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# ACTS

of the EIGHTH SYNOD  
of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia  
held in the John Calvin School at Launceston,  
Tasmania. 18th to 22nd May, 1970.

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E v e n i n g   s e s s i o n   o n Monday 18th May.

## Article 1

### OPENING

On behalf of the convening Church, the Church of Launceston, the Rev. G. van Rongen opens the meeting. This happens, in accordance with a decision made by the Council of the Church of Launceston, in the English language. He reads from God's Word Ephesians 4 :1 - 6, Psalm 133 is sung. The "Opening Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies" is prayed.

In his opening address the Rev. G. van Rongen points to the fact that our Prayer Book says many a fine thing about the Church of the Lord.

The Church is clearly shown as originating in the mercy of God, Who has chosen many people out of the human race that is lost in sin. When we are doing some work for the wellbeing of the Churches, we must be well aware of this. Even when we have to deal with all sorts of "Church business", we must not do this too business-like, but the joy about God's election and His eternal pleasure has to dwell in our hearts.

Our Prayer Book says also something concerning the unity of the Church, which is "The unity of true faith". This true faith can be described, as is done in our Heidelberg Catechism. Because of this our doctrinal standards take a prominent place in our fellowship of Churches. God is to be thanked because our Churches, unlike others, are not disturbed by difficulties that concern the Confession. It is very important that the Church Councils, in the Credentials of their delegates, express their intention to maintain the unity of true

faith by being faithful to our common Confession. The same can be said about the testifying of their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity by the delegates later on during this session.

Further, our Prayer Book shows us that the LORD gathers unto Himself a true Church, by the service of men. It sums up "the marks of the true Church" and shows us this way where the LORD is doing this great work, and how and in which respect the special office-bearers and the delegates to our Synod have to be loyal. In this great context - which at the same time makes our membership a small one - we have to do our work as a Synod. May the LORD strengthen us in this!

### Article 2

#### CREDENTIALS

The deacons of the Church of Launceston assist in the examination of the Credentials and the attendance-list. All Churches are lawfully represented.

The primary delegates are all present, namely,

of the Church of Albany:	the Rev. J. D. Wielenga and elder J. Brouwer.
of the Church of Armadale:	the Rev. K. Brünning and elder A. Swarts.
of the Church of Launceston:	the Rev. G. van Rongen and elder F. J. Veldhuis.

### Article 3

#### MODERAMEN

The Moderamen is elected as follows:

the Rev. J. D. Wielenga,	president
the Rev. K. Brünning,	assessor
the Rev. G. van Rongen,	first clerk
elder J. Brouwer,	second clerk.

### Article 4

#### CORRESPONDENCE

It is announced that some more correspondence has been received, which is to be added to the draft agenda that was made by the convening Church.

Article 5

CONSTITUTION

The meeting is constituted as the eighth Synod of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

Article 6

AGREEMENT WITH THE THREE FORMS OF UNITY

The delegates testify their agreement with The Three Forms of Unity by standing up.

Article 7

AGENDA

The agenda as drafted by the convening Church is agreed to, with the addition of the documents mentioned in article 4 of these Acts.

It is as follows:

6. Adoption of time and work schedules.

7. Letters and overtures:

- a. The Church of Armadale proposes that Synod adopts rules regarding the eligibility for call in our Churches of Bachelors of Divinity.
- b. The Church of Armadale proposes to insert into our By-laws a rule concerning a more detailed formulation of the Acts of Synod so that they may give a faithful report of the argumentation which has led to the decisions.

Explanation: The text of Article 17 of Acts-1968 may serve as an illustration. The last part of it reads: "From information given by the delegates of the Churches it becomes clear that the congregations are already acting along these lines".

During the discussion on these Acts in our meeting of July 8, 1968, our delegates have declared that the text of this Article does not fully report the things that became clear from information given by the delegates.

- c. An appeal against decisions made by one of our Church Councils regarding the appeal made by the same person against Church discipline applied to him by another Council.
- d. A letter from the Rev. P. van Gorp of Bunschoten-

Spakenburg on behalf of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches, appointed by the General Synod of Hoogeveen of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, in which they wish our Synod God's blessing.

- e. A number of documents from Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk te Pretoria, South-Africa, Minister the Rev. Dr. C. van der Waal, in which information is given concerning the difficulties in the confederation of the Churches in South-Africa, and in particular in Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk te Pretoria, and the sister-Churches in The Netherlands are requested not to approve the decisions of the General Synod of Hoogeveen concerned.
- f. A telegram from br. J. B. van Rongen and the fam. Brünig at Armadale, reading: "Proverbs 3 verses 5 and 6."

8. Instructions

9. Reports

- a. on Church visitation.
- b. from the Church of Armadale concerning the archives of Synod.
- c. from the Church of Albany concerning the examination of the archives of Synod.
- d. from the Churches concerning the work amongst the "scattered brothers and sisters".
- e. from the Church of Armadale concerning correspondence with the "Presbyterian Reformed Churches".
- f. from the Churches of Albany and Armadale concerning Mission Work in Western Australia.
- g. from the Church of Launceston concerning the spiritual support of military service-men.
- h. from deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches.
- i. from deputies for the correspondence with the Government.
- j. from deputies for an English Version of the Bible.
- k. from deputies for an English Church Service Book.
- l. from deputies concerning the Training for the Ministry of the Word.
- m. from deputies ad the Articles 49 and 79 Church

Order.

10. Auditing of the book of the Treasurer of Synod.
11. Determination of the percentage figures for the apportionment of Synod costs between the Churches.
12. Appointment of deputies.
13. Appointment of the convening Church, place and date of the next Synod.
14. Business concerning Article 41 C.O.
15. Personal business.
16. Adoption of the Acts of Synod.
17. Adoption of a Press Report.
18. Discipline after Article 43 C.O.
19. Closing.

