

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Report of Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches

A1. General

Members

Synod appointed to this Deputyship the following brothers: Reverend C Bouwman, AMC Bruning, D Pot, and A van Leeuwen. Br PO Posthuma was designated as alternate. Upon receiving his appointment, br van Leeuwen indicated his inability to accept. Br Posthuma has consequently filled the vacancy.

Mandate

Synod 1994 gave to Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches mandates pertaining to the following churches:

- Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
- Canadian Reformed Churches
- Free Reformed Churches of South Africa
- Presbyterian Church in Korea

The specific mandates for each of these four churches are printed at the beginning of each sub-section below.

Declarations

Deputies issued declarations to overseas sister churches relating to the following ministers: Reverend A Veldman, Reverend C Kleyn.

Declarations were received concerning Reverend H Versteeg and Reverend SG Hur.

Work Done

Apart from the activities described in the various sub-sections, we mention that we sent two (2) copies of the *Acts of Synod Byford* to each of the sister churches, and one copy to each of the Theological Colleges in Hamilton and Kampen. We also sent to the sister churches a copy of the revised Church Order adopted by Synod Byford. Further, upon receipt of invitations to be present at the major assemblies of sister churches, letters of greeting were sent to the following:

- General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches, May 1995;
- General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, September 1994;
- General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, September 1995;
- General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, April 1996.

Letters of invitation to Synod Kelmscott were sent to the four sister churches for which we have responsibility.

Recommendation

- 1 Discharge deputies from their task.
- 2 Appoint new deputies to carry out relations with Sister Churches according to the adopted rules.

Deputies for Sister Church Relations:

Reverend C Bouwman

AMC Bruning

PO Posthuma

D Pot

A2. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

Mandate

Synod 1994 gave deputies the mandate to "continue sister relations with the RCN under the adopted rules" (Acts, Art 93).

Synod Ommen, 1993

The Acts of Synod Ommen 1993 did not arrive in Australia in time for the previous deputies to peruse these Acts and compile a report to Synod. Though the next Synod of the RCN is expected to be underway at the time our Synod begins, deputies take the opportunity yet to report on the decisions of the previous Synod. Some comments are included.

- 1 **Women's Voting Rights.** (Art 24; pg 37ff). Synod rescinded the decision of 1978 (and so of 1930) which had said that voting for office bearers in the congregation belonged not to the task and place of the female but only of the male. Instead Synod decided that communicant sisters of the congregation may no longer be denied participation in the election of office bearers in Christ's church. The grounds for this decision boil down to the conviction that Synod 1978 wrongly argued that the vote for office bearers involves an exercising of authority. Since no authority is bound up in the casting of a vote, the sisters of the congregation ought also to be allowed to express a judgment on the proposed brothers.

We note that no new grounds have been adduced by synod. Rather, the same texts as used in 1930 & 1978 are now used to prove another point of view. Further, since the spirit of the times encourages equality in rights for male and female, Synod expressly said that any argument for change needs to be based on Scripture (4a). Again, Synod stated clearly that since voting is not a form of government, granting women the right to vote may not be seen as the first step to opening the offices for women (pg 43).

Reverend Grossmann of the RCUS argued strongly against granting women the right to vote, specifically on the basis that an equal vote for man and woman takes away from the fact that man is the head of woman, and hence in both OT and NT represented by man (pg 46).

Your deputies note that in the decision as recorded in the Acts,¹ the Scripture references cited are all from the NT. We consider this to be a distinct weakness since any evaluation of the respective roles of man and woman, and hence too of the relation between man and woman, must begin with the words of God spoken at their creation in Gen 2. Though deputies are certainly not looking for work, it seems to us needful to communicate with Dutch deputies on this point.

- 2 **Needy Students of Theology.** The rules in force in Holland up till Synod Ommen stipulated that students for the ministry, if they accepted a call overseas within ten years of having finished their study, had to refund the monies loaned to them in proportion to the number of years they'd served in the Netherlands. This rule caused considerable concern and labour in the FRCA in the time that Reverend Koelewijn was with us. However, this rule has now been changed so that students who bind themselves (as ministers) to an overseas sister church can be freed of the obligation to refund the loans they'd received. In discussions between the student (and his new bond of churches) on the one hand and the Dutch deputies for needy students on

1 A translation of the decision into English is presented in Clarion, vol 42/22, November 5, 1993, pg 465f.

A2. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

the other about whether and how much needs to be refunded, the relative sizes of the two bonds of churches needs to be taken into account. Practically, this ought to mean that we in the FRCA need not fear a repeat of the problems we encountered in connection with Reverend Koelewijn.

- 3 **Remarriage of Divorced.** Deputies were appointed to study whether the churches were in fact carrying out the decisions made by previous Synods concerning the remarriage of divorced persons. Deputies were also mandated to consider whether further decisions had to be made by a Synod on the point, and if so which. In so doing deputies had to consider what Scripture said about divorce and remarriage.
- 4 **Salutation/Benediction by Non-ministers.** Synod ruled that the salutation and benediction may be pronounced unchanged (ie, using the words of Scripture), accompanied by the raising of hands, by non-ministers. The onus is now on the local church to decide whether or not the non-minister is to bless as the minister would.

It is to be noted that Canadian deputies received from their Synod the mandate to discuss this matter further with Dutch deputies, since it's feared that with this decision the distinction between the office of the minister and the office of the elder is blurred.

- 5 **Church Services for Handicapped.** It was decided separate official worship services may be held for those with a mental handicap, and that deviation from CO Art 65b and 67 are permitted for such services. If possible, these services should be additional to regular church services. Deputies were appointed to provide recommendations for the conducting of such special services, and to study further the demands of CO Art 65b.

Further, one church was appointed to call a minister who would in turn be mandated to labour specifically amongst the deaf members of the churches.

- 6 **Liturgical Developments.** A deputyship was formed to list considerations dealing with liturgical developments in the churches. Special attention is to be given to variation in or expansion of the order of worship and the number of liturgical forms. Deputies are also to investigate the desirability and feasibility of adding to the number of hymns.
- 7 **Theological Assistance.** Synod appointed deputies with the mandate to investigate the possibilities of establishing an institute to assist foreign churches in their church development, and foreign students in their further education in reformed theology.
- 8 **Promotion of Ecclesiastical Unity.** Synod decided to establish basic guidelines for discussions to assist in the process of coming to union with other churches within the country. These guidelines are as follows:

In the initial phase of contact, the churches are to investigate each other carefully, giving attention to areas of agreement as well as to areas of disagreement. Areas of agreement are to be gratefully noted, while areas of possible disagreement (of confessional and church political nature) are to be honestly and clearly discussed. The purpose of the discussion on the differences is to clear them away in a Scripturally and church politically responsible manner. It is also pastorally wise to highlight possible differences relating to ecclesiastical culture and history.

In the next stage, the dialoguing churches are to declare that they, on the basis of Scripture and confession, recognise each other locally as faithful churches of Jesus Christ, and therefore promise and bind each other to do all that is possible to reach ecclesiastical unity. To this end the dialoguing churches shall present proposals to their respective major assemblies, so that these in turn also do what is necessary to come to unity.

In the final stage, the churches, using an adopted program, are to seek and evaluate their closer acquaintance and fellowship.

9 **Foreign Churches: relations**

Sister relations were **continued** with the following churches:

Canadian Reformed Churches
Reformed Churches in the United States
Free Reformed Churches of Australia
Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
Gereja-gereja Reformasi di Indonesia
Free Reformed Churches of the Philippines
Presbyterian Church in Korea

Sister relations were **finalised** with the following churches:

Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland
Free Church of Scotland
Eglise Reformee Confessante au Zaire
La Iglesia Cristiana Fe Reformada in Venezuela

Sister relations were **pursued** with the following church:

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

With regards to this church, Synod decided that "a sister church relation with the PCEA must be sought and so contact with this church is to be continued."² Sister relations were not finalised with the PCEA at this Synod out of deference to the FRCA. Discussions with the FRCA were to be continued about the PCEA. To the Australian delegate present at Synod Ommen, the chairman said:

"Our deputies received the mandate to inform your churches extensively about the decisions our Synod took regarding the continued contact with the PCEA – churches with whom you also have contact. For that reason I will not now interact with the objections to our decisions mentioned in your address."³

Igreja Reformada Colonia Brasolandia te Unai

Contact was to be **continued** (and if possible intensified) with:

Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Reformed Churches of New Zealand
Presbyterian Association in England and the 'interim presbytery'
Ely Reformed Church of Cardiff
Union des Eglises Reformees Evangeliques Independantes de France
Greek Evangelical Church
Iglesias Reformadas de Espana
Iglesia Christiani Reformada (Madrid)

- 2 "Besluit 4: uit te spreken dat er naar gestreefd moet worden een zusterkerkrelatie aan te gaan met de Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia en met het oog hierop het contact met deze kerk voort te zetten."
- 3 *Acts* Ommen, pg 35: "onze deputaten hebben opdracht gekregen uw kerken ook uitvoerig te informeren over de besluiten die onze synode nam met betrekking tot de voortgang van onze contacten met de Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Kerken waarmee uw kerken ook in gesprek zijn. Op uw bezwaren tegen deze besluiten die u in uw toespraak geuit heb, ga ik dan ook nu niet in."

A2. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

Igreja Evangelica Reformada (Portugal)
Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika
African Evangelical Presbyterian Church of East Africa
Reformed Church of East Africa
Nongo u Kristu u Ken Sudan nen Tiv (Nigeria)
Gereja-gereja Masehi Musyafir
Reformed Church in Japan
Reformed Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)
Reformed Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
Evangelical Reformed Church in Singapore
Dutch Reformed Church in Sri Lanka
Reformed Presbyterian Church of India

Contact was to be established with

Igreja Presbyteriana do Brasil
Igreja Evangelica Reformada

- 10 **Foreign Churches: rules.** The Synod of Ommen decided to revise the rules for exercising sister church relations. The revised rules read as follows: *Having entered into a sister church relationship with a foreign church a few rules regarding this relationship shall apply. The goal of these rules shall be that as Reformed Churches we remain faithful to the Word of God, assisting, encouraging and stimulating each other mutually to bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in this world by word and deed.*

From the side of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, the following rules shall apply:

1. *The churches shall as much as possible assist each other in the maintenance, defence, and promotion of the Reformed Standards according to the Scriptures in doctrine, church polity, discipline and liturgy.*
 2. *The churches shall inform each other of the decisions taken by their broadest assemblies, if possible by sending each other their Acts (or Minutes) and otherwise, at least by sending the decisions relevant to the respective churches (if possible, in translation).*
 3. *The churches shall inform each other when entering into a sister church relationship with third parties.*
 4. *The churches shall accept one another's attestations or certificates of good standing, which also means admitting members of the respective churches to the sacraments upon presentation of that attestation or certificate.*
 5. *The churches shall in principle open their pulpits for each other's ministers in agreement with the rules adopted in the respective churches.*
- In exercising these relations, the churches shall strive to implement also the following:*
6. *When major changes or additions are being considered to the confessions, church government or liturgy, the sister churches shall be requested to take due notice in order that as much as consultation can take place as possible before a final decision is taken.*
 7. *The churches shall receive each other's delegates at their broadest assemblies and invite them to participate as advisers, as much as local regulations permit.*

A second decision relating to relations with foreign churches was the following:

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands state that in case a foreign church has its own rules for ecclesiastical relations, this fact does not necessarily preclude the entering into and entertaining of a sister church relationship, provided that there is no conflict between the rules of this foreign church and the rules of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

The major change in these rules (compared to the previous rules as adopted by Synod Leeuwarden 1990) relates to the formulation of Rule 1. For a compilation of the developments relating to this revised formulation, see Appendix 1 to this chapter of the report.

Ought the FRCA to follow the example of the RCN and the CanCR, reword our rules in conformity with their first rule, and so negate the sentiment expressed by Synod Armadale 1990? In consideration of this question, deputies find it enlightening that the Synod of Ommen did not stipulate any points that needed discussion with either the FCS or the PCEA. Is this a by-product of the weaker formulation of the rules? This conclusion is certainly not ruled out. It seems to us that the notion of "taking care for each other" goes hand in hand with addressing each other on points wherein a (seeming) departure from God's Word is noticed.

At this point we signal too a difference between the requirements the Dutch churches have in their relation with foreign churches and the guidelines adopted for use in the promotion of ecclesiastical unity with churches within the country. "Areas of possible difference (of confessional and church political nature)" with churches within the country "are to be honestly and clearly discussed" so that these differences might be cleared away "in a Scripturally and church politically responsible manner," and so the way be opened to recognition. With recognised churches overseas, however, we find no evidence of such discussion, even while the RCN indicate dissatisfaction with practices found in Presbyterian churches relating to Lord's Supper and pulpit exchange.

11 **Foreign Churches: ICRC.** The RCN decided to retain membership in the ICRC.

12 **Next Synod** is to be convened on 10 April 1996 by the church of Berkel en Rodenrijs.

Correspondence

In the middle of last year, Deputies responsible for contact with sister churches noted that response had been received from their Dutch counterparts only to the third of the three points mentioned in the address delivered at Synod Ommen on behalf of previous Australian deputies. (This address is printed on pg 98ff of the Acts of Synod 1994) Accordingly, a letter dd 20 July 1995 was sent to The Netherlands requesting interaction with the first two points of that address. It seemed to us that progress could best be made through discussion.

In a letter dd 20 September 1995, Dutch deputies respond to our letter. They note that they received no mandate to answer the address delivered to Synod Ommen. Their mandate was only to "inform in detail".⁴ As to the reasons for the Dutch decision to recognise the PCEA as a true church, deputies refer us to the material of various reports – material deputies had before a decision was made to address the Dutch Synod. Their response adds nothing new.

This same letter requested input from the FRCA on the deputies' plan to advise Synod Berkel en Rodenrijs to establish sister relations with the PCEA. Deputies responsible for sister churches brought this matter to the full Deputyship, which in turn delegated the matter to deputies responsible for Presbyterian Churches.

4 "uitvoerig te informeren"

A2. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

Synod Berkel en Rodenrijs 1996

Deputies received the Report of Dutch deputies for relations with Foreign Churches as prepared for Synod Berkel en Rodenrijs. We mention the following salient points from this report:

Deputies recommend that sister church relations with the FRCA be continued. Of interest is the absence of a recommendation that Synod mandate deputies to continue discussions with the FRCA about the PCEA and the RCNZ. This omission is the more noteworthy because a) deputies currently do have such an instruction, and b) concerning the Canadian Reformed Churches Dutch deputies advise Synod to involve the CanRC in any decision to establish relations with churches where the CanRC has congregations or mission work.

Concerning the PCEA deputies report that there has not been an intensive exchange of letters with the PCEA since Synod Ommen did not stipulate any points that required deputies' attention. Deputies record no proposal in their report because they want first to give deputies from the FRCA a chance to respond to their proposal. The supplementary report will contain more information re the PCEA.

Deputies recommend that contacts be continued with those churches concerning which a decision was made by Synod Ommen (see section 11 above), with the exception of the Greek Evangelical Church and Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika. Contacts with these churches ought to cease.

Mandates are sought to establish contact with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Manipur (India), the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan and the Iglesia Presbiteriana Independiente de Mexico.

Deputies themselves have, on the basis of initial investigations, judged the Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil to be a church of Jesus Christ, and so recommend to Synod to encourage further contact with the IPB.

No information is available in this report about what plans the deputies have regarding the RCNZ. The supplementary report will reveal more.

Recommendation

Decision:

- 1 to continue relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands according to the established rules;
- 2 to ascertain what progress there was in discussions about differences (beyond what is covered by Art 46 CO) with churches as the Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

Grounds:

- 1 the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order;
- 2 Dutch deputies have repeatedly assured us that the differences between themselves and Presbyterian sister churches will be discussed after recognition.

* * * * *

Appendix 1

Dutch Rules for Relations with Foreign Churches

Deputies appointed by Synod Albany 1987 received a mandate to interact with suggested rules for relations with churches abroad as presented by sister churches. These deputies received for discussion a communication from the deputies of the RCN(L) about rules for correspondence. The first rule suggested by the Dutch brethren

ren (DpBBK) was this: "1. The churches will pay heed to each other's doctrine, church government, discipline and liturgy;". Our deputies responded by expressing displeasure at the DpBBK proposal to change the current formulation of Rule 1. The "current formulation" was "to take care for each other that the doctrine, church services, church government and discipline do not deviate from the Reformed confession." Dutch deputies proposed to change this to: "the churches will pay heed to each other's doctrine, church government, discipline and liturgy." Our deputies felt that the proposed change did "not allow for a proper functioning of a sister-relation which may require the admonition of a church which begins to deviate from its Reformed doctrine and confessions" (see Acts 1990, Appendix F, pg 224ff).

In its consideration of Deputies' report, Synod Armadale 1990 said this:

"Deputies correctly expressed concern regarding the DpBBK proposal to change the current formulation of Rule 1. Even as brothers and sisters within a congregation are instructed to encourage and exhort one another, so also churches must encourage and exhort each other to remain faithful" (Acts, Art 90, Cons 3).

The Dutch Synod of Leeuwarden 1990 subsequently adopted a Rule 1 as follows:

"a. The churches shall see to each other that they do not depart from the Reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline and liturgy."

Our deputies, in their report to Synod Bedfordale 1992, comment on this point as follows:

"Deputies objected to the previous proposed set of rules because the requirement for churches to 'care for each other that there is no deviation from the Reformed faith etc' was omitted. This objection has now been addressed by the reinclusion of rule a."

Dutch deputies for relations with foreign churches proposed to Synod Ommen 1993 to alter Rule 1 more in line with the formulation "pay heed". Deputies offered the following argumentation:

"The Free Church of Scotland raised objections to the rules of the RCN(L) and the (previous) rules of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and established their own rules for 'fraternal relations' at their 1992 General Assembly. The objection of the FCS was specifically the first Rule of Leeuwarden. To mention first of all the watching against deviations from the doctrine suggests, according to these churches, an 'inquisitorial and judgmental attitude'. It is known to deputies that other presbyterian churches share these objections, even though they have made less of a problem out of it than the FCS does."⁵

Dutch deputies indicated to Synod that they had understanding for the objections of the FCS. They report that the RCN generate in other countries an impression of suspicion in their approaches to other churches, and then add that "this is not how sisters are to relate to each other." The current rule, they argued, has proven to be a hindrance in contact with other churches.

- 5 See *Acts Ommen, Bijlage XXIVb*, pg 651: "De Free Church of Scotland (FCS) heeft bezwaar gemaakt tegen de regels van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN(V)) en de (vroegere) regels van de CANCR, en heeft op haar General Assembly van 1992 eigen regels voor de 'fraternal relations' vastgesteld. De bezwaren van de FCS gaan met name tegen de eerste 'regel van Leeuwarden'. Het voorop stellen van het waken tegen afwijkingen van de leer suggereert volgens deze kerk een 'inquisitorial and judgmental attitude'. Het is deputaten bekend, dat andere presbyteriaanse kerken deze bezwaren delen, al hebben zij er minder een probleem van gemaakt dan de FCS doet."

A3. Canadian Reformed Churches

Synod Ommen accepted the argumentation of the deputies, and altered Rule 1 accordingly. The result is that the Dutch formulation is now essentially identical to the Canadian formulation. Of interest is the second ground mentioned by Synod:6 *"the positive formulation assist each other implies not only taking care for each other, but especially also the mutual responsibility."*7

A3. Canadian Reformed Churches

Mandate

Synod 1994 mandated Deputies to "continue sister relations with the CanRC under the adopted rules" (Acts, Article 79).

Synod Abbotsford 1995

Deputies received two copies of the Acts of Synod Abbotsford 1995, and offer the following digest of the decisions made at this Synod.

- 1 **Free Reformed Churches of Australia.** Synod decided "to continue the Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the Free Reformed Churches in Australia...in accordance with the adopted rules." Deputies were also instructed "to convey our appreciation for the support given by the Free Reformed Churches in Australia to our Theological College in Hamilton." Synod Abbotsford has asked deputies to solicit a response from the FRCA about the difference in our respective rules for sister relations, to wit, on the point of entering into third party relations.
- 2 **Nicene Creed.** A revised text of the Nicene Creed was adopted "provisionally", with the request that the churches "test" it.
- 3 **Bible Translation.** Synod decided to "recommend the NIV for use within the churches." At the same time, Synod decided "to leave it in the freedom of the churches if they feel compelled to use another translation." Further, this decision, together with the Report of the Committee on Bible Translation, would be sent to the sister churches in Australia.
- 4 **Promotion of Ecclesiastical Unity.** Because of the existence of various groups and/or churches who have left the Christian Reformed Church, Synod considered it warranted and right to appoint new deputies for the promotion of ecclesiastical unity. Their mandate relates to providing information about the Canadian Reformed Churches, giving advice to consistories in their local contacts, and exercising public relations.
- 5 **Theological College.** No changes were made to the staff teaching at the Theological College. Prof. Dr. NH Gootjes was appointed principle for the three year period beginning in Sept 1996. Synod recognised the need for expansion to the College facilities (specifically the library) and requested the Board of Governors to present a detailed and definite proposal to the next Synod.
- 6 **Contact with Churches Abroad: relations.**

6 The first ground is a reformulation of the quote cited above. The third ground is a reference to the Canadian precedent.

7 "de positieve formulering *elkaar bijstaan* impliceert niet alleen het *op elkaar toezien*, maar vooral ook de wederzijdse verantwoordelijkheid;"

Ecclesiastical Fellowship was maintained with the following churches:

Free Reformed Churches of Australia
Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerken in Suid-Afrika
Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
Free Church of Scotland
Presbyterian Church of Korea

Contact was continued with:

Reformed Church in the United States

Contact was requested by, and therefore exists with, the following:

Eglise Reformee du Quebec

Reformed Church in Zaire

Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly

- 7 **Contact with Churches Abroad: ICRC.** Synod decided to continue participation in the ICRC, and send two (specified) delegates to the 1997 meeting of the ICRC. Synod also agreed that the Australian proposal to amend Article III, sub 1 of the Constitution should not be supported.
- 8 **Orthodox Presbyterian Church.** Synod decided "to deny the requests for Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the OPC at this time" on the grounds that there is need to continue to discuss the differences in confession and church polity. Instead, Synod decided "to acknowledge with gratitude the commitment of the OPC to be faithful to the Scriptures and to defend the Reformed heritage." Synod also expressed the hope that "the protracted discussions between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the OPC can be concluded by the establishment of a relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship within the next three years so that, the Lord willing, it can be finalised by Synod 1998." Numerous appeals and communications were received by Synod on the decisions of previous Synods about the OPC as well as about the recommendations of Deputies to this Synod. Various of the appeals highlighted the perceived double standard displayed by Synod 1992 in its decision on the one hand to recognise the Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Korea (and so offer ecclesiastical fellowship) and on the other to decline a similar recognition and offer to the OPC. Synod's reply to appellants was that a) the practices in the OPC on the one hand and the FCS and PCK on the other are not identical, and b) appellants have not demonstrated that the practices in any of these churches is unscriptural.
- 9 **Next Synod** is to be convened in Fergus, in May 1998.

Letter from Canadian Deputies

We received a letter from Canadian deputies dated November 11, 1995. In part the letter reads as follows:

A4. Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

"...our Committee wishes in the first place to convey to you officially the appreciation of the Canadian Reformed Churches for the support that your churches give to the Theological College in Hamilton, Ontario. We are thankful that a considerable portion of our student body comes from your churches, that your churches remember this training in their prayers and that your members contribute to its support in a very tangible way through their offerings. May our combined efforts serve to send many more workers out into the harvest.

If there is anything that our churches can do to further promote the ties between Hamilton and Australia, we are sure that both the Board of Governors of the Theological College, as well as the Committee on Relations With Churches Abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches on behalf of General Synod, will be more than happy to receive your suggestions and proposals."

Visit?

Deputies considered whether it might be appropriate that a delegation be sent to the next Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches. The fact that we have so much in common with the CanRC – for example, the Theological College, the Book of Praise, the interest in a common Bible translation – plus the fact that there is so much travel between the two bonds of churches plead in favour of giving consideration to an official delegation to the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Recommendation

Decision:

- 1 To continue relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches according to the established rules.
- 2 To send a delegation to the next Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Grounds:

- 1 The Canadian Reformed Churches give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- 2 The degree of common interests we have with the Canadian Reformed Churches makes face to face contact desirable.

A4. Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

Mandate

Synod 1994 instructed deputies to "continue relations under the adopted rules" (Acts, Article 103).

Synod Johannesburg 1994

From the Acts of Synod Johannesburg 1994 we gleaned the following items of interest.

- 1 **Introduction.** The biennial Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa was held in Johannesburg from the 4th - 7th May 1994. The Dutch sister churches were represented by Prof J van Bruggen, who participated in synod in advisory capacity.
- 2 **Admission of two brothers to the ministry.** Synod admitted the brothers J Bosman and E Viljoen to serve as ministers of the Word in the FRCSA. Both brothers had left the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa because of their convictions, and joined the FRCSA. (On this point deputies had received information from deputies of the FRCSA and subsequently compiled

an extract for our membership and published it in *Una Sancta*. This extract forms Appendix 1 to this part of the report.)

- 3 **Contact with churches abroad.** Synod decided to relieve deputies of some of their workload. The deputies for contact with churches within South Africa were asked to take responsibility for contact with the Presbyterian and Reformed Church in Monte Vista and the Free Church of Southern Africa. Since both the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands formulated new rules for correspondence with churches abroad, Synod resolved to charge new deputies with the mandate to study these new rules.

The deputies appointed by Synod received the following mandate:

- 3.1 To continue sister church relations with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.
- 3.2 To continue fraternal relations with the Gereja-Geraja Reformasi di Indonesia and the Presbyterian Church of Korea.
- 3.3 To give assistance in organising the regional mission conference of ICRC churches in Africa, which is to be held in Cape Town in December 1995.
- 3.4 To study the new rules for correspondence adopted by the Canadian and Dutch sister churches.
- 3.5 To report on any hindrance there would be to establishing a sister church relation with the Presbyterian Church of Korea.
- 3.6 To continue the preliminary contacts with the Eglise Reformee Confesante au Zaire and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, aiming at a mutually meaningful form of contact.
- 3.7 To contact the IRCB in Unai, Brazil, to come to an agreement on the form any contact should take.
- 3.8 To study the findings of the committee for Theological Affirmation (ICRC 1993) and if necessary to exchange views with sister churches on the consequences of recognising other churches as 'true', with particular emphasis on the occurrence of another true church in one's own country.

- 4 **Contact with churches within South Africa.** The report of the deputies dealt largely with the contact exercised with the Gereformeerde Kerke in SA (the so-called Dopperkerk). Deputies advised that the discussions are to be continued on the matters that separate the FRCSA and the GKSA. It is of interest to note that deputies held many discussions with disquieted Dutch Reformed ministers and with the congregation at De Deur, which was ousted from the Dutch Reformed bond of churches. It was considered to be in the best interest of this congregation that they are given more time to orientate themselves and decide on their future action without too much interference.

New deputies received broad guidelines so that no pressure was brought to bear on the building of relations with other churches; deputies were asked to use their own discretion. Deputies are also given the 'authority' to invite some guests to attend Synod 1996.

- 5 **Theological training.** Deputies received a mandate to examine pre-requisites set by the FRCSA for ministers' theological training and the practical implementation thereof. Deputies were also instructed to give guidance to any person who wishes to study theology.
- 6 **Bible translation.** Deputies were given the mandate to identifying obvious mistakes in the New Afrikaans Bible translation and include attempts at improvement when feedback is offered to the Bible Society in South Africa.

A4. Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

- 7 **Next synod.** The next synod will, the Lord Willing, be convened in April/May 1996 by the Church at Cape Town.

Recommendations

Decision:

- 1 To continue relations with the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa according to the established rules.

Ground:

- 1 The Free Reformed Churches of South Africa give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.

* * * * *

Appendix 1

Exciting Developments in South Africa⁸

As Deputies for Sister Church Relations, we recently received a letter from our counterparts in South Africa informing us about some exciting developments in that country. Deputies considered it to be of interest for the Australian Churches to share some of that information via *Una Sancta*. In summary the letter advises us of the following.

The ecclesiastical scene in South Africa has, like in many other parts of the world, been under attack by the liberal theology which has gradually been penetrating the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. It has been the subject of much debate at the theological college of the University of Pretoria some years ago.

The authority of the Scriptures has been under constant attack and was eroded even further by liberal teachings and publications. In 1990 the National Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa resolved to permit women to the special offices in the church, not only as deacons, but also as elders and ministers. It stands to reason that some of the ministers had great difficulty in accepting these decisions and were greatly alarmed by these false doctrines and unholy practices infiltrating the churches.

These developments resulted in one minister, Reverend E Viljoen, as well as one theological student, Mr J Bosman, becoming members of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa during 1993. These two men received additional theological training at our University in Kampen in The Netherlands. Some time last year (1994) they both were installed as ministers of the Word in our sister churches in South Africa.

Another ex-minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, Reverend CF Heiberg, also went to Kampen earlier this year.

On Friday 26th May 1995 a special synod was convened to have a colloquium with Reverend Heiberg. Without reservation or hesitation this synod decided unanimously to admit Reverend Heiberg into the Federation by allowing him to serve as a minister of the Word in the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa.

Also present at synod was Mr Benno Zuiddam, another member of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Recently he had completed his theological training at the university in Bloemfontein. However, due to his opposing views on the issue of women in office, he was refused admission to the pulpits in the Dutch Reformed

⁸ This article originally appeared in the 19 August 1995 edition of *Una Sancta*.

Church. He, together with his wife, on Sunday 28th May 1995 expressed the wish to become members of the Free Reformed Church of South Africa.

On that same Sunday, another minister, Reverend P Nel, separated from the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. In Bethal, East Transvaal, he has instituted a new church on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity and the Church order Of Dordt. They have named themselves the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk (Free Reformed Church) of Bethal and have now officially applied to become part of the bond of churches in South Africa. This congregations presently consists of 26 members but more are expected to join shortly. These members are all people formerly belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church. Apparently some members of the Reformed Church (Dopperkerk) are now also considering joining the congregation of Reverend Nel. We can understand that the brotherhood in South Africa is overwhelmed and greatly encouraged by these developments. On the one hand it is sad that more and more churches deviate from the truth by replacing the rich Gospel of Grace with humanistic philosophies and practices. But on the other hand it is gratifying to note that not all are led astray, but that God also in time of great deformation gives reformation by using people as instruments in His hand, people who remain faithful to His Word and defend the truth at all cost.

Isn't it comforting to know that God will continue to gather, maintain and preserve for Himself a remnant which will remain faithful as the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ until He comes again on the clouds of heaven.

On behalf of the Deputies for Sister Church Relations,
D Pot

A5. Presbyterian Church in Korea - Koshin

Mandate

Synod 1994 instructed deputies (Article 104) to:

- 1 "continue sister relations under the adopted rules"
- 2 "continue efforts to improve the exchange of information between the churches"

The following report is divided into two segments, revolving around the two aspects mentioned above.

1. Work Done in carrying out Sister Relations

Deputies received invitations in 1994 and in 1995 to attend the annual General Assembly of the PCK. Both times, greetings were passed on to Synod by letter. Together with the written greetings of 1995 we requested Prof Dr SG Hur (who was in our midst for some six months with a travel attestation) to greet the brethren in Korea on our behalf when he attended the General Assembly, and express our desire for more information from the PCK.

Concerning the decisions of the 1995 General Assembly of the PCK, we received early in 1995 a "digest of the highlights of its decisions." Of the six decisions mentioned, the following are of interest:

- 1 To demand of the Bible Society a total revision of the current translation. If the demand was not properly accepted, the PCK would organise another Bible Society.
- 2 To organise a mission committee for special fields, ie, the handicapped, prison, hospital, gay quarters, etc.
- 3 To appeal to the Government to stop transacting any official affairs on Sundays (eg voting).

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- 4 To accept a proposal to allow the Pusan Presbytery to have provisionally a fraternal relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Japan, and further to study whether a closer relationship might be possible with this church. Advice would be sought from their sister church in Japan, the Reformed Church in Japan.

Given the brevity of the digest, and in light of the second aspect of our mandate, deputies resolved to send a letter to the PCK requesting a more meaningful relationship. Deputies also decided to meet with Reverend Dr SG Hur when he next comes to Australia in an effort to obtain more information. Further, deputies solicited the assistance of Professor Dr NH Gootjes in acquiring information about developments in the PCK. He, however, also received too little information to be of assistance.

No documentation has been received to date relating to the General Assembly of 1996.

