result is usually a standoff, with an argument over whether this or that text (Galatians 3:28, for example) is or is not relevant to the issue of ordination. Both sides of the issue tend to focus on the interpretation and possible implications of isolated individual texts in the Bible.

It seems imperative, therefore, for anyone involved in the ongoing discussion of the issue to clarify as explicitly as possible what criteria are being used to judge whether or not there is "sufficient" and "compelling" biblical grounds to "require" or warrant a change in policy with regard to ordaining women to ecclesiastical office. We want to specify three criteria that we believe can and should be used.

1. The decision to ordain women to the ecclesiastical offices should be one which arises out of and is an integral part of the church's overall biblical-theological perspective on creation, fall, and redemption.

Implied in this criterion is the recognition that it is not sufficient merely to demonstrate that certain scriptural texts do not explicitly exclude women from office. Also implied is that the desire to ordain women must demonstrably proceed from the positive conviction that such a change does indeed embody the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures and is not merely or primarily an accommodation to the secular spirit and movements of our age. The current secular women's liberation movement may fade away, or fall into disrepute, or fail to gain widespread support (witness the repeated defeat of E.R.A. in Illinois, and possibly in the nation). Our position and policy as the church must be rooted in the enduring Word and will of God, regardless of what happens to the currently popular secular women's liberation movement.

2. A biblical-theological perspective supporting the ordination of women should be able to account for those biblical passages which have in our tradition been cited as a basis for excluding women and to incorporate those passages in an integral way into our overall biblical-theological perspective.

Implied here is that there should be no need to "explain away," or "get around" such passages, or to dismiss them simply as "culturally conditioned" and therefore "irrelevant" for modern life. Such arguments are not adequate. An example of meeting this criterion is found in the question of the Old Testament levitical laws which the church no longer observes. We have no need to "get around" these laws precisely because they "fit" in the overall biblical-theological perspective of creation, fall, and redemption in Christ. We should be able to do something similar with those passages which appear to place restrictions on women in the church, so that we have no need to be embarrassed by them or explain them away, precisely because they are seen to "fit" in the overall biblical perspective.

3. Such a perspective should give us a specifically biblical and theological stance from which we are enabled critically to evaluate the secular women's movement, both in its overall direction and in its particular and varied expressions.

Implied in this criterion is the recognition that the Scriptures alone are to be our infallible guide in evaluating current movements, as well as an awareness of the dangers we all face in subtly, consciously or unconsciously, accommodating ourselves to current cultural or humanistic movements. It should be readily evident from within our perspective that the Scriptures are determining our viewpoint and that they stand in judgment over the secular movement, not vice versa.

It appears to us that if our discussion of the biblical material pertaining to the issue of ordaining women to church office satisfies these three criteria, we will have adduced "sufficient" and "compelling" biblical grounds to warrant the conviction that we are now "required" to admit women to ordination in all the ecclesiastical offices.

IV. A BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

A. Creation: *The Defining of Relationships*

1. Genesis 1

A biblical understanding of the relationship between men and women appropriately begins "in the beginning." When God was conceiving the creation of human beings in his own image, we read in Genesis 1:26.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

Inseparably related to God's conception of creating a being in his own image and likeness is the idea of that being having dominion over the rest of creation, which is thus conceived as under his dominion. To have dominion, therefore, appears to be an integral part of being an image bearer of God.

Following the typical pattern present in each day of creation, God's Word is immediately followed by his accomplished deed. We read in verse 27:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female he created them.

In the actual creation of human beings, it becomes evident that their being created male and female is also an integral part of their being created in the image of God. In human life, the relationship between the sexes in some way reflects or is a likeness and image of the very being of God. Theologically, we see premonitions of the doctrine of the Trinity in the "us" of verse 26. Just as the persons of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while distinct and unconfused, are one and equal, so we may presume here an equality between the male and the female in comprising the image of God, even while the distinction between them is clearly identified. Together they are given God's blessing and command to "be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth."

But to that reproductive blessing and command is added a further elaboration of the blessing and command: subdue the earth, and have dominion over all its creatures: fish, birds, land animals, and plants for food. What needs to be highlighted here is the nature of that dominion.

First of all, this dominion is given them *by God*. He is and remains the source and giver of this dominion. He is the Lord over all; he remains Lord over his image bearers.

A relationship in which one is *over* another, and the other *under* the one, may for convenience be designated a "complementary" relationship, whereas a relationship of equality between two or more may be designated a "symmetrical" relationship. Even though this use of the term *complementary* to designate an "over/under" relationship may seem somewhat unusual, we shall be using those two terms throughout as they are here defined.

In this sense the relationship between the persons in the Trinity can be called a *symmetrical* relationship. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal as persons in the Trinity. But the relationship between God and his image bearers is clearly set forth in Genesis 1 as a *complementary* relationship. God is over them; they are under him. Similarly, the relationship between man as image bearer of God to the earth and to its other creatures is also a *complementary* relationship. Man has dominion over them.

Second, what is apparent and also significant in Genesis 1:26-28 is that the dominion given to God's image bearer is a dominion given to the male and the female alike. It is not a dominion of the one over the other. The female is not given dominion over the male; neither is the male given dominion over the female. The dominion is given to them together, to share in its exercise over the *other* creatures and the earth. This is paradise indeed! There is no dominion or authority of one over the other, no power struggle evident here between one human being and another, no power plays between male and female. That will come later, in Genesis 3. According to our use of the terms, the relationship between the male and the female as created and by God's intention is not complementary but symmetrical.

What this means for our discussion of women today is that we need to take into account in all of our considerations that in the beginning the male and the female were created equal, sharing equally in the dominion with which God entrusted them, without dominion being exercised over each other. The female, according to Genesis 1, is as inherently capable of exercising dominion as is the male, and they are equally commissioned by God to exercise their dominion as they rule together over God's creation.

According to Genesis 1, therefore, we see a symmetrical relationship within the Godhead, a complementary (over/under) relationship between God and man, a symmetrical relationship between male and female, who together stand in a complementary relationship over the rest of creation by exercising a shared dominion. "And it was very good."

2. Genesis 2

The creation story is told again in Genesis 2:4ff. with both similarities and differences. Genesis 1 highlights the majesty of God as the power of his Word is translated into the efficacy of his creative deed, with the crown of creation, God's image bearer as male and female, given a shared dominion over God's other works. Genesis 2, however, tells the story more as it centers on man and his experience of God's creative provision.

In the opening scene, the earth is barren and without life. As God forms the man of the dust of the ground now moistened and cohesive by the mist, and breathes into him the breath of life, we can imagine the man opening his eyes and looking around him, exhilarated by the sense of life, yet puzzled as to who he is, and what it all means, and what is expected of him—questions we human beings continue to ask. Then to the east the Lord God plants a garden, utterly delightful to all man's senses: "and there he put the man whom he had formed" (v. 8). What a sense of God's provision the man must have experienced in that transition! Surely it is already apparent to the man that he stands in a complementary relationship to his Creator-Provider. But the nature of that over/under relationship is immediately made explicit as the Lord God addresses the man, assigning to him the task to till and to keep the garden, giving him permission to enjoy its fruit, but forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, lest he die. Similar to Genesis 1, the relationship of God to the man is clearly spelled out as a complementary one, with the Lord God as Lord over the man, who is obligated to obedience to his Maker and is assigned his task by his Creator. By the same token, the relationship of the man to the garden is likewise a complementary one. He is to manage the garden, with a dominion over it that is here expressed in terms of service: he is to till it and keep it while enjoying its fruit in obedience to God.

Despite all this, and before the man himself is fully aware of his own needs and feelings, the Lord God recognizes the ache in the pit of the man's stomach. And here the Lord God pronounces his "not good"; that is, it is not good that the man should be alone. The Lord God knows our needs and acts on them even before we ourselves are aware of those needs. The entire story of creation in Genesis 2 is moving toward a crescendo of God's provision for the man and his needs in the world, a world which God himself is making habitable and hospitable for the man.

In answer to the recognized need of the man, the Lord God forms the animals of the dust of the ground, just as he had formed the man. And he brings these to the man. Now the man has surrounding him creatures who in many ways are like him, creatures who, unlike the trees of the garden, live and move and breathe, creatures with heads and necks and limbs attached to bodies. Again we can easily identify with the sense of exultation the man must have felt as he experienced his Maker providing ever more fully for him.

But the animals are brought to the man for him "to name." And whatever he called them, that was their name. To be naming another creature is to be in a position of power or authority or dominion over that creature. Perhaps that is part of why all of us, children and adults alike, resent others putting names, labels, on us; it places them in a position of power over us, whether real or imagined. In any case, as the man completed his naming of the animals, it became evident that none was found to be a helper suitable or fit for him. All of them were "under" him; he stood in a complementary relationship to them all. He was still alone.

And his Maker continued to be aware of his need, his aloneness. This time, while he slept, the Lord God formed a being from the man's own side, identified as a "woman" (v. 22). As she is brought to the man, he responds with a climactic and jubilant cry of recognition (v. 23):

This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

The dramatic movement of this creation story begins with the man standing alone, and then moves on to portray his position *over* the other creatures which God made (the garden and the animals which the man named). This creation account reaches its climax, however, at the point where the Lord God provides the man with the one who is truly "fit" for him, the one whom he can spontaneously embrace without shame and in recognition of a true oneness and equality. Here is one, "at last," with whom he has, not a complementary (over/under) relationship as he does both to God, on the one hand, and to the lower creatures, on the other hand, but a truly symmetrical or equal relationship.

The differences between the two creation stories do not stand at all in the way of but serve beautifully to bring out the underlying harmony between them. In both stories the Lord God remains from beginning to end the Lord over all his creation, including his image bearers. All the details of both stories point to what we have termed a complementary relationship between God and man, with God as Lord, and man as the creature-servant under him. Similarly, the details of both creation stories highlight the exalted position of the human pair as having dominion over the other creatures (cf. Ps. 8), another kind of complementary relationship. At the same time, it becomes apparent that both stories in their details give expression to the unique symmetrical relationship, a relationship of recognized equality, between the male and the female, the man and the woman.