Article 8

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The schedule of meetings is agreed to.

Synod will meet: mornings 10.00 to 12.30

afternoons: 2.00 to 5.30

evenings: 7.30 to 10.00

Whenever possible those items on the agenda which may be expected to be of special interest to the Church members who attend Synod will be dealt with during the evening sessions.

Article 9

PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE ACTS OF SYNOD

The proposal of the Church of Armadale regarding the Acts of Synod is dealt with (see Agenda sub 7b).

The Church of Armadale proposes to insert into our By-laws a rule concerning a more detailed formulation of the Acts of Synod so that they may give a faithful report of the argumentation which has led to the decisions.

Explanation: The text of Article 17 of Acts-1968 may serve as an illustration. The last part of it reads: "From information given by the delegates of the Churches it becomes clear that the congregations are already acting along these lines". During the discussion on these Acts in our meeting of July 8, 1968, our delegates have declared that the text of this

article does not fully report the things that became clear from information given by the delegates. Synod does not adopt this proposal of the Church of Armadale, because a similar decision was made by Synod 1966 (Acts of Synod 1966; Article 14 sub 2).

#### Article 10

##### PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE BACHELORS OF DIVINITY

Then the proposal of the Church of Armadale, mentioned under 7a of the Agenda, is discussed.

It reads: The Church of Armadale proposes that Synod adopts rules regarding the eligibility for call in our Churches of Bachelors of Divinity.

The discussion will be continued later on (see these Acts, Articles 18, 46 and 47).

#### Article 11

##### ARCHIVES OF SYNOD

The Church of Armadale reports about the archives of Synod.

The Church of Albany reports concerning the examination of the archives of Synod.

Both deputy-Churches are thanked for the work that was done and obtain their discharge.

#### Article 12

##### SPIRITUAL SUPPORT TO MILITARY SERVICE MEN

The Church of Launceston reports about its activities regarding the spiritual support to the members in military service.

Synod decides to instruct the re-appointed deputy-Church to contact the Government in order that the said Church members, after their basic training, are placed close by one of our Churches.

The delegates of the Church of Armadale express their appreciation about the way in which the Church of Launceston has received the Church members who are serving in the Army. They ask for more reports on the contacts which the Church of Launceston has with the military service men from the other congregations, e.g. on "home visitations".

Article 13

"PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCHES"

The report of the Church of Armadale regarding the correspondence with the "Presbyterian Reformed Churches" is read.

The discussion will be continued at a later stage (see (Article 36 of these Acts).

Article 14

ADJOURNMENT

Psalm 118:9 is sung. The president leads in prayer, and Synod is adjourned.

M o r n i n g   s e s s i o n   on Tuesday 19th May.

Article 15

RE-OPENING

Synod is re-opened. The president reads Psalm 46. Ps. 46:1 is sung, after which God's blessing is prayed for.

Article 16

CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for the examination of the appeal mentioned under 7c of the Agenda, and for the discussion on the reports concerning Church visitation.

E v e n i n g   s e s s i o n   on Tuesday 19th May.

Article 17

INFORMATION

Synod is re-opened. Psalm 72:8 is sung. The president makes known that Synod, in closed session decided to deal with the appeal mentioned under 7c of the Agenda in closed session, and further to appoint a committee that has to advise Synod concerning the continuation and organization of the Mission Work in particular with respect of the eventual appointment of a full-time missionary worker.

Article 18

PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE BACHELORS OF DIVINITY

The discussion of the proposal of the Church of Armadale mentioned under 7a of the Agenda (see also the Articles 10, 46 and 47 of these Acts) is continued.

A committee is appointed to advise Synod in this matter, its members being the Rev. K. Brüning and the Rev. G. van Rongen.

#### Article 19

##### ADJOURNMENT

The evening session is closed at an early time because a meeting is to be held this evening in which the congregation of Launceston will be informed about the Mission Work at Albany and in the vicinity of Armadale.

M o r n i n g   s e s s i o n   on Wednesday 20th May.

#### Article 20

##### RE-OPENING

Synod is re-opened. Psalm 75:1 is sung. The scripture reading is Ephesians 3:14-21, after which God's blessing is asked for.

#### Article 21

##### CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for the completion of the discussion of the Church visitation reports.

#### Article 22

##### SOUTH-AFRICA

After the closed session the report of the deputies for the correspondence with the foreign sister-Churches is coming up for discussion. Some additions and a correction is made.

First of all the correspondence with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika is discussed, also in view of the documents which are mentioned in the Agenda under 7e.

A committee is appointed to prepare a decision concerning South Africa. It will consist of br. J. Brouwer and the Rev. K. Brüning (see further Article 24 of these Acts).

Article 23

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned for the midday interval and committee-work.

A f t e r n o o n   s e s s i o n   o n   W e d n e s d a y   20th  
May.

Article 24

SOUTH-AFRICA

After the session is re-opened the committee mentioned in Article 23 reports.

Synod decides:

Having heard the report of the deputies ad hoc concerning the difficulties and schism in the sister-Church of Pretoria, South-Africa,

Synod decides, that the Australian Churches, in accordance with the rules for the correspondence, have to decide which of the two opposing Church Councils at Pretoria must be acknowledged as the legal Council of the local Church.

Synod is of the opinion that - during its sessions - it will be impossible to arrive at a right and definite judgment of the schism that has taken place in the Church of Pretoria, because some official documents, which are to be considered, were not received in time or are lacking;

and consequently decides to appoint a committee which has to report to the Churches and advise them regarding the conflict at Pretoria within six months.

Synod is also of the opinion that the Australian Churches will act wisely when they, should the case arise, would not issue any attestations or send them addressed to any of the Church groups in Pretoria, as long as it has not been made clear to the Churches in Australia which of the two Church Councils of Pretoria is to be acknowledged as the lawful one.

