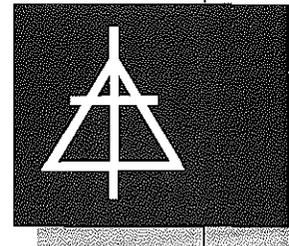


CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

# AGENDA FOR SYNOD



# 1998

# AGENDA FOR SYNOD

June 13-20, 1998  
Fine Arts Center Auditorium  
Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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# PREFACE

Synod 1998 begins its sessions on Saturday, June 13, at 4:00 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Rev. Richard E. Williams, pastor of Pullman Christian Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois, will serve as president pro tem until Synod 1998 is duly constituted and its four officers have been elected.

A Service of Prayer and Praise will be held Sunday, June 14, 1998, at 4:00 p.m. in the Calvin College Chapel. The service will be a combined service with the Multiethnic Conference. Rev. R. Williams will be in charge of this service.

The congregations of the Christian Reformed Church in North America are requested to remember the synodical assembly in intercessory prayers on Sundays, June 7 and 14. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will equip the synodical delegates to serve in faith and obedience and will lead the Christian Reformed Church into new and challenging areas of ministry. May we together experience the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace as we strive to know and to do the will of the Lord.

David H. Engelhard  
General Secretary  
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49560

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## I. Note to delegates

A. Delegates who travel by automobile are urged to carpool if possible, to save on travel costs.

B. Plane travel is the most economical for delegates traveling long distances to synod because it eliminates lodging and meal expenses en route.

C. Synod provides travel accident insurance for those traveling to and from synod. Synod does not provide health insurance. Canadian delegates may wish to purchase additional health insurance for the time they are at synod (for which reimbursement will be made) if their present policies do not provide adequate insurance outside of Canada.

D. Delegates should bring with them to synod their copies of the *Agenda for Synod 1998* and all supplementary materials.

## II. Confidentiality of the executive sessions of synod

The Board of Trustees calls the matter of confidentiality to the attention of Synod 1998 and urges that all necessary precautions be taken to prevent violations of confidentiality.

Synod 1954 stated that "the very principle of executive sessions, or sessions that are not open to the public, involves the practical implication that reporters may not 'report'" (*Acts of Synod 1954*, p. 15). If reporters are not permitted to report on executive sessions of synod, it is certainly a breach of confidentiality also for delegates to the synodical assembly to report—publicly, orally, or in print—on the discussions held in an executive session of synod (cf. *Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 16).

## III. Audio and video recordings of synod

Synod 1979 authorized the making of an official audio recording of the entire proceedings of the general sessions of synod as a way to verify the written record of the synodical proceedings. Although the general sessions of synod are recorded, executive sessions are not taped. Delegates to synod are informed at the opening session of synod that all the general sessions are being taped. Synod has designated that the office of the general secretary be responsible for the use and storage of these materials.

The following regulations were adopted by Synod 1989 concerning audio and video recordings of synodical sessions by media representatives and visitors:

A. Representatives of the media are permitted to make video recordings of synodical proceedings provided they observe the restrictions placed upon them by the synodical news office under the direction of the general secretary of synod.

B. *Visitor privileges*

1. Visitors are at liberty to make audio recordings of the public proceedings of synod provided they do so unobtrusively (i.e., in no way inhibiting or disturbing either the proceedings of synod, the synodical delegates, or other persons).
2. Video recordings are permitted provided the following restrictions are observed:
  - a. Video cameras are permitted only at the entrances, not backstage or in the wings.
  - b. Auxiliary lighting is not permitted.
  - c. Videotaping is to be done unobtrusively (i.e., in such a way that it in no way inhibits or disturbs either the proceedings of synod, the synodical delegates, or other persons).

(Acts of Synod 1989, p. 445)

# DELEGATES TO SYNOD 1998

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
<b>Alberta North</b>		
Ministers .....	Homer G. Samplonius Martin T. Mobach	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Herman Berkenbosch Henry A. Bosch	Elders.....
		James E. Pot John Pasma Dirk W. Simmelink Terry E. Visser
<b>Alberta South/Saskatchewan</b>		
Ministers .....	Herman Salomons James D. Zondervan	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Herman Konynenbelt Roy Bil	Elders.....
		Peter C. Stellingwerff William D. Vis Allan Kielstra Fred Bosma
<b>Arizona</b>		
Ministers .....	Jonathan D. Westra Gilbert J. Kamps	Ministers .....
Elders.....	E. Boschma Harvey Jansen	Elders.....
		Esteban Lugo Stephen R. Steenstra H. Faram
<b>Atlantic Northeast</b>		
Ministers .....	Verlan G. Van Ee Carl W. Bergman	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Edward H. De Vries Henry G. Kuperus	Elders.....
		Stanley J. Vander Klay James R. Van Tholen Steve Tryon
<b>B.C. North-West</b>		
Ministers .....	Wout (Walt) Brouwer John Van Hemert	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Geerlof Bomhof Gerry Bruins	Elders.....
		James R. Poelman Leonard H. Batterink Martin Jurrius
<b>B.C. South-East</b>		
Ministers .....	Gerrit Veeneman Rudy W. Ouwehand	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Norman Brouwer Harry De Jong	Elders.....
		Kenneth D. Boonstra Albert Westerhuis Henk Van Huizen Joe De Vries
<b>California South</b>		
Ministers .....		Ministers .....
Elders.....		Elders.....
<b>Central California</b>		
Ministers .....	Gerard L. Dykstra Wendell M. Gebben	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Charles Hiemstra Cornelius (Conn) J. Witt	Elders.....
		John J. Berends Robert R. Broekema Peter E. Hoekstra Scott Kamper

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
<b>Chatham</b>		
Ministers .....	Peter Nicolai Michael W. Bootsma	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Peter J. Berghuis Ben Vanderlugt	Elders .....
		Dirk Miedema Gerrit K. Haagsma John A. Middel Jan W. Van Reenen
<b>Chicago South</b>		
Ministers .....	Richard E. Williams Anthony Van Zanten	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Marvin H. De Vries Norman C. Vander Wel	Elders .....
		Timothy P. Hoekstra Calvin J. Aardsma Perry D. Recker Marvin Visser
<b>Columbia</b>		
Ministers .....	D. Vance Hays Gary P. Hutt	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Herbert Roos Arie H. Jongeneel	Elders .....
		Stanley A. Drenth Carl J. Leep Dale R. Andre Al M. Smeenk
<b>Eastern Canada</b>		
Ministers .....	Allan C. Groen Nicolaas Cornelisse	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Henk Breimer John M. Kralt	Elders .....
		George J. Rowaan Norman J. Visser Henry Boehm Guy Couture
<b>Georgetown</b>		
Ministers .....	Howard D. Vanderwell Allan H. Jongsma	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Maynard W. Wildeboer Thomas Van Zalen	Elders .....
		Marvin W. Heyboer Marvin J. Vander Vliet Robert A. Beute John Crans
<b>Grand Rapids East</b>		
Ministers .....	Duane K. Kelderman Russell Palsrok	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Philip J. Quist William K. Blickley	Elders .....
		Morris N. Greidanus Peter M. Jonker Nathan Vandenbroek David J. Taylor
<b>Grand Rapids North</b>		
Ministers .....	Douglas A. Warners Thomas E. Mayo	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Jay H. Kuiper Bing S. Goei	Elders .....
		John L. Hoekwater Peter T. Verhulst Marvin Dodde Burton J. Breuker
<b>Grand Rapids South</b>		
Ministers .....	John J. Steigenga David A. Struyk	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Jim Haagsma Ted J. Baas	Elders .....
		Kenneth E. Van Wyk Ronald G. Kool Louis Miedema Steven Skahn
<b>Grandville</b>		
Ministers .....	Gerald D. Postema Douglas R. Zimmerman	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Larry D. Groothuis James Roskam	Elders .....
		Thomas R. Wolthuis Paul O. Sausser William G. Sterk Roger J. Van Duinen
<b>Greater Los Angeles</b>		
Ministers .....	Peter H. Kim David R. Koll	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Francisco Golon Gordon H. De Young	Elders .....
		Elmer M. Tandayu Ronald D. Goudzwaard Donald L. Dykstra Julian A. Baas

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
<b>Hackensack</b>		
Ministers .....	Ricardo E. Orellana Joel E. Kok	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Thomas J. Henion Ezequiel N. Romero	Elders .....
		Thomas G. Klaasen Paul R. De Vries Jesse Cooper David L. Vander Hart
<b>Hamilton</b>		
Ministers .....	A. Carel Geleyense John Zantingh	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Neil Paul Donald R. Hoekstra	Elders .....
		Marvin Van Donselaar Bart P. Velthuizen Bill Beldman Ralph H. Luimes
<b>Heartland</b>		
Ministers .....	Peter J. Mans Timothy E. Van Zalen	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Bruce D. LeFever Duane E. Pals	Elders .....
		Barry B. Blankers Wick Hubers Allan J. Kramer Duane H. Haack
<b>Holland</b>		
Ministers .....	Marvin J. Hofman Anthony L. Louwerse	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Stanley J. Koster Sander De Haan	Elders .....
		Douglas R. Fauble H. David Schuringa Morris P. Driesenga Calvin J. Hoogstra
<b>Hudson</b>		
Ministers .....	Kenneth J. Verhulst John C. Fisher	Ministers .....
Elders .....	David Lowe Donald D. Holwerda	Elders .....
		John J. Hoogland Robert D. Steen _____
<b>Huron</b>		
Ministers .....	Nathaniel J. Elgersma Jack A. Quartel	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Jerry Van Dyk Harry H. Sjaarda	Elders .....
		Kevin P. De Raaf Ralph Koops Ed Benjamins Herb J. Verbeek
<b>Iakota</b>		
Ministers .....	Stanley R. Scripps Warren H. Lammers	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Stanley Sybesma Lew Arkema	Elders .....
		Robert D. Drenten John L. Witvliet John C. Vander Stelt _____
<b>Illiana</b>		
Ministers .....	Gerald L. Hoek Gregory S. Janke	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Richard G. Vander Woude Bernard Smit	Elders .....
		Calvin R. Hoogendoorn James La Grand Richard A. Smits Jay W. Bykerk
<b>Kalamazoo</b>		
Ministers .....	Carl R. Bolt G. Duane Nieuwsma	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Leonard D. Klok Louis J. Meinema	Elders .....
		Joseph A. Brinks Philip J. Boender _____ _____
<b>Lake Erie</b>		
Ministers .....	Leonard T. Riemersma Paul E. Bakker	Ministers .....
Elders .....	Paul R. Bouman Kenneth C. Ludema	Elders .....
		Paul W. Brink Richard J. Hamstra _____ _____

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
<b>Lake Superior</b>		
Ministers .....	James G. Busscher James Admiraal	Ministers .....William H. Kooienga Phillip S. Leo
Elders .....	Andrew Tenson Arthur J. Rooze	Elders .....Henk Meinders Gerard Hammink
<b>Minnesota South</b>		
Ministers .....	David E. Den Haan Kevin J. Vryhof	Ministers .....Bruce Leiter David A. Bosch
Elders .....	Robert P. Schoone-Jongen Howard De Weerd	Elders .....Peter Van Drunen _____
<b>Muskegon</b>		
Ministers .....	Edward C. Visser Carl H. Bruxvoort	Ministers .....Rick T. Vander Wal Robert L. Bierenga
Elders .....	James Saladin Ron Kuiper	Elders .....Ron Wagenmaker _____
<b>Niagara</b>		
Ministers .....	Jerry J. Hoytema Richard J. de Lange	Ministers .....Harry A. Vander Windt Jack Van Marion
Elders .....	John Van Der Beek Richard Verburg	Elders .....Cornelis Van Soelen Rick Jongejan
<b>Northcentral Iowa</b>		
Ministers .....	George M. McGuire P. Wayne Townsend	Ministers .....Thomas J. Niehof G. David Daley
Elders .....	Herbert Mulder Mick E. Vanden Bosch	Elders .....Elmer J. Riebkes Lauris R. Frerichs
<b>Northern Illinois</b>		
Ministers .....	Joel J. Sheeres Lugene L. Schemper	Ministers .....Bruce J. Vaandrager Lambert J. Sikkema
Elders .....	Martin LaMaire Ted De Jong	Elders .....David W. Bakker _____
<b>Northern Michigan</b>		
Ministers .....	Scott D. Los Kenneth D. Koning	Ministers .....Gordon S. Miller Duane J. Timmermans
Elders .....	Edward W. Berkompas Harold Dodde	Elders ....._____ _____
<b>Pacific Hanmi</b>		
Ministers .....	Seung Jai Kang In Chul King	Ministers .....Ike Chang _____
Elders .....	Tai Ho Kim Seung Won Yoon	Elders ....._____ _____
<b>Pacific Northwest</b>		
Ministers .....	Harvey A. Brink Michael J. Kooy	Ministers .....Steven D. Frieswick E. Robert Tigchelaar
Elders .....	George Y. Kim Marvin G. Vander Pol	Elders .....John Cobb Duane Van Dyke
<b>Pella</b>		
Ministers .....	William D. Zeilstra Douglas M. MacLeod	Ministers .....Kenneth L. Schepel Lawrence J. Howerzyl
Elders .....	Raymond Klyn Calvin L. Rozenboom	Elders .....Larry Eggink _____

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
<b>Quinte</b>		
Ministers .....	John Visser William T. Koopmans	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Ralph Pypker John Kloosterman	Elders.....
		Henry Wildeboer Ronald G. Fisher Clarence De Vries Hank Nieuwstraten
<b>Red Mesa</b>		
Ministers .....	Donald E. Byker Robert L. Jipping	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Duane Chimoni Herb Beyale, Jr.	Elders.....
		Paul H. Redhouse W. Keith Bulthuis Norman Chee Bruce Tempest
<b>Rocky Mountain</b>		
Ministers .....	William Verhoef Robert A. Lyzenga	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Kenneth D. Ruter Richard L. Anema	Elders.....
		John Terpstra Dennis A. Kamper Richard M. Schemper
<b>Southeast U.S.</b>		
Ministers .....	Luis A. Pellecer Stanley J. Workman	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Owen J. Baas George N. De Boer	Elders.....
		James A. Vander Slik Joel A. De Boer Donald R. Vande Polder
<b>Thornapple Valley</b>		
Ministers .....	R. Scott Greenway Martin J. Vellekoop	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Ralph J. Cok Cornelius D. Korhorn	Elders.....
		Berton Van Antwerpen William J. Renkema Julius Kuiper Andrew Tiesenga
<b>Toronto</b>		
Ministers .....	Jack B. Vos Herman Van Niejenhuis	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Gary Maas Ronald Vance	Elders.....
		Howard M. McPhee Samuel Cooper Erno J. Meijers Joe Kortleve
<b>Wisconsin</b>		
Ministers .....	Larry L. Meyer Edward J. Laarman	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Steven M. Baas David Katsma	Elders.....
		Clifford E. Bajema Steven J. Alsum Robert J. Elgersma Robert M. Brenton
<b>Yellowstone</b>		
Ministers .....	J. William Van Der Heide Bernard J. Van Ee	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Arthur R. Koenes Leon H. Smit	Elders.....
		John Wanders Gary G. Hofland Todd M. Horner Roger Van Dyken
<b>Zeeland</b>		
Ministers .....	Gerry G. Heyboer Bernard F. Tol	Ministers .....
Elders.....	Stanley E. Zemaitis, Jr. Harvey Jongekrijg	Elders.....
		Gerrit P. Veenstra Jerry L. Alferink Dave Weemhoff Gordon Nagelkirk

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

## Joint-Ministries Management Committee

Christian Reformed Church in North America—Michigan Corporation  
Christian Reformed Church in North America—Ontario Corporation  
Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (the Board) presents this report as a summary of the activities carried out on behalf of synod during the interim between Synod 1997 and Synod 1998.

## I. Introduction

### A. General

The governing board of the Christian Reformed Church is organized as two legal entities, one in Michigan and one in Ontario. Together these legal entities form the Joint-Ministries Management Committee (JMMC) and are known as the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

The mandate given by synod to the Board is found in its constitution and bylaws, which received final approval at Synod 1996 (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 620-33).

The Board has met three times since Synod 1997 (September, December, February) and is scheduled to meet again in May. At its meetings the board divides into two standing committees (Polity Committee and Program and Finance Committee) for consideration of agenda material. The Polity Committee considers matters which formerly were assigned to the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) as well as the work associated with the office of the general secretary. The Program and Finance Committee deals with matters which arise out of the ministries of the agencies and the work associated with the office of the executive director of ministries.

The executive committee of the Board meets as needed. Canadian trustees meet separately to consider Canadian issues. This arrangement complies with Canadian regulations governing Canadian registered charities and provides a helpful way to consider and recommend solutions to issues unique to the Canadian churches.

Though the Board deals with many ecclesiastical matters as well as required corporate issues, a central focus of its work is to enhance the ministries of the whole church, especially those which are carried on through the agencies of the CRC. It is a privilege to see how many wonderful ministries the Lord is pleased to accomplish through the membership and organizations of the CRC. The work of education, relief and development, radio and TV, care and compassion, and missions at home and abroad has been blessed by God.

The Board, as synod's agent, is grateful for the opportunity to serve the whole church in these challenging times.

*B. Membership*

The members of the Michigan Corporation are Rev. Raymond Slim (Far West U.S. I); Dr. Tom Van Groningen (Far West U.S. II); Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper, Mr. Harold Van Maanen (Great Plains); Mr. William Weidenaar (Central U.S. I); Rev. Alvin L. Hoksbergen (Central U.S. II); Dr. Arthur J. Schoonveld, Mr. Howard Johnson (Central U.S. III); Mrs. Kathleen Smith, Rev. Duane K. Kelderman (Central U.S. IV); Rev. Stanley J. Workman (Eastern U.S.); Dr. Carol Rottman, Mrs. Jane Vander Ploeg (members-at-large).

The members of the Ontario Corporation are Rev. Jake Kuipers (Eastern Canada I); Rev. Gordon H. Pols, Mr. J. Hans Vander Stoep (Eastern Canada II); Rev. Peter Brouwer, Dr. William H. Vanden Born (Western Canada); Mr. William Wildeboer (member-at-large).

The general secretary (Dr. David H. Engelhard) and the executive director of ministries (Dr. Peter Borgdorff) serve ex officio as corporate trustees and members of the Board of Trustees.

1. Board officers: president, Mr. W. Weidenaar; vice president, Rev. J. Kuipers; secretary, Dr. D.H. Engelhard; treasurer, Mrs. K. Smith.
2. Corporation officers: president, Mr. W. Weidenaar; vice president, Rev. J. Kuipers; general secretary, Dr. D.H. Engelhard; executive director of ministries, Dr. P. Borgdorff; treasurer, Mrs. K. Smith; director of finance and administration, Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus.
3. Polity Committee: Rev. P. Brouwer, Rev. A.L. Hoksbergen, Rev. A.L. Kuiper, Rev. G.H. Pols, Dr. C. Rottman, Dr. A.J. Schoonveld, Rev. R. Slim, Mr. W. Wildeboer, Rev. S.J. Workman, and Dr. D.H. Engelhard (adviser).
4. Program and Finance Committee: Mr. H. Johnson, Rev. D.K. Kelderman, Rev. J. Kuipers, Mrs. K. Smith, Mr. W.H. Vanden Born, Mrs. J. Vander Ploeg, Mr. J.H. Vander Stoep, Dr. T. Van Groningen, Mr. H. Van Maanen, Mr. W. Weidenaar, and Dr. P. Borgdorff (adviser).
5. Executive Committee: Mr. W. Weidenaar, Rev. J. Kuipers, Mrs. K. Smith, Mr. H. Johnson, Mr. W. Wildeboer. Dr. D.H. Engelhard and Dr. P. Borgdorff serve ex officio.

*C. Salary disclosure*

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
19	1	3rd quartile
18	2	3rd quartile
17	1	3rd quartile
16	1	2nd quartile
15	5	1st, 2nd, 4th quartile

Salary ranges within which the agencies will be reporting actual compensation for the current fiscal year are as follows:

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA  
1998 SALARY RANGES**

Levels	Proposed U.S. 1998 Range			Proposed Canadian 1998 Range		
	Min	Midpoint	Max	Min	Midpoint	Max
20	\$68,295	\$85,369	\$102,443	\$87,974	\$109,967	\$131,961
19	62,138	77,671	93,206	76,319	95,399	114,479
18	56,950	71,187	85,424	66,501	83,126	99,752
17	52,573	65,717	78,860	58,219	72,774	87,329
16	48,911	61,138	73,366	51,287	64,109	76,930
15	45,841	57,302	68,762	45,478	56,848	68,217
14	40,239	50,298	60,358	40,570	50,711	60,853
13	35,540	44,425	53,310	36,447	45,558	54,670

The shaded areas are not currently in use.

*D. Interim appointments*

1. Board appointments

Board	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term
Synodical Deputies	Alberta North		Rev. H. Vriend	
	California South		Rev. D.W. Lagerwey	
	Grand Rapids South	Rev. J.J. Steigenga		2001
	Hackensack		Rev. B. van Eyk	
CRC Publications	Northern Michigan		Rev. R. Brinks	
	Quinte	Rev. W.T. Koopmans		2000
	Pella	Rev. E. Vander Lugt		1998 1999
Home Missions	California South	Mrs. W. Klop		1998
	B.C. North-West		Mr. M. Jurrius	
	B.C. South-East	Rev. B.E. Gritter		2001
	Northern Michigan	Rev. J.W. Zuidema	Rev. D.J. Weemhof	2000
World Missions	Red Mesa	Mr. V. Pablo	Mr. T. Charles	2000
	Arizona		Rev. S.R. Steenstra	
	Grandville		Rev. C.G. Tapanes	
	Northern Michigan	Rev. W.R. De Young	Rev. J.D. Fox	2000
	Red Mesa		Rev. J.J. Greydanus	
CRWRC	Wisconsin		Rev. L.J. Kulper	
	Grandville		Mr. N. De Young	
	Greater Los Angeles	Mr. F.G. Golon		2000
	Hamilton		Mr. V. Kooistra	
	Minnesota South	Mr. R. Huisken		2000
Pacific Northwest	Mr. J. De Boer	Mr. E. Kok		2000

2. Youth-Ministries Committee

The Board approved the appointment of Rev. David D. Poolman to a three-year term on the Youth-Ministries Committee to replace Mr. James K. Jackson, who moved from the area.

**II. Activities of the Board**

*A. Polity matters*

1. Convening church for Synod 1998

Synod 1997 had not designated a church to convene Synod 1998, and

thus it was left to the Board of Trustees to designate a church. The Pullman Christian Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois, was invited to convene Synod 1998 and has graciously agreed to do so.

2. Convening church for Synod 2003

First Christian Reformed Church, Orange City, Iowa, submitted a request to Synod 1997 to be the convening church for Synod 2003 with the assembly meeting on the Dordt College campus in Sioux Center, Iowa. Since Synod 1997 did not have access to a cost estimate for its decision, it referred the matter to the Board for consideration and recommendation.

The Board recommends the following:

That synod accept the invitation from First CRC, Orange City, Iowa, to convene Synod 2003 and that the meetings of that synod be held at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

*Grounds:*

- a. It is occasionally good to hold synodical meetings in different areas where the denomination is represented.
- b. The expenses, with the exception of travel, will be comparable to the expenses charged by Calvin College.

3. Voting for regional representatives on denominational boards

Synod 1997's decision to permit classes to seat deacons at their meetings created a situation in which some classes might have one-third more delegates voting for regional board members than do other classes. Until all classes vote to seat deacons, a policy needs to be established regarding voting for regional representatives on boards.

The Board recommends the following:

That a classis permitting deacons to be seated as delegates shall regulate its voting for regional representatives on denominational boards by permitting only two votes to be cast by each congregation represented in the classis.

*Ground:* This regulation ensures that all classes will have the same proportion of votes for these positions.

*Note:* This policy was followed for the voting done in the spring of 1998.

4. Archivist of the Christian Reformed Church

The denominational archives are housed in Heritage Hall in the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary library. For many years the curator of Heritage Hall has also served as the archivist of the Christian Reformed Church. Dr. Herbert Brinks served in that capacity until his retirement in 1996. We are grateful for his work and for the solid foundation which has been built for future work on the history of the CRC.

In December 1997 Dr. Richard Harms was appointed as curator of Heritage Hall and archivist of the CRC. Even though his term has just begun, his vision and plans for the collection are already being implemented. The congregations and agencies and institutions of the CRC are reminded that it is important to preserve the documents which tell our story.

5. Proposed changes in Church Order Article 38-c, -d, and -e (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 613-15)

Synod 1997 proposed that Church Order Article 38-c, -d, -e be added to the Church Order and read as follows:

c. *When a council and congregation decide to disband or revert to unorganized status, the approval of classis is required. If any distribution of assets is required, the congregation and council will consult with classis.*

d. *When two or more councils and congregations decide to merge, the approval of classis is required.*

e. *When a council decides to disaffiliate from the denomination, the set process for disaffiliation adopted by synod shall be followed.*

According to the regulations of Church Order Supplement, Article 47, this proposed change must be adopted by a following synod before it is implemented.

To assist synod in its deliberation, the grounds presented to Synod 1997 (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 613-15) are reproduced here:

a. Grounds for adding Church Order Article 38-c:

- a. Classis approves the formation of a council as part of the denomination; it is logical that it should also be involved in the dissolution of a congregation.
- b. A change of status may have an impact upon the classis through ministry shares. The requirement that classis approve of such changes maintains accountability.
- c. Assets of a congregation may come from substantial contributions by classis or other denominational agencies. The advice of classis in the distribution of assets will ensure some consideration of denominational agencies that may have provided funding.

b. Ground for adding Church Order Article 38-d:

- a. Classis approves the formation of a council; it is logical that classis be involved when the status or realignment of congregations is being considered.

c. Grounds for adding Church Order Article 38-e:

- 1) This procedure is consistent with the teaching of I Corinthians 6 regarding believers' involvement in the settling of disputes.
- 2) This procedure is consistent with the legal need for structuring relationships involving church property so that the civil courts are not required to solve church disputes (cf. *Presbyterian Church v. Hull Church*, 393 US 440, 449 [1969]).
- 3) There is an urgent need for a policy on these matters.

6. Classes which have declared the word "male" inoperative in Church Order Article 3-a

In accordance with the instructions of Synod 1995, the general secretary keeps a list of those classes which declare the word "male" inoperative in Church Order Article 3-a. Although some of the classes have developed their own regulations regarding the permissibility of women attending

classis meetings, the following classes have adopted a decision to declare the word "male" inoperative in Church Order Article 3-a:

Alberta North	Lake Erie
British Columbia South-East	Muskegon
Chicago South	Northern Illinois
Florida	Pacific Northwest
Grand Rapids East	Quinte
Greater Los Angeles	Red Mesa
Hackensack	Rocky Mountain
Holland	Toronto
Huron	

7. Translation of the *Diverse and Unified Family of God* report (see *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 595-619)

Synod 1996 asked the Board to "ask representatives of various language groups in the denomination to translate the document into the languages of the groups" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 515). When representatives of various ethnic groups were approached in September 1996, marginal interest was expressed for such translations. The time that would need to be expended and the costs involved were too high for the expected results.

By September 1997, however, there was renewed interest in translating the document into Spanish and Korean. The Board reviewed the request, considered the cost, and approved the project. At this writing, the translations are complete but not yet ready in a format for easy distribution. The material will be ready by the time synod and the Multiethnic Conference meet in June.

8. Committee to Study Ordination and "Official Acts of Ministry" (Church Order Art. 53-b)

The Committee to Study Ordination and "Official Acts of Ministry" (Church Order Art. 53-b) was appointed by Synod 1995. Normally a committee is given three years to complete its work. This committee, however, was unable to complete its work and has asked for a one-year extension. The Board has heard the committee's request and on behalf of synod has granted a one-year extension. It is expected that this study committee's report will be ready for Synod 1999.

A consequence of this committee's not reporting in 1998 is that an extension to the exception granted Classis Red Mesa in 1995 (cf. *Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 745) will need to be made. The Board recommends that the exception granted Classis Red Mesa to Church Order Article 55 be extended for one more year.

9. Electronic balloting

The Board has received assurances from the representative of the Engineering Department of Calvin College that the electronic balloting system will be ready for use at this year's synod. We look forward to this new technology and its benefit for the work of synod.

10. Euthanasia and assisted suicide

Synod 1997 received an overture from Classis Chatham requesting the

appointment of a committee to determine the CRC position on the practice of euthanasia (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 442-43). Though synod did not accede to the overture, it did request that the Committee for Contact with Government (CCG) of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada adapt its study on this subject for presentation to a later synod.

CCG has accepted the request of Synod 1997 and has begun its work on the project. Presently it is anticipated that the report will be presented as a study-committee report to the churches in the fall of 1999 for deliberation and decision at Synod 2000.

#### 11. Ethnic advisers

Synod 1996 adopted the Guidelines for Ethnic Advisers to Synod (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 454-55). These have been incorporated into the Rules for Synodical Procedure.

The Board appointed the following persons to serve as ethnic advisers to Synod 1998:

Rev. Paul Lam  
Mr. James Mutoigo  
Rev. Dante Venegas  
Rev. Jai Shim  
Rev. Elmer Tandayu

#### 12. Board nominations

##### a. Regional members

Whenever a new board member is needed from a region or when a member's first term is completed, each classis in the region is requested to submit names for the open position. Once a slate has been prepared by the Board, the nominations are returned to the classes for voting at their spring meetings. The nominees for this year are listed below:

Great Plains: Rev. Dennis Kamper and Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper  
Central U.S. III: Rev. Calvin D. Compagner and Rev. John P. Gorter  
Central U.S. IV: Mrs. Mary Jo De Jong and Mrs. Kathleen Smith  
Eastern Canada II: Rev. Gordon H. Pols and Rev. Barton Velthuisen  
Eastern Canada II: Mr. Andrew Schaafsma and Mr. J. Hans Vander Stoep

The results of the classical elections will be presented to synod in June.

##### b. At-large members

At-large members on the Board (total of three) are chosen directly by synod. This year Mrs. Jane Vander Ploeg completes her second term and is not eligible for reelection. At-large positions exist to help create balance and/or provide expertise on the Board. This year the Board presents the names of the following African-American women as nominees:

*Mrs. Mamie L. Thomas* is director of the Drop-In Center of the Roseland Christian Ministries Center, a ministry to street people, homeless people, and persons who are mentally disabled. She is also director of the summer camp for youth. A member of Roseland CRC,

Chicago, Illinois, where she serves as a deacon, she has previously served on the home-missions committee of Classis Chicago South and on the boards of Home Missions and the Synodical Committee on Race Relations.

*Mrs. Cindy Vander Kodde* serves as evangelism outreach coordinator at Calvin CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan. She was born and raised in Harlem, New York, where she was a member of Manhattan CRC. She has been a member of Madison Square CRC, Grand Rapids, for the past seventeen years, where she serves as worship leader. She is director of the children's and teens' choirs. She is on contract as director of reconciliation for Let's Come Together, in which she trains leaders for conflict resolution and cross-cultural relationships. She also serves as a member of the 1997-1998 Leadership Grand Rapids class, a training experience for community learning.

13. Deletion of Church Order Supplement, Article 44-b

Church Order Supplement, Article 44-b, approved by Synod 1967, contains the mandate and regulations for the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC). The CCRCC has voted to disband now that the Canadian Ministries Board has been convened and has assumed responsibility for the ministries previously under the jurisdiction of CCRCC.

The Board of Trustees of the CRCNA recommends to synod that Church Order Supplement, Article 44-b be deleted.

*Ground:* The establishing and convening of the Canadian Ministries Board has led to the disbanding of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, and the supplement is no longer needed as the mandate and regulative document for CCRCC.

14. Report to Synod 1998 from the Classis Pacific Hanmi Monitoring Committee

Synod 1996 approved the formation of a new classis for those churches in the Korean community of the CRC which felt that their needs could be met more effectively through the formation of such an ethnically based ecclesiastical assembly. The *Acts of Synod 1996* record the following:

**Approve the Formation of a Korean-Speaking Classis in California**

A. *Material:* Overture 56, pp. 302-07

B. *Background*

The substance of this report was before Synod 1995, but synod withheld action. It also encouraged the classes to come back in 1996 with a clearer strategy for implementation. The present overture is a response to that action. It includes much of the original overture and additional material to answer questions and provide a better framework for implementation.

The advisory committee believes that the issues and questions raised by Synod 1995 have been adequately addressed in the present overture, and therefore we can recommend that this experimental classical structure proceed. We emphasize the experimental and temporary nature of a classis of Korean-speaking churches and have therefore strengthened the oversight mechanisms and defined its time limit.

C. *Recommendations* (continued from Art. 71)

2. That synod accede to Overture 56, thereby approving the formation of a classis of Korean-speaking churches out of Classes Greater Los Angeles and California South, to serve southern California, Nevada, and Hawaii, effective September 1996, for a maximum of fifteen years. The following stipulations for monitoring, training, and relationships with the denomination will apply.
  - a. That the Korean-speaking classis will request advisers from at least two neighboring classes for all its meetings during the first three years of its existence. After this initial period, these advisers will be requested to attend once a year for the next two years.
  - b. That synod monitor the development of the Korean-speaking classis every two years through a standing committee comprised of a person appointed by the Ministries Coordinating Council and two members each from the Korean-speaking classis, Classis Greater Los Angeles, and Classis California South. The members of this committee will report to their respective classes and to synod, through the general secretary, on the progress of the new classis and on possible ways to improve its functioning. In the fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-year reviews the committee shall make recommendations to the classes and to synod regarding the continuation of the Korean-speaking classis. Guidelines for evaluation are (1) adherence to the Church Order, (2) participation in the work of denominational boards and agencies, (3) contribution of classical and synodical ministry shares, (4) relationship with neighboring classes, and (5) seeking to increase the use of student interns trained at Calvin Theological Seminary.
  - c. Pastors and other church officers will receive long-term training on the Church Order and the Rules for Classical Procedure. This training will be under the leadership of the general secretary, who will use qualified persons to assist him in this work.
  - d. Upon its inception the Korean-speaking classis will sponsor an intensive two-day course on ecclesiology, structure, and the Church Order for pastors, elders, and deacons.
  - e. During the first five years of existence of this classis, the *Voice of the Reformed* (Korean CRC periodical) will be urged to include in every issue a section dealing with CRC government.
  - f. The Korean-speaking classis will send delegates to synod and to the denominational boards as other classes do.
  - g. The churches of the Korean-speaking classis will contribute their classical and denominational ministry shares.
  - h. The Korean-speaking classis will appoint delegates to the Southern California Race Relations Committee and to other interclassical bodies (CRWRC, California Regional Leaders, etc.) and projects (Multiethnic Celebration, Camp Dunamis, etc.).
  - i. The Korean-speaking classis will accept as advisers the regional representatives of CRC agencies.

*Grounds:*

1. Grounds A through G of Overture 56 (*Agenda for Synod 1996*, pp. 303-04).
2. The time limit ensures that this classis is formed explicitly for the purpose of providing training, orientation, and acclimation of these churches to the CRC in preparation for their full participation in regular CRC structures; the Korean-speaking classis is not intended as a permanent structure.

3. The formation of this special classis is supported by the Korean Council in North America and the Korean-ministries director, and the stipulations are agreed to by the petitioning churches.
4. These stipulations answer the issues and questions brought up by Synod 1995.

—Adopted

The Classis Pacific Hanmi Monitoring Committee is made up of the following persons: Rev. Seung Won Yoon and Rev. Hyung Ju Park, representing Classis Pacific Hanmi; Dr. John Van Schepen and Rev. David Koll, representing Classis Greater Los Angeles; Rev. Peter Shin and Rev. Donald Klop, representing Classis California South; and Dr. Peter Borgdorff, representing the Ministries Coordinating Council.

The monitoring committee has met five times since the summer of 1996 and is pleased to present this interim report to synod. Dr. Van Schepen serves as chairman, and Dr. Peter Borgdorff serves as the secretary for the committee. In doing its work the committee has developed a list of criteria against which the development of Classis Pacific Hanmi is monitored. This interim report is based on the committee's observations to date.

Classis Pacific Hanmi is presently composed of eleven organized and three unorganized congregations. Collectively these congregations have 463 professing members over 18 years of age. The individual congregations range in size from seventeen to seventy members. Classis meetings are held three times per year, and attendance has varied. Since the concept of a classis is foreign to the Korean experience, the committee will encourage a greater commitment to all of the churches being involved in the meetings of classis.

The size of the congregations that make up Classis Pacific Hanmi is such that financial concerns tend to be prominent in our discussions with classical representatives. This reality has also made ministry-share participation by the churches of Classis Pacific Hanmi difficult. At the same time, there is a growing awareness that participation in the denomination's ministries is an important component of belonging to the CRC.

Beginning a new classis is a lot of work and requires a high level of commitment. In the case of Classis Pacific Hanmi this is especially true since the effort of beginning a classis is further complicated by both cross-cultural issues and a different tradition of church polity. In view of these complexities, the committee is especially thankful to report that significant progress has been made in the first two years. Several training sessions for pastors, elders, and deacons have been held, and classis is being led by dedicated and committed leaders.

A comprehensive evaluation will be submitted to Synod 2000. The committee has no recommendations to submit at this time except that synod receive this report as information.

## 15. Publications and services

### a. *Yearbook*

The *Yearbook*, published annually by the office of the general secretary of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, serves as a denominational directory and as a resource for statistical information. In addition to information about classes, congregations, ministers,

and agencies, it contains a historical sketch of the life of the church during the previous year and provides obituary information about pastors who died during that year.

Each year the *Yearbook* is published with greater facility than the year before because of technological refinements. The earlier deadline for *Yearbook* information was observed again this year so that the book could be published in January rather than in the spring, as in prior years. Thus the book reflects denominational and local-church information at a given point (August 31) in the calendar year. The change in date of publication continues to meet with favorable response.

The statistics printed beneath the congregational information in the 1998 *Yearbook* in each instance show the total number of souls (baptized and professing members) in a local congregation. By instruction of synod the following membership totals are listed on the Classical Information pages: number of families, number of professing members over 18 years of age, total number of professing members, total number of baptized members, and total number of members.

The Directory of Churches and Ministries in the *Yearbook* includes organized churches, emerging churches, newly planted churches (not yet having statistics), and other ministries, for a total of 972 active ministries. The return rate for questionnaires was very good this year so that the *Yearbook* includes current statistics for 857 ministries.

We acknowledge with gratitude the excellent services of Mrs. Charlene Ezinga, *Yearbook* manager, and Mrs. Marlene Oosterhouse and Mrs. Gert Rotman, who assisted in gathering information, entering it into the database, copy reading, editing, and carefully attending to the myriad of details involved in publishing the *Yearbook*. The same hearty gratitude needs to be expressed to our computer staff—Mr. Jim Jonker, Mrs. Shirley De Vries, and Mr. Matt Winkle—who diligently provide the necessary support services for this exacting task.

b. *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure*

An updated *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure* was printed, incorporating the changes adopted and ratified by synod. These booklets are updated by the general secretary and reprinted annually, when necessary, and a copy is sent to each church.

c. *Agenda for Synod and Acts of Synod*

The publication of the *Agenda for Synod and Acts of Synod* is the responsibility of the general secretary. This would not be accomplished by established deadlines without the invaluable assistance of his secretary, Mrs. Marlene Oosterhouse, Mrs. Jan Walhout (copy editor), Mrs. Charlene Ezinga, and personnel from CRC Product Services.

As in previous years, some decisions needed to be made about which material properly belonged in the *Agenda for Synod*. Erring on the side of grace seemed more appropriate than erring on the side of rigid regulation. Synod itself will finally decide in all cases whether the material is properly on its agenda.

d. *Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church*

During the past year the Board of Trustees has again sent to all CRC councils updated materials for the *Handbook of the Christian Reformed*

*Church: Your Church in Action.* Several councils ordered new notebooks because the old ones had been lost or misplaced. This large blue notebook should be kept available in every council room.

The *Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church* contains the following sections:

- 1) Ministry Shares and Offerings—This section of the booklet contains financial data and a description of the programs carried on by all CRC boards and agencies as well as by accredited outside agencies. It gives assistance for scheduling special offerings and suggests announcements to be made prior to receiving such offerings.
- 2) Denominational Insights—After a brief statement on the nature of the church and on some of the principles of Reformed church government, this section provides information 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 councils and congregations; suggested rules of procedure and model agendas for council, consistory, and deacons meetings; suggestions for congregational committees; helpful information on the use of members' gifts; and other useful information.
- 4) Ministers' Compensation Survey—By mandate of synod, a survey of ministers' compensation has been prepared each year for use by our pastors and by finance committees of the church councils. The 1998 survey will be presented to Synod 1998 for approval and mailed for inclusion in the *Handbook*. It is intended to be a helpful guide in the setting of salaries and other position-related reimbursements. Because the survey is also used by our pension committees, Synod 1988 passed the following recommendation:

That synod remind the churches that Synod 1982 adopted a recommendation to "require that all ministers complete the salary questionnaire annually to enable the pension committees to accurately calculate the average cash salary as a base for computing ministers' pensions."

*(Acts of Synod 1982, p. 51; Acts of Synod 1988, p. 574)*

- 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* 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 position of the CRC on various matters of doctrine and ethics.
- e. Index of synodical decisions

Previous editions of the *Index of Synodical Decisions* have been valuable aids for those who need to research the decisions of synodical assemblies. The most recent edition of the index was published in 1980.

Thus sixteen years of synodical activity is difficult to obtain apart from engaging in the time-consuming examination of each *Agenda* and *Acts*.

Steps have been taken to prepare a new cumulative index of synodical decisions. The format, categories, and inclusionary principles that were operative in previous editions of the index will be retained. The new edition will look essentially like its predecessors and probably contain data inclusive of Synod 1998.

When will it be published? No one knows the answer to that question. Preparing the index has proven to be a monumental task, and every effort is being made to complete the project by the end of 1998.

f. *Manual for Synodical Deputies*

This manual was prepared by Rev. Leonard J. Hofman and is distributed to synodical deputies and stated clerks of classes. All reports indicate that the manual has been well received. Anyone needing a copy of the manual may receive one from the office of the general secretary.

B. *Program and finance matters*

1. *Appointments*

At its September 1997 meeting, the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the Christian Reformed World Missions Committee, ratified the appointments of Rev. Albert Hamstra as the program director for Asia and Dr. Derk Oostendorp as the program director for Latin America.

Mr. John De Haan, who has served as the director of CRWRC-U.S. since 1978, is scheduled for retirement on June 30, 1998. At the annual meeting of CRWRC in February 1998, Mr. Andrew Ryskamp was chosen to fill the CRWRC-U.S. director position. He was interviewed and appointed by the Board of Trustees at its February 26, 1998, meeting. Mr. Ryskamp was chosen upon the completion of a year-long search process and comes to the position with twenty years of varied and extensive experience in the ministries of CRWRC. Mr. Ryskamp's resumé is an appendix to CRWRC's report. The Board is pleased to present Mr. Ryskamp for synod's ratification. Synod also needs to decide whether an interview with Mr. Ryskamp is needed before synod's ratification vote.

2. *Interagency matters*

Since Synod 1992 approved the reorganization of interagency cooperation, the eight agencies and institutions of synod have worked more closely together in pursuing the "one mission of the church." This process has been helped by the approval granted by Synod 1997 of the Vision and Mission Statement for the CRC's ministries. The Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC) has been engaged in a serious effort to implement the goals for ministry that synod endorsed. There is a growing awareness that collaboration is the "more excellent way," and increasingly agency staff are responding to ministry opportunities with a view toward utilizing the gifts, expertise, and resources of sister agencies and institutions in the pursuit of the mission of the church.

At the same time, it is important to observe that we are not yet where we should be. Appendix 1 contains a record of the organizational journey to date and a projection for what needs yet to happen to reach the greater

potential of cooperation and ministry integration. There is presently a spirit of uncertainty due to the pending report of the U.S. Structure Committee's recommendations to Synod 1999. However, we will continue to work for the best form of wholistic ministry that we can achieve so that the values we hold as a denomination will be reflected in our mission together.

### 3. Agency presentation at synod

Synod 1995 adopted a three-year rotation cycle for agency presentations at synod. Synod also decided to recognize at its Prayer and Praise Service the presence of missionaries, chaplains, and all others engaged in ministries in specialized settings. Finally, synod made provision for retiring agency directors to address synod with a brief farewell address (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 690). The following roster for agency presentations and a farewell address is proposed for Synod 1998 on a schedule of synod's choosing:

- The Back to God Hour
- Calvin College
- Farewell address of Mr. John De Haan (CRWRC)

### 4. Social justice and world-hunger matters

There has been a growing awareness of the issues of systemic injustice since Synod 1993 adopted the recommendations of the Committee to Study World Hunger. Mr. Peter Vander Meulen has significantly raised the social-justice profile of the CRC in the halls of the U.S. Congress, among the agencies, and in the churches through a social-justice network that keeps the membership alerted to major developments and needs around the globe. On the Canadian side these activities are coordinated with the ministry of the Committee for Contact with Government (CCG), which was formerly associated with the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC) but is now part of the Canadian Ministries Board. The actual world-hunger programming is carried on through the ministries of CRWRC, but the awareness raising and educational function are being carried out through the cooperative efforts Mr. Vander Meulen promotes.

In addition, this office also gives leadership to the follow-up activities associated with Free to Serve. Much of this activity is now regionalized and at local initiative, with assistance from Mr. Vander Meulen's office as requested. A significant effort is now underway to encourage such regional observances and celebrations in the fall of 1998 and the spring of 1999.

### 5. Denominational survey

The Calvin College Social Research Center has completed the denominational survey which is conducted every five years (1987, 1992, and 1997). Trends in the life of the denomination are identified, and comparisons can be made with previous findings. It would be instructive for synod to hear the major observations of the report, which, if synod so chooses, can be arranged at one of the sessions of synod. We are deeply grateful to Dr. Rodger Rice and Ms. Ann Annis of Calvin College for their expertise in tracking the trends that affect and reflect the life of the Christian Reformed Church.

### 6. Canadian Ministries Board

According to the decision of Synod 1997, the Canadian Ministries Board has been convened and held its first meeting January 16-17, 1998, in

Toronto, Ontario. The membership of the Canadian Ministries Board as elected by the respective classes is as follows:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North	Mr. Cor Vander Vinne	
Alberta South/Saskatchewan	Rev. Alvin Beukema	Rev. J. Cameron Fraser
B.C. North-West	Rev. William C. Veenstra	Rev. Leonard Batterink
B.C. South-East	Mr. Joe De Vries	Mr. Henk Van Huizen
Eastern Canada	Mr. Tom Luimes	
Lake Superior	Mr. John Harris	
Chatham	Rev. Peter Nicolai	Rev. Robert J. Haven
Hamilton	Mr. Martin Adema	
Huron	Mr. Ray Elgersma	Mr. Fred Vander Sterre
Niagara	Mr. Jack DeRoos	Ms. Stephanie Collins
Quinte	Mr. Ralph Pypker	Mr. Andy Batelaan
Toronto	Rev. Gerald Ringalda	Rev. Herman Praamsma

Presently the Canadian Ministries Board is in the process of assuming its responsibilities as assigned by synod. It has been agreed that on July 1, 1998, it will assume all of the functions previously performed by the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. At that time, Rev. Arie Van Eek, who has been serving as the executive secretary of CCRCC, will retire. It is anticipated that the Canadian Ministries Board will be ready to present a Canadian-ministries-director nominee to the Board of Trustees' meeting in May 1998 for appointment and that the Board will present the appointee to Synod 1998 for ratification. Synod will need to decide whether an interview is necessary before its ratification vote.

#### 7. Financial information

Detailed financial information for all the agencies and institutions will be presented to synod in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*, which is distributed at the time synod convenes. All of the budgets will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval at the May 1998 meeting of the Board. Synod will be asked to approve the unified budget of the Board (inclusive of all the agencies and institutions of synod) and a ministry share that is inclusive of the total of agencies' and institutions' requests. The Board is responding to the mandate of synod that ministry shares be allocated according to the needs and opportunities of the various ministries.

Effective July 1, 1997, the financial support services for all of the agencies were consolidated under the office of the director of finance and administration, Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus. The respective directors of finance for each of the agencies, as well as other finance support staff, have been reassigned to functions that serve the needs of all the agencies. In the process two positions were eliminated. As the consolidation process is refined, further adjustments may need to be made. It is anticipated that, when all of the transition is over, substantial savings can be achieved and greater effectiveness can be realized.

The Board adopted the Ministries Coordinating Council's recommendation that a renewed effort be made to improve the participation of congregations in supporting denominational programs through ministry-share participation. A detailed set of procedures was approved, and these are

now being implemented. A copy of the Board-approved procedures can be found in Appendix 2.

Significant attention has been given to the highly publicized difficulties of the IRM Corporation, in which three agencies had invested funds totaling \$11.4 million. These investments were made over a period of about ten years and had returned significant income to the agencies involved. The Back to God Hour (about \$1 million), Calvin College (\$2.4 million), and Home Missions (about \$8 million) each had invested board-designated and restricted funds. Though investing in IRM seemed like a prudent decision to the boards involved, in retrospect that did not prove to be so. The Board of Trustees has determined that such investments were outside of synodical guidelines as approved by Synod 1965 and revised by Synod 1990. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees decided that more-specific guidelines are needed for investment purposes and that the management of such investments (with the exception of the investments of Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance) should be consolidated under the management of the CRC Foundation. The newly adopted investment policy is attached in Appendix 3 and is presented to synod as information. It is the Board of Trustees' assumption that if synod receives the investment policy as information, without amendment, the policy, though a Board decision, has the force of synodical approval.

#### D. Recommendations

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Mr. William Weidenaar, chairman of the Board; Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary; Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries; and Mr. Kenneth Horjus, director of finance and administration, when matters pertaining to the Board of Trustees are discussed.
2. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the Board to the agency boards and Youth-Ministry Committee (I, D, 1-2).
3. That synod accept the invitation from First CRC, Orange City, Iowa, to convene Synod 2003 and that the meetings of that synod be held at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa (II, A, 2).

#### Grounds:

- a. It is occasionally good to hold synodical meetings in different areas where the denomination is represented.
- b. The expenses, with the exception of travel, will be comparable to the expenses charged by Calvin College.
4. That synod adopt the following recommendation: That a classis permitting deacons to be seated as delegates shall regulate its voting for regional representatives on denominational boards by permitting only two votes to be cast by each congregation represented in the classis (II, A, 3).
5. That synod adopt the proposed changes in Church Order Article 38-c, -d, and -e (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 613-15) (II, A, 5).
6. That synod extend for one year the exception granted Classis Red Mesa to Church Order Article 55 in 1995 (cf. *Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 745) (II, A, 8).

7. That synod receive as information the report of the Classis Pacific Hanmi Monitoring Committee (II, A, 14).
8. That synod ratify the appointment of Mr. Andrew Ryskamp as the executive director of CRWRC-U.S., effective July 1, 1998 (II, B, 1).
9. That synod approve the presentations of the agencies and the farewell address of Mr. John De Haan at a time of synod's choosing (II, B, 3).
10. That synod schedule a time for a presentation of the denominational survey results by Dr. Rodger Rice and Ms. Ann Annis (II, B, 5).
11. That synod approve the membership of the Canadian Ministries Board (II, B, 6).
12. That synod ratify the appointment of a Canadian ministries director as presented to synod by way of supplementary report (II, B, 6).

Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed  
Church in North America

David H. Engelhard, general secretary  
Peter Borgdorff, executive director  
of ministries

## APPENDIX 1

### Reorganization Process: A Report by the Executive Director of Ministries

#### I. Foreword

The writing of this document was undertaken at the direction of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church as recorded in the minutes of the Board of Trustees:

Motion carries that the Executive Director of Ministries and staff provide a report on the reorganization process since 1991 and some projection as to what is anticipated in the future. The draft is to be prepared by the December 1997 Board of Trustees meeting and is intended to be presented to Synod 1998.

(May 1997 Board of Trustees minute 2101, B, 1, b)

Though the specific instruction mentions the year 1991, beginning there is like beginning to read a novel in the middle. It makes more sense to trace the present organizational reality back to Synod 1983, where specific concerns were first raised and acted on by synod. The material presented on these pages is based on several official records, including the *Acts of Synod* and the minutes of the Ministries Coordinating Council, the Synodical Interim Committee, and the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church.

This report has been reviewed by the present members of the Ministries Coordinating Council, and their recall and perspectives were considered in this final copy. However, recalling a journey is difficult. I make no claim to have incorporated every detail, though I certainly hope that all of the major steps along the way have been incorporated. Nevertheless, official decisions and perspectives on such decisions can blur, and to the degree that such happens in this report, I assume full responsibility. At the same time, I am

deeply indebted to my colleagues, and especially to Mrs. Nelvina Ilbrink, who serves as executive assistant to the executive director of ministries, for their assistance in the preparation of this historical summary.

## II. Introduction

The instruction of the Board of Trustees which led to the preparation of this historical summary has its own context. It is fifteen (15) years ago that the journey of reorganization was initiated, and during that time many changes have been implemented. Present members of the Board of Trustees, members of agency boards, recently appointed personnel, as well as other interested members of the Christian Reformed Church may not know where we have come from. It is hoped that this historical summary and the names and events associated with the changes that have been introduced will provide a clearer picture of the present and what may be anticipated in the future.

Another reason why a summary such as this may be helpful and discussing the issues contained herein important is that change, and especially organizational change, is difficult. One could adduce many reasons why that is so, but it is sufficient to say that a major reason that change in the agencies and institutions of the church is especially difficult is that in the church context life is supposed to be stable. Deeply imbedded in our own history, as well as in contemporary culture, is the fear that change inevitably introduces something that will not be as good as what we previously experienced. It is sometimes suggested that the church (and, for the purposes of this report, the agencies and institutions of the church), her faith and theology, her practices, and even her organizational form are best left alone. At the same time, it is also generally recognized that life itself is an agent of change, and therefore change is inevitable. The ways we think, communicate, conceptualize, relate, and do our work have all been radically influenced by the technological development that now shapes the world we live in. The church and its agencies also are part of that world and thus need to make adjustments in the way they fulfill their mission. Consequently, we, as members of that church, must also make adjustments in how we experience life together.

Despite the inevitability of some changes, there are also some things that do not change. The church is always the church. The theology of the church, its faith and basic commitments, and its covenantal fellowship should remain the same. There may be a uniqueness about the way the church organizes its agencies and institutions because they are mandated to do "churchly" kinds of ministries. That is the point. The mission of the church is scripturally based and is its highest value. The way the church conducts its life, including its organizational life, ought to reflect that [we] are "not [our] own, but belong to [our] faithful Savior Jesus Christ" (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 1). Doing matters a certain way organizationally (i.e., in a church-like way) is held as a high value in the Christian Reformed Church. But there is also much in church-based organizations that is similar to organizations that are for profit. There are corporate status, employer-employee relations, budgets, policies, and procedures. It is important to note that the focus of the organizational journey described in this report is the church-based organizations commonly known among us as agencies and institutions and not the structure of congregations or the ecclesiastical assemblies (i.e., classes and synod). There is, of course, a direct relationship between congregations/classes/synod and the

agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church, but it is also important to recognize the differences between these two groupings: The agencies and institutions are called into being by the church for a particular purpose and, in that sense, are part of the church. However, agencies and institutions are not the church in the same sense that congregations, classes, and synod are the church. As we speak of the former in relationship to the latter, it is important to keep that distinction clear.

It is our prayer and hope that reviewing the course of our journey will help the reader understand where we have come from and what still needs to be done as the Christian Reformed Church faces the twenty-first century. It is equally our prayer and hope that the journey yet to be traveled will demonstrate our highest value of doing God's work in a God-honoring way. To him be the glory—always.

### III. Beginnings

The agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) have enjoyed various life spans. It is interesting and useful to list the birth dates of each if only to show that some have many more years than others of organizational and cultural development. The birth dates of the agencies and institutions<sup>1</sup> of the CRC since the formation of the denomination in 1857 are listed in chronological order below:

Calvin College	1876 <sup>2</sup>
Calvin Theological Seminary	1876
Christian Reformed World Missions	1888
Christian Reformed Home Missions	1896
CRC Publications <sup>3</sup>	1911
The Back to God Hour	1939
Christian Reformed World Relief	1962
Pastoral Ministries <sup>4</sup>	1995

<sup>1</sup>The designation "agencies and institutions" is to be understood as follows: Agencies are all the major synodically created ministry-program organizations except Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, which bear the designation "educational institutions." Synod, from time to time, also appointed committees of various kinds, such as the Interchurch Relations Committee, the Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad, the CRC Loan Fund Committee, the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee, the Fund for Smaller Churches Committee, the Youth-Ministries Committee, and the Judicial Code Committee. These various committees are not the primary focus of this report.

<sup>2</sup>Calvin College grew out of a seminary-preparatory program in the 1890s, became a junior college around the turn of the century, and became a four-year college in 1920.

<sup>3</sup>CRC Publications is a combination of various previously separate committees. There may well have been some sort of catechism-materials committee almost from the beginning of the denomination in 1857. The date of origin of the Publishing House is not known. *The Battler* became officially part of the denomination in 1914; the Sunday School Committee was joined in 1936; the Education Committee, in 1946. These various entities were merged with the Publishing House into CRC Publications in 1968.

<sup>4</sup>Pastoral Ministries was organized in 1994, combining into one agency the former Chaplaincy Committee (1942), the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (1972), the Pastor-Church Relations Committee (1982), the Committee on Disability Concerns (1986), and the Committee for Abuse Prevention (1994).

The formation of the agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church followed a standard pattern. A need was identified, and synods responded by appointing a committee, approving a mandate, providing financial resources, and requiring an annual accounting of the committee's work. In most instances such a committee's initial work was done by volunteers, but also in most cases a committee's work soon required professional staffing, which, as is natural, then also caused organizational growth, complexity, and expanding mandates. Each of these organizations also developed its own culture and rules of procedure (both written and unwritten), even though each was governed by a synodically appointed board. Each reported directly to synod; there was no pre-implementation review of an agency's ministry direction or of the priority that should be placed on a certain ministry in the context of the whole CRC program.

This way of operating worked well for many years. Countless numbers of people took ownership of the ministries to which they were assigned or for which synod asked them to assume responsibility. Nothing in the pages that follow is intended to diminish or criticize what was decided or done by the individuals and organizations that functioned in their positions over the years. Agency and institutional boards, as well as their personnel, functioned mostly as synod intended.

But perhaps synods for many years failed to keep pace with changing attitudes and organizational realities. So it was and is. Subsequent synods (i.e., after 1982) learned to grapple with new realities and changing ways of doing things. I, for one, am proud of the way CRC synods met the challenge. In the practical realities of our life as a church, the Spirit's leading can be seen vividly. Building the church is most often identified with new conversions or new church plantings, but the Lord also builds his church through processes of institutional change that better equip the church to respond more and more effectively to the continuing call of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

#### **IV. Initiating the discussion**

Serious discussions about restructuring the agencies and institutions of the CRC grew out of an increasing discomfort with the perceived lack of cooperation and integration among the various ministries as practiced by the agencies and the institutions of the church. Concurrent with this discomfort was also the positive desire for more and better coordination of the church's growing ministries. Already in 1971 synod addressed this concern by enlarging the three (3)-member Synodical Interim Committee into a regionally representative committee of twelve (12) and expanding its mandate to include "encouraging coordination among the agencies." Interestingly, synod did not want the expanded SIC to have any *authority* to coordinate; its mandate was only to *encourage* cooperation. Agencies themselves were to figure out the best ways to accomplish such coordination. As a matter of fact, synod never did empower the Synodical Interim Committee with the requisite authority to ensure results. It seems that whenever the Synodical Interim Committee tried to initiate some leadership, synod would slap the SIC's wrists for exceeding its authority and/or mandate.

Already during the 1970s and 1980s, the denominational staff people were regularly engaging in conversations about how we could do our ministry

better, more effectively, and more efficiently together as agencies of the church. Even then we had several domestic ministry agencies and at least three international ministry agencies. Questions were raised about the effectiveness of our organizational structures, the traditional divisions of "world" and "home" agencies as that pertained to geography, or word/deed as that pertained to wholistic ministry. Staff members were also aware of increasing tension between various agencies as geography and mandates overlapped and lack of clarity about organizational priorities increased.

Various synods prior to 1982 received reports about developing difficulties, especially between two of the international ministry agencies, Christian Reformed World Missions and Christian Reformed World Relief. It is telling that Synod 1977 appointed the Missions Coordination Council. The advisory committee dealing with these concerns during Synod 1984 observed the following:

The Synod of 1977 appointed the Missions Coordination Council, consisting of representatives of the various mission agencies of the denomination, "to share pertinent board actions, projected plans and goals, and to discuss the resolution of difficulties which may arise between the agencies" [italics added].

The Missions Coordination Council was given no instruction about reporting to synod. The Missions Coordination Council has worked at its mandate since its formation, and in so doing became involved in the discussion and resolution of difficulties between World Missions and CRWRC, but was not able to go beyond discussion and advice for reasons of its "limited authority, resources, and time." In its report via the Synodical Interim committee, the Missions Coordination Council registers its negative reaction to the World Missions and Relief Commission proposals for the reorganization of World Missions and CRWRC. The Missions Coordination Council also asks synod to "clarify the status of the Missions Coordination Council and its relationship to the Synodical Interim Committee and to synod, in the light of the decision of 1977."

(Acts of Synod 1984, pp. 663-64, Art. 111)

Interestingly, especially in the light of later developments, the *Acts of Synod 1984* then records the following action in response to the advisory committee's observations:

That synod reaffirm the mandate of the Missions Coordination Council as set by the Synod of 1977, without instruction for reporting either to synod or the Synodical Interim Committee.

*Grounds:*

1. The mandate of the Missions Coordination Council continues to speak to the need for interagency communication.
2. There is no need for having the Missions Coordination Council report to the Synodical Interim Committee or to synod.
3. The task of dealing with the issue of World Missions and CRWRC relationships has been assigned by synod to the World Missions and Relief Commission.

(Acts of Synod 1984, pp. 663-64, Art. 111)

Synod 1982 intervened in the developing conflict between World Missions and World Relief by appointing the World Missions and Relief Commission and giving this commission sweeping powers over both agencies. To accomplish the task, synod appointed respected and experienced churchmen.<sup>5</sup> It was

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<sup>5</sup>Synod appointed Mr. Gerard Berghoef, Mr. Norman De Graaf, Rev. Harold Dekker, Dr. John H. Kromminga, and Dr. William Spoelhof.

a time of pain and learning as the church forged, some would say "forced," a new cooperative alignment among the mission agencies of the denomination. The World Missions and Relief Commission in 1985 recommended, and synod approved, the creation of a fifteen (15)-member Board of World Ministries to oversee the work of World Missions and CRWRC.<sup>6</sup> The Board of World Ministries made a significant difference for the good in the relationship between World Missions and CRWRC and continued in existence until February 1993, when its functions were transferred to the Board of Trustees and the functions of its executive director were integrated into the position of the executive director of ministries. The Board of World Ministries first reduced the level of conflict between World Missions and World Relief and followed by nurturing a more productive environment for wholism in ministry and by encouraging programmatic integration (also called joint fields) when appropriate to the ministry needs in a particular place. In many respects this integrative ministry approach has become a model for the later development of a denominational ministries plan and for the accompanying organizational realignments that are under discussion at the present time.

Concurrent with the concerns for the ministries of World Missions and CRWRC there were also voices expressing more general concerns about the way agencies functioned and were expanding. At Synod 1983 Rev. Donald Wisse, a delegate from Classis Hudson, made an impassioned plea for an overture from his classis which asked synod to address the larger context of how agencies were functioning in the life of the denomination. Initially his plea fell on deaf ears, but before synod adjourned, it reconsidered the concerns expressed in the overture and assigned to the Synodical Interim Committee the responsibility of addressing the issues raised. The Synodical Interim Committee then appointed a committee which later became known as the Vision 21 Committee.<sup>7</sup> The creation of yet another committee, with a broader mandate than that of the World Missions and Relief Commission, resulted in two parallel, and in some sense uncoordinated, discussions in the church. Both the World Missions and Relief Commission and the Vision 21 Committee worked in relative confidentiality and isolation from each other, with the unintentional result that agency boards and personnel were feeling increasingly threatened and resentful. It was not surprising, therefore, that, when the Vision 21 Committee reported to Synod 1987, only one year after the Board of World Ministries had been appointed, synod was forced to choose between an extensive reorganization proposal recommended by the Vision 21 Committee and endorsed by the Synodical Interim Committee, on the one hand, and the agencies, which mostly opposed the recommendations, on the other hand. Synod 1987 sought its way out of this unfortunate dilemma by adopting the

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<sup>6</sup>The Board of World Ministries was composed of five (5) representatives who also served on the Board of World Missions, five (5) members who also served as members of the board of CRWRC, and five (5) members-at-large elected by synod. Dr. Roger Greenway served as its first executive director (1986-1990), followed by Dr. Peter Borgdorff (1990-1992). Dr. Roger Van Harn served as the Board of World Ministries' president from 1985-90; Rev. Charles Terpstra served as president from 1990-1993.

<sup>7</sup>The Vision 21 Committee was composed of Dr. Anthony Diekema, Mr. Kenneth Horjus, Rev. John Klomps, Mr. Richard Postma, Mr. Ray Seven, Mr. Frank Velzen, and Mr. Wayne Vriesman.

principles and guidelines<sup>8</sup> recommended by the Vision 21 Committee and retaining the existing agency structure rather than instituting the organizational restructuring proposed by the Vision 21 Committee.

The actions of Synod 1987 did not really settle anything except perhaps to set a direction. Realizing that there was more to be done, synod appointed a Structure Review Committee<sup>9</sup> to prepare a report for Synod 1990. In the grounds for adopting the principles and guidelines, synod said,

1. The report ("Vision 21") articulates principles in harmony with Reformed church polity and guidelines which reflect good stewardship.
2. The extensive and valuable work begun by the Structure Study Committee (i.e. "Vision 21") needs to be continued.
3. The specific structural proposals have raised significant questions which need to be answered.
4. The church needs additional time and advice before finalizing such far-reaching decisions regarding restructuring.

(Acts of Synod 1987, p. 597)

One further action by Synod 1987 should be mentioned. When the Board of World Ministries was appointed in 1985, synod also decided that the Board of World Ministries arrangement would be evaluated in five years (1990). Therefore, Synod 1987 appointed a World Ministries Review Committee<sup>10</sup> and instructed it to consult with the Structure Review Committee. This World Ministries Review Committee also reported to Synod 1990. It will be further discussed below.

## V. Decision time - Synod 1990

Several developments converged at Synod 1990. The Structure Review Committee presented its report.<sup>11</sup> The World Ministries Review Committee presented its report.<sup>12</sup> The Board of World Ministries presented a nomination for a new executive director to replace Dr. Roger Greenway.<sup>13</sup> Finally, synod was faced with a number of protests from the agencies, mostly expressed at meetings with the synodical advisory committee at synod. These converging developments produced several oddities of the type unique to synodical gatherings. First, even though the advisory committee assigned responsibility for the Structure Review Committee's report substantially agreed with the Structure Review Committee's work, it proceeded to draft its own proposals for consideration by synod. Second, synod interviewed and appointed Dr. Peter Borgdorff for the position of executive director of World Ministries one

<sup>8</sup>The principles and guidelines were adopted by Synod 1987 (see *Agenda for Synod 1987*, pp. 276-80, and *Acts of Synod 1987*, p. 596).

<sup>9</sup>The 1987-1990 Structure Review Committee was composed of Mr. Dirk Booy, Rev. Bernard J. Haan, Rev. George Vander Weit, Rev. Wilbert M. Van Dyk, Mr. Frank Velzen, and Rev. J. Vos. Mr. Kenneth Horjus and Rev. John Klomps served the committee for part of its work, but neither was serving on the committee when the report was completed.

<sup>10</sup>The World Ministries Review Committee was composed of Rev. Harold Dekker, Rev. Jacob Hasper, Rev. Raymond Opperwall, Dr. William Spoelhof, and Dr. Edwin Roels.

<sup>11</sup>*Agenda for Synod 1990*, pp. 331-62.

<sup>12</sup>*Agenda for Synod 1990*, pp. 363-400.

<sup>13</sup>*Agenda for Synod 1990*, p. 107.

day and three days later voted by implication to phase out the Board of World Ministries and the executive-director position as soon as newly adopted proposals could be implemented. Third, the report of the World Ministries Review Committee hardly received any consideration at all by synod, perhaps because both the advisory committee and synod were preoccupied with the report of the Structure Review Committee and with drafting an alternative structure as a substitute proposal. At least by implication it was decided to phase out the Board of World Ministries. Whatever the reason for the short shrift given to it, the World Ministries Review Committee deserved better treatment than it received, and synod passed up an opportunity to learn some valuable lessons about the complexities of agency coordination and cooperation (see *Agenda of Synod 1990*, pp. 363-400). Rather than reviewing the dynamics and emotions that played out at this critical synod meeting, it is probably best to proceed to the actual decisions made which became the framework for what we have today.

Lest anyone conclude that synod rejected most of the ideas advanced by the Vision 21 Committee, as well as the revised proposals of the Structure Review Committee, it is instructive to look at at least part of the advisory committee's observations:

The need to restructure our operations occupied synods again during most of the eighties and was initiated by an overture of Classis Hudson in 1983. The outcome of subsequent synodical studies was a document called "Vision 21." The report's general direction was received with considerable approval, albeit that approval was accompanied by some rather profound questions. In order to answer these questions, the 1987 Synod appointed the Structure Review Committee, whose report is before this synod . . . .

We want to express praise and gratitude for the work of the Structure Review Committee. In its report the committee places very important considerations before our denomination: the relationship between governance and administration, the consequence of centralization and decentralization, the relationship between local and denominational ministries, . . . and the matter of necessary coordination and its relation to the accompanying need for authority.

The theme that stands out in the report is the need for coordination and integration of the denomination's operations. This faithfully represents the wish of the church expressed by previous synods . . . .

Your advisory committee has carefully studied the model and weighed the consequences it might have in the operation of our denomination. We recognize the merits of the plan, and we have tried to preserve those merits in the proposal which we submit to synod. We stress that we do not consider our proposal to be totally different from the model submitted by the Structure Review Committee. Our plan shares with that of the SRC a striving for coordination and integration in the execution of our kingdom ministries. However, it is an altered one which responds appropriately to the concerns which were brought to our attention during interviews with representatives of the denomination's agencies.

(*Acts of Synod 1990*, pp. 661-62, Art. 98)

The record shows that the Structure Review Committee's report was considered and synod then adopted a motion (with five grounds) "that synod not approve the plan and its proposed implementation which are presented by the Structure Review Committee."<sup>14</sup> Having made this decision, synod moved quickly to the consideration of an "alternative structure," which contained the following major components:

<sup>14</sup>*Acts of Synod 1990*, p. 670, Art. 105.

1. The strengthening of the mandate of the Synodical Interim Committee by giving it the authority to manage the denomination's ministries and agencies.<sup>15</sup>
2. The appointment by synod of an executive director of denominational ministries, who will exercise ongoing management on behalf of synod and its interim committee.<sup>16</sup>
3. The establishment of a Ministries Management Team<sup>17</sup> composed of the heads of all denominational ministries and agencies and chaired by the executive director of denominational ministries.
4. The requirement that the existing agencies begin a process which will result in the combination of agencies where practical and feasible and the combination of administrative support services to establish necessary economies and efficiencies.

*(Acts of Synod 1990, pp. 675-76, Art. 110)*

Synod also adopted "steps toward implementation" for the Synodical Interim Committee to follow and instructed the Synodical Interim Committee to report to Synod 1991.<sup>18</sup> Subsequent developments prove that Synod 1990 made foundational decisions that significantly altered the independence of the agencies of the Christian Reformed Church<sup>19</sup> and moved them in a direction of interdependence and cooperation as together they reflect the one mission of the denomination. In the process, attention was also focused on achieving greater efficiencies in the use of denominational resources, but the main intended thrust of the changes that followed, and ultimately the most church-like expectation, is that the ministries be as effective as possible in carrying out the ministry to which the Christian Reformed Church is called.

## VI. Toward implementation

Immediately following Synod 1990 the Synodical Interim Committee convened meetings that involved both agencies and advisers to develop the details of the restructuring plan. In a supplementary report to Synod 1991 the Synodical Interim Committee provided a detailed plan which was then slightly amended by synod's advisory committee and approved by synod.<sup>20</sup> In the main body of the Synodical Interim Committee's supplementary report to Synod 1991, we get a glimpse of the Synodical Interim Committee's perspective on what needed doing early in the process.

The Synodical Interim Committee decided to set the following process in motion, to be completed by June 1, 1993:

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<sup>15</sup>The Synodical Interim Committee officially became the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church upon the provisional adoption of the constitution and bylaws by Synod 1993.

<sup>16</sup>This position was filled by Synod 1992 and renamed executive director of ministries.

<sup>17</sup>The Ministries Management Team was later renamed the Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC).

<sup>18</sup>*Acts of Synod 1990*, p. 680, Art. 115.

<sup>19</sup>The term *agencies* in this context includes Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. It was only later that the designations were changed to *agencies and institutions*, the latter referring to educational institutions, as explained in Footnote 1. The needed independence required for educational institutions is provided for in both the Constitution and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church.

<sup>20</sup>*Acts of Synod 1991*, pp. 619-33, 777-81.

- A. Instruct the executive director of ministries to develop, in consultation with all the agencies, definitive mission and vision statements which will guide the ministries of the denomination.
- B. Direct all agencies at both staff and board levels to review their vision statements and submit any changes required to bring them in line with the overall statement of the denomination through the Ministries Advisory Council [later renamed the Ministries Coordinating Council].
- C. Direct all agencies to review their strategic plans in light of a process led by the Synodical Interim Committee and the executive director of ministries through the Ministries Advisory Council to ensure that all the issues of "overlap, gaps, and priorities" are addressed, with all the agency plans requiring the approval of the Synodical Interim Committee.
- D. Instruct all agencies to review the following in consultation with the Synodical Interim Committee and the executive director of ministries:
  - 1. Board size and composition (regional representation with preservation of the principle of classical representation).
  - 2. Combining/merging activities with other agencies.
  - 3. Issues of effectiveness and efficiency, especially in the areas of support services.

*(Acts of Synod 1991, p. 606)*

After the basic details of the plan had been approved and the initial activities of the Synodical Interim Committee and the new position of executive director of ministries had been decided, the Synodical Interim Committee, with a mandate from synod, began to revise its own constitution to reflect its new responsibilities even as it continued to provide leadership while the search for an executive director of ministries ran its course. At the March 19-20, 1992, meeting of the Synodical Interim Committee Dr. Peter Borgdorff was selected as the single nominee to be presented to Synod 1992 for the executive director of ministries position. At that time he was serving as the executive director of World Ministries, a position that was itself scheduled to be incorporated into the executive director of ministries position. Synod 1992 completed the process by appointing Dr. Borgdorff,<sup>21</sup> and he began his service on July 1, 1992.

The transition to a more unified structure for denominational ministries came at a time when there was a great deal of conflict in the church. Some churches and members were unhappy with the decision of Synod 1990 about women in ecclesiastical office; others were equally unhappy about the decision of Synod 1992 which reversed the intent of Synod 1990 on the same issue. It seemed that the spirit in the church was fearful, sometimes inconsistent, and cautious. Agencies were also sensing a lack of enthusiasm among the church's membership for the denominational ministries, and contributions to these ministries dropped significantly. At its meeting on September 24-25, 1992, the Synodical Interim Committee was informed that agencies had reduced their previously approved budgets for fiscal year 1993 by \$4.5 million, that a hiring freeze had been implemented, and that all salaries were frozen until further notice.<sup>22</sup>

As is to be expected, the 1991 statement of the Synodical Interim Committee's view of what had to be done toward restructuring was refined

<sup>21</sup>*Acts of Synod 1992*, pp. 612-13, Art. 21, III; p. 637, Art. 37.

<sup>22</sup>Synodical Interim Committee minutes of September 24-25, 1992, 1575, I, C.

and placed in a different time frame. Nevertheless, the basics of that vision have remained and continue to be operative in the present.

#### *A. Ministries Coordinating Council*

One of the early developments after the appointment of the executive director of ministries was the formation of the Ministries Coordinating Council. At its first meeting, July 25, 1992, the Ministries Coordinating Council<sup>23</sup> adopted a number of initiatives to begin implementing the directives of synod and the Synodical Interim Committee. Certainly one of the most significant decisions of that first meeting was the appointment of several task forces to begin addressing specific issues for coordination. These task forces were Human Resources; Finance; Coordinated Services; and Communications, Development, and Church Relations. Even though not all the recommendations made by these task forces in the course of the next year were approved, many of the changes experienced since 1992 were initiated as a result of these recommendations.

When the Ministries Coordinating Council held its second meeting, in October 1992, it approved a recommendation to the Synodical Interim Committee that the membership<sup>24</sup> of the Ministries Coordinating Council be approved:

1. The executive directors of the larger agencies.
2. A member selected from among the smaller agencies.
3. Two members selected from among the staff in Burlington, Ontario.
4. The executive director of ministries as its chairman.
5. The general secretary as an ex officio member (without vote).

As the membership of the Ministries Coordinating Council is reviewed from the perspective of 1997, it should be noted that there has been significant turnover in five years. Rev. Louis Tamminga, Rev. Harold Bode, Rev. Leonard Hofman, and Dr. Anthony Diekema have all retired. Mr. David Vander Ploeg, Mr. Ray Elgersma, and Rev. William Van Tol have changed positions and are no longer involved in the Ministries Coordinating Council. The staff advisers to the Ministries Coordinating Council have also been in transition. Mr. Harry Vander Meer retired as the denominational financial coordinator in 1994.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup>The persons who initially were part of the Ministries Coordinating Council were Rev. Harold Bode, Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Mr. John De Haan, Dr. James De Jong, Dr. Anthony Diekema, Mr. Raymond Elgersma, Mr. Bing Goei, Rev. Leonard Hofman, Mr. Rudy Hulst, Mr. Al Karsten, Mr. Gary Mulder, Mr. David Radius, Rev. John Rozeboom, Rev. Louis Tamminga, Mr. Harry Vander Meer, Mr. David Vander Ploeg, Mr. Ray Vander Weele, Rev. William Van Tol, and Rev. Theodore Verseput. As indicated in the text, Ministries Coordinating Council's formal membership was selected from this group.

<sup>24</sup>The formal membership of the Ministries Coordinating Council as approved by the Synodical Interim Committee was Rev. Harold Bode, Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Mr. John De Haan, Dr. James De Jong, Dr. Anthony Diekema, Mr. Raymond Elgersma, Rev. Leonard Hofman, Mr. Al Karsten, Mr. Gary Mulder, Rev. John Rozeboom, Mr. David Vander Ploeg, and Rev. William Van Tol. In most instances, Mr. Harry Vander Meer was present as denominational financial coordinator.

<sup>25</sup>Though Mr. Harry Vander Meer retired as the denominational financial coordinator, he then became the executive director of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S., where he served with distinction until 1997.

when that position was renamed director of finance and administration. Mr. Robert Van Stright served first in that position from 1994-1997, when he returned to private business. In the spring of 1997 Mr. Kenneth Horjus was appointed to this position. In addition, Ms. Norma Coleman was appointed as the director of personnel in 1993 and by virtue of that position became a staff adviser to the Ministries Coordinating Council.

It is difficult to measure the impact of such staff changes, but they are clearly significant. Presently the Ministries Coordinating Council<sup>26</sup> members collectively have different experiences in denominational matters than was the case when the Ministries Coordinating Council was first formed. New insight without strong ties to the past can be significantly freeing. It is also true that one's sense of history and personal experience are important ingredients in providing leadership as expressed through the Ministries Coordinating Council.

The journey to date has been difficult for the Ministries Coordinating Council. It has been hard for MCC to carve out its identity as a leadership group, to develop collegial relationships with sometimes competing agencies, and to coalesce into a cooperative unit members who are accustomed to being leaders of agencies. There are many evidences that the Ministries Coordinating Council members are seeking to do what will best serve the mission of the church as a whole. At the same time, what is described here as a difficult journey is also intended to indicate that the Ministries Coordinating Council has a way to go. There is consensus that the Ministries Coordinating Council may not yet be what synod intended it to be when it was formed in 1992. Too often agencies or agency personnel support Ministries Coordinating Council decisions that are either low threat or agreeable to themselves and resist, even ignore, decisions that are less agreeable. The complexity of the CRC agency structure requires the Ministries Coordinating Council to provide a clear administrative voice which is then supported by all the council members when they return to their individual responsibilities within the agencies and institutions they serve.

Despite these difficulties the Ministries Coordinating Council has managed to advance, for the first time in CRC history, a denominational ministries plan. It took five years, two rounds of listening conferences among the membership of the CRC, several strategic-planning events, and numerous meetings to produce a consensus document which includes a mission statement, a vision statement, major goals, and specific objectives. Synod 1997 approved the Vision and Mission Statement and endorsed the goals and objectives the agencies will pursue in cooperation with the congregations of the CRC. This is no small accomplishment, though it is recognized by the Ministries Coordinating Council that the real accomplishment is not in designing the plan but rather in the achieving, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the goals we have adopted. The denominational ministry plan as presently

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<sup>26</sup>The 1997 membership of the Ministries Coordinating Council is Mr. John Kuyers, Dr. Gaylen Byker, Dr. James De Jong, Rev. John Rozeboom, Mr. Gary Mulder, Rev. Merle Den Bleyker, Mr. John De Haan, and Ms. Beth Swagman as agency directors; Mr. Wayne deJong and Mr. Al Karsten as Canadian staff; Dr. Peter Borgdorff as chairman; and Dr. David Engelhard as member ex officio (without vote). Ms. Norma Coleman and Mr. Kenneth Horjus serve the Ministries Coordinating Council as advisers.

written will take us to the tenth anniversary (2002) of the Ministries Coordinating Council's efforts.

Part of the reason the development of the denominational ministries plan took a significant amount of time is that it involves a ministry paradigm shift that should be noted. It reflects a significantly increased commitment of agency staff members to collaborative ministries and integrated efforts. The hope is, of course, that this shift signals a change away from an environment of agency competition to one of cooperation and mutual support. Even as we encourage and applaud this shift, it is our prayer that the Lord will be honored through such efforts.

To best accomplish its coordinating and administrative role, the Ministries Coordinating Council has been organized into several teams. Almost from the beginning in 1992 there has been a Canadian counterpart to the Ministries Coordinating Council, though technically this Canadian group functions as a subgroup of the Ministries Coordinating Council. The Canadian counterpart is called the Canadian Ministries Advancement Team,<sup>27</sup> and increasingly this leadership group is assuming responsibility for dealing with the ministries of the CRC in the Canadian context. In fact, it is noteworthy that the synodically approved report of the Committee to Study Structure for Ministry in Canada grants this staff group significant standing in the new Canadian structure. This development does not reflect less emphasis being placed on the need to interface the Canadian and U.S. ministries in a binational denominational context. What it does reflect is that the Burlington-based staff is increasingly assuming responsibility for developing interagency approaches to denominational ministries in the Canadian context.

The Ministries Coordinating Council has also established a Ministries Team, which is essentially the program-review team of all the ministries that fall under the Ministries Coordinating Council's influence. There are also a number of subteams that have more detailed assignments (e.g., Eastern European Ministries Team, Classical Renewal Ministries Team, Church in Society Team, etc.), all of which are multiagency based. Their respective mandates are inclusive of all CRC ministry activity within a geographical region or specific programmatic function.

There are also other Ministries Coordinating Council subteams (e.g., Advancement Council, Korean Ministries Relation Team, etc.), some of which report not only to the Ministries Coordinating Council but also directly to the Board of Trustees. It is not necessary to detail the fine points here but only to suggest that the intricacies of organization are determined by history, culture, political realities, and functional necessity. The assignments given to teams do not necessarily follow clear and clean organizational lines.

#### *B. The Board of Trustees*

After Synod 1992 the Synodical Interim Committee's functions were immediately changed. The Synodical Interim Committee assumed the functions of a board in September 1992. The name of Synodical Interim

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<sup>27</sup>The Canadian Ministries Advancement Team is composed of the following persons: Mr. Al Karsten, Mr. Wayne deJong, Mr. Terry Veldboom, Rev. John Van Til, Mr. Ben Vandezande, Rev. Siebert Van Houten, Dr. Calvin Bremer, Mr. Gary Mulder, Mr. Keith Knight, Rev. Arie Van Eek, and Dr. Peter Borgdorff.

Committee was not changed to the Board of Trustees until the provisional adoption of the constitution and bylaws by Synod 1993. As could be expected, there was an initial flurry of activity as the Board of Trustees began to address a backlog of issues that had been awaiting action until synod had decided on the recommendations received in various reports. Inevitably there was also a period of ambiguity as the Board of Trustees defined its role relative to the existing agency boards. In retrospect, synod's introduction of new governance and administrative structures without dissolving any of the old systems made the transition significantly more complex. It appears that the old systems were left in place, to a significant degree, because it was thought that such dual systems would provide good checks and balances. Clearly it would also prevent too much power from residing in the hands of too few people. That fear and the desirability of the present organizational overlaps can still be heard in discussions today. At the same time, one needs to remember that both the Vision 21 Committee (1987) and the Structure Review Committee (1990) tried to prevent the development of this organizational bifurcation and its accompanying ambiguity.

The Synodical Interim Committee, as it drafted the constitution and bylaws, tried to clarify its authority and role with respect to the remaining agency boards. Special attention was given to the need for the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary boards of trustees to retain a greater measure of independent authority<sup>28</sup> than was needed by the agencies of the church. The Board of Trustees also had to find its own comfort zone with the new authority synod had entrusted to it. The change from being an interim committee to becoming a group of trustees was significant, and it brought its own challenges. The Board was created not only to exercise authority but also to engage in advocacy in the church for the agencies and institutions and to ensure coordination and integration of the ministries. Increasingly the Board has been finding its comfort zone and continues to develop its task.

That is not to suggest that the agencies and their administrative personnel were immediately comfortable with the presence of the Board of Trustees. There were rumblings at agency board meetings about the agencies having lost their independence and among some administrative personnel who suggested that the Board of Trustees and the executive director of ministries were exercising authority beyond that intended by synod. It should be noted, however, that each time such rumblings and suggestions reached synod, they were turned back and synod sustained the role of the Board of Trustees in implementing the new structure.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America<sup>29</sup> were formally presented to Synod 1993 and were provisionally approved for a period of three years. "Provisionally"

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<sup>28</sup>Provisions for this greater need for independent authority is described in greater detail in both the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees.

<sup>29</sup>The membership of the first Board of Trustees was Rev. A. Jongtsma, chairman; Rev. J. Vos, vice chairman; Mr. E. Vander Wall; Dr. J. Van Schepen; Rev. J. Joldersma; Mr. H. Vermeer; Dr. K. Bootsma (chairman 1994); Dr. H. Eldersveld; Mr. N. Gritter; Dr. A. Schoonveld (chairman 1995-1997); Mr. W. Weidenaar; Rev. W. Witte; Rev. V. Geurkink; Rev. B. Nederlof; Mr. K. Terpstra; and Mr. D. Wiersma. Rev. L.J. Hofman and Dr. P. Borgdorff were the ex officio members.

was added by an amendment from the floor of synod primarily because some synodical delegates were concerned that agencies might be marginalized. The Board of Trustees was instructed to propose any revisions, after consulting with the agencies, to Synod 1996. The Board of Trustees complied with that instruction and resubmitted the constitution and bylaws, with several revisions, to Synod 1996. The most significant change in the 1996 edition of the constitution and bylaws is the official declaration that the CRC is and shall conduct itself as a binational denomination in the United States and Canada. Synod gave its approval to the Board of Trustees' proposals, and future revisions are now subject to the procedure described in the constitution and bylaws.

The Board of Trustees already in 1992 organized itself into three committees. The Polity Committee was assigned responsibility for most of the ecclesiastical functions formerly associated with the Synodical Interim Committee and the responsibilities of the general secretary. The Program and Finance Committee was assigned responsibility for the functions of the former standing synodical Finance Committee, the newly assigned responsibility for providing oversight of the agencies and institutions of synod, and the responsibilities of the executive director of ministries. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees was assigned responsibility for interim functions between the meetings of the Board of Trustees, personnel functions of the Board of Trustees (including the supervision of the general secretary and the executive director of ministries), and the function of serving as the Board of Trustees' Compensation Administration Committee. In addition, since the CRC is organized corporately in both the state of Michigan and in the province of Ontario, the Canadian Board of Trustees members fulfill the corporate responsibilities of a registered Canadian charity and the requirements of the joint-venture agreement that exists between the Michigan and Ontario corporate entities.

The initial Board of Trustees in 1992 had sixteen (16) elected members plus two (2) ex officio members (without vote). The Board of Trustees<sup>30</sup> is presently composed of nineteen (19) elected members and two ex officio members (without vote). Thirteen (13) of the elected members reside in the United States, and six (6) reside in Canada. Sixteen (16) of the elected members are chosen from defined denominational regions, and three (3) of the elected members are chosen at large. The ex officio members (without vote) are the general secretary and the executive director of ministries.

The Board of Trustees has concentrated its efforts on being an oversight board on behalf of synod, approving interagency policy, approving the overall budget of the denominational ministries, and involving itself in the operations of the agencies and their personnel only on an as-needed basis. The Board of Trustees has been active in reviewing and approving agency reorganization matters (e.g., the formation of Pastoral Ministries and the restructuring of

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<sup>30</sup>The present membership of the Board of Trustees is Mr. W. Weidenaar, chairman; Rev. J. Kuipers, vice chairman; Rev. R. Slim; Dr. T. Van Groningen; Rev. A. Kuiper; Mr. H. Van Maanen; Dr. A. Hoksbergen; Dr. A. Schoonveld; Mr. H. Johnson; Ms. K. Smith; Rev. D. Kelderman; Rev. S. Workman; Rev. G. Pols; Mr. J. H. Vander Stoep; Rev. P. Brouwer; Dr. W. Vanden Born; Dr. C. Rottman; Ms. J. Vander Ploeg; and Mr. W. Wildeboer; ex officio (without vote): Dr. D. Engelhard and Dr. P. Borgdorff.

interagency administrative support systems). For the most part, the Board of Trustees exercises its oversight by reviewing the work of the general secretary and the executive director of ministries. It accomplishes its work with the agencies and institutions primarily through the office of the executive director of ministries. The specific responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are fully described in the bylaws of the Board of Trustees (see *Agenda for Synod 1995*, pp. 67-74).

### C. Administrative changes

Earlier a reference was made to the formation of four (4) task forces in 1992 which were asked to identify desirable organizational changes, especially those which would enhance the use of agency resources and reduce duplication and overlap in administrative support systems. Many (though not all) of the changes that have been implemented, and even those still being planned, can be traced to the recommendations of the four task forces. Some other changes came about through other normal organizational developments, and some were implemented in anticipation of certain directions that became clear over time. While the changes made have been significant in the effort to be more efficient with denominational resources, many of the changes were in the area of support services and, therefore, were means to certain ends, not ends in themselves. The primary intent of all the changes discussed in this report is that we be about the mission of God in a way that best reflects his intent and a healthy understanding of the church we serve. For reasons of simplicity we will deal with the four task forces one at a time.

#### 1. Human Resources (later called Personnel)

In 1992 each agency had its own personnel procedures, some of them formalized (e.g., CRC Publications, World Missions, and Home Missions), others informal (e.g., no written policies or specific personnel procedures). As a result, practices in compensation, working conditions, benefits, and expectations varied significantly even among agencies sharing the same office facility. The assumption was that a person was employed by an agency or institution, each of which made its own rules. The Human Resources task force quickly concluded that an untenable situation had developed and that uniform personnel policies, practices, and procedures should be introduced. This recommendation led to the decision to establish an Office of Personnel, which eventually would serve all the agencies but not the educational institutions of the CRC. Ms. Norma Coleman joined the denominational staff as director of personnel in December of 1993.

Establishing uniform personnel policies and procedures has been a challenging undertaking. The Ministries Coordinating Council has the authority to make decisions that are binding on the agencies and exercised that authority in the adoption of the *Employee Manual*. Generally speaking, however, on a day-to-day basis the Office of Personnel functions as a resource for the administrative personnel of the various agencies.

The service orientation of the Office of Personnel does not minimize the progress that has been made in developing uniform policies and procedures. A listing of achievements might be helpful:

- a. Recruitment procedures and assistance.
- b. Performance-evaluation procedures for all personnel.

- c. Single-source benefit administration.
- d. The development of a common *Employee Manual*.
- e. The inclusion of all personnel (except international staff) into standard personnel systems.
- f. The development of a uniform compensation system.
- g. An identifiable place for personnel to voice concerns.
- h. Assumption of CRC Publications' personnel matters when personnel assistant left.
- i. An intentional effort to develop a "ministry culture" representing the CRC instead of an "agency culture."

There is more to be done. Following is a list of things yet to be achieved:

- a. Inclusion of international staff.
- b. Development of uniform compensation for international staff.
- c. More effective recruitment procedures.
- d. Greater compliance among the agencies in sensitive personnel issues.
- e. Personnel training in employee sensitivities (ethnic, workplace, etc.).
- f. Personnel training in personal benefits (retirement issues, life choices, etc.).
- g. Personnel training in work-related functions.

## 2. Finance

The history of denominational financial management is that each agency did its own. Only in the last twenty (20) years or so has there been a development toward a central office for denominational finances. Mr. Anthony Vroon was the first denominational financial coordinator. He was followed by Mr. Harry Vander Meer, who served in that capacity until his retirement in 1994. The task force recommended that this function be strengthened to become that of chief financial officer for the denomination. This significant change was made when it was decided that the former denominational finance coordinator would become the director of finance and administration. The administration component was added to the position's title because the position includes responsibility for supervising various centralized support functions.<sup>31</sup> Mr. Robert Van Stright was the first to occupy this newly defined position when he joined the denominational staff in April 1994. He served through December 1996. Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus assumed the office in April 1997 and is its current occupant. A listing of significant staff changes associated with financial management, some of which were the result of task-force recommendations, might be helpful:

- a. CRWRC's Merle Grevengoed retires and is not replaced.
- b. CRC Publications' Alvin Van Zee unexpectedly passes away and is not replaced.
- c. Common fiscal year is agreed to and implemented (1994).
- d. Uniform budget procedures are implemented (1994).
- e. Common cash-management system is developed (1994).

<sup>31</sup>Such centralized support functions include Product Services, Information Systems Services, and Building and Grounds Maintenance.

- f. Common insurance plan is adopted (1994).
- g. Common travel policy and procedures are adopted (1994).
- h. Plan is drafted for the consolidation of all financial services for the agencies (4/15/97).
- i. Consolidation plan is implemented with a further reduction in staff of at least two additional persons (7/1/97).
- j. Consolidation of ministry-share receipts is developed for implementation (1/1/98).

There is still more to be done, but significant progress has been made. Mr. Harry Vander Meer created the climate for cooperation; Mr. Robert Van Stright initiated the changes that were needed; Mr. Ken Horjus is putting systems in place and giving the leadership needed to achieve our goals. As important as the contributions made by the various finance directors are those made by Mr. Chris Cok and other members of the finance staff, who have absorbed the changes and made them happen. Finally, these changes have been encouraged and facilitated by a variety of volunteer professionals such as Dr. Shirley Roels, Mr. Milton Kuyers, Mr. William Terpstra, and others who have given generously of their time and skills.

### 3. Coordinated Services

There had been a department by this name for some years prior to the appointment of this task force. This department provided centralized mailing, copying, some information systems, facilities maintenance, and a few other support services. It was felt, however, that a complete integrated support-service system should be developed that would allow agencies to focus on their primary mission, would develop an economy of scale, and would centralize all support functions shared by the agencies. The following were implemented as a result of the task force's recommendations:

- a. The information system's hardware and software were standardized.
- b. The printing plant, graphic design, and project management were transferred from CRC Publications to Denominational Services.
- c. Some of the purchasing was centralized.
- d. Common imaging was developed and implemented.
- e. Space-utilization procedures were implemented.
- f. Common office hours and building procedures were developed and implemented.
- g. All communication systems were standardized and maintained by one source.

### 4. Communications, Development, and Church Relations

The most difficult and conflictual area in the reorganization process has been the activity associated with communications, development (fund-raising), and church relations. This is probably true because communications and donor/church relations touch the soul of an agency. It is only natural that an organization wants to tell its own story, do its own relationship building, and exercise its control over the way funds are raised. With the exception of CRWRC, each of the agencies and institutions also receives support through ministry shares, but most of the contact with churches and donors comes through above-ministry-share efforts.

What adds to the complexity and conflict in this area is the fact that the churches, as well as many individuals, frequently express the desire for a more coordinated approach in communications. Efforts made to develop and strengthen such coordinated efforts have met with only limited success. The Canadian office staff have made the most progress. *CRC Source* was first proposed by them, an idea that was then implemented for all of the agencies binationally. *CRC Source* is an agency news periodical seeking to tell the story of all of the CRC ministries rather than have each agency tell its own story. It was expected that this joint publication would significantly reduce the number of agency publications. That has simply not happened. There has been a slight reduction, but not nearly what had been expected.

In fairness to the agencies involved, it needs to be pointed out that publishing newsletters, magazines, informational pieces, and so forth is part of a larger strategy to inform the churches and their members and to solicit support for the ministries of the agencies. It is often said that if an agency is to be its own fund-raiser, then it must also have the freedom to do what needs to be done to be effective.

No effort has been made to consolidate the activities of the church-relations offices which are now resident within several of the agencies. Not all of the agencies have separate offices for church relations, but nearly all have the function within their organization. The question that needs to be answered is why these functions exist. If such activities exist primarily for the benefit of the agency, then perhaps the cost of maintaining such offices or functions is simply the cost of doing business. An alternative point of view is that church-relations offices really exist to serve the congregations of the denomination. According to that view, church-relations offices exist to make the participation of local churches in denominational ministries more meaningful. Financial support follows vision and relationships. That is how it should be, and that is our goal.

The last area to be addressed in this section is that of joint fund-raising. Perspectives vary widely on this subject, and viewpoints are strongly held. On the one hand, there are those who hold the position that a united campaign would be the death knell of ministry support in the CRC. It is argued that people do not want to contribute to the big pot, and the decline in ministry-share contributions is cited as evidence for this viewpoint. On the other hand, there are those who say that people contribute to ministry rather than to agencies or projects, and the boards and personnel who are close to the ministries can best allocate the gifts as needed and as the priorities are established. To date, other than what became known as the Fellowship Fund (which is now called the CRC Foundation), fund-raising is done on an agency-by-agency basis. This is difficult for the smaller agencies because they really can't afford the cost of professional development people. Among the larger agencies there is the inevitable competition for the support of the church's membership, especially among those donors that have discretionary giving ability. Various task forces, as well as the work of the Advancement Council, have addressed development and above-ministry-share solicitation with some measure of success. A great deal of work needs yet to be done as we sort through these issues and come to a clear direction for the future.

That is not to say that nothing has happened in the area of development and church relations. A listing may help:

- a. A common display for conventions/conferences, etc., has been developed.
- b. There have been several fund-raising projects with the participation of several agencies.
- c. *CRC Source* is being published.
- d. Several joint videos have been produced.
- e. A joint communication strategy is being implemented in Canada.
- f. There have been a number of exploratory initiatives.

What needs further attention includes the following:

- a. A communication office that will service all of the ministries and agencies of the CRC.
- b. A church-relations office that will service all of the ministries and agencies of the CRC.
- c. Integrated video productions that focus on wholistic ministry.
- d. A development program that will give churches and individual donors the choice of how their gifts are directed.
- e. Unified publications and imaging of the ministries of the CRC.

All of the above does not fully chronicle the efforts to coordinate ministries that have been made. The agencies and institutions support the work of the Office of Social Justice and World Hunger as mandated by Synod 1993. World Missions and World Relief have mutually agreed to provide pastoral care for international staff. Home Missions and CRC Publications cooperate in providing published resources for congregational ministries. Several agencies cooperate in CRC Publications' World Literature Ministries. The Ministries Coordinating Council played a significant role in encouraging Home Missions to reemphasize the importance of ministry on the campuses of universities in North America. Finally, The Back to God Hour provides video-production capability for all of the CRC's ministries. All of these examples are evidences that we are moving in the right direction and that synod's intent is being pursued and implemented.

## **VII. The future: what's ahead**

The best way to anticipate what the future will bring is to look at the decisions being made today. The CRC has decided that it desires more effective and more efficient ministries. Synod also decided that such denominational ministry should be articulated and set forth in a denominational ministries plan. Finally, it has become a value in the CRC that agencies engage themselves in cooperative and complementary ministry activities and minimize competition. Much of the reorganization activity of the past five years has been guided by at least one of these challenges. To be sure, some have suggested that there has been too much focus on organizational concerns or too much activity in the consolidation of agency functions. It needs to be noted, however, that simultaneously a denominational ministries plan has been developed which is ambitious indeed. It is my position that a ministry plan without the infrastructure to carry it out will be a plan that remains on the shelf. Once the infrastructure is in place (and much of it is) and the ministry

plan has been given form, we should see significant progress toward giving it life and toward sharing the values the church holds dear.

In ministry I expect that we will see more wholistic programs as we do the work to which the Lord has called us. There will be less emphasis on agency identity, ways of doing things, and even member loyalties. It is more likely that the overall program, rather than the individual organization, will capture center stage. Geography will also have less meaning. As the world shrinks toward the reality of being a global village, as the concept of a world economy takes root, and as increasingly we face the realities of urbanization all over the globe, we will find that new ways of working and communicating will emerge. Independence will diminish, and interdependence will increase. Ministry agencies and institutions will contribute specialties like the spokes of a wheel, but increasingly they will share the axle and help move the wheel for which they are spokes in the same direction. I believe that such combined effort will vastly improve our effectiveness and will make us more efficient with the limited resources we have.

Continuing organizational development, therefore, should be evaluated in the light of what we think is ahead. If ministry is our goal and interdependence is our chosen ministry style, then our organizational models will need to reflect that choice. To that end we are committed, because we believe that God desires it to be so.

Organizational development is not the primary mission of the Christian Reformed Church. It is the tool we use to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by the Lord and his people. To that end we dream, and plan, and implement. To God be the glory!

Peter Borgdorff  
Executive Director of Ministries

## APPENDIX 2

### Ministry-Share Enhancement Procedures

#### I. Goal

To increase the ministry-share collection rate by 4 percent per year for the U.S. and 6 percent per year for Canada for the next five budget years, beginning in fiscal year 1999 and extending through fiscal year 2003.

#### II. Assumptions

A. The U.S. ministry-share receipts will be measured in U.S. currency, and the Canadian ministry-share receipts will be measured in Canadian currency. This change will remove the dollar exchange rate from the ministry-share tracking process.

B. The denominational average ministry share requested of synod for 1999 is \$231.98 per confessing member 18 years old and over (this equals a 2 percent adjustment over 1998). Future adjustments for inflation will be reviewed annually.

### III. Strategies for achieving the goal

#### A. Administration

1. That the Board of Trustees through the office of the executive director of ministries and with the assistance of the agencies and institutions assume primary responsibility for implementing the strategies detailed below.
2. That the Board of Trustees authorize a thank-you letter to be sent in the name of the Board to all churches for the ministry-share support received.
3. That an accurate tracking system be developed and implemented for all ministry-share receipts beginning January 1, 1998.
4. That, to facilitate accurate tracking, all ministry-share receipts be received and recorded (by individual congregation and classes) in the denominational offices. In addition, that an accurate tracking system be developed as to which churches are receiving permission for ministry-share reduction according to the synodically approved formula for such reductions based on the size of a congregation. The adjusted ministry share (if paid) will constitute 100 percent payment for recording purposes. Partial payment of adjusted ministry shares will be measured as a percentage of the adjusted total.
5. That it be our goal that each church be mailed a statement of its ministry-share participation each quarter. The final quarterly report each year will give a summary of the previous year. A copy of the semiannual and annual report will also be sent to the classis. Classes will be encouraged to assist churches in special need. This goal will be implemented as the development of the tracking system permits.
6. That the Board of Trustees receive a report two times per year and that specific data be provided to all BOT members for the churches in the region (or classes) they represent.

#### B. Encouragement and recognition

1. That a letter of thanks and encouragement be sent to each church at least annually and that participation in the denominational ministry program be appropriately recognized. The Board of Trustees member will also send such a letter to each church in his/her region once per year.
2. That a letter of recognition be sent to each church that increases its ministry-share participation over the previous year.

#### C. Communication

1. That the churches be notified of these new procedures.
2. That CRC Source provide significant space to ministry-share-supported ministries for the time span of these strategies.
3. That the Board of Trustees authorize the executive director of ministries to arrange for the production of video and print materials to promote denominational ministries supported by ministry shares.

4. That an intentional communication and fraternal network be developed among classical treasurers with the goal of more effective two-way communication between classes and denominational ministries. This network will emphasize the development of mutual understanding, assistance, sharing technical resources, and the building of personal relationships with the persons involved.

*D. Funding*

That the BOT provide resources in the denominational budget to implement these strategies.

## APPENDIX 3

### Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

#### I. Introduction

The members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America provide the funds to carry out the mission of the denomination. Therefore, great care and stewardship should be accorded these funds.

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the broad guidelines under which the funds of the denomination shall be managed. The investment objectives are

A. To preserve the principal value of funds.

B. To earn a reasonable return.

C. To invest the funds in a manner consistent with the values and ministries of the Christian Reformed Church.

There appear to be good reasons for Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance to conduct their investment programs separately if they so choose. All other agencies will have their funds invested under the umbrella of the CRC Foundation and under the supervision of the denomination's financial office. Such a practice will permit greater professionalism, efficiency, and compliance with policy. The investment of funds is not of sufficient magnitude on the part of individual agencies to develop core competency, diversification, or proper monitoring.

The overall responsibilities of the director of finance and administration (DFA) shall be clear. The DFA shall carry out the investment policy for the denomination. This shall include a sensitivity to and overview of the Canadian investment management.

If institutions such as Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance elect to conduct their own investment programs, such programs shall be subject to the denomination's investment policy. In addition, there shall be periodic reporting to both the respective governing boards and the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church regarding the investments.

The long-term success of investments will be enhanced by the input and monitoring of this activity by business professionals. The Christian Reformed Church is fortunate to have a number of such members who can provide the

broad guidance and oversight that would be difficult to develop within the limited staff available. Therefore, the CRC Foundation trustees will appoint and maintain an Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) of qualified individuals, which will function as described below.

The IAC shall be appointed by the CRC Foundation trustees and chaired by the DFA; it shall consist of up to eight people, of whom two (2) are Canadians.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian members shall meet as a Canadian board from time to time to review the Canadian portfolio, management of funds, asset allocation, etc. The U.S. members will meet separately regarding U.S. matters as needed. The binational committee of five to seven members will meet and review investments and policy on a denomination-wide basis.

The IAC shall regularly provide performance reports to the participating agencies and be accountable to the CRC Foundation trustees. Initially, IAC will meet twice a year. As investment managers are appointed, IAC will meet with them annually to review performance. IAC will also set and review asset-allocation policy. As various funds for investment are gathered and times change, IAC may adapt the policy to current circumstances.

The IAC will report at least annually to the CRC Foundation trustees on investment results and allocation of funds. The CRC Foundation trustees are responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees of the CRC at least annually.

Once investment guidelines and objectives are set, the use of outside professional money managers is expected. The selection of managers and specific mutual funds will be the responsibility of IAC.

This investment policy makes no provision for the placement of denominational funds in private investments. When such investments are donated, it shall be the practice to liquidate such gifts as soon as feasible. The advice of the donor may be sought in determining the appropriate time for such liquidation.

## **II. Application**

This policy shall apply to all the committees, boards, agencies, and institutions associated with the ministries that are part of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA).

Generally, all funds and investments of the denomination, with the permissible exception as defined in this policy statement of Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance, shall be under the supervision of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA (BOT). The responsibility for implementing this policy is assigned by the CRC Foundation trustees and the DFA. The custody and management of the funds shall be performed under the umbrella of the CRC Foundation except as approved in advance by the BOT. To the extent that there are assets and investments of separate legal organizations represented within the portfolio managed by the CRC Foundation and the DFA, appropriate agreements to effect this policy shall be entered into. Exceptions shall be recommended by the DFA and approved by the BOT. Exceptions authorized in the adoption of this policy are these:

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<sup>1</sup>This arrangement will be in effect until such time as a Canadian CRC Foundation is established.

A. The CRC Canada shall maintain cash management and investment programs as necessary to comply with the requirements of Canadian regulations and laws.

B. Agencies shall be permitted bank accounts to carry on their mandates, but excess funds are subject to the policy.

C. Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance may elect to conduct their own cash management and investment programs, within the broad parameters of this policy.

In accordance with the preceding, the following are expected to be the principal types of funds managed by the CRC Foundation:

A. Funds or assets not needed for near-term operations by the agencies or other entities of the CRC, including reserves and endowments.

B. Funds or assets given to the CRC as a denomination, rather than to a particular agency, for endowment or other longer-term purposes by the donor.

C. Short-term funds intended to be passed through to agencies or ministries of the CRC by the donor. Such funds would be received and passed to the appropriate parties in a timely fashion.

### **III. Implementation and maintenance of this policy**

The BOT of the CRCNA shall be responsible for seeing to it that this policy is implemented. The DFA is responsible for providing the leadership to implement and maintain this policy.

The DFA shall be aided by an Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) of up to seven members, of whom at least one shall be a member of the BOT. The others shall be appointed by the CRC Foundation trustees upon the recommendation of the DFA and the executive director of ministries (EDM). The term of service shall be for three years, with staggered terms to provide for continuity of oversight. Members may be nominated for a second term. At least two members shall be Canadian.

### **IV. Duties of the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC)**

The IAC shall be responsible for recommending the guidelines and implementation of the investment policies of the CRCNA. Such recommendations shall be presented to the CRC Foundation trustees for approval or further processing. The Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC) shall have the right of review and comment before the CRC Foundation trustees act on such recommendations.

The primary duties of the Investment Advisory Council shall be

A. To approve the procedures for management of funds.

B. To approve the type and number of investment pools to be utilized.

C. To approve the investment allocation ranges for the various types of investments.

- D. To approve the investment managers utilized.
- E. To meet annually with the investment managers to review performance against agreed-upon benchmarks.
- F. To recommend changes in the investment policy for presentation to the CRC Foundation trustees and, if necessary, to the BOT.
- G. To report to and meet annually with the Board of Trustees of the CRC Foundation.