B. THE FALL: *The Inversion of Relationships*

As we turn to Genesis 3, it appears that the woman understood that what God had said to the man applied equally to her (v. 2). The temptation with which the serpent confronted her can probably be described in a variety of ways. Whatever else may be said of it, we can recognize that the serpent attempts to seduce the woman into redefining their relationship with God from being complementary (over/under) to becoming symmetrical. (That is precisely what Satan himself had attempted, precipitating his fall and that of other angels.) Genesis 2, like Genesis 1, clearly defines God's relationship to man, and man's relationship to God, in unequal or complementary terms. But the serpent says: "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be *like* God, knowing good and evil." The implication is that the man and the woman would be able to define for themselves what is good and what is evil; they would no longer be under God but on an equal footing with God. Their relationship to God would no longer be complementary but symmetrical. And the woman and the man alike succumb to this temptation to redefine their relationship to God.

The immediate consequence of the woman's and the man's attempt to redefine their relationship to God as symmetrical, as equal, to God, is that their own relationship to each other at the same time becomes redefined. The symmetrical relationship between the man and the woman can no longer be maintained. They each become self-conscious of their own and the other's nakedness; they experience their own vulnerability. They hide themselves from each other by sewing fig leaves to cover themselves, just as they hide themselves also from the presence of God walking in the garden. Confronted by God with what they have done, each begins to play the always competitive and destructive blaming game. The man blames the woman; the woman blames the serpent. The sense of sharing a dominion, present in Genesis 1, and the sense of oneness, evident in Genesis 2, can no longer be maintained.

Something has happened to the blessings of reproduction and shared dominion. The woman now experiences pain in childbearing and becomes dependent on the man: "Your desire shall be for your husband." Moreover, she now becomes subject to his rule, to the dominion of the physically larger and stronger: "he shall rule over you." The dominion which they originally shared together over all the lower creations of God but which was not intended to be exercised by one over the other now becomes an inverted dominion. Instead of properly being a dominion exercised together over God's other creatures, it now becomes a dominion turned inward on humankind itself, a dominion of the man over the woman. What we have as the consequence and curse of the fall is the introduction into human life and relationships of the *power struggle*, of power exercised by one human being over another instead of being shared. The once-symmetrical relationship between the man and the woman has turned into a complementary relationship of inequality, the one being "over," the other "under." The element of the power struggle also appears evident between the man and the earth; it shall bring forth thorns and thistles and bring out the sweat on his face. Human life becomes a struggle, a power struggle.

In fact, the change from a symmetrical relationship involving a shared dominion to a complementary relationship involving a power struggle of one over the other, which Genesis 3 portrays, appears to be typical of what is more broadly characteristic of nearly all human relationships throughout subsequent history. Underlying all the varied conflicts which lead to the breakdown of a marriage, for example, we invariably can discover the power struggle. We see it also in the relationship between the governing and the governed, between management and labor, between and among the nations of the world and competing ideologies. The history of the church, too, is replete with examples of the power struggle. Since the fall, genuinely symmetrical relationships are always difficult to achieve in human affairs, and even when achieved, they are precarious and unstable at best.

No sooner is the curse pronounced on the sin of mankind than we read, in Genesis 3:20: "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." Here the man begins to exercise his inverted relationship of dominion over the woman, treating her as an unequal, as one under him. He names her, as before the fall he had earlier named the animals. In naming her, he now claims for himself the prerogative of redefining her being and her role. By naming her "Eve," he redefines her role in terms of her biological function of bearing children. The dominion, it seems, is now securely in his hands alone.

The dominion, or authority, of man over woman, evident through most of human history, derives from the curse of the fall, from the attempted conversion of man's complementary relationship under God into a symmetrical one; the result is the inversion of the symmetrical male-female relationship established in creation so that it became an unequal, complementary one pervading human life with the power struggle.

C. REDEMPTION: *The Restoration of Relationships*

Despite the human pair's attempt to redefine their relationship to God as symmetrical, or equal, God nonetheless always retains his control over defining that relationship. Man never succeeds in changing his relationship to God from a complementary to a symmetrical one; yet he continues trying to do so. By making idols in his own image, with his own hands, man attempts to define and control the nature of his gods, suggesting that man is really over his gods in an inverted complementary way, while at the same time he ends up in slavery to and fear of the very gods he creates.

Through the Old Testament prophets God ridicules this foolishness in man (Isa. 44:9ff). None of man's efforts to be equal to God can ever succeed. For the Lord God, Jahwe, always remains in control, the same yesterday, today, and forever. He remains the sovereign, not only as the Creator but also as the Redeemer of mankind. "I, I am the Lord, and besides me, there is no savior" (Isa. 43:11). Man's salvation and restoration, the undoing of the curse (the power struggle), can lie only in the reality, the experience, and the confession of his proper, complementary relationship under God. That is true in all areas of life; it is particularly true in man's redemption. Man's only hope and salvation lies in the reality of that complementary relationship, which he is always and everywhere called on to confess: God's sovereignty, God's covenant, God's law, God's deliverance, God's grace, God's election, God's Messiah, God's ways of salvation. Man's hope, after the fall just as in the day of creation before the fall, lies in responding exultingly to God's full provision for both life and salvation. Only in this way, God's way, will human symmetrical relationships also be restored and the devastating effects of the power struggle overcome and abandoned, so that genuine equality among human beings will again exist as it was in the beginning, at the creation of male and female, the man and the woman.

The Old Testament

The Old Testament amply portrays the futile out-working of the curse, in the form of the power struggle, among men. Cain rises up in power over Abel. Jacob uses deceit to gain the upper hand over Esau. What is noteworthy is that in and through all the power plays of men attempting to gain their own position of dominance, Jahwe nonetheless mysteriously works out his own plan. The brothers of Joseph attempted to gain the upper hand over the dreamer by selling him, only to hear him later say to them in Egypt: "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20). Pharaoh carries out his own power play over the children of Israel, but in the end, he and the Egyptians *aid* the Israelites in leaving for the promised land, as God had promised Abraham. Through all of the Old Testament stories, God allows the power struggle to work itself out; yet through it all he is working his own will, according to his own promises. For years in the promised land God alone was King; he raised up judges to save Israel. But Israel wanted a king to rule over her like the other nations. God warned them pointedly that such a ruler over them would be a curse, but they still wanted a king over them. Part of the curse of the fall is that people often prefer to be ruled over rather than to accept the responsibility implied in human symmetrical relationships under God. The kingship given to Israel, curse that it often became, was nonetheless through David the primary vehicle for the promises of God and the coming of the Messiah.

Much of Old Testament history becomes understandable in terms of God's allowing the curse to work itself out in the form of complex power plays and power struggles, yet in such a way that God's definition of his relationship to his people (complementary) and God's design for salvation nonetheless prevail not merely in spite of but in and through those power struggles.

In this context it is understandable that in the Old Testament the position of women is almost universally one of inferiority and subjection to men. Only males, for example, needed circumcision, the sign of the covenant. All the more remarkable, therefore, are those foreshadowings in the Old Testament found in women who are given a place and position of prominence: Rahab, Ruth, Deborah the judge, and Esther. They may be seen as dimly foreshadowing the day when in Christ the woman and the man alike will be freed from the curse of the power struggle to resume a symmetrical relationship of shared dominion and responsibility under God.

The New Testament: The Christ

In Jesus, the Christ of God, we see the working out of God's plan of redemption and restoration. Jesus embodies a new working of God which goes beyond the working of God in Israel. The curse still is at work in the form of power plays, and the greatest power play of all eventually nailed him to the cross. In and through this power play too, God nonetheless works his final redemption, the atonement for sin through the shedding of

Christ's blood. What is new is that "once for all" God triumphs over the human and demonic power of evil (the power play), and ushers in a new age with the resurrection of the crucified one. In him, all things are made new. He becomes the center, the norm, the way, the truth, and the life. All of the Scriptures are now seen as bearing witness to him (Rom. 3:21) and as fulfilled by him. He becomes the center of all truth, and the norm for all of living and all relationships.

We, the church, confess that he is both Son of God and Son of Man. As Son of God he is equal with God, "very God of very God." He stands in a truly symmetrical relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. But as Son of Man, as Messiah, he accepts what the woman and the man in the garden refused to accept, the appropriate complementary relationship under God. Repeatedly he testifies: I can do nothing of myself; I came not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; my meat is to do the Father's will; not my will, but thine be done. "Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:6-7). In his becoming the servant, the Christ displays his truest glory as man, a glory typified in Genesis 1:26-28, and extolled in Psalm 8.

The entire life and working of Christ embodies the antithesis of engaging in power plays and power struggles. His life is the embodiment of everything "man"—male and female—in Genesis 1:26-28 was meant to be. He alone is truly the "second Adam." He exercises his power, his dominion, over the winds and the sea, over the fish and the fig tree and the swine, over demons and sickness and death. But never did he seek to gain a human position of power over other men. He was tempted in the wilderness to go that route. His disciples were ready and eager to move with the power play, like Peter swishing his sword in the garden. Pilate and Herod wondered whether he had any power, any dominion, at all. His answer: My kingdom is not of this world. Though he could have resorted to it on many occasions, Jesus consistently resists and renounces the power struggle, the way of the curse.

He teaches his disciples to do the same. Peter and John wanted positions of power over others, requesting to sit on the right hand and on the left hand of Christ in his kingdom. The disciples argued among themselves over who was the greatest among them. We know Jesus' answer. He pointed to the little child. He washed their feet. He observed that the rulers of this world seek to lord it over others but warned that it shall not be so among his followers. To believe in Jesus, and to follow him, is to believe in the way of the servant and embody it in oneself.