If necessary this report, which is to be sent to the Churches as indicated in the above mentioned decision, will be finally dealt with at the next Synod.

Article 25

THE NETHERLANDS

The section of the report of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches which concerns the Netherlands, is now discussed.

This discussion lasts until the evening interval. Synod is adjourned (see further Article 26 of these Acts).

E v e n i n g   s e s s i o n   o n   W e d n e s d a y   20th   M a y .

#### Article 26

##### THE NETHERLANDS

Synod is re-opened, after which the discussion mentioned in Article 25 of these Acts is continued.

Synod makes the following statement:

The Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, in its session of Wednesday 20th May, 1970, gratefully ascertains the fact that the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland can be continued because it has been proved - among other things from the course of things around the "Open Brief" - that the said Churches desire to remain faithful to the Reformed confession and Church Order;

and judges that, according to the ecclesiastical rule, no attestations can be accepted as legal but those that were issued by the Churches with which the Free Reformed Churches of Australia are officially corresponding; and further judges that, as long as the ecclesiastical proceedings cannot be considered as definitely completed, members of churches from outside the confederation who arrive here, having been supplied with an attestation from these churches, cannot be accepted but after a conversation on the Reformed doctrine and Church government, and their ecclesiastical position; on the ground that Synod ascertains that from the quarters of the churches outside the confederation sounds are heard that clearly deviate from the Reformed doctrine and Church government.

Synod further decides to insert the Rules for the correspondence with the foreign sister-Churches as an Appendix in these Acts (see Appendix 2).

#### Article 27

##### CANADA

The section of the report of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches that concerns Canada is discussed.

Synod decides, at the request of The Canadian Reformed Churches, to adopt the "Forms for Public Announcement regarding members who, not yet having made Profession of Faith, are living in disobedience" as accepted by these Churches, and to recommend them for use in our Churches (see Appendix 1).

Article 28

KOREA

A part of the report of the said deputies deals with the efforts to contact "The Presbyterian Church in Korea" and examine the possibility to enter into a relation of correspondence with this Church.

After the report was written a letter was received from the deputy appointed by the said Church. This is read and included in the discussion.

The discussion cannot be completed today (see further these Acts the Articles 33 and 35).

Article 29

ACTS AND PRESS REPORT

The Acts and the Press Report concerning the sessions held so far are adopted.

Article 30

ADJOURNMENT

Synod is adjourned after the singing of Psalm 105:6 and prayer in which br. A. Swarts leads.

M o r n i n g   s e s s i o n   o n   Thursday 21st May.

Article 31

RE-OPENING

Synod is reopened. Psalm 3 is read. Psalm 119 : 3 is sung, and God's blessing is asked.

Article 32

CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session to discuss the appeal

which is mentioned under 7c of the Agenda.

Article 33

KOREA

The discussion on the report of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches regarding "The Presbyterian Church in Korea" and the recently received letter is continued (see further the Articles 28 and 35 of these Acts).

Article 34

ADJOURNMENT

This discussion is interrupted by midday interval.

A f t e r n o o n   s e s s i o n on Thursday 21st May.

Article 35

CORRESPONDENCE WITH FOREIGN SISTER-CHURCHES

The discussion on the report of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches is continued.

Synod deems it desirable that the new deputies will inform the Churches from time to time.

Further, more regular and detailed information about the contacts with third parties which the foreign sister-Churches make and keep appears to be necessary. It occurs that these "third parties" have correspondence with other churches that are not recognized e.g. by our own Churches, which may cause all sorts of difficulties regarding attestations and suchlike.

Synod declares that it is desirable that foreign sister-Churches, when they enter into correspondence with other Churches, urge the latter to try - as a consequence of this new correspondence - to contact those sister-Churches in the world that are living in a relation of correspondence with the first mentioned Churches.

Synod decides to instruct the deputies to be appointed to continue the efforts to enter into a relation of correspondence with "The Presbyterian Church in Korea". These deputies are also instructed to be active in seeking to establish contact with Churches that are faithful to the Holy Scriptures and to examine whether we

can enter into correspondence with them also.  
Deputies are thanked and obtain their discharge.

#### Article 36

##### "PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCHES"

The discussion on the report of the Church of Armadale regarding contact with the "Presbyterian Reformed Churches" is continued (see Article 13 of these Acts). Synod takes notice of the letter of the "Presbytery of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches" in which we are advised that the Presbytery will discuss the letter of the Synod Albany 1968 in its meeting during the month of August of this year.

The deputy-Church to be re-appointed will be instructed to continue keeping contact with these Churches and inform our own Churches.

#### Article 37

##### MISSION WORK

The committee mentioned in Article 16 of these Acts reports. Synod continues the discussion on the reports of the Churches of Albany and Armadale regarding the Mission Work.

Synod is of the opinion that the Mission Work in Western Australia is to be continued, and that, for the benefit of this work, the appointment of a full-time missionary worker is necessary.

The Church of Armadale is deputized as a calling and appointing Church, in accordance with the "Agreement for Co-operation" and is invited to make proposals concerning further arrangements to the Churches, as indicated in the said Agreement.

Synod goes into closed session for some time.

After the session is made public again, information is given that in closed session the Church of Armadale was given advice concerning the conditions for an appointment. Synod decides to instruct the Church of Armadale to investigate the ecclesiastical position of such a missionary worker as soon as possible, and to report to the Churches.

Article 38

MISSION REPORTS, HOSTELS, ETCETERA.

A proposal of the Church of Armadale is adopted, which means that the Churches of Albany and Armadale will make further investigations regarding the establishing and maintaining of one or more foster-homes for State-Ward children, because this also is considered to be a real possibility to spread the Word of God.