2. Efforts to Improve Contact

Meeting

In an effort to fulfil the second part of our mandate, deputies met with Prof Dr SG Hur to consider ways of improving the contact between our churches so that we could mutually carry out the first rule for sister relations, as adopted by our 1978 Synod, and so be our brother's keeper. (For the record we included in Appendix 1 to this part of our report an overview of the frustrations expressed by previous Synods on the matter of contact with the PCK, and the resulting mandates given to deputies.) In the process of the discussions, Dr Hur also gave us more details on the PCK. We thought it might be advantages to include an account on this aspect of our meetings with Dr Hur as a second Appendix to this part of our report.

As to our rules for sister relations, Prof Dr Hur reminded us first of all that these rules had indeed been accepted by Korea. Further, he spelled out three aspects that we do well to bear in mind in our contacts with the PCK. In the first place, the PCK appoints new deputies for inter-church relations at each (annual) synod, and precedent dictates that appointments are normally restricted to those who have been delegated to the Synod. That in turn means that there isn't much continuity within the deputyship. It means further that there are very few English speaking brothers to choose from for the deputyship, a fact that hinders communication.

Beside these practical problems relating to continuity and language, Prof Dr Hur reminded us that the western way of "doing things" is different from the Asian. Western people approach issues and tasks in a very "business like" manner, while Asians do not. On a given issue troubling the churches, westerners expect and produce a detailed written report, but for Asians a short verbal report will do. It is not, then, that the Koreans are not as interested in us as we are in them; it is rather that they approach the task of being a brother's keeper with less rigidity than we do. They are content that our confessions, church order and liturgical forms are acceptable in the light of Scripture, and so trust that all is and continues to be OK (unless the contrary becomes apparent). They will pray for us (and others), but will not make a mountain of work out of looking after their ecclesiastical sisters. They are happy to hear from us (eg, our annual greeting to their Synod), but hearing from us is to the Korean mind sufficient.

A third aspect complicating the relation between ourselves and the PCK is, Prof Dr Hur indicated, the historical development of the PCK. While he found the first rule a very good one, especially in our liberal age, we had to be aware that many in the PCK do not understand this element of mutual supervision. In time past the PCK had close relations with the OPC (in America), but in practice this close relation was

loose in the sense that it did not involve mutual responsibility to look after each other. We need therefore to be patient with the Korean brothers as they grow into this idea of being their brother's keeper in our secular world.

Analysis

In the light of Prof Hur's words, it seems proper to rethink the repeated lament in the *Acts* about poor contact and the recurring mandate given to deputies to "continue efforts to improve the exchange of information". Two options come to mind. Either we change the existing rule to a lesser standard OR we maintain the rule on the understanding that language, culture and history conspire together to make it very difficult to carry out this rule to our satisfaction.

The first alternative is not an option, for FRCA synods have as recently as 1992 reiterated the need to maintain the norm of being our brother's keeper (see new rules adopted by Synod 1992, Article 95: "the churches shall mutually care for each other that they do not depart from the reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline and liturgy"). That leaves only the second option, be it that we bear in mind that this rule shall always remain difficult to execute with churches of different language, culture and/or history. With regards to the PCK, we ought not to relax striving to improve contact and exchange of information, but shall need to be content with less than we may expect from the sister churches in the Netherlands and Canada.

Recommendation

Decision:

- 1 To continue relations with the Presbyterian Church of Korea according to the established rules.
- 2 No longer to formulate decisions suggesting that the PCK is slack in maintaining contact or supplying information.
- 3 To encourage deputies to be diligent in staying abreast of developments in the PCK.

Grounds:

- 1 No evidence has arisen suggesting that the Presbyterian Church of Korea has departed from the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions or the Church Order.
- 2 The refrain in the *Acts* of our Synods about the level of contact with the PCK suggests a failure on the part of the PCK to live up to the agreed-upon rules, whereas in fact the failure (if failure there be) lies with ourselves in as much as we have not adequately taken into account the impact of language, culture and history in carrying out relations with other churches.

* * * * *

Appendix 1

History of Contact

Synod 1966 received a proposal from the church of Armadale "to appoint deputies which will have to inquire whether the Free Reformed Churches of Australia are called and able to recognise the Korean Presbyterian churches as foreign sister-churches and on this bases to enter into correspondence with them...." This proposal "is accepted in its entirety" (Article 19). This decision is repeated in instructions to deputies in Article 64.

Synod 1968 notes that deputies "have sent a letter to the Presbyterian church of South-Korea; however no reply has been received" (Article 41). Deputies are instructed "to examine whether the Free Reformed Churches of Australia have the duty

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and are able to recognise The Presbyterian Churches of Korea as a foreign sister-churches and on that ground to enter into correspondence with it" (Article 42).

Synod 1970 received a letter from a deputy from Korea (Article 28). Synod decided "to instruct the deputies...to continue the efforts to enter into a relation of correspondence with The Presbyterian Church in Korea" (Article 35; Article 59f).

Acts of Synod 1972 record no discussion re Presbyterian Church of Korea. An instruction is given to deputies to "continue the attempts to come to correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea" (Article 53).

Synod 1975 received "a letter, dated October 20, 1975, from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, in which they respond favourably to our previous attempts to seek correspondence" (Article 73). The following decision was made:

"Synod, observing that

1. a letter from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, dated October 20, 1975, responding to our previous requests for correspondence was received in gratitude;
2. the investigations into the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Acts 1968, Article 19) by deputies appointed in 1968 could not be finalised;
3. meanwhile, informal contacts with the Presbyterian Church of Korea have fruitfully developed;
4. the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland have decided (Amersfoort-West, 1967) to enter into full correspondence with these churches and that such correspondence has developed strongly;

decides,

1. to enter in principle into full correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Korea as sister churches;
2. to charge deputies for correspondence with foreign sister churches with the drafting of rules for such correspondence on the basis of rules applying for correspondence with the Dutch churches..." (Article 82).

Synod 1978 decided "to adopt the following rules for correspondence with The Presbyterian Church of Korea:

1. to take care for each other that the doctrine, church services, church government and discipline do not deviate from the reformed confession;
2. to send each other the Agendum and Decisions (Acts) of the General Synods and the receiving of subsequent delegates from these other churches as advisers;
3. to consult each other previous to making any amendments or additions to confessional standards, church orders or liturgical forms;
4. to accept each other's attestations and admitting each other's ministers of the Word to preach the Word and administer the sacraments...;
5. to be responsible to each other concerning correspondence with third parties.

It is further decided to instruct the deputies for Correspondence with foreign Churches:

1. to make sure that the Korean Presbyterian Church agrees with the rules for Correspondence as they were proposed and accepted by our Churches;
2. to do all that is possible to make the relationship between the Free Reformed Churches and Korean Presbyterian Church as effective as possible" (Article 38).

Synod 1980 received correspondence from the "Fraternal Relations Committee/Korean Presbyterian Church: with good wishes for our Synod and an invitation to attend the General Assembly convened in Seoul on 25 September 1980" (Article 30).

Synod 1982 mentions concerning the PCK only the decision "to continue correspondence with the Korean Presbyterian Church" (Article 70).

Synod 1985 decided "to continue the sister-Church relationship with the Korean Presbyterian Church, in accordance with the adopted Rules." The ground given for this decision is "Deputies' report contains no adverse aspects" (Article 74.4).

Synod 1987 decided "to express disappointment that the relations with the Presbyterian Church in Korea have been frustrated by a lack of information and by language barriers." This decision was based on the consideration that "the report of deputies is very scanty and shows that the relations with the Presbyterian Church in Korea have not been fruitful." Hence deputies were urged "to make every possible effort to make the relations with the Presbyterian Church in Korea fruitful so that we can adhere to the adopted rules for sister-church relations" (Act 52).

Synod 1990 instructed deputies to "intensify efforts to improve the exchange of information between our churches." This instruction was based on the consideration that "deputies' report is limited in scope and thus reflects the difficulty in maintaining the sister-relations" (Article 110).

Synod 1992 noted "an improvement in communication received from the PCK", on the grounds that "the PCK Fraternal Relations Committee provided a summary in English of some of the important discussions and decisions at this General Assembly." Meanwhile, deputies were instructed "to continue efforts to improve the exchange of information between the churches" (Article 43).

Synod 1994, again deciding to continue sister relations under the adopted rules, instructed deputies "to continue efforts to improve the exchange of information between the churches" (Article 104).

Appendix 2

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR SISTER CHURCHES IN KOREA⁹

Church Life In Korea

At the end of 1994 the number of churches in Korea totalled 1361 congregations. During the course of that year, 42 congregations were added to their federation. The Korean sister churches have a total of 154,000 communicant members served by 1360 ministers.

Presently 25% of Korea's population is Christian. During the 1970's the church growth, mainly as a result of evangelism, was enormous. This growth has slowed down considerably. Just in Seoul alone (population of approximately 10 million) there are more than 150 congregations varying in size from 50 to 1000 members.

As the Korean Churches are still relatively young, their Church life is also distinctly different from ours. Instead of singing psalms, hymns are sung in their church services. Almost all churches have a church choir which participates in the worship services.

The Role Of Women. Two thirds of the membership consists of women. Most children are coming to the church via the mothers. Hence, the women play a significant role in the church. Even though women cannot be elders in the church, the women have the right to vote for office-bearers. This has never been a point of discussion.

Female deaconesses are serving the churches to visit the sick; they are helping and encouraging one another but *not* in the capacity of office-bearers. The main reason

9 An altered edition of this appendix has appeared in the 2 March 1996 edition of *Una Sancta*.

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for their involvement as deaconesses is that in Korea there is generally and literally a lack of man power.

Seminary: Historical Development. The Theological Seminary was founded in 1946. In September of this year, the Lord willing, the Korean Churches look forward to commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of their seminary. In 1951, during the Korean War, a famous Christian doctor (a surgeon) fled North Korea, leaving wife and children behind and started to assist 'people in need of medical help' in South Korea. These humble beginnings gradually developed into a proper hospital which was financially supported by the churches. In 1955 a seminary and hospital were constructed on the same site. Both institutions continued to be under the supervision of the same Board of Trustees. In the year 1970 the actual College was instituted which included a 4 year pre-seminary course. In 1981 the Medical School was added to the College, and within a short period of time the College became a University. Presently there are 15 different faculties at the university: Education, Early Childhood, Music, Language Department for Mission, Medical, theology, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Food and Nutrition, Chemistry and Health. In the past the university with all its faculties had to give account to general synod. Small wonder that this situation caused some difficulties and brought about a lot of frustration for many of the parties involved. With the opening of the new Theological College, construction of which is about to commence, this situation is going to change as it will give the College a far greater level of independence.

Seminary: New Building. Presently a new seminary building is being erected in Seoul. The purchase price for the property alone was 4 million dollars! The building complex, which is to include lecture-rooms, an enormous library, study-rooms for the professors, dormitories for approximately 500 students living on campus as well as a large auditorium with a seating capacity of some 2000, is anticipated to cost around the 20 million dollar mark. The old seminary building will go to the Medical School which in turn will pay part of the cost for the new seminary building.

Spreading The Gospel. A few years ago there was room for optimism in regards to opening doors for bringing the Gospel into North Korea. Unfortunately this did not eventuate. Presently North Korea is a closed door for the Gospel. Recently the country was stricken by famine and the living conditions are atrocious. The people living in North Korea just don't know how the rest of the world lives. Some time ago 300,000 tonnes of rice was shipped from South to North Korea. However, since the North Korean Government did not want their people to know where the rice came from, they had it packed in blank packets. On the other hand, there is a good co-operation between Korea and China. In fact there are about 1 million Koreans living in China.

The Korean Churches have presently 55 missionary families together with 14 assistants working in foreign countries.

APPENDIX B

Report of Deputies for Relations with Other Churches (Reformed)

B1. General

Esteemed brothers,

- 1 Deputies hereby submit reports on the Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI), Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir (GGMM), the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, the Reformed Churches of Australia, the Reformed Churches of the Philippines and the Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore in accordance with our mandate given by Synod, Byford 1994.
- 2 We propose that the report on the Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore be not taken up in the Acts as it contains information of a sensitive nature.
- 3 Deputies have met 19 times plus attended 5 meetings of combined deputies. The reports as attached have been submitted to and passed by the full meeting of deputies. Some reports of our activities have been published in "Una Sancta".

With brotherly greetings,
Deputies:

Reverend W. Huizinga (convener)
J. Bosveld
J. van Dyk
J. L. van Burgel
9 March, 1996.

Abbreviations used in the reports:

ERCS - Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore
GGRI - Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (our sister churches - situated mainly on Sumba-Savu)
GGMM - Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir (Indonesian churches mainly situated in West Timor)
PRCA - Protestant Reformed Churches of America
RCA - Reformed Churches of Australia
RCNZ - Reformed Churches of New Zealand

B2. Indonesia

A. Yonson Dethan

- 1 Synod Byford, 1994 mandated deputies to continue to support the theological training undertaken by Yonson Dethan. (Art 102)
- 2 Yonson Dethan completed his studies at the Columbia International College obtaining a certificate of graduation in July, 1994. He obtained excellent results. Yonson subsequently commenced studies at the Hamilton Theological College. Deputies continued to provide financial support through Prof Faber, who provides regular reports on Yonson's progress including regular financial statements. In the meantime Yonson Dethan was accepted as a communicant member of the Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington South.

B2. Indonesia

- 3 During the year, Prof Faber recommended some extra financial support to assist Yonson in purchasing books for his library. We decided to allow an extra \$500 per year. Yonson has kept in contact with deputies, giving information about his activities.
- 4 After completing the first year of studies at College, deputies were advised by Prof Gootjes that Yonson made the 65% average needed for proceeding to the next course year. Prof Gootjes remarks:
"we were convinced that he worked very hard. Still it is not easy for him .. Yet we hope that he will continue to progress and that he can proceed without too much difficulty since he showed he could make it through the first year"

B. Support Reformed Churches in Indonesia

- 1 Synod Byford gave deputies the mandate "to coordinate the support offered to the Indonesian Churches by the way of visits, literature and other aids in order to build up the reformed character of the Reformed Churches in Indonesia".
- 2 Deputies supported the stay by a candidate minister of the GGMM, Remy Fanggidae, amongst the Free Reformed Churches. His travel and accommodation costs were met by private arrangement but deputies could coordinate his instruction and activities in our midst.
- 3 Deputies supported the visit by a candidate minister from the GGRI, Pila Njuka, who was able to visit the Free Reformed Churches from October, 1995 to January, 1996. He received English instruction from Br M. Zuidema and other instruction from Revs Huizinga, van Delden and van Rongen.
- 4 Financial support was provided to the GGMM to enable them reprint bibles and church books.
- 5 During the visits by Brs Bosveld and De Man, they were able to distribute financial assistance, provided by the Youth Clubs of the Perth Metro area to the churches of the GGRI.
- 6 Deputies have informed the GGRI of the forthcoming Synod of the FRCA and invited them to send delegates. Subsequently deputies offered financial support to Revs P. Hawu and M Radjah to visit Australia for three weeks during the time of Synod, Kelmscott, 1996.
- 7 The above support, including that for Yonson Dethan was provided from the "Fund for the Support for Indonesian Churches" in accordance with Synod's mandate to encourage the individual Free Reformed churches and their members to provide the financial support in order to carry out their mandate. Deputies have regularly reported to the churches on the status of the fund, including income received and disbursements. Deputies can thankfully report that it has received sufficient support to enable it to carry out its mandate.
- 8 The deputies of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands wrote in July, 1995 asking if there was a possibility within the FRCA to sponsor further students for study in Hamilton. They had in mind three possible students. The Dutch deputies also requested us to continue our programme to sponsor Indonesian students for three months theological orientation in Australia, since they understand our proximity and use of the English language is a distinct advantage over sponsoring these students to eg. visit the Netherlands. Deputies replied that the FRCA is fully committed in sponsoring Yonson Dethan but that visits of Indonesian students to Australia will continue to be encouraged and supported. The Dutch deputies have sponsored Edwar Dethan (Yonson's brother) for English training in Canada prior to him attending the Hamilton Theological College.

- 9 In view of the requests from the Dutch deputies, we need to consider whether the FRCA is willing to sponsor another student from the Indonesian churches to study at Hamilton after Yonson Dethan completes his studies, D.V. Sept 1998. If a suitable student is available, deputies will need a mandate from Synod to begin preparations early 1998 to support such a student.
- 10 Minutes of the Conference of Indonesian Churches held 3 -5 July 1995 was received. The conference was attended by delegates of the GGRI NTT, GGRI Irian Jaya, GGRI West Kalimantan, RCN, GGMM, ZGK and Litindo. The following material was discussed:
 - Women's voting rights. The conference had no objections that women may use their voting rights, except to be voted as elders or deacons.
 - Raising of hands for blessings by elders. Will be discussed next conference.
 - Church Book. It was decided to use the church book of the GGRI NTT as the church book throughout the GGRI in Indonesia.
 - Ecclesiastical Organisations. The GGRI is prepared to form a national organisation which will promote the Reformed way.
 - Ecclesiastical Songs. The conference dealt with development of a Psalm book for general and official services.
 - Possibility of a general Synod. The conference is of the opinion that each area must prepare themselves in the direction of having general Synods.
 - Marriage outside the GGRI. The problem of Christian youth marrying a non-Christian is discussed. The conference reminded parents and consistories of their obligations.
- 11 The next conference of GGRI churches is planned for July, 1999 in Irian Jaya.

C. Visits to the Indonesian Churches

Synod mandated deputies to visit the Indonesian Churches, preferably during the time of the next Synod of the GGRI.

- 1 Deputies delegated Br s J. Bosveld and C. de Man to visit the GGRI Synod at Tana-Rara during August, 1994. The report of delegates is attached as appendix A. This report has also been published in the "Una Sancta" for the benefit of the churches.
- 2 Deputies mandated delegates to visit the Synod of the GGMM and at the same time visit the GGRI churches. At the last minute the GGMM Synod was postponed for the second time. Since tickets had already been purchased and travel arrangements made, it eventuated that Br C. de Man visited the Indonesian Churches in September, 1995 whilst Br J. Bosveld delayed his departure. Br De Man reported:
 - He met with Revs Hawu, Doko and delegate Parawu.
 - Reverend Doko and Reverend Hawu will be responsible for the youth club money collected for the distribution of bibles and songbooks. A remark was made that there are plans to add more hymns to their psalm book.
 - The deputies mentioned that in future they want to decided who is going to visit Australia.
 - The hope is expressed that in future also one of the GGRI will be sponsored to study at the theological college in Hamilton, Canada.
 - Pila Njuka will translate a report regarding the Reformed Movement in Indonesia
 - Br de Man met with deputies GGMM. They accepted the money for bibles and songbooks. They advised Edwar Dethan was not able to visit Australia because of the vacancy in Bolok.

B2. Indonesia

- 3 Br J. Bosveld was then delegated to attend the postponed Synod of the GGMM in Dec, 1995. His report is attached as appendix C and also will be published in "Una Sancta"

D. Conclusions:

- 1 Deputies have been able to carry out their mandate to support Yonson Dethan and the Indonesian Churches. Yonson Dethan appears to be progressing satisfactorily although difficulties with language will continue to impede him. Visits by Indonesian candidate ministers have been successfully carried out, to the benefit of the students, and the churches in Indonesia. In this way also the relationship between the FRCA and the churches in Indonesia has been strengthened. Deputies plan to continue its program of inviting Indonesian candidate ministers to Australia for theological orientation.
- 2 The visits by delegates to both the GGRI and GGMM have not only strengthened ties but also enabled deputies to observe first hand the developments in the these churches. This is of particular significance in relation to the struggle currently underway in the GGMM.

E. Recommendations

Synod decide that:

- 1 The FRCA continue sister relations with the GGRI in accordance with the adopted rules.
- 2 Deputies have mandate to continue to support the theological training undertaken by Yonson Dethan.
- 3 Deputies make preparation for supporting a further student for study at Hamilton once the financial support for Yonson is completed.
- 4 Deputies coordinate the support offered to the Indonesian churches by way of sponsoring visits, provision of literature and other aids in order to build up the reformed character of the reformed churches in Indonesia.
- 5 Deputies continue to visit the Synods of the GGRI and the GGMM.
- 6 Deputies maintain the contacts with the GGMM to assist them in their desire to remain reformed and to report on progress towards an eventual recommendation to recognise the GGMM as sister churches.
- 7 Deputies look into the advantages and possibilities for delegates of the FRCA attending the conference of GGRI churches in Irian Jaya in July, 1999
- 8 Deputies encourage the individual Free Reformed Churches and their members to provide the financial support to enable deputies to carry out their mandate under 2,3 and 4.

Appendix A

Report on visit to Indonesia 1994

We visited Kupang on the Island of Timor from August 17 to 20, 1994 and attended the two day elders conference held by the Musyafir churches. This is a yearly conference where all the churches try to be represented.

The meeting was opened with Scripture reading, prayer and singing. The first item on the agenda allowed any elder to report on difficulties in their congregation, be it lack of finances or material for repair or building a church, or lack of literature or other problems that could arise in a congregation. This took most of the day. Br Bosveld was then invited to deliver a paper "The position of the elder in the church". Earlier, Reverend Fangidae had translated it and was able to give everyone a copy. A item strongly emphasised was that Paul in his letter to Timothy gave instruction how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the pillar of truth, and

that he says I do not allow a woman to have any authority over man. A discussion on this item took place, seeing that in some congregations there are women in office, but not with a teaching permission. They were fully in agreement with what was said, because God's Word teaches it.

Next afternoon we had a meeting with the deputies for churches abroad of the Musyafir churches. The meeting was opened in the usual Christian way. We briefly conveyed to them the progress of Yonson Dethan and then asked where we as churches in Australia could help to support reformed literature. We explained that the translation work is organised privately and is not a mandate given to deputies to organise.

We emphasised that any request for help must come through the deputies. There were some requests to assist in the provision of Bibles and church books which are very scarce on the Islands of Roti and Sabu. They stressed that we should only subsidise and let the people give something for it to appreciate what they get, for if it is for nothing people won't regard it as their own and will neglect looking after it. It was good to again strengthen the bond which we have at the moment. May we be able to help them in the reformed way of life.

We also visited the church at Baku Nase. Reverend Mada Bila had already left for the coming Synod in Sumba but his wife showed us the church where they were busy finishing the ceiling.

On Saturday we left for Sumba, and spent the afternoon and Sunday in Melolo, visited a few people, and attended both church services in Melolo. Both services were conducted by Rev Radja. The morning sermon was on John 4:14 and the afternoon on a Lord's Day. It was good to worship there and sing the psalms in the Indonesian language.

Monday we left for Tana Rara. On our way up there we visited Rev Doko at Wai-marangu where we also unloaded our luggage which we took along for the students of the theology school. A item of discussion was the split in the church in Wai-marangu. Late in the afternoon we arrived at Tana Rara and introduced ourselves to the other delegates.

Later in the morning Rev M.B.Radjah, chairman of the previous Synod, opened Synod with a sermon on 1 John 2:15 with the theme "Love not the world or the love of the Father will not be in you". All guests were warmly welcomed and were given the opportunity to address the Synod. We gave our greetings as follows:

Our churches consist of about 3000 members divided over 9 churches and we have six ministers. Our number is small, yet we desire to have contact with churches that are faithful to Gods Holy Word. We are grateful that we received a invitation to your Synod, and that the Lord God of all creation has made it possible that we can be in your midst, and that you allow us to address you.

We have acknowledged each other as sister churches for forty years but it is only the last few years that real contact has been established. Our Synod of the previous past have focused on international relationships, and with it there has been a growing realization within the Australian churches that Indonesia as our near neighbour gives us a great opportunity for close contact with Reformed brothers and sisters. That this contact has been able to take place has been helped by the fact that Bapak DeMan speaks your language. May this contact grow to a deeper understanding of each other.

We live in different countries, have different cultures. We read in Ps. 24:1 that the earth and the fullness of it is the Lord's. Ps.50 says: "The cattle is Mine, I know all the birds of the mountain says the Lord". Even if we possess greater wealth and have more possessions, yet we are only stewards, for the prophet Haggai says, "The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine says the Lord".

B2. Indonesia

What we do share together is the same Reformed faith and we must each in our own land seek to be faithful to the Almighty God and a true witness in the country where we live.

We could receive Reverend Doko at the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. He addressed us and brought your brotherly greetings to us. Now we as deputies from the Australian churches may bring the brotherly greetings to you from your sister churches in Australia. To bring greetings is very important for behind it is a bond which we have in Jesus Christ who bought us by His precious blood, and through this bond or should I say because of this bond we should be a help to each other. For we all have to fight the good fight of faith, which is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual host of wickedness in heavenly places. (Eph. 6:12)

Our mutual help is not in the first place financial but spiritual. That is also why our Synod instructed the deputies with the following mandate; To inform the churches (the bond of churches in Australia) of any assistance that can be given to the Indonesian churches in the way of visits, literature and other aids to build up the Reformed faith in Indonesia.

So brothers of the Synod if there is anything in which we can be of assistance you should let us know. You are aware that at the moment we support Yonson Dethan, a member of your sister churches the GGMM. We were able to receive Reverend Doko in our midst for 2 months and maybe we can continue such support or maybe there are other matters that you like to discuss with us.

Let us all, seeing the struggle which we have, put on the whole armour of God so that we can stand against the fiery darts of the evil one.

May the God of all peace dwell richly among you that also in your difficulty the bond of love may dwell, that you as churches may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head- Christ, that the whole body be knit together in the unity of faith. May God bless you.

Thank you.

Reverend T.Wendt from our sister churches in Holland then addressed Synod, followed by Reverend E.Fangidae of the Musyafir churches. The representative of Bupati, the local government, stressed that there is one God, one faith one country, and that the government is working to a unity amongst the many tribes. He expressed the hope that also this Synod would work to this aim. The deputy of the department of religion who officially opened the Synod in the name of the government, had the same message as the previous speaker urging the churches to work actively together under the umbrella of the churches for the unity, for that is the aim of the government. He further stressed that the aid from foreign churches should come to an end. Although this aid has been valuable to build schools etc., it has not really developed the churches to care for themselves.

After a break, the minister of the calling church called the meeting together again. All credentials are checked. There are fourteen delegates from the churches via the classis. Moderamen are chosen, and the delegates from the sister churches are invited to be advisers to Synod. The Synod is constituted by rising from their seats and saying the Apostle creed in unison and singing Ps 130:4.

One of the important items is the appeal of the Consistory of Lai- Handangu against the previous Synod and the tenth classis of Pantai. This classis considered that the church of Lai-Handangu had put it self outside the bond of churches because it did not accept the decision of the fourth Synod.

Other matters on the agenda are:

- 1 Relationship with the GGMM-Timor, F.R.C.Australia and the G.K.Netherlands.
- 2 Contact with churches of Korea, Canada, Zaire
- 3 National Synod of the G.G.R.I.

- 4 Upgrading of the theological school in Wai-Marangu to a higher level
- 5 Voting rights for women
- 6 Birth control
- 7 A register for the assets of the churches
- 8 Question of the baptism of children from parents who are withheld from the Lord's Supper.
- 9 Psalms and Hymns in the church services.
- 10 The repair of church buildings.
- 11 Pension distribution.
- 12 Receiving of the emiritus funds.
- 13 Female students at the collage
- 14 Pulpit exchange
- 15 View of the Adat
- 16 Discharge of the deputies and appointment of new deputies.

There were 28 items on the agenda but the above were the important ones. After three days of Synod with sessions starting as early as seven o'clock in the morning to the last session at eleven o'clock at night Synod was temporarily closed, because food and other provision were depleted, to be continued some time in November called together by the classis of Pantia. The sister churches were cordially invited to attend the continuation of the Synod.

In conclusion we see a great struggle in these churches against the principalities of this dark age, may we pray that these churches remain faithful until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the close of the Synod Br. DeMan expressed our thanks that we could be in their midst and that we had a good contact with the churches. He wished the Churches God's blessing and protection. May our prayer go up together before God's throne, Come, Lord Jesus, Maranatha. The chairman in reply expressed appreciation for our attendance requested that we pray for the Indonesian churches in their difficult situation. He gave greetings to the brotherhood in Australia and expressed the wish that our bond be strengthened in true faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Br. J Bosveld
Br. C. DeMan

Appendix B

Report on visit to the Synod of the GGMM held 13-12-95 to 17-12-95

This report is mainly on the events that happened on and around the Synod of the Musafir churches held in the Persaudaraan church in Kupang Timor.

Synod originally should have been held in July 1995, but was postponed to September. Br.C.DeMan and Br.J.Bosveld were delegated to attend the Synod, and were ready to go, at the last minute it was postponed again to December 1995.

The result was that Br. DeMan went in September and the undersigned in December to attend the Synod. The report of Br.DeMan is also attached.

Tuesday 13th December all delegates from out side Kupang were expected to be present, but did not eventuate, so the official opening happened on Wednesday in the afternoon. It was hot and humid in the middle of the rain season real tropical weather. There was a good attendance about 300 people, six young ladies were the welcome committee, who supplied every one with a sheet of songs and the delegates with the program of Synod.

B2. Indonesia

The prayer sermon was done by Reverend Yeh.Hede, we sang "The Church has one foundation". As text he chose 1 Kings 12:6,7 Rehoboam consulting the elders of his father Solomon, he brought it in connection with Col. 3: 15,16

The theme was, The peace of Christ, called together in one church, teaching and admonishing one another. Let us not be like Rehoboam who's pride led to the division of Israel. Ministers are not to lord over the congregations, but serve each other. He also commemorated that the Musafir churches existed for 45 years, financially we are very weak, but we have the great God of heaven and earth on our side. After the sermon we sang, "Stand up stand up for Jesus".

The agenda was read out. The representative of Kupangs parliament addressed the audience, he also is minister of the Word in the Musafir churches Reverend W.A.Bire, he spoke mainly about the name of the church, was against the suggestion of calling the name in a singular form, we must retain the name in the plural sense, churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. There seemed to be quite a tension on this issue, will it lead to a hierarchy in the churches, or will we maintain the decision of our previous Synod 1992.

A representative of the government than officially opened the Synod by addressing it, and pointing out that Synod should not only deal with internal matters, but also seek the best for the country of Indonesia, with a bang on the gong the Synod was opened. A discussion took place about checking the credentials, all of a sudden the Synod was adjourned till the morning.

Thursday morning roll call was made, there were 21 churches present, also 4 women were delegated. After one hour of debating finally a vote was cast, one round only, Reverend Bire had seven votes and was declared chairman, Reverend Hede had five votes and became vice chairman, and the brother with three votes became scribe.

No rising from the seats or any other form was shown to indicate allegiance to the confession. A letter of greetings from Holland was read, after which I was allowed to address Synod on behalf of the F.R.C.A. translated by Reverend Remy Fangidae, chairman responded with a thank you from the words of Australia, not all things are in order, but asked the Australian churches to remember them in their prayers, for there is a great struggle. Reverend Mada Bila addressed Synod on behalf of the G.G.R.I.

Various deputies reported on their activities, just to mention a few. Reverend P.Bengu Mission and evangelism, He mention there is a lot of short comings, Sunday schools not functioning properly. Theological training is not properly organised, he was concerned about the charismatic influence also in the Musafir churches. He urged every one to personally witness in their own surrounding, for that purpose it is good to have good instructions. We are allowed to broadcast every Monday morning it is taken care of by Reverend E.Fangidea, Reverend R.Fanggidae and Reverend Nuka.

Reverend E.Fangidea reported on churches abroad and his many trips abroad, he also emphasise that Reverend Knigge was in their midst on the churches invitation, it was by no means a private affair, and the churches should make use of it, because as churches we asked Holland to send someone.

After the deputies reports, The delegates from the churches reported on their well being, and came with their request, [A sort of church visitation I presume.] The evening was taken up by discussing the deputies reports,

A few times things really flared up, with accusations about mismanagement of money and the like, from the other side it was said that the accusations had a different back ground. There were peace keepers also amongst the audience with great authority. the result was that all deputies reports were dismissed, and that the churches were not served by deputyship. Apparently for month prior to Synod their had been a movement going on to change the whole structure of Synod, the oppor-

tunity was taken at this point to push their ideas. [Also a reason I was told that Synod was postponed a couple of times]

Friday morning. Synod was opened by a sister delegate.

The delegates to Synod were divided into three groups to discuss the different request from the churches, 60 in total. The main ones are as follows.:

To choose a permanent chairman for Synod

Do away with deputyship

A Synod secretary

Changing name of church

Sunday schools

Co-operation with other churches

Church order

Theological training

Unity of liturgy

The chairman warned every one to speak and address each other in a Christian manner, while groups gathered together things flared up, with a result that some left. In the afternoon reports were brought forward from the group discussions. It was concluded by the chairman that most were in favour of changing the name of the church, after a vote was taken the name of the GGMM was changed to GMMI, "Gereja Masefir Musafir Indonesia". So the change is from churches to church, which was the main issue because of this a lot of other items were a fore gone conclusion. Eight from the twenty one churches voted against, these are the churches whose ministers mainly studied in Wai-marang.