#### **V. Designation of investment pools**

Because the funds to be invested have many different characteristics, there are likely to be a number of investment pools. These investment pools will likely be accounted for and managed differently. The initial pools shall be

- A. Short-term cash utilized to operate the CRCNA.
- B. Excess seasonal funds which are expected to be required by ministries within one year.
- C. Intermediate-term funds which may be held for ministry needs within the next few years.
- D. Long-term funds which may be invested over longer periods of time (e.g., an endowment).
- E. Funds held for specific denominational programs.

The IAC shall approve guidelines which list the appropriate investment vehicles for each of these pools. Since the members of the CRCNA have given and entrusted these funds for kingdom work, safety of principal shall be given great consideration, especially in the shorter-term investments.

There shall be discussion between the DFA and each agency as to the pools where agency funds are invested. If there is a difference of opinion, the agency shall meet with the IAC. If there is still no resolution, the matter shall be referred to the BOT for decision.

It is possible that different pools will have similar investment objectives for portions of their portfolios, such as ownership of fixed-income securities of intermediate duration. If so, it may be desirable to place such funds from more than one pool with the same investment manager for efficiency and ease of management.

#### **VI. Asset allocation**

The funds invested shall employ a balanced and diversified investment approach. The asset pools are expected to utilize differing investments and allocations. The IAC shall adopt a range of allocation for each asset pool. Funds for various needs and projects should have an asset allocation that is in keeping with the time frame within which the funds are to be invested. In all cases the investment allocation should take into account that these are church-related funds.

The allocation of funds shall be reported to the BOT annually at the end of the fiscal year.

## **vii. Investment advisers and performance measurement**

Since the investment of funds is a specialized field, it is expected that outside investment advisers and/or funds will be utilized to implement this policy, especially for the larger amounts and intermediate- or longer-term funds.

The IAC will select advisers to manage funds assigned to them. Such funds will be managed by them on a fully discretionary basis within the overall parameters of fiduciary responsibility and the policies set forth in this investment policy.

The investment results of each manager shall be compared at least annually with appropriate benchmarks for the type of manager and investments. The benchmarks shall be agreed upon between the IAC and each adviser at the point of hiring. Performance should be measured over a period of years, but any adviser with continual below-benchmark performance should be replaced.

## **VIII. Approved investments**

The major portion of the overall portfolio shall be readily marketable and traded on major exchanges. The investments shall consider liquidity and not be speculative. As appropriate, funds may be invested in the following financial assets:

### *A. Short-term investments*

1. U. S. Treasury bills and their Canadian counterpart.
2. Commercial paper in the highest grade as rated by Standard and Poors or Moody.
3. CDs and other bank or savings-and-loan deposits, provided they are government-insured institutions. If more than the insured amount is invested with an institution, the institution should be of high quality.
4. Other approved short-term investments of high quality and marketability.

*B. Publicly traded common stocks, preferred stocks, and convertible securities of companies which have capable and ethical management and are not subject to undue risk.*

*C. Publicly traded bonds and notes of investment grade. In most cases it is expected that the investments will be at least A-rated securities.*

## **IX. Gifts received directly from donors**

At times, gifts of assets other than cash will be received directly from donors. No gifts of real or tangible personal property or nonpublicly traded stocks, bonds, or notes may be accepted until approved by the DFA. In the case of such donations, the following guidelines shall govern:

*A. In the case of publicly traded stocks or other securities, they should generally be transferred to the appropriate investment manager for retention or sale as the manager deems appropriate.*

B. In the case of nonpublicly traded securities, the advice of the donor should be requested. This advice should include what the donor's preferences are and how and when the securities can be converted to usable funds.

C. In the case of a proposed donation of property or physical assets, it shall not be accepted until approved by legal counsel. The CRC shall request, in writing, opinion as to liens, litigation, and environmental issues before deciding whether to accept the proposed donation. If there is not positive cash flow, a plan for funding the cash needs of the proposed donation shall be approved prior to acceptance. In some instances, a donor may contribute real estate or financial assets with investment specifications (including, but not limited to, retention of the asset) inconsistent with the Investment Policy of the CRCNA. Compliance with such donor specifications will require approval of the CRC Foundation trustees and the BOT prior to acceptance of the gift. The goal is to convert all such donations to cash at the earliest practical date to minimize the management and monitoring responsibilities imposed on the staff of the DFA.

#### **X. Restrictions on investments**

A. Because the funds are held in trust until utilized for ministry, investments shall not be made in companies or institutions which are not compatible with the values or mission of the CRCNA. Examples of inappropriate investments would be institutions engaged in or promoting abortion, gambling, or tobacco.

B. Not more than 5 percent of any investment pool may be invested in a single company or investment, except under the following circumstances:

1. No limits shall be placed on investments in U. S. or Canadian government securities or bonds. This shall include securities backed by them.
2. Investments in mutual funds or similar approved pools of assets shall not be considered to be in violation of this standard if said mutual funds or similar approved pools include a broad base of assets in the funds.
3. The bond portfolio is invested in bonds rated "A."

C. Investments will not be made in warrants, options, or commodity futures. In addition, purchases will not be made on margin, and securities will not be sold short.

D. No investments shall be made which could place in jeopardy the tax-exempt status of the CRC, its agencies, or affiliates. In keeping with this policy, no investments shall be made for the purpose of exercising control over corporate management.

E. The automatic sale of a security whose quality or rating falls below CRCNA policy standards shall not be required, but the investment managers shall be expected to reevaluate retention of the security on a regular basis.

# REPORTS OF AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

## Introduction

As mandated by synod, the Board of Trustees annually presents a unified report of all the ministries conducted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the members of the Christian Reformed Church. This report covers the period from July 1, 1997, to the present. Information generated subsequent to this report will be included in the supplementary report, which will be distributed to the synodical delegates prior to the meeting of synod. Such supplementary material is expected to be comparatively minimal for most of the agencies even though Home Missions and World Missions do not have their annual meetings until April and May respectively. Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary both have significant material on the agenda for their May meetings. In the past both of these educational institutions have presented many of their recommendations by way of supplementary reports.

The mandate to unify the reports of the agencies and institutions does not specify a particular format. To date we have chosen to retain separate sections for each agency and institution so that the delegates to synod can easily find the material associated with a particular agency. However, it is important to recognize that the various activities are all part of the one mission of the church, and increasingly we have come to recognize that all parts of that one mission are interdependent. Please read the reports in that light.

The reports appear in alphabetical order by the name of the agency or institution of synod. Appendices to a particular report immediately follow that report. Financial information and the unified budget for all of the ministries are presented to synod in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

The Christian Reformed Church continues to experience significant upheaval, conflict, and stress. At the same time, its commitment to carry on in the ministries of the denomination appears to be firm. It is a remarkable evidence of the Lord's faithfulness in and through his people that covenant youth are being educated, church leaders are being trained, the membership is being discipled and cared for, churches are being planted, the poor are being ministered to, and the gospel is being preached. To God be the glory!

The members of the Board of Trustees and the denominational staff are grateful for the opportunity to serve the Lord and his church. It is our prayer that the Lord will bless the deliberations and decisions of Synod 1998 to his glory.

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## I. Introduction

Our missionary God sends his people into the world with a message of reconciliation through Jesus Christ. The Back to God Hour is a vital component of the church's response to God's passionate call to mission.

The board and staff of The Back to God Hour serve the church and the world in light of the mandate which synod has established. Among other things, that mandate calls The Back to God Hour to

give leadership in media missions and to supervise the production of denominational radio, television, and other electronic programs which express the Reformed faith in response to man's need for conversion, edification, and cultural direction . . . and it is required to give leadership to the denomination as a whole and its congregations in the use of available communication media.

## II. The board

### A. Function

The Back to God Hour is governed by a regionally representative fourteen-member board, which meets three times a year to set policy and evaluate the work of the staff.

### B. Officers of the board

The officers of the board are Rev. Henry Kranenburg, president; Rev. Harlan Vanden Einde, vice president; Mr. George VandeWerken, secretary; Mr. Keith Oosthoek, treasurer.

### C. Nominations for board members

#### 1. Great Plains U.S. (one-year term)

*Mr. Larry Myren* is a member of Bethel CRC in Dallas, Texas. He has served as elder and deacon at Bethel and as vice president of council. A retired vice president of American Excelsior Company, he is currently self-employed.

*Mr. John Slegers*, a member of Calvary CRC in Orange City, Iowa, is news director of KDCR, Dordt College Radio, and has also worked with other radio stations in northwest Iowa. He is a graduate of Dordt College with a major in communications. He has served on his church council.

#### 2. Great Plains U.S. (three-year term)

*Rev. Timothy Brown* is pastor of First CRC in Edgerton, Minnesota. He has also served two congregations in Michigan. He has served on his classical home-missions committee.

*Rev. Charles J. De Ridder* (incumbent) is pastor of Shalom CRC in Sioux Center, Iowa. He has also served churches in Michigan and California. He currently serves on the personnel committee and is reporter of the finance committee of The Back to God Hour Board. He also serves on the home-missions committee of Classis Iakota.

3. Central U.S. (three-year term)

*Rev. Thomas J. Kok* has been pastor of Peace CRC in South Holland, Illinois, since 1992. Previously he served a church in Washington. He has served on classical interim committees in both classes where he was a pastor and has been a delegate to synod.

*Rev. Richard E. Williams* has been pastor of Pullman CRC in Chicago, Illinois, since 1981. He is just completing a three-year term on the denominational Pastoral Ministries Board. Currently he is also serving on the Worship Committee of CRC Publications, on the classical interim committee of Classis Chicago South, and as president of the Roseland Christian Ministries Board.

4. Eastern U.S. (two-year term)

*Mr. Don Bouwer* of Bradenton, Florida, is president of Ten-Eight Fire Equipment Company, Inc. He is a member of Bradenton CRC, where he has served on the council. He has also served on the Bradenton Christian School Board and has been president of the Florida Diaconal Conference.

*Mr. Cornelius Bushoven* of Wyckoff, New Jersey, is a retired CPA. He has been a member of the Eastern Christian School Board and Finance Committee and has served on the Cedar Hill CRC council and the Christian Health Care Board. He is a member of the National Association of Accountants and has served as its president.

5. Eastern Canada I (three-year term)

*Mr. Keith Oosthoek* (incumbent) from Kitchener, Ontario, is vice president of the Royal Bank of Canada. He is a member of First CRC of Kitchener and has served as elder and deacon. Currently he serves as a member of the finance committee and treasurer of The Back to God Hour Board.

*Second nominee* (no nominations were received from classes)

6. Western Canada (three-year term)

*Mr. Arnie Melissen* of Pitt Meadow, British Columbia, is president of North West Rubber Mats Ltd., in Abbotsford, British Columbia. He has served as elder and Sunday-school teacher in his church and also as school-board member.

*Mr. Marten VanHuizen* of Surrey, British Columbia, is a partner in Field and Marten Associates, Inc. He is a member of Surrey CRC in Surrey, British Columbia, where he has been an elder. He has been a delegate to synod and has worked extensively with fund-raising and development in local Christian schools and other organizations.

D. Cooperating organizations

1. The Back to God Hour works closely with AdMark, an advertising agency, and RACOM, the public-relations agency dedicated to support the ministry of The Back to God Hour.
2. The Back to God Hour contracts with CRC Publications for publication of selected materials.
3. The Back to God Hour and Christian Reformed Home Missions are developing pilot projects in cooperative ministry.

4. The Back to God Hour is an active partner along with others, including Christian Reformed World Literature Ministries, in the publication of Calvin's *Institutes* in the Russian language.
5. The Back to God Hour, in partnership with Crossroad Bible Institute, provides a correspondence program as part of a follow-up ministry.
6. The Back to God Hour explored a number of joint ventures in producing programs for Canadian television with the Electronic Media Committee of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. Back to God Hour's "Faith 20" also uses segments produced for the Electronic Media Committee.

*E. Salary disclosure*

The following information is provided to synod as requested:

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	1	3rd quartile
17	1	4th quartile

**III. Back to God Hour ministries**

The Back to God Hour proclaims God's Word in nine languages, using radio, television, telephone, and the Internet. Its commitment to presenting the gospel to those who do not know Jesus as Savior is reflected in its programming content and in its decision to use secular stations to air its programs whenever possible.

People respond to the presentation of the gospel. Some object to the claims of Jesus; others want to know more about him and how to serve him. Trained volunteers and staff persons answer the telephone and read the mail which comes from listeners, responding appropriately to questions and suggestions generated by the ministry. Back to God Hour representatives supply literature, help people find church homes, refer people to Christian counselors, and pray with and for people. They distribute prayer requests to a network of prayer partners who covenant to pray regularly.

*A. English-language ministry*

1. Rev. David Feddes continues to proclaim the historic Christian faith to contemporary society on "The Back to God Hour," a weekly half-hour radio program heard on every continent in the world.
2. English-language television is in a transition period. "Faith 20" television program is presently heard weekly in Canada. A new program which will replace "Faith 20" for both Canada and the United States is in the planning stages. Current plans call for the new magazine-style program to begin airing in the fall of 1998. This program will be tied to local congregations and will utilize second- and third-tier television stations in the United States.

3. "Insight," a four-and-a-half-minute radio commentary heard weekdays on approximately eighty stations, is hosted by Dr. Joel Nederhood, who, although retired, has consented to this assignment.
4. The Voice of Life radio station on the island of Dominica covers the eastern Caribbean islands and carries all of our English programs as well as a radio version of "Faith 20."
5. The English-language literature ministry includes the publication of over 400,000 copies of each issue of *Today* (a bimonthly devotional) and over 35,000 printed copies of *The Radio Pulpit*, as well as printed transcripts of "Insight" and "Faith 20."

*B. Arabic-language ministry*

The Back to God Hour continues to search for a person to fill the vacancy in this ministry position. The prayers of the churches are solicited as we search for the person of the Lord's choosing. The ministry continues through the use of undated previously recorded messages. Listener response is somewhat sporadic, especially from those areas in which there is much tension and conflict.

*C. Chinese-language ministry*

Back to God Hour broadcasts in Cantonese and Mandarin cover all twenty-six provinces in China, which is home to over 1.1 billion people. These broadcasts are aired on seven superpower stations located outside the country.

In China, listener follow-up is difficult because of government-imposed restrictions. Presently the Alliance Radio staff in Hong Kong works with The Back to God Hour in follow-up and listener contact. Hong Kong's 1997 reversion to Chinese rule has so far not adversely affected ministry.

This past year a significant expansion of the Chinese ministry took place because of a change in governmental regulations concerning media in Australia. As a result of alliances with local congregations, Back to God Hour Chinese programs are heard throughout Australia with limited cost to the agency.

Significant Chinese-language ministry also takes place in some major metropolitan areas in Canada, the United States, and Panama, where concentrations of Chinese-speaking persons are found. In some of these areas our programming is bilingual.

Please pray for Rev. Jimmy Lin as he gives direction to this crucial ministry.

*D. French-language ministry*

The Back to God Hour Board made a decision in 1996 to focus the French-language ministry on Africa, where there is great need and from where we have had the most significant response. Rev. Paul M'Pindi, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo and a Ph.D student at Calvin Theological Seminary, was appointed in October of 1997 to give leadership to this ministry. He plans to begin his work on a part-time basis in February of 1998. He will also be responsible for coordination of listener contact for the French-language ministry.

*E. Indonesian-language ministry*

Indonesia, an island nation having the largest Muslim population in the world, is home to Dr. Junus Atmarumeksa, whose media ministry covers that

country. This ministry is conducted in the context of sporadic outbursts of hostility to the gospel. Those who respond to the gospel may be persecuted for their faith.

This year has also seen much financial uncertainty in Indonesia. The instability of the Indonesian currency and the economic crisis which affects all the Pacific Rim countries also impact this ministry.

Dr. Atmarumeksa intends to retire within the next four years. A process is underway, in conjunction with the church in Indonesia, to identify and recruit his successor.

#### *F. Japanese-language ministry*

Rev. Shojiro Ishii of the Reformed Church in Japan, who has been directing the Japanese broadcast ministry, plans to retire this summer. The Japanese Advisory Committee worked for nearly a year to identify a successor to Rev. Ishii. In February of 1998 The Back to God Hour Board approved Rev. Masao Yamashita as the person to give leadership to the electronic media ministry in the Japanese language.

Radio is an excellent ministry medium among a people who have been resistant to the gospel. Radio allows people to listen to the gospel privately, without risking the loss of face that a more public listening to the gospel might entail. The Back to God Hour enjoys over 1,200 responses per month to the programming in Japan. The addition of an Internet site to this ministry during the past year has proved a valuable adjunct to the other ministry tools. As economic uncertainty rises and the influence of traditional religion wanes, the opportunities for the gospel grow in Japanese society.

#### *G. Portuguese-language ministry*

Radio, television, and telephone are all important parts of the media ministry in Brazil, which is directed by Rev. Celsino Gama. The Presbyterian Church in Brazil sustains a high level of interest and is a significant partner in this ministry. This is evidenced in the number of local congregations who underwrite part of the broadcasting costs or have leased telephone equipment to assist in follow-up ministry. This year many ministry opportunities presented themselves as a result of the growing privatization of the communications industry in Brazil. We thank God for these opportunities and pray for wisdom to know which opportunities should be seized.

#### *H. Russian-language ministry*

The Back to God Hour ministry to the Commonwealth of Independent States is part of a coordinated effort of Christian Reformed agencies to minister in this area of the world.

Mr. Serguei Sossedkine serves as the speaker for the Russian-language broadcast. Mr. Sossedkine, a native of Moscow and a graduate of Reformed Bible College, is presently a student at Calvin Theological Seminary. He translates and adapts sermons written by Rev. David Feddes for broadcast to Russia.

The change in Russian law which has the potential for greatly restricting evangelism has not yet affected The Back to God Hour. To this point we have been able to carry on our ministry through a variety of local stations in select metropolitan areas. However, we continue to be much in prayer, for we do not

know the full impact the change in law will have until the specific regulations are written and enforcement begins.

#### *I. Spanish-language ministry*

Nearly 250 radio stations and 30 television stations carry Back to God Hour Spanish-language programming. This ministry reaches Central, North, and South America, as well as Spain. This past year Rev. Guillermo Serrano, who gives leadership to this ministry, visited Spain and Mexico, accompanied by other staff persons. The purpose of these visits was to shoot footage for television programming, conduct interviews with Christian leaders in these countries, and consult with persons and organizations with whom we share common ministry concerns.

The Spanish-speaking world is a fertile field for ministry. The Back to God Hour continues to explore ways in which it can best be involved in the work of God's Spirit.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

- A. That Rev. Henry Kranenburg, president; Mr. John Kuyers, executive director; and Dr. Calvin L. Bremer, director of ministries, be given the privilege of the floor when Back to God Hour matters are discussed.
- B. That Rev. Shojiro Ishii, who retires this year as the Japanese-language minister for The Back to God Hour, be granted permission to address synod.
- C. That synod elect board members to serve from the nominations presented.

The Back to God Hour  
John Kuyers, executive director

## I. Introduction

This report reflects information received and actions taken at the October 1997 and the February 1998 Calvin College Board of Trustees meetings.

The officers elected for the 1997-1998 year are Mrs. Sheri Haan, retired executive director of Christian Schools International, chair; Mr. Milton Kuyers, businessman from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, vice chair; Rev. Edward Blankespoor, pastor of Beckwith Hills Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, secretary; Mrs. Carol Smith, assistant secretary; and Mr. James Kraai, vice president for administration and finance, Calvin College, treasurer.

## II. General college matters

### A. Staff

1. The board endorsed two administrative appointments (see Recommendations):
  - a. *Richard H. Harms, Ph.D.*, curator of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary Archives and archivist of the Christian Reformed Church, two and one-half years, beginning January 12, 1998.
  - b. *Michael J. Stob, Ph.D.*, academic dean for the natural sciences and mathematics and for the contextual disciplines, three years, effective August 1, 1998. Dr. Stob is a tenured faculty member in the Mathematics Department. Dr. David Hoekema, who currently serves in this position, will return to classroom teaching.
2. The board approved the change in title of executive director of development to vice president for development, a position which carries faculty status. Ms. Cheryl Nielsen presently serves in this position.
3. Other appointments
  - a. *Robert Crow*, currently dean of students at Malone College, will join the staff in June 1998 as dean of student development.
  - b. *Michael Travis*, who formerly worked with students at Aquinas College, became the director of multicultural student development in September 1997.
  - c. *Lavonne M. Zwart* has assumed the position of counselor for students with disabilities. This position is funded by a private donor.
  - d. The board ratified the appointments of three new faculty and reappointments of fifteen faculty. Eleven faculty were granted sabbatical leaves, and fifteen received Calvin Research Fellowships.
  - e. Tenure interviews were the highlight of the February meeting, and the board approved nine for reappointment. Their names and recommendations are listed under Recommendations.

4. *Dr. Bert de Vries*, professor of history, was presented the Presidential Award for Exemplary Teaching. This award is given to a tenured professor whose Christian attitudes are readily apparent in exemplary teaching in the classroom. In addition, a cash award is provided to be used for educational opportunities and life experiences which will enrich the recipient's career.

#### *B. Finance*

1. In October the board approved the preliminary 1998-1999 budget of approximately \$58 million. In February the board approved the 1998-1999 tuition rate of \$12,915, an increase of \$690 or 5.6 percent. This includes a \$235 (1.9 percent) increase for technology systems and infrastructure. Room and board rate for 1998-1999 will be \$4,500, an increase of \$160 or 3.7 percent.
2. Groundbreaking for the Life Sciences Project, which includes construction of a new building and renovation of the present Science Building, is expected to take place in April 1998. Most of the funds for the project are expected to be in hand before the completion of construction.

#### *C. Enrollment and financial aid*

Applications and admissions are running close to those of last year, though it appears that prospective students are applying somewhat later in the cycle than in previous years.

The success of our new scholarship amounts in improving the quality and number of students enrolled in the fall of 1997 and our desire to make more progress in adding diversity to our student body have prompted us to increase the amount of several other specialized scholarships. The Mosaic Scholarship and the Presidential Scholarship are now at the \$5,500, and we have several new \$2,500 scholarships.

#### *D. Institute for Christian Worship*

In the fall of 1997 Calvin College announced the formation of the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship. The institute aims to reinvigorate Christian worship through rigorous study of Christian religious practices across the world and through the ages and by finding practical ways to encourage integrity and creativity in congregations' patterns of worship. The institute cultivates the strengths of the Reformed tradition while engaging and learning from other traditions. It encourages worship that is both spiritually vital and theologically rooted. Dr. John D. Witvliet, a Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary graduate with a Ph.D. in worship and theology from the University of Notre Dame, is the director. A thirty-member Worship Institute Faculty Panel has been constituted, and an international advisory board is being formed. The CRC Worship Committee will also serve as an advisory panel to promote cooperation with the various CRC agencies.

Program initiatives include the following: (1) new courses at the college and seminary, (2) new library resources dealing with worship relevant to local congregations, (3) a series of scholarly conferences, (4) sponsorship of the annual Symposium on Worship in the Arts each January, (5) periodic local and regional events to be held at centers throughout North America, (6) several publishing projects, and (7) assistance to local congregations.

### III. Recommendations

- A. That synod ratify the following new administrative appointments:
1. Richard H. Harms, Ph.D., Curator of the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary Archives and Archivist of the Christian Reformed Church, two and one-half years, beginning January 12, 1998.
  2. Michael J. Stob, Ph.D., Academic Dean for the Natural Sciences and Mathematics and for the Contextual Disciplines, three years, effective August 1, 1998.
- B. That synod ratify the following reappointments with tenure:  
(Italics indicate promotion to that rank.)
1. Joel C. Adams, Ph.D., *Professor of Computer Science.*
  2. Claudia De Vries Beversluis, Ph.D., *Professor of Psychology.*
  3. Marilyn Bierling, Ph.D., *Professor of Spanish.*
  4. Richard J. Plantinga, Ph.D., *Professor of Religion and Theology.*
  5. Kenneth E. Pomykala, Ph.D., *Professor of Religion and Theology.*
  6. Steven D. Steenwyk, Ph.D., Professor of Physics.
  7. Steven R. Timmermans, Ph.D., *Professor of Education.*
  8. John L. Ubels, Ph.D., *Professor of Biology.*
  9. Steven K. Vander Veen, Ph.D., *Professor of Economics and Business.*

Calvin College Board of Trustees  
Edward Blankespoor, secretary

**I. Introduction**

With thanks and praise to God, the seminary board presents an encouraging report to synod. Enrollment remains high, and a fine spirit exists among our students. The faculty is committed to the Reformed faith, effective in its teaching, productive in scholarship and service to the church. The facilities are in good condition and well utilized. Financially the school is sound. Advancement and recruitment efforts are being blessed.

**II. Highlights**

Noteworthy at the present time are the following:

- A. Implementation of the seminary's own strategic plan, adopted last year, and coordinating it with the denominational plan approved by synod last year.
- B. Successful completion of a self-study process and approval of a very positive self-study report in preparation for the seminary's ten-year reaccreditation review by the Association of Theological Schools in March.
- C. Implementation of a program of computer technology and effective teaching, funded by a \$200,000, three-year grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.
- D. The retirements of Dr. David E. Holwerda and Dr. Melvin D. Hugen this summer and the appointments of Dr. Dean B. Deppe and Dr. Ronald J. Nydam to the faculty.
- E. A positive year financially, enabling the seminary to operate essentially on a break-even basis over the last five years.
- F. Renovation and expansion of the heavily used food pantry and clothing-distribution center, which are greatly appreciated by the many students dependent on them.
- G. Development of an effective continuing-education program in conjunction with the seminary alumni association as a replacement for the annual Ministers' Institute.
- H. Awarding a distinguished-service award to Rev. Herman Van Nijenhuis for help in establishing the Dragt Ontario Student Grants Program and in achieving the goals of the Canadian Covenant effort.
- I. Completion of the three-year, one-time Th.M. program Korean Ministry in the North American Context and adjunct professor of missiology Dr. John T. Kim's acceptance of the presidency of Dae Han Theological Seminary in Seoul, Korea.

**III. Board of trustees**

The board is made up of sixteen regional trustees and three members-at-large. The board met in full session on February 5-6, 1998, and is schedule to meet again on May 14-15. The executive committee of nine persons met on

September 19, November 21, and January 16 and will meet on April 17. The board officers are as follows:

Rev. Gerry Heyboer, chairman  
Rev. Calvin Hoogendoorn, vice chairman  
Mr. Mark Muller, recording secretary  
Rev. Joel Boot, corresponding secretary  
Mr. Philip Vanden Berge, treasurer (nonvoting)

A complete listing of current trustees and alternates, with the expiration dates of their terms, appears on page 710 of the *Acts of Synod 1997*. Regular trustees are also listed on page 2 of each issue of *Calvin Seminary in Focus* and in the seminary catalog.

The board prepared and submitted nominations, for the most part from names submitted by classes, to the general secretary for distribution to the classes in the regions where elections are required. Synod will have to elect one at-large trustee from each of the following nominations submitted by the board (Recommendation B):

*First at-large nomination:*

*Rev. Mary S. Antonides* is pastor of Eastern Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is a graduate of Calvin College and of Calvin Theological Seminary (1996). She serves on the classical home-missions committee of Classis Grand Rapids East.

*Dr. Margaret E. Toxopeus*, a radiologist, is president of Winchester Radiologists, P.C., in Winchester, Virginia, where she serves on the endowment-fund investment committee and chairs the hospital radiation-safety committee. She is a graduate of Calvin College and of the University of Michigan Medical School. She has taught at the medical schools of Wayne State University and Johns Hopkins University. She is a member of the Washington, D.C., CRC and serves on the worship and music committees of her church.

*Second at-large nomination:*

*Mr. Sidney J. Jansma, Jr.*, was owner, president, and chief executive officer of Wolverine Gas and Oil Company, Inc., a company which he sold last year. He has served as chairman of the Michigan Gas and Oil Association, chairman of the Grand Rapids Christian School Association fund drive, president of the board of Bethany Christian Services, elder and chairman of council of Plymouth Heights CRC in Grand Rapids, and as a delegate to both classis and synod. He is a graduate of Calvin College. For five years he has served as an alternate on the seminary board.

*Mr. Bernard te Velde, Sr.*, is a dairyman from Visalia, California. He attended Pierce Junior College in California. He has served three terms as elder at Calvary CRC, Chino, California, and one term as elder at First CRC, Visalia, California. He has been a delegate to classis and was a delegate to synod in 1990 and in 1995, where he served on the advisory committee for educational matters. He served two terms on the Ontario, California, Christian-school board.

The board authorized its chairman and the seminary president to select retired ministers, as needed, to assist with processing candidates.

The board's secretary mailed reports of the May 1997 and the February 1998 board meetings to the clerks of all classes and all congregations.

#### IV. Faculty and staff

Our faculty continues to serve the church in numerous ways. Members teach in the six degree programs and set or recommend seminary policy. They advise students, supervise theses, write for church papers and theological journals, produce curriculum materials for CRC Publications, speak at conferences, serve on denominational committees, advise synod, and produce four seminary publications. Under the editorship of Dr. John Bolt and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra respectively, they produce and distribute the *Calvin Theological Journal* and the *Calvin Seminary Forum*. This year the seminary has tripled the number of copies of the latter sent to each CRC council. The seminary newsletter and the alumni news magazine keep the churches and our graduates informed on developments at the school. Additionally, our faculty members preach, lecture, conduct adult education, advise congregations and our agencies, and serve in many other noteworthy capacities. Several faculty members published significant books and pamphlets in 1997. Through the funding of the Calvin Seminary missions institute a number of faculty have taught or been involved in projects in such places as Cuba, France, Japan, Kenya, Korea, and Mexico, as well as in Canada and the United States. In this, the centennial year of Abraham Kuyper's Stone Lectures, Dr. John Bolt has given addresses on Kuyper both at Princeton Theological Seminary and at the Free University of Amsterdam. In these and other ways our faculty is a blessing to our own and to other churches and seminaries.

The board presents a number of faculty and staff reappointments to synod for ratification. These actions are based on a thorough review of the appointees' service. In the case of professors an advance in rank is indicated in italics (see Recommendation C).

*Dr. Calvin P. Van Reken*, Professor of Moral Theology with permanent tenure.

*Mr. Paul Fields*, Theological Librarian with continuing tenure.

*Rev. Daniel Devadatta*, Director of Recruitment and Financial Aid for two years, 1998-2000.

The board presents two appointees for synodical interview and for ratification of their appointments. Background materials will be presented to the delegates at synod.

*Dr. Dean B. Deppe* is presented as Assistant Professor of New Testament.

*Dr. Ronald J. Nydam* is presented as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care.

Suggestions for candidates for these positions were solicited and received from churches, individuals, trustees, and faculty members. Persons suggested were invited to submit materials, which were carefully reviewed by the search committees. Several candidates were interviewed by the search committees, and the faculty and board each conducted their own interviews. Particular emphasis was given to identifying ethnic-minority candidates, and several were seriously considered. The board reports that the searches were seriously and comprehensively conducted, and it confidently commends to synod the two brothers presented. Our prayer is that they will be a source of much

blessing to the churches and our students. May God also give them satisfaction and enjoyment in their service (see Recommendations D and E).

With gratitude to God for their years of faithful service and effective teaching, the board calls synod's attention to the retirements of Professors David Holwerda and Melvin Huguen. Dr. Huguen left the pastorate to join the faculty in 1971. In 1984 Dr. Holwerda left a long tenure at Calvin College to teach at the seminary. Both men have made distinguished contributions on a number of important matters before the church.

## V. Other matters

The board approved a provisional budget for 1998-1999 of \$4,102,805. It is based on a 2 percent tuition increase and a 2 percent increase in the salary base. The budget will be reviewed and adjusted for final adoption in May. Financial recommendations will come to synod by way of the synodical board's financial supplement, distributed when synod convenes.

## VI. Recommendations

A. That Rev. Gerry Heyboer, chairman, and Mr. Mark Muller, secretary, be given the privilege of the floor when seminary matters are presented:

B. That synod elect two at-large trustees for Calvin Theological Seminary from the following nominations and designate the persons not elected as the alternate trustees:

*Rev. Mary S. Antonides, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

*Dr. Margaret E. Toxopeus, Winchester, Virginia.*

*Mr. Sidney J. Jansma, Jr., Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

*Mr. Bernard te Velde, Visalia, California.*

C. That the following faculty and staff reappointments be approved (italics indicate an advance in rank):

*Dr. Calvin P. Van Reken, Professor of Moral Theology with permanent tenure.*

*Mr. Paul Fields, Theological Librarian with continuing tenure.*

*Rev. Daniel Devadatta, Director of Recruitment and Financial Aid for two years, 1998-2000.*

D. That the appointment of Dr. Dean B. Deppe as Assistant Professor of New Testament be approved.

E. That the appointment Dr. Ronald J. Nydam as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care be approved.

Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees  
 Mark Muller, recording secretary

**I. Introduction**

CRC Publications continues to serve the Christian Reformed Church and the worldwide church of Jesus Christ by working at carrying out its mission as adopted by the CRC Publications Board in 1990:

To provide, efficiently and effectively, publications and other resources to assist the Christian church in helping people to (a) commit their lives to Jesus Christ and (b) show the lordship of Christ in their daily living and in their witness and ministry to the world.

Given the trends facing our denomination and our society, CRC Publications faces ongoing challenges in carrying out this mission in a cost-effective manner. For example, the increasing heterogeneity of the denomination makes it more difficult to publish curriculum materials and worship resources that will be acceptable by most churches. That same trend makes it difficult to publish a denominational periodical that meets the needs of and ministers to a significant number of CRC members. As another example, the increasing dependence on other forms of communication, particularly electronic communication, calls for some significant strategic thinking about the future of Christian publishing and our role in it. In this report delegates to synod will find various responses that our agency is making to these and other significant trends.

Among the key developments within our agency during the past year are the following:

- A. The change in *The Banner* from a weekly to a biweekly publication.
- B. The publishing of the first volume of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in Russian.
- C. Participation in the continuing development and implementation of interagency strategies as called for in the denominational strategic plan.
- D. The movement of the finance staff (and function) to the denominational office.
- E. The decision to publish, in cooperation with the Reformed Church in America, a hymnal supplement.

The following report is a summary of our work in these and many other areas. We look to synod for reactions to and input about any and all the activities described here, with a view toward providing better service to our churches so that their ministries can be enhanced.

**II. Board organization, membership, and governance and other administrative matters****A. Organization**

CRC Publications is governed by a board of forty-nine delegates, one nominated by each of the forty-six classes and three (at-large) delegates elected by synod. The board ordinarily meets annually in February.

Between board meetings a fifteen-member executive committee (elected annually by the board) normally meets three times to supervise the ongoing work of the agency. Each member of the executive committee serves on one of three subcommittees: administrative, education, or periodicals.

#### *B. Officers*

The officers of the CRC Publications Board through June 1997 are as follows: Rev. Stanley Mast, president; Mr. Fred Herfst, vice president; Ms. Cheryl Mahaffy, secretary; and Mr. Dennis Bergsma, treasurer.

#### *C. At-large board member*

The second term of one of our at-large board members, Mr. Cecil Jenkins, will be completed on June 30, 1998. As required by synodical guidelines, we are submitting two nominees for this position. This position is designated for someone with finance/business expertise. The CRC Publications Board nominates Mr. Scott Lee and Mr. Charles Brown for a three-year term as at-large member of the CRC Publications Board.

*Mr. Charles Brown* is president of Chad Brown (contracting) Co. and presently serves on Home Missions' African-American Leadership Team and Church Planting Committee. He is a member and elder of Eastside CRC and chairman of the new Church Planting Board in Warrenville Heights, Ohio. He serves on the mayor's (Cleveland) Hunger Task Force and Community Relations Board and previously served on the board of the YMCA and a local congressman's Caucus Board.

*Mr. Scott Lee* is the owner/operator of Seoul Garden Restaurant and Asiana Chinese Restaurant in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He graduated from Michigan State University's school of business with a major in finance. He is a member of Hahn-In CRC, Grand Rapids, and currently serves on the Greater Grand Rapids Marriage Council. He is a former board member for the Citizens for Kentwood Committee.

#### *D. Long-range planning*

The CRC Publications Board discussed the annual edition of CRC Publications' long-range plan, developed by staff. The board offered suggestions to the staff in the various areas of CRC Publications' ministry. The board then approved the plan in concept. The plan incorporates, where appropriate, strategies necessary to implement the denominational long-range plan.

#### *E. Relationships with other organizations*

Again last year considerable focus was placed on developing closer working relationships with other CRC agencies. Much of that work has taken place as a result of the denominational strategic plan—some of those specific developments will be mentioned later.

In addition to the above, CRC Publications develops products to support the work of the various agencies. The most significant work in this regard is our ongoing work with Home Missions. During the past year World Literature Ministries, a department of CRC Publications, has also moved into a closer working relationship with the mission agencies.

In addition to partnering with CRC agencies, CRC Publications also has developed copublishing partnerships with a number of other denominations and publishers. We work closely with the RCA in a number of areas; for

example, the RCA promotes virtually all our products to its congregations. Other denominations that promote our products are the Assemblies of God, the United Methodist Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Finally, during the past year we have developed increasingly close relationships with Youth Unlimited, Christian Schools International, and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

#### *F. CRC Publications' mission, vision, core values*

The CRC Publications Board reviewed some staff proposals in the areas of mission, vision, and core values. After some discussion, the board approved the proposed statements in concept and authorized the executive committee to approve the final redrafted statements.

#### *G. Recycling*

At its 1990 meeting the CRC Publications Board adopted a report of the Task Force on CRC Publications and the Environment. That report contained several goals regarding CRC Publications' use of recycled paper. Because of reductions in the price difference between recycled and nonrecycled paper, CRC Publications is now essentially achieving the goals of that report. About 95 percent of CRC Publications' materials was printed on recycled paper during 1997, including both *The Banner* and the LiFE curriculum. During the past year, the CRC Publications executive committee decided that sometimes, to ensure that our covers are marketable and durable, we should laminate book covers with nonrecyclable materials.

#### *H. Ethnic-minority and disability concerns*

Several years ago the CRC Publications Board adopted personnel policies and goals related to ethnic-minority persons and persons with disabilities. Progress in these areas has not been rapid in recent years, partially due to our losing some staff positions as a result of centralization. A concerted effort will begin, in cooperation with other agencies, during the next year to make more progress in these areas. Currently 5 percent of our employees and 4 percent of our board members are ethnic minorities.

#### *I. World Wide Web*

In February, the second edition of CRC Publications' Web site went "up." The site currently covers only a few of CRC Publications' product areas (*The Banner*, *Reformed Worship*, *Men's Life*, *Friendship Ministries*, *World Literature Ministries*, and some recent products by the Education, Worship, and Evangelism Department). Plans are currently underway to place CRC Publications' entire catalog of products on the Web, with full "shopping cart" ordering capabilities.

#### *J. Salary disclosure*

CRC Publications, in accord with the action taken by synod, submits the following annual compensation data:

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	1	3rd
17	2	2nd
15	1	1st

### III. CRC Publications' ministry

#### A. Periodicals Department

##### 1. *The Banner*

###### a. General overview

The synodically adopted mandate for *The Banner* is to "inform readers about what is happening in the CRC, as well as in the church at large, to provide articles that edify and encourage Christian living, and to stimulate critical thinking about issues related to the Christian faith and to the culture of which Christians and the CRC are a part."

After more than sixty years of weekly publication, *The Banner* switched to biweekly publication in September 1997. Besides this change in frequency, *The Banner* also added eight pages and included full-color printing on every page.

So far these changes have been almost universally well received. Evidence for that is wide ranging: For the first time in recent memory, total *Banner* subscriptions have not declined from the previous year; they remain at about 31,000. This is due largely to the successful subscription drives held in the past year, one producing 1,800 new subscribers, the other almost 1,000.

Also, feedback from readers with regard to these changes has been very positive. Readers not only appreciate the decrease in frequency; they also express considerable support for the increasing depth of some of the *Banner* articles. In addition, *The Banner* appears to be appealing to a wider range of ages.

In an attempt to cover developments in the entire denomination adequately, *The Banner* has established a network of *Banner* news correspondents. These stringers play a critical role in helping *The Banner* ensure comprehensive coverage of developments and events throughout our denomination. The news section is consistently rated as the most read by *Banner* readers.

As part of his duties, editor John Suk visits CRC churches all over North America in order to learn more about the varying segments of the CRC; this helps him keep his ear to the ground so that he can ensure that *The Banner* continues to serve our denomination well. His editorial goals for the future include the following:

- The news section must be honest about where the church is, unflinching about addressing concerns, and at the same time reflective of all the good news about ministry that is going on.
- *The Banner* must do an excellent job of reaching subscribers who want light fare as well as those who desire intellectually stimulating articles.
- *The Banner* must do a better job of reaching people in the 40-65 age group.

b. Editorial freedom

During the past year, as a result of the IRM matter, the subject of the editorial independence and responsibility of *The Banner* in light of the new denominational structure became the focus of some discussions. At one time or another, these discussions included the CRC Publications executive committee and board, the Board of Trustees, a committee made up of representatives of each of these boards, and the U.S. Structure Committee. At the time of this writing, discussions on this matter are continuing.

c. Advertising guidelines

One of the actions taken by Synod 1997, in response to the GALA advertisement controversy, was to "direct the CRC Publications Board to draw up explicit guidelines for evaluating proposed ads for publication in *The Banner*. These guidelines are to be approved by the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA." These guidelines have been developed and approved as requested. They are contained in Appendix 1.

2. *CRC Source*

In response to a request from the CRC agencies, CRC Publications began in January 1996 to publish a quarterly newsletter called *CRC Source* that would serve as a way to coordinate communications about denominational ministries to the CRC constituency. The intent of this publication was to replace *Mission Courier* and other communications used by the agencies to represent their ministries.

The editor of *CRC Source* is Ms. Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen. A committee is currently meeting to evaluate the effectiveness of this publication and to see whether it should be continued and/or whether other improvements are needed. A telephone survey of CRC members indicates that approximately 44 percent of respondents say they read this publication—at least to some extent.

3. *Voice of the Reformed*

For the past several years synod has helped fund the *Voice of the Reformed*, a monthly periodical published by the Korean CRC community through a ministry-share allocation to CRC Publications. When editor Rev. James Hyun resigned last spring, the Korean Council appointed Rev. Seung-Jai Kang as editor in chief of this periodical. The CRC Publications executive committee endorsed this appointment.

The purpose of this publication is to provide a bridge between the Anglo and Korean CRC communities. Accordingly, the content of the *Voice of the Reformed* often includes translations of articles and news stories from *The Banner*.

4. A possible new ministry/leadership magazine

After the Free to Serve rallies ended, a group of agency personnel met to discuss how the excitement generated by these rallies could be channeled into local-church ministries. One suggestion being pursued is the idea of publishing a leadership/ministry magazine. A possible purpose statement that has been developed for such a magazine reads as follows: "The CRC ministry/leadership publication will offer readers inspiration, imaginative ideas, and practical instruction so that they will be better able to love their

neighbors in word and deed." The magazine would be written primarily for leaders of any and all church ministries. Part of the intent in developing a publication like this would be to have it take the place of many of the current individual pieces published by many of the agencies.

This concept is being pursued through a task force that is gathering input from agencies and is sponsoring some research activities regarding the feasibility of such a publication.

*B. Education, Worship, and Evangelism Department (EWE)*

The work of this department is carried out through five offices:

1. Curriculum Office

Developing and producing church-school curriculum materials (for Sunday school, catechism classes, youth groups, adult small groups, and so on) continues to be the major activity of this department.

This office will probably be the one most affected by the denominational plan, since the "Nurture" section of that plan calls for the development of "an integrated discipleship church curriculum." The editor in chief of the EWE Department is chairing a team of staff from a variety of agencies to spearhead that effort.

a. For younger students

Most of those who express their views about the LiFE curriculum continue to show appreciation for the emphases of this curriculum: faith modeling, faith nurture, "wondering," and a strong emphasis on the content of our faith. During the past year staff have been busy on the significant task of revising this curriculum, based on input from teachers who have been using it. This revision is a multiyear project.

One surprise during the past six months has been that, while LiFE curriculum sales have declined a bit, sales of our "old" curriculum, BIBLE WAY, have stopped declining. Many churches still use that curriculum with great appreciation. This development has caused the CRC Publications Board to ask whether the earlier decision eventually to drop the BIBLE WAY curriculum should be reexamined.

Two other significant projects that are being completed this year are a new curriculum for two- and three-year-olds and a substantial revision of the Story Hour program, the curriculum for four- to six-year-olds that is used in conjunction with the Coffee Break program. The curriculum for twos and threes, called God Loves Me, will incorporate Bible-story books that will also be sold separately.

b. For junior-high students

The staff added one course, a study of Acts, to the Crossroads series in the past year. Also being planned for youth are a short course modeled after the much-used Discover Your Gifts program for adults and a course dealing with spiritual growth.

c. For senior-high students

Because of declining sales of current offerings for this age group, CRC Publications conducted a major research study during the past year to determine the needs of churches for their high-school youth. Most of CRC Publications' current products received high marks from the respondents of this survey. Much of future development activity will be

influenced by the results of this research. For example, considerable interest was expressed in more courses on spirituality. Some disappointing results of this research were the following: (1) many youth leaders are not familiar with many current CRC Publications' offerings, and (2) while the teaching method most used was lecture based, this was the least desired methodology in the students' view.

During the next year, several new courses will be added to both the LifeWise (practical, life-related courses) and Prime Time (Bible study) product lines. Two new courses of interest are 32 *Great Bible Stories*, developed in cooperation with Youth Unlimited and the RCA, and *A Christian Looks at World Religions*, a program that Christian Schools International will also be promoting.

The Landmarks, Decisions, and Reasons courses continue to form the backbone of our offerings for this age group.

d. For adults

CRC Publications' adult curriculum falls into four general categories: Bible study, church and doctrine, Christian living, and spiritual growth. A number of products have been developed in each area.

Some new and planned products of particular interest include the following:

- *Speaking as One: A Look at the Ecumenical Creeds*, co-published with Eerdmans, is the first installment in our effort to replace Dr. Cornelius Plantinga's *A Place to Stand*.
- *The Day of Christ's Return* by Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven.
- A revision of our all-time best-seller, *Space for God*, by Rev. Donald Postema.

Finally, it should be noted that we are developing most of the materials for adults in a format to make them usable for small-group study. The series especially developed for that purpose, the Acts 2 series, is selling well.

e. For people with mental impairments

The Friendship Ministries Board, an entity set up to support spiritual development for people with mental impairments, has committed to publishing at least two new courses each year to add to our curriculum offerings in this category. The basic curriculum remains the Friendship Series curriculum.

Although an exciting new product in this area was actually developed by our World Literature Ministries Department, it should be mentioned here. Based on a grant from the Friendship Ministries Board, we have now translated one year of the Friendship Series curriculum into Spanish. As far as we know, this is the first Spanish-language curriculum for people with mental impairments. The new Spanish curriculum is called *Amistad*.

f. For people with visual impairments

We continue to expand the list of curriculum materials available in braille, working with a ministry in Minneapolis. All of the LiFE curriculum is now available in braille. A small ministry share is allocated for this work.

g. For minority groups

During the past year a new five-session course for children in grades 3-6 rolled off the press: *Hand in Hand: Helping Children Celebrate Diversity*. This course was developed in cooperation with the RCA through a multicultural team from that denomination.

2. Music and Liturgy Office

a. *Reformed Worship*

In the eleventh year of its existence, *Reformed Worship* again came out with four issues of practical resources to support churches' worship planning. Dr. Emily Brink continues to serve as editor of this publication. Circulation remains just below four thousand; many of the subscribers to the magazine are from other denominations.

At last year's Associated Church Press awards, *RW* received the first-place award in its class. Judges called it "A powerhouse product!"

b. Other projects

As requested by synod, CRC Publications published a study version of *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture*, the 1997 synodical report on worship. Sales of this product have been strong; a number of classes have held workshops based on this publication, using trained leaders.

Before synod meets, the long-awaited publication of the *Psalter Hymnal Handbook* should be hot off the press. This mammoth project is eagerly awaited by many church leaders.

Another large project, a supplement to the *Psalter Hymnal*, was begun during the past year. This project is being done in cooperation with the RCA and with Calvin College's Institute for Christian Worship. It is anticipated that at its 1999 meeting the CRC Publications Board will review the recommended songs for this important new contemporary hymnal.

Other new and planned products of late include the following:

- Several dramas in the Scripture Alive series.
- Several sixteen-page pamphlets in the popular new So You've Been Asked To . . . series, which offers tips and guidelines on carrying out the tasks of specific ministries in the church.

c. CRC Worship Committee

1) Membership.

The current (1997-1998) members of this committee are:

Dr. Thomas Dykstra, Rochester, NY	Term I	1997
Rev. Ruth Hofman, Toronto, ON	Term I	1999
Ms. Fern Emma Pruiksmas, Chester, NJ	Term II	1997
Rev. Jack Reiffer, Washington, DC	Term II	1999
Ms. Jeri Schelhaas, Sioux Center, IA	Term II	1998
Rev. Peter Slofstra, St. Catharines, ON	Term I	1997
Rev. Richard E. Williams, Chicago, IL	Term I	1998
Dr. John D. Witvliet, Grand Rapids, MI	Term II	1999
(One vacant position)		

The CRC Publications Board elected Dr. Thomas Dykstra and Rev. Peter Slofstra to second three-year terms. Rev. John Terpstra resigned his position on the board; Ms. Pruiksmas is completing her second term and is not eligible for reelection. The board decided that the two

openings on the committee would not be filled until a study and possible restructuring is complete.

The committee and the CRC Publications Board spent considerable time discussing whether a standing committee is still needed to fulfill the mandate or whether some other structure might serve that purpose. The CRC Publications Board appointed a committee to look into this matter.

## 2) Mandate

The mandate of the Worship Committee is as follows:

To meet the contemporary needs of the Christian Reformed churches in the area of liturgical forms and resources.

To study liturgical uses and practices in our churches in the light of Reformed liturgical practices and past synodical decisions, and to advise synod (through the CRC Publications Board) as to the guidance and supervision it ought to provide local congregations in liturgical matters.

## 3) Action taken to carry out synodical mandate re the New King James Version of the Bible

### a) Mandate

In 1996 the Classis of the Heartland overtured synod "to declare the New King James Version of the English Bible to be acceptable for use in worship services" (*Agenda for Synod 1996*, p. 312). Synod's answer to that overture was to adopt a motion to "refer the request to CRC Publications for study (in consultation with experts in Old and New Testament) and recommendation." One ground was given: "The King James Version already has this 'acceptable' status" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 535). The mandate was assigned to the CRC Worship Committee, a standing committee of CRC Publications.

### b) Procedure

The Worship Committee followed the same procedure it used when responding to a synodical mandate to evaluate the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (*Acts of Synod 1992*, pp. 53-55). In fact, the committee asked the same scholars to review the NKJV and to prepare recommendations. We are grateful to each of them. The Old Testament scholars were Dr. Barry Bandstra, Dr. David Engelhard, and Rev. John Stek; the New Testament scholars were Dr. Willis De Boer, Dr. David Holwerda, and Dr. Bastiaan Van Elderen. Their report includes two kinds of advice: (1) advice based on basic principles accepted by all synods of the CRC making decisions on Bible versions from 1926 to the present and (2) advice based on analysis of the New King James text and translation.

### c) Observations

As the CRC moved from Dutch to English at the beginning of the twentieth century, synod was asked to recommend an English version for use in worship services. Although the King James Version was in use in many churches, Synod 1926 favored the American Standard Version because it was based on a more

accurate Greek text than the King James was. While synod did not disallow the use of the KJV, Synod 1926 readily recommended the ASV because, like the New Dutch translation, it was based on a more accurate Greek text than the text used by both the KJV and the old Staten Vertaling in the Netherlands (*Acta Synodi 1926*, pp. 46-47). In addition, it was thought that the ASV would displace the KJV and would become the more representative (ecumenical) translation. Thus the basic principles for recommending a version for use in the worship services were (1) the accuracy of the original language of the text, (2) the quality of the English translation, and (3) the ecumenical acceptance of the version.

However, Synod 1926 was mistaken in its judgment concerning the eventual general acceptance of the ASV. Because of stylistic difficulties the ASV (while praised for its accuracy) did not widely displace the KJV for use in worship outside the CRC. In 1934 a request to reverse the decision of 1926 was denied; synod reminded the churches that "the synod of 1926 explicitly declared that it refrained from *adopting* either the Authorized [King James] or the American Revised Version as the *official* version of the Bible in our churches, but only *recommended* the use of the American Standard Version" (*Acts of Synod 1934*, p. 103, italics added).

When the Revised Standard Version was published in 1952 as a replacement for the ASV, using additional textual evidence and improving the quality of the English translation, Synod 1954 rejected its use not for reasons of textual accuracy but because of objections to the translations of specific verses. When Synod 1969 reconsidered this decision, it designated the RSV as one of the versions acceptable for use in worship services on the basis of the same three principles mentioned above. Subsequently, in declaring the NIV (1980) and the NRSV (1992) as acceptable for use, synod based its actions on the same three principles: (1) fidelity to the earliest recoverable original-language texts, (2) readability, and (3) ecumenical acceptance.

The following observations are made about the New King James Version on the basis of those three principles:

(1) Fidelity to the original-language texts

The question must be raised whether the ground for the action of Synod 1996 measures up to the actions of synods during the past seventy years. Technically, the single ground—that the King James Version already had "acceptable" status in the CRC—is in error. Although the use of the KJV was never formally disallowed, Synod 1926 recommended the ASV for use and not the KJV. While the NKJV remains stylistically in the tradition of the KJV, it still uses the same Greek text as the basis for the translation—a text which synod has consistently judged to be inferior to the more widely accepted critical text. Thus the objection that led synod originally to favor the ASV over the KJV still applies. More detail as to the textual base of the NKJV is found in Appendix 2.

(2) Readability for liturgical use

We judge that the efforts of the translators of the NKJV to retain the stylistic virtues of the KJV have resulted in the production of a version that contains many archaisms, ungrammatical constructions, and obscure expressions. Therefore, whatever poetic beauty has been preserved is largely nullified for modern readers by distracting if not misleading idioms. Several examples taken from the psalms are found in Appendix 3.

(3) Ecumenical acceptance

The CRC synods have already recommended for liturgical use the English versions that have the greatest claim to ecumenicity. While the NKJV sells more copies than the RSV or NRSV and is second only to the NIV, it is far behind the NIV in the range of communions in which it is used liturgically.

d) Recommendations

(1) That Dr. David Holwerda be given the privilege of the floor when this report is discussed.

(2) That synod not recommend the New King James Version of the Bible for use in worship.

*Grounds:*

(a) The NKJV is based on an inferior Greek text of the New Testament. Previous synods have endorsed English translations that use the more reliable Nestle-Aland text.

(b) The NKJV translation is burdened with many misleading and even ungrammatical English renderings.

(c) The CRC synods have already recommended for liturgical use the English versions that have the greatest claim to ecumenicity.

(3) That the work of the scholars who prepared this report be declared completed.

3. Church Development Resources (CDR) Office

The resources of this office came to CRC Publications as a result of the merger with the publishing work of Home Missions. As a result these resources are primarily focused on assisting churches in their evangelism efforts.

a. Discover Your Bible and Discover Life series.

These series provide the primary materials for the Coffee Break and Men's Life programs, respectively. One or two products are normally added to each of these series each year. Staff continue to attempt to work with the Promise Keepers organization to try to integrate the Discover Life materials with that organization's work. The United Methodist and the Assemblies of God denominations have endorsed these materials for their men's ministries.

b. Other products

Among other notable products planned or published from this office are the following:

- *The Praying Church Sourcebook* was revised. This reformatted and expanded book is being heavily promoted and is used by a variety of denominations and parachurch organizations.
- *Charting a Course for Your Church, How to Coordinate Your Prayer Ministry, and Practicing Racial Reconciliation in Your Church* have been added to the Healthy Church Series.
- Revision of Story Hour curriculum.

#### 4. Training and Consultancies Office

The work of this office is closely related to our curriculum in that it provides the training and advice of a network of church-education consultants (CECs), who are essential to the use of our curriculum in the churches. Ms. Sherry Ten Clay, former CRC Publications Board president, has assumed staff responsibility for this office. During the past year this office has initiated several efforts to better coordinate the work of the CECs with the small-group ministry coordinators supported by Home Missions. The CECs are now also trained to conduct workshops on small-group ministry. The work of this department falls into several areas.

##### a. LiFE curriculum support

Our CECs lead workshops to help church-education leaders teach the curriculum. However, only a small percentage of our churches take advantage of this service each year. Accordingly, the CRC Publications Board decided that a video should be produced so that churches can obtain this training by means of a video workshop. The video is called *Here's LiFE*.

##### b. Children's worship

This office also provides training and consulting support for churches with children's worship programs. This activity is done in cooperation with the RCA. A new book to support this work is currently being developed.

#### 5. General Publications Office

This office serves as a catchall. It is assigned everything that doesn't fit in any of the other offices. Some of the product categories are the following:

##### a. Open Door Books

These are materials for new readers. Both national literacy councils support these materials in different ways, so sales are picking up somewhat. It is still unclear whether this product line will become profitable. CRC Publications and the RCA are cooperating on holding training events for churches wishing to develop programs for new readers.

A how-to manual for setting up an English-as-a-second-language program is being prepared for the churches.

##### b. Devotionals

CRC Publications has decreased its new-product development in this area because of low sales. The only devotional materials we now produce are those which tie in with a program, are written by a well-known author, or present a creative new direction. Several of the recent and planned devotionals include

- *Near unto God*, Dr. James C. Schaap's adaptation of Abraham Kuyper's classic. This product is selling well.
- *Face It*, by Rev. Brian Bosscher, written to coincide with the Youth Unlimited Convention.
- *This Splendid Journey* by Dr. Joel Nederhood.
- A revision of the long-time good seller *Intermission* by Dr. James C. Schaap.

c. Other products

Some of the other products of note from this office:

- *Homelink*, a unique approach that helps churches to integrate the worship/sermon activities with devotionals for the home. The first product of this series, *When Advent Doesn't Feel Like Christmas*, sold very well.
- *A Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Formation* by Rev. Glandion Carney.
- *Preventing Child Abuse: A Guide for Churches*, done in cooperation with the Abuse Prevention office of Pastoral Ministries.
- *Guiding God's People in a Changing World: A Handbook for Elders* by Rev. Louis Tamminga.
- *Our Family Album: The Unfinished Story of the Christian Reformed Church* by Dr. James C. Schaap.
- *Our Only Comfort: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism*, vols. 1-2, by Dr. Fred Klooster.

C. World Literature Ministries (WLM)

1. Purpose and overview

World Literature Ministries coordinates the efforts of the various CRC agencies in publishing and distributing biblical Christian literature in a variety of languages. The literature is intended to introduce its readers to and nurture them in a Reformed view of faith and life.

During the past year, this department has continued the change in focus and direction begun in the previous year. A year ago, due to the ineffectiveness of their functioning, the various language committees of the World Literature Committee were disbanded. During the past year, it became obvious that the World Literature Committee itself was not functioning effectively. Accordingly, it too was disbanded.

In its place, CRC Publications staff developed, and the Ministries Coordinating Council and the CRC Publications Board approved, a new structure for carrying out this ministry. Basically the new structure calls for a literature team to be formed in each of the language areas that WLM works in. This literature team would be made up of the representatives from interested agencies. The team would plan the needed new publications in that language, and the agencies involved would provide the necessary subsidy to ensure that the publication would be financially viable.

During the past year the first literature team, the Spanish Literature Ministry Team, was formed. This team has developed a plan whereby a \$120,000 subsidy would be provided to ensure that the needed new projects in Spanish are developed. Part of the subsidy would come from proceeds from the sale of the TELL (The Evangelical Literature League) building after the merger of TELL and CRC Publications.

Under this new arrangement WLM will primarily publish literature that provides support for the work of the CRC agencies, individually or, more likely in the long term, as part of an interagency strategy for each language area.

## 2. Language-projects overview

Because of the developments mentioned above, the scope of the work of this department has diminished considerably during the past year. Work now takes place primarily in three languages:

### a. Korean literature

The primary work in this area continues to be the translation of Coffee Break program materials into the Korean language. Two new Korean Coffee Break Bible studies were completed during the past year.

### b. Russian literature

The most significant project of this office is certainly the translation of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* into the Russian language. Books I and II have been published (twenty thousand copies). Completion of the remainder of the project will proceed as funding is available. A quotation from a letter from Dr. Konstantin Ivanov, a leading reform-minded thinker in the Russian Orthodox Church, is instructive:

Thank you and your associates on behalf of many of us and on behalf of Russian Christians for the great work of Calvin that you have translated into Russian. . . . "The Institutes" teach us to consider the Word of God with care and reverence, embracing its full and at the same time concrete sense through every word of the Bible. . . . Calvin's book is beyond comparison.

### c. Spanish literature

This aspect of the work of WLM remains, by far, the most significant. Due to the merger with TELL and increased marketing efforts, sales have grown substantially during the past year.

Among the significant projects planned or completed are the following:

- *Amistad*, a translation of one year of the Friendship Series materials, paid for by the Friendship Ministries Board.
- *Nuevo Diccionario Biblica (New Bible Dictionary)*, a significant new resource.
- *Asi Fue Calvino (This Was John Calvin)*.
- *Marcos (Mark)* by Dr. William Hendriksen.

## D. Marketing Department

The functions performed by the Marketing Department include customer service, promotion, public relations and communications, sales of *Banner* ads and subscriptions, market research and analysis, and sales forecasting. The executive director has been serving as marketing director for the past several years.

As can be seen from the chart below, the CRC's publishing ministry is much broader than our own denomination; more than half of CRC Publications' accounts and sales are to non-CRC churches. This fact, we believe, speaks highly of the quality of the products produced by the Christian Reformed Church.

Denomination	Active Customers	%	Sales	%
CRC	907	20	1,400,866	39
Other	2,978	67	1,947,012	54
Bookstores/schools/ distributors	563	13	262,650	7
Total	4,448	100	3,610,528	100

Sales for a number of CRC Publications' product lines are down a bit from prior years. As mentioned earlier in this report, we conducted an extensive research survey to determine needs of the church with regard to youth ministry. We will be doing additional research in the future to help us ensure that we are meeting the needs of the church in all areas. In addition, CRC Publications is participating in a major research project sponsored by the Protestant Church-Owned Publishers Association and funded by the Lilly Foundation which seeks to find out what resources American churches need from their denominations in order to minister effectively.

For most CRC Publications' products, the primary vehicles for marketing are the CRC Publications' catalog, direct-mail announcements of new products to the churches, minicatalogs based on categories of products, and advertising in *The Banner*. During the past year we have implemented a system for evaluating the results of each of these efforts. We will use that data to help develop better promotional strategies. We believe there is still a significant problem in getting information about our products into the hands of the right persons in the churches. Among the new strategies we are considering are the following:

- A system of CRC Publications' representatives in each church—one person to promote *The Banner* and another to promote products from the Education, Worship, and Evangelism Department.
- An e-mail newsletter to interested church leaders who use this medium regularly.
- A bookmobile within each congregation.
- Special efforts to expand our market in several areas: children, youth, prayer, and small groups.

The staff members in the Marketing Department who support *The Banner* had an especially busy season during the past year. In addition to implementing two major subscription-acquisition campaigns to promote the biweekly *Banner*, staff simultaneously directed the changeover to a new computer-software system for processing subscriptions. All this was done with almost no noticeable impact on *Banner* subscribers.

Marketing staff working with WLM also had an effective year, with a substantial increase in sales to show for it. As a result the professional staff position used to support these activities will be increased to a full-time position.

#### E. Personnel matters

The CRC Publications staff team is made up of forty employees. Our staff is organized into five departments and an administrative office.

The Staff Council is a management group made up of the executive director—Mr. Gary Mulder—and the department heads: Rev. John Suk, Periodicals

Department (*The Banner*); Rev. Robert De Moor, EWE Department; Mr. John De Jager, World Literature Ministries Department; Ms. Lana Hasper, Marketing Department and sales; and Mr. Michael Dykema, Financial Services

#### F. Finances

The most significant development in this area during the past year was the reassignment of the finance staff to the central denominational office. Up to this point, the transfer has been a success. CRC Publications is getting the same service at a lower cost.

The CRC Publications Board remains firmly committed to the goal that CRC Publications' ministry should be, as nearly as possible, financially self-supporting. However, it recognizes that there may always be projects undertaken (either because our board believes they are necessary or because synod requests them) that cannot be financially self-supporting. This situation is particularly true for our World Literature Ministries Department, as mentioned earlier. However, our ministry-share request for 1998 constitutes only 3.3 percent of our annual budget.

During the past several years, due to the extensive development costs of the LiFE curriculum, CRC Publications' financial position has been weaker than in previous years. Our financial results showed a deficit, and our cash position was depleted. Fortunately, the current situation looks much better. In fiscal 1997, our net revenue was \$166,000, or 11 percent over budget; this included a substantial increase in our reserve for obsolete inventory. It appears that our current year-end results will also be better than budgeted.

CRC Publications submits for synod's information audited financial statements for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 1997, and budgets for the fiscal years 1998 and 1999. These reports have been submitted to the denominational financial coordinator for placement in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

The CRC Publications Board formally requests synod to recommend Friendship Ministries (United States) and Friendship Series Charities (Canada) to the churches for financial support in 1998.

### IV. Recommendations

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

For the board

Rev. Stanley Mast, president

Mr. Fred Herfst, vice president

Mr. Gary Mulder, executive director

For *The Banner*

Rev. John Suk, editor in chief

For Education, Worship, and Evangelism

Rev. Robert De Moor, editor in chief

For the Worship Committee

Dr. Emily Brink

Dr. David Holwerda (for the report on the NKJV of the Bible)

B. That synod elect either Mr. Scott Lee or Mr. Charles Brown to a full three-year term as at-large member of the CRC Publications Board.

C. That synod approve the recommendations of the Worship Committee regarding the New King James Version of the Bible.

D. That synod recommend Friendship Ministries (United States) and Friendship Series Charities (Canada) to the churches for financial support in 1998.

CRC Publications

Gary Mulder, executive director

## Appendix 1

### Advertising Guidelines for *The Banner*

1. Advertisements for both denominational and nondenominational agencies recommended for financial support by synod will be accepted in *The Banner* provided they do not conflict with other guidelines. The list of these approved agencies is published annually in the *Christian Reformed Church Yearbook*.
2. Advertisements for organizations, products, or services not specifically Christian may be accepted for publication if they do not conflict with the general character of the magazine.
3. Advertisements from charitable organizations not approved by synod that request funds for ministries substantially the same as ministries already carried out by denominational agencies will not be published without consultation with those agencies.
4. Advocacy advertisements that take a position on issues being debated in the church will not be accepted.
5. Advertisers from organizations not well-known to the church may be requested to give *The Banner* additional information about their organizations before their advertisements are published. Such information might include a statement of purpose for the organization, testimonials from denominational members in good standing, and financial disclosures (for charitable organizations).
6. Organizations that are known to hold moral or ethical positions different from those of the Christian Reformed Church will not be afforded advertising space.
7. Advertisements that promote dissension or schism within the CRC will not be placed in *The Banner*.
8. No advertisements will be placed for alcohol or tobacco products.
9. *The Banner* will permit advertisements promoting the sale of promissory notes only if certain conditions are met. In brief, organizations named in such advertisements must (a) be in compliance with all applicable security

laws of their jurisdiction, (b) explain the purpose of fund solicitation and offer the repayment schedule, and (c) submit a statement from the classis in which they operate indicating that the classis is not aware of any matters that would suggest that the advertisement should not be placed. Detailed instructions about how these conditions can be met are available from the advertising department of *The Banner*.

10. Decisions about questionable advertising will be made together by the editor of *The Banner* and the executive director of CRC Publications, with input from the executive director of ministries if necessary.

## Appendix 2

### The Textual Base of the New Testament in the King James Version

#### I. Introduction

Significant progress has been made in the study of the Greek text of the New Testament in the last century and a half. Not only has the quantity of manuscripts used for the establishment of this text increased astronomically and many earlier texts have become available, but also a clearer understanding of the transmission of this text has emerged. This brief report will review some of the developments since the publication of the original King James Version (KJV) and will demonstrate the inadequacy of the Greek text base used in the New King James Version (NKJV).

#### II. The text base of the KJV-NT

In the centuries prior to the Reformation (sixteenth century) the Bible predominantly used in the Roman Catholic Church was Jerome's Latin Vulgate (c. A.D. 405). Interest in the Greek text of the New Testament arose in the sixteenth century largely through the work of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, who published five editions of the Greek New Testament from 1516 to 1535. His work was based on a half-dozen late manuscripts, the oldest being a tenth-century manuscript, which he used least.

A number of other editions of the Greek New Testament appeared in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, based largely on the work of Erasmus. About this time the term *Textus Receptus* (TR) came to be used to designate the accepted text of the New Testament that this tradition had developed. This was the text used by the translators of the KJV and all Protestant translations in the languages of western Europe prior to 1881.

#### III. New data for the study of the text of the Greek New Testament

During the nineteenth century a major change occurred in the study of the text of the Greek New Testament. Some important early Greek manuscripts which had been hidden in libraries and museums became available for study. These influenced scholarly attempts to reconstruct the original texts. Moreover, since the late 1800s, thousands of documents written on papyrus have been found in the Nile valley, including some significant New Testament manuscripts dating as early as the second century A.D. Still other useful manuscripts have been found. Today for the study of the Greek text of the

New Testament we have about 5,700 items to consult—a striking contrast to the few manuscripts used for developing the *Textus Receptus*—and some of these are almost a thousand years older than those used in the construction of that text.

Continuing study of this growing body of manuscripts has led to the development of what is known as the Nestle-Aland text of the Greek New Testament. This text is accepted by the vast majority of New Testament scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. It is the text that is used almost universally in New Testament scholarship and is the basis for most modern translations of the New Testament (e.g., RSV, NIV, JB, NJB, NAB, NRSV, NASB, NEB, REB). This Greek text differs from the *Textus Receptus* in some significant ways. A few scholars have questioned this tradition of scholarship and have produced a Greek text based on a close consensus of the majority of the later Greek manuscripts. They call their reconstruction the Majority Text. In general it agrees with the *Textus Receptus*.

#### **IV. The text base of the NKJV-NT**

Currently there are three options regarding the Greek text of the New Testament: the *Textus Receptus*, the Majority Text, and the Nestle-Aland text. The preface of the NKJV states that the translators based their version on the “Received Text, thus perpetuating the tradition begun by William Tyndale in 1525 and continued by the 1611 translators in rendering the Authorized Version” (KJV). Significant variations in the New Testament Greek manuscripts are noted in the footnotes, but the translation follows the text base of the KJV.

#### **V. Evaluation of the text base of the NKJV-NT**

In the study and analysis of the vast manuscript evidence, scholars employ a number of well-tested criteria to establish the most reliable text of the Greek New Testament. Employing these criteria, the vast majority of scholars, including evangelical scholars, find the Nestle-Aland text the best base to work from. A serious commitment to Scripture, as in the Reformed tradition, demands the careful use of all the scholarly resources and tools available for the recovery of the earliest form of the text available to us. In our judgment, this means a decided preference for the Greek text as presented in the Nestle-Aland tradition. For that reason, liturgical use of the NKJV in the Christian Reformed churches should not be encouraged.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Examples of Obscurities, Unidiomatic Expressions, and Ungrammatical Constructions in the NKJV**

(All examples are taken from Psalms, the biblical book most often used liturgically. Such examples could be multiplied.)

##### **1. Capitalization of poetic lines**

The capitalization of the first letter of each poetic line makes reading difficult since punctuation at the ends of the lines must be very carefully noted if syntactical relationships are not to be confused.

## 2. Ungrammatical constructions

Contrary to English usage, collective nouns are treated as singular wherever that is done in Hebrew. A few examples from Psalm 37:

10 For yet a little while and **the wicked** shall be no more;  
Indeed, you will look carefully for **his** place,  
But it shall be no more.

12 **The wicked** plots against the **just**,  
And **gnashes** at **him** with **his** teeth.

21 **The wicked** borrows and **does** not pay,  
But **the righteous** shows mercy and **gives**.

30 **The mouth of the righteous** speaks wisdom,  
And **his tongue** talks of justice.

32 **The wicked** watches **the righteous**,  
And **seeks** to slay **him**.

35 I have seen **the wicked** in great power,  
And spreading **himself** like a native green tree.

## 3. Strange, obscure, ambiguous, or misleading idioms

4:2 How long will you love **worthlessness**  
And seek **falsehood**?

5:9 Their **inward part** is destruction.

6:6 All night I **make my bed swim** . . .

7:5 And lay **my honor** in the dust.

8:4 What is man that You are mindful of him,  
And the son of man that you **visit** him?

9:17 The wicked shall be **turned into hell**.

10:4 The wicked in **his proud countenance** does not seek God.

11:4 His **eyelids** try the sons of men.

11:7 His **countenance** **beholds** the upright.

13:4 Lest those who trouble me rejoice when **I am moved**.

16:2 My **goodness** is nothing apart from you.

16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my **glory** rejoices.

18:45 The foreigners **fade away**,  
And **come frightened from their hideouts**.

19:2 **Day unto day** utters speech,  
And **night unto night** reveals knowledge.

21:12 You will **ready** Your arrows on Your string **toward their faces**.

22:7 They **shoot out the lip**, they shake the head . . .

22:16 The **congregation** of the wicked has enclosed Me.

24:3 Who will **ascend into** the hill of the LORD?

29:7 The voice of the LORD **divides the flames of fire**.

- 30:9 What profit is there in my blood . . . ?
- 32:4 **My vitality** was turned into the drought of summer.
- 44:19 But You have **severely broken us in the place of jackals.**
- 49:5 Why should I fear in the days of evil,  
When **the iniquity at my heels surrounds me?**
- 58:1 Do you indeed **speak righteousness, you silent ones?**
- 58:3 The wicked are **estranged from the womb . . .**
- 58:9 He shall take them away as with a whirlwind,  
As in His **living and burning wrath.**
- 59:4 Awake to help me, **and behold!**
- 66:15 I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat animals,  
With **the sweet aroma of rams.**
- 68:9- You, O God, sent a plentiful rain,  
10 Whereby You **confirmed Your inheritance,**  
**When it was weary.**  
Your congregation dwelt in it . . .
- 69:27 Add iniquity to their iniquity,  
And let them not **come into your righteousness.**

## I. Introduction

### A. *The mission of Home Missions*

The Christian Reformed Church has mandated the Board of Home Missions to lead the church in its task of bringing the gospel to the people of Canada and the United States and of drawing them into fellowship with Christ and his church.

This mandate has three aspects:

1. Encourage and assist churches and classes in their work of evangelism.
2. Initiate, support, and guide new church development in cooperation with local churches and classes.
3. Initiate, support, and guide other evangelistic ministries in cooperation with local churches and classes.

(Home Missions Order, Art. 2)

### B. *The vision of Home Missions*

The vision of Home Missions is to partner with the members, congregations, and classes of the Christian Reformed Church in *Gathering God's Growing Family* . . . "seeking the lost and discipling the found . . . all for God's glory!"

### C. Gathering

The goals of *Gathering* are

1. Prayer: Mobilizing the Christian Reformed Church in focused prayers for its ministry of seeking the lost and discipling the found.
2. Established-church development: Encouraging and equipping established churches to seek the lost and disciple the found.
3. New-church development: Initiating, supporting, and guiding the development of new churches for disciple making in cooperation with partner churches and classes.
4. Other disciple-making ministries: Initiating, supporting, and guiding campus and other disciple-making ministries in cooperation with partner churches and classes.
5. Financial resources: Developing partnerships which provide financial resources to support the goals of *Gathering*.

### D. *The Gathering goals give expression to the core Gathering values adopted by Christian Reformed Home Missions in 1993:*

1. Care: The church cares passionately for the salvation and discipling of lost people as God calls it to do.
2. Prayer: Prayer is essential to fulfilling God's mission to lost people.
3. The church is the missionary: The local church, empowered by the Spirit, is the primary agent for carrying out God's mission in the great harvest field of North America.

4. Growth: The increasing growth and diversity of the Christian Reformed Church are essential to the effectiveness of this mission.
  5. Flow: Wherever and whenever we, God's people, exercise vision and faith, God provides resources for his work.
- E. *The CRC denominational vision and goals approved by Synod 1997*
- Synod 1997 endorsed and affirmed the CRC Vision and Mission Statement along with comprehensive goals and strategies. Home Missions, along with CRWRC, will give leadership to the North American Outreach section of the CRC goals and strategies.

A. Agencies assist congregations so that, by 2002, at least 90 percent of members are able to express Christian faith and 50 percent are involved in an intentional and evangelistic relationship with a person who is not a believer.

B. Agencies assist congregations and classes so that, by 2002, 200 new churches are planted, 90 percent of which have some form of parent-church sponsorship.

C. Agencies assist congregations so that, by 2002, 70 percent of congregations are involved in at least two community ministries to the poor and/or disadvantaged so they can experience the fullness of God's grace.

D. Agencies will assist so that by 2002, thirty classes will have a visionary outreach ministry plan in place.

(*Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 58-59)

On October 1, 1997, Home Missions convened a day-long session of planning and commitment for discussing the North American Outreach goals. *Every CRC agency and institution was represented*, and each formally committed to specific partnership projects toward reaching the North American Outreach goals.

Home Missions will work in every way it can to partner with all CRC agencies and institutions to advance the CRC vision, mission, and goals statement.

#### F. *Gathering (evangelizing) progress in 1996*

By God's grace, in the last ten years growth through evangelism by the CRC has totaled 28,238 persons. In the 1997 reporting period, 2,738 persons (compared to 2,846 persons in 1996) were added through evangelism. Continuing concern to the whole church is the fact that as of September 1, 1997, total CRC membership is reported as 279,029 members, nearly 7,000 fewer than last year. The number of congregations decreased from 987 to 972.

Since 1988, new congregations accounted for 6,900 persons added through evangelism. In 1996 alone, an estimated 700 people were added through evangelism in new and emerging churches.

## II. Board and executive committee

### A. *Board*

The Board of Home Missions is the agent of synod charged with guiding and carrying out the denominational home-missions program. The board has forty-nine members. Forty-seven members are chosen by their respective classes; two are board members-at-large who have special expertise. Twelve board members are from Canada and thirty-seven from the United States. Since 1994, the Board of Home Missions has held its annual meeting in late

April rather than in February, as was formerly the custom, in order to respond more quickly to proposals for new ministries.

*B. Board officers*

The officers of the Board of Home Missions are Rev. Shawn Sikkema, president; Ms. Mary Buteyn, vice president; Rev. John Rozeboom, secretary (executive director); Mr. Dan Cooke, recording secretary; and Mr. Leon DeLange, treasurer.

The officers of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions of Canada are Rev. Mike Reitsma, president; Rev. Karl House, vice president; Ms. Mary Buteyn, secretary; and Rev. Dan Tigchelaar, assistant treasurer.

*C. Executive committee*

The executive committee meets in September, December, and February. It is made up of elected delegates from the following regions.

Region	Classes	Delegates
Western Canada	B.C. North-West, B.C. South-East, Alberta North, Alberta South/Saskatchewan	Rev. Michael Reitsma
Central Canada	Chatham, Huron, Niagara	Rev. Daniel Tigchelaar
Eastern Canada	Hamilton, Toronto, Quinte, Eastern Canada	Ms. Mary Buteyn
Northwest U.S.	Pacific Northwest, Columbia, Central California, Yellowstone	Rev. Bruce Persenaire
Southwest U.S.	California South, Greater Los Angeles, Arizona, Pacific Hanmi, Red Mesa	Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker
Midwest U.S.	Rocky Mountain, Iakota, Minnesota South, Heartland	Rev. Shawn Sikkema
Central U.S.	Lake Superior, Northcentral Iowa, Pella	Rev. Evert Busink
Chicago	Northern Illinois, Chicago South, Illiana, Wisconsin	Mr. Dewey Westra
Eastern U.S.	Atlantic Northeast, Hudson, Hackensack, Southeast U.S.	Mr. Dan Cooke
Out-state Michigan	Northern Michigan, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie	Rev. Emmett Harrison
Ottawa County	Holland, Zeeland, Georgetown, Grandville	Mrs. Joyce Sikkema
Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids North, Grand Rapids South, Thornapple Valley	Rev. Maurice De Young

*D. Salary disclosure*

Executive staff persons are being paid within the approved salary ranges.

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	1	2nd quartile
17	2	2nd, 3rd quartile
16	2	1st, 3rd quartile

### III. Home Missions' ministries

#### A. Established-church development

1. The ministry of Home Missions directly impacts at least seven hundred of our churches and many classes as Home Missions seeks to make passion for seeking the lost and discipling the found integral to the calling of every member, every church, and every classis.
2. This ministry with established churches is accomplished through
  - a. Assisting and encouraging churches in praying (as a foundational element in *Gathering*) that the CRCNA may be increasingly and effectively used by God to reach the lost and to disciple the found.
  - b. Planning and consulting with churches and classes so that they effectively find the lost and disciple the found.
  - c. Developing leadership through networks and conferences so that pastors and other church leaders grow in their ability to lead *Gathering* churches and classes.
  - d. Training in small-group evangelizing so that local churches are assisted in their work with small-group, life-changing *Gathering* ministries.
  - e. Resourcing churches with partnership grants and materials to help them become mission-shaped churches.
3. The results prayerfully envisioned and worked for in established churches are
  - a. A praying church: All the members, churches, and classes mobilized in prayer for the Spirit's blessing on the witness and efforts of the CRCNA to bring an increasing number of people to faith and disciple them as fruitful followers of Jesus.
  - b. A focused church: Healthy churches who know their purpose and vision and are growing in all ways—including size—while effectively ministering where God has placed them.
  - c. A committed people: They are now part of God's family, growing daily in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and contributing to and participating in the ministry of the church.
4. The strategies and activities used in working for these results may be summarized as follows:
  - a. Mobilizing prayers for the lost: Implementing a plan for congregational and classical prayer coordinators to encourage churches, classes, and denominational agencies to pray for effective *Gathering*.
  - b. Promoting classical ministry development: Assisting classes through classical home-missions committees and diaconal conferences in doing ministry planning (through the CRWRC/CRHM Classical Renewal Ministry Team). Holding regional classical forums to explore how the classis can be an effective instrument of the mission of God.
  - c. Promoting ethnic (non-Anglo) ministries: Working with CRHM's New-Church Development Department and five intercultural ministry

directors to help the CRCNA grow in its multicultural character and ministry.

- d. Collaborating with (1) Calvin Theological Seminary by participating in teaching courses on church-development subjects, (2) with CRC Publications by doing mutual planning and publishing evangelistic resources, (3) with Youth Unlimited by providing 141 SWIMers for thirty-four new and established churches during the summer, and (4) with CRWRC on classical renewal.
- e. Focusing Networks: (1) Developing interconnected leadership networks in greater Chicago and (2) enabling six Focusing Church Networks involving thirty-one churches.
- f. MasterPlanning: Helping twenty churches define their ministries and draw up specific ministry plans, including a new form of MasterPlanning called ReBirth (in Flanders, NJ).
- g. Promoting small-group evangelism strategies/ministries and providing resources: Approximately 1,500 members participated in small groups/Coffee Break workshops, an additional 4,000 in rallies, and 500 in Men's Life workshops, which include working with pastors, councils, and ministry-team leaders to model and promote renewed vision and relationship-based ministry. Small-group representatives throughout the U.S. and Canada also offer workshops on witnessing and incorporation of new members. The biennial Coffee Break/Story Hour convention is scheduled for July at Gordon Conwell College in greater Boston with an anticipated attendance of 1,500.
- h. Sponsoring *Gathering* conferences in connection with Willow Creek Community Church and Saddleback Community Church: 244 leaders representing forty-seven churches participated in the Willow Creek conference, and sixty-two leaders representing twelve churches participated in the Saddleback conference.
- i. Making Partnership Assistance Grants: Providing financial grants for sixty-two established churches to help them advance their ministries.

## 5. In summary

All the work Home Missions does with established churches is carried out for the purpose of empowering churches and classes to be effective signs and instruments of God's kingdom and harvest.

In all of this there is a prayerful expectation that God continues to add new people to his churches and sets them free to minister as members of the new community in keeping with the spiritual gifts the Spirit has given them.

## B. *New-church development*

### 1. Projected and actual new-church starts, 1988 to 1998

In 1998 we will mark the completion of ten years under the banner of *Gathering God's Growing Family*. This anniversary occasions a review of specific projections for new-church development. The goal and related vision and prayer were stated as follows:

To encourage and equip churches and classes to plan and develop new churches which seek the lost and disciple the found.

*It is our vision and prayer that with God's blessing 240 new churches will be started, and that new and emerging churches will grow by at least 30,000 members during 1988 to 2,000 A.D.*

During this past decade God has raised up harvest workers, partnering churches, and material resources for a total of 170 new-church starts, compared to the 188 projected for this same time period. We can also report, with praise to God, that another 13 new-church ministries have been launched since September 1, 1997.

Year*	Projected Starts	Projected Cumulative	Actual Start	Actual Cumulative
1988	14	14	13	13
1989	15	29	14	27
1990	17	46	20	47
1991*	17	63	10*	57
1992	18	81	13	70
1993	19	100	20	90
1994	21	121	20	110
1995	21	142	27	137
1996	22	164	19	156
1997	24	188	14	170
1998	25	213	13	183
1999	27	240		
2000	240	240		

\*1991 was calculated as an eight-month year.

+Starts from 9/1/97 to 2/1/98.

## 2. Partnering with new and emerging churches

As of January 1, 1998, Home Missions is partnering financially with 124 new and emerging churches, and another fifteen proposals have been approved for opening when missionary pastors are recruited. Home Missions also provides partnership funding for more than twenty in-training positions (currently eight residents, five interns, and nine apprentices) and four missionary-pastor positions whose work focuses on the training of future new-church developers. These total numbers vary from year to year in relation to the number of new starts, continuing funding relationships, funding conclusions, and other considerations. Actual new-church starts and funding conclusions for this reporting period are listed below.

### a. New-church starts from September 1996 through August 1997

Location/Name	Personnel	Began
Albuquerque, NM/Galilee Korean	Sung H. Chung	9/96
Calgary, AB/New Hope	John Van Sloven	12/96
Flanders, NJ/Crossroads Community	Paul Ingeneri	8/97
Franklin, MA/New England Chapel	Chris Mitchell	8/97
Grand Junction, CO/New Life Church	Kenneth Nydam	8/97
Lincoln, NE/Northern Lighthouse	Sam Keyzer	6/97
Mission, BC/New Church	Andrew Turkstra	9/96
New Lenox, IL/NewLife Church	Julius Medenblik	9/96
Raleigh-Durham, NC/The Durham Church	Coleman Moore	8/97
Ridgefield Park, NJ/Love Korean	Sung Ho Chung	2/97

San Bernardino, CA/Gailee Church	Paul Won	3/97
Seattle, WA/Emmaus Road	Lynn/Eric Likkel	9/96
Toronto, ON/The Barnabas Network	Timothy Berends	9/96
Tucson, AZ/Rock the Desert Ministries	Rodney Hugen	8/97

b. New-church starts from September 1997 through February 1998

Location/Name	Personnel	Began
+ Abbotsford, BC/Leadership-Development Training	John Poortenga	1/98
Carson, CA/Grace Filipino #2	Elmer Tandayu	9/97
Darien, IL/Daughter NCD	Daniel Maat	2/98
Denver, CO/Outpost	Jeffrey Van Kooten	10/97
Edmonton, AB/Edmonton Korean Mission	Woon Joung	12/97
Hartford, CT/Hartford Hispanic	Carlos Aranguiz	12/97
Holland, MI/Mision Discipular	Florencio Lopez	9/97
Horicon, WI/Marshview Ministries	David Katsma	2/98
Jersey City, NJ/Filipino NCD	Albert Sideco	1/98
Las Vegas, NV/ Yung Kwang	Myung Soo Lee	9/97
New Westminster, BC/Queens Park Com.	William C. Tuininga	9/97
Petoskey, MI/Petoskey NCD	Joseph Fox	9/97
Pomona, CA/Betel Hispanic	Albino Melendez	1/98
Surrey, BC/Bridge Community	Jim J. Heuving	9/97
++ Winnipeg, MB/Red River Fellowship	John van Drongelen	9/97
+ Leadership Development Program		
++ New-church "restart"		

c. Funding conclusions from September 1996 through August 1997

Location/Name	Personnel	Began
Bakersfield, CA/Cornerstone Comm.	Harley Faber	7/91
Beverly Hills, CA/Cho Won Korean	Dae Sun Shin	9/94
Bigelow, MN/Laotian Ministry	Ronald Lammers	9/91
Chino, CA/1st Hispanic CRC of Chino	Gilbert Miranda	9/92
Darien, IL/Suburban Life	Timothy Hoekstra	3/91
De Soto, TX/Hope Fellowship	Tom Pettinga	4/91
Downey, CA/Faith Korean	Inyeol Jeong	9/91
*El Paso, TX/Paso Del Notre	John Matias	11/94
Garden Grove, CA/Korean Presbyterian	Young Ook Kim	9/94
Grand Rapids, MI/Keystone Comm.	Gene De Jong	9/95
*Hialeah, FL/Iglesia el Redentor	Elias Burgos	9/82
Holland, MI/Graafschap Cambodian	Socheth Na	9/91
Las Vegas, NV/So Mang Presbyterian	Chung Choo Cho	9/91
Missouri City, TX/Community Life	Ministry Team	5/93
Northridge, CA/Valley Evangelical	Soo Do Hong	9/94
Orange County, CA/Christ Ref. Church	Kim Riddlebarger	9/93
Phoenix, AZ/Arizona	Chung-Ang	10/93
Quebec City, PQ/Institut Farel		9/87
Red Deer, AB/New Life Fellowship	Stanley Schalk	9/89
Rocklin, CA/Granite Springs	Kevin Adams	6/91
San Dimas, CA/Vida Nueva	Felipe Acuna	9/94
San Jose, CA/Friendship Agape	John Liu	9/88
St. Vital, MB/The Youth Network	Michele Visser	9/93
Sun Valley, CA/Sol Del Valle	Gilbert Varela	1/81
Surrey, BC/LifeNet 21 NCD	Jim J. Heuving	9/95
Victorville, CA/Church of the Way	Robert Lewis	9/93
*Winnipeg, MB/Hope Centre	Anthony Schweitzer	9/77

\*Funding conclusion due to closing or other transition

### 3. Church-planting goal for 1998 through 2002

As a part of the overall CRCNA ministry plan, last year's synod endorsed a very challenging North American Outreach goal in relation to new-church development. This goal for the CRCNA is that during the next five years agencies assist congregations and classes so that two hundred new churches are planted, 25 percent of them in high-need communities and all of them with some form of parent-church sponsorship. Recognizing that this goal requires a doubling of the present pace for starting new churches, Home Missions already has initiated various collaborative efforts with the seminary and other partner agencies toward fulfilling this goal.

As planning already has commenced for ministry year 1999, Home Missions is committed to developing and multiplying disciple-making leaders and new churches in obedience to the Great Commission (cf. Matt. 28:18-20). This purpose and our planning require that Home Missions provide guidance, assistance, and partnership in the following key areas:

- a. **Prayer:** mobilizing church leaders and members to pray for the harvest. Matthew 7:7-8, 9:38; Ephesians 3:20-21.
  - b. **Harvest vision:** cultivating shared vision and passion for gathering the harvest. Matthew 9:36-37; Romans 1:16.
  - c. **Parenting:** partnering with parent churches to plan and start new churches. Acts 13:1-3; I Corinthians 9:22b-23.
  - d. **Leadership:** helping raise up more disciple-making leaders for new churches. Matthew 9:38; II Timothy 2:2.
  - e. **Equipping:** empowering new-church leaders through training, networking, and coaching. Ephesians 4:11-13, 16.
  - f. **Development:** resourcing new and emerging churches for effective staffing, program, and facilities development. Matthew 10:10b; Philippians 1:3-5, 4:16.
- (CRHM Work Plans for Ministry Year 1999)

Since disciple making and new-church development are totally dependent on the working of God's Spirit, the whole church is urged to pray that our God who is able will "do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us[.] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21).

### C. Other disciple-making ministries

#### 1. Partnering with campus ministries

There are about forty campus ministries in Canada and the United States. The following fifteen campus ministries are supported by Home Missions partnership grants:

University of Alberta	Wayne State University
University of Western Ontario	Ferris State University
University of New Brunswick	Iowa State—Korean
Paterson State University	Iowa State University
McMaster University	University of Iowa
University of Guelph	Queen's University
Wilfrid Laurier University and Waterloo University	University of New Mexico
	University of Toronto

In 1997 Dr. Willis Van Groningen, formerly campus pastor at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, became the first Christian Reformed Home Missions campus-ministry director. While retaining his residency in

Kingston and maintaining ties to the Queen's Geneva Fellowship ministry, Dr. Van Groningen has vigorously begun (a) visiting CRC-sponsored campus ministries for requested guidance and consultation, (b) providing campus-ministry support through grant administration and developing standards, evaluation tools, and resources for campus committees, and (c) promoting and interpreting campus ministry.

Campus ministry is guided by the comprehensive vision document *To Pursue the Mission*, developed by the Campus Ministry Association in 1995 and adopted by Home Missions. Copies of *To Pursue the Mission* are available from the Office of the Campus Ministry Director, c/o Christian Reformed Home Missions.

## 2. Partnering with Christian schools in Classis Red Mesa

Home Missions continues to partner with the Crownpoint, Rehoboth, and Zuni Christian schools in the western New Mexico area of Classis Red Mesa. The overall objective is to guide and assist the schools in ways that increase their effectiveness in educating, evangelizing, and discipling their students; promote local vision and commitment; and encourage their progress toward financial independence.

The newly formed Rehoboth-Red Mesa Foundation was incorporated during calendar year 1997 and held its first full board meeting in January 1998. The purpose of the foundation is to serve the Red Mesa schools and churches especially in developing financial resources that will supplement and eventually replace denominational subsidies. This includes income-generating uses of the Rehoboth school campus and adjacent property, nearly nine hundred total acres. It remains Home Missions' intent and commitment that this entire Rehoboth property be deeded over to the foundation. We are confident that with God's help this historic action will be completed before the turn of the century.

### D. Finance and advancement

One of Home Missions' core *Gathering* values states, "Wherever and whenever God's people exercise vision and faith, God provides resources of money and spiritual gifts for his work." Home Missions is grateful for generous and faithful continued support of its ministries.

## 1. Resources

### a. Financial resources

Through strong giving from churches, individuals, and businesses, God provided abundantly in fiscal 1997. Total gift income was equal to 1996, and the ministry was able to fund all programs as planned. Ministry-share receipts decreased slightly from the previous year; above-ministry-share gifts from churches and individuals increased slightly compared to 1996. Total expenses were managed below budget without curtailment of ministry programs and with a balanced budget. In light of denominational financial issues, the 1998 ministry-share request did not increase from the 1997 request.

### b. Personnel resources

Home Missions also gratefully notes that volunteers donating their time and various talents in both the central office and field ministries

continue to provide numerous benefits to Home Missions and affiliated ministers.

c. Missionary prayer and financial partnerships

God is blessing the Christian Reformed Church with gifted leaders from various ethnic groups. Our denomination is honoring God in partnering with ethnic groups across Canada and the United States. But gaining prayer and financial support for these ministries is an increasing challenge because these missionary pastors are not yet well-known in the CRC. Churches are encouraged to establish a support partnership with an ethnic missionary pastor.

d. Information resources

This year for the third time Home Missions offered Reformation Day bulletins and other materials, which were used by 483 churches. Nearly half of these churches took a special offering for the cause of Home Missions. We also again offered Easter bulletins and devotional material, which were requested by 561 churches. Approximately 250 congregations scheduled an Easter offering for Home Missions.

Home Missions participated with other CRC agencies in several cooperative projects, such as *CRC Source*, a relatively new publication which provides the churches with news about the ministries they support. We continue to work cooperatively in projects such as *Prayer Guide*, *Intermission*, the Barnabas Foundation, Women's Missionary Union speaking tours, Service Link, and the scheduling of mailings.

e. In 1997 Home Missions and other CRC-related agencies learned that the IRM company, which had received major restricted-funds investments from Home Missions, suspended interest payments. Home Missions had benefited from interest received from IRM investments. The current status and future of the CRC investments is a continuing concern. Though Home Missions' budgeted general-fund activities are not jeopardized, this development may negatively affect future capability for loan and grant support for new-church land and facilities funding.

2. Capital-expenditures assistance

a. Home Missions provides advice and financial assistance in site selection, purchase, building design, and construction for new churches that start with Home Missions' partnership. During 1997, Home Missions assisted the Lao Community CRC of Holland, Michigan, in the purchase of a site for a future church building. Home Missions' investment notes provide a way for CRC members to invest in new-church building programs. Proceeds from the sale of these notes provide a loan fund for new-church building programs that would have difficulty obtaining funds from commercial lenders. At the end of fiscal 1996, Home Missions had over \$5.3 million in outstanding loans to sixty-three churches.

b. The Advancement Department provided stewardship advice, promotion, and fund-raising assistance to eight new churches embarking on building projects.

### 3. Fiscal-year 1997 financial report

A detailed financial report for the twelve-month fiscal year ended June 30, 1997, the 1998 budget, and the proposed 1999 budget will be presented to synod in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*. A summary report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1997, is shown below:

Source of income	Income (1,000s)	Percent of total
Ministry share	\$5,292	51.0
Missionary support	790	7.6
Above-ministry-share gifts	1,224	11.8
Conferences, consulting	187	1.8
Interest and other	<u>2,886</u>	<u>27.8</u>
Total income	\$10,379	100.0

#### IV. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Rev. Shawn Sikkema, president, and Rev. John Rozeboom, executive director, when matters pertaining to Home Missions are discussed.

B. That synod encourage all Christian Reformed churches to recognize Easter Sunday and Reformation Sunday as significant opportunities to take offerings for Christian Reformed Home Missions.

Home Missions is blessed, privileged, and profoundly challenged in serving the Lord and the church through *Gathering*.

Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions  
John A. Rozeboom, executive director

## I. Introduction

Empowered by the Spirit of Pentecost and with a vision for "salvation to the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47), Christian Reformed World Missions continues to proclaim the gospel and develop churches around the world. With gratitude to the Lord of the harvest, we report to synod on opportunities, efforts, and results during 1997-1998.

During the past year World Missions gave support to twenty-nine Reformed and Presbyterian churches, which are attended by over two million people. World Missions also gave support to twenty other agencies and leadership-training institutions. In ten countries we are developing churches which are in various stages of formal organization. It is estimated that as a result of our efforts about fifty thousand are added to the fold each year.

About 185 CRC missionaries are active in thirty countries. There are also about 90 partner and associate missionaries (most of whom are teachers), 20 short-term missionary volunteers, and over 30 students who become involved with us during the summer months. At least ten work groups are being sent to Latin American countries to assist with the building of churches.

## II. Report on mission fields and projects

World Missions, as one of the agencies, is one of the servants of the CRCNA. It is under the authority of and derives its task from the CRCNA. World Missions, therefore, works towards providing for the fullness of God's grace in a broken world and seeks to bring glory to God. We are very thankful that the support for the work of World Missions continues to be strong.

### A. Africa

1. *Sierra Leone.* The disruption of civil war has hampered the work in Sierra Leone. Evacuation of expatriate staff from the country has not, however, brought the work to a halt. About a thousand people per week meet for worship. Development programs within the country continue even under difficult circumstances.
2. *Liberia.* Though civil war forced evacuation from Liberia several years ago, translation work continues. The Bassa translation of the Scriptures is on target for completion by October 1998.
3. *Nigeria.* Fifty baptisms mark the significant beginnings of the church among the Avadi people. Under a partnership with the Christian Reformed Church in Nigeria, Nigerian evangelists join the teams in the development of the church in the Kambari region.
4. *Mali.* Firstfruits also became visible in Mali during the past year. Permission was received to make a public gospel presentation in Guduru. More than thirty attended until they came under pressure from local Islamic leaders. Long-term results are not yet known, but at least one woman has gone public with her confession, and an elder claims privately to be a believer. Work continues with the more responsive Fulbe in western Mali at the

invitation of Frontiers Mission. Three men, including the chief, have professed faith in Christ.

5. *Guinea*. Discipleship courses are being held for five individuals, evangelistic Bible studies with six individuals, and a Bible class for ten children. Worship services have resumed in Labé and also several Bible studies.
6. *Hospital Christian Fellowship*. In a ministry of leadership training and discipleship for medical personnel throughout Africa, one long-term associate, temporarily based in Amsterdam, develops the training materials. Health problems limited both the training activities and the achievement of goals for material production.
7. *Zambia*. World Missions works with the Reformed Church in Zambia through a grant given to the Justo Mwale Theological College for development of library resources. The grant concludes in June 1998.

#### B. *Asia*

The economic "bubble" has expanded significantly over the past years—and has burst in many of the Asian countries. While the falling currencies (against the U.S. dollar) have helped World Missions, the weakening currencies and economies have taken a significant toll on the partner churches with whom we work.

1. *Japan*. The mission staff feels what appears to be a backlash against the radical sects. Attendance levels have dropped for the first time in eight to ten years. The Reformed Church in Japan has about ten thousand members.
2. *China*. The People's Republic of China has asserted itself with the transfer of Hong Kong from British to Chinese control. Persecution of church members and leaders appears to be on the increase again. World Missions continues to puzzle over the best means of reaching the people of the mainland and continues to give significant support to the placement of teachers in mainland universities. These teachers can touch about five thousand students with a Christian witness.
3. *Philippines*. Our partner church, the Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines, achieved a significant milestone this year by holding a meeting of synod and appointing its first general secretary. The synod brought together the many language and sociological groups which make up the church. There are thirty-five organized and about sixty emerging churches in the national church. World Missions' involvement moved significantly toward a support role. Presently World Missions personnel are involved mostly in leadership training at formal and informal levels.
4. *Guam and Micronesia*. World Missions saw the achievement of a \$975,000 sales goal from the Faith Bookstore. World Missions also filled more than its share of the training responsibilities at the Pacific Island Bible College, much of its work being done in the extension program of the school. In December of 1997, typhoon Paka hit Guam hard, with much material damage. Losses to Faith Bookstore were \$10,000, two vehicles were totally destroyed, and minor damage was done to the missionary's house.

5. *Pakistan*. World Missions works with World Witness, the foreign-mission arm of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and loans one missionary family to the work in Pakistan. The Scripture-translation work of the missionary shifted to church planting in Karachi. This joint effort is likely to conclude in 1998.

### C. *Europe*

1. *France*. We have completed a five-year agreement with the Evangelical Reformed Church in France for the placement of a professor at the church's seminary.
2. *Hungarian ministries*. World Missions' involvement has been very much in a support role. In eastern Europe the Hungarian Reformed Church has been our partner; the work includes parts of Hungary, Ukraine, and Romania. Since the government relinquished control a number of years ago, leadership training and placement of teachers in church-run schools has been World Missions' strategy. This year will see the first graduates from these schools. There are about 150 students in training.
3. *Russia*. Our work is part of an interagency ministry effort, a matter to celebrate. Reading rooms have provided fertile soil in which the first converts have "sprouted." Religious freedom is still a very sensitive issue.

### D. *Latin America*

World Missions has experienced a year of advances and reverses in the fields and projects in Latin America.

1. *Central America*. The greatest upheaval was seen in Honduras. Many ministry goals were placed on hold due to the struggles internal to the Christian Reformed Church in Honduras. Fourteen baptisms were reported in northern Honduras; the greatest growth in Honduras continues in the eastern region of the country. Similar struggles in the partner groups in El Salvador led to disappointing results. In Costa Rica there was a large turnover of staff though relations between the mission and the national church have improved. No growth was reported here. With a joint CRWRC-World Missions effort, the church partner in Nicaragua has shown signs of growth.
2. *Cuba*. The Christian Reformed Church in Cuba saw growth limited only by the size of the buildings. The \$40,000 grant and six visits by visiting leadership trainers (two from Calvin Theological Seminary) were goals set and met.
3. *Dominican Republic*. Here World Missions has seen a significant shift in strategy from a missionary serving a congregation to a missionary supporting the ministry of national pastors who are doing the church planting. Training programs at the local and zonal level are now covered by national leaders; World Missions personnel focus on more specialized ministries. A ten-year phaseout goal now is in place. Instruction at the university level has increased. Supervision of teachers in the Christian day schools has begun to shift to qualified national teachers/supervisors, and World Missions has reduced its staffing in this program. Membership in the national church has plateaued at about 10,500 with eighty-five pastors tending 80 organized and 120 emerging churches.

4. *Ecuador*. The tragic death of Neal Eldrenkamp will upset plans, but goals were reached in the production of training literature (under InterVarsity) and the contribution to a revision of a new NIV-equivalent of the Spanish Scriptures.
5. *Haiti*. This was the quietest, most peaceful, and productive year for our joint ministry with CRWRC in Haiti. The teacher-training program has been highly successful with some two hundred students in twelve centers and sixty-six graduates. Seminars touched 140 teachers representing twenty-eight day schools and 5,100 students.
6. *Mexico*. World Missions enjoyed its best year with its partner, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Mexico. The decline in number of students studying for leadership positions was the biggest concern for the year. Church development in the Tijuana area saw some growth, but the goal of establishing a classis in northwest Mexico was not achieved. The RPCM has 125 congregations, about 15,000 members.
7. *Puerto Rico*. World Missions grants continue to decrease according to plan. Two new churches were planted, and one church was reopened.
8. *Cooperative International Theological Education (CITE)*. CITE was served by one missionary, who conducted important teacher-training workshops in Cuba and Mexico in the context of needs analysis for Christian (church) education. In this ministry World Missions works with CRC World Literature Ministries in the editing and production of training material in Spanish.

### III. Ministry in Canada and the U.S.A.

Whereas World Missions-International's major focus is on field ministry, the ministry and plans of World Missions-U.S.A. and World Missions-Canada are focused on challenging the CRCNA to respond to the mission needs of the world. A positive working relationship continues to exist between the Burlington and Grand Rapids offices. Through a joint-venture agreement the two give administrative support to one world-missions outreach. This challenge involves developing a strong mission vision and connection between the church and its missionaries and mission programs.

1. *Network of prayer*. World Missions recognizes that the power of prayer is what drives our ministry. Therefore, through all our contacts, both written and verbal, we continually challenge the church to be a praying church. Modern technology such as e-mail and fax machines provides exciting opportunities to make such prayer requests readily available and more meaningful. As staff we have attempted to model that as well in our personal lives and in our daily gatherings for a time of communal prayer.
2. *Mission vision*. There is significant variation in the level of passion for mission ministry within our churches. Some, particularly the elderly, are very loyal and very mission minded. Others appear to be more interested in local initiatives. The real challenge that faces us in the future is nurturing a passion for the lost and suffering in the hearts and minds of younger generations. Special initiatives are being taken to respond to this challenge.

We are excited about and encouraged by the number of churches who are partnering specifically with one or more of our missionaries. We recognize that the vision for mission can best be advanced through the stories and experiences of our missionaries. We are committed to build on that partnership.

3. *Partnership development.* Pilot projects are presently in the works between a group of churches/ classes or business groups and a specific country, field, or project. Through such special partnerships we hope that a greater sense of passion and urgency for our missions ministry will grow.
4. *Regional and local representatives.* World Missions-Canada and World Missions-U.S.A. work through a network of regional and local-church representatives. Through seminars in each region we provide opportunities to share about the mission ministry and to encourage each other. In seminars we can also discuss new ways to make this great ministry become real and alive to the churches that we serve together. Exploration is presently underway in Canada to pilot seminars that would combine the efforts of all CRC mission agencies.

#### IV. Personnel matters

Training programs will prepare 7 long-term and 140 short-term people.

	FY1996-1997	FY1997-1998	FY1998-1999
Long-term missionaries	101	98	98
Missionary spouses	87	84	84
Total	188	182	182
Partner missionaries	56	58	58
SMP volunteers	39	34	34
Other volunteers	13	12	12
Seminary interns	2	4	4
Associate missionaries	36	34	34
Total	146	142	142
Grand total	334	324	324

It costs World Missions just under \$65,000 to send and keep a long-term missionary family overseas for one year. About one-half of this support comes from denominational ministry shares. An average of eleven sending and supporting churches supply most of the other half with faith-promise or above-ministry-share support. Individuals can also support missionaries directly rather than through their local churches. Short-term partner missionaries, associate missionaries, and summer mission participants usually serve for one to two years and do not receive salaries from World Missions. They raise their own support (travel and living allowance) from churches and friends, support themselves, or, in the case of many partner missionaries, are supported by a job in the country to which they go.

All of our fields and 95 percent of our three hundred missionaries are connected via the Internet to the office and to each other. This greatly increases the mission's ability for communication and distribution of mission news.

The names and addresses of our missionaries and regional representatives may be found on the back pages of the World Missions calendar. These and

World Missions' administrators are also listed in the Directory of Agencies and Committees of the CRC *Yearbook*.

Each year we give tribute to missionaries and office staff who are celebrating significant anniversaries of service. This year we honor the following for five to thirty years of service with World Missions:

Mr. Lee and Mrs. Carolyn Baas (Nigeria and Philippines) 30 years  
Miss Lois Craven (Hungary) 5 years  
Mr. Gerald Cremer (Nigeria and Grand Rapids office) 30 years  
Rev. Merle Den Bleyker (Puerto Rico and Grand Rapids office) 25 years  
Miss Cecelia Drenth (Central America) 25 years  
Rev. Henry and Mrs. Judy De Vries (Guam) 20 years  
Rev. Steve and Mrs. Lori De Vries (Philippines and Dominican Republic) 10 years  
Mr. Dave and Mrs. Jan Dykgraaf (Nigeria) 30 years  
Miss Mary Kaldeway (Nigeria and Kenya) 25 years  
Mr. Al Karsten (Canada office) 5 years  
Mr. Gene and Mrs. Dawn Michelson (Mali) 10 years  
Mrs. Marcia Otte (Grand Rapids office) 15 years  
Mrs. Kristy Quist, (Grand Rapids office) 5 years  
Mr. Ken Schemper (Nigeria and Grand Rapids office) 10 years  
Rev. Kurt and Mrs. Vicki Selles (Taiwan) 10 years  
Mr. Greg and Mrs. Nellie Sinclair (Mali) 5 years  
Mr. Bill and Mrs. Sandy Thornburg (Nigeria) 10 years  
Miss Kathy VanderKloet (Nigeria) 10 years  
Rev. Ken and Mrs. Sally Vanderwal (Central America) 5 years  
Mr. Larry and Mrs. Rose Van Zee (Nigeria) 20 years  
Rev. George and Mrs. Ruth Young (Japan) 15 years

Two missionary couples retired from World Missions' service during the year: Rev. Gerrit and Mrs. Ruth Koedoot, who served for thirty-one years in Japan and the Philippines (they will continue serving with World Missions as volunteers), and Rev. Peter and Mrs. Freda Tong, who served for thirty-three years in Taiwan.