Article 39

ADJOURNMENT

The session is adjourned for commission work and evening interval.

E v e n i n g   s e s s i o n   on Thursday 21st May.

Article 40

CHURCH BOOK IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The report of the deputies for a Church Book in the English language is discussed. Br. J. Van der Ros as a deputy takes part in the discussion.

Synod instructs the deputies to be re-appointed to request their Canadian colleagues to send them the "hymn-section" on approval before definite publication will take place. They will also be commissioned to contact the committee concerned appointed by The Canadian Reformed Churches and request them to send them the English version of the Church Order before this will be inserted in "Book of Praise".

The eventual moral obligation to contribute in the defrayal of the expected high expenses of the completion of our English Church Book is amply discussed. From the information received it is clear that the Canadian Churches have raised large sums of money, by which our Churches profit. The discussion results in the entitling of the deputies to be re-appointed to ask the Churches to hold a collection for this purpose. Deputies are thanked and obtain their discharge.

Article 41

TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Now the report of the deputies for the Training for the

Ministry of the Word comes up for discussion.

It appears to be desirable that a young man who prepares himself for the study of Theology makes himself conversant with the Dutch language, apart from the languages that are summed up in the report.

In connection with a sentence at the end of the said report regarding financial support to the theological training in Canada the question is discussed whether it would be good to establish a special fund to enable the Churches to support - according to Article 19 Church Order - those students from among us who are following a theological course in Canada or in The Netherlands. However, a proposal regarding this matter has to come from our Churches. In view of this the deputies to be re-appointed are instructed to contact the Church of Armadale about this matter.

These deputies shall also consider the question whether the time has come to make a choice between the two possibilities of theological training.

They will also investigate the possibility of obtaining an exemption from the admission-examination at Kampen to the benefit of students from our Churches.

#### Article 42

##### ADJOURNMENT

Psalm 138 : 1, 4 is sung. Br. F. J. Veldhuis leads in prayer. The president adjourns Synod.

M o r n i n g   s e s s i o n   o n Friday 22nd May.

#### Article 43

##### RE-OPENING

Synod is re-opened. Psalm 5 is read, Psalm 115:1 sung, after which God's blessing upon the work of this day is asked.

#### Article 44

##### CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session.

#### Article 45

##### ANNOUNCEMENT

It is announced that the committee which is mentioned in Article 17 of these Acts has reported partly in closed session since the matter which it had to prepare had some confidential aspects.

#### Article 46

##### BACHELORS OF DIVINITY

The Rev. J. D. Wielenga - who replaced the Rev. G. van Rongen - reports on behalf of the committee mentioned in Article 18 of these Acts (Agenda under 7a).

A draft for certain rules is discussed. The discussion is interrupted by midday interval.

A f t e r n o o n s e s s i o n on Friday 22nd May.

#### Article 47

##### BACHELORS OF DIVINITY

The discussion is continued.

The following rules for the eligibility for call in our Churches of Bachelors of Divinity are adopted:

I. Regarding Bachelors of Divinity who have been trained at the Theologische Hoogeschool at Kampen or the Theological College at Hamilton, Canada, it is ruled that they will be preparatorily examined by an ecclesiastical meeting of our Churches. If there is a real possibility that the candidate concerned will be called by one of our Churches this examination will have the standards and validity of the peremptoir exam. In this case the praeparatoir exam will also include the subjects of the peremptoir exam. The examination will be conducted by the examiners in a meeting in which two Churches are proportionally represented by at least four delegates, while the third Church Council, after having received a written report, has to give approval.

II. Regarding Bachelors of Divinity who have not studied at the Theological Colleges of our sister-Churches the following rules are adopted.

- a. the value of their theological education and scientific ability will be examined by the Senate of one of the colleges of the sister-Churches.
- b. The candidate shall contact the Council of the

Church of which he is a member, which Council informs the deputies-examiners, who make the necessary arrangements with the said Senate in Canada or The Netherlands for the examination.

- c. after the examiners have favourably reported the candidate is made eligible for call in our Churches in accordance with the above mentioned rules.

III. As for Bachelors of Divinity who have been made eligible for call by the foreign sister-Churches after their preparatory examination, it is ruled that they, if called by one of our Australian Churches, will as yet be peremptorely examined by our Churches in an ecclesiastical meeting.

#### Article 48

##### SYNOD TREASURY

The Church of Launceston reports that the books of the Treasurer of Synod have been audited and found in good order. A report from the Treasurer is tabled. His books are deposited for inspection. The Treasurer is thanked and obtains his discharge.

#### Article 49

##### PERCENTAGE FIGURES

The percentage figures for the apportionment of Synod costs between the Churches are determined as follows:

Albany:	25%
Armadale:	50%
Launceston:	25%

#### Article 50

##### ENGLISH VERSION OF THE BIBLE

The report regarding an English Version of the Bible cannot be discussed because it has not passed the Churches.

Synod decides to again appoint some deputies, who receive the same instruction as the deputies appointed by Synod 1968.

#### Article 51

##### DEPUTIES AD ARTICLES 49 AND 79 C.O.

There is nothing to be reported by the deputies ad Articles 49 and 79 Church Order.

#### Article 52

##### CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT

There is no report from the deputies for the correspondence with the Government. Again some deputies will be appointed who shall report to the Churches as soon as possible on the recognition of the Churches by the Government and the meaning thereof.

#### Article 53

##### INSTRUCTIONS

No instructions have been added by the Churches to the Credentials.

#### Article 54

##### APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTIES

The following deputies are appointed.