The result of it all is that from now on they have a permanent chairman of Synod, no more deputies but departments. A committee was formed to work it all out and report back in six month time. Half way through the evening the Synod was adjourned, all other items had really no significant any more. Saturday no Synod, and Sunday afternoon was the closing of the Synod.

Because it was close to Christmas they made a big festival from it. A band from Kupang was invited with a few pop singers, the church was decorated with a Christmas tree, and plenty of candles.

The representative of the government spoke some encouraging words and praised them for their decision about the name of the church and taking on board, as the government has, different departments. As delegates from over seas we were asked to light the candles, after this the Synod was closed with a bang on the gong.

Saturday because there was no Synod, all those that voted against all the changes came together at Reverend Knigge place, they also invited me to attend. The aim was to talk about the result of Synod decisions and in what situation the churches had arrived. The result was that they wanted to remain faithful to Scripture and confession and remain the church order. A letter was drafted to send to all the churches and to the government to state this fact. They will remain the GGMM while the other have changed. Of course also at stake is that with these changes all the property of the local churches now become the assets of the church, They move into a hierarchy system where Synod receives the authority over the congregations, ministers and office bearers, where Synod takes guard against false doctrine.

Recommendation

To keep in close contact with this small group of churches that want to remain faithful, and give them as much support as possible.

J Bosveld.

Appendix C

Address to Synod of the GGMM held on the 13-12-95 to 17-12-95 In the Persaudaraan church Kupang

Dear Brothers

As deputy of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia I may be here among you to have fellowship together and to strengthen the bond which has grown between us over the years.

This is the first time that I as deputy of our churches may be at your Synod. For that reason it is good to first of all introduce the churches where with you seek contact as we seek contact with you.

Our churches consist of nine congregations with a total membership of about 3100. We are not very big. We have sister church relationship with the churches here in Indonesia, Canada, Africa, Korea and Holland. We are also seeking other churches where with we can have contact, with the aim to come to acknowledge each other as sister churches, or let me say as churches of our Lord, our only Saviour Jesus Christ, as His bride, built upon the foundation of the twelve apostles. Their teaching of the church is the pillar of the truth.

We as churches thank you that we on two occasions could have Reverend Fangidae in our midst at our previous Synods. We are glad that we can, and are allowed to support Jonson Dethan, in order that he may receive further theological education in Canada. In the past year we were also able to have Remy Fanggidea in our midst for three months, and were able to give you support in distributing some literature. Maybe not much, yet through all this the bond, which we have together is strengthened. Our number is only small but as God's Word tells us in Hebrews 13:16, "but do not forget to do good and to share, for such sacrifices God is well pleased."

We see that we have grown closer together. However, every rose has also thorns and we experience that as well.

We have two different cultures which, at times may lead to a misunderstanding. But let that not hinder us to seek unity on a Scriptural basis. That will take time, however. Let us not act hastily. For Scripture says in Isaiah 28-16 "Therefore, thus says the Lord God. Behold I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. Whoever believes will not act hastily."

I would just like to ponder on this. Let us not act hastily. We are not in a position that we can fully understand you, or know your way of doing. To accept each other we must be convinced that we both build on that precious stone that God has laid in Zion. Brothers we do not know as yet. Let us continue our contact and learn more about each other.

We also wish to express our pleasure that you have adopted the Three Forms of Unity and the Canons of Dordt. We understand that you need time to let these decisions take effect in the churches. For example, we understand that it will take time for women as elders / deacons to be replaced with men.

We are also thankful that the Dutch churches sent Reverend Knigge to GGMM. He helps you to implement decisions to use the Tree Forms of Unity and the Canons of Dordt. Reverend Knigge, as well as Reverend Fangidae, have also helped us in many practical matters, for example, visas for theological students visiting us in Australia, and in giving us advice.

It is also our desire to work with the Dutch sister churches and Reverend Knigge in helping you, and also in deciding when the time is right to offer you sister church relationship.

Because sister church relationship is very important, to be able to accept each others attestations, each others ministers and to share together in the Lord's Supper, here

B3. Reformed Churches of New Zealand

we can really express the unity which we have towards each other, a unity which we have not yet reached. Let me give you an example. A young couple have fallen in love with each other. They have engaged themselves to each other. However, they must not have the unity which a married couple may express to each other. They must wait until they are married. Then they may show each other that they fully belong together.

We have the same in church life. We cannot yet show each other the full unity which is expressed in the Lord's Supper. For from many grains one bread is baked, and from many grapes one wine flows. So closely are we united together in the Lord's Supper. At this stage however we have not accepted each other in this way as yet. There are still many things that we have to discuss together. Whoever believes will not act hastily. I sincerely hope you understand why we cannot as yet talk about sister church relationship. That brothers, does not mean that we do not love each other, for we do, and we also like to express it by being here in the midst of you, and offer our help towards you.

On behalf of the churches in Australia I wish you God's blessing upon your Synod. May your decisions be to the glory of God's name and for the upbuilding of His church. May you find each other in true love and unity. Build each other up in the fear of the Lord, so that, when the Lord returns, He may find you at peace with each other, with out spot and blameless. [2Peter 3:14].

Thank you. J Bosveld.

B3. Reformed Churches of New Zealand

1. Background

- 1.1 Synod Launceston, 1985 decided "to instruct deputies to write to the RCNZ to point out to these churches that their sister church relationship with , for instance, the Reformed Churches of Australia, as well as their second level correspondence with the GKN (Synodical) are impediments to continue the existing contact. (Article 75)
The RCNZ Synod Mangere, 1986 decided to break the second level correspondence relationship with the GKN (syn) and to further explore the establishment of a meaningful relationship with the RCN (liberated). the same Synod decided to withdraw from the REC if the GKN (syn) as not expelled.
- 1.2 Synod Albany, 1987 noting these positive steps and noting the RCNZ's closer ties with the NRC, instructed deputies "to continue contact with the RCNZ and specifically draw their attention to relations with other churches with which we have broken all ties" Article 105.
- 1.3 Synod Armadale, 1990 continued the contact with the RCNZ encouraging it to break ties with overseas churches such as the RCA and the CRCNA.
Synod also mandated deputies to visit the RCNZ to clearly address these impediments (Article 53). Reverend Sawyer from the RCNZ was able to address Synod, Armadale on personal title.

2. Mandate

Synod Byford, 1994 received a comprehensive report from the FRCA observer to the RCNZ Synod, Bishopgate, 1992. Reverend Flinn from the RCNZ IRC attended Synod, Byford as an observer and addressed Synod. Synod decided:

- to continue contacts on the present level and work towards resolution of third parties so that the way may be opened towards sister relations

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- to investigate how the relation between the RCNZ and RCA should impact our relation with the RCNZ

3. RCNZ Synod Avondale, 1995

- 3.1 Deputies received an invitation to send an observer to the above Synod, and responded with a letter of greeting.
- 3.2 The Inter-church Relations Committee subsequently advised of the decision of Synod which impacted on the FRCA they included:
 - a decision to apply for membership in the ICRC
 - a decision to suspend ties with the CRC NA
 - specific decisions regarding the RCA (see later section)
- 3.3 Regarding the RCA, Reverend Flinn reported on his attendance at the RCA Synod, Canning, 1994. He expressed deep concern about developments in the RCA including their decisions on "Word and Spirit" and women in Office. Several overtures were received by the RCNZ Synod including two from churches requesting to modify the RCNZ relationship with the RCA. Synod did not go this far but did express the following:
 - To continue the sister relations with the RCA
 - To express regret that the joint meeting between our committees responsible for interchurch relations did not produce more effective liaison between our respective churches.
 - To continue to express grave concern to the RCA over the issue of women in office
 - To advise the RCA with deep regret and concern that our sister relationship is now under strain because their decision on Word and Spirit and because their acceptance of worship innovations which are a clear departure from traditional Reformed liturgy and practice and to publish this concern in "Trowel and Sword"
 - To advise the presbyteries in their colloquia docta to question thoroughly both ministers and candidates for ministry coming from the RCA: in the areas of Women in Office, Word and Spirit, and Reformed liturgy and practice
 - To send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCA
- 3.4 With regard to the FRCA Synod decided:
 - 1 To acknowledge that the FRCA are true churches of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2 To request the FRCA to make a similar formal acknowledgment with respect to the RCNZ
 - 3 Depending on the responses of the FRCA during the interSynodical period, and any further dialogue that may result, to express the desire to offer the FRCA a sister church relationship.
 - 4 To send one observer to the FRCA Synod of 1996

4. Observations

- 4.1 The RCNZ has moved significantly closer to us. It has shown a willingness to break with unfaithful churches and seek ties with faithful reformed churches. The FRCA over the years had expressed concern about relations with third parties, nominating specifically four federations: the GKN (syn), CRCNA, NRC and the RCA.
 - Relations with the GKN (syn) has been discontinued.
 - Formal relations with the CRCNA has now been suspended.
 - The IRC (Interchurch Church Relations Committee) recommended to Synod to also discontinue contact with the NRC (GKN - buiten verband) but this was defeated by Synod. The IRC had reported regarding the NRC on "the

near-independent nature of the Articles of Accord and the allowance of defective doctrine views..." Whilst Synod gave no reasons for rejecting the IRC recommendation, (there was a letter from the NRC disputing aspects of the IRC report) it seems the RCNZ is moving in the direction of breaking contact since the IRC report "our sister churches the CGKN also have the same difficulties (with the NRC).

- Relations with the RCA "is now under strain" - see section 3.3 above.

Whereas we would have wanted a stronger response from the RCNZ in regard to the divergencies which are evident in the RCA, agreeing with the overtures advocating suspension of sister relations, we must accept that the RCNZ has had a long relationship with the RCA and may feel it has a duty to continue to admonish its sister, allowing time for change.

Meanwhile the RCNZ decided to apply for membership in the ICRC, intending to use this body as a vehicle for its international contacts. Consequently it has ended its formal contacts with the FCS, PCEA and the GKN (Lib) deciding that future contact be within the framework of the ICRC. The decision regarding the GKN (lib) is not to be seen as a step backwards, on the contrary the IRC report regarding the GKN (Lib) was very positive, but the RCNZ saw little benefit in a relationship which is inhibited by distance and language.

5. Considerations

5.1 The RCNZ has formally recognised the FRCA as true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ and asked the FRCA to reciprocate.

Synod Launceston after deciding that the decisions of the previous Synod in declaring several church federations as true was done with "undue haste and without due consideration" decided that our declaration of another Church as being "true and faithful Church of the Lord Jesus Christ".

- I Means that both our churches, and that recognised church, stand on the foundations as expressed in Articles 27 to 32 in the Belgic Confession.
- II Has as direct consequence that a sister-church relationship can be established, without disregarding the fact that historical developments may well give cause to several stumbling blocks still lying on the road to a practical realisation of unity;
- III and that our church members must join that church, and vice versa, in the case that such a church is their nearest church, in accordance with article 28 of the Belgic Confession.

(Article 67, Synod Launceston, 1985)

5.2 Previous Synods have not expressed any reservations about recognition of the RCNZ other than their relations with third parties. Nevertheless it is good to state clearly that the three marks of a true church are present in the RCNZ (see section 7).

5.3 The FRCA at the Synod of Launceston 1985 has considered the declaration of churches as true and faithful church to be inextricably tied to the establishment of sister relations. It follows the teachings of Scripture and the confessions that the recognition of a church as true also involves our unity with them. This means that recognition of the RCNZ as true churches should go hand in hand with the offer of sister relations. However, here a problem enters. For FRCA Synods in the past have stated that the relationship of the RCNZ and the RCA is an impediment for us to enter official relations with the RCNZ. Specifically, their mutual sister relations with the Synodical GKN in the Netherlands and their ties with the same in the RES were impediments to us. Since that time both bonds of churches have totally broken all

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relations with the GKN-syn and the RCNZ has stopped its membership in the RES. However, the past influences from the Netherlands have not left the RCA. FRCA deputies in their report regarding the RCA noted that *"the decisions by the RCA Synod for example about 'Word and Spirit', about liturgical practices, about the REC, and about women in office alarm deputies and give legitimate concerns about the non-reformational, even un-reformed, and more general 'christian' approach taken by the RCA"*. Consequently deputies recommended that the FRCA not enter official contact with the RCA.

Deputies therefore hesitate to recommend the recognition of the RCNZ as true and faithful because sister relations should follow. Such sister relations would be problematic while the RCNZ maintains ties with the RCA even though it is 'under strain'. This would place the RCNZ in a position where it expresses unity - a oneness in faith - with two churches in Australia which are unable to take steps towards unity. The FRCA believes it is contrary to the Confessions regarding the Church to recognise two churches in one country, when those two churches are unable or unwilling to work towards unity. The FRCA opposes recognition in such cases and it should not encourage the RCNZ to do so either. That the RCNZ understands our position is evident from their IRC report to Synod Mangere, 1986 (See Synod Albany 1987, Reports p A21)

6. Doctrinal Standards

The RCNZ have adopted the Belgic and Westminster Confessions and the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort. Unlike the RCA which has adopted the Westminster Confession in as much it does not diverge from the Three Forms of Unity, the RCNZ has adopted the four confessions without reservations (except those amendments to the Westminster Confession regarding church and government adopted by the North American Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in the 19th century). It is believed to be the only Reformed/Presbyterian church to have adopted all four Confessions.

The Church Order reflects the Reformed Continental practice rather than the Presbyterian practice. Hierarchy or Synodacracy is avoided.

Art 35 specifies that:

"each assembly exercises, in keeping with its own character and domain, the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to the church by Christ; the authority of the sessions being original, that of the major assemblies being delegated."

Art 29 states:

"Assemblies may not compel compliance on the part of a minority in matters of conscience not clearly defined in the Word of God and the Forms of Unity."

7. Marks of the True Church

Reverend W. Huizinga who visited the RCNZ Synod Bishopsgate 1992, reported to Synod Byford 1994 on the marks of the church as he observed them. Further information can be gleaned from the report of a visit made to NZ by br and sr H. Olde from Dec 1987 to Jan 1988 and from published material by the RCNZ.

7.1 The pure preaching of the Gospel:

The report of our deputy who visited the RCNZ (reported to Synod Byford, 1994) states the following:

"The preaching which was heard on five occasions was sound, biblical and very applicable. there was a solid explanation and application of Scripture. Catechism preaching offered good biblical instruction and showed how the Reformed faith applies to all areas of life. The Four

forms of Unity, instead of being a show piece, are indeed operative, promoting and ensuring, by the oath of office, that the preaching is biblical"
Another deputy has read several printed sermons from a number made available. He reported favourably on their Reformed content.

Br and sr Olde in their written report to deputies dated March 1, 1988. He attended at least 7 worship services. With two exceptions they reported positively on the preaching "appreciated for its scriptural basis and content....encouraging and doctrinally correct....both sermons were sound Scripturally"

The two disappointing occasions concerned a minister (previously a missionary) loaned from the OPC. Br and sr Olde remark "He made little or no reference to Christ's redemptive work or the work of the Holy Spirit". With the other sermon they were "taken aback by the ecumenism and vague generalities"

Br and Sr Olde reported that often sermons from our Canadian Reformed ministers are read.

Written sermons from RCNZ are available for scrutiny.

That the RCNZ guard their pulpits is evident from Synod Avondale, 1995 which decided "that visiting ministers from the RCA must be questioned by the local session in regard to these issues (Women in Office, Word and Spirit and Reformed Liturgy and Practice) to ensure full confessional agreement before being allowed to preach in our pulpits".(Art 40 Synod Avondale, 1995)

7.2 The pure administration of the sacraments:

The last two RCNZ Synods were furnished with reports from study committees regarding guests at the Lord's Supper. the reports reflect the two traditions in the RCNZ - the continental reformed approach and the Presbyterian approach. Synod adopted the following guidelines to fence the Lords Supper Table:

- i. It is the responsibility of the session to identify guests in order to supervise properly the Lord's Supper.*
- ii It is the responsibility of the session to inform guests as to the requirements for participation in the Lord's Supper and as to the consequences of partaking in an unworthy manner (1 Cor 11:27-29)*
- iii. It is the responsibility of the session to ascertain the following before it grants permission to guests and visitors to participate in the Lord's Supper:*
 - a) that they are communicant members in good standing in their own church*
 - b) that they live upright and godly lives*

The 1992 report had recommended also that sessions ascertain:

"that their personal faith conviction is compatible with the Reformed Confessions for example : the Inerrancy and Sufficiency of Scripture, the Doctrines of Grace and Covenantal Baptism".

This latter requirement was not adopted and a further study committee appointed. This study committee relied heavily on the Westminster Confessions and Catechisms and concluded that "guests who make a credible confession of saving faith ought to be permitted to share the fellowship of the Lord's Table" and recommended that sessions be free to apply Scripture and Church Order according to its own regulations. This recommendation was not adopted, the previous guidelines reaffirmed and a new study committee appointed.

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Baptism is administered only to children of believers, including children legally adopted by the members of the congregation (Art 58 Church Order). Those who have not been baptised as children shall receive holy baptism upon profession of faith (Art 59, CO)

The form for the administration of baptism is taken from the Christian Reformed Church Psalter Hymnal (3rd Ed). It is similar to ours. The questions asked of the parents is identical to that of the FRCA except that the second question the FRCA has "summarised in the Confessions" whilst the RCNZ has "articles of the Christian faith "

Members of the RCNZ support Christian day schools at great cost, since there is no government assistance.

7.3 Faithful exercise of church discipline

The Church Order adopted by the RCNZ devotes a chapter to Christian Discipline (as does our C.O.). Articles 67 to 81 deal with discipline of church members, Articles 82 to 90 deal with discipline of Office Bearers and articles 91 to 96 deals with administrative discipline.

Article 67 gives the purpose of discipline as:

- a) to vindicate the honour of the Lord
- b) to maintain the purity of the Church
- c) to promote the welfare of the believer

Article 68 specifies that all members of the church are subject to Christian discipline respecting both doctrine and life.

Synod Avondale, 1995 has a report of a study committee into "Discipline of those who resign from the church". It gives an enlightening account of the practice of the various churches in the RCNZ regarding members who withdraw. It is evident that the RCNZ exercises discipline in a similar vein to our practice.

In the Report on the visit to RCNZ (October 1992) we read:

"Discipline is exercised, as was heard on more than one occasion. That some local churches do not accept resignations (to other churches) but continue with discipline, because leaving a faithful church is 'contrary to the ordinances of God' demonstrates their strong confessional stance. One might argue against the legitimacy of the continued discipline, but one applauds the doctrinal stance" (Acts of Synod Byford 1994 - Reports p 131)

8. Recommendations

Synod declare

- 1 That the FRCA express its gratitude for the principled approach the RCNZ has shown in dealing with third parties by its encouragement of and establishment of relations with faithful churches and its admonition and if necessary breaking of ties with unfaithful Reformed churches.
- 2 That though the three marks of a true church are present in the RCNZ, there is the stumbling block of their sister relationship with the RCA and therefore acknowledgment of the RCNZ as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ be postponed until it can coincide with the time when an offer of sister relations can be extended according to Article 67, Acts Synod Launceston 1985. This will occur when their relations with the RCA has been resolved.
- 3 That deputies be mandated to clearly explain to the RCNZ the reasons for recommendation 2, taking into account comments in paragraph 5.3 and the decision of Synod Launceston 1985 (Article 67).
- 4 Deputies attend the next Synod of the RCNZ if invited.
- 5 Delegates from the RCNZ be invited to attend the Synods of the FRCA as observers with the privileges mentioned in Acts 1992, Article 19, Rec 2b.

9. Source Material

Acts of Synod Avondale, 1995

Handbook of Rules and Regulations for the RCNZ

Office Bearers Handbook

Forms and Confessions of the RCNZ, 1994.

Report on visit to NZ by Br and sr H. Olde (dated 1 March, 1988)

Report on the visit to the RCNZ Sept 24 - Oct 5, 1992, p R124-R131 (Acts Synod Byford, 1994)

Address by Reverend Sawyer (Acts Synod, Armadale, 1990)

Address by Reverend Flinn (Acts Synod Byford, 1994)

B4. Free Reformed Churches in the Philippines

Synod Byford gave deputies the following mandate regarding the Free Reformed Churches in the Philippines:

Decision:

Synod decide to instruct the deputies to continue to gather information regarding the FRCP e.g. received via Acts of Synod of our sister churches or correspondence received, with the aim of seeing whether official contacts should be opened with them.

Grounds:

1. These churches have a sister relationship with our sister churches in the Netherlands, and are geographically close to us.

2. These churches are young in the Reformed faith and would undoubtedly benefit from the heritage of churches long standing in the Reformed faith.

3. Deputies find that having to translate material, pass it on to the churches and then wait and see if any church will bring it to the Synod is cumbersome.

4. It is a more orderly manner to mandate deputies to coordinate the relevant information.

Your deputies have been immersed by the work, especially with regard to the contacts and relations with the Indonesian churches. It has left little time to delve into this portion of our mandate. We are unable to present a completed report to Synod. Thus far some material has been translated (cf 1994 Acts, p.132); material from past Synods of our Dutch sister churches has been assembled; a letter has been sent to the Dutch deputies, asking them for up-to-date information on these churches with whom they have sister relations; and a letter has gone out to the FRC-Philippines. We would request that this part of our mandate be renewed for the newly appointed deputies.

Recommendation

- 1 To renew the previous mandate of deputies with regard the Free Reformed Churches of the Philippines.

GROUND: The deputies were unable to complete this part of their mandate.

B5. Reformed Churches of Australia

1. Mandate

The 1992 Synod gave deputies the following mandate:

To appoint new deputies with the mandate to observe what the next Synod of the RCA will do with the report which their deputies for dialogue with the FRCA will submit, and to report to the next Synod of the FRCA with their recommendations as to whether and how to proceed (Art.78, rec.3).

B5. Reformed Churches of Australia

In the considerations leading to this mandate reference is made to the dialogue which resulted in a common report being adopted by both the deputies of the FRCA & RCA. The translation of the Dutch, official material and the dialogue about it proved fruitful. The 1992 Synod thanked the deputies for their work done, and considered that their work was finished, for the Synod discharged them without issuing the mandate again (ibid, recs.1,2). This implies that the report of our deputies, including the agreed conclusions, was accepted. The real question in 1992 was what the Synod of the RCA would do; would it support the agreed conclusions, the stand taken by their deputies?

Consideration 5 sums up how the crucial matter of the sister-relation between the RCA and the GKN(syn) caused the problems. When the 1982 RCA Synod cut all ties with the GKN(syn) it was not owing to the reasons brought forward by our churches in the fifties and sixties, but rather because of the theological deviations in the GKN(syn). Thus there was still the outstanding matter of the wrong, sinful choice of sister-relations with the GKN(syn) in the early fifties. The dialogue focused on that problem.

In order to understand why those sister-relations were wrong one needed to understand and appreciate what the LORD did in the forties in the GKN. To see that the sister-relations were wrong and sinful would require an understanding and acceptance of the Liberation in 1944.

2. The 1994 RCA decision

Article 61 of the *ACTS* of the 1994 RCA Synod contains the decision on the "Dialogue with the Free Reformed Churches" and it reads as follows:

- 1 To express appreciation for the work of our deputies in dialogue with the FRCA, and for the FRCA's willingness to respond to the renewed effort at improving relations.
- 2 That whilst the way forward remains difficult as long as the FRCA continues to see the Liberation of 1944 as a key factor to possible unity, the RCA reaffirms its commitment to the unity that our Lord prayed for (John 17), and it iterates that this ought to be possible especially between the RCA & FRCA as churches sharing the Reformed Confessions. (*Rev S Bajema wished to have his negative vote recorded.*)
- 3 That Synod decides to express regret that the FRCA did not as yet see its way clear to send an official observer in response to our invitation.
- 4 That our need for today is for our two Churches, so close in the Reformation, to work for a joint proclamation of the gospel of reconciliation in Australia and the world on the basis of Scripture and Confessions; and therefore to express its desire for closer and further meaningful dialogue between our Churches.
- 5 To note that many of the observations and data contained in the CER Report concerning the FRCA are NOT derived from the formal dialogue held by the Deputies for Dialogue with the FRCA.
- 6 To adopt the following agreed statements on the understanding that this now closes the discussion concerning the events of 1942/22/44, and allows us to enter into further meaningful dialogue with the FRCA.
 1. *The Synodical/doctrinal pronouncements of 1942 binding all office bearers to the one point of view, as opposed to the two views of 1905, were ill conceived.*
 2. *The content of these bindings cannot be proved from Scripture and these went beyond Scripture and the Confessions.*

3. *That in suspending and deposing office bearers and the summary dismissal of appeals, Synod(s) acted in an hierarchical manner and thus violated the Reformed Church Order.*

4. *In setting its own agenda, as well as extending its life beyond what was allowed by the accepted rules, the Synod acted unlawfully.*

5. *Our (RCA) past Synods should have acted in a more consequential manner. While the RCA on principle did not take over the bindings, we entered into full sister-relations with the GKN(S) and sought a sister-relation with the GKN(L), fully aware that these two churches were not on speaking terms. Hence, there was an inherent conflict in the RCA decision to offer a sister-relation to both the GKN(S) and the GKN(L). Rules governing a sister-relation demanded that there be mutual heed that true doctrine is maintained and the Church Order is properly exercised. Yet, by its (GKN) un-church-orderly acts, considerable injustice had been done by the GKN(S), with the result that no less than 100,000 members left the GKN(S) on principle. Justice required that before we (the RCA) offered sister-relations to the GKN(S) we should have addressed the matter of the Liberation in a more judicial manner. We did not do this, with the result that serious obstacles to the way of union with the FRCA remained.*

6. *In the light of the historical data, we agreed that the Liberation was a legitimate step for those who chose that path.*

3. Comments on the RCA decisions (1- 6)

- 1 At first the RCA Synod dealt with a report of their Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) which mentioned the dialogue with the FRCA and reported on it too. It is important to note that this committee did not engage in the actual dialogue but only gave a report on what their deputies had reported. Rev S Bajema, the chairman of their deputies for dialogue with us, sincerely disapproved of this procedure. In his view, the report of their deputies should be dealt with, not the commentary of the CER! Thus his dissenting vote is recorded. Also, the general remarks of the CER would do nothing to solve the 'rift' and Rev S Bajema strenuously opposed it. Thus the fifth decision corrects this. Point 5 and 6 were actually decided later on in the Synod sessions though in the Acts they are printed together for convenience. They should be seen as a correction especially of Point 2 of the decision.
- 2 Point 3 about their regret that we did not send an official observer relates to the decision of our 1994 Synod (art.118, p.62 of the Acts). It should be pointed out that an official letter was sent to the RCA Synod informing them. We thought the letter was quite positive (a copy is enclosed). However, it remains true that the RCA Synod was very disappointed, seeing that our deputies were within easy distance. That many of our people unofficially attended did not take away their disappointment. Yet in spite of that disappointment they endorsed the agreed conclusions!
- 3 The RCA, according to Points 4 and 6, desires further meaningful dialogue. Seeing that the past has been healed, let there be room for official contact, they plead. How must this request be assessed? The dialogue must be 'meaningful'. Also, if we enter official contact with the RCA our aim should be clear in our minds. As far as ecclesiastical contacts go it is our consistent goal to work toward sister-relations or if the bond of churches is in our own land, towards church-union. That then should be the ultimate goal of any further contacts. Are we prepared for that? Our 1992 Synod has referred to the various 'negative influences' on the RCA in the past four to five decades.

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The 1992 Synod considered that when and if the past problems could be solved, that "there are more items that will need to be discussed before sister-relations and union can occur" (Consideration 7). The 1992 Synod therefore spoke of its willingness to work towards that goal when and if the past sins were acknowledged and removed. Since the 1994 Synod of the RCA has indeed endorsed the common report, one could thus expect a recommendation to enter official contacts with the RCA in order to address further issues of today. This matter will receive more attention later on.

- 4 The crucial decision comes in Point 6. This confirms that the whole agreed set of conclusions have been adopted. This is very heartening, and we might say, quite surprising.

4. Comments about the agreed conclusions (1-6)

- 1 The report of the CER is included in the Acts. It includes many responses from within the RCA to the report of their Deputies for Dialogue with the FRCA. Yet these responses were those of individuals and were not endorsed by Synod. In addition, the whole report of their deputies is included. Attached to the agreed conclusions were the comments of the RCA deputies. It is contained in Appendix D-1 (pp.347-352) of the Acts. However, while it is informative to read this commentary, the actual Synod decision does not include this commentary. The decision is solely what is printed above (the six agreed conclusions). In other words, the commentary has no official status and has not been adopted. It is thus best to limit our comments to the actual decision, except in two cases where their commentary should be mentioned.
- 2 It is important to note that the whole common report (the agreed conclusions) has been officially adopted by the 1994 RCA Synod without addition or deletion. What their deputies proposed has now been officially endorsed. One should recall that the 1992 implicitly accepted this common report and decided to wait and see what the 1994 RCA Synod would do with it. The wholesale adoption of the common report then should not need further commentary, since the 1992 Synod implicitly accepted it. Yet we offer some commentary.
- 3 Some may be disappointed that the actual conclusions do not say verbatim that the Liberation was a work of the Lord. However, if one reads all the statements made about the Liberation, how all the crucial points that led to the Liberation are covered and agreed to, then one can conclude that they see the Liberation as 'legitimate' and necessary. We refer to the following:
 - the doctrinal pronouncements binding one to one point of view only were ill-conceived; they were not from Scripture and Confession and went beyond them.
 - The suspensions and depositions from office and the summary dismissals of appeals by Synods were hierarchical and against the Church Order.
 - The setting of its own agenda, the extension of its life, etc were against the accepted rules and unlawful.
 - Entering into sister-relations with the GKN(S) involved an inherent conflict and was not church-orderly. The RCA did not act consequentially, exercising the rules for such sister-relations. Justice was not done.
 - The Liberation was legitimate.
- 4 One has to remember the salient point, i.e. that the RCA took sides, made the wrong choice, when they entered sister-relations with the GKN(S). That is the crux of the whole matter. The Liberation forms the background for this matter, and one needs to understand it, even to accept it, but it is not the

main issue. The choice of sister-churches is the main issue. The RCA deputies commented on this matter of the sister-relations with the GKN(S) accordingly:

"The first sentence of (the fifth agreed Statement) is of the essence. We regret that some within our churches have reacted to this statement (and the explanation) on the basis of their past experience of discussions with FRCA members, rather than actually studying what we have agreed to as deputies. The point that the FRCA made was NOT that we had sinned in, or participated in, the events of 1942/44. They fully recognise that some of their members have taken an a-historical position. The FRCA deputies fully recognise that a church which was commenced in the 1950's in Australia, cannot be corporately held accountable for the acts of a denomination from which a significant number of its founding members came. Rather, their point was that through offering a sister-relation to both the GKN(S) & GKN(L), while we knew full well that they were not on speaking terms with one another, we were pretending that nothing had happened..."

- 5 A comment on the term 'legitimate' in agreed Statement 6 is in order. Please recall that the term 'legitimate' was very important in the context of the ten-year church-struggle. It points to the term 'true (church)' in the Belgic Confession; 'true' also carries the idea of the lawful or legitimate church. That was the reason our deputies chose it. But the RCA deputies give a different commentary. We quote their commentary (please recall that it carries no weight and has no standing as part of the decision of Synod):

The FRCA Synods in the past have sought from the RCA an acknowledgment that the "liberation" was "an unmistakable act of God." We were thankful that the FRCA deputies saw that this wording was not acceptable to the RCA, and after much discussion, we were able to agree that there was a "legitimacy" to the liberation.

The reason we chose the "legitimacy" was the fact that those who on grounds of conscience could not sign the bindings, were by their very refusal automatically disqualifying themselves from their offices. Thus in a very real sense, they had only two choices: resign from their offices, or dishonestly sign the bindings. Their decision to leave the GKN under those circumstances was in our view, a legitimate step to take.

- 6 Some remarks are in order here. They point to the crisis of conscience for those who were 'legitimately' against the doctrinal pronouncements. They had no way out! As true as that may be, and we note this acknowledgment with thanks, yet the agreed Statement directs our attention elsewhere, i.e. it refers to **"the light of historical data"** we agree that the Liberation was a legitimate step for those who chose that path." This clearly refers to the history of the ten-year struggle about doctrinal bindings and Synodical hierarchy. **In the light of that historical data** the Liberation was a legitimate step. It was lawful, right in God's eyes, and met divine approval. If read in that context, the agreed Statement says much about the Liberation, namely, that it was legitimate in God's eyes. For brothers and sisters to liberate themselves was legitimate in the light of that history. Thus we were not totally happy with the remarks of their deputies on this important matter, although those remarks have no official standing and are not part of the actual decision. Those remarks do not do full justice to the situation. We are happy with the agreed statement itself, the agreed statement which belongs to the body of the actual decision.