The way of Jesus in reconciling and restoring human life to God is at every point one which refuses the temptation to employ the tactics of the human power struggle. He did not join party with the Zealots to overthrow Rome. His way is consistently that of the servant, and in this he embodies in himself not only the truly human complementary relationship under God but also the new beginnings of a genuinely symmetrical relationship to all other human beings. Mary, his mother, prophesied: He will bring down the mighty from their thrones, and exalt those of low degree (Luke 1:52). He is to be found feasting with the Pharisees, on the one hand, and eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, on the other hand. In doing so, however, he brings the former down and lifts up the latter, equalizing them. In his innermost circle of followers are to be found women as well as men. The way of the servant which he embodied is not to be confused with weakness or mere passivity, though if viewed from the vantage point of those engaged in the power struggle it may appear so. In reality Jesus is embodying and exercising a dominion similar to that spoken of in Genesis 1:28 as given by God to his image bearer, male and female. The way of the servant is consistent with that dominion, and therein lies Jesus' genuine, inherent, authentic authority, an authority so different from and so much more real than that of the power-conscious scribes and pharisees (Matt. 7:28).

It appears fully consistent with Jesus' way that he appointed twelve men, all males, to be his official disciples, or learners. To argue that Jesus' appointing only men to be his disciples proves that only men are fit to rule and have authority (power) in his church misses the point and the meaning of Jesus' way. The assumption in that argument seems to be that Jesus' concern was to reinforce the power structure derived from the fall. But Jesus appointed disciples in order to teach them what following him means, namely, the way of self-emptying, the way of the servant. Jesus did not especially need to appoint women to learn that way. *They* knew no other way. They were commonly treated as little more than chattel. Yet Jesus' way of treating women as his followers elevated them in reality to a position symmetrical to that of the disciples. These women were the first human preachers of the gospel after Jesus had risen from the grave.

Surely it is evident that Jesus had no need or desire to initiate a power-oriented women's

liberation movement in order to restore women to a fully equal, symmetrical relationship with men. That would only initiate or precipitate a new form of the power struggle, so contrary to his way. Besides, before women could truly and widely be recognized and received as equals to men, men, including the disciples, had first to learn to see themselves truly as servants, and their "authority" as residing in their servanthood. And that would take time. *The Apostles* (Paul)

How do the apostles, then, witness to and embody the way of Christ? The effects of the curse, the reality of the power play and the power struggle, were still evident everywhere in the world, even after the resurrection of Jesus. But in the risen Christ they had all the evidence they needed that Jesus' way is God's way of triumph.

Rome still exercised its tyranny over Palestine. Slavery was still an accepted part of the social structure. Men still dominated women. The apostles led no army to overthrow Rome. They organized no abolition movement. They initiated no power play to forcefully gain women's rights. In fact, on the surface they might even be cited as supporting tyranny (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:11), endorsing slavery (Eph. 6; Philemon; 1 Pet. 2:18ff), and contributing to the subjugation of women (1 Cor. 11 and 14; Eph. 5; 1 Tim. 2-3; 1 Pet. 3:1-7). On all of these issues men have in fact appealed to the New Testament Scriptures—in espousing the "divine right" of kings, for example, and defending the institution of slavery, as well as maintaining the exclusion of women from ecclesiastical office.

In Romans 13 Paul does indeed give the instruction that every person is to be subject to the governing authorities, which at that time meant the despotic Roman government. To submit to such governments is considered a submission to God. But in giving this instruction, Paul at the same time indicates what the real calling of governing authorities is meant to be. First of all, he reminds us that they have no authority at all except from God and that their very existence as rulers is owing to God. They, too, stand unequivocally in a complementary relationship under God. That defines the nature and purpose of their authority, according to Paul. They serve the good and set limits to the bad: "for he is God's servant for your good." Here there is no room for justifying an arbitrary, self-serving exercise of authority and power, such as was commonly done. The calling of rulers, as well as the meaning of ruling, is defined in terms of servanthood, just as the messiahship of Jesus was. Paul does not directly oppose tyranny, or incite a power struggle against it, but he redefines the meaning of "ruling" in terms of service (cf. 1 Pet. 2:11-17).

Let that principle once take hold in the spirit of Christ, and a new form of governing will emerge, though it will take time for the radically new principle to permeate any society. When it does, a form of governing which we call "democracy" begins to emerge, a form of governing which is understood as "public service," the ruler being a "public servant" who has to give account of himself to the people periodically as he faces reelection. The populace is as much over him as he is over them. With governing redefined in terms of servanthood, we have the closest thing possible this side of the fall to a symmetrical relationship between the governing and the governed.

Paul takes a look at other kinds of relationships in Ephesians 5 and 6. In Ephesians 6:5ff. he addresses slaves and instructs them to "be obedient to those who are your earthly masters." No call here to an uprising. But no compliant passivity, either. Slaves are to see themselves positively "as servants, doing the will of God from the heart." But then, masters are in turn given the very same instruction: "Masters, do the same to them, and forbear threatening." Paul redefines here what it means to be a master. Masters, too, are to see themselves as servants in relation to their slaves. And the reason, once again, is that masters and slaves alike have one and the same Master in heaven, who shows "no partiality." Instead of calling slaves to a power struggle against slave holders, Paul redefines the meaning of the relationship between the two on both sides in terms of a mutual servanthood under God, the Lord. The relationship is being redefined away from being complementary (over/under) toward becoming symmetrical. In the same spirit, while Paul does send the slave Onesimus back to his master, Philemon, it is done in such a way that Paul's expectation is that Philemon will receive Onesimus "no longer as a slave," but "as a beloved brother" (v. 16)—in a symmetrical rather than a complementary relationship (cf. 1 Pet. 2:18ff).

Again, let that principle once take hold in the spirit of Christ, and the followers of Christ will eventually come to the conviction that slavery, and every form of racial discrimination, is indeed contrary to the will of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. But it has taken a long time for that conviction to develop.

Paul speaks to the relationship between wives and husbands in the very same manner (Eph. 5:21ff). "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord." The comparison is

made to the church being subject to Christ. But the entire passage is introduced by the words: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." The subjection of wives to husbands is one side of the mutual subjection to each other that is to characterize a Christian marriage. The other side of that mutual subjection is that husbands are to love their wives in the same way that Christ loved the church, namely, by giving himself up for her, so that she might become like he is: in splendor, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish (v. 27). Christ's taking the form of the servant, giving himself for us, is the model for husbands in relationship to their wives. The shift from the widely accepted complementary relationship between husband and wife, which followed from the curse that made Adam ruler over Eve, to a symmetrical relationship of mutual service to each other is made by defining the meaning of marriage on both sides in terms of the servanthood which Christ took on himself. And in 1 Corinthians 7 that same mutuality is applied to the sexual relationship in marriage, eliminating the power struggle over sex. The way to achieve that symmetrical relationship in marriage is not for wives to rise up in rebellion by a new power play against their husbands but for *husbands*, like wives, to see themselves in the servant role, with Christ as the model (cf. 1 Pet. 3:1-7, "joint heirs").

Since Paul deals with the relationship of parents to children, and children to parents, in this same context in Ephesians (6:1ff.), we may add a note on that as well. Of all the human relationships which appear to be inherently complementary, the one between parents and children would seem to be the most irrevocably so. But we may note that Paul here, too, places both parents and children under the Lord, and he calls for a mutual respect which goes both ways. Children are to obey their parents in the Lord. But fathers, whom Paul apparently feels need this admonition more than mothers since men are accustomed to wielding power, are warned not to provoke their children to anger. Instead they are to "bring them up" in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Christian discipline of children is not to proceed out of anger and the power struggle ("Do this because I say so!"). The objective of all Christian parenting and discipline lies in helping children move toward responsible adulthood, that is, from the complementary relationship to the symmetrical relationships of an adulthood which emulates Christ's servanthood. The principle involved in the parent-child relationship is, therefore, essentially the same as in the other relationships Paul is talking about in Ephesians 5 and 6.

We may expect that Paul will speak to the relationship of women and men together in the church in a manner that is consistent with the way he deals with other relationships. Just as Paul was in no hurry to assault the tyranny of the Roman government or to overthrow the institution of slavery, so too Paul was in no hurry to change the social domination of men over women. Just as he teaches submission to the tyranny of Rome and calls on slaves to obey their masters, and wives to be subject to their husbands, in the same spirit he calls on women in the church to "learn in silence with all submissiveness," and he adds that he does not permit women to teach or to have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:33ff). His practice is to have men serve as elders and as deacons in the churches (1 Tim. 3). Paul makes specific application of this principle in 1 Corinthians 11, where he states that the husband is the head of a woman, Christ is the head of every man, and God is the head of Christ. On this basis Paul argues that a man should not have his head covered while praying but that a woman should wear a veil, just as a man should have short hair and a woman long hair. Paul here even appeals to the fact that the woman was made from the man, not the man from the woman. In thus arguing for the veil, Paul makes it clear that he is not in favor of radically upsetting the existing social practices. He does not want Christian women, with their new sense of self-respect and freedom in Christ, their new and elevated status compared to the lot of women in the pagan world and in their former lives, to be rising up in a struggle against men; that would likely provoke a counter power struggle from the side of men. So Paul uses a variety of arguments here in support of the veil. He appeals also to their sense of propriety (v. 13), and to nature (v. 14). He uses analogy (v. 15). In the end, he pointedly rejects any spirit of contentiousness (v. 16). In all of this, Paul's consistent principle is to resist and warn against any form of the power struggle as a means of trying to transform human relationships. He does not want to see or in any way support women defying or rising up against men, anymore than he wants to see or support slaves defying or rising against their masters, or Christians involved in rebellion against Rome. Insurrection in any of these forms would only escalate the old power struggle in new ways, all contrary to the spirit and way and working of Christ, the Servant. That would be to perpetuate the way of the curse and impede the way of restoration and reconciliation.