1. for keeping the archives of Synod: the Church of Armadale.
2. for supervising the archives of Synod: the Church of Albany.
3. Synod treasurer: br. J. Kroeze, 22 Pomona Road, Riverside, Tas., 7250; secundus: F. Streefland, 24 Harrow Street, Young Town, Tas., 7250.
4. Deputies ad Articles 49 and 79 C.O.: the Ministers of the Word, and the brs. J. Brouwer of Albany, A. Swarts of Armadale, and F.J.Veldhuis of Launceston.
5. Deputies for the correspondence with foreign sister-Churches: Rev. K. Brünning (president), br. H. Terpstra and br. J. Zuidema of Armadale.
6. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government: the president and clerk of each Church (president: Rev. G. van Rongen).
7. Deputies for an English Church Book: Rev. G. van Rongen, president; J. van der Ros of Launceston.
8. Deputies for an English Version of the Bible: the Ministers of the Word (president: Rev. J.D. Wielenga).
9. Deputies for the Training for the Ministry of the Word: Rev. K. Brünning (president), and the brs. M.

- Dijkstra and J. Eikelboom of Armadale.
10. Deputies-examiners: the Ministers of the Word (president: Rev. K. Brüning):  
as for the praeparatoir exam:
- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Old Testament:       | Rev. G. van Rongen |
| New Testament:       | Rev. J.D. Wielenga |
| Systematic Theology: | Rev. K. Brüning    |
| Draft sermon:        | Rev. G. van Rongen |
- as for the peremptoir exam: the same subjects and the same examiners, and further:
- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Ethics:             | Rev. K. Brüning    |
| Bible-knowledge:    | Rev. J.D. Wielenga |
| Church History:     | Rev. K. Brüning    |
| Church Policy:      | Rev. K. Brüning    |
| Symbolics:          | Rev. G. van Rongen |
| Practical Theology: | Rev. G. van Rongen |
11. For Church visitation: the Ministers of the Word; for each oral visitation the Church Council to which the deputy concerned belongs appoints one elder, who will be regarded as having been appointed by Synod.
12. for spiritual support to Church members in military service: the Church of Launceston.
13. for correspondence with the "Presbyterian Reformed Churches": the Church of Armadale.
14. as a calling and appointing Church for the Mission Work: the Church of Armadale.
15. Deputies re Article 24 of these Acts (South-Africa): Rev. J. D. Wielenga (president), and the brs. J. Brouwer and J. Plug of Albany.

All reports shall be sent to the Churches in multiple and in the English and Dutch languages at least three months prior to next Synod, unless it has been decided differently in the decisions or instructions concerned.

### Article 55

#### NEXT SYNOD

The Church of Armadale is appointed as the convening Church for the next Synod, which will be held at Armadale in May 1972, the LORD willing.

Article 56

ARTICLE 41 C.O.

There is no business concerning Article 41 C.O.

Article 57

PERSONAL BUSINESS

There is no personal business.

Article 58

PRESS REPORT

The Press Report will be offered to "Una Sancta" (English and Dutch), "Canadian Reformed Magazine" (ibid.), "Shield and Sword", Canada (ibid.), and "Nationaal Dagblad, Gereformeerd Gezinsblad" (Dutch).

Article 59

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DEPUTIES

The following instructions are given to the respective deputies:

S p i r i t u a l   s u p p o r t   t o   m e m b e r s  
i n   m i l i t a r y   s e r v i c e:

- a. to contact the Government in order that the Church members in military service, after their basic training, are placed close by one of our Churches;
- b. to report more frequently on the contacts which the Church of Launceston has with the military servicemen from the other congregations e.g. on "home visitations".

(Article 12 of these Acts).

"P r e s b y t e r i a n   R e f o r m e d   C h u r -  
c h e s": to continue keeping contact with these Churches and inform our own Churches (Article 36 of these Acts).

E n g l i s h   C h u r c h   B o o k:

- a. to continue and if possible complete the work as outlined in the Acts of Synod 1962 Article 40, paying particular attention to the danger of the Book of Songs assuming the character of a "Hymn-Book".
- b. to request the Canadian deputies to send them the "hymn-section" on approval before definite publication will take place.

- c. to contact the committee concerned appointed by The Canadian Reformed Churches and request them to send the English version of the Church Order before this will be inserted in "Book of Praise".
- d. to inform the Churches from time to time of the further development and meaning of the work which deputies are instructed to carry out.

Deputies have been entitled to ask the Churches to hold a collection for the defrayal of the expected high expenses of the completion of "Book of Praise". (Article 45 of Acts of Synod 1968, and Article 40 of these Acts).

#### T r a i n i n g   f o r   t h e   M i n i s t r y   o f t h e   W o r d :

- a. to examine whether an opportunity can be created for students to complete their studies after having followed the compulsory lectures abroad.
- b. to contact the Church of Armadale regarding the eventual proposing to establish a special fund to enable the Churches to support - according to Article 19 Church Order - those students from among us who are following a theological course in Canada or in The Netherlands.
- c. to consider the question whether the time has come to make a choice between the two possibilities of theological training.
- d. to investigate the possibility of obtaining an exemption from the admission-examination at Kampen.
- e. to investigate the question whether the training for the Ministry of the Word is going to take too much time.

(Article 46 Acts of Synod 1968, and Article 41 of these Acts).

#### M i s s i o n   W o r k : the Church of Armadale:

- a. to act as a calling and appointing Church for the Mission Work.
- b. to act as the address Church for the Mission Work of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
- c. to draft further arrangements regarding the calling of missionaries and the appointment of full-time missionary workers in accordance with the "Agreement of Co-operation".

- d. to investigate the ecclesiastical position of a full-time missionary worker as soon as possible, and to report to the Churches.
- e. to make further investigations regarding the establishing and maintaining of one or more foster-homes for State Ward children.

(Articles 29 and 52 Acts of Synod 1968; and Articles 37 and 38 of these Acts).

M i s s i o n   W o r k, the Church of Albany:

to make further investigations regarding the establishing and maintaining of one or more foster-homes for State Ward children.