B5. Reformed Churches of Australia

- 7 However, it would have been heartening to have this overall conclusion stated as such, that the Liberation was an act of God, for then there would be no question at all about the events in Australia in the 1950's, and again, *that* is the main issue. Yet one must remember a few important factors. A generation which is removed fifty years from the Liberation, which did not make those decisions, which was not involved, and which has little understanding of those years, has now in actual fact agreed to all the doctrinal and church-political matters which our fathers stood for. That is quite a statement for them to make; it is quite an achievement for us! One must also not forget that one can only fully appreciate a reformation, prizing it as God's work to set one free (cf. Psalm 124), if and when one experiences it oneself and reaps the benefits from it. Yet the RCA has not had that benefit. If the RCA would have had the sister relations and friendship of a faithful bond of churches, instead of that of the GKN-syn, then their history would have changed, and their outlook on the Liberation would have differed. Yet all that was not the case, and still they have acknowledged all the essential truths about the Liberation. That is also very important, for it makes them realise the wrongfulness of entering sister-relations with the GKN(syn) in the early fifties. Again, the understanding of the Liberation, its doctrinal and church-political controversies, was necessary to see our objection against those sister-relations.
- 8 As far as the Liberation is concerned, we should not stipulate that its recognition is essential for further contacts. Our Scriptural and confessional stance has always been to establish whether bonds of churches are reformed, and whether they have and practise the three marks of the true church. We have never been asked to approve the reformations in other bonds of churches, e.g. those in Scottish church history. We in turn should not require this of others either. If we did, then reformations would receive the 'status confessionis' (the status or rank of a confession). In this case the proper understanding of the Liberation was necessary in order to see the sinfulness of entering sister-relations with the GKN(syn). For those sister-relations meant they recognised the GKN(syn) as true church and approved what had happened in the GKN(syn). That is why past correspondence referred to this dual matter (the Liberation and sister-relations) so often.
- 9 There is another logistical problem which the deputies faced in assessing the decision of the RCA. The 1992 Synod in Consideration 7 states "when and if the RCA as a whole acknowledge that the Liberation is a work of the Lord..." Thus the Synod expected the RCA Synod to say this. Aside from the principle argument above, your deputies ask, "was that expectation realistic?" It is necessary to remember that while we might have liked to have more said (that the Liberation was a work of God), it was also impossible to expect more than what was in the common report. Allow us to explain. Our 1992 Synod received the common report. Both sets of deputies had finished the dialogue and completed their reports. So we could not expect a different report. Also, the new deputies received no new mandate to renew dialogue and to pursue certain points which the 1992 Synod put in its considerations. This makes it difficult to expect more than was in the original, common report. If the 1992 Synod wanted more than was in the report, they should have renewed the mandate of the deputies so that they could have pursued the matter. This was purposely not done. The mandate was finished and the deputies discharged! This logistical problem makes the deputies say, "the essentials have been covered, the RCA has acknowledged its errors in enter-

ing the sister-relations with the GKN(syn), and we must be thankful and satisfied with that.”

- 10 If the RCA has now indeed acknowledged its wrongs and neglect with respect to entering sister relations with the GKN-syn., what are the fruits of this word? For words and deeds must match. This is a legitimate question. To answer it one must go back to the original, twin demand which the FRCA made, i.e. that the RCA not skirt around the events of the Liberation but face them judicially, that is, make a judgment about their correctness or not. Once having done that, the RCA should cease their sister relations with the Synodical GKN. Historically speaking, acknowledgment that there was Synodical hierarchy and supra-Scriptural binding must be translated into deeds by undoing those sister relations. As far as the sister relations go, they have ceased since 1982. Thus it is impossible to expect anymore than that the RCA acknowledge that the Liberation was necessary and proper, a work from heaven and not from hell. This will make them realise that entering sister relations with a bond of churches that had acted falsely was wrong. They had not acted judicially, judging the correctness or wrongness of the events of the Liberation.
- 11 Having said the above, it might still be considered relevant to ask whether this agreed statement can be upheld. For does this statement indeed “heal the rift?” The RCA decided to “iterate that unity ought to be possible especially between the RCA & FRCA as churches sharing the Reformed Confessions” and “to work for a joint proclamation of the gospel of reconciliation in Australia and the world on the basis of Scripture and Confessions; and therefore to express its desire for closer and further meaningful dialogue between our Churches.” Seeing that the RCA sees its acceptance of the agreed statement in this light, is there evidence for this to materialise? In the view of your deputies there is no such evidence. On the contrary, the 1994 Synod took the RCA in a direction of being more broadly christian and less reformed. This makes your deputies reluctant to accept this agreed statement with a great deal of practical enthusiasm. Indeed, our next section makes clear that though we recommend to accept their statement, we do not at all recommend any steps toward unity or cooperation. Instead we recommend that Synod authorise deputies to send a letter of appeal in which our reluctance about their statement, our alarm about present trends in the RCA, and our view that their past sister relations with the GKN-syn has imported a liberal influence into the RCA, contributing to their present problems. However, the mandate of Synod was to clear up an historical problem from the past. As far as that is concerned, we recommend that the RCA’s statement be accepted.

5. Comments on if and how to proceed

- 1 The deputies received no mandate to investigate modern trends in the RCA. Deputies have no mandate to report on the direction of the RCA and on its decisions in 1994. This makes it very difficult for the deputies to come to a recommendation as to **“whether and how to proceed”** as our mandate says. In our view it is impossible to forget what is happening inside the RCA. If the 1994 Synod of the RCA had given a reformational direction, then their adoption of the agreed conclusions could have led us to recommend further contact. However, as it is, the decisions, for example, about “Word and Spirit”, about liturgical practices, about the REC, and about women in office alarm the deputies and give them legitimate concerns about the non-reformational, even unreformed, and more general, ‘christian’ approach taken by the

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RCA. The deputies also have kept up to date with the substantial unrest and debates within the RCA, especially in Western Australia. All this makes the deputies very concerned, and gives them little enthusiasm and confidence in their desire for more contact. We ask whether it will be 'meaningful' or frustrating?

Moreover, with whom would we have 'further dialogue' (their terms) or contact? Would it be with a committee from WA, a committee that would be divided among themselves? And would we not immediately become involved in their debates and divisions? Would it really be meaningful, as long as we wish to take a reformed direction and the RCA as a whole takes a more general, christian approach which erodes the reformed character of the church? Our conclusion is that it would not be meaningful but frustrating.

All this is confirmed by the 1995 Synod of the RCNZ (cf the summary of its decisions elsewhere) which declared that the decision of the RCA about "Word and Spirit" was in error, admonished the RCA to change, stated that the mutual sister relations were under strain, criticised the professors of the RTC, put restrictions in place for the acceptance of ministers and guests ministers from the RCA and even started investigating the establishing of their own seminary. It would be strange to see the RCNZ move closer to us and take a critical stand over against the RCA, while we moved closer to the RCA!?

- 2 Since the RCA has endorsed the agreed conclusions, we should however not just cut off the contacts, especially now that we have achieved a worthy goal. Their decision should rather cause us to pursue the matter at least one step further. To do this the deputies recommend that the 1996 Synod approve a mandate which authorises deputies to send a letter of appeal to the RCA, its sessions and Synod, stating our thankfulness for their decision but also explaining why we cannot fulfil their desire for further meaningful contact. The appeal should deal with current issues and decisions and explain why they alarm us and cause us to say that we are headed in two different directions. Under those circumstances we cannot expect meaningful contact. They must change their direction, desiring to be wholeheartedly reformed in confession and practice. This appeal should be sent to their 1997 Synod and to all their sessions.

6. Recommendations

- I To accept the decision of the 1994 RCA Synod that their sister-relations with the GKN(syn), seen in the historical light of the doctrinal and church-political controversies and the subsequent Liberation of 1944, were unjust and inconsequential and the express cause for lack of unity; and that this ends the discussion concerning the events of the fifties and sixties.

Grounds:

- 1 All the doctrinal and church-political matters leading to the Liberation have been acknowledged.
 - 2 They thus consider the Liberation 'legitimate'. This acknowledgment allows them to understand our objections against their sister-relations with the GKN(syn).
 - 3 They acknowledge their neglect of biblical justice and their inconsequential manner in dealing with the important matter of sister-relations, and that they placed 'serious obstacles in the way of union with the FRCA.'
- II Not to enter official contact (which has sister relations or union as its aim) with the RCA at this time.

B6. Relations with other Reformed Churches - Supplementary Report

Ground:

1 The current trends in the RCA, which have been in part imported by their past sister relations with the GKN-syn, give alarm, and show that they and we travel in a different direction (the decisions by the RCNZ confirm this). Further contact would thus not be meaningful but frustrating for both parties.

- III To authorise deputies to send a letter of appeal to the 1997 RCA Synod and to all their sessions, appealing to them to return to a distinctively reformed direction so that future contact may become possible and can be meaningful.

Grounds:

1 The gains made thus far should be used and not wasted.

2 Synod has not given a mandate thus far to address the current trends in the RCA. To write such a letter of appeal requires a mandate from Synod.

3 A letter of appeal, rather than official contacts which already mean we are working towards the goal of sister-relations or union, seems the best route at this stage.

B6. Relations with other Reformed Churches - Supplementary Report

To: The 1996 Synod of the FRCA
c/ Free Reformed Church of Kelmescott, Convening Church

Esteemed brothers,

Deputies hereby submit some items received since the issue of our last report. The items are included at this late stage for they supplement, or are relevant to, information already given in our main report.

- 1 Deputies received a letter from the Geneva Free Reformed Church in Auckland, New Zealand requesting contact with a view to possible future affiliation. This church was previously part of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and they have supplied extensive documentation on the circumstances leading to their break with the RCNZ. Deputies could not consider the matter at this late stage and recommends to Synod to give a mandate to future deputies to study the request. A copy of the letter is enclosed. The accompanying material is available from deputies.
- 2 In the previous report, deputies had advised that it had invited Revs P. Hawu and M. Radjah to attend our Synod as delegates of our sister churches the Gereja Gereja Reformasi Indonesia. These two brothers have now arrived for a three week stay and will present their credentials to Synod. According to Synod Bedfordale 1992 Acts article 19 (2a) delegates from visiting sister churches will be given the privilege of addressing Synod and sitting as advisory members of Synod.
- 3 Regarding the Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir (GGMM) federation of churches in Indonesia, deputies have provided a report from Br Bosveld who attended the Synod of these churches where a division took place. Another Synod of the faithful remaining churches was held in April this year, and deputies considered it important that a representative from the FRCA be delegated to attend. Br J. Bosveld, accompanied by Br W. Buist attended as delegates of the FRCA and their report is attached.
- 4 Deputies advised earlier that the Synod of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand decided to send a representative to the FRCA Synod. We have

B6. Relations with other Reformed Churches - Supplementary Report

been informed Reverend B. Hoyt is delegated as observer to Synod. According to Synod Bedfordale 1992, Acts Article 19 (2c) deputies have advised Reverend Hoyt of the privileges afforded to representatives of churches with which we have contact. ie. "the privilege to address Synod to pass on greetings and relevant information about our contacts".

- 5 We can also advise that Reverend E. Fangidaa representing the Gereja Masehi Musyafir (GGMM) will also attend Synod as a visitor. Under the same provision of Synod Bedfordale Article 19 (2c), it is expected he will be given the privilege to address Synod at an opportune time.

With brotherly greetings,

Reverend W. Huizinga (convener)
J.L. van Burgel (secretary)

June 10, 1996

Appendix A

Some Impressions of the GGMM Synod

Held on 12-13 April 1996 in Tarus - about 15 km from Kupang

Due to a lost passport we were a day later in Timor than expected, and consequently missed the Friday afternoon opening of the Synod. Arriving in Kupang at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, after a quick refreshment, we went by taxi to Tarus, but to our dismay Synod was adjourned for the day. Most of the delegates were still there so we could acquaint ourselves with them while having a cup of coffee. We learned that Synod should have started 9 o'clock in the morning, but because of security reasons and place, it was rescheduled from a hall to the church in Tarus. With security guards and police in place to avoid any disturbance from groups or gangs, the Synod was opened at 1 o'clock.

Reverend Remy Fangidea opened the Synod with a sermon. After this the moderamen was chosen. Reverend E. Fangidea was chosen as chairman and Elder Monie as secretary. Synod consisted of nine churches that disagree with the last held Synod in December 1995. Two of them are without a regular consistory at the moment. About 25 delegates were present. The rest of the afternoon was spent on discussing the relationship with the GGRI. Hopefully they will work towards a greater and more practical relationship.

Saturday morning Reverend E. Fangidea opened the Synod with a word of welcome and read from Scripture Psalms 73. After this he led in prayer. A special welcome to the two brothers of the Australian churches was heartily extended, brothers Buist and Bosveld, after which br Bosveld was given the opportunity to bring the greetings from the Australian churches. The chairman responded that it is with great appreciation that we receive the Australian deputies, it strengthens the bond, it encourages us, and has a good foundation to ask the Australian churches to acknowledge us as sister churches, which will be discussed in the morning session.

From the Dutch churches was received, through a phone call via Reverend King, Christian greetings and God's blessing upon their Synods.

After this, Synod discussed the relationship with the Australian churches. They feel very happy and affected toward the Australian churches, for the help the Australian

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churches have given in the past, in supporting Jonson Dethan, in literature and providing money for Bibles and some books, and the many contacts they have had. Maybe they can keep receiving this support. A suggestion was made to help a church in Roti for a place of worship, maybe they can get some more support for students. The conclusion was that the most important thing is first of all to work towards sister church relations. After much discussion it was decided to express the appreciation of the many years of relationship and the help received from the Australian churches, and ask them to accept the Musyafir churches as sister churches on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity. They will do that to our next Synod, to see if we can accept the GGMM as sister churches. The following grounds were brought forward. That they accept the FRCA as sister churches and have accepted their help in the past. And also they be encouraged and strengthened by the brothers and sisters as close neighbours.

Saturday afternoon. The support for the theological training and college was discussed. The chairman had difficulties, as far as the GGMM is concerned, with working together with the Reformatie churches of Sumba, Savu and Timor; as far as the theological training is concerned, because they are not a registered college, and they don't seem to have the insight nor the manpower to follow this up either. He suggested that he should go and discuss this with them again, for at the moment, according to the chairman, things are at a very low standard. And seeing that the GGMM has in the future two persons to be able to work at a college we should take a leading role. Suggested was to look into the possibility to have it in Samau Island; there are some good buildings there, electricity and telephone. Samau Island is about 5 km from Kupang. It was also pointed out that the Church Order says that we must support and maintain a theological college. At the last conference it was suggested to the Reformatie churches to work together, but they refuse to register with the government.

Now that the Musyafir churches have two prospective instructors, they should take a leading position. Suggestion was to send Reverend Fangidae to the GGRI to sort it out, suggesting to send a letter with the following points:

1. To upgrade the training.
2. To register with the government.
3. To discuss the place for a future theological school.

Synod decided to contact the Reformatie churches by letter and if necessary to arrange a meeting.

Deputies were appointed for the different functions. These deputies would meet with Reverend Knigge to spell out their mandate and the correct wording of it. It was decided to have synod once every two years; next synod July 1998.

Reverend Knigge read from Scripture 1 Corinthians 13, and after singing and a short word of encouragement, the Synod was closed by the chairman.

Sunday we discussed with Reverend Knigge our position towards the GGMM as far as sistership relation is concerned. The following points were noted:

1. First of all see how things will develop, because not all things are rosy.
2. Wait and see if government will accept them as a registered church.
3. There is very little evidence of church discipline.
4. Try to keep up a good relationship and where possible some help like in the past.

The above is also our recommendations.

On Monday the 15th of April we travelled to Sumba. Going to Sumba had mostly to do with Mission Aid work, but being there we also had a meeting with the deputies

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for churches abroad of the GGRI. We extended the brotherly greetings from the Australian churches, and vice versa also received the brotherly greetings for the Australian churches. The items of discussion were the following: their visit to the coming Synod of the Australian churches in June, and gave Reverends Radjah and Hawu Rp 120000 so that they could go to Kupang to get their passport and visas organised.

Also talked about the help Mission Aid is giving. Deputies are happy for the support the churches are receiving via Mission Aid and no need to work directly through the deputies, although they would like to be informed about the activities. Any request the churches have for their particular use would come through the deputies and pass on to the Mission Aid if so desired.

We reminded them of the fact that we never received the acts of their last Synod of 1994-95.

J Bosveld
W Buist

* * * * *

Appendix B

Address to GGMM Synod held in Tarus 12-13 April 1996

Dear brothers,

We again may be in the midst of you; thank you for the invitation to your Synod. We gladly accepted it and thank you for allowing us to address you on behalf of the Australian Churches.

The Australian churches bring you the Christian greetings in the Name of our only Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. He who gathers for Himself a church out of the whole human race, from the beginning of the world to its end. He who is the Lord of the Body, His Church, defends her and also preserves her. He does so by His Spirit and Word. May we all find comfort in the knowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ gathers a Church unto eternal life, and that we are and remain living members of it.

Yes out of the whole human race, we are thankful that we may know this, and also acknowledge this of each other. Christ is the Head of the Church and has given us His Word, wherein He says, "Blessed are those that read and hear His words and keep those things which are written in it, for the time is near. Behold I'm coming quickly. Hold fast what you have that no one may take your crown.

The Australian deputies have received and discussed the report of your previous synod, and seeing that you want to remain faithful and truthful to God's holy Word as it is confessed in the Three Forms of Unity: the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt, we would like to extend our support to you, in helping to understand what the will of God is, what is pleasing in His sight. For we know that the church has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, given by our Lord Jesus Christ. The first key is the preaching of His Word. By this the kingdom of heaven is opened to us; God's will must be revealed to His people. He ascended on high and gave gifts to men; He Himself gave some to be teachers and some pastors, for the equipping of the saints, the edifying of the body of Christ. Christ builds His Church on the good confession and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

These are the sure Words of God. Let us then be faithful, living in obedience to God's Word, so that we may be prepared to meet our God. For we are not of those

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that draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. May you in your assembly gathered together in the Name of our Lord and Saviour, follow the Good Shepherd and lead His people in the green pastures of His Word. The Australian churches seek a further relationship with you, seeing that you also want to follow the good guidance of the Church Order, and if we can be of any help to you please let us know about it.

Further may we encourage you to live in harmony and peace with each other; let brotherly love continue, for a house divided against itself cannot stand. Stand therefore on that firm foundation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the chief corner stone. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the Name of My God and the Name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven from my God. And I will write on him My new name. We all have rich promises; let us hold fast to these words. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev 3:12).

May you have a blessed Synod under the protection of our Heavenly Father.

May I remind you that we as Australian churches haven't as yet received any minutes or acts of your last held Synod in December 1995. Please brothers let us have them as soon as possible.

Thankyou.

On behalf of the Australian churches.

APPENDIX C

C. Report of Deputies for Relations with Other Churches (Presbyterian)

TO: The 1996 Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia
C/- Free Reformed Church in Kelmscott as convening Church

FROM: Deputies for Relations with Presbyterian Churches

DATE: 9th March, 1996

Mandate: The deputies received the following mandate:

1. To study/discuss the matter of contacts/relations with Presbyterian churches, addressing the following questions:
 - a. What weight the FRCA should give to the areas of concern;
 - b. Whether or not all areas of concern must be cleared before the FRCA can progress with contacts/relations;
 - c. How in a manageable and responsible way the FRCA can fulfil their obligations towards churches geographically/culturally far away;
2. To authorise deputies to organise a conference for the churches to discuss the contact with Presbyterian churches as broadly as possible;
3. To report back to the churches when the mandate is finished;
4. To continue contact/relations with the PCEA, FCS, EPCI, and RPCI at a low level (passing on Acts and greetings, etc) leaving the discussions in abeyance.

Contact With Other Churches:

Letters were sent to the EPCI, RPCI and PCEA advising them of the relevant FRCA synod decisions regarding Presbyterian churches and forwarding a copy of the 1995 and 1996 synods of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA).

Programme:

Deputies identified the following areas of concern which require study as per the mandate:

- a pulpit exchange
- b fencing of the Lord's Supper table
- c the position of children in the covenant
- d covenanting
- e purity of worship

Deputies decided that position papers should be prepared for all topics for discussion. The above topics were shared among deputies for research and writing of papers. In preparation for the writing of papers (a) and (b) above, a letter was written to the deputies in the PCEA to clarify PCEA practice regarding pulpit exchange and fencing of the Lord's Supper table. Replies were received. At the time of writing this report several draft papers had been prepared and one distributed. Deputies regret that no more work was done but consider that if deputies are appointed by this synod with the same mandate that reports will be ready, the Lord willing, for synod 1998.

A letter (dated 20th September 1995) from the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands was received. This letter advises the Committee's intention to recommend to GKN(L) synod Berkel 1996

C. Report of Deputies for Relations with Other Churches (Presbyterian)

that the PCEA should be offered Sister Church relations. The undersigned deputies have written to the Dutch deputies seeking clarification for this recommendation in view of the last (GKN) synod decision not to offer the PCEA Sister Church relations in deference to the unfinished FRCA discussions with the PCEA.

Deputies attended four meetings with other FRCA deputies for relations with other churches at which proposed reports to synod 1996 were discussed.

Recommendation:

That Deputies be appointed with the same mandate being:

1. To study/discuss the matter of contacts/relations with Presbyterian churches, addressing the following questions:
 - a. What weight the FRCA should give to the areas of concern;
 - b. Whether or not all areas of concern must be cleared before the FRCA can progress with contacts/relations;
 - c. How in a manageable and responsible way the FRCA can fulfil their obligations towards churches geographically/culturally far away;
2. To authorise deputies to organise a conference for the churches to discuss the contact with Presbyterian churches as broadly as possible;
3. To repeat back to the churches when the mandate is finished;
4. To continue contact/relations with the PCEA, FCS, EPCI, and RPCI at a low level (passing on Acts and greetings, etc) leaving the discussions in abeyance.

Yours in Christ,
A Veldman (convener)
A Van Delden
A Slobe
H Olde
J Bruning

APPENDIX D

Report of Deputies for International Conference of Reformed Churches

D1. Deputies for the International Conference Of Reformed Churches

Mandate

Synod Byford 1994 decided to continued membership in the ICRC and appointed deputies with the following mandate:

- 1 to pass onto the churches the conclusions and recommendations of the ICRC, specifically the ones about "Theological Affirmation" and regional conferences and mission conferences from the 1993 ICRC, together with deputies comments, at least ½ a year before the next synod, if so desired,
- 2 to send the proposed the proposed "Constitutional Amendment of the First Purpose of the ICRC" as presented by previous deputies to the 1992 Synod to the next ICRC,
- 3 to carry out our obligations as members of the ICRC.

Activities

Re 1:

On March 24, 1995 a letter was sent to all the consistories of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. In this letter we informed the churches that the conclusions about "Theological Affirmation" had been passed onto the Deputies for Interchurch Relations with Presbyterian Churches to study this and come with a proposal. Since the fore-mentioned deputies are studying the matters which are concluded in this decision about "Theological Affirmation", it seemed expedient to deputies to allow the other Deputies for Interchurch Relations with Presbyterian Churches to use these conclusions to fulfil their mandate. When they are finished we as Deputies for the ICRC can also gauge what to do with these ICRC conclusions.

In this same letter we also passed on the decision about regional (mission) conferences together with deputies' comments, leaving it to the individual churches to place this matter on the synod agenda.

Re 2:

Deputies sent the proposed "Constitutional Amendment of the First Purpose of the ICRC" to the secretary of the Interim Committee for the ICRC with the request to place it on the agenda of the next ICRC.

Re 3:

Deputies passed onto the secretary of the Interim Committee for the ICRC a copy of the Acts of Synod Byford 1994 and an update of the data of the FRCA for the ICRC directory.

We received from the secretary of the Interim Committee for the ICRC:

the semi-annual Newsletters of the Mission Committee of the ICRC

a number of letters from which we can pass on the following information:

- a) The next conference of the ICRC will be held from October 14th until October 22nd 1997 in Seoul, Korea. At this conference the following topics will be dealt with:

D1. Deputies for the International Conference Of Reformed Churches

Biblical Principles for the Relation between Church and State by Dr. R.C. Beckett (Northern Ireland)

The Principles of Reformed Mission by Mr Mark T. Bube (U.S.A.)

The new Paradigm in Theology by Drs. E.A. de Boer (The Netherlands)

Challenges of the Charismatic Movement to the Reformed Tradition by Dr. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr (U.S.A.)

Women in Office, especially about 'deaconesses' by Dr. Soon Gil Hur (Korea)

The Ministry of the Word amongst Asian religious people (Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Zorastrians) by Rev. David John (India)

b) The following churches have applied for membership:

The Reformed Churches of New Zealand

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian (USA)

The Christian Reformed Churches in The Netherlands

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Deputies also received the report of the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution and Regulations as appointed by the 1993 Conference. This committee had to provide to the member churches a proposal to reword Article. IV of the ICRC Constitution, and also Article. V.3 and VII.1.e of the Regulations in order to reformulate the requirements for ICRC membership (cf. Proceedings, 77.1 of the 1993 Conference, page 23).

This committee proposes that Article. IV of the Constitution be changed as follows:

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

1. Those churches shall be admitted as members:
 - a. which adhere and are faithful to the Reformed Faith summarised in the documents listed in the Basis;
 - b. whose confessional standards agree with the said Reformed Faith
 - c. which have been sponsored by at least two member churches (see Regulations, Article VII.1.e);
 - d. furnish
 - i. their confessional standards
 - ii. their declaratory acts (if applicable)
 - iii. their form of subscription
 - iv. their form of government
 - e. are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organisation whose aims and practices are deemed by the Conference to be in conflict with the Basis.
 - f. are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member churches, every member church having one vote.
2. Termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority of member churches whenever the Conference is of the opinion that a member church in its doctrine and/or practice is longer in agreement with the Basis.

The Committee proposes that Article. V of the Regulations be changed as follows:

ARTICLE V - PARTICIPANTS

1. The following may take their seats as participants in meetings of the Conference

D1. Deputies for the International Conference Of Reformed Churches

- a. Voting delegates from the member churches.
Each member church shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to the meeting. These delegates shall be known as 'Voting Delegates'.
- b. Advisory delegates from the member churches. Each member church may appoint two advisers, but they shall have no vote. These delegates shall be known as 'Advisers'.
2. No others shall sit as participants in the meeting unless and until invited by the Conference to participate.
These include:
 - a. Observer delegates from churches that have made application for membership in the Conference. These delegates shall be known as 'Observers'.
 - b. Visiting delegates from churches which have not yet applied for membership. These delegates shall be known as 'Visitors'
3. The Conference may provide a designated area for official Observers and Visitors, to distinguish them from others who may be present to observe the meeting.

The Committee proposes to read Article. VII.1.e of the Regulations as follows:

1. The Conference shall place on its agenda ...
 - b. recommendations from any two member churches sponsoring a church that applies for membership.

Your deputies have scrutinised these proposals and in the main are quite happy with them, and especially with the commentary accompanying them, since it clearly reflects the FRCA's view on the ICRC. However, we do have some amendments to offer. We thus propose to accept the revisions as proposed with the following amendments:

- a) Article. IV.1.a read "as confessed..." instead of summarized".
- b) Article. IV.1.b be deleted.

GROUND:

1. These proposals and in particular the notes accompanying these proposals clearly reflect the FRCA's view on the ICRC and are also in line with the amended proposal to the Constitution put on the agenda by the FRCA.
2. In Article. IV.1.a "summarised" is an ambiguous term. It usually refers to the confessions which summarise the Scriptures.
3. Article. IV.1.b opens the practical problem of admission of churches which confessions not listed in the Basis, and which are unknown. These confessions would then need to be checked at the ICRC by committees.
This is unsatisfactory.

Recommendations

- 1 That the FRCA be represented at the next meeting of the Conference scheduled to take place in Korea during the month of October in the year of the Lord 1997.

GROUND:

This is in line with the decision taken by Synod Byford 1994 that the FRCA continue their membership in the ICRC.

- 2 That the FRCA supports the proposals of the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution and Regulations with the following amendments:
 - a) Article. IV.1.a read "as confessed ..." instead of summarized".

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- b) Article. IV.1.b be deleted.

GROUNDINGS:

1. These proposals and in particular the notes accompanying these proposals clearly reflect the FRCA's view on the ICRC and are also in line with the amended proposal to the Constitution put on the agenda by the FRCA.
2. In Article. IV.1.a "summarized" is an ambiguous term. It usually refers to the confessions which summarise the Scriptures.
3. Article. IV.1.b opens the practical problem of admission of churches which confessions not listed in the Basis, and which are unknown. These confessions would then need to be checked at the ICRC by committees.
This is unsatisfactory.

D2. Report of the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution and Regulations

(The Reverend. Mr W. Peter Gadsby and the Reverend. Dr Rowland S Ward, Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia)

1. The Committee's Remit from ICRC 1993

1.1 The decision of ICRC 1993

The 1993 meeting of the ICRC made the following decision:

77.1 Revision of Constitution and Regulations

It was agreed that PCEA delegates Messrs. Gadsby and Ward function as a Committee to provide to the member churches a proposal to reword Article IV of the ICRC Constitution, and also Articles V.3 and VII.1.e of the Regulations in order to reformulate the requirements for ICRC membership.

1.2 The articles referred to in the decision of 1993

The relevant articles are as follows:

Article IV of the Constitution concerns membership of the ICRC, and states:

- 1 Those churches shall be admitted as members which:
 - a adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards stated in the Basis;
 - b furnish
 - i their confessional standards
 - ii their form of government
 - iii their form of subscription
 - iv their declaratory acts (if applicable)
 - c are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member churches, every member church having one vote;
 - d are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organisation whose aims and practices are deemed to be in conflict with the Basis.
- 2 Termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority whenever the Conference is of the opinion that the member church in its doctrine and/or practice is no longer in agreement with the Basis.

Article V.3 of the Regulations states:

Article V - Participants

The following are to be seated at the meetings of the Conference ...

1. Observer delegates from churches that have made application for membership in the Conference.

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They may be invited to take part in all discussions but will not be accorded the right to vote nor to be present at closed session.

Article VII.1.e. of the Regulations states:

1. The Conference shall place on its agenda ...
 - a. recommendations from any two member churches to extend an invitation to another church to send observers to the Conference.

1.3 The Committee's approach

In seeking to fulfil our remit, we have understood that what was required was a re-formulation of the wording of these articles so as to clarify their real intention. In particular, in regard to the constitutional issue, we have tried to pay due attention to the *unity* and the *diversity* of the member churches.

ICRC member churches are committed to the Biblical and Reformed faith which they confess in the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards - this is their unity (see ICRC Constitution, Article II). But it is a unity in diversity, for there are differences between the Three Forms and the Westminster Standards, and there are even differences in the Westminster Standards adhered to by several of our member churches. For example, the Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as received by the Church of Scotland in 1647; the Orthodox Presbyterian Church subscribes to a different version of the WCF (see 1993 ICRC *Proceedings*, Article.11.1); and the free Church of Central India to a slightly different version again.

These differences have not been held to be a bar against cooperation and fellowship in the ICRC, which is not a church nor a synod, but a 'Conference' of the delegates of like-minded, Reformed churches.

In reformulating the several articles, we have tried to do justice to the diversity-in-unity of this Biblical and Reformed conference.

1.4 Additional matter raised by the Reverend M. van Beveren

In a letter of 16 November 1993, the ICRC Secretary also drew to our attention a matter of terminology in Article V of the Regulations, in particular the use of the terms 'observer delegates' in Article V.3 and 'Visiting delegates' in Article V.4. In the Regulations, the former term is used to describe delegates from churches which have applied for membership but have not yet been received, while the latter refers to 'visiting delegates from churches which have not yet applied for membership'. However, in practice it has become common for the delegates of non-applying churches to be referred to as 'observers' (cf. the address list in the 1993 *Proceedings*!). Mr van Beveren suggested that in our review of the Constitution and Regulations, we might like address this matter, and so we have included our suggestions. This is really only a matter of semantics, and we trust that member churches will agree with our proposal (see 4.1 below) for clarifying the confusing terminology. (It may be noted that ICRC 1989 remitted a similar matter to the Interim Committee for report to ICRC 1993 - see 1989 *Proceedings*, Session 3, Article 2.10. However, apart from a reference in the report of the Corresponding Secretary (1993 *Proceedings*, p.46), no report was made.)