Yet in this context as in the others Paul subtly slips in a new definition of the relationship which points in the direction of equality. In verses 11-12 he writes: "Nevertheless, in the

Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so now man is born of woman." Paul here calls on men and women alike to view their own relationships in terms of Christ, that is, "in the Lord." And in that light he sees, not a movement toward independence or competition, but a recognition of *mutual dependence*, the focus of which is to remind *men*, once again, that *they* are as dependent on women as women are on men.

Paul is here bringing the same basic argument to bear on the relationship of men and women in the church as he does elsewhere on the relationships of the governing and the governed, masters and slaves, husbands and wives, parents and children. Paul's consistent form of addressing these relationships is this:

- (1) He proscribes revolt in any form and enjoins submission on the party who is one-down in the relationship, or historically the underdog (subjects under tyranny, slaves, wives, children, women in the church).
- (2) He defines that submission as a submission or service rendered to the Lord.
- (3) He reminds the party that is historically (from the fall) in a position of power that he too is equally under the Lord (rulers, masters, husbands, fathers, men in the church).
- (4) And he redefines the meaning of the power-position in terms of a mutual dependence, subjection, or servanthood, in terms of a self-emptying like that of Christ.

Through this consistent way of addressing all human relationships, Paul calls on both sides of any relationship to acknowledge their common complementary position under the Lord (points 2 and 3). Both sides doing that is what begins to make possible once again the genuinely symmetrical relationships (points 1 and 4) that God intended "in the beginning," before the fall, between the male and the female. Relationships are restored in this way without a power struggle.

In no case does Paul ever call on those in power-positions to make certain that they retain their power by keeping those under them there forever. Rulers are never told to keep their subjects submissive, nor are masters ever exhorted to enforce slavery. Husbands are not commanded to enforce subjection on their wives, nor fathers obedience on their children. Neither are men in the church ever exhorted to silence women or keep them out of church office. The one in the position of power is always directed to take on the self-emptying form of the servant. The result, insofar as it is carried out, is the equality of mutual servanthood under God.

Paul's method of dealing with all of these relationships is thoroughly consistent with Christ's own way. In his relationships with them, Jesus lifted women up; he taught his male disciples to be servants.

It is noteworthy that the apostle Peter deals with such relationships in much the same way that Paul does. Peter exhorts Christians to "be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution," including the supreme emperor (1 Pet. 2:11), at a time when persecution was imminent. Peter's point: "Live as free men. . . but as servants of God" (v. 16). Peter also exhorts servants to be submissive even to overbearing masters who cause them to suffer. And again the example of Christ as the suffering servant is their model (1 Pet. 2:18-25). "Likewise," says Peter in holding up the same model, "you wives, be submissive to your husbands" (1 Pet. 3:1-7). The suffering servant example applies here too. But the same "likewise," the same servant model, is then applied to husbands in relation to their wives (v. 7), and they are told to bestow *honor* on the woman. Realistically referring to the woman as the "weaker sex" in view of the fact that since the fall men had the power while women were virtually powerless, Peter bases his argument for honoring women on the fact that they are "joint heirs" with husbands, reminding us again of the shared dominion of Genesis 1:26-28. As Peter discusses all of these relationships, he too is concerned with directing those who have been "under" suppression to avoid redress by means of the wrongdoing of the power struggle. Peter, too, holds up to both sides the example of Jesus as the suffering servant.

Restoration and reconciliation of unequal human relationships does not come through precipitating new forms of the old power struggle derived from the fall. These new relationships will evolve only as the spirit of Christ, the way of the servant, begins to pervade both sides of an unequal, or complementary relationship, and only when it does will a truly symmetrical relationship, such as existed before the fall, begin to grow and flourish. Both Paul and Peter, like Christ, are apparently willing to give that renewal the time and history needed to work itself out.

The working out of that principle would appear to give at least some real meaning to the continuing history of the world.

Democracy took a long time to become established, and it still appears to be a limited and precarious phenomenon in the world. But to the church today it seems fairly clear that this form of government is most nearly in conformity to the will of God, precisely because human rights, principles of equality and justice, and freedom under God are implied and important, or at least possible, in it. Although much of the history of the Western world since Christ involves tyrannical governments, it was the rediscovery of biblical principles in the Reformation, particularly as articulated and implemented in Geneva by John Calvin, and by his followers elsewhere, that provided the fertile soil and impetus for democracy to emerge. The result is that today we as a Christian church cannot go back to supporting the tyranny implied in the "divine right" of kings. Many are willing even to sacrifice their lives for the preservation of democracy in the conviction that this is according to God's will.

The abolition of slavery took an even longer time in history to accomplish, and its concomitant found in racial discrimination is still very much with us. But God's will for us in these matters finally appears clear to us even if we sometimes find it hard to carry out. One thing is evident: even though Paul enjoins slaves to obey their masters, we are convinced that there are sufficient and compelling biblical grounds for opposing both slavery and racial discrimination.

Equality for women is currently a similar issue, one that is taking an even longer time through history to become resolved. We are only beginning, in the last decade, to face this issue. But once confronted with the issue, once permeated by the way of Christ with his call to follow him in the way of mutual servanthood, once embarked on the way to restoring in this area of life, too, a symmetrical relationship of equality between the sexes, we can no longer turn back but can only go forward in the conviction that this, too, is indeed the will of God revealed in the Scriptures.

Having this sense of history precludes any pride or arrogance on our part, which might lead us to say, or think, that we are right and all our forefathers wrong, as though we are somehow wiser than they in interpreting the Scriptures. What precludes that kind of arrogance is the realization that we could not possibly be dealing with the women's issue today as we are if it were not for those before us who made democracy a reality, as an expression of God's will, and if it were not for those before us who came to see that slavery and racial discrimination in any form are diametrically opposed to the spirit and way of Christ. We can only build on what they have seen and done; but build on it further we must. It is only in the soil of democracy, in a climate where equal rights and justice for all are a matter of concern, that the question of full equality between men and women can even arise. And that soil and climate we are convinced will only be present and endure where the atmosphere is long permeated with the Spirit of Christ the Servant, whose servanthood itself is inherently invested with the will and authority of God.

The Principle of Male Headship

Perhaps the greatest stumbling block to recognizing the appropriateness of ordaining women as well as men to all the offices of the church is what has often been referred to as the biblical principle of male headship. It is with this principle in mind that the Christian Reformed Synod of 1978 gave permission to the churches to ordain women as deacons "provided that their work is distinguished from that of the elders." The supposition appears to be that elders "govern" the church and therefore exercise "authority over" church members, something women are not allowed to do over men. Since deacons commonly function in the consistory in that capacity along with the elders, the reasoning behind the qualifying clause in synod's decision appears to be that some safeguard is needed to ensure that no woman serving as a deacon will actually be in a position of authority in the consistory "over" the men of the church. Or since the man as head is referred to both in 1 Corinthians 11 and in Ephesians 5 as head of his *wife*, the concern may perhaps be that no woman serving on the consistory as deacon will be in a position of authority "over" her husband in the church. (Perhaps we could at least allow single or celibate women to serve as elders and ministers if this is the concern!)

In the light of the biblical-theological principles we have been looking at, some observations can be made about the principle of male headship as that relates both to marriage and to the ecclesiastical offices.

First of all, it may be observed that the concept of "head" stands as an alternative to and in contrast with the concept deriving from the fall, of the husband as "ruler over" the wife. One who is "head" is one who goes first, who initiates, who takes the lead. But he takes the lead so that those who follow may arrive at the same place and position together with the one who goes first. In this sense Christ is the one who is preeminently head. He rises from the grave, so that we who follow may have new life and may also some day rise from the

dead. As head he ascends to heaven so that we too may ascend to where he is. He rules at the right hand of the Father so that we may reign with him. He who was "without spot or wrinkle," "holy and without blemish," leads the way, from Bethlehem to Golgotha, from the grave to the right hand of God, so that we the church might be where he is and be like him: "in splendor," "without spot or wrinkle," "holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). In Romans 6 this is described both as a future promise and as a present reality. We are united with him both in his death and in his resurrection. But he remains the "firstfruits" (1 Cor. 15:20, 22). He took the initiative, making it possible by his becoming the servant and consistently following the way of servanthood, even to the cross (Phil. 2:6-8). The concept of "head" appears, therefore, to be inseparable from that of "servant."

What this means for the husband as the "head" of the wife, taking Christ as the model (Phil. 2:5; Eph. 5:23; 1 Pet. 3:7), is that the husband is to be the one who initiates, who takes the lead, in exemplifying the way of the servant, the way of Christ, in undoing the effects of the curse on the marriage relationship, in refusing to engage in the power game in marriage, in being servant to the wife in the same way the wife is to be servant to the husband. In this way the wife is restored to the same position of honor, that the husband enjoys which both enjoyed together in the beginning (Gen. 1:26-28). But that will not happen as long as the husband grasps or clings to his power-position over the wife by refusing to take the lead as head in following the self-emptying example of Christ. *In* this way of headship, however, resides all the authority of Christ and of God that was also inherent in the servanthood of Christ himself.

Those who are "on top" in any form of complementary relationship since the fall have the calling in Christ, and with it all the inherent authority of Christ, to be "head" with him, to lead the way in reestablishing a symmetrical relationship with those who from the fall have been "under." That is why Jesus chose *men* to be his disciples. Only when those "on top," like husbands in the home and men in the church, take their initiative in this process will new forms of the old power struggle meaningfully be averted as we move toward the symmetrical or equal relationship between the sexes that God intended in the creation of male and female, the man and the woman.

It is the calling of the Christian husband (as head), therefore, to encourage his wife to experience herself as a fully equal partner in the marriage.

In the same way, it is the calling of Christian parents to lead their children to full adult responsibility and equality.

And it is the calling of men (males) in the church, with all the authority of Christ, to exercise their leadership, headship, in elevating women back to the status of full equality with themselves: in the home, in society, and above all in the church.