## **V. Cooperation with other agencies**

World Missions cooperates with The Back to God Hour, CRC Publications, CRWRC, and Calvin Theological Seminary in a number of countries. Calvin Theological Seminary's Mission Institute provides World Missions with seminars and workshops for our missionaries, and many of our overseas seminaries benefit from short-term teaching by seminary professors, who have also provided on-field seminars for some missionaries. This includes the joint implementation of the strategic plan adopted by the denomination. Staff in the Canada office has been very active in piloting various initiatives which focus on mobilizing the new Canadian ministry structure. Indications are that through a cooperative, interagency approach World Missions will be able to be more effective and efficient, especially in the area of church relations and communication.

## **VI. Governance and administration**

The World Missions Committee holds its annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, May 4-6, 1998, at which time the committees of World Missions-Canada and World Missions-U.S.A. will meet separately to attend to mission matters peculiar to Canada and the U.S.A. and jointly to attend to the common task of governing and overseeing our mission fields and projects through World Missions-International. The executive committee meets jointly and separately in February (Canada), September (Grand Rapids), and December (Grand Rapids).

Consolidation of financial services has begun. This transition for all the agencies is still in process, and its impact remains difficult to assess.

The new structure for ministries in Canada was approved by synod and is in its beginning stages. Presently a committee is in place to consider a new design for ministries in the U.S.A. While it can be expected that the Canadian design will figure prominently in the minds of the structure-committee members, the committee is seeking input for a new structure for World Missions-U.S.A.

## **VII. Long-Range Plan and fiscal 1998-1999**

Copies of World Missions' Long-Range Plan are available on request. It describes our vision, mission, purpose, values, mission task, design of fields and projects, deployment guidelines and plans, strategic issues for effective mission, and the force for mission provided by the CRCNA. This plan has been updated and is being used to give shape to our three-year plan as well as to our annual plan and budget.

With the proposed budget for 1998-1999 World Missions will support 98 long-term missionaries (84 spouses who volunteer much time to ministry) and 142 short-term missionaries (including spouses) for a total of 324 active missionaries, accompanied by many children. They will be supported by an administration of 23 full-time and 4 part-time staff, based in Grand Rapids and Burlington. Many regional representatives and their spouses based in North American also offer much support.

The budget from July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999, will be \$13,075,021. North American administrative and promotional expenses will be 12.6 percent of the budget. Budget details will be provided in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

## **VIII. Salary information**

World Missions provides the following information about missionary salaries. In fiscal 1997-1998 the base salary for single missionaries is \$20,504, and the base for married couples is \$26,655. In addition, each missionary receives 1.1 percent of the single base salary for each year of applicable prior service for a maximum of twenty years (1.4 percent of base salary for each year of World Missions service). Educational allowances in the amount of 2.3 percent of single base salary for an M.A., 3.4 percent of single base salary for an M.Div., and 4.5 percent of single base salary for a Ph.D. are provided. World Missions provides assistance for educational costs of children. World Missions also provides U.S. Social Security payment or allowance and Canada pension payment; payments to denominational pension plans, which include disability insurance; worker's compensation insurance; medical and hospitalization

costs; housing; an automobile or mileage reimbursement for overseas ministry; and a cost-of-living differential where applicable.

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	1	2nd quartile
16	5	2nd and 3rd quartile
15	1	3rd quartile

### **IX. Recommendations**

World Missions-Canada and World Missions-U.S.A. recommend the following:

A. That the president of World Missions-Canada, Rev. Jack Quartel; the president of World-Missions U.S.A., Rev. William Renkema; and the World Missions-International executive director, Rev. Merle Den Bleyker, be given the privilege of meeting with appropriate advisory committees of synod and represent World Missions to synod when synod deals with matters related to this agency.

B. That synod continue World Missions on its list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

C. That synod encourage all Christian Reformed churches to recognize Pentecost Sunday as a significant opportunity to take an offering for Christian Reformed World Missions.

Christian Reformed World Missions  
Merle Den Bleyker, international director

## **I. Introduction**

During the past three years CRWRC realized that our structure, organizational culture, and functions needed to be changed in order to achieve our vision of helping the poor, the community, and the body of believers to flourish. We became aware that our organizational structure and culture were contributing to independent and competitive behaviors internally. However, it was our desire to be a more significant part of the collaborative ministry of the body of believers which led to the final decision to change. A new style of management was chosen which values networking, interdependence, cooperation, collaboration, and the formation of multifunctional work teams.

That process of change began in 1995, and the assignments of reorganization were completed in July 1997. The transition from the old supervisory chain of accountability to the new self-managed work teams was more difficult than we had anticipated. In retrospect, it appears that the "covered wagon" of CRWRC change has crossed a very deep and turbulent river of transition and has now touched down on the other side. With the new self-managed work teams there are a number of small creeks that still need to be forded, but the main crossing has been completed.

As reported in CRWRC's report to Synod 1997, the basic units in the new CRWRC structure are teams, which are organized in an integrated fashion. Teams allow their members to participate fully in the mission of the organization, to use and develop their gifts to the fullest. An integrated structure ensures that teams are well coordinated with and connected to each other as well as to the poor whom we serve and to the CRC constituency, whom we also serve.

There are several types of teams in the new structure. Geographic ministry teams directly carry out the work of CRWRC, showing God's love to people in physical and spiritual need. They do this by facilitating a direct connection between our supporting constituency and the poor—to channel the interest, love, prayers, and support of those who are in a position to transmit such blessings. At the same time, they channel, in the other direction, the learning and the love that come from working with our partners. The five geographic ministry teams are "in the field," working intimately with partners in North America, Latin America, West Africa, East Africa, and Asia, building and nurturing collaborative and supportive relationships that help partners to grow, attain a better standard of living, and ultimately become self-sufficient.

Geographic ministry teams are coordinated and supported in various functions by the home-office-based functional teams, or specialized teams. These provide direction and consistency in the areas of program, administration, and communications and resource development.

The combined efforts of the geographic ministry teams and functional teams are facilitated and integrated by the Facilitation and Integration Team, which is composed of the codirectors and representatives of various teams, who meet together to ensure that all activities are in harmony and that the overall objectives of the organization are being realized. The Facilitation and Integration Team is responsible for implementing the decisions of CRWRC's board with maximum integrity and for making recommendations to the board.

Inherent in this new structure is an increased delegation of decision making and authority to the level where the quality and quantity of available information best enable sound and timely decisions. To avoid compromising governance, however, we will simultaneously strengthen accountability. Team leaders will be selected by a responsible process. The flow of information will be channeled and focused to ensure that all team members get the information necessary for their own work or monitoring activities.

CRWRC believes its new structure will greatly enhance its ability to cooperate within CRWRC. In addition, the new structure is ideally suited to promoting the type of interagency integration that is needed to implement the CRCNA strategy approved by Synod 1997.

## **II. Board and executive-committee matters**

The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America asked the agencies of the Christian Reformed Church for suggestions about restructuring the boards of the agencies. With the endorsement of the executive director of ministries, CRWRC is both suggesting and field testing a new structure for CRWRC ministries. In this structure, the expenses of committee members are considered to be public-relations costs, and the expenses of CRWRC's board are administrative costs.

### *A. CRWRC's Binational Committee*

1. Meetings of the committee: annually, composed of representatives from the classes and several members-at-large.
2. Work of the committee
  - a. Ensure two-way grass-roots communication between its supporters and CRWRC.
  - b. Endorse major budget proposals submitted by the administration.
  - c. Endorse major policy decisions submitted by the administration.
  - d. Annually elect six Canadian and six U.S. delegates to serve on the board's binational executive committee.

### *B. CRWRC's Binational Board*

1. Meetings of the board: quarterly, composed of six elected members from the U.S.A. committee and six elected members from the Canadian committee.
2. Work of the Binational Board
  - a. Review and update the Long-Range Plan for endorsement by the committee.
  - b. Annually provide the committee with a report on CRWRC's ministry and cost effectiveness.
  - c. Review budgets/programs and submit major proposals to the committee for its endorsement.
  - d. Review policies and submit major proposals to the committee for its endorsement.

C. *Officers of CRWRC-Canada*

Mr. Peter Bulthuis, president  
Mr. Marvin De Vries, vice president  
Ms. Pauline Prins, secretary  
Mr. Lawrence De Graaf, treasurer  
Mr. Jack Feenstra, vice all

D. *Officers of CRWRC-U.S.A.*

Mr. Calvin Hulst, president  
Ms. Carol Van Ess-Dykema, vice president  
Ms. Kay Yoder, secretary  
Mr. Barry Haven, treasurer

E. *Vision*

CRWRC's vision is to enable and empower people to interdependent responses in such a way that the poor, the community, and the body of believers flourish.

Achieving this vision of wholistic ministry is possible because of the strengths with which God has blessed the CRC. A vision built on the strengths of God's people draws people together in a common ministry directed by the Holy Spirit. But people also need to be given opportunity to bring their best efforts to this ministry, to see the larger vision of what God is doing in the world, and to be invited into this wholistic ministry.

CRWRC is exploring ways to bring people together, to help people work together, to build on their strengths . . . to flourish.

### III. *CRWRC's programs and ministries*

A. *Development regions*

CRWRC's five geographic ministry teams are setting out signposts of the kingdom in East Africa, West Africa, Latin America, Asia, and North America. The key is to bring about changes that build community and transform people, changes that will last even after CRWRC leaves, changes that point to Jesus and his kingdom's values and victories. CRWRC continues to focus on child health, adult literacy, increasing family incomes, and increasing people's ability to work together in ways that build their neighborhoods and communities.

But there is a lot more to community development than health, literacy, income, and group formation. CRWRC is learning about the explosive kind of change that can be unleashed when organizations from the business community, the government, and the church; overseas partner organizations; and the gifts of the poor are yoked into collaborative efforts that wholistically address economic systems, justice, and the environment. Balancing individual and group approaches, integrating diaconal and community-based approaches, finding the gifts and needs in each community, addressing both short- and long-term issues—these are some of the dimensions of the complex task of community development as CRWRC carries it out.

Political turmoil, economic chaos, tyrannical oppression—these are frequently the conditions in which staff work. Targeting the appropriate population with the appropriate approach, ensuring that in the midst of the

complexities and obstacles human needs are being addressed and human potential is being unleashed, all in ways that set out signposts of the kingdom—that's the excitement of our task. Refugee populations, the growing AIDS epidemic, natural disasters, religious and ethnic conflicts, the collapse of economies in Asia, and increasingly common instances of whole segments of a society experiencing severe trauma—these are some of the specific challenges that make the development environment complex.

CRWRC has experienced significant reduction in staff in all five regions as the number of positions has been reduced, and it is increasingly difficult to recruit new staff with the requisite skills. Staff are spread very thin, and we are challenged to find ways to build up our staff capacity again in spite of budget restraints and recruiting difficulties.

In every region CRWRC staff are at work with deacons of churches, helping them to strengthen their ministry to the churches and to the neighbors. In every region staff are at work with community organizations, building their capacity to carry out quality development.

We are anticipating a large new grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (US AID) which (if we are successful) would begin early in 1998-1999. The purpose of this grant would be to assist CRWRC to learn how to build coalitions among organizations that will increase the capacity of the organizations while also developing new capacities in poor communities. Continued (though perhaps reduced) funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will help us continue to focus on new learning and on the longer-range outcomes of our development work. New initiatives have begun which build links between congregations and community organizations as well as between CRC agencies. Greater use of short-term volunteers and more links with CRC business persons are priorities for every region. A new emphasis on justice—helping teams respond to injustice more effectively and helping CRC members to understand justice issues more clearly through personal involvement—is another important theme in every region. Our collaboration with Partners for Christian Development brings new capacity to CRWRC to help address issues of economics, business, and job development.

CRWRC has undergone significant restructuring to make it more responsive, more effective, and more flexible in an increasingly complex environment characterized by constant change. Our prayer is that the Lord of the church will use us as instruments of his will, shaped to his hand.

What are our results? As can be seen from the following chart, there is a major difference between what CRWRC projected it would do for 1996-1997 and what it actually did. We speculate that there are two reasons for this wide gap. First, CRWRC did not provide enough resources for evaluation in previous years, and the reporting became imprecise. Second, making the transition from a supervisory chain of accountability to self-managed work teams is disruptive. It's something like remodeling a store while you are still open for business. (A very helpful book entitled *The Wisdom of Teams* by Katzenbach and Smith presents a graph that clearly shows a temporary decrease in performance during the transition to becoming a high-performance team.)

Geographic Ministry Team	1996-1997 participants projected	1996-1997 participants actual	1996-1997 participants unit cost
Asia	24,944	17,018	\$ 58.00
East Africa	66,808	32,000	\$ 32.00
Latin America	35,207	14,287	\$138.00
West Africa	12,280	9,622	\$126.00
North America	4,959	4,856	\$169.00
Total served	144,198	77,823	\$ 77.00

In the introduction to this report we stated that "inherent in this new structure is an increased delegation of decision making and authority to the level where the quality and quantity of available information best enable sound and timely decisions. To avoid compromising governance, however, we will simultaneously strengthen accountability." Good stewardship of the Lord's resources demands such accountability. This year CRWRC has put an increased emphasis on accountability. As part of our report to the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, CRWRC's board and its own staff made the following observations:

There are so many variables in the conditions and programs on each field that it is hard to judge one against another, or one region against another. We need to be careful in doing this. Yet we can see that there are some fields that are all-around good performers, others that are promising, others that are vulnerable to deterioration, and maybe one or two that are in serious trouble.

In summary, CRWRC has gone through some turbulent times while making the transition to self-managed work teams. We believe that this transition was essential to help us work better together in CRWRC, the CRCNA, and the broader evangelical community.

#### B. Justice education

Educational efforts toward justice education incorporate on-site education through tours, work groups, long-term volunteers, and service and training positions. CRWRC's justice-education subteam is also a connection point for interagency denomination-wide justice education.

Justice education has an *action* component (i.e., work groups install water systems, local partner organizes women to advocate for change in local law) and a North American supporter/church-membership educational component (i.e., work-group members learn about life for people living in poverty or about the need for advocacy by Christians in North America).

We are particularly excited about

- Placing staff on the geographic ministry teams to coordinate local efforts to educate our North American constituency and to respond to injustices that occur in the regions.
- Providing opportunities for Christian business people to get involved directly.
- Continuing to develop quality educational events and materials.
- Collaborating with other faith-based groups in educational efforts.
- Working with other CRC agencies in the denominational efforts of Free to Serve and Church in Society.
- Responding to the needs of those suffering from injustice and those who wish to understand and stand with them.

### C. *Relief*

Needs have been intense, and our response capability has increased through important linkages with other organizations and denominations. Among them are the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency, Dorcas International, the Reformed Church in America, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Disaster Response Services in Canada and the U.S.A. included completion of recovery after tornadoes in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Detroit, Michigan; a tropical storm in Albany, Georgia; Hurricane Fran in North Carolina; and floods in Nehalem Valley, Oregon, and Dayton, Washington. Work continues in 1998 in response to Red River flooding in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Grand Forks, South Dakota; floods in Modesto, California; tornado in Little Rock, Arkansas; ice storms in the east; and probably other locations.

In 1996-1997, 668 volunteers donated 61,771 hours on 243 homes and 5,809 needs assessments with nine interfaith and/or community organizations.

In the first six months of 1997-1998, 807 volunteers have donated 46,715 hours on 75 homes and 11,303 needs assessments with six interfaith and/or community organizations.

In Canada, we also provide child care for children in disasters and a center for trauma and torture.

International responses included used-clothing distribution to Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea; food products, medicines, and mosquito nets for flood victims in Kenya; food-for-work activities along with seed and tool distribution in war-devastated Rwanda; assistance for food, housing, replanting, and medicines in hurricane-stricken areas of Mexico; responses in conjunction with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

### D. *Canadian Foodgrains Bank*

As one of thirteen church-based partner members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, CRWRC annually commits \$250,000 (Canadian) to its account at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. This \$250,000, together with funds committed by our Foodgrains partners to projects initiated and managed by CRWRC and matched by Canadian government funds, amounted to more than \$4 million (Canadian) during the past year. The increasing role of overseas CRWRC and World Missions staff in carrying out these projects is essential. Food distribution and food-for-work programs took place in Nicaragua, Mexico, Cuba, Bangladesh, Burundi, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Niger, and North Korea.

North Korea is a special focus of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank activities. The total spending of the Foodgrains Bank members passed the \$6.5 million (Canadian) mark, making the partnership the largest private donor of food to this needy country. The partnership also made funds available for a sizable double-cropping scheme for barley.

CRWRC's work through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank continues to receive strong support from our constituency all across Canada. This is evident in the contribution of grains from CRC members in the farming business as well as in cash contributions. CRWRC receives ever-increasing contributions from the Canadian Reformed Church and other Reformed churches as well as from individuals. A growing number of CRC congregations are individually or together with other local churches involved in growing crops for proceeds that go to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

### E. Community services

CRWRC-Canada, together with other denominational agencies, is involved in ServiceLink, a program of the CRC in Canada which reflects the increase of volunteers in ministry. It now has seven volunteer regional coordinators, who facilitated the response of youth groups and adults to the Red River flooding, to overseas placements with CRWRC and CRWM, to Youth Unlimited SERVE projects, and to Back to God Hour/"Faith 20" and diaconal programs in their regions.

In 1996-1997, 270 volunteers served 14,171 hours. For the first six months of 1997-1998, 97 volunteers served 8,190 hours.

In the U.S.A. CRWRC linked twenty-three church groups (550 individuals) and 20 individuals with community-service ministries throughout the country.

## IV. Finance

### A. Financial history

The graph on the next page displays CRWRC revenues and expenses from 1991 to 1999 (projected).

### B. Salary disclosure

In accordance with synod's mandate to report the executive levels and the percentage of midpoint, CRWRC reports the following:

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	2	2nd and 3rd quartile
17	2	3rd and 4th quartile
16	3	1st through 4th quartile

### C. Detailed financial information

Detailed financial information and budgets will be submitted to synod by way of the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

## V. Resource development

CRWRC income was above the planned budget for the year ending June 30, 1997, and also for the current fiscal year as of December 31, 1997. CRWRC organizes its income into four main areas: program, disaster, grants, and estates/term endowments.

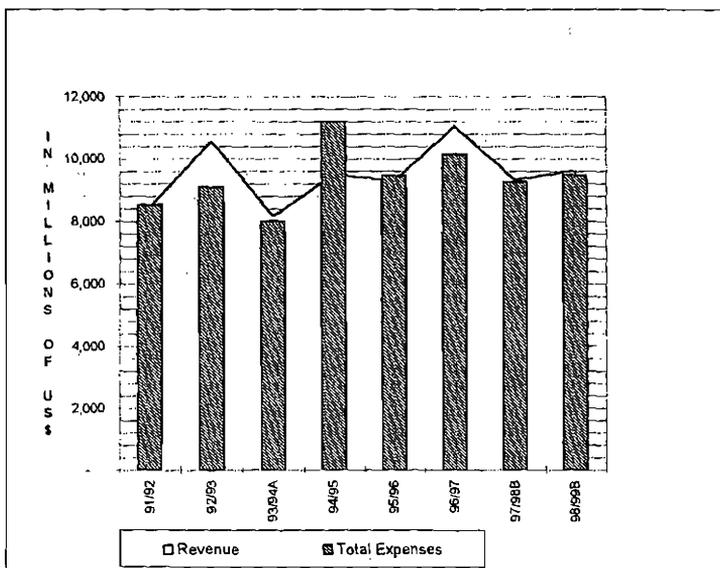
Approximately 80 percent of total income comes from the voluntary contributions of churches and individual members and is tracked as program funds. We are very grateful for this excellent support. We ask synod again to urge churches to schedule at least four offerings per year to support CRWRC in lieu of ministry share.

Disaster expenditures increased in 1996-1997 over the previous year. Funds for disasters come from churches and members in response to specific appeals as needed. When necessary, funds designated for disaster response are supplemented by program funds to carry out the approved disaster-response programs. This happened in 1996-1997.

**CRWRC - CONSOLIDATED  
REVENUE AND EXPENSE HISTORY/BUDGETS  
(Including Disasters)**

(A = 10 months, B = Budget)

	91/92	92/93	93/94A	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98B	98/99B
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>8,463</b>	<b>10,577</b>	<b>8,162</b>	<b>9,513</b>	<b>9,290</b>	<b>11,056</b>	<b>9,325</b>	<b>9,631</b>
Overseas	5,354	5,432	4,312	5,977	5,481	5,548	5,459	5,610
North America	594	611	917	1,317	1,165	1,005	978	1,089
Dis. Resp. Serv.	954	1,457	1,288	1,849	876	1,674	818	803
Resource Devel.	813	762	743	1,086	1,026	983	1,009	1,079
Administration	820	840	751	987	894	932	1,001	909
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>8,535</b>	<b>9,102</b>	<b>8,011</b>	<b>11,216</b>	<b>9,452</b>	<b>10,142</b>	<b>9,265</b>	<b>9,490</b>
<b>Net rev./ (exp.)</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>1,475</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>(1,703)</b>	<b>(162)</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>141</b>



CRWRC Canada continues to receive significant support in the form of government grants from the Canadian International Development Agency. Last year this amounted to \$1,304,491. CRWRC U.S.A. also receives government grants from the United States Agency for International Development. Last year this amounted to \$971,024, including nearly \$600,000 for emergency relief work in the Rwanda crisis.

From time to time CRWRC receives bequests. These special gifts are now applied to support the ministry through the Joseph Fund, a seven-year-term endowment program. Detailed information about the Joseph Fund is available from CRWRC upon request.

## **VI. Retirement of Mr. John De Haan**

In 1978 Mr. John De Haan was appointed to be the executive director of CRWRC. The changes that have taken place within CRWRC since that time are significant because these changes have affected every part of CRWRC's ministry. John De Haan has played a leading and very significant role in the development of what CRWRC has become. "I want to do as much as I can for the kingdom before the Lord returns" is one of John's common sayings. In saying it, he has become a very uncommon person. The CRC owes a debt of gratitude to John for his twenty years of service in the mission of the church.

## **VII. Appointment of new CRWRC-U.S.A. director**

The search to identify nominees for the CRWRC-U.S.A. director was conducted over a period of twelve months. Initially twenty-seven persons indicated an interest in being considered for the position. The conclusion of the search process is that the board of CRWRC nominated and the Board of Trustees appointed Mr. Andrew Ryskamp at its February 1998 meeting. Mr. Ryskamp's resumé is attached to this report as an appendix. Synod is requested to ratify the appointment in a manner of synod's choosing.

## **VIII. Recommendations**

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Mr. Calvin Hulst, president of CRWRC-U.S.A.; Mr. Marvin De Vries, president of CRWRC-Canada; Mr. John De Haan, director of CRWRC-U.S.A; and Mr. Wayne deJong, director of CRWRC-Canada, when CRWRC matters are discussed.

B. That CRWRC missionaries who are presently in North America be presented to and acknowledged by synod.

C. That synod commend the work of mercy carried on by CRWRC and urge the churches to take at least four offerings per year in lieu of ministry-share support.

D. That synod ratify the appointment of Mr. Andrew Ryskamp as director of CRWRC-U.S.A.

E. That synod approve the nomination of a pastoral adviser and alternate for CRWRC-U.S.A. from the following list of names:

### *Member-at-large (pastoral adviser)*

*Rev. Manuel Ortiz* currently serves as professor of ministry and mission at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Rev. Ortiz has served as pastor of the Evangelical Free Church in Salem and Chicago, Illinois; the Independent Spirit and Truth Fellowship, Chicago, Illinois; the Spirit and Truth Fellowship CRC in Chicago, Illinois, and as urban-mission consultant in Chicago.

*Rev. Robert Price*, a long-time associate of the Navigators, has begun leadership-development work with Roseland CRC and with African-American leaders in the CRC. As African-American ministries director, Rev. Price identifies, recruits, and assists with training potential leaders from the African-American community. In addition, he works to develop a sense of community among African-American leaders in the Christian Reformed Church and facilitates networking with people of other cultures.

*Alternate member-at-large (pastoral adviser)*

*Rev. Gilbert Varela* has served the Christian Reformed Church in ministry at Sol del Valle CRC in Sun Valley, California, since 1995. He currently serves as codelegate from Classis Greater Los Angeles to CRWRC's board of delegates.

F. That synod take note of Mr. John De Haan's twenty years of service and permit him to say his farewell to synod at a time of synod's choosing:

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee  
John De Haan, CRWRC-U.S.A. director  
Wayne deJong, CRWRC-Canada director

## Appendix 1

### Resumé of Mr. Andrew Ryskamp

ANDREW RYSKAMP  
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### PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

I want to honor God in every aspect of my life so that others can readily see Christ through me and I can speak boldly of the hope I have in him. In my various roles, in family, church, work, and community, I will live by the following values as exemplified in God's Word: love, justice, servanthood, integrity, and learning.

### EDUCATION

Ridgetown College of Agriculture Technology, Ridgetown, Ontario (1968-1970): *Associate Degree (Agribusiness)*.

University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario (1970-1971): Additional courses in Agriculture Science.

Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan (1976-1979): *Bachelor of Arts degree (Business, Economics, and Sociology)*.

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan (1983-1984): *Master of Development Administration*. Focus was on development issues in the developing countries.

### LANGUAGES

English, Dutch, Bengali, Tagalog

### EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian Award, Ridgetown College, 1973.
- Athlete of the Year, Ridgetown College, 1970.
- Dean's List, Calvin College, 1979.
- Recipient of Shilling Award for academic excellence in political science, 1985.

## EXPERIENCE

Director of U.S. Ministries, CRWRC: 1993 - June 1997.

Responsible for planning and implementation of programs in the U.S., including urban community development, diaconal consultation, disaster response, community services, education and advocacy, and integration and networking with CRC agencies and other related organizations.

Director of Diaconal Ministries-U.S., CRWRC: December 1985-1992.

Responsible for marketing plan to raise \$4.9 million for CRWRC from U.S. constituents, as well as implementation of U.S. programs. These programs involve organizational development and consultation in building a nationwide network (diaconal conferences) of community-outreach programs with local churches.

Foreign Program Staff Coordinator, CRWRC: July 1983-August 1985.

Recruit and interview staff for foreign development programs.

Responsible for administering home-office support to maintain high staff morale.

Responsible for all disaster programs where no CRWRC staff were present. Acting Director for Sierra Leone, a joint CRWRC-World Missions field, September 1984 to January 1985.

Acting Director and Community Developer, CRWRC, Philippines: 1980-1983.

Supervise expatriate and national staff in comprehensive development program in a joint effort with World Missions' church-planting efforts. Motivate communities to address poverty in their areas, coordinate and develop resources with them.

Project Director, CRWRC Bangladesh: 1974-1976.

Supervised two expatriate and fourteen national staff in a comprehensive agriculture-development project run jointly with Mennonite Central Committee.

Crop Products Supervisor, United Cooperatives of Ontario, Ailsa Craig Ontario: 1971-1974.

## INTERESTS/RELATED INFORMATION

- Member: Alger Park CRC
  - member and chair of Social Justice Committee
  - deacon
  - member of Congregational MasterPlanning team
  - chair of Outreach Team for two years
  - board member of Ramoth House shelter
  - member of prayer team.
- Member: Society for International Development.
- Member: Bread for the World, Evangelicals for Social Action, Prison Fellowship, Amnesty International.

**PERSONAL DATA**

Married with two sons. Canadian citizen/U.S. resident alien. Excellent health.

**REFERENCES**

Professional references provided upon request.

## **I. Introduction**

The Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. was organized by Synod 1983 with a directive to assist organized Christian Reformed churches in the financing of capital improvements. The Loan Fund concentrates its efforts in the United States; Canada has its own similar fund. The board of directors, responsible to synod, oversees the loan-approval process and the determination of interest rates. The board also establishes interest rates for securities sold primarily to Christian Reformed constituents.

## **II. Board of directors**

The terms of Ms. Jany Admiraal-Nykamp and Rev. Gerard Dykstra expire on June 30, 1998. Both Ms. Admiraal-Nykamp and Rev. Dykstra are eligible to serve second three-year terms. The board requests synod to appoint two board members from the following nominees for terms as stated:

### *A. Position 1 - select one for a three-year term through June 2001*

*Ms. Jany Admiraal-Nykamp* (incumbent) is a member of Seymour CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she is a member of the auditing committee and sanctuary choir. She is a graduate of Calvin College, holds a CPA designation, and is a supervisor with Helmholdt and Company LLP, CPAs.

*Mr. James Fredricks* is a member of Georgetown CRC, Hudsonville, Michigan, where he is an administrative elder. A graduate of Calvin College, he is president of the West Michigan Community Bank. Mr. Fredricks previously served on the board of Christian Reformed Home Missions.

### *B. Position 2 - select one for a three-year term through June 2001*

*Rev. Gerard Dykstra* (incumbent) is the pastor of Walnut Creek CRC, Walnut Creek, California. A graduate of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, he previously served as pastor of Cascade, Michigan, CRC and prior to ordination was president and general manager of Brinderson De Laval Sales and Service, Inc. Rev. Dykstra was a delegate to synod three times, is a member of the Classis Central California Task Force on Ministry and Structure, and serves as a Congregational MasterPlanning consultant to six churches.

*Rev. William G. Vis* is the pastor of Pleasant Street CRC in Whitinsville, Massachusetts. A graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary, he previously served churches in South Dakota, Illinois, and Florida. Rev. Vis has served on the executive committee of the Christian Reformed World Missions board and has been a delegate to synod. He considers finance to be an avocation.

The remaining members of the board of directors are Mr. Gerard Borst (1999), Ms. Arlissa Joseph (1999), Mr. Jon Feikens (2000), and Mr. Curtis Witte (2000).

## **III. Growth of operations**

A. The Loan Fund is qualified to sell notes to investors in twenty-eight states and in the District of Columbia: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska,

Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, and Washington. Efforts continue to add other states with CRC populations if cost of registration is reasonable.

B. At the close of the fiscal year (June 30, 1997) a total of \$8,625,105 of interest-bearing notes held by investors was outstanding. Maturities range from one year to nine years, and interest rates vary from 5.5 percent to 7.5 percent, with a time-weighted average of 6.81 percent. The variances in interest rates reflect market conditions at the time the notes were issued.

C. To date nearly three hundred requests for loan information have been received from various Christian Reformed churches in the United States; more than eighty loan applications have been approved. As of June 30, 1997, a total of \$10,574,764 (U.S.) was outstanding. Loan delinquencies do occur from time to time, but they are monitored and minimal.

D. Growth of operations is also reflected in the following data (U.S. and Canada consolidated):

	1995	1996	1997
Cash and equivalents	\$824,394	\$839,611	\$1,501,525
Loans and accounts receivable	\$9,340,295	\$9,835,476	10,310,664
Total assets	\$10,164,689	\$10,675,087	\$11,812,189
Notes and accounts payable	\$7,151,333	\$7,597,047	\$8,627,416
Net assets	\$3,013,356	\$3,078,040	\$3,184,773
Total liabilities and net assets	\$10,164,689	\$10,675,087	\$11,812,189

E. An audited financial report as of June 30, 1997, will appear in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

#### IV. Sources of funding

Funds for the Loan Fund operations are derived from the following sources:

A. The sale of notes in those states where legal approval to offer has been obtained.

B. The gradual liquidation of non-interest-bearing notes of the former Christian Reformed Church Help Committee, which was dissolved December 31, 1983. The balance of these notes as of June 30, 1997, was \$36,062 (U.S.).

C. Gifts and bequests made to the corporation.

D. Bank loans and interagency borrowing so long as these are consistent with the corporation's articles of incorporation and bylaws. The Loan Fund currently does not have any outstanding bank loans or interagency borrowing.

#### V. Staff

The Loan Fund is served by Mrs. Ethel Schierbeek (80 percent of full time), and Mr. Jack Heinen, who also provides support to CRC Home Missions as a member of the CRCNA Financial Services staff.

## **VI. Recommendations**

- A. That the Loan Fund's executive director or any members of the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to the Loan Fund are discussed.
- B. That synod approve the four nominees and that it vote for two of the four to serve on the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.  
Jack Heinen, executive director

## I. Organization

The Fund for Smaller Churches (FSC) Committee is composed of three lay people and two ministers, in keeping with previous synodical decisions. The present membership is as follows: Mr. Arthur Ruiter (1999), president; Rev. Lambert J. Sikkema (1998), secretary; Mr. Henry F. Eizenga (1998); Mr. Jack Folkerts (2000), treasurer; and Rev. Lester Van Essen (1999).

Mr. Jack Folkerts, elected by Synod 1997, was duly elected by the committee to the office of treasurer at the September 1997 meeting.

## II. Statistics for calendar year 1997

Applications processed	83 (87 in 1996; 105 in 1995)
Assistance granted	83 (some provisionally)
Average size of congregation	78 confessing members over 18
Educational allowances granted	17 (21 in 1996)

## III. The future of the Fund for Smaller Churches

The Fund for Smaller Churches has been going through a series of transitions over the past few years. Based on the results of an extended study of the agency in 1993-1994, changes were introduced in 1995 and again in 1997. In 1995 synod approved a fundamental shift in the nature of the grant system as historically understood. The concept of a 10 percent reduction in grants over each of the next ten years was approved by Synod 1995 and implemented in 1997. In that same year, the FSC reversed a decision made in 1988 regarding the "Retention of Ministry Shares" as a component of the grant formula. With this second change there was a corresponding increase in the level of support requested from all confessing members to be directed toward the salary of their own pastors.

Both of the changes described above were made with a view to increasing the level of accountability in the grant-funding system. However, there still remains a rather significant problem in the system. The committee is of the mind that the whole premise of the agency is flawed. The mandate of this agency puts it in the position of subsidizing pastors' salaries. The FSC now believes this mandate and mission do not have the best interests of our funded congregations and our denomination at heart. As long as the FSC continues to operate within its present structure and guidelines, ministry effectiveness is being compromised. The time has come for a fundamental shift in the way this ministry and mandate are carried out in our denomination.

It is not our intention to second guess the decisions of previous synods which led to the creation and maintenance of such an agency. It was a solution to a problem that was born in a different era in our ecclesiastical history. We were a different kind of church when the FSC was conceived. The existence of an agency like the FSC made a great deal of sense then, and keeping it around for all these years was an assumption no one challenged. Things change. One of the changes we are now prepared to deal with concerns the validity of the FSC as we know it.

The issue comes down to this: Should the denomination continue using ministry shares to subsidize the salaries of individual full-time pastors, or

should we use these funds to underwrite a portion of the ministry-development expenses of our established smaller churches? It may appear, upon first reading, that we are playing semantic games, but we are not. These are fundamentally different focuses. The shift necessitates an entirely new set of funding criteria. The shift also flows naturally from previous synodical decisions which emphasized the issue of increasing the financial accountability of our funded congregations.

Upon careful consideration and after much discussion, the FSC Committee is proposing that its ministry and mandate ought to be transferred to Home Missions or some other suitable agency and that the FSC Committee as presently constituted cease all operations. FSC has communicated its proposal to the Board of Trustees, which has instructed the executive director of ministries to appoint a task force to assess this proposal and formally prepare recommendations for consideration by all concerned and to forward these to Synod 1999. At this time the foregoing is for synod's information.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

A. That the secretary and treasurer of FSC be consulted on matters pertaining to FSC when considered either by synod or its advisory committee and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of either, it requests that the same privilege be granted to other members of the committee.

B. That the minimum salary for ministers serving churches receiving assistance from FSC be set at \$30,000 (\$28,800 for 1998) and that Canadian minimum salary be set at \$33,000 (\$30,000 x 110%). (See K below.)

C. That a service increment be paid according to the following scale:

\$100 per year of service for years 1-10

\$150 per year of service for years 11-20

\$200 per year of service for years 21 and up.

D. That child allowance of \$600 continue to be granted for every unmarried child up to age 19 (age 23 if enrolled full-time at an educational institution in an undergraduate program).

E. That automobile expenses be reimbursed at the rate of 32 cents a mile (32 cents per kilometer in Canada) times the percentage of ministry-share reduction granted (80 minus number of families = % reimbursement rate).

F. That an allowance of \$4,000 be granted each congregation which provides its minister with health/dental/life insurance. Insurance coverage of the pastor and family is mandatory for congregations receiving FSC assistance.

G. That salary allowance for stated supply be set at \$365 per week (this amount was \$350 in 1997, \$330 in 1996, \$320 in 1995, \$310 in 1994).

H. That the contribution toward the minister's salary in a congregation receiving assistance from FSC be not less than, and if possible more than, \$365 per communicant member for 1998.

I. That congregations in the U.S. receiving assistance from FSC shall pay a Social Security/Medicare offset to their pastor in the amount of at least \$2,730 (the amount was \$2,675 in 1998; \$2,630 in 1997; \$2,540 in 1996; \$2,425 in 1995; \$2,425 in 1994).

J. That FSC churches in the U.S. be assisted in the Social Security/Medicare offset in the following way: Churches shall receive assistance in the amount of \$2,000 in 1998.

K. That a cost-of-living differential allowance of 10 percent be added to the minimum salary and allowances paid to pastors serving Canadian congregations assisted by FSC. The Canadian churches shall also contribute at a rate of 110 percent of the per communicant member contribution rate established for the U.S. churches for 1998 ( $\$365 \times 110\% = \$401.50$ ).

*Grounds:*

1. The disparity in the cost of living between the U.S. and Canada makes such an adjustment necessary.
2. Other denominational agencies give a differential premium to those employed in Canada.

L. That synod declare the continuing-education allowance for pastors in smaller churches to continue at \$400 for 1999. We note that *all pastors* of churches with *fewer than fifty families* are eligible to apply for these funds. This educational allowance is not limited to those pastors serving churches receiving FSC grants.

M. That synod approve a Christian-education allowance of \$800 per child for each child attending a Christian school, grades K-12, for 1998.

N. That the 1999 ministry share for the Fund for Smaller Churches be set at \$7.00 per communicant member per year.

O. That Mr. Henry F. Eizenga be reelected to a second term on the FSC Committee. (This would be his first full term. He is presently filling out the term of Mr. James Hofman, who resigned from the committee because of a job transfer.)

P. That synod permit the extension of the terms of FSC members scheduled for retirement while the discussion referred to above runs its course.

Fund for Smaller Churches  
Lambert Sikkema, secretary

### I. Introduction

Pastoral Ministries continues to experience the growth pains of a newly formed agency. It was created as an agency in 1993 by the bringing together of five independent ministries: Abuse Prevention, Chaplaincy, Disability Concerns, Pastor-Church Relations, and the Synodical Committee on Race Relations. Each of these ministries had its own following among the members of the CRC, and some members still grieve the consolidation of these separate agencies into what is now called Pastoral Ministries. Unlike other CRC agencies, it is far from being a household name. At times individuals question where a particular "committee" has disappeared to or why they don't hear much about it anymore. Funding for the combined ministries is not yet stable, and the agency is too young and too small to function with a fully developed fund-raising plan. Confusion continues over the collection of ministry shares for the departments of Pastoral Ministries. For example, some churches use free-will offerings as the means of providing for the payment of Pastoral Ministries ministry shares and then designate specific departments of Pastoral Ministries rather than the agency as a whole as the recipients of the offerings, perhaps because some churches are unfamiliar with the new name and structure.

The Pastoral Ministries Board has worked hard to create a strategic plan to develop its ministry for the twenty-first century. The demand for services and resources from each of the five departments remains high. It is the intention of the Pastoral Ministries staff to train and equip individuals and congregations to enhance their opportunities for ministry within and outside the church walls.

### II. The board

#### A. *Members, meetings, nominations*

The board, composed of fifteen members, has met three times since Synod 1997: September 1997, December 1997, and February 1998. A fourth meeting is planned for April 1998. The reason for two additional board meetings is to engage in a strategic-planning process. The officers of the board are Rev. Charles Terpstra, chairman; Rev. Robert Heerspink, vice chairman; and Rev. Edward Tamminga, secretary. The board organizes its work into several committees—an executive/personnel committee, finance committee, Canadian chaplaincy committee, and program committee.

Five persons are finishing their first regular-member terms on the board: Ms. Nell DeBoer, Mr. Peter Szto, Ms. Carol Topp, Rev. Richard Williams, and Dr. Joe Wilson. The alternates whose terms are expiring are Ms. Diane Algera, Rev. Juan Flores, Mr. William Van Dyke, Ms. Marcia Van't Land, and Ms. Mary VanderVennen. Only Ms. Vander Vennen declines renomination. Rev. Peter Nicolai has resigned his position on the board to assume the position of chairman of the Canadian Ministries Board. Alternate Mr. Henry Bosch will finish out Rev. Nicolai's term as regular member of the board (2000).

Five other regular-member positions and six alternate-member positions need to be filled on the Pastoral Ministries Board. Two nominations are being

presented for each position. Persons not elected as regular delegates automatically become nominees for alternate-delegate positions.

### 1. Position 1

#### *Regular member*

*Ms. Diane Algera* (alternate incumbent), from Port Hope, Ontario, has served on the Canadian Chaplain Committee since 1990. She is a member of Grace CRC in Coburg, Ontario.

*Rev. Ruth Hofman* is pastor of First CRC in Toronto, Ontario. She serves as chair of the classical home-missions committee.

#### *Alternate member*

*Ms. Nell DeBoer* (incumbent), from Willowdale, Ontario, has served on the Canadian Chaplain Committee since 1991. She is a chaplain for Classis Toronto Hospital Ministry Committee. She is a member of Willowdale CRC in Willowdale.

*Nominee not elected as member.*

### 2. Position 2

#### *Regular member*

*Mr. Norman Suhoo*, from New York City, is a member of Queens CRC, where he serves as deacon. He is a health-care specialist, specializing in acupuncture therapy.

*Mr. Peter Szto* (incumbent) served on the SCORR Board and was a member of its leadership-development committee. He is now an assistant professor of social work at Calvin College.

#### *Alternate member*

*Mr. Phonh Sinvondit* is a church planter for Christian Reformed Home Missions in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He resides in Pettisville, Ohio.

*Nominee not elected as member.*

### 3. Position 3

#### *Regular member*

*Mr. Joe Schalk* is a member of First Ladner CRC of Delta, British Columbia, where he has often served as a council member and has served as council chairman. He is presently a member of the Abuse Response Team for Classis B.C. South-East.

*Ms. Carol Topp* (incumbent) serves as a therapist at the Christian Counseling Center in Grand Rapids. She served on the Synodical Committee on Abuse for two years. Carol is a member of Sherman Street CRC of Grand Rapids, where she is also a council member.

#### *Alternate member*

*Rev. Paul Lam* is a pastor at First CRC, Vancouver, British Columbia. He presently serves as church planter for Christian Reformed Home Missions. He has served as counselor, teacher, and minister to several Laotian congregations in the Midwest and as an ethnic adviser to Synod 1997.

*Nominee not elected as member.*

4. Position 4

*Regular member*

*Rev. Juan Flores* (alternate incumbent) served on the SCORR Board and was a member of its leadership-development committee. He is the pastor of Christ's Vineyard CRC, Chicago, Illinois.

*Ms. Joyce Jackson* is a member of Madison Avenue CRC in Paterson, New Jersey, where she serves as director of its day-care ministry.

*Alternate member*

*Mr. Ken Blake* is a member of Westend CRC in Grand Rapids, where he is a Stephen minister. He has served as the director of His Place Ministries in Grand Rapids for the past four years.

*Nominee not elected as member.*

5. Position 5

*Regular member*

*Ms. Marcia Van't Land* (alternate incumbent) is a member of Calvary CRC, Chino, California. She has taught English and physical education full-time and various subjects part-time. She is the author of a book entitled *Living Well with Chronic Illness* and has written many articles for publication.

*Dr. Joe Wilson* (incumbent) served on the Committee on Disability Concerns. Dr. Wilson has been involved with Special Olympics for many years. He lives in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he is a professor of therapeutic recreation at Northern Iowa State University. He is a member of Cedar Falls CRC, in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

*Alternate member*

*Mr. Charles Hiemstra* is a member and elder of Gateway CRC in Merced, California. He is a former teacher and principal in public and Christian schools in New Jersey, Colorado, South Dakota, Montana, and California. He has also served as an adult-Sunday-school teacher.

*Nominee not elected as member.*

6. *Alternate member* to replace Mr. Henry Bosch

*Ms. Lisa Comartie* is a member of Montello Park CRC in Holland, Michigan. She serves as director of Urban Youth Ministry in Holland.

*Rev. Thomas J. Vos* is pastor of First CRC, Wellsburg, Iowa. He serves as secretary of the interim committee and as chair of the student-fund committee of Classis Northcentral Iowa. He has served as delegate to synod.

B. *Salary disclosure*

In compliance with the requirements of synod, the following salary information is provided:

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
17	1	2nd quartile
15	4	2nd quartile

### III. The programs of Pastoral Ministries

#### A. Abuse Prevention (Ms. Beth A. Swagman, director)

##### 1. Work accomplished during the past year

- Conducting seminars, training, and conferences in/for Chicago, IL (three times); Grand Rapids, MI (twice); Classis Minnesota North; Abbotsford, BC; Palmerston, ON; Strathroy, ON (twice); Ponoka, AB; Seattle, WA; Holland, MI; Classis Northern Michigan; field directors of CR World Missions; Calvin College; Diaconal Ministries in Eastern Canada (Hamilton, ON); Classis Alberta North and South Diaconal Conferences (Calgary, AB).
- Consulting with thirteen CR churches and four non-CRC churches in the formation of child-abuse-prevention policies; thirty-four churches requested sample abuse-prevention policies.
- Training two additional abuse-response teams, one in Classis Central California and one in British Columbia Southeast.
- Consulting with six CR churches where allegations of abuse or misconduct against a church leader became known.
- Consulting with two Christian-school systems when allegations of abuse became known.
- Consulting with pastors, councils, classes representatives, Christian-school board members, denominational agencies, and others when allegations of misconduct or abuse surfaced within a family, church, school, organization, or institution.
- Supporting and advising persons who have experienced abuse, extended family members of persons abused or abusing, and others connected to incidents of abuse that have occurred in the recent past.
- Developing written resources for the local churches, including a brochure for participants in the SWIM program (in conjunction with CR Home Missions and Youth Unlimited) and a brochure to introduce the abuse-response team concept to members of the CRC.
- Updating and republishing the Child-Abuse-Prevention Program (now referred to as *Preventing Child Abuse*).

##### 2. Challenges to the ministry

A significant amount of time has been devoted to creating awareness of the reality of abuse. Some of those efforts have resulted in frustration because of the level of denial that exists in Christian communities about abuse. When communities have begun to break down the barriers to acknowledging the existence of abuse, those communities have often quickly encountered wounded individuals who are desirous of having the Christian community respond to them and support them. The challenge for Abuse Prevention is to equip and train church servants to respond effectively to the wounded members worshipping with them and to those living in the surrounding community. For this effort to be successful, church servants will need to acknowledge the woundedness that lies inside of them and allow themselves to be filled with God's grace and be healed.

B. *Chaplaincy Ministries* (Rev. Jacob P. Heerema, director; Rev. Siebert Van Houten, Canadian director)

Chaplaincy Ministries is grateful to report that more than eighty-five full-time chaplains continue to serve as agents of hope, mercy, and reconciliation. They minister in such settings as the military, hospitals, correctional facilities, and nursing homes, as well as serving as pastoral counselors or as members of treatment teams in Hospice and with substance-abuse programs. Chaplains put flesh on the mandate to bring spiritual resources to human needs.

1. Work accomplished during the past year
  - Endorsing five eligible candidates for chaplaincy.
  - Providing pastoral support for fifty of our chaplains and their families.
  - Publishing the chaplains' newsletter (*INTERNOS*) three times per year.
  - Providing an annual chaplains' conference, which was held June 12-14, 1997, with 125 chaplains and spouses attending.
  - Representing the denomination as the official agent with governmental, professional, and educational organizations, i.e., the Federal Interfaith Committee, the Ontario Multifaith Committee, Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, College of Chaplains, Association of Clinical Pastoral Education, and the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces.
  - Supervising chaplains in their ministry.
  - Providing salary subsidies in the amount of \$3,160 for two chaplains whose employers cannot meet minimum salary standards.
  - Providing training stipends to encourage the professional growth of chaplains and assist persons preparing for chaplaincy.
  - Promoting chaplaincy ministry in the denomination by providing more than a dozen articles in the Agency News section of *The Banner*, participating in three installation services of new chaplains, sending bulletin notices to all churches, and sponsoring a pastors' breakfast meeting in western Michigan.
2. Significant events
  - The responsibility for chaplains' pensions was transferred to the Board of Pensions and Insurance.
  - Chaplaincy Ministries completed the report addressing the supervision of chaplains in response to the mandate given to Chaplaincy Ministries by Synod 1993 (see Appendix 1).
  - The chaplains in southern California met regularly for peer support and professional growth during the past year. This is a pilot project, and its effectiveness is being evaluated.
  - The Chaplaincy Ministries functional group and the Canadian Chaplain Committee held two joint strategy-planning sessions to chart the course for the future of chaplaincy in the CRC.
3. Challenges to the ministry
  - Chaplaincy Ministries is exploring the development of community-based contract chaplaincy services. Partners in the contract could arrange for limited services of a chaplain who would minister to clients in a variety of settings.

- Chaplaincy Ministries is exploring the expansion of endorsement tracks to include the endorsement of ordained evangelists, nonordained persons, and volunteer chaplains.
- Chaplaincy Ministries is committed to developing ways to bring chaplains' ministries into a closer relationship with congregations and classes.

C. *Disability Concerns* (Dr. James L. Vanderlaan, director)

1. Accessibility of churches

Disability Concerns is responsible to synod for monitoring denominational progress in making all church buildings, services, and activities fully accessible to people with disabilities. The CRC *Yearbook* questionnaires, sent annually by the general secretary to all councils, have been adapted to provide this data. The results this year compared to the past two years are as follows:

Categories	1996	1997	1998
Barrier-free access	517	394	368
Partially accessible	307	435	459
Signing for deaf	30	32	31
Aids for hearing-impaired	428	455	190
Aids for visually impaired	210	305	346
Special programs	218	245	240
Transportation	139	276	292

What do these figures indicate? If the numbers of churches in the first two categories are combined, that should be the total number of churches completing the questionnaire; over the three years shown, that number remains roughly the same: 824, 829, and 827. Therefore, the steady decline in the number of churches reporting barrier-free access must indicate greater care in accurate reporting rather than a steady increase in new barriers. The 1998 questionnaire carried the suggestion that church councils ask a member with firsthand experience in disabilities to fill in the questionnaire, and this suggestion may have been followed. A person with this experience is likely to be more alert to barriers than is an able-bodied person, no matter how honest the intent may be. It is also possible that an increase in reporting indicates growing knowledge about disability barriers among the CRC membership; that increase in awareness is one of the goals of Disability Concerns.

These figures also seem to indicate general neglect of people with hearing impairment. The number of churches providing signing for the deaf remains flat, and those offering other aids have declined this year. In light of the advanced technology available today to assist hearing-impaired persons, churches are urged to increase efforts to reduce barriers to worship for the hearing impaired.

Special church programs for those with disability-related needs remain constant. There is clear growth or better reporting in providing aids for those with impaired vision. Churches are also giving more attention to the transportation needs of members and neighbors with disabilities.

The final question on the questionnaire asks information about people with disabilities who participate in church activities. The data generated from the answers to this question are not shown in the CRC *Yearbook* but are

very helpful to Disability Concerns in tracking denominational progress toward bringing people with disabilities more fully into church life. This question was first included on the questionnaire in 1997, so there are only two years to compare. The results are as follows:

Members with disabilities serve in staff or volunteer positions in the congregation	1997	1998
Paid staff	14	9
Officebearer	28	32
Church-school teacher	24	36
Usher/greeter	81	102
Committee member	57	78
Other	56	66

Overall these numbers indicate that more people with disabilities are participating in church life this year than last year. It should be noted that these numbers refer to individuals involved rather than to churches. If these figures are added together, they indicate that a total of 323 people with disabilities are active in church life in the designated ways. This is more than the tally of 260 for last year, but the numbers indicate only limited participation among the 12 percent to 15 percent of the CRC membership (35,000 to 45,000) who have disabilities.

Many of those included in this overall estimate do not consider themselves to have disabilities, and many of those who acknowledge their disabilities are not known to others as having disabilities. Thus there may be many CRC members with disabilities who are active in church life. Nevertheless, we have a long way to go.

It may also be interesting to note the comparison of Canadian churches to U.S. churches. They are as follows:

	U.S.	Canada	Total
Barrier-free access	267	101	368
Partially accessible	348	111	459
Signing for deaf	18	13	31
Aids for hearing-impaired	134	56	190
Aids for visually impaired	237	109	346
Special programs	131	109	240
Transportation	218	74	292

There is slightly less than one Canadian church for every three U.S. churches. The percentage in the responses to the needs of people with disabilities as shown by the questionnaire is significantly better for Canadian churches than for U.S. churches in all categories except in Partially Accessible and Providing Transportation. (Disability Concerns wants a decline in Partially Accessible churches.) Canadian churches

significantly respond to the needs of people with disabilities despite the lack of a federal law like the United States federal law (ADA) which establishes accessibility standards throughout the society.

## 2. Work accomplished during the past year

- a. Provided information on services available to people with disabilities and to their families by
  - 1) A directory of CRC-related agencies helping people with developmental disabilities.
  - 2) A disability resource guide, "Opening Doors to All God's People," included in council handbooks.
  - 3) A list of the resources and services Disability Concerns offers mailed annually to deacons.
  - 4) Developing a network of ten regional consultants across Canada and the U.S.
- b. Developed constituency awareness of needs people with disabilities have by
  - 1) Publishing *Breaking Barriers*, life stories of Christian Reformed people with disabilities.
  - 2) Providing articles for *CRC Source*, the *Classical Newsletter*, the *Prayer Guide*, etc.
  - 3) Preaching and speaking in churches, schools, and other gatherings as requested.
  - 4) Providing consultation with professionals, church leaders, and people/families with disabilities.
- c. Assisted churches to identify and eliminate disability barriers by
  - 1) Offering church-evaluation checklists, disability-ministry guidelines, Bible-study outlines, etc.
  - 2) Arranging onsite services for councils and congregations.
  - 3) Conducting workshops as requested by diaconal conferences, councils, congregations, etc.
  - 4) Encouraging and assisting in the development of support groups and respite services.
  - 5) Supporting, advising, and advocating for people with disabilities and their families.
  - 6) Helping churches and individuals locate any specialized disability services they may require.

## 3. Challenges to the ministry

The challenges Disability Concerns confronts are of two kinds, those that are internal to the division as it carries out its mandate within the denomination and those that are external and face people with disabilities themselves.

### a. The internal challenges include

- 1) Motivating and supporting the regional consultants and their supporting committees to bring help to individuals, families, and churches in their regions.
- 2) Locating, recruiting, and training additional competent and committed regional consultants and church-contact people to serve in the areas which presently do not have them.

- 3) Devising a strategy with the help of an interagency team to bring people who are deaf or hard of hearing more fully into church life.
- b. The external challenges include
  - 1) Caring for the spiritual needs of people with developmental disabilities and mental illnesses who live in community group homes, in particular those in the neighborhoods of CRCs.
  - 2) Helping people with disabilities locate jobs, develop the specific skills required, and receive the job coaching needed to succeed.
  - 3) Locating the monetary resources people with disabilities, including many elderly, must have for such basic necessities as housing, medical services, and personal-care attendants.

Disability Concerns seeks ways to impress upon the agencies and congregations their responsibility to help meet these challenges.

*D. Pastor-Church Relations (Rev. Duane A. Visser, director)*

1. Work accomplished in the past year

Pastor-Church Relations celebrated its fifteenth birthday in 1997. After this many years Pastor-Church Relations experiences many of the same challenges while providing avenues of care for pastors and encouraging healthy relationships between clergy and congregations as it did when it first became an agency. The various activities of Pastor-Church Relations have continued through its history, with some change in emphasis.

- Developing pastor-relations committees. These committees are an important source of support and evaluation of the pastor's work.
- Assigning mentors to new ministerial candidates and other pastors entering the CRCNA from other denominations.
- Equipping and training regional pastors who serve in each classis. In Pastor-Church Relations history, the regional pastor has become a key component of ministry to clergy and congregations. There are now sixty-one pastors serving in this position.
- Providing consultation with and intervention for pastors, councils, and congregations upon request. Requests for mediation services may involve up to seventy-five hours of work with the church council, pastor, and congregation.
- Staying current with trends in the CRCNA ministry.
- Coordinating the activities of program developer Beth Kuipers, who is working with unordained church professionals. There are approximately five hundred such professionals working in CRC congregations.
- Coordinating the Ministerial Information Services. With approximately 125 vacant churches in the denominations, there continue to be many requests for ministerial and congregational profiles. During 1997, Pastor-Church Relations processed over two thousand ministerial profiles. Calls were accepted by 105 pastors.
- Developing written resources, including the introduction of a new profile form for both pastors and churches. This is a comprehensive form which presents more information for both pastors and search committees than the old form did.
- Providing a conference for all regional pastors in September at Maranatha conference grounds.

## 2. Challenges to this ministry

- a. The ongoing support of and necessary redefinition of the role of the regional pastor in light of increasing demands and needs of colleagues.
- b. The establishment of a model for mediation teams. This is a necessity with the increase in the amount of conflict reported in the churches. Some pilot mediation teams will begin in the near future.
- c. The effective response to separations of pastors and congregations. Synod 1996 requested that Pastor-Church Relations develop guidelines for separations and for support. These will be presented to this year's synod. One concern which has emerged through this study is that church leaders need ways of intervening with and educating clergy and congregations who have gone through separation.
- d. The assistance to congregations who are vacant or are in need of guidance after a lengthy pastorate or a rather difficult termination. Pastor-Church Relations is now recruiting pastors to serve as specialized interim pastors. Pastor-Church Relations hopes to enlist the help of classes in supporting and encouraging this opportunity for healing.
- e. Learning how to relate in a changing culture and changing church. It is hard work. Pastor and parishioners need to communicate effectively and be creative in their mutual problem solving. Anger-management skills are no longer just for the professional, but they become life skills for people of all ages.

Pray that the CRC denomination with the services of Pastor-Church Relations can move toward greater creativity and cooperation in ministry.

*E. Race Relations* (Rev. Alfred S. Luke, director; Mrs. Yvonne Rayburn-Beckley, regional director—Chicago; Rev. Norberto Wolf, regional director—Los Angeles)

Racism is a perverse sin that cuts to the core of the gospel message. Put simply, racism negates the reason for which Christ died—the reconciling work on the cross. It denies the purpose of the church: to bring together, in Christ, those who have been divided one from another, particularly in the early church's case Jew and Gentile—a division based on race. There is only one remedy for such a sin and that is repentance, which, if genuine, will always bear fruit in concrete forms of conversion, changed behavior, and reparation. (Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*)

The mandate of Race Relations is "to design, organize, and implement programs which the denomination, churches, and members can effectively use to eliminate racism, both the causes and effects, within the body of believers and throughout the world." Race Relations utilizes four strategies to dismantle racism, promote reconciliation, and celebrate diversity. These strategies are (1) raising awareness of personal, cultural, and institutional racism through the use of educational resources; (2) leadership development by offering scholarships and mentoring relationships; (3) providing consultation and/or intervention when requested by the church or classis; and (4) advocating on behalf of ethnic-minority members of the CRCNA.

## 1. Activities of the central Race Relations office in the past year

- Facilitated three eight-week sessions of Institutes for the Healing of Racism.
- Led Classis Eastern Canada in a discussion on racial reconciliation and justice and led two adult-education classes on racism and prejudice.
- Publishing in partnership with Home Missions a strategy for racial reconciliation in the local church (Healthy Church Series).
- Sponsored a racial-reconciliation conference with Madison Square CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Sponsored and participated in Anti-Racism Training Event spearheaded by the Kalamazoo Deacons Conference.
- Preached at twenty churches across the U.S. and Canada, including the unity service for Graafschap CRC and the Cambodian Fellowship.
- Attended various committee and agency meetings of the denomination including the National Indian Ministries Board (Canada), Canadian Council Racial Reconciliation Committee, Reformed Ecumenical Council, NAE Social Action Commission, African-American Planning Committee, intercultural directors (Home Missions) planning meetings, Ecumenical Task Force on Racism, and the Seminary Consortium on Urban Pastoral Education Board.
- Attended the consultation on cross-cultural ministry.
- Coordinated the denominational celebration of All Nations Heritage Sunday. Bulletin covers and inserts as well as liturgical resources were sent to five hundred churches to assist them in celebration.
- Provided two consultations with representatives of one congregation and consultations with two pastors.

## 2. Activities of the regional offices in the past year

- Participated in scheduled classes meetings held in the regions the staff serves.
- Coordinated Camp Dunamis (Los Angeles), a ministry opportunity which introduces teenage campers to the reality of racism and problem-solving strategies to combat it. Last summer 144 campers attended Camp Dunamis.
- Consulted with fifteen pastors, three church leaders, and seventeen Christian-school leaders when issues of racism and discrimination became known.
- Conducted five training seminars, twenty-five workshops on cultural diversity, racism, racial reconciliation, and racial justice.
- Led twenty worship services celebrating unity and diversity.
- Recruited mentors to serve ethnic-minority leaders.
- Translated or arranged for the translation of three theological, ecclesiastical, or governmental materials.
- Mediated two conflicts between ethnic-minority and majority groups of Christians.
- Facilitated six interactions between ethnic-minority and majority church leaders and congregations.

### 3. Leadership development

Race Relations reports that the following Race Relations scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$20,900:

Recipient	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Other
Calvin College	0	1	1	1	1
Calvin Seminary	0	2	2	0	0
Dordt College	1	1	0	0	1
RBC	0	1	1	0	1
Trinity Christian College	1	2	0	1	1

Race Relations has helped to develop ethnic-minority leaders and ethnic-minority ministries through Race Relations' Leadership-Development Grants. These grants help place ethnic-minority leaders in churches and Christian institutions. They also help ethnic-minority churches and institutions implement programs that meet the unique needs of the community they serve. The following ministries have received Race Relations' grants in the amount of \$15,000:

- Friendship Community Church - Weston, Ontario
- Grace and Peace Fellowship - Chicago, Illinois
- Kalamazoo Deacons Conference - Kalamazoo, Michigan
- Lao Community CRC - Holland, Michigan
- Sunshine Community Church - El Paso, Texas

### 4. Challenges

- a. Since only eight classes have responded to Synod 1996's request that classes study the diversity report "and its implications for the churches and their ministries," Race Relations faces the challenge of how to mobilize more classes to study the report.
- b. Race Relations struggles to develop long-term strategies to dismantle institutional racism in the CRCNA. The Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC) has decided to sponsor two two-day workshops to analyze any systemic racism. Collaboration between agencies may be a key to discovering the long-term strategies.
- c. Another challenge to Race Relations is how the issues of race, ethnicity, and culture can be addressed in CRCNA-affiliated educational institutions so that the gifts of all of God's children are affirmed and celebrated.

## IV. Recommendations

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to Rev. Charles Terpstra, chairman; Ms. Beth Swagman, executive director; and the other Pastoral Ministries directors when Pastoral Ministries matters are discussed.

B. That synod encourage churches to celebrate All Nations Heritage Week from September 27 to October 3, 1999.

*Grounds:*

1. The task of eliminating racism is formidable; it is a matter that needs to be put boldly before the congregations at all times but especially as they celebrate Worldwide Communion in October.
2. The financial support that is received when congregations celebrate All Nations Heritage Week dramatically increases Race Relations' ability to award grants and scholarships for ethnic-minority leadership and ministry.

C. That synod approve the report (Appendix 1) and its recommendations concerning the supervision of pastors serving in specialized ministries.

D. That synod approve the report (Appendix 2) and its recommendations concerning pastor/church separations and severance.

E. That synod approve the report (Appendix 3) and its recommendations concerning suspended and/or deposed ministers

F. That synod approve the changes proposed (Appendix 4) in Articles 16 and 17 of the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church.

Pastoral Ministries

Beth Swagman, executive director

## APPENDIX 1

### Recommended Strategies for the Supervision of Pastors Serving in Specialized Ministries

**I. Background** (see also Church Order Articles 12-c and 13-a and Church Order Supplement, Article 12-c)

Synod's concern for adequate supervision of the ministry of chaplains was addressed in 1978, when synod urged calling churches to obtain the endorsement of the Chaplain Committee prior to calling a minister of the Word to military or institutional chaplaincy (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 47).

Synod 1993 once again called the denomination's attention to the difficulties encountered in the supervision of chaplains (*Agenda for Synod 1993*, Overture 11, pp. 286-87). At that time synod made the following decision:

3. That the Chaplain Committee be mandated to recommend strategies for ensuring the appropriate supervision and accountability of those pastors serving in specialized ministries.

*Grounds:*

- a. There is a great deal of misunderstanding in the churches regarding the relationship between pastors in specialized ministries and their calling churches. Church Order Article 13-a specifies that the councils of calling churches shall supervise such pastors in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved, and this overlap of responsibilities requires clarification.

- b. The questions of supervision and accountability have legal as well as moral and ecclesiastical implications.
- c. The Chaplain Committee is the most appropriate agency to do this work, since it is already involved in the recruitment, placement, and credentialing of pastors in specialized ministries. Moreover, the need for such guidelines is especially acute in the supervision of chaplains and those in counseling ministries.

*(Acts of Synod 1993, p. 545)*

Church Order Article 13-a leaves no doubt about the importance of providing supervision for all pastors:

- a. A minister of the Word is directly accountable to the calling church, and therefore shall be supervised in doctrine, life, and duties by that church. When his work is with other than the calling church, he shall be supervised in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved.

Church Order Supplement, Article 12-c states the following about supervision:

*Regulations for the application of Article 12-c of the Church Order to specific tasks and situations:*

- a. The calling church shall secure the prior approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, for each new ministerial position, by providing classis with the following information:
  - 1) The description of the official position (purposes, duties, qualifications, etc.) as determined by the calling church in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.
  - 2) The evidence that the minister will be directly accountable to the calling church, including an outline of requirements for reporting to the calling church, and supervision by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies where applicable.
  - 3) The demonstration that the position will be consistent with his calling as a minister of the Word.

The supervision of a chaplain has been perceived to be the responsibility primarily of the calling church. While synod has set forth a procedure for ensuring the proper supervision of chaplains, the mandate given to the Chaplain Committee demonstrates that these procedures generally have been found to be either difficult to implement or ineffective.

## **II. General observations regarding ecclesiastical supervision of chaplains serving in specialized settings**

When clarifying strategies for ensuring the appropriate supervision of the duties of the chaplains, we should remember that they have dual accountability. They serve not only under their calling church but also under the board and/or administration of the institution in which they minister (whether this be in a military establishment, a correctional facility, a hospital, or any other setting).

The calling church often finds it difficult to provide suitable supervision because the ministry does not happen among the members of the congregation and the life of the local church. Furthermore, the chaplain may serve a great distance from the calling church, intensifying the sense of separation. Since the chaplain's ministry is often specialized and unusual, few in the congregation and/or consistory feel confident to provide adequate supervision. And since counseling is often at the heart of a chaplain's ministry, issues of confidentiality make it difficult or impossible for others to assess these activities.

While supervision in a narrow sense can be defined as oversight, the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* rightly notes the following about supervision: "Supervision does not imply mere watchfulness but love, counsel, encouragement, and assistance in the work of the Lord" (1994 ed., p. 107). The supervision of ministers serving either in a congregation or in a specialized setting requires a meaningful and interactive relationship with the calling church.

Another area of difficulty is the "cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies" that the calling church is called to exercise. Calling churches often have no relationship with the chaplain's employer, nor do they feel qualified to engage in a meaningful relationship with the employer. In the case of the military, the director of Chaplaincy Ministries (formerly the Chaplain Committee) is seen as the point of contact with the denomination, not the calling church.

We also note that Synod 1978 dealt with the issue of ministers serving in noncongregational settings. Synod put in place safeguards about the tasks and work of such ministers, including, for example, mandating that the church visitors inquire annually about the supervision of such ministers:

The synod of 1978 ruled that church visitors shall inquire annually into the supervision of the calling church toward ministers of the Word in specialized ministerial tasks, noting the nature of the reporting of such ministers and of the consistorial supervision.

(*Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, p. 238)

History and practice have shown that this process has been generally ineffective.

Until now, Chaplaincy Ministries, on behalf of the denomination, has been granting endorsement at the beginning of a chaplain's ministry. This means that the candidate's ministerial status, record of specialized training, letters of reference, suitability for ministry in specialized settings, and job description have been reviewed and found acceptable. Chaplaincy Ministries has thus been serving the denomination by affirming a prospective chaplain's gifts and training and by providing personal and professional support while the pastor is engaged in ministry in specialized settings. Chaplaincy Ministries, however, has not been formally involved in the supervision of chaplains.

The factors cited make it difficult for meaningful supervision to take place. While councils may feel qualified to engage their pastor in dialogue about his ministry, they feel unqualified to engage in conversation with chaplains because of the specialized nature of chaplaincy ministry and the many different aspects of a chaplain's relationships to employer and professional organizations.

### III. Solutions to the problem

In order to make supervision meaningful not only for the chaplain but also for the calling church and the denomination, it is recommended that Pastoral Ministries be assigned the responsibility to provide *joint supervision* with the calling church. Such joint supervision shall be for the supervision of the duties of the chaplain. Supervision of life and doctrine should remain with the calling church.

Staff and Pastoral Ministries Board members have knowledge and expertise about chaplaincy ministries. They are already involved in endorsing and

supporting the chaplains and endorsing chaplaincy positions. Pastoral Ministries is able to monitor and ensure that supervision is being provided. Staff can provide assistance and resources in the supervisory process. Staff can serve as a bridge between the calling church and the chaplain's employing agency since such agencies generally prefer to work with those who are involved in chaplaincy ministry.

Joint supervision will make the supervision process meaningful and intentional for both calling church and chaplain. Joint supervision provides the local church with expertise, and it can serve as a process whereby calling church and chaplain are encouraged to be in dialogue with each other.

Joint supervision and allowance for a measure of creativity will greatly enhance the supervisory process. Even though many of the requirements have been in place, there has not been an effective mechanism to ensure that supervision takes place. In order to enhance the supervision of chaplains, we recommend the following:

#### **IV. Recommendations**

A. That synod *require* that *all* ministers serving in chaplaincy ministries be endorsed by Chaplaincy Ministries.

*Grounds:*

1. This will ensure that appropriate endorsement and supervision can be facilitated.
2. Until now synod has merely *urged* persons to seek endorsement.

B. That synod declare endorsement to be an ongoing process. This process includes granting, monitoring, or withdrawing of endorsement based upon fulfilling the criteria for the ministry to which a chaplain is called.

*Grounds:*

1. Until now endorsement, indicating qualifications and suitability, has been granted at the beginning of a chaplain's ministry.
2. Ongoing endorsement is an expectation of many agencies and institutions.
3. Endorsement will assure the denomination's ongoing involvement with the chaplain's ministry.

C. That synod assign supervision of the work and duties of chaplains as a joint responsibility of the calling church and Pastoral Ministries.

*Grounds:*

1. Though the directors of Pastoral Ministries have an active and supportive role with chaplains, joint supervision with the calling church has never been formally assigned to Pastoral Ministries.
2. Joint supervision ensures that the chaplains are accountable to the denomination at large for their specialized ministries.
3. Pastoral Ministries is qualified to interpret specialized ministry to the calling church and the denomination and is able to act as a bridge between calling church and the employer.
4. Joint supervision underscores the Church Order's focus on the cooperation between the calling church and other institutions or agencies.

D. That synod call the attention of the churches to the decisions of Synod 1978 regarding the supervision of associate ministers (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34, and *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, p. 238).

E. That synod revise the guidelines for church visiting to include questions about the supervision of associate ministers.

*Ground:* The present guidelines have not been changed to reflect the decisions of Synod 1978 (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34).

## APPENDIX 2

### Guidelines for the Separation of Pastor and Congregation

#### I. Church Order articles relevant to separation of minister from congregation

##### *Church Order Article 16*

- a. A minister who for valid reasons desires a temporary leave of absence from service to the congregation must have the approval of his council, which shall continue to have supervision over him.
- b. A minister who for valid reasons desires termination from service to the congregation must have the approval of his council and classis. The council shall provide for his support in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.
- c. A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service to his congregation shall be eligible for a call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare him to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend his eligibility for call on a yearly basis.

##### *Church Order Article 17*

- a. A minister who is neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may for weighty reasons be released from active ministerial service in his congregation through action initiated by the council. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations.
- b. The council shall provide for the support of a released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.
- c. A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service in his congregation shall be eligible for call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare him to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend his eligibility for call on a yearly basis.

(*Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure* [1997], p. 7)

#### II. Background

Synod 1996 of the Christian Reformed Church in North America instructed "the Pastoral Ministries Board to prepare guidelines for congregations which are considering separation from their ministers under Church Order Articles 14, 16, and 17" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 578-79). These guidelines are meant to

be applicable in situations where the pastor requests separation because conditions seem to prevent the continuation of an effective ministry (Art. 16) or in situations where the ties between the pastor and congregation are severed at the request of the council/congregation (Art. 17).

In these situations it should be understood that there are always three parties involved: (A) the council/congregation, (B) the minister, and (C) the classis or its representatives. These three parties will cooperate in formulating and/or adopting the details of a termination agreement.

Because of the serious nature of the separation of a pastor and congregation, it should be facilitated with much prayer, deliberation, and dialogue on the part of the three parties. However, undue delay in completing the process often promotes further conflict and stress, underscoring the need for a reasonable time schedule.

### III. Guidelines

#### A. *Responsibility of the separating pastor*

1. Promptly inform the regional pastor and church visitors *when signs of conflict arise*, and maintain regular communication.
2. Conduct him- or herself so as not to disrupt further the peace and unity of the congregation.
3. Identify a personal advocate who can assist him/her in the process.
4. Be amenable to career counseling and/or personal counseling.
5. Update the Pastoral Profile and contact Ministerial Information Services (Pastor-Church Relations) if relocation becomes necessary.
6. Help formulate and sign a termination agreement with the council if there is a separation.

#### B. *Responsibility of the council/congregation*

1. Seek assistance from the classical church visitors and regional pastor when signs of conflict begin.
2. Be willing to work with a designated person(s) (e.g., Pastor-Church Relations staff, classical regional pastor, mediation specialists) toward reconciliation. This would involve both the time and cost of such intervention.
3. Along with the pastor, determine the reasons for the conflict and/or separation.
  - a. This step requires accountability from both council and pastor.
  - b. It is also important to determine whether suspension is a more appropriate response to the problems which have arisen than separation/severance is.
4. Inform the congregation of decisions which are being made about the relationship to the pastor. This should be done in a timely manner, and members should be apprised of the process (cf. Church Order Art. 37).

5. Convene a meeting to formulate a termination agreement with the pastor. (Establishing a termination agreement is a mutual responsibility of council and pastor.) This agreement goes into effect only after classical approval. It should address *at least* the following issues:
  - a. Specific reasons for the separation, along with citation of the applicable Church Order article.
  - b. Severance agreement (compensation, benefits, etc.). See 6 below.
  - c. Resolution of any debts owed the church by the minister or owed the minister by the church.
  - d. Penalty clauses which would void the signed agreement in the event the minister acts in violation of ordination vows, renounces the jurisdiction of the Christian Reformed Church, becomes a competitor for the membership of the church which terminated him/her, is the subject of substantial criminal charges.
  - e. Waiver of liability for all future judgments initiated by the separating minister against the church so that no further legal action can be pursued by the minister.
  - f. Clear specification of recommended dates for conducting last worship service, ceasing of pastoral functions, vacating the office and parsonage, and date of dissolution of relationship.
  - g. A clear commitment on the minister's part not to participate in the formation of any newly organized group or in any other group already organized which is engaged in the active recruitment of members who have held membership in the church from which he/she is being separated.
  - h. Plans for the announcement of the pastor's availability for a call.
6. Present to the classis the specific reasons for the separation. This involves the dynamics and behaviors of both the pastor and the council/congregation. Since the termination commences with the official decision by classis, this may necessitate a special meeting of classis to process the separation.
7. Engage the services of an interim pastor who has been trained to guide the congregation in processing the reasons for the conflict, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission for the congregation. This is particularly appropriate when there has been extended conflict which led to separation of the pastor and congregation, a series of forced separations from the same congregation, or the last pastorate was a lengthy one. It may also be advisable that the church delay calling another pastor until there has been an interim process.
8. Provide a compensation package (cf. Church Order Arts. 16-b and 17-b) which includes the following:
  - a. Cash salary—a minimum of thirteen (13) weeks from the official decision of classis is required. Following the three months, further remuneration may be decided upon by a committee made up of some members of the local council and some members of classis. Any recommendation must be approved by the full classis.

- b. Parsonage occupancy or housing allowance.
- c. Provision for continuation of medical and dental insurance benefits.
- d. Provision for continuation of Ministers' Pension benefits.

The church served at the time of separation is responsible for the severance compensation.

### C. *Responsibilities of classis*

1. Church visitors should be available to assist or may take initiative if necessary when there is an indication of conflict or other relationship difficulty. They may be involved in reconciliation or mediation, or they may recommend that there be others who can assist the pastor and congregation in this process, e.g., a committee from the classis, outside resources such as representatives of Pastor-Church Relations or mediation specialists.
2. Concurrent with the work of the church visitors, the regional pastor should be called to provide emotional support and guidance for the pastor. The regional pastor, often one of the first persons aware of tensions, can serve as a gatekeeper and adviser for the pastor in the process of mediation.
3. Church visitors should continue to provide support and guidance for the council and congregation. They may assist the council in communication with the congregation.
4. If a separation of the pastor from the congregation is recommended, the classis should do the following:
  - a. Assist the council in determining whether a separation is appropriate. If it is appropriate, give guidance as to whether there should be a release or a suspension.
  - b. If necessary, call a special meeting of classis to process the separation.
  - c. Assign an individual(s) (not the regional pastor) to provide liaison between the pastor, the congregation, and the classis in the process of the separation. Such a person(s) should be acceptable to all parties involved.
  - d. Approve a termination agreement between pastor and council and record in the records of classis specific reasons for the termination.

*Note:* Copies of this agreement should be given to the pastor, the council, the classis, and the Pastor-Church Relations office.
  - e. Encourage the pastor and/or the congregation to seek continued help in learning from this situation and facing their responsibilities. (This will often require specific recommendations and continued involvement.)
  - f. Recommend specific follow-up for the congregation, such as a specialized interim pastor to help with healing and future planning.
  - g. Inform the regional pastor, congregation, and classis of his/her presence in the new region if the pastor moves to another region.

### D. *A pastoral note*

It is important that ecclesiastical due process be followed in the separation process. When Synod 1996 asked that the above guidelines be prepared, it did

so against a background of concern for the possibility of healing for both pastors and congregations. *When signs of conflict or disagreements arise*, it is crucial that the pastor, council, and classis take prompt action to deal with these differences. When there is early intervention and open communication, reconciliation is a greater possibility.

If pastor and council or congregation are not able to mediate differences, it may be advisable to bring in outside resource persons. If a separation does occur, it is important to recognize that there are *continuing* needs. The members of the congregation require continued support, opportunity to grieve, and guidance for future planning. The separated pastor and his/her family should not be forgotten as they leave the congregation and seek another call. The congregation and classis should covenant to provide continuing ministry and care for them, assisting in any way possible to encourage personal healing and further opportunities for ministry.

## APPENDIX 3

### Guidelines for the Suspension and/or Deposition of Pastors, Including Pastoral Care

#### I. Church Order articles relevant to suspension and/or deposition of ministers

##### *Article 82*

All officebearers, in addition to being subject to general discipline, are subject to special discipline, which consists of suspension and deposition from office.

##### *Article 83*

Special discipline shall be applied to officebearers if they violate the Form of Subscription, are guilty of neglect or abuse of office, or in any way seriously deviate from sound doctrine and godly conduct.

##### *Article 84*

Persons who have been suspended or deposed from office may be reinstated if they give sufficient evidence of repentance and if the church judges that they are able to serve effectively.

*(Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure, 1997)*

#### II. Background

Synod 1996 of the Christian Reformed Church in North America instructed "the Pastoral Ministries Board to develop guidelines for attending to the ongoing physical and spiritual needs of ministers suspended and/or deposed under Church Order Articles 82-84 (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 578-79). These articles discuss situations referred to as "special discipline," and the request for such guidelines was made against a background of increasing numbers of such separations and a lack of clear guidance for councils, church visitors, and pastors when there are suspensions and/or depositions.

In these situations it should be understood that there are several parties involved: (A) the council/congregation, (B) the minister, (C) the classis, (D) the neighboring council, and (E) the synodical deputies. These parties are expected to work cooperatively in the process of special discipline.

In addition to being handled in a timely fashion so as not to promote further conflict and stress, the process of suspension/deposition should be facilitated with much prayer, deliberation, and dialogue among the parties named above. Those pastors who are suspended or deposed need to be in our prayers. Classes, congregations, and individual members are encouraged to maintain contact with and provide emotional and spiritual support for them.

### III. Specific guidelines

#### A. Responsibilities of the council/congregation

1. Take immediate action after determining that special discipline is indicated because of violation of the Form of Subscription, neglect or abuse of office, or deviation from sound doctrine and godly conduct:
  - a. Obtain concurrence from the nearest consistory for the actions being taken, giving adequate information. Consultation with the church visitors prior to seeking concurrence is advisable.
  - b. Seek support of the regional pastor on behalf of the pastor.
  - c. Release the pastor from all ministry tasks until the issues have been dealt with.
  - d. Notify the classical abuse-response team if allegations of abuse are made.
2. Contact the church visitors or the classical interim committee to help articulate the reasons for suspension/deposition.
  - a. Identify the behavior/grounds.
  - b. Determine the appropriate response (suspension/deposition: Church Order Arts. 82-84; separation: Church Order Arts. 16 and 17). This decision will determine whether or not the pastor is to resume ministry tasks and the nature of the request for action by classis.
  - c. If a pastor is to be suspended, be clear about the specific cause for the suspension and what steps are necessary to lift the suspension.
3. Keep the congregation informed (cf. Church Order Supplement, Arts. 78-84 re Guidelines for Confidentiality).
4. Support the pastor during a time of suspension and prior to a final decision by the classis.
  - a. Encourage professional counseling and pastoral support.
  - b. Continue financial support (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 592).
  - c. Assign a committee from the consistory to provide liaison between the pastor and the consistory. This committee should be in regular contact with the pastor, assisting in the transition and encouraging response to the needs of the pastor and family.
  - d. Since a suspension is temporary, the council should list reasons for the suspension and the basis and time line for why and when it will be lifted.
5. Set up a termination agreement with the pastor if a decision is made to depose. This agreement should address at least the following issues:
  - a. Specifics regarding any further compensation or transition assistance.

- b. Clear specification of recommended date for vacating parsonage and date of separation from the congregation.
  - c. Waiver of liability for all future judgments initiated by the deposed minister against the church so that no further legal action can be pursued by the minister.
  - d. Recommendations for continuation of pastoral care for the minister and his/her family.
  - e. A clear commitment on the part of the pastor not to participate in the formation of any newly organized group or in any other group already organized which is engaged in the active recruitment of members who have held membership in the church from which he/she is being separated.
6. Present the request for action relating to the pastor to the full classis at the earliest convenience in the case of a deposition.
  7. Engage the services of an interim pastor who has been trained to guide the congregation in processing the separation, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission.

*B. Responsibilities of the classis*

1. Church visitors should be available to assist as soon as possible to
  - a. Clarify the issues with both the council and the pastor.
  - b. Explain the Church Order procedures and options (this should include the possibilities and grounds for reinstatement).
  - c. Encourage honesty and fairness.
  - d. Provide liaison with the classical interim committee. Again, it is important that necessary action be taken in a timely fashion in order to decrease anxiety and facilitate a proper response.
  - e. Arrange with the council the continuing financial support for the pastor during the exploration/decision-making phase.
2. Set up a transitional support network for the pastor, his/her family, and the congregation. This will include spiritual, emotional, and career counseling, some of which may be supplied by the regional pastor and other designated classical representatives. It is also important to involve the denominational office of Pastor-Church Relations. Such support should continue for at least one year.
3. In the case of deposition, assist the council in setting up a termination agreement. Since the deposition commences with the official decision of classis, this may necessitate a special meeting of classis to process the deposition. Encourage the pastor and/or the congregation to seek continuing help in learning from this situation and facing their responsibilities.
4. Inform classical stated clerks of any action to depose, as required by the Church Order.
5. If the pastor moves to another region, inform the regional pastor, congregation, and classis of his/her presence in the new region, encouraging follow-up and support.

### C. Responsibilities of the pastor

1. Inform the regional pastor and church visitors when signs of conflict or accusations arise, and maintain regular communication.
2. Enter into consultation with the council and classical representatives in determination of the validity of accusations and appropriate responses.
3. Conduct him- or herself so as not to disrupt further the peace and unity of the congregation.
4. Sign a termination agreement set up by the council (see III, A, 5 above).
5. Maintain communication with a council or classis, keeping it informed of progress and needs and accepting its support.
6. Identify an advocate who can assist him/her in the process.

### D. A pastoral note

It is important that ecclesiastical due process be followed in the process of suspension or deposition. When Synod 1996 asked that the above guidelines be prepared, it acted against a background of concern for the possibility of healing for pastors and congregations. *When there are indications that special discipline may be necessary*, it is crucial that the pastor, council, and classis take prompt action. There should be open communication about problems which have surfaced and an opportunity given to prove or disprove charges which are made. All of this should be done in an atmosphere of Christian concern and support. If the pastor and council are not able to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion, it may be necessary to bring in outside resource persons.

If a suspension or deposition does occur, it is important to recognize that there are *continuing* needs. The members of the congregation require continued support, opportunity to grieve, and guidance for future planning. The suspended pastor and his/her family should be included in the process of decision making. The deposed pastor and his/her family should not be forgotten as they leave the congregation and ministry. The congregation and classis should covenant to provide continuing ministry and care for them, assisting in any way possible to encourage personal healing and guidance for possible reentry into ministry at a future date.

## APPENDIX 4

### Recommended Changes in Church Order Articles 16 and 17

The task force which set up the guidelines for separation concluded in its discussions that Articles 16 and 17 of the Church Order as they presently stand (approved by Synod 1987) make the process of separation more complicated than it should be and limit choice. The Pastoral Ministries Board therefore recommends the following changes to Church Order Articles 16 and 17 and to Church Order Supplement, Article 17 (changes are in italics and/or referred to in a note):

### Article 16

A minister who for valid reasons desires a temporary leave of absence from service to the congregation must have the approval of *the* council, which shall continue to have supervision over him. *In all cases of a temporary leave of absence the minister shall return to service in that congregation.*

Note: The present Article 16-b and 16-c will be deleted if this new wording is accepted.

### Article 17

- a. Ministers who are neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may for weighty reasons be released from active ministerial service in a congregation through action initiated *by themselves or by a council*. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations.
- b. The council shall provide for the support of a released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.
- c. A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service in *a* congregation shall be eligible for call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare him to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend *the* eligibility for call on a yearly basis.

### Supplement, Article 17

- a. *If a classis has reason to believe that the released minister needs evaluation and assistance before accepting another call, it shall specify at the time of release what is required before the minister may receive and accept a call.*
- b. *If a classis has reason to believe that before a congregation calls another pastor it needs a time of healing and preparing itself for an effective relationship with a new minister, it shall instruct the classical church counselor not to sign a letter of call until the classis and the church council decide that this process is complete (cf. Church Order Art. 9).*
- c. A minister who has been released from active ministerial service in a congregation according to Article 17 of the Church Order, and who has transferred his membership to another congregation, may, *after meeting all stipulations placed upon him and with the approval of classis and after a time agreed upon by classis*, have his official connection transferred to the consistory of the congregation of which he is a member.

### Grounds:

1. The present system does not allow churches and ministers to work cooperatively toward a mediated decision because it presupposes an either/or requirement for release from office: either the minister proposes it or the council proposes it.
2. According to current Article 16-b, deliberations at classis do not include the concurrence of or advice from the synodical deputies.

3. Under the current administration of Articles 16 and 17, there is a perception that separations under Article 17-a are more severe than separations under Article 16-b. Thus, it is thought that a person's ministry may be more negatively affected by a separation under Article 17-a than by a separation under Article 16-b.

*Note:* If the above changes are accepted, the present Church Order Supplement, Article 16-b and -c will be deleted.

### I. Introduction

The Christian Reformed Church maintains employee benefit programs that provide retirement benefits as well as health, life, and disability insurance for employees of denominational agencies, local churches, and other CRC organizations. Administration of these programs, including communication, enrollment, and record keeping, is a service of the denomination's Personnel Office. Accounting, control, and investment management are handled by the denominational financial office.

### II. Board matters

The ministers' pension plans and the employees' retirements plans are governed by the U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance and the Canadian Pension Trustees. These boards meet two to four times per year, usually in joint session. Separate meetings of the boards are held as needed to address matters unique to the responsibilities of the U.S. or Canadian trustees.

The responsibilities of the boards include long-term planning, benefit-related decision making, and policy definition as well as oversight of fund assets and investment returns. The U.S. board monitors the investment activities of the funds through a subcommittee made up of trustees and additional members recruited because of a need for special expertise in investment-related matters. The Canadian board provides investment oversight within the context of the full committee.

During 1995 the role of the U.S. board was expanded to include governance of the U.S. Consolidated Group Insurance (CGI) program. The Canadian CGI plan is administratively managed by staff under the governance of the Christian Reformed Church in North America—Ontario Corporation.

The U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance is a five-member board currently chaired by Mr. David Vander Ploeg. The Canadian Pension Trustees are a board of five members chaired by Mr. John Woudstra.

### III. Benefit-program activities

#### A. *Ministers' pension funds*

The ministers' pension funds are defined-benefit pension plans designed to provide retirement income and disability benefit to ordained ministers within the Christian Reformed Church. As of December 31, 1997, there were 1,567 participants in the ministers' pension plans, categorized as follows:

	U.S.	Canada	Total
Total participants	1,237	330	1,567
Active ministers	785	231	1,016
Retired ministers	346	73	419
Widows and dependents	106	26	132

Every three years independent actuaries are employed to do a complete valuation of the liabilities and assets of the plans. These calculations were most recently made in January 1996.

### 1. Basic assumptions

The calculation of the fund liability is based on several major assumptions. These assumptions are reviewed and approved regularly by the U.S. and Canadian trustees and are based on historical data and expectations for future trends. Most significant of these assumptions include those regarding investment yields. An interest rate is assumed at 7.5 percent for the Canadian plan and 8.0 percent for the U.S. plan.

The formula for pension determination is 1.1 percent of the final average salary multiplied by pensionable years of service. Therefore, expectations concerning increases in ministers' salaries enter very significantly into the calculation of the position of the plans. The 1998 average salary used for pension determination was \$31,838 (U.S.) and \$34,350 (Canada).

### 2. Asset balances

Market values of fund assets were as follows (in thousands of dollars):

	December 31, 1997	December 31, 1996
United States (US\$)	\$83,175,000	\$70,100,000
Canada (Can\$)	\$21,407,000	\$17,883,000

Both the U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance and the Canadian Pension Trustees are guided in their investment decisions by previously adopted policies governing social responsibilities and proportions of funds to be invested in various instruments. The primary goal is to provide an above-average return and at the same time to preserve principal. Five professional money managers direct the day-to-day investments of the pension funds. In the United States this service is performed by Ambis Investment Counsel, Inc.; Invesco; Loomis, Sayles and Co., L.P.; and NBD Bank, Trust Division. Canadian pension-fund investments are managed by Perigee Investment Counsel Inc.

### 3. Investment results

Investment returns are continually monitored by the investment committees of both the U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance and the Canadian Pension Trustees. Total portfolio performance is as follows:

	1997	3 years	5 years
Canadian Plan	21.0%	19.4%	15.0%
U.S. Plan	22.2%	20.8%	14.6%

As these statistics indicate, the investment performance of the plans has been very strong. The trustees are grateful for this performance, mindful of the long-term nature of the plan's obligation to pay retirement and other benefits to its participants, and aware of the need to participate in and benefit from "up" markets.

### 4. Plan review

At the April 1997 meeting of the trustees, it was decided to review the design of the ministers' pension plans to determine whether they continue to meet the needs of the participants within existing and anticipated financial resources and constraints. The task of performing the review was

given to a three-member committee with the understanding that all aspects of the plans would be reviewed. "All aspects" were to include the retirement provisions of the plans and disability and other benefit provisions.

This review is currently in progress and includes participation by each of the actuarial firms serving the plans to assist in the development of an accurate understanding of the economic aspects of any proposed change. The trustees expect this work to be finished in time for a report and any recommendations for change to be presented to Synod 1999.

## 5. Funding strategy

Since the start of the present ministers' pension plans in 1970, they have been funded by a combination of ministry shares and direct billings. Ministry shares have paid for the pension benefits of ministers serving churches (one pastor in cases of churches having multiple-staff ministries). The underlying concept has been that ministers serve several congregations during the course of their careers and in so doing serve the entire CRC. The cost of pension benefits for these ministers has been spread among all the members of the CRC. Regardless of whether one attends a large church or a small church, the pension cost to be paid by each member is the same.

Since 1970, each ministry which employs a minister as a missionary, professor, teacher, or in any capacity other than a first or only pastor has paid an annual assessment for the future pension to be paid to such ministers. Approximately one-third of all ministers covered by the plans are on the assessment basis. The assessment is paid quarterly to the ministers' pension funds.

Synod 1997 approved a new method of funding the pension costs of all first/only pastors and chaplains. Under this new method, pension costs associated with these pastors is funded by means of an assessment on each professing member of the denomination age 18 or older. The amount of the assessment for 1998 is \$16.00 per member. These amounts are collected by means of quarterly billings to each church based on a church's reported membership statistics. As with ministry shares, this funding method spreads the cost evenly among all members of the CRC.

### B. *Employees' retirement plans*

The employees' retirement plans are defined-contribution plans covering unordained employees of denominational agencies, committees, and churches. Contributions are paid to the plan on a quarterly basis by participating groups in an amount equal to 9 percent of the compensation of the unordained employees who are participants in the plan. Twice each year, participants receive a statement indicating the dollar amount credited to their accounts, the total value of their accounts, and the vested percentage in their accounts.

Individual participants direct investment of their account balances among a number of investment alternatives such as a money-market fund, a bond fund, a pooled equity fund, and a guaranteed-investment contract fund. The investment alternatives are currently managed for U.S. participants by the NBD Bank, N.A. Trust Division, which also serves as custodian of the plan's assets, and for Canadian participants by Mu-Can Investment Counseling, Ltd.

### C. Consolidated Group Insurance

Consolidated Group Insurance is a denominational plan which offers life, health, and dental coverage in the United States and Canada to ministers and employees of local congregations and denominational agencies. Currently there are 1,366 participants in the program, 565 employees of denominational agencies and 771 pastors and employees of local churches. The plan in Canada is a fully insured plan purchased through a major health-insurance provider. The coverage in Canada is supplemental to health benefits available through government health programs. In the U.S. a trust has been established to fund benefits and expenses of the plan. Premiums are assessed based on overall expectations of claims and administrative expenses.

In the U.S. the plan has been significantly affected by increasing costs of health care and changes in systems available to self-insured plans for the administration of claims and for obtaining discounts through provider networks.

## IV. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to members of the Canadian Pension Trustees and of the United States Board of Pensions and Insurance or to Mr. Kenneth Horjus when insurance matters and matters pertaining to pension plans for ministers and employees are discussed.

B. That synod designate up to 100 percent of a minister's early or normal retirement pension or disability pension for 1998 and 1999 as housing allowance for United States income-tax purposes (IRS Ruling 1.107-1) but only to the extent that the pension is used to rent or provide a home.

C. That for 1999 synod designate the assessment rate for participants in the ministers' pension plans who are not covered by direct assessments as the amount determined by the independent actuary to be the "average annual cost per active minister."

D. That synod elect one member to the U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance from the following nominations for a three-year term beginning September 1, 1998:

1. *Mr. Richard Bouma* is a partner in the law firm of Warner, Norcross and Judd, where he has practiced general corporate law for approximately seventeen years. He is a member of LaGrave Avenue CRC and currently serves the denomination as a member of the Judicial Code Committee.
2. *Mr. Thomas Waalkes* is a partner in the law firm of Ver Spoor, Waalkes, Lalley, Slotsema and Talen and has been in the practice of estate planning and taxation for nearly thirty years. He is a member of Sunshine CRC in Grand Rapids and is presently serving as an elder. He has also served as a deacon and as a member of the Barnabas Foundation board of trustees.

E. That synod elect two members to the Canadian Pension Trustees for terms beginning September 1, 1998.

1. One member for a three-year term from the following nominees:
  - a. *Mr. John Woudstra* (incumbent), from Edmonton, Alberta, is a retired supervisor of credit and collections for a large gas-distributing company. He is currently serving the Maranatha CRC in Edmonton as an elder and as treasurer of District 11 of Christian Schools International. He has served several terms on the local Christian-school board, as governor and treasurer of The King's University College, and twice as delegate to synod. In the 1980s he served the Canadian Ministers' Pension Plan for six years. He is currently serving as chairperson of the Canadian Pension Trustees.
  - b. *Mr. Harry Stuvie*, from Beamsville, Ontario, is an actuarial associate at Hartford Life Insurance Company of Canada. A member of Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ontario, he is currently involved in the Sunday-school program. He has served as a Calvinist Cadet counselor, school-board member, and on various school committees.
2. One member for a three-year term from the following nominees:
  - a. *Mr. John Knibbe*, from Calgary, Alberta, is a lawyer in general practice. He is a member of First CRC of Calgary and currently serves as chairperson of the deacons, as a member of the Board of Governors of The King's University College, and as a member of its executive committee. He has served on boards and committees for several organizations, including Citizens for Public Justice, Telecare, and Calgary Christian School.
  - b. *Mr. Joseph Vroom*, from Caledonia, Ontario, is a lawyer in commercial practice. A member of Orangeville, Ontario, CRC, he serves as chair of council. He serves on the board for Simcoe Senior Citizen Complex, and he has served on boards and committees for several organizations, including Redeemer College and the Canadian Christian Education Foundation.

Pensions and Insurance

Kenneth J. Horjus, director of finance  
and administration

## I. Introduction

This report gives an overview of youth ministry in the denomination in 1997 and provides a sampling of how the Youth-Ministry Committee (YMC) is supporting, encouraging, and improving the way the denomination ministers to youth. A major part of our work is to embrace, affirm, and monitor the work of the three ministry divisions of United Calvinist Youth (UCY). The committee as a whole has met twice since its report to Synod 1997.

## II. Promoting the work of United Calvinist Youth

For many years the CRC has endorsed the work of United Calvinist Youth as the denominationally related youth-ministry resource. However, a significant number of CRC congregations do not use all of the divisions of UCY. We believe that our churches could benefit from participation in UCY programs and resources. The Youth-Ministry Committee is exploring why some congregations do not participate and how the structures of both United Calvinist Youth and the CRC can be used to foster increased communication and cooperation.

## III. Classical youth-ministry committees

Synod 1991 mandated classes to form classical youth-ministry committees. The response to this mandate has been disappointing. A Youth-Ministry Committee subcommittee continues to investigate reasons why individual classes are not forming such committees.

## IV. Youth-ministry model

Denominational response to the YMC's youth-ministry model, published as *Walk with Me: A Model for Youth Ministry* by CRC Publications in 1996, continues to grow. The model's purpose is to serve as a training tool for volunteer leadership. The model gives direction and focus to local youth ministry.

## V. Mentoring program

Encouraged by the response to the youth-ministry model, the Youth-Ministry Committee has begun work on exploring the importance of mentoring as a means of ministry to young people. A subcommittee has been formed to examine this type of ministry with an eye toward producing materials to help congregations in their mentoring ministry.

## VI. Early Teen Ministry (ETM) representative

When United Calvinist Youth added a fourth division to focus on the needs of early teens, a representative of UCY's Early Teen Ministry was appointed to the Youth-Ministry Committee. This year Early Teen Ministry became part of Youth Unlimited, and so United Calvinist Youth again has only three divisions. The YMC continues to value the input of a representative whose ministry focus is on early teens. We are requesting that the position on the Youth-Ministry Committee allotted to a representative from Early Teen Ministry be filled instead by a member-at-large for early teen ministry concerns.

## VII. Nominations for Youth-Ministry Committee

Several committee positions need to be filled, for which the committee is pleased to present the following nominations:

### A. *GEMS (Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior)*

*Mrs. Jean Koops* has been a GEMS/Calvinette counselor for seventeen years. She has served as head counselor, leadership trainer, and chairperson of the GEMS/Calvinettes Executive Director Search Committee and is currently serving as president of the GEMS/Calvinettes executive board. *Mrs. Koops* is also the current chairperson of the United Calvinist Youth Board.

*Mrs. Ellen Van Til* has been involved in GEMS/Calvinettes as a counselor for fifteen years. She has served as president of her GEMS council for four years and as a leadership trainer for councils in her area since 1985. *Mrs. Van Til* became a member of the GEMS/Calvinettes executive board in 1992 and of the annual Convention Planning Committee in 1994.

### B. *Ethnic representative*

*Mr. Auggi Azwan* of Clarkson, Ontario, is actively involved in his church's youth program and has been helping with the planning and coordination of the Toronto SERVE project for two years. Born in Indonesia, *Mr. Azwan* has lived in Sweden and France. He works as a national market manager with a pharmaceutical company in Brampton, Ontario.

*Ms. Wendi Waller* (incumbent) is an elementary teacher at Roseland Christian School in Chicago. A long-time resident of Chicago's south side, *Ms. Waller* has been deeply involved in the spiritual shaping of youths from non-Anglo backgrounds.

### C. *Far West United States*

*Mr. Scott Elgersma* has been the youth director at Hayward CRC, Hayward, California, since 1994. *Scott* is a Youth Unlimited league trainer and has served on the Youth Unlimited board since 1995. Emphasizing relational youth ministry, *Scott* seeks to build a long-term ministry with the youth to whom he ministers.

*Rev. David Nederhood* is pastor at Alameda CRC in northern California. *David* has served on staff at Wedgwood Christian Youth and Family Services in Grand Rapids, Michigan, as well as on staff at Beverly Reformed and Ada Christian Reformed churches in Grand Rapids.

## VIII. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Youth-Ministry Committee chairperson, *Dr. Robert Keeley*, and the secretary, *Ms. Glenda Tamming*.

B. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to United Calvinist Youth division directors: *Mrs. Jan Boone*, GEMS Girls' Clubs director; *Mr. Richard Broene*, Cadet Corps director; and *Rev. Brian Bosscher*, Youth Unlimited director.

C. That synod approve a change in one position description for the YMC: The position formerly held by a representative from Early Teen Ministry will now be held by a member-at-large with an early teen focus.

D. That synod select one of the nominees for Western United States representative, one for GEMS representative, and one for ethnic representative to three-year terms on the YMC.

E. That the three divisions of United Calvinist Youth—Cadets, GEMS, and Youth Unlimited—be placed on the recommended-causes list.

Youth-Ministry Committee  
Robert Keeley, chairperson  
Glenda Tamming, secretary

### **UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH: GEMS Girls' Clubs/Calvinettes**

The year 1997 was filled with multiple God sightings as we saw God faithfully at work within the ministry. Counselors reported more girls from outside the church attending their clubs than ever before. We thank God for the ability to reach not only the children in our churches but also girls who have not had the opportunity to learn about Jesus before.

The annual counselors' convention, held in Peterborough, Ontario, was a real mountaintop experience for all the women who attended. Counselors chose from forty different workshops to help them become better prepared to lead young girls. Mass-meeting speakers inspired and challenged them to truly know God, and the awesome worship experiences are still being talked about today.

The annual theme, "Come! Celebrate the King!," has been a great study of the attributes and character of God as well as an encouragement to worship and celebrate him every day. Throughout the exploration of the theme this year, girls have been encouraged to do daily God sightings—to look for and find God at work in their lives.

Celebration Gatherings were begun this year. These gatherings are opportunities for large numbers of girls, counselors, and guests to come together for a morning of true praise, celebration, and fun. Singing, creative movement with beautiful flags and streamers, drama, and mime all go together to make up a morning filled with lasting memories. Celebration Gatherings ranged in size from five hundred to over two thousand attendees at the first two gatherings held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Pella, Iowa. Nine future Celebration Gatherings have been scheduled in various locations across the continent.

Two new councils were added to the ministry to make a total of fifty-one councils. Councils provide helpful counselor training and support and create opportunities for girls to develop relationships outside of their own clubs and churches.

GEMS Girls' Clubs  
Jan Boone, executive director

## UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH: Calvinist Cadet Corps

The biggest developments for the Cadet Corps last year came in the area of leadership training. Our North American clubs were grouped into seven regions, and seven regional training coordinators (RTCs) accepted positions of responsibility, one for each. A new staff training coordinator (STC) came on board to oversee all those efforts, and we've already seen blessings come as a result. Bernard Teeninga, the STC, performs the work from his home in Dundas, Ontario, and, like the RTCs, is not paid for his services. We praise God for the willingness of men to serve countless unpaid hours in his kingdom work.

Other training, as always, takes place at the annual counselors' convention. The convention last year was held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and its theme, "Building to the Lord's Code," served as the annual Cadet theme, highlighted from hundreds of North American pulpits on Cadet Sunday. In 1998, the convention is scheduled to be held at the Haworth Center in Holland, Michigan, with the theme "Let Your Light Shine." That will also be the Cadet theme for the year. We pray it will be true for the boys as well as for their leaders. To God be the glory!

Calvinist Cadet Corps

G. Richard Broene, executive director

## UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH: Youth Unlimited

The 1997-1998 program year of Youth Unlimited was a year filled with growth and transition. As a result of a year of strategic planning, both the staff and board of Youth Unlimited have undergone restructuring. Both of these changes occurred in an effort to make the ministry more responsive to the changing scene of youth ministry in the Christian Reformed Church and beyond.

In the spring of 1997, under the direction of the United Calvinist Youth Board, Early Teen Ministry became a part of Youth Unlimited. This consolidation has resulted in an immediate doubling of the number of churches who have chosen to participate in this program. We look forward to the continued development of this ministry in the areas of special events, service opportunities, and Bible studies.

Youth Unlimited has continued to provide churches with quality programs for both adults and students. Through the annual convention, SERVE projects, SWIM, Project Bridge, and leadership-training events, thousands of teens and adults are encouraged to follow Christ and be a part of the transforming of their world for him. All of these programs are again being offered in 1998.

In 1998 for the first time Calvin Theological Seminary and Youth Unlimited will be offering a youth pastors' retreat for the purpose of spiritual refreshment and encouragement to part-time and full-time youth-ministry professionals. This event is scheduled for June 1-3 in Muskegon, Michigan.

Youth Unlimited has also been very active with the strategic-planning process that has been taking place in the CRC and stands eager and willing to explore new ways to strengthen our ministry partnership. New youth-

ministry resources targeted to serve youth-ministry needs in the churches are being developed in cooperation with CRC Publications.

In light of youth-ministry trends in Canada, Youth Unlimited has also formed a special study group called the Canadian Action Team. In cooperation with various churches and groups throughout the CRC in Canada, this task force will be conducting listening tours and surveys to better understand how Youth Unlimited can serve the Canadian churches. This group began its work in the winter of 1998 and is hoping to complete its work by the spring of 1999.

Youth Unlimited is grateful to the Lord for the faithful support of nearly six hundred churches throughout Canada and the U.S. and continues to stand in need of the prayers of God's people.

Youth Unlimited

Brian Bosscher, executive director

### I. Introduction

The Historical Committee is the standing committee of the Christian Reformed Church that oversees the work of the denominational archives and promotes the publication of denominationally related historical studies. The archives are located in Heritage Hall at Calvin College and are staffed by Dr. Richard Harms, denominational archivist; Ms. Wendy Blankespoor and Ms. Boukje Leegwater, assistant archivists; Dr. Robert Bolt, archival assistant and denominational field agent; Dr. Henry Ippel, adjunct field agent; Rev. Marinus Goote, archival assistant; Ms. Hendrina Van Spronsen, office manager; and several student assistants.

### II. Archival work during 1997

During the past year the archivists

- A. Maintained connections with thirty-nine classes via designated regional representatives (contact persons). Seven classes (Alberta South, Chicago South, Grandville, Hackensack, Northern Illinois, Quinte, and Red Mesa) do not currently have such representatives.
- B. Published its seventeenth annual newsletter, which was sent to all regional representatives, classical stated clerks, the Dutch-American Historical Commission, relevant magazine editors, and other denominational leaders.
- C. Acquired historical records from sixty-seven Christian Reformed congregations and three Christian-school organizations; received official minutes from thirty-six classes; received anniversary materials from nineteen churches as well as newsletters, directories, and bulletins from various churches.
- D. Microfilmed minutes, reports, and other materials from various CRC agencies/committees; received materials from and/or reworked collection inventories of forty-two individuals or families associated with the CRC ministry, congregations, Calvin College, or Calvin Theological Seminary.

### III. Publications

The committee is pleased to report that Dr. James Schaap is making excellent progress on the popular history of the CRC which the committee commissioned in cooperation with CRC Publications. The book is on schedule to be published during 1998. It will provide the general reader with an honest, accessible account of the main tracks of the denomination's development in the interest of promoting a renewed sense of historical identity among the membership.

The committee continues to explore ways of raising an endowment to cover start-up costs for future publications and of identifying donors who might be interested in contributing to specific projects. It welcomes suggestions on these initiatives.