1.1 Background

1.2 Discussions at ICRC 1989

The matter of the ICRC Constitution was the subject of much discussion during the 1989 meeting in Langley, BC, Canada. The 'Constitution Committee', of which one of us (Gadsby) was the convener, made four reports to the meeting, one concerning

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the admissibility of one of the papers, and the other three following consideration of constitutional amendments proposed by several member churches (see 1989 ICRC *Proceedings*, Session 1, Articles 6 and 8; Session 3, Article 2; Session 5, Article 5; and Session 7, Article 4). The latter three reports led to various amendments being made to the Constitution and Regulations.

However, the major issue was the proposal from the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to insert a stipulation in the Constitution, Article II, Basis, the 'the delegates subscribe only to the standards of the churches of which they are members'. Following long consideration and two reports to the meeting the Committee's penultimate recommendation was defeated. However, unanimous support was given to their final recommendation on procedure that 'proposals for alterations to the Constitution and Regulations should be submitted in accurate terms with clear indications as to the precise point in the wording of the Constitution or Regulations at which the alternative addition is to be adopted.'

2.3 Decisions at ICRC 1993

2.3.1 Report of Corresponding Secretary

In his report, Reverend. van Beveren commented:

'At the previous Conference several proposals were on the agenda, especially regarding the *Constitution* and *Regulations*. For this Conference, however, no proposals have reached us. We may consider it an indication that the basis and direction of the ICRC has been accepted as established and that the Churches are looking forward to pursuing the purpose of the ICRC with determination.' (1993 *Proceedings*, p.46)

2.3.2 Admission of Reformed Church in the US (RCUS)

The RCUS membership application was sponsored by the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Free Church of Scotland and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated). On the unanimous recommendation of a sub-committee, the meeting agreed that the RCUS be admitted to the membership of the ICRC (see Article 24.1). This decision was taken in full knowledge of the fact that the RCUS subscription only to the Heidelberg Catechism (see Article 11.2), but was 'in the process of adopting the two other Forms of Unity'.

2.3.3 Submission by Dr James Visscher, Canadian Reformed Churches

The decision to institute the present committee's review was prompted by an individual submission to the 1993 meeting from the Reverend. Dr James Visscher of the Canadian Reformed Churches (see 11993 ICRC *Proceedings*, Article 7 and 77). Dr Visscher suggested that a committee be mandated 'to examine carefully the Regulations with regard to the requirements for membership. There has been some confusion over the last number of years as to the criteria. To some the Constitution seems to say one thing and the Regulations another. Others are convinced that the Regulations should receive some further elaboration'.

These were the only matters relevant to the constitutional debate which arose at ICRC Zwolle, 1993. It might be mentioned that the discussions on the Constitution in 1989 had left a bad taste in the mouths of many. This is perhaps one reason why they were avoided in the 'singing conference' of 1993, which many remember as a helpful and friendly meeting.

3. Basis, Purpose and 'Subscription'

3.1 The Basis of the Conference

Article II of the ICRC Constitution states:

The basis of the Conference shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the

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Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort) and the Westminster Standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms).

The doctrinal basis of the ICRC is the teaching of Holy Scripture, and particular that teaching as expressed in the Three Forms and the Westminster Standards. These documents embody what we call the Reformed Faith, after the 16th century Reformation in Europe. Churches which subscribe to them are called Reformed Churches, and the ICRC is a conference of such churches.

As we consider the six documents mentioned in the Basis, it is clear that they all differ from one another in their emphases, and in their terminology. But individually and together they comprise a summary of the Reformed teaching which is upheld in the Churches whose office-bearers subscribe to (some of) them. No one has been able to point to irreconcilable differences in teaching between any of these documents, and that is why they together form the basis, or foundation of the ICRC. There is a unity of Reformed and Biblical faith expressed in these documents. No Church which believed that these basic documents, or any of them, set forth unbiblical doctrine would be able to accept this Basis, and cooperate in this Conference.

3.2 The Purpose of the Conference

Article III of the Constitution says:

The purpose of the Conference shall be:

1. to express and promote the unity of faith that the member churches have in Christ;
2. to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member churches;
3. to encourage cooperation among the member churches in the fulfilment of the missionary and other mandates;
4. to study the common problems and issues that confront the member churches and to aim for recommendations with respect to these matters;
5. to present a Reformed testimony to the world.

In the five-fold purpose expressed here we see an interplay of unity and diversity.

It is clear that member churches share a commitment to the Reformed Faith - it is in this sense that they have a 'unity of faith' to express and promote (1). They can present a united Reformed testimony to the world (5), and study problems together from the Reformed standpoint (4).

At the same time, there is diversity: 'the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship' and cooperation in mission, etc. are to be encouraged (2, 3). The implication is that such fellowship and cooperation still fall short of what Christ desires for his church (John 17:20ff). The diversity of the ICRC member churches is such that, while there is a shared commitment to the Reformed Faith, there are differences of emphasis, terminology and background (geographical, cultural and historical) which are real and which have proved to be impediments to full ecclesiastical union.

It is not a purpose of the ICRC to *accomplish* fuller union between churches, but to *encourage* it. It is no part of the purpose of the ICRC to interfere in discussions between member churches about their mutual relations, but it is clearly a part of its purpose to encourage them. It does this as church-delegated representatives meet, discuss, worship, and work together at the meetings every four years, and from time to time in other contexts. ICRC delegates are not authorised to negotiate unification deals among themselves as a part of ICRC business, but their coming together does facilitate such discussions as may lead the respective churches to pursue closer relations.

These qualifications should make it clear that the ICRC has fairly limited pretensions. It does not claim to be a Reformed 'Synod' or ecclesiastical assembly. Rather, it is a facilitator, with a rather limited scope for originating initiatives. It 'encourages', it

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'promotes', it 'recommends' to the churches which are members. As the Constitution explicitly states in Article V:

The conclusions of the Conference shall be advisory in character. Member churches are to be informed of these conclusions and are recommended to work towards their implementation.

3.3 'Subscription' and Membership of the Conference

It is with the above in mind that we must read Article IV of the Constitution, cited above (1.2). In particular, the words of 1.a:

1. Those churches shall be admitted as members which:

a. adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards stated in the Basis;

These words have caused concern in the past for several reasons. Churches which have reservations about parts of one or more of documents mentioned in the Basis have wished to have this section changed to something like:

1. Those churches shall be admitted as members which:

a. adhere and are faithful to *their own* confessional standards stated in the Basis...

The major problem with this is that it effectively destroys the Basis of the Conference! Diversity eats up unity. A Basis must be shared if it is to promote commonality, but this proposal would divide the Basis, with each member church adhering to only part of it. There would effectively be two or more ICRC's each subscribing to a different standard.

However, the concern over Article IV.1.a is real: if in fact membership of the ICRC means full subscription to the six documents mentioned in the Basis, then unity has eaten up diversity, and all the member churches are one simply by becoming members of the ICRC!

The problem lies in the interpretation of the words 'adhere and are faithful' in Article IV. As the foregoing discussion has shown, the ICRC has never been regarded as a 'short cut' to full church union. Rather, it is a means by which churches can come together to confer on an agreed basis, and facilitate those discussions which are properly the business of each respective church. However, the words 'adhere and are faithful' and 'unity of faith' in Article III, Purpose, could be misunderstood to mean what member churches mean when they require their office bearers to 'subscribe' their own doctrinal standards. We agree with ICRC 1993 that some clarification is needed, particularly in Article IV, to make it clear that the expression 'adhere and are faithful' is NOT equivalent to 'subscribe' in this sense, but neither is it a mere token acknowledgment of the standards of other member churches.

In other words, in reformulating Article IV, we need to maintain both unity and diversity in proper balance.

3.4 A Proposed Solution

3.4.1 Purpose

We propose no change to Article III, Purpose, of the ICRC. The words 'unity of faith' in Article III must be interpreted in connection with the rest of the Constitution, and when this is done, it is clear that it is not the same 'unity of faith' which is shared within a particular bond of churches. The latter unity is expressed in the words of an agreed set of doctrinal standards, code of worship, and rules for church government. It is, we might say, a 'tighter' unity than the unity in the Reformed Faith which we share in the ICRC, and tighter than the unity we share with all those everywhere who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:2).

If it be asked, "But what is the unity of faith we have in the ICRC?" we answer that it is the unity of a shared commitment to the tenets of the Reformed faith summarised in the six documents mentioned in the Basis (Article II). This is the Reformed Faith

D2. Report of the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution and Regulations

for which the ICRC stands, and upon the basis of which we conduct our affairs according to our stated purpose.

Article III is important as it stands, because it helps to show what is meant by 'unity of faith' in the context of the ICRC: unity and diversity; similarity and difference; brethren learning from each other to follow Christ better; an opportunity for churches to pursue closer relations as they cooperate in the more limited agenda of the ICRC.

3.4.2 Membership

We propose that the Article IV be changed as follows: (*see next page*)

Notes on the proposed changes:

Note 1 on new Section 1.a.

We have reformulated the Basis so as to refer now to 'the Reformed Faith'. As churches, ICRC members stand together upon the basis of a shared commitment to this biblical understanding of our Faith. If it be asked "Where is this Faith you share summarised?" the answer is stated clearly: 'in the documents listed in the Basis'. This does not require any applicant church to subscribe to all of the six documents, or even to any of them, thus leaving open the possibility of admission of churches who subscribe other Reformed Confessions than those listed. Such churches and their confessions would have to be in agreement with the Reformed Faith as summarised in the six documents.

Note that we have eliminated the description of the six documents as 'confessional standards'.

The reason for this is that it must be made clear that the ICRC is not a confessing church, but a conference of confessing churches. The documents are, of course, confessional standards within the various churches, but within the ICRC they serve the purpose of summarising the Reformed Faith.

Note 2 on new Section 1.b

This is a new section, the purpose of which is to clarify the relationship between the documents in the ICRC Basis (Article II), and the confessional standards of member churches. Specifically, the latter must agree with the Reformed Faith as summarised by the six documents in our Basis.

This does not mean that such confessional standard(s) will be identical with all or any of the six; nor does it mean that they will have the same scope as the six. Thus, a church subscribing only to the Heidelberg Catechism can be received into membership because that Catechism agrees with the Reformed Faith summarised by our basic documents. (This must have been the interpretation placed upon the original wording of Article IV.1.a by ICRC 1993 when the meeting received the RCUS into membership - see 2.3.2 above.)

Rather than make additional statements in the proposed draft of IV.1.b, we leave as implied the fact that the ICRC meeting which considers any application for membership will ensure that the documents tendered as prescribed in (new) IV.1.c do set forth a commitment to the Reformed Faith as required.

Note 3 on new Section 1.c

The requirement for applicant churches to have the support of two member churches is not spelled out clearly in the Constitution and Regulations. Accordingly we insert it here, and also amend Regulation VII.1.e to make its intention clear (see below).

Note 4 on new Section 1.d

We propose a change not of substance but of form. We have altered the order of the documents listed: first, the basic confessional standard(s); then, any 'declaratory act' which declares the church's official understanding of its basic standard(s); next the form of subscription required of office bearers, the form of church government practised by the applicant church.

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EXISTING	PROPOSED REVISION
<p>1 Those churches shall be admitted as members which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards in the Basis; b furnish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. their confessional standards ii. their form of government iii. their form of subscription iv. their declaratory acts (if applicable) c are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member churches, every member church having one vote; d are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organisation whose aims and practices are deemed to be in conflict with the Basis. <p>2 Termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority whenever the Conference is of the opinion that the member church in its doctrine and/or practice is no longer in agreement with the Basis.</p>	<p>1 Those churches shall be admitted as members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a which adhere and are faithful to the Reformed Faith summarised in the documents listed in the Basis; (<i>see Note 1 below</i>) b whose confessional standards agree with the said Reformed Faith; (<i>see Note 2 below</i>) c which have been sponsored by at least two member churches (<i>see Regulations, Article VII.1.e</i>); (<i>See Note 3 below</i>) d furnish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. their confessional standards ii. their declaratory acts (if applicable) iii. their form of subscription iv. their form of government (<i>see Note 4 below</i>) e are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organisation whose aims and practices are deemed by the Conference to be in conflict with the Basis. (<i>see Note 5 below</i>) f are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member churches, every member church having one vote. <p>2 Termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority of member churches whenever the Conference is of the opinion that a member church in its doctrine and/or practice is longer in agreement with the Basis. (<i>see Note 6 below</i>)</p>

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Note 5 on new Section 1.e

This section required an amendment, making clear exactly who was to do the 'deeming'. Again we would assume with making it explicit, that 'deemed by the Conference' means 'deemed by a majority of member churches of the Conference'. We have also placed old Section 1.d before old Section 1.c, since this seemed to be a more logical order.

Note 6 on new Section 2

We have inserted the words 'of member churches' after the words 'two third majority' as a simple clarification of the intention of this section.

3.5 Summary

In reformulating Article IV, we have tried to retain a balance between unity and diversity among the member churches, and to ensure that the Constitution reflects the mind of the member churches, with regard to membership qualifications as revealed in decisions of the Conference.

It should be said that having a 'correct' Constitution will not ensure the ongoing faithfulness of this organisation. The Reformed Ecumenical Council (Synod) began with a very fine sounding constitutional basis, but that did not prevent the declension in that organisation which has sadly occurred. The ICRC will remain faithful only as its constituent members remain faithful, and if it ceases to be faithful to the historic Reformed Faith, then faithful member churches will (rightly) abandon it as they have the RES/REC.

4. ICRC Meeting Participants

4.1 Terminology

Currently, our Regulations refer to various classes of person who 'are to be seated at the meeting of the Conference': (1) voting delegates from member churches; (2) advisory delegates from member churches; (3) observer delegates from applicant churches; and (4) visiting delegates from non-applicant churches. (See Regulations, Article V.)

4.2 Proposed Changes

We recommend that the following changes be made to Article V, Participants: *(see next page)*

Notes on the proposed changes:

Note 1 on new Section 1.a

The new proposed Regulation specifies that full participation in meetings be limited to voting delegates from the member churches.

Note 2 on new Terminology

The new terms are consistent with what has become common ICRC usage, and we think they meet the concerns of our Secretary (see 1.4 above).

Note 3 on new Section 2

Participation of any others than the delegates of member churches is to be at the discretion of the meeting itself. For example, it may permit 'Observers' to participate fully (other than voting), but we believe that this would be unwise, since it could lead to embarrassment if the application of their church were rejected.

Note 4 on new Section 2.c

At the same time, we believe that official delegates of churches, whether or not applying for membership, should be accorded suitable privileges, such as the provision of a designated seating area, and copies of non-confidential papers.

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EXISTING	PROPOSED REVISION
<p>The following are to be seated at the meetings of the Conference:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Voting delegates from the member churches. Each member church shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to the meeting. 2 Advisory delegates from the member churches. Each member church may appoint two advisors, but they shall have no vote. 3 Observer delegates from churches that have made application for membership in the Conference. They may be invited to take part in all discussions but will not be accorded the right to vote nor be present in closed sessions. 4 Visiting delegates from churches which have not yet applied for membership. They shall be granted the right to attend the open meetings of the Conference and have extended to them the usual courtesies for such occasions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The following may take their seats as participants in meetings of the Conference: (<i>see Note 1 below</i>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Voting delegates from the member churches. Each member church shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to the meeting. These delegates shall be known as 'Voting Delegates'. (<i>see Note 2 below</i>) b) Advisory delegates from the member churches. Each member church may appoint two advisors, but they shall have no vote. These delegates shall be known as 'Advisors'. (<i>see Note 2 below</i>) 2 No others shall sit as participants in the meeting unless and until invited by the Conference to participate. (<i>see Note 3 below</i>) These include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Observer delegates from churches that have made application for membership in the Conference. These delegates shall be known as 'Observers'. (<i>see Note 2 below</i>) b) Visiting delegates from churches which have not yet applied for membership. These delegates shall be known as 'Visitors'. (<i>see Note 2 below</i>) 3 The Conference may provide a designated area for official Observers and Visitors, to distinguish them from others who may be present to observe the meeting. (<i>see Note 4 below</i>)

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5. Invitations to non-member churches

Article VII.1.e of the Regulations provides:

1. The Conference shall place on its agenda: ...
 - a. recommendations from any two member churches to extend an invitation to another church to send observers to the Conference.

The use of the word 'observers' indicates that this Regulation refers to applicants for membership in the ICRC. To make this absolutely clear, we recommend that it be amended to read:

1. The Conference shall place on its agenda: ...
 - a. recommendations from any two member churches sponsoring a church that applies for membership.

6. Conclusion

In preparing this report, your Committee sought to reformulate and revise in a way that faithfully represents what we take to be the intention of the existing provisions. We trust that our proposals to improve the Constitution and Regulations will meet with acceptance among the member churches of the ICRC, and that they will not prove to be the occasion of undesirable tensions and argument.

A. Peter Gadsby
Rowland S. Ward
May 1995

APPENDIX E

E. Report Of Deputies for Bible Translations

1. General

A Mandate

Synod 1994 gave your deputies the following mandate (Acts, Article 55):

- a to inform the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) of this decision and to remain in touch with the Canadian deputies about developments there;
- b to inform the churches of developments in the CanRC;
- c to monitor developments with respect to the NKJV and the NIV;
- d to solicit from the churches comments on possible improvements on these translations for a possible reprint, and to send these comments to the respective publishers;
- e to maintain the archives;
- f to report to next Synod.

B Activities

- a Deputies held one meeting since their appointment.
- b Contact was sought with the NIV Translation Center for information on recent and/or proposed future NIV developments such as revisions and new editions. No reply has been received to date.
- c Seeing that the Committee on Bible translations of the CanRC was already informed of the Australian Synod's decision, deputies did not have to pass on this information.
- d A summary was made of the Canadian deputies' report, including the considerations leading up to the Canadian decision in favour of the NIV, and sent on for publication in *Una Sancta*.

2. Information Received

A NASB, NIV or NKJV: Which Version Now?

- a This is the report to General Synod Abbotsford 1995 from the Committee on Bible Translations, appointed by Synod Lincoln 1992 of the CanRC.
- b The report, numbering more than 250 pages, carefully examines each of the three versions according to the criteria for evaluating a Bible translation, such as original text, method of translation and the aims of each version in theory and in practice.
- c It also addresses concerns about, and common objections to the NIV, as well as devoting a number of appendices to allegations made against the NIV by such critics as R Martin, E Radmacher, Z C Hodges and others. The Committee demonstrates in its report that the numerous criticisms voiced against the NIV are predominantly unfair and biased.
- d The Committee in its report took cognisance of the position and decisions of the Australian Churches, and several of our concerns were discussed at length.
- e The Committee concluded that the NIV:
is simply the finest translation when all the criteria and the relative importance of the different factors are taken into consideration. Furthermore, this translation takes all of Scripture into account and is true to the Word of God. (p 17)

E. Report Of Deputies for Bible Translations

Hence the committee recommended this version for use within the churches. The Committee's conclusions were supported by extensive text studies from both the OT and the NT (pp 176-253).

- f See further Reverend W Huizinga's review in *Una Sancta*, Vol 42, No 8, Feb 1995).

B Acts of Synod Abbotsford 1995, CanRC.

Synod decided to recommend the NIV for use in the churches and to leave it in the freedom of the churches if they feel compelled to use another translation. In coming to this decision Synod Abbotsford considered, among other things:

- a In its calling to proclaim the Word of God to God's people and to the world, the Church has a responsibility to use the Scriptures in the most faithful and understandable translation available. The NIV fulfils the criteria stipulated by Synod 1992, namely faithfulness to the original text and clarity of language, and does so better than the NKJV and the NASB.
- b The acknowledged weaknesses in the NIV are no decisive ground for not recommending this translation for use in the churches, considering there is no such thing as a perfect translation. An example is the Greek translation of the OT (the Septuagint) which was the Church Bible from approximately 300 BC to 300 AD, also used by Christ and the apostles and quoted by the NT in spite of considerable difference between the Septuagint and the original Hebrew text (Acts p 48).

1. Developments NKJV/NIV

Deputies have little to report on this aspect of their mandate:

- a The NKJV is a completed project. No revised editions are planned and so no opportunity exists for suggesting improvements.
- b Two versions of the NIV appear to exist (pre and post 1983). Other than differences incidentally noticed (eg Matt 16:23), deputies have not been able to ascertain the extent of the changes from one version to the other. No information has been received about future projects or revised editions. The NIV Translation Center welcomes suggestions and comments.

Feedback From The Churches

No specific formal comments or suggestions concerning either the NKJV or the NIV have been received.

Considerations/Conclusions

- a Deputies concur with the Report to General Synod Abbotsford 1995 from the Committee on Bible Translations of the CanRC. This report is scholarly and thorough, and includes in-depth study of all aspects of Bible translation with which recent Australian Synods have concerned themselves. It draws on scholarship and expertise not available in Australia. Deputies are unable to add any significant relevant material of their own.
- b It is regrettable that Synod 1994 (of the FRCA) did not adopt deputies' recommendation to defer a definite decision regarding the translation to be used in the church services until it is clear what direction the CanRC will be going.

The decision of Synod Abbotsford of the CanRC to recommend the NIV means that the Canadian and Australian churches will, to all intents and purposes, go their separate ways in respect to Bible versions. This will have consequences regarding the Book of Praise, including the Creeds,

E. Report Of Deputies for Bible Translations

Forms and Prayers. As a result of Synod 94's endorsement of the NKJV for use in the churches, the majority of the Australian churches has already opted for this version and will therefore not be able to work with the findings in this well-balanced and thorough report. This is the more unfortunate since the Canadian committee specifically addressed many of the reservations which our churches had about the NIV, demonstrating that most of them were unfounded. It appears unlikely now that the clock can be turned back in order that uniformity between the Canadian and Australian churches in the matter of Bible versions and related issues will continue.

- c Deputies recommend that the above-mentioned report be used by Synod as background material for considering deputies' proposals below.
- d Recent synods have found the NKJV to be a faithful and reliable translation. The Canadian Bible Translation Committee's report has demonstrated, and the Canadian General Synod 1995 has found, that the NIV, though not a perfect translation, is likewise a faithful and reliable one, and is indeed superior to the NKJV on several counts.

6. Recommendations

Synod decide:

- a to thank deputies for the work done and discharge them;
- b to retain the archives;
- c to recommend both the NIV and the NKJV as faithful and reliable translations for use in the churches, as well as for study, instruction and family purposes;
- d to discontinue use of the RSV in the church services and discourage its use for instruction and study purposes;
- e to appoint new deputies with the mandate:
 - 1 to inform the Canadian Reformed Churches of this decision and to maintain contact with their Committee on Bible Translations for the purpose of jointly determining passages in the NIV in need of improvement;
 - 2 to solicit comments from the Australian Churches on possible improvements to the NIV;
 - 3 to monitor developments in the NIV and to pass on to the NIV Translation Center suggested improvements for future reprints;
 - 4 to maintain the archives;
 - 5 to report to next synod.

Deputies Bible Translations

G Brouwer

G Groenewold

C Kleyn

F J van Hulst

Legana/Launceston 31-1-1996

APPENDIX F

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

1. Mandate

Synod 1994 gave your deputies the following mandate:

to:

- A collect funds for "Hamilton" and forward them to the College.
- B encourage the churches to hold regular collections for the Theological Seminary in Pusan.
- C continue correspondence with both "Hamilton" and "Kampen" in order to maintain contact and obtain information.
- D publish relevant information about the training for the ministry, so that the churches understand the need to support the colleges and the training of the students.
- E continue to arrange the support of the theological students whenever required in accordance with Article 18 CO.
- F clarify which church has secondary responsibility in the case of a student who has been a member of more than one congregation (Regulations, Article 3).

2. Financial Support Hamilton Theological College

In compliance with Synod 1994 decision, deputies have requested the churches to contribute \$38.00 annually per confessing member towards the maintenance of the College, starting at the first of July 1994 (refer 7.0 Finance).

3. Financial Support Theological Seminary Pusan.

In compliance with our mandate, the churches were requested by letter to hold regular collections for the seminary in Pusan.

However, we feel that the time has come to delete this recurring mandate to deputies or the following reasons:

- 1 There seems to be sufficient financial resources in the PCK to warrant discontinuing collections for the seminary (cf Report of Deputies for Sister Churches in Korea);
- 2 To our knowledge, none of the churches actually collect for the seminary in Pusan. Some do collect for needy students in Pusan. Since some churches are already collecting for this purpose without deputies' reminder, it seems reasonable to refrain from mandating deputies to issue a biannual reminder. Besides, the extent of this need and the resulting burden it places on the Korean Church federation are unknown to us.

4. Contact With Hamilton Theological College And Theologische Universiteit Kampen

- 1 Deputies on behalf of our churches conveyed messages of congratulations and fraternal greetings on the occasions of Hamilton's Convocation and Kampen's Schooldag 1994 and 1995.
- 2 Hamilton Theological College kept us up to date via the annual reports, covering events, subject matters and financial data, while the Theologische Universiteit Kampen forwarded its 1995 information booklet.
- 3 Via the Deputies for Relations with churches abroad, deputies received correspondence originating from their Canadian counterparts. In this correspondence formal appreciation was voiced for the support given by the FRCA to

the faculty in Hamilton. Thankfulness was also expressed for the fact that presently a considerable portion of their student body stems from our churches. The question was asked what can be done to further strengthen the ties between "Hamilton and Australia". Having given this matter some thought, deputies thought it a good idea to look into the possibility of inviting guest lecturers as a once off occasion or even as a recurring event. This, we felt would greatly strengthen our relations with Hamilton Theological College and be most beneficial for our Church federation as a whole. A number of issues would of course need to be addressed, expenses being one of them, but deputies would welcome being given the mandate to look into these into some greater detail.

5. Publicity

Appropriate information received from "Hamilton" and news concerning the study progress of Br J Plug were passed on to the membership via an article in Una Sancta Vol 42 No 15 p 334. Furthermore a message of congratulations on the occasion of Br Plug's graduation was published in Una Sancta Vol 42 No 18 p 413.

6. Financial Aid To Students

- 6.1 During the past term Br Plug received support to the tune of \$15,000.00 (Can) for 1994-1995, being his concluding year. Consistent with past (pre Synod 1992) procedure, this burden was carried by the church federation as a whole with no church having assumed secondary responsibility for him.(refer regulations for the financial aid of students Article 3, included in Acts Synod 1992).
- 6.2 Furthermore deputies received an application from the Church at Kelmscott, for financial assistance in aid of Br Dong to the value of \$ 21,000.00 , covering the 1995-96 academic year. The Church at Kelmscott itself has made a commitment to financially support this brother and his family in accordance with Article 3 mentioned above. Upon having considered Br. Dong's circumstances and budget, deputies approved this application. The church at Albany challenged this decision on the ground of Article 1 of the regulations for the financial aid of students. Albany held, that as Br Dong does not aspire to become a minister within our own churches or sister churches, he should not be supported by the Fund for Needy Students. Deputies however rejected the notion of Br Dong's alleged ineligibility, as he strongly desires to serve the Church of our Lord, hopefully in the capacity of missionary in his homeland the Lord willing, with the Church at Kelmscott as sending church. When it came to assessing the churches, deputies considered that Article 3 stipulates that: "Deputies when assessing the churches must take into account financial commitments which the local churches have assumed with respect to the support of needy students" (ie at secondary level). The intention here is clearly not to overburden those churches which already support their own student. We observed however that currently the situation is such that a number of churches support their own student to greater or lesser degree, (the details of which are unknown to us) or will the Lord willing do so in the near future. Deputies felt that if interpreted in the sense that churches, supporting their own theological student (ie at secondary level) shall not be assessed, this measure could be counter productive and result in a few "uncommitted" churches having to shoulder the complete tertiary responsibility for financial support of Br Dong. It was then thought best to proceed with assessing the churches according to the number of their confessing members. As the church at Albany presently renders substantial financial support to a

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

student of theology, Albany felt compelled to register its objection to deputies' manner of assessment. Deputies' failure to persuade Albany to as yet contribute towards the upkeep of Br Dong has prompted us to review our manner of assessment. When Article 3 is to be interpreted in the sense that assessments to churches supporting a student of theology at secondary level are to be reduced, it would be best to, at the commencement of each new fiscal year, request the churches to forward details of their financial commitments with respect to any theological students at secondary level. Deputies consider it prudent that this course is taken for any future applications in order to arrive at equitable assessments.

7. Finance

- 7.1 Support Theological College Hamilton.
Refer Appendix A
- 7.2 Support needy students.
Refer Appendix B

8. Secondary Responsibility

Synod 1994 gave your Deputies the mandate to clarify which church ought to assume secondary responsibility in the case where a student has been a member of more than one congregation.

Article 3 of the current regulations reads: "...the church to which the eligible student belongs when he begins his studies has secondary responsibility to provide support....". It was felt that this beginning of theological studies should be interpreted as being the time at which the student actively undertakes steps to commence preparatory studies. Thus the wording of the current regulations already has the answer to the above dilemma implied.

However situations could arise whereby it would be unreasonable to adhere to this rule of thumb. Upon having given this matter due consideration, deputies agreed that providing a cut and dried solution to fit any conceivable scenario would not be possible. Rather in order for students and consistories to avoid any unpleasant surprises or misconceptions, early consultation between the above mentioned parties is essential. Thus a consistory would be given opportunity to give an early indication of its willingness to accept secondary responsibility for the student's upkeep. Should however the consistory in question, due to the student's membership background, consider another church responsible, ample time would be left to work out a practical and satisfactory arrangement between the two consistories and the student.

9. Recommendations

Deputies recommend that:

- 1 Synod decide to assess the churches \$ 38.00 per communicant member per annum, for the maintenance of the Theological College in Hamilton as from the 1st July 1996.
- 2 Synod decide to discharge deputies and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a collect funds for "Hamilton" and forward them to the College,
 - b continue correspondence with both "Hamilton" and "Kampen", in order to maintain contact and obtain information,
 - c publish relevant information concerning the training of the ministry, so that the churches understand the need to support the colleges and the training of the students,
 - d continue to arrange the support of theological students whenever required in accordance with Article 19 CO, and

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

e look into possibilities to invite guest lecturers from Hamilton (refer 4.3).