(Article 38).

S y n o d   T r e a s u r e r:

- a. to table a written report at next Synod.
- b. to provide the Churches with an outline of receipts and expenditure as soon as possible.
- c. to have his books and documents audited by the Church of Launceston, which shall report to next Synod.

(Article 50 Acts of Synod 1968).

F o r e i g n   s i s t e r - C h u r c h e s:

- a. to bring to the attention of the Churches those items from the correspondence with the foreign sister-Churches which are of importance to the Churches of Australia.
- b. to forward two copies of the Acts of this Synod to the foreign sister-Churches.
- c. to inform the foreign sister-Churches of the place and time of the next Synod, and to send the preliminary agenda to them at least six weeks prior to the commencement of that Synod.
- d. to inform the sister-Churches in the Netherlands of the decision of Synod mentioned in Article 26 of these Acts:

"The Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, in its session of Wednesday 20th May, 1970, gratefully ascertains the fact that the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland can be continued because it has been proved - among other things from the course of things around the "Open Brief" - that the said Churches desire to re-

main faithful to the Reformed confession and Church Order;

and judges that, according to the ecclesiastical rules, no attestations can be accepted as legal but those that were issued by the Churches with which The Free Reformed Churches of Australia are officially corresponding;

and further judges that, as long as the ecclesiastical proceedings cannot be considered as definitely completed, members of churches from outside the confederation who arrive here, having been supplied with an attestation from these Churches, cannot be accepted but after a conversation on the Reformed doctrine and Church government, and their ecclesiastical position;

on the ground that Synod ascertains that from the quarters of the churches outside the confederation sounds are heard that clearly deviate from the Reformed doctrine and Church government."

- e. to inform the Canadian Reformed Churches of the decision of Synod to adopt the "Forms for Public Announcement regarding members who, not yet having made Profession of Faith, are living in disobedience" as accepted by these Churches, and to recommend them for use in our Churches.
- f. to continue the efforts to enter into a relation of correspondence with "The Presbyterian Church in Korea".
- g. to be active in seeking to establish contact with Churches that are faithful to the Holy Scriptures and to examine whether we can enter into correspondence with them also.
- h. to inform the foreign sister-Churches of the decision, mentioned in Article 35 of these Acts, "that it is desirable that foreign sister-Churches, when they enter into correspondence with other Churches, urge the latter to try - as a consequence of this new correspondence - to contact those sister-Churches in the world that are living in a relation of correspondence with the first mentioned Churches.
- i. to inform the Churches from time to time.

j. to report on their work to the Churches at least six weeks prior to the commencement of the next Synod, and also to that Synod.

(Article 42 Acts of Synod 1968, and Articles 26, 27, and 34 of these Acts).

G o v e r n m e n t:

to report to the Churches as soon as possible on the recognition of the Churches by the Government, and the meaning thereof.

(Article 52 of these Acts).

#### Article 60

##### ADJOURNMENT

The afternoon session is closed.

E v e n i n g   s e s s i o n   o n Friday 22nd May.

#### Article 61

##### RE-OPENING

Synod is re-opened with the singing of Psalm 33:1.

#### Article 62

##### ACTS AND PRESS REPORT

The acts of Synod and the Press Report are adopted.

#### Article 63

##### ARTICLE 43 C.O.

No discipline after Article 43 C.O. is required.

#### Article 64

##### FINAL ADDRESS PRESIDENT

The president delivers his final address. He thanks the other delegates, the convening and receiving Church of Launceston for the preparations and good care, in particular the ladies in charge.

But our thanksgiving has to be directed to the LORD also.

The Rev. Wielenga points to the "Closing Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies", which contains a thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Spirit. He has been present in our meeting. This can even be printed in our Church Book. For we can take the line that the Holy

Spirit has been in our midst since God has given us promises concerning that and makes them true.

We were confronted with some difficulties in our sister-Churches in The Netherlands and South-Africa. We have made decisions concerning them. Decisions were made concerning other matters also. What comfort it is that the Holy Spirit was in our midst! He has guided us when we were deliberating and settling things in accordance with His secret will, and so uses our work for the benefit of His own work in this country after His council. We only have to pray God to invalidate that which was harmful and wrong in our doings, and crown the good things with His blessing.

The said Closing Prayer mentions also "mutual peace and unity". Well, we have enjoyed these as a gift of the LORD. We know whereon this peace and unity have been based. We have recognized each other in the faithfulness to the LORD and to the confession of the Church. In this atmosphere we have discussed all sorts of subjects, also when we spoke about the reports of Church visitations that dealt with the fact that our Churches are standing in the midst of this world.

There was the matter of bilingualism. There are many young members in our Churches, we have a great number of "baptized members". The appeal of the world is very strong. The task of the overseers is very heavy. We are only weak and need the assistance of the LORD. This too may be asked of Him according to the said Closing Prayer.

The LORD is doing His work "by the service of men". But we quietly can put our trust in Him. He adds that which we are lacking. For it is Him Who gathers the Church! This is our peace also in the matter of our Mission Work. It goes on. However to a large extent we still have to find the way. But we can pray: Wilt Thou guide us!

It is a custom to try to typify a Synod at the end of it. What could we say about the Synod of Launceston? It is difficult to formulate this. Perhaps it can be said in this way: There are some Churches here that badly need to stay close to the Word of God. This sort of time may be the best one for our Churches. Later on we may thank the LORD for them.

Article 65

ADDRESS ASSESSOR

The assessor thanks the president for the good way in which he has presided over Synod.

Article 66

CLOSING

The "Closing Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies" is prayed. Psalm 121 of "Book of Praise" is sung. The president closes Synod.

NOTE: Synod could approve only the Dutch version of these Acts.  
The English version is an un-authorized translation for which only the undersigned is responsible.