### IV. Tribute

On behalf of the denomination, the committee extends its appreciation to Dr. Herbert Brinks, whose many years of service as denominational archivist

and curator of Heritage Hall came to a completion in January 1998. The scope of the archives, the efficiency of its operation, and the valuable service it will render to professional researchers as well as to the cultivation of CRC historical memory in the future owe an incalculable debt to the vision, dedication, and expertise of Dr. Brinks.

## V. Reminders

A. The committee urges congregations that have observed or soon will observe a twenty-fifth, fiftieth, seventy-fifth, or hundredth anniversary to send the archives a copy of any commemorative materials (booklets, historical sketches, etc.) they create for the occasion. This is a simple means of preserving a vital historical record.

B. Of the 841 organized congregations in the CRC, 162 (19 percent) have not sent their minutes to the archives for microfilming. The committee asks these congregations to use this inexpensive means of permanently preserving important records for convenient reference while maintaining all due confidentiality.

C. The CRC will mark its sesquicentennial in nine years. The committee will gladly receive suggestions regarding the best ways this anniversary can be observed.

## VI. Recommendations

A. That Dr. Henry Zwaanstra represent the committee when matters pertaining to its mandate come before synod.

B. That one candidate from the following pair be elected to the committee for a three-year term:

- *Mrs. Swenna Harger* (incumbent), a local historian and genealogist, is a member of Graafschap CRC, Holland, Michigan. She is a charter member of the Genealogy Society of Holland and serves as its foreign secretary.
- *Mrs. Janet Sjaarda Sheeres*, a member of East Paris CRC, Grand Rapids, emigrated to Canada from the Netherlands in 1951 and to the U.S. in 1962. She has taught genealogy classes through the Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning and has authored several publications, including "My Search for Sjaardas."

### Historical Committee

James D. Bratt, secretary

William D. Buursma

Swenna Harger

Henry Zwaanstra, chair

## I. Membership

The members of the Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC) (with the years in which their terms expire) are Dr. Lyle Bierma (1999); Rev. Peter W. Brouwer (2000); Rev. Jason Chen (1999); Ms. Claire Elgersma (1998); Rev. Robert J. Haven (1998); Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, administrative secretary (2000); Ms. Cynthia Roelofs (2000); Rev. Edward Van Baak, president (1999); Dr. Henry Zwaanstra, vice president (1998); and the general secretary, Dr. David Engelhard (ex officio). Nominations for members to replace those whose terms expire this year are submitted below.

## II. Information regarding ecumenical relations

### A. Fraternal delegates

In 1997 the IRC appointed the following fraternal delegates to the assemblies of churches with which the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) is in ecclesiastical fellowship:

1. To the general assembly of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, meeting at Bonclarken, Flat Rock, North Carolina, June 9-11, 1997, Rev. Robert J. Haven.
2. To the general assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, meeting at Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, June 4-11, 1997, Dr. David H. Engelhard.
3. To the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, meeting at Village Seven Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado, June 10-13, 1997, Dr. David H. Engelhard.
4. To the general synod of the Reformed Church in America, meeting at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 14-20, 1997, Rev. Larry Van Essen.
5. To the synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia, meeting in Blacktown, New South Wales, Australia, August 18-28, 1997, Dr. David H. Engelhard.
6. To the general assembly of the Reformed Church of Japan, meeting in Hamamatzu, Japan, October 10-17, 1997, Rev. Lawrence K. Spalink.

Please note that fraternal delegates were not sent to the general assemblies of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church or the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America in keeping with the IRC policy to send fraternal delegates on alternate years to North American churches in ecclesiastical fellowship (see *Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 232-33).

### B. Representatives and observers to ecumenical organizations

In accordance with the mandate of the Ecumenical Charter of the CRCNA, the IRC appoints representatives and observers to various ecumenical organizations. These appointees report to the IRC.

1. Rev. Leonard J. Hofman is a member of the executive committee of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and currently is chairman of

the NAE board of directors. In that capacity he serves as a member of the board of NAE's World Relief Corporation. The Lord willing, he will complete his two-year term as chairman of the NAE board in March 1998. At various times during the past fifteen years he has chaired NAE's Membership Committee, Awards Committee, Resolutions Committee, Bylaws Committee, Search Committee for an NAE president, and a number of NAE ad hoc committees. The IRC has appointed Rev. Leonard J. Hofman and Dr. David H. Engelhard as voting members to the NAE annual meeting in Orlando, Florida, in March 1998.

2. Dr. George Vandervelde serves as the IRC observer on the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches. The Faith and Order Commission is divided into three subgroups: Mission in This Pluralistic World, Christian Identity and Formation, and Ecclesiology. Dr. Vandervelde is a part of the subgroup focusing on ecclesiology.
3. Dr. Henry Zwaanstra serves as the IRC observer to the Theological Commission of the Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC) of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). He attended the March 14-16, 1997, meeting of the commission in Atlanta, Georgia. Focusing on economic justice, the commission found a document from the 208th Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (1996), "Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development," to be a more credible, realistic, and authentic presentation of the subject than any previously produced in the ecumenical movement. The theological and ethical foundations for economic justice articulated in the statement are, from a Reformed perspective, a valuable contribution to the discussion. Dr. Zwaanstra was asked to present a paper on "Economic Justice in the Dutch Reformed Tradition" for the October 24-27, 1997, meeting of CANAAC.

Rev. Robert Haven and Dr. David Engelhard served as observers to the annual meeting of CANAAC, one of the regional councils of WARC, held on the campus of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, from January 29 to February 1, 1998. Rev. Haven participated in the Committee on Civil and Religious Liberties, one of three committees into which CANAAC divides its work, and Dr. Engelhard worked with the Committee on Cooperation and Witness.

The IRC is requesting additional information from the offices of CANAAC relating to its publications and its regulations pertaining to membership.

4. Dr. Richard L. van Houten, general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC), served as an observer representing the CRCNA to the twenty-third General Council meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), meeting in Debrecen, Hungary, August 8-19, 1997. Because the CRCNA was invited to send an official observer to WARC 1997 and because Dr. van Houten was scheduled to represent the REC to this assembly, the IRC asked him to serve as observer for the CRCNA to WARC and to present a report to the IRC. The council organized around the theme "Breaking the Chains of Injustice." Dr. van Houten presented a thirteen-page report to the IRC on WARC 1997. He also met with the IRC at its December 12, 1997, meeting to provide a further oral report and to answer

questions. His service in behalf of IRC is of value as the committee reviews our relationship to WARC.

5. In keeping with past practice of the CRCNA, the IRC is making plans to send one or two observers to the eighth assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, December 3-4, 1998.

### C. *Churches in corresponding fellowship*

In keeping with the establishment of the category churches in corresponding fellowship (*Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 407-10), the IRC is cultivating such relationships with churches. Currently the list includes the Christian Reformed Church of Myanmar; the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Nkhoma Synod (in Malawi); and the Reformed Church of Zambia.

We are pleased that the Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines (CRCP), listed in the *Agenda for Synod 1997* as a church in corresponding fellowship, is now a church in ecclesiastical fellowship.

## III. Ecumenical organizations

### A. *North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC)*

The twenty-third annual meeting of NAPARC was held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 18-19, 1997, and was hosted by the Presbyterian Church in America. All member churches were represented. Our delegates were Dr. David H. Engelhard, Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, and Rev. Edward A. Van Baak. Dr. Engelhard represented the CRCNA on the Interim Committee of NAPARC. Rev. Merle Den Bleyker represented the CRCNA at NAPARC's consultation on foreign missions.

1. Reports were received from each member church as well as from observers representing non-member denominations. Prayer was offered for each church after its report was received.
2. CRCNA membership in NAPARC

At NAPARC 1996 the delegation from the Presbyterian Church in America offered a resolution "that NAPARC initiate the process to suspend the Christian Reformed Church in North America from its membership" (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 224-25). The motion was placed before the 1997 meeting of NAPARC, and after discussion, a unit-rule vote resulted in the adoption of the motion. The resolution was adopted by a 6 to 1 vote, with only the CRCNA voting against the motion.

Thereupon the following motion was adopted:

That a committee comprising [sic] of the Chairman, vice-chairman and Secretary of NAPARC be requested to formulate, from the actions of major assemblies of the NAPARC churches pursuant to the matter of the ordination of women to ecclesiastical office in the Christian Reformed Church in North America, reasons to be sent to the NAPARC churches with citations from the actions of the major assemblies of the NAPARC churches, together with the information concerning the proposed suspension of the Christian Reformed Church in North America from membership in NAPARC.

In a letter to the interchurch committees of NAPARC churches, secretary Donald Duff offered the following explanation:

This does not mean that the Christian Reformed Church in North America is presently suspended from membership in NAPARC. It does mean, according to the Constitution of NAPARC, that "this proposal must then be approved within three years by two-thirds of the major assemblies of the member churches." Each member church should consider this matter at the major assembly level. For your information the Constitution of NAPARC defines a suspended church membership as follows: "A suspended church may send delegates to meetings of the Council but they shall not vote nor may that church be represented on the Interim Committee.

3. The officers of NAPARC for 1997-1998 are Gordon J. Keddie, chairman (RPCNA); Ronald L. Potter, vice chairman (RCUS); Donald J. Duff, secretary (OPC); Robert A. Henning, treasurer (RPCNA).
4. The next meeting of NAPARC will be hosted by the Reformed Church in the United States in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on November 17-18, 1998.
5. Having received from NAPARC secretary, Rev. Donald Duff, material relating to the action of NAPARC and material from member-church assemblies pertaining to women in ecclesiastical office, gleaned by certain officers of NAPARC after the November 1997 meeting, the IRC decided to send a letter to each of the general assemblies/synods of the NAPARC churches providing reasons why it should not vote to suspend CRCNA membership in NAPARC.

#### B. *Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC)*

1. Ms. Claire Elgersma, first clerk of REC and IRC member, reported on contacts made with several South African churches while in that country for the REC Interim Committee, including the following: the Reformed Church in Africa (Indian), the Dutch Reformed Church, and the Reformed Churches in South Africa. Dr. Richard van Houten, general secretary of the REC, reported on visits he made with the following churches in Nigeria: the Church of Christ in the Sudan Among the Tiv (NKST); the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN); the Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria (RCCN).

#### 2. *The Unique Person and Work of Christ*

An IRC subcommittee consisting of Rev. Peter Brouwer and Dr. Ronald Feenstra reviewed and critiqued this REC publication for the IRC. Following discussion of their careful review and critique, the IRC recommends that Synod 1998 recommend the REC study report *The Unique Person and Work of Christ*, second edition, to the churches as a responsible Reformed statement regarding the person and work of Christ and as a useful document for the ministry and witness of the church. This report can be used by pastors, church members, and study groups as a thoughtful biblical reflection on important issues facing the church today.

#### C. *National Association of Evangelicals*

The fifty-sixth annual convention/meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) is scheduled to meet in Orlando, Florida, on March 2-4, 1998. Rev. Leonard J. Hofman and Dr. David H. Engelhard will represent the

CRCNA at this convention. Rev. Hofman will complete his two-year term as chairman of the NAE Board of Directors. He presides over regular meetings of the executive committee of NAE and its officers. He also serves as a member of the board of the World Relief Corporation (WRC) of NAE, its wholly owned subsidiary.

The convention will be attended by representatives of NAE's forty-eight member denominations, individual congregations from twenty-seven additional denominations, several hundred independent churches, and 245 parachurch ministries and educational institutions. Reports will be received from its WRC subsidiary, eight commissions, and five affiliates. Resolutions will be formulated on various issues of current importance.

In keeping with the NAE Statement of Conscience concerning worldwide religious persecution, Dr. Donald Argue, president of NAE, is serving as a member of the White House Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad. Dr. Argue and two other religious leaders have been selected by the United States State Department to meet in February 1998 with Chinese officials in China and to visit Christians in registered churches and house churches in that country. The delegation will also visit with Christians in Tibet.

#### **IV. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland) (GKN)**

As reported in the *Acts of Synod 1997*, page 526, a delegation from the RCN/GKN met with members of the IRC and others in Grand Rapids on May 6-10, 1997. A representative of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (Netherlands Reformed Church), one of the denominations that, with the Evangelisch Lutherse Kerk and the RCN/GKN, is in process of federation, accompanied the delegation. Informative and helpful discussions focused on the CRC's Ecumenical Charter and the GKN's federating process (*Samen op Weg*), the REC document *Hermeneutics and Ethics*, and such subjects as homosexuality and cooperative ministries.

In an exchange arrangement, a CRC delegation met with representatives of the RCN/GKN and others in the Netherlands January 3-10, 1998. The delegation consisted of Dr. Lyle Bierma, Ms. Claire Elgersma, and Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, members of IRC; Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary; and Dr. Calvin Van Reken, professor of ethics at Calvin Theological Seminary. The delegation of five provided the needed expertise and balance for these discussions. Discussions with the RCN/GKN were held by the IRC in fulfillment of its 1996 mandate from synod to "intensify its pursuit of the two remaining provisions of ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKN" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 520). The delegation met daily with representatives of the Committee for Ecumenical Relations of the RCN/GKN. The discussions covered ecumenical matters such as ecumenical charters and the ecclesiastical structure of the developing federation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The implications of *Samen op Weg/Together on the Way* for relationships with the CRCNA were discussed.

The conversations covered various ethical issues and theological issues as well. A complete report will be submitted to synod in the supplementary report of the Interchurch Relations Committee. Subsequent to the meetings held with the RCN/GKN, certain developments have come to the attention of

the IRC that will require our evaluation and will factor into our consideration of the relationship between the CRCNA and the RCN/GKN.

The IRC delegation had opportunity to meet with representatives of the RCN/GKN, the Netherlands Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk), and with a ministers conference of the Reformed Alliance (Gereformeerde Bond), a conservative wing of the NRC/NHK. In addition, the IRC delegation visited with a pastor of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Christian Reformed Churches) that severed ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA in 1995, as well as with a delegation from the Netherlands Reformed Churches (Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken), with whom we enjoy continuing ecclesiastical fellowship. The itinerary also included an afternoon discussion with the theological faculty of the Free University of Amsterdam, focusing on Reformed theology in the Netherlands today. Issues relating to cooperative efforts of a diaconal nature were explored.

As in Grand Rapids in May 1997, the discussions were intensive and were conducted in an atmosphere of candor, concern, and cordiality. The January hospitality of the Dutch was generous and warm.

#### **V. Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA) (Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika) (GKSA)**

In a letter dated February 19, 1997, and received on May 19, 1997, the synod of the Reformed Churches in South Africa acknowledged the receipt of the January 1997 letter of the IRC (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, p. 229). Their letter indicates that

A. The RCSA will continue to maintain correspondence with the churches that separated from the CRCNA until they have clarity on the matter.

B. They took note that our suspension of fraternal relations with the RCSA was repealed since a new government came to power in South Africa. This issue is still not clear to them in view of the fact that our "decision did not deal with any ecclesiastical matter."

C. Their Deputies for Correspondence with Churches in Foreign Countries would like to meet with our deputies in connection with problems they stated in previous letters. Because they cannot afford to visit the CRCNA in the U.S.A., they invite deputies of the CRCNA to visit them in 1998 to discuss all outstanding issues between our two churches.

The IRC sent a positive letter of response to the RCSA letter of February 19, 1997, addressing the various issues raised in their letter. The IRC decided to send two of its members to meet with representatives of the RCSA, requesting that they suggest dates for those meetings. To date no reply has been received.

At the request of the IRC, the administrative secretary prepared a ten-page history of the relationship between the CRCNA and the RCSA.

#### **VI. Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ) (see *Agenda for Synod 1997*, p. 230, Section VIII, and *Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 526)**

The IRC received a letter from the RCNZ Interchurch Relations Committee acknowledging IRC's letters of February 3 and April 30, 1997. The RCNZ *Rules for Sister Church Relationships* were attached.

On August 13, 1997, the general secretary visited with representatives of the RCNZ in New Zealand en route to the synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia.

IRC sent a letter to the RCNZ expressing appreciation for the meeting of their representatives with Dr. David Engelhard, providing an opportunity to clarify issues of concern. The letter earnestly requested that communication on matters of mutual concern be continued and that ecclesiastical fellowship be maintained.

## VII. Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines (CRCP)

We are pleased to announce that the CRCP is now a church in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA. The IRC was also informed that the CRCP has become a member denomination of the Reformed Ecumenical Council. The general secretary of the CRCP is Rev. Lawrence de los Trinos.

## VIII. Churches in ecclesiastical fellowship in North America

### A. Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC)

A letter dated August 6, 1997, was received regarding the relationship of the KAPC to the CRCNA. It reported that "the 21st General Assembly . . . has decided to hold the fraternal relationship with the CRCNA, for the said denomination admitted the ordination of woman in church leadership." In a subsequent letter to the administrative secretary the general secretary of the KAPC explained that its general assembly "decided to *stop* the fraternal relationship, not to *hold* the relationship."

### B. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) (see *Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 639-40)

A September 3, 1997, response of the 1997 PCA General Assembly to the greetings of our fraternal delegate was received as information by the IRC.

In keeping with the direction of Synod 1997 that "the Interchurch Relations Committee . . . explore how the CRC can still maintain a constructive relationship with the PCA," arrangements are being made to meet with PCA representatives at the March 1998 annual meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals.

### C. Reformed Church in America (RCA)

In response to the invitation of the RCA that the CRCNA make provision for union churches with the RCA (see *Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 527), Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary; Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, administrative secretary; and Rev. Edward Van Baak, president of IRC, met with RCA representatives including Dr. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, general secretary, at the RCA regional office in Grand Rapids. Following the meeting, an IRC subcommittee reviewed the section of the RCA *Book of Order* that provides for union churches and amended it for adoption by the plenary meeting of IRC. Another church in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC, namely the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, also has a provision for union churches in its *Book of Order*.

### *Recommendations:*

1. That synod approve the following addition to Church Order Article 38:
  - f. *Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may unite to form union congregations with one or more particular congregations of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, with the approval of classis.*
2. That the provision for forming union churches as outlined in the Appendix to this report be approved and included in Church Order Supplement, Article 38-f.

### **IX. The Ecumenical Charter** (see *Agenda for Synod 1997*, p. 232)

The IRC has appointed a committee to review and, if necessary, revise the Ecumenical Charter of the CRCNA. Events and changes taking place in the area of ecumenical relationships are being reviewed relative to "the ways in which the basis and principles of the Ecumenical Charter are applied and implemented" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 387, 527-28). In keeping with a time frame established by the IRC, the committee will begin its work in April 1998.

### **X. Nominations for committee members**

The three-year terms of Ms. Claire Elgersma, Rev. Robert Haven, and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra expire on June 30, 1998. They are all eligible for reelection and will appear on the synodical ballot as incumbent nominees. Additional nominees, paired with the three names mentioned above, will be submitted to synod via the supplementary report of IRC.

### **XI. Representation at synod**

Rev. Edward A. Van Baak (president), Dr. Henry Zwaanstra (vice president), and Rev. Leonard J. Hofman (administrative secretary) have been appointed to represent the IRC at Synod 1998, along with other IRC members as necessary.

### **XII. Recommendations**

- A. That Rev. Edward A. Van Baak (president), Dr. Henry Zwaanstra (vice president), and Rev. Leonard J. Hofman (administrative secretary), along with other IRC members as necessary, be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to the IRC are discussed.
- B. That synod recommend the REC study report *The Unique Person and Work of Christ*, second edition, to the churches as a responsible Reformed statement regarding the person and work of Christ and as a useful document for the ministry and witness of the church (see Section III, B, 2).
- C. That synod take note of the discussions held with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (see Section IV).

D. That synod approve the concept of “union churches” with the RCA and the necessary changes in Church Order Article 38 and in Church Order Supplement, Article 38-f (see Section VIII, C).

Interchurch Relations Committee

Lyle Bierma  
Peter W. Brouwer  
Jason Chen  
Claire Elgersma  
David H. Engelhard (ex officio)  
Robert J. Haven  
Leonard J. Hofman, administrative secretary  
Cynthia Roelofs  
Edward A. Van Baak, president  
Henry Zwaanstra, vice president

**APPENDIX**

**Union Churches**

1. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church may unite to form union congregations with one or more particular congregations of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, with the approval of the classis.
2. The following Plan of Union shall be adopted by the union church so formed:
  - a. The following Plan of Union is adopted by the \_\_\_\_\_ Christian Reformed Church of \_\_\_\_\_, effective as of the date when each of the congregations has approved the plan by a two-thirds majority of those present at a regularly called congregational meeting with such notice and quorum as is required by the constitution of each church and when the classis (presbytery) of each church has approved the particular union and this Plan of Union.
  - b. The purpose of this union is to provide for the worship of almighty God, instruction in the Christian faith, and outreach and diaconal ministry by a united congregation which will share the property, real and personal, of the uniting churches and provide for the services of a minister or ministers for the united church.
  - c. The united church shall be known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - d. The united church shall be subject to the constitution of each church involved as set forth in subsections *r*, *s*, *u*, and *v*.
  - e. The council (session) shall submit its records annually, and whenever requested, to each broader assembly (judicatory).
  - f. The membership of the united church shall consist of those who were members of the uniting churches, plus those received by the council (session) of the united church.

- g. The council (session) of the united church shall report an equal share of the total membership to each broader assembly (judicatory), and such membership shall be published in the minutes/acts/directory of the synod/general assembly with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union church and with an indication of the total actual membership. A report of additional vital congregational information shall be made by the council (session) and properly noted by each (general) assembly.
- h. Initially the officers of the united church (elders and deacons) shall be those officers in active service of the uniting churches, who will undertake to perform their responsibilities under the constitution of each church, as indicated in subsections *d* above and *r, s, u,* and *v* below.
- i. At the first annual meeting subsequent to the effective date of the union, new officers shall be elected by the united congregation to replace the officers noted in subsection *h* above according to the constitutional procedure in force as a consequence of subsection *v* below.
- j. The pastoral relations of the ministers of the uniting churches shall be dissolved automatically by the action of the classis (presbytery) in approving this plan, but they may be eligible to be ministers (pastors) of the united church according to the election of the united congregation.
- k. The minister/s of the united church shall be full and responsible members of each assembly (judicatory) of immediate jurisdiction and shall be subject to discipline as provided below in subsection *s*.
- l. The united church shall cause a corporation to be formed under the appropriate laws of the state, where permissible. The corporation shall include in its articles or charter the substance of subsections *b, c,* and *d* above and the confessional standards of the uniting churches.
- m. All property of the uniting churches, real and personal, shall be transferred to the corporation formed in section *1* above. The new corporation shall be the legal successor of the corporations, if any, of the uniting churches, and it shall be bound to administer any trust property or monies received in accordance with the provisions of the original establishment of the trust. All liabilities of the uniting churches shall be liabilities of the united church. In any state/province where a church corporation is forbidden, the purposes of this section shall be achieved in harmony with the law of that state.
- n. Trustees of the corporation (or the unincorporated body) shall be elected in harmony with civil law according to the constitutional provisions outlined in subsection *d* above, as interpreted by subsection *v* below.
- o. While recognizing the basic right of any giver to designate the cause or causes to which the gift shall go, the council (session) of the united church shall annually propose to the congregation a general mission or benevolence program which shall be divided equitably among the officially approved causes of each denomination. The proportions shall be as the council (session) shall decide in response to the request of the broader assemblies (judicatories).
- p. Per capita ministry shares (apportionments) shall be paid to each classis (presbytery) and to synod (general assembly) on the basis of the total

communicant membership of the union church, equally divided among the denominations involved.

- q. All members of the united church shall be under the discipline of the elders (session) according to rules agreed upon in harmony with the constitution of each denomination where they coincide, in harmony with the mandatory provisions of the constitution of one denomination where the others are permissive, and at the choice of the elders (session) where they may be contradictory.
  - r. Appeals against the actions of the council (session) shall be made to one assembly or judicatory only (presbytery or classis), at the choice of the members, and all subsequent appeals or complaints shall be in the assemblies of the members' original choice, and decisions so finally made shall be binding on the council (session) and on the members.
  - s. The minister/s shall be subject to the discipline of the council/classis/presbytery provided that when an assembly begins an action, it shall invite a committee from the others to join in formulating and pressing the charges. In the event of appeal, the case shall be finally decided by the broadest assembly to which the appeal is taken in the church which commenced the action, and that decision shall be equally binding on the council/classis/presbytery.
  - t. The minister/s shall participate in the denominational pension plan of one of the churches. If already participating in a plan, the minister/s shall remain in that plan. If there has been no participation in any pension plan, the minister/s may choose which denominational plan to join.
  - u. Protests/complaints against the actions of the council (session) may be taken under the constitutional provisions of only one denomination, according to the choice of the complainant; once a complaint is registered with an assembly (judicatory), no other denomination shall accept jurisdiction in the same matter.
  - v. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions (except as provided in subsection *q* above), the council (session) of the united church shall petition the assemblies (judicatories) of immediate jurisdiction to overture their respective broadest assembly to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretations or by constitutional amendment.
  - w. A union church may be dissolved by a two-thirds vote of two congregational meetings held not less than one year and not more than two years apart, subject to the concurrence of the classes (presbyteries) involved. In case of dissolution of a union church, all property of the united church, real and personal, shall be divided equally between the classes (the presbytery and the classis) of jurisdiction.
3. No provision in this document shall be construed as modifying or amending the constitution of this church in its application to any but union churches organized under this provision, their members, officers, or ministers.

### I. Brief overview

In 1997 the Sermons for Reading Services Committee served a total of 170 churches, of which 155 are regular subscribers. The committee annually publishes three booklets of nine sermons each.

Committee member Rev. Fred Heslinga accepted a call to Edmonton and resigned from the committee. Alternate Rev. Carel Geleynse took his place. The present committee consists of Rev. Harry Vander Windt (2000), chairman; Rev. Paul Stadt (1999); Rev. Carel Geleynse (1999); and Mr. Ray Vander Ploeg (1999), secretary/treasurer. A new alternate is to be elected by synod.

Subscription rates will remain unchanged at \$75.00 (CAN.) or \$60.00 (U.S.). In its September annual meeting the committee hopes to discuss the possibility of making sermons available in electronic form, as suggested by CRC Publications.

### II. Recommendations

A. That synod approve the publication of *The Living Word* for 1999 to provide sermons for reading services for the churches.

B. That synod encourage churches and ministers to subscribe to this service for the benefit of churches and individuals.

C. That synod elect one committee member to serve as alternate from the following nominations:

1. *Rev. Hendrik Bruinsma*, pastor of Maranatha CRC, Woodbridge, Ontario.
2. *Rev. Gerald Hogeterp*, pastor of Covenant CRC, Woodstock, Ontario.

Sermons for Reading Services Committee  
Carel Geleynse  
Paul D. Stadt  
Ray Vander Ploeg, secretary/treasurer  
Harry A. Vander Windt, chairman

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# DENOMINATIONALLY RELATED AGENCIES

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Dordt College began the 1997-1998 academic year with its second record enrollment in a row. The new record of 1,301 continued a six-year trend of enrollment increases, and the make-up of the student body continued to follow patterns that we believe bode well for the future:

- Close to a thousand Christian Reformed students chose to attend Dordt College last year, making up three-quarters of the student body. This is the largest number since the late seventies, despite the fact that there are smaller numbers of college-age students in the denomination today.
- At the same time, proportional growth in the numbers of students from other denominations indicates increased interest in Reformed Christian higher education across a broader spectrum of prospective college students.
- More than 50 percent of students come to Dordt from over five hundred miles away, indicating a broad base of support and a position from which to reach an increasingly diverse audience.
- Last year's 24.2 average ACT score for incoming freshmen was a new record high, pointing to a growing appreciation for the academic quality of a Dordt College education.

Dordt's enrollment growth has necessitated growth on other fronts, especially housing, since more than 85 percent of current students live on campus. Groundbreaking for a new 220-bed residence hall took place in June 1997, and work is continuing toward a fall 1998 completion date. Students, staff, and the Sioux Center community are enjoying the new recreation facility that was opened last August. The full-feature recreation center, including a two-hundred-meter indoor track, is used for physical-education classes and intercollegiate athletics, but the majority of its more than six hundred users are involved in personal recreation or fitness programs.

The faculty was also expanded again in 1997-1998 with the addition of a position in business administration, which was filled by Erik Hoekstra, formerly chief operating officer of Eastern Floral and Gift, Inc., and a graduate of Trinity Christian College and the Rotterdam School of Management. Hoekstra is one of nine new faculty members who have been hired in the past two years to fill new positions or to replace retiring faculty members or those who have taken on new roles. These professors' previous experience, their academic credentials, their written responses to Dordt's statement of purpose, and their work since coming to campus give every evidence that these men and women will be valuable assets as Dordt strives to maintain an excellent, distinctively Reformed educational program. Over the past year we have once again been prayerfully seeking committed Reformed scholars to fill a number of faculty openings for the coming academic year.

The college was blessed with good financial support in the past year. Total gift dollars received in 1997-1998 reached a new record. The \$16 million DORDT 2000 capital campaign—the source of funding for the recreation center, other smaller building projects and improvements, annual operational needs, and endowment growth—reached the \$15 million mark by the end of January 1998. In the face of these positive trends in financial support, we were

disappointed to finish the past fiscal year with a 3.6 percent decline in church gift support.

Dordt College is committed to maintaining a strong relationship with its supporting churches, especially the Christian Reformed Church. We believe that the mission of Dordt College complements the church's mission. We ask for your continued prayers and support as we carry out within the educational sphere our shared calling to proclaim that "our world belongs to God."

Dordt College

Carl E. Zylstra, president

## **I. Celebrating thirty years of Christian graduate education**

The Institute for Christian Studies celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 1997 with praise and thanksgiving to God. Over the course of thirty years the institute's effort to honor Christ as the Lord of all learning has been blessed in remarkable ways.

## **II. Highlights for 1997**

A. In March "Art Talks! The Ruth Memorial Series on the Arts and Culture" was the first of a new annual event. It featured organists and pianists Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger, to promote our aesthetics program.

B. The "Trust and Suspicion? Hermeneutics in a Broken World" conference hosted by ICS in May saw keynote speakers Walter Brueggemann, Phyllis Trible, Jim Olthuis, and Sylvia Keesmaat share their views on current trends in biblical interpretation, in addition to numerous workshops and special events.

C. Hundreds of people from the ICS community gathered with family and friends for two ICS summer conferences, in Alberta and Ontario, focused on the theme of Christian responses to our technological society.

D. An October "Words in Season" event celebrated the long and productive history of publishing the work of ICS faculty and students. Several tables arrayed with these works were concrete evidence of God's blessings over the past thirty years.

## **III. Faculty transitions**

A. Dr. Paul Marshall recently announced his resignation in order to pursue opportunities made available to him due to the great success of his recent book, *Their Blood Cries Out*. We congratulate Paul on his recent successes and wish him God's blessings for the future. ICS is currently in a search process for a new faculty member in political theory.

B. ICS eagerly anticipates the arrival of two new faculty members who will be relocating to Toronto to teach at ICS this summer. Dr. Douglas Blomberg will arrive from Australia to be senior member in education. Professor Adrienne Chaplin will come from England to be senior member in aesthetics.

## **IV. Affiliation explorations**

The institute is continuing to explore the possibility of affiliation with The King's University College in Edmonton. A joint task force is currently examining various issues of concern to both institutions, with the goal of bringing a full report to both boards in May 1998.

## **V. CRC support for Christian graduate education**

A substantial amount of support income comes to ICS through individuals from the Christian Reformed Church and their church congregations, for which we are very grateful. For thirty years ICS has been carried on the prayers and financial support of people united in the conviction that all

wisdom and knowledge find their roots in Christ. As ICS enters a new decade, this remains our compass point. May God continue to bless our journey in his service.

Institute for Christian Studies  
Harry Fernhout, president

The past year has again been a year filled with many blessings as well as challenges for The King's University College in Edmonton, Alberta. The college's enrollment was stable at just over five hundred. However, student demographics are changing somewhat over the past couple of years, with more students enrolling from areas outside the city and the province. Since competition for post-secondary students in the Edmonton area is strong, we are pleased with this development. It also has substantially increased the population of our student residence.

In terms of program development, a number of highlights stand out. The environmental-studies program continues to attract many students, and we expect our first graduates in this area this spring. Enrollment in the elementary-education program also grew this year. Twenty-one teachers graduated last spring, many of whom are now teaching in Christian schools around the country. In the coming year the college hopes to expand its offerings in psychology, which is also very popular with students. Significant new opportunities for student participation in athletics have been created with the college's membership in the Alberta Colleges Athletics Conference. Teams presently compete in basketball and volleyball; with a new soccer field currently under development, we expect to compete in that sport as well in the near future.

The student-life program, under the direction of CRC pastor Rev. Roy Berkenbosch, continues to develop and grow. Increasing numbers of students are involved in campus worship, prayer, Bible-study groups, and many campus clubs. Student leadership is strong.

The college is placing increased emphasis on global awareness in terms of opportunities for students to study abroad and to gain international exposure on campus as well. An extensive report emphasizing the need to celebrate international diversity in the context of a strong Christian witness was adopted.

This past year the college received significant funds to endow new scholarships and bursaries. These funds, together with increased internal funding, have substantially increased the financial aid to be given to students in support of their study costs. Tuition for 1998-1999 was set at \$4,845 (Canadian) for a full-time study load.

The college is grateful to CRC congregations for the support given by way of ministry shares and to many individual members of CRC churches who support the college with annual giving. The college values its links with the CRC and is thankful for the opportunity to serve hundreds of students from the denomination.

The King's University College  
Henk Van Anandel, president

Redeemer College continues to stand as a testimony to God's faithfulness. In many ways our very existence on the university scene in Ontario is evidence that God's ways are higher than our ways. During the past year the college has experienced both challenges and positive developments, including a healthy increase in enrollment as well as in the number of students living on campus. It also appears that we will complete the year with another balanced budget.

All this is reason for thanksgiving. But more important than the financial implications is the quality and commitment of our students. While two-thirds are from Reformed background, the student body represents thirty different denominations and thirteen countries. Such diversity carries many blessings for our students. Yet our campus life also testifies to their unity in Christ as they pursue a distinctively Reformed Christian education. Evidence of the spiritual vitality of Redeemer College students is abundant. On campus they are active in prayer groups, peer-support initiatives, and praise ministries. Off campus they have volunteered their time and energy for local missions as well as for trips to the Montreal Seafarers Ministry, to Mississippi, and to Honduras.

The faculty of Redeemer College also continue to contribute toward the endeavor of Christian scholarship both on and beyond the Redeemer College campus. The Pascal Centre is in the process of organizing an international conference on "Science in Theistic Contexts," and the Dooyeweerd Centre continues to make extensive progress in translating the works of Herman Dooyeweerd. Additionally, our Theatre Arts Department will be performing on tour in various communities throughout southern Ontario, and the Redeemer College concert choir will be performing for audiences in western Canada.

To improve our service to both students and the community, new programs have been developed in youth ministry, social work, kinesiology, recreation, and co-op studies in the sciences. Supporting these developments, the college is in the process of upgrading its technological infrastructure as it applies to teaching, learning, and the library.

All the activities listed above are examples of the influence of a Christian college on its communities and on the broader culture. Even though Redeemer College is a great place to grow and develop, we as faculty and students must never forget that our calling takes us far beyond our eighty acres in Ancaster, Ontario, to a world that cries out for the message of hope and truth in Christ.

We are thankful to the churches and the many individuals who partner with us in making this vision possible. Support from the churches continues to increase. During the last year contributions provided over \$475,000, which has been directed toward financial aid for our students. We hope that the churches, too, will benefit in some way from the work of Redeemer College, whether through our students, our faculty, our conferences, or our publications. May God receive all the glory.

Redeemer College  
Justin D. Cooper, president

*Lord, I have heard of your fame;  
I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord.  
Renew them in our day,  
in our time make them known;  
in wrath remember mercy.*

—Habakkuk 3:2

We at Reformed Bible College (RBC) consider ourselves greatly blessed to have had the enrollment increase we experienced this year. The student body grew from 198 to 245, a 24 percent increase. This is the highest enrollment RBC has had since its founding. Because our emphasis is training for ministry in some form, we ask ourselves, "What might this mean for the activities in God's kingdom in the next century that he is now calling people into special preparation for spiritual leadership?" We know that a very real need and spiritual hunger are being expressed at different levels of society, and it seems that perhaps God is preparing his body for a significant increase in kingdom activity. May the delegates to synod keep in mind this observation from a ministry college as they look at the possibilities and implications of items before them at synod this year.

A characteristic of RBC is its clear focus on ministry-directed education, training, and research. We are convinced that God has called us specifically to locate, encourage, train, and send people into a global society to give witness to God and help build believers to be a strong and unified body in Christ. *Reformed* is not merely a name to us; it is our very reason for being. Because the Lord has shown himself to us in marvelous and unmistakable ways, we earnestly seek to convey to our needy world the wonder and reality of his glory. RBC is focused to show the deeds of the Lord in a way that today's society can know them and respond to his hand of mercy.

A significant development for the college is receipt of approval to offer a bachelor of science degree in addition to our bachelor of religious education. The B.S. provides a means through which students may take a more focused and concentrated program of courses in Bible and theology, as well as courses in other areas. Also, the B.S. will enable students to transfer credits more readily between RBC and other institutions. Further, it will enable us to extend state aid to our students that will increase each student's present allocation by about \$4,000.

A five-year strategic plan is in place that sets out the vision of RBC as a five-hundred-student institution. We plainly see that the Lord has opened doors for us and that there is a need for ministry-directed people in a number of fields. We are convinced that we must respond to this vision as an act of obedience—the Lord wants workers in his field, and this college is a tool he would use toward that end. What a thrill it is to be so used of him!

Reformed Bible College  
Nicholas V. Kroeze, president

Trinity Christian College made significant advances in the areas of programs, services, and new facilities during 1997. President A.J. Anglin and the Trinity community wish to extend their thanks to members of the Christian Reformed Church for their generous and essential support throughout the year. We are grateful for synod's recognition of Trinity's contributions to the life and development of the greater Reformed community.

Continuing its pledge to academic excellence, Trinity has approved an honors program to begin in the fall of 1998. This enthusiastically anticipated program complements the college's recent addition of the Founders' Scholarships—full tuition scholarships awarded annually to two academically gifted freshmen who demonstrate a vibrant Christian faith and outstanding leadership potential. This year twenty applicants from eight states were interviewed on campus for the award.

A degree-completion program will also be implemented in 1998. Designed for the working adult, classes and group projects culminate in a bachelor's degree in organizational management. As with its traditional undergraduate programs, Trinity requires both theology and philosophy as core elements in the degree-completion curriculum. In addition to degree completion, Trinity has actively begun its investigation into offering graduate programs in several key disciplines.

Thanks to the initiative of key donors and business groups, Trinity has expanded its student services to include a Career Planning and Placement Center. This new service centralizes campus efforts to locate and place students in internships and jobs and provides counseling to students in career decisions and placement preparation. In turn, the center will serve as an interactive hub for businesses to communicate with students and alumni seeking employment. President Anglin has expressed interest in investigating ways the center could link with the career centers at other Reformed colleges. This collaborative effort could provide a wider range of services and job-market options for Trinity students while providing other college students with greater access to the Chicago job market via Trinity.

We continue planning for two new facilities on campus, the Science and Technology Center and the Chapel/Performance Auditorium, to provide much needed classroom, rehearsal, and communal space to support our growing student body. Several significant gifts have already been pledged to these projects; construction will commence when funding for a specific facility is secured.

Keeping higher education affordable both now and in the future is a key concern for us but especially for families who envision their children attending an excellent Christian college in the Reformed tradition. Therefore, our fiscal stewardship must include avenues that provide increased assistance directly to families with financial need. As we work to build our physical campus, we also place increased emphasis on raising dollars for endowed scholarships and faculty chairs. Trinity's commitment to provide quality education at a reasonable price is related to its ability to reduce indebtedness, increase endowment, promote steady yet controlled growth in student population, and partner with friends to provide gifts in support of our valuable mission.

The involvement of churches is essential to provide the faculty, facilities, programs, and services necessary to equip our students for lives of meaningful service. During our last fiscal year, churches gave \$151,000 in unrestricted gifts, nearly 14 percent of total annual unrestricted giving. However, this number represents an \$11,000 decrease in giving compared to the previous year. Although current projections for 1998 are stronger, we pray that synod will continue to recommend that area classes faithfully support the work of their regional colleges.

Trinity Christian College is blessed to serve young people of faith and charged to nourish them spiritually, intellectually, and physically to the glory of God. The campus community gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Christian Reformed Church and its members in sustaining us through prayers and gifts. We pray that our partnership may continue to flourish for the benefit of the kingdom of God.

Trinity Christian College  
A.J. Anglin, president

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# OVERTURES, APPEALS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

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# OVERTURES

## **Overture 1: Permit an Independent Assessment of Readiness for Ministry of Those Ministers Separated from Their Congregations**

### **I. Background**

In response to a report on difficulties with the calling process, Synod 1972 appointed a standing committee to serve as a clearing house for information about ministers and congregations. At that time it was rare for a church to advertise a vacancy and daring for a minister to reply to such an advertisement.

The work of this volunteer committee found a home in the Pastor-Church Relations Committee in 1987 as Ministerial Information Services (MIS). Advertisements for ministerial vacancies became common; applications were not automatically suspect; information exchanged became more detailed, including references and possible police records.

Our calling process has changed considerably since 1972, but the number of pastors and congregations that separate has grown alarmingly. These breakdowns occur for such a variety of reasons that the normal channel of information (consistorial and classical credentials) is not able to provide sufficient information for calling churches. Ministerial Information Services has received some complaints that not all ministers who are listed as eligible for call are ready for ministry. Churches expect MIS to be more helpful than merely passing on names.

The 1997 report of Pastor-Church Relations signals some of MIS's current difficulty by asking whether "some form of denominational personnel committee" is needed. The following overture proposes less than that. It asks that the director of Pastor-Church Relations, without interfering with the rights and duties of the councils and classes and after due consultation with the appropriate classical officials, be allowed to be more helpful to pastors and churches who use MIS by being able to assure churches who receive names from MIS that problems of certain ministers have been faced and to some extent resolved.

### **II. Overture**

Classis Grand Rapids East overtures synod

A. To allow the director of the Pastor-Church Relations division of CRC Pastoral Ministries to require, where he deems it necessary, an independent assessment of readiness for ministry of ministers who have been separated from their congregations by way of Church Order Articles 16, 17, or 83 before Ministerial Information Services makes their names available to calling churches.

B. To declare that the costs for such an assessment shall be borne equally by the minister, the last congregation or agency served, and the denomination (estimated cost of each assessment: \$1000).

*Grounds:*

1. Such assessments will help separated pastors to deal with issues that led to their separation and to reenter ministry, where possible, with more assurance.
2. Such assessments will help churches to have more confidence in the names submitted by MIS.
3. Such assessments are already used by several of our agencies and congregations.
4. The modest cost is a small price to pay to assist congregational and pastoral health and avoid possible liability.

Classis Grand Rapids East

Philip R. Lucasse, stated clerk

## **Overture 2: Appoint a Study Committee to Revise Form of Subscription**

Classis Thornapple Valley overtures synod to appoint a study committee to revise the Form of Subscription along the following three lines:

A. Revise the statement in the Form of Subscription that "*all the articles and points of doctrine set forth in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort fully agree with the Word of God*" (italics added) to reflect the fallibility of all human work.

*Grounds:*

As concerns agreement with the Word of God, the Form of Subscription claims too much for the articles and points of doctrine in the creeds of the church.

1. Even making full allowance for the fact that the doctrines in the creeds are not necessarily stated in the best possible manner and that the creeds do not say everything about them that can be said (see Church Order Supplement, Art. 5), since the creeds are human and therefore fallible formulations, no claim should be made that they "*fully agree* [italics ours] with the Word of God." Rather, as human formulations, creedal declarations should always be subject to ongoing scrutiny and revision.
2. The questions that have been raised about certain teachings—notably about the scriptural fidelity of points in the Canons of Dort and related articles in the other two creeds—and the fact that the Christian Reformed Church has occasionally seen fit to make changes in the creeds are indications that it cannot truthfully be said that all these doctrines "*fully agree*" with the Word of God.
3. The present wording of the Form of Subscription promotes signing it with mental reservations. Those who sign with reservations may not be aware that this is prohibited by the Church Order Supplement, Article 5, *Guidelines*, A,1: "*The person signing the Form of Subscription subscribes without reservation to all the doctrines contained in the standards of the church, as being doctrines which are taught in the Word of God*" (italics

added). For others the signing of the Form has become a routine gesture devoid of real meaning. This happens despite the presence in the Form of Subscription of the words "We, the undersigned, . . . by means of our signatures *declare truthfully and in good conscience before the Lord that we sincerely believe that all the articles and points of doctrine . . . fully agree . . .*" (italics added).

Yet others, those who know what the Form says and who cannot in good conscience sign such a document, back off, though they are capable and willing to be officebearers. The church in effect deprives itself of their services, all because of a centuries-old Form of Subscription that has never been substantially revised (the Form of Subscription dates back to the 1618-1619 Synod of Dort).

4. The claim that the doctrines in the creeds "fully agree" with the Word of God needlessly alienates members of the Christian Reformed Church from fellow Christians in other denominations who hold different views on some points.

B. Modify the Form of Subscription so that it distinguishes the responsibilities of elders and deacons from those of ministers, evangelists, and professors of theology in the promise to teach and defend the articles and points of doctrine.

*Grounds:*

The blanket requirement that all who sign the Form of Subscription must diligently teach and faithfully defend all the doctrines contained in the creeds does not reckon with the individual gifts and separate responsibilities of ministers, elders, and deacons.

1. The Form of Subscription is clearly geared to ministers and theological professors, not to elders and deacons. Presumably, it may be expected of (most) ministers and theologians that they possess the theological knowledge and personal gifts to live up to this requirement; it comes with the territory of being pastors and teachers. It seems wrong and unrealistic to require the same of elders and deacons. Their offices do not seem to require it, and their personal gifts, while enabling them to be fine spiritual elders and deacons, may not lie in this area at all. It is worthy of note that the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands have never had *one* Form of Subscription covering all three offices.
2. It is customary in the CRC that teachers at Calvin College when appointed are asked to sign the Form of Subscription. While it is easy to see why this is asked of the religion or theology professors, to ask the same of professors in other fields of learning seems out of place, since it is not in their area of expertise to diligently teach the articles and points of doctrine in the creeds.
3. Changing the Form of Subscription along the lines suggested will promote the spiritual well-being of the church in that it will bring about greater integrity in the signing of the Form of Subscription.

C. Modify the requirement that signers of the Form of Subscription, if they come to have some difficulty with a doctrine or doctrines in the creeds, will not speak or write about it until they have disclosed their sentiments to the proper authorities in the church for examination.

### *Grounds:*

The requirement that a person who has come to have problems with (some of) the doctrines of the church may not speak or write about it *even privately* until he/she has made the difficulties known to the proper ecclesiastical bodies inhibits free, Spirit-guided theological reflection and study and does not reflect realistically how theology is developed in the twentieth century.

1. Difficulties with creedal teachings often are the result of *group study* of Scripture and the creeds and from *interacting with others* in speaking and in writing about questions. By the time a person has discovered that he/she disagrees with a creedal teaching, the matter has already been discussed with others. Late-twentieth-century means of communication (telephone, Internet, etc.) make the discussion of doctrinal issues with others easy, unlike the situation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when communication was not so easy and scholars worked largely alone. No serious scholar today develops theological concepts *alone*, but the Form of Subscription taken seriously seems to require it and thus makes the development of doctrine practically impossible whenever the doctrine in question touches upon doctrines covered in the creeds.
2. Advance in understanding biblical truth requires the freedom to raise questions, to propose new ideas, to scrutinize old doctrines afresh, even the freedom to discount old concepts. The stipulation imposed by the Form of Subscription places a roadblock in the way of honest students of Scripture and muzzles dissent. If strictly adhered to (it is not always!), it would do much to confine the church's grasp of divine truth to that achieved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the creeds were formulated. While, historically speaking, the framers of the Canons of Dort may have wanted to claim that standing for the Canons, the same cannot be said of the Belgic Confession and Heidelberg Catechism.

Classis Thornapple Valley

Roger G. Timmerman, stated clerk

## ADDENDUM

### Historical Survey and Observations on the Form of Subscription within the CRCNA

#### I. Synod 1973: objections to the Form of Subscription

This is not the first overture asking for revision in the Form of Subscription to be submitted to a synod of the Christian Reformed Church. For years, many in the CRC have been aware that the Form of Subscription contains serious weaknesses. Synod 1973 had on its agenda two overtures on the subject, submitted respectively by Classis Chicago South and Dr. Harry R. Boer.

Boer first submitted his overture to Classis Chicago South, but it was not accepted. Classis Chicago South did recognize the merits of Boer's overture yet chose instead to present its own version of an overture to synod (*Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 720-21). Boer then forwarded his overture to that synod as well (*Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 729-31).

The deficiency Classis Chicago South detected in the Form of Subscription is that it "limits the process of creedal revision exclusively to the ecclesiastical assemblies." Boer proposed the drafting of an entirely new Form. Classis Chicago South was unwilling to endorse that proposal. But it also was of the opinion that something should be done to correct the weakness in the Form. Therefore it proposed the addition of a new sentence to the Form of Subscription that would give those with problems concerning teachings in the creeds a measure of freedom to air their feelings and discuss their problems with others. Classis Chicago South requested that a sentence be added to the Form stating that those who submit their sentiments regarding teachings in the creeds to the consistory for examination shall by that very act "obtain the right to discuss and defend them publicly, except in . . . preaching or . . . teaching" while "the church may openly reflect upon them" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 721).

Boer himself wanted something much more comprehensive. Labeling the Form a "hierarchical, and, therefore, not a Reformed instrument," he asked synod "to undertake the writing of a new instrument to replace the present Form. . . ." According to Boer, "The vitality of the church's theology, her preaching and her witness depend in the long run on the openness of the church to the Word of God." At present, he contended, "This openness does not exist in the basic and determinative area of creedal revision with its necessary condition of freedom of inquiry into and discussion of the meaning of the Spirit as he speaks . . . through his Word." Therefore Boer wanted a new document in which, in agreement with the Reformed conception of the church, theologians and others would be officially given this openness. In particular, he asked that the new Form to be written "recognize the fallible human aspect of the creeds and qualify the statement that the creeds 'do fully agree with the Word of God.'"

In response to these overtures, Synod 1973 adopted an addition to the Form of Subscription. Slightly altering the wording of Classis Chicago South's proposal, it decided to incorporate the following sentence into the Form:

After revealing such sentiments to the consistory, classis or synod for examination, we shall have the freedom to discuss and defend these sentiments publicly, except in our preaching or official teaching, always with a spirit of meekness and love, and we understand that the church as the body of believers may openly reflect upon them until the matter has been conclusively adjudicated by consistory, classis or synod.

(*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 98)

## II. Synod 1974

But that is as far as the revision efforts got, for Synod 1973 also decided that final ratification of the changes be delayed until Synod 1974. That synod, however, did not ratify the changes adopted by Synod 1973. Instead, Synod 1974 created a study committee with the mandate to study the history, nature, and functioning of the Form of Subscription in the Christian Reformed Church and especially to study the merits of the changes made by Synod 1973.

## III. Synod 1976

The study committee reported to Synod 1976 with a lengthy, carefully researched majority report (*Acts of Synod 1976*, pp. 550-83) and two brief minority reports (pp. 584-85, 587-91).

The majority report recommended that synod not ratify the proposed changes adopted by Synod 1973. Instead, it proposed that synod adopt a set of guidelines and regulations, guidelines to spell out the meaning of subscription to the creeds and regulations to specify a procedure for submitting "difficulties and sentiments."

The first minority report, signed by only one delegate, recommended substantial changes in the Form itself, altering or removing the phrase "do fully agree with the Word of God." The second minority report, likewise signed by only one, objected to the guidelines proposed by the majority report and called for a revision of the Form itself "that will meet the objections which have been raised to it, especially to the declaration concerning the phrase 'do fully agree with the Word of God.'"

Synod 1976 chose to go along with the majority report and did not ratify the changes in the Form of Subscription made by Synod 1973. It also adopted the guidelines and regulations proposed by the majority report. The complete text of these were inserted into the Church Order Supplement, Article 5, *Guidelines and Regulations re Gravamina*. Subsequent synods did not deal further with Form of Subscription issues.

#### **IV. Observations: where matters stand today regarding the Form of Subscription**

On issues regarding the Form of Subscription, three things stand out:

##### *A. Contested words still stand*

The disputed words in the Form of Subscription that the teachings in the creeds "do fully agree with the Word of God" still stand, entirely unaltered.

In this connection it is noteworthy that all the members of the 1976 study committee (including the signers of the two minority reports) agreed that the present Form was specifically designed as "the instrument by which the church seeks to assure itself that those called by the church to function officially do so in accord with the faith of the church" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, p. 571). As that kind of instrument, it is watertight; "it does not encourage . . . examination" (of the creeds), and "it makes no provision for participation of the membership of the church either in the examination of the confessions or in their revision" (p. 571). Tellingly, some years later Dr. Boer would write that "it is the express purpose of the Form of Subscription . . . to impose on the church and on the College and the Seminary the imprint of Dort" (*The Doctrine of Reprobation in the Christian Reformed Church*, Eerdmans, 1983, p. 74).

Indeed, nothing in the wording of the Form of Subscription has been changed. Those who must sign it as a condition for employment in the CRCNA (ministers, elders, deacons, Calvin College professors) still are asked to declare that they are convinced that the teachings set forth in the church's three creeds "do fully agree with the Word of God." The guidelines concerning the meaning of subscription adopted by Synod 1976 do nothing to change that basic fact.

##### *B. Still no real freedom of inquiry*

Synod 1976 did clarify the nature of subscription and also outlined a procedure to be followed in case of difficulties with the Form. It did nothing, however, to make it easier for thinkers in the church to critically examine the

faith of the church in the light of Scripture, let alone to encourage such critical engagement with the creeds.

As is recognized in the report of the majority committee, "a strict reading and application of the Form would seem to foreclose free discussion within the church of any proposal for revision of the confessions . . ." (p. 572). The regulations to be followed for submitting gravamina (complaints or objections) have not changed this fundamental fact. The prescribed regulations take no cognizance of the fact that newer insights that *may be* at variance with traditional creedal teachings do not arise in a vacuum but more often than not are the product of prolonged study and reflection, both private and public. On this point, even with the current guidelines and regulations, the Form of Subscription is quite unrealistic.

The requirement that signers of the Form of Subscription when they come to have "views differing" from the creeds "will not propose, defend, preach or teach such views, either publicly or privately" until they have disclosed them to the proper ecclesiastical authorities is legal language that does nothing to encourage faithful Christian scholarship, but can only stifle it. Often thinkers are not sure whether their thoughts are in agreement with Scripture or not. They would like to test their ideas through public discussion. The regulations adopted in 1976 do nothing to make this officially possible.

Pastors who are not afraid to do their own study and thinking remain at risk, too. It can happen that, unwittingly, their personal study of Scripture makes them teach and preach something that is contrary to the creeds or something which a hearer or hearers feel is contrary to the creeds. In such cases, the current Form of Subscription in effect declares "open season" on such persons in the pulpit or classroom, giving critics the freedom to "fire away" at him or her.

The result is that the church's theologians, to say nothing of most of its members, are hardly encouraged to engage in study of the Scriptures through other glasses than those of the church's centuries-old creeds. The gospel will always stay the same, but our understanding of it is subject to change. The Form of Subscription is so written that it makes it almost impossible to make significant changes in our understanding of the unchangeable gospel. This is still where we stand today.

### C. *Burden on elders, deacons, teachers remains*

The impossible burden placed upon elders and deacons and teachers (non-theological) at Calvin College by the requirement of signing the Form of Subscription still stands. They are required to "teach these doctrines diligently, to defend them faithfully." This requirement to teach and defend in most cases has little to do with their daily occupations, or field of study, or requirements of office. They are required to promise to do something which, in most cases, they do not have the ability to do.

Monsma and Van Dellen in their *Church Order Commentary* (1941 edition, pp. 225ff.) suggest that the Form of Subscription is not really suitable for signing by elders and deacons. The 1976 majority report recognized that there "may well be a question as to whether this form is the most appropriate formulary of subscription for unordained professors in a college" (p. 567). Appropriate changes should be made in the Form itself.

## V. Conclusion

All in all, the discussion above shows that with respect to the Form of Subscription, the Christian Reformed Church still has a lot of unfinished business. This overture is intended to move the church to have another look at the Form, to deal seriously with the questions that have been raised (earlier, in the 1973 overtures, in the 1976 majority and minority reports, and now again in this overture), and to draft a Form that comes to grips with and removes these problems.

The CRCNA needs a Form which can be signed in good conscience without any mental reservations by all who are required to sign it.

## Overture 3: Challenge North Americans to Recognize the Holocaust of Abortion and to Oppose It Boldly; Urge Councils to Respond Publicly

### I. History

#### A. Synod 1972 adopted the following recommendations:

1. That synod affirm the unique value of all human life and the special relationship of man to God as his image-bearer. . . .
2. That synod, mindful of the sixth commandment, condemn the wanton or arbitrary destruction of any human being at any stage of its development from the point of conception to the point of death. . . .
3. That synod affirm that an induced abortion is an allowable option only when the life of the prospective mother is genuinely threatened by the continuation of the pregnancy. . . .
4. That synod call believers to a ringing testimony against the evils of abortion as practiced in our society, and encourage them to promote action and legislation that reflects the teaching of Scripture. . . .

(Acts of Synod 1972, pp.63- 64)

#### B. Synod 1976 decided

1. That synod endorse the Human Life Amendment to the Constitution of the United States (as worded by the legal committee of the National Right to Life Organization).

....

3. That synod call the classes, consistories, and members of our congregations in both the United States and Canada to do all in their power to protect and promote the sanctity of human life, at any age; publicizing the issues, educating people, organizing committees, and doing whatever is considered necessary to confront people with the crucial physical and moral issues which are at stake.

(Acts of Synod 1976, pp. 63-64)

#### C. Synod 1981

Synod 1981 rejected the overture to declare January 22 a national day of mourning, prayer, and fasting but also gave this statement as grounds for continued attention to this issue: "Christians may not rest while the evil abuse of abortion persists, but are called to testify and act in public life in obedience to their Lord" (Acts of Synod 1981, p. 61).

#### D. Synod 1988

Synod 1988 authorized the stated clerk of synod to send a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada (the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney) and to the Parliament of Canada "re the impending introduction of new abortion-regulatory legislation in the Parliament of Canada" (*Acts of Synod 1988*, p. 528).

#### E. Synod 1990

Synod 1990 rejected Overture 40 to reaffirm the synodical statements of 1972 and 1976 regarding abortion on the following grounds:

1. a Synodical decision, once made, stands until changed (cf. Church Order Article 29 and 31) and
2. the position has not been officially challenged.

(*Acts of Synod 1990*, p. 596)

#### F. Synod 1993

Synod 1993 rejected Overture 10 to restudy the issue of abortion, following the advice of the advisory committee, which noted that past statements and current materials were sufficient to give guidance to the churches (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 515).

#### G. Synod 1995

Synod 1995 rejected Overture 77 to designate a Sanctity-of-Human-Life Sunday on the grounds that "sanctity of life is already being successfully observed" . . . and that "there is no need . . . to disregard synod's statements against increasing the number of special Sundays" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 659).

#### H. Synod 1997

1. Synod 1997 rejected Overture 14 (to declare Dr. Hessel Bouma's position on abortion contrary to the CRC position) on the following grounds:

1. The committee studied Overture 14 for quite some time and eventually concluded that it does not provide sufficient new grounds.
2. The committee notes that there is considerable merit in Overture 15, which is not specifically on this committee's agenda but which could serve as a partial answer to Classis Heartland's concerns in Overture 14. . . .
3. The committee acknowledges what was said in *Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 528: . . . that [even though] certain of the book's conclusions and his positions do not agree with the decision of synod in every respect. . . . the book and Professor Bouma are strongly but not absolutely pro-life. . . .

(*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 604-05)

2. Synod 1997 also rejected Overture 15, to provide biblical grounds for the denominational position on abortion, on these grounds:

1. Synod has previously addressed a request for a new study of the abortion issue (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 515).
2. If Classis Wisconsin believes that a better biblical and confessional case can be made for the decision of Synod 1972, the classis should bring these materials to synod for consideration. . . .

(*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 606-07)

3. Synod 1997 adopted Overture 13 to "reaffirm the unique value of all human life and condemn the practice of partial-birth abortion" and "to instruct the general secretary of the CRCNA to send official correspondence to the President of the United States and to the Congress . . . lamenting the presidential veto of the ban on partial-birth abortions and calling upon the government to enact legislation which would affirm 'the unique value of all human life' and prohibit 'the wanton or arbitrary destruction of any human being at any stage in its development'" (*Acts of Synod 1972*, pp. 63-64) (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 607-08).

## II. Overture

Classis Zeeland overtures synod to

- A. Challenge the people of North America to awaken to the fact that after twenty-five years abortion has become an American holocaust.
- B. Boldly proclaim our opposition to the American holocaust of abortion and thus avoid the guilt of remaining silent.
- C. Urge councils to wrestle with a public response to the abortion problem in North America.

### *Grounds:*

1. One of the dictionary definitions of *holocaust* is "great or widespread destruction." The destruction of over thirty-five million lives in the United States since 1973 fits this definition. *Holocaust* is a dramatic word that calls attention to the great horror that has taken place.
2. It has been twenty-five years since the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision. In twenty-five years abortion has destroyed thirty-five million innocent lives created by God. On this anniversary it is appropriate and necessary for synod to address the enormity of this wanton and intentional destruction of human life.
3. The Christian Reformed Church is called by Scripture to continue to be prophetic to its world. We are to speak the truth without toning down the message to mollify those who might oppose what God's Word clearly teaches. To act as salt and light in our world, we must address boldly the American holocaust of abortion and call our nation to repentance and change.

Classis Zeeland

Steven R. Sytsma, stated clerk

## Overture 4: Establish an Independent Financial-Review Committee for Examination of Agency Investments and Policy Concerning Them

### I. Background

A letter from the executive director of ministries (dated Dec. 8, 1997), a communication from CR Home Missions (dated Dec. 11, 1997), and an announcement from the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America appearing in *The Banner* (Dec. 22, 1997) disclosed that \$11.5 million invested with IRM Corporation of Concord, California, by Christian Reformed Home Missions (\$8 million), Calvin College (\$2.4 million), and The Back to God Hour (\$1 million) is in jeopardy.

The announcement from the Board of Trustees indicated that an Investment Oversight Committee was established by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to deal with this matter. The Board also affirmed its commitment to the principle of full disclosure when such disclosure will not harm the interests of the church and individuals who have investments in IRM.

This financial debacle has far-reaching implications for all members of the denomination. Among many members who have contributed conscientiously to the causes of all CRC agencies, it prompts serious questions with respect to how denominational funds are managed. Questions of principle must be asked not only about any existing investment guidelines but also about the appropriateness of investing funds donated for ministry causes in any nonministry capacities. There should also be provision for all CRC agencies to make periodic public disclosure of all specific assets and equities.

The concerns created within the denomination by the IRM investments necessitate the fullest possible disclosure of details pertaining to these ill-advised investments. Also evident is the need for better avenues of financial accountability and disclosure for all CRC agencies.

### II. Overture

Classis Quinte overtures synod

A. To establish an independent review committee, free of any conflict of interest, to study the matter of the IRM investments in order to provide the fullest possible public disclosure.

B. To take whatever steps are necessary to facilitate (1) investment guidelines appropriate for ministry-designated funds and (2) annual public disclosure of assets and specific investments for all denominational agencies.

*Ground:* These steps are necessary to restore confidence in the financial integrity of the denomination and its boards.

Classis Quinte

Irene Bakker, stated clerk

## Overture 5: Require Denominational Agencies to Provide Yearly a Detailed Statement of Investments

Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan overtures synod to require that all denominational agencies provide each year, in addition to a financial account of income and expenditures, a full detailed statement of investments.

### *Grounds:*

1. There is a need for more openness about investments by denominational agencies. This will ensure better conformity to the investment policy established by the Board of Trustees.
2. Inappropriate investments by denominational agencies will affect financial contributions to local churches and denominational agencies.

Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan  
Durk De Jong, stated clerk

## Overture 6: Adopt New Categories for Reporting Church Membership for Yearbook and Ministry-Share Purposes

### I. Background

#### A. *Centralized reporting*

In December 1997 the Board of Trustees adopted ministry-share enhancement procedures in an effort to increase the percentage of potential shares actually contributed in support of denominational ministries. The procedures adopted include the following:

3. That an accurate tracking system be developed and implemented for all ministry-share receipts beginning January 1, 1998.
4. That, to facilitate accurate tracking, all ministry-share receipts be received and recorded (by individual congregation and classis) in the denominational offices. In addition, an accurate tracking system will be developed as to which churches are receiving permission for ministry-share reduction according to the synodically approved formula for such reductions based on the size of a congregation. The adjusted ministry share (if paid) will constitute 100 percent payment for recording purposes. Partial payment of adjusted ministry shares will be measured as a percentage of the adjusted total.

(Ministry Shares Memorandum to all CRC Councils, Jan. 13, 1998)

Thus, all denominational ministry shares will be submitted directly to the denominational offices, effective immediately. The procedures take note of the synodically approved reduction for smaller churches, but there is no mention of the reductions approved by Synod 1986 for churches where there are a significant number of families with no breadwinner, families on public welfare, families where only one of the marriage partners is a member, or families made up of students. Presumably, if classes approve such reductions, these would also be factored in to determine what constitutes 100 percent payment.

The ministers' pension funds have recently been removed from the ministry-share system, and pension payments are being directly billed to each congregation instead, but pension assessments continue to be based upon the number of confessing members listed in the *Yearbook*. However, it is well

known that churches are using different methods to determine what to report. As *Yearbook* statistics are used to track ministry-share giving and determine pension assessments, it becomes increasingly important that these statistics be accurate and reported in a uniform manner.

#### *B. Differing standards for membership reporting*

Some churches report the true total of the membership as recorded in a church's records. This number will inevitably include people who have moved or are under discipline or are simply no longer attending the church. In Classis Atlantic Northeast such churches have annually reviewed their records and, having noted the number of such inactive members, have reported a reduced number of members to the classical treasurer for calculation of ministry share.

Other churches have such a review of inactive members prior to submitting their *Yearbook* statistics and have simply omitted them in their *Yearbook* reporting. This practice has resulted in the same ministry-share calculations as that which would have been calculated if they had reported all members to the *Yearbook* and then given a smaller number to the classical treasurer, but it has also made it impossible to make accurate comparisons between churches or even within the same church from year to year.

According to a paper on church mergers recently written for a seminary class, a review of the *Yearbook* from year to year clearly shows that membership counting is not consistent. Additions and declines from year to year do not add up for many churches, probably at least in part because of inconsistency of reporting regarding inactive members, motivated in part by the fact that churches have to pay ministry shares based on the number of confessing members over the age of 18 they report. In fact, some churches that have been asked have explicitly stated that they remove inactive members from the numbers they report to the *Yearbook* in order to avoid paying ministry share for people who are no longer present in the ministry of the congregation.

How many churches are not reporting their full membership for the *Yearbook*? It is impossible to be certain, but events at a recent meeting of a classis of significant size suggest it may be a substantial number. When one church asked for permission from the classis to reduce ministry share for members who had been inactive for more than two years, its request was denied because such a reduction did not fit the synodical and classical guidelines. Later in the same meeting, a pastor from another congregation got up to talk about membership reporting as it dealt with members who were not attending, who had moved to other churches without changing their membership status, or who had been inactive for years. When this pastor was asked by a delegate from the church that had requested a ministry-share reduction what his church was doing about non-attending members, he said it went through its membership lists and removed non-attending members and members who had gone to other churches from the number it reported to the *Yearbook*. The pastor then asked what the other churches in the classis did. All but the church that had requested a ministry-share reduction were also excluding inactive members from their *Yearbook* reporting. When it became clear that in essence these other churches were doing what the church requesting a reduction had asked permission to do—that is, to remove inactive members from the ministry-share calculation—the original request was brought back to the floor, and that church was allowed to make the reduction.

C. *Problems resulting from these differing standards*

Regardless of how many churches are underreporting their membership, the fact that underreporting is being done creates a number of problems.

1. The expected ministry-share contribution and the amount of the pension assessment are being established by a standard different from that intended by synod.
2. Accurate and meaningful tracking of the denomination's impact in reaching and serving God's people cannot be done.
3. Mutual accountability is damaged. We cannot encourage one another to "be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" (Acts 20:28, NIV) when we do not have any way of knowing how many of the sheep may be straying from the fold.

D. *Membership reporting in the Reformed Church in America*

The Reformed Church in America has struggled with some of the same dynamics. It recently adopted the following definitions for reporting membership statistics to the denomination, as found in its 1996 *Book of Order*:

"Confessing" members are members who have received Christian baptism and have been received by the board of elders through profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or presentation of a satisfactory certificate of transfer of membership from another Christian church, and who make faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the use of the Lord's Supper.

"Baptized" members are members who have received Christian baptism, who may or may not participate at the Lord's Table, and who have not been received by the board of elders as confessing members.

"Inactive" members are members who have been removed by the board of elders from the confessing members list.

"Adherents" are all who participate in the life, work, and worship of the church, but are not members.

With regard to how members are determined to be in the inactive category, the 1996 *Book of Order* states,

[The board of elders] shall place on the inactive list the name of any confessing member whose relationship with the church has ceased for one year or who for one year has not made faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the use of the Lord's Supper, unless there are extenuating circumstances making such faithful use impossible. After making due effort to notify the member of such action, the board shall seek diligently for an additional period of one year to recover the member. If there is no renewal of an active connection with the church in spite of these efforts, the board may vote to strike the name of the member from the church membership. Due effort shall be made to notify the member of the action.

## II. Overture

Classis Atlantic Northeast overtures synod

A. To adopt for purposes of reporting church membership the categories of baptized members, confessing members, and inactive members, using definitions adapted from the Reformed Church in America *Book of Order* as follows:

*Baptized* members are members who have received Christian baptism and who have not been received by the consistory as confessing members.

*Confessing* members are members who have received Christian baptism and have been received by the consistory through profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or presentation of a satisfactory certificate of transfer of membership and who make faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the Lord's Supper.

*Inactive* members are those baptized or confessing members who are declared by the consistory to have a relationship to the congregation which has ceased for one year or who for one year have not made faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the Lord's Supper, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., military service, residence in a nursing home) that make such faithful use impossible.

*Note:* Continued encouragement of inactive members and, if necessary, their final removal from membership should follow Church Order procedures. The reporting should note whether these members are inactive baptized members or inactive confessing members.

*Ground:* Inactive members are a reality in virtually every church, but the churches are dealing with the reporting of inactive members in a variety of ways. Establishing this new category will encourage consistency in how our churches report these members. This consistency will assist in accurate year-to-year comparisons and will increase our ability to exercise mutual accountability.

**B.** To continue to calculate ministry shares and pension assessments based upon the number of confessing members (as defined above) 18 years and older, using current procedures. Reductions because of size or other factors will continue to need the approval of classis.

*Ground:* Inactive members would be removed from computations for all churches. If the churches are assured that all churches are making their ministry-share and pension computations upon the same basis, trust in and support for these membership-based budget items may be enhanced.

Classis Atlantic Northeast

J. George Aupperlee, stated clerk

### **Overture 7: Add a Sentence in Church Order Supplement, Article 40-a**

Classis Wisconsin overtures synod to amend Church Order Supplement, Article 40-a, adopted by Synod 1997. The first part of that article reads,

The council of each church shall delegate a deacon in addition to a minister and an elder, provided the classis approves of the delegation of deacons to its meetings. Deacons delegated to classis shall be given credentials identical to those given to ministers and elders. The gender of diaconal delegates to a classis shall be consistent with the decisions of that classis concerning the supplement to Article 3-a of the Church Order.

The change would insert the following sentence after the first sentence quoted above: "Or, if classis so decides, each church shall delegate either a deacon or an elder in addition to a minister."

*Grounds:*

1. Synod 1967 found that "the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church is neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture and the Reformed Confessions" (*Acts of Synod 1967*, p. 93, Art. 131).
2. Diaconal work is an integral part of the mission of the church, and the participation of deacons at its meetings would enable classis to better carry out its mission in the world.
3. Many of the decisions of classis involve diaconal functions.
4. "The unity and equality of offices (cf. Church Order Art. 85) supports the inclusion of deacons at the broader assemblies" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 621, Art. 33).
5. Though it may be preferred that elders, deacons, and ministers from each church attend classis meetings, this amendment will allow each classis the flexibility to determine what works best in its particular setting.
6. Allowing elders or deacons to be delegates will foster the integration of "word and deed ministry" and promote the "unity and equality of offices" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 621, Art. 33) without increasing the size of the group or the amount of time, money, and other resources expended.
7. The option of sending an elder or deacon will be particularly beneficial for churches with smaller councils from which to select delegates.

Classis Wisconsin

Norman B. Haan, stated clerk

## **Overture 8: Reject Synod 1997's Procedure and Church Order Changes Regarding Disaffiliation**

### **I. Introduction**

Synod 1997 adopted a recommendation by the Board of Trustees regarding a new procedure to be followed by churches choosing to disaffiliate from the denomination.

The major and far-reaching changes of this procedure involve provisions for greater classical and synodical authority over the disaffiliation process and the distribution of the property and assets of the local church. We recognize that some of the guidelines in the procedure are appropriate and reflect biblical sensitivity. However, there are some fundamental flaws in the proposed changes to the Church Order and in the adoption of this procedure as Church Order Supplement, Article 38-e. The problem lies in the doctrine of the church they reflect.

The changes are based on an assumption that the denomination is the church and that what we call the local council and congregation is dependent for its origin and right to exist upon the classis and denomination. This is a principle that is neither biblical nor historically true.

Monsma and Van Dellen in their commentary on Church Order Article 27 state,

As to the difference in domain between consistories and major assemblies it should be noted that consistories have authority each over its own church, but then also authority over all the affairs of that church. But major assemblies have authority only over "those matters which concern its churches in common."

## II. Overture

The council of Wyoming CRC, Wyoming, Ontario, overtures synod not to adopt the change to Article 38-e as proposed.

### *Grounds:*

- A. The proposed Article 38-e would incorporate into the Church Order a principle that is neither biblically nor historically true, namely, that the councils of the churches were constituted by a decision of classis or another broader assembly. This is true, however, only of those councils constituted, according to the provisions of Article 38, for groups "among whom no council can as yet be constituted" and who were initially "under the care of a neighboring council, designated by Classis."
- B. The procedure for disaffiliation adopted by Synod 1997 violates in crucial ways the stipulations of Article 27 ("the authority of councils being original, that of major assemblies being delegated") and Article 85 ("no church shall in any way lord it over another church") of the Church Order. Entrance into and departure from a denominational affiliation are matters that belong to the original authority of the council. The procedure adopted by Synod 1997 for disaffiliation would allow, perhaps even encourage, the churches of classis to lord it over the council and church that sought to disaffiliate.

Council of Wyoming CRC, Wyoming, ON  
John Beintema, clerk

*Note:* This overture was submitted to Classis Chatham but was not adopted.

## **Overture 9: Amend Article VI, D of the New Model Articles of Incorporation; Drop the Requirement That Churches Receiving Financial Assistance Must Adopt Them**

### **I. Background**

When it became apparent that the new Model Articles of Incorporation for Christian Reformed Churches (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 617-19) were being read with different interpretations, Classis Columbia appointed a committee to articulate the questions being raised. The committee reported the following questions:

- A. Do member churches of a classis really wish to adopt articles of incorporation that grant significant control of their property to classis (and, on appeal, to synod)?
- B. Synod has now set up a two-tiered system regarding the Model Articles.

Churches currently receiving monies from the denomination (Loan Fund, Fund for Smaller Churches, and Home Missions) and churches entering the CRC are *required* to adopt the new articles. For churches not receiving monies and for older churches, the change is only *recommended*. Is it right that different rules should exist for churches in the same denomination?

C. The new Model Articles state that the only legitimate use of the local church property is the furtherance of the church's purposes as a member of the CRC. Is this really so?

General secretary David Engelhard has explained that, although the articles appear to give individual classes power to decide property disputes and actually to award property in certain instances, such is not the case. Our committee's research of the historical background of this issue corroborates the general secretary's statement. Legally, classes and synods cannot make such decisions. Only local congregations have that power. Thus the intent of the new Model Articles is simply to ensure that when congregations are troubled by disputes or schisms, they will consult with their classes before seeking a just and fair settlement.

## II. Overture

Classis Columbia overtures synod

A. To amend Article VI, D of our new Model Articles of Incorporation ("In the Event of Irreconcilable Division") by changing unclear language which incorrectly implies that a classis or synod has the power to award property in the event of a church split.

*Grounds:*

1. No such power exists.
2. The language is so unclear that classes may mistakenly assume that such power is within their purview, thus throwing church, classis, and synod into needless confusion.

B. To end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.

*Grounds:*

1. Synod adopted this requirement so it could guarantee that denominational grants would be used "in furtherance of the purposes of the congregation as a member church of the CRCNA" (Acts of Synod 1997, p. 619). This statement implies that the purpose of the requirement is to compel new or financially dependent churches to stay in the denomination or else to repay their "debts" should they leave. Yet classes and synods do not possess those powers, nor are they granted in the new Model Articles of Incorporation. Agencies and local churches need to resolve this issue through their own arrangements.
2. It is unfair to require of new and financially dependent churches what is not required of old and financially independent churches.

Classis Columbia

Howard B. Spaan, stated clerk

## Overture 10: Request a Revision of the Decision Made by Synod 1997 Concerning the Articles of Incorporation

Classis Central California overtures synod to reconsider the decision of Synod 1997 recorded under Article 33, II, Recommendations 1 and 5, concerning the new Model Articles of Incorporation for Christian Reformed Churches.

### *Grounds:*

1. Recommendation I, D (pp. 617-18) states that classis or synod on appeal will determine who will receive all real and personal property, whereas previously all real and personal property was to be divided according to the decision of the local council or congregation. We believe that this new provision is not in keeping with Reformed principles of church government, wherein the local congregation/council has primary authority and classis and synod have only delegated authority.
2. Recommendation 5 (p. 619) states

That synod require any congregation receiving financial assistance from synodical agencies (e.g., Fund for Smaller Churches, CRC Loan Fund, CR Home Missions) or newly affiliating with the CRC to have and maintain articles of incorporation that faithfully reflect the model adopted by synod and contained in Church Order Supplement, Article 32-d.

We believe that this demonstrates an unbiblical use of money. In Matthew 22:15-22 Jesus will not become embroiled in the controversy of whether a follower of the Lord should pay taxes to Caesar. He would not allow money to have power. Recommendation 5 gives money power in that grants will not be awarded until churches have adopted articles of incorporation that place their assets in the hands of the classis and the denomination. Such a recommendation also demonstrates a lack of trust in congregations that receive grants for doing ministry in their local communities. In essence we are saying to them, "We will give you this money if you will give us the deed of trust to your property." It is our belief that these two recommendations put us on a course where power and authority rest in the hands of a few rather than in the local congregation and council, where authority should and must reside.

Classis Central California  
Harold Hiemstra, stated clerk

## Overture 11: Redraft Article IV, D of the Model Articles of Incorporation

### I. Background

Synod 1980 adopted the Model Articles of Incorporation for Christian Reformed Churches, which included guidelines for division of property in case of a schism. These guidelines were adopted to help deal with such matters in an ecclesiastical manner. The hope was that fellow believers could be assisted by the Model Articles and not feel the need to ask civil courts to help settle their disputes. However, this hope has not always been realized. For this and other reasons, when Synod 1997 adopted changes to the Model Articles of Incorporation, it included a new Article IV, D (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 617) for what to do with property "in the event of irreconcilable division."

## II. Observations

Synod 1997 hoped the new article would be seen as less congregationalist, that it would clarify an ambiguity in the old article which tended to drive the parties in such divisions in the direction of requesting a resolution from the civil courts, that it would encourage church members to follow the directives of I Corinthians 6:1-8, and that the new article would more clearly preserve the reasonable expectations of members present and past that their donations had been used and would be used in furtherance of the purposes of the church as a member church of the CRCNA.

## III. Overture

Maranatha CRC, Woodbridge, Ontario, overtures synod to find a more impartial way of stating Article IV, D to allay the concerns that existed with regard to the former article.

### *Grounds:*

- A. The new article places classis (or synod in case of appeal) in a very serious conflict of interest. When classis (or synod in case of appeal) is asked first to determine that an irreconcilable division (schism) has occurred within a congregation and then is given exclusive determination of which members of the congregation have remained true to the purposes of the church as a member church of the CRCNA, with the knowledge that a group of members so favored will have the exclusive right to hold and enjoy the real and personal property of the church, all appearance of impartiality is lost.
- B. It is by no means clear that the new article more adequately honors the expectation of members past and present. The fact that some members are found not to have remained true to the purpose of the church as a member church of the CRCNA begs the question of whether they more adequately honor the beliefs and hopes of members of the congregation in an earlier time than other members do.
- C. The history of other denominations in which broader assemblies have been given jurisdiction over property of individual congregations when local schism occurred does not seem to indicate that the concerns of I Corinthians 6 are more fully honored by a provision such as Article IV, D than they are by other arrangements.

Council of Maranatha CRC, Woodbridge, ON  
Harry Kamstra, clerk

*Note:* This overture was submitted to Classis Toronto but not adopted.

## **Overture 12: Discontinue the Practice of Separating Seminarians by Gender When Declaring Them Candidates for the Ministry**

### I. Background

#### *A. Qualifications for entering the gospel ministry*

For most of its history the Christian Reformed Church has believed that only males are permitted to enter the ordained ministry. In 1970, in response to a discussion in the Reformed Ecumenical Council, synod appointed a commit-

tee "to examine in light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church" (*Acts of Synod 1970*, p. 119). After a quarter-century of study and intense discussion on this subject, Synod 1995 recognized "that there are two different perspectives and convictions, both of which honor the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, on the issue of whether women are allowed to serve in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 731). As a result of that recognition, synod decided that a classis "may authorize the churches under its jurisdiction to ordain and install women in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 733).

#### *B. Synod's sensitivity toward those who disagreed*

Not everyone agreed that women's gifts ought to be used in the office of minister. With that in mind, Synod 1995 adopted the following regulation:

In the consideration of applications for candidacy for the office of minister of the Word submitted by qualified women, both the Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary and synod shall ensure that trustees and delegates may not be forced to participate against the dictates of their consciences. In the declaration of candidacy, delegates will exercise their right to abstain from voting without pressure or reprisal.

(*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735)

#### *C. Synod's insensitivity toward its women candidates*

In essence Synod 1995 declared that being male was no longer a requirement for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church. Women who met the requirements specified by the denomination would now be welcomed into the ministry. Unfortunately, both Synod 1996 and Synod 1997 decided that they would vote separately on male and female seminarians when declaring them candidates. This was a radical departure from the usual procedure. Normally, the entire group of candidates being recommended by the Seminary Board of Trustees to synod is voted on as a group. Individuals are singled out for separate discussion and vote only if the board or synod's advisory committee has reservations about a person's qualifications. Synods 1996 and 1997 both singled out three candidates for a separate vote, but they were not singled out because there was any question about their qualifications. All six of these individuals were singled out simply because they are women.

#### *D. Gender reintroduced as a qualification for ministry*

The decisions of Synod 1996 and Synod 1997 to single out seminarians for separate votes on the basis of gender distort the nature of the motion on which the delegates are voting. When seminarians are declared candidates, the motion is "That synod declare the following as candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, subject to completion of all requirements." Synod is voting on whether or not these seminarians have met the requirements specified for entrance into the gospel ministry. Synod is not voting on whether or not women are allowed to be ministers in the Christian Reformed denomination.

Theoretically, six women could have been kept out of the ministry by a majority vote of the delegates simply on the basis of their gender, even though they had met every requirement specified by the denomination. Most members of our congregations would be outraged if synod voted separately on

seminarians of different skin color, since skin color is not a criterion for candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church. Synod has declared that gender is not a criterion either, and yet it votes separately on equally qualified candidates simply because some are men and some are women.

In the broader society, the current synodical practice, which exposes candidates to different requirements simply on the basis of gender, would be illegal. The practice is unfair, since it exposes women to the risk of rejection solely on the basis of their gender. The church has declared that a specific gender is not a requirement for candidacy; therefore, it should not introduce gender as a criterion for candidacy by this back-door method.

There are some who would be quick to deny that such is the intent of such division. They assert that such a division is necessary because without it those delegates who feel they cannot vote affirmatively on female seminarians would not have an opportunity to vote affirmatively on male seminarians. This assertion is true only if delegates are voting on gender, not on gifts and talents, but that was not clear to the 1997 synodical delegates. For example, one speaker who agreed with what is asserted above immediately contradicted it by saying, "... if [there are] delegates who in principle cannot partake of the process to declare women candidates for the ministry, then when it comes time to take a vote on those particular people, they must not vote against them because they are women. They must not participate and therefore must abstain because at that point those who are being presented as candidates who are women need to be evaluated in terms of their gifts and qualities for ministry, and the mere fact that they are women ought not to cause them to vote no" (*Tape of Synod 1997*).

If women candidates need to be evaluated in terms of their gifts and qualities for ministry and not in terms of their gender, then there is no just or honorable reason why they should be segregated from their male counterparts, who must also be evaluated in terms of their gifts and qualities for ministry and not in terms of their gender. A delegate loses his vote only if he votes on the basis of gender rather than on gifts and qualities for ministry. In other words, a delegate loses his vote only if he votes on whether women ought to be candidates instead of voting on the motion before synod, namely, whether the seminarians presented have fulfilled the requirements specified by the denomination for candidacy. Synod does these women and the entire denomination a great disservice when it calls for a separate vote on women candidates as if there is one set of requirements for women and another set for men.

#### *E. The decision of Synod 1995 ignored*

As stated above, Synod 1995 made a provision to accommodate any person who believes that an affirmative vote on the matter of requirements is equivalent to an affirmative vote on the matter of women's ordination. Synod 1995 decided that all Calvin Theological Seminary Board members or synodical delegates who did not wish to participate in a process that would result in a declaration of candidacy for women students would be able to "exercise their right to abstain from voting without pressure or reprisal" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735). Instead of following this decision, Synods 1996 and 1997 chose to institute a new process, which, as described above, gives the impression that the denomination has two sets of requirements for entrance into the gospel

ministry. The practice of separating seminarians by gender when declaring them candidates must not continue. Women and men seminarians ought to be declared candidates solely on the basis of their talents and abilities, the official criteria specified by the denomination.

## II. Overture

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to discontinue the practice of separating seminarians by gender when declaring them candidates for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

### *Grounds:*

- A. Gender is not a qualification for entrance into the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.
- B. Synod 1995 provided a way to deal with this matter when it declared that delegates who cannot vote on the seminarians presented because some of them are women are able to "exercise their right to abstain from voting without pressure or reprisal" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735).

Classis Lake Erie

George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

## Overture 13: Review This Year the 1995 Decision Regarding Women in Office

### I. Background

For close to thirty years there have been discussions and debates in the Christian Reformed Church concerning the matter of women's ordination. The *Agenda for Synod* and the *Acts of Synod* from those thirty years indicate that there are two convictions among us with respect to women in office. Some of us are convinced that the Bible does not allow women to serve in ecclesiastical office. Others are just as persuaded that the Bible allows for or requires the ordination of women in all church offices.

Back-to-back synods have reflected our differences of opinion by allowing and then disallowing women's ordination. For example, the majority of delegates to Synod 1993 were of a mind to open all church offices to women. The majority of delegates to the next year's synod (1994) were of a mind not to ratify proposed changes to the Church Order which would have codified women's ordination. It went on record as saying that the clear teaching of Scripture forbids the ordination of women to the offices of minister and elder.

Attempting to lead the CRC beyond ecclesiastical gridlock, Synod 1995 adopted a compromise which was based on the following recognition: "... that there are two different perspectives and convictions, both of which honor the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God on the issue of whether women are allowed to serve in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 731). This recognition had as its primary ground that "numerous overtures to this synod . . . , as well as decisions and reports of previous synods, adduce good biblical grounds for both positions" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 732). With its compromise, Synod 1995 left it up to each classis whether or not to declare the word "male" in Article 3-a of the Church Order inoperative. Synod 1995 also declared that its ruling on women in office should be "in effect

until the year 2000, at which time it will be reviewed" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735).

## II. Overture

The council of Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Rock Valley, Iowa, overtures synod

A. To review the 1995 decision on women in office now (in 1998) instead of waiting until the year 2000.

*Ground:* By the time Synod 1998 convenes, three years will have elapsed since Synod 1995 gave each classis the right to declare the word "male" inoperative in Church Order Article 3-a. These three years have allowed sufficient time for us to decide the merits or demerits of what Synod 1995 implemented.

B. To remove from the Church Order the supplement to Article 3-a which was placed there pro tem by Synod 1995.

*Grounds:*

1. The supplement to Article 3-a has failed to achieve what Synod 1995 intended it to do: "to provide satisfactory leadership on the matter of women in ecclesiastical office" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 733). The supplement to Article 3-a, together with its rationale and guidelines for implementation, has proven to be most unsatisfactory to literally thousands of individuals and to the congregations that have terminated their membership in the CRC subsequent to Synod 1995. Though it is not their only grievance against the CRC, the supplement to Article 3-a figures prominently in their stated reasons for leaving the CRC. The supplement to Article 3-a is also unsatisfactory to many who remain in the CRC.
2. The supplement to Article 3-a has damaged the CRC's ecumenical relationships with several Reformed and Presbyterian denominations. In the past three years the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church in America, have terminated ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC. As of this writing, the membership of the CRC in NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council) is in the process of being suspended and is in jeopardy of being terminated. The fact that the supplement to Article 3-a opens all church offices to women is the chief offense cited by the denominations that have severed ties with us.
3. The supplement to Article 3-a has been the focus of unrest rather than harmony in the CRC, so much so that delegates to the South Holland Interclassical Conference of 1996 adopted a resolution which called for the formation of theologically identified classes. Classis California South brought the essence of that resolution to Synod 1997 in the form of Overture 4. Synod 1997 did not approve the overture because of its departure from traditional Reformed polity. Note well: "Conservatives" who love traditional Reformed polity proposed nontraditional theologically identified classes because they saw it as the only way they could live with the supplement to Article 3-a of the Church Order. Now that

there is no possibility for theologically identified classes, there will be even more unrest among us.

C. To instruct the agencies of the CRC to comply with Church Order Article 3-a and to urge the churches to do the same.

*Ground:* The Church Order is the set of articles by which the Christian Reformed Church regulates its ecclesiastical organization and activities (Church Order Art. 1).

Council of Calvin CRC, Rock Valley, IA  
Bill Vanden Top, clerk

*Note:* This overture was submitted to Classis Iakota but was not adopted.

## **Overture 14: Allow Agencies to Use the Talents and Abilities of Women Pastors**

### **I. Background**

#### *A. The road to ordained ministry*

The road to the ordained ministry for women members of the Christian Reformed Church has been a very long and difficult one. Officially, that journey began when Synod 1970 appointed a committee "to examine in light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church" (*Acts of Synod 1970*, p. 119). Three years later the committee recommended, among other things, that synod declare that "the practice of excluding women cannot conclusively be defended on biblical grounds" and "that synod appoint a committee to study whether the word 'male' in Article 3 of the Church Order should be deleted" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 588). Synod 1973 did not concur in those recommendations. Instead, it referred this report to the churches for study and reactions and appointed another study committee.

The second study committee recommended to Synod 1975 that it declare, among other things, 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). It also recommended that synod declare "that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready or willing to open her offices to women" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 593). Synod did not adopt these recommendations but appointed another study committee to further research this issue. It did adopt the committee's recommendation that "synod urge all 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" and also adopted a recommendation to appoint a committee of men and women to help the churches implement that recommendation (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 78).

Throughout the years more study committees were appointed, and the church assured its women members that it did indeed value their God-given gifts. Eventually the denomination welcomed the use of those gifts in all the offices of the church. Synod 1984 voted to allow the use of those gifts in the office of deacon, and Synod 1995 allowed the use of those gifts in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist.

*B. Synod prohibits the use of women's gifts*

Synod 1995 also adopted a number of regulations to guide the churches as they ordain women elders, ministers, and evangelists. The most surprising of those regulations is one that states that "synodical agencies shall not appoint women as ministers of the Word to any field of labor within their jurisdiction nor seek to have them installed by a local church" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735). For over two decades synod had urged "all 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." When synod declared that the service of women ministers was permissible, one would have expected that it would again urge the churches to use the talents and abilities of its women members. Instead, synod did exactly the opposite. Its previous urgings were replaced by a prohibition. Synodical agencies (e.g., Home Missions, World Missions, Chaplaincy Ministries, Race Relations) were instructed not to use their resources to assist in the placement of women pastors.

Such a prohibition turns a deaf ear to the voice of Christ Jesus, the Lord of the Church, who says to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt. 9: 36-38). Women members of our denomination profess that they have been called by God, and they seek to proclaim his message. By its action, synod prohibits these willing workers from serving in parts of the Lord's harvest field.

Such a prohibition is demeaning to women who testify to the Spirit's call to enter the gospel ministry. These women have experienced criticism and rejection in a variety of ways during their years of preparation, and they certainly do not need synod to place additional burdens on their shoulders. If the experience of other denominations is any indication of our future, we will discover that many of our women will begin their service in specialized ministries, not in an established church. To shut this door on them is not only unresponsive to our Savior's call for workers, but it may well ensure that these women move to other denominations where their service is welcome.

Such a prohibition is inconsistent with the other regulations adopted by Synod 1995. Those regulations recognize that there are some classes in which the service of women in all the offices may be welcomed and some in which such service may not be welcomed. Each classis has the responsibility to make its own decision about such service. In like manner, each classis should also be able to make a decision about whether one of its member churches may call a woman minister to serve as a chaplain in a local hospital or as a home missionary within the bounds of that classis. One-third of the classes in the denomination have declared the word "male" in Church Order Article 3 inoperative. All of these classes financially support the work of our agencies, and many of these would welcome the placement of women pastors by the agencies.

Such a prohibition is unnecessary. Before a minister may be placed in a particular ministry by one of our agencies, that person must be called by a local church, and that call must be approved by the classical counselor. Thus, there is no opportunity to place a minister in a classis that does not welcome such service. In addition, this prohibition does not evidence a high regard for the personnel of our denominational agencies, implying that they would not be sensitive to the perspective of a particular classis in the calling and placement of a pastor.

Such a prohibition dishonors both the letter and the spirit of the 1995 decision, which intends to make room for all members of the denomination when it states that "there are two different perspectives and convictions, both of which honor the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, on the issue of whether women are allowed to serve in the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 731). No one wants to insist that classes that do not welcome women home missionaries and chaplains must receive them. Certainly, no one should be able to prohibit classes that welcome women home missionaries and chaplains from receiving them.

### C. *Synod and discrimination*

Synod 1997 was marked by a very moving moment when the delegates fell to their knees, repenting the denomination's lack of progress in race relations and praying "that the church would gain renewed energy and conviction for eradicating racial injustice" (*The Banner*, July 1997, p. 11). And yet insensitivity and injustice toward our women members are repeatedly evident in the attitudes and policies of the denomination. This regulation is one example of that. Synod must not wait until the year 2000 to delete a regulation which prohibits the denomination from doing what it has urged its churches to do for so many years, namely, "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*, p. 78).

## II. Overture

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to delete Regulation f associated with the 1995 declaration on women in office: "Synodical agencies shall not appoint women as ministers of the Word to any field of labor within their jurisdiction nor seek to have them installed by a local church" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735).

### *Grounds:*

- A. This regulation dishonors both the letter and the spirit of the 1995 decision by prohibiting classes from following convictions on the service of women which honor the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God.
- B. This regulation discriminates against pastors in good and regular standing in the denomination solely on the basis of their gender.
- C. This regulation is unnecessary because existing regulations already ensure that an agency cannot place a woman pastor in a classis that does not welcome such service.
- D. This regulation dishonors the call of our Savior by prohibiting committed and qualified workers from entering parts of his harvest field.

Classis Lake Erie

George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

### I. Background

#### A. *The requests received by Synod 1993*

Synod 1978, in response to the way a classis had processed the resignation of one of its ministers, reminded "all our churches and classes that in all cases of resignation a proper resolution of dismissal must be adopted with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 73). Synod 1993 was asked to give more specific guidance in dealing with resignations because "churches and classes . . . are experiencing considerable difficulty in applying Church Order Articles 14-18 and 82-84 to an increasingly complex and often discordant variety of situations" (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 581).

Most of these situations arose because of differing opinions on an issue that the church had been discussing for two decades—the matter of women in office. On the basis of this issue, a number of ministers resigned from the CRC, and a number of declarations were made in response to their resignations. For example, the *Acts of Synod 1993* indicates that classes "acquiesced" in resignations or "dismissed" ministers from office or considered ministers "deposed from office" (*Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 624-29).

Synod 1993 received overtures on this issue from five classes. (Two of these overtures were duplicates with the exception of one ground.) One overture asked that synod "standardize the terminology used regarding the resignations of ministers who are not attempting to avoid discipline by their resignations" (*Agenda for Synod 1993*, p. 289). The remaining four overtures were especially concerned with the declaration that a minister be considered in the status of one deposed. One overture asserted that "such a declaration connotes that the person has, or should have, undergone official church discipline. But in the case of several of these ministers there may have been no cause for special discipline" (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 287). Another contended that the application of the Church Order article that spoke of deposition "seems out of place, since usually there is no misdeed of any kind involved" (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 288). The duplicate overtures asked synod "to declare that ministers resigning . . . because of their conscientious theological objections to developments in the CRC should be regarded as honorably released, not as deposed" (*Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 289-90). One of those overtures asserted that "over the past sixty years in the CRC, deposition has been applied almost exclusively to those guilty of serious public sin in their conduct, particularly to violators of the seventh commandment. Ministers who have been deposed by their respective classes for conscientious theological objections are not guilty of any public or serious immorality" (*Agenda for Synod 1993*, p. 289).

#### B. *The response of Synod 1993*

Synod 1993 responded to these overtures (*Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 581-82) by

1. Reminding the churches and classes of the decision of Synod 1978.
2. Directing "the churches and classes to take into account the manner and spirit in which a minister has acted during the time leading up to and including his departure from office when determining what action to take.

(Some situations may require a deposition; others may require only a simple release from office.)”

### 3. Encouraging the church and classes

- a. to recognize carefully the conditions and circumstances of a particular case that may come to their attention (e.g., whether it be a formal or a de facto resignation) and, having done so,
- b. to make a declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status that is appropriate to the way and spirit in which the minister acted during the time leading up to and including his resignation from office. Such a declaration could reflect one of the following:
  - 1) The resigned minister is honorably released.
  - 2) The resigned minister is released.
  - 3) The resigned minister is dismissed.
  - 4) The resigned minister is in the status of one deposed.

In addition, Synod 1993 did not concur in the assertions of the overtures that none of the ministers who resigned were guilty of any public or serious immorality, did not engage in behavior that called for special discipline, or were not involved in misdeeds of any kind. Using words reminiscent of the 1566 form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which identifies "all who seek to raise discord, sects and mutiny in Church or State" as people "defiled with . . . gross sins," synod also encouraged "churches and classes to prayerfully consider the following principles in their deliberations:

- a. Schismatic activities are to be considered a serious violation of the sacred trust associated with ordination and a dishonoring of God which results in pain and brokenness in the body of Christ.
- b. All declarations by churches and classes should clearly evidence hope for the possibility of restoration and mutual reconciliation.

*(Acts of Synod, p. 582)*

### C. *The relevance of these decisions to Synod 1998*

These decisions have specific relevance to requests that are and may be coming to Synod 1998 to grant honorable release to those who have engaged in schismatic activities and who have actively encouraged schism. Dr. John Kromminga, former president of Calvin Theological Seminary, in two *Banner* editorials entitled "Well-Nurtured Discontent" (Feb. 22 and Mar. 1, 1993), described how over the years a number of organizations, publications, and ministers had encouraged secession from the Christian Reformed Church. Some of those ministers had, at the time of Dr. Kromminga's writing, recently left the denomination either by themselves or with their congregations. As in 1993, some are today asserting that such ministers ought to be "honorably released." Synod 1993 did not concur in that assertion. Synod 1998 and subsequent synods should not concur in that assertion either. To grant "honorable release" to those who have participated in and encouraged schismatic activity

1. Does not honor the 1993 synodical decisions concerning release.
2. Does not demonstrate that the church speaks with integrity.
3. Does not demonstrate sensitivity to the remaining members of the denomination, especially to its female members.

D. *Such a declaration does not honor the 1993 decision*

The 1993 decision directs “the churches and classes to take into account the manner and spirit in which a minister has acted during the time leading up to and including his departure from office when determining what action to take” (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 581) and encourages the churches and classes “to make a declaration reflecting the resigned minister’s status that is appropriate to the way and spirit in which the minister acted during the time leading up to and including his resignation from office” (*Acts of Synod*, p. 582). It also declares that “schismatic activities are to be considered a serious violation of the sacred trust associated with ordination and a dishonoring of God which results in pain and brokenness in the body of Christ” (*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 582).

In what way and in what spirit did various ministers act during the time leading up to and including their resignation from office? Did they participate in and encourage schismatic activity? Those are important questions, and the following should be considered when synod addresses those questions:

1. In his *Banner* editorials Dr. Kromminga referenced a number of publications. One of them was *Outlook*, a magazine which has a long history of encouraging secession. In 1990 it carried an article saying that synod’s ratification of its decision to allow women to serve in all the offices “would be such a sign and seal of biblical infidelity in the CRC that those of us who believe in a confessionally Reformed church should secede” (Sept. 1990, p. 11).

Similar statements were made on other occasions. For example, after Synod 1995 allowed churches and classes the option of calling women to serve in all the offices, the cover of *Outlook* proclaimed, “TAKE IT or LEAVE IT,” the title of its editorial. The editorial reported,

One keen analyst of this year’s synod put it this way: “We have only two options: TAKE IT or LEAVE IT. . . . Our choice is no longer to change the CRC because Synod 1995 has locked the door on the conservatives and thrown away the key. The only choice is—how to get out. Basically there are only two options for every member of the CRC: TAKE IT (pay all the bills and watch the tragedy of the GKN be reenacted in the CRC) or LEAVE IT (the only questions being—how and with whom?).”

(July/Aug. 1995, p. 5)

The editorial continues, “Our reaction to this statement is that there is much more truth than fiction here,” and then the readers are encouraged to attend the South Holland Conference, a gathering that would consider how and with whom to leave.

2. The South Holland Conference was convened in November 1995, and four ministers, three of whom have since left the denomination, were elected as officers. It was these officers, not the delegates, who recommended that the conference adopt the following: “that the Inter-Classical Conference inform Synod 1996 that should she not humble her heart in repentance before the Lord, this conference will reconvene next year to consider a proposal to form a new denomination.”
3. The officers also recommended that the conference send a communication to Synod 1996. The delegates approved that recommendation and entrusted

that task to the officers. The four officers wrote a letter to Synod 1996 that described fellow Christians who held a different perspective on the issue of women in office in the following manner: "[I]n the way we have handled the Bible in our synodical debates in recent years, we have committed a heinous sin. We have so trifled with the text that our people have lost the ability to use Scripture believingly, lovingly, trustingly." The letter accused synod of "hermeneutical gymnastics" and "the disregarding of the plain and clear words of the text of Scripture" and alleged that "we have ripped the Bible from the hands of our people." The letter ended by informing synod that

Should you not lead our churches in repentance for sin and a return to the high view of Scripture for which the CRC has historically been known—until recent years—we will be forced to convene next year to consider painful options, one of which must be a proposal to form a new or different denominational federation.

(Dec. 1, 1995, letter to Synod 1996)

The 1993 decision calls the church to "make a declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status that is appropriate to the way and spirit in which the minister acted during the time leading up to and including his resignation from office." Synod 1998 is being asked to declare that this schismatic way and spirit of acting are "honorable." Such a declaration cannot be sustained if synod takes seriously its 1993 decision.

*E. The recommendation does not demonstrate that the church speaks with integrity*

For years many members of the denomination, including synod itself, have struggled with the issue of women in office and, in the words of the apostle, have attempted to "keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Certainly, the actions and the spirit of such members could be called "honorable." In the words of one of the 1993 overtures, it is even possible to imagine that "pastors who have left the denomination quietly and have not created widespread public scandal" (*Agenda for Synod 1993*, p. 289) could be honorably released. To make such a declaration in the case of pastors who have publicly encouraged people to leave the denomination and who have publicly written to synod that they will convene a conference to discuss a proposal to form another denominational federation unless synod adopts their perspective does not demonstrate any integrity in the use of language and does not truthfully describe the reality of the situation under consideration.

*F. The recommendation does not demonstrate sensitivity toward members remaining in the denomination, especially the female members*

In its letter to synod the officers of the South Holland Conference use very strong language to refer to fellow Christians. As Dr. Kromminga mentioned in his editorial, various "publications honor those who use the most intemperate and unjustified language as true prophets" (*The Banner*, Mar. 1, 1993). However, synod itself has never honored such terminology and has consistently attempted to point its members in another direction. Already in 1984 a synodical study committee wrote,

The fact is that on the matter before us there are differences between honest, sincere, committed, devout, and well-intentioned Christian brothers and sisters. While this acknowledgment does not solve the problem, it does place the problem in a context where Christians who differ significantly on these matters

can speak with each other, accept each other, and live with each other in the same family of faith. Important as the matter before us is, it does not concern an essential creedal affirmation such as the church faced in the controversy with Arius.

We urge everyone who is considering the question of the ordination of women to do so with charity and humility. We ask everyone to acknowledge that the matter is not crystal clear. If it were, it would have been solved long ago. Some of the most gifted theological minds and pastoral hearts in our denomination have wrestled with this matter and have come to different conclusions. This alone should suffice to eliminate stridency from our discussions.

*(Acts of Synod 1984, p. 286)*

Even in the face of such encouragement to "eliminate stridency from our discussions," a number of people spoke stridently and continued to encourage secession. To identify such activity as "honorable" dishonors many Christians who sincerely attempted to follow the encouragement of synod and sought to "keep the unity of the Spirit though the bond of peace." To identify such activity as "honorable" is especially an affront to some of our women members who have borne the brunt of the intemperate and unjustified language. Shortly after a classis voted to declare one of the officers of the South Holland Conference "honorably released," some of the women in a congregation in that classis cornered their pastor and asked, "How could such a thing happen?" A number of women in our denomination are already cynical because of decisions that are made without adequate consideration of their viewpoints or feelings. Some don't expect a great deal of sensitivity from assemblies made up solely of males. They expect, and have often received, decisions that are demeaning to them and that create and/or maintain discrimination. To grant "honorable release" to ministers who have encouraged secession will give further testimony to the denomination's insensitivity to its women members.

### *G. Vindictiveness or fairness?*

Undoubtedly, some will assert that an overture objecting to a declaration of "honorable release" is vindictive. Some will point to many years of good service given by those who are being released. That, of course, is not the issue. Even those who were deposed because of violations of the seventh commandment had given many years of good service to the denomination. The point under consideration when a declaration of release is made is not years of good service. Rather, synod instructs the church "to make a declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status that is appropriate to the way and spirit in which the minister acted during the time leading up to and including his resignation from office."

Declarations of release have relevance not only to the ministers being released but also to the members of the denomination from which the minister resigns and to the principles that the denomination values. That is precisely why Synod 1993 stipulated four different statements that can be used when releases are declared. In its declarations the church must deal charitably with ministers who resign, but the church must also deal charitably with members who remain and who have been deeply affected by the activities of ministers who resign.

## **II. Overture**

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to consider carefully declarations of release for which approval is requested to make sure that such releases

- A. Honor the 1993 synodical decisions concerning release.
- B. Demonstrate that the church speaks with integrity.
- C. Demonstrate sensitivity to the remaining members of the denomination, especially to its female members.

*Grounds:*

- 1. Those who have encouraged secession should not be granted "honorable release" because Synod 1993 specifically indicated that "schismatic activities are to be considered a serious violation of the sacred trust associated with ordination and a dishonoring of God which results in pain and brokenness in the body of Christ."
- 2. In its declarations of release the church must deal charitably with members who remain in the denomination and who have been deeply affected by the activities of ministers who resign in addition to dealing charitably with ministers who have encouraged secession and have resigned.

Classis Lake Erie  
George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

**Overture 16: Remove Question and Answer 80 from the Text of the Heidelberg Catechism**

**I. Introduction**

*A. Text of Question & Answer 80*

Q. How does the Lord's Supper differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?

A. The Lord's Supper declares to us that our sins have been completely forgiven through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ which he himself finished on the cross once for all. It also declares to us that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ, who with his very body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father where he wants us to worship him. But the Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present in the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshiped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry.

*B. Local background*

The council of First Christian Reformed Church of Detroit has become concerned about the place of Q. and A. 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism because of our increasing association with our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time, council members have experienced a deepening offense with the wording used in Q. & A. 80. Marriages between members of the Christian Reformed Church and people from other denominations and, in particular, the Roman Catholic Church are increasing, as is our association with Roman Catholics generally. When prospective members coming to the Christian Reformed Church from Catholic backgrounds are instructed in the doctrines of the Christian Reformed Church, they are offended and puzzled by the strong language used in Q. & A. 80.

### C. *Synodical background*

Synod 1977, addressing the role of Q. & A. 80 (*Acts of Synod 1977*, pp. 88-89), adopted the recommendation of the New Confession Committee to make no changes in Q. & A. 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism. The following grounds were offered in 1977 for leaving Q. & A. 80 in the approved text of the catechism:

- a. The small number of responses from the churches indicates that this is not a troublesome issue for the churches.
- b. A historical creed must not be altered without weighty reasons.
- c. Answer 80 appears to be historically accurate. The statements of Trent which answer 80 rejects have not been repudiated by the Roman Catholic Church.
- d. Although the language in answer 80 appears sharp, such indignation at the withholding of assurance of salvation from believers is not inappropriate to a confessional statement. Trent speaks rather sharply too. And the acts of teaching and refuting are frequently coupled in the New Testament.
- e. Answer 80 must be understood in terms of its main emphasis: our assurance of salvation through the "full pardon of our sins by Christ's only sacrifice."