With Brotherly greetings

The deputies:

Reverend C Bouwman

J A Bolhuis

A van Leeuwen

A T Schiebaan

Appendix B

Treasurer's Report: Deputies Training for the Ministry

NEEDY STUDENTS FUND

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

March 1994 to February 1996

Opening Balance	\$ 3299.58
Receipts	
Albany	2564.90
Albany West	2431.00
Armadaale	6917.20
Bedforddale	4474.84
Byford	4560.26
Kelmscott	6973.36
Launceston	5468.45
Legana	1602.42
Rockingham	998.00
Interest	192.12
PBS Return	307.59
Total Receipts	\$ 39789.72
Payments	
Support J. Plug family	20,000.00
Support F. Dong family	19,388.00
Bank charges	118.00
State Duty	20.97
Total Payments	\$ 39526.97
BALANCE	\$ 262.75

F Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

Appendix A

Deputies Training for the Ministry: Hamilton Theological College

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	BALANCE
1994		\$	\$	\$
March	Opening Balance			264.67
June	Bankfee 1/3		2.00	262.67
	Bankfee 15/4		2.00	260.67
	Bankfees S/D		9.45	251.22
	Interest	12.88		264.10
	Bankfee 17/5		2.00	262.10
	ARMADALE	4,912.50		
	BEDFORDALE	5,925.00		
	BYFORD	2,868.75		18,968.35
	Bankfee 17/6		2.00	18,966.35
July	LAUNCESTON	3,500.00		
	LEGANA	2,156.25		
	ROCKINGHAM	1,481.25		
	KELMSCOTT	4,625.00		25,728.85
October	Bank Transfer		25.00	25,703.85
	Hamilton T/C		25,000.00	703.85
	Bankfees S/D		15.37	688.48
	Interest	144.78		833.26
	BYFORD	2,964.00		3,797.26
November	P B S	631.77		4,429.00
December	WEST ALBANY	1,710.00		
	ROCKINGHAM	930.00		
	ARMADALE	4,912.50		
		(7,552.50)		11,981.53
	Bankfees S/D		2.19	11,979.34
	Interest	53.36		12,032.70
	KELMSCOTT	4,000.00		16,032.70
1995				
January	LEGANA	2,213.75		18,246.45
February	ROCKINGHAM	1,501.00		19,747.45
	BEDFORDALE	39.50		19,786.95
March	LAUNCESTON	3,475.00		23,261.95
	Bankfees S/D		9.23	23,252.72
	Interest	84.98		23,337.70
	ARMADALE	5,005.50		28,343.20

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

	Transfer to Students Support Fund		930.00 **	27,413.20
	Hamilton T/C		25,000.00	
	Bank Transfer		25.00	2,388.20
April	ALBANY	7,714.00		
	WEST ALBANY	1,881.00		
		(9,595.00)		11,983.20
May	Interest	117.36		12,100.56
	Bankfees S/D		10.92	12,089.64
	BEDFORDALE	6,118.00		18,207.64
July	LEGANA	2,170.00		20,377.64
August	ROCKINGHAM	1,691.00		22,068.64
	KELMSCOTT	5,041.50		27,110.14
	Hamilton T/C		20,000.00	
	Bank Transfer		25.00	7,085.14
October	Bankfees S/D		9.10	7,076.04
	Interest	149.98		7,226.02
	BYFORD	6,023.00		13,249.02
	Bedfordale Youth Clubs	392.65		13,641.67
November	Bankfees S/D		3.88	13,637.79
	Interest	49.49		13,687.28
	KELMSCOTT	5,000.00		18,687.28
December	WEST ALBANY	1,881.00		20,568.28
	LAUNCESTON	7,304.50		27,872.78
	ARMADALE	5,000.00		32,872.78
	LEGANA	2,171.25		35,044.03
	Hamilton T/C		30,000.00	
	Bank Transfer		25.00	5,019.03
	ROCKINGHAM	1,691.00		6,710.03
1996				
February	Bankfees S/D		13.90	6,696.13
	Interest	122.47		6,818.60
	ALBANY	3,895.00		10,713.60

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

TREASURER'S REPORT

DEPUTIES TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
MARCH 1994 - DECEMBER 1995
=====

OPENING BALANCE \$ 264.67

RECEIPTS:

ALBANY	11,609.00
ARMADALE	19,830.50
BEDFORDALE	12,082.50
BYFORD	11,855.75
KELMSCOTT	18,666.50
LAUNCESTON	14,279.50
LEGANA	8,711.25
ROCKINGHAM	6,364.25
WEST ALBANY	5,472.00
INTEREST	735.30
BEDFORDALE YOUTH	392.65
PBS LIQUIDATION	631.77

TOTAL RECEIPTS \$ 110,895.64

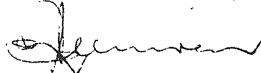
PAYMENTS:

HAMILTON COLLEGE 10/94	\$ 25,000.00
	3/95 25,000.00
	8/95 20,000.00
	12/95 30,000.00
TRANSFER FEES FOR ABOVE	100.00
BANK/STATE DUTY CHARGES	82.04

TOTAL PAYMENTS 100,182.04

BALANCE FEBRUARY 1996 \$ 10,713.60

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



A VAN LEEUWEN
TREASURER
HAMILTON THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE FUND

F. Report of Deputies for Training for the Ministry

NOTE:

As reported to Synod 1994, it was indicated that due to the collapse of the Permanent Building Society the funds of the Theological College would have an anticipated loss of \$ 894.81.

However, the Liquidators have made a final payment of \$ 631.77, resulting in that all but \$ 314.25 of the \$ 21,059.14 has been retrieved.

ASSESSMENTS OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA									
		1994		and		1995			
ALBANY	1994	291 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	\$ 37.50 =	\$	5,456.25		
		201 C/M	Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		3,819.00		
	1995	205 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		7,790.00		
ARMADALE	1994	262 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		4,912.50		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		4,978.00		
	1995	260 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		9,880.00		
BEDFORDALE	1994	158 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		2,962.50		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		3,002.00		
	1995	161 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		6,118.00		
BYFORD	1994	153 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		2,868.75		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		2,907.00		
	1995	160 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		6,080.00		
KELMSCOTT	1994	230 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		4,312.50		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		4,370.00		
	1995	263 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		9,994.00		
LAUNCESTON	1994	186 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		3,487.50		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		3,534.00		
	1995	191 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		7,258.00		
LEGANA	1994	115 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		2,156.25		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		2,185.00		
	1995	115 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		4,370.00		
ROCKINGHAM	1994	79 C/M	Jan - Jun	@	37.50 =		1,481.25		
			Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		1,501.00		
	1995	89 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		3,382.00		
WEST ALBANY	1994	Instituted August 1994							
		90 C/M	Jul - Dec	@	38.00 =		1,710.00		
	1995	99 C/M	Jan - Dec	@	38.00 =		3,762.00		

APPENDIX G

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

G1. Synod Procedures and Rules

DEPUTYSHIP:

Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott

REFERENCES:

Acts of Synod 1992, Article 156, Appendix M
Acts of Synod 1994, Articles 7 and 130

TASK

To revise the *Rules for Synods* and propose new *Rules* and domestic *Regulations* for consideration at Synod Kelmscott 1996.

BACKGROUND

1. The consistory of Kelmscott delegated the task to a committee comprising Rev Bouwman, br P Posthuma and br J Bonker.
2. The committee used as background material the *Report on Investigating Ways of Improving Synod Meeting Procedures and Decision Making* dated July 1993 which was circulated to the churches in that year, as well as the responses received on this report.
3. In commencing its task the committee concluded that a revision of the existing *Rules* should take place in accordance with pre-defined grammatical and other criteria. One of these was that no rule was to repeat or reinforce a previous rule or repeat the provisions of the *Church Order*.
4. The committee then reviewed the existing *Rules* with the following objectives :
 - (a) To eliminate all statements and rules made superfluous because they are already covered by the *Church Order*.
 - (b) To draft a new set of comprehensive domestic regulations which synod is able to add to or amend on its own authority and to incorporate into those regulations the provisions of the relevant existing *Rules*.

COMMENT

Review of RULES FOR SYNODS

- 1 The committee reviewed the present *Rules* and made the following observations:

Article 1 - Frequency of Synods

This Article repeats the contents of Article 45 of the *Church Order* and is therefore unnecessary.

Article 2 - Synod Delegates

This Article repeats the content of Articles 45 and 32 of the *Church Order* and is therefore unnecessary.

Article 3 - Convening the Synod

All the items of this Article ought to be at the discretion of synod itself and not be subject to Article 14 which presently permits any changes to these *Rules* to be sought only by means of a proposal from one or more of the

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

churches. The various present rules of this Article ought therefore to be relocated to the proposed new domestic *Regulations* for Synods.

Article 4 - Conduct of Synods

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 5 - Officers of Synod

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*. However it should be noted that Article 34 of the *Church Order* requires the appointment of at least a *chairman and a clerk* and to that extent synod itself cannot dispense with those offices. Obviously this would be a most unlikely possibility.

Article 6 - Voting

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 7 - Proposals and Decisions

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 8 - Execution of Decisions

This *Rule* is partially covered by Article 48 of the *Church Order*.

Article 9 - Deputies

Clause (a) of this *Rule* is sufficiently covered by Article 48 of the *Church Order* and is therefore considered unnecessary. Clause (b) is considered to belong to the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 10 - Approbation of Calls

The content of this Article are not rules for synods, but for the Classis-church and as such has no place in any *Rules* or *Regulations* for synods. Whether the intent of the present *Rule* is adequately covered by Article 6 of the *Church Order* is questionable but if it is to be retained it should perhaps appear as a separate 'Ecclesiastical Ordinance'.

Article 11 - Synod Costs

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 12 - Synod Treasurer

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 13 - Standard Proceedings

As for Article 3 above, these *Rules* are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed domestic *Regulations*.

Article 14 - Amendment of These Rules

This *Rule* would become redundant if, as recommended by the committee, synod dispenses with the *Rules for Synods* in their entirety.

Appendix - Model for Committee Proposals

As for Article 3 above, any reporting models are considered to belong within the jurisdiction of the proposed *Domestic Regulations*.

- 2 The committee came to the conclusion that after having removed all rules, which restated or reinforced *Church Order* provisions, only *domestic* 'rules' remained, ie. rules which synod of its own initiative ought to be empowered to modify, add to or delete as it deems necessary from time to time.
- 3 The committee then prepared draft *Regulations for the Conduct of Synod*. It comprises:-
 - the provisions of the remaining *Rules for Synods*

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- appropriate provisions of the Dutch *Domestic Regulations for General Synods*
 - appropriate provisions of fairly standard *Standing Orders* as used extensively in Australian society.
- The proposed *Regulations* are attached as an Appendix to this report.
- 4 The *Regulations* have been drafted on the following underlying principles:-
- To ensure that every delegate has an equal right to be heard and have his point of view considered.
 - To ensure every delegate has an equal right to vote and assist in the making of decisions.
 - To expedite the dispatch of business while protecting these rights of the delegates.
 - To prevent the hierarchy or dominance of any delegate or faction of delegates.
 - To assist the Chairman in running the meeting and protecting him, as much as possible, from having to apply *ad hoc* and arbitrary rulings which may subsequently be challenged or criticised.
- 5 In considering these *Regulations* synod is urged to resist the possible temptation to regard the *Standing Orders* section (Section 10) as unnecessary and inappropriate for our ecclesiastical assemblies simply because our general unfamiliarity with them or the perception that they are too confusing, will stifle discussion, or will be too time wasteful. It should be borne in mind that they are tried and proven rules that continue to serve both formal and voluntary, secular and non-secular, organisations well. It would be wrong to assume that meetings of synod will always be exempt from the areas of improper conduct that these *Standing Orders* have addressed.
- 6 It is emphasised that the section on *Standing Orders* is not as difficult or technical as it may appear at first sight. Many of the provisions are simply statements of procedure that synod has practised in the past, or are 'non-technical', or provisions that, hopefully, rarely need to be acted upon because they relate to maintaining order when emotions run high and the order, peace and harmony is under threat. It is precisely for such situations that pre-agreed rules should exist because they ought not to be devised in an *ad hoc* way under such circumstances.
- 7 In many respects the operation of synod under these new *Regulations* would not be greatly different than in the past. The main difference will be in the way proposals are introduced and debated, and how and when delegates may speak. They are based on the principle of equity and fairness and it should not be difficult for the delegates to adapt to the new practices. No doubt a number of our members will already be familiar with these rules through their exposure to them in their work place. Certainly the delegates need to familiarise themselves with the *Regulations* before coming to the meeting - as they needed to with the previous Rules - but it is unnecessary to commit them to memory or intensive learning. Of necessity the delegates who are appointed as Chairmen, as well as the other Officers, need to get to know them more so than the other delegates because of their leadership roles.
- 8 It is also emphasised that the proposed *Regulations* do not rule supreme over the actions of synod nor are absolute in any way. They are 'default' provisions, that is, they apply until synod decides in a proper way that they should not be applicable in certain instances. Hopefully though - and that depends on how 'complete' the *Regulations* are - the temporary setting aside of any of its provisions should be comparatively rare. If that should sub-

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

sequently prove not to be the case, such provisions should then be modified or abolished.

- 9 Perhaps the introduction of *Standing Orders* may be perceived to be something from the secular world and because of their abuse in those circles (eg. Parliament) therefore have no place in our ecclesiastical assemblies or will lead to a lowering of our standards. The response to that is that invariably the cause of improper or lower conduct does not lie in the rules themselves but in their application.
- 10 The deputyship did not consider it was necessary to introduce a further set of 'constitutional' rules, ie. ones that can only be changed at the instigation of a minor assembly, to govern the operation of synod. It felt the *Church Order* and the *Regulations* were sufficient at this time and that if further 'constitutional' provisions needed to be introduced in the future, these be sought by amendments to the *Church Order*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A That the report be received.
- B That the present *Rules for Synods* be suspended for Synod Kelmscott 1996.
- C That the draft *Regulations for the Conduct of Synod* be adopted on a trial basis and apply for the meeting of Synod Kelmscott 1996.
- D That the decision on adopting the *Regulations* be referred to the next general synod following Synod Kelmscott 1996.

G2. Regulations for the Conduct of Synod (Draft)

FOREWORD

- 1 The various Free Reformed Churches in Australia have mutually agreed to meet together from time to time - in a meeting termed a "synod" - in accordance with Article 45 of the *Church Order*. The churches have further agreed that at such a meeting only those matters shall be discussed "*which could not be finished in the minor assembly or which belong to its churches in common*" (Article 30, *Church Order*). By means of these meetings the churches seek to promote unity within the bond, strive for uniformity of their ecclesiastical procedures and practice, and assist each other wherever assistance is needed or sought.
- 2 The churches are represented at meetings of synod by members appointed by their consistory. The delegates have the duty to inform themselves of the information that is made available on all matters that are placed on the agenda, participate in the discussion and cast their vote when called upon to do so.
- 3 A delegate has a vote in his own right and is under no obligation to vote on any matter in accordance with the majority view of his consistory, where such a majority view is known or previously expressed. Delegates may be charged with specific instructions by their consistories and they shall be obliged to inform synod of such instructions.
- 4 To provide for the good order and the timely progress of synod it is fitting that there is an agreement on the procedure of the meeting. In the following articles a mutually agreed procedure, known as the *Regulations for the Conduct of Synod*, is set out.
- 5 Any amendment or addition to these *Regulations* must be in conformity with, and subservient to, the provisions of the *Church Order*.

SECTION 1. CONVENING SYNOD

- 1.1 A synod shall appoint, in alphabetic order, the church that is to convene the next general synod.

SECTION 2. DUTIES OF CONVENING CHURCH

Notification

- 2.1 The convening church shall, as much as possible in accordance with any instructions provided by the previous general synod, give the churches not less than six months' notice in writing of the meeting place, date and commencement time of synod.
- 2.2 The convening church shall notify the churches in writing of the closing date for correspondence and the postal address where items for the agenda will be received. Included in the notification shall be an invitation to submit items for inclusion on the draft agenda. The closing date shall be four months prior to the commencement of synod.
- 2.3 The convening church shall give the various deputyships appointed by the last held ordinary synod not less than six months notice in writing of the postal address and closing date by which their reports are to be submitted. The closing date shall be four months prior to the commencement of synod. The convening church shall include with this notification a copy of Section 7 of the *Regulations* and the formatting requirements for their report as specified in Section 9.
- 2.4 The convening church shall as soon as practicable after the closing date and at least three months prior to the commencement of synod, forward an unbound and unfolded copy of the draft agenda to each of the churches. The draft agenda shall be in the format specified in Section 9 and include all correspondence and documentation received up until the forwarding date.
- 2.5 The final closing date for correspondence and supplementary reports shall be not less than three weeks prior to the commencement of synod and an unbound copy of the supplementary material shall immediately thereafter be forwarded to each of the churches as well as two bound copies of the original draft agenda complete with the supplementary material. Each church shall also receive sent not less than four(4) copies of the *Regulations*.
- 2.6 In the case of an extra-ordinary synod, the times and conditions specified in this section shall, to the extent that it is practical to do so, be observed.

Meeting Facilities

- 2.7 The convening church shall make arrangements that will enable synod to carry out its work efficiently, giving attention to the following:
- accommodation for the plenary sessions
 - accommodation for the advisory committees
 - suitable sound amplification arrangements
 - photocopying facilities
 - word processing facilities and administrative support
 - refreshments and meals
 - lodging and care for non-local delegates and representatives
- 2.8 The convening church shall provide at least four(4) personal computers equipped with *Windows 3.1* (or higher version), a hard and 1.44Mb floppy disk drives and *Microsoft Word 6.0* (or higher version) word processing software. Not less than two(2) quality printers (laser or inkjet) shall be provided with suitable cabling and switching for the computers. It is preferable that the majority of the computers be the portable (notebook) kind.

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 2.9 Six (6) bound copies of the final draft agenda, together with loose inserts of copies of submissions received after the final closing date, and six(6) bound copies of the *Regulations* shall be placed on the synod table prior to the commencement of synod.

Opening of Synod

- 2.10 The convening church shall, at the appointed time and place:
- open synod in the Christian manner
 - examine the credentials of the delegates and report on them
 - conduct the election of officers in the following order: chairman, vice-chairman, first clerk and second clerk
 - hand over the management to the elected chairman
 - hand over to the officers the agenda and all associated items, including submissions received after the final closing date
 - inform the officers what arrangements have been made to enable the efficient conduct of synod.

SECTION 3. OFFICERS

- 3.1 Synod shall from among the delegates elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, First Clerk and Second Clerk who collectively are designated as the officers of synod.
- 3.2 The Chairman shall preside over the plenary sessions of synod and have responsibility for the orderly conduct and efficient progress of the meeting. He shall conduct the meeting in observance of the *Regulations* and shall require compliance of them by the delegates. He shall exercise oversight over the preparatory work for the sessions.
- 3.3 The Vice-Chairman shall support the Chairman in leading synod and substitutes as Chairman when the need arises. He shall care for the material and financial interests of synod and assist the other officers in the execution of their duties where required. He shall, in consultation with the Chairman, prepare the *Press Release* of synod and provide procedural advice to the advisory committees. He shall see to it that advisers and other persons described in Section 4 are acquainted with the *Regulations* pertaining to that Section.
- 3.4 The First Clerk shall prepare the *Acts of Synod*. Whenever a part of the *Acts* is ready in draft form, he shall present them to the meeting for adoption. At the conclusion of synod he shall arrange for the *Acts* to be printed, bound and distributed to the churches and other outlets. He shall have responsibility for the word-processing/copying facilities and ensure the timely distribution of material to the delegates.
- 3.5 The Second Clerk shall prepare all outward correspondence, including written advice of decisions and appointments to all concerned parties. He shall see to it that a copy of every item of outward correspondence is placed in the synod *Archives*. He shall substitute as the First Clerk when the need arises.
- 3.6 The officers shall be authorised to formulate the following proposals for consideration by synod:
- the closing period for the acceptance of items for the agenda
 - the number of advisory committees and the items to be dealt with by them
 - the chairmen of the advisory committees
 - in consultation with the appointed chairmen of the advisory committees, the membership, and the items to be dealt with by those committees

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- any amendment to the *Regulations*
 - the session commencement times, time frames and order in which the agenda business is to be conducted
 - the nomination of deputies
 - the attendance and participation in a plenary session of any adviser, visitor, representative or member of a deputyship.
- 3.7 The officers shall not propose to refer to any advisory committee items that are controversial and on which opinions are known to be strongly divided.
- 3.8 The officers shall not propose to refer to any advisory committee items that are straightforward and which do not require any research or investigation.
- 3.9 The officers, under the leadership of the Vice-Chairman, shall maintain contact with the advisory committees and persons to whom the various agenda items have been entrusted, exercise supervision over their tasks and timetables, and shall take care that the items, reports and advice are distributed in a manner that provides sufficient time for the delegates and advisers to study them.
- 3.10 The Chairman and First Clerk shall not be appointed as members of an advisory committee.

SECTION 4. ADVISERS

- 4.1 Synod may, on a proposal from the officers or an advisory committee, or a seconded proposal from the delegates, resolve to invite or admit to any plenary session or advisory committee any:
- minister within the bond of churches who has not been delegated to synod,
 - accredited visitor or delegate from overseas sister churches,
 - accredited visitor or delegate from bodies with whom synod has established, or may establish, ecclesiastical contact,
 - member or members of a deputyship, or
 - communicant member with particular skills or expertise required by synod to be in attendance for the purpose of making an address, answering questions, making explanations and the giving of advice when requested.
- 4.2 Synod shall, as far as it is practical to do so, provide any person or persons described in *Regulation* 4.1 with as much prior notice as possible of their desired presence and specify the matters on which their advice will or may be sought.
- 4.3 A person or persons admitted to a session or advisory committee shall confine their activities at the meeting to giving their address and answering questions or making explanations as objectively and succinctly as possible. They shall speak only when requested by the Chairman to do so and shall under no circumstances participate in any gratuitous discussion or debate on any matter. In a plenary session they shall rise to speak. They shall vacate their place at the meeting table at the conclusion of their explanation or questioning or when requested by the Chairman. They shall not remain in audience of any closed session of synod, or any advisory committee meeting, at the conclusion of their explanation or questioning unless synod or the advisory committee, by resolution, decides otherwise.
- 4.4 As far as practicable synod shall conclude the questioning and explanations provided by persons described in *Regulation* 4.1 and exclude them from the meeting prior to commencing any debate on the matter.

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 4.5 The *Regulations* pertaining to the *Standing Orders* (Section 10) shall be suspended during the address, explanation and questioning of persons described in *Regulation 4.1*.
- 4.6 Any person or persons described in *Regulation 4.1* shall be acquainted with the *Regulations* set out in this Section prior to their admittance to the meeting.

SECTION 5. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- 5.1 After the officers have been elected the Chairman shall request the delegates and any advisers then present to rise and by that action those rising shall be held to reaffirm their agreement with the *Word of God* and the *Confessions*. The same promise shall also be required at the first attendance of those who are present as substitute for a delegate.
- 5.2 Other than in cases of personal matters or where synod decides otherwise by a majority vote of not less than two-thirds, it shall not meet in closed session. Whenever synod meets in closed session all those who are not delegates, advisers, or who are present at the invitation of synod, shall leave the meeting.
- 5.3 Members of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, or any of its foreign sister churches, have the right of admission to all open sessions of synod.
- 5.4 Delegates who are not members of a particular advisory committee have the right to attend and remain present at such meetings as observers but shall not participate in its discussions except at the invitation of the committee and then only in an advisory capacity in which case such observers shall, with respect to their participation in the meeting, comply with the provisions of *Regulation 4.3*.
- 5.5 The commencement times and places for the next sessions of synod and the meetings of the advisory committees shall be decided by synod on a proposal of the officers or advisory committee, or a seconded proposal from the delegates, and decided in a plenary session at, or prior to, any adjournment. In exceptional circumstances the officers are authorised to vary the commencement times previously decided. Exceptional circumstances include - but is not limited to - a life-threatening illness or death of a delegate or close relative, a funeral or other serious situation requiring the recall of a minister or delegate to his home congregation.
- 5.6 Other than personal greetings and legitimate appeals synod shall not declare admissible submissions, correspondence and petitions received from individual members.
- 5.7 The daily closing of synod with prayer shall be by the delegates in alphabetical order of their surnames.
- 5.8 As far as it is practical to do so, the *Acts* of the proceedings of each day shall be presented for adoption in an open session on the following sitting day.
- 5.9 Synod shall, on its own authority, be authorised to amend, add to, or delete any of these *Regulations* but any motion for its amendment, addition or deletion shall not be adopted unless supported by at least a two-thirds majority of the delegates.

SECTION 6. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 6.1 Each advisory committee shall consist of not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members and be chaired by the person appointed by synod.
- 6.2 An advisory committee shall appoint an acting chairman to substitute for the chairman as the need arises.

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 6.3 Copies of all items entrusted to the an advisory committee shall be made available to all members of that committee.
- 6.4 The chairman shall take responsibility for all original items provided to his advisory committee and return such items to the First Clerk after having dealt with them.
- 6.5 Unless the matter under consideration is able to be finalised by a straightforward recommendation to synod, an advisory committee shall prepare, in the format specified in Section 9, a report for consideration by synod. In the compilation of its report the committee shall comply with the provisions of *Regulation 7.5*. In the case of substantial matters a committee may first distribute a provisional report with draft conclusions to the delegates with the request to submit written comment on it by a certain date and time and thereafter submit a final report to synod. Any recommendation or report prepared by an advisory committee shall be signed by its chairman and at least one other member of the committee prior to its presentation to synod.
- 6.6 Unless otherwise decided by an advisory committee, the committee chairman shall be the person who introduces and presents the committee report to synod.

SECTION 7. DEPUTIES

- 7.1 Deputies shall be appointed in a closed session of synod.
- 7.2 Synod shall provide the deputyships with clearly defined written instructions for their tasks. The deputies shall ensure that they will confine their tasks to the terms of reference of those instructions.
- 7.3 The deputyships shall submit their reports, and any supplementary reports, in the format specified in Section 9. As far as is practical supplementary reports shall be avoided. The content of supplementary reports shall be confined to information that was not available at the time the earlier report was sent to the convening church or to relevant events that have taken place since that time. The admissibility of supplementary reports or reports received after the final closing date shall be decided by synod.
- 7.4 A deputyship shall submit only one report on their terms of reference. Minority reports of one or more members of the deputyship shall not be admissible. In cases where the members of a deputyship cannot be unanimous in a recommendation, or a number of recommendations, the deputyship shall ensure that all arguments for or against a particular recommendation are set out in the report. Such a report shall conclude with recommendations that are either unanimous or the views of the majority of its members. In instances where members of the deputyship are numerically evenly divided on any recommendation it shall report this to synod and not make any recommendation. In the event where the opinions of the members of a deputyship on any term of reference, or any recommendation, are divided to the extent that cooperation in the production of a single composite report is not possible, the convener of that deputyship shall report this in writing to synod and recommend that the deputyship be discharged. In such a report, which shall be dealt with in a closed session of synod, the convener shall set out what attempts and efforts were made to reconcile the opposing factions and fulfil their terms of reference.
- 7.5 A deputyship shall endeavour to keep the body of its report as brief, concise, matter-of-fact and relevant as possible, setting it out in short, separated paragraphs with the use of numbering, headings, sub-headings and other reporting mechanisms. Lengthy discourses and quotations shall be avoided and where they are necessary they shall as much as possible be included as Ap-

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pendices to the report. The deputyships shall take particular care in the formulation of their recommendations, avoiding complex, all-inclusive proposals and instead separate them into a series of short, simple, single-issue recommendations that synod can use as draft resolutions and deal with systematically and efficiently.

- 7.6 Deputies shall be reimbursed for costs incurred in the execution of their task and such reimbursement shall be within the guidelines provided to them by, or on behalf of, synod. Deputyships shall present details of their expenditures to synod for auditing prior to being discharged.

SECTION 8. TREASURER and FINANCE

- 8.1 The duties of the synod Treasurer shall be to:
- prepare financial estimates and inform the churches of their share of synod costs,
 - collect and bank the monies received from the churches as their share of the synod costs,
 - invest, in an authorised trustee investment banking institution, monies surplus to the immediate and foreseeable requirements of synod,
 - pay all properly authorised and documented synod expenditures and properly keep the books of account, setting out accurately all disbursements and balances of funds held,
 - submit, when required to do so, the books of account to the authorised deputies of synod for scrutiny and/or audit.
- 8.2 Synod, after acceptance of a satisfactory audit report, shall discharge the Treasurer.
- 8.3 Itemised accounts of authorised synod expenditure incurred by the convening church, deputyships or delegates, shall be presented to the Treasurer for payment.
- 8.4 The several members of a deputyship appointed for one specific task shall submit a joint statement of expenditure.
- 8.5 The share of each church in synod costs shall be in proportion to the number of its confessing members as at the first day of January of the year in which synod is held.

SECTION 9. FORMAT OF AGENDAS, REPORTS & ACTS

Draft Agenda

- 9.1 The initial draft agenda shall comprise single sided, A4 size, 80 gsm, white pages. The pages shall be a copy of typewritten or handwritten material of a quality suitable for further photocopying. Poor quality or poorly legible submissions shall be transcribed in *Word 6.0* (or higher version).
- 9.2 The bound copies of the final draft agenda shall comply with the provisions of *Regulation 9.1* and be serial page numbered, indexed and be colour coded as follows: Main agenda - white, Deputies' Reports - Gold, Minor Assembly Submissions - Green, Other Correspondence - Pink. The different coloured sections shall be kept together.
- 9.3 The font type, font size, margins, headings and sub-headings used by the convening church in preparing the draft agenda shall generally conform to the requirements specified in *Regulation 9.5*.
- 9.4 The order of business shall be listed on the draft agenda in the following order, or as near thereto as is practicable:
- 1 Opening by the Convening Church
 - 2 Signing of the Attendance List and Examination of Credentials
 - 3 Election of Officers

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 4 Constitution of Synod
- 5 Delegates' agreement with the Three Forms of Unity
- 6 Adoption of the Agenda
- 7 Adoption of Meeting Procedure
- 8 Incoming Correspondence
- 9 Instructions
- 10 Reports by Classis Churches
- 11 Reports of Deputies and discharge of Deputies
- 12 Audit of the Books of the Treasurer and discharge of Treasurer
- 13 Calculation of the Percentages of the Churches' Share of Synod Costs
- 14 Appointment of Deputies
- 15 Appointment of Convening Church, and the Place and Time of the Next Synod
- 16 Questions according to Article 41 of the Church Order
- 17 Personal Questions
- 18 Adoption of Acts
- 19 Approval of Press Release
- 20 Censure according to Article 47 of the Church Order
- 21 Closing of Synod

Advisory Committee and Deputies Reports

9.5 Reports of advisory committees and deputyships shall comply with the following formatting specifications:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| - WORD PROCESSING: | <i>MS Word 6.0</i> (or higher version) |
| - MARGINS (top, left and right): | 1 inch or 25mm |
| - TEXT FONT: | Times New Roman, 12 pt, normal |
| - TEXT SPACING: | Single line |
| - MAIN HEADER: | Times New Roman, 16 pt, normal |
| - HEADING 1: | Arial, 14 pt, bold, normal |
| - HEADING 2: | Arial 12 pt, bold, italic |
| - PAGE HEADER - CENTRE: | Page Number (Except first Page) |
| - RIGHT: | Title of Subject,
Name of Deputy or Committee
(Times New Roman, 10 pt, italic) |
| - PAGE FOOTER: | None |
| - REPORT FOOTER - LEFT: | Computer File Name and Extension
(Arial 10 pt, normal) |

Underlining shall not be used in any headers.

9.6 The reports of deputyships and advisory committees shall as much as possible conform to the following structure:

< Title of Subject>
< Name of Deputyship or Committee>
(Except title page)

SUBJECT: <Title of Subject>

DEPUTYSHIP: <Name of Deputyship>
(or COMMITTEE) <Name(s) of Member(s)>

REFERENCES: <Times New Roman 12 pt italic>
(to previous synod <Reference #1>
decision(s) on this <Previous Reference #2>
subject) <Previous Reference #3>
<Etc.>

TASK

< State the task given to the deputyship or advisory committee, quoting, verbatim, the terms of reference provided by synod.>

BACKGROUND

< In numbered point form provide an overview, in chronological order, how the deputyship or committee went about their task, whom they consulted, what parameters they adopted, etc. These statements should be brief and matter-of-fact.>

COMMENT

< This generally forms the bulk of the report and contains all the argumentation and counter-argumentation of the issues dealt with. Text should be set out in numbered paragraphs with use of headings and sub-headings.>

RECOMMENDATION(S)

< Refer guidelines set out in *Regulation 7.5.*>

FILENAME.DOC (At end of report)

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 9.7 Reports of deputyships shall be forwarded, unfolded and unbound, to the convening church on single-sided, 80 gsm, white paper. An electronic copy of the report, and any supplementary report, shall be provided on a 3.5" computer diskette to the convening church prior to the commencement of synod. The diskette shall be labelled with the electronic file name(s) of the report(s).

Acts of Synod

- 9.8 All matters of substance shall be recorded in the *Acts* under the headings of MATERIAL, DECISION(S) and GROUNDS. Proposals declared in the affirmative shall be recorded as ADOPTED in the *Acts*. Proposals declared in the negative shall be recorded as DEFEATED in the *Acts*. Reference shall not be made in the *Acts* whether or not any decision was unanimous.
- 9.9 The *Acts* shall not record the names of the movers and seconders of proposals, motions or amendments.
- 9.10 Where a delegate requests his name be recorded pursuant to *Regulation* 11.7, the name of that delegate, and the fact that he dissented, shall be recorded in the *Acts* in the place immediately following the declaration of the decision to which he dissented.
- 9.11 The starting, finishing and adjournment times, as well as the session periods, day, date and sitting day numbers, shall be recorded in chronological order. All noteworthy events in the plenary sessions shall be recorded including Scripture passages read, Psalms or Hymns sung, prayers rendered - and by whom, absentees and the presence and departures of alternate delegates, visitors and advisers.
- 9.12 The *Acts* shall record the name of any delegate who, pursuant to Article 32 of the *Church Order*, was disqualified from taking part in a vote.
- 9.13 Separate *Acts* shall not be produced for the open and closed sessions unless synod, by resolution, decides otherwise for any particular matter.
- 9.14 The printing format for the publication of the *Acts* shall be decided by the Officers.

Synod Regulations

- 9.15 In any updated reprint of the *Regulations*, a continuous historical log of all amendments, including the text of any words, phrases, sentences or regulation deleted or added - together with a reference to the synod at which this was done - shall be recorded in small print at the place of, or immediately below, the relevant *Regulation*.

SECTION 10. CONDUCT IN PLENARY SESSION (STANDING ORDERS)

Observers and Visitors

- 10.1 The admission of observers and visitors to the proceedings of synod shall be under and subject to the condition that no expression of dissent or approval, conversation or interruption to the proceedings of synod shall take place, and in the event of any breach of this condition, the Chairman may at his discretion, and without a vote of synod, require the person or persons so offending to withdraw from the audience.