In 1 Corinthians 11 Paul considers that it is important for us to understand the hierarchy of heads. On top is God, as the head of Christ. Clearly, it is God, as head, who takes the initiative, who leads the way, in sending his Son, the Messiah, to become incarnate as the servant. Our entire redemption and restoration is initiated by and originates from the working of God in sending the Christ. The authority inherent in Christ's servanthood derives from God himself. Christ, in turn, is the head of every man. He leads the way in making it possible for every man to embody what he is: the self-emptying servant. And as men follow in that way of the self-emptying servant, they are embodying the very authority of Christ himself. And her husband is the head of a woman. His calling as servant is to lead the way for the wife to be elevated to equality with himself in servanthood. His taking on the servant way validates the worth and value of her servanthood. And the power struggle is eliminated from the relationship.

The hierarchy of heads in the church gives poignant expression to the basic biblical principle that, in answer to the power struggle introduced at the fall, redemption and restoration come only from the "top" down, with the one "on top" initiating, emptying himself, becoming the servant, so that the one who is "under" may be lifted up, to a genuine equality of status and position. Within this hierarchy of heads the relationships defined at creation are preserved and restored. God remains uniquely God, in a complementary relationship over the Christ and all other human beings. Jesus is uniquely the Mediator who alone makes atonement for sin. And human beings as male and female are uniquely God's image bearers who are enabled once again to exercise their intended shared dominion over the rest of God's creation.

Seen in this light, no conflict exists at all but rather a beautiful harmony between the concept of male headship and the ordination of women to the offices of the church. It is, of course, a legitimate and biblical concern that women in the church should not grasp for positions of power or "authority over" men (1 Tim. 2:12). The Scriptures clearly and con-

sistently warn against women engaging in a power struggle over against men or attempting to reverse the complementary relationship of man-on-top to one of woman-on-top. But that is not what ordination of women to office in the church is about. The authority invested in the offices of the church is in no way derived from the power and rule implied in the curse of Genesis 3:16. The offices of the church embody, rather, the authority that initially derives from Genesis 1:26-28 and became incarnate in Christ and his servanthood.

This same perspective is expressed also in 1 Peter 5:1-6. Peter here exhorts elders to "tend the flock." His authority in doing so is as a "fellow elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ" (v. 1). The model for elders is that of the suffering servant. Peter's further explication of what it means for elders to "tend the flock" implies a negation of any form of power play over others: "not by constraint, but willingly, not for shameful gain [power as well as money], not as domineering over those in your charge but being an example to the flock" (v. 2-3). In this way will come "the unfading crown of glory" (v. 4). Inherent in this way of the servant lies the authority of Christ, to which those who are younger must be subject as that is embodied in the elders (v. 5). Peter concludes by recognizing the mutual, symmetrical relationship of all in the church: "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (v. 5). All alike are thus united in a symmetrical relationship with each other through the common servant-bond of humility, which acknowledges at the same time their common complementary relationship "under the mighty hand of God" (v. 6). Precisely because the authority of the elders excludes any domineering "over," any power play, but essentially implies a mutual humility embodied in the example of suffering servanthood, women are inherently and equally suited, or fit, to embody this authority of church office with men.

Within this biblical-theological context a passage like Galatians 3:26-28 takes on profound meaning.

For in Christ Jesus you are all *sons* of God through faith.

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female;

for you are all *one* in Christ Jesus.

All are one; all are "sons"; not slaves, but "sons"! Not females, but "sons"! "Sons" are those who inherit (are "heirs": 3:29; 4:1, 7) all the prerogatives of their father, including the rights and authority of that position. In Christ, all are elevated to this position, without distinction. The old human complementary relationships (one-up—one-down) derived from the fall are no longer appropriate. Symmetrical relationships between all are now possible: between Jews and Greeks, masters and slaves, males and females, husbands and wives. All are "sons." In Christ. And, therefore, especially in the church.

As Paul continues developing this theme in Galatians, he extols in chapter 5 the new freedom which is ours in Christ. He admonishes the churches to "stand fast" in that freedom and not to "submit again to a yoke of slavery" (v. 1). But he also warns against using that freedom "as an opportunity for the flesh"—for the power struggle (v. 13). And he immediately identifies how that freedom in Christ is to be used: "but through love be servants of one another." Once that freedom in Christ is tasted in male-female relations in the church, we cannot return to the old bondage of one domineering over the other.

Standing isolated by itself, Galatians 3:28 may not appear to compel us to allow ordination of women to church office. But in the total biblical-theological perspective it clearly points us to the shared dominion of Genesis 1:26-28 rather than to the curse, the domineering rule, of Genesis 3:16b.

Nor does even the exercise of church discipline conflict with this understanding of the authority of office. In practice it may not always be so, but, in exercising church discipline, the elders of the church are not placing themselves "over" one who is "under" discipline. Ideally they are serving him. More than that, however, they are also setting those limits which alone enable the church faithfully to maintain its character as the servant of Jesus Christ. When the authority of the church offices is fully recognized as inherent in the servant role, then no conflict can be seen in women being ordained to any of those offices. Accustomed as they are to the serving role, women in office will in fact be effectively serving to help men, who are accustomed to wielding the power derived from the fall, to grasp more fully what servanthood really means.

The appropriate way to achieve full equality for women in the church, including its offices, is not for women to initiate some power play or power struggle in opposition to men. It is rather for men to exercise leadership—headship—in recognizing and welcoming women into the role of full equality and partnership in office, and for women on their part

to accept these roles in humility as an acceptance of themselves as being fully equal in Christ. Only in this way will it be possible for men, existing with the form of power but ready and eager to empty themselves for the servant role, and for women, resisting the temptation to grasp for a distorted power they have never known, to join together as fellow servants having a shared dominion under Christ as Lord. Then no power struggle will develop as women are ordained to the office of Christ's church, and there will be no problem of one sex having dominion over the other.

But if men in the church fail to exercise that leadership, their headship, as servants welcoming fellow female servants ("all sons") to a shared dominion, then the likelihood of a power struggle by women is increased and even invited. Contrary as such a power struggle would be to Christ's servant way, it would not be the first time that God might work in and through such means for his own purpose in establishing his kingdom on earth. (Consider how democracy and emancipation were achieved in America.) We discourage and deplore any such power play on the part of women against men, but we cannot exclude the possibility of God in his sovereignty using it to chastize his church and accomplish his will.

To call for the ordination of women along with men in all the offices of the church, far from denying or ignoring the biblical principle of male headship, is itself a profound exercise of that headship.

V. CONCLUSION: CRITERIA FULFILLED

At the outset of our study we identified three criteria to be used in determining whether there is "sufficient" and "compelling" biblical grounds to require or warrant a change in policy regarding the ordination of women to the offices of the church. Those three criteria have amply been fulfilled.

The first criterion is that any decision to ordain women to the ecclesiastical offices should be one which arises out of and is an integral part of a Reformed biblical-theological perspective on creation, fall, and redemption.

In looking at creation, we have noted that in creating man in his own image, God gave to the male and female a shared dominion (Gen. 1:26-28), indicating that according to God's original intention (v. 26) and creation (v. 28), the woman and the man are equally suited to exercise dominion. The inequality, the subordinate position of the woman under the man's rule, including her exclusion from ecclesiastical office, derives not from creation, nor from redemption, but from the fall and the curse, which introduced the power struggle, so foreign to Genesis 1:28, into all of human relationships. Christ's way of triumph over the curse is consistently to turn away from every temptation to achieve restoration by means of that power struggle and to embody instead a dominion consonant with that of Genesis 1:26-28. His self-emptying and taking on the form of a servant embodies that kind of dominion and authority. To this way of servanthood Jesus also calls his disciples and his church. The apostles redefine the major kinds of unequal human relationships in such a way that both sides are equally called to servanthood. Women are called to be subject to their husbands and to be submissive in the church. But men are called to the same subjection, with the servanthood of Christ as their model. In this way the movement in the New Testament is clearly away from any reinforcement of the unequal relationships derived from the fall toward a meaningful recognition of equality in relationships. This movement is most clearly expressed in the correlation between Genesis 1:26-28 and Galatians 3:26-28. The original dominion, which through the fall fell exclusively to men and to their sons, is now seen in Christ to belong as appropriately to the female as to the male, to the slave as to the free, for all are "sons." The female in Christ has the same prerogatives as the male, the same fitness to serve also in the offices of the church.

The second criterion we identified is that a biblical-theological perspective favoring ordination of women should be able to account for the apparent restrictions which the New Testament places on women.

We have seen that the apostles, like Christ, do not immediately attempt to impose, as if by external force or authority, a new and unfamiliar equality between the sexes on the church or on marriage, any more than they attempt to do so in the areas of government and slavery. The principle which consistently accounts for this is the abnegation of the power struggle as a way of achieving the goal, and the affirmation of Christ's way of servanthood now applied to both sides of the relationship. That creates space and leaves time for the "all things are new" meaningfully to work itself out in stages through history, like salt, like leaven (Matt. 5:13; 13:33). Those passages which appear to put restrictions on women can therefore be seen as embodying the same central Christian principle of servanthood which calls for those "on top" (men) to empty themselves and take on the servant form. In this

perspective the concept of male headship, rather than enforcing male superiority, calls on men to exercise leadership in restoring women to their rightfully shared dominion and equality, so that every form of power struggle is avoided. These passages, therefore, rather than posing any embarrassment or obstacle to the ordination of women to church offices, actually point to the essential qualification for anyone's serving in these offices, woman or man. No need at all to try "getting around" these passages. When men finally learn to see these passages as equally applying to themselves, they will no longer have difficulty recognizing the full equality of women to themselves in Christ and in his church.

These same biblical principles also fulfill our third criterion, that we be provided with a specifically biblical and theological perspective from which we are enabled critically to evaluate the secular women's liberation movement. It now appears clear that to whatever extent that movement incites women against men, in a new or escalated power struggle to gain their ends, to that extent it stands under the judgment of the Scriptures. But insofar as its objective is that of achieving a genuinely equal relationship between the sexes, in which each sex is able to value and serve the other freely and without discrimination, for the benefit and growth of both together, to that extent we can assess its objectives as consistent with the teachings of the Scriptures, and its existence as owing to God's working.