These grounds are much less persuasive in today's context:

- a. At the time of Synod 1977, the Christian Reformed Church was debating the issue of women in office; therefore, the small number of responses should not have been taken as indicative of church sentiment. In addition, the ecumenical contacts of the Christian Reformed people have become much broader in recent years. In 1977 the CRC was not as interested in the Roman Catholic Church, our relation to its members, and their practice of the Christian faith as we are today.
- b. Weighty reasons should be given for altering historic creeds, as was done in 1958 and 1985, when the Belgic Confession was modified by Christian Reformed synods. The practice of basic love, unity, and understanding based on current contact with Roman Catholic believers demands modification of Q. & A. 80.
- c. Churches of any denomination rarely, if ever, "repudiate" previous positions. Over time, however, they do change them. The Roman Catholic Church, as shown in its new confession with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and as stated in the Baltimore Catechism, believes in justification by faith alone (cf. d below).
- d. Though Q. & A. 80 may be historically accurate to the 1500s, the Heidelberg Catechism is not just a historical document. It is a guide for faith and daily life today. The language in Q. & A. 80, while reflecting historical conditions, is embarrassingly sharp and should not be used in our confessional statements to describe a Christian church which seeks to honor Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior. It is also very pertinent that Roman Catholics in North America have recently approved a new joint Declaration on Justification with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Some relevant excerpts from this statement follow:

Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive

the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.<sup>1</sup>

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While Catholic teaching emphasizes the renewal of life by justifying grace, this renewal in faith, hope, and love is always dependent on God's unfathomable grace and contributes nothing to justification about which one could boast before God (Rom. 3:27).<sup>2</sup>

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Good works—a Christian life lived in faith, hope, and love—follow justification and are its fruits.<sup>3</sup>

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Good works are made possible by grace and the working of the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

Justification always remains the unmerited gift of grace.<sup>5</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

The faithful can rely on the mercy and promises of God. In spite of their own weakness and the manifold threats to their faith, on the strength of Christ's death and resurrection they can build on the effective promise of God's grace in Word and Sacrament and so be sure of this grace.<sup>6</sup>

Also relevant to current practice in the Roman Catholic Church is this statement in the Baltimore Catechism:

On the cross Christ physically shed his blood and was physically slain, while in the Mass there is no physical shedding of blood nor physical death, because Christ can die no more; on the cross Christ gained merit and satisfied for us, while in the Mass he applies to us the merits and satisfaction of his death on the cross.<sup>7</sup>

- e. The Roman Catholic Church has no intention of withholding from its members assurance of salvation. Our confessions in their attempt to emphasize this vital assurance ought not denigrate the Lord's Supper as practiced in a church we openly recognize as Christian.

## II. Overture

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to remove Question and Answer 80 from the text of the Heidelberg Catechism as confessed by the CRCNA. We recommend that there be an appendix at the back of the catechism with an appropriate introduction indicating when Q. & A. 80 was included by the authors and when it was removed by the Christian Reformed Church.

<sup>1</sup>*Ecumenical Proposals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1996) 27.

<sup>2</sup>*Ecumenical 29.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ecumenical 30.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ecumenical 30.*

<sup>5</sup>*Ecumenical 30.*

<sup>6</sup>*Ecumenical 30.*

<sup>7</sup>*Baltimore Catechism* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1969) 173. The quotation is from Question and Answer 362 in the Baltimore Catechism.

*Grounds:*

- A. The phrase "a condemnable idolatry" should be reserved for describing actions of persons who do not believe in justification by faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. The Roman Catholic Church is a church which confesses the same ecumenical creeds as those confessed by the CRCNA (i.e., Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed).
- B. The practice of basic love, unity, and understanding among Christians today demands the removal of Q. & A. 80 from confessional status in the CRCNA.
- C. Q. & A. 80 was not included in the original text of the Heidelberg Catechism and was added only as a response to statements from the Council of Trent made in December of 1563.

Classis Lake Erie

George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

**Overture 17: Ensure the Editorial Freedom of *The Banner***

**I. Background**

In the December 8, 1997, issue of *The Banner*, the denominational Board of Trustees informed the denomination that the IRM Corporation had "decided to suspend all principal and interest payments and loan payoffs on our investor notes, as well as all partnership distributions to our investors. . . ." The article also informed us that

because several Christian Reformed Church agencies and institutions, as well as other closely related Christian organizations, have investments with the IRM Corporation, the executive committee of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church has appointed a committee to represent the interests of those agencies, institutions, and organizations.

At the end of this notification was a note from the editor of *The Banner* informing us that the Board of Trustees was prohibiting *The Banner* from investigating the particulars of this situation and that *The Banner* believed that this decision "is in conflict with synodically approved guidelines covering *The Banner's* accountability and freedom."

On December 8 the Board of Trustees sent a letter and an announcement to all church councils. In this announcement the Board further explained its decision regarding *The Banner*, saying,

. . . the Board of Trustees has been advised by legal counsel for the CRC to be extremely careful in how the IRM concerns are dealt with considering the limited amount of information that is available. For this reason, the Board of Trustees decided that the denominational agencies and institutions, as well as its periodical, *The Banner*, will refrain from public comment on all matters related to IRM except that approved by representatives of the Investment Oversight Committee.

The announcement ends by saying, ". . . we ask for understanding and trust that these matters are being addressed responsibly and as expeditiously as possible with the assistance of professional advisors."

At our March 7 classis meeting we discussed this matter with the benefit of input from our regional representative to the Board of Trustees. In his report our representative said, "I am principally opposed to the restriction placed

upon the editor of *The Banner* and recorded a negative vote indicating my opposition to the decision of the Board." He also informed us that, following a meeting between three representatives of the Board of Trustees and three representatives of CRC Publications, the ban was lifted.

We know that it is necessary to treat matters like the IRM matter with care. We do wish to trust the Board of Trustees as it deals with such matters. However, we also wish to trust the editor of our denominational publication. The editor has been carefully chosen by synod and is supervised by the executive director of CRC Publications and by a board of delegates elected by our denomination. We believe that he would also be sensitive to the input of the Board of Trustees on this and on similar matters.

In its December 8 letter the Board says that its "position was carefully considered and is significantly impacted by legal concerns arising from the fact that *The Banner* is a publication of the CRC." We understand that the Board wishes to appoint one official spokesperson on this issue. We do not understand why this would prohibit *The Banner* from reporting on this issue. On October 27 all IRM investors received a letter concerning this matter, and immediately after that a number of stories were being circulated. A report by our denominational publication would have been very beneficial in placing this matter in perspective and in defusing some of the rumors connected with it. Because *The Banner* was not allowed to report on the story, information about it came via the secular media, and the denomination looked like it had something to hide.

Our denomination has a long history of guarding the freedom of *The Banner*. In 1993 *The Banner's* accountability and freedom were again described in the *Agenda for Synod* (pp. 76-80). Those guidelines state that "the editorial staff must be granted the freedom to inform its readers and subscribers about what is occurring in the church (including relevant problems, needs, and concerns) even though some persons, congregations, or agencies may prefer that such information not be disseminated." We are very thankful that the ban on *The Banner's* reporting has been lifted. We believe that the placing of such a ban violated existing policy and was uncharacteristic of our denomination's relationship to *The Banner*.

## II. Overture

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to

- A. Declare that synod exercises its authority over *The Banner* editor through CRC Publications.
- B. Ensure that the editorial freedom of *The Banner*, outlined in the guidelines presented to Synod 1993, be protected.

*Ground:* The authority of our boards and the editorial freedom of *The Banner* are long-held values that ought to be retained.

Classis Lake Erie

George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

## Overture 18: Make a Minor Revision to Clarify the Abuse Guidelines

### I. Background

In recent years our denomination has tried to develop a comprehensive set of guidelines for resolving allegations of abuse within the denomination. Classis Lake Erie has been supportive of these efforts but has also been deeply concerned that the final guidelines adopted by synod ensure that justice is secured for the accused as well as the accuser. Our classis has commented on the guidelines a number of times. In 1992 we sent an overture to synod. In response to the request of Synod 1994 for comments on the guidelines, three of our councils gave suggestions. At Synod 1995 our delegates presented six pages of comments to the advisory committee considering the guidelines. In 1996 we sent an overture to synod and met with representatives of Abuse Prevention to discuss that overture. After Synod 1996 our classis appointed a five-person committee to review the guidelines provisionally approved by that synod. Upon the recommendation of that committee, classis sent a very detailed overture to Synod 1997 suggesting a number of technical and substantial changes to improve and strengthen the guidelines. We are grateful that Synod 1997 publicly expressed "its gratitude to Classis Lake Erie for its thorough study and suggested revisions of the Abuse Guidelines" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 685).

After such public thanks, we find it difficult to ask synod to make one more change in the guidelines. However, such public thanks also assures us that synod itself recognizes the thorough study we have made of these guidelines in an attempt to serve the denomination and its members. Thus, we ask synod to make one minor yet important revision to the guidelines for the sake of both the accused and the accuser. We believe this revision will better ensure that justice is secured for all parties involved when allegations of abuse are made.

Our concern focuses on the suggested procedures and guidelines when the abuse victim is an adult (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 678-81). In such cases an advisory panel is convened to "evaluate the gravity of the allegations and the probable veracity of them" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 678). When this alternative is chosen, the guidelines instruct the executive committee of the council to notify the classical abuse-response team to convene an advisory panel. The panel meets with the accuser and his or her witnesses and then meets with the accused and his or her witnesses. Following these interviews, the panel submits a summary of its findings to the executive committee of the council.

As the guidelines are now written, as soon as an allegation is raised, whether warranted or not, a full inquiry is begun. We are concerned that at no point before the initiation of the inquiry is there an opportunity for anyone to make an initial determination that a "reasonable suspicion" exists that abuse has occurred. This is an important judgment. All of us know from discussions in our own communities that an increased focus on abuse has also produced a number of false allegations. We have seen family members alienated, careers destroyed, and people sent to jail because of allegations that later were determined to be untrue. The church must take seriously that reality.

None of us can call the police to lodge a complaint against our neighbor with the expectation that the police will begin an investigation simply on the basis of our allegation. The police will make a determination about whether or not there is "reasonable suspicion" to warrant an investigation. In fact, this is one of the provisions stated in the guidelines when the abuse victim is a child (*Acts of Synod*

1997, p. 681). In those guidelines, a person contacted about an allegation of abuse is instructed to notify the authorities "if presented with information which suggests a reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 681).

There are no comparable provisions in the guidelines when the abuse victim is an adult. Therefore, in our overture to Synod 1997 we asked that the adult guidelines contain such a provision and also suggested that the council's executive committee be instructed to make a determination of "reasonable suspicion" before requesting the convening of a classical advisory panel. We suggested the executive committee for two reasons. First, it will have the most intimate knowledge of the parties involved when abuse allegations are made. Second, it is the body instructed by the guidelines to call for the convening of an advisory panel. Some objected to the assignment of this task to the executive committee, asserting that this committee would be perceived as biased in favor of the accused and observing that most executive committees are currently composed only of males. Synod 1997 did not consider whether there was another, more acceptable body that could make a determination of "reasonable suspicion."

Perhaps the reason Synod 1997 did not consider other alternatives is that some have asserted that, if a determination is made about whether there is "reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred," the classical advisory panel will have nothing to do. Such an assertion, however, is simply untrue and unresponsive to the concern highlighted in our overture. The assertion confuses a full-scale investigation involving the calling of many witnesses, something the classical advisory panel is commissioned to do, with an initial determination of whether or not there is sufficient reason even to embark on such an investigation.

Is it even necessary to make such a determination? In terms of basic justice, we believe it is. In fact, the guidelines adopted by Synod 1994 included such a provision. Those guidelines called for the immediate suspension of a church leader and then stated,

If a leader is suspended, the congregation should be notified by announcement and by letter explaining the reason for suspension and what steps are being taken to move things ahead only after a neutral fact finder, after appropriate investigation, judges the accusation to be credible."

(Guidelines sent to the church on September 16, 1994, by Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries, p. 2)

Only if the accusation was judged "to be credible" was the council instructed to "appoint a panel of five to seven people for a hearing process."

It is important that some determination be made before a full inquiry by a panel begins. As one of our church councils wrote to Abuse Prevention already in 1994, abuse allegations should be pursued promptly and fairly, "not only because the church has a spiritual obligation to do so, but also to avoid any claim the church's actions contributed to the abuse or claim of defamation by one falsely accused."

Two examples can be given from our own classis. In one, a person alleged that the minister was in love with her and cited compliments, statements in sermons, hugs given in public setting, and other actions. The consistory determined these allegations to be groundless and later discovered that the accuser had alleged the same things at a church previously attended. In the second case, a person undergoing psychiatric treatment alleged that the minister had made an inappropriate private advance when she was a teenager. When a relative of the woman informed the minister of this allegation, the

minister immediately contacted the council's vice president and visited the parents of the now married daughter to describe the very public incident that was being referenced, offering to contact witnesses if the parents desired that.

Under the present guidelines, a council receiving such allegations as well as a request for the convening of an advisory panel, is instructed to call for the convening of the classical panel, and the panel is expected to conduct a full inquiry into these matters. In our judgment this is unwise stewardship of time and talent and, in spite of the fact that the entire process is designed to be confidential, a possible source of the defamation of one falsely accused.

The denomination has formulated guidelines to assist the church in taking seriously charges of abuse that are made against its leaders. We applaud that goal and believe that the guidelines used by the denomination must be designed to make it as easy as possible for people to come forward with their allegations of abuse. There must be no unrealistic provisions that produce barriers that encourage silence instead of disclosure.

On the other hand, we believe it is unrealistic, unjust, and potentially defamatory for any and all allegations against church leaders to be forwarded without question to a classical advisory panel for a full hearing. We believe that, as is in the suggested guidelines when the abuse victim is a child, a provision must be included in the adult guidelines to indicate that a determination of "reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred" must be made by someone before further steps are taken.

We understand the reservations that some have expressed about entrusting this determination to the executive committee of a council. We also believe that the "neutral fact finder" specified in the 1994 guidelines unnecessarily introduces a third party into this process. It is our belief that the classical advisory panel, or a subcommittee of it, can make a determination of whether or not an allegation warrants the convening of an advisory panel and the calling of witnesses.

Such a provision will also assist those who bring allegations of abuse. Synod 1997 expressed its desire that the executive committee of council should not make a determination of reasonable suspicion but instead "should notify the classical abuse-response team to convene an advisory panel . . . regarding the allegation" (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 678). However, our Abuse Prevention Department reported to synod that "in some cases persons were denied access to the process . . ." (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, p. 188). Apparently, pastors, executive committees, and councils are, in fact, making determinations of reasonable suspicion. Synod would serve the church well by revising the guidelines to make it clear who makes this determination and how any denial of access to the panel is communicated to the person alleging abuse. We believe that our suggested revision protects both the accused and the accuser.

## II. Overture

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod

A. To revise the suggested procedures and guidelines when the abuse victim is an adult so that, as with the suggested procedures and guidelines when the abuse victim is a child, there is a provision calling for the determination of "reasonable suspicion" before an allegation of abuse is advanced.

*Grounds:*

1. The church must ensure that its actions do not contribute to the claim of defamation by one falsely accused.
2. This matter needs clarification since, contrary to the expressed desire of Synod 1997, pastors, executive committees, and councils are denying access to the advisory panel instead of following the guideline which states that the executive committee "*should notify the classical abuse-response team to convene an advisory panel*" when an allegation of abuse is brought forward (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 678).

B. To revise in the following manner the suggested procedures and guidelines (changes in italics) when the abuse victim is an adult (cf. *Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 678-79):

- b. (See Footnote 4, a for important information.) The executive committee (or its equivalent), after consulting with one another (no one of those consulting may be implicated by the victim) and after reviewing the alternatives, should notify the classical abuse-response team *about the allegation of abuse. The abuse-response team or a subcommittee of the team shall determine if the information presented suggests a reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred. If the information presented does not suggest a reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred, two members of the abuse-response team should meet with the alleged victim within seven days of that determination to discuss its decision and to offer whatever pastoral assistance may be appropriate. A summary of the abuse-response team's deliberations should be given in writing to the alleged victim and to the council's executive committee if requested. This summary should protect the identity of the person against whom allegations have been raised.*
- c. (Add this sentence to the beginning of existing c.) *If the information presented suggests a reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred, an advisory panel should be convened as soon as possible.* [The last four words should be italicized in final form.]

(*Note:* Although we have retained it in our suggested revision of b because it is not part of the concern of our overture, synod should note that the words "and after reviewing the alternatives" are unnecessary and potentially confusing. These words refer to the paragraphs before the guidelines, which indicate that there are three other alternatives for handling allegations. These words are unnecessary because the very choice to enter a process which calls for the convening of a classical panel indicates that the other alternatives already have been considered and rejected in favor of this one. For the sake of clarity, synod should drop the words "and after reviewing the alternatives.")

Classis Lake Erie

George F. Vander Weit, stated clerk

## **Overture 19: Request Calvin Theological Seminary to Offer Specialized Courses to Help Korean M.Div. Students Understand the Nature of Ministry in the Korean Context**

### **I. Background**

Since the late 1960s, many Korean Christians have immigrated to this country. As a result, there are over 3,500 Korean Christian churches in the United States. The leadership of these Korean churches is still held and practiced by the first-generation Koreans, and the major activities of the Korean churches are still conducted in the Korean language.

The number of 1.5- and 2nd-generation Koreans has been rapidly growing. Therefore, we need to train young leaders to minister to these members. However, we need bilingual leaders who not only know both languages but also both cultures. As a matter of fact, what we have observed is that 1.5- and 2nd-generation leaders who have been trained in the U.S. have problems with the first-generation leaders because of difficulties in communication as well as limited knowledge of how to minister to the first-generation Koreans (who still provide major resources and leadership for the 2nd-generation Koreans).

We all know that Calvin Theological Seminary graduates are well trained academically and in ministry capabilities. Yet we see a great need for specialized training in Korean ministry. When CTS graduates are first employed in Korean churches, most of them work in the educational ministry as assistant pastors rather than as senior pastors. Even though they are well trained both theologically and academically at CTS, Korean churches have difficulty calling them for reasons mentioned above. Therefore, Classis Pacific Hanmi submits this overture to synod.

### **II. Overture**

Classis Pacific Hanmi overtures synod

A. To ask Calvin Theological Seminary to offer specialized courses for Korean M.Div. students to help them understand the nature of ministry in the Korean context. The suggested topics for such courses are

1. Preaching in a Korean context. (Preaching in a Korean context requires a different style than is used in other communities.)
2. Church administration in a Korean context.
3. Study of ministry /field education in a Korean context.

B. To permit the instructor for these courses to be recommended or chosen by the Korean member on the CTS board, the Korean ministry director, and the theological committee of the Korean Council. The instructor must be CRC and currently serving in ministry. It is preferred that the instructor come to CTS one or two weeks per year to teach.

C. To ask CTS or Home Missions to pay the instructor's wages and expenses.

Classis Pacific Hanmi  
Moses Jeong, stated clerk

# APPEALS

## Appeals

1. Council of Harderwyk CRC, Holland, Michigan, appeals from a decision of Classis Holland regarding the postponement of the process to examine Mr. Trent Walker for ordination by way of Church Order Article 7 and seeks the approval of synod to proceed with that examination. The complete appeal document will be submitted to the advisory committee dealing with this matter.

## Personal Appeals

1. Dr. Hendrik Hart appeals from a series of decisions of Classis Toronto.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## Communication 1: Classis Greater Los Angeles

To Synod 1998 of the Christian Reformed Church:

After hearing the presentation regarding restructuring prior to the meeting of Classis Greater Los Angeles in October of 1997, the classis decided to form an ad hoc committee with the mandate (1) to receive feedback from the churches of Classis Greater Los Angeles regarding denominational restructuring and (2) to present a report to the March 1998 meeting of classis. Classis decided to endorse the committee's report and asked that it be communicated to Rev. Henry Numan, chairman of the restructuring committee, and also to Synod 1998.

We make the following observation: The premise for restructuring appears to be that there is fragmentation in the denomination as well as a need for better communication between the agencies and the people in the pew and a need for more efficient governance.

We contend that it is not clear that the three parts of this premise should result in restructuring. If these are the three major areas of concern in the denomination, we have received no indication from the synodical Committee to Study Structure for Ministry in the U.S. that it has considered any other options besides changing the structure in order to achieve the desired result. Furthermore, if restructuring is the best way to achieve the desired results, we have received no evidence that any options for restructuring have been considered except the one that is being proposed.

We believe that the following issues need to be addressed with regard to the current suggested restructuring:

- First, the flow chart which we have seen indicates such a heavy flow through the office of the executive director of ministries (EDM) that it appears this will become a log jam for action. Although the plan speaks of decentralization, we are not sure that this result will be achieved.
- Second, we are concerned that the recommended restructuring will result in changing the Board of Trustees (BOT) into something quite different from what synod envisioned when the change was made from the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) to the BOT several years ago.
- Third, the suggested restructuring appears to be not only extremely complex and expensive but also to add another layer of bureaucracy in our denomination at a time when we are actually shrinking in size.

Therefore, we present the following recommendation, based upon the foregoing observations:

That the report on restructuring which is to be sent to the churches in the fall of 1998 for action by Synod 1999 actually be considered an interim report and that a final draft be sent to the churches in 1999 for action in the year 2000.

*Grounds:*

1. A change of such magnitude ought not to be done hastily. Therefore, the churches deserve more than the normal time between the fall report and the next synod to discuss the changes envisioned.
2. Since Canadian restructuring envisioned three regional offices of the kind the U.S. restructuring committee is proposing in the United States, it would be good to allow ample time for the proposed changes in Canada to serve as a pilot project before making any changes in the U.S. structure.

Though we believe that a formal overture to this effect would be premature, since the final report will not be available until September, we also believe that this communication to Synod 1998 is significant in that it indicates the serious concern we have regarding the proposed U.S. restructuring.

Classis Greater Los Angeles  
Maurice Sleger, stated clerk

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**Communication 2: Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada**

**I. Introduction**

This communication is the final direct report of the CCRCC to synod. From now on reports of the Christian Reformed agencies at work in Canada will be coming from the Canadian Ministries Board (CMB). What is true of the classes is true of the agencies reporting through the CMB: "Believing that the God of all grace brought the Christian Reformed churches into being in the Dominion of Canada for his own purposes, we accept the calling and affirm the need of engaging in mutual consultation and cooperation on a nationwide basis" (Preamble to the Agreement of Cooperation, CCRCC).

At the end of thirty years the administration is changing. After the transition this constant will remain: We do gospel ministry together. We address every aspect of public life.

It is only fair to admit that planning and implementation of the new administration have involved a lot of hard work since Synod 1997 adopted the new structure. Since that decision was made, all concerned have put their minds to its implications. Working out the shared vision of the agencies has been rewarding because staff members from various agencies have been open to each other's mandates and strongly committed to working together as the Canadian Ministries Advancement Team.

**II. Working with other churches**

*A. Reformed Church in America*

The Reformed Church in America has a presence in Canada, and it is exploring with CCRCC's Interchurch Relations Committee what both denominations consider to be their calling in this vast land. Comparing vision and

mission statements, we explored our parallel histories of settlement and our attitudes toward Christian education, membership in secret societies, and local supervision of the Lord's Supper.

We struggled with images widely held by each denomination of the other. Perceptions about the CRC by Reformed Church in America members were not flattering. Reformed Church in America folk see the CRC members they know

- as spiritually arrogant (one-upmanship)
- as fiercely loyal to their denomination
- as loose in life-style but rigid in religion
- as materially rich (Christian education?)
- as exercising a presumptive faith/conversion.

Conversely, the CRC pictures the RCA in Canada

- as older in membership
- as passive in terms of ministry, having little impact
- as struggling and smaller
- as more culturally assimilated.

In general, it was admitted that there is widespread ignorance in the CRC with regard to the RCA. There is a lack of *any* perception in many cases.

We share the hope that we will reach a commitment and plan for doing specific ministries together.

#### *B. Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)*

At its triennial assembly in Ottawa the CCC implemented its decision to be a forum by (1) emphasizing worship, Bible study, and the input of various denominations; (2) discussing the results of a country-wide study on gospel and culture; and (3) eliminating assembly generated overtures. It also formally welcomed into full membership the Canadian Christian Reformed churches and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The CCC now receives inspiration from its new general secretary, Janet Somerville, a devout and evangelical Roman Catholic woman with a passion for justice. Three Christian Reformed persons have applied for the part-time position of associate secretary for the CCC Commission on Justice and Peace. Dr. George Vandeveld already serves with distinction on the Commission on Faith and Witness. He was the only non-Catholic Canadian delegate to the papal Synod on the Americas.

In the course of the last twelve months the CCC has received approval from member churches to petition the government of Canada about euthanasia; redress of wrongs done to many native people, especially attempts at assimilation; revision of Canada's refugee legislation; the devolution of universal health care; environmental issues; nuclear-arms stockpiles; and alleviation of suffering in the Middle East.

The Commission on Faith and Witness has compiled a volume on Christian marriage in the traditions of the various member churches with the hope that it will become a resource for developing marriage and family studies. Divorce and common-law relationships are increasing in direct proportion to the loss of members in the churches.

### C. *Canadian ecumenical Jubilee initiative*

In March 1998 the Canadian Christian Reformed churches were invited to join a broad-based group of churches and joint working groups, or coalitions, in celebrating God's grace at the beginning of the third millennium since Christ's incarnation. The plan is to call the churches and political powers to a new beginning in the biblical tradition of the Jubilee (Lev. 25), which included release from bondage, redistribution of wealth, and renewal of the land. The celebration will involve theological reflection, education, and networking. Its hoped-for outcome is that the churches strengthen their work for social justice and creation stewardship. A global campaign to press for the remission of the unpaid debts of the world's poorest countries is also a major component of the Jubilee celebration.

The Interim Committee of the CCRCC has endorsed the proposal. It seeks the concurrence of synod's agencies and requests the Canadian Ministries Board to participate in this project and adapt its thrusts in ways appropriate to our local congregations.

### D. *Evangelical Fellowship of Churches (EFC)*

After Dr. Brian Stiller, president of the EFC, accepted a call to become president of Tyndale College (formerly Ontario Bible College and Theological Seminary), Dr. Gary Walsh was appointed president. A former bishop of the Free Methodist Church of Canada, Dr. Walsh has already given impetus to a major visioning event.

As publisher of *Faith Today*, Canada's equivalent of *Christianity Today*, the EFC has bound its twenty-eight member churches together in a strengthening witness through eight commissions to churches, Christians, society, and government. Task forces serve global mission, women in ministry, world relief, evangelism, education, aboriginal concerns, government relations, and social action. EFC's Ottawa bureau monitors the Canadian government through the ears and mind of a Calvinist trained at the Institute for Christian Studies.

EFC is presently seeking resolution of disputes with Revenue Canada on clergy housing, remuneration for a charity's directors, and taxing of Christian-school contributions.

## III. Working with Canada's first peoples—racial reconciliation

### A. *Three urban ministries*

This spring the youngest of our three native Christian communities, following the lead of the Winnipeg and Regina fellowships, purchased its own facilities. Pride of ownership is reflected in the growing use of their own space made by dozens of people every day.

It is difficult to picture a typical day in any of the three native peoples' worship centers. The directors' reports do identify the following scheduled activities in any one week: worship, daily prayers, circles for Bible study and for program management, A.A. meetings, soup-and-bannock luncheons, sports for youth and children, women's support group, and monthly council meetings.

Each director and the native pastoral assistants are called to respond pastorally to people wounded by abuse, addiction, poverty, racism, broken homes, underemployment, and despair. Transiency disrupts progress in nurturing and healing.

### B. *Cross-cultural ministries consultations*

Synod 1996 approved CCRCC's request for help in researching Scripture and our mission agencies' practices in bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to people of pre-Christian cultures. A first modest consultation took place in November 1997.

Resultant recommendations have been worked out in a proposal now before the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA. It calls for a small group to visit non-Dutch ethnic Christian communities nurtured by CRC missionaries, for the purpose of learning these communities' insights into the cultural transformation of their pre-Christian belief and practices resulting from their response to the gospel. Both the report and the proposal are available upon request.

### C. *Racial reconciliation*

The CCRCC's Committee on Racial Reconciliation benefits from the participation of five ethnic-minority representatives. Synod's Race Relations director, Rev. Alfred Luke, is a highly valued resource person. The committee has collaborated in the preparation and fielding of two major resources toward deepening the insight of Christians into the need for and progress toward racial reconciliation. *Wiciwetowin (Walking Together on the Path of Justice)* is an attractive self-guided kit for students of all ages. Produced by Citizens for Public Justice, for Christian Reformed, Salvation Army, Mennonite, and World Vision sponsors, it emphasizes the turnaround required in response to Canada's aboriginal people. Currently focus groups are testing the kit. Ultimate proof of its usefulness will be that native communities use it. The second resource is ready for field testing among youth groups and college- and career-age young adults. *Weaving a New Tapestry* probes the work of God's Spirit in connecting a pre-Christian spirituality with the person and work of Jesus Christ. Both of these kits may be obtained from our office at cost.

### D. *Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC)*

This coalition of churches includes native persons in its membership. Partly in response to the far-reaching recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Rights, ARC has almost finished its own rights-oriented study of Canada's most pervasive injustice, the marginalization of its oldest inhabitants.

ARC also provides very specific support to native communities that struggle for recognition of their cultures, societal structures, and their claims to natural resources and land. Every new resource development requires a new struggle to protect their indigenous communities from devastation. We participate in projects to the extent that our adopted guidelines permit and the Consultative Committee on Task Forces deems to be biblically responsible.

## IV. **Church in society**

Participation in four other interchurch working groups broadens the scope and deepens the outreach of our churches into the social, economic, and political warp and weft of Canada's public life. Typically the work of these groups involves advocacy for society's most vulnerable people. In the words of the Contemporary Testimony (par. 17), we face the realities that "sin is present everywhere, in pride of race, in arrogance of nations, in abuse of the weak and helpless, in disregard for water, air, and soil, in destruction of living creatures, in slavery, deceit, terror and war, in worship of false gods. . . ." But

since "the Creator made us all, and life is his gift, we foster the well-being of others, protecting the unborn and helpless from harm."

*A. Interchurch Committee for Refugees (ICCR)*

The Interchurch Committee for Refugees monitors the world refugee movements, the Canadian government's response, and opportunities for churches to respond. In its latest effort ICCR responded to proposals to review the Canadian Immigration Act of 1974. As holders of a sponsorship agreement, the CRWRC and CCRCC prepared their own brief about refugee needs for international protection.

*B. Interchurch Committee for Human Rights in Latin America*

The Interchurch Committee for Human Rights in Latin America has celebrated twenty years of struggling for aboriginal people in Latin America. In small ways this coalition witnesses against the pervasive oppression under which native Americans suffer from inadequate housing, education, health care, and minimal participation in any measure of prosperity in their societies.

*C. Task Force on Churches and Corporate Responsibility*

Closely related in mandate, the Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility responds to large business actions, domestic and international, which adversely affect the poor. It is helping major world players in trade and resource exploration to develop guidelines for ethically responsible resource development. Significant progress has been made in this profit-driven sector of human endeavor. As in refugee concerns, CRWRC also cosponsors CRC participation in the Task Force on Churches and Corporate Responsibility.

*D. Church Council of Justice and Corrections*

After seventeen years of monitoring the Church Council of Justice and Corrections, CCRCC has joined this advocate group on behalf of government and prisoners. With some project support from federal and provincial justice ministries, this coalition studies Scripture and proposes sentencing alternatives to prison.

Mennonites, Quakers, the Salvation Army, and eight larger denominations also conduct community projects guiding reentry of ex-prisoners into the community. This involves Christian outreach to persons and families isolated as a result of incarceration. Biblical themes of personal reconciliation, forgiveness, restitution, and responsibility are dominant motifs in this search for justice seasoned with compassion.

The CCRCC's Consultative Committee on Task Forces has held our volunteer representatives on each coalition accountable to the CRC's adopted guidelines and confessions. It has encouraged biblical input into the work of each coalition and has benefited from expert research in each field of public witness to peace with justice.

*E. Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG)*

Key to the work outlined above, the CCG does original work in response to current public issues. It prepares foundational papers, briefs on specific concerns, and letters of appeal to provincial and national governments.

The committee hopes soon to finalize a paper on the biblical norms for family. This is an urgent endeavor because the federal government has cut back on transfer payments to the provinces for the administration of health,

welfare, child care, and education. As the evidences of financial cutbacks become clearer, the advocacy of the church for the family, mother, and child under stress will be more urgent. People in high places give the appearance that they do not feel the pain of the poor.

Two major papers were sent to local-church councils and social-justice committees for reflection. One of them, "Medical Decisions and Public Policy Pertaining to the End of Life," is a draft which may eventually become a piece of the larger study Synod 1997 commissioned CCG to bring to Synod 1999. A draft study guide on the relationship between "The Bible, Homosexual Persons, and Public Policy" is being offered for testing in a dozen congregations. The report of synod's Committee to Give Direction about and for Pastoral Care for Homosexual Members, to be submitted to Synod 1999, may well influence this project before it reaches its final form.

Last year we reported our struggle against Video Lottery Terminals. This year provincial governments are straying even farther from their tasks. They are attempting to ignore public referenda against the placement of "charity CASINOS." CCG is again circulating its own briefs against both among our churches. The hope is that our churches will lead their towns in resisting the increasing tendency of provincial governments to prey upon human addiction and greed to raise additional public revenue.

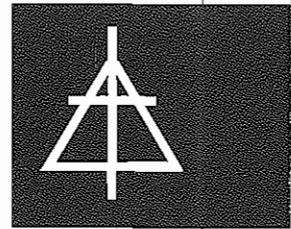
## V. Conclusion

A century ago the Dutch Calvinist leader Abraham Kuyper claimed people and public life for Christ. We continue in that tradition. May the Lord of the church and creation bless all who work out the will of God in public life. May the holy ferment abroad in the land bring glory to God alone—*Soli Deo Gloria*.

Council of the Christian Reformed  
Churches in Canada  
Arie G. Van Eek, executive secretary

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

# ACTS OF SYNOD



# 1998

*Donation 0106*  
Christian Reformed Church in North America

# ACTS OF SYNOD

June 13-19, 1998  
Fine Arts Center Auditorium  
Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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# FOREWORD

The *Acts of Synod 1998* contains the following:

- Supplementary reports of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and those agencies authorized to file them
- Supplementary overtures and communications relevant to matters found in the printed *Agenda for Synod 1998* or adopted on the floor of synod
- Financial reports
- The minutes of Synod 1998
- An index

It will be necessary for the user of the *Acts of Synod 1998* to keep the *Agenda for Synod 1998* at hand for ready reference. The *Agenda* is not reprinted in the *Acts*. The pagination continues from the *Agenda* to the *Acts*. Supplementary materials begin on page 251, following preliminary unnumbered pages. Financial reports begin on page 321. Minutes of synod follow, beginning on page 345. The index references both volumes; the numbers in boldface type refer to pages in the minutes of Synod 1998.

The various sections of the *Acts of Synod*, including the minutes of synod, are identified with black bars on page edges, which help to locate and identify the sections.

May all who read the reports of the ministries and study committees and the minutes of Synod 1998 discover the ways in which the Lord is leading the Christian Reformed Church in North America and give him thanks for its many opportunities to minister in the areas of education, missions, mercy, publications, and pastoral care.

David H. Engelhard, general secretary

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES SUPPLEMENT

## Joint-Ministries Management Committee

Christian Reformed Church in North America—Michigan Corporation  
 Christian Reformed Church in North America—Ontario Corporation  
 Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees

### I. Interim appointments

Board	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term
CRC Publications	Central California	Mrs. Grace Miedema	Mrs. Linda Dykstra	2001
	Chatham		Rev. R.T. Vander Vaart	
	Columbia	Rev. Chung C. Cho	Mrs. Beverly Vander Beek	
	Greater L.A.		Rev. G. Varela	
Home Missions	Pacific Hanmi			2001
World Missions	Kalamazoo	Mr. Eugene Smith	Mrs. Kathleen Apothecker	2001
	California South			
CRWRC	Greater L.A.		Dr. J. Van Schepen	
	Northcentral Iowa		Rev. H. Dykema	
	Lake Superior		Mr. Randy Kroll	
	Northcentral Iowa		Mr. D. Mattison	
	Pacific Northwest		Mrs. Gladys Visser	

### II. Board of Trustees membership

#### A. Trustees whose terms expire in 1998

District	Member	Alternate
Great Plains	Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper	Rev. Dennis A. Kamper
Central U.S. III	Dr. Arthur J. Schoonveld	Rev. Jacob W. Uitvlugt
Central U.S. IV	Mrs. Kathleen Smith	Mrs. Mary Jo De Jong
Eastern Canada II	Rev. Gordon H. Pols	Rev. Gerard Ringnalda
Eastern Canada II	Mr. J. Hans Vander Stoep	Mr. Andrew Schaafsma
At-large	Mrs. Jane Vander Ploeg	Mrs. Sandra Gronsmann

Words of thanks are in order for Rev. A.L. Kuiper, Rev. G. Pols, Mrs. K. Smith, and Mr. J.H. Vander Stoep, who are completing their first terms of service on the Board, and to Dr. A.J. Schoonveld and Mrs. J. Vander Ploeg, who are completing their second terms. We recognize with gratitude the contributions these members have made and thank them for the many hours they have given to the service of Christ and his church as members of the Board.

#### B. Ratification of elected regional trustees

The list of elected regional trustees will be presented to synod for ratification (see Recommendation C).

### III. Letter to President Clinton re Cuba

At the request of the leadership of the Christian Reformed Church in Cuba and upon advice received from CR World Missions, the Board of Trustees instructed the general secretary to send a letter to President William J. Clinton regarding the United States' economic embargo of Cuba. The letter (see Appendix A) has been sent, and a slightly modified form was also sent to the leadership of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

### IV. Judicial Code Committee nominations

The following Judicial Code Committee members are completing their first terms: Rev. Case Admiraal, Mr. Reid J. Smeda, and Ms. Kathy Vandergrift. We thank them for the contribution they have made to the life of our churches.

Despite its best efforts to find additional nominees to form a slate with the incumbents, the committee informs synod that it was unsuccessful and recommends that the three incumbents listed above be reelected for a second three-year term.

### V. Interim report on ethnic diversity

Synod 1996 amended and adopted the principles and guidelines recommended by the Committee to Articulate Biblical and Theological Principles for the Development of a Racially and Ethnically Diverse Family of God. This report is now commonly referred to by the title of its reprinted form: *God's Diverse and Unified Family*.

The recommendations of that document called for a response from congregations, classes, agencies, boards, and synod itself. Appendix B is the Board of Trustees' summary and interim report as requested by Synod 1996.

### VI. Policy change re nominations for regionally based agency boards and for service committees

The following section recommends a change in the synodical expectation that multiple nominees be presented for election rather than a single nominee for appointment (see *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure 1997*, VI, D, 2, p. 89).

#### A. Background

The board and committee system of synod has many configurations. Some delegates are chosen by classes and ratified by synod, and others are chosen directly by synod. Some boards are classically based, and others regionally based. Two factors, however, regulate all these elections: (1) multiple nominees must be presented for each election, and (2) no delegate/member of a board or committee may serve more than six years consecutively.

It is the observable practice that an incumbent is usually reelected to a second term if the incumbent allows his/her name to stand. Inasmuch as incumbents are usually reelected, it has become more difficult to convince additional candidates to submit their names as nominees when running against an incumbent. This difficulty requires committees to devote a significant amount of time searching for and convincing potential nominees to run for positions for which incumbents are also running.

*B. Recommendation*

Given the situation described above, the Board of Trustees considered alternatives at a recent meeting and is presenting the following recommendation to synod for consideration and adoption:

That regionally based agency and institution boards and service committees shall present a slate of multiple nominees for election to membership for a first term of service but may present a single nominee (an incumbent) for a second term.

The following boards and committees are affected by this change:

*Agency/Institutional Boards*

Board of Trustees of the CRCNA  
The Back to God Hour  
Calvin College  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Pastoral Ministries

*Committees*

CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. Committee  
Fund for Smaller Churches Committee  
Historical Committee  
Interchurch Relations Committee  
Judicial Code Committee  
Ministers' Pension Funds Committees  
Sermons for Reading Services Committee  
Youth-Ministry Committee

*Note:* The boards of CRC Publications, Home Missions, World Missions, and CRWRC are not affected by this change because their delegates are appointed by classes.

*C. Procedure to be followed*

In all instances the boards and service committees will present multiple nominees when a new position on the board or committee is being filled. Some of those nominees will be solicited from classes (as is done now for board membership), and some nominees will be identified by the committees themselves (as is the practice now for service committees). Each board or service committee member will initially be chosen for a three-year term from a slate of two or more nominees.

The second term for board positions will be processed as follows:

A slate of names containing the name of an incumbent and the name of an incumbent alternate will be sent in July prior to reelection to each classis in the region represented by the board member. The classes at their fall meetings will be able to review the slate and register any serious reservations they have about the reelection of any incumbent. If no reservations are registered, then the slate will be submitted to the following synod for ratification. If serious reservations are registered by a majority of classes in a region, then the affected board will prepare a new slate of nominees for election at the winter and/or spring meeting of classes before the next annual synod.

The second term for committees will be processed as follows:

The secretary of each committee will be reminded in July of those committee members who are eligible for reelection by the synod of the following year. Each committee will consider the names, and if the members are willing to be reelected and the committee supports the reelection, the names will be submitted to synod for election. Each name will be printed in the *Agenda for Synod* and accompanied by sufficient biographical information to assist synodical delegates in their voting.

## VII. Pastoral letter

The Board of Trustees received from four retired ministers a model pastoral letter, which they asked the Board to endorse and recommend to synod for distribution to the churches. The Board was not convinced that the letter it received from the ministers was the right letter to be sent to the churches but did think that a pastoral letter from synod to the churches is a good idea. Therefore, the Board recommends that synod formulate a pastoral letter and send it to the churches.

The above recommendation is predicated on the understanding that several of our congregations have been split apart by schism, others have experienced internal strife over a variety of issues, and a general malaise is felt by many throughout the denomination. Although the Board recognizes that assembly meetings are not usually places where letters are formulated, it assumes that the officers or someone requested by an advisory committee could be commissioned to carry out this task.

## VIII. Program and finance

### A. Canadian Ministries Board

The Canadian Ministries Board nominated Mr. Raymond A. Elgersma to become the first Canadian ministries director. The Board of Trustees-Canada interviewed Mr. Elgersma and appointed him to the position at its May 5, 1998, meeting. Mr. Elgersma's resumé is attached to this supplementary report. The process previously approved by Synod 1997 requires that an appointment to this position be ratified by synod. There is no requirement that synod interview the candidate, and, unfortunately, Mr. Elgersma will be in Asia during the week of synod. The Board of Trustees-Canada recommends, therefore, that synod ratify this appointment without an interview by synod.

It is important for synod to take note that the restructuring of ministry in Canada adopted by Synod 1997 is well on the way to being implemented. As previously reported, the Canadian Ministries Board held its first meeting in January and has had two subsequent meetings. It is expected that a Canadian ministries director will begin to serve on July 1, 1998. The ministries of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC) will also be folded into the denominational structure on July 1, 1998. Rev. Arie Van Eek, executive secretary of the CCRCC, will retire on that same date. The Canadian Ministries Board is organizing itself to assume responsibility for all denominational ministries conducted in Canada. Much has happened to implement the new Canadian structure since June 1997.

It is important to note these developments not only because they are significant in themselves but also because these developments significantly

shape the continuing discussion on organizational structure for the agencies of the church. It is clear that the interest of the churches and classes in this subject is increasing, but it is also important to recognize that much has already been said and decided by previous synods.

One of the significant complications in implementing the restructuring of ministry in Canada as approved by Synod 1997 is the fact that new structures, positions, and even a board were created while all the previously existing structures (with their accompanying authority) remained in place. The Canadian Ministries Board is trying to face that issue and deal with it, but this situation has made implementation substantially more difficult. Nevertheless, there are both energy and commitment to do what synod approved, and we remain hopeful that even more progress can be reported next year.

#### *B. Budget review and ministry shares*

At its May 1998 meeting the Board of Trustees received a report of the Budget Review Committee, which the Board had appointed to examine all budgets proposed by the agencies for the 1998-1999 fiscal year. The Budget Review Committee paid particular attention to the ministry-share request implicit in each of the budgets presented (with the exception of CRWRC), the sum of which had been recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Ministries Coordinating Council. The Budget Review Committee was composed of the director of finance and administration, a board member, an external person knowledgeable in ministry program, and one agency director (a different director each time the committee interviewed another agency). All of the agencies were required to submit detailed financial and program information to the committee in advance of their interview meetings. Each agency was scheduled for an interview lasting approximately two hours. The report of the Budget Review Committee was then submitted to the Board of Trustees with recommendations.

On the basis of this review process the Board sought to fulfill the mandate of Synods 1996 and 1997 instructing the Board to review carefully agencies' effectiveness and efficiencies in the light of denominational priorities. The Board's response to that instruction is reflected in its approval of the agency and institutional budgets as found in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement* and in its recommendation that synod approve the ministry-share requests below. Before submission to the Board for approval, the individual budgets of the agencies and institutions were approved by their respective boards. The overall ministry share, after it is approved by synod, will be allocated to the receiving ministries as outlined in the *Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement*.

The 1999 ministry-share requests are expressed in terms of confessing members over 18 years of age as a result of action taken by Synod 1993. For 1999, 100 percent of the church's ministry-share determination will be based on the number of confessing members over 18. The requests for 1999 are as follows:

The Back to God Hour	\$31.90
CRC-TV	11.44
Calvin College	25.74
Calvin Seminary	22.64
CRC Publications	2.34
Home Missions	51.05
World Missions	49.13
Pastoral Ministries	9.55
Denominational Services	19.75
Fund for Smaller Churches	7.00
	<u>\$230.54</u>

*C. Recommended salary ranges for 1999*

The Board recommends the following salary ranges for 1999, which represent a 2.5 percent adjustment for both the U.S. and Canadian ranges:

Level	Proposed U.S. 1999 Range			Proposed Canadian 1999 Range		
	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
20	\$70,003	\$87,504	\$105,004	\$90,173	\$112,716	\$135,260
19	\$63,691	\$79,613	\$95,536	\$78,227	\$97,784	\$117,341
18	\$58,373	\$72,967	\$87,560	\$68,163	\$85,205	\$102,246
17	\$53,888	\$67,360	\$80,831	\$59,674	\$74,593	\$89,512
16	\$50,133	\$62,666	\$75,200	\$52,569	\$65,711	\$78,854
15	\$46,987	\$58,735	\$70,481	\$46,615	\$58,269	\$69,922
14	\$41,245	\$51,555	\$61,867	\$41,584	\$51,979	\$62,375
13	\$36,429	\$45,536	\$54,642	\$37,358	\$46,697	\$56,037

Note: The shaded areas are not currently in use.

*D. Denominational and denominationally related agencies recommended for one or more offerings*

In addition to the ministry-share recommendation, the Board of Trustees also presents to synod a list of accredited agencies which, if synod approves, will constitute the list of approved causes for 1999. There are several parts to this list. First, there is a section recommending above-ministry-share offerings, or specified offerings, for denominational agencies. Second, there are those causes being recommended for one or more offerings. Finally, there is a list of accredited organizations which are recommended for support but not necessarily for one or more offerings. Synod is requested to approve the list as presented.

1. Denominational agencies

The Back to God Hour—above-ministry-share needs

Calvin College—above-ministry-share needs

Calvin Theological Seminary

a. Above-ministry-share needs

b. Revolving Student Loan Fund

CRC Publications

World Literature Ministries—above-ministry-share needs

CR Home Missions—above-ministry-share needs

CR World Missions—above-ministry-share needs

CR World Relief—one offering per quarter

Pastoral Ministries—above-ministry-share needs

- a. Abuse Prevention
- b. Chaplaincy Ministries
- c. Disability Concerns
- d. Pastor-Church Relations
- e. Race Relations

— Multiracial Student Scholarship Fund

2. Denominationally related agencies recommended for one or more offerings

United Calvinist Youth

- a. GEMS (formerly, Calvinettes)
  - b. Calvinist Cadet Corps
  - c. Youth Unlimited/Young Calvinist Federation
- Early Teen Ministry

*E. Nondenominational agencies recommended for financial support but not necessarily for one or more offerings.*

Note should be made of the action of Synod 1992 regarding the financial support provided by Christian Reformed churches to these agencies:

... in light of the growing number of agencies seeking recommendation for financial support, [synod] remind[s] the congregations of the synodical decision of 1970 wherein "synod urge[d] all the classes to request their churches to pay denominational causes before making gifts to nondenominational organizations on the synod-approved accredited list.

*Ground:* Our denominational causes should have priority in our giving. . . ."  
(*Acts of Synod 1992*, p. 667)

Thus, the list of accredited nondenominational agencies is meant to provide guidance to the churches in selecting organizations for support. However, accreditation is not meant to obligate the churches to designate one or more offerings to a cause.

1. United States agencies

a. Miscellaneous agencies

American Bible Society  
Audio Scripture Ministries (formerly, PRM International)  
Friendship Ministries  
Gideons International  
International Bible Society  
Lord's Day Alliance of the United States  
Metanoia Ministries  
Mission 21 India  
Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE)  
The Bible League  
The Tract League (formerly, Faith, Prayer and Tract League)  
Wycliffe Bible Translators

b. Benevolent agencies

Bethany Christian Services  
Calvary Rehabilitation Center  
Cary Christian Center  
Christian Health Care Center  
Elim Christian School  
International Aid, Inc.  
The Luke Society, Inc.  
Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services

c. Educational agencies

Center for Public Justice  
Christian Schools International  
Christian Schools International Foundation  
Dordt College  
Reformed Bible College  
Rehoboth Christian School  
Roseland Christian School  
The King's University College (through the U.S. Foundation)  
Trinity Christian College  
Worldwide Christian Schools

2. Canadian agencies

a. Miscellaneous agencies

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada  
Friendship Groups—Canada  
Gideons International—Canada  
International Bible Society—Canada  
The Bible League—Canada  
Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, Inc.  
Work Research Foundation

b. Benevolent agencies

Beginnings Counseling & Adoption Services of Ontario, Inc.

c. Educational agencies

\*Canadian Christian Education Foundation, Inc.  
Dordt College  
Institute for Christian Studies  
Redeemer Reformed Christian College  
Reformed Bible College  
The King's University College  
Trinity Christian College  
Worldwide Christian Schools—Canada

\*The request from the Canadian Christian Education Foundation was received after the BOT meeting adjourned and was not processed by the Board. The EDM will report this late receipt to the advisory committee on finance at synod and leave it to the discretion of the advisory committee as to whether to add the request to the approved list.

It should be noted that all organizations that requested to be placed on the list for 1999 are being recommended with the exception of Westminster Theological Seminary. The Board of Trustees decided not to recommend Westminster because some of its institutional representatives have engaged in negative publicity and accusatory dialogue about the CRC and its ministries. Furthermore, Westminster has close ties with the member churches of NAPARC, and even CRC-related faculty members at Westminster did nothing to defend the CRCNA with reference to NAPARC's action to remove the CRC from membership in NAPARC. The Board judges that Westminster cannot condone and/or permit that behavior of its representatives on the one hand and then expect support for its operations from CRC congregations on the other hand. The Board also notes that no other theological school receives permission to be on the accredited list, and therefore there is no real reason to leave Westminster on the list as an exception.

#### *F. Pension computations for 1999*

The U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance and the Canadian Board of Trustees of Pensions and Insurance are recommending that the per confessing member pension premium amount of \$16.00 remain unchanged for 1999. The Board of Trustees approved that recommendation and now requests Synod 1998 to so decide.

The Ministers' Compensation Survey 1998 has been compiled from questionnaire responses received from our churches in both the United States and Canada. The survey is published in pamphlet form and distributed as part of the *Handbook of the CRC: Your Church in Action*.

The average salaries to be used for calculating pensions of retired ministers are recommended to be \$34,868 (U.S.) and \$36,573 (Can.).

#### *G. IRM*

The Board of Trustees received an extensive report at the May meeting concerning the IRM Corporation matter previously reported on in the printed agenda. Mr. Kenneth Horjus, Mr. James Kraai, and Mr. John Kuyers, all of whom are employed by the CRC or one of its agencies, serve on the Creditors Committee handling the IRM matter. The complexities and competing interests surrounding the IRM situation cannot be easily overstated. As synod knows from overtures and communications received concerning this sad story, there are divergent viewpoints about what various parties did in response to the IRM development. The Board representatives are fully prepared to give synod an exhaustive or summary report of all actions taken in general and the reasons for specific actions in particular. The Board decided not to respond in writing, or in advance of synod's convening, to the overtures, communications, or even an agency's response. Rather, the Board has instructed its chairperson and the executive director of ministries to respond to synod on these matters when synod is in session. Mr. Horjus, director of finance and administration for the CRCNA, is also available to synod when synod deals with these matters.

## IX. Recommendations

- A. That synod approve the Board's interim appointments (see Section I).
- B. That synod express its appreciation to retiring members of the Board for their services to the church (see Section II, A).
- C. That synod ratify the following appointments to the Board (terms to begin and end on the convening date of the first full Board meeting following the meeting of synod):

Region	Delegate	Alternate	Term
Great Plains	Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper	Rev. Dennis Kamper	2001
Central U.S. III	Rev. John P. Gorter	Rev. Calvin D. Compagner	2001
Central U.S. IV	Mrs. Kathleen Smith	Mrs. Mary Jo De Jong	2001
Eastern Canada II	Rev. Gordon H. Pols	Rev. Barton P. Velthuizen	2001
Eastern Canada II	Mr. Andrew Schaafsma	Mr. J. Hans Vander Stoep	2001

- D. That synod reelect the slate of nominees for the Judicial Code Committee (see Section IV).
- E. That synod adopt the recommendation re ethnic diversity contained in the Board's interim report on diversity (see Section V and Appendix B, Section II, C).
- F. That synod adopt the policy change re multiple nominees for second terms on boards and committees (see Section VI).
- G. That synod formulate and send a pastoral letter to the churches (see Section VII).
- H. That synod ratify the appointment of Mr. Raymond A. Elgersma to the position of Canadian ministries director (see Section VIII, A).
- I. That synod approve a ministry share of \$230.54 per confessing member over 18 for calendar year 1999 (see Section VIII, B).
- J. That synod approve the proposed salary ranges for 1999 (see Section VIII, C).
- K. That synod approve the list of above-ministry-share and specially designated offerings for the agencies and institutions of the CRC and recommend these to the churches for consideration (see Section VIII, D).
- L. That synod approve the list of accredited agencies according to the designations assigned to each as recommended by the Board of Trustees (see Section VIII, E).
- M. That synod approve the continuation of the per confessing member assessment of \$16.00 for the funding of the Ministers' Pension Funds (see Section VIII, F).
- N. That synod approve the final average salaries recommended for computing 1999 pension amounts in the U.S. and Canada (see Section VIII, F).

Board of Trustees of the  
Christian Reformed Church in North America  
David H. Engelhard, general secretary  
Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries



CHRISTIAN  
REFORMED  
CHURCH

March 18, 1998

Dr. David H. Engelhard  
General Secretary  
(616)224-0744

President William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

The Board of Trustees, on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, asks you to do all in your power to remove the economic embargo on Cuba because it punishes the poor, the weak, and the powerless. This request is based on our Christian moral convictions and our sense of justice. Furthermore, we have heard clearly the cries of our Cuban neighbors.

It is morally wrong, Mr. President, to do what the United States is doing to the people of Cuba. To deny other human beings the basic necessities of life—especially food and medical supplies—offends our Creator God. His creational provisions for his creatures are abundant, and no one should be denied access to God's gifts.

Even though we understand the security and political reasons which initially motivated the thirty-seven-year-old embargo on Cuba, those reasons are no longer valid. Furthermore, continued use of the embargo does not reflect the compassionate America of the twenty-first century, a nation attempting to live up to its deep belief in the God-given rights of life and liberty—for all. What is more, the embargo is a weapon that deeply troubles the consciences of an increasingly large number of Christian citizens of the United States.

We know, Mr. President, of your own deep concern for and commitment to justice in the world. And so, giving voice to the prayers and wishes of our brothers and sisters in the Christian Reformed Church in Cuba, we urge you to take strong action now to end the embargo.

Thank you for prayerfully and seriously considering this request. We realize that the removal of the embargo cannot be accomplished without the support of Congress. Therefore, we are sending a similar letter to the leadership of Congress and expect to assist the members of our 972 congregations to speak out to their respective representatives as well.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. David H. Engelhard  
General Secretary,  
Christian Reformed Church In North America

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## Report Regarding Ethnic and Racial Diversity

### I. Introduction

#### A. Brief overview of synodical declarations on race

1. Synod 1959 adopted the "Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church on Race Relations" (see *Acts of Synod 1959*, pp. 82-84). The CRC took as its own the twelve points of the declaration on race which was formulated by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) in 1958 at its meeting in Potchefstroom, South Africa.
2. Synod 1968 reaffirmed in the context of unprecedented racial strife in America's cities the "Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church on Race Relations" (the 1959 document) and made the following recommendations:
  4. That synod declare that members of the Christian Reformed Church, through persevering prayer and the diligent use of their Spirit-given talents, ought to labor unceasingly to cause the light of the gospel of reconciliation to shine upon all men so that the hate engendered in the present racial crisis by the prince of darkness may speedily be dissipated.
  5. That synod declare that members of the Christian Reformed Church ought freely to receive as brethren, regardless of race or color, all who repent of their sins and who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; that exclusion from full Christian fellowship on account of race or color is sinful; and that if members are judged responsible for such exclusion they must be dealt with according to the provisions of the Church Order regarding Admonition and Discipline.
  6. That synod declare that fear of persecution or of disadvantage to self or our institutions arising out of obedience to Christ does not warrant denial to anyone, for reasons of race or color, of full Christian fellowship and privilege in the church or in related organizations, such as Christian colleges and schools, institutions of mercy and recreational associations; and that if members of the Christian Reformed Church advocate such denial, by whatever means, they must be reckoned as disobedient to Christ and be dealt with according to the provisions of the Church Order regarding Admonition and Discipline.

*(Acts of Synod 1968, pp. 18-19)*
3. Synod 1969 ratified a fifteen-point declaration on race which had been adopted by RES 1968 (*Acts of Synod 1969*, pp. 50-52). The document was later revised and reratified by Synod 1977 (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 34).
4. Synod 1978 received reports from both the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (SCORR) and the Interchurch Relations Committee regarding the Koinonia Declaration and the issue of race relations in South Africa (see *Acts of Synod 1978*, pp. 24-25, 318, 401-08). Synod 1978 declared that it "considers the Koinonia Declaration to be an excellent enunciation of biblical principles and a significant reformational statement on South African race relations by Reformed Christians in South Africa."

5. Synod 1996 received and adopted a set of recommendations regarding the development of a racially and ethnically diverse and unified family of God (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 510-15, 595-619). The CRC articulated in these recommendations a skeletal strategy for building a church which is racially and ethnically inclusive from the membership to the leadership.

*B. Process since Synod 1996*

Following Synod 1996 there were two processes in place which contributed to this report and the progress made to date. The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) and the Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC) each appointed a committee to help the various agencies and the Board process the report and prepare recommendations for action.

The MCC committee, chaired by Ms. Beth Swagman, included the following members:

Mr. John De Haan, CR World Relief Committee  
Rev. Daniel Devadatta, Calvin Theological Seminary  
Dr. David H. Engelhard, general secretary, CRCNA  
Rev. Alfred Luke, Race Relations  
Mr. Thomas McWhertor, Calvin College  
Rev. Alfred Mulder, CR Home Missions  
Ms. Patricia Nederveld, CRC Publications  
Mr. Sidney Norman, CR World Missions  
Mr. Gary Teja, CR Home Missions

The committee devoted one lengthy session to a conversation with ethnic-minority employees of the agencies. Many forthright and eye-opening observations were made during that meeting, and on the basis of this conversation strategies were considered and recommendations were drawn up.

The Board of Trustees committee was composed of Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Dr. David Engelhard (convener), Rev. Duane Kelderman, and Mrs. Kathleen Smith. This committee assisted the Board in its oversight capacity with respect to the agencies' responses to the diversity report. Furthermore, this committee reviewed the recommendations proposed by the MCC and in some cases amended them before recommending them to the Board. This report presents some of those recommendations for action.

*C. The reason for this report*

One of the recommendations adopted by Synod 1996 gave the Board of Trustees the following responsibilities:

That synod mandate the **Board of Trustees**, under the leadership of its CRCNA staff and with the assistance of the Race Relations division of Pastoral Ministries and other CRCNA agencies,

- a. To coordinate and monitor the role and response of the agencies in providing guidance and assistance to the churches and classes in support of ethnic diversity and racial reconciliation as outlined above.
- b. To serve Synod 1998 with advice and recommendations for ensuring the equitable representation and meaningful participation of ethnic-minority persons in leadership and other roles of influence with the classes and synod, the Board of Trustees, denominational agencies, and other ministries of the CRCNA. The recommendations should include transitional and long-term

## II. Congregational and classical responses to the 1996 report

### A. Congregational overview

1. Following Synods 1996 and 1997, congregations/councils were informed and reminded of synod's challenge to them as contained in Recommendation 7 adopted by Synod 1996:

That synod call the **churches**

- a. To articulate the biblical vision for a racially and ethnically diverse and united family of God by means of the preaching, teaching, and study of the above biblical and theological principles.
- b. To evaluate their life and ministry with regard to their racial and ethnic composition, the social factors contributing to their composition, the selecting and training of their leaders, their worship style, and their ministry to congregational members and to their community in light of their sense of God's vision and call for them as congregations.
- c. To develop racially and ethnically diverse congregations by all appropriate models and strategies, such as
  - 1) Established churches becoming more inclusive ethnically and culturally.
  - 2) Planting and developing multiethnic congregations.
  - 3) Sponsoring new congregations that are ethnically and culturally different from the parent congregation, in the same or separate facilities.
  - 4) Developing relationships (e.g., joint worship, workshops, and work projects) with congregations from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
  - 5) Supporting persons and programs at home or abroad that are committed to racial reconciliation.
- d. To witness publicly *against* racism, prejudice, and related unemployment, poverty, and injustices and *in defense* of all people as imagebearers of God.
- e. To call individual members to promote and establish interracial and cross-cultural relationships in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and communities.

(Acts of Synod 1996, pp. 513-14)

2. Since there is no reporting mechanism in place from congregations to classes and from classes to synod about this matter, there is very little verifiable data detailing congregational responses to the challenge. With the help of Rev. Alfred Luke, Mrs. Yvonne Rayburn-Beckley, and Rev. Norberto Wolf from the Race Relations division of Pastoral Ministries, we were able to piece together representative responses from a few congregations and classes.
3. Congregations in the Chicagoland area (Classes Illiana, Chicago South, and Northern Illinois) each received copies of the reprint entitled *God's Diverse and Unified Family*. Many of the councils set aside time at their meetings to discuss various points of the report.

Many of the California churches were sent a letter from Race Relations' regional office with a set of questions suitable for discussion at council meetings or in small-group settings. In many instances the questions were

given to a small committee to answer and did not generate the broader involvement of the council or congregation.

In a few instances neighboring churches held a joint worship service in response to the report and its challenge that we better understand each other's cultures and worship styles. No other specific actions on the congregational level have been reported.

#### 4. Brief overview of racial and ethnic diversity in the CRCNA

The report of 1996 provided a brief overview of racial and ethnic diversity in the history of the Christian Reformed Church. Not much has changed since then, but an update of membership statistics may be helpful.

The *Yearbook* database reveals that the CRC has 136 congregations which identify themselves ethnically/racially (African-American, Native American/Canadian [Navaho, Zuni, Metis, etc.], Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese) and 43 congregations which identify themselves as multiethnic. This represents about 18.5 percent of the congregations.

The number of members reported for the ethnically identified churches is 10,164 and for the multiethnic churches is 7,643. This totals 17,807 members, which is approximately 6.5 percent of the membership of the CRC.

#### B. *Classical responses*

The work of classes is more public than that of church councils/congregations, and the reports of classical responses are more accessible. The following has been reported from or about classes:

Atlantic Northeast—Adopted (1) a vigorous commitment for informing/educating each congregation between October 1997 and March 1998; (2) a means for reporting progress re implementation of synod's challenge to the churches (*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 513-14); and (3) a way by which classis' own progress on these matters is reported to congregations.

California South—Asked its Race Relations Committee to assist classis in pursuing the recommendations.

Chicago South—Established a Race Relations Committee, which is working on ways to coordinate educational workshops and special worship services. Volunteers from many congregations are working together and committed to racial reconciliation.

Eastern Canada—Organized and conducted a special diversity workshop (an awareness-raising event) at its fall 1997 classis meeting.

Greater Los Angeles—Assigned the report to its Race Relations Committee for processing. The recent reorganization of classis enhances ethnic-minority representation and supports the classis' core value of racial diversity among its congregations.

Grand Rapids North—Organized and held a classis-wide multiethnic combined worship service.

Hudson—Assigned the report to its social-justice committee for processing.

Kalamazoo—Sponsored along with the Kalamazoo Deacons Conference a two-day antiracism workshop. Additional steps and actions are being considered.

Northern Illinois—Established a Race Relations Committee, which is working on ways to coordinate educational workshops and special worship services.

Red Mesa—Asked the Racial Reconciliation Committee to study the 1996 report and addressed the racial tensions within the classis on the basis of the report. All churches have been asked to hold a Reconciliation Sunday in April, and the churches have been asked to pray and fast during March to discern the Lord's leading.

### C. *Proposals for continued action*

The Board of Trustees received a series of recommendations at its February meeting regarding racial and ethnic diversity. The Board approved the following proposals and recommends them to synod for adoption:

1. That classes be encouraged to sponsor workshops or retreats on racial inclusiveness and justice for classical leaders and delegates.
2. That classes be encouraged to sponsor sensitivity training/diversity workshops for congregational leaders and congregations.
3. That classes be encouraged to recruit and delegate ethnic/minority persons to synod, to agency boards, and to classical standing committees.
4. That synod appoint at least one ethnic-minority person (either delegate or ethnic adviser) to serve on each advisory committee of synod and that ethnic advisers be given orientation and training for their task.
5. That the general secretary, with the Multiethnic Conference Planning Committee, plan for the continuing interaction of the Multiethnic Conference with synod with the goal of increasing cultural sensitivity, racial justice, and racial reconciliation.

### III. **Board and agency responses**

The following strategies regarding agencies, boards, and the Board of Trustees were adopted by the Ministries Coordinating Council and the Board of Trustees:

#### A. *That agencies*

1. Provide sensitivity training for all CRCNA agency staff at every level.
2. Collaborate on interagency models and plans for developing and retaining ethnic-minority leadership, including (a) recruitment and orientation and (b) support processes and professional skill development.

*Note:* Orientation is to include a fresh historical perspective on the CRC as well as an introduction to culture, structure, and vision of the CRC.

3. Appoint a cross-agency team knowledgeable about ethnic-minority networks to (a) establish and maintain a robust minority network, (b) develop a comprehensive plan for the recruitment, hire, and retention of ethnic-minority employees, and (c) serve in an advisory capacity to agency executives and MCC.
  4. Subsequently establish (a) goals and procedures, approved by MCC, for ethnic-minority employment and (b) a means of mutual accountability within MCC before persons are hired.
  5. Enhance ethnic-minority representation on every committee within each agency/institution at all levels.
  6. Provide the Prayer Line with one item per week regarding racial inclusiveness and justice.
- B. That the general secretary and executive director of ministries*
1. Annually collect and create a database of ethnic individuals willing to serve on boards and synodical committees.
  2. Encourage cultural-sensitivity training of agency boards.
  3. Provide orientation and ongoing support for ethnic individuals willing to serve on boards and synodical committees.

With reference to membership on the various agency and institutional boards, it can be reported that ethnic-minority representation among the regular board members has increased from twelve persons in 1997 to twenty persons in 1998 (+ 66 percent). There has been no change in the number of alternate board members who are of an ethnic-minority heritage; that number remains at ten.

With reference to the employment of ethnic-minority persons, it can be reported that as of April 9, 1998, the agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church employ a total of 413 persons, of whom 37 (8.9 percent) are of ethnic-minority background. It is difficult to retrieve accurate data on the change this represents since employment records were not kept in a central location prior to 1996. In any event, there is, we believe, slight improvement in recent years, but the situation is not yet what we would like it to be.

With reference to sensitivity training for employees and board members, minority recruitment and personnel retention, nurturing a robust minority network, and providing orientation for ethnic individuals who serve as board members, all of these strategies are in various stages of implementation, some being further along than others. Continued progress can be anticipated.

#### **IV. Synod and the diversity report**

##### *A. Introduction*

Synod 1996 addressed itself and future synods and urged future synods

- a. To include in their worship times the articulation and celebration of the biblical vision for a racially and ethnically diverse and unified family of God.
- b. To encourage the development of specific recommendations and specific practical guidelines for supporting ethnic diversity in all aspects of denomi-

national life, including interchurch relations in general and ministries of the Reformed Ecumenical Council in particular.

- c. That denominational response to the above decisions be reviewed by Synod 1998 on the basis of an interim progress report by the Board of Trustees.

(*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 515)

### *B. Provision for the biennial Multiethnic Conference*

Synod 1986 adopted a recommendation that gave birth to the biennial Multiethnic Conference, which held its first meeting in 1988. Its original purposes continue until today, namely, to provide orientation for ethnic minorities to denominational assemblies, agencies, and personnel; to foster mutual interaction and fellowship with synod and synodical delegates; and to engage in cross-cultural communication, learning, and worship.

In the last decade the conference has provided the training ground for and the occasion for assisting many present leaders in the CRC. Several delegates to synod have benefited greatly from the Multiethnic Conference's emphases and encouragement. The recommendation introduced above (II, C, 5) asks Synod 1998 to reaffirm the Multiethnic Conference and its mandate so that the conference committee together with synod can find ways to assist the churches in racial reconciliation.

### *C. Ethnic representation at synod*

#### 1. Synodical delegates in 1997 and 1998

Since the diversity report was adopted in 1996, classes have been more intentional in identifying, nominating, and delegating ethnic leaders to committees, boards, and synod. Synod 1997 had twelve ethnic-minority delegates (6 percent), representing seven different classes (15 percent). Synod 1998 has seventeen (17) ethnic-minority delegates (9 percent), representing nine different classes (19 percent).

#### 2. Ethnic advisers

Synod 1995 adopted the request of an overture to appoint representatives from various ethnic communities to serve as advisers to synod (*Acts of Synod 1995*, pp. 694-95). Guidelines regulating this new position were adopted in 1996 (see *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 454-55), and the first ethnic advisers were seated that year. Including Synod 1998, fifteen different people will have served as ethnic advisers to synod. Although there has been no formal evaluation of the process and position, all informal responses and indicators have led us to believe that they are working very well. One favorable indicator is that four of those who have served as advisers in either 1996 or 1997 have been sent as delegates to synod in a subsequent year.

### *D. Convening church for Synod 1998*

The records indicate that this year (1998) is the first time that an ethnic-minority congregation has been the convening church for synod (Pullman CRC, Chicago, Illinois). Undoubtedly this is only the beginning of a new tradition for the CRC as it anticipates the new millennium, wherein the diverse and unified family of God works together to build Christ's church.

## APPENDIX C

**RAYMOND A. ELGERSMA**

27 Homewood Ave.

Kitchener, Ont. N2M 1X1

ph. 1-519-578-2508

fax 1-519-576-5012

e-mail 105221.2122@compuserve.com

### **Career Objective:**

To utilize my gifts and abilities to God's glory and honor, particularly in administration, organizational development, and program assessment, and to serve and empower organizations to greater effectiveness and efficiency and better service to their client populations.

### **Qualifications:**

Twenty-five years of experience at a director level in 6 social-service and church organizations.

Excellent financial and human-management skills.

Strong collaborator and networker with good interpersonal and leadership skills.

Visionary leader with a common-sense approach to organizational change.

Academic credentials and continued education and training in planning and administration.

A passion for the empowerment and dignity of the poor.

Good mediation and motivation skills.

### **Experience:**

Administrative Consultant - World Relief Canada, 5 months (current)

Interim Director—Diaconal Ministries of Eastern Canada, 3 months

Interim Executive Director—Canadian Foodgrains Bank, 4 months

Director—Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, 6 years

Director of Income Maintenance—Region of Waterloo Social Services, 5 years

Director—Lanark Social Services, 10 years

Director—Smiths Falls Family and Community Services, 2 years

I have also worked as a teacher; program developer; child-care worker; taxi, bus, and truck driver prior to my entry into management.

### **Education:**

Master of Social Work, Planning, and Administration—Western Michigan University

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology—Calvin College

I have attended numerous noncredit courses, workshops, and seminars over 24 years, primarily related to the management of nonprofit organizations.

### **Volunteer Experiences:**

Children's Aid Society	board member
Mental-health clinic	chairman of founding board
Big Brothers	president, founding board member
2 Christian Reformed churches	elder, deacon, church-school leader
2 diaconal conferences (CRC)	board member
2 housing coops	president, founding board member
2 employment programs	president, board member
Community Case Conference	chairman
2 denominational-restructuring committees (CRC)	current member
Relief-and-development group (CCCC)	president
2 CIDA advisory committees	member
2 Christian schools	committee chairperson
COMSOC (provincial task force)	member
Ontario Municipal Social Services Assn.	executive member

I have also served on a number of ad hoc committees in both the church and government sector, primarily focused on governance, restructuring, or fund-raising issues.

### **Accomplishments:**

As the first national director, completely reorganized the Canadian arm of a binational church agency engaged in development and relief services, to provide more professional services and have the Canadian staff play a greater role in the direction and management of the organization.

Successfully shared in managing an agency engaged in international development with work in 23 countries, 57 overseas staff, and a budget of \$10 million (Canadian).

Successfully managed a large social-services division in regional government with 100 staff and a \$23 million budget, where 2 social-services systems with their staffs had recently been amalgamated.

Developed a municipal county-wide social-service agency, amalgamating services previously provided by 19 townships, and introduced a number of professional services for special-needs community members as well as income-maintenance services in an underserved rural area.

Made financial-management decisions in the first 6 months of managing a large organization that resulted in an ongoing annual cost reduction of \$40,000 (1984).

Made human-resource changes in a small church agency that resulted in a reduction in staff, improved functions, greater coordination, and annual savings of \$31,000 (1995).

Made financial-management decisions in the first 2 months of managing a church agency to avoid a potential shortfall of \$500,000 (1990).

Accessed numerous funding resources in all of the agencies in which I have worked.

Successfully chaired a church-building fund-raising committee that realized \$530,000 in its initial 3-month drive (1995).

Led and participated in the development of a number of new organizations and services as a community volunteer (i.e., Big Brothers, Community Mental Health Clinic, services to developmentally challenged [1973-88]).

Initiated new systems for organizational and staff work plans and for salary grids in 3 agencies.

Participated in the development of guidelines for better working relationships between religious voluntary organizations and government.

Completed organizational assessments on both international and Canadian organizations, including solid recommendations for improvements in organizational structure and practice.

Served on over 25 boards and committees, most often in a chair or executive position, in areas of social action, housing, government relations, church development, and international development in my 25-year career.

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# AGENCY AND COMMITTEE SUPPLEMENTS

## Calvin College Supplement

The Calvin College Board of Trustees, having met on May 21-22, 1998, presents this supplement to guide delegates in their decisions and to inform them of additional matters relating to Calvin College.

The board had a full agenda in its two days of meetings. The highlights, as always, were personnel matters. Interviewing faculty and bidding farewell to retiring faculty and trustees continue to be important aspects of the May meeting.

### I. Faculty matters

A. *Appointments/reappointments* (see Recommendation III, A, 1-3)

B. *Retirees* (see Recommendation III, B, 1-5)

C. *David Hoekema*, dean for the contextual disciplines and for the natural sciences and mathematics, has served two three-year terms and, after a sabbatical, will return to teaching in the Philosophy Department.

### II. Election of college trustees

A. *Regional trustees* (see Recommendation III, C, 1)

B. *Alumni trustee* (see Recommendation III, C, 2)

Ms. Shirley Vogelzang Hoogstra has served the board as an alumni trustee for one three-year term. The board appointed Ms. Hoogstra to an at-large position for three years.

The board appointed Dr. Marvin Kusters to the alumni-trustee position vacated by Ms. Hoogstra. Dr. Kusters has a B.A. from Calvin College and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Since 1987 he has been a resident scholar and director of economic-policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research in Washington, D.C. Since 1965 he has served as an adviser on economic policy for the Rand Corporation, the White House, and the U.S. Cost of Living Council, among other assignments. He has served intermittently over the years on the council of the Burke, Virginia, CRC. He, his wife, Bonnie, their three children, and their children's spouses are all Calvin graduates.

C. *At-large trustees* (see Recommendation III, C, 3)

The terms of at-large trustees Mr. Preston Kool, Mrs. Elsa Prince, and Dr. Willis (Bill) Van Groningen expire in 1998, and Dr. John Van Engen has resigned one year early due to commitments abroad next year.

Having established that concerns of ethnic diversity, gender balance, clergy/laity representation, geographical representation, and expertise and gifts be considered, the board proposes the following for at-large trustees for three-year terms:

1. *Dr. Jack Harkema* has a B.S. from Calvin College, an M.S. and D.V.M. from Michigan State University, and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Davis. Since 1994 Dr. Harkema has been a professor of pathology and director of the Laboratory for Experimental and Toxicology Pathology at Michigan State University. His previous experience includes work as an experimental pathologist at the Inhalation Toxicology Research Institute in the Department of Pathology at the medical school of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He has published extensively and has received a number of grants and contracts. Dr. Harkema, his wife, Laurie, and their two daughters are members of the River Terrace CRC, East Lansing, Michigan, where he serves on the executive committee.
2. *Ms. Shirley Vogelzang Hoogstra* has a B.S. from Calvin and a J.D., with honors, from the University of Connecticut School of Law. Ms. Hoogstra, having served as an alumni trustee for three years, is being recommended to serve as an at-large trustee. She is a practicing attorney in the areas of family law and personal-injury litigation at the law firm of Jacobs, Grudberg, Belt & Dow, P.C. in New Haven, Connecticut. Ms. Hoogstra taught junior- and senior-high-school English for four years before entering the law profession. She served as legal assistant and law clerk in the office of the general counsel at Yale University. She, her husband, Jeffrey, and two children are members of the First Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in New Haven, where she has served as an elder.
3. *Ms. Jacquelyn S. Vander Brug* has a B.S. from Calvin College and an M.B.A. from the University of Michigan. Ms. Vander Brug is a managing associate in the management-consulting arm of Computer Sciences Corporation, an international company. She works as a financial consultant to a variety of firms, including divisions of the Fortune 500 Company and the Chicago Public Schools. She has served as worship planner and liturgist at Washington Community Fellowship campus chapel and at present is active at LaSalle Street Church in Chicago.
4. *Mr. Michael A. Volkema* has a B.A. from Western Michigan University and a J.D. from Wayne State University Law School. Mr. Volkema attended Calvin College for three years before transferring to Western Michigan University. Since 1995 he has served as president and chief executive officer at Herman Miller, Inc., a manufacturer of office furniture located in Zeeland, Michigan. He has served on many philanthropic boards and currently serves as a board member of International Aid, Inc. Mr. Volkema is an active member of Covenant Life CRC in Grand Haven, Michigan. He, his wife, Valerie, and their three children live in Spring Lake, Michigan. Two of their children are students at Calvin College.

### III. Recommendations

A. That synod ratify the following appointments:

1. Christiana de Groot van Houten, Ph.D., Professor of Religion and Theology, with tenure.
2. Won Lee, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology, for two years.
3. Debra K. Rienstra, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of English, for three years.

B. That synod give appropriate recognition to the following for their service to Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church and confer on them the titles listed below.

1. Donald L. Boender, M.A., Dean of Men and Director of Campus Events, Emeritus.
2. Albertus D. Bratt, Ph.D., Professor of Biology, Emeritus (December 1997).
3. Gertrude A. Huizenaga, Ph.D., Professor of Music, Emerita.
4. Marvin E. Monsma, M.A.L.S., Director of the Hekman Library, Emeritus.
5. Mary E. Zwaanstra, M.S.W., Associate Professor of Social Work, Emerita.

C. That synod ratify the following appointments to the board (terms to begin and end on the convening date of the first full board meeting following the meeting of synod):

1. Regional Trustees

Region	Delegate	Alternate	Term
Far West U.S. I	John W. De Vries	Jeffrey Dykema	2001
Far West U.S. II		Jack Veltkamp	2001
Great Plains	Charles De Ridder	Randall Engle	2001
Central U.S. III	Arnold Morren	Paul De Young	2001
Eastern U.S.	Gerald Gabrielse	Donna Kuiper	2001
Eastern Canada I	Henry Stronks	Calvin Davies	2001

2. Alumni trustee

Dr. Marvin Kusters 2001

3. At-large trustees

Dr. Jack Harkema 2001

Ms. Shirley Vogelzang Hoogstra 2001

Ms. Jacquelyn S. Vander Brug 2001

Mr. Michael A. Volkema 2001

D. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chair of the board, Ms. Sheri D. Haan; the vice chair of the board, Mr. Milton Kuyers; the secretary of the board, Rev. Edward Blankespoor; and the president of the college, Dr. Gaylen Byker, when matters pertaining to the college are presented.

Calvin College Board of Trustees  
Edward Blankespoor, secretary

This report includes actions and recommendations of the seminary board of trustees resulting from its April executive committee and its plenary meeting of May 14 and 15, 1998.

**I. Information**

*A. The Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary*

The general secretary's office receives and tabulates votes for regional seminary trustees. These elections, effective July 1, need synodical ratification (Section II, A).

*B. Graduates, licentiates, candidates*

Seventy-four students graduated from six degree programs this spring. The class included three Ph.D. graduates and eleven Th.M. graduates from the one-time Korean Ministry in the North American Context program.

Successful interviews were conducted with twenty-nine new candidacy applicants recommended by the faculty (Section II, B).

Six candidates from last year requested extension of candidacy. Some of these people were delayed candidates and only recently became eligible for call; others are in the process of considering calls or are awaiting classical examinations. The board recommends to synod that the candidacy of these six be extended (Section II, C).

Twenty-five students were granted either regular or temporary licensure to exhort.

*C. Appointment matters*

The board noted the appointment of and interviewed Mr. Glenn Remelts as director of the Hekman Library. Though Mr. Remelts holds a Calvin College faculty appointment, as library director he has dual accountability to both the college and the seminary. The college report will propose ratification of his appointment.

The board declared two openings in the theological division of the faculty. The first is in systematic theology, to fill the position vacated by Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.'s announced resignation, effective July 1, 1999. Professor Plantinga, after a difficult struggle, has decided to remain in his position as dean of the chapel at Calvin College. The board thanks him for his twenty years of outstanding service to Calvin Theological Seminary and wishes him God's favor and blessing in his position at the college.

The second opening is in philosophical and moral theology for primary teaching responsibility in the seminary's Ph.D. program. This opening is contingent on successful conclusion to the search for endowed funding for the professorship, but the declaration allows the faculty and administration to proceed with the search process as soon as funding is assured. Originally the board and synod approved three positions for this program. The program has now reached the stage in its successful development where the third person is greatly needed.

The declaration of these openings needs synodical ratification (Section II, D).

At its May meeting the board, after a successful interview with Dr. Craig Van Gelder, granted him permanent tenure. This action successfully concludes

the extended reappointment process initiated by the board in February 1997. The reappointment needs synod's ratification (Section II, E).

The general secretary has scheduled interviews with two new appointees—Dr. Dean Deppe and Dr. Ronald Nydam—for Tuesday, June 15, at 7:15 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. respectively. Attached to this supplementary report are vita materials on both appointees.

#### D. Finances

The board approved the 1998-1999 operating budget.

The board approved a base salary increase of 3 percent and a tuition increase of 3 percent.

The board recommends to synod that Calvin Theological Seminary be included on the approved list for church offerings for above-ministry-share general operations and for the seminary Revolving Loan Fund (Section II, F).

The board reports that it has one administrative position salaried within the third quartile, level 18, of the Hay scale.

#### E. Salary disclosure

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
18	1	3rd

#### F. Continuing professional development

Synod 1997 approved a vision and mission statement for the CRCNA. This statement is contained on page 45 of the *Agenda for Synod 1997*. Synod's approval is recorded in Article 43 of the *Acts of Synod 1997*, page 630. Appended to the vision and mission statement is a table of "goals, agency strategies, and agents" for achieving the vision and realizing the mission. This table appears on pages 54-61 of the *Agenda for Synod 1997*. Last year synod gave "concept endorsement" to these goals, agency strategies, and agents. This action is also recorded in Article 43 of the *Acts of Synod 1997*, page 630. The material receiving "concept endorsement" includes the following (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, p. 55):

##### Goal

By 2002, all ordained ministers and other ministry staff serving congregations in the CRC will receive continuing training in effective ministry. A curriculum and a strategy will be developed to provide such leadership training on the congregational level.

##### Agency Strategies

Calvin Theological Seminary, in consultation with the other agencies, will develop and propose a plan for evaluating, approving, offering, monitoring, and certifying required continuing and professional development experiences annually for all CRC ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel. This plan will be presented via the board of trustees to Synod 1998 for approval. (Continuing education/training opportunities will be provided on a regional basis at least once per year within each region.)

##### Agents

Pastoral Ministries, Calvin Seminary

The academic dean of the seminary, the director of Pastor-Church Relations, and the general secretary of the CRCNA have collaborated on the plan contained in the following recommendations. Others provided ideas, and the seminary faculty and board have approved what follows. The plan needs synodical adoption (Section II, G).

1. That a ministerial-standards committee be established by December 1, 1998, with the following mandate and organization:

Title: Ministerial-Standards Committee

Mandate: The Ministerial-Standards Committee is to evaluate, approve, monitor, and certify the continuing education required annually of all CRC ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel.

Composition: General secretary, academic dean of Calvin Theological Seminary, director of Pastor-Church Relations, two ordained ministers selected by the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA.

Organization:

- a. The committee will meet at least twice per year. Other meetings may be held at the call of the chairman.
- b. The committee will record its actions in minutes, which shall be distributed to the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA.
- c. The committee will report to synod regarding its meetings and actions of evaluating, approving, monitoring, and certifying the continuing and professional-development experiences required annually of all CRC ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel. Each annual report will include
  - 1) A summary and analysis of the degree of compliance with the continuing-professional-education requirement on the part of ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel.
  - 2) Other matters which the committee deems useful for synod to know or consider to accomplish the goal of full participation of Christian Reformed ministers and full-time ministry personnel in continuing-professional-development experience.

Funding:

- a. Office expenses incurred by members of the committee in the course of their work will be borne by the agencies or churches where they work.
  - b. The general secretary will include in his annual budget money sufficient to cover the expenses of the committee for travel, meals, and lodging.
2. That beginning with calendar year 2000 the amount of continuing professional development required of Christian Reformed ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel be set at one continuing-education unit (CEU) per year (normally 1 CEU is given for ten hours of instruction). If a person earns two or more units in one year, one of these units may be carried to the following year.
  3. That the following means of meeting the continuing-professional-development requirement be approved:

- a. Any CEU earned at a school with full or provisional accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.
  - b. Any course taken in any master's or doctoral program at any school with full or provisional accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.
  - c. Service as a delegate to synod.
  - d. Any means (conference, workshop, personal study plan, or the like) approved by the Ministerial-Standards Committee.
4. That the general secretary include a notation in the annual *Yearbook* to indicate those ordained ministers and full-time ministry personnel who have complied with the continuing-professional-development requirement for the previous year.
  5. That the general secretary, after consultation with the committee, inform church councils of the compliance or noncompliance with continuing-education requirements of the ministers and full-time ministry personnel under their supervision.

## II. Recommendations

A. That synod approve the election of regional trustees and their alternates for the seminary board for terms beginning on July 1, 1998, and running for three years.

B. That synod declare the following to be candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, subject to completion of all requirements:

Aasman, John T.  
 Apoll, Philip A.  
 Baarda, Steven G.  
 Bruins, Rozanne Meyer  
 Byker, Robert J.  
 Byma, Peter R.  
 de Vuyst, Gerard D.  
 Douma, John P.  
 Ghossein, Insoon J.  
 Grotenhuis, Todd M.  
 Holtrop, Cindy K.  
 Jeltema, David J.  
 Jordan, Kevin L.  
 Kempes, William J.  
 Ko, Victor Y.

Kok, Philip D.  
 Kuperus, Timothy A.  
 Kuyvenhoven, Leonard A.  
 LeMahieu, Jean C. Hoolsema  
 Persenaire-Hogeterp, Henry  
 Pimentel, Alejandro  
 Ricardo, Eufemio  
 Sytsma, William R.  
 Van Wolde, Arthur J.  
 Venhuizen, Steven W.  
 Watson, David K.  
 Westra, Erick D.  
 Won, Timothy Sang-Joon  
 Yu, Ki Cheol (Paul)

C. That the following people be granted a one-year extension of candidacy:

Amanda J. Wiersma Benckhuizen  
 Martin A. Benckhuizen  
 Raymond Blacketer  
 Daniel De Vries  
 Michelle R.A. Gritter  
 Shin Jae Hwang

D. That synod ratify two openings on the seminary faculty, one in systematic theology and one in philosophical and moral theology with primary teaching responsibility in the Ph.D. program (contingent upon assurance of endowed funding).

E. That the reappointment of Dr. Craig Van Gelder as Professor of Domestic Missiology with permanent tenure be ratified.

*Note:* Subsequent to the board's action, Dr. Craig Van Gelder, professor of domestic missiology, announced his resignation to accept an appointment to teach at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

F. That the plan for continuing professional development for all CRC ministers and full-time staff personnel be approved.

Board of Trustees  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Mark Muller, secretary

## Curriculum Vitae

REV. DR. DEAN DEPPE

P.O. Box 124 410 Cedar Avenue

Prinsburg, MN 56281

U.S.A. tel. home 320-978-4902 office 320-978-4300

Personal	Born May 16, 1951 Parents: Frank and Bernice Deppe 2198 N. Thrush Ct., Grand Rapids, MI (616) 949-7458
Family	Wife: Julie R. Hollemans Deppe (Married: June 1, 1974) teacher with early childhood emphasis 1974-1978 presently a mother and home manager children: Charles, age 19 Anne Marie, age 17 Rebecca, age 14 Cory, age 10
Church Life	Alger Park CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, 1951-1969 Woodlawn CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, 1969-1973 S.W.I.M. Detroit inner city 1969 Bonaire, Transworld Radio 1970 Fuller Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, 1974-1976 Christ's Community, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976-1978
Minister	Christ's Community, Grand Rapids, MI, 1978-1981 Study leave at the Free University 1981-1984 Interim pastor at Oakdale CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, 1984-1985 Community CRC, Lambertville, MI (Toledo), 1985-1992 Unity CRC, Prinsburg, MN, 1992-present
Education	Seymour Christian School, Grand Rapids, MI, 1956-1966 East Christian High School 1966-1969 Student Council President Calvin College 1969-1973 Major: Philosophy Calvin Theological Seminary M.Div. 1973-1977 Master of Theology Degree 1977-1978 Free University, Amsterdam, Th.D., 1989 Scholarships: (1) Middler Scholarship, Calvin Seminary (2) Alumni Scholarship (3) Richard Veldman Scholarship
Teaching Experience	Calvin Theological Seminary, 1984 and 1991 (teaching Greek, Gospels, Catholic Epistles, and James)
Publications	<i>The Salt Sayings of Jesus</i> (Master's Thesis) <i>The Sayings of Jesus in the Epistle of James</i> (Doctoral Thesis) Book reviews in <i>Calvin Theological Journal</i> (Contributor)
Audiotapes	Sermons

Goals

The teaching of New Testament theology  
Developing my abilities to teach the Old Testament  
The preparation of future ministers for church work  
The teaching of students with a knowledge of Greek  
A leadership position in the local church  
Participation in or oversight of a more worldwide  
(national) ministry in either missions or social action  
Using the computer to increase biblical studies.

## Curriculum Vitae

**REV. DR. RONALD J. NYDAM**  
9185 East Kenyon Ave., Suite 120  
Denver, Colorado 80237  
303-741-5585 (phone)  
303-741-9977 (fax)

Personal Data	Place of Birth: Whitinsville, Massachusetts Date of Birth: July 26, 1948 Marital and Family Data: Married, three children
Education	Ph.D., University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology, 1994.  Major Areas: Religion and Psychological Studies, Pastoral Psychotherapy.  D. Min., Chicago Theological Seminary and the Center for Religion and Psychotherapy of Chicago, 1981.  M.Div., Calvin Theological Seminary, 1974.  B.A., Calvin College, 1970.
Employment	1984–present, Agency Director of Pastoral Counseling for Denver, Inc., Denver, Colorado.  1973–1984, Pastor, Third Christian Reformed Church, Denver, Colorado.  1973–1974, Intern, Fort Logan Mental Health Center, Denver, Colorado.
Additional Experience	1984–1985, Part-time Interim Pastor, Christian Indian Center, Denver, Colorado.  1979–1981, Part-time, Private Practice of Psychotherapy, DeJong Clinic, Chicago, Illinois.  1979–1981, Part-time, Pastoral Psychotherapist, Calvary Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois.
Professional Status	Fellow, American Association of Pastoral Counselors.  Licensed Professional Counselor (#364), State of Colorado.
Publications	1983, "Rescue Trauma Threshold," <i>Emergency</i> 15 (Feb.), 34-35, 45.  1987, Co-producer of <i>A Better Way</i> , a 27-minute video on the subject of adolescent suicide (with 32-page leader's guide).

1989, "A Denial of Grace: The Dynamics of Adolescent Suicide," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 43:3 (Fall), 135-47.

1991, "Character Disorders: Where Faith and Healing Sometimes Fail," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 45:2 (Summer), 135-47.

1992, "Adoption and the Image of God," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 46:3 (Fall), 247-60.

1992, Co-producer of *More Than Love*, a 67-minute video on adoptive development (with 32-page guidebook).

1995, *Youth Suicide: Let's Talk About It*. Presbyterian Publishing House, Louisville, Kentucky.

1995, "Heartache and Love: The Dynamics Between Relinquishment and Closeness," *Adoption Therapist* 6.4 (Fall), 25-28.

1996, "A Case Gone Wrong," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 17, 31-38.

1997, "Fantasy and Hope in the Lives of Adoptees," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 51:1 (Spring), 65-78.

1998, *Adoptees Come of Age: The Ghost Parent Struggle*. Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky.

### I. Advertising guidelines for *The Banner*

The CRC Publications' report to synod (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, pp. 82 and 94-95) contains advertising guidelines developed in response to a directive from last year's synod. After the report to synod was written, the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA reviewed these guidelines and suggested two revisions that were satisfactory to CRC Publications. The changes are in Guidelines 9 and 10. These changes are noted below (additions are in bold; deletions are underlined):

9. *The Banner* will permit advertisements promoting the sale of promissory notes only if certain conditions are met. In brief, organizations named in such advertisements must (a) **provide reasonable written assurances that they are in compliance with all security laws of their jurisdiction.** . . .
10. Decisions about questionable advertising will be made together by the editor of *The Banner* and the executive director of CRC Publications, with input from the executive director of ministries if necessary.

### II. CRC Publications' mission and core values

During the past year, CRC Publications' staff and board have been working on a new mission statement and some statements regarding our core values. These statements, adopted in virtually final form by the executive committee at its May meeting, follow:

#### Mission Statement

We provide resources that help followers of Jesus Christ understand, experience, and express the good news of God's kingdom.

#### Core Values

Our resources are biblical, relevant, high quality, and stewardly.

Our resources will faithfully reflect the worldview and interpretation of Scripture that are articulated in the Reformed confessions and expressed in the Contemporary Testimony.

We will treat each other and those we serve with love and respect.

### III. Editorial freedom and responsibility of *The Banner*

In the CRC Publications report to synod, reference was made to discussions about the issue of editorial freedom and responsibility that arose because of the IRM matter (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 82). The *Agenda* also contained an overture from Classis Lake Erie (pp. 236-37) on this issue.

In light of the above, the CRC Publications executive committee recommends the following to synod:

That synod adopt the editorial guidelines for *The Banner* that were adopted by the CRC Publications Board in 1993 (see Appendix).

*Grounds:*

- A. These guidelines were discussed by Synod 1993 without dissension and would provide helpful clarity during a time of changing organizational structures.
- B. The CRC will continue to benefit from the checks and balances provided by a denominational periodical whose editor is free to exercise both freedom and responsibility within these guidelines.

CRC Publications

Gary Mulder, executive director

## APPENDIX

### *The Banner's Accountability and Freedom*

*The Banner* is a publication of the Christian Reformed Church in North America rather than an independent magazine. Accordingly, the editorial staff, led by the synodically appointed editor in chief, is accountable to the church for the style and content of this magazine. This accountability to the church is realized in a number of diverse, sometimes overlapping, and at times conflicting responsibilities to various groups and structures within the denomination. All these responsibilities are governed by *The Banner's* synodical mandate to (1) inform readers about what is happening in the CRC as well as the church at large, (2) provide articles that edify and encourage Christian living, and (3) stimulate critical thinking about issues related to the Christian faith and the culture of which we are a part.

#### **I. Lines of accountability**

Lines of accountability have been established by previous decisions of synod and CRC Publications. For the editorial staff, accountability runs through the editor in chief, who is directly accountable,

A. *To the CRC Publications Board*, the body mandated by synod to publish this denominational periodical. This accountability includes

1. Reporting periodically on editorial activities and decisions.
2. Reporting reactions, criticisms, and suggestions received from readers and churches.
3. Recommending needed changes in policies and procedures.
4. Carrying out all approved policies and procedures.

B. *To the executive director*, the administrative head appointed to manage and coordinate the work of the CRC Publications staff. This accountability includes

1. Keeping him/her informed of possibly sensitive or controversial issues being addressed and listening seriously to any advice offered regarding such issues. The executive director should, at his/her discretion, consult with the executive director of ministries.
2. Being fiscally responsible.
3. Following approved personnel procedures.
4. Working cooperatively with other departments of CRC Publications.

## **II. General responsibilities**

In addition to this direct accountability, the editorial staff carries general responsibilities inherent in the nature of a denominational magazine:

### *A. To its subscribers and readers in the Christian Reformed Church for*

1. Reporting in an honest and unbiased manner information about activities affecting the church.
2. Presenting to the readers the issues pertinent to the life of the church in a way that shows the diverse positions held within the church and encourages biblical and Reformed thinking about these issues.
3. Edifying readers so as to encourage them to grow in Christian maturity and faith and to live out their faith in daily life.
4. Providing a vehicle through which church members can express their views and opinions on pertinent issues.

### *B. To the ecclesiastical assemblies (councils, classes, synod) of the CRC for*

1. Keeping church members informed about important decisions taken.
2. Reporting significant trends or policy directions.

### *C. To the official agencies of the CRC for*

1. Presenting and explaining their ministry on behalf of the churches, making sure the information disseminated is accurate.
2. Keeping church members informed about important changes in their programs and personnel.
3. Encouraging church members to support and participate in the ministries being carried out.

## **III. Freedom of editorial staff**

In order that it may carry on these diverse responsibilities, the editorial staff must be granted the freedom to

*A. Inform its readers and subscribers about what is occurring in the church (including relevant problems, needs, and concerns) even though some persons, congregations, or agencies may prefer that such information not be disseminated.*

B. Investigate and determine the facts regarding any occurrence in the church that appears to merit reporting to readers.

C. Lead and encourage a responsible discussion of the issues important to the life of the church through editorial comment and publication of articles that represent the various views held within the church.

D. Permit people of the church to voice their views and reactions even though some of these views may be unacceptable to others in the church.

E. Provide a biblically prophetic and responsible criticism and evaluation of trends within the church and society and of actions, decisions, policies, programs, etc., being considered by or already approved by ecclesiastical assemblies and agencies.

#### **IV. Editorial integrity**

The following guidelines for editorial judgment will be used in determining what materials (editorials, articles, news stories, etc.) are published in the pages of *The Banner*:

A. *The Banner* materials should be faithful to Scripture and the confessions.

B. *The Banner* materials should edify and educate readers.

C. Truth must be written but always in love.

D. Criticism must be constructive and fair.

E. Editing of materials should always maintain the intent of the author while making the writing more effective in presenting the author's views.

F. No author should be demeaned by editorial comment or by the way an article, column, letter, etc., is presented.

G. Selection of authors should aim at equity of representation (U.S./Canada, minorities, men/women, younger/older, conservative/progressive, etc.).

H. Nothing deliberately inflammatory, insulting, or divisive should be published.

I. Nothing that serves the interest solely of one individual, organization, or group in contrast to other individuals, organizations, or groups or in neglect of the general interest of the churches should be published.

J. *The Banner* should give preference to CRC authors.

K. Heads/titles should not be misleading or sensational; they should accurately reflect the heart of the story/article.

**I. Churches in ecclesiastical fellowship**

Below are the provisions of ecclesiastical fellowship and an updated list of churches with whom the CRCNA has ecclesiastical fellowship.

*A. Provisions of ecclesiastical fellowship*

1. Exchange of fraternal delegates to major assemblies
2. Occasional pulpit fellowship
3. Fellowship at the table of the Lord
4. Joint action in areas of common responsibility
5. Communication on major issues of joint concern
6. Exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity

Ecclesiastical fellowship may involve fewer than all six elements. At present the CRCNA is in full fellowship with the churches listed below unless otherwise indicated. Restrictions were placed on the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN/GKN) in 1983 relating to provisions 1 and 2. Further restrictions were placed upon the RCN/GKN in 1996 relating to provisions 3 and 4. Synod 1996 of the CRCNA decided to lift the suspension of our relationship with the Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA) (Synod Potchefstroom) which was enacted by Synod 1989. To date we have not been informed of formal action on the part of the RCSA in response to the 1996 decision.

*B. List of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship (with the year in which such fellowship was established)*

## 1. Africa

- a. Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) (1974)
- b. Church of Christ in the Sudan Among the Tiv (NKST) (1974)  
(Nongo U Kristu U Ken Sudan Hen Tiv)
- c. Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA)  
(Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk in Suider Afrika)
  - 1) Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) (1983)
  - 2) Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa (DRMC) (1982)
- d. Midlands Reformed Churches in South Africa (MRCSA) (1991)  
(Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika—Sinode Middellande)
- e. Reformed Church in Africa (RCA) (1982)
- f. Reformed Churches in South Africa (Synod Potchefstroom) (1974)  
(Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika)  
(*Suspension lifted by CRCNA—1996*)
- g. Reformed Churches in South Africa (Synod Soutpansberg) (1989)

## 2. Asia, Australia, Indonesia, and New Zealand

- a. Christian Reformed Church of Sumba (Indonesia) (1974)  
(Gereja Kristen Sumba)
- b. Dutch Reformed Church in Sri Lanka (1974)
- c. Reformed Church in Japan (RCJ) (1974)
- d. Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA) (1974)
- e. Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ) (1974)  
(*Suspended by RCNZ—1995*)
- f. Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines (1997)

## 3. Europe

- a. Netherlands Reformed Churches (NRC) (1982)  
(Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken—Buiten Verband)
- b. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (1974)  
(Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland)  
(*Ecclesiastical fellowship restricted by CRCNA —1983, 1996*)

## 4. North America

- a. Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (1977)
- b. Evangelical Presbyterian Church (1986)
- c. Reformed Church in America (1976)
- d. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (1974)

## 5. South America

- a. Evangelical Reformed Church in Brazil (1974)  
(Igreja Evangelica Reformada no Brasil)
- b. Reformed Church in Argentina (1974)  
(Iglesias Reformadas en le Argentina)

### C. Churches formerly in ecclesiastical fellowship

1. Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CRCN) (1980)  
(Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland)  
(*Ecclesiastical fellowship severed by CRCN—1995*)
2. Korean American Presbyterian Church (1979)  
(*Ecclesiastical fellowship severed by KAPC—1996*)
3. Orthodox Presbyterian Church (1975)  
(*Ecclesiastical fellowship severed by OPC—1997*)
4. Presbyterian Church in America (1975)  
(*Ecclesiastical fellowship severed by PCA—1997*)

## II. Ecumenical organizations

### A. North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC)

Material was received from NAPARC member-church assemblies pertaining to women in ecclesiastical office, gleaned by officers of NAPARC after the November 1997 meeting (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 177). The IRC sent letters of response to the assemblies/synods of the NAPARC member churches asking that they consider seriously several reasons for maintaining the membership

of the CRCNA in NAPARC. Each church was asked to "take the opportunity and the time once more to consider the matter from the perspective of the CRCNA" with the help of relevant enclosed materials. To date a reply has been received only from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, acknowledging the letter and promising to publish it in the RPCNA "docket." However, the RPCNA interchurch-relations committee will be recommending that the NAPARC action to suspend the CRCNA membership be ratified.

#### *B. National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)*

The new officers of NAE are Dr. Lamar Vest, first assistant general overseer for the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, chairman; Dr. Edward L. Foggs, general secretary for The Leadership Council for the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), first vice chairman; Dr. L. Edward Davis, stated clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, second vice chairman; Dr. Ray Seilhamer, bishop of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ in Huntington, Indiana, secretary; and Mr. Donald Duff, vice president of Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company, treasurer. Rev. Leonard Hofman continues as a member of the NAE Executive Committee and as chairman of its Nominating Committee. Dr. David Engelhard serves on the Bylaws Committee of NAE.

Several resolutions were adopted by the NAE at its fifty-sixth annual convention, meeting in Orlando, Florida, March 2-4, 1998, including the following: "Pornography and Obscenity," "Ministry to Senior Adults," "Declaration for Public Education," and "Housing for the Least of These." In order that synod and members of the CRCNA may be informed about this part of NAE's activity, the IRC decided to append these publications to this supplementary report (see Appendix A).

#### *C. World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)*

After receiving the report of Dr. Richard van Houten regarding the General Council meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, pp. 175-76); the report of Dr. Henry Zwaanstra, observer to the Theological Commission of the Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC) of WARC; and the report of Dr. David Engelhard and Rev. Robert Haven, who served as observers at CANAAC, meeting January 29 to February 1, 1998, in Decatur, Georgia, the IRC decided to appoint a committee to review membership in WARC. The committee will report to the December 1998 meeting of the IRC.

#### *D. World Council of Churches (WCC)*

Having received an invitation from the general secretary of the WCC, and in keeping with past practice, the IRC appointed Dr. George Vandervele as observer to the eighth assembly of the WCC, to be held at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, December 3-14, 1998.

### **III. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN/GKN)**

At its April 1998 meeting the IRC reviewed the report of the delegation that visited the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in January 1998. The *Agenda for Synod 1998* (pp. 178-79) made mention of this visit, and now the complete report is attached to this supplement (see Appendix B). Synodical delegates are encouraged to read this report carefully.

The IRC reflected on discussions held with the RCN in May 1997 (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 227-28 and *Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 526) as well as those of January 1998, which are reported in Appendix B. It now presents as a recommendation to synod the first of three statements from a "memorandum of understanding" prepared by the CRCNA delegation and those representing the RCN/GKN toward the close of four days of intensive interaction in January 1998:

*Recommendation:* That the CRCNA continue its current ecclesiastical relationship with the RCN/GKN (see *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 520-21).

*Grounds:*

- A. The historical character of the CRCNA/RCN relationship is vital.
- B. Repairing a fractured relationship is more difficult than nurturing a strained one.
- C. There is an articulated desire on the part of the RCN for the continuation of the relationship.
- D. The review of the CRCNA Ecumenical Charter is still in process.
- E. Samen op Weg (Together on the Way) is still in process, and at some point in the process the United Protestant Church in the Netherlands (UPCN) will ask its ecumenical partners (including the CRCNA) to recommit to an ecclesiastical relationship with the UPCN.
- F. Factors have surfaced re the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk which are worthy of consideration.

#### **IV. Netherlands Reformed Churches/Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NRC/NGK)**

As reported in Appendix B, the IRC delegation to the Netherlands in January 1998 spent a pleasant evening with three representatives of the NRC, with whom we have had ecclesiastical fellowship since 1982. At that time and through a later official communication the NRC extended an invitation to the CRCNA to send a fraternal delegate to their assembly. Because it has been many years since a fraternal delegate was sent to that denomination's assembly and because it is considered important to nurture the ecclesiastical relationship between the CRCNA and the NRC, the IRC has delegated Dr. David Engelhard to serve as fraternal delegate to the NGK in May 1998.

#### **V. Reformed churches in South Africa**

In recent months the IRC has been in correspondence/conversation with three different Reformed churches in South Africa. As reported in the *Agenda for Synod 1998* (p. 179), the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches in Foreign Countries of the Reformed Churches in South Africa have invited deputies of the CRCNA to visit them in 1998 to discuss all outstanding issues between our two churches.

Members of the IRC also have had conversation with representatives of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). They were in Grand Rapids for conversations with CRWRC to develop a diaconal partnership. The General Synodical Committee of the URCSA will be meeting on October 19-22, 1998.

The synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa will be meeting in October as well. That church has expressed a vital interest in exploring a bilateral ecclesiastical relationship with the CRCNA.

In light of the above, the IRC has delegated Dr. David Engelhard, Rev. Leonard Hofman, and a person to be selected by the Race Relations division of Pastoral Ministries to meet with representatives of these Reformed churches in South Africa in October 1998.

#### **VI. Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ)**

At its 1995 synod the RCNZ decided to suspend formal relations with the CRCNA. The IRC was informed that the RCNZ will consider whether or not to terminate ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA at its October 1998 synod. An invitation has been received to send a fraternal delegate to that synod. The IRC considered it to be urgent and important to delegate one of its members to be present. Therefore the IRC appointed Rev. Peter Brouwer to serve as fraternal delegate to the synod of the RCNZ, meeting October 17-23, 1998, in the Reformed Church of Wainuiomate, New Zealand.

#### **VII. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)**

In keeping with the 1997 synodical directive to "explore how the CRC can still maintain a constructive relationship with the PCA," Dr. David Engelhard and Rev. Leonard Hofman, representing the IRC, met with Rev. K. Eric Perrin, Dr. Paul R. Gilchrist, and Dr. Charles Dunahoo of the PCA during the convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, in March 1998. Discussions were both candid and cordial. The representatives of the PCA promised to initiate correspondence toward a formal relationship between our churches.

#### **VIII. Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (PCUSA)**

In response to an invitation, the IRC decided to send one of its members, Mrs. Cynthia Roelofs, as its representative to the 210th General Assembly of the PCUSA, meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, June 12-20, 1998. The official letter of invitation said about this year's assembly that "this is a special occasion. We have never invited all Reformed and Presbyterian churches to a special meeting of the assembly. In that sense, this is a special arrangement for us to try to establish closer relationships with Presbyterian and Reformed churches of North America."