(signed) G. van Rongen  
First Clerk.

APPENDIX I

(see articles 27 and 59 of these Acts)

FORMS FOR PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING MEMBERS WHO HAVING NOT YET MADE PROFESSION OF FAITH, ARE LIVING IN DISOBEDIENCE.

A. Public Admonition.

The consistory, having taken the advice of classis, has the sad duty of informing the congregation, that N, by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, in spite of continual earnest admonitions obstinately persists in the sin of .....

Unless he/she within ..... shows repentance and amendment of life, the consistory will be obliged to exclude this brother/sister from the communion of the Church because of his/her wilful disobedience to the covenant of God.

The congregation is exhorted to admonish this averse member with affection and pray the LORD for his/her conversion.

B. Excommunication.

The consistory had the sad duty of informing the congregation that N, by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, in spite of continual earnest admonitions, obstinately persisted in the sin of ....., and that the consistory would be obliged to exclude this brother/sister from the communion of the Church, unless he/she would show repentance and amendment of life.

The consistory must now inform the congregation that N, in spite of many earnest admonitions, obstinately denies the communion with Christ and His Church, which was signified and sealed unto him/her in Holy Baptism. Therefore, being obliged to proceed, we ministers and rulers of the Church of Christ at this place, being assembled in the Name and authority of Jesus Christ, our Lord, declare before you all that for the aforesaid reasons we hereby excommunicate from the Church of our Lord and that, as long as he/she persists obstinately and impenitently in his/her sins, he/she is excluded

from the fellowship of Christ and His spiritual blessings and benefits which God promises to and bestows upon His Church; and that he/she is therefore to be accounted by you as a gentile and publican, according to the command of Christ, Who says that whatsoever His Ministers shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Further we exhort you, beloved Christians, to keep no company with him/her to the end that he/she may be ashamed; yet count him/her not for an enemy, but at times admonish him/her as you would a brother/sister. In the meantime, take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (Hebrew 4:12). "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour thy father and thy mother - which is the first commandment with a promise - that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth. Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:1-4).

"Ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder" (1 Peter 5:5). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 John 2:15-17).

But since it is God Who works in us both to will and to work, for His good pleasure, let us call upon His holy Name with confession of our sins:

O righteous God, merciful Father, before thy high majesty we blame ourselves for our sins, and acknowledge that we have justly deserved the sorrow and pain caused us by this excommunication of this our late fellow-member; yea, if Thou shouldst enter into judgment with us, we all deserve to be excluded and banished from thy presence on account of our great transgression. But, O Lord, be gracious unto us for Christ's sake; forgive us our trespasses, for we heartily repent of them; and work in our hearts an ever increasing measure of sorrow

for them, that we, fearing thy judgment which thou bringest upon the stiff-necked, may endeavour to please Thee. Grant that we may avoid all pollution of the world and of those who are excluded from the communion of the Church, in order that we may not make ourselves partakers of their sins, and that he/she who is excommunicated may become ashamed of his/her sins.

And since Thou desirest not the death of the sinner, but that he may repent and live, and since the bosom of thy Church is always open for those who return, kindle Thou, therefore, in our hearts a godly zeal, that we, with good Christian admonitions and example, may seek to bring back this excommunicated person, together with all those who through unbelief and recklessness of life go astray. Add thy blessing to our admonitions, that we thereby may have reason to rejoice again in them for whom we must now mourn, and that thus thy holy Name may be praised, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors;  
And bring us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, for ever.  
Amen.

## APPENDIX II

### REGULATIONS FOR THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH FOREIGN SISTER CHURCHES.

- a. to take care for each other that the doctrine, church services, church government and discipline do not deviate from the reformed confession;
- b. to send each other the Agendum and decisions (Acts) of the General Synods and the receiving of subsequent delegates from these other churches as advisors;
- c. to consult each other previous to making any amendments or additions to confessional standards, church orders or liturgical forms;
- d. to accept each other's attestations and admitting each other's ministers of the Word to preach the Word and administer the sacraments, applying what was determined at the Synod of Dordrecht in 1893, in article 165, which was further detailed at the Synod of Groningen in 1927 in article 161 (which includes the closer definition made in Amsterdam in 1936, article 122, decision I, 4);
- e. to be responsible to each other concerning correspondence with third parties.

#### Dordrecht 1893, article 165

Preachers from Reformed Churches outside the Netherlands must hand over proof concerning their calling to the ministry, their confession and way of life. They must further submit themselves to a colloquium concerning doctrine and knowledge which demands the same degree of academic development as the preparatoir and the peremptoir examinations of those preachers accepted by the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. If, however, they had already been previously accepted by these churches, then there will only be an examination to determine whether they have remained unaltered in their doctrine.

#### Groningen 1927, article 161

considered

that of ministers and candidates for the ministry from

foreign churches with which the Reformed Churches of The Netherlands correspond, no lower standards than those of our own ministers and candidates should be required,

and decided to determine that

1. ministers and candidates of foreign churches with which our churches correspond may not conduct a church service in any one of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands without requesting and receiving express permission to do this, - in the following manner:

- a. church councils which desire a church service to be conducted by a minister who will stay in our country for only a few weeks, must prior to this, request advice from the deputies for the correspondence with foreign churches.
- b. those who will remain here for a longer period must turn to the classis under which they temporarily reside, which will make a decision after due examination;

2. the colloquium concerning doctrine and knowledge, mentioned in article 165 of the Acts of the Synod of Dordrecht 1893, shall be held by the classis, aided by the deputies of the Provincial Synod, according to art. XLIV of the Church Order, and it shall especially concern the knowledge of Reformed doctrine and church government; and

3. the churches can at all times give, to her members leaving for foreign churches, attestations which must be handed in to those churches which, in their confession and church government are closest to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. The receiving of attestations given by foreign churches is left to the discretion of the church councils which shall deal with them as they see fit.