We conclude, therefore, that the Reformed biblical-theological perspective on creation, fall, and redemption in Christ does provide us with "sufficient" and "compelling" biblical grounds to warrant and even "require" the change in policy which will enable women to serve in all the offices of the church.

VI. OVERTURE

The Consistory of Hope Christian Reformed Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, based on the preceding biblical study, overtures synod to make the necessary changes in the Church Order and adopt whatever orderly procedures it deems necessary for implementing them, so that qualified women may begin to serve equally with men as ordained in the offices of deacon, elder, and minister of the Word.

Summary of Grounds:

1. Genesis 1:26-28 implies that women are inherently as capable of serving in these offices as are men.
2. Redemption in Christ restores women to the position of equality with men present in creation, including all the prerogatives of "sons" (Gal. 3:26-28).
3. Ordination in no way puts women in a superior position over men but enables them to serve in office with men in such a way that women and men together embody the authority of Christ inhering in his servanthood.
4. The concept of male headship is given profound expression as men take the lead at consistory, classis, and synod in thus recognizing women's gifts and providing full scope for their use in the offices of the church as well as in all other areas of the church's life.

Hope Consistory
Herman Triezenberg, clerk

Note: The above overture was presented to Classis Chicago South. The classis studied the overture but did not endorse it.

Overture 21 — Appoint Another Committee to Revise Marriage Guidelines

The Consistory of the Sussex Christian Reformed Church requests synod to appoint a committee to revise the Marriage Guidelines Report, Section III. Guidelines for the Ministry of the Church (cf. *Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 480ff.)

Grounds:

1. This part of the Guidelines opens the way for some of those who are contemplating divorce and some who have already obtained a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity, and remain unrepentant, to continue to participate in the sacraments and remain members of the church in good and regular standing.

2. This is contrary to Scripture, our creeds, and the Church Order (ct. 1 Cor. 11:25-29; Form for the Lord's Supper, Number 1 and 3; L.D. 30, 31; Church Order Art. 85, 86).
3. Several parts are quite ambiguous and, therefore, are open to various interpretations.

We request synod to instruct the committee, in its proposed revision to:

1. Affirm that when there are those who rebel against the authority of God's Word by either contemplating a divorce or obtaining a divorce for reasons other than that of unchastity on the part of his or her spouse, the church must exercise formal discipline as required by Scripture, our creeds, and the Church Order. This shall be done in a way similar to that which is done when people live in any other sin.
2. Affirm that no one may marry one who has obtained a divorce for reasons other than that of unchastity on the part of his or her spouse; and that if they should do so the church must exercise discipline as required by Scripture, our creeds, and the Church Order.
3. Make whatever revisions are necessary in the various sections of the Guidelines so that they will be consistent with the above affirmations.

OBSERVATIONS

In response to our request Classis Hudson overtured the Synod of 1980 "not to adopt recommendations 2 and 3 of the Marriage Guidelines Report but refer the entire report and recommendations of its study committee to the churches for study and evaluation for a period of one year." In the grounds it was stated that "to properly evaluate this report requires many hours of study and reflection. The churches have not had adequate time for this since they received the agenda" (cf. *Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 592).

After further study and reflection, our consistory regards Part I, Biblical Teaching Regarding Marriage, and Part II, Biblical Teaching Regarding Divorce and Remarriage to be acceptable and helpful. There is an excellent emphasis on the sacredness and permanence of the marriage bond (cf. especially pp. 469, 477).

Part III. Guidelines for the Ministry of the Church has excellent material in Section A, The Education Ministry of the Churches. However, much of the content in the sections that follow is not supportive of, but is inconsistent with and runs counter to the many good things that are found in the Guidelines up to this point.

We draw your attention to several matters in each of these sections.

B. *The Ministry to Those Whose Marriages Are in Crisis*

On the one hand the Guidelines correctly state, in paragraph 2:

"... the church must not only listen, she must also speak in confrontation and with promise. Where overt sinful conduct is present, the church must address the Word of God in rebuke. *Where separation is contemplated* (italics ours) the church must warn concerning the seriousness of such action. God declared to Old Testament Israel that he hated the breaking of the marriage covenant (Mal. 2:14-16)" (p. 482).

But, on the other hand, the Guidelines in paragraph 4 leave the door open for at least some who are contemplating divorce for causes other than that of unchastity, and remain unrepentant, to continue to participate in the sacraments and remain members of the church in good and regular standing by stating that the church must

"*Consider the purpose of discipline*: namely whether formal discipline might not be a helpful or necessary means to achieve the repentance of persons involved in marital crisis, when one or both partners by word or deed refuse to hear the Word of God, refuse the call to repentance and forgiveness, and appear to have closed their hearts to the hope of possible reconciliation" (p. 482).

Notice carefully, the Guidelines *do not* state that formal discipline even then *must* be exercised, but only that it is to be considered. It is left optional. This is a radical departure from the traditional stand and practice in the Christian Reformed Church. It is contrary to Scripture, our creeds, and our Church Order to allow anyone who is contemplating divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity and remains unrepentant (as in any other case), to continue to participate in the sacraments and remain a member of the church in good and regular standing.

IT IS CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE. It is abundantly clear that Scripture teaches that no one may obtain a divorce, except for the cause of unchastity (cf. Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Rom. 7:2). Anyone, then, who chooses to obtain a divorce is flouting God's command. Is it not obvious that such a one is living in sin? If one is intending to obtain a divorce and break up his/her home, how can he/she at the same time stand before the Lord and his church

and speak the sacred baptismal vow, which includes the promise to instruct his/her children in the Word of God and cause them to be instructed therein to the utmost of his/her power? It would be sheer mockery. And how can the church allow one who chooses to obtain a divorce to partake of the Lord's supper and receive the sign and seal of the forgiveness of sin? When he/she (in the very words of the Guidelines) "by word or deed refuse to hear the Word of God, refuse the call to repentance and forgiveness, and appear to have closed their hearts to the hope of reconciliation"? Does not God warn against this very thing when he says through Paul, "Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself." (1 Cor. 11:25-29, NIV)? Are we suddenly free to ignore this warning in some cases?

Our forms for the Lord's supper follow the scriptural teaching. In form Number 1 it is stated, "Wherefore we also, according to the command of Christ and of the apostle Paul, admonish all who know themselves to be defiled with the following gross sins to abstain from the table of the Lord, and declare to them that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ. . . ." Then follows the familiar list of sins, after which we read, "All these while they continue in such sins, shall abstain from this food, which Christ has appointed only for his believers, lest their judgment and condemnation be made the heavier." If we were to retain this section of the Marriage Guidelines in their present form, to be consistent, we would have to strike all of this out of the form for the Lord's supper—contrary to Scripture.

Form Number 3 also follows the teaching of Scripture on this. It states, "God will surely receive at the table of his Son all who truly repent of their sins, believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and desire to do his will. All those, however, who do not repent, who do not put their trust in the Lord Jesus, and who have no desire to lead a godly life, are warned, according to the command of God, to keep themselves from the holy sacrament. If anyone is living in disobedience to Christ and in enmity with his neighbor, he must repent of his sin and reconcile himself to his neighbor before he comes to the Lord's table." Now, who is the nearest neighbor to a husband or wife? If we should retain the Marriage Guidelines in their present form, to be consistent, we would have to take the above out of this form, contrary to Scripture.

IT IS CONTRARY TO OUR CREEDS to allow anyone to participate in the sacraments who is contemplating a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity and is unrepentant. In Lord's Day 30 of the Heidelberg Catechism the question is asked, "Are they also to be admitted to this supper who, by their confession and life, show themselves to be unbelieving and ungodly?" (Q. 82). The answer: "No; for in this way the covenant of God would be profaned and His wrath kindled against the whole congregation; wherefore the Christian church is in duty bound, according to the ordinance of Christ and His apostles, to exclude such persons by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, until they show amendment of life." Lord's Day 31 requires the church to exercise discipline and forbid the use of the sacraments to *all* "who maintain unchristian practices; who will not, after repeated admonition, renounce their errors and wicked course of life" (Q. & A. 85).

IT IS CONTRARY TO OUR CHURCH ORDER to allow anyone to participate in the sacrament who is contemplating a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity, and is unrepentant. It requires that formal discipline shall be exercised in *all* cases in which people continue to live in sin and are unrepentant. It requires that eventually such shall be excommunicated from the church. (Cf. Church Order Arts. 85, 86.)

C. The Ministry to Those Who Are Divorced

This section makes no distinction between ministering to those who are divorced on the ground of unchastity and those who are divorced on other grounds. In fact, it seems to be concerned primarily with the latter. It is important to keep this in mind as one considers what is stated here.

We regard several things in this section to be unacceptable. To those who have already obtained a divorce, in disobedience to the Word of God, the church is advised to "speak with clarity where sinful conduct is overt and apparent" (par. 2, p. 483). Is not sinful conduct overt and apparent whenever one chooses to obtain a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity?

In paragraph 3 (p. 483) it is stated that "as long as there is *openness to the Word* (italics ours) and to the pastoral counsel and admonition of the consistory, participation in the sacraments, which are a means of grace, should not be denied." Is it not very clear that those who choose to obtain a divorce are by that very act rebelling against the Word? How

can they possibly at the same time be open to the Word and to the pastoral counsel and admonition of the consistory? When one is living in rebellion against God's authority will participation in the sacraments be of benefit? Certainly not! It would bring God's judgment on him/her (1 Cor. 11:25-29).

It is stated in paragraph 4 that the church should "exercise discipline only when there is disdain for the biblical teaching and when unrepentance is beyond doubt." Is not one who chooses to obtain a divorce by that very act showing disdain for the Word of God? Is unrepentance in such cases beyond doubt?