#### **IX. Nominations for committee members (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 181)**

*Recommendation:* That the incumbent members of IRC who are completing their first terms be reelected to the Interchurch Relations committee: namely, Ms. Claire Elgersma, Rev. Robert Haven, and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra.

##### *Grounds:*

- A. Although nominations were considered at both the February and April meetings of the IRC, the committee experienced difficulty in finding persons who could be paired with the incumbents in seeking the current best interests of interchurch relations.

- B. The incumbent nominees are members of the Ecumenical Charter Review Committee. Their background and expertise are essential to the committee's continuing study.

#### **X. Hospitality Committee**

The following have been appointed to serve as the Hospitality Committee for interchurch relations during Synod 1998: Rev. and Mrs. Tymen Hofman and Rev. and Mrs. Gerard Bouma.

#### **XI. Matters requiring synodical action**

- A. That the CRCNA continue its current ecclesiastical relationship with the RCN/GKN (see Section III).
- B. That the incumbent nominees be reelected to the Interchurch Relations Committee.

Interchurch Relations Committee  
Leonard J. Hofman, administrative secretary  
Edward A. Van Baak, president

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **NAE**

#### **Pornography and Obscenity**

A Resolution Adopted by the 56th Annual Meeting of the  
National Association of Evangelicals

The National Association of Evangelicals affirms the declaration of Scripture that all persons are made in the image of God and are therefore to be treated with respect and dignity. We also affirm that sex is a gift from our loving Father to be enjoyed within the sacred bonds of marriage between husband and wife.

Because of our sin, we as individuals and as a nation continue to experience a decline in moral values and beliefs. Our sinful behavior has resulted in increasing rates of unmarried adolescent and adult sexual activity, the birth of children to unwed mothers, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and decreasing marital fidelity. These are all signs of the decline of our culture.

Today pornography and obscenity are available through increasingly sexually explicit movies and television programs, magazines, video tapes and, most recently, the Internet. The Internet brings pornography into our homes, schools and libraries. Everything from soft-core to hard-core to child pornography is now available not just for adults, but for children. The powerfully corrosive effect within American society is deeply troubling to evangelicals.

Pornography and obscenity cause harm to those (often women and children) who are abused in the production of it as well as to those who use it. These

materials exploit persons made in God's image, destroy healthy relationships and distort God's gift of loving, mutual sexuality between husband and wife.

As members of the National Association of Evangelicals, we are therefore committed to educating both our members and the broader culture about the harm of pornography. To facilitate that commitment, we encourage our member denominations to take official action at their national governing bodies, and to implement an educational process that will protect God's people from the impact of pornography. We encourage pastors and congregations to protect their youth and children from exposure to these materials. We call upon leaders of businesses, schools and libraries as well as parents to participate in an effort to protect children and youth from being harmed by these materials.

We also urge local, state, and federal agencies to prosecute aggressively those who break the law in producing and distributing illegal pornography or who operate illegal sex businesses.

Lastly, we call upon all leaders of the broader faith community, all persons of goodwill and especially representatives of the evangelical community to be "salt and light" in protecting people from the harm of pornography, obscenity and sex businesses. We also call upon these same people to join together in their own communities to win the battle against pornography and obscenity through education, appropriate law enforcement efforts and by helping those who have been harmed.

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The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) is a voluntary association of individuals, denominations, churches, schools and organizations comprised of approximately 43,000 congregations nationwide from 49 member denominations and individual congregations from an additional 27 denominations, as well as several hundred independent churches. The membership of the association includes 245 parachurch ministries and educational institutions. Through the cooperative ministry of these members, NAE directly and indirectly benefits over 27 million people. The association maintains its national offices in Carol Stream, Ill., and an office for governmental affairs in the nation's capital.

## NAE

### Ministry to Senior Adults

#### A Resolution Adopted by the 56th Annual Meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals

The senior adult population in the United States of America is growing three times more rapidly than the national population rate. In spite of this fact, only 1% of the churches surveyed have a director of adult ministry, while 80% of the same churches have a volunteer or paid youth worker.

Senior adults possess the capacity to grow spiritually and enrich the lives of others. Too few churches provide real resources for spiritual growth or provide senior adult ministries beyond recreational activities.

Senior adults possess a wealth of experience and knowledge that is desperately needed by younger generations. This breadth of experience and knowledge can, and should be utilized by churches and other organizations. However, most programs that are available for senior adults lack either adequate numbers or diversity of options from which seniors can choose to find meaningful service.

Senior adults sometimes possess physical limitations, yet one survey shows that few churches provide ramps, elevators, large-print hymnals, or adequate sound systems to accommodate some of those needs. Rather than face such obstacles to worship, study and enrichment, many senior adults just do not go to church.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), in recognizing the needs of senior adults, issues a call to its constituent bodies for the development and implementation of aggressive ministries to senior adults which should include the following minimum objectives:

- The development of training and methodology for reaching senior adults, both for salvation and spiritual growth;
- An informed and sensitive response to the needs of senior adults through the development of diverse local church-based ministries;
- A spiritually-based focus of care for senior adults;
- The provision of appropriate ministry opportunities for senior adults.

## NAE

### Declaration for Public Education

A Resolution Adopted by the 56th Annual Meeting of the  
National Association of Evangelicals

Whereas, we as Christians recognize our biblical duty to teach our children; and as citizens of the United States recognize today that mothers and fathers desire a hope and a future for their children;

Whereas, public schools were founded as one of the means of educating future generations to be capable of assuming their responsibilities as citizens, discover truth and develop moral character;

Whereas, the churches and all people of faith have an opportunity to assist local schools and communities to secure a safe learning environment, academic excellence, meaningful parental involvement, and community participation;

Whereas, Christian churches need not only to provide for the spiritual well-being of children, parents and educators within their congregations, but also

need to see their involvement in local public schools as part of the churches' vision;

Be it resolved, as followers of Jesus Christ, we accept the responsibility to love all children as we love ourselves, and to pray for children.

Be it further resolved, that we recognize and accept our opportunity as Christians and citizens to build constructive relationships with local public schools, to pursue avenues of support for those involved in public education and to encourage and disciple public school teachers, administrators and students.

Be it further resolved, this emphasis on public education is not intended to compromise the value nor question the validity of private, Christian, or home schools.

## NAE

### Housing for the Least of These

A Resolution Adopted by the 56th Annual Meeting of the  
National Association of Evangelicals

More than 25% of the world's population lacks adequate shelter. The need for adequate affordable housing crosses all national boundaries and generational lines. In the Mississippi Delta, a family of five huddles around the heater in a shack as the bitter wind whips through the cracks in the walls. In Honduras, a woman lives with her adult children in a corrugated tin structure that has been patched repeatedly to keep the rain out. In Rwanda, a widow who survived the genocide waits with five orphans she has adopted for a roof to cover their mud-walled shelter. In the Philippines, hundreds of families are left homeless by a relentless volcano.

The Epistle of James challenges Christians to social responsibility. It is not enough to say to a needy person, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," while neglecting his or her physical suffering and material needs. A living faith calls us to hold out boldly the hope of the gospel as we fulfill God's command to love others in both word and deed. The example of Christ and the explicit instruction of the pastoral epistles teaches us to invite strangers in to a place of security and love in His name.

Recognizing the necessity to put faith into action, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) seeks to raise awareness of the need for adequate shelter for families around the world. Therefore, we resolve to challenge our individual members and member organizations to become partners with people in need of adequate affordable housing. This partnership begins with a commitment to regular prayer for those in need of adequate shelter. We also suggest participation in the observance of the International Day of Prayer and Action for Human Habitat on the third Sunday in September of each year.

Beyond prayer, we also call upon the members of the NAE to partner with our relief and development arm, World Relief, and other organizations involved in housing efforts by providing labor and funds.

Affirming that we have been called to a living, active faith, we seek to match our words with our deeds. We commit to proclaim the good news of God's redemption of humankind with our mouths and our hands. We will pray for those who suffer because of inadequate housing, we will work together to build homes for families in need in our communities, and we will give financially so that more families around the world will have access to affordable housing.

Now is the time for the evangelical church in the United States to model the early church of Acts 4, and become "one in heart and mind . . . sharing everything they had. With great power they testified to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. And there were no needy persons among them."

## APPENDIX B

### Report on Discussions with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

#### I. Background

The relationship between the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) has been strained since the early 1980s. Synod 1983 restricted the relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship by declaring "that the elements referring to pulpit and table fellowship no longer apply, except at the discretion of the local consistories. . ." (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 679). This development was precipitated by the RCN's decision to permit "ministers and members to engage in a lifestyle that in our judgment is contrary to the Scriptures and in conflict with the decisions of our Synod of 1973 [regarding homosexuality]" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 679).

The restricted relationship described above was challenged by an overture to Synod 1992. The overture requested that synod terminate the relationship with the RCN. Rather than acting on the overture in 1992, synod referred it to the Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC) for consideration and recommendation. The IRC was unable to complete its review until 1995. At that time it presented a detailed analysis of the relationship between the two churches and especially of the issues which have troubled the relationship (*Acts of Synod 1995*, pp. 225-44). Because that report and its conclusions are important for the ongoing discussion about the RCN, delegates to Synod 1998 are encouraged to familiarize themselves with it.

On the basis of the 1995 report, Synod 1995 adopted the following recommendations:

1. That synod not terminate its ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKN [RCN] as defined by the Ecumenical Charter with the restrictions by Synod 1983 on table and pulpit fellowship.

2. That synod mandate the Interchurch Relations Committee to discuss with the official representative of the GKN the issues and trends in the life and practice of the GKN that are of deep concern to the CRC and trouble our ecclesiastical relations.
3. That synod instruct the IRC to report regularly to synod on its dialogue with the GKN.

*(Acts of Synod 1995, pp. 704-05)*

It was not easy for Synod 1995 to reach its decisions on this matter. Only a few hours before synod discussed this issue the fraternal delegate from the RCN had addressed the assembly and had given a frank picture of the situation in the RCN, including speaking favorably about "homophilial relationships in love and fidelity." The synodical delegates were shocked and dismayed at what had been said. The fact that the relationship was not terminated that day speaks well for the deliberative process and for synod's refusing to base a decision on reaction to a single speech.

Nonetheless, the negative reaction within the CRC to an ongoing relationship with the RCN continued. When Synod 1996 met, there were nine overtures on the agenda requesting termination of the relationship. The report of the IRC's delegation to the RCN synod in April 1996 was presented to Synod 1996 (see *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 393-410). Synod 1996 did not terminate the relationship but restricted it even further than it had already been restricted in 1983. Even though the relationship was restricted further, the Interchurch Relations Committee was mandated

to intensify its pursuit of the two remaining provisions of ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKN:

- a. "[C]ommunication on major issues of joint concern."
- b. "[T]he exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity."

*(Acts of Synod 1996, p. 520)*

The remainder of this report summarizes the IRC's activities and conversations with the RCN since Synod 1996.

Following the delegation's return from the Netherlands in January 1998, two new issues within the RCN have been reported: the case involving a book by Professor C.J. den Heyer from Kampen Seminary and the tragic attempt by a minister to generate sympathy for pedophiles. The latter case has resulted in the RCN synod's accepting the resignation of its president, R. Vissinga, and dismissing several ministers from synodical assignments. The den Heyer matter is more complicated and will require greater investigation by IRC before it can knowledgeably present a report to the churches. Neither of these matters was identified previously as a concern and therefore was not on the agenda for discussion.

## II. Overview of visit to Netherlands

### A. Introduction

Following the decisions of 1996, the IRC proposed and the RCN agreed that two discussions/consultations be held, one in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in the spring of 1997 and one in Leusden, the Netherlands, in January 1998. The composition of the delegation and the topics of the meetings were briefly reported to Synod 1997 (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 526).

## *B. Review of activities*

In January of this year, four IRC members (Dr. Lyle Bierma, Dr. David H. Engelhard, Ms. Claire Elgersma, and Rev. Leonard J. Hofman) along with Dr. Calvin Van Reken (professor of moral theology, Calvin Theological Seminary) traveled to the Netherlands for the second round of conversations. Our hosts warmly welcomed us to their country, their homes, their churches, and their lives. The days were filled with observing, discussing, debating, and reflecting.

Each morning the delegation was introduced to and/or observed some aspect of the ministry program of the RCN. We met with staff and/or department heads of Mission and World Service, Congregational Development, Samen op Weg combined ministries, and a diaconal ministry project in Utrecht-West.

In order that we might better understand the church union taking place between the RCN, the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (NHK), and the Evangelisch Lutherse Kerk (called Samen op Weg/Together on the Way—SoW/ToW), our hosts arranged for us to attend a morning meeting of the Gereformeerde Bond (Reformed Alliance), which is an alliance of conservative ministers and congregations within the NHK. The Reformed Alliance graciously accepted us into its preplanned sessions and even gave us an opportunity to bring greetings. The opening sermon, the morning's educational presentation, and conversation at the noon meal were very familiar, confirming that on many matters we are confessionally and theologically very close to these brothers and sisters in the Netherlands.

Even though the ministers and congregations of the Reformed Alliance represent only a fraction of the total NHK, the number of active members in the Reformed Alliance churches represents almost half the active members within the NHK. Therefore, the Alliance has substantial influence within the NHK, but not a majority voice. On the basis of what we saw and heard, we concluded that many CRC members and pastors would feel at home in the Reformed Alliance churches.

The daily afternoon sessions with the RCN delegation were devoted to intense conversations on topics identified in advance. These conversations were extensions of the talks begun in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in May 1997, focusing on hermeneutics, ethics, ecumenicity, and church federation (SoW/ToW). More about these matters below.

In the evening our IRC delegation usually met and reflected on the day's activities and conversations. One evening we met with three representatives of the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK), with whom we have had ecclesiastical fellowship since 1982. This was a most pleasant evening, and it taught us again the beauty of sharing basic convictions and faith and the joy of being one in the Lord with others throughout the world. We recognized again the need for nurturing the relationship between the CRC and the NGK.

The personal value derived from these meetings cannot be denied, but it is not limited to that. We who represented the CRC are convinced that Synod 1996's decision not to terminate the relationship with the RCN but to intensify communication with them was wise. Our churches are very much alike in so many ways. The RCN are in transition theologically, and we believe that a continuing relationship between our churches can do for them at the beginning of the next century what they did for us at the beginning of this century,

namely, provide a confessional and theological rudder to help navigate difficult waters. Our sessions of intensive dialogue laid a good foundation for continuing the conversation.

### III. Topics discussed with the RCN

It is difficult to summarize conversations held over a period of ten days (five days in May 1997 and five days in January 1998). Since we were pursuing "communication on major issues of joint concern," both churches placed on the agenda those matters which they wanted to discuss. The CRC identified hermeneutics, homosexuality, euthanasia, and *Samen op Weg*; the RCN identified ecumenicity, capital punishment, and cooperative ministry ventures.

#### A. *Ecumenicity*

##### 1. Christian Reformed Church's Ecumenical Charter review

Since the Interchurch Relations Committee is committed to reviewing the CRC's Ecumenical Charter (see *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 527-28) and since the RCN are fully engaged in the federation process with two other churches, ecumenicity seemed like a "major issue of joint concern." The CRC's review of the Ecumenical Charter is still in the early stages, and therefore we had only initial observations to report. Ecumenical relationships with other denominations and with ecumenical organizations are changing rapidly. This is true not only for the CRC but for other churches as well. We reported that it did not seem prudent to review and make changes to the Ecumenical Charter during the maelstrom of negative ecumenicity.

Nonetheless, the main biblical principle of the charter was reemphasized, namely, that in Christ we are "one, holy, catholic church" and by his Spirit we work toward that goal. The unity of the church, moreover, "is a unity in truth." Our conversations were prime examples of the charter's recognition that "en route to achieving unity, major differences in the perception of biblical truth must be overcome." We might add that there are also times when we may have to learn to live with the differences.

##### 2. RCN and *Samen op Weg*/Together on the Way (SoW/ToW)

For over a decade the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN), the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (NHK), and the Evangelisch Lutherse Kerk have been committed to and working toward the unification of the churches. The end result of this process will be a federated church with a common church order, coordinated ministries, blended/merged congregations, and joint synods. The differences and uniqueness of each denomination are likely to be observable for a generation or two, but the intention is to become one church in the Netherlands.

Within the uniting churches there are differing ways of maintaining interchurch relationships. The RCN have both bilateral and multilateral relationships, but the NHK has only multilateral relations. There is presently some flexibility in how interchurch relationships will be conducted in the new federation, and until the union is finally complete (no one was willing to predict how many years that will take), we will continue to relate primarily to the RCN. Once the federation is complete, the new denomination (its present proposed name is the United Protestant Church

in the Netherlands) will hold discussions with all the ecumenical partners of its component churches to determine which ones wish to continue in a relationship with the new church. This is likely to occur within the next five to ten years.

The CRC delegation was provided a helpful overview of the process of coordination of all the ministries of the three churches. Our visit to the present offices in Driebergen enabled us to understand the magnitude of the task of creating organizational unity for these three churches and their ministries. Presently July 1999 is the target date for moving staff and operations into their newly renovated facilities. Although not all the staff have been appointed, we were informed that there was likely to be an RCN contact person with whom we would relate for ecumenical matters. How this works and what implications it has for interchurch relationships will need to be evaluated at a later time.

As alluded to above, the ecclesiastical restructuring has not moved forward as quickly as the ministry/agency restructuring has. Final union is still several years away, maybe, some say, in 2003 or 2005. Some pieces of the union are in place, such as a new church order, the uniting of congregations in many cities and villages, and the joint meeting of the Trio Synode/Three Synods. It is planned that near the end of 1998 the RCN synod will hand over responsibility for some decisions to the Three Synods and retain authority for those decisions not yet under the Three Synods. The Three Synods will have primary responsibility for the coordinated ministries, whereas the individual synods will retain authority for their continuing internal matters. The details are still being worked out and will not be clear until the transfer of responsibility/authority has actually taken place.

### 3. Implications for ecclesiastical fellowship

The visiting delegations and IRC now have a more complete picture of the implications of Samen op Weg for ecclesiastical fellowship, but it is not yet a perfectly clear picture. We are convinced that the RCN are doing everything in their power to maintain a relationship with the CRC as they enter the federation. Again and again we heard it said that our relationship with them is among the most meaningful and important. We have reason to believe from both our visit with the Reformed Alliance and from the NHK member on the RCN delegation that the NHK too would cherish our continued relationship with the RCN and eventually with the united church.

We are assured that our relationship as churches will come under review when the union is complete. That will give us an opportunity to reassess all matters relevant to our relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship and to make a new decision.

In the meantime, we may encounter some new difficulties in relating to the RCN themselves because of the placement of the Ecumenical Department within the new restructuring. If the present RCN ecumenical officer is appointed to such a position in the new structure, then continuation of our contact and relationship will be made easier. If authority/responsibility for ecclesiastical fellowship is transferred from the RCN synod to the Three Synods, then our relationship will become more compli-

cated. We have been told that will not happen until the unification is final several years hence.

In summary, *Samen op Weg* is complicating our relationship with the RCN but not negating it. For the foreseeable future our relationship will continue with the same church (RCN) and in much the same way as it has until now.

### B. *Theological and ethical issues*

The issues which have troubled our relationship with the RCN are their views of Scripture, hermeneutics, and homosexuality. In addition, some concerns were raised about their view of mission to the Jews and euthanasia. The reports presented to previous synods have detailed the issues, provided responses from the RCN, evaluated the responses, and identified the implications for ecclesiastical fellowship.

It can be accurately reported that we learned almost nothing new during our recent round of discussions. The RCN's positions have not changed since 1995 and 1996, when we last had serious conversations. The present delegation, in spite of its best efforts, did not fully persuade the RCN to alter their views on homosexuality or to rethink their conclusions from the biblical evidence. On the other hand, the open and frank discussions provided the RCN some new food for thought, strengthened the foundation for future dialogue, and established the relationships which are vital for continuing interaction and influence.

Synod 1998 will be well served if the delegates refer to the following sections of previous reports and their analyses of and conclusions about the various issues:

1. Scripture and hermeneutics
  - a. *Agenda for Synod 1995*, pp. 227-32
  - b. *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 405-08
2. Homosexuality
  - a. *Agenda for Synod 1995*, pp. 233-37
  - b. *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 404-05
3. Mission to the Jews
  - a. *Agenda for Synod 1995*, pp. 237-39
  - b. *Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 399-404
4. Euthanasia

*Acts of Synod 1996*, pp. 398-99

Near the conclusion of our visit we had an afternoon meeting with the theological faculty of the Free University to discuss the topic "Doing Reformed Theology Today." Two faculty members presented brief papers identifying the key themes of Reformed theology as well as the difficulties in the European context of distinguishing those elements that are distinctively Reformed. The theological changes which have swept across Europe have affected Lutheran, Catholic, and Reformed theology so that today the distinctives of each are harder to identify and, when identified, harder to defend.

We had a healthy interchange of ideas and concerns throughout the afternoon. We were heartened to hear them struggle with some of the same issues we face in North America and to learn of their desire to address these issues with the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary. A theological conference for the two faculties was suggested as a way to address and discuss the issues of Reformed theology as we enter a new millennium.

The afternoon discussion identified for us again that the Dutch are very good at asking probing questions. They perceive that the European context requires them to face questions in a different way than we do in North America. The ecclesiastical, geopolitical, social, and intellectual contexts shaping the issues in Europe are forcing religious communities to address them in new ways. We pressed them to move from doing theology in the interrogative mood to doing it in the declarative and imperative moods. The church is challenged by questions, but it is nourished by declarations; it must address questions, but it receives its marching orders from imperatives.

#### **IV. Request for joint actions**

During our discussions with the RCN, the idea of participating in joint actions as churches was raised more than once. In our initial days together in May 1997, we were reminded by them that ecumenical relationships often have two main focuses: (A) faith and order and (B) life and work. The former focus explores issues of theology and polity, whereas the latter focus explores areas and places where cooperative ministry can be undertaken. The possibility of cooperative ventures, however, was restricted by the decision of Synod 1996.

The RCN delegates expressed a desire for joint action in the areas of diaconal/relief work, world mission work in Eastern Europe and Nigeria, and theological dialogue between the faculties of the Free University (theology faculty) and Calvin Theological Seminary. It is the judgment of the IRC that theological dialogue is not restricted by our relationship with the RCN, and we warmly encouraged the theological faculties to pursue a conference as soon as possible.

The RCN delegation emphasized the idea that when brothers and sisters work together, they learn to love each other and understand each other better. When churches only debate doctrines, the RCN argued, they gradually gain a distorted idea about each other. We acknowledged the truth of that observation but reminded them that ideas have consequences not only for thinking but also for doing. If one's theology and/or missiology is not well conceived and thought out, that will affect the ministry and work undertaken together.

#### **V. Memorandum of understanding**

After our extensive meetings together, the two delegations devoted an afternoon to developing a memorandum of understanding, which expresses some commitments on the part of each delegation. The memorandum follows:

1. The CRC's IRC will recommend that the CRCNA continue the current ecclesiastical relationship.

*Grounds:*

- a. The historical character of the CRC/GKN relationship is vital.
  - b. Repairing a fractured relationship is more difficult than nurturing a strained one.
  - c. There is an articulated desire on the part of the GKN for the continuation of the relationship.
  - d. The review of the CRC Ecumenical Charter is still in process.
  - e. Samen op Weg (Together on the Way) is still in process, and at some point in the process the United Protestant Church in the Netherlands will ask its ecumenical partners (including the CRCNA) to recommit to an ecclesiastical relationship with the UPCN.
  - f. Factors have surfaced re the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk which are worthy of consideration.
2. The GKN's ecumenical committee will recommend that its synod confirm its willingness to listen to and seriously consider the CRCNA's communications "in major issues of joint concern."

*Ground:* Mutual accountability, especially on biblical and confessional issues, is essential to an ecclesiastical relationship.

3. The CRC's IRC will consider recommending to synod the reinstatement of the provision of ecclesiastical fellowship relating to "joint action in areas of common responsibilities."

*Grounds:*

- a. Life and work matters are vital to an ecclesiastical fellowship.
- b. This would allow both churches the opportunity to explore joint action in select places in the world.

## VI. Conclusion

Even though much of the dialogue in our conversations was intense, and occasionally conflictual, the underlying willingness by both delegations to labor toward the truth was evident consistently. Both churches recognize that in spite of our differences there is a oneness we share in Christ and similarities born of confession and heritage. We continue to believe that we need each other.

Lyle Bierma  
Claire Elgersma  
David Engelhard  
Leonard Hofman  
Calvin Van Reken

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# OVERTURES, APPEALS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

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# OVERTURES

## Overture 20: Revise Synod 1997's Decision re Articles of Incorporation

### I. Background

In response to recent history, Synod 1997 implemented decisions which give classes (and synod on appeal) the responsibility of settling disputes between differing factions in congregations regarding rights to real and personal property. Both the new Articles of Incorporation and the procedure which is to be followed in the event of disaffiliation contain such language. The burden of this overture is that investing such authority in the classes and synod violates the historic Reformed understanding of the authority which the major assemblies should exercise.

Van Dellen and Monsma in *The Revised Church Order Commentary* (1967) succinctly and directly address this matter:

The authority which the government exercises over its subjects is judicial authority. The authority which the Reformed churches have attributed to their major assemblies in relation to their minor assemblies is not judicial, but moral and spiritual. The Dutch distinguish in like manner between "rechterlijk gezag" and "zedelijk, geestelijk gezag." According to Reformed church polity, the authority of major assemblies is . . . [m]inistering, and not compelling. A major assembly cannot force a minor assembly to accept and execute its decisions. A minor assembly, if it feels that a decision of a major assembly is unbiblical, should appeal to the next gathering of the assembly, or to the assembly next in order. In the meantime, the appealing body should submit, unless it cannot do so because of great conscientious objections before God. If the objections are not removed, and if the decision stands, then the brethren concerned should, if at all possible, submit, if need be under continued protest and always with a clear understanding that the burdened parties have a full right to retain their own convictions. But if the brethren concerned feel fully persuaded that they may not submit, even under conditions as just indicated, then the only other course open to them is withdrawal from the denomination. Needless to say, this is a very serious and extreme step and should only be taken in case the matter is very urgent.

(P. 115)

The commentary just quoted is just that, commentary, and is not synodical decision, but it does represent a consensus among us, dating back to the Netherlands, which no synodical decision has made null and void. Synod 1997 gave no grounds for these principles to be overruled.

### II. Overture

Classis Zeeland overtures synod to revise the decision of Synod 1997 concerning the new Model Articles of Incorporation.

*Ground:* The authority which Articles 7-a and 7-d assign to classis and/or synod violates Church Order Article 27-a and the historic understanding that the relationship of the major assemblies to the minor assemblies is not judicial.

Classis Zeeland

Steven R. Sytsma, stated clerk

### **Overture 21: Not to Remove Question and Answer 80 from the Heidelberg Catechism, as Requested by Overture 16**

Classis Kalamazoo overtures synod not to accede to Overture 16, which requests that Question and Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism be removed.

*Grounds:*

1. The overture is misleading concerning the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. The overture cites "pertinent" dialogue between Roman Catholics in North America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on the subject of justification. What is pertinent is not what a group of North American Roman Catholics teach but what the official teaching and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church states. In its official teaching on justification, found in the Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> (1547), the Roman Catholic Church includes the following declarations:

Canon 9

If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone . . . let him be anathema [damned].

Canon 11

If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins . . . let him be anathema [damned].

Canon 30

If anyone saith, that, after the grace of Justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened [to him]: let him be anathema [damned].<sup>2</sup>

These declarations of the Roman Catholic Church clearly stand against the historic Protestant position that justification is by grace alone through faith alone. In fact, the preceding quotations indicate the extreme prejudice of the Roman Catholic Church against the biblical position as articulated by the Heidelberg Catechism: "God, without any

<sup>1</sup>This official teaching has been reinforced, not repudiated, by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which carries the official *Imprimi Potest* of the Holy See. Relevant paragraphs on "Grace and Justification" begin on page 481.

<sup>2</sup>Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches in Creeds of Christendom*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker reprint, 1977), 2:117.

- merit of mine, of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ" (Q. and A. 60).
2. The overture is groundless. Its fabricated view that the Roman Catholic Church has changed its views and its teaching on the matter of justification by faith alone does not bear the scrutiny of either the historical record or the official documents and teachings of that church. The overture's quotations from ecumenical documents and from a minor catechism do not make the case. Further, the Roman Catholic Church has never repudiated its statements (above) from the Council of Trent. (Overture 16 makes this very point in I, C, where it cites *Acts of Synod 1977*, Ground c.)
  3. The overture is self-repudiating. In citing the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to repudiate its own condemnation (i.e., "embarrassingly sharp" language) of Protestants (see Canons 9, 11, 30 above), Overture 16 demonstrates that the Roman Catholic Church has, in fact, *not* changed. Rome's condemnations and strong repeated damnation of Protestants who hold to such teachings as articulated in, e.g., Q. and A. 60 and 61 of the Heidelberg Catechism require that those who *do* believe in justification by faith alone cannot and must not accede to Overture 16.

Classis Kalamazoo

Robert A. Arbogast, stated clerk

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**Overture 22: Permit Transfer of Laotian Vientiane CRC from Classis Greater Los Angeles to Classis California South**

Classis California South overtures synod to permit the transfer of Laotian Vientiane CRC, Moreno Valley, California, from Classis Greater Los Angeles to Classis California South.

*Ground:* This is the request of this emerging congregation, which has relocated within the boundaries of Classis California South.

Classis California South

Randal K. Young, stated clerk

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**Overture 23: Appoint a Committee to Review the Functioning of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA**

**I. Background**

The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America was created by Synod 1991. The new position of executive director of ministries was filled by Synod 1992, effective July 1, 1992. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Board were provisionally approved by Synod 1993. The final version of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Board were approved by Synod 1996.

## II. Overture

Classis Grand Rapids North overtures synod to appoint a committee to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure and functioning of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

### Grounds:

- A. It is prudent to review and evaluate a new structure after that structure has functioned for a reasonable period of time.
- B. A five-year period of operation before such review was judged appropriate by Synod 1971 when it enhanced the role of the Synodical Interim Committee and again by Synod 1976 when it adopted modifications (see *Acts of Synod 1976*, Report 44, and *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 35).
- C. The investments in IRM and IRM's default raise questions about the Board's effectiveness in adopting and supervising investment policy (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 34, and an article in *The Banner* of February 2, 1998).
- D. The spending of substantial dollars over the budgeted amount for the Free to Serve rallies raises questions as to the adequacy of the Board's management of the budget it proposes and synod adopts. (See *Agenda for Synod 1997—Financial and Business Supplement*, p. 39, for the budgeted amounts for years ended June 30, 1996 and 1997, and for the amount spent during the year ended June 30, 1996. See financial statements for the year ended June 30, 1997, p. 5, for amount spent in year ended June 30, 1997.)

	Budgeted	Spent
Year ended June 30, 1996	\$ 0.00	\$ 175,653.00
Year ended June 30, 1997	<u>\$629,919.00</u>	<u>\$ 863,693.00</u>
	\$629,919.00	\$1,039,346.00

- E. An objective review committee appointed by synod could probably recommend significant changes to improve the functioning of the Board. The precedents of Synod 1976 (Report 44) and of Synod 1981 (Report 35) provide a basis for such probability.

Classis Grand Rapids North  
Fred J. Van Dyk, stated clerk

## Overture 24: Waive Regulation Prohibiting Chaplaincy Ministries from Endorsing a Woman Candidate

### I. Background

Insoon Gho is a senior at Calvin Theological Seminary who is applying for candidacy and planning to enter the military chaplaincy after graduation. She has already graduated from the United States Armed Forces Chaplain School and has been commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant Chaplain Candidate.

Eastern Avenue CRC intends to extend a call to 2LT Gho to military chaplaincy after she has been declared a candidate by Synod 1998.

However, due to current synodical regulations, an agency of the CRC (in this case Chaplaincy Ministries) may not "appoint women as ministers of the

Word to any field of labor within their jurisdiction, nor seek to have them installed by a church" (Church Order Supplement, Art. 3-a). Yet the military requires that chaplains receive endorsement from their denominations in order to be commissioned as chaplains and given assignments. The endorsement by Chaplaincy Ministries is necessary in order for 2LT Gho to receive her military commission as a chaplain.

## II. Overture

Classis Grand Rapids East overtures synod to waive in the case of 2LT Insoon Gho the synodical regulation which prohibits denominational agencies from appointing women to ministries within their jurisdiction.

### *Grounds:*

- A. A congregation rather than a denominational agency is initiating this call and process.
- B. 2LT Gho has trained for this specific ministry and has demonstrated a unique ability for it.
- C. 2LT Gho is a very gifted woman who has already demonstrated her abilities for ministry in many different areas. However, for a Korean woman with a Master of Divinity degree, the possibility for a call to a parish ministry in a Korean church within the CRC is unlikely.
- D. The need for military chaplains, particularly women and minorities, is very high. 2LT Gho has the gifts, experience, and ability to assist in meeting this need.

Classis Grand Rapids East  
Philip R. Lucasse, stated clerk

## Overture 25: Alter Formula for Fund for Smaller Churches Reductions

### I. Background

West Olive Christian Reformed Church is one of the churches that receive grant money from the Fund for Smaller Churches (FSC). West Olive has benefited from the assistance received and has been able to do significant work in ministry thanks in part to the grants from FSC. As the 1998 *Yearbook* statistics show, West Olive had four professions of faith, three persons received through evangelism, five received from other denominations, and ten members coming from other CRCs. However, as a result of this growth, the current FSC formula required that West Olive's 1998 request for funding be 32 percent less than its 1997 grant. Since West Olive received the full FSC grant in 1996, it was on schedule to be reduced by 20 percent. The FSC Committee, however, approved a grant for West Olive CRC for 1998 in the amount of only \$5,900, 20 percent less than its 1998 grant request (\$7,375) but 46 percent less than its 1997 grant.

When West Olive submitted its grant application, it included a letter of appeal to the FSC Committee not to reduce its grant amount from the \$7,375 requested. West Olive's letter pointed out that the amount it was requesting was actually less than the 20 percent reduction required by the formula. The FSC Committee chose not to grant this request and has not been willing to change West Olive's grant amount after subsequent communication between

West Olive CRC and the FSC Committee and between Classis Holland Church Growth Committee and the FSC Committee. This overture comes to synod after the March deadline because West Olive and the Classis Holland Church Growth Committee were still in discussion with the FSC Committee when Classis Holland met in January. At that time West Olive did not think that an overture to synod would be necessary.

The FSC Committee's rejection of the appeals has been based primarily on two grounds:

- A. The 20 percent reduction required of West Olive this year is not based on a fixed baseline, such as the amount of the grant received in year one. Rather, the FSC Committee bases reductions on a shifting baseline, namely, the FSC formula, which takes into account the cost of paying a pastor and the number of communicant members in a church. The increase in communicant members at West Olive resulted in the 32 percent reduction in request.
- B. Further, the FSC Committee justifies its refusal to grant West Olive's request because the FSC formula no longer takes into account ministry-share contributions of client churches in determining grant amounts and because West Olive, like all churches under eighty families, is allowed to pay reduced ministry shares.

Even given these reasons, Classis Holland believes that a 46 percent reduction in FSC funding from one year to the next is unfair, given that a 20 percent reduction was called for. Our understanding is that Synod 1995 did not intend to enact such dramatic reductions in grant amounts. Rather, we believe synod's intent was to ensure that churches receiving FSC would move toward self-sufficiency over a period of ten years. Current FSC policy penalizes growing churches and rewards shrinking churches.

## II. Overture

Classis Holland overtures synod to revise the decision of Synod 1995 regarding FSC policy for grant assistance as follows:

Present policy: That normally assistance be granted at the following declining percentage rates of the FSC formula: 100, 90, 80, 70, 60, 50, 40, 30, 20, 10.

Proposed policy: That normally the amount of assistance granted be reduced over a ten-year period by 10 percent per year based on the amount granted in year one.

### *Grounds:*

- A. Current policy fails to recognize and to reward churches for making progress toward self-sufficiency through growth in membership.
- B. The proposed policy honors the intent of Synod 1995 that the FSC subsidy be phased out over a ten-year period.

Classis Holland  
Peter Winkle, stated clerk

# APPEALS

## Appeals

2. CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. appeals from a decision of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America regarding its status.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## Communication 3: Classis Holland

### I. Background

Mr. Trent Walker, a thirty-one-year-old student at Western Theological Seminary, was approved on September 19, 1996, by Classis Holland to be ordained as an evangelist ministering among Generation Xers at Harderwyk Christian Reformed Church. His position title is pastor of youth and young adults. At its September 18, 1997, meeting, Classis Holland, choosing not to follow the recommendation of its pre-advice committee, acceded to the request of Harderwyk CRC to permit Evangelist Walker to pursue ordination as a minister of the Word in the CRC under Article 7 of the Church Order because of his gifts and his unique circumstances. The synodical deputies gave provisional concurrence with the decision of Classis Holland and at the same time included in their report that they believe Mr. Walker "is able to follow the synodically established track for entry into the Christian Reformed ministry. . . ."

Following the meeting of classis, Dr. David Engelhard informed the deputies in an October 8 letter that, in his judgment, they had erred in their concurrence with the decision of Classis Holland because Article 6-c, not Article 7, is the appropriate and required route to the ministry for one who is completing his theological education at another seminary. Dr. Engelhard urged the deputies to reconsider their decision so that the process could be redirected in the January meeting of Classis Holland.

As a result of the general secretary's letter, the synodical deputies informed Classis Holland in their November 19 letter that they "agree with Dr. Engelhard that Article 7 was not the appropriate route for Mr. Walker's entry into the CRC ministry" and that "Article 6-c can be applied to Mr. Walker's case. . . ." Therefore, the deputies wrote, "we must rescind our concurrence with Classis Holland's decision of September 18, 1997, and we advise classis to postpone all preparations for the future examination of Mr. Walker for possible ordination." However, the deputies then went on to write that "if Mr. Walker chooses not to follow Article 6-c, we advise classis to implement Recommendation b of our September 18, 1997, report as soon as possible." This would put the matter under Article 7.

The classical interim committee, along with the stated clerk of classis, met on December 2 to discuss the matter. It was decided to request the synodical deputies to provide Classis Holland with a clear and unambiguous statement. In response, the deputies requested a meeting with the classical interim committee on December 16 to explain their actions. In this meeting it was evident that the synodical deputies, having earnestly wrestled with the case,

are uncertain with respect to which Church Order article may or ought to be applied in the case of Evangelist Walker.

## II. Materials supporting this communication

- A. Request of Harderwyk CRC to Classis Holland (July 21, 1997)
- B. Pre-advice-committee report to Classis Holland (Sept. 18, 1997) re Harderwyk request
- C. Decision of Classis Holland regarding Trent Walker (see Minutes, Art. 14)
- D. Report of the synodical deputies to Classis Holland (Sept. 18, 1997)
- E. Letter from Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary of the CRCNA (Oct. 8, 1997)
- F. Letter to classis from the synodical deputies (Nov. 19, 1997)

## III. Recommendation

Classis Holland hereby requests that synod determine whether Article 6-c or Article 7 of the Church Order should be followed in the special case of Mr. Trent Walker's route to the ordained ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

### *Grounds:*

- A. The history of this case reveals a consistent pattern of uncertainty as to whether Article 6-c or Article 7 of the Church Order should be applied.
- B. Since the decisions and advice of the synodical deputies prohibit satisfactory resolution at the classical level, the case must "remain in status quo" until synod adjudicates the matter (cf. *Acts of Synod 1908*, pp. 36-37).
- C. This issue has implications at the denominational level in terms of permissible routes into the ministry in the CRC.

Classis Holland,  
Peter D. Winkle, stated clerk

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# FINANCIAL REPORTS

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# Calvin College

## Operating Budget (000s) Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 2,694	\$ 2,748	\$ 2,723	\$ 2,796	\$ 2,801	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800
% of Total Income	5.8%	5.5%	5.1%	4.8%	4.4%	4.1%	3.9%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 2,091	\$ 2,095	\$ 1,782	\$ 2,253	\$ 2,873	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Estate Gifts	\$ 90	\$ 144	\$ 49	\$ 4	\$ 20	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	2,181	2,239	1,831	2,257	2,893	3,000	3,000
% of Total Income	4.7%	4.5%	3.4%	3.9%	4.6%	4.4%	4.2%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 40,233	\$ 43,651	\$ 47,596	\$ 52,014	\$ 56,505	\$ 60,651	\$ 64,521
Grants	\$ 287	\$ 255	\$ 299	\$ 278	\$ 258	\$ 399	\$ 399
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,208	\$ 913	\$ 1,357	\$ 1,059	\$ 1,103	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Total Other Income	41,728	44,819	49,252	53,351	57,866	62,050	65,920
% of Total Income	89.5%	90.0%	91.5%	91.3%	91.0%	91.5%	91.9%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>46,603</b>	<b>49,806</b>	<b>53,806</b>	<b>58,404</b>	<b>63,560</b>	<b>67,850</b>	<b>71,720</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Education	\$ 39,695	\$ 41,915	\$ 46,333	\$ 50,701	\$ 56,162	\$ 57,414	\$ 59,966
FTEs	406	393	407	432	456	486	486
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
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	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	\$ 39,695	\$ 41,915	\$ 46,333	\$ 50,701	\$ 56,162	\$ 57,414	\$ 59,966
Total Program Service FTEs	406	393	407	432	456	486	486
% of Total \$	86.4%	85.6%	86.8%	87.6%	87.9%	84.6%	84.7%
% of Total FTEs	80.7%	78.9%	78.6%	80.7%	80.4%	81.3%	81.3%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 3,349	\$ 4,271	\$ 3,628	\$ 3,749	\$ 4,397	\$ 5,402	\$ 5,616
FTEs	43	47	49	44	49	50	50
Plant Operations	\$ 2,214	\$ 2,019	\$ 2,550	\$ 2,463	\$ 2,183	\$ 4,088	\$ 4,252
FTEs	43	45	48	44	46	46	46
Fund-raising	\$ 675	\$ 746	\$ 887	\$ 952	\$ 1,120	\$ 946	\$ 984
FTEs	11	13	14	16	16	16	16
Total Support Service \$	6,238	7,036	7,065	7,164	7,700	10,436	10,852
Total Support Service FTEs	97	105	111	104	111	112	112
% of Total \$	13.6%	14.4%	13.2%	12.4%	12.1%	15.4%	15.3%
% of Total FTEs	19.3%	21.1%	21.4%	19.3%	19.6%	18.7%	18.7%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 45,933</b>	<b>\$ 48,951</b>	<b>\$ 53,398</b>	<b>\$ 57,865</b>	<b>\$ 63,862</b>	<b>\$ 67,850</b>	<b>\$ 70,818</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>598</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 670</b>	<b>\$ 855</b>	<b>\$ 408</b>	<b>\$ 539</b>	<b>\$ (302)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 902</b>

**Operating Budget (000s)  
Fiscal Year 1998-99**

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 1,646	\$ 1,764	\$ 1,762	\$ 1,823	\$ 1,900	\$ 2,111	\$ 2,146
% of Total Income	57.8%	66.2%	57.4%	53.0%	52.3%	52.4%	52.9%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 412	\$ 165	\$ 363	\$ 541	\$ 468	\$ 625	\$ 661
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 71	\$ 145	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	412	165	363	612	613	625	661
% of Total Income	14.5%	6.2%	11.8%	17.8%	16.9%	15.5%	16.3%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 792	\$ 735	\$ 691	\$ 761	\$ 878	\$ 1,008	\$ 1,012
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 143	\$ 136	\$ 170	\$ 170	\$ 168
Miscellaneous	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 110	\$ 108	\$ 74	\$ 114	\$ 71
Total Other Income	792	735	944	1,005	1,122	1,292	1,251
% of Total Income	27.8%	27.6%	30.8%	29.2%	30.9%	32.1%	30.8%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,850</b>	<b>2,664</b>	<b>3,069</b>	<b>3,440</b>	<b>3,635</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>4,058</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Instructional	\$ 1,047	\$ 1,169	\$ 1,734	\$ 1,834	\$ 1,820	\$ 2,006	\$ 1,985
FTEs	24	24	24	24	24	24	23
Public Service	\$ 37	\$ 53	\$ 75	\$ 94	\$ 58	\$ 84	\$ 64
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Academic Support	\$ 278	\$ 299	\$ 375	\$ 393	\$ 379	\$ 427	\$ 437
FTEs	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
Student Services	\$ 147	\$ 165	\$ 235	\$ 221	\$ 230	\$ 279	\$ 351
FTEs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Student Aid	\$ 83	\$ 67	\$ 111	\$ 148	\$ 168	\$ 210	\$ 276
FTEs	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	1,592	1,753	2,530	2,690	2,655	3,006	3,113
Total Program Service FTEs	30	30	30	30	30	29	29
% of Total \$	64.5%	65.8%	79.9%	77.9%	78.2%	74.6%	76.7%
% of Total FTEs	85.7%	85.7%	86.8%	85.6%	84.4%	84.2%	84.8%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 596	\$ 636	\$ 312	\$ 334	\$ 403	\$ 606	\$ 543
FTEs	3	3	3	3	4	4	3
Plant Operations	\$ 121	\$ 114	\$ 178	\$ 227	\$ 185	\$ 231	\$ 224
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ 161	\$ 160	\$ 145	\$ 201	\$ 154	\$ 185	\$ 178
FTEs	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total Support Service \$	878	910	635	762	742	1,022	945
Total Support Service FTEs	5	5	5	5	6	6	5
% of Total \$	35.5%	34.2%	20.1%	22.1%	21.8%	25.4%	23.3%
% of Total FTEs	14.3%	14.3%	13.2%	14.4%	15.6%	15.8%	15.2%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2,470</b>	<b>2,663</b>	<b>3,165</b>	<b>3,452</b>	<b>3,397</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>4,058</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 380</b>	<b>\$ 1</b>	<b>\$ (96)</b>	<b>\$ (12)</b>	<b>\$ 238</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

**Operating Budget (000s)  
Fiscal Year 1998-99**

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 248	\$ 227	\$ 204	\$ 219	\$ 249	\$ 220	\$ 224
% of Total Income	3.8%	3.5%	3.6%	3.3%	4.0%	3.5%	3.3%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 43	\$ 17	\$ 66	\$ 229	\$ 99	\$ 125	\$ 95
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	43	17	66	229	99	125	95
% of Total Income	0.7%	0.3%	1.2%	3.5%	1.6%	2.0%	1.4%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 6,130	\$ 6,119	\$ 5,234	\$ 5,888	\$ 5,800	\$ 5,816	\$ 6,147
Grants	\$ -	\$ 23	\$ 22	\$ 56	\$ 8	\$ 40	\$ 120
Miscellaneous	\$ 99	\$ 35	\$ 155	\$ 234	\$ 134	\$ 114	\$ 122
Total Other Income	6,229	6,177	5,411	6,178	5,942	5,970	6,389
% of Total Income	95.5%	96.2%	95.2%	93.2%	94.5%	94.5%	95.2%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>6,520</b>	<b>6,421</b>	<b>5,681</b>	<b>6,626</b>	<b>6,290</b>	<b>6,315</b>	<b>6,708</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Banner	\$ 1,357	\$ 1,467	\$ 1,473	\$ 1,569	\$ 1,479	\$ 1,277	\$ 1,260
FTEs	8	8	8	8	8	7	7
Education	\$ 2,984	\$ 3,239	\$ 3,512	\$ 3,898	\$ 3,577	\$ 3,803	\$ 3,935
FTEs	21	21	21	22	22	22	22
World Literature	\$ 318	\$ 346	\$ 378	\$ 536	\$ 502	\$ 493	\$ 677
FTEs	2	4	4	4	4	3	4
Agency Printing (PS)	\$ 1,372	\$ 1,299	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	22	22	-	-	-	-	-
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	\$ 6,031	\$ 6,351	\$ 5,363	\$ 6,003	\$ 5,558	\$ 5,573	\$ 5,872
Total Program Service FTEs	53	55	33	34	34	32	33
% of Total \$	91.8%	94.2%	89.8%	89.7%	90.8%	90.2%	90.6%
% of Total FTEs	85.5%	87.3%	80.5%	81.0%	85.0%	84.2%	84.6%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 538	\$ 393	\$ 609	\$ 688	\$ 566	\$ 603	\$ 610
FTEs	9	8	8	8	6	6	6
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support Service \$	538	393	609	688	566	603	610
Total Support Service FTEs	9	8	8	8	6	6	6
% of Total \$	8.2%	5.8%	10.2%	10.3%	9.2%	9.8%	9.4%
% of Total FTEs	14.5%	12.7%	19.5%	19.0%	15.0%	15.8%	15.4%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 6,569</b>	<b>\$ 6,744</b>	<b>\$ 5,972</b>	<b>\$ 6,691</b>	<b>\$ 6,124</b>	<b>\$ 6,176</b>	<b>\$ 6,482</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (49)</b>	<b>\$ (323)</b>	<b>\$ (291)</b>	<b>\$ (65)</b>	<b>\$ 166</b>	<b>\$ 139</b>	<b>\$ 226</b>

# Christian Reformed Home Missions

## Operating Budget (000s) Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 5,483	\$ 5,408	\$ 4,481	\$ 5,310	\$ 5,292	\$ 5,139	\$ 5,039
% of Total Income	61.6%	60.2%	60.3%	64.5%	51.0%	66.7%	64.6%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 1,909	\$ 1,693	\$ 1,309	\$ 1,474	\$ 1,701	\$ 1,580	\$ 1,660
Estate Gifts	\$ 160	\$ 478	\$ 73	\$ 272	\$ 313	\$ 134	\$ 250
Total Gift Income	2,069	2,171	1,382	1,746	2,014	1,714	1,910
% of Total Income	23.3%	24.2%	18.6%	21.2%	19.4%	22.2%	24.5%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 887	\$ 1,008	\$ 981	\$ 214	\$ 1,868	\$ 366	\$ 366
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 457	\$ 399	\$ 592	\$ 960	\$ 1,204	\$ 491	\$ 491
Total Other Income	1,344	1,407	1,573	1,174	3,072	857	857
% of Total Income	15.1%	15.7%	21.2%	14.3%	29.6%	11.1%	11.0%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>8,896</b>	<b>8,986</b>	<b>7,436</b>	<b>8,230</b>	<b>10,378</b>	<b>7,710</b>	<b>7,806</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
New-Church Development	\$ 5,185	\$ 5,369	\$ 4,934	\$ 4,867	\$ 4,717	\$ 4,523	\$ 4,523
FTEs	10	10	10	11	11	11	11
Established-Church Develop.	\$ 2,210	\$ 2,111	\$ 1,883	\$ 1,942	\$ 1,887	\$ 2,058	\$ 2,058
FTEs	18	17	16	19	19	19	19
Campus	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 321	\$ 321
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Total Program Service \$</b>	<b>\$ 7,395</b>	<b>\$ 7,480</b>	<b>\$ 6,817</b>	<b>\$ 6,809</b>	<b>\$ 6,604</b>	<b>\$ 6,902</b>	<b>\$ 6,902</b>
<b>Total Program Service FTEs</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>% of Total \$</b>	<b>86.7%</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>85.9%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>
<b>% of Total FTEs</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>71.2%</b>	<b>73.3%</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	<b>77.1%</b>	<b>82.9%</b>	<b>83.0%</b>
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 696	\$ 717	\$ 570	\$ 578	\$ 610	\$ 588	\$ 588
FTEs	7	7	5	5	5	2	2
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ 437	\$ 494	\$ 457	\$ 493	\$ 476	\$ 457	\$ 457
FTEs	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Total Support Service \$</b>	<b>1,133</b>	<b>1,211</b>	<b>1,027</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>1,045</b>
<b>Total Support Service FTEs</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>% of Total \$</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>
<b>% of Total FTEs</b>	<b>29.2%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 8,528</b>	<b>\$ 8,691</b>	<b>\$ 7,844</b>	<b>\$ 7,880</b>	<b>\$ 7,690</b>	<b>\$ 7,947</b>	<b>\$ 7,947</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 368</b>	<b>\$ 295</b>	<b>\$ (408)</b>	<b>\$ 350</b>	<b>\$ 2,688</b>	<b>\$ (237)</b>	<b>\$ (141)</b>

# Christian Reformed World Missions

## Operating Budget (000s)

Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 5,108	\$ 4,345	\$ 4,916	\$ 5,086	\$ 5,052	\$ 4,912	\$ 5,000
% of Total Income	33.1%	40.6%	39.4%	39.2%	38.1%	38.4%	38.2%
Other Gift Income:							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 4,947	\$ 3,882	\$ 4,332	\$ 4,933	\$ 4,975	\$ 4,970	\$ 5,132
Estate Gifts	\$ 1,519	\$ 534	\$ 328	\$ 410	\$ 309	\$ 586	\$ 620
Total Gift Income	6,466	4,416	4,660	5,343	5,284	5,556	5,752
% of Total Income	41.9%	41.3%	37.3%	41.2%	39.9%	43.4%	44.0%
Other Income:							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 2,360	\$ 851	\$ 1,314	\$ 929	\$ 972	\$ 925	\$ 1,000
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,497	\$ 1,082	\$ 1,599	\$ 1,621	\$ 1,950	\$ 1,408	\$ 1,323
Total Other Income	3,857	1,933	2,913	2,550	2,922	2,331	2,323
% of Total Income	25.0%	18.1%	23.3%	19.6%	22.0%	18.2%	17.8%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>15,431</b>	<b>10,694</b>	<b>12,489</b>	<b>12,979</b>	<b>13,258</b>	<b>12,799</b>	<b>13,075</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Africa	\$ 2,693	\$ 2,198	\$ 3,125	\$ 2,681	\$ 2,919	\$ 3,013	\$ 3,037
FTEs	71	73	72	72	73	70	70
Asia	\$ 4,148	\$ 4,121	\$ 5,415	\$ 4,426	\$ 4,053	\$ 4,019	\$ 4,162
FTEs	65	66	66	67	63	64	63
Latin America	\$ 3,266	\$ 2,817	\$ 3,170	\$ 3,251	\$ 3,347	\$ 3,507	\$ 3,257
FTEs	71	71	75	70	72	70	69
Europe	\$ 319	\$ 232	\$ 416	\$ 479	\$ 466	\$ 470	\$ 564
FTEs	14	15	20	23	23	20	19
Education	\$ 369	\$ 303	\$ 338	\$ 408	\$ 399	\$ 411	\$ 414
FTEs	4	4	5	4	4	4	4
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$10,795	\$ 9,671	\$12,464	\$11,245	\$11,184	\$11,420	\$ 11,434
Total Program Service FTEs	225	229	237	235	234	228	224
% of Total \$	89.1%	89.2%	89.6%	88.4%	88.3%	88.6%	87.4%
% of Total FTEs	91.5%	91.7%	91.5%	91.9%	91.6%	91.9%	91.8%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 682	\$ 611	\$ 768	\$ 813	\$ 851	\$ 829	\$ 907
FTEs	13	13	13	12	13	12	12
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ 635	\$ 559	\$ 682	\$ 669	\$ 637	\$ 647	\$ 734
FTEs	8	8	9	8	9	8	8
Total Support Service \$	1,317	1,170	1,450	1,482	1,488	1,476	1,641
Total Support Service FTEs	21	21	22	21	21	20	20
% of Total \$	10.9%	10.8%	10.4%	11.6%	11.7%	11.4%	12.6%
% of Total FTEs	8.5%	8.3%	8.5%	8.1%	8.4%	8.1%	8.2%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$12,112</b>	<b>\$10,841</b>	<b>\$13,914</b>	<b>\$12,727</b>	<b>\$12,672</b>	<b>\$12,896</b>	<b>\$ 13,075</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 3,319</b>	<b>\$ (147)</b>	<b>\$ (1,425)</b>	<b>\$ 252</b>	<b>\$ 586</b>	<b>\$ (97)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

Operating Budget (000s)  
Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 8,878	\$ 6,915	\$ 7,364	\$ 7,022	\$ 8,581	\$ 7,801	\$ 7,940
Estate Gifts	\$ 296	\$ 507	\$ 273	\$ 692	\$ 176	\$ 240	\$ 260
Total Gift Income	9,174	7,422	7,637	7,714	8,757	8,041	8,200
% of Total Income	87.6%	90.9%	80.2%	80.5%	79.2%	86.2%	85.2%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grants	\$ 1,329	\$ 649	\$ 1,791	\$ 1,454	\$ 2,160	\$ 1,221	\$ 1,390
Miscellaneous	\$ (35)	\$ 90	\$ 97	\$ 409	\$ 139	\$ 63	\$ 40
Total Other Income	1,294	739	1,888	1,863	2,299	1,284	1,430
% of Total Income	12.4%	9.1%	19.8%	19.5%	20.8%	13.8%	14.8%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>10,468</b>	<b>8,161</b>	<b>9,525</b>	<b>9,577</b>	<b>11,056</b>	<b>9,325</b>	<b>9,630</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Overseas programs	\$ 5,432	\$ 4,312	\$ 5,906	\$ 5,488	\$ 5,548	\$ 5,458	\$ 5,610
FTEs	49	44	46	58	47	36	39
North American programs	\$ 611	\$ 917	\$ 1,246	\$ 918	\$ 815	\$ 757	\$ 810
FTEs	8	9	12	11	11	10	8
Disaster relief programs	\$ 1,457	\$ 1,288	\$ 1,984	\$ 938	\$ 1,674	\$ 818	\$ 803
FTEs	3	4	4	5	5	5	6
Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 243	\$ 190	\$ 221	\$ 279
FTEs	-	-	-	1	1	1	2
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	7,500	6,517	9,136	7,587	8,227	7,254	7,502
Total Program Service FTEs	60	57	62	75	64	52	55
% of Total \$	82.5%	81.4%	81.6%	80.5%	81.1%	78.3%	79.1%
% of Total FTEs	77.9%	74.0%	75.6%	78.9%	75.3%	72.2%	71.4%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 834	\$ 750	\$ 1,058	\$ 968	\$ 932	\$ 1,001	\$ 909
FTEs	11	10	11	11	11	10	11
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ 762	\$ 743	\$ 998	\$ 875	\$ 983	\$ 1,009	\$ 1,079
FTEs	6	10	9	9	10	10	11
Total Support Service \$	1,596	1,493	2,056	1,843	1,915	2,010	1,988
Total Support Service FTEs	17	20	20	20	21	20	22
% of Total \$	17.5%	18.6%	18.4%	19.5%	18.9%	21.7%	20.9%
% of Total FTEs	22.1%	26.0%	24.4%	21.1%	24.7%	27.8%	28.6%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 9,096</b>	<b>\$ 8,010</b>	<b>\$ 11,192</b>	<b>\$ 9,430</b>	<b>\$ 10,142</b>	<b>\$ 9,264</b>	<b>\$ 9,490</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 1,372</b>	<b>\$ 151</b>	<b>\$ (1,667)</b>	<b>\$ 147</b>	<b>\$ 914</b>	<b>\$ 61</b>	<b>\$ 140</b>

**Statement of Activity**

	1/01/94 to 12/31/94 Actual	1/01/95 to 6/30/96 Actual (18 months)	7/01/96 to 6/30/97 Actual	7/01/97 to 6/30/98 Budget	7/01/98 to 6/30/99 Budget
<b>INCOME:</b>					
Interest Income	\$611,579	\$1,127,449	\$857,080	\$850,000	\$850,000
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>					
Interest	370,199	666,481	541,047	540,000	540,000
Payroll and fringe benefits	69,477	113,972	67,404	67,000	67,000
Provision for loan losses	50,000	100,500	96,500	180,000	180,000
Administrative	27,134	33,857	63,445	63,000	63,000
	516,810	914,810	768,396	850,000	850,000
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$94,769</b>	<b>\$212,639</b>	<b>\$88,684</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## Denominational Services

### Operating Budget (000s) Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
	(10 months)						
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share - Regular	\$ 1,390	\$ 1,295	\$ 1,539	\$ 1,564	\$ 1,523	\$ 1,648	\$ 1,771
Ministry Share - CCRCC							\$ 828
% of Total Income	50.8%	51.8%	19.6%	19.7%	19.4%	19.4%	26.4%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ 9	\$ 7	\$ 22	\$ 8	\$ 1	\$ 7
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	-	9	7	22	8	1	7
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,030	\$ 6,115	\$ 4,901	\$ 4,847	\$ 4,927	\$ 4,662
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ 73	\$ 50	\$ 259
Miscellaneous	\$ 205	\$ 168	\$ 176	\$ 1,195	\$ 1,414	\$ 1,889	\$ 2,310
Total Other Income	1,346	1,198	6,291	6,346	6,334	6,866	7,231
% of Total Income	49.2%	47.9%	80.3%	80.0%	80.5%	80.6%	73.5%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>2,502</b>	<b>7,837</b>	<b>7,932</b>	<b>7,865</b>	<b>8,515</b>	<b>9,837</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Synodical Services & Grants	\$ 496	\$ 405	\$ 520	\$ 670	\$ 736	\$ 752	\$ 1,846
FTEs	4	4	4	4	5	5	8
Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27	\$ 275	\$ 950	\$ 109	\$ 213
FTEs	-	-	1	1	4	1	2
CS/PS Cost of Goods Sold	\$ 953	\$ 809	\$ 5,641	\$ 4,779	\$ 4,715	\$ 5,006	\$ 4,678
FTEs	7	7	41	40	39	39	32
Finance/Payroll Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 41	\$ 1,044	\$ 1,165
FTEs	-	-	-	-	1	17	17
CSIS	\$ 135	\$ 178	\$ 346	\$ 515	\$ 530	\$ 287	\$ 355
FTEs	3	3	4	4	5	5	6
Personnel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 99	\$ 96	\$ 104	\$ 125
FTEs	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
Total Program Service \$	1,584	1,392	6,534	6,338	7,068	7,302	8,382
Total Program Service FTEs	14	14	50	51	56	69	67
% of Total \$	61.9%	55.0%	82.6%	80.5%	84.1%	86.4%	87.1%
% of Total FTEs	63.6%	63.6%	84.7%	83.6%	84.8%	90.8%	90.5%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 464	\$ 542	\$ 504	\$ 628	\$ 549	\$ 316	\$ 357
FTEs	5	5	5	6	6	3	3
Plant Operations/Debt Serv.	\$ 510	\$ 599	\$ 853	\$ 833	\$ 752	\$ 784	\$ 834
FTEs	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23	\$ 72	\$ 38	\$ 49	\$ 50
FTEs	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
Total Support Service \$	974	1,141	1,380	1,533	1,339	1,149	1,241
Total Support Service FTEs	8	8	9	10	10	7	7
% of Total \$	38.1%	45.0%	17.4%	19.5%	15.9%	13.6%	12.9%
% of Total FTEs	36.4%	36.4%	15.3%	16.4%	15.2%	9.2%	9.5%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2,558</b>	<b>2,533</b>	<b>7,914</b>	<b>7,871</b>	<b>8,407</b>	<b>8,451</b>	<b>9,623</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 178</b>	<b>\$ (31)</b>	<b>\$ (77)</b>	<b>\$ 61</b>	<b>\$ (542)</b>	<b>\$ 64</b>	<b>\$ 214</b>

# Fund for Smaller Churches

## Operating Budget (000s) Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 275	\$ 653	\$ 675	\$ 916	\$ 913	\$ 800	\$ 720
% of Total Income	88.1%	97.9%	99.3%	96.3%	98.9%	99.3%	99.3%
Other Gift Income:							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 12	\$ 2	\$ 2	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	12	2	2	1	1	1	1
% of Total Income	3.8%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Other Income:							
Tuition & Sales	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 25	\$ 12	\$ 3	\$ 34	\$ 9	\$ 5	\$ 4
Total Other Income	25	12	3	34	9	5	4
% of Total Income	8.0%	1.8%	0.4%	3.6%	1.0%	0.6%	0.6%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>725</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Subsidy Requests	\$ 792	\$ 803	\$ 677	\$ 750	\$ 718	\$ 670	\$ 620
FTVolunteer(s)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Auto Reimbursements	\$ 27	\$ 58	\$ 50	\$ 54	\$ 58	\$ 65	\$ 60
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moving Expenses	\$ 12	\$ 5	\$ 7	\$ 8	\$ 14	\$ 15	\$ 15
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	\$ 6	\$ 5	\$ 4	\$ 5	\$ 5	\$ 7	\$ 8
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biennial Conference	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	\$ 837	\$ 871	\$ 738	\$ 817	\$ 795	\$ 782	\$ 703
Total Program Service FTEs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
% of Total \$	98.5%	98.9%	99.2%	98.6%	98.5%	98.0%	97.8%
% of Total FTEs	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 13	\$ 10	\$ 6	\$ 12	\$ 12	\$ 16	\$ 16
FTVolunteer(s)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support Service \$	13	10	6	12	12	16	16
Total Support Service FTEs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
% of Total \$	1.5%	1.1%	0.8%	1.4%	1.5%	2.0%	2.2%
% of Total FTEs	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 850</b>	<b>\$ 881</b>	<b>\$ 744</b>	<b>\$ 829</b>	<b>\$ 807</b>	<b>\$ 798</b>	<b>\$ 719</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>2</b>						
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (538)</b>	<b>\$ (214)</b>	<b>\$ (64)</b>	<b>\$ 122</b>	<b>\$ 116</b>	<b>\$ 8</b>	<b>\$ 6</b>

# Pastoral Ministries

## Operating Budget (000s) Fiscal Year 1998-99

	Fiscal 92-93 Actual	Fiscal 93-94 Actual	Fiscal 94-95 Actual	Fiscal 95-96 Actual	Fiscal 96-97 Actual	Fiscal 97-98 Budget	Fiscal 98-99 Proposed
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Ministry Share	\$ 1,015	\$ 879	\$ 1,032	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,153	\$ 1,118	\$ 984
% of Total Income	84.4%	85.3%	86.8%	85.2%	85.1%	87.5%	84.2%
<b>Other Gift Income:</b>							
Above Ministry Share	\$ 186	\$ 125	\$ 136	\$ 165	\$ 187	\$ 159	\$ 184
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	186	125	136	165	187	159	184
% of Total Income	15.5%	12.1%	11.4%	12.5%	13.8%	12.5%	15.8%
<b>Other Income:</b>							
Tuition & Sales	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2	\$ -	\$ -
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ 3	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 2	\$ 26	\$ 21	\$ -	\$ 10	\$ -	\$ -
Total Other Income	2	26	21	30	15	-	-
% of Total Income	0.2%	2.5%	1.8%	2.3%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>1,355</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>1,168</b>
<b>EXPENSES (FTE = Full-Time Employee):</b>							
<b>Program Services:</b>							
Chaplaincy Ministries	\$ 468	\$ 333	\$ 376	\$ 421	\$ 418	\$ 373	\$ 190
FTEs	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
Race Relations	\$ 355	\$ 225	\$ 219	\$ 241	\$ 270	\$ 246	\$ 268
FTEs	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
Pastor-Church Relations	\$ 101	\$ 62	\$ 78	\$ 124	\$ 80	\$ 97	\$ 153
FTEs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Abuse Prevention	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44	\$ 55	\$ 55	\$ 74	\$ 95
FTEs	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
Disability Concerns	\$ 129	\$ 82	\$ 105	\$ 120	\$ 121	\$ 100	\$ 119
FTEs	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Program #6	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$ 1,053	\$ 702	\$ 822	\$ 961	\$ 944	\$ 890	\$ 825
Total Program Service FTEs	9	9	11	10	8	8	8
% of Total \$	86.4%	73.1%	76.0%	79.2%	78.1%	72.1%	70.6%
% of Total FTEs	81.8%	81.8%	84.6%	76.9%	66.7%	61.5%	66.7%
<b>Support Services:</b>							
Management & General	\$ 166	\$ 248	\$ 260	\$ 223	\$ 198	\$ 293	\$ 343
FTEs	2	2	2	3	3	4	4
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ 10	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ 67	\$ 52	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Total Support Service \$	166	258	260	253	265	345	343
Total Support Service FTEs	2	2	2	3	4	5	4
% of Total \$	13.6%	26.9%	24.0%	20.8%	21.9%	27.9%	29.4%
% of Total FTEs	18.2%	18.2%	15.4%	23.1%	33.3%	38.5%	33.3%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 1,219</b>	<b>\$ 960</b>	<b>\$ 1,082</b>	<b>\$ 1,214</b>	<b>\$ 1,209</b>	<b>\$ 1,235</b>	<b>\$ 1,168</b>
<b>TOTAL FTEs</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (16)</b>	<b>\$ 70</b>	<b>\$ 107</b>	<b>\$ 104</b>	<b>\$ 146</b>	<b>\$ 42</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

# Ministers' Pension Funds

## Operating Budget Fiscal Year 1999

	CANADA (CAN \$)	UNITED STATES (US \$)	Combined (US \$) *
<b>INCOME:</b>			
Member Assessments: Per Member (>18 years old) Assessments:	\$16.00	\$16.00	
Number of Members	46,815	123,798	170,613
<b>Total Member Assessments</b>	<b>\$749,040</b>	<b>\$1,980,768</b>	<b>\$2,520,077</b>
% of Total Income	27.1%	20.6%	21.7%
Participant Assessments: % of Total Income	\$179,216 6.5%	\$574,392 6.0%	\$703,428 6.1%
Investment Income	\$1,840,000	\$7,040,000	\$8,364,800
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$2,788,256</b>	<b>\$9,595,160</b>	<b>\$11,588,304</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES:</b>			
<b>Program Services:</b>			
Disbursed to Participants % of Total	\$970,000 86.4%	\$4,016,000 90.4%	\$4,714,400 89.8%
<b>Support Services:</b>			
Allocated Fees	\$44,569	\$90,000	\$122,090
Investment/Advisory Fees	87,000	300,000	362,640
Other Expenses	20,833	35,000	50,000
<b>Total Support Services</b> % of Total	<b>\$152,403</b> 13.8%	<b>\$425,000</b> 9.8%	<b>\$534,730</b> 10.2%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,122,403</b>	<b>\$4,441,000</b>	<b>\$5,249,130</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$1,645,853</b>	<b>\$5,154,160</b>	<b>\$6,339,174</b>

\* An actuarial valuation is completed every three years by independent actuaries.  
The most recent calculation was done in December 1996.



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# REPORT OF SYNOD 1998

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# MULTIETHNIC WORSHIP AND SYNODICAL PRAYER AND PRAISE SERVICE 1998

Sunday, June 14, 1998

4:00 P.M.

Calvin College Chapel  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

**Prelude** ..... Rev. John Matias, worship leader  
Youth Band of Orange Korean CRC, Fullerton, CA

**Welcome and Call to Worship** ..... Rev. Richard E. Williams  
Pastor of Pullman CRC, Chicago

*All please stand at the beginning of the hymn*

**Processional Hymn:** "Lift High the Cross" ..... *Psalter Hymnal* 373

*Refrain:* Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.

All: 1 Come, Christians, follow where our Savior led,  
our King victorious, Jesus Christ, our Head. *Refrain.*

All: 2 All newborn servants of the Crucified  
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. *Refrain.*

All: 3 From north and south, from east and west we raise  
in growing unison our song of praise. *Refrain.*

Men: 4 O Lord, once lifted on the tree of pain,  
draw all the world to seek you once again. *Refrain.*

Women: 5 Let every race and every language tell  
of him who saves our lives from death and hell. *Refrain.*

All: 6 Set up your throne, that earth's despair may cease  
beneath the shadow of its healing peace. *Refrain.*

All: 7 So shall our song of triumph ever be:  
praise to the Crucified for victory! *Refrain.*

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1887; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1916, alt.  
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## Songs of Praise

### BE GLORIFIED

Be glorified, be glorified,  
be glorified, be glorified.  
Be glorified in the heavens,  
be glorified in the earth,  
be glorified in this temple,  
Jesus, Jesus, be Thou glorified.  
Jesus, Jesus, be Thou glorified.

Worship the Lord, worship the Lord,  
worship the Lord, worship the Lord.  
Worship the Lord in the earth,  
worship the Lord in this temple,  
Jesus, Jesus, be Thou glorified.  
Jesus, Jesus, be Thou glorified.  
Jesus, Jesus, be Thou glorified.

### GLORIFICATE

Glorificate, glorificate  
glorificate, glorificate.  
Sobre la tierra y los cielos,  
seas Tu glorificado,  
recibe gloria en tu templo,  
Jesús, Jesús, glorificate.  
Jesús, Jesús, glorificate.

Adorémosle, adorémosle,  
adorémosle, adorémosle,  
Sobre la tierra y los cielos,  
a nuestro Dios adoremos,  
démosle gloria en su templo  
Jesús, Jesús, glorificate.  
Jesús, Jesús, glorificate.  
Jesús, Jesús, glorificate.

Billy Funk, © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music / ASCAP

### OH, HOW GOOD IS CHRIST THE LORD OH, QUÉ BUENO ES JESÚS

*Psalter Hymnal 401*

Oh, how good is  
Christ the Lord!  
On the cross he died for me.  
He has pardoned all my sin.  
Glory be to Jesus.  
Glory be to Jesus!  
Glory be to Jesus!  
In three days he rose again.  
Glory be to Jesus.

Oh, qué bueno es Jesús.  
Que por mí murió en la cruz.  
Mis pecados perdonó.  
A su nombre gloria.  
A su nombre gloria.  
A su nombre gloria.  
En tres días resucitó.  
A su nombre gloria.

Text: Puerto Rican folk hymn

### LORD, I LIFT YOUR NAME ON HIGH

Lord, I lift your name on high;  
Lord, I love to sing your praises.  
I'm so glad you're in my life;  
I'm so glad you came to save us.  
You came from heaven to earth  
to show the way,  
from the earth to the cross  
my debt to pay.  
From the cross to the grave,  
from the grave to the sky;  
Lord, I lift your name on high.

### SEÑOR, TU NOMBRE EXALTARÉ

Señor, tu nombre exaltaré;  
y me gozo en alabarte.  
Pues mi vida eres tû;  
soy feliz pues nos salvaste.  
Del cielo al mundo  
llegaste a guiar.  
y del mundo a la cruz  
para salvar.  
A la tumba de la cruz,  
y al cielo de la tumba;  
yo, tu nombre exaltaré.

Rick Founds, ©1989 Maranatha! Music

## MAJESTY

Majesty, worship his majesty.  
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.  
Majesty, kingdom authority  
flow from his throne, unto his own; his anthem raise.  
So, exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.  
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the King.  
Majesty, worship his majesty;  
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.

Jack W. Hayford, © 1981 Rocksmith Music Co.

### Greetings from God and God's People

*All sing the refrain:*

Through north and south and east and west,  
may God's most holy name be blessed: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*All may be seated*

Greetings from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Dr. L. Edward Davis, stated clerk

Prayer . . . . . Herb Beyale, Jr., delegate from Classis Red Mesa

*Repeat refrain: "Through north and south . . ."*

Greetings from the Reformed Church in Japan

Dr. Yasunori Ichikawa, professor  
Kobe Reformed Theological Seminary

Prayer . . . . . Ms. Insoon Gho, Calvin Seminary graduate

*Repeat refrain: "Through north and south . . ."*

### PROCLAIMING THE WORD

**Sung Prayer for Illumination:** "Send Out Your Light and Your Truth"

*Psalter Hymnal 165*

**Old Testament Lesson:** Micah 6:6-8 . . . . . Mrs. Yvonne Rayburn-Beckley,  
Member of Pullman CRC

**New Testament Lesson:** Luke 10:25-37 . . . . . Rev. Richard E. Williams,  
Pastor of Pullman CRC

**Sermon:** We Need Our Neighbors . . . . . Rev. Richard E. Williams

**Prayer of Application**

### RESPONSE OF FAITH AND COMMITMENT

*All please stand*

Hymn: "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" . . . . . *Psalter Hymnal 602*

## Testimonies of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

*All please recite the creed in your own language*

*All may be seated*

Recognition of those who bring the Word and witness around the world

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Mr. Andy Ryskamp, executive director-elect

Home Missions ..... Rev. John Rozeboom, executive director

World Missions ..... Rev. Merle Den Bleyker, executive director

Chaplains ..... Rev. Jacob Heerema, director, Chaplaincy Ministries

Calvin Theological Seminary ..... New candidates for the ministry

Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary

Intercessory Prayers ..... Rev. Howard Vanderwell, president of synod

Offering ..... Scholarship fund for multiethnic leadership

Musical offering by the Youth Band

Hymn: "Lift Up Your Hearts unto the Lord" ..... *Psalter Hymnal* 309

## COMMUNION AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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 and praise.**

Minister: With joy we praise you, gracious God,  
for you have created heaven and earth,  
made us in your image, and kept covenant with us—  
even when we fell into sin.

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who by his life, death, and resurrection  
opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we join our voices  
with all the saints and angels and the whole creation  
to proclaim the glory of your name.

*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 he comes again. At his last supper, the Lord Jesus 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, he took the cup, after supper, and said, "This cup is the new

covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me." For whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (I Cor. 11:23-26). Therefore we proclaim our faith as signed and sealed in this sacrament:

People: **Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.**

#### Prayer of Consecration

Minister: Lord, our God, send your Holy Spirit so that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love. Gather your whole church, O Lord, into the glory of your kingdom. We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray,

*(Please pray the Lord's Prayer in your own language)*

#### The Invitation

Minister: Congregation of 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 as Lord, are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord.

The gifts of God for the people of God!

#### The Communion

*Please come forward as directed, take the bread, and dip it in the cup. When you hear the words "The body of Christ was given for you" and "The blood of Christ was shed for you," you may wish to respond with "Amen."*

*During Communion we will sing the following songs:*

*"Eat This Bread" . . . . . Psalter Hymnal 312*

*"Glorify Thy Name" ("Father, We Love You") . . . . . Psalter Hymnal 634*

*"Alleluia"*

*"Let Us Break Bread Together" . . . . . Psalter Hymnal 304*

*"As the Deer Pants for the Water"*

#### DEPARTING TO SERVE

*All please stand*

**Closing Hymn:** "Bless the Lord, O My Soul" . . . . . *Psalter Hymnal 627*

#### Parting Blessing

**Doxology:** "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" . . . *Psalter Hymnal 637*

**Postlude** . . . . . Youth Band

Members of the Worship Band:

John Matias and John Rickardo Rivera, vocalists  
Ralph Van Tienhoven, keyboard  
Jose Espindola, guitar  
Eric Likkel, saxophone  
Robert Gwaivo, bass  
Jerry Shira, drums

Members of the Youth Band:

Janey Hong  
Arnold Kim  
Eugene Kim  
Teddy Kim  
Jina Koh  
Ken Lee, leader  
James Park  
John Won

Organist: Dr. Emily R. Brink, CRC music and liturgy editor

Worship leader: Rev. John Matias, associate director,  
multicultural admissions, Calvin College

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### PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES FOR CRC MINISTRY 1998

\*Aasman, John T. (Joann)

\*Apoll, Philip A.  
Baarda, Steven G.

\*Bruins, Rozanne Meyer (George), Abigail, Leah, and Paul  
Byker, Robert J.

\*Byma, Peter R. (Cheri), Matthew, Christine, Rachel, and Ryan  
de Vuyst, Gerald D.

Douma, John P.

\*Gho, Insoon J.  
Grotenhuis, Todd M.

\*Holtrop, Cindy K.

\*Jeltema, David J. (Roberta), Cassandra  
Jordan, Kevin L.

\*Kempkes, William J. (Sue), Mike, Jess, Beth, and Jim

\*Ko, Victor Y. (Eunea), Johanna

\*Kok, Philip D.

\*Kuperus, Timothy A. (Heidi)

\*Kuyvenhoven, Leonard A. (Sue), Jake and Alison

\*LeMahieu, Jean C. Hoolsema (Tim), Chad, Jennifer, and Amanda  
Persenaire-Hogeterp, Henry

\*Pimentel, Alejandro (Ana Maria), Fiorella and Claudia

\*Ricardo, Eufemio (Amy), Rebeca and Samantha

\*Sytsma, William R. (Staci)

\*Van Wolde, Arthur J. (Amy), Lydia, Maria, and Anna  
Venhuizen, Steven W.

Watson, David K.

\*Westra, Erick D.

\*Won, Timothy Sang-Joon (Natalie)

\*Yu, Ki Cheol (Paul) (Suelan), Hanel

\*Candidates present at service.

Names of spouses (in parentheses) and children who are present are also given.

# MINUTES OF SYNOD 1998

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 13, 1998

## First Session

### ARTICLE 1

President pro tem Rev. Richard E. Williams, pastor of Pullman Christian Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois, the convening church, announces *Psalter Hymnal* 502, "The Church's One Foundation."

Rev. Williams reads from I John 5:13-15. He briefly addresses synod, reminding the delegates that they are at Synod 1998 on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church to do the work that God created them to do. He quotes Ephesians 2:10—"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"—and concludes that synod is one of those good works. He reminds the delegates to ask God for wisdom to be able to discern in all the discussions and debates what God wants to be done, and he asks the delegates to exercise patience, to show love for all brothers, and to listen to one another. "You may agree to disagree, but do it all in love and patience," he urges. Rev. Williams closes his message by assuring the delegates that they may approach God with confidence, knowing that he will hear us and will answer our prayers according to the riches of his grace. The president pro tem leads in prayer and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 508, "Jesus, with Your Church Abide."

He recognizes Dr. John Hamersma, a professor of music at Calvin College and organist for the opening session.

### ARTICLE 2

The president pro tem requests the general secretary, Dr. David H. Engelhard, to call the roll of delegates listed on the credentials of the forty-seven classes:

### DELEGATES TO SYNOD 1998

Classis	Ministers	Elders
Alberta North	Homer G. Samplonius Martin T. Mobach	Herman Berkenbosch Terry E. Visser
Alberta South/Saskatchewan	Herman Salomons James D. Zondervan	Allan Kielstra Roy Bil
Arizona	Jonathan D. Westra Gilbert J. Kamps	Ed S. Boschma Harvey Jansen
Atlantic Northeast	Verlan G. Van Ee Carl W. Bergman	Edward H. De Vries Henry G. Kuperus

Classis	Ministers	Elders
B.C. North-West	Leonard H. Batterink John Van Hemert	Geerlof Bomhof Gerry Bruins
B.C. South-East	Gerrit Veenerman Rudy W. Ouwehand	Norman Brouwer Henk Van Huizen
California South	Neville L. Koch Tong K. Park	Dirk Jasperse Hyung J. Kim
Central California	Gerard L. Dykstra Wendell M. Gebben	Peter E. Hoekstra Cornelius (Conn) J. Witt
Chatham	Peter Nicolai Michael W. Bootsma	Peter J. Berghuis Jan W. Van Reenen
Chicago South	Timothy P. Hoekstra Anthony Van Zanten	Marvin H. De Vries Norman C. Vander Wel
Columbia	D. Vance Hays Carl J. Leep	Herbert Roos Arie H. Jongeneel
Eastern Canada	Allan C. Groen Nicolaas Cornelisse	Henk Breimer John M. Kralt
Georgetown	Howard D. Vanderwell Allan H. Jongsma	Maynard W. Wildeboer Thomas Van Zalen
Grand Rapids East	Duane K. Kelderman Russell Palsrok	Phillip J. Quist William K. Blickley
Grand Rapids North	Douglas A. Warners John L. Hoekwater	Jay H. Kuiper Bing S. Goei
Grand Rapids South	John J. Steigenga David A. Struyk	Jim Haagsma Ted J. Baas
Grandville	Gerald D. Postema Douglas R. Zimmerman	Larry D. Groothuis James Roskam
Greater Los Angeles	Peter H. Kim David R. Koll	Francisco Golon Gordon H. De Young
Hackensack	Ricardo E. Orellana Joel E. Kok	Thomas J. Henion Ezequiel N. Romero
Hamilton	A. Carl Geelynse John Zantingh	Neil Paul Donald R. Hoekstra
Heartland	Peter J. Mans Timothy E. Van Zalen	Bruce D. LeFever Duane E. Pals
Holland	Marvin J. Hofman Anthony L. Louwerse	Stanley J. Koster Sander de Haan
Hudson	Kenneth J. Verhulst John C. Fisher	David Lowe Donald D. Holwerda
Huron	Nathaniel J. Elgersma Jack A. Quartel	Jerry Van Dyk Harry H. Sjaarda
Iakota	Stanley R. Scripps Warren H. Lammers	Stanley Sybesma Lew Arkema
Illiana	Gerald L. Hoek Gregory S. Janke	Richard G. Vander Woude Bernard Smit
Kalamazoo	Carl R. Bolt G. Duane Nieuwsma	Leonard D. Klok Louis J. Meinema
Lake Erie	Leonard T. Riemersma Paul E. Bakker	Paul R. Bouman Kenneth C. Ludema
Lake Superior	James G. Busscher James Admiraal	Andrew Tensen Arthur J. Rooze
Minnesota South	David E. Den Haan Kevin J. Vryhof	Robert P. Schoone-Jongen Howard De Weerd
Muskegon	Edward C. Visser Carl H. Bruxvoort	James Saladin Ron Kuiper
Niagara	Jerry J. Hoytema Richard J. de Lange	John Van Der Beek Richard Verburg
Northcentral Iowa	George M. McGuire P. Wayne Townsend	Herbert Mulder Mick E. Vanden Bosch

Classis	Ministers	Elders
Northern Illinois	Joel J. Sheeres Lugene L. Schemper	Martin LaMaire Ted De Jong
Northern Michigan	Scott D. Los Kenneth D. Koning	Edward W. Berkompas Gerry Gernaat
Pacific Hanmi	Seung Jai Kang In Chul Kim	Tai Ho Kim Seung Won Yoon
Pacific Northwest	Harvey A. Brink Michael J. Kooy	George Y. Kim Marvin G. Vander Pol
Pella	William D. Zeilstra Douglas M. MacLeod	Raymond Klyn Calvin L. Rozenboom
Quinte	John Visser William T. Koopmans	Ralph Pypker John Kloosterman
Red Mesa	Donald E. Byker Robert L. Jipping	Duane Chimoni Herb Beyale, Jr.
Rocky Mountain	William Verhoef Robert A. Lyzenga	Kenneth D. Ruter Richard L. Anema
Southeast U.S.	Luis A. Pellecer Stanley J. Workman	Owen J. Baas George N. De Boer
Thornapple Valley	R. Scott Greenway Martin J. Vellekoop	Ralph J. Cok Cornelius D. Korhorn
Toronto	Jack B. Vos Herman Van Niejenhuis	Gary Maas Enno J. Meijers
Wisconsin	Larry L. Meyer Edward J. Laarman	Steven M. Baas David Katsma
Yellowstone	J. William Van Der Heide Bernard J. Van Ee	Arthur R. Koenes Leon H. Smit
Zeeland	Gerry G. Heyboer Bernard F. Tol	Stanley E. Zemaitis, Jr. Harvey Jongekrijg

The roll call indicates that the following delegates are absent: Rev. Homer G. Samplonius (Alberta North), Elder Peter E. Hoekstra (Central California), Rev. Anthony Van Zanten (Chicago South), Rev. D. Vance Hays and Rev. Carl J. Leep (Columbia), Elder Gordon H. De Young (Greater Los Angeles), Rev. Ricardo E. Orellana and Elder Thomas J. Henion (Hackensack), Elder Duane E. Pals (Heartland), David Lowe (Hudson), Elder Kenneth C. Ludema (Lake Erie), Elder Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi), Rev. Michael J. Kooy (Pacific Northwest), Elder Duane Chimoni (Red Mesa), Rev. Stanley J. Workman (Southeast U.S.), Rev. Bernard J. Van Ee (Yellowstone).

Rev. Ronald G. Kool (alternate) is present for the Saturday-afternoon session for Rev. John J. Steigenga (Grand Rapids South).

### ARTICLE 3

The assembly proceeds to elect officers by ballot.

The following are elected:

President: Rev. Howard D. Vanderwell

Vice President: Rev. Jack B. Vos

First Clerk: Elder Stanley J. Koster

Second Clerk: Rev. Peter Nicolai

### ARTICLE 4

The president pro tem welcomes the officers to the podium and congratulates them.

The president of synod, Rev. Howard D. Vanderwell, expresses the appreciation of synod to Pullman Christian Reformed Church for its willingness to serve as convening church for Synod 1998 and to Rev. Richard Williams for his participation in the opening of synod.

On behalf of himself and the other officers, he thanks synod for the confidence it has placed in them to lead synod during the next week. He states that he wants two things for synod—first, that delegates will enjoy it as a deeply satisfying experience and, second, that they will be encouraged with regard to the life and vitality of the Christian Reformed Church. He reads from James 1:5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him," and he urges the delegates to claim this verse for the duration of synod.

#### ARTICLE 5

The president, having requested the delegates to rise, reads the Public Declaration of Agreement with the Forms of Unity, to which the delegates respond with their assent.

#### ARTICLE 6

The president of synod welcomes the denominational officers (general secretary and executive director of ministries), the seminary faculty advisers, the ethnic advisers, and the representatives of denominational boards and agencies. Both the college and seminary presidents are away on assignment and will be present beginning Monday morning.

The executive director of ministries, Dr. Peter Borgdorff, introduces denominational staff present: Mr. Gary Mulder (executive director of CRC Publications), Mr. Kenneth Horjus (director of finance and administration), Ms. Beth Swagman (director of Pastoral Ministries), and Ms. Norma Coleman (director of personnel).

The general secretary welcomes and introduces the ethnic advisers to synod: Rev. Paul S. Lam, Mr. James Mutoigo, Rev. Elmer Tandayu, and Rev. Dante A. Venegas. Rev. Jai-Sung Shim will arrive later.

Dr. Engelhard welcomes Mrs. Eileen Christofferson, who has been commissioned by Classis Rocky Mountain to serve as a prayer intercessor at and for synod.

#### ARTICLE 7

The following schedule is adopted: morning session, 8:00-11:45; afternoon, 1:15-5:15; evening, 7:00-10:00; coffee breaks at 9:45 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

#### ARTICLE 8

The general secretary calls the attention of delegates and visitors to the following matters:

##### **I. Confidentiality of the executive sessions of synod**

The Board of Trustees calls the matter of confidentiality to the attention of Synod 1998 and urges that all necessary precautions be taken to prevent violations of confidentiality.

Synod 1954 stated that “the very principle of executive sessions, or sessions that are not open to the public, involves the practical implication that reporters may not ‘report’” (*Acts of Synod 1954*, p. 15). “If reporters are not permitted to report on executive sessions of synod, it is certainly a breach of confidentiality also for delegates to the synodical assembly to report—publicly, orally, or in print—on the discussions held in an executive session of synod” (cf. *Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 16).

## II. Audio and video recordings of synod

Synod 1979 authorized the making of an official audio recording of the entire proceedings of the general sessions of synod as a way to verify the written record of the synodical proceedings. Although the general sessions of synod are recorded, executive sessions are not taped. Delegates to synod are informed at the opening session of synod that all the general sessions are being taped. Synod has designated that the office of the general secretary be responsible for the use and storage of these materials.

The following regulations were adopted by Synod 1989 concerning audio and video recordings of synodical sessions by media representatives and visitors:

A. Representatives of the media are permitted to make video recordings of synodical proceedings provided they observe the restrictions placed upon them by the synodical news office under the direction of the general secretary of synod.

### B. Visitor privileges

1. Visitors are at liberty to make audio recordings of the public proceedings of synod provided they do so unobtrusively (i.e., in no way inhibiting or disturbing either the proceedings of synod, the synodical delegates, or other persons).
2. Video recordings are permitted provided the following restrictions are observed:
  - a. Video cameras are permitted only at the entrances, not backstage or in the wings.
  - b. Auxiliary lighting is not permitted.
  - c. Videotaping is to be done unobtrusively (i.e., in such a way that it in no way inhibits or disturbs either the proceedings of synod, the synodical delegates, or other persons).

(*Acts of Synod 1989*, p. 445)

## ARTICLE 9

The general secretary presents the report of the Program Committee, which recommends the following advisory committees for Synod 1998:

### *Committee 1—Synodical Services*

**Chairman:** William Verhoef; **reporter:** John Zantingh; **ministers:** Carl W. Bergman, Carl R. Bolt, Timothy P. Hoekstra, Allan H. Jongsma, Martin T. Mobach, Tong Kun Park, Luis A. Pellecer, Herman Van Niejenhuis, Edward C. Visser; **elders:** Edward W. Berkompas, Herb Beyale, Jr., William K. Blickley, Edward H. De Vries, Hyung J. Kim, Harry H. Sjaarda, Leon H. Smit, Marvin G. Vander Pol, Richard G. Vander Woude, Jerry Van Dyk.

### *Committee 2—Missions*

**Chairman:** Gilbert J. Kamps; **reporter:** Anthony Van Zanten; **ministers:** R. Scott Greenway, Allan C. Groen, In Chul Kim, Anthony L. Louwerse, David A. Struyk, Verlan G. Van Ee, Douglas A. Warners; **elders:** Peter J. Berghuis,

Howard De Weerd, Harvey Jongekrijg, Allan Kielstra, Raymond Klyn, David Lowe, Duane E. Pals, Kenneth D. Ruter, Henk Van Huizen, Maynard W. Wildeboer; **advisers:** Gary J. Bekker, James Mutoigo.

#### *Committee 3—Education*

**Chairman:** Warren H. Lammers; **reporter:** David R. Koll; **ministers:** Michael W. Bootsma, D. Vance Hays, Robert L. Jipping, Seung Jai Kang, Kenneth D. Koning, George M. McGuire, Kevin J. Vryhof, Stanley J. Workman, James D. Zondervan; **elders:** Lewis G. Arkema, Owen J. Baas, Herman Berkenbosch, Ed S. Boschma, Norman Brouwer, Jay H. Kuiper, Ezequiel N. Romero, James Saladin, Cornelius (Conn) J. Witt; **advisers:** Gaylen J. Byker, James A. De Jong, Jai Shim.

#### *Committee 4—Publications*

**Chairman:** Harvey A. Brink; **reporter:** Herman Salomons; **ministers:** Scott D. Los, Douglas M. MacLeod, Ricardo E. Orellana, P. Wayne Townsend, Bernard J. Van Ee, Jonathan D. Westra, William D. Zeilstra, Douglas R. Zimmerman; **elders:** Roy Bil, Henk Breimer, George N. De Boer, Jim Haagsma, Donald D. Holwerda, Leonard D. Klok, Ron Kuiper, Arthur J. Rooze, Richard Verburg, Stanley E. Zemaitis; **advisers:** David E. Holwerda, Paul S. Lam.

#### *Committee 5—Pastoral Ministries*

**Chairman:** Jack A. Quartel; **reporter:** Sander de Haan; **ministers:** James G. Busscher, Donald E. Byker, David E. Den Haan, Gerald L. Hoek, Peter J. Mans, Gerald D. Postema, Leonard T. Riemersma, Stanley R. Scripps, Joel J. Sheeres, J. William Van Der Heide; **elders:** Geerlof Bomhof, Thomas J. Henion, David Katsma, John M. Kralt, Henry G. Kuperus, Louis J. Meinema, Neil Paul, Ralph Pypker, Seung Won Yoon; **advisers:** Arie C. Leder, Dante Venegas.

#### *Committee 6—Financial Matters*

**Chairman:** Gerard L. Dykstra; **reporter:** Philip J. Quist; **ministers:** Paul E. Bakker, Nicolaas Cornelisse, John C. Fisher, Peter H. Kim, Robert A. Lyzenga, G. Duane Nieuwsma; **elders:** Paul R. Bouman, Ralph J. Cok, Marvin H. De Vries, Larry D. Groothuis, Peter E. Hoekstra, Harvey Jansen, Dirk Jasperse, Arie H. Jongeneel, George Y. Kim, Arthur R. Koenes, Gary Maas, Stanley Sybesma, Terry E. Visser.

#### *Committee 7—Interdenominational Matters*

**Chairman:** Bing S. Goei; **reporter:** Russell Palsrok; **ministers:** Nathaniel J. Elgersma, John L. Hoekwater, Jerry J. Hoytema, Michael J. Kooy, Edward J. Laarman, Lugene L. Schemper, Bernard F. Tol, John Van Hemert, Timothy E. Van Zalen, Martin J. Vellekoop; **elders:** Gordon H. De Young, Gerry Gernaat, Donald R. Hoekstra, Tai Ho Kim, John Kloosterman, Herbert Mulder, Robert P. Schoone-Jongen, Andrew Tensen, Thomas Van Zalen; **adviser:** John Bolt.

#### *Committee 8—Appeals*

**Chairman:** Homer G. Samplonius; **reporter:** Leonard H. Batterink; **ministers:** James Admiraal, Carl H. Bruxvoort, Wendell M. Gebben, Gerry G. Heyboer, Joel E. Kok, Carl J. Leep, Larry L. Meyer, John J. Steigenga, Gerrit Veeneman; **elders:** Francisco Golon, Cornelius D. Korhorn, Martin LaMaire, Bruce D. LeFever, Kenneth C. Ludema, Enno J. Meijers, James Roskam, Bernard Smit, Mick E. Vanden Bosch, John Van Der Beek; **adviser:** Henry De Moor.

*Committee 9—Church Order*

**Chairman:** Duane K. Kelderman; **reporter:** William T. Koopmans;  
**ministers:** Richard J. de Lange, A. Carel Geleyse, Marvin J. Hofman, Gregory S. Janke, Neville L. Koch, Rudy W. Ouwehand, Kenneth J. Verhulst, John Visser; **elders:** Richard L. Anema, Steven M. Baas, Ted J. Baas, Gerry Bruins, Duane Chimoni, Ted De Jong, Herbert Roos, Calvin L. Rozenboom, Jan W. Van Reenen, Norman C. Vander Wel; **advisers:** Henry De Moor, David E. Holwerda, Elmer Tandayu.

*Committee 10—Judicial Code Committee*

**Chairman:** Donald F. Oosterhouse (1997); **reporter:** John G. Van Ryn;  
**members:** Case Admiraal, Richard Bouma, Harvey J. Bratt (1997), Jeanne Engelhard, Carl Oosterhouse, Wietse Posthumus, Reid Smeda, Kathy Vandegrift, Loren Veldhuizen, Jean Vogelzang (1997).

That synod adopt the Program Committee's report and the advisory committees for Synod 1998 as presented.

—Adopted

ARTICLE 10

The general secretary presents the Agenda Directory for Synod 1998, which contains a complete listing of every matter on the agenda that requires synodical action. He indicates where the materials may be found and to which advisory committee each item has been assigned.

ARTICLE 11

The general secretary expresses thanks to Professors Edward G. Nielsen, Steven H. Vander Leest, and Robert J. Hoeksema from the Engineering Department of Calvin College for the new electronic balloting system. In addition to these three, the following participated in designing, manufacturing, and assembling the system:

*Electronics and software design and testing:* Randall J. Brouwer, Calvin engineering faculty; Kenneth D. Hoekman, engineering technician; Charles E. Holwerda, electronics technician; Dean Ter Haar, electrical engineer; Douglas Bynam and Ross Stoepker, electrical engineers at Laser Alignment Inc.; Tim Friend, electrical engineer at X-Rite Inc.

*Enclosure design and manufacture:* John G. De Vries, shop supervisor; Gerrit Hoeksema and Clarence Schipper, volunteer machinists; James Mader and Jaime Hirmas, metal-shop student employees; Henry Willis, Biology Department student employee.

*Circuit-board manufacture:* Jack Doornbos, president, Petra Electronic Manufacturing, Inc.

*Key-pad assembly:* Michelle Krul, engineering administrative assistant; Suanne Sweetman and Michelle Popescu, science-division secretaries.

*Assembly, testing, and parts ordering:* Dustin Van Stee, engineering summer intern; Timothy Lund, Philip Glewen, and Tanveer Singh, engineering research students.

*Original prototype:* Matthew J. George, Gregory Hess, Saurabh Sachdeva, and Jeffrey Van Dorp, Calvin engineering students.

#### ARTICLE 12

The vice president of synod, Rev. Jack B. Vos, leads the assembly in closing prayer, and synod adjourns at 6:05 p.m. Synod will meet in joint session with the Multiethnic Conference on Saturday evening, and it will reconvene on Monday at 8:00 a.m.

### MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 15, 1998

#### Second Session

#### ARTICLE 13

Rev. Jack Vos, vice president, announces *Psalter Hymnal* 438, "When Morning Gilds the Sky." He reads from Psalm 133 and Ephesians 3:14-21 and leads in opening prayer. He announces *Psalter Hymnal* 601, "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love."

The roll call indicates that Rev. Homer G. Samplonius (Alberta North), Elder Peter E. Hoekstra (Central California), Rev. Anthony Van Zanten (Chicago South), Rev. D. Vance Hays and Rev. Carl J. Leep (Columbia), Elder Gordon H. De Young (Greater Los Angeles), Rev. Ricardo E. Orellana and Elder Thomas J. Henion (Hackensack), Elder Duane E. Pals (Heartland), Elder David Lowe (Hudson), Elder Kenneth C. Ludema (Lake Erie), Rev. Michael J. Kooy (Pacific Northwest), Elder Duane Chimoni (Red Mesa), Rev. Stanley J. Workman (Southeast U.S.), and Rev. Bernard J. Van Ee (Yellowstone) are now present. They rise to express agreement with the forms of unity.

Rev. Stanley R. Scripps (Iakota) and Elder Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi) are absent.

#### ARTICLE 14

The officers of synod announce the following appointment:

Sergeant at Arms:

Elder Thomas J. Henion (Classis Hackensack)

#### ARTICLE 15

The morning session is adjourned at 8:25 a.m. so that delegates can work in advisory committees. Synod will reconvene at 3:15 p.m.

### MONDAY AFTERNOON, June 15, 1998

#### Third Session

#### ARTICLE 16

The president welcomes and introduces Dr. James A. De Jong, president of Calvin Theological Seminary, and Dr. Gaylen J. Byker, president of Calvin College. Dr. Byker welcomes the delegates to the Calvin College campus and briefly addresses them.

The officers of synod announce the following appointments:

Devotions Committee:

- Rev. Allan H. Jongsma (Classis Georgetown)
- Rev. Allan C. Groen (Classis Eastern Canada)

Minutes-Review Committee:

- Rev. Marvin J. Hofman (Classis Holland)
- Elder Robert P. Schoone-Jongen (Minnesota South)

## ARTICLE 17

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. John Zantingh reporting, presents the following:

### Board of Trustees

#### A. *Materials*

1. Board of Trustees Report, pp. 19-62 (except Section II, A, 5, p. 23)
2. Board of Trustees Supplement (Sections V; VIII, A; Appendix B, II, C)

#### B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Mr. William Weidenaar, chairman of the Board; Dr. David H. Engelhard, general secretary; Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries; and Mr. Kenneth Horjus, director of finance and administration, when matters pertaining to the Board of Trustees are discussed.

—*Granted*

2. That synod adopt the recommendations regarding ethnic diversity contained in the Board of Trustees report on diversity (BOT Supplement, Section V and Appendix B, II, C).
  - a. That classes be encouraged to sponsor workshops or retreats on racial inclusiveness and justice for classical leaders and delegates.
  - b. That classes be encouraged to sponsor sensitivity-training/diversity workshops for congregational leaders and congregations.
  - c. That classes be encouraged to recruit and delegate ethnic-minority persons to synod, to agency boards, and to classical standing committees.
  - d. That synod appoint at least one ethnic-minority person (either delegate or ethnic adviser) to serve on each advisory committee of synod and that ethnic advisers be given orientation and training for their task.
  - e. That the general secretary, with the Multiethnic Conference Planning Committee, plan for the continuing interaction of the Multiethnic Conference with synod with the goal of increasing cultural sensitivity, racial justice, and racial reconciliation.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod receive with appreciation the interim Report Regarding Ethnic and Racial Diversity, especially the board and agency responses (see *Acts of Synod 1998*, Appendix B, pp. 264-70).

—*Adopted*

Mrs. Victoria Gibbs, coordinator of the Multiethnic Conference, briefly addresses synod on behalf of the conferees of the Multiethnic Conference who are in attendance at this session of synod. The general secretary expresses gratitude to Mrs. Gibbs for the many hours she has devoted to the conference; he also recognizes and thanks the conference-planning-committee members who are present.

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 24.)

## ARTICLE 18

Advisory Committee 10, Judicial Code Committee, Rev. John G. Van Ryn, reporter, presents the following:

### I. Introduction

During the last several years the Judicial Code Committee (JCC) has had a light agenda. Those who have been assisted by JCC testify that the experience has been a good one and has proved helpful. The committee wonders whether members of the denomination are aware of this avenue for settling certain differences that arise in the life of the church. It reminds the churches that the Judicial Code of Rights and Procedures can be found in the Church Order Supplement, Article 30-c.

The JCC has handled one appeal since the last meeting of synod. Since this case was considered while Donald Oosterhouse was still serving as chairperson, it is requested that Mr. Donald Oosterhouse and Rev. John Van Ryn, reporter, be given the privilege of the floor should there be questions about this report.

### II. The case of Eric F. Evenhuis and Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of Traverse City, Michigan

—Rev. Eric F. Evenhuis, D. Min., Complainant

—Fellowship CRC of Classis Northern Michigan, Respondent

#### A. *Materials*

1. Letter to Dr. Engelhard from Rev. and Mrs. Eric Evenhuis dated April 1, 1997
2. Response from Fellowship Church addressed to Mr. Donald Oosterhouse and the Judicial Code Committee
3. Minutes of Classis Northern Michigan, September 26, 1995, Article 15

#### B. *Background*

Eric Evenhuis is an ordained minister in the Christian Reformed Church who served as part of the ministry team of Fellowship CRC of Traverse City, Michigan, from November 1993 until August 4, 1995. He was engaged in a counseling ministry associated with the church. Tensions developed between Evenhuis and other staff members on the one hand and Pastor Jon DeBruyn on the other hand. The church council required the several parties to participate in mediation. If they did not, the council would release Rev. Evenhuis from his position. At that point Eric Evenhuis resigned. In September 1995 classis approved the release of Rev. Evenhuis under Church Order Article 16, along with remuneration for his severance, which included one month of salary for

each year or fraction of a year that Evenhuis had served in Traverse City. Classis committed itself to \$2,000 for moving expenses. Mrs. Evenhuis, who was a deacon, also resigned. Rev. and Mrs. Evenhuis are now living in California, where he continues in a counseling ministry; his ministerial credentials are being held by Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Chino, California.

### *C. Charge of Eric Evenhuis*

Evenhuis states, "The charge that needs formal adjudication is the recalcitrant position of the Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of Traverse City, Michigan, to meet their moral, ethical, and legal obligations of paying for my severance package entitled to me after the church forced me and other employees to resign our various positions. I am bringing this charge against the church after appealing to Classis Northern Michigan without success. Classis has been supportive of our attempts to bring this matter to a close."

The Judicial Code Committee (JCC) observes that this is not a charge against the classis or an appeal regarding the decision of classis. Evenhuis has made no appeal from the decision of classis, which determined severance pay at two months' salary. Evenhuis, in his April 1 letter to the JCC, requests a different severance package than that approved by classis, but the JCC is not in a position to deal with that since there is no charge against the classis. The JCC must respond to the charge against the church for not paying the two-month severance approved by Classis Northern Michigan.

### *D. Position of Fellowship CRC of Traverse City*

In presenting its case for not being obligated to pay severance for Dr. Evenhuis, the church places much emphasis upon the fact that Evenhuis was not its pastor and that his position did not require ordination. Therefore he was not covered by Article 16.

### *E. Some observations*

From the beginning there seems to have been indifference on the part of both Eric Evenhuis and the council of Fellowship CRC as to the matter of ministerial status and its implications. This lack of attention turned out to be to the disadvantage of both and to complicate the difficulty that later arose.

It would appear that the tensions between the various people were not dealt with adequately, and therefore many people were hurt.

Classis, while seeking to be understanding and gentle, would have served better by being more forceful in its decisions.

As to the issue before the JCC, Article 16, which requires that a severance arrangement be approved by classis, is not limited to ministers who are serving as senior pastors. Let it be noted that Evenhuis was and continues to be a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. He was issued the denominationally provided Letter of Call, dated September 13, 1993, with the words "Chaplain of Counseling" substituted for "Minister of the Word." He was installed as an associate pastor of Fellowship CRC on January 2, 1994. His credentials resided with Fellowship Church, and it transferred those credentials when he left. Classis treated him as an ordained minister and approved his release under Article 16.

Fellowship Church appealed to classis in September 1996 (against the classis decision of 1995) that it not be responsible for paying Evenhuis a severance since Evenhuis was not serving in a position requiring ordination.

Classis Northern Michigan maintained its position. Fellowship Church is now obligated to pay the severance approved by classis.

#### *F. Recommendations*

*Note:* The following recommendations were formulated in August 1997 and would have been forwarded to synod for action. Eric Evenhuis, Fellowship CRC, and Classis Northern Michigan were given the report of the JCC and informed of these recommendations.

1. That synod direct Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of Traverse City, Michigan, to provide Eric Evenhuis with a severance remuneration equal to two months' pay.
2. That synod direct Classis Northern Michigan to monitor the payment. In the event the parties are unable to agree on the amount of monthly salary, the Classical Interim Committee of Classis Northern Michigan shall make that determination.

#### *G. Consequent actions of classis*

Classis Northern Michigan at its September 1997 meeting considered the report of the JCC and appointed a committee to work with Fellowship Church. After several meetings the committee made recommendations to the classis. At its March 1998 meeting, Classis Northern Michigan decided the following (Minutes, Art. 19):

1. Classis will make the severance payment to Eric Evenhuis.
2. Fellowship Church will give high priority to making monthly payments of the classical ministry shares.
3. Fellowship Church will have one visiting pastor of classis preach for it each year.
4. The present committee will meet with Fellowship CRC in the fall of 1998 to gauge progress.

#### *H. Response of Eric Evenhuis*

Eric Evenhuis believes it is important to move on from here. He is grateful for the efforts of the Judicial Code Committee and classis. He is willing to accept this decision of classis and therefore withdraws his appeal to synod.

### **III. Recommendation**

A. That synod receive as information that Eric Evenhuis has withdrawn his appeal and note its appreciation to Rev. Evenhuis for accepting this solution of classis.

—Adopted

B. That synod express its appreciation to Classis Northern Michigan for paying the severance and for continuing to work with Fellowship Church:

—Adopted

## ARTICLE 19

The afternoon session is adjourned at 4:25 p.m. so that delegates can continue to work in advisory committees. Synod will reconvene on Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. Rev. Nicolaas Cornelisse leads in closing prayer.