Amsterdam 1936, article 122, Decision I, 4.

The Synod decides that

4. in connection with possible errors in foreign churches, the regulations of the General Synod of Groningen 1927 (Article 161 of the Acts) concerning the conducting of services by ministers and candidates from

foreign churches, must be strictly adhered to, and the classis which, according to article 161 sub I b of those Acts, receive such a request, must ask the advice of the deputies for the correspondence with foreign churches.

S Y N O P S I S

O F   T H E

A C T S       O F       S Y N O D S

1954   -   1970

# SYNOPSIS OF THE ACTS OF THE SYNODS 1954 - 1970

Subject	<u>1954</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1959</u>
Acts, more detailed -	-	-	-
Acts, publication -	60	65	-
Adoption	-	-	-
Advice re Art. 38 C.O.	28	33	2
Advice re Arts. 76,77,79 C.O.	30	33	23
Agenda	4	5	9
Appeal acc. to Art. 31 C.O.	-	30,52	-
Appointment deputies	41	19,58	47
Approbation calls	27	28	-
Archives of Synod	32	48	24
Austr.Council of Ref.Churches	-	-	-
Bachelors of Divinity	-	-	-
Baptized members discipline -	-	-	-
Bible, English version -	16	36	-
By-laws	48	7,50	20
Calls, approbation of	27	28	-
Canada	-	-	-
Chr.Geref.Kerken in Nederland	-	-	-
Church Book in English	17	38	36,report
Church Order	38,39	16,42	-
Church Order, English text	-	-	17, App.
Church visitation	29	30,54	38
Classes, establishing of	-	21	-
Confederation, establishing of	7	-	-
Confederation, foundation of -	8,38	-	-
Confederation, name of -	11,40	26	-
Correspondence foreign Churches	14	9,31,39,51	34,38
Correspondence Government	13	48	35
Decisions, booklets cont.text -	-	-	-
Deputies, appointment of -	41	19,58	47
Deputies, reports	-	-	-
Discipline, baptized members	-	-	-
Eligibility Bach.of Divinity	-	-	-
English Church Book	17	38	36,report
English Church service	-	-	45
English text Church Order	-	-	17, App.
English text Liturgical Writings -	-	-	19, App.
English text Three Forms of U.	17	38	36,39,report
English Version of the Bible	16	36	-

<u>1962</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1970</u>
-	-	14	-	9
44	-	14	-	-
-	8,39	38,70	34,38	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
6	6	8	5	7
-	-	-	-	-
35	59	70	52	54
20	-	33	-	-
21,22	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	15,66,App.III	-
-	-	-	-	10,18,46,47
-	36	65	-	27,59
24	18	50,70	40	50,59
-	11	-	-	-
20	-	33	-	-
-	-	11,46,64	-	27,59
-	32,35,43,62	18,64	-	-
8,40	50,58	34,46,70	45	40,59
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	40,59
35	11,12	27,29	24,39	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
30,36	25,43	11,18,64,70	14,33,41,42	21,24-28,35,59
-	-	24,70	48	52,59
-	-	30	-	-
35	59	70	52	54
-	-	68	-	54
-	36	65	-	27,59
-	-	-	-	10,18,46,47
8,40	50,58	34,46,70	45	40,59
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	40,59
-	-	-	-	-
8,40	-	-	-	-
24	18	50,70	40	50,59

Subject	<u>1954</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1959</u>
Forms for disc.baptized members	-	-	-
Forms for ordination missionaries-	-	-	-
Forms for subscription ministers	-	-	-
Forms, Three Forms of Unity	17	38	36,49,report
Foundation, Confederation Chu.	8,38	-	-
Hour of thanksgiving	-	20	-
Korea	-	-	-
Literature, translation Ref.-	-	-	39
Liturgical Writings	-	-	18
Liturg.Writings, Engl.text	-	-	19, App.
Liturgy	15	14,40	26
Marriages	-	-	-
Migration to New Zealand	-	-	-
Military service men	-	-	-
Mission Work	24	34	-
Missionaries, Ordination Forms	-	-	-
Name Confederation Churches	11,40	26	-
Netherlands, The -	-	-	8,14
October,last Sunday in -	-	-	-
Percentage figures	33	57	46
Presbyterian Reformed Churches	-	-	-
Reformed Churches of Australia	-	-	40,49,App.
Reformed Churches of New Zealand	-	-	-
Reports deputies	-	-	-
Scattered, work amongst the	20	22,25,41	11,28,37
South-Africa	-	-	-
Spiritual support military	-	-	-
Subscription Form Ministers	-	-	-
Synod Treasury	-	-	-
Thanksgiving, Hour of -	-	20	-
Translation of Ref.literature	-	-	39
Treasury Synod	-	-	-
Visitation, Church -	29	30,54	38

<u>1962</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1970</u>
-	36	65	-	40,59
-	15	-	-	-
-	-	5	-	-
8,40	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	19,64	41	28,35,59
-	-	-	-	-
-	15	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
13,19	53,57	51,56	23	-
18,37,44	25,49,62,	-	-	-
- App.I	- App.II	-	8,11,22	12,59
47	15,27,44,47	20,70	29	17,37,38,59
-	15	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	18,59	-	25,26,59
-	-	-	17	-
31	22	69	51	49
-	-	-	16,65,App.I	13,36,59
12,38,44,	26,48,App.I	39,46,58,59,	-	-
- App.II	25,49,62	18 App.	-	-
-	- App.II	68	-	54
18	-	40,44	25	-
-	-	7	-	21,24,54
-	-	-	8,11,22	12,59
-	-	5	-	-
-	-	15,28,70	30,50	48,59
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	15,28,70	30,50	48,59
35	11,12	27,29	24,39	16,21