Urgent Business

- 10.2 If any delegate has urgent business to place before the meeting he may move the suspension of the *Standing Orders*, and if agreed to by synod such business shall take precedence of all other.

Suspension of Standing Orders

- 10.3 Except when required to do so pursuant to *Regulation 4.5*, synod may, at any time during a debate, suspend the operation of any or all of the *Standing Orders* on a motion to that effect being duly moved and seconded. In an open session a motion calling for the suspension of the *Standing Orders* shall only be sought for reasons of necessity or expediency, or the hearing or questioning of an adviser or visitor, and the motion shall not be adopted unless an absolute majority of the members of synod, or a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote, whichever is the lesser, have voted in favour of it. During the suspension of *Standing Orders* delegates need not rise to speak but they shall not speak until the Chairman invites them to do so.
- 10.4 Any delegate moving the suspension of a *Standing Order* shall state the object of the motion but discussion shall not otherwise take place thereon.

Written Reports

- 10.5 Written reports or advice received by the delegates in a timely manner shall not be read aloud but shall be dealt with directly.

Quorum and Starting Time

- 10.6 A synod shall not conduct any business unless at least three-quarters of the number of delegates are present and seated at the meeting table and all delegates were given proper and adequate prior notice of the session commencement time. Synod shall not commence any open session prior to the time it had, by resolution, previously decided. Synod shall not commence any closed session prior to its scheduled commencement time unless all delegates are present and seated. If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the scheduled commencement time the officers shall adjourn the session to another period on the same or subsequent sitting day.

Confirmation of Acts

- 10.7 The draft *Acts* of any preceding open or closed session, not previously confirmed, shall be submitted as the first business at any open session period and no discussion shall be permitted thereon except as to their accuracy as a record of the proceedings.

Discussion

- 10.8 Discussion relating to the introduction of a formal proposal or motion shall be kept to a minimum and be restricted to procedure and matter-of-fact issues. Under no circumstance shall such discussion include argumentation in support of, or in opposition to, the substance of a proposal or motion except in the wording or the framing thereof.

Speakers to Rise

- 10.9 A delegate desiring to speak shall rise before addressing the meeting but he shall not speak until invited to do so by the Chairman.

Delegates to Address the Chairman

- 10.10 A delegate moving a proposal, motion or amendment, or taking part in the discussion thereon, shall address the Chairman.

Limiting Speaking Time

- 10.11 Synod may, by resolution on a proposal of the Chairman, officers, or a motion from the meeting, limit the time period the delegates, an adviser

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or visitor shall be permitted to speak on a motion or matter. Where the period of debate on any motion has been limited every delegate shall be allocated the same length of time. Any time limit decided pursuant to this *Regulation* shall be held to be the maximum time a person can speak and any allotted time unused by any speaker shall not, in total or in part, be transferred to, or taken over by, another speaker.

Point of Order

- 10.12 A delegate who has the floor shall not be interrupted except on a point of order, in which event he shall refrain from speaking until the point of order has been heard and decided, whereupon the delegate so interrupted may, if permitted, proceed.
- 10.13 A delegate expressing a difference of opinion with or contradicting a speaker shall not be recognised as raising a point of order.

Chairman May Require Proposal in Writing

- 10.14 A delegate wishing to submit an original proposal, motion or amendment shall, if required by the Chairman, put the proposal, motion or amendment in writing.

Unopposed Business

- 10.15 Upon a proposal being moved the Chairman may ask the meeting if any delegate opposes it. If no one signifies opposition to it, or his opposition to it being treated as unopposed business, the Chairman may declare the motion carried without debate and without taking a vote thereon. Any motion declared adopted in this manner shall be deemed a decision of synod.

Proposals, Motions or Amendments Submitted in Writing

- 10.16 Synod may, by resolution on a proposal of the Chairman, officers, or a motion from the meeting, invite the delegates to submit in writing, by a stipulated time and date, any suggested original proposal or motion, or amendment to a motion or matter that has been debated but has not been put to the vote. The order in which multiple submissions received on the same matter shall be given into debate shall be at the discretion of the officers but all delegates shall be given prior written advice of all proposals or motions received pursuant to this *Regulation*.
- 10.17 Proposals or motions pursuant to *Regulation* 10.16 can only be submitted by delegates and must be seconded by at least one other delegate.

Proposals, Motions or Amendments to be Seconded

- 10.18 Except as provided by *Regulations* 10.15 and 10.19, no proposal, motion or amendment shall be debated, put to the vote or adopted unless it has been seconded.

Proposals Not Required to be Seconded

- 10.19 Any proposal, motion or recommendation supported by the majority of the officers or the members of an advisory committee may be put into debate without requiring such proposal, motion or recommendation to be seconded.

Priority of Speakers

- 10.20 If two or more delegates speak at the same time the Chairman shall decide which shall have priority.

Chairman to be Heard

- 10.21 Whenever the Chairman rises during the debate any delegate then speaking shall cease speaking and the meeting is to be silent, so that the Chairman may be heard without interruption.

Chairman to Hand Over Chairmanship During Participation in Debate

- 10.22 When the Chairman desires to speak in debate on a matter of substance he shall hand over the chairmanship to the Vice-Chairman prior to commencing his speech.

Delegate not to Speak Twice

- 10.23 No delegate shall speak more than once on the same question except by way of explanation, or in reply, upon any original proposal or motion of which he was the mover or as the mover of any amendment then before the meeting. No delegate shall speak to any question after the mover shall have been permitted to reply provided that synod may, by resolution, suspend the operation of this *Regulation* during the debate of any proposal, motion or amendment.

Personal Explanation

- 10.24 A delegate making a personal explanation shall confine it to a succinct explanation of a material part of his former speech which may have been misunderstood, and to the explanation itself, and shall not refer to matters not strictly necessary for that purpose nor seek to strengthen his former argument by new matter or by replying to other delegates.

Withdrawal of Motion

- 10.25 A proposal, motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of synod, which shall be signified without debate, and no delegate shall be permitted to speak on it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal, unless such permission shall have been refused.

Division of Complicated Motion

- 10.26 The Chairman at his discretion may, or synod may by motion without debate, order a complicated proposal, motion or amendment to be subdivided and put in the form of two or more motions.

Speaking in Reply

- 10.27 A delegate who was the mover of a proposal, motion or amendment shall, at the conclusion of the speeches of all the other delegates who chose to speak on the motion, have the right of reply. A delegate speaking in reply shall not introduce any new matter but shall strictly confine himself to answering previous speakers.

No Speaking After Motion Put

- 10.28 No delegate may speak to any question after the same has been put to the vote by the Chairman.

No Adverse Reflection on Synod

- 10.29 A delegate shall not reflect adversely upon a resolution of synod, except on a motion that the resolution be rescinded.

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No Adverse Reflection on Delegate

- 10.30 A delegate shall not reflect adversely upon the character or actions of another delegate nor impute any motive to a member unless synod resolves, without debate, that the question then before it cannot otherwise be adequately considered.

Continued Irrelevance

- 10.31 The Chairman may call the attention of synod to continued irrelevance, tedious repetition, intemperate language or any breach of order or decorum on the part of a delegate, and may direct such delegate, if speaking, to discontinue his speech, and thereupon such delegate shall cease speaking.

Chairman May Call to Order

- 10.32 The Chairman shall preserve order and may on his own authority call any delegate to order whenever in his opinion there shall be cause for doing so.

Definition of Order

- 10.33 Any delegate who shall do any thing or behave in any manner contrary to any section of the Standing Orders shall be deemed to be out of order.

Infraction of Standing Orders

- 10.34 A delegate is entitled to direct the attention of the Chairman to any infraction of the Standing Orders by any delegate of synod.

Rulings by Chairman

- 10.35 The Chairman shall decide all questions of order or practice and his decision shall be final and be accepted by synod without argument or comment unless in any particular case synod shall thereupon resolve that a different ruling shall be substituted for the ruling given by the Chairman. Discussion shall be permitted on any such motion.

Chairman May Adjourn Meeting

- 10.36 If during a session of synod the Chairman is of the opinion that by reason of disorder or otherwise the business of synod cannot effectually be continued, he may adjourn the meeting for a specified period, whereafter synod shall re-assemble and decide, without debate, whether business is to proceed.
- 10.37 Where after any proceeding under Regulation 10.36 the Chairman is again of opinion that the business of synod cannot effectually be continued, he may close or adjourn the session.

Proposals, Motions or Amendments

- 10.38 When a proposal, motion or amendment is under debate another motion shall not be received unless it is a Procedural motion of a type set out in Regulation 10.39 or one of a nature necessary for the observance of the Regulations or the Church Order.

Procedural Motions

- 10.39 In addition to the other proposals, motions or amendments authorised by the Regulations the following motions may be received when a proposal or motion is under debate:
- (1) That the motion be amended.
 - (2) That synod do now adjourn.
 - (3) That the debate be adjourned.
 - (4) That synod continue in closed session.
 - (5) Where the question before synod is a recommendation from an advisory committee, a delegate may move that the question be referred back to the committee.

(1) “ That the Motion be Amended”

Relevancy of Amendment

- 10.40 Every amendment shall be relevant to the proposal or motion on which it is moved and must substantially support the nature and intent of that proposal or motion.

One Amendment at a Time

- 10.41 Only one amendment shall be discussed at a time. As often as an amendment is defeated, another amendment may be moved before the original motion is put to the vote. Where an amendment is adopted, one further amendment to the original motion, as amended, and no more, may be moved.
- 10.42 In speaking to an amendment a delegate may give notice of his intention to move a further amendment.
- 10.43 Where an amendment is adopted, the original motion as amended shall for all purposes of subsequent debate and subject only to *Regulation* 10.41, be treated as an original motion.

(2) “ That Synod do Now Adjourn”

Time to Move

- 10.44 A delegate may, at the conclusion of the speech of any other delegate or on the conclusion of any business, move without notice that synod do now adjourn and that motion shall state the time and date to which the adjournment is to be made.

Procedure Before Further Motion

- 10.45 If a motion for the adjournment of synod is defeated, the subject then under consideration or the next scheduled item of the agenda, shall be discussed or debated before any subsequent motion for adjournment shall be entertained.

One Motion Only

- 10.46 At the same session of synod no delegate may move or second more than one motion for its adjournment.

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(3)“ That the Debate be Adjourned”

Time to Move

- 10.47 A delegate may, at the conclusion of the speech of another delegate, move without notice that the debate be adjourned to a later hour of the same day or to another day.

No Discussion

- 10.48 No discussion shall be allowed upon a motion for the adjournment of a debate.

Mover to Speak First

- 10.49 On resuming an adjourned debate the delegate who moved its adjournment shall be entitled to speak first provided that he has not previously spoken on the motion.

One Motion Only

- 10.50 At the same session of synod no delegate may move or second more than one motion for the adjournment of the same debate.

(4)“ That Synod Continue in Closed Session”

No Discussion

- 10.51 No discussion shall be allowed upon a motion calling for synod to continue its discussion in closed session.

SECTION 11. VOTING

Open Voting

- 11.1 At any plenary session of synod, or at any advisory committee meeting, a delegate shall vote on the question openly and not by secret ballot except when a secret ballot is required pursuant to *Regulation* 11.8 or synod or the advisory committee, by resolution, decides otherwise.

Method of Taking Votes

- 11.2 The Chairman shall, in taking the vote on any proposal, motion or amendment, ask those in favour to indicate such, either on the voices or by a show of hands, and he may do so as often as is necessary to enable him to form and declare his opinion as to whether the affirmative or negative has the majority.

Concluding Vote

- 11.3 If a matter contains two or more motions and these have been separately put to the vote, the Chairman shall put the composite proposal to a concluding vote.

Time of Voting

- 11.4 Wherever possible decisions should be made unanimously and on matters of principle the Chairman shall call for a vote only after all efforts to obtain a consensus have been exhausted.

Declaring the Result of a Vote

- 11.5 A matter shall be declared ADOPTED or DEFEATED according to the vote of a simple majority (except as otherwise required in *Regulations* 5.2, 5.9 and 10.3) of the delegates then present and eligible to vote on the matter

G. Report of Deputies for Revision of Synod Procedures and Rules

- 11.6 If the number of votes for or against a proposal or motion is equal, it shall be declared DEFEATED.

Dissenting with a Decision

- 11.7 A delegate dissenting with a decision on a matter of substance or principle may request that his name, and the fact that he dissented with the decision, be recorded in the Acts but he may not require that other dissenting delegates make the same request nor request that the grounds of his objection be recorded.

Voting on Persons

- 11.8 Questions concerning persons, except appointments proposed by the officers with the prior consent of the meeting or pursuant to *Regulation 3.6*, shall be decided by secret ballot.

Election Rules

- 11.9 Ballot papers that contain a name that does not clearly identify a person, or ballot papers left blank or that contain a greater number of names than stipulated, shall be declared invalid.
- 11.10 Those who receive the largest number of votes shall be declared elected provided that this number is not less than one-half of the number of valid votes cast.
- 11.11 If there is no result after two free ballots, any subsequent ballot shall be restricted to the candidates who received the most votes in the last held free ballot. If this ballot results in a tied vote a further ballot shall be held between those who received the highest number of equal votes and if this results in a further tied vote, the eldest candidate shall be declared elected.

APPENDIX H

H. Report of Deputies for Archives and Library of Synod

Consistory of the Church of Bedfordale, as Archivist of Synod, received and adopted the following Report from its Archivist and Librarian, sr J VanderPlas.

- 1 Consistory accepts the conclusion in paragraph 1; and adds as its opinion that microfilm is probably no longer an acceptable long-term storage medium. In the given situation, Consistory recommends to hold the matter in abeyance until action is required.
- 2 Consistory has approved the request in paragraph 2, and is in the process of seeking the School Board's approval.

FREE REFORMED CHURCH OF BEDFORDALE

HJ Dekker (chairman)
J Eikelboom (secretary)
15 February 1996

H1. Report of Synod Archivist

1 SYNOD 1994 INSTRUCTIONS

- a To make a microfilm record of the archives on a selective basis in accordance with the recommendations of the report of the church in charge of synod archives;
- b To present a detailed report to the next synod. (Acts 1992, Article 34, points 3, 4)

Having checked the documents, with the assistance of Br J. Eikelboom, it was concluded that for most documents the expense of microfilming is not justified. This is based on the following observations:

- 1) The few documents that would warrant such preservation are still legible and in good condition. Some documents are flimsy because of the poor quality of paper used at the time, but on the whole they are still intact and very legible. In cases of illegibility it is more because the print was light or the quality of photocopying poor at the time. Re-photocopying them today would make little improvement.
- 2) The documents contained in the archives do not show signs of ageing. They receive minimal handling, are safely stored in a fire-proof cabinet and are well protected from the elements.

2 LOCATION OF ARCHIVE COLLECTION

Synod archives are currently stored in a fire-proof filing cabinet in the store room of the Bedfordale Church building. Apart from the fact that whatever else is stored in this room does not always permit clean or ready access to the cabinet, it would be greatly appreciated if consistory would authorise and organise the transfer of the cabinet to the Library at the Armadale John Calvin Senior High School. The advantages would be improved security for the documents and greater convenience to myself. Since only photocopies of documents may be borrowed, it means documents must first be removed from the cabinet, photocopied elsewhere, and then returned again. However, a prompt return of the original documents to the cabinet has not always been possible, and this could be avoided if the cabinet is relocated to the proposed location. This would also save driving up and down on my part.

3 CONTENTS OF SYNOD ARCHIVES

- ITEMS NOT PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN CONTENTS OF ARCHIVES

88.14 Sermon Proposal by J. Koelewijn

88.15 Acts of extraordinary synod 1988

Documents relating to Colloquium for Rev. C. Kleyn, 31 Jan 1990.

- ADDITIONS TO ARCHIVES AFTER SYNOD 1992

62.23A Report from deputies for church book in English language

72.1.16(b) Report from deputies for church book in English language

78.34 Report from deputies for church book in English language

- ITEMS FROM SYNOD 1994 - SEE THE ATTACHED REVISED LISTING OF THE CONTENTS OF SYNOD ARCHIVES

- REVISED CONTENTS LIST OF SYNOD ARCHIVES

Please find attached a cumulated list, (including the computer disk) of the contents of synod archives, listing all items from synod 1954 to 1994 inclusive, incorporating all additions to the archive collection since the last cumulated list printed in the Acts of the 1990 Synod, as well as some amendments to the listing itself.

(PLEASE NOTE: I draw your attention to the fact that no minutes for any closed sessions for the 1990 and 1994 synods have been received to date.)

4 SUBJECT INDEX TO ARCHIVES' CONTENTS (CORRESPONDENCE INWARD ONLY)

Article 126, Acts 1990 recommended the compilation of a subject index of the archives' contents. This has now been completed and a copy has been attached. (The enclosed computer disk holds a copy of the file). Please note however that this index has been restricted to correspondence inward only. Deputies' reports are published and indexed in the Acts of Synod, and since most outward correspondence relates to Synod decisions printed in the Acts, these items have not been included in this index. However, archival copies of deputies' reports and outward correspondence items are listed in the chronological contents list of synod archives.

5 CONTENTS OF SYNOD LIBRARY

- ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY OF SYNOD

Acts of the 1994 Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

(PLEASE NOTE: With regard to Acts of Synods of Sister Churches, the last copies received for storage in the archives are 1989 (Canada), 1984-85 (The Netherlands) and 1978 (South Africa). I am of the understanding that these should be passed on to the archivist by deputies "immediately after the next Synod from date of receipt," Article 27, Acts of Synod 1980. However, this has not been the practice over the last few years and makes for some rather large stock gaps in the collection).

6 LOANS FROM ARCHIVES

The following items were loaned from the archives and library:

Rev. Veldman: 16/6/94 Acts of General Synod, Groningen-Zuid 1978

Rev. Bouwman: 28/7/95 Documents 85.3.22, 85.3.24, 90.28, 90.29, 90.44, 90.45, 90.52

Rev. Bouwman: 22/1/96: Acts of Synod of FRCA 1956; 90.14

Rev. Bouwman: 24/1/96: Documents 83.3.13c, 92.1.2

7 INSPECTION

The archives were inspected by two representatives of Byford on January 5th, 1996.

H2. Cronological Index to Synod Archives

SYNOD - 1954

- Minutes SEE: Secret Archives
- 54.1 Attendance list.
 - 54.2 Opening by Rev. Pels on behalf of the convening Church - Armadale
 - 54.3 Credentials - FRC Armadale
 - 54.4 Credentials - FRC Launceston
 - 54.5 Credentials - FRC Albany (for 1 delegate)
 - 54.6 Credentials - FRC Albany (for 2 delegates)
 - 54.7 Letter from delegate C. Plug about his replacement delegate
 - 54.8 Agenda
 - 54.9 Letter from FRC Albany - 5 points for the agenda
 - 54.10 Letter from FRC A'dale - 14 points for the agenda
 - 54.11 Letter from FRC L'ton - 5 points for the agenda
 - 54.12 Letter from P. v.d. Steen, Albany - complaints about holding Synod
 - 54.13 Synod's reply to P. v.d. Steen
 - 54.14 Instructions for mission deputies
 - 54.15 Instructions for deputies for correspondence with the Government
 - 54.16 Instructions for deputies - Art. 49 & 79 C.O.
 - 54.17 Instructions for deputies - Churches abroad
 - 54.18 English Bible Translation
 - 54.19 Instructions for deputies - English Psalms & transl. of Three Forms of Unity
 - 54.20 Synod's letter to distributors of some Australian publications
 - 54.21 Synod's press report sent to some Australian newspapers
 - 54.22 Letter from 1st clerk to the FRC at Alb. Arm, L'ton, accompanying the Acts of Synod
 - 54.23 Letter accompanying the press reports sent to "Ger. Gezinsblad and "de Reformatie."
 - 54.24 Subscription form signed by ministers of the Word
 - 54.25 Financial report of Treasurer (34 items)

SYNOD - 1956

- Minutes SEE: Secret Archives
- 56.1.1 Attendance list
 - 56.1.2 Opening by Rev. van Gorp
 - 56.1.3 Credentials - FRC Albany
 - 56.1.4 Credentials - FRC A'dale
 - 56.1.5 Credentials - FRC L'ton
 - 56.1.6 Agenda
 - 56.1.7 Rules for Synod
 - 56.1.8 Letter from Ref. Ch. at Hollandia (New Guinea)
 - 56.1.9 Letter from Ref. Ch. at Hollandia (New Guinea)
 - 56.1.10 Letter from Ref. Ch. at Hollandia (New Guinea)
 - 56.1.11 Letter from W.L. Dekker of Bayswater
 - 56.1.12 Letter from W.L. Dekker of Bayswater
 - 56.1.13 Letter from J. Van der Ros of Legana
 - 56.1.14 Letter from J. Van der Ros of Legana repeating previous letter
 - 56.1.15 Letter from P. Bulthuis of Byford

- 56.1.16 Letter from FRC Albany with 3 proposals
- 56.1.17 Letter from FRC A'dale with 5 proposals
- 56.1.18 Letter from FRC A'dale with 1 proposal
- 56.1.19 Letter from FRC Wol'gong with request add item 18 (above) to agenda
- 56.1.20 Letter from FRC L'ton with 5 proposals
- 56.1.21 Report of deputies for mission
- 56.1.22 Letter from Ref. Ch. at Hollandia (New Guinea) about mission
- 56.1.23 Report of deputies - Art. 49 & 79 C.O.
- 56.1.24 Report of deputies - English Bible translation
- 56.1.25 Report of deputies - English Psalms & Three Forms of Unity
- 56.1.26 Minority report of J. V.d. Ros - English Psalms
- 56.1.27 Report of deputies for correspondence with Churches abroad
- 56.1.28 Letter of Synod Enschede - rules of correspondence
- 56.1.29 Letter of Synod Homewood - rules of correspondence
- 56.1.30 Report of FRC Albany - scattered members
- 56.1.31 Report of FRC A'dale - scattered members
- 56.1.32 Report of FRC L'ton - scattered members
- 56.1.33 Rules for church visitation (proposed)
- 56.1.34 Rules for church visitation (adopted)
- 56.1.35 - 56.1.37: SEE Secret Archives 1956
- 56.1.38 Report of deputies - correspondence with the Government
- 56.1.39 Report of FRC A'dale - Archives
- 56.1.40 Report of FRC Albany - approbation of call to Rev. Van Gorp
- 56.1.41 Report of FRC L'ton - approbation of call to Rev. Van Gorp
- 56.1.42 Yearbook
- 56.1.43 Letter to Synod treasurer - J. Brouwer
- 56.1.44 Letter to deputies - Art. 49 & 79 C.O.
- 56.1.45 Letter to deputies - English Psalms and Three Forms of Unity
- 56.1.46 Letter to deputies - correspondence with churches abroad
- 56.1.47 Letter to deputies - correspondence with the Govt.
- 56.1.48 Letter to FRC Wol'gong about her non-attendance at Synod
- 56.1.49 Letter to FRC Wol'gong about her non-attendance at Synod
- 56.1.50 Letter - J. Reitsema (Wol'gong) to C. Plug (Alb) re items 48 & 49 above
- 56.1.51 Letter C. Plug to J. Reitsema (Wol'gong) in reply to item 50
- 56.1.52 Financial report of treasurer (24 items)

SYNOD - 1956 - Correspondence - Deputies for Churches Abroad

- 56.2.1 Letter from deputies to the churches of Pretoria & Capetown
- 56.2.2 Letter from deputies to the churches of Djakarta & Semarang
- 56.2.3 Letter from deputies to the Canadian Ref. Chs
- 56.2.4 Letter from deputies to the Chs of Holland

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- 56.2.5 Letter from FRC A'dale to deputies
- 56.2.6 Letter from deputies to FRC A'dale
- 56.2.7 Letter from FRC L'ton to deputies
- 56.2.8 Letter from Rev. Pels, A'dale to deputies
- 56.2.9 Letter from Synod Homewood to the Ref. Ch.
in Aust. Original in 56.1.29
- 56.2.10 Letter from deputies to the Australian Churches
- 56.2.11 Letter from Sth African deputies to Austr. Deputies
- 56.2.12 Letter from Ch. Of Djakarta to deputies
- 56.2.13 Letter from Ch. L'ton to deputies
- 56.2.14 Letter from deputies to Canadian Homewood Synod deputies
- 56.2.15 Acts of Synod - Pretoria, Sth Africa
- 56.2.16 Letter from deputies to Pretoria, Sth Af. Deputies
- 56.2.17 Letter from deputies to deputies for correspondence in Holland, Sth Africa, Djakarta, Canada
- 56.2.18 Report from deputies to Synod A'dale

SYNOD - 1956 - Correspondence - Deputies for Churches Abroad

- 56.2.1 Letter from deputies to the churches of Pretoria & Capetown
- 56.2.2 Letter from deputies to the churches of Djakarta & Semarang
- 56.2.3 Letter from deputies to the Canadian Ref. Chs
- 56.2.4 Letter from deputies to the Chs of Holland
- 56.2.5 Letter from FRC A'dale to deputies
- 56.2.6 Letter from deputies to FRC A'dale
- 56.2.7 Letter from FRC L'ton to deputies
- 56.2.8 Letter from Rev. Pels, A'dale to deputies
- 56.2.9 Letter from Synod Homewood to the Ref. Ch. in Aust. Original in 56.1.29
- 56.2.10 Letter from deputies to the Australian Churches
- 56.2.11 Letter from Sth African deputies to Austr. Deputies
- 56.2.12 Letter from Ch. Of Djakarta to deputies
- 56.2.13 Letter from Ch. L'ton to deputies
- 56.2.14 Letter from deputies to Canadian Homewood Synod deputies
- 56.2.15 Acts of Synod - Pretoria, Sth Africa
- 56.2.16 Letter from deputies to Pretoria, Sth Af. Deputies
- 56.2.17 Letter from deputies to deputies for correspondence in Holland, Sth Africa, Djakarta, Canada
- 56.2.18 Report from deputies to Synod A'dale

Correspondence between Armadale 1956 SYNOD Deputies for Churches Abroad

- 56.2.19 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 12.10.54
- 56.2.20 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 1.11.54
- 56.2.21 Letter from C. Plug to J.v.d.Ros 6.11.54
- 56.2.22 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to W.Dekker 9.11.54

- 56.2.23 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 15.11.54
- 56.2.24 Letter from P. Bulthuis to J.v.d.Ros 11.12.54
- 56.2.25 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to W. Dekker 7.12.54
- 56.2.26 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 16.12.54
- 56.2.27 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 4.1.55
- 56.2.28 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 17.5.55
- 56.2.29 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 1.7.55
- 56.2.30 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 3.8.55
- 56.2.31 Letter from W.Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 8.8.55
- 56.2.32 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 6.9.55
- 56.2.33 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 16.9.55
- 56.2.34 Letter from C.Plug to J.v.d.Ros 20.9.55
- 56.2.35 Letter from P. Bulthuis to J.v.d.Ros 26.9.55
- 56.2.36 Letter from P. Bulthuis to J.v.d.Ros 26.9.55
- 56.2.37 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 23.9.55
- 56.2.38 Letter from J.v.d.Ros to fellow deputies 1.11.55
- 56.2.39 Letter from W. Dekker to J.v.d.Ros 3.12.55

SYNOD - 1959

- Minutes: SEE: Secret Archives 1959
- 59.1.1 Credentials FRC Albany
- 59.1.2 Credentials FRC A'dale (plus instruction)
- 59.1.3 Credentials FRC L'ton
- 59.1.4 Attendance list
- 59.1.5 Draftagenda (plus appendix) from Synod Albany
- 59.1.6 Letter from Br J. Kroeze - L'ton
- 59.1.7 Letter from deputies - Ref. Ch of Austr.
- 59.1.8 Objection from FRC A'dale
- 59.1.9 Objection from Br W. Dekker - Bayswater & Appendix and 2 replies
- 59.1.10 Report - Church Book in the English language
- 59.1.11 Report - Archives from Rev. Pels to FRC A'dale
- 59.1.12 Report from the Church keeping the archives
- 59.1.13 Report from deputies for correspondence with Churches abroad
- 59.1.14 Report from FRC Albany - checking of archives
- 59.1.15 Report - scattered members - Albany
- 59.1.16 Report - scattered members - A'dale
- 59.1.17 Report - scattered members - L'ton
- 59.1.18 Report from deputies - Art. 49 & 79 C.O.
- 59.1.19 Rules - Church visitation
- 59.1.20 - 59.1.30 SEE: Secret Archives
- 59.1.31 English summary of Three forms of Unity from Br J. Kroeze - L'ton in duplicate
- 59.1.32 Letter from FRC L'ton to Albany, A'dale & Melbourne

H2. Chronological Index to Synod Archives

- 59.1.33 Letter from FRC Albany to L'ton with proposal
- 59.1.34 Letter from FRC A'dale to L'ton
- 59.1.35 Letter from FRC Albany to L'ton
- 59.1.36 Letter from Melbourne to L'ton
- 59.1.37 Letter from FRC A'dale to L'ton
- 59.1.38 Letter from FRC L'ton to the FRC Aust.
- 59.1.39 Letter from FRC A'dale to L'ton
- 59.1.40 Same from March 1958
- 59.1.41 Letter from Rev. van Rongen to A.v.d. Schoor
- 59.1.42 Letter from A.v.d. Schoor to Rev. van Rongen
- 59.1.43 Letter from Rev. van Rongen to Prof. Dr K. Runia and vice versa
- 59.1.44 Letter from L'ton to the FRCs of Aust.
- 59.1.45 Letter from L'ton to A'dale & Albany respectively
- 59.1.46 Letter from A'dale to L'ton
- 59.1.47 - 59.1.49 SEE: Secret Archives 1962
- 59.1.50 Minutes - committee - general (vertrouwelijk)

SYNOD - 1959 - Correspondence

INCOMING

- 59.2.1 The Free Ref. Ch. of Capetown
- 59.2.2 Deputies for correspondence with churches abroad appointed by the Synod of the FRC of Pretoria
- 59.2.3 Can. Ref. Ch. Hamilton
- 59.2.4 Canadian deputies for correspondence with Churches abroad
- 59.2.5 Ref. Ch. at Monte Alegre
- 59.2.6 Deputies for correspondence with Ch. Abroad appointed by Synod Homewood - Carman 1958 - in duplicate
- 59.2.7 FRC L'ton
- 59.2.8 Synod A'dale 1956
- 59.2.9 Synod A'dale 1956 in duplicate
- 59.2.10 FRC L'ton

OUTGOING

- 59.2.11 Concepts of letters of various churches
- 59.2.12 Synod - Pretoria 1957
- 59.2.13 Ref. Ch. of Dutch New Guinea - in duplicate
- 59.2.14 2 letters from J. van Dyk
- 59.2.15 Ref. Ch. At Monte Alegre
- 59.2.16 Deputies for corresp. with churches abroad appointed by Synod Enschede 1955
- 59.2.17 Deputies for corresp. with churches abroad appointed by Synod Homewood 1954

SYNOD 1962

- Minutes SEE: Secret Archives
- 62.1 Credentials FRC Albany
- 62.2 Credentials FRC A'dale
- 62.3 Credentials FRC L'ton
- 62.4 Attendance list
- 62.5 Letter - A'dale with 2 proposals
- 62.6 Letter - deputies - Ref. Churches Austr.
- 62.7 Answer to Ref. Churches
- 62.8 Instructions to Synod re: Br K. of Albany
- 62.9 Letter from Br R. Koops - Albany

- 62.10 Correspondence copy with regards to Br K. between Albany & A'dale
- 62.11 Report FRC A'dale - approbation of call to Rev. K. Bruning
- 62.12 Letter FRC Albany convening synod
- 62.13 Reply by FRC A'dale
- 62.14 Reply by FRC L'ton
- 62.15 Letter of Albany to A'dale re: Synod
- 62.16 Letter of Albany to L'ton re: Synod
- 62.17 Letter of L'ton to Albany re: Synod
- 62.18 Proposal of L'ton
- 62.19 Letter of Albany to A'dale - Proposal of L'ton
- 62.20 Letter of A'dale - list of delegates
- 62.21 Copy of letter - deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
- 62.22 Report of deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
- 62.23 Letter from Synod of "Vrije Ger. Kerken in Sth. Africa"
- 62.23A Report from deputies: Church book in the English Language
- 62.24 - 62.29 SEE: Secret Archives
- 62.30 Report of Ch. where archives are kept
- 62.31 Report of Albany - checking archives
- 62.32 Report of Armadale - scattered members
- 62.33 Report of L'ton - scattered members
- 62.34 Acts of Synod
- 62.35 Brief report of Synod
- 62.36 Closing speech
- 62.37 Financial report of treasurer