## TUESDAY MORNING, June 16, 1998

### Fourth Session

## ARTICLE 20

Elder Stanley J. Koster, first clerk, announces *Psalter Hymnal* 501, "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing." He relates an event he experienced in Israel; reads a passage that has become very meaningful to him, Romans 8:12-17; and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 506, "Like a River Glorious."

The roll call indicates that Rev. Stanley J. Scripps (Iakota) is now present. He rises to express agreement with the forms of unity. Elder Hyung J. Kim (California South) and Rev. Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi) are absent.

## ARTICLE 21

Advisory Committee 3, Education, Rev. David R. Koll reporting, presents the following:

### I. Calvin College

#### A. Materials

1. Calvin College Report, pp. 71-73
2. Calvin College Supplement

#### B. Recommendations

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chair of the board, Ms. Sheri D. Haan; the vice chair of the board, Mr. Milton Kuyers; the secretary of the board, Rev. Edward Blankespoor; and the president of the college, Dr. Gaylen Byker, when matters pertaining to the college are presented.  
—Granted
2. That synod ratify the following new administrative appointments:
  - a. Richard H. Harms, Ph.D., Curator of the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary Archives and Archivist of the Christian Reformed Church, two and one-half years, beginning January 12, 1998.
  - b. Michael J. Stob, Ph.D., Academic Dean for the Natural Sciences and Mathematics and for the Contextual Disciplines, three years, effective August 1, 1998.
  - c. Mr. Glenn Remelts, M.A., Director of the Hekman Library, three years, effective August 1, 1998.

—Adopted

3. That synod ratify the following reappointments with tenure (*italics indicate promotion to that rank*):

- a. Joel C. Adams, Ph.D., *Professor of Computer Science.*
- b. Claudia De Vries Beversluis, Ph.D., *Professor of Psychology.*
- c. Marilyn Bierling, Ph.D., *Professor of Spanish.*
- d. Christiana de Groot van Houten, Ph.D., *Professor of Religion and Theology.*
- e. Richard J. Plantinga, Ph.D., *Professor of Religion and Theology.*
- f. Kenneth E. Pomykala, Ph.D., *Professor of Religion and Theology.*
- g. Steven D. Steenwyk, Ph.D., *Professor of Physics.*
- h. Steven R. Timmermans, Ph.D., *Professor of Education.*
- i. John L. Ubels, Ph.D., *Professor of Biology.*
- j. Steven K. Vander Veen, Ph.D., *Professor of Economics and Business.*

—*Adopted*

4. That synod give appropriate recognition to the following for their service to Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church and confer on them the titles listed below.

- a. Donald L. Boender, M.A., *Dean of Men and Director of Campus Events, Emeritus.*
- b. Albertus D. Bratt, Ph.D., *Professor of Biology, Emeritus (December 1997).*
- c. Gertrude A. Huizenga, Ph.D., *Professor of Music, Emerita.*
- d. Marvin E. Monsma, M.A.L.S., *Director of the Hekman Library, Emeritus.*
- e. Mary E. Zwaanstra, M.S.W., *Associate Professor of Social Work, Emerita.*
- f. Howard J. Van Till, Ph.D., *Professor of Physics, Emeritus.*

—*Adopted*

5. That synod ratify the following appointments to the board (terms beginning July 1, 1998, and running for three years):

a. Regional Trustees

Region	Delegate	Alternate	Term
Far West U.S. I	John W. De Vries	Jeffrey Dykema	2001
Far West U.S. II		Jack Veltkamp	2001
Great Plains	Charles J. De Ridder	Randall Engle	2001
Central U.S. III	Arnold Morren	Paul De Young	2001
Eastern U.S.	Gerald Gabrielse	Donna Kuiper	2001
Eastern Canada I	Henry Stronks	Calvin Davies	2001

b. Alumni trustee

Dr. Marvin Kusters 2001

c. At-large trustees

Dr. Jack Harkema 2001

Ms. Shirley Vogelzang Hoogstra 2001

Ms. Jacquelyn S. Vander Brug 2001

Mr. Michael A. Volkema 2001

—*Adopted*

## II. Youth-Ministry Committee

A. *Material*: Youth-Ministry Committee Report, pp. 167-71

### B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Youth-Ministry Committee chairperson, Dr. Robert Keeley, and the secretary, Ms. Glenda Tammimg.  
—*Granted*
2. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the United Calvinist Youth division directors: Mrs. Jan Boone, GEMS Girls' Clubs director; Mr. Richard Broene, Cadet Corp director; and Rev. Brian Bosscher, Youth Unlimited director.  
—*Granted*
3. That synod approve a change in one position description for the YMC: The position formerly held by a representative from Early Teen Ministry will now be held by a member-at-large with an early teen focus.  
—*Adopted*

## III. Dordt College

A. *Material*: Dordt College Report, pp. 189-90

### B. *Recommendation*

That synod acknowledge with thankfulness to God the blessings of Dordt College in the areas of student enrollment and academic quality, facility expansion, and financial support. It shares the college's concern over the decline in church giving.

—*Adopted*

## IV. Institute for Christian Studies

A. *Material*: Institute for Christian Studies Report, pp. 191-92

### B. *Recommendation*

That synod note with joy the thirtieth anniversary of Christian graduate education by the Institute for Christian studies.

—*Adopted*

## V. The King's University College

A. *Material*: The King's University College Report, p. 193

### B. *Recommendation*

That synod receive with gratitude and praise to a faithful God the report of The King's University College and take note of the positive developments in its student-life program, curriculum development, and increased endowment funding.

—*Adopted*

## VI. Redeemer College

A. *Material*: Redeemer College Report, p. 194

*B. Recommendation*

That synod give thanks to God with Redeemer College for an increased enrollment of a diverse student body and for the strong evidence of spiritual vitality among these students. That synod join in the prayer of the college that both faculty and student body will continue to find means to powerfully influence Canadian cultures for the kingdom of God.

**VII. Reformed Bible College**

A. *Material*: Reformed Bible College Report, p. 195

*B. Recommendation*

That synod receive the report of Reformed Bible College and give gratitude and praise to God for the 24 percent increase in enrollment for the 1997-1998 school year as RBC reaches toward its vision of reaching a student body of five hundred and that synod acknowledge with joy RBC's receipt of approval to offer a bachelor of science degree.

—*Adopted*

**VIII. Trinity Christian College**

A. *Material*: Trinity Christian College Report, pp. 196-97

*B. Recommendation*

That synod join in praising God for the continuing advances in programs, services, and new facilities at Trinity Christian College, as well as for its contribution to the greater Reformed community, and, furthermore, that synod reaffirm its recommendation that area classes faithfully support the work of Trinity Christian College.

—*Adopted*

**IX. Calvin Theological Seminary**

A. *Materials*

1. Calvin Theological Seminary Report, pp. 74-77
2. Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement

*B. Recommendations*

1. That Rev. Gerry Heyboer, chairman, and Mr. Mark Muller, secretary, be given the privilege of the floor when seminary matters are presented.

—*Granted*

2. That the following faculty and staff reappointments be approved (*italics* indicate an advance in rank):

Dr. Calvin P. Van Reken, *Professor* of Moral Theology with permanent tenure.

Mr. Paul Fields, Theological Librarian with continuing tenure.

Rev. Daniel Devadatta, Director of Recruitment and Financial Aid for two years, 1998-2000.

—*Adopted*

3. That the appointment of Dr. Dean Deppe as Assistant Professor of New Testament be approved, pending a successful interview. —Adopted
4. That the interview for Dr. Dean Deppe be scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 1998, at 7:15 p.m. and be held according to the regulations adopted by synod (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 69-70) and implemented as follows:
- a. That Rev. William D. Zeilstra be appointed to interview Dr. Deppe on behalf of synod for a maximum time of thirty minutes.
  - b. That questions be allowed from the delegates for a maximum time of thirty minutes.
- Adopted
5. That the appointment of Dr. Ronald J. Nydam as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care be approved, pending a successful interview. —Adopted
6. That the interview for Dr. Ronald J. Nydam be scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 1998, at 8:30 p.m. and be held according to the regulations adopted by synod (*Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 69-70) and implemented as follows:
- a. That Rev. John J. Steigenga be appointed to interview Dr. Nydam on behalf of synod for thirty minutes.
  - b. That questions be allowed from the delegates for a maximum time of thirty minutes.
- Adopted
7. That synod approve the election of regional trustees and their alternates to the seminary board for terms beginning on July 1, 1998, and running for three years.

Region	Delegate	Alternate	Term
Central U.S. I	Gerald Baas	Leonard Reedyk	2001
Central U.S. III	James Roskam	William Stoub	2001
Central U.S. IV	Norman Meyer	John Steigenga	2001
Eastern Canada II	John Barnstead	William Kort	2001
Western Canada	Herb de Ruyter	Jack Hielema	2001

—Adopted

## **X. Response to Overture 12: Discontinue the Practice of Separating Seminarians by Gender When Declaring Them Candidates for the Ministry**

A. *Material*: Overture 12, pp. 220-22

### **B. Background**

The advisory committee analyzed the procedural decision of Synod 1995 concerning the processing of candidates. In its judgment that decision seems to assume, but does not prescribe or require, that candidates for ministry will be presented to synod for approval as a group (i.e., for a "block vote"). This procedure had in fact been followed for a number of years. Earlier, however, synod for a time interviewed each candidate and voted on the candidacy of each one individually.

Synod 1995 did clearly decide that the seminary board and future synods “shall ensure that trustees and delegates may not be forced to participate against the dictates of their consciences” (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735). By proposing to vote on the candidates as a block, synod, in effect, “forces” those unpersuaded of women’s ordination either to abstain from voting on all candidates or to violate their consciences by voting one way or the other. Similarly, by proposing to separate the candidates into two groups, based on gender, the consciences of others are offended, as is expressed in Overture 12.

After discussing all sides of this difficulty, the advisory committee has prepared a proposal that it believes will satisfy both sides in this matter.

We pray that our recommendation will meet with the approval of synod and will allow us to continue walking together as a body of believers.

### C. Recommendations

1. That Synod 1998 vote for each potential candidate one at a time, in alphabetical order.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. Such a practice will lovingly address both the concerns of those in favor and of those against separating the list of candidates into two groups based on gender.
- b. Such a practice has precedence in earlier years of synod’s dealing with candidates.
- c. Such a practice uses well the new electronic technology that Synod 1998 is enjoying.

—Adopted

2. That this be synod’s response to Overture 12.

—Adopted

## XI. Calvin Theological Seminary (continued from IX)

8. That synod declare the following as candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, subject to completion of all requirements (each candidate to be voted upon individually):

Aasman, John T.  
Apoll, Philip A.  
Baarda, Steven G.  
Bruins, Rozanne Meyer  
Byker, Robert J.  
Byma, Peter R.  
de Vuyst, Gerard D.  
Douma, John P.  
Gho, Insoon J.  
Grotenhuis, Todd M.  
Holtrop, Cindy K.  
Jeltema, David J.  
Jordan, Kevin L.  
Kempes, William J.  
Ko, Victor Y.

Kok, Philip D.  
Kuperus, Timothy A.  
Kuyvenhoven, Leonard A.  
LeMahieu, Jean C. Hoolsema  
Persenaire-Hogeterp, Henry  
Pimentel, Alejandro  
Ricardo, Eufemio  
Sytsma, William R.  
Van Wolde, Arthur J.  
Venhuizen, Steven W.  
Watson, David K.  
Westra, Erick D.  
Won, Timothy Sang-Joon  
Yu, Ki Cheol (Paul)

—Adopted

9. That the following be granted a one-year extension of candidacy (each candidate to be voted upon individually):

Amanda J. Wiersma Benckhuizen  
Martin A. Benckhuizen  
Raymond Blacketer  
Daniel De Vries  
Michelle R.A. Gritter  
Shin Jae Hwang

—Adopted

10. That synod ratify two openings on the seminary faculty: one in systematic theology and one in philosophical and moral theology, with primary teaching responsibility in the Ph.D. program (contingent upon assurance of endowed funding for the Ph. D. professorship).

—Adopted

11. That the reappointment of Dr. Craig Van Gelder as Professor of Domestic Missiology with permanent tenure be ratified.

—Adopted

12. That synod acknowledge with gratitude to God the years of faithful service and effective teaching of Professors David Holwerda and Melvin Hugen and confer upon them, respectively, the titles of Professor of New Testament, Emeritus, and Professor of Pastoral Care, Emeritus.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 38.)

## ARTICLE 22

The executive director of ministries welcomes a delegation of Korean ministers from the Dae-Shin Presbyterian Church in Korea. They are here to observe synod and to visit the Christian Reformed Church in North America and several CRC ministries. They are led by the president of their seminary, Rev. Dr. John-Taek Kim.

## ARTICLE 23

Rev. Alfred S. Luke, director of Race Relations, introduces *Celebrate God's Wonderful Gift*, a video on diversity, which is shown to the delegates.

## ARTICLE 24

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 17.)

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. John Zantingh reporting, presents the following:

### I. Board of Trustees

#### A. Materials

1. Board of Trustees Report, pp. 19-62
2. Board of Trustees Supplement
3. Board of Trustees Supplement, Appendix C
4. Notifications of ministerial retirements

*B. Recommendations*

1. That synod ratify the appointment of Mr. Andrew Ryskamp as the executive director of CRWRC-U.S., effective July 1, 1998.

—Adopted

The president of synod congratulates Mr. Ryskamp on his appointment and wishes him God's blessing on his work as executive director of CRWRC-U.S. Mr. Ryskamp responds.

2. That synod approve the presentations of the agencies (The Back to God Hour and Calvin College) and the farewell address of Mr. John De Haan at a time of synod's choosing.

—Adopted

3. That synod schedule a time for a presentation of the denominational survey results by Dr. Rodger Rice and Ms. Ann Annis.

—Adopted

4. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the Board to the agency boards and the Youth-Ministry Committee.

a. Board appointments

Board	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term
Synodical Deputies	Alberta North		Rev. H. Vriend	
	California South		Rev. D.W. Lagerwey	
	Grand Rapids South	Rev. J.J. Steigenga		2001
	Hackensack		Rev. B. van Eyk	
CRC Publications	Northern Michigan		Rev. R. Brinks	
	Quinte	Rev. W.T. Koopmans		2000
	California South	Mrs. W. Klop		1998
	Central California		Mrs. L. Dykstra	
Home Missions	Chatham	Mrs. G. Miedema	Rev. R.T. Vander Vaart	2001
	Columbia		Mrs. B. Vander Beek	
	Greater Los Angeles		Rev. G. Varela	
	Pacific Hanmi	Rev. C.C. Cho		2001
World Missions	Pella	Rev. E. Vander Lugt		1999
	B.C. North-West		Mr. M. Jurrius	
	B.C. South-East	Rev. B.E. Gritter		2001
	Kalamazoo		Mrs. K. Apotheke	
CRWRC	Northern Michigan	Rev. J.W. Zuidema	Rev. D.J. Weemhof	2000
	Red Mesa	Mr. V. Pablo	Mr. T. Charles	2000
	Arizona		Rev. S.R. Steenstra	
	California South	Mr. E. Smith		2001
CRWRC	Grandville		Rev. C.G. Tapanes	
	Greater Los Angeles		Dr. J. Van Schepen	
	Northcentral Iowa		Rev. H. Dykema	
	Northern Michigan	Rev. W.R. De Young	Rev. J.D. Fox	2000
	Red Mesa		Rev. J.J. Greydanus	
	Wisconsin		Rev. L.J. Kuiper	
	Grandville		Mr. N. De Young	
	Greater Los Angeles	Mr. F.G. Golon		2000
	Hamilton		Mr. V. Kooistra	
	Lake Superior		Mr. R. Kroll	
CRWRC	Minnesota South	Mr. R. Huisken		2000
	Northcentral Iowa		Mr. D. Mathison	
	Pacific Northwest	Mr. J. De Boer	Mrs. G. Visser	2000

b. Youth-Ministries Committee

Rev. David D. Poolman to a three-year term to replace Mr. James K. Jackson, who moved out of the area.

—Adopted

5. That synod accept the invitation from First CRC, Orange City, Iowa, to convene Synod 2003 and that the meetings of that synod be held at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

*Grounds:*

- a. It is occasionally good to hold synodical meetings in different areas where the denomination is represented.  
b. The expenses, with the exception of travel, will be comparable to the expenses charged by Calvin College.

—Adopted

6. That synod adopt the following recommendation: That a classis permitting deacons to be seated as delegates shall regulate its voting for regional representatives on denominational boards by permitting only two votes to be cast by each congregation represented in the classis.

—Adopted

7. That synod extend for one year the exception granted in 1995 to Classis Red Mesa re Church Order Article 55 (cf. *Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 745).

—Adopted

8. That synod receive as information the report of the Classis Pacific Hanmi Monitoring Committee.

—Adopted

9. That synod ratify the appointment of Mr. Raymond A. Elgersma to the position of Canadian ministries director (see *Acts of Synod 1998*, pp. 271-73).

—Adopted

10. That synod express its appreciation to retiring members of the Board, Dr. Arthur J. Schoonveld and Ms. Jane Vander Ploeg, for their services to the church.

—Adopted

11. That synod ratify the following regular members and alternate members elected to become members of the Board for three-year terms beginning July 1, 1998:

Great Plains (clergy)

Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper, member

Rev. Dennis Kamper, alternate

Central U.S. III (clergy)

Rev. John P. Gorter, member

Rev. Calvin D. Compagner, alternate

Central U.S. IV (nonclergy)

Mrs. Kathleen Smith, member

Mrs. Mary Jo De Jong, alternate

Eastern Canada II (clergy)  
 Rev. Gordon Pols, member  
 Rev. Bart Velthuizen, alternate

Eastern Canada II (nonclergy)  
 Mr. Andrew Schaafsma, member  
 Mr. J. Hans Vander Stoep, alternate

—Adopted

12. That synod approve the following nominees as members of the Judicial Code Committee for second three-year terms:

*Rev. Case Admiraal* is pastor of Immanuel CRC, Ripon, California. He is a graduate of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. He has served in a number of capacities within classis, such as church visitor, member of classical interim committee, and regional pastor. He has been a delegate to synod four times and served as a member of the synodical Committee on Dance and the Christian Life (1982).

*Mr. Reid J. Smeda* is a member of Evergreen Park CRC, Evergreen Park, Illinois. He received a B.A. degree from Calvin College and a J.D. degree from George Mason University School of Law. He is vice president of retail banking at First National Bank of Evergreen Park. He presently serves as a member of the executive committee of Southwest Chicago Christian School Association and on the Steering Committee for a Healthier Evergreen Park. He is also a member of the Missions and Outreach Committee of his church.

*Mrs. Kathy Vandergrift* is a member of Calvin CRC, Ottawa, Ontario. She is an employee of the Canadian government, serving as a policy analyst. She previously worked as a policy analyst in administration for the mayor of Edmonton.

—Adopted

### 13. Ministerial retirements

#### a. Information

Synod has received notice of the following ministerial retirements:

Minister	Classis	Effective Date
Boonstra, John	B.C. South-East	January 1, 1998
Brouwers, William G., Jr.	Northcentral Iowa	March 1, 1998
De Vries, Willard H.	Minnesota South	October 1, 1998
Eshuis, Henry	Niagara	October 1, 1997
Geisterfer, Aren P.	Hamilton	August 31, 1998
Havert, Kenneth L.	Grandville	January 25, 1998
Holwerda, David E.	Grand Rapids East	June 30, 1998
Hugen, Melvin D.	Grand Rapids East	June 1, 1998
Mennega, Harry	Quinte	April 1, 1998
Meyer, Edward P.	Illiana	February 15, 1998
Monsma, Timothy M.	California South	June 21, 1998
Shepherd, Norman	Illiana	August 24, 1998
Stulp, Jack	Holland	July 1, 1998
Tong, Peter	Grand Rapids East	August 31, 1997

Toonstra, Martin  
Van Drunen, Peter  
Van Eek, Arie G.  
Van Harn, Roger E.  
\*Veeneman, Gerrit  
Wigboldy, Homer J.  
Zantingh, John

Wisconsin  
Pella  
Hamilton  
Grand Rapids East  
British Columbia South-East  
Illiana  
Hamilton

January 1, 1998  
November 1, 1997  
September 26, 1998  
October 1, 1998  
October 1, 1997  
January 13, 1998  
September 1, 1998

\*Medical disability

b. Recommendations

- 1) That synod acknowledge with profound gratitude the faithful labors of these ministers.

—Adopted

- 2) That a prayer of thanksgiving be offered by one of the officers of synod for their many years of dedicated service.

—Adopted

Vice president Rev. Jack B. Vos leads the assembly in prayer, thanking God for the dedication and the many years of service of these ministers of the Word.

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 48.)

ARTICLE 25

The general secretary presents the ballot, and delegates vote. Voting for agency and committee-membership positions is done electronically. The ballot results will later be ratified by synod.

ARTICLE 26

The morning session is adjourned; Rev. Peter Nicolai, second clerk, leads in closing prayer.

**TUESDAY AFTERNOON, June 16, 1998**

**Fifth Session**

ARTICLE 27

Rev. Thomas R. Wolthuis (Grandville) replaces Rev. Douglas R. Zimmerman for the afternoon session. He rises to express agreement with the forms of unity.

The executive director of ministries welcomes and introduces Mr. John Kuyers, executive director of The Back to God Hour, who announces *Psalter Hymnal* 596, "From Ocean unto Ocean." He reads from Micah 4:1-5 and leads in opening prayer. He announces *Psalter Hymnal* 620, "By the Sea of Crystal."

Mr. Kuyers introduces the chairman of The Back to God Hour Board, Rev. Henry Kranenburg, who briefly addresses synod. Dr. Calvin L. Bremer, director of ministries, informs the delegates of activities and plans that have

developed since the report of The Back to God Hour was submitted for the printed *Agenda*.

Rev. Shojiro Ishii, who retires this year as the Japanese-language minister for The Back to God Hour, addresses synod. The president of synod responds and wishes Rev. Ishii God's blessing in the work he will undertake in the Netherlands.

## ARTICLE 28

Advisory Committee 4, Publications, Rev. Herman Salomons reporter, presents the following:

### I. CRC Publications

A. *Material*: CRC Publications Report, pp. 78-98

#### B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the following people when matters of CRC Publications are discussed:

For the board

Rev. Stanley Mast, president

Mr. Fred Herfst, vice president

Mr. Gary Mulder, executive director

For *The Banner*

Rev. John Suk, editor in chief

For Education, Worship, and Evangelism

Rev. Robert De Moor, editor in chief

For the Worship Committee

Dr. Emily Brink

Dr. David Holwerda (for the report on the NKJV of the Bible)

—*Granted*

2. That synod approve the recommendation of the Worship Committee that synod not recommend the New King James Version of the Bible for use in worship.

*Grounds:*

- a. The NKJV is based on an inferior Greek text of the New Testament. Previous synods have endorsed English translations that use the more reliable Nestle-Aland text.
- b. The NKJV translation is burdened with many misleading and even ungrammatical English renderings.
- c. CRC synods have already recommended for liturgical use the English versions that have the greatest claim to ecumenicity.

—*Adopted*

### II. Historical Committee

A. *Material*: Historical Committee Report, pp. 172-73

B. *Recommendation*

That Dr. Henry Zwaanstra represent the committee when matters pertaining to its mandate come before synod.

—Granted

**III. Sermons for Reading Services Committee**

A. *Material*: Sermons for Reading Services Committee Report, p. 185

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod approve the publication of *The Living Word* for 1999 to provide sermons for reading services for the churches.

—Adopted

2. That synod encourage churches and ministers to subscribe to this service for the benefit of churches and individuals.

—Adopted

**IV. Response to Overture 17: Ensure the Editorial Freedom of *The Banner***

A. *Materials*

1. Overture 17, pp. 236-37
2. CRC Publications Supplement

B. *Background*

In the December 8, 1997, issue of *The Banner*, the denominational Board of Trustees informed the denomination that the IRM Corporation had “decided to suspend all principal and interest payments and loan payoffs on our investor notes, as well as all partnership distributions to our investors.”

The article further informed the denomination that a committee had been appointed to represent the interests of those agencies, institutions, and organizations that had invested in IRM. At the end of this notification was a note from the editor of *The Banner* informing the reader that the Board of Trustees was prohibiting *The Banner* from investigating the particulars of this situation.

The present Constitution and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA provide for both the general oversight of the Board of Trustees over the agencies and for addressing internal agency matters when required. See Board of Trustees constitution Article II, C, which reads as follows: [To fulfill its purposes the Board will] “Exercise general oversight and authority when necessary in the manner stated in the bylaws of the Board.” See also Bylaw II, D, 1:

The executive directors of the agencies and presidents of educational institutions are accountable to the boards of the agencies or institutions they serve for all internal matters that pertain to that agency or institution. In such internal matters the EDM and the Board will function only as needed in consultation with the executive director or president in question and only in conjunction with the board of that agency or institution. (An agency board and its executive director have the freedom to fulfill the mandate of the agency in compliance with its mandate and bylaws, but synod and the Board of Trustees, through the EDM, reserve the right to gain access to the administration and governance of an agency as, in their judgment, is needed).

We believe the Board of Trustees acted in a fiduciary manner consistent with legal counsel regarding the corporate interests of the CRCNA when it issued the directive suspending *The Banner* investigations and publications regarding this matter. *The Banner* is an official publication of the CRCNA and is accountable within the agency structure for what it prints.

We also believe that the Board of Publications raises legitimate ecclesiastical issues regarding the editorial freedom of *The Banner*, the integrity of its pastoral and prophetic role within the church, and the mandated process of consultation between boards before such a directive is extended.

The occasion for this overture we believe was extremely unusual. We do not think it is possible to make any kind of ruling or guideline that will cover any and all situations.

However, we believe the Guidelines for *The Banner's* Accountability and Freedom, presented to Synod 1993 but not adopted, will be of some help to all parties concerned.

### C. *Recommendations*

1. That synod adopt the 1993 Guidelines for *The Banner's* Accountability and Freedom as given below with the additional italicized statement in the opening paragraph re lines of accountability taken in part from the Constitution of the Board of Trustees, Article II, C.

#### **Guidelines for *The Banner's* Accountability and Freedom**

*The Banner* is a publication of the Christian Reformed Church in North America rather than an independent magazine. Accordingly, the editorial staff, led by the synodically appointed editor in chief, is accountable to the church for the style and content of this magazine. This accountability to the church is realized in a number of diverse, sometimes overlapping, and at times conflicting responsibilities to various groups and structures within the denomination. All these responsibilities are governed by *The Banner's* synodical mandate to (1) inform readers about what is happening in the CRC as well as the church at large; (2) provide articles that edify and encourage Christian living; and (3) stimulate critical thinking about issues related to the Christian faith and the culture of which we are a part.

#### **I. Lines of accountability**

Lines of accountability have been established by previous decisions of synod and CRC Publications. *The Board of Trustees of the CRCNA will exercise general oversight and authority when necessary in the manner stated in the bylaws (see esp. Bylaw II, D, 1 and 2) of the Board's constitution and bylaws, and The Banner editor will exercise editorial freedom in accordance with these synodical guidelines.* For the editorial staff accountability runs through the editor in chief, who is directly accountable:

A. To the CRC Publications Board, the body mandated by synod to publish this denominational periodical. This accountability includes

1. Reporting periodically on editorial activities and decisions.
2. Reporting reactions, criticisms, and suggestions received from readers and churches.
3. Recommending needed changes in policies and procedures.
4. Carrying out all approved policies and procedures.

B. To the executive director, the administrative head appointed to manage and coordinate the work of the CRC Publications staff. This accountability includes

1. Keeping him/her informed of possibly sensitive or controversial issues being addressed and listening seriously to any advice offered regarding such issues. The executive director should, at his/her discretion, consult with the executive director of ministries.
2. Being fiscally responsible.
3. Following approved personnel procedures.
4. Working cooperatively with other departments of CRC Publications.

## II. General responsibilities

In addition to this direct accountability, the editorial staff carries general responsibilities inherent in the nature of a denominational magazine:

- A. To its subscribers and readers in the Christian Reformed Church for
1. Reporting in an honest and unbiased manner, information about activities affecting the church.
  2. Presenting to the readers the issues pertinent to the life of the church in a way that shows the diverse positions held within the church and encourages biblical and Reformed thinking about these issues.
  3. Edifying readers so as to encourage them to grow in Christian maturity and faith and to live out their faith in daily life.
  4. Providing a vehicle through which church members can express their views and opinions on pertinent issues.
- B. To the ecclesiastical assemblies (councils, classes, synod) of the CRC for
1. Keeping church members informed about important decisions taken.
  2. Reporting significant trends or policy directions.
- C. To the official agencies of the CRC for
1. Presenting and explaining their ministry on behalf of the churches, making sure the information disseminated is accurate.
  2. Keeping church members informed about important changes in their programs and personnel.
  3. Encouraging church members to support and participate in the ministries being carried out.

## III. Freedom of editorial staff

In order that it may carry on these diverse responsibilities, the editorial staff must be granted the freedom to

- A. Inform its readers and subscribers about what is occurring in the church (including relevant problems, needs, and concerns) even though some persons, congregations, or agencies may prefer that such information not be disseminated.
- B. Investigate and determine the facts regarding any occurrence in the church that appears to merit reporting to readers.
- C. Lead and encourage a responsible discussion of the issues important to the life of the church through editorial comment and publication of articles that represent the various views held within the church.
- D. Permit people of the church to voice their views and reactions even though some of these views may be unacceptable to others in the church.
- E. Provide a biblically prophetic and responsible criticism and evaluation of trends within the church and society and of actions, decisions, policies, programs, etc., being considered by or already approved by ecclesiastical assemblies and agencies.

#### IV. Editorial integrity

The following guidelines for editorial judgment will be used in determining what materials (editorials, articles, news stories, etc.) are published in the pages of *The Banner*:

- A. The Banner materials should be faithful to Scripture and the confessions.
- B. The Banner materials should edify and educate readers.
- C. Truth must be written but always in love.
- D. Criticism must be constructive and fair.
- E. Editing of materials should always maintain the intent of the author while making the writing more effective in presenting the author's views.
- F. No author should be demeaned by editorial comment or by the way an article, column, letter, etc., is presented.
- G. Selection of authors should aim at equity of representation (U.S./Canada, minorities, men/women, younger/older, conservative/progressive, etc.).
- H. Nothing deliberately inflammatory, insulting, or divisive should be published.
- I. Nothing that serves the interest solely of one individual, organization, or group in contrast to other individuals, organizations, or groups or in neglect of the general interest of the churches should be published.
- J. The Banner should give preference to CRC authors.
- K. Heads/titles should not be misleading or sensational; they should accurately reflect the heart of the story/article.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. These guidelines presented to Synod 1993 as information should be adopted by synod so that they function as a meaningful document in the operation of *The Banner*.
- b. The authority of our boards and the editorial freedom of *The Banner* are long-held values that ought to be retained.

—Adopted

2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 17.

—Adopted

## ARTICLE 29

Advisory Committee 2, Missions, Rev. Anthony Van Zanten reporting, presents the following:

### I. The Back to God Hour

A. *Material*: The Back to God Hour Report, pp. 65-70

#### B. *Observations*

With thanks to God, the advisory committee acknowledges that

1. The Back to God Hour ministries, using radio, television, telephone, and the Internet, have been blessed tremendously in gospel proclamation in nine languages.
2. Support for The Back to God Hour has been equally blessed.
3. The Back to God Hour representatives speak candidly to the matter of IRM investments, noting that the ministry is not being undercut or curtailed, though some purchases of new equipment may be delayed.

#### C. *Recommendations*

1. That Rev. Henry Kranenburg, president; Mr. John Kuyers, executive director; and Dr. Calvin L. Bremer, director of ministries, be given the privilege of the floor when Back to God Hour matters are discussed.

—Granted

2. That Rev. Shojiro Ishii, who retires this year as the Japanese-language minister for The Back to God Hour, be granted permission to address synod.

—Granted

### II. Home Missions

A. *Material*: Christian Reformed Home Missions Report, pp. 99-109

#### B. *Observations*

1. With thanks to God, the advisory committee acknowledges that
  - a. The CRC and CRHM, through *Gathering*, have been used by God to plant 185 new churches in the past ten years and that through these new congregations God has added 6,900 persons to the CRC through evangelism.
  - b. One hundred of the 185 new churches are multiethnic congregations, and about 50 of the new churches minister in places of high need.
  - c. Since the beginning of *Gathering*, God has added 28,238 persons to our denomination through evangelism.

2. The committee reports, with appreciation, the openness of Rev. Rozeboom to hold conversation regarding Home Missions' investments with IRM. Noted were the reasons behind the accumulation of such funds (e.g., the need for reserves coupled with sales of property and delayed applications from NCDs for land and building loans and grants) and the wonderfully consistent financial support that continues to come in, suggesting that trust is intact and God's blessings still abound. Rev. Rozeboom is ready, willing, and available to respond to questions.

C. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Rev. Shawn Sikkema, president, and Rev. John Rozeboom, executive director, when matters pertaining to Home Missions are discussed.

—*Granted*

2. That synod encourage all Christian Reformed churches to recognize Easter Sunday and Reformation Sunday as significant opportunities to take offerings for Christian Reformed Home Missions.

—*Adopted*

**III. Response to Overture 13: Review This Year the 1995 Decision Regarding Women in Office**

A. *Material*: Overture 13, pp. 223-25

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod not accede to Overture 13 at this time and that the council of Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Rock Valley, Iowa, be asked to wait patiently until the year 2000, when the review is scheduled to take place.

*Ground*: Synod 1995 (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735) has clearly stated that the decision will be reviewed in the year 2000. Calvin Christian Reformed Church council will be allowed to voice its concerns at that time.

—*Adopted*

2. That this be synod's response to Overture 13.

—*Adopted*

A motion is made that synod instruct the officers to confer with the Board of Trustees concerning the process of the review of 2000 and to report later at this synod.

—*Adopted*

**IV. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee**

A. *Material*: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee Report, pp. 118-29

B. *Observations*

1. CRWRC continues to work through a prolonged and difficult process of restructuring. "Teams" is a key word describing the emerging structure. Collaboration and partnership are near the heart of CRWRC's efforts in ministry and in the CRC.

2. With gratitude to God the committee reports that the number of persons and families participating in CRWRC, including financial support, has been tremendous.

C. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Mr. Calvin Hulst, president of CRWRC-U.S.A.; Mr. Marvin De Vries, president of CRWRC-Canada; Mr. John De Haan, director of CRWRC-U.S.A.; and Mr. Wayne deJong, director of CRWRC-Canada, when CRWRC matters are discussed.

—Granted

2. That synod commend the work of mercy carried on by CRWRC and urge the churches to take at least four offerings per year in lieu of ministry-share support.

—Adopted

3. That synod take note of Mr. John De Haan's twenty years of service and permit him to say his farewell to synod at a time of synod's choosing.

—Granted

**V. Response to Overture 14: Allow Agencies to Use the Talents and Abilities of Women Pastors**

A. *Material*: Overture 14, pp. 225-27

B. *Recommendation*

That synod not acquiesce to Overture 14 from Classis Lake Erie at this time and ask the classis to wait patiently until the year 2000, when the 1995 decision regarding women in office is scheduled for review.

*Ground*: Synod 1995 (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735) has clearly stated that the decision will be reviewed in the year 2000. Classis Lake Erie will be allowed to voice its concerns at that time.

—Adopted

**VI. Christian Reformed World Missions**

A. *Material*: Christian Reformed World Missions Report, pp. 110-17

B. *Observations*

1. The advisory committee thanks God for the life and ministry of Rev. Merle Den Bleyker, international director of World Missions, and prays for him, his family, and staff as he begins to undergo a new series of chemo treatments.
2. Atrocities abound in several nations where CR World Missions is present; challenges also abound in discovering ways and means and places to bring the message of the kingdom of heaven; joyful reports of rich harvests abound as well.

3. Partnerships with national churches are increasingly becoming the pattern for doing mission work. Partnerships with other CR agencies are also being nurtured. Partnerships with the members of the CRCNA are producing people and financial resources. (Approximately three hundred missionaries are doing gospel work in about thirty nations under the banner of CR World Missions.)

Rev. Anthony Van Zanten, reporter, leads the assembly in prayer remembering Rev. Den Bleyker and his family in their special needs.

C. *Recommendations*

1. That the president of World Missions-Canada, Rev. Jack Quartel; the president of World-Missions U.S.A., Rev. William Renkema; and the World Missions-International executive director, Rev. Merle Den Bleyker, be given the privilege of the floor when synod deals with matters related to this agency.

—*Granted*

2. That synod continue World Missions on its list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod encourage all Christian Reformed churches to recognize Pentecost Sunday as a significant opportunity to take an offering for Christian Reformed World Missions.

—*Adopted*

**VII. The Back to God Hour, CR Home Missions, CR World Missions, and CR World Relief Committee**

A. *Materials*

1. Back to God Hour, pp. 65-70
2. CR Home Missions, pp. 99-109
3. CR World Missions, pp. 110-17
4. CR World Relief Committee, pp. 118-29

B. *Recommendation*

That synod, with gratitude to God, commend the boards, staffs, and volunteers of The Back to God Hour, CR Home Missions, CR World Missions, and CRWRC for visionary, creative, and effective ministries being developed and carried out.

*Ground:* All of the reports testify to strong work being done, and it is good for synod to encourage the servants of our Lord in this way.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 30

Advisory Committee 7, Interdenominational Matters, Rev. Russell Palsrok reporting, presents the following:

## Interchurch Relations Committee

### A. *Materials*

1. Interchurch Relations Committee Report, pp.174-84
2. Interchurch Relations Committee Supplement
3. Communication 2: Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, pp. 245-50

### B. *Recommendations*

1. That Rev. Edward A. Van Baak (president), Dr. Henry Zwaanstra (vice president), and Rev. Leonard J. Hofman (administrative secretary), along with other IRC members as necessary, be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to the IRC are discussed.

—*Granted*

2. That the incumbent members of IRC who are completing their first terms be reelected to the Interchurch Relations Committee, namely, Ms. Claire Elgersma, Rev. Robert Haven, and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra.

#### *Grounds*

- a. Although nominations were considered at both the February and April meetings of the IRC, the committee experienced difficulty in finding persons who could be paired with the incumbents in seeking the current best interests of the Interchurch Relations Committee.
  - b. The incumbent nominees are members of the Ecumenical Charter Review Committee. Their background and expertise are essential to the committee's continuing study.
3. That synod request the IRC to complete its review of the CRCNA Ecumenical Charter and report to Synod 1999.

—*Adopted*

#### *Grounds*

- a. Recent changes in ecclesiastical relationships (NAPARC, RCN/GKN) have created uncertainty regarding the usefulness of present categories.
- b. Future realignments (RCA, Samen op Weg) may require different categories.
- c. It is important that the denomination be clear on the meaning of our ecumenical relationships.

—*Adopted*

4. That the CRCNA continue its current (restricted) ecclesiastical relationship with the RCN/GKN and continue, for a minimum of two years, the mandate given the Interchurch Relations Committee by Synod 1996:

To intensify its pursuit of the two remaining provisions of ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKN:

- a. [C]ommunication on major issues of joint concern.
- b. [T]he exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

(*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 520)

*Grounds:*

- a. The historical character of the CRCNA/RCN relationship is vital.
- b. Repairing a fractured relationship is more difficult than nurturing a strained one.
- c. There is an articulated desire on the part of the RCN for the continuation of the relationship.
- d. The review of the CRCNA Ecumenical Charter is still in process.
- e. Samen op Weg (Together on the Way) is still in process, and at some point in the process the United Protestant Church in the Netherlands (UPCN) will ask its ecumenical partners (including the CRCNA) to recommit to an ecclesiastical relationship with the UPCN.
- f. Factors have surfaced re the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk which are worthy of consideration.

Note: According to the CRC's Ecumenical Charter, the following six provisions apply to churches in full ecclesiastical fellowship; presently the CRC's relationship with the RCN/GKN is limited to numbers 5 and 6.

1. Exchange of fraternal delegates to major assemblies
2. Occasional pulpit fellowship
3. Fellowship at the table of the Lord
4. Joint actions in areas of common responsibility
5. Communication of major issues of joint concern
6. Exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

(*Agenda for Synod 1987*, p. 174)

—*Adopted*

5. That synod request the general secretary, in his summary statement of the decisions of Synod 1998, to highlight the work of the IRC's ongoing discussions with the RCN/GKN as reported in the IRC supplementary report, Appendix B.

*Ground:* Because of historical connections, there is significant interest and concern in the churches about developments in the RCN/GKN, and it is important for the members of the CRC to be apprised of the discussions that are taking place between representatives of our two churches.

—*Adopted*

6. That synod inform the churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Council's study report *The Unique Person and Work of Christ*, second edition, and encourage the churches to make use of it as a document for study and thoughtful reflection.

*Grounds*

- a. The issue of our Lord's uniqueness as the Son of God and only Savior of the world is one of the pressing theological and missiological issues of our day.
- b. This report has been carefully reviewed by a subcommittee of the IRC and is judged by the IRC to be a "responsible Reformed statement . . . useful for the ministry and witness of the church."

—*Adopted*

7. That synod approve the concept of union churches by
  - a. Proposing the following addition to the Church Order as Article 38-f:
    - f. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may unite to form union congregations with one or more particular congregations of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, with the approval of classis.
  - b. Adopting the provision for forming union churches as detailed in the Appendix to the IRC report (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, pp. 182-84) and including these provisions in Church Order Supplement, Article 38-f.

*Grounds:*

- 1) Currently certain CRC congregations are involved in union discussions with neighboring RCA congregations. These CRC congregations will be assisted in their discussions by having Church Order guidance parallel to that provided by the RCA *Book of Order*.
- 2) In some cases such unions may provide a more effective local ministry than that provided by two small individual congregations, for example, in multiethnic churches, in inner-city ministries, in campus ministries, and in locations where small churches' survival is threatened.

—Adopted

8. That synod receive with gratitude the report from the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, express its appreciation to Rev. Arie G. Van Eek, and grant him the privilege of briefly addressing synod.

—Adopted

Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, administrative secretary of the Interchurch Relations Committee, reports that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has informed synod that it voted to approve the suspension of the Christian Reformed Church in North America from the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council.

#### ARTICLE 31

Dr. Rodger R. Rice of the Social Research Center of Calvin College highlights for the synodical delegates some of the results of the 1997 denominational survey conducted by the college Social Research Center. Following the presentation an opportunity is given for questions from the floor.

#### ARTICLE 32

The afternoon session is adjourned; Rev. Nathaniel Elgersma leads in closing prayer.

ARTICLE 33

Elder Richard L. Anema introduces Ms. Kathleen Fagre, a professional musician and member of Crestview CRC, Boulder, Colorado, who leads the delegates in singing *Psalter Hymnal* 556, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." Elder Anema reads from Isaiah 43. The song leader announces *Psalter Hymnal* 462, "Amazing Grace—How Sweet the Sound," and *Psalter Hymnal* 483, "How Great Thou Art." Elder Anema leads in opening prayer.

Rev. Douglas Zimmerman (Grandville) has returned to synod. Elder Burton J. Breuker (Grand Rapids North) replaces Elder Jay H. Kuiper for the evening session.

ARTICLE 34

**I. Seminary faculty appointment: Dr. Dean Deppe**

A. *Material*: Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement, pp. 283-84

Dr. Dean B. Deppe, nominee for the position of Assistant Professor of New Testament for three years, is introduced to synod by Rev. Gerry G. Heyboer. Rev. William D. Zeilstra interviews Dr. Deppe, who also responds to questions from the floor.

B. *Recommendation*

That synod approve the appointment of Dr. Dean B. Deppe as Assistant Professor of New Testament for three years, 1998-2001.

—Adopted

The president of synod congratulates Dr. Deppe. Dr. Deppe responds.

**II. Seminary faculty appointment: Dr. Ronald J. Nydam**

A. *Material*: Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement, pp. 285-86

Dr. Ronald J. Nydam, nominee for the position of assistant professor of pastoral care, is introduced to synod by Rev. Gerry G. Heyboer. Rev. John J. Steigenga interviews Dr. Nydam, who also responds to questions from the floor.

B. *Recommendation*

That synod approve the appointment of Dr. Ronald J. Nydam as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care for three years, 1998-2001.

—Adopted

The president of synod congratulates Dr. Nydam. Dr. Nydam responds.

ARTICLE 35

The evening session is adjourned; Rev. Luis Pellecer leads in closing prayer.

ARTICLE 36

Rev. Allan C. Groen announces *Psalter Hymnal* 92, "How Good It Is to Thank the Lord," and he reads from Jeremiah 17:5-8. He leads in opening prayer and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 235, "Here from All Nations."

The roll call indicates that Elder Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi) is absent.

ARTICLE 37

Rev. John A. Rozeboom, executive director of Home Missions, is present to answer questions of the delegates relating to observations made by the advisory committee.

ARTICLE 38

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 21.)

Advisory Committee 3, Education, Rev. David R. Koll reporting, presents the following:

**I. Continuing professional education for ministry staffs in the CRC**

A. *Material*: Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement, pp. 279-81, 282

B. *Background*

The professional world in which we live frequently requires staff persons to receive continuing training in their fields. Our world is complex, and the needs and contexts we address are continually changing. Thus, Synod 1997 approved the following goal statement relative to the continuing education of CRC pastors:

By 2002, all ordained ministers and other ministry staff serving congregations in the CRC will receive continuing training in effective ministry. A curriculum and a strategy will be developed to provide such leadership on the congregational level.

As a step toward implementing this goal, the following material has been prepared by Calvin Theological Seminary in consultation with the other agencies.

C. *Recommendation*

That the following plan for continuing professional development for all CRC ministers and full-time staff personnel be approved:

1. That a ministerial-standards committee be established by December 1, 1998, with the following mandate and organization:

Title: Ministerial-Standards Committee

Mandate: The Ministerial-Standards Committee is to evaluate, approve, monitor, and certify the continuing education required annually of all CRC ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel.

Composition: General secretary, academic dean of Calvin Theological Seminary, director of Pastor-Church Relations, two ordained ministers selected by the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA.

Organization:

- a. The committee will meet at least twice per year. Other meetings may be held at the call of the chairperson.
- b. The committee will record its actions in minutes, which will be distributed to the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA.
- c. The committee will report to synod regarding its meetings and actions of evaluating, approving, monitoring, and certifying the continuing-professional-development experiences required annually of all CRC ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel. Each annual report will include
  - 1) A summary and analysis of the degree of compliance with the continuing-education requirement on the part of ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel.
  - 2) Other matters which the committee deems useful for synod to know or consider to accomplish the goal of full participation of Christian Reformed ministers and full-time ministry personnel in continuing professional development.

Funding:

- a. Office expenses incurred by members of the committee in the course of their work will be borne by the agencies or churches where they work.
  - b. The general secretary will include in his annual budget money sufficient to cover the expenses of the committee for travel, meals, and lodging.
2. That beginning with calendar year 2000 the amount of continuing professional development required of Christian Reformed ministers and full-time ministry-staff personnel be set at one continuing-education unit (CEU) per year (normally 1 CEU is given for ten hours of instruction). If a person earns two or more units in one year, one of these units may be carried to the following year.
  3. That the following means of meeting the continuing-professional-development requirement be approved:
    - a. Any CEU earned at a school with full or provisional accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.
    - b. Any course taken in any master's or doctoral program at any school with full or provisional accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.
    - c. Any means (conference, workshop, personal study plan, or the like) pre-approved by the Ministerial-Standards Committee.
  4. That the general secretary include a notation in the annual *Yearbook* to indicate those ordained ministers and full-time ministry personnel who have complied with the continuing-professional-development requirement for the previous year.

5. That the general secretary include a notation in the annual *Yearbook* to indicate those churches which have provided released time and money to make it possible for their pastor(s) to get continuing-education units for the previous year.
6. That synod declare that the above five recommendations are adopted provisionally for the next three years and encourage the churches and pastors to offer their suggestions for the improvement of this program so that final approval can be given in 2001.

—Action withheld

A motion is made that synod recommit this matter to Advisory Committee 3.  
—Adopted

## **II. Overture 19: Request Calvin Theological Seminary to Offer Specialized Courses to Help Korean M.Div. Students Understand the Nature of Ministry in the Korean Context**

A. *Material*: Overture 19, p. 242

### *B. Recommendation*

That synod refer this request to Calvin Theological Seminary and its board for consideration and further discussion with the Korean CRC leaders and ask them to report to Synod 1999 on their response and progress.

*Ground*: Such an action responds positively to the need which the overture identifies without requiring synod to infringe upon the operations of the seminary.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued in Article 55.)

## ARTICLE 39

Advisory Committee 8, Rev. Leonard H. Batterink reporting, presents the following:

### **I. Response to appeal of the council of Harderwyk CRC, Holland, Michigan**

#### *A. Materials*

1. Appeal of the council of Harderwyk CRC, Holland, Michigan (distributed only to members of the advisory committee)
2. Communication 3: Classis Holland

#### *B. Background*:

At its September 18, 1997, meeting, Classis Holland granted the request of Mr. Trent Walker to take steps toward examination for admission to the ministry of the Word under Church Order Article 7. A year before, Mr. Walker had been approved for ordination as an evangelist ministering among Generation Xers at Harderwyk CRC, having already served the church as pastor of youth and young adults for several years.

The synodical deputies gave provisional concurrence with the decision of Classis Holland and at the same time included in their report that they

believed Mr. Walker "is able to follow the synodically established track for entry into the Christian Reformed ministry. . . ."

Following the meeting of classis, Dr. David Engelhard, general secretary, informed the deputies in an October 8 letter that, in his judgment, they had erred in their concurrence with the decision of Classis Holland because Article 6-c, not Article 7, is the appropriate and required route to the ministry for one who is completing his theological education at another seminary.

As a result of the general secretary's letter, the synodical deputies informed Classis Holland in a November 19 letter that they "agree with Dr. Engelhard that Article 7 was not the appropriate route for Mr. Walker's entry into the CRC ministry" and that "Article 6-c can be applied to Mr. Walker's case. . . ." Therefore, the deputies wrote, "we must rescind our concurrence with Classis Holland's decision of September 18, 1997, and we advise classis to postpone all preparations for the future examination of Mr. Walker for possible ordination."

Subsequent meetings of the classical interim committee and the synodical deputies failed to resolve the matter. Therefore, Classis Holland, at its January 15, 1998, meeting decided to postpone the process of examination and request that synod determine whether Article 6-c or Article 7 of the Church Order should be followed in Mr. Walker's case. The request comes to synod as Communication 3.

The council of Harderwyk CRC appeals that postponement. It argues that Article 7 is entirely appropriate in this case because Mr. Walker is not a graduate from another seminary seeking a new position. Rather, he is a person already engaged in ministry who has taken seminary courses to enhance his gifts and now asks to be affirmed in the ministry in which he is engaged.

### C. Recommendations

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to representatives of Harderwyk CRC when matters of the appeal are considered.  
—*Granted*
2. That synod not sustain the appeal of the Harderwyk council.

*Ground:* Classis Holland had the prerogative to postpone action on the matter of admitting Mr. Walker to the ministry of the Word by way of Article 7 of the Church Order.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod declare that Classis Holland is the proper deliberative assembly for deciding whether Mr. Walker should enter the ministry by way of Article 6-c or Article 7.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. Synod is not in a position to make judgments about the specific case of Mr. Walker and the specific ministry needs of Harderwyk CRC.
- b. It is the mandate of the synodical deputies to act on behalf of synod in such matters at the meeting of the classis where the matter is fully deliberated.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod urge Classis Holland and the synodical deputies to take into account all relevant synodical regulations as well as the specific circumstances of this particular case.

—Adopted

5. That synod declare the above to be its response to Communication 3 from Classis Holland.

—Adopted

## **II. Response to appeal of the CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. from a decision of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA**

A. *Material*: Appeal from CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. (distributed only to members of the advisory committee)

### *B. Background*

The CRC Loan Fund was organized by Synod 1983 to assist organized Christian Reformed churches in financing capital improvements. Its board oversees the loan application and approval process, supervises repayment of loans, and sets interest rates. Its staff (an executive director and an administrative secretary) provides advice and counsel on a variety of matters involved in the process of financing and completing construction of church buildings.

In 1996 officers of the Loan Fund engaged in some dialogue with denominational officers relating to a report on financial reorganization. The Loan Fund was concerned that the report characterized the position of its executive director as a financial-staff function principally involved with activities of a "financial" nature rather than as an agency head engaged in a more comprehensive ministry.

Beginning in 1997, Mr. Jack Heinen served the Loan Fund as executive director and Home Missions in real estate and loan matters. In early 1998 Mr. Heinen left his duties with both agencies. Subsequently, the Loan Fund Board inquired of the director of finance and administration (DFA) concerning the reporting mechanism for its new executive director. The DFA indicated that the Loan Fund's new executive director would report to the DFA rather than to the executive director of ministries (EDM), since his/her work is of a "financial" nature.

On April 29, 1998, the president of the Loan Fund Board, Mr. Gerard Borst, sent an electronic letter to the EDM making these four requests:

1. That the CRC Loan Fund, Inc. be recognized as an agency of the CRCNA.
2. That the executive director of the Loan Fund have a normal reporting relationship, i.e., through the EDM to the BOT.
3. That the accountability of the Loan Fund executive director be according to the BOT bylaws.
4. [That] the membership of the Ministries Coordinating Council be amended to include the executive director of the CRC Loan Fund, Inc.

At its May 7-8 meeting, the Board of Trustees denied the requests. The Loan Fund now appeals that BOT decision. Specifically, it asks six things:

1. That synod reverse the action of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA taken on May 7-8, 1998, denying the four requests of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.
2. That synod declare that the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. be considered and deemed an agency of the Christian Reformed Church for all relevant purposes.
3. That synod declare that to the extent that the bylaws require reporting to any person or body other than the board of directors of the Loan Fund, the executive director of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. report to the executive director of ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and not to the director of finance and administration.
4. That synod declare that the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. is the primary body to whom the executive director must account and that accountability to the Board of Trustees, when appropriate, be exercised only through the executive director of ministries.
5. That the bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA, specifically Bylaw IV, A, be amended to include, as number 12 thereof, the executive director of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. as a member of the Ministries Coordinating Council.
6. That two of the members of the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. be permitted to address synod and/or the advisory committee to which this appeal is assigned.

The advisory committee judges that the appeal has merit in part. Some of its requests are granted by the BOT's own bylaws, and the advisory committee judges that those ought to be affirmed by synod.

*C. Recommendations*

1. That two members of the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. be granted the privilege of the floor when this appeal is discussed.
 

—*Granted*
2. That synod declare that to the extent that the bylaws require reporting to any person or body other than the board of directors of the Loan Fund, the executive director of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. report to the executive director of ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

*Ground:* The bylaws of the BOT state that "the executive directors of agencies and the presidents of education institutions have a reporting relationship, through the EDM, to the Board" (II, C, 5).

—*Defeated*

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

#### ARTICLE 40

Rev. Tymen E. Hofman of the Hospitality Committee introduces Rev. Tersur Aben, fraternal delegate from the Church of Christ in the Sudan Among the Tiv, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds.

Dr. Peter Borgdorff introduces Rev. Marlin Vis, fraternal delegate from the Reformed Church in America, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds.

Rev. Gerard Bouma of the Hospitality Committee introduces Dr. William Evans, fraternal delegate from the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds.

Rev. Tymen E. Hofman of the Hospitality Committee introduces Rev. Yasunori Ichikawa, fraternal delegate from the Reformed Church in Japan, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds.

Rev. John Van Hemert introduces and welcomes Rev. Jack B. Lowndes from the Lord's Day Alliance, Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Lowndes briefly addresses synod, and he presents the Dr. James P. Wesberry Award to Rev. John Schaal of Grand Rapids, retired minister of the Christian Reformed Church.

#### ARTICLE 41

The morning session is adjourned; Elder Leonard D. Klok leads in closing prayer, remembering especially Rev. James Van Tholen of Rochester Christian Reformed Church, Rochester, New York, who is struggling with a rare form of cancer.

### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, June 17, 1998

#### Eighth Session

#### ARTICLE 42

Dr. Gaylen J. Byker, president of Calvin College, announces *Psalter Hymnal* 90, "Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place." He reads from Proverbs 8 and addresses synod with comments based on Proverbs 8. He leads in opening prayer and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 433, "Earth and All Stars." Dr. Byker then makes a PowerPoint presentation to review the history and mission of Calvin College and its long-standing relationship with the Christian Reformed Church.

Dr. Peter Borgdorff introduces Mr. John De Haan, executive director of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, who is retiring after twenty-one years of service to CRWRC. He addresses synod. The president of synod responds, thanking Mr. De Haan for his years of dedication to the denomination.

#### ARTICLE 43

(The report of Advisory Committee 8 is continued from Article 39.)

Advisory Committee 8, Appeals, Rev. Leonard H. Batterink reporting, presents the following:

## **I. Response to Overture 25: Alter Formula for Fund for Smaller Churches Reductions**

A. *Material*: Overture 25, pp. 315-16

### *B. Background*

Synod 1995 adopted new guidelines for the funding of churches served by the Fund for Smaller Churches. The guidelines included a reduction-in-grant formula based on a movable baseline to account for year-by-year changes in the client churches. Under these guidelines West Olive CRC experienced a larger than expected reduction in its grant for 1998. Classis Holland, to which West Olive CRC belongs, now proposes a new guideline, based on a fixed baseline, under which the amount of assistance would be reduced over a ten-year period by 10 percent per year, based on the amount granted in year one.

### *C. Recommendation*

That synod not accede to Overture 25.

*Ground* The overture does not adequately demonstrate that the present policy is inequitable.

—Adopted

## **II. Response to Overture 23: Appoint a Committee to Review the Functioning of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA**

A. *Material*: Overture 23, pp. 313-14

### *B. Background*

Classis Grand Rapids North sends an overture asking synod to appoint a committee to review the functioning of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America was created by Synod 1991. The constitution and bylaws of the Board were provisionally approved by Synod 1993, and the final version was approved by Synod 1996.

The advisory committee notes with appreciation the fine work done by the Board. At the same time, it feels that Overture 23 has merit.

### *C. Recommendation*

That synod accede to Overture 23.

#### *Grounds:*

1. It is prudent to review and evaluate a new structure after that structure has functioned for a reasonable period of time.
2. A five-year period of operation before such review was judged appropriate by Synod 1971 when it enhanced the role of the Synodical Interim Committee and again by Synod 1976 when it adopted modifications (see *Acts of Synod 1976*, Report 44, and *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 35.)
3. No thorough, independent review to evaluate the structure and functioning of the BOT has taken place since it replaced the Synodical Interim Committee in 1991.
4. Although the bylaws of the BOT provide for internal reviews of programs and goals (II, E, 2), an external review committee appointed by synod may be able to recommend changes to enhance the functioning of the Board. The precedents of Synod 1976 (Report 44) and of Synod 1981

(Report 35) regarding the Synodical Interim Committee provide a basis for such a probability.

According to Rules for Synodical Procedure, the minority report of the advisory committee is read as information by Rev. Gerry G. Heyboer.

### **Response to Overture 23: Appoint a Committee to Review the Functioning of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA**

A. *Material*: Overture 23, pp. 313-14

#### *B. Background*

Classis Grand Rapids North sends an overture asking for a review of the functioning of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America was created by Synod 1991. The new position of executive director of ministries was filled by Synod 1992, effective July 1, 1992. The constitution and bylaws of the Board were provisionally approved by Synod 1993, and the final version was approved by Synod 1996.

#### *C. Recommendations*

1. That synod instruct the Board of Trustees to engage in a review of its policies, programs, goals, and performance per the requirement of its constitution and bylaws (Bylaw II, E, 2) and report its finding with appropriate recommendations to Synod 1999.

##### *Grounds:*

- a. It is prudent to review and evaluate a new structure after that structure has functioned for a reasonable period of time.
- b. A five-year period of operation before such review was judged appropriate by Synod 1971 when it enhanced the role of the Synodical Interim Committee and again by Synod 1976 when it adopted modifications (see *Acts of Synod 1976*, Report 44, and *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 35).

*Note*: Bylaw II, E, 2 reads as follows:

E. The accountability of the Board shall be exercised as follows:

2. It shall make periodic evaluations of its own programs and goals and shall submit appropriate recommendations to synod.

2. That this be synod's response to Overture 23.  
Synod returns to its consideration of the recommendations of the advisory-committee majority report.

#### *C. Recommendation*

1. That synod accede to Overture 23.

##### *Grounds:*

- a. It is prudent to review and evaluate a new structure after that structure has functioned for a reasonable period of time.
- b. A five-year period of operation before such review was judged appropriate by Synod 1971 when it enhanced the role of the Synodical Interim Committee and again by Synod 1976 when it adopted modifications (see *Acts of Synod 1976*, Report 44, and *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 35.)

- c. No thorough, independent review to evaluate the structure and functioning of the BOT has taken place since it replaced the Synodical Interim Committee in 1991.
- d. Although the bylaws of the BOT provide for internal reviews of programs and goals (II, E, 2), an external review committee appointed by synod may be able to recommend changes to enhance the functioning of the Board. The precedents of Synod 1976 (Report 44) and of Synod 1981 (Report 35) regarding the Synodical Interim Committee provide a basis for such a probability.

—*Defeated*

A motion is made that synod return to the recommendations of the minority report.

—*Adopted*

### C. *Recommendations*

- 1. That synod instruct the Board of Trustees to engage in a review of its policies, programs, goals, and performance per the requirement of its constitution and bylaws (Bylaw II, E, 2) and report its finding with appropriate recommendations to Synod 1999.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. It is prudent to review and evaluate a new structure after that structure has functioned for a reasonable period of time.
- b. A five-year period of operation before such review was judged appropriate by Synod 1971 when it enhanced the role of the Synodical Interim Committee and again by Synod 1976 when it adopted modifications (see *Acts of Synod 1976, Report 44, and Acts of Synod 1981, Report 35*).

—*Adopted*

*Note:* Bylaw II, E, 2 reads as follows:

E. The accountability of the Board shall be exercised as follows:

- 2. It shall make periodic evaluations of its own programs and goals and shall submit appropriate recommendations to synod.

- 2. That this be synod's response to Overture 23.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 44

Advisory Committee 5, Pastoral Ministries, Elder Sander de Haan reporting, presents the following:

### I. **Pastoral Ministries**

A. *Material:* Pastoral Ministries Report and Appendices 1-4, pp. 136-61

#### B. *Background*

Discussions with Rev. Charles Terpstra, Ms. Beth Swagman, and Rev. Jacob Heerema yielded the impression that there is need for a structural review of this agency. The executive committee of the Pastoral Ministries Board is not ready to make that recommendation at this time, but the question is under discussion and examination.

Ministry is being done and done well, but development of new ministries has suffered with the current level of unrest regarding structure. Issues such as public relations and fund-raising are not getting due attention.

The advisory committee recommends that synod take note that despite significant growing pains, image problems, and promotional concerns, Pastoral Ministries as a young agency is overseeing a great deal of excellent ministry being done through each of its five divisions. It is the intent of the Pastoral Ministries staff to train and equip individuals and congregations to enhance their opportunities for ministry both inside and outside the church walls.

### C. Recommendations

1. That synod give the privilege of the floor to Rev. Charles Terpstra, chairman; Ms. Beth Swagman, executive director; and the other Pastoral Ministries directors when Pastoral Ministries matters are discussed.

—*Granted*

2. That synod encourage churches to celebrate All Nations Heritage Week from September 27 to October 3, 1999.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. The task of eliminating racism is formidable; it is a matter that needs to be put boldly before the congregations at all times but especially as they celebrate Worldwide Communion in October.
- b. The financial support that is received when congregations celebrate All Nations Heritage Week dramatically increases Race Relations' ability to award grants and scholarships for ethnic-minority leadership and ministry.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod approve the report on the supervision of chaplains as amended (see Appendix 1, pp. 457-60) and the following Recommended Strategies for the Supervision of Pastors Serving in Specialized Ministries:

*Note:* In the report the term "specialized ministries" refers strictly to chaplaincies.

- a. That synod *require* that *all* ordained ministers serving in chaplaincy ministries be endorsed by Chaplaincy Ministries.

#### *Grounds:*

- 1) This will ensure that appropriate endorsement and ecclesiastical supervision can be facilitated.
- 2) Until now synod has merely *urged* persons to seek endorsement.

—*Adopted*

- b. That synod declare endorsement to be an ongoing process. This process includes granting, monitoring, or withdrawing of endorsement based upon fulfilling the criteria for the ministry to which a chaplain is called.

#### *Grounds:*

- 1) Until now endorsement, indicating qualifications and suitability, has been granted at the beginning of a chaplain's ministry.
- 2) Ongoing endorsement is an expectation of many employing agencies and institutions.

- 3) Endorsement will ensure the denomination's ongoing involvement with a chaplain's ministry.

—Adopted

- c. That synod assign ecclesiastical supervision of the ministry of chaplains as a joint responsibility of the calling church and Pastoral Ministries.

*Grounds:*

- 1) Though the staff of Pastoral Ministries has an active and supportive role with chaplains, joint ecclesiastical supervision with the calling church has never been formally assigned to Pastoral Ministries.
- 2) Joint ecclesiastical supervision ensures that the chaplains are accountable to the denomination at large for their specialized ministries.
- 3) Pastoral Ministries is qualified to interpret specialized ministry to the calling church and the denomination and is able to act as a bridge between calling church and employer.
- 4) Joint ecclesiastical supervision underscores the Church Order's focus on the cooperation between the calling church and other institutions or agencies.

—Adopted

- d. That synod call the attention of the churches to the decisions of Synod 1978 regarding the ecclesiastical supervision of associate ministers (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34, and *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, p. 238).

—Adopted

- e. That synod revise the guidelines for church visiting to include questions about the ecclesiastical supervision of associate ministers.

*Ground:* The present guidelines have not been changed to reflect the decisions of Synod 1978 (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34).

—Adopted

4. That synod approve the report on the separation of pastor and congregation (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, 152-56) and the following Guidelines for the Separation of Pastor and Congregation as amended:

*Note:* The text of the Guidelines reads as it was published in the *Agenda for Synod 1998* (pp. 153-56) with the exception of Section B, 5, which was altered upon the advice of legal counsel.

- a. Responsibility of the separating pastor
- 1) Promptly inform the regional pastor and church visitors when signs of conflict arise, and maintain regular communication.
  - 2) Conduct him- or herself so as not to disrupt further the peace and unity of the congregation.
  - 3) Identify a personal advocate who can assist him/her in the process.
  - 4) Be amenable to career counseling and/or personal counseling.
  - 5) Update the Pastoral Profile and contact Ministerial Information Service (Pastor-Church Relations) if relocation becomes necessary.
  - 6) Help formulate and sign a termination agreement with the council if there is a separation.

- b. Responsibility of the council/congregation
- 1) Seek assistance from the classical church visitors and regional pastor when signs of conflict begin.
  - 2) Be willing to work with a designated person(s) (e.g., Pastor-Church Relations staff, classical regional pastor, mediation specialists) toward reconciliation. This would involve both the time and cost of such intervention.
  - 3) Along with the pastor, determine the reasons for the conflict and/or separation.
    - a) This step requires accountability from both council and pastor.
    - b) It is also important to determine whether suspension is a more appropriate response to the problems which have arisen than separation/severance is.
  - 4) Inform the congregation of decisions which are being made about the relationship to the pastor. This should be done in a timely manner, and members should be apprised of the process (cf. Church Order Art. 37).
  - 5) If a decision is made to release the pastor from active ministerial service in his or her congregation, the council should attempt to enter into a termination agreement with the pastor. This agreement should address at least the following issues:
    - a) Clear specification of the effective date on which the relationship between church and pastor is to be dissolved and the pastor's employment is to be terminated. This date should be defined as the date on which the pastor is relieved of the duties and benefits of his or her position, except as expressly provided under the termination agreement.
    - b) Specifics regarding the length of time for salary and benefits continuation and the nature of any transition assistance. Some salary and benefits continuation may be necessary to make the termination agreement legally enforceable.
    - c) A clear specification of the date on which the pastor will conduct his or her last service and the date on which the pastor and family shall vacate the parsonage, if applicable.
    - d) In consideration for continuing compensation and benefits, the pastor should agree to release the CRCNA, the applicable classis, the church, and each of their respective trustees, delegates, directors, employees, and agents from any and all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, and expenses which the pastor (or anyone claiming on behalf of the pastor) may attempt to claim in connection with the pastor's release and termination of employment, whether those claims are known or unknown, liquidated or unliquidated, contingent or not contingent.
    - e) The pastor should agree that he or she will not, directly or indirectly, engage in any activities designed to recruit members who have held membership in the church from which the pastor has been released.
    - f) The pastor should commit to maintaining the confidentiality of the agreement and any proceedings of the council, classis, or synod in connection with the release. Moreover, the pastor should

commit to a nondisparagement provision which requires the pastor not to make disparaging comments regarding the CRCNA, the classis, the congregation, or the council.

- g) Provision for liquidated damages in the full amount of the salary continuation and the cost of benefits in the event that the minister breaches the provisions of the agreement, including the provision for member nonsolicitation, confidentiality, and nondisparagement or in the event of any of the following:
  - (1) The minister acts in violation of his or her ordination vows.
  - (2) The minister renounces any continuing ecclesiastical governance of the CRCNA over the minister.
  - (3) The minister is convicted of any significant criminal conduct.
- h) Provision that any disputes under the agreement, or otherwise in connection with the minister's release and termination of employment, must be reconciled by the classis, or synod on appeal, as ecclesiastical issues. Provision that recognizes that civil court shall have no jurisdiction over any dispute, except to the limited extent necessary to enforce the judgment of the classis or synod by entry of a monetary judgment and/or injunctive relief. Civil courts shall have no jurisdiction over the merits of the judgment of the classis or synod, which would create a governmental entanglement in violation of constitutional protections for freedom of religion.
- 6) Present to the classis the specific reasons for the separation. This involves the dynamics and behaviors of both the pastor and the council/congregation. Since the termination commences with the official decision by classis, this may necessitate a special meeting of classis to process the separation.
- 7) Engage the services of an interim pastor who has been trained to guide the congregation in processing the reasons for the conflict, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission for the congregation. This is particularly appropriate when there has been extended conflict which led to separation of the pastor and congregation, a series of forced separations from the same congregation, or the last pastorate was a lengthy one. It may also be advisable that the church delay calling another pastor until there has been an interim process.
- 8) Provide a compensation package (cf. Church Order Arts. 16-b and 17-b) which includes the following:
  - a) Cash salary—a minimum of thirteen (13) weeks from the official decision of classis is required. Following the three months, further remuneration may be decided upon by a committee made up of some members of the local council and some members of classis. Any recommendation must be approved by the full classis.
  - b) Parsonage occupancy or housing allowance.
  - c) Provision for continuation of medical- and dental-insurance benefits.
  - d) Provision for continuation of Ministers' Pension benefits.  
The church served at the time of separation is responsible for the severance compensation.

c. Responsibilities of classis

- 1) Church visitors should be available to assist or may take initiative if necessary when there is an indication of conflict or other relationship difficulty. They may be involved in reconciliation or mediation, or they may recommend that there be others who can assist the pastor and congregation in this process, e.g., a committee from the classis or outside resources such as representatives of Pastor-Church Relations or mediation specialists.
- 2) Concurrent with the work of the church visitors, the regional pastor should be called to provide emotional support and guidance for the pastor. The regional pastor, often one of the first persons aware of tensions, can serve as a gatekeeper and adviser for the pastor in the process of mediation.
- 3) Church visitors should continue to provide support and guidance for the council and congregation. They may assist the council in communication with the congregation.
- 4) If a separation of the pastor from the congregation is recommended, the classis should do the following:
  - a) Assist the council in determining whether a separation is appropriate. If it is appropriate, give guidance as to whether there should be a release or a suspension.
  - b) If necessary, call a special meeting of classis to process the separation.
  - c) Assign an individual(s) (not the regional pastor) to provide liaison between the pastor, the congregation, and the classis in the process of the separation. Such a person(s) should be acceptable to all parties involved.
  - d) Approve a termination agreement between pastor and council and record in the records of classis specific reasons for the termination.

*Note:* Copies of this agreement should be given to the pastor, the council, the classis, and the Pastor-Church Relations office.

  - e) Encourage the pastor and/or the congregation to seek continued help in learning from this situation and facing their responsibilities. (This will often require specific recommendations and continued involvement.)
  - f) Recommend specific follow-up for the congregation, such as a specialized interim pastor to help with healing and future planning.
  - g) Inform the regional pastor, congregation, and classis of his/her presence in the new region if the pastor moves to another region.

d. A pastoral note

It is important that ecclesiastical due process be followed in the separation process. When Synod 1996 asked that the above guidelines be prepared, it did so against a background of concern for the possibility of healing for both pastors and congregations. When signs of conflict or disagreements arise, it is crucial that the pastor, council, and classis take prompt action to deal with these differences. When there is early

intervention and open communication, reconciliation is a greater possibility.

If pastor and council or congregation are not able to mediate differences, it may be advisable to bring in outside resource persons. If a separation does occur, it is important to recognize that there are continuing needs. The members of the congregation require continued support, opportunity to grieve, and guidance for future planning. The separated pastor and his/her family should not be forgotten as they leave the congregation and seek another call. The congregation and classis should covenant to provide continuing ministry and care for them, assisting in any way possible to encourage personal healing and further opportunities for ministry.

—Adopted

5. That synod approve the report on the suspension and/or deposition of pastors (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, pp. 156-59) and the Guidelines for the Suspension and/or Deposition of Pastors as amended.

*Note:* The text of the Guidelines reads as it was published in the *Agenda for Synod 1998* (pp. 157-59) with the exception of Section B, 5, which was altered upon the advice of legal counsel.

- a. Responsibilities of the council/congregation

- 1) Take immediate action after determining that special discipline is indicated because of violation of the Form of Subscription, neglect or abuse of office, or deviation from sound doctrine and godly conduct
  - a) Obtain concurrence from the nearest consistory for the actions being taken, giving adequate information. Consultation with the church visitors prior to seeking concurrence is advisable.
  - b) Seek support of the regional pastor on behalf of the pastor.
  - c) Release the pastor from all ministry tasks until the issues have been dealt with.
  - d) Notify the classical abuse-response team if allegations of abuse are made.
- 2) Contact the church visitors or the classical interim committee to help articulate the reasons for suspension/deposition.
  - a) Identify the behavior/grounds.
  - b) Determine the appropriate response (suspension/deposition: Church Order Arts. 82-84; separation: Church Order Arts. 16 and 17). This decision will determine whether or not the pastor is to resume ministry tasks and the nature of the request for action by classis.
  - c) If a pastor is to be suspended, be clear about the specific cause for the suspension and what steps are necessary to lift the suspension.
- 3) Keep the congregation informed (cf. Church Order Supplement, Arts. 78-84 re Guidelines for Confidentiality).
- 4) Support the pastor during a time of suspension and prior to a final decision by the classis.
  - a) Encourage professional counseling and pastoral support.
  - b) Continue financial support (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 592).

- c) Assign a committee from the consistory to provide liaison between the pastor and the consistory. This committee should be in regular contact with the pastor, assisting in the transition and encouraging response to the needs of the pastor and family.
  - d) Since a suspension is temporary, the council should list reasons for the suspension and the basis and time line for why and when it will be lifted.
- 5) If a decision is made to depose the pastor consistent with the requirements of Church Order, the council should attempt to enter into a termination agreement with the pastor. This agreement should address at least the following issues:
- a) The termination agreement should address both the minister's professional status relating to his or her ministerial credentials and the minister's status as an employee of the congregation.
  - b) Clear specification of the impact on the pastor's ministerial credentials (with concurrence of classis) and the effective date for his/her termination.
  - c) Clear specification of the effective date on which the pastor's employment is terminated. This date should be defined as the date on which the pastor is relieved of the duties and benefits of his or her position, except as expressly provided under the termination agreement.
  - d) Specifics regarding the length of time for salary and benefits continuation and the nature of any transition assistance. Some salary and benefits continuation may be necessary to make the termination agreement legally enforceable.
  - e) A clear specification of the date on which the pastor will conduct his or her last service and the date on which the pastor and family should vacate the parsonage, if applicable.
  - f) In consideration for continuing compensation and benefits, the pastor should agree to release the CRCNA, the applicable classis, the church, and each of their respective trustees, delegates, directors, employees, and agents from any and all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, and expenses which the pastor (or anyone claiming on behalf of the pastor) may attempt to claim in connection with the pastor's suspension/deposition and termination of employment, whether those claims are known or unknown, liquidated or unliquidated, contingent or not contingent.
  - g) The pastor should agree that he or she will not, directly or indirectly, engage in any activities designed to recruit members who have held membership in the church from which the pastor has been suspended or deposed.
  - h) The pastor should commit to maintaining the confidentiality of the agreement and the proceedings of the council, classis, or synod in connection with the suspension or deposition. Moreover, the pastor should commit to a nondisparagement provision which requires the pastor not to make disparaging comments regarding the CRCNA, the classis, the congregation, or the council.
  - i) Provision for liquidated damages in the full amount of the salary continuation and the cost of benefits in the event that the minister

breaches the provisions of confidentiality and nondisparagement or in the event of any of the following:

- (1) The minister acts in violation of his or her ordination vows.
  - (2) The minister renounces any continuing ecclesiastical governance of the CRCNA over the minister, if applicable.
  - (3) The minister is convicted of any significant criminal conduct.
- j) Provisions that any dispute under the agreement, or otherwise in connection with the minister's deposition, suspension, and termination of employment, must be reconciled by the classis, or synod on appeal, as strictly ecclesiastical issues. Provision that recognizes that civil courts shall have no jurisdiction over any dispute, except to the limited extent necessary to enforce the judgment of the classis or synod by entry of a monetary judgment and/or injunctive relief. Civil courts shall have no jurisdiction over the merits of the judgment of the classis or synod, which would create a governmental entanglement in violation of constitutional protections for freedom of religion.
- 6) Present the request for action relating to the pastor to the full classis at the earliest convenience in the case of a deposition.
  - 7) Engage the services of an interim pastor who has been trained to guide the congregation in processing the separation, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission.
- b. Responsibilities of the classis
- 1) Church visitors should be available to assist as soon as possible to
    - a) Clarify the issues with both the council and the pastor.
    - b) Explain the Church Order procedures and options (this should include the possibilities and grounds for reinstatement).
    - c) Encourage honesty and fairness.
    - d) Provide liaison with the classical interim committee. Again, it is important that necessary action be taken in a timely fashion in order to decrease anxiety and facilitate a proper response.
    - e) Arrange with the council the continuing financial support for the pastor during the exploration/decision-making phase.
  - 2) Set up a transitional support network for the pastor, his/her family, and the congregation. This will include spiritual, emotional, and career counseling, some of which may be supplied by the regional pastor and other designated classical representatives. It is also important to involve the denominational office of Pastor-Church Relations. Such support should continue for at least one year.
  - 3) In the case of deposition, assist the council in setting up a termination agreement. Since the deposition commences with the official decision of classis, this may necessitate a special meeting of classis to process the deposition. Encourage the pastor and/or the congregation to seek continuing help in learning from this situation and facing their responsibilities.
  - 4) Inform classical stated clerks of any action to depose, as required by the Church Order.

- 5) If the pastor moves to another region, inform the regional pastor, congregation, and classis of his/her presence in the new region, encouraging follow-up and support.
- c. Responsibilities of the pastor
- 1) Inform the regional pastor and church visitors when signs of conflict or accusations arise, and maintain regular communication.
  - 2) Enter into consultation with the council and classical representatives in determination of the validity of accusations and appropriate responses.
  - 3) Conduct him- or herself so as not to disrupt further the peace and unity of the congregation.
  - 4) Sign a termination agreement set up by the council (see III, A, 5 above).
  - 5) Maintain communication with a council or classis, keeping it informed of progress and needs and accepting its support.
  - 6) Identify an advocate who can assist him/her in the process.

d. A pastoral note

It is important that ecclesiastical due process be followed in the process of suspension or deposition. When Synod 1996 asked that the above guidelines be prepared, it acted against a background of concern for the possibility of healing for pastors and congregations. When there are indications that special discipline may be necessary, it is crucial that the pastor, council, and classis take prompt action. There should be open communication about problems which have surfaced and an opportunity given to prove or disprove charges which are made. All of this should be done in an atmosphere of Christian concern and support. If the pastor and council are not able to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion, it may be necessary to bring in outside resource persons.

If a suspension or deposition does occur, it is important to recognize that there are continuing needs. The members of the congregation require continued support, opportunity to grieve, and guidance for future planning. The suspended pastor and his/her family should be included in the process of decision making. The deposed pastor and his/her family should not be forgotten as they leave the congregation and ministry. The congregation and classis should covenant to provide continuing ministry and care for them, assisting in any way possible to encourage personal healing and guidance for possible reentry into ministry at a future date.

—Adopted

6. That synod adopt the following wording of Church Order Articles 16 and 17:

*Article 16*

A minister who for valid reasons desires a temporary leave of absence from service to the congregation must have the approval of the council, which shall continue to have supervision over him. In all cases of a temporary leave of absence the minister shall return to service in that congregation.

- a. Ministers who are neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may for weighty reasons be released from active ministerial service in a congregation through action initiated by themselves, by a council, or jointly. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations.
- b. The council shall provide for the support of a released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.
- c. A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service in a congregation shall be eligible for call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare him to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend the eligibility for call on a yearly basis.

—Adopted

7. That synod adopt the following as Church Order Supplement, Article 17:

Supplement, Article 17

- a. If a classis has reason to believe that the released minister needs evaluation and assistance before accepting another call, it shall specify at the time of release what is required before the minister may receive and accept a call.
- b. If a classis has reason to believe that before a congregation calls another pastor it needs a time of healing and preparing itself for an effective relationship with a new minister, it shall instruct the classical church counselor not to sign a letter of call until the classis and the church council decide that this process is complete (cf. Church Order Art. 9).
- c. A minister who has been released from active ministerial service in a congregation according to Article 17 of the Church Order and who has transferred his membership to another congregation may, after meeting all stipulations placed upon him and with the approval of classis, have his official connection transferred to the consistory of the congregation of which he is a member.

—Adopted

*Note:* This supplement replaces Supplement, Article 16-b and -c and Supplement, Article 17, as adopted by Synod 1990 and Synod 1973 respectively.

**II. Response to Overture 1: Permit an Independent Assessment of Readiness for Ministry of Those Ministers Separated from Their Congregations**

A. *Material:* Overture 1, pp. 201-02

B. *Recommendation*

That synod accede to the overture, with the deletion of the word "minister" in line 2 of paragraph B on top of page 202.

—Adopted

### **III. Response to Overture 3: Challenge North Americans to Recognize the Holocaust of Abortion and to Oppose It Boldly; Urge Councils to Respond Publicly**

A. *Material*: Overture 3, pp. 208-10

#### *B. Recommendations*

1. That, after twenty-five years of legalized abortion in which over 35,000,000 unborn children in the U.S. have lost their lives, synod reaffirm its strong opposition to legalized abortion and also urge the churches to give more attention to sensitive ministry to those who carry children to term, to the care of unwed mothers and their children, and the social ills associated with this issue. We further encourage governmental agencies to support programs which will address these needs.

—*Recommitted*

### **IV. Response to Overture 18: Make a Minor Revision to Clarify the Abuse Guidelines**

A. *Material*: Overture 18, pp. 238-41

#### *B. Recommendation*

That synod not accede to this overture.

*Ground*: The current policy provides for this review by means of an advisory committee of the abuse-response team (*Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 678, b and 679, h).

—*Adopted*

### **V. Response to Overture 24: Waive Regulation Prohibiting Chaplaincy Ministries from Endorsing a Woman Candidate**

A. *Material*: Overture 24, pp. 314-15

#### *B. Recommendations*

1. That synod allow the Pastoral Ministries Board and the director of Chaplaincy Ministries to endorse Insoon Gho as qualified for chaplaincy.

*Grounds*:

- a. Regulation B, 6 of the Church Order Supplement, Article 3-a does not prevent Chaplaincy Ministries from endorsing Insoon Gho and does not stand in the way of her being called by Eastern Avenue CRC.
  - b. She is not an employee of Chaplaincy Ministries and is not being appointed by this agency, and the agency has not asked Eastern Avenue to call her.
  - c. This overture is not needed.
2. That this be synod's response to Overture 24.

According to Rules for Synodical Procedure, the minority report of the advisory committee is read as information by Rev. J. William Van Der Heide.

## Response to Overture 24: Waive Regulation Prohibiting Chaplaincy Ministries from Endorsing a Woman Candidate

A. *Material*: Overture 24, pp. 314-15

### B. *Background*

Synod 1995 received majority and minority reports regarding women in office. In their Introductions and Observations, the two reports were of the same mind. Both sides of the issue agreed:

We as a committee are persuaded, in light of all the arguments made, that our interpretations cannot lead to an unequivocally clear conclusion on the matter, which is the cause of our division and current dilemma.

*(Acts of Synod 1995, p. 726)*

For this reason Synod 1995 reached a compromise between the two main positions regarding women in ecclesiastical office. It did so with the pastoral concern of achieving peace in our denomination. Both the majority and minority reported this intent:

This position is a compromise for the vast majority of the members of the committee, but it is offered in the hope that it will be positively received by a sizable majority of synod, thus providing a solution to our current dilemma.

*(Acts of Synod 1995, p. 727)*

and

This course of action will effectively remove the debate from the floor of synod for a number of years and will allow the denomination and its churches to concentrate on their ministries.

*(Acts of Synod 1995, p. 729)*

We conclude from these observations that it was the intent of Synod 1995 to establish a five-year period of peaceful reflection and prayer on this contentious issue. One of the ways synod sought to ensure this state of calm reflection was the adoption of the following:

Synodical agencies shall not appoint women as ministers of the Word to any field of labor within their jurisdiction nor seek to have them installed by a local church.

*(Acts of Synod 1995, p. 728, Recommendation 3, f)*

In this and other recommendations a covenant of trust was established between the various positions within the denomination. In the years since, synod has valued this covenant of trust and the peace that it affords us. For example, a study committee of Synod 1997 reported the following to that synod:

Synod 1995 approved a process whereby local churches could exercise the option of ordaining women to the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist (*Acts of Synod 1995, p. 733*). Synod 1995 also adopted seven regulations to guide the church in the implementation of this policy (*Acts of Synod 1995, p. 735*). Among these regulations is the following: "f. Synodical agencies shall not appoint women as ministers of the Word to any field of labor within their jurisdiction nor seek to have them installed by a local church." In addition, Synod 1995 declared "that this arrangement be in effect until the year 2000, at which time it will be reviewed."

*(Acts of Synod 1995, p. 735)*

Synod 1996 received twenty-one overtures and two communications related to the 1995 decision. The large majority of these sought revisions of the 1995 decision; a few sought refinements. The mind of Synod 1996 was basically to stay the course with the 1995 decision, believing that "the denomination is not well served by continued reversals on this issue."

(*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 551)

On the basis of these observations, Synod 1996 specifically rejected an overture to amend Recommendation 3, f in the 1995 agreement to read, "Synodical agencies . . . shall respect local views on women in office in the placement of ministerial personnel" (*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 268). On the basis of these observations Synod 1997 (see *Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 631) rejected an overture to reconsider Overture 22 from Synod 1996, listing, as Ground 2, "With respect to the use of women's gifts in ecclesiastical office, Synod 1995 adopted a motion that the present 'arrangement be in effect until the year 2000, at which time it will be reviewed'" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735).

It would seem that synod has consistently affirmed the value and integrity of the covenant established in 1995.

### C. Recommendation

That synod not accede to Overture 24.

#### Grounds:

1. A great deal of trust throughout our denomination has been invested in and generated by the decision of Synod 1995. We are concerned that this trust may be compromised by an agreement to waive the synodical regulation which prohibits denominational agencies from appointing women to ministries within their jurisdiction. The perception within the denomination, strengthened by recent synodical decisions, is that such action violates the pastoral intent of the covenant of trust that Synod 1995 established.
2. Chaplaincy Ministries, as a denominational agency, represents the denomination through its endorsement of military chaplains. Such a denominational endorsement is necessary for all chaplains in the armed forces. This endorsement becomes, for all intents and purposes, an appointment. It is not accurate to state that Chaplaincy Ministries merely endorses and does not, in effect, appoint. Furthermore, action taken on the basis of this semantic distinction has the potential of disrupting a hard-earned state of trust between the various positions in our denomination.
3. By appointing a female candidate for ministry in the armed forces, Chaplaincy Ministries is communicating to the armed forces a false picture of where we are, as a denomination, on the issue of women in ecclesiastical office. Such an action affirms that we, as a denomination, fully support women in such offices. But this is not what Synod 1995 affirmed, and it is not our present position. In fact, we remain divided on this particular issue and continue to struggle to live together with our differences.
4. Another advisory committee is recommending to this synod that Chaplaincy Ministries have joint ecclesiastical supervision, with the calling church, over the chaplains whom it endorses. This joint ecclesias-

tical supervision constitutes jurisdiction and thus falls under the stipulations of Church Order Supplement, Article 3-a, B, 6.

5. The overture itself recognizes that this endorsement requires waiving Church Order Supplement, Article 3-a, B, 6. This is a tacit acknowledgment that the stipulations of B, 6 do apply in this case.

Synod returns to its consideration of the recommendations of the advisory-committee's majority report.

*B. Recommendations*

1. That synod allow the Pastoral Ministries Board and the director of Chaplaincy Ministries to endorse Insoon Gho as qualified for chaplaincy.

*Grounds:*

- a. Regulation B, 6 of the Church Order Supplement, Article 3-a does not prevent Chaplaincy Ministries from endorsing Insoon Gho and does not stand in the way of her being called by Eastern Avenue CRC.
- b. She is not an employee of Chaplaincy Ministries and is not being appointed by this agency, and the agency has not asked Eastern Avenue to call her.
- c. This overture is not needed.

—Adopted

2. That this be synod's response to Overture 24.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Article 58.)

**ARTICLE 45**

The afternoon session is adjourned; Elder Marvin H. De Vries leads in closing prayer.

**WEDNESDAY EVENING, June 17, 1998**

**Ninth Session**

**ARTICLE 46**

Dr. Emily Brink, music and liturgy editor for CRC Publications, announces *Psalter Hymnal* 455, "For the Fruits of His Creation" (sung to the Welsh tune *Ar hyd y nos*), and 493, "Precious Lord, Take My Hand." Psalm 70 is read in three sections (*Psalter Hymnal* 70) interspersed with delegates singing a refrain taken from "Precious Lord, Take My Hand." Dr. Brink leads the assembly in prayer, and delegates participate by making their petitions known. Devotions are concluded with *Psalter Hymnal* 627, "Bless His Holy Name."

**ARTICLE 47**

The officers of synod present the following:

A. *Background*

Synod 1995 adopted this decision regarding the permissibility of ordaining women to the offices of minister, elder, and evangelist: Classes may declare the word "male" inoperative for their region (Church Order Supplement, Art. 3-a) and thereby permit the ordaining of women ministers, elders, and evangelists and the seating of women officebearers at classical meetings. In addition, Synod 1995 decided "that this arrangement be in effect until the year 2000, at which time it will be reviewed" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 735). Two of the grounds for this decision were these:

*Grounds:*

- b. It will . . . allow the denomination to determine the effects of this decision in some regions before further considering this issue.
- c. A period during which the issue is not hotly and bitterly debated will allow the denomination to prayerfully reflect on the issue without the pressure of an imminent decision.

No procedure is in place to organize the upcoming review in an orderly way. Following a question from the floor of synod regarding this matter, the officers were asked to provide some guidance.

B. *Recommendations*

The officers of Synod 1998 recommend

1. That synod appoint a committee of five to seven members with the following mandate:
  - a. Solicit responses from congregations and classes to determine the effects of the 1995 decision in various regions of the denomination.
  - b. Summarize all responses received and prepare a report for Synod 2000.
  - c. Prepare recommendations for Synod 2000, including a biblical-theological argument to undergird the position(s) recommended.
  - d. Make the report available to the churches by November 1, 1999.

*Ground:* This committee will provide synod and the denomination a way to receive the prayerful reflection of the churches and her leaders on the decision of 1995 and to organize the responses and issues for constructive discussion at Synod 2000.

—Adopted

2. That Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, serve as the nominating committee and receive the names of nominees for this new committee from delegates of synod per regulation VI, D, I of the Rules for Synodical Procedure.

—Adopted

ARTICLE 48

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 24.)

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. John Zantingh reporting, presents the following:

## I. Board of Trustees

### A. Materials

1. Board of Trustees Report, pp. 19-62 (except Section II, A, 5)
2. Board of Trustees Supplement (Section VIII, A)

### B. Recommendations

1. That synod approve the membership of the Canadian Ministries Board (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 33, II, B, 6).

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North	Mr. Cor Vander Vinne	
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Rev. Alvin Beukema	Rev. J. Cameron Fraser
B.C. North-West	Rev. William C. Veenstra	Rev. Leonard Batterink
B.C. South-East	Mr. Joe De Vries	Mr. Henk Van Huizen
Eastern Canada	Mr. Tom Luimes	
Lake Superior	Mr. John Harris	
Chatham	Rev. Peter Nicolai	
Hamilton	Mr. Martin Adema	
Huron		Mr. Fred Vander Sterre
Niagara	Mr. Jack DeRoos	Ms. Stephanie Collins
Quinte	Mr. Ralph Pypker	Mr. Andy Batelaan
Toronto	Rev. Gerald Ringalda	Rev. Herman Praamsma
Members-at-large	Ms. Stephanie Collins Ms. Kathy Vander Grift Mr. Ed Vander Veer	

—Adopted

2. Regarding the policy change concerning multiple nominees for second terms of boards and committees (see BOT Supplement, Section VI, B, C).
  - a. That synod adopt the process "that regionally based agency and institution boards and service committees shall present a slate of multiple nominees for election to membership for a first term of service but may present a single nominee (an incumbent) for a second term."

The following boards and committees are affected by this change:

#### *Boards*

Board of Trustees of the CRCNA  
The Back to God Hour  
Calvin College  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Pastoral Ministries  
At-large members of the boards of CRC Publications, CR Home Missions, CR World Missions, and CRWRC

#### *Committees*

CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. Committee  
Fund for Smaller Churches Committee  
Historical Committee  
Interchurch Relations Committee

Judicial Code Committee  
Ministers' Pension Funds Committees  
Sermons for Reading Services Committee  
Youth-Ministry Committee

*Note:* The boards of CRC Publications, CR Home Missions, CR World Missions, and CRWRC are not affected by this change because their delegates are appointed by classes, except for the at-large members of these boards.

—*Adopted*

- b. That synod adopt the procedure to be followed as described in the Board of Trustees Supplement VI, C:

C. *Procedure to be followed*

In all instances the boards and service committees would present multiple nominees when a new position on the board or committee is being filled. Some of those nominees will be solicited from classes (as is done now for board membership); and some nominees will be identified by the committees themselves (as is the practice now for service committees). Each board or service-committee member will initially be chosen for a three-year term from a slate of two or more nominees.

The second term for board positions will be processed as follows:

A slate of names containing the name of an incumbent and the name of an incumbent alternate will be sent in July prior to reelection to each classis in the region represented by the board member. The classes at their fall meetings will be able to review the slate and register any serious reservations they have about the reelection of any incumbent. If no reservations are registered, then the slate will be submitted to the following synod for ratification. If serious reservations are registered by a majority of classes in a region, then the affected board will prepare a new slate of nominees for election at the winter and/or spring meeting of classes before the next annual synod.

The second term for committees will be processed as follows:

The secretary of each committee will be reminded in July of those committee members who are eligible for reelection by the synod of the following year. Each committee will consider the names, and if the members are willing to be reelected and the committee supports the reelection, the names will be submitted to synod for election. Each name will be printed in the *Agenda for Synod* and accompanied by sufficient biographical information to assist synodical delegates in their voting.

—*Adopted*

3. Concerning a "pastoral letter" (Board of Trustees Supplement, VII)

- a. That synod send a pastoral letter to the churches regarding the concern expressed in the report that "several of our congregations have been split apart by schism, others have experienced internal strife over a variety of issues, and a general malaise is felt by many throughout the denomination."

—*Adopted*

- b. That the task of formulating the pastoral letter be given to the officers of synod and that they report back to synod at a later session.

—Adopted

## II. Multiethnic-Strategies Committee

A. *Material*: Motion from a delegate of synod which was referred to Advisory Committee 1

### B. *Recommendation*

That synod appoint a committee of thirteen members (including three ex officio) to study the issues and solutions identified by the 1998 Multiethnic Conference, including the results of the dialogue held between synodical delegates and multiethnic conferees, in order to develop specific strategies which will continue to move us toward becoming a diverse family of God. This committee will report its recommendations to the Board of Trustees to enable the Board to fulfill the mandate given to it by Synod 1996 regarding multiethnic matters (*Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 514). This report will be presented to the 1998 multiethnic conferees for review and feedback.

That this committee be made up of

- 2 African North Americans
- 2 Asian North Americans
- 2 European North Americans
- 2 Hispanic North American
- 2 Native North Americans
- A member of the Board of Trustees (ex officio)
- Executive director of ministries (ex officio)
- General secretary (ex officio)

### *Grounds:*

1. It is important that the rich contributions to the dialogue between multiethnic conferees and synodical delegates in 1998 be used to enhance the ability and commitment of the CRCNA to better reflect God's kingdom.
2. We recognize the need to prepare the denomination for the rapidly changing multiethnic population and culture of North America.
3. It is crucial that such a committee has no majority or minority but has a membership of persons who love the Lord and have a deep appreciation for the CRCNA.

—Adopted

## III. Response to Communication 1: Classis Greater Los Angeles

A. *Material*: Communication 1, pp. 244-45

### B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod publish in the *Acts of Synod 1998* the communication from Classis Greater Los Angeles regarding restructuring.

—Adopted

## Communication 1: Classis Greater Los Angeles

To Synod 1998 of the Christian Reformed Church:

After hearing the presentation regarding restructuring prior to the meeting of Classis Greater Los Angeles in October of 1997, the classis decided to form an ad hoc committee with the mandate (1) to receive feedback from the churches of Classis Greater Los Angeles regarding denominational restructuring and (2) to present a report to the March 1998 meeting of classis. Classis decided to endorse the committee's report and asked that it be communicated to Rev. Henry Numan, chairman of the restructuring committee, and also to Synod 1998.

We make the following observation: The premise for restructuring appears to be that there is fragmentation in the denomination as well as a need for better communication between the agencies and the people in the pew and a need for more efficient governance.

We contend that it is not clear that the three parts of this premise should result in restructuring. If these are the three major areas of concern in the denomination, we have received no indication from the synodical Committee to Study Structure for Ministry in the U.S. that it has considered any other options besides changing the structure in order to achieve the desired result. Furthermore, if restructuring is the best way to achieve the desired results, we have received no evidence that any options for restructuring have been considered except the one that is being proposed.

We believe that the following issues need to be addressed with regard to the current suggested restructuring:

- First, the flow chart which we have seen indicates such a heavy flow through the office of the executive director of ministries (EDM) that it appears this will become a log jam for action. Although the plan speaks of decentralization, we are not sure that this result will be achieved.
- Second, we are concerned that the recommended restructuring will result in changing the BOT into something quite different from what synod envisioned when the change was made from the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) to the BOT several years ago.
- Third, the suggested restructuring appears to be not only extremely complex and expensive but also to add another layer of bureaucracy in our denomination at a time when we are actually shrinking in size.

Therefore, we present the following recommendation, based upon the foregoing observations:

That the report on restructuring which is to be sent to the churches in the fall of 1998 for action by Synod 1999 actually be considered an interim report and that a final draft be sent to the churches in 1999 for action in the year 2000.

### *Grounds:*

1. A change of such magnitude ought not to be done hastily. Therefore, the churches deserve more than the normal time between the fall report and the next synod to discuss the changes envisioned.
2. Since Canadian restructuring envisioned three regional offices of the kind the U.S. restructuring committee is proposing in the United States, it would be good to allow ample time for the proposed changes in Canada to serve as a pilot project before making any changes in the U.S. structure.

Though we believe that a formal overture to this effect would be premature, since the final report will not be available until September, we also believe that this communication to Synod 1998 is significant in that it indicates the serious concern that we have regarding the proposed U.S. restructuring.

*(Agenda for Synod 1998, pp. 244-45)*

2. That synod refer this communication to the synodical Committee to Study Structure for Ministry in the U.S.

—Adopted

**IV. Response to Overture 15: Examine Declarations Regarding Ministers Who Resign**

A. *Material*: Overture 15, pp. 228-33

B. *Recommendation*

That synod not accede to the overture.

*Ground*: Church Order Supplement, Article 14-b provides adequate guidance.

—*Adopted*

**V. Overture 22: Permit Transfer of Laotian Vientiane CRC from Classis Greater Los Angeles to Classis California South**

A. *Material*: Overture 22, p. 313

B. *Recommendation*

That synod accede to the overture and approve the transfer of Laotian Vientiane CRC from Classis Greater Los Angeles to Classis California South.

*Ground*: This is the request of this emerging congregation, which has relocated within the boundaries of Classis California South.

—*Adopted*

**VI. Overture 6: New Categories for Reporting Church Membership for Yearbook and Ministry-Share Purposes**

A. *Material*: Overture 6, pp. 212-15

B. *Recommendation*

That synod accede to the overture.

*Grounds*

1. Grounds within the overture are convincing.
2. The need for the new categories in church membership is real.

—*Adopted*

**VII. Work of synodical deputies**

A. *Classical examinations of candidates*

Synodical deputies report their concurrence with the decisions of classes to admit the following to the office of minister of the Word:

Candidate	Classis	Synodical Deputies and Classes
John G. Aukema	Florida (9-27-97)	S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East J. Reiffer, Hackensack D.J. Van Loo, Chicago South
Mark D. Bennink	Pella (10-17-97)	D.W. De Groot, Iakota P. De Jong, Northern Illinois D.A. Zylstra, Northcentral Iowa
Fred M. Bultman	Grand Rapids East (9-18-97)	F.J. Van Dyk, Grand Rapids North J.H. Looman, Kalamazoo G.W. Sheeres, Thornapple Valley
Andrew Kyung-Jin Chun	Lake Erie (10-4-97)	S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East F.J. Van Dyk, Grand Rapids North G.W. Sheeres, Thornapple Valley

Candidate	Classis	Synodical Deputies and Classes
Karl J. De Lange	Illiana (3-3-98)	D.J. Van Loo, Chicago South J.S. Meyer, Holland T.H. Douma, Northern Illinois
Munchul Kim	Kalamazoo (1-27-98)	J. Gorter, Grandville S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East J.J. Steigenga, Grand Rapids South
Robert L. Knol	Grand Rapids South (10-2-97)	S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East J. Gorter, Grandville D. Tinklenberg, Georgetown
Joel C. Korenstra	Kalamazoo (1-27-98)	J. Gorter, Grandville S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East J.J. Steigenga, Grand Rapids South
Henry J. Lengkeek	Zeeland (9-17-97)	J.H. Scholten, Holland J. Gorter, Grandville D. Tinklenberg, Georgetown
Robert J. Loerts	Niagara (9-17-97)	H.R. De Bolster, Hamilton H.D. Praamsma, Toronto R. Koops, Huron
Michael F. Miedema	Quinte (9-23-97)	H.R. De Bolster, Hamilton J. De Jong, Niagara H.D. Praamsma, Toronto
Christopher P. Mitchell	Atlantic Northeast (7-8-97)	J. Reiffer, Hackensack J.G. Keizer, Hudson G. Ringnald, Toronto
Coleman S. Moore	Florida (9-27-97)	S.E. Hoezee, Grand Rapids East J. Reiffer, Hackensack D.J. Van Loo, Chicago South
Steven J. Mulder	Northcentral Iowa (9-9-97)	L.J. Howerzyl, Pella D.W. De Groot, Iakota A.L. Kuiper, Heartland
Kevin J. Muyskens	Kalamazoo (10-14-97)	D. Tinklenberg, Georgetown G.W. Sheeres, Thornapple Valley J.H. Scholten, Holland
David J. Nederhood	Central California (9-16-97)	J. Van Schepen, Greater Los Angeles R. Bultman, California South H.A. Brink, Pacific Northwest
Eleanor M. Rietkerk	Pacific Northwest (8-20-97)	J. Boonstra, B.C. South-East J. Weeda, Yellowstone D.L. Recker, Columbia
Johannes Schouten	Alberta North (10-7-97)	W.L. Vander Beek, B.C. South-East J. Corvers, Alberta South H. Jonker, B.C. North-West
Andrew R. Sytsma	Pacific Northwest (10-22-97)	H. Jonker, B.C. North-West J. Weeda, Yellowstone D.L. Recker, Columbia
Wayne A. Ten Harmsel	Alberta North (3-3-98)	J. Corvers, Alberta South H. Jonker, B.C. North-West W.L. Vander Beek, B.C. South-East
Colin Vander Ploeg	Alberta North (10-7-97)	W.L. Vander Beek, B.C. South-East J. Corvers, Alberta South H. Jonker, B.C. North-West
Arthur L. Verboon	Alberta North (10-7-97)	W.L. Vander Beek, B.C. South-East J. Corvers, Alberta South H. Jonker, B.C. North-West
Todd V. Wagenmaker	Pella (9-19-97)	J.D. Buwalda, Minnesota South D.W. De Groot, Iakota D.A. Zylstra, Northcentral Iowa
Andrew Yongil Yi	Pacific Northwest (10-22-97)	H. Jonker, B.C. North-West J. Weeda, Yellowstone D.L. Recker, Columbia

*B. Classical examinations via Church Order Article 7*

1. Synodical deputies J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), S.J. Vander Klay (Atlantic Northeast), and W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), having examined the written credentials submitted by the council of Ocean View CRC, Norfolk, Virginia, having considered the need, and having heard the examination for licensure to exhort in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7 and its supplement, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on March 3, 1998, to grant **Mr. Efren Echipare** the right to exhort in Christian Reformed churches.
2. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and M.A. Davies (Florida), having considered the gifts of the applicant and having heard the examination in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 23, 1997, to declare **Ms. Sheila Holmes** eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
3. Synodical deputies J.G. Busscher (Lake Superior), L.J. Howerzyl (Pella), and D.A. Zylstra (Northcentral Iowa) concur with Classis Heartland, in session on September 27, 1997, in their declaration that **Mr. Marvin Leese** has demonstrated the required "exceptional gifts" for ministry and can therefore proceed to the preparatory examination.
4. Synodical deputies J.G. Busscher (Lake Superior), L.J. Howerzyl (Pella), and D.A. Zylstra (Northcentral Iowa), having considered the gifts of the applicant and having heard the examination in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7, concur in the decision of Classis Heartland, in session on November 12, 1997, to declare **Mr. Marvin Leese** eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
5. Synodical deputies J.G. Busscher (Lake Superior), L.J. Howerzyl (Pella), and D.A. Zylstra (Northcentral Iowa), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7, concur in the decision of Classis Heartland, in session on November 12, 1997, to admit **Mr. Marvin Leese** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.  
*Deputies' comments:* We recommend the appointment of an especially strong mentor to provide guidance in the areas of sermon crafting and pastoral counseling.
6. Synodical deputies J. Corvers (Alberta South), W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having considered the gifts of the applicant and having heard the examination in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North, in session on October 7-8, 1997, to declare **Mr. Bill Nieuwenhuis** eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

7. Synodical deputies J. Corvers (Alberta South), H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), and W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with the provisions of Church Order Article 7, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North in session on March 3-4, 1998, to admit **Mr. Bill Nieuwenhuis** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

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

—Adopted

*C. Ministers from other denominations, Church Order Article 8*

1. Synodical deputies S.J. Vander Klay (Atlantic Northeast), W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), and B. van Eyk (Hackensack), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Hudson, in session on January 28, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination to serve as home-missionary pastor.
2. Synodical deputies H.A. Brink (Pacific Northwest), W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), and J. Weeda (Yellowstone), having reviewed the material specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Columbia, in session on February 25, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated on the basis of ethnic minority to call a minister from another denomination to serve as pastor for the emerging Zion CRC, Portland, Oregon, under the supervision of Oak Hills CRC of Portland.
3. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), J. Weeda (Yellowstone), and A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on March 3, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination to serve as pastor of Sun Valley CRC, Denver, Colorado.
4. Synodical deputies J.A. Molenbeek (Muskegon), J.W. Uitvlugt (Zeeland), and J.R. Boot (Georgetown), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Holland, in session on May 28, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination (United Methodist) to serve as program manager of Church Relations and Communications (CR Home Missions).
5. Synodical deputies S.E. Hoeszee (Grand Rapids East), J. Reiffer (Hackensack), and D.J. Van Loo (Chicago South), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. George Boyd**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Florida, in session on September 27, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
6. Synodical deputies P. De Jong (Northern Illinois), H.J. Schutt (Illiana), and D.J. Van Loo (Chicago South), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the

declaration of Classis Wisconsin, in session on January 13, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination (Reformed Churches of New Zealand) to serve as minister of the Word in First CRC, Randolph, Wisconsin.

*Statement of need:*

- a. Church has been vacant for two and one-half years and has issued five calls.
  - b. Church believes that Rev. Robert Brenton would be compatible with the views and positions of their congregation.
7. Synodical deputies P. De Jong (Northern Illinois), J.T. Medenblik (Chicago South), and J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Robert Brenton**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Wisconsin, in session on March 3, 1998, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
  8. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and J. Reiffer (Hackensack), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Atlantic Northeast, in session on October 18, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (**Rev. Ted Gray**) from another denomination to serve as minister of Champlain Valley CRC, Vergennes, Vermont.
  9. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and J. Reiffer (Hackensack), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Ted Gray**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Atlantic Northeast, in session on December 2, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
  10. Synodical deputies T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), J.H. Scholten (Holland), and J.L. Alferink (Zeeland), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Chicago South, in session on June 19, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Sam Hamstra) from another denomination to serve as pastor.

*Deputies' comments:* Provided that, prior to publication of this call in *The Banner*, the required application and a statement of health, appropriate diplomas, and the evaluated psychological report be furnished the classical interim committee.

11. Synodical deputies J. Bylsma (Wisconsin), T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), and H.J. Schutt (Illiana), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Sam Hamstra**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Chicago South, in session on September 18, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
12. Synodical deputies J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and R.L. Scheuers (California South), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on July 1, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from

another denomination, namely Rev. Joseph Hyunsook Hong, to serve as minister of South Bay Elim CRC of Gardena, California.