To allow anyone to participate in the sacraments *after* they have chosen to obtain a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity, have broken the sacred marriage vows, and denied the sanctity of the divine institution of marriage is also contrary to Scripture, our creeds, and the Church Order. This has already been demonstrated in our consideration of section B. *The Ministry to Those Whose Marriages Are in Crisis*. For, of course, the obtaining of a divorce goes beyond the contemplation of the sinful act.

D. *The Ministry to Those Contemplating Remarriage*

This section rightly reiterates the fact that God intends for marriage to be permanent as long as both marriage partners are living. For example it states, "... the basic declaration of Scripture is that divorce and remarriage while one's spouse is alive constitutes adultery" (p. 483).

However, there is no explicit statement to the effect that no one is free to marry one who has obtained a divorce on grounds other than that of unchastity and is unrepentant. Rather, in language that is quite ambiguous, the door is left open for consistories to make their own judgment on this (p. 484). Notice especially this: "Therefore the church must:

2. Deal pastorally with those who have failed to keep the biblical principle by
 - a. Refraining from a strictly legal approach to remarriage that tries to provide a basis for judgment that certain categories or remarriage are always compatible or incompatible with the teachings of Scripture."

Is it not quite likely that some will interpret this to mean that the church must not take the stand that for a person to marry one who has been divorced on grounds other than that of unchastity, and remains unrepentant, is always incompatible with the teaching of Scripture?

Sussex Consistory
John G. Kruis, president

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Hudson meeting on January 28, 1981, but was not adopted.

Overture 22 — Permit Women to Serve as Deacons

The Consistory of the All Nations Christian Reformed Church of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, overtures synod again to allow women to be ordained deacons in the churches that deem it necessary.

Grounds:

1. Synod has already confirmed the validity of women's ordination as deacons by allowing those women deacons already elected and ordained, to continue to the end of their term in office.
2. Many congregations have worked long and hard to prepare their members for the election of women to be ordained as deacons.
3. In some congregations there is a sense of urgent need for women to participate in diaconal work in a fully authorized way.
4. Strong biblical grounds for the ordination of women as deacons have been supplied by the synodical study committee which reported in 1978.

Consistory of All Nations
Christian Reformed Church
A. Engbers, clerk

Note: The overture above was presented to Classis Eastern Canada, but was not adopted.

Printed Appeals

1. — Dutton Consistory Appeals 1979 Synod's Adjudication of its Own Appeal Versus Decisions of Neland Avenue Consistory and Classis Grand Rapids East

The Dutton Consistory, having shown that the expressed views of Dr. Allen Verhey "are in conflict with Scripture, our Confessions and Form of Subscription, and the decisions of our Synod," appealed to the 1979 Synod "to declare that this method of interpreting and using the Bible is not to be tolerated in the Christian Reformed Church and to take whatever measures may be needed to prevent its being preached and taught by Dr. Verhey as a minister in our churches" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 740-45).

The consistory, having considered synod's decisions on the appeal, is convinced that that appeal has been illegally, incompletely, and inadequately dealt with, and, considering that the matter is of sufficient importance to the welfare of our churches, appeals to the Synod of 1980 to rectify and complete the unfinished resolution of this matter (*Acts of Synod 1979*, Art. 84, pp. 91-97).

Grounds:

1. Article 30 of the Church Order states that "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." Since the matter was acknowledged as properly before the Synod of 1979, we believe that "the assembly next in order" to which appeal must be made to rectify deficiencies in the 1979 decisions is the Synod of 1980.
2. The first decision which synod took on the matter was irrelevant to our appeal and was taken in violation of synod's own rule:

"2. A main motion is not acceptable under the following conditions:
 "c. If it is verbally or substantially the same as a motion already rejected by synod..."

Rules for Synodical Procedure, p. 58, VIII, Rules of Order B, 2, c.

Notice that Recommendation D, 2 (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 95), which carried, was "substantially" and for the most part also "verbally," "the same as" D, 1, which had been "already rejected by synod."

3. Synod in its Recommendation 3 (p. 96) acknowledged that Dr. Verhey's method, as he applies it, is objectionable, but limited its criticism to merely "some aspects" of his method. But Dr. Verhey's own defense of his views states clearly that what is at issue is not merely "some aspects of his method," or as the committee said, some "detail which is questioned." He wrote:

"Incidentally, I do not 'except' the resurrection from this kind of investigation. Indeed, if this kind of investigation demonstrated that Jesus had not been raised, I would become a Jew. The gospels stake their case on history, after all. But such an investigation, while it cannot 'prove' God took Jesus from the dead, clearly demonstrates it is not historically unreasonable to accept such a claim" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 656).

Notice that in the application of this method even the resurrection is made historically debatable.

4. The 1979 Synod's treatment of the matter ignored the material which we cited from Dr. Verhey's thesis, presumably because, as Dr. Verhey suggested, it was irrelevant. That material from the thesis clearly demonstrates that Dr. Verhey, in applying his method, contradicts Article VII of the Belgic Confession on THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE TO BE THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH, the "sola scriptura" teaching which he in the thesis repeatedly criticizes. His thesis also abundantly demonstrates that the application of Dr. Verhey's view to moral matters makes every application of the Bible to man's moral decisions subject to the veto of man's own experience.
5. The 1979 Synod later in its sessions reaffirmed decisions taken by previous synods regarding the inerrancy of the Bible. In so doing it stated again "that it is inconsonant with the creeds to declare that there is an area of Scripture in which it is

allowable to posit the possibilities of actual historical inaccuracies (cf. *Belgic Confession*, "believing without any doubt all things contained therein") (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 127, V, C, 1, b). It also again "warns against the use of any method of biblical interpretation which excludes or calls into question either the event character or revelational meaning of biblical history" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 128, d). Yet this same synod in the case we appealed took no effective action to maintain these decisions.

6. Synod's treatment of our appeal fails to take the requested action, to prevent the objectionable method of interpreting and using the Bible from being preached and taught in our churches. Furthermore, synod's decision provided for no follow-up on its advice. In merely urging Dr. Verhey to reexamine his method under the guidance of the Neland Consistory and in consultation with Reformed theologians, and advising him to speak cautiously in presenting diverging interpretations and demonstrate their harmony with our creeds (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 96, 97, items 4 and 5), synod was taking no effective action. In fact, its decision is being interpreted as tolerating his views, as the *Press* reported, "Synod Allows Minister His Debatable Views" (headline, *G.R. Press*, June 21, 1979).

In view of the increasing prevalence of views such as these among us, we appeal to the Synod of 1980 "to declare that this method of interpreting and using the Bible is not to be tolerated in the Christian Reformed Church and to take whatever measures may be needed to prevent its being preached and taught by Dr. Verhey as a minister in our churches."

The Dutton Consistory
William A. Hulst, clerk

Note: Classis Thornapple Valley, in session on January 20, 1981, endorsed the appeal of the Dutton Consistory on the following ground: "Synod has not dealt adequately with the context of Dutton's 1979 appeal."

2. — Trinity, Iowa City, Consistory Appeals Decision of Classis Pella re Home Visiting

The Council of Trinity, Iowa City, Iowa, appeals the decision of Classis Pella, May 16, 1980 (Art. 3664 D),

"that classis declare that the present practice of the Trinity, Iowa City, CRC, of having a deacon accompany an elder on annual home visitation is in violation of the Church Order.

Ground: The Church Order (Art. 65) assigns the task only to ministers and elders."

We appeal this decision to synod, asking that synod overturn it, recognizing the present practice of the Trinity CRC to be within the limits of Church Order, Article 65.

Grounds:

1. The Church Order, Article 65, gives ministers and elders the task of pastoral care, including conducting annual home visitation, and faithfully visiting the sick, the distressed, the shut-ins, and the erring. In giving the minister and elders responsibility in this area, the Church Order does not exclude deacons from being involved in these ministries under the leadership and supervision of the ministers and elders.
2. Classis Pella, by its interpretation of the Church Order, Article 65, unnecessarily limits the Church Order and, without scriptural basis, restricts the practice of pastoral care in annual home visitation to the elders and ministers *alone*.
3. In principle, and in denominationwide practice, the pastoral care of the congregation, while it is the responsibility of the elders and ministers, has also been a part of the ministry of the deacons, according to Church Order Article 25 and the Form for Ordination.

Trinity Consistory
David Hoeper, clerk

Background:

It has been a long-standing practice of the Trinity CRC that the elders conduct annual home visitation accompanied by deacons. In so doing, the deacons do not function as elders, but precisely as deacons in fulfilling *their* office, as stipulated in the Church Order, Article 25 and in the Form for Ordination. The deacons do not participate directly in disciplinary matters.

We feel that this arrangement enables both the elders and the deacons to better fulfill their offices, it saves time and energy for the elders in the congregation in which a great deal of the visiting has to be done in a short period of time, and it works well in a congregation with a large number of students in which there is rapid turnover and cases of acute, short-term financial need. Both the elders and deacons want to accomplish their own distinctive tasks in the most efficient and helpful way possible.

This matter came before Classis Pella via a church visitors' report from the Classical Home Missions Committee, which conducts annual church visitation for Home Missions churches, in September 1979. The Classical Interim Committee was given the task of studying the matter and reporting back at the next meeting of classis. The Classical Interim Committee reported to the January 1980 meeting of classis but its report was not taken up because it had not been distributed to the churches prior to the meeting. This same report was placed before the May meeting of classis, but was tabled since its first recommendation was redundant to the Church Order. The motion we are appealing was adopted in place of the Classical Interim Committee report.

3. — Classis Kalamazoo Requests Revision of Decision of Synod of 1979 re Scripture Interpretation

Classis Kalamazoo appeals to the Synod of 1981 to revise the decision of the Synod of 1979 in Article 84 (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 91-97) by declaring that the views and method of interpretation which allows one to deny the historical character of the serpent in Genesis 3, Jesus' statement re fornication, and the earthquake of Matthew 28:2, cannot be taught in our churches.