*Deputies' comments:* We encourage the church to clarify the issue of senior pastor prior to the colloquium doctum.

13. Synodical deputies D.R. Koll (Greater Los Angeles), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and J.R. Kok (Central California), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Joseph Hyunsook Hong**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on September 16, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
14. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), and R.L. Scheuers (California South), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on July 1, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Ho Suk Kang) from another denomination to serve as pastor of Korean Peace of Los Angeles CRC, Mission Hills, California.
15. Synodical deputies D.R. Koll (Greater Los Angeles), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and J.R. Kok (Central California), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Ho Suk Kang**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on September 16, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
16. Synodical deputies R.L. Scheuers (California South), J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), and G.J. Kamps (Arizona), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on July 1, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Young Moon Kim) from another denomination to serve as pastor of Orange County Choong Hyun Presbyterian Church.
17. Synodical deputies D.R. Koll (Greater Los Angeles), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and J.R. Kok (Central California), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Young Moon Kim**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on September 16, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
18. Synodical deputies D.W. De Groot (Iakota), J. Bylsma (Wisconsin), and T.J. Brown (Minnesota South), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Lake Superior, in session on March 3, 1998, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination (independent) to serve as a minister in the CRCNA.

*Statement of need:* "We believe there is a need within our denomination for church planters. We believe that Rev. Charlie Louvau has demonstrated gifts in the area of evangelism and church planting."

19. Synodical deputies W.K. Bulthuis (Red Mesa), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and G.G. Vink (Central California), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Albino Melendez**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis California South, in session on October 15, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
20. Synodical deputies J.H. Scholten (Holland), S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), and D. Tinklenberg (Georgetown), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Mark Minegar**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Kalamazoo, in session on September 9, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
21. Synodical deputies H.A. Brink (Pacific Northwest), R. Bultman (California South), and J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Central California, in session on September 16, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination to serve as minister of the Word in the CRCNA.  
  
*Deputies' comments:* Rev. Samuel Chi Ping Ng is a Cantonese-speaking pastor who can fill an ethnic need in the CRCNA.
22. Synodical deputies H.A. Brink (Pacific Northwest), R. Bultman (California South), and J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Samuel Chi Ping Ng**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Central California, in session on September 16, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
23. Synodical deputies R.L. Scheuers (California South), J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), and G.J. Kamps (Arizona), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on July 1, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Jin Hwan Oh) from another denomination to serve as pastor of Gracious Ark Church.
24. Synodical deputies D.R. Koll (Greater Los Angeles), G.J. Kamps (Arizona), and J.R. Kok (Central California), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Jin Hwan Oh**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Hanmi, in session on September 16, 1997, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America
25. Synodical deputies J.R. Kok (Central California), W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), and D.L. Recker (Columbia), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Gui Je Park**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Northwest, in session on

September 20, 1997, to admit **Rev. Gui Je Park** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

26. Synodical deputies W.K. Bulthuis (Red Mesa) and G.G. Vink (Central California), having reviewed the documents and reports specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis California South, in session on October 15, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. John Seho Oh) from another denomination to serve as pastor of a Korean American church.

*Deputies' comments:* Classis is urged to do a more exhaustive demonstration that a search for ministerial candidates has been done. Deputies noted that Calvin Theological Seminary is providing more Korean-qualified candidates.

*Note:* Deputy G.J. Kamps arrived late because of plane delays.

27. Synodical deputies G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley), J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo), and F.J. Van Dyk (Grand Rapids North), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, D, 5, a, concur in the declaration of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 18, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister from another denomination to serve as copastor of Madison Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
28. Synodical deputies J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo), G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley), and F.J. Van Dyk (Grand Rapids North), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Samuel B. Reeves**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, meeting on May 21, 1998, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
29. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), and J. Weeda (Yellowstone), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on September 24, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Roger Ryu) from another denomination to serve as pastor of Korean Presbyterian Galilee CRC, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
30. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), and J. Weeda (Yellowstone), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Roger Ryu**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on March 3, 1998, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
31. Synodical deputies J. Vande Lune (Atlantic Northeast), B. van Eyk (Hackensack), and W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Albert Sideco**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on May 13, 1998, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

32. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), and J. Weeda (Yellowstone), having reviewed the documents specified in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 8, concur in the declaration of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on September 24, 1997, that a **need** has been demonstrated to call a minister (Rev. Jeff Van Kooten) from another denomination (Evangelical Presbyterian Church) to serve as new-church developer in central Denver.
33. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), and J. Weeda (Yellowstone), having heard the colloquium doctum of **Rev. Jeff Van Kooten**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, concur in the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on March 3, 1998, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

*Recommendations*

1. That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies. —Adopted
2. That synod remind the synodical deputies to provide the required statement of need re Article 8 concurrences. —Adopted

*D. Ministers in specialized services, Church Order Article 12-c*

Minister	Work	Classis and Date	Synodical Deputies
D.J. Einfeld	Hospice Chaplain	Pella (10-17-97)	D.W. De Groot, Iakota P. De Jong, Northern Illinois D.A. Zylstra, Northcentral Iowa
<p>Synodical deputies D.W. De Groot (Iakota), P. De Jong (Northern Illinois), and D.A. Zylstra (Northcentral Iowa), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Trinity CRC, St. Louis, Missouri, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Pella, in session on October 17, 1997, to approve the position of Hospice chaplain as consistent with the ministry of the Word.</p>			
T.G. Soerens	Instructor of Theology	Iakota (9-16-97)	J.D. Buwalda, Minnesota South A.L. Kuiper, Heartland D.A. Zylstra, Northcentral Iowa

Synodical deputies J.D. Buwalda (Minnesota South), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), D.A. Zylstra (Northcentral Iowa), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Bethel CRC, Sioux Center, Iowa, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, in accordance with Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Iakota, in session on September 16, 1997, to approve the position of instructor of theology as consistent with the ministry of the Word.

Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and M.A. Davies (Florida), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Trinity CRC, Broomall, Pennsylvania, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, in accordance with Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 23, 1997, to approve the position of professor of Bible and theology at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

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

—Adopted

*E. Loaning a minister to another denomination under Article 13-b*

Synodical deputies J. Gorter (Grandville), S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), and J.J. Steigenga (Grand Rapids South), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-b, concur in the decision of Classis Kalamazoo, in session on January 27, 1998, to approve loaning **Rev. Munchul Kim** to serve Michiana Korean Church of Osceola, Indiana.

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

—Adopted

*F. Release from the ministry under Article 14-b*

1. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and S.J. Vander Klay (Atlantic Northeast), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Robert W. De Vries**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on March 3, 1998, to declare that **Robert W. De Vries** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. Synodical deputies R. Opperwall (Grand Rapids East), C.D. Vander Meyden (Grand Rapids South), and F.J. Van Dyk (Grand Rapids North), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Richard C. Gamble**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Thornapple Valley, in session on September 23, 1997, to declare that **Richard C. Gamble** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
3. Synodical deputies J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), F.J. Walhof (Arizona), and R. Vander Ley (Pacific Northwest), having heard the discussion relating to the resignation of **William P. Green III**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Central California, in session on March 3, 1998, to declare that **William P. Green III** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

*Note:* In regard to the matter of the release of William Green III, we note that while he requested release from the ministry, the council of First Ripon CRC is requesting that he be "honorably released." We believe that in the future, should Classis Central California and/or the churches be faced with a similar situation in which a minister from the CRC seeks affiliation with a denomination such as the United Reformed Church, which is made up largely of churches and people who have seceded from the CRC, it is more appropriate simply to "release" such a minister. This has been the way many other classes in our denomination have handled this matter.

4. Synodical deputies L.J. Kuiper (Wisconsin), J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo), and J.T. Medenblik (Chicago South), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Timothy J. Kikkert**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Northern Illinois, in session on March 4, 1998, to declare that **Timothy J. Kikkert** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

*Deputies' comments:* We recommend that in the public notice mention be made that T.J. Kikkert will affiliate with the PCUSA to continue his work as military chaplain.

5. Synodical deputies J. Corvers (Alberta South), W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the discussion of Classis Alberta North at its meeting on October 7-8, 1997, concur in the decision of classis to
  - a. Acquiesce in the resignation of **Jacob H. Kits** from the Christian Reformed Church,
  - b. Declare **Jacob H. Kits** released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
6. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), B. van Eyk (Hackensack), and J. Vande Lune (Atlantic Northeast) do not concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on May 13, 1998, to honorably release **William Kosten** (emeritus) from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

*Grounds:*

1. No article of the Church Order specifically provides for the release of a retired minister to another church body.
  2. Article 14-b, which might otherwise allow this release, seems to stipulate that release is to a recognized ministry in the other church body.
7. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and M.A. Davies (Florida), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Timothy C. Limburg**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 23, 1997, to declare that **Timothy C. Limburg** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
  8. Synodical deputies J. Weeda (Yellowstone), A.L. Kuiper (Heartland), and G.J. Kamps (Arizona), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Dale L. Piers**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on September 24, 1997, to declare that **Dale L. Piers** is released from the office

of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

9. Synodical deputies G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley), J.S. Meyer (Holland), and J.R. Boot (Georgetown), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **William Renkema**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Zeeland, in session on May 6, 1998, to declare that **William Renkema** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
10. Synodical deputies H.D. Praamsma (Toronto), M. Van Donselaar (Hamilton), and R. Koops (Huron), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **John Roke**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Eastern Canada, in session on October 24, 1997, to declare that **John Roke** is dismissed from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.  
*Deputies' comments:* John Roke has resigned from the ministry in the CRC, has shown insufficient willingness to submit to the authority of the Athens CRC council, and has engaged in schismatic activity.
11. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), J.J. Hoogland (Hudson), and M.A. Davies (Florida), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Donald C. Sherow**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 23, 1997, to declare that **Donald C. Sherow** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
12. Synodical deputies W.J. Dykstra (Lake Erie), S.J. Vander Klay (Atlantic Northeast), and B. van Eyk (Hackensack), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **James J. Stastny**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on January 28, 1998, to declare that **James J. Stastny** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
13. Synodical deputies J. Gorter (Grandville), S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), and D.A. Struyk (Grand Rapids South), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Joel A. Vander Kooi**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session on January 20, 1998, to declare that **Joel A. Vander Kooi** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
14. Synodical deputies J.D. Buwalda (Minnesota South), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and A.L. Kuiper (Heartland) heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Allen P. Vander Pol**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, but only two of the deputies (J. Buwalda and D. De Groot) concur in the decision of Classis Lake Superior, in session on September 30, 1997, to declare that **Allen P. Vander Pol** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Deputy A.L. Kuiper did not concur.

15. Synodical deputies J.S. Meyer (Holland), R. Opperwall (Grand Rapids East), and J.C. Medendorp (Thornapple Valley), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Clark G. Van Halsema**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Georgetown, in session on May 21, 1998, to declare that **Clark G. Van Halsema** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
16. Synodical deputies J.S. Meyer (Holland), G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley), and J.R. Boot (Georgetown), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Andrew J. Van Schouwen** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Zeeland, in session on May 6, 1998, to declare that **Andrew J. Van Schouwen** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

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

—*Adopted*

17. Synodical deputies S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), D. Tinkenberg (Georgetown), and C.D. Vander Meyden (Grand Rapids South), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session on September 18, 1997, to declare that **Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

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

—*Defeated*

A motion is made that synod divide the question.

—*Adopted*

*Recommendations:*

- a. That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies in releasing Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
 

—*Recommended*
- b. That synod approve removing the word “honorably” from the synodical deputies’ report.
 

—*Recommended*

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 56.)

#### ARTICLE 49

The evening session is adjourned. In light of the discussion held during the evening session, delegates conclude the evening with a time of intercessory prayer for each other and the church.

ARTICLE 50

Elder Enno J. Meijers announces *Psalter Hymnal* 47, "Nations, Clap Your Hands," and *Psalter Hymnal* 8, "Lord, Our Lord, Your Glorious Name." He reads from Luke 9:10-17, after which the delegates sing *Psalter Hymnal* 545, "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace," as an opening prayer.

Elder Bing Goei thanks the president of synod for the leadership given to the assembly on Wednesday evening.

The roll call indicates that Elder Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi) is absent.

ARTICLE 51

Advisory Committee 9, Church Order, Rev. William T. Koopmans reporting, presents the following:

**I. Board of Trustees**

*A. Materials*

1. Board of Trustees Report (Section II, A, 5), p. 23
2. Overture 8, pp. 216-217

*B. Recommendations*

1. That synod adopt the proposed changes in Church Order Article 38-c, -d, and -e.

—Adopted

2. That synod declare this decision to be its answer to Overture 8.

—Adopted

**II. Response to Overtures 9 (part A), 10, 11, and 20, requesting synod to revise the 1997 decision on Article VI, D of the new Model Articles of Incorporation.**

*A. Materials*

1. Overture 9 (part A), pp. 217-18
2. Overture 10, p. 219
3. Overture 11, pp. 219-220
4. Overture 20, pp. 311-12

*B. Recommendations*

1. That synod not accede to these overtures.

*Grounds:*

- a. Since the new Model Articles of Incorporation are recommended to the churches with the understanding that each congregation may voluntarily implement them, the original authority of the local councils (as described in Church Order Article 27) is not violated.
- b. The wording of the present model presupposes that, in the event of an irreconcilable division or schism, the classis (and synod upon appeal)

would be obligated to proceed under the dictates and in the spirit of I Corinthians 6.

—*Adopted*

2. That the Board of Trustees be advised of concerns which have been raised with regard to potential problems pertaining to the application of the new Model Articles of Incorporation in the context of Canadian churches, which ordinarily are incorporated provincially rather than federally and which may require the inclusion of human-rights-code language.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod require that the word "model" be inserted in Church Order Supplement, Article 32-d, to read, "Model Articles of Incorporation for Churches in the United States," and "Model Articles of Incorporation for Churches in Canada."

—*Adopted*

4. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overtures 9 (part A), 10, 11, and 20.

—*Adopted*

### **III. Response to Overture 9 (part B): That synod end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.**

A. *Material*: Overture 9 (part B), pp. 217-18

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod accede to Overture 9's (part B) request that synod end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.

*Grounds*:

- a. The present requirement, adopted in 1997, inappropriately grants a classis or synod the power to dictate the incorporation articles of a local congregation.
  - b. Financially dependent congregations which receive support by means such as loans or grants can be held accountable by other more appropriate means.
2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 9 (part B).

According to Rules for Synodical Procedure, the minority report of the advisory committee is read as information by Rev. Gregory S. Janke.

### **Response to Overture 9 (part B): That synod end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.**

A. *Material*: Overture 9 (part B), pp. 217-18

1. That synod not accede to Overture 9's (part B) request that synod end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.

*Grounds:*

- a. People have a reasonable expectation that the money they give will be used to further the kingdom ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The CRCNA, through its agencies and ministries, must act in accordance with the trust implied in the gift.
  - b. Churches newly affiliating with the CRCNA are already expected to make doctrinal and ecclesiastical changes (i.e., changes in church offices or election procedures). Requiring a legal change for newly affiliating churches as reflected in the adoption of the new Model Articles of Incorporation to indicate their new status does not place an undue burden upon those churches.
2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 9 (part B).

Synod returns to its consideration of the recommendations of the majority advisory-committee report.

1. That synod accede to Overture 9's (part B) request that synod end its requirement that new or financially dependent churches must adopt the denomination's new Model Articles of Incorporation.

*Grounds:*

- a. The present requirement, adopted in 1997, inappropriately grants a classis or synod the power to dictate the incorporation articles of a local congregation.
  - b. Financially dependent congregations which receive support by means such as loans or grants can be held accountable by other more appropriate means.
- Adopted
2. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 9 (part B).
- Adopted

#### **IV. Response to Overture 2: Appoint a Committee to Revise Form of Subscription**

A. *Material:* Overture 2, pp. 202-08

B. *Recommendation*

That synod not accede to the request of Overture 2 to appoint a committee to revise the Form of Subscription.

*Grounds:*

1. The "guidelines as to the meaning of subscription to the confessions by means of the Form of Subscription," which were adopted by Synod 1976 and are printed in Church Order Supplement, Article 5, adequately meet the objections which have been raised with respect to the phrase "do fully agree with the Word of God" in the Form of Subscription.

2. The Form of Subscription is not intended to function as a mandate or job description for the various signers, and the promise "to teach these doctrines diligently" ought to be interpreted in a manner appropriate to the function or office of the signer and the corporate nature of the offices.
3. The question of freedom to speak or write about theological difficulties has been dealt with previously (*Acts of Synod 1976*, pp. 66-70, Art. 64).

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 54.)

#### ARTICLE 52

The morning session is adjourned; Rev. Martin T. Mobach leads in closing prayer, which is concluded with the delegates' singing of *Psalter Hymnal* 634, "Father, We Love You."

### THURSDAY AFTERNOON, June 18, 1998 Eleventh Session

#### ARTICLE 53

Rev. Ezequiel Romero announces *Psalter Hymnal* 490, "Blessed Assurance: Jesus Is Mine," the singing of which is interspersed with readings from Romans 8. Rev. Romero leads in opening prayer and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 188, "Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah."

#### ARTICLE 54

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 51.)

Advisory Committee 9, Church Order, Rev. William T. Koopmans reporting, presents the following:

#### **I. Response to Overture 7: Add a Sentence in Church Order Supplement, Article 40-a**

A. *Material*: Overture 7, pp. 215-16

B. *Recommendation*

That synod not accede to Overture 7.

*Grounds*:

- a. The requested revision violates Church Order Article 40.
- b. The requested revision goes beyond the intention of Church Order, Supplement Article 40-a.
- c. The needs of smaller churches are already being dealt with at the classical level by way of exceptions when warranted.

—Adopted

## II. Response to Overtures 16 and 21, regarding the removal of Question and Answer 80 from the text of the Heidelberg Catechism

### A. Materials

1. Overture 16, pp. 233-36
2. Overture 21, pp. 312-13

### B. Recommendations

1. That synod not accede to the request of Overture 16.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. Overture 16 has not established that the language of Q. and A. 80 is an incorrect presentation of the present official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.
- b. In certain ministry settings the clear teaching of Q. and A. 80 is pastorally and evangelistically helpful.
- c. Synods of 1959 and 1961 established an important precedent by resisting technical revisions of the confessions and by opting for a historical textual approach to the confessions (*Acts of Synod 1959*, pp. 183-84; *Acts of Synod 1961*, Art. 12, p. 88).

—Adopted

2. That synod direct the Interchurch Relations Committee to make an attempt to dialogue with the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church to clarify the official doctrine of that church concerning the mass.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. The Roman Catholic Church appears to speak with a variety of voices with regard to its doctrine of the mass. Some of these voices articulate a doctrine worthy of the criticisms and condemnations contained in Q. and A. 80. Some, however, raise questions as to the accuracy of the characterization of the mass found in Q. and A. 80.

Q. and A. 112 of the Heidelberg Catechism, concerning God's will for us in the ninth commandment, instructs, "It is God's will that I never give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor join in condemning anyone without a hearing or without just cause." This confession should compel us to offer a "hearing" to the Roman Catholic Church to ensure that the explanation of the mass found in Q. and A. 80 is accurate and does not unjustly "twist the words" of the Roman Catholic Church.

- b. The CRCNA sends missionaries to many countries around the world with strong Roman Catholic Church influences. It is important that before we even consider revisiting Q. and A. 80 we hear the Roman Catholic Church's official doctrine concerning the mass so that our confessional critique and response to that doctrine can be universally accurate and relevant.
- c. The issue of the appropriateness of Q. and A. 80 is not likely to go away. Increasing numbers of former Roman Catholics are joining the CRC, and association of members of the RCC and the CRC through joint ministry projects is becoming more commonplace. Success by the Interchurch Relations Committee in obtaining clarification concerning the official

position of the Roman Catholic Church concerning its doctrine of the mass will be instructive to possible future discussions.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overtures 16 and 21.

—*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 55

(The report of Advisory Committee 3 is continued from Article 38.)

Advisory Committee 3, Education, Rev. David R. Koll reporting, presents the following:

#### **Continuing professional education for ministry staff in the CRC** (recommitted)

A. *Material*: Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement, pp. 279-81, 282.

#### B. *Recommendations*

1. That Synod 1998 affirm the value of continuing education for CRC ministry staff, a value raised by the Denominational Strategic Plan and addressed by the 1998 Calvin Seminary supplementary report:

By 2002, all ordained ministers and other ministry staff serving congregations in the CRC will receive continuing training in effective ministry. A curriculum and a strategy will be developed to provide such leadership on the congregational level.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod ask its officers to appoint a broad-based committee of laity and clergy to study the issues of ministry standards and continuing education, with the mandate of preparing a continuing-education proposal to Synod 1999. Such a committee will take into account

- a. The discussions of Synod 1998 on this issue.
- b. The issues of local ownership and accountability.
- c. The means and simplicity of administration.
- d. Input from church councils and congregations throughout the denomination.

—*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 56

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 48.)

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. John Zantingh reporting, presents the following:

## I. Work of synodical deputies (continued from Article 48)

### G. Extensions (and releases) under Article 16-c

1. Synodical deputies J.D. Buwalda (Minnesota South), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and A.L. Kuiper (Heartland) concur in the decision of Classis Lake Superior, in session on September 30, 1997, to extend eligibility for call for one year for **Rev. R. Rozema**.
2. Synodical deputies H.D. Praamsma (Toronto), H. Vander Plaat (Niagara), and R. Koops (Huron), having heard the discussion of Classis Hamilton, in session on May 19, 1998, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 16-c, that the ministerial credentials of **Rev. Fred Koning** be extended for one year.
3. Synodical deputies G.J. Kamps (Arizona), J. Van Schepen (Greater Los Angeles), and G.G. Vink (Central California), having received sufficient correspondence and information regarding the request by **Rev. Thomas J. Van't Land** for a three-year leave of absence as provided for in Article 16, caused by unique hardships as indicated, concur with the decision of Classis California South, in session on May 14, 1998, to grant the request.

Comments: The decision is based on a compassionate understanding of Church Order Article 16 and the previously approved yearly granting of requests, which should no longer be needed after this three-year period is completed.

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

—Adopted

### H. Release from ministry in a congregation under Article 17-a

1. Synodical deputies J.H. Scholten (Holland), D. Tinklenberg (Georgetown), and S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), having heard the grounds submitted by the council of Milwood CRC, Kalamazoo, Michigan, and the discussion of Classis Kalamazoo, in session on September 9, 1997, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Kevin L. Dwyer** is released from ministerial service to Milwood CRC of Kalamazoo.
2. Synodical deputies J. Bylsma (Wisconsin), P. De Jong (Northern Illinois), and H.J. Schutt (Illiana), having heard the grounds submitted by the council of Park Lane CRC of Evergreen Park, Illinois, and the discussion of Classis Chicago South, in session on January 21, 1998, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Nasser Yassa** is released from ministerial service to Park Lane CRC of Evergreen Park, Illinois.

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

—Adopted

*I. Extensions (and releases) under Article 17-c*

1. Synodical deputies G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley) and J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo) concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 15, 1998, to extend the eligibility for call of **Rev. James Lucas** until May 1998 according to Church Order Article 17-c.

Synodical deputy F.J. Van Dyk (Grand Rapids North) does not concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 15, 1998, to extend the eligibility of **Rev. James Lucas** until the May 1998 meeting of classis.

2. Synodical deputies J.H. Looman (Kalamazoo), G.W. Sheeres (Thornapple Valley), and F.J. Van Dyk (Grand Rapids North), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on May 21, 1998, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **James A. Lucas** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

*Ground:* Eight years is more than adequate time to receive a call to a specific ministry.

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

—Adopted

*J. Deposition under Articles 82 and 83*

Synodical deputies H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), W.L. Vander Beek (B.C. South-East), and J. Corvers (Alberta South), having heard the grounds submitted by the council of New Life CRC, Red Deer, Alberta, and the discussion of Classis Alberta North, in session on July 3, 1997, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North to approve, in accordance with Church Order Articles 82 and 83, the deposition of **Stanley R. Schalk** from the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

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

—Adopted

**II. Work of synodical deputies (recommitted)**

*A. Materials (see Article 48, F, 17)*

17. Synodical deputies S.E. Hoezee (Grand Rapids East), D. Tinklenberg (Georgetown), and C.D. Vander Meyden (Grand Rapids South), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel**, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session on September 18, 1997, to declare that **Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

*B. Recommendations*

1. That synod approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

2. That synod attach this note: In the broader context of denominational life a declaration of "release" might have been more appropriate than that of "honorable release."

—Adopted

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

## ARTICLE 57

The officers of synod present the following:

### **Pastoral letter**

A. *Material*: Board of Trustees Supplement (Section VII), p. 256

B. *Background*

Early in 1998 the Board of Trustees received a model letter from four retired pastors requesting endorsement and forwarding of the letter to Synod 1998 for possible distribution to the churches. The BOT did not endorse that particular letter but recommended that a pastoral letter be sent by synod to the churches. At an earlier session Synod 1998 approved a recommendation that such a letter be sent and that it be formulated by the officers of synod.

C. *Officers' response*

The officers of Synod 1998 request synod to approve the sending of the pastoral letter to the churches (councils) of the Christian Reformed Church and to *The Banner* and *Christian Courier*. This letter will include the following topics and will be over the signatures of the officers of Synod 1998:

1. The grace of affirmation
  - a. Affirmation and celebration of the CRC membership's faithfulness and loyalty.
  - b. Affirmation and celebration of the ongoing work of the CRC.
  - c. Exhortation of our members to see the work of God among us, in each of us, and in our denomination and to affirm one another, dealing with our sin and our failures in that context.
2. The grief of brokenness
  - a. Acknowledgment of the brokenness among us.
  - b. Expression of our grief and concern over the intrusive and divisive influences from outside.
  - c. Expression of grief over the unfounded accusations and misrepresentations that have been all too common among us.
3. An affirmation of our rootedness in God's infallible Word and our continued adherence to the Reformed faith as expressed in the creeds.
4. An acknowledgment of our weaknesses, including the influence of worldliness, individualism, and fundamentalism among us.
5. An expression of the desire to be a church of healing and spiritual growth, to be agents of reconciliation

- to those who do not know or follow our Lord Jesus Christ.
- to those who are oppressed and disadvantaged.
- to the broad ethnic and cultural spectrum within the body of Christ.
- to those who love the Reformed faith but who have left us.

6. An appeal to everyone that it is God's desire that we walk and work covenantally, heeding our Savior's plea and command to be one in the Lord.

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 58

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued from Article 44.)

Advisory Committee 5, Pastoral Ministries, Elder Sander de Haan reporting, presents the following:

### **Response to Overture 3: Challenge North Americans to Recognize the Holocaust of Abortion and to Oppose It Boldly; Urge Councils to Respond Publicly** (recommitted)

A. *Material*: Overture 3, pp. 208-10

B. *Recommendation*

That synod urge the churches to challenge the people of North America to awaken to the fact that after twenty-five years abortion has become a North American catastrophe.

*Ground*: It has been twenty-five years since the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision. In twenty-five years abortion has destroyed over 37 million innocent lives created by God. On this anniversary it is appropriate and necessary for synod to address the enormity of this wanton and intentional destruction of human life.

—*Action withheld*

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Article 66.)

## ARTICLE 59

The general secretary introduces Mr. Alejandro Pecorelli, fraternal delegate from the Reformed Church in Argentina, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds.

The general secretary introduces Rev. Arie G. Van Eek, executive secretary of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, who addresses synod. The president of synod responds. Rev. Van Eek will retire after twenty years of service to the Council.

The general secretary reads letters received from the Reformed Churches of Australia (a church in ecclesiastical fellowship) and the Christian Reformed Church in Cuba.

## ARTICLE 60

The afternoon session is adjourned; Elder Maynard Wildeboer leads in closing prayer.

ARTICLE 61

Vice president Rev. Jack B. Vos assumes the chair.

Rev. Paul S. Lam announces *Psalter Hymnal* 509, "Your Hand, O God, Has Guided." He reads from Colossians 3:12-17 and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 557, "My Jesus, I Love Thee." He leads in opening prayer.

ARTICLE 62

Advisory Committee 6, Financial Matters, Elder Philip J. Quist reporting, presents the following:

I. Board of Trustees

A. Materials

1. Board of Trustees Supplement (Sections VIII and IX, I-N)
2. Agenda for Synod 1998—Financial and Business Supplement

B. Recommendations

1. That synod approve a ministry share of \$230.54 per confessing member 18 years and over for calendar year 1999 (see Section VIII, B).

The Back to God Hour	\$31.90
CRC-TV	11.44
Calvin College	25.74
Calvin Theological Seminary	22.64
CRC Publications	2.34
Home Missions	51.05
World Missions	49.13
Pastoral Ministries	9.55
Denominational Services	19.75
Fund for Smaller Churches	7.00
	<u>\$230.54</u>

—Adopted

2. That synod approve the following salary ranges for 1999, which represent a 2.5 percent adjustment for both the U.S. and Canadian ranges:

Level	Proposed U.S. 1999 Range			Proposed Canadian 1999 Range		
	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
20	\$70,003	\$87,504	\$105,004	\$90,173	\$112,716	\$135,260
19	\$63,691	\$79,613	\$95,536	\$78,227	\$97,784	\$117,341
18	\$58,373	\$72,967	\$87,560	\$68,163	\$85,205	\$102,246
17	\$53,888	\$67,360	\$80,831	\$59,674	\$74,593	\$89,512
16	\$50,133	\$62,666	\$75,200	\$52,569	\$65,711	\$78,854
15	\$46,987	\$58,735	\$70,481	\$46,615	\$58,269	\$69,922
14	\$41,245	\$51,555	\$61,867	\$41,584	\$51,979	\$62,375
13	\$36,429	\$45,536	\$54,642	\$37,358	\$46,697	\$56,037

—Adopted

Note: The shaded areas are not currently in use.

3. That synod approve the list of above-ministry-share and specially designated offerings for the agencies and institutions of the CRC and recommend these to the churches for consideration (see Section VIII, D).

a. Denominational agencies

The Back to God Hour—above-ministry-share needs

Calvin College—above-ministry-share needs

Calvin Theological Seminary

1) Above-ministry-share needs

2) Revolving Student Loan Fund

CRC Publications

World Literature Ministries—above-ministry-share needs

CR Home Missions—above-ministry-share needs

CR World Missions—above-ministry-share needs

CR World Relief—one offering per quarter

Pastoral Ministries—above-ministry-share needs

1) Abuse Prevention

2) Chaplaincy Ministries

3) Disability Concerns

4) Pastor-Church Relations

5) Race Relations

— Multiracial Student Scholarship Fund

- b. Denominationally related agencies recommended for one or more offerings

United Calvinist Youth

1) GEMS (formerly, Calvinettes)

2) Calvinist Cadet Corps

3) Youth Unlimited/Early Teen Ministry (Young Calvinist Federation)

—Adopted

4. That synod approve the list of accredited agencies according to the designations assigned to each as recommended by the Board of Trustees (see Section VIII, E).

United States agencies

a. Miscellaneous agencies

American Bible Society

Audio Scripture Ministries (formerly, PRM International)

Friendship Ministries

Gideons International

International Bible Society

Lord's Day Alliance of the United States

Metanoia Ministries

Mission 21 India

Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE)

The Bible League

The Tract League (formerly, Faith, Prayer and Tract League)

Wycliffe Bible Translators

b. Benevolent agencies

Bethany Christian Services  
Calvary Rehabilitation Center  
Cary Christian Center  
Christian Health Care Center  
Elim Christian School  
International Aid, Inc.  
The Luke Society, Inc.  
Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services

c. Educational agencies

Center for Public Justice  
Christian Schools International  
Christian Schools International Foundation  
Dordt College  
Reformed Bible College  
Rehoboth Christian School  
Roseland Christian School  
The King's University College (through the U.S. Foundation)  
Trinity Christian College  
Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia  
Worldwide Christian Schools

Canadian agencies

a. Miscellaneous agencies

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada  
Friendship Groups—Canada  
Gideons International—Canada  
International Bible Society—Canada  
The Bible League—Canada  
Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, Inc.  
Work Research Foundation

b. Benevolent agencies

Beginnings Counseling & Adoption Services of Ontario, Inc.

c. Educational agencies

Canadian Christian Education Foundation, Inc.  
Dordt College  
Institute for Christian Studies  
Redeemer Reformed Christian College  
Reformed Bible College  
The King's University College  
Trinity Christian College  
Worldwide Christian Schools—Canada

—Adopted

5. That synod approve the continuation of the per confessing member assessment of \$16.00 for the funding of the Ministers' Pension Funds (see Section VIII, F).  
—Adopted
6. That synod approve the average salaries recommended for computing 1999 pension amounts in the U.S. (\$34,868) and Canada (\$36,573) (see Section VIII, F).  
—Adopted

## II. CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.

A. *Material:* CRC Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. Report, pp. 130-32

### B. *Recommendation*

That the Loan Fund's executive director or any members of the board of directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. be given the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to the Loan Fund are discussed.  
—Granted

## III. Fund for Smaller Churches

A. *Material:* Fund for Smaller Churches Report, pp.133-35

### B. *Recommendations*

1. That the secretary and treasurer of FSC be consulted on matters pertaining to FSC when considered either by synod or its advisory committee and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of either, it requests that the same privilege be granted to other members of the committee.  
—Granted
2. That the minimum salary for ministers serving U.S. churches receiving assistance from FSC be set at \$30,000 (\$28,800 for 1998) and that Canadian minimum salary be set at \$33,000 (\$30,000 x 110%). (See 11 below.)  
—Adopted
3. That a service increment be paid according to the following scale:  
\$100 per year of service for years 1-10  
\$150 per year of service for years 11-20  
\$200 per year of service for years 21 and up  
—Adopted
4. That a child allowance of \$600 continue to be granted for every unmarried child up to age 19 (age 23 if enrolled full-time at an educational institution in an undergraduate program).  
—Adopted
5. That automobile expenses be reimbursed at the rate of 32 cents a mile (32 cents per kilometer in Canada) times the percentage of ministry-share reduction granted (80 minus number of families = % reimbursement rate).  
—Adopted

6. That an allowance of \$4,000 be granted each congregation which provides its minister with health/dental/life insurance. Insurance coverage of the pastor and family is mandatory for congregations receiving FSC assistance.
- Adopted
7. That salary allowance for stated supply be set at \$365 per week (this amount was \$350 in 1997, \$330 in 1996, \$320 in 1995, \$310 in 1994).
- Adopted
8. That the contribution toward the minister's salary in a congregation receiving assistance from FSC be not less than, and if possible more than, \$365 per communicant member for 1999.
- Adopted
9. That congregations in the U.S. receiving assistance from FSC shall pay a Social Security/Medicare offset to their pastor in the amount of at least \$2,730 (the amount was \$2,675 in 1998; \$2,630 in 1997; \$2,540 in 1996; \$2,425 in 1995; \$2,425 in 1994).
- Adopted
10. That FSC churches in the U.S. be assisted in the Social Security/Medicare offset in the following way: Churches shall receive assistance in the amount of \$2,000 in 1999.
- Adopted
11. That a cost-of-living differential allowance of 10 percent be added to the minimum salary and allowances paid to pastors serving Canadian congregations assisted by FSC. The Canadian churches shall also contribute at a rate of 110 percent of the per communicant member contribution rate established for the U.S. churches for 1999 (\$365 x 110 percent = \$401.50).
- Grounds:*
- a. The disparity in the cost of living between the U.S. and Canada makes such an adjustment necessary.
  - b. Other denominational agencies give a differential premium to those employed in Canada.
- Adopted
12. That synod declare that the continuing-education allowance for pastors in smaller churches be set at \$400 for 1999 (\$350 in 1998). We note that *all pastors of churches with fewer than fifty families* are eligible to apply for these funds. This educational allowance is not limited to those pastors serving churches receiving FSC grants.
- Adopted
13. That synod approve a Christian-education allowance of \$800 per child for each child attending a Christian school, grades K-12, for 1999.
- Adopted
14. That Mr. Henry F. Eizenga be reelected to a second term on the FSC Committee.

*Mr. Henry F. Eizenga* is a member of Cottage Grove CRC, South Holland, Illinois. A retired accountant, he was appointed to serve on the Fund for Smaller Churches Committee two years ago to fill the unexpired term of Mr. James Hofman, who resigned from the committee because of a job transfer.

—*Adopted*

15. That synod extend the term of Lambert Sikkema for one year while the FSC's proposal to transfer its operation to another agency runs its course (see *Agenda for Synod 1998*, pp. 134-35).

—*Adopted*

#### **IV. Pensions and Insurance**

A. *Material*: Pensions and Insurance Report, pp. 162-66

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to members of the Canadian Pension Trustees and of the United States Board of Pensions and Insurance or to Mr. Kenneth Horjus when insurance matters and matters pertaining to pension plans for ministers and employees are discussed.  
—*Granted*
2. That synod designate up to 100 percent of a minister's early or normal retirement pension or disability pension for 1998 and 1999 as housing allowance for United States income-tax purposes (IRS Ruling 1.107-1) but only to the extent that the pension is used to rent or provide a home.  
—*Adopted*
3. That for 1999 synod designate the assessment rate for participants in the ministers' pension plans who are not covered by direct assessments as the amount determined by the independent actuary to be the "average annual cost per active minister." (The amount for 1999 is \$4,000 for Canada and \$3,245 for the U.S. The amount for 1998 was \$3,896 for Canada and \$3,156 for the U.S.)  
—*Adopted*

A motion is made that synod instruct the Board of Trustees to clarify to every classis that the Board of Trustees' ministry-share-enhancement procedures will not usurp the role of the classes to diligently monitor the giving for ministry shares in each church of classis in order to encourage the faithful and admonish the delinquent in their giving.

*Grounds:*

- A. The local, face-to-face relationships in each classis are more effective in encouraging faithful, grateful giving than some centralized promotions coming out of Grand Rapids.
- B. Implementation of a centralized plan is discouraging to the efforts of classes and the local churches.

—*Adopted*

## V. Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

### A. Materials

1. BOT Report, II, B, 7, pp. 33-34; Appendix 3 (pp. 57-62)
2. Board of Trustees Supplement, Section VIII, G
3. Overture 4, p. 211
4. Overture 5, p. 212

### B. Background

In a letter dated December 8, 1997, the executive director of ministries informed the churches that the IRM Corporation had suspended interest and principal payments on denominational investments of \$11.5 million. Since that announcement, the agencies and staff have been working diligently to recover as much of these investments as possible. In addition, many questions have been raised about the procedures that had been used and the decisions that had been made which led the agencies to make such investments. Further questions have been raised about how such investment risks could have been avoided and what will be done in the future to prevent such incidents.

It should also be noted that in the two years prior to the IRM failure the BOT, on its own initiative, had begun an evaluation of all agencies' investments and policies. The result of this evaluation was the document Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, which the BOT adopted at its December 1997 meeting. Coincidentally this was the same meeting at which the Board received notification from the IRM Corporation of its decision to suspend payments.

### C. Recommendations

1. That the executive director of ministries, Dr. Peter Borgdorff, and the director of finance and administration, Mr. Kenneth Horjus, be invited to give synod an oral report on the IRM matters.

—Adopted

The executive director of ministries addresses synod regarding the background of the investments and responds to questions from the floor. The director of finance and administration addresses synod regarding the types of investments and investors involved in IRM and responds to questions from the floor.

2. That synod take note of and receive for information the Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (*Agenda for Synod 1998*, Appendix 3, pp. 57-62) and that it be published in the *Acts of Synod 1998*.

—Adopted

*Note:* The Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America document is published in *Acts of Synod 1998* as Appendix 2 (see pp. 461-66).

3. That the BOT instruct the director of finance to compile annually the audited financial statements of the agencies and institutions and provide these to each classical treasurer, beginning in 1998 with the 1997 statements. Six copies of these statements will also be distributed to the advisory committee on finance of each synod. In addition, a condensed version of these audited statements will be published annually in the *Agenda for Synod*.

—Adopted

4. That the BOT annually provide synod and classical treasurers with a summary of all investments owned by agencies and institutions of the CRCNA. The summary is to include groupings of investments listed in the investment policy.

—Adopted

5. That the BOT annually provide synod with a statement that the agencies and institutions are in compliance with the investment policy; any exception to the policy will be reported.

—Adopted

6. That the finance offices having custody of investment records be requested to provide access to those records to members of the CRCNA in those offices during regular office hours. An appointment must be made with the finance office in advance of any such visit.

—Adopted

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 65.)

#### ARTICLE 63

President Rev. Howard D. Vanderwell reassumes the chair.

The evening session is adjourned at 10:30 p.m.; Rev. Gerry G. Heyboer leads in closing prayer.

#### FRIDAY MORNING, June 19, 1998 Thirteenth Session

#### ARTICLE 64

Rev. Allan H. Jongsma reads from Romans 11:33-36 and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 181, "Exalt the Lord, His Praise Proclaim." He reads from Psalm 48:9-14 and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 510, "I Love Your Church, O Lord." After reading from Ephesians 3:14-21, he announces *Psalter Hymnal* 561, "Rejoice, O Pure in Heart." He leads in opening prayer, especially remembering Mrs. Jennie Quartel (wife of delegate Rev. Jack Quartel), who is undergoing surgery today. The prayer concludes with the delegates singing the refrain of *Psalter Hymnal* 544, "Lead Me, Guide Me."

The roll call indicates that Rev. Verlan G. Van Ee (Atlantic Northeast); Rev. Leonard H. Batterink, Elder Geerlof Bomhof, and Elder Gerry Bruins (B.C. North-West); Rev. Ricardo E. Orellana and Elder Thomas J. Henion (Hackensack); Rev. A. Carel Geleynse (Hamilton); Rev. Jack A. Quartel (Huron); Elder James Saladin (Muskegon); Rev. Richard J. de Lange and Rev. Jerry J. Hoytema (Niagara); Elder Mick E. Vanden Bosch (Northcentral Iowa); Elder Tai Ho Kim (Pacific Hanmi); Rev. Harvey A. Brink (Pacific Northwest); and Rev. John Visser and Elder Ralph Pypker (Quinte) are absent.

#### ARTICLE 65

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued from Article 62.)

Advisory Committee 6, Financial Matters, Elder Philip J. Quist reporting, presents the following:

## Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

### A. Materials

1. Board of Trustees Report, II, B, 7, pp. 33-34; Appendix 3, pp. 57-62
2. Board of Trustees Supplement, Section VIII, G
3. Overture 4, p. 211
4. Overture 5, p. 212

Synod continues the question and answer session regarding IRM matters. The executive director of ministries and the director of finance and administration are available to answer questions.

A motion is made that synod also grant the privilege of the floor to Rev. John A. Rozeboom, executive director of Home Missions, to answer questions from the floor.

—Adopted

Synod enters into executive session.

Synod returns to open session.

### B. Recommendations (continued from Article 62, V)

7. That synod issue a statement to members of the Christian Reformed Church regarding the IRM matter and include the following:
  - a. Synod's deep regret for the pain that many are experiencing as a result of this business failure.
  - b. Synod's sincere regret that denominational agencies invested funds in speculative ventures contrary to synodically approved investment policies.
  - c. Synod's appreciation for the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and various staff members for their decisive action taken in the face of IRM's failure.
  - d. Synod's confidence that the new investment policy adopted by the Board of Trustees will serve to prevent similar occurrences in the future.
  - e. Synod's appreciation for the many hours of extra time and energy that have been spent by board members and staff (particularly those who are serving on the Creditors' Committee) to seek the protection of the investors, both private and institutional.
  - f. Synod's satisfaction that the appropriate information is being communicated to the churches and that nothing is being withheld in order to protect individuals or agencies.
  - g. Synod's desire and request for the prayers of God's people for those who are victims of this tragic failure as well as for those who are diligently seeking to recover those losses.

—Adopted

8. That this statement be signed by the officers of Synod 1998, distributed to the treasurer and clerk of each Christian Reformed congregation for distribution to the individual members, and be printed in *The Banner* and *Christian Courier*.

—Adopted

9. That this constitute synod's answer to Overtures 4 and 5.

—Adopted

Rev. Gerard L. Dykstra leads the assembly in prayer, remembering those who have been hurt as investors in the IRM Corporation and those in management of IRM.

#### ARTICLE 66

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued from Article 58.)

Advisory Committee 5, Pastoral Ministries, Elder Sander de Haan reporting, presents the following:

#### **Response to Overture 3: Challenge North Americans to Recognize the Holocaust of Abortion and to Oppose It Boldly; Urge Councils to Respond Publicly (recommitted)**

A. *Material*: Overture 3, pp. 208-10

B. *Recommendation*

That synod not accede to Overture 3.

*Grounds*:

1. Synod has previously expressed the denomination's strong opposition to abortion (cf. *Acts of Synod 1997*, pp. 607-08, Art. 26, II).
2. The committee feels that no further statement is needed at this time.

—Tabled

Synod turns to consideration of an earlier version of the advisory-committee's recommitted report (see Article 58).

#### **Response to Overture 3: Challenge North Americans to Recognize the Holocaust of Abortion and to Oppose It Boldly; Urge Councils to Respond Publicly**

1. That synod urge the churches to continue to challenge the people of North America to awaken to the fact that after twenty-five years abortion has become a North American atrocity.

*Ground*: It has been twenty-five years since the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision. In twenty-five years abortion in the U.S. and Canada has destroyed over 37 million innocent lives created by God. On this anniversary it is appropriate and necessary for synod to address the enormity of this wanton and intentional destruction of human life.

—Adopted

2. That synod urge the churches to continue to proclaim boldly our opposition to the North American atrocity of abortion and thus avoid the guilt of remaining silent.

*Ground*: The Christian Reformed Church is called by Scripture to continue to be prophetic to its world. We are to speak the truth without toning down the message to mollify those who might oppose what God's Word clearly

teaches. To act as salt and light in our world, we must address boldly the North American atrocity of abortion and call our nation to repentance and change.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod urge councils to continue to wrestle with a public response to the abortion problem in North America.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod urge the churches to continue to minister sensitively to

- a. Those who carry their children to term.
- b. Unwed mothers and their children.
- c. Those who have to deal with the aftermath of abortions.

*Ground:* Our responsibilities go beyond saving the lives of the unborn.

—*Adopted*

5. That synod urge churches and individuals to encourage governmental agencies to support programs which will address these needs.

—*Adopted*

6. That synod affirm that, though abortion is an exceedingly violent act, we reject all violence against those who perpetrate this act.

—*Adopted*

7. That this be synod's response to Overture 3.

—*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 67

It is moved that synod approve the following members for the Committee on Continuing Professional Development:

Rev. Duane Visser (chair), Dr. Gary Bekker, Rev. Carlos Tapanes, Rev. Moon Bae Kim, Dr. Russell Palsrok, Mr. Stanley Koster, Rev. Peter Nicolai, Ms. Mary Vander Vennen, Dr. David Engelhard (ex officio).

—*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 68

The morning session is adjourned; Rev. Jack B. Vos, vice president, leads in closing prayer, especially remembering Rev. Vinh Le of Vancouver, British Columbia, who struggles with a serious kidney problem and awaits a kidney transplant, and expressing gratitude for Redeemer College's having received full degree-granting power.

#### FRIDAY AFTERNOON, June 19, 1998

##### Fourteenth Session

#### ARTICLE 69

Rev. Nicolaas Cornelisse announces *Psalter Hymnal* 410, "Crown Him with Many Crowns," and leads in opening prayer. He reads from Revelation 21:1-5 and announces *Psalter Hymnal* 568, "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

## ARTICLE 70

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 56.)

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. John Zantingh reporting, presents the following:

It is moved that synod approve the following members for the Multiethnic-Strategies Committee:

African North American:	Ms. Cindy Doorn and Mr. James Mutoigo Alternate: Rev. Reginald Smith
Asian North American:	Mr. Bing Goei and Rev. Ray Yeo Alternate: Mr. Hyung Kim
European North American:	Mrs. Kathleen Smith and Rev. Frederick J. Witteveen Alternate: Rev. Samuel Cooper
Hispanic North American:	Rev. Pedro Aviles and Rev. Luis Pellecer Alternate: Rev. Dante Venegas
Native North American:	Mr. Duane Chimoni Alternates: Mr. Herb Beyale, Jr., and Mr. Leonard Arviso
Ex officio:	Rev. David H. Engelhard, general secretary Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries One member of the Board of Trustees

—*Adopted*

*Note:* The Board of Trustees of the CRCNA—Ontario Corporation is requested to appoint a Native North American representative to the committee.

It is moved that synod approve the following members for the Committee to Review the Decision re Women in Office for Synod 2000:

Dr. Andrew J. Bandstra  
Dr. Sander de Haan  
Dr. Roger S. Greenway  
Rev. William T. Koopmans  
Ms. Gayla Postma  
Rev. Jae Sung Shim  
Rev. John G. Van Ryn, chair  
Rev. Jack B. Vos  
Dr. David H. Engelhard, general secretary, ex officio  
  
Ms. Sharon Hulst, alternate  
Dr. George Vandervelde, alternate

—*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 71

Appointments, officers, and functionaries are presented for review. This listing reflects the results of the synodical elections and appointments and includes study committees which are synodically approved.

### I. Officers and functionaries

#### A. Officers

1. General secretary: Dr. David Engelhard
2. Executive director of ministries: Dr. Peter Borgdorff
3. Director of finance and administration: Mr. Kenneth J. Horjus

## B. Functionaries

Arrangements for synod: Mr. Jeff Stob, Calvin College

Mrs. Margaret Buma, Redeemer College

Convening church for Synod 1999: Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, ON

## II. Synodical deputies

Classis	Deputy	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. H.G. Samplonius	Rev. H. Vriend	2000
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Rev. J. Corvers	Rev. A. Beukema	1999
Arizona	Rev. F.E. Pott	Rev. F.J. Walhof	1998
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. S.J. Vander Klay	Rev. J. Vande Lune	2000
B.C. North-West	Rev. H. Jonker	Rev. J.S. Hielema	1998
B.C. South-East	Rev. W.L. Vander Beek	Rev. J. Boonstra	1998
California South		Rev. D.W. Lagerway	1998
Central California	Rev. G.G. Vink	Rev. G.L. Dykstra	2001
Chatham	Rev. J. Kuipers	Rev. A. De Jager	1999
Chicago South	Rev. D.J. Van Loo	Rev. J.T. Medenblik	1999
Columbia	Rev. D.L. Recker	Rev. G.P. Hutt	1999
Eastern Canada	Rev. H.G. Gunnink	Rev. H.P. Kranenburg	1998
Georgetown	Rev. J.R. Boot	Rev. T.J. Lapinsky	2000
Grand Rapids East	Rev. S.E. Hoezee	Rev. R. Opperwall	2000
Grand Rapids North	Rev. F.J. Van Dyk	Rev. D.A. Warners	1999
Grand Rapids South	Rev. J.J. Steigenga	Rev. D.A. Struyk	2001
Grandville	Rev. J.P. Gorter	Rev. K.L. Havert	2001
Greater Los Angeles	Dr. J. Van Schepen	Rev. D.R. Koll	2000
Hackensack	Rev. J. Reiffer	Rev. B. van Eyk	1999
Hamilton	Rev. J. Zantingh	Rev. H.R. De Bolster	2001
Heartland	Rev. A.L. Kuiper	Rev. J.M. Gray	1999
Holland	Rev. J.S. Meyer	Rev. J. Hasper	1996
Hudson	Rev. J.J. Hoogland	Rev. J.G. Keizer	1998
Huron	Rev. R. Koops	Rev. H.J. Bierman	1999
lakota	Rev. D.W. De Groot	Rev. C.E. Fennema	2000
Illiana	Rev. H.J. Schutt	Rev. R.J. Blauw	1999
Kalamazoo	Rev. J.H. Looman	Rev. L.J. Vander Zee	1999
Lake Erie	Rev. W.J. Dykstra	Rev. C. Libolt	1999
Lake Superior	Rev. J.G. Busscher	Rev. W.H. Kooienga	1999
Minnesota South		Rev. T.J. Brown	2000
Muskegon			1999
Niagara	Dr. H. Vander Plaats	Rev. J. De Jong	1999
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. D.A. Zylstra	Rev. H. Dykema	1998
Northern Illinois	Rev. P. De Jong	Rev. T.H. Douma	1997
Northern Michigan	Rev. R. Klimp	Rev. R. Brinks	2000
Pacific Hanmi			
Pacific Northwest	Rev. H.A. Brink	Rev. R. Vander Ley	2000
Pella	Rev. L.J. Howerzyl	Rev. R.L. Bouwkamp	1999
Quinte	Rev. W.T. Koopmans	Dr. W. Van Groningen	2000
Red Mesa	Rev. W.K. Bulhuis	Rev. S.A. Jim	2000
Rocky Mountain	Rev. W. Verhoef	Rev. J.P. Boonstra	2000
Southeast U.S.	Rev. M.A. Davies	Rev. R.E. Van Hofwegen	2000
Thornapple Valley	Rev. G. Bouma	Rev. G.W. Sheeres	2001
Toronto	Rev. H.D. Praamsma	Rev. J. Kuntz	2000
Wisconsin	Rev. J. Bylsma	Rev. L.J. Kuiper	1999
Yellowstone	Rev. J. Weeda	Rev. B.J. Van Ee	1999
Zeeland	Rev. J.W. Uitvlugt	Rev. J.L. Alferink	2000

### III. Boards and committees

#### A. Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

District	Member	Alternate	Term Expires
Far West U.S. I	Rev. R. Slim	Rev. D.W. Vander Veen	1999
Far West U.S. II	Dr. T. Van Groningen	Mrs. P. Medema	1999
Great Plains	Rev. A.L. Kuiper	Rev. D.A. Kamper	2001
	Mr. H. Van Maanen	Mrs. B. Ackerman	1999
Central U.S. I	Mr. W. Weidenaar	Mr. D. Hoebeke	2000
Central U.S. II	Rev. A.L. Hoksbergen	Rev. S.D. Los	2000
Central U.S. III	Rev. J.P. Gorter	Rev. C.D. Compagner	2001
	Mr. H. Johnson	Dr. J. Strikwerda	2000
Central U.S. IV	Mrs. K. Smith	Mrs. M.J. De Jong	2001
	Rev. D.L. Kelderman	Rev. H. Admiraal	1999
Eastern U.S.	Rev. S.J. Workman	Dr. B.A. Averill	1999
Eastern Canada I	Rev. J. Kuipers	Rev. E. Den Haan	1999
Eastern Canada II	Rev. G.H. Pols	Rev. B.P. Velthuizen	2001
	Mr. A. Schaafsma	Mr. J.H. Vander Stoep	2001
Western Canada	Rev. P. Brouwer	Rev. A. Beukema	2000
	Dr. W. Vanden Born	Mr. J. Lok	2000
At-large	Mrs. M. Thomas	Mrs. C. Vander Kodde	2001
	Dr. C.J. Pottman	Mrs. M. Minnema	2000
	Mr. W. Wildeboer	Mr. D. De Jong	1999
Ex officio	Dr. David H. Engelhard, general secretary Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries		

#### B. The Back to God Hour

Region	Member	Term Expires
Far West U.S. I	Rev. A. Begay	1999
Far West U.S. II	Rev. D.V. Hays	2000
Great Plains	Mr. J. Slegers	1999
	Rev. T.J. Brown	2001
Central U.S. I	Rev. R.E. Williams	2001
	Mrs. J. Bilthouse	2000
Central U.S. II/Central U.S. IV	Dr. E. Greenway	1999
Central U.S. III	Rev. H.G. Vanden Einde	1999
	Dr. R. Huizenga	2000
Eastern U.S.	Mr. C. Bushoven	2000
Eastern Canada I	Mr. C.K. Oosthoek	2001
Eastern Canada II	Rev. H.P. Kranenburg	1999
	Rev. H. Wildeboer	2000
Western Canada	Mr. M. VanHuizen	2001

*C. Calvin College Board of Trustees*

Region	Member	Alternate	Term Expires
Far West U.S. I	Rev. J.W. De Vries	Rev. J.A. Dykema	2001
	Mr. D. Van Andel	Dr. J. Van Schepen	1999
Far West U.S. II	Mr. C.A. Pasma	Dr. J. Veltkamp	2000
Great Plains U.S.	Rev. C.J. De Ridder	Rev. R.D. Engle	2001
Central U.S. I	Dr. J. De Roos	Mrs. J. Van Dyke	1999
	Mr. V. Boerman	Mr. G. Baas	2000
Central U.S. II	Mrs. M. Schaafsma	Rev. K.A. Baker	2000
Central U.S. III	Mr. J. Postma	Dr. R. Brummel	2000
	Mr. A. Morren	Dr. P. De Young	2001
Central U.S. IV	Rev. E.J. Blankespoor	Mr. M. De Boer	2000
	Mr. R. Alderink	Mr. W. Knoester	1999
Eastern U.S.	Dr. E. Wierenga	Mr. D. Sporn	1999
	Dr. G. Gabrielse	Ms. D. Kuiper	2001
Eastern Canada I	Dr. H.J. Stronks	Mr. C.P. Davies	2001
Eastern Canada II	Mr. W. Neutel	Mrs. S. Koppendrayner	2000
Western Canada	Dr. N. Terpstra	Dr. J. Hielema	1999
Alumni	Dr. Tom R. DeMeester		1999
	Ms. Janice Veenstra		2000
	Dr. Marvin Kusters		2001
At-large	Mrs. Grace Achterhof		1999
	Rev. Jason Chen		2000
	Mrs. Sheri Haan		1999
	Dr. Jack Harkema		2001
	Mr. Milton Kuyers		1999
	Mrs. Cecilia Mereness		2000
	Mr. K. Olthoff		2000
	Mr. Thomas Page		1999
	Ms. Jacquelyn S. Vander Brug		2001
	Ms. Shirley Vogelzang Hoogstra		2001
	Mr. Michael A. Volkema		2001
Mr. M. Williams		2000	

*D. Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees*

Region	Member	Alternate	Term Expires
Far West U.S. I	Rev. D.J. Klompeen	Rev. A. Lindemulder	2000
Far West U.S. II	Rev. K.D. Koeman	Rev. J.R. Kok	2000
Great Plains U.S.	Dr. C.E. Zylstra	Dr. E. Rubingh	2000
	Rev. R.D. Kramer		2000
Central U.S. I	Mr. G. Baas	Dr. L. Reedyk	2001
Central U.S. II	Rev. Y.J. Oh	Dr. M.S. Khil	1999
Central U.S. III	Rev. J.R. Boot	Rev. M.J. Hofman	1999
	Mr. J. Roskam	Mr. W.F. Stoub	2001
Central U.S. IV	Rev. N.L. Meyer	Rev. J.J. Steigenga	2001
	Ms. N. Vander Ark	Mrs. M. Brassier	2000
Eastern U.S.	Mr. P. Steensma	Mr. J. Steen	1999
Eastern Canada I	Mr. M. Bosveld	Mr. J. Geschiere	2000
Eastern Canada II	Mr. J.A. Barnstead	Mr. W. Kort	2001
	Rev. W. Dykstra	Rev. J.B. Vos	1999
Western Canada	Rev. H.G. de Ruyter	Dr. J.S. Hielema	2001
	Mr. H. Kielstra	Dr. D. Danielson	1999
At-large	Mr. M. Muller	Mr. D. Nydam	2000
	Mr. S.J. Jansma, Jr.	Mr. B. te Velde, Sr.	2001
	Dr. M.E. Toxopeus	Rev. M.S. Antonides	2001

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Mrs. C. Mahaffy	Rev. L. Burghart	1999
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Ms. P. De Boer	Ms. G. Heinen	1999
Arizona	Ms. L. Vanooostveen		2001
Atlantic Northeast	Dr. T. Dykstra	Ms. L. Bieze	2000
B.C. North-West	Mr. F. Herfst	Rev. W.C. Veenstra	1999
B.C. South-East	Rev. A. Westerhuis	Mr. N. Ringma	1998
California South	Mrs. W. Klop	Mrs. B. Breems	1998
Central California	Mrs. A. Meester	Mrs. L. Dykstra	2001
Chatham	Mrs. G. Miedema	Rev. J.W. Jongmsma	1999
Chicago South	Rev. W.R. Lenters	Mr. J. Hamilton	1999
Columbia	Mrs. C. Bosch	Mrs. B. Vander Beek	2000
Eastern Canada	Mrs. I. Neutel	Mr. E. Geertsema	1998
Georgetown	Ms. P. Dornbush	Mr. C. Koning	2001
Grand Rapids East	Ms. G. Goris-Stronks	Ms. J. Timmer	2000
Grand Rapids North	Mr. A. Stremler	Rev. M.J. Flikkema	2000
Grand Rapids South	Rev. S. Mast	Rev. E. De Vries	1999
Grandville	Rev. G.D. Postema	Ms. M. Bantjes	2001
Greater Los Angeles	Mrs. W. Van Schepen	Rev. G. Varela	2000
Hackensack	Rev. E.N. Romero		2000
Hamilton	Mrs. A. Van der Woerd	Rev. P.A. Hoytema	2001
Heartland	Mr. D. De Jong	Mr. C. De Boer	2001
Holland	Mrs. C. Brummel	Mr. B. Den Boer	1999
Hudson	Mr. D. Holwerda		2000
Huron	Mrs. M. Herfst	Mrs. J. Van Der Velden	2000
lakota	Mrs. S. Matheis	Dr. M. Vanden Bosch	2001
Illiana	Mr. J. De Vries	Rev. B.J. Haan, Jr.	1998
Kalamazoo	Rev. L.J. Vander Zee	Rev. S.R. Van Eck	2000
Lake Erie	Dr. C. Libolt	Mrs. L. Miller	2001
Lake Superior	Mrs. C. Rudie	Mrs. L. Kroese	2000
Minnesota South	Ms. L. Van Beek	Mr. J. Van Nieuwenhuizen	2001
Muskegon	Ms. J. Meyers	Rev. L.D. Baar	2000
Niagara	Mr. C. Van Soelen	Rev. E. Groot-Nibbelink	2000
Northcentral Iowa	Ms. R. Verbrugge	Rev. P.W. Townsend	1998
Northern Illinois	Ms. M. Sytsma	Rev. J.F. Schuurman	1999
Northern Michigan	Mrs. B. Verbrugge	Mr. S. Loomis	2000
Pacific Hanmi	Rev. C.C. Cho		2001
Pacific Northwest	Mr. S. Van Mersbergen	Rev. G.A. Terpstra	1999
Pella	Rev. E. Vander Lugt	Mr. H.J. Vande Voort	1999
Quinte	Mrs. J. Wildeboer	Mr. H. Nieuwstraten	2000
Red Mesa	Mrs. T. Rottschaffer	Mr. R. Slim	2000
Rocky Mountain	Mr. M. Newton	Rev. R. De Young	1999
Southeast U.S.	Miss D. De Boer		1999
Thornapple Valley	Mrs. S. Phillips	Mrs. D. Bloem	1999
Toronto	Rev. H. Van Niejenhuis	Mr. H. Kuntz	1998
Wisconsin	Rev. E.J. Laarman	Rev. N.B. Haan	1999
Yellowstone	Mrs. K. Eekhoff	Mr. S. Kamp	2001
Zeeland	Rev. H. Lengkeek	Rev. R.A. Terpstra	2001
At-large (with expertise in finance and law)			
	Mr. Robert L. De Jong		1999
	Mr. Dennis Bergsma		2000
	Mr. S. Lee		2001
Fraternal delegate	Mr. Jeff Japinga (RCA)		1999

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. P. Stel	Rev. R.J. Graff	1999
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Rev. M. Reitsma	Rev. C. Pool	2000
Arizona	Mr. H. Jansen		2000
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. A. Gelder	Rev. V.G. Van Ee	1999
B.C. North-West	Rev. W. Brouwer	Mr. M. Jurrius	2000
B.C. South-East	Rev. B.E. Gritter	Rev. J.R. Berry	2001
California South	Rev. R.K. Young	Mr. J. De Young	1999
Central California	Rev. B.A. Persenaire	Mr. T. Bloemhof	1999
Chatham	Rev. D.R. Tigchelaar	Rev. G.K. Haagsma	2000
Chicago South	Rev. K. Wong	Rev. D.A. Crushshon, Sr.	1999
Columbia	Rev. V.L. Michael	Mrs. M. Geelhood	2001
Eastern Canada	Mr. T. Alblas	Rev. H.G. Gunnink	2001
Georgetown	Ms. J. Sikkema	Rev. L.J. Doornbos	2000
Grand Rapids East	Rev. W. Vanden Bosch	Mr. J. Witte	1999
Grand Rapids North	Mr. T. de Vries	Ms. C. Vogel	2001
Grand Rapids South	Rev. M.L. De Young	Rev. R. Smith	2000
Grandville		Rev. A.L. Van Wyhe	2000
Greater Los Angeles	Rev. A. Vanden Akker		2000
Hackensack	Rev. J.A. Algera	Rev. P.R. De Vries	2000
Hamilton	Mrs. D. Proper	Rev. R. Vander Kooij	2000
Heartland	Rev. R.R. De Vries	Mr. A. Kramer	2000
Holland	Rev. A.L. Louwerse	Rev. F.T. Wevers	2001
Hudson	Rev. K.J. Verhulst	Mr. D. Holwerda	2000
Huron	Mr. V. Vander Molen	Rev. K.P. De Raaf	2000
Iakota	Rev. A. Eising	Rev. C.J. De Ridder	1999
Illiana	Mr. A. Vanden Bosch		1999
Kalamazoo	Rev. R.D. Vanderwell	Ms. K. Apotheker	2000
Lake Erie	Rev. E.A. Harrison	Rev. W.C. De Vries	2001
Lake Superior	Rev. E.S.H. Busink	Rev. A.J. Van Dellen	1999
Minnesota South		Mr. W. Sankey	2000
Muskegon	Rev. L.D. Van Dyke	Rev. C. Uken	1998
Niagara	Rev. J.J. Hoytema	Rev. W.H. Vander Werf	2000
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. D.J. Dykstra	Rev. G.D. Daley	2000
Northern Illinois	Rev. T.H. Douma	Rev. L.L. Schemper	1998
Northern Michigan	Rev. D.J. Weemhoff		2000
Pacific Hanmi	Rev. H.J. Park		1999
Pacific Northwest	Rev. I.S. Kim	Mr. R. Bode	2001
Pella	Mr. N. Nikkel	Mr. I. Mulder	1999
Quinte	Rev. K.J. House	Mr. C. Reitsma	1998
Red Mesa	Mr. V. Pablo	Mr. T. Charles	2000
Rocky Mountain	Rev. S. Sikkema	Rev. C. Vander Neut	2000
Southeast U.S.	Rev. J. De Boer	Rev. J.A. Vander Slik	2001
Thornapple Valley	Rev. R. Bultman	Rev. R.S. Greenway	2001
Toronto	Rev. R. Hofman	Rev. S. Cooper	2001
Wisconsin	Rev. L.L. Meyer	Mr. D. Ritzema	2001
Yellowstone	Mr. J. Westra	Mr. C. Abee	1999
Zeeland	Dr. J.E. De Vries	Rev. D.A. Gritter	1999
At-large			
Finance	Mr. L. De Lange	Mr. E. Berends, Jr.	2000
Advancement	Mr. H. Rozema	Mr. M. Feldkamp	2000

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Mrs. S. Mobach	Rev. J.A. Ooms	1999
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Rev. J.R. Huizinga	Rev. A.G. Vander Leek	2001
Arizona	Rev. F.E. Pott	Rev. S.R. Steenstra	2001
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. W.G. Vis	Rev. V.G. Van Ee	1999
B.C. North-West	Rev. P.L. Hendriks	Rev. J. Koster	2001
B.C. South-East	Rev. C.H. Salomons	Rev. E. Jager	1998
California South	Mr. E. Smith		2001
Central California	Mrs. E. Huttinga	Rev. P.V. De Jonge	2001
Chatham	Rev. H. Mennega	Rev. E. Penning	2001
Chicago South	Rev. A. Van Zanten	Mr. M. Ozinga, Jr.	1999
Columbia	Rev. S.A. Drenth	Rev. P.J. Tinklenberg	2001
Eastern Canada	Mrs. W. Runia	Mr. M. Van Wyk	2001
Georgetown	Mr. H. De Witt	Dr. M.W. Heyboer	2000
Grand Rapids East	Rev. H.W. Lew	Rev. H. Kiekover	2001
Grand Rapids North	Mr. D. Zylstra	Mr. J. Vander Henst	2000
Grand Rapids South	Rev. R.L. Fyneweever	Rev. R.D. Bolt	2000
Grandville	Rev. L. Van Drunen	Rev. C.G. Tapanes	2001
Greater Los Angeles	Dr. J. Van Schepen		2001
Hackensack			1998
Hamilton	Rev. A.C. Geleynse	Mr. T. Vande Putte	2001
Heartland	Mr. J. Kooiker	Rev. B.B. Blankers	2000
Holland	Rev. J.C. Hutt	Dr. J.M. Zinkand	2001
Hudson	Rev. J.G. Keizer		1999
Huron	Rev. A.A. Van Geest	Rev. W.D. Dirksen	2001
Iakota	Rev. L.A. Lobdell	Dr. W.H. Lammers	2000
Illiana	Rev. B.M. Madany	Rev. L.W. Van Essen	2000
Kalamazoo	Rev. G.D. Nieuwsma	Mr. D. Selles	1999
Lake Erie	Rev. H.A. Stob	Rev. R. De Vries	2001
Lake Superior	Rev. W.H. Kooienga	Rev. J.G. Busscher	2001
Minnesota South	Rev. D.A. Bosch	Rev. T.J. Brown	2000
Muskegon	Rev. L.P. Troast	Rev. D.H. Bratt	1999
Niagara	Rev. P.A. Heerema	Rev. D.W. Cowart	2000
Northcentral Iowa	Mr. P. Eekhoff	Rev. H. Dykema	2000
Northern Illinois	Dr. W. Venema	Mr. J. Bosma	2001
Northern Michigan	Rev. W.R. De Young	Rev. J.D. Fox	2000
Pacific Hanmi	Rev. D.W. Yang	Rev. C.C. Cho	2000
Pacific Northwest	Rev. R.J. De Ruiter	Mr. W. Eskes	1999
Pella	Rev. T.R. Dykstra	Rev. C.A. Heuss	1999
Quinte	Rev. E.W. Visser	Rev. R.G. Fisher	2000
Red Mesa	Rev. R.L. Jipping	Rev. J.J. Greydanus	2000
Rocky Mountain	Mr. W. Lemke	Rev. H. de Jong	1999
Southeast U.S.	Rev. D.L. Aldrink	Rev. G. Moreno	2001
Thornapple Valley	Rev. W.J. Renkema	Mr. T. Van't Land	2001
Toronto	Mr. R. Rajballie	Mr. S. Kabetu	1999
Wisconsin		Rev. L.J. Kuiper	2000
Yellowstone	Mrs. J. Gebben	Mr. H. Faber	2001
Zeeland	Rev. E.L. Shuart	Rev. R. Walter, Jr.	1998

H. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Classis	Delegate	Alternate	Term Expires
Alberta North	Ms. P. Prins	Ms. A. Feddes	1999
Alberta South & Saskatchewan	Mr. J. Feenstra	Mr. H. Slomp	2000
Arizona	Mr. J. Ten Elshof	Mr. G. Andringa	2000
Atlantic Northeast	Mr. T. Woodnorth	Ms. R. Ruiter	2001
B.C. North-West	Mr. W. Potma	Ms. P. De Wilde	2000
B.C. South-East	Mr. C. Tuin	Mr. J. Richey	2001
California South		Ms. C. Hooyer	1999
Central California	Mr. L. De Ruiter	Mr. T. Greidanus, Jr.	1999
Chatham	Mr. M. De Vries		2000
Chicago South	Mr. P. Kamp	Mr. R. Van Dellen	1999
Columbia	Ms. K. Haley	Mr. M. Boersma	2000
Eastern Canada	Mr. N. Van Dyk	Mr. T. Hogeterp	1999
Georgetown	Mr. G. Hartger	Mr. P. DeLange	2001
Grand Rapids East	Ms. K. Yoder	Ms. M. Dengerink	1998
Grand Rapids North	Mr. B. Haven	Mr. R. Zuidema	1999
Grand Rapids South	Mrs. M. Hooyer	Mr. A. Steensma	1999
Grandville	Mr. P. Wassink	Mr. N. De Young	2001
Greater Los Angeles	Mr. F. Golon		2000
	Mr. S. Cole		2000
Hackensack	Mrs. C. Van Ess-Dykema		1999
Hamilton	Mr. J. De Groot	Mr. V. Kooistra	2000
Heartland		Mr. G. Geels	1999
Holland	Mr. C. Hulst	Mr. C. Prins	2000
Hudson	Mr. R. Wynjia	Mr. R. Comer	1998
Huron	Mr. C. Zondag	Mr. J. Schreuders	1999
Iakota	Mr. D. Postma	Mr. L. Nyhof	1999
Illiana	Mr. H. Bykerk		1999
Kalamazoo	Ms. S. De Boer	Mr. W. Haak	1998
Lake Erie	Mr. E. Mosher	Mr. J. Van Wyk	2000
Lake Superior, Canada			1997
Lake Superior, U.S.	Ms. M. Buss	Mr. R. Kroll	2001
Minnesota South	Mr. R. Huisken	Mr. H. Klumper	2000
Muskegon	Mr. D. Drew	Ms. C. Witteveen	1998
Niagara	Mr. L. De Graaf	Ms. S. Vandenberg	1998
Northcentral Iowa	Mr. E. Olthof	Mr. D. Mathison	2000
Northern Illinois	Ms. R. Strodman	Ms. D. Flores	1999
Northern Michigan	Mr. A. Diemer	Mr. L. Stahl	1999
Pacific Hanmi	Rev. J. Hyun		2000
Pacific Northwest	Mr. J. De Boer	Mr. E. Kok	2000
Pella	Mr. M. Blom	Mr. G. Van Engelenhoven	2000
Quinte	Mr. P. Feddema	Mr. W. Bylisma	2000
Red Mesa	Mr. B. Boyd	Mr. J. Smart	2001
Rocky Mountain	Ms. S. Velzen	Ms. M. Anema	2000
Southeast U.S.	Mr. J. Boldenow		1999
Thornapple Valley	Mr. K. Buys	Mr. J. Zomerlei	2001
Toronto	Mr. H. Wieringa	Ms. M. Spoolstra	1999
Wisconsin	Mr. C. Adams	Mr. D. Vree	2001
Yellowstone	Mr. K. Van Dyken	Mr. B. Gagestein	2001
Zeeland	Mr. S. Dykstra		2000
At-large (U.S.)			
Pastoral adviser	Rev. M. Ortiz	Rev. G. Varela	2001
Financial adviser	Mrs. B. Clayton	Mr. H. Washington	1999
Attorney	Mr. T. Geelhoed	Mr. P. Kladder III	1999
At-large (Canada)			
Pastoral adviser	Ms. A. Dekker	Ms. G. De Groot	1999
	Mr. P. Bulthuis	Ms. B. Hoekstra	1999
	Rev. J. Postuma	Rev. J. Koster	1999

Member	Alternate	Term Expires
Mr. D.J. De Witt	Rev. E. Gritter	1999
Rev. E.J. Tamminga	Rev. N. Vander Kwaak	1999
Rev. C. Terpstra	Rev. V. Vander Zee	1999
Rev. S.E. Ver Heul	Mr. G. Thaxton	1999
Mr. J. te Linde	Mr. B. Zwiers	1999
Mr. G. Bosma	Mr. E. Westra	2000
Ms. M. Bouwma	Ms. S. Hulst	2000
Ms. M. Hollebeek	Ms. R. Oosterhof	2000
Rev. R.C. Heerspink	Mr. H. Postma	2000
Mr. H. Bosch	Ms. L. Cromartie	2000
Ms. D. Algera	Ms. N. De Boer	2001
Mr. P. Szto	Mr. N. Suhoo	2001
Ms. C. Topp	Rev. P. Lam	2001
Rev. J. Flores	Ms. J. Jackson	2001
Dr. J. Wilson	Ms. M. Van't Land	2001

#### IV. Service committees

##### A. *Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. Committee*

Mr. G.J. Borst (1999), Ms. A. Joseph (1999), Mr. J. Feikens (2000), Mr. C.R. Witte (2000), Rev. G.L. Dykstra (2001), Ms. J. Admiraal (2001); ex officio member: Mr. C.A. Gronsman.

##### B. *Fund for Smaller Churches Committee*

Rev. L. Sikkema (1999), Mr. A. Ruiter (1999), Rev. L.W. Van Essen (1999), Mr. J. Folkerts (2000), Mr. H.F. Eizenga (2001).

##### C. *Historical Committee*

Dr. J. Bratt (1999), Rev. W.D. Buursma (2000), Dr. H. Zwaanstra (2000), Ms. S. Harger (2001).

##### D. *Interchurch Relations Committee*

Dr. L. Bierma (1999), Rev. J. Chen (1999), Rev. E.A. Van Baak (1999), Rev. P.W. Brouwer (2000), Rev. L.J. Hofman (2000), Ms. C. Roelofs (2000), Ms. C. Elgersma (2001), Rev. R.J. Haven (2001), Dr. H. Zwaanstra (2001); ex officio member: Dr. D.H. Engelhard; administrative secretary: Rev. L.J. Hofman.

##### E. *Judicial Code Committee*

Mr. R. Bouma (1999), Mr. W. Posthumus (1999), Rev. J.G. Van Ryn (1999), Mrs. J. Engelhard (2000), Mr. L. Veldhuizen (2000), Mr. C. Oosterhouse (2000), Rev. C. Admiraal (2001), Mr. R.J. Smeda (2001), Mrs. K. Vandergrift (2001).

##### F. *Ministers' Pension Funds committees*

###### *Canadian Pension Trustees*

Mr. A. de Jong (1999), Mr. H. Schep (1999), Rev. J. Kuntz (2000), Mr. J. Knibbe (2001), Mr. J. Woudstra (2001).

###### *U.S. Board of Pensions and Insurance*

Rev. L. Van Drunen (1999), Mr. A. Walters (1999), Mr. L. Bierma (2000), Mr. W. Venema (2000), Mr. T. Waalkes (2001).

*G. Sermons for Reading Services Committee*

Rev. P.D. Stadt (1999); Rev. A.C. Geleynse (1999); Mr. R. Vander Ploeg (1999), secretary/ treasurer; Rev. H.A. Vander Windt (2000); Rev. H. Bruinsma (2001), alternate.

*H. Youth-Ministry Committee*

Mr. G. Bysma (Cadets) (1999), Ms. M. De Groote (1999), Mrs. J. De Heer (1999), Mr. R. Grussing (CRASM) (1999), Ms. G. Tamming (1999), Mrs. K. Wilk (1999), Dr. R. Keeley (1999), Rev. D.D. Poolman (2000), Mr. P. Pereboom (2000), Mrs. J. Koops (2001), Mr. A. Azwan (2001), Mr. S. Elgersma (2001); members-at-large: Mr. S. Hielema (2000), Mr. J. Vanden Heuvel (2000); advisers: Dr. R.C. De Vries (Calvin Theological Seminary), Rev. A.E. Mulder (director of New-Church Development, Home Missions), Mr. R. Rozema (CRC Publications).

**V. Study committees**

*A. Committee to Study Ordination and "Official Acts of Ministry" (Church Order Art. 53-b)*

Dr. R.C. De Vries (chair), Rev. H. De Ruyter, Rev. R. Hofman, Dr. D.E. Holwerda, Rev. S.A. Jim, Rev. J.B. Vos; Dr. D.H. Engelhard, adviser.

*B. Committee to Study Structure for Ministry in the U.S.*

Dr. B.A. Averill, Mr. J. De Groat, Mrs. M.J. De Jong, Mr. R. Elgersma, Dr. R.S. Greenway, Mr. J. Kuyers, Rev. H. Numan, Dr. S. Roels, Mr. W. Terpstra, Mr. F. Velzen, Mr. W. Weidenaar; advisers: Dr. P. Borgdorff, Dr. D.H. Engelhard.

*C. Committee to Examine Routes Being Used to Enter the Ordained Ministry in the CRC*

Rev. B.T. Ballast, Mr. E. Benally, Dr. J. Bolt, Mr. R. den Dulk, Dr. E. Greenway, Rev. E.A. Harrison, Rev. J.T. Kim, Rev. R.E. Orellana, Ms. E.J. Scholten, Dr. B. Van Groningen; ex officio members: Dr. J.A. De Jong, Dr. D.H. Engelhard.

*D. Committee to Give Direction about and for Pastoral Care for Homosexual Members*

Mrs. R. Alons, Ms. M.L. Bouma, Rev. C.J. De Boer, Dr. M.D. Hugen, Dr. J. Kreeft, Rev. Y.J. Oh, Rev. H. Van Niejenhuis, Dr. R. Van Noord, Rev. G.L. Zandstra, Dr. D.H. Engelhard.

*E. Multiethnic-Strategies Committee*

Rev. P. Aviles, Mr. D. Chimoni, Mrs. C. Doorn, Mr. B. Goei (chair), Mr. J. Mutoigo, Rev. L. Pellecer, Mrs. K. Smith, Rev. F.J. Witteveen, Rev. Ray Yeo, and ex officio members Dr. D.H. Engelhard, Dr. P. Borgdorff, and one member of the Board of Trustees.

*Note:* The Board of Trustees—Ontario Corporation is requested to appoint a Native North American representative to the committee.

*F. Committee to Review the Decision re Women in Office for Synod 2000*

Dr. A.J. Bandstra, Dr. S. de Haan, Dr. R.S. Greenway, Dr. W.T. Koopmans, Mrs. G. Postma, Rev. J.S. Shim, Rev. J.G. Van Ryn (chair), Rev. J.B. Vos, Dr. D.H. Engelhard (ex officio).

G. *Committee on Continuing Professional Development*

Dr. G.J. Bekker, Rev. M.B. Kim, Mr. S.J. Koster, Rev. P. Nicolai, Dr. R. Palsrok, Rev. C.G. Tapanes, Ms. M. Vander Vennen, Rev. D.A. Visser (chair), Dr. D.H. Engelhard (ex officio).

*Recommendation*

That synod approve the membership list of the boards and committees.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 72

President of synod Rev. Howard D. Vanderwell expresses thanks to his fellow officers—Rev. Jack B. Vos, vice president; Elder Stanley J. Koster, first clerk; Rev. Peter Nicolai, second clerk—for the fine cooperation and support they have given.

Rev. Vanderwell expresses appreciation to the faculty advisers from Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary and to the ethnic advisers. He thanks Dr. David H. Engelhard, general secretary, and Dr. Peter Borgdorff, executive director of ministries, for the advice they have given Synod 1998.

He expresses appreciation to Mr. Donald Boender, Mr. Jeff Stob, Mr. Carl Hordyk, and the staff of the Fine Arts Center for their services and to the Engineering Department of Calvin College for the development of the electronic balloting system. He acknowledges with gratitude the work of Timothy Won, who served as translator for the Korean delegates. He thanks the synod office staff for their excellent services—Mrs. Ina De Moor, Mrs. Charlene Ezinga, Mrs. Nelvina Ilbrink, Mr. Marvin Ilbrink, and Mrs. Marlene Oosterhouse. He also expresses thanks to the synod newsroom person—Mrs. Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen.

The vice president, Rev. Jack B. Vos, expresses thanks on behalf of synod to the president for his leadership during Synod 1998.

ARTICLE 73

The president announces *Psalter Hymnal* 503, "Built on the Rock." He also announces *Psalter Hymnal* 232, "You Are Worthy," and *Psalter Hymnal* 633, "He Is Lord." When the delegates have sung, the president addresses the assembly. He reads from Matthew 16:18: "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Rev. Vanderwell notes that "we have had the privilege of observing how Christ is building his church through people, congregations, and agencies." He says, "We must also note that it is Christ who builds the church. We don't do it but are only instruments in his hand. Even Christ knew that building his church would not be such a smooth road, for he had dealt with many obstacles himself."

In his reflections on synod he observes (1) that the spirit of this synod was wholesome and healthy, free of anger, attack, and sarcasm, (2) that the ages, particularly of the pastors, indicate a whole new generation of committed leaders whom God is raising up for the next generation of the Christian Reformed Church, and (3) that the participation by elders was more widespread than he has observed in previous synods.

The delegates participate in concluding prayers of thanksgiving, and Synod 1998 concludes with *Psalter Hymnal* 156, "The Lord Bless You and Keep You. Synod 1998 adjourns at 1:55 p.m.

Howard D. Vanderwell, president  
Jacob B. Vos, vice president  
Stanley J. Koster, first clerk  
Peter Nicolai, second clerk

Attested a true copy  
David H. Engelhard, general secretary



## APPENDIX 1

(Amended version of Pastoral Ministries Report Appendix 1 in *Agenda for Synod 1998*)

### Recommended Strategies for the Supervision of Pastors Serving in Specialized Ministries

#### I. Background (see also Church Order Arts. 12-c and 13-a and Church Order Supplement, Art. 12-c)

Synod's concern for adequate supervision of the ministry of chaplains was addressed in 1978, when synod urged calling churches to obtain the endorsement of the Chaplain Committee prior to calling a minister of the Word to military or institutional chaplaincy (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 47).

Synod 1993 once again called the denomination's attention to the difficulties encountered in the supervision of chaplains (*Agenda for Synod 1993*, Overture 11, pp. 286-87). At that time synod made the following decision:

3. That the Chaplain Committee be mandated to recommend strategies for ensuring the appropriate supervision and accountability of those pastors serving in specialized ministries.

##### *Grounds:*

- a. There is a great deal of misunderstanding in the churches regarding the relationship between pastors in specialized ministries and their calling churches. Church Order Article 13-a specifies that the councils of calling churches shall supervise such pastors in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved, and this overlap of responsibilities requires clarification.
- b. The questions of supervision and accountability have legal as well as moral and ecclesiastical implications.
- c. The Chaplain Committee is the most appropriate agency to do this work, since it is already involved in the recruitment, placement, and credentialing of pastors in specialized ministries. Moreover, the need for such guidelines is especially acute in the supervision of chaplains and those in counseling ministries.

*(Acts of Synod 1993, p. 545)*

Church Order Article 13-a leaves no doubt about the importance of providing supervision for all pastors:

- a. A minister of the Word is directly accountable to the calling church, and therefore shall be supervised in doctrine, life, and duties by that church. When his work is with other than the calling church, he shall be supervised in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved.

Church Order Supplement, Article 12-c states the following about supervision:

##### *Regulations for the application of Article 12-c of the Church Order to specific tasks and situations:*

- a. The calling church shall secure the prior approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, for each new ministerial position, by providing classis with the following information:
  - 1) The description of the official position (purposes, duties, qualifications, etc.) as determined by the calling church in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.

- 2) The evidence that the minister will be directly accountable to the calling church, including an outline of requirements for reporting to the calling church, and supervision by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies where applicable.
- 3) The demonstration that the position will be consistent with his calling as a minister of the Word.

The supervision of a chaplain has been perceived to be the responsibility primarily of the calling church. While synod has set forth a procedure for ensuring the proper supervision of chaplains, the mandate given to the Chaplain Committee demonstrates that these procedures generally have been found to be either difficult to implement or ineffective.

## **II. General observations regarding ecclesiastical supervision of chaplains serving in specialized settings**

When clarifying strategies for ensuring the appropriate supervision of the duties of the chaplains, we should remember that they have dual accountability. They serve not only under their calling church but also under the board and/or administration of the institution in which they minister (whether this be in a military establishment, a correctional facility, a hospital, or any other setting).

The calling church often finds it difficult to provide suitable supervision because the ministry does not happen among the members of the congregation and the life of the local church. Furthermore, the chaplain may serve a great distance from the calling church, intensifying the sense of separation. Since the chaplain's ministry is often specialized and unusual, few in the congregation and/or consistory feel confident to provide adequate supervision. And since counseling is often at the heart of a chaplain's ministry, issues of confidentiality make it difficult or impossible for others to assess these activities.

While supervision in a narrow sense can be defined as oversight, the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* rightly notes the following about supervision: "Supervision does not imply mere watchfulness but love, counsel, encouragement, and assistance in the work of the Lord" (1994 ed., p. 107). The supervision of ministers serving either in a congregation or in a specialized setting requires a meaningful and interactive relationship with the calling church.

Another area of difficulty is the "cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies" that the calling church is called to exercise. Since most calling churches have little or no contact with the chaplain's employer, meaningful interaction and dialogue with them is often lacking. In the case of the military, the director of Chaplaincy Ministries (formerly the Chaplain Committee) is seen as the point of contact with the denomination, not the calling church.

We also note that Synod 1978 dealt with the issue of ministers serving in non-congregational settings. Synod put in place safeguards about the tasks and work of such ministers, including, for example, mandating that the church visitors inquire annually about the supervision of such ministers:

The synod of 1978 ruled that church visitors shall inquire annually into the supervision of the calling church toward ministers of the Word in specialized ministerial tasks, noting the nature of the reporting of such ministers and of the consistorial supervision.

(*Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, p. 238)

History and practice have shown that this process has been generally ineffective.

Until now, Chaplaincy Ministries, on behalf of the denomination, has been granting endorsement at the beginning of a chaplain's ministry. This means that the candidate's ministerial status, record of specialized training, letters of reference, suitability for ministry in specialized settings, and job description have been reviewed and found acceptable. Chaplaincy Ministries has thus been serving the denomination by affirming a prospective chaplain's gifts and training and by providing personal and professional support while the pastor is engaged in ministry in specialized settings. Chaplaincy Ministries, however, has not been formally involved in the supervision of chaplains.

The factors cited make it difficult for meaningful supervision to take place. While councils are responsible to engage their pastor in dialogue about his ministry, they often are not qualified to engage in conversation with chaplains because of the specialized nature of chaplaincy ministry and the many different aspects of a chaplain's relationships to employer and professional organizations.

### **III. Strategies**

In order to make supervision meaningful not only for the chaplain but also for the calling church and the denomination, it is recommended that Pastoral Ministries be assigned the responsibility to provide joint ecclesiastical supervision with the calling church. Joint ecclesiastical supervision will provide the local church with additional expertise, and it can serve as a process whereby the calling church and chaplain are encouraged to be in dialogue with each other. Staff and Pastoral Ministries Board members have knowledge and expertise about chaplaincy ministries. They are already involved in endorsing and supporting the chaplains and endorsing chaplaincy positions. Pastoral Ministries is able to monitor and ensure that supervision is being provided. Staff can provide assistance and resources in the supervisory process. Staff can serve as a bridge between the calling church and the chaplain's employing agency since such agencies generally prefer to work with those who are involved in chaplaincy ministry.

Based on a legal review of these matters, we also recommend that a clear distinction be made between the church's supervision and the supervision which is offered by the chaplain's employer. It should be clearly understood that the chaplain's employing agency or institution has sole responsibility for providing ongoing vocational supervision of the chaplain. This job-performance appraisal targets the quality and competence of the chaplain's professional and clinical work. In a joint ecclesiastical-supervision situation, the calling church provides assurance that chaplains continue to be ministers in good standing with respect to life and doctrine. Pastoral Ministries seeks assurance that the chaplain's pastoral identity is being lived out with integrity, based on an ongoing review of the chaplain's position description. Pastoral Ministries also seeks official indications from the chaplain's employer that the chaplain is serving with competence.

Joint ecclesiastical supervision and allowance for a measure of local creativity will greatly enhance the supervisory process. Even though many of the requirements have been in place, there has not been an effective mechanism to ensure that ecclesiastical supervision takes place. In order to enhance the supervision of chaplains, we recommend the following:

#### IV. Recommendations

A. That synod *require* that *all* ordained ministers serving in chaplaincy ministries be endorsed by Chaplaincy Ministries.

*Grounds:*

1. This will ensure that appropriate endorsement and ecclesiastical supervision can be facilitated.
2. Until now synod has merely *urged* persons to seek endorsement.

B. That synod declare endorsement to be an ongoing process. This process includes granting, monitoring, or withdrawing of endorsement based upon fulfilling the criteria for the ministry to which a chaplain is called.

*Grounds:*

1. Until now, endorsement, indicating qualifications and suitability, has been granted at the beginning of a chaplain's ministry.
2. Ongoing endorsement is an expectation of many employing agencies and institutions.
3. Endorsement will assure the denomination's ongoing involvement with the chaplain's ministry.

C. That synod assign ecclesiastical supervision of the ministry of chaplains as a joint responsibility of the calling church and Pastoral Ministries.

*Grounds:*

1. Though the staff of Pastoral Ministries have an active and supportive role with chaplains, joint ecclesiastical supervision with the calling church has never been formally assigned to Pastoral Ministries.
2. Joint ecclesiastical supervision ensures that the chaplains are accountable to the denomination at large for their specialized ministries.
3. Pastoral Ministries is qualified to interpret specialized ministry to the calling church and the denomination and is able to act as a bridge between calling church and the employer.
4. Joint ecclesiastical supervision underscores the Church Order's focus on the cooperation between the calling church and other institutions or agencies.

D. That synod call the attention of the churches to the decisions of Synod 1978 regarding the ecclesiastical supervision of associate ministers (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34, and *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, p. 238).

E. That synod revise the guidelines for church visiting to include questions about the ecclesiastical supervision of associate ministers.

*Ground:* The present guidelines have not been changed to reflect the decisions of Synod 1978 (*Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 48, Art. 34).

## APPENDIX 2

### Investment Policy of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

#### I. Introduction

The members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America provide the funds to carry out the mission of the denomination. Therefore, great care and stewardship should be accorded these funds.

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the broad guidelines under which the funds of the denomination shall be managed. The investment objectives are

- A. To preserve the principal value of funds.
- B. To earn a reasonable return.
- C. To invest the funds in a manner consistent with the values and ministries of the Christian Reformed Church.

There appear to be good reasons for Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance to conduct their investment programs separately if they so choose. All other agencies will have their funds invested under the umbrella of the CRC Foundation and under the supervision of the denomination's financial office. Such a practice will permit greater professionalism, efficiency, and compliance with policy. The investment of funds is not of sufficient magnitude on the part of individual agencies to develop core competency, diversification, or proper monitoring.

The overall responsibilities of the director of finance and administration (DFA) shall be clear. The DFA shall carry out the investment policy for the denomination. This shall include a sensitivity to and overview of the Canadian investment management.

If institutions such as Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance elect to conduct their own investment programs, such programs shall be subject to the denomination's investment policy. In addition, there shall be periodic reporting to both the respective governing boards and the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church regarding the investments.

The long-term success of investments will be enhanced by the input and monitoring of this activity by business professionals. The Christian Reformed Church is fortunate to have a number of such members who can provide the broad guidance and oversight that would be difficult to develop within the limited staff available. Therefore, the CRC Foundation trustees will appoint and maintain an Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) of qualified individuals, which will function as described below.

The IAC shall be appointed by the CRC Foundation trustees and chaired by the DFA; it shall consist of up to eight people, of whom two (2) are Canadians.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian members shall meet as a Canadian board from time to time to

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<sup>1</sup>This arrangement will be in effect until such time as a Canadian CRC Foundation is established.

review the Canadian portfolio, management of funds, asset allocation, etc. The U.S. members will meet separately regarding U.S. matters as needed. The binational committee of five to seven members will meet and review investments and policy on a denomination-wide basis.

The IAC shall regularly provide performance reports to the participating agencies and be accountable to the CRC Foundation trustees. Initially, IAC will meet twice a year. As investment managers are appointed, IAC will meet with them annually to review performance. IAC will also set and review asset-allocation policy. As various funds for investment are gathered and times change, IAC may adapt the policy to current circumstances.

The IAC will report at least annually to the CRC Foundation trustees on investment results and allocation of funds. The CRC Foundation trustees are responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees of the CRC at least annually.

Once investment guidelines and objectives are set, the use of outside professional money managers is expected. The selection of managers and specific mutual funds will be the responsibility of IAC.

This investment policy makes no provision for the placement of denominational funds in private investments. When such investments are donated, it shall be the practice to liquidate such gifts as soon as feasible. The advice of the donor may be sought in determining the appropriate time for such liquidation.

## **II. Application**

This policy shall apply to all the committees, boards, agencies, and institutions associated with the ministries that are part of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA).

Generally, all funds and investments of the denomination, with the permissible exception as defined in this policy statement of Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance, shall be under the supervision of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA (BOT). The responsibility for implementing this policy is assigned by the CRC Foundation trustees and the DFA. The custody and management of the funds shall be performed under the umbrella of the CRC Foundation except as approved in advance by the BOT. To the extent that there are assets and investments of separate legal organizations represented within the portfolio managed by the CRC Foundation and the DFA, appropriate agreements to effect this policy shall be entered into. Exceptions shall be recommended by the DFA and approved by the BOT. Exceptions authorized in the adoption of this policy are these:

- A. The CRC Canada shall maintain cash management and investment programs as necessary to comply with the requirements of Canadian regulations and laws.
- B. Agencies shall be permitted bank accounts to carry on their mandates, but excess funds are subject to the policy.
- C. Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Board of Pensions and Insurance may elect to conduct their own cash-management and investment programs, within the broad parameters of this policy.

In accordance with the preceding, the following are expected to be the principal types of funds managed by the CRC Foundation:

- A. Funds or assets not needed for near-term operations by the agencies or other entities of the CRC, including reserves and endowments.
- B. Funds or assets given to the CRC as a denomination, rather than to a particular agency, for endowment or other longer-term purposes by the donor.
- C. Short-term funds intended to be passed through to agencies or ministries of the CRC by the donor. Such funds would be received and passed to the appropriate parties in a timely fashion.

### **III. Implementation and maintenance of this policy**

The BOT of the CRCNA shall be responsible for seeing to it that this policy is implemented. The DFA is responsible for providing the leadership to implement and maintain this policy.

The DFA shall be aided by an Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) of up to eight members, of whom at least one shall be a member of the BOT. The others shall be appointed by the CRC Foundation trustees upon the recommendation of the DFA and the executive director of ministries (EDM). The term of service shall be for three years, with staggered terms to provide for continuity of oversight. Members may be nominated for a second term. At least two members shall be Canadian.

### **IV. Duties of the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC)**

The IAC shall be responsible for recommending the guidelines and implementation of the investment policies of the CRCNA. Such recommendations shall be presented to the CRC Foundation trustees for approval or further processing. The Ministries Coordinating Council (MCC) shall have the right of review and comment before the CRC Foundation trustees act on such recommendations.

The primary duties of the Investment Advisory Council shall be

- A. To approve the procedures for management of funds.
- B. To approve the type and number of investment pools to be utilized.
- C. To approve the investment allocation ranges for the various types of investments.
- D. To approve the investment managers utilized.
- E. To meet annually with the investment managers to review performance against agreed-upon benchmarks.
- F. To recommend changes in the investment policy for presentation to the CRC Foundation trustees and, if necessary, to the BOT.
- G. To report to and meet annually with the Board of Trustees of the CRC Foundation.

### **V. Designation of investment pools**

Because the funds to be invested have many different characteristics, there are likely to be a number of investment pools. These investment pools will likely be accounted for and managed differently. The initial pools shall be

- A. Short-term cash utilized to operate the CRCNA.
- B. Excess seasonal funds which are expected to be required by ministries within one year.
- C. Intermediate-term funds which may be held for ministry needs within the next few years.
- D. Long-term funds which may be invested over longer periods of time (e.g., an endowment).
- E. Funds held for specific denominational programs.

The IAC shall approve guidelines which list the appropriate investment vehicles for each of these pools. Since the members of the CRCNA have given and entrusted these funds for kingdom work, safety of principal shall be given great consideration, especially in the shorter-term investments.

There shall be discussion between the DFA and each agency as to the pools where agency funds are invested. If there is a difference of opinion, the agency shall meet with the IAC. If there is still not resolution, the matter shall be referred to the BOT for decision.

It is possible that different pools will have similar investment objectives for portions of their portfolios, such as ownership of fixed-income securities of intermediate duration. If so, it may be desirable to place such funds from more than one pool with the same investment manager for efficiency and ease of management.

#### **VI. Asset allocation**

The funds invested shall employ a balanced and diversified investment approach. The asset pools are expected to utilize differing investments and allocations. The IAC shall adopt a range of allocation for each asset pool. Funds for various needs and projects should have an asset allocation that is in keeping with the time frame within which the funds are to be invested. In all cases the investment allocation should take into account that these are church-related funds.

The allocation of funds shall be reported to the BOT annually at the end of the fiscal year.

#### **VII. Investment advisers and performance measurement**

Since the investment of funds is a specialized field, it is expected that outside investment advisers and/or funds will be utilized to implement this policy, especially for the larger amounts and intermediate- or longer-term funds.

The IAC will select advisers to manage funds assigned to them. Such funds will be managed by them on a fully discretionary basis within the overall parameters of fiduciary responsibility and the policies set forth in this investment policy.

The investment results of each manager shall be compared at least annually with appropriate benchmarks for the type of manager and investments. The benchmarks shall be agreed upon between the IAC and each adviser at the point of hiring. Performance should be measured over a period of years, but

any adviser with continual below-benchmark performance should be replaced.

### **VIII. Approved investments**

The major portion of the overall portfolio shall be readily marketable and traded on major exchanges. The investments shall consider liquidity and not be speculative. As appropriate, funds may be invested in the following financial assets:

#### *A. Short-term investments*

1. U. S. Treasury bills and their Canadian counterpart.
  2. Commercial paper in the highest grade as rated by Standard and Poors or Moody.
  3. CDs and other bank or savings-and-loan deposits, provided they are government-insured institutions. If more than the insured amount is invested with an institution, the institution should be of high quality.
  4. Other approved short-term investments of high quality and marketability.
- B. Publicly traded common stocks, preferred stocks, and convertible securities of companies which have capable and ethical management and are not subject to undue risk.*
- C. Publicly traded bonds and notes of investment grade. In most cases it is expected that the investments will be at least A-rated securities.*

### **IX. Gifts received directly from donors**

At times, gifts of assets other than cash will be received directly from donors. No gifts of real or tangible personal property or nonpublicly traded stocks, bonds, or notes may be accepted until approved by the DFA. In the case of such donations, the following guidelines shall govern:

- A. In the case of publicly traded stocks or other securities, they should generally be transferred to the appropriate investment manager for retention or sale as the manager deems appropriate.*
- B. In the case of nonpublicly traded securities, the advice of the donor should be requested. This advice should include what the donor's preferences are and how and when the securities can be converted to usable funds.*
- C. In the case of a proposed donation of property or physical assets, it shall not be accepted until approved by legal counsel. The CRC shall request, in writing, opinion as to liens, litigation, and environmental issues before deciding whether to accept the proposed donation. If there is not positive cash flow, a plan for funding the cash needs of the proposed donation shall be approved prior to acceptance. In some instances, a donor may contribute real estate or financial assets with investment specifications (including, but not limited to, retention of the asset) inconsistent with the Investment Policy of the CRCNA. Compliance with such donor specifications will require approval of the CRC Foundation trustees and the BOT prior to acceptance of the gift. The goal is to convert all such donations to cash at the earliest practical date to*

minimize the management and monitoring responsibilities imposed on the staff of the DFA.

#### **X. Restrictions on investments**

A. Because the funds are held in trust until utilized for ministry, investments shall not be made in companies or institutions which are not compatible with the values or mission of the CRCNA. Examples of inappropriate investments would be institutions engaged in or promoting abortion, gambling, or tobacco.

B. Not more than 5 percent of any investment pool may be invested in a single company or investment, except under the following circumstances:

1. No limits shall be placed on investments in U. S. or Canadian government securities or bonds. This shall include securities backed by them.
2. Investments in mutual funds or similar approved pools of assets shall not be considered to be in violation of this standard if said mutual funds or similar approved pools include a broad base of assets in the funds.
3. The bond portfolio is invested in bonds rated "A."

C. Investments will not be made in warrants, options, or commodity futures. In addition, purchases will not be made on margin, and securities will not be sold short.

D. No investments shall be made which could place in jeopardy the tax-exempt status of the CRC, its agencies, or affiliates. In keeping with this policy, no investments shall be made for the purpose of exercising control over corporate management.

E. The automatic sale of a security whose quality or rating falls below CRCNA policy standards shall not be required, but the investment managers shall be expected to reevaluate retention of the security on a regular basis.

# DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY SHARES AND RECOMMENDED AGENCIES FOR 1999

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# DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY SHARES AND RECOMMENDED AGENCIES FOR 1998

## I. Denominational ministry shares

	Per professing member
Back to God Hour.....	\$31.90
CRC TV.....	11.44
Calvin College*	
	Per professing member
Area 1—Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids North, Grand Rapids South, Grandville, Thornapple Valley.....	\$48.60
Area 2—Cadillac, Georgetown, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lake Erie, Muskegon, Zeeland.....	38.20
Area 3—Chicago South, Florida, Illiana, Northern Illinois, Wisconsin.....	33.30
Area 4—Heartland, Iakota, Lake Superior, Minnesota South, Northcentral Iowa, Pella.....	8.40
Area 5—Atlantic Northeast, Hackensack, Hudson.....	31.60
Area 6—Arizona, Columbia, California South, Central California, Greater Los Angeles, Pacific Hanmi, Pacific Northwest, Red Mesa, Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone.....	23.50
Area 7—Chatham, Eastern Canada, Hamilton, Huron, Niagara, Quinte, Toronto.....	12.00
Area 8—Alberta North, Alberta South, B.C. North-West, B.C. South-East.....	5.90
Calvin Theological Seminary.....	22.64
CRC Publications	
World Literature Ministries.....	2.34
Denominational Services.....	19.75
Denominational Building funds and operations; synodical expenses; grants; funds for standing, service, and study committees	
Fund for Smaller Churches (includes quarterly subsidies and continuing-education fund).....	7.00
Home Missions.....	51.05

\*Areas which benefit from a ministry-share reduction should employ the following monies to finance their area colleges (*Acts of Synod 1962, 1984, 1993*):

Per professing member

Area 1, -0-; Area 2, \$3.57; Area 3, \$8.47; Area 4, \$33.37; Area 5, \$10.17; Area 6, \$18.27; Area 7, \$29.77; Area 8, \$35.87.

Ministers' Pension Funds and Special Assistance and Moving Fund for Retired Ministers and Widows .....	0.00
Pastoral Ministries .....	9.55
World Missions .....	49.13

**II. Agencies recommended for financial support in 1999**

*A. Denominational agencies recommended for one or more offerings*

Canadian registration #

1. Back to God Hour—above-ministry-share needs .....0347708-39
2. Calvin College—above-ministry-share needs .....(per Schedule VIII)
3. Calvin Theological Seminary .....(per Schedule VIII)
  - a. Above-ministry-share needs
  - b. Revolving Loan Fund
4. CRC Publications
  - World Literature Ministries—above ministry-share needs .....0590018-49
5. CR Home Missions—above-ministry-share needs .....0549022-47
6. CR World Missions —above-ministry-share needs .....0435081-47
7. World Relief—one offering per quarter because CRWRC receives no  
ministry-share support.....0366443-09
8. Pastoral Ministries—above-ministry-share needs .....0590018-49
  - a. Abuse Prevention
  - b. Chaplaincy Ministries
  - c. Disability Concerns
  - d. Pastor-Church Relations
  - e. Race Relations
    - Multiracial Student Scholarship Fund

*B. Denominationally related youth agencies recommended for one or more offerings*

United Calvinist Youth

1. GEMS (Calvinettes) .....0877563-49
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps .....0877563-49
3. Youth Unlimited/Early Teen Ministry (Young Calvinist Federation) .....0877563-49

*C. Nondenominational agencies recommended for financial support but not necessarily for one or more offerings*

Note should be made of the action of Synod 1992, related to the financial support provided by Christian Reformed churches relative to these agencies:

... in light of the growing number of agencies seeking recommendation for financial support, [synod] remind[s] the congregations of the synodical decision of 1970 wherein "synod urge[d] all the classes to request their churches to pay denominational causes before making gifts to nondenominational causes on the synod-approved accredited list.

*Grounds:* Our denominational causes should have priority in our giving. . . ."  
(Acts of Synod 1970, p. 81)

## **United States agencies**

### *A. Benevolent agencies*

1. Bethany Christian Services
2. Calvary Rehabilitation Center
3. Cary Christian Center
4. Christian Health Care Center
5. Elim Christian School
6. International Aid Inc.
7. The Luke Society, Inc.
8. Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services

### *B. Educational agencies*

1. Center for Public Justice
2. Christian Schools International
3. Christian Schools International Foundation
4. Dordt College
5. Reformed Bible College
6. Rehoboth Christian School
7. Roseland Christian School
8. The King's University College (through the U.S. Foundation)
9. Trinity Christian College
10. Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia, PA)
11. Worldwide Christian Schools

### *C. Miscellaneous agencies*

1. American Bible Society
2. Audio Scripture Ministries (formerly, PRM International)
3. Friendship Ministries
4. Gideons International
5. International Bible Society
6. Lord's Day Alliance of the United States
7. Metanoia Ministries
8. Mission 21 India
9. Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE)
10. The Bible League
11. The Tract League (formerly, Faith, Prayer, and Tract League)
12. Wycliffe Bible Translators

## **Canadian agencies**

### *A. Benevolent agencies*

1. Beginnings Counseling & Adoption Services of Ontario, Inc.

### *B. Educational agencies*

1. Canadian Christian Education Foundation, Inc.
2. Dordt College
3. Institute for Christian Studies
4. Redeemer Reformed Christian College
5. Reformed Bible College
6. The King's University College
7. Trinity Christian College
8. Worldwide Christian Schools—Canada

*C. Miscellaneous agencies*

1. Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
2. Friendship Groups—Canada
3. Gideons International—Canada
4. International Bible Society—Canada
5. The Bible League—Canada
6. Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, Inc.
7. Work Research Foundation

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# INDEX

(Page numbers in **boldface type** refer to the minutes of synod; page numbers in regular type refer to agenda and supplementary material.)

*Initialisms and abbreviations in the index refer to the following:*

Art.	Article
BOT	Board of Trustees of the CRCNA
CCRCC	Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada
CITE	Cooperative International Theological Education
CO	Church Order
CRC	Christian Reformed Church
CRCNA	Christian Reformed Church in North America
CRWRC	Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
FSC	Fund for Smaller Churches
IRC	Interchurch Relations Committee
MCC	Ministries Coordinating Council
MIS	Ministerial Information Service
NAE	National Association of Evangelicals
NAPARC	North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council
PCR	Pastor-Church Relations
RCN/GKN	Reformed Churches in the Netherlands/Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
REC	Reformed Ecumenical Council
YMC	Youth-Ministry Committee

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