Grounds:

1. Although the Synod of 1979 advised that in "suggesting interpretations which diverge from those widely held in the church one should speak cautiously" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 97, 5), it did now disallow the above views from being taught.
2. It is important for the church to hold clearly and firmly the historical character and reliability of the events mentioned in the above overture.
3. There is still uncertainty and concern in the churches over synod's decision in this matter. A clearer stand would serve the churches well pastorally in dealing with this matter.

Classis Kalamazoo
Jack Stulp, stated clerk

4. — First, Grand Rapids, Consistory Appeals Decision of the Synod of 1980 re Gravamen of Dr. Boer

The Council of the First Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids overtures synod to adopt the following appeal respecting the decision of the Synod of 1980 on the Report of the Committee on Dr. Harry Boer's Confessional Revision Gravamen. The Synod of 1980 decided "that synod refer Report 30 to the churches for elucidation of the teachings of the Canons on election and reprobation" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, p. 76, 4).

We judge that in adopting this motion the synod essentially and effectively revised the teaching of the Canons of Dort on the doctrine of reprobation. We base this judgment on the following:

A. The decision of synod to adopt verbatim the recommendation of the study committee that "the scriptures do teach a doctrine of election and reprobation in that they teach that some but not all have been elected to eternal life" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 76, 3, b).

This decision appears to us to constitute an impermissible reduction of the explicit decretal context of the Canons of Dort, I/15, to the mere words "not all have been elected." I/15 reads in part:

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, have been 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. . . .

B. The decision of synod to refer to the churches for study the argumentation of the committee report in support of this reduction as an "elucidation" of the "teaching of the Canons on election and reprobation."

In so deciding the synod in effect revised the creed. This action ought not to have been taken without first referring this report to the churches for their consideration. The Synod of 1976 in its regulations governing the procedure to be followed in the adjudication of a confessional-revision gravamen decided that "a revision of the confessions shall not be adopted by synod until the whole church membership has had adequate opportunity to consider it" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 7, 6).

This the Synod of 1980 did not do. We, therefore, appeal the decision of said synod to the Synod of 1981, requesting specifically:

1. That the Synod of 1981 request all consistories and the membership of the Christian Reformed Church to evaluate the report of the study committee and the decisions of the Synod of 1980 on it.
2. That synod appoint a committee to receive responses from the churches and her membership, to assess the study committee report and the decisions of the Synod of 1980, and to submit recommendations for action to the Synod of 1983.

Grounds:

a. The decision of the Synod of 1980 that reprobation consists only in that "not all have been elected" eliminates the basic element in the specifically decretal character of the doctrine, namely that God has decreed to leave the reprobate in the common misery into which they have wilfully plunged themselves, and not to bestow upon them saving faith, and the grace of conversion. . . . (I/15).

It is this clause which most notably leads the Canons to say, "And this is the decree of reprobation. . . ." (I/15). That is to say, I/15 elaborates the "non-elect" reference in I/6 to consist of a directly positive action on God's part with respect to the reprobate in that he *decrees* "not to bestow upon them the gift of faith and the grace of conversion." The elimination of this basic component from the "decree of reprobation" (Latin: *decretum reprobationis*) constitutes an unqualified revision of the doctrine of Dort and therefore requires consultation with the church according to the promise given by the Synod of 1976.

- b. The Synod of 1980 in thus making reprobation a simply inevitable concomitant of election relates reprobation to election in a manner that is wholly foreign to Dort's teaching. Dort thinks to draw the doctrine of reprobation not from the fact of election, but very specifically and directly from the text of sacred Scripture. The teaching is, it says, "the express testimony of sacred Scripture" (I/15). The report of the study committee minimizes this altogether. The word "express," it says, does not appear in the Latin text. This claim is technically correct but substantively without warrant. According to the committee's own translation the testimony of Scripture to the doctrine of reprobation is very express indeed. It translates the passage in I/15 as follows:

... *What is more*, holy Scripture most especially highlights this eternal and undeserved grace of our election, and makes us appreciate it, *in that* it further bears witness that *not all men* have been chosen, but that *some have not been chosen* or have been passed by in God's eternal election. . . . (italics ours).

The words "*What is more*" and "*holy Scripture most especially highlights*" refer to reprobation. They mean that the scriptural teaching of reprobation "most especially highlights" the eternal and undeserved grace of our election. That is the clear and unambiguous meaning of "*in that*." The phrase *express testimony* is therefore a substantively faithful rendering of the authoritative Latin text. Moreover, I/6 speaks explicitly of "that decree of election and reprobation, revealed in the Word of God."

The Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed tradition as a whole have held that reprobation is a scriptural teaching and passages like "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated" come to the mind of all when reprobation is mentioned. All passages adduced by Dort in connection with reprobation have in the gravamen been shown to be irrelevant to the doctrine. The study committee concurs in this exegesis. The committee writes:

If the committee does not find the doctrine of reprobation explicitly taught in the passages quoted in the gravamen, why does the committee not conclude that the Scriptures do not in any way teach a doctrine of the reprobation? (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 547).

One would expect the committee at this point to adduce other scriptural material not quoted by Dort, but validly supporting the doctrine. This the committee does not do. It writes this:

Our answer is this: . . . God's election . . . is a limited election . . . This being the case, it is obvious that some persons have not been elected to eternal life. . . (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 547).

Then follow three pages of scriptural support for the "limited election" all of which is of the same character as the passages that were invalidated by the exegesis of the gravamen. The sole reliance for the doctrine of reprobation in the study committee report is the doctrine of election in its alleged negative significance ("not all have been elected"). This fundamental revision of Dort's teaching on the explicit scriptural basis for the doctrine of reprobation should have been made known to the church before accepting the present position.

- c. The Synod of 1980 referred to the church, without qualification, the report of the study committee as an "elucidation" of the teaching of the Canons of Dort on election and reprobation (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 76). This will leave the impression with serious readers that synod concurs with the judgment of the study committee that God is the "deficient cause" of unbelief. The committee compares God to a judge who, had he the power to do so, might have induced penitence in criminals so that he could pardon them, but chose not to do so (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 363). Similarly, God could have bestowed "the gift of faith and the grace of conversion" on the reprobate, but did not in fact do so. This non-action on God's part is "deficient causality" of their unbelief.

This is a wholly new and indeed strange understanding of reprobation in the Christian Reformed tradition. The following should be noted:

- (1) In reprobating men, God was (according to Dort) definitely not a "deficient cause." God *decreed* that he would not bestow on the reprobate "the gift of faith and the grace of conversion." In *decreeing* reprobation God did not simply refrain from acting, as the committee suggests, but spoke a definitive and eternal judgment upon the reprobate, whereby he declares himself to be "an awful, ir-reprehensible, and righteous Judge and Avenger" of sin (I/15).
- (2) The concept of God's "deficient causality" of unbelief fits in wholly with the study committee's understanding of reprobation as simply not-being-elected. The synod in accepting this definition of reprobation effectively supports the committee's view of a divine deficiently causal relationship to sin and unbelief.
- (3) Most seriously, the notion of "deficient causality" is contradicted in the most forceful way by the Canons themselves. I/5 reads, "The cause or guilt of this unbelief as well as of all other sins is *in no wise in God* . . ." I/15 reads, "And this is the decree of reprobation which *by no means* makes God the Author of sin (the very thought of which is blasphemy) . . ." (italics ours). The committee and presumably the Synod of 1980 judge otherwise. Instead of God being cause of unbelief *in-no-wise* and *by-no-means* he is now declared to be *a-cause-by-deficient-action*. But Dort teaches that God directly by an active and deliberate decree reprobates men.

First Grand Rapids Consistory
Marten VandeGuchte, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Grand Rapids East in its January 15, 1981 meeting, but was not adopted.

5. — Classis Chicago South Appeals Decision of Synodical Deputies re Church Order, Article 12c

At its meeting of January 21, 1981, Classis Chicago South granted the request of the First Oak Lawn Christian Reformed Church for permission "to call Dr. Gerald Van Groningen according to Article 12c of the Church Order as associate minister to serve Trinity Christian College as president." The synodical deputies, the Revs. J. Hoeksema, A. Verburg, and H. Roelofs did not concur in the decision of Classis. We hereby appeal the decision of the synodical deputies.

We judge that serving as president of Trinity Christian College is "consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word" (Art. 12c, C.O.).

Grounds:

1. We respect the opinion of the Board of Trinity Christian College as stated in their position description that:

"Visionary leadership must be provided within the college by (1) motivating students to pursue knowledge, prepare for careers and leadership roles in society and develop personal vision and meaningful Christian lifestyles, all within the framework of Christian love and concern for God-centered excellence, (2) motivating the faculty to build a strong academic program through visionary teaching in an atmosphere conducive to Christian love and learning, and (3) motivating the staff to build an institution conducive to Christian living and learning." The position description goes on to say that "the president must provide leadership outside the college by (1) continuing academic development through popular and scholarly writing in his field; (2) participating in local, regional, national, and international conferences, colloquiums, and ceremonies; and (3) speaking to various groups, including churches, about the vision and world view fostered within the college."

The board is of the opinion that an experienced minister of God's Word could best provide the spiritual leadership needed by Trinity Christian College at this time.

2. The pledge made by the president of Trinity Christian College in his inaugural address:

"I pledge that I will continue the ministry for which I was ordained. I will proclaim the whole counsel of God. I will proclaim the gospel, its rich meaning and application for all of life. I will continue to preach wherever and whenever I have opportunity to do so. I will continue to speak at conferences. I will minister as I interact with faculty, guiding them, directing them, inspiring them in whatever way I can. I will continue to minister as I interact with the students, preach to them in chapel, address them, counsel them, and live among them."

3. Synod has previously approved ordained men serving as presidents of Calvin College, Dordt College, and The King's College.

Classis Chicago South

Richard M. Hartwell Sr., stated clerk

PERSONAL APPEAL

Members of the University CRC of Ames, Iowa, appeal decisions re women in office.