SYNOD 1964

- 64.1 Provisional agenda
- 64.2 Credentials FRC Albany
- Credentials FRC A'dale
- Credentials FRC L'ton
- 64.3 Items for discussion - Synod - Albany
- 64.4 Report about adoption - A'dale
- 64.5 Discipline baptised members - proposal A'dale
- 64.6 Instruction liturgical forms - L'ton
- 64.7 Report - scattered members - L'ton
- 64.8 - 64.10 SEE: Secret Archives
- 64.11 Report - Archives
- 64.12 Report - Church book in the English language
- 64.13 Report - mission possibilities
- 64.14 Report - Art. 70 C.O.
- 64.15 Letter to deputies - Art. 70
- 64.16 Correspondence and guidelines - Art 70. C.O.
- 64.17 Report correspondence - Churches abroad
- 64.18 Letter to General Synod - Rotterdam-Delfshaven
- 64.19 Letter and appendix to deputies - Holland
- 64.20 Letter - deputies - Holland
- 64.21 Correspondence from deputies - Holland
- 64.22 Correspondence from deputies - Canada
- 64.23 1st preliminary agenda Synod - Canada
- 64.24 2nd preliminary agenda Synod - Canada
- 64.25 Correspondence - deputies - Sth Africa
- 64.26 Letter about manner from correspondence
- 64.27 Financial report of treasurer

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SYNOD - 1966

Minutes book (Synod 1954 and 1966)

- 66.1 Letter - convening churches
 - a) Draft agenda
- 66.2 Credentials FRC Albany
 - Credentials FRC A'dale
 - Credentials FRC L'ton
- 66.3 Attendance list
- 66.4 "Eerste rondschriven"
- 66.5 Declaration Classis Amersf. & Consistory
 - Veenendaal - acceptance of call by Rev. Wielenga to Albany
- 66.6 Report - scattered members - A'dale
- 66.7 Report - scattered members - L'ton
- 66.8 - 66.13 SEE: Secret Archives 1966
- 66.14 Report - Archives
- 66.15 Report - Church book in English language
- 66.16 Report - correspondence churches abroad
- 66.17 Report - mission
- 66.18 Report - correspondence with the Govt.
- 66.19 Correspondence with the Govt.
- 66.20 Rules for Ch. Visitation and some modifications
- 66.21 Report - possibility - training for the ministry
- 66.22 Report - Synod Quaestor
- 66.23 Report - Discipline: baptised members
- 66.24
 - a) From Synod Holland - correspondence
 - b) From Synod Holland about correspondence - New Zealand
 - c) Letter to "Chr. Ger. Kerken" in Holland (Synod) & answer

1966 - Outgoing letters - Deputies - Churches abroad

- 66.25
 - a) To General Synod Rotterdam - Delfshaven
 - b) From Synod A'dale to deputies - Holland
 - c) From Synod A'dale to Synod Ref. Ch. Austr.
 - d) From deputies to dep. In Holl., Can., Sth Africa & Monte Alege (Art. 70)

1966 - Incoming letters by Deputies

- 66.26
 - a) Letter - deputies - Holland
 - b) Letter - deputies - Holland to Synod
 - c) Letter from Ger. Kerk to Monte Alege, Brazil
 - d) Letter deputies Canada - te houden Synode
 - e) Provisional agenda from this synod
 - f) Letter from deputies - Sth Africa - te houden synode
 - g) Provisional agenda Synod
 - h) Proposed rules for Church visitation in Sth Africa
- 66.27 Instructions to deputies and appointments
- 66.28 Letter from A'dale Consistory to Synod - Marriage

SYNOD - 1968

- 68.1 Credentials - FRC Albany
 - Credentials - FRC A'dale
 - Credentials - FRC L'ton
- 68.2 Proposals from A'dale
- 68.3 Report deputies: churches abroad
- 68.4 Outgoing letter - deputies

- 68.5 Incoming - 8 letters from deputies Holland
- 68.6 Incoming - 1 letter from deputies Canada
- 68.7 Incoming - 1 letter from deputies Sth Africa
- 68.8 Correspondence - deputies - Govt.
- 68.9 Letter and minutes Annual meeting
 - Ref. Presb. Ch.
- 68.10 - 68.12 SEE: Secret Archives
- 68.13 Deputies - Training for the Ministry of the Word
- 68.14 Seminary of the Canadian Ref. Churches
- 68.15 Report - deputies - Church book
 - English language
- 68.16 Interim report - Book of Praise
- 68.17 Report from the Church where archives are kept
- 68.18 Albany - checking of archives
- 68.19 Reports - Adoption
- 68.20 Reports - scattered members - A'dale
- 68.21 Report - Mission committee
- 68.22 Report - hostels
- 68.23 Report - Mission
- 68.24 Report - Mission committee regarding Pinjarra

SYNOD - 1970 - Launceston

- 70.1 Letter of FRC L'ton - calling Albany & A'dale to Synod
- 70.2 Letter of FRC A'dale
 - points for agenda
- 70.3 Letter of FRC L'ton - date of Synod
- 70.4 Letter of FRC A'dale
 - proposals for Synod
- 70.5 Letter of FRC L'ton - delegates
- 70.6 Letter of FRC Albany - delegates
- 70.7 Letter of FRC A'dale - delegates
- 70.8 Attendance list
- 70.9 Credentials FRC Albany
- 70.10 Credentials FRC A'dale
- 70.11 Credentials FRC L'ton
- 70.12 Preliminary agenda
- 70.13 Opening address
- 70.14 - 70.16 SEE: Secret Archives 1970
- 70.17 Report archives
 - Report - archives control
- 70.18 Report - Presbyterian Ref. Churches
- 70.19 Report - Mission A'dale
- 70.20 Report - Mission Albany
- 70.21 Report - military service
- 70.22 Report - churches abroad
- 70.23 Report - English church book
- 70.24 Report - Training for the ministry
- 70.25 Report - A'dale - scattered members
- 70.26 Report - L'ton - scattered members
- 70.27 Report - English Bible translation
- 70.28 Letter from P. van Gorp on behalf of Churches in Holland
- 70.29 Telegram from J. van Rongen & Fam. Bruning
- 70.30

1970 - Correspondence of deputies for correspondence with sister churches abroad

- 70.31 Letter to Synod FRC Netherlands
 - salutation

H2. Chronological Index to Synod Archives

- 70.32 Letter to Dutch deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
- 70.33 Letter to Canadian deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
- 70.34 Letter to Sth Afr. Deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
- 70.35 Letter Church at Monte Alegre, Brazil
- 70.36 Letter to Church at Curacao
- 70.37 Letter to Presbyterian Church in Korea
- 70.38 Letter from Canadian deputies
- 70.39 Letter from P.v. Gulp with copy of letter from Presb. Ch. Of Korea
- 70.40 Letter from P. V. Gulp about Presb. Ch. of Korea
- 70.41 Report of Canadian deputies to Synod Orangeville '68
- 70.42 Letter from FRC Albany - collection Hamilton College
- 70.43 Letter from P. v. Gulp - various matters
- 70.44 Letter from P. v. Gulp to Presb. Ch. Of Korea
- 70.45 Letter from Korean Ch. To Rev. v. Gulp
- 70.46 Proposed agenda of Synod Hoogetveen '69
- 70.47 Report of Dutch deputies to Synod Hoogetveen '69
- 70.48 Letter of Synod Hoogetveen to Australian deputies re: Presb. Ch. Of Korea
- 70.49 Letter from Canadian deputies - salutation

- 72.1.17 Mission report from Albany
- 72.1.18 Deputies report for correspondence with sister churches abroad
- 72.1.19 Deputies report for correspondence with sister churches abroad in the English language
- 72.1.20 General report for the correspondence with sister churches abroad
- 72.1.21 Correspondence with sister church - Korea
- 72.1.22 Correspondence with sister church - Sth Africa
- 72.1.23 Correspondence with sister church - Holland
- 72.1.24 Correspondence with sister church - Canada
- 72.1.25 Correspondence with Austr. Council of Churches
- 72.1.26 Report: archives
 - a) report on checking of archives
- 72.1.27 Letter with greetings from Synod Holland
- 72.1.28 Acknowledgement from Synod to Holland
- 72.1.29 Letter to Presbyterian Ref. Churches
- 72.1.30 Financial statement of Synod treasurer
 - a) Report - Synod treasurer's books
- 72.1.31 Appointments

Appointment of deputies by Synod Launceston - 1970

- 70.50 FRC A'dale - archives; Presb. Ref. Churches
- 70.51 FRC L'ton - pastoral care military servicemen
- 70.52 FRC Albany - control archives; mission
- 70.53 Deputies for Sth. Africa
- 70.54 Deputies for churches abroad
- 70.55 Deputies for training for the ministry
- 70.56 Appointment Synod treasurer
- 70.57 Deputies - Church book in English language

SYNOD 1972

- 72.1.1 Agenda
- 72.1.2 Credentials - FRC Albany
- Credentials - FRC A'dale
- Credentials - FRC L'ton
- 72.1.3 Attendance list
- 72.1.4 Appeal from Mr K. Bull
 - a) Reply to Mr K. Bull
- 72.1.5 Letter from Br Schoof (snr) to A'dale
 - a) Reply to Br Schoof
- 72.1.6 Letter from Br Wieske (snr)
 - a) Reply to Br Wieske
- 72.1.7 - 72.1.9 SEE: Secret Archives
- 72.1.10 Complete report exams of Br A.H. Dekker on 28.8.71
- 72.1.11 Concept regeling i.v.m. beroepstelling en examinatie kandidaten
- 72.1.12 Report - Training for the Ministry of the Word
- 72.1.13 Correspondence - spiritual care of Ch. Members in military service
- 72.1.14 Correspondence with Govt.
- 72.1.15 Report scattered members
- 72.1.16 Interim report Ch. Book in English language
- 72.1.16b Report Ch. Book in English language

1972 - Correspondence abroad

- 72.2.1 Committed report about split in Pretoria
- 72.2.2 Letter with appendix from "Die Vrije Geref. Kerk" - Pretoria (v.d.Waal)
- 72.2.3 Synod - Sth Africa
- 72.2.4 Letter - Ds Meijer
- 72.2.5 Letters from Kaapstad (Rev. v.d. Linden)
 - a) Reply to Rev H.v.d.Linden
 - b) Reply to Rev. H. v.d. Linden
 - c) Reply to Rev. H. v.d. Linden
- 72.2.6
 - a) Letter from H.J. Nauta
 - b) Letter from H.J. Nauta
 - c) Letter from H.J. Nauta
 - d) Letter from H.J. Nauta
- 72.2.7
 - a) Reply to H.J. Nauta
 - b) Reply to H.J. Nauta
- 72.2.8 Letter from K. Miske & M. De Jong

SYNOD 1975

- 75.1 List of delegates present
- 75.2 Credentials - FRC Albany
- Credentials - FRC A'dale
- Credentials - FRC L'ton
- 75.3 Report re: ordination of Rev. A.H. Dekker
- 75.4 Greetings from Canadian deputies and Rev. G. van Rongen
 - a) Letter from Rev. G. van Rongen re: Acts for the Calvin Seminary at Grand Rapids, plus reply from Synod
- 75.5 Letter from A'dale with items for the agenda
- 75.6 Report and proposal from A'dale re: attestations
- 75.7 Report from A'dale re: baptism of adopted children

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| <p>75.8 Objection against baptism of adopted children
 a) Explanation point 8
 b) Reply from Synod</p> <p>75.9 Explanation of Rev. Bruning re: 9a
 a) Another objection - baptism of adopted children
 b) Reply from Synod</p> <p>75.10 Report re: departure of Rev. G. van Rongen</p> <p>75.11 Three proposals from L'ton:
 a) Re: attendance of officebearers at Synod sessions
 b) To endeavour to use the English language as much as possible
 c) Translation and revision of Church visitation rules and to increase the number of delegates</p> <p>75.12 - 75.14 SEE: Secret Archives 1975</p> <p>75.14a Alterations in Church visitation reports</p> <p>75.15 Reports about scattered brothers and sisters</p> <p>75.16 Instructions for the archives, plus letter from Synod to archivist</p> <p>75.17 Report on archives</p> <p>75.18 Report: inspection of archives</p> <p>75.19 Mission report from Albany</p> <p>75.20 Mission report from A'dale and financial report</p> <p>75.21 Report from L'ton on church members in military service</p> <p>75.22 Report: English Bible</p> <p>75.23 Report deputies for correspondence with foreign sister churches</p> <p>75.24 Report contact with Presbyterian Ref. Churches Aust.
 a) Letter from Synod to these churches</p> <p>75.25 Report Church Book in English Language</p> <p>75.26 Concept rules for candidates
 a) Some revised rules</p> <p>75.27 Financial report Training for the Ministry of the Word</p> <p>75.28 Report of treasurer of Synod 1972
 a) Auditor's report</p> <p>75.29 Letter to Holland</p> <p>75.30 8 letters received from Holland</p> <p>75.31 6 letters received from Canada</p> <p>75.32 Report from Canada - contact with Orthodox Presbyterian Church</p> <p>75.33 3 letters to Canada</p> <p>75.34 All correspondence and reports re: Sth Africa
 - Correspondence with Mr D. Bosveld of Tasmania
 - SEE: Secret Archives 1964 - 1980.</p> | <p>78.8 Letter from Albany about visitors when Holy Supper is celebrated</p> <p>78.9 Appeal from Rev. Dekker about examination of candidates</p> <p>78.10 Proposal from A'dale - shortage of sermons in English</p> <p>78.11 Report scattered brothers and sisters from A'dale</p> <p>78.12 Mission report A'dale</p> <p>78.13 Mission report Albany</p> <p>78.14 - 78.16 SEE: Secret Archives 1978</p> <p>78.17 From deputies for correspondence with Churches abroad about Korea</p> <p>78.18 Report from deputies with overseas sister churches</p> <p>78.19 Report correspondence with the Presb. Ref. Ch. of Aust.</p> <p>78.20 Letter from Rev. Dekker re: duty of church visitors</p> <p>78.21 From Rev. Dekker re: tasks for deputies</p> <p>78.22 Report from deputies for correspondence with Churches abroad</p> <p>78.23 Report Bible version</p> <p>78.24 Report deputies for correspondence with the Govt.</p> <p>78.25 Report deputies for Training for the Ministry of the Word</p> <p>78.26 Report quaestor</p> <p>78.27 Report about auditing of the books</p> <p>78.28 Letter from Canada</p> <p>78.29 Correspondence with Sth Africa</p> <p>78.30 Correspondence with Korea</p> <p>78.31 Correspondence with Sth. Africa</p> <p>78.32 Correspondence with Holland</p> <p>78.33 Correspondence with Canada</p> |
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| SYNOD 1978 | |
| <p>78.1 List of delegates</p> <p>78.2 Credentials - FRC Albany
 Credentials - FRC A'dale
 Credentials - FRC L'ton</p> <p>78.3 Letters from Rev. van Rongen and van Beveren, Canada</p> <p>78.4 Best wishes from Holland and Sth. Africa</p> <p>78.5 Report - call Dr S.G. Huh to the Church at A'dale</p> <p>78.6 Invitation to churches and date of Synod</p> <p>78.7 Proposal - working method of Synod</p> | <p>80.1 Credentials - FRC Albany
 Credentials - FRC A'dale
 Credentials - FRC L'ton
 Credentials - FRC Holland</p> <p>80.2 List of delegates present</p> <p>80.3 SEE: Secret Archives 1980</p> <p>80.4 Greetings from teachers of the Free Ref. Schools</p> <p>80.5 SEE: Secret Archives 1980</p> <p>80.6 Report about checking of archives</p> <p>80.7 Report: scattered members</p> <p>80.8 Report: librarian</p> <p>80.9 Report mission work</p> <p>80.10 Report deputies correspondence with Churches abroad</p> <p>80.11 English Bible version</p> <p>80.12 Report: Training for the Ministry of the Word</p> <p>80.13 Report: deputies: Church book in the English language</p> <p>80.14 Contact PCEA</p> <p>80.15 Report from deputies for rules for Synod</p> <p>80.16 Report from deputies to revise the CO</p> <p>80.17 Financial assistance from Holland: Mission</p> <p>80.18 Letter to our churches from deputies</p> |

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- 80.19 To and from deputies Canada
- 80.20 To and from Holland
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- 92.1.12 Rev. G. van Rongen - re: omission in the text of Certificate of release of ministers
- 92.1.13 Rev. G. van Rongen - some notes re: report B on the ICRC by some of the deputies for contact with churches abroad
- 92.1.14 Rev. G. Van Rongen - some notes re: report of deputies for revision of the Church Order
- 92.1.15 B'dale - proposal re: ICRC
- 92.1.16 B'dale - appeal re: ICRC
- 92.1.17 P.W. Dekker - submission re: the recognition of other churches
- 92.1.18 Byford - proposal re: Art. 25 of the C.O.
- 92.1.19 K. Heerema re: relationships / contacts with churches and ICRC
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- 92.1.22 A'dale - proposal re: adoption of Church Order
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- 92.1.26 K.A. Wieske - notes responding to Rev. G. van Rongen's notes on ICRC report
- 92.1.27 M. Vermeulen - request to receive Acts of Synod
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- 92.3.6 Contact with the PCEA
- 92.3.7 Bible Translations
- 92.3.8 Training for the ministry (Art. 18, 19, C.O.) and possibility of theological library
- 92.3.9 Pulpit exchanges
- 92.3.10 Revision of Church Order
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- 94.17 FRC Kelmescott - Church Order Art. 19 (27/11/93)
- 94.18 FRC Kelmescott - Revision of Synod procedures and rules
- 94.19 FRC Launceston - Application to Govt. for recognition of FRCA as a denomination
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- 94.21 FRC Rockingham - Synod '94 attendance (2 letters)
- 94.22 FRC Bedforddale - C.O. Art. 48
- 94.23 FRC Albany - Pulpit Exchange: roster 1994-96
- 94.24 FRC Launceston - Proposal for closed sessions
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- 94.26 FRC Legana - Recognition of PCEA
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H2. Chronological Index to Synod Archives

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- 94.44 Br. P. 't Hart: receipt of correspondence after closing date (Acts 94, art. 8)
- 94.45 Kelmscott Men's Club: receipt of correspondence after closing date (Acts 94, art. 8)
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- 94.51 The FRC at Byford: supervision of Archives; Acts 94, art.55
- 94.52 The FRC at Armadale: Acts 94, articles: 20, 22, 29, 31
- 94.53 The FRC at Launceston: Civil registration of FRCs Aust.; Acts 94, articles 33, 45
- 94.54 The FRC at Kelmscott: Synod Rules; Acts 94, articles 7c, 56: report 2; auditing books of Synod treasurer; convener of Synod 1996
- 94.55 The FRC at Bedfordale: Acts 94, articles 22, 34
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- 94.57 Br L. 't Hart discharging him as Dep. Relations Sister Churches and Dep. C.O. Art. 48, 76
- 94.58 Br J. Eikelboom discharging him as Dep. Relations Presbyterian Churches and Dep. C.O. revision
- 94.59 Br J. Van der Ros discharging him as Dep. Bible Translation

- 94.60 Br J. Numan discharging him as Dep. C.O. revision
- 94.61 Br S.H. Terpstra discharging him as Dep. C.O. revision
- 94.62 Rev. A. Veldman re: work as Dep. Relations other churches, Dep. Church visits, and Dep. C.O. Art. 48, 76; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.63 Br A.M.C. Bruning re: work as Dep. Relations other churches; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.64 Rev. W. Huizinga re: work as Dep. Relations other churches; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.65 Br J. Van Dijk re: work as Dep. Relations other churches; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.66 Br J. Bosveld re: work as Dep. Relations other churches; reappointment to deputyship(s)
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- 94.68 Rev. C. Kleyn re: work as Dep. Relations other churches, Dep. Bible Translation; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.69 Br J. Bruning re: work as Dep. Relations other churches, reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.70 Br P.O. Posthuma re: work as Dep. Relations other churches; reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.71 Br G. Brouwer re: work as Dep. Bible Translation; reappointment to deputyship(s)
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- 94.73 Br J. Bolhuis re: work as Dep. Training for Ministry; reappointment to deputyship(s)
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- 94.77 Br H. Olde: appointment to deputyship(s)
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- 94.79 Rev. F.J. van Hulst: appointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.80 Br S.C. Fokkema: appointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.81 Br A. Hordyk: reappointment as synod treasurer
- 94.82 Br S.R.H. Herbert: reappointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.83 Br J. Eikelboom: appointment to deputyship(s)
- 94.84 Rev. A. Van Delden: appointment to deputyship(s)
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H2. Chronological Index to Synod Archives

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1956 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 56.1.35 Albany 1955
- 56.1.36 Armadale 1955
- 56.1.37 Launceston 1955

1956-1959-1962 CLOSED SESSIONS

Minutes book

1959 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 59.1.20 Albany 1959
- 59.1.21 Albany 1957
- 59.1.22 Albany 1958
- 59.1.23 Albany 1958
- 59.1.24 Launceston 1959
- 59.1.25 Launceston 1957
- 59.1.26 Launceston 1958
- 59.1.27 Armadale 1959
- 59.1.28 Armadale 1957
- 59.1.29 Armadale 1957
- 59.1.30 Armadale 1958

1962 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 62.24 Albany 1961
- 62.24a Albany 1959/60
- 62.25 Armadale 1961
- 62.25a Armadale 1959
- 62.26 Launceston 1962
- 62.27 Albany 1961 (and letter)
- 62.28 Armadale 1961
- 62.29 Launceston 1961
- 62.29a Launceston 1959

1964 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 64.8 Albany 1963
- 64.9 Albany 1964
- 64.9a Armadale 1963
- 64.10 Launceston 1964

1964-1968-1970-1972-1975-1978-1980 CLOSED SESSIONS

Minutes of closed sessions are lost
(See Acts 1990, Article 126, Recommendation 1).

1966 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 66.8 Albany 1965 (Apr)
- 66.9 Albany 1966 (Mar)
- 66.10 Albany 1966 (Mar)

- 66.11 Armadale 1966 (Apr)
- 66.12 Launceston 1964 (Dec)
- 66.13 Launceston 1966 (Apr)

1968 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 68.10 Albany 1967 (Aug)
- 68.11 Armadale 1967 (Oct)
- 68.12 Launceston 1968 (Apr)

1970 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 70.14 Armadale 1970 (Feb)
- 70.15 Albany 1970 (Apr)
- 70.16 Launceston 1970 (May)
- Other:
- 70.58 Letter of appeal - K. Bull
- 70.59 Reply to K. Bull - FRC Launceston
- 70.60 Reply to K. Bull - FRC Albany

1972 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 72.1.7 Albany (not received)
- 72.1.8 Armadale 1972 (Oct)
- 72.1.9 Launceston 1972 (Oct)

1975 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 75.12 Albany 1975 (Sep)
- 75.13 Armadale 1974 (Jul)
- 75.14 Launceston 1974 (Mar)

1978 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 78.14a Albany 1977 (Jul)
- 78.14b Albany 1977 (Mar)
- 78.14c Albany 1977 (Jul)
- 78.15 Armadale 1978 (Apr)
- 78.16 Launceston 1976 (Nov)

1980 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 80.3 Albany 1979 (Apr)
- 80.5 Launceston 1979 (May)
- 80.5a Launceston 1980 (May)

1983 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 83.2.1a Launceston (Nov. 1981, Dec. 1982)
- 83.2.1b Armadale 1981 (Nov)
- 83.2.1c Kelmscott 1981 (Nov)
- 83.2.1d Albany 1981 (Oct)
- Other:
- 83.2.15 Minutes of closed sessions
- 83.3.14 Letter from J. Zuidema (re: conduct of fellow deputy for correspondence abroad)

H2. Chronological Index to Synod Archives

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Church Visitation Reports:

- 85.1.1a Armadale 1983 (Nov)
- 85.1.1b Armadale 1984 (Nov)
- 85.1.1c Kelmscott 1983 (Nov)
- 85.1.1d Albany 1983 (Dec)
- 85.1.1e Albany 1984 (Nov)
- 85.1.1f Launceston 1984 (May)
- 85.1.1g Launceston 1985 (Jun)
- 85.1.1h Kelmscott 1984 (Nov)

Other:

- 85.4 Letter to Mr H.G. Bosveld
- 85.5 Letter to Br W.L. Dekker
- 85.6 Minutes of closed sessions

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Church Visitation Reports:

- 87.108 Albany 15.11.85
- 87.109 Albany 05.12.86
- 87.110 Armadale 19.11.85
- 87.111 Armadale 27.11.86
- 87.112 Byford 29.11.85
- 87.113 Byford 28.11.86
- 87.114 Kelmscott 28.11.85
- 87.115 Kelmscott 01.12.86
- 87.116 Launceston 29.09.86

Other:

- 87.117 Appeal - procedure used in readmission
- 87.118 Minutes of closed sessions

1990 CLOSED SESSIONS

- 90.63 Albany Dec. 1987
- 90.64 Albany Dec. 1988
- 90.65 Albany Sep. 1989
- 90.66 Armadale Nov. 1987
- 90.67 Armadale 1988
- 90.68 Armadale Oct. 1989
- 90.69 Bedforddale Nov. 1988
- 90.70 Bedforddale Oct. 1989
- 90.71 Byford Nov. 1987
- 90.72 Byford 1988
- 90.73 Byford Oct. 1989
- 90.74 Kelmscott Nov. 1987
- 90.75 Kelmscott Nov. 1988
- 90.76 Kelmscott Nov. 1989
- 90.77 Launceston 1987
- 90.78 Launceston Oct. 1988
- 90.79 Launceston Nov. 1989
- 90.80 West Tamar Dec. 1989

1992 CLOSED SESSIONS

Church Visitation Reports:

- 92.2.1 Albany Sep. 1990
- 92.2.2 Kelmscott Nov. 1990
- 92.2.3 Bedforddale Nov. 1990
- 92.2.4 Launceston Nov. 1990
- 92.2.5 Kelmscott Apr. 1991
- 92.2.6 Byford Oct. 1991
- 92.2.7 Kelmscott Oct. 1991
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- 92.2.9 Launceston Nov. 1991

92.2.10 West Tamar Nov. 1991

92.2.11 Bedforddale Apr. 1992

92.2.12 West Tamar Nov. 1990

92.2.13 Armadale Nov. 1991

Other:

92.2.14 Minutes of closed sessions

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- 94.41.1 Albany Oct. 1992
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- 94.41.12 Launceston Nov. 1993
- 94.41.13 Legana Nov. 1992
- 94.41.14 Legana Dec. 1993
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- 94.41.16 Rockingham Oct. 1993

H3. Subject Index to correspondence items sent to synods, stored in synod archives (excluding deputies' reports).

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AUSTRALIA

1954, 1956, 1959, 1962 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970,
1972, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1987,
1990, 1992, 1994

CANADA

Hamilton 1962 (2 copies)
Edmonton 1965
Orangeville 1968
New Westminster 1971
Toronto 1974
Coaldale 1977 (2 copies)
Smithville 1980
Cloverdale 1983
Burlington 1986
Winnipeg 1989

The NETHERLANDS

Bunschoten-Spakenburg 1958-59
Assen 1961

Rotterdam 1964-65
Amersfoort 1966-67
Hoogeveen 1969-70
Hattem 1972-73
Kampen 1975
Groningen-Zuid 1978
Arnhem 1979-81
Heemse 1984-85 (part 1)
Heemse 1984-85 (part 2) (2 copies)

SOUTH AFRICA

Pretoria 1963
Pretoria 1966
Kapaastad 1968
Pretoria 1969
Pretoria 1971 (2 copies)
Kapaastad 1972 (2 copies)
Pretoria 1972 (2 copies)
Kapaastad 1974
Pretoria 1975
Pretoria 1976 (2 copies)
Pretoria 1977
Kapaastad 1978 (2 copies)

CORRESPONDENCE OF DEPUTIES

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***H3. Subject Index to correspondence items sent to
synods, stored in synod archives
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83.3.3 Rev. Joosse

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85.3.12 K'scott - appeal against

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85.3.22 J. Numan

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90.31 B'dale - appeal against (re: 'deleted hymns')

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90.20 K'scott - appeal against
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75.7 A'dale - report re:

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- 75.8 Objection against baptism of adopted children
 - a) Explanation point 8
 - b) Reply from Synod
- 75.9 Explanation of Rev. Bruning re: 9a
 - a) Another objection - baptism adopted children
 - b) Reply from Synod
- 68.19 Reports - adoption
- 64.4 Report about adoption - Armadale
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- 94.32 Inspection of archives and library
- 92.3.1 Archives and library of synod
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- 83.2.10 K'scott - Report
- 83.2.12 Report - librarian of Synod
- 80.6 Report about checking the archives
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 - a) Report on checking of archives
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- 90.25 P. 't Hart
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- 92.1.14 Rev. G. van Rongen: some notes re: Report of deputies for revision of the Church Order

- 87.49 Byford : linguistic revision

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H3. Subject Index to correspondence items sent to synods, stored in synod archives (excluding deputies' reports).

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- 78.20 Rev. Dekker re: duty of church visitors
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- 75.14A Alterations in church visitation reports
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- 83.3.13 Albany, letter 3.11.81 - classis churches
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- 90.53 A.M. Hidding re: appeal Classis decision
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- 85.3.4 K'scott: appointing secundi for deputyships
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- 85.3.16 L'ton - name of the churches

HOBART

- 92.1.9 L'ton - proposal that Hobart be declared a 'house congregation'

HOSTELS

- 68.22 Report

HUIZINGA, Rev. W.

- 87.52 K'scott - Colloquium Doctum

HUR, Rev. Dr S.G.

- 87.19 L'ton - dismissal
- 78.5 Report - call Dr S.G. Huh to the Church at A'dale

HYMNS

- 90.48 K. Wieske re: appeal of B'dale
- 87.10 Rev. Huizinga: Hymn section of Book of Praise

- 85.3.3 Albany: Hymns in Book of Praise

ICRC

- 92.1.13 Rev. G. van Rongen: some notes re: Report B on the ICRC by some of the deputies for contact with churches abroad
- 92.1.15 B'dale - proposal re:
- 92.1.16 B'dale - appeal re:
- 92.1.19 K. Heerema re: relationships / contacts with other churches and ICRC
- 92.1.21 R. Eikelboom
- 92.1.23 W. & A.C. Amoraal
- 92.1.24 A. & M. Schiebaan and M. & W. Eikelboom - contacts with churches and ICRC
- 92.1.26 K.A. Wieske - notes responding to Rev. G. van Rongen's notes on ICRC report

- 90.44 L. Hart, A.H. Terpstra, B. Vermeulen

- 90.45 A. Amoraal

- 90.52 H. Ballast

- 87.50 Rev. G. van Rongen - ICRC creeds

- 83.3.10 J. Eikelboom

- 83.3.11 K'scott - postponement of a decision re: ICRC membership

JOOSSE, Rev. L.J.

- 85.3.1 Report - dismissal
- 83 (1-10) Re: call to Albany and acceptance of call

KOELEWIJN, Rev. J.

- 88.1 - 88.15 Peremptory Examination

LITURGICAL FORMS

- 64.6 Instruction liturgical forms - L'ton

LORD'S SUPPER

- 78.8 Albany: re: visitors when Lord's Supper is celebrated

MILITARY SERVICE - CHURCH MEMBERS IN

- 75.21 L'ton: report on church members in mil. serv.
- 72.1.13 Correspondence - spiritual care of ch. Members in mil. Serv.

- 70.22 Report - military service

MINISTERS - CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE

- 92.1.12 Rev. G. van Rongen re: an omission in the text of

MISSION

- 87.3 A'dale - transfer of mission assets to FRC Albany - see Art. 107, Acts '83

- 85.1.14 Albany - future Mission task

- 85.1.15 A'dale - disposal of Mission assets

- 83.2.14 Report Mission (A'dale Church)

- a) 3rd December 1981

- b) Report May 1983

- c) Additions to report May 1983

- d) Final mission report P. 't Hart

- P. 't Hart - future mission task

- 83.3.13 Albany - disputing decision of A'dale to cease Mission activities

- a) Letter 19.10.81 - mission matters

- 80.9 Report mission work

- 80.17 Financial support from Holland re: mission

- 78.12 A'dale: mission report

- 78.13 Albany: mission report

- 75.19 Albany: mission report

H3. Subject Index to correspondence items sent to synods, stored in synod archives (excluding deputies' reports).

- 75.20 A'dale mission report and financial report
- 70.20 A'dale mission report
- 70.21 Albany mission report
- 68.21 Report - mission committee
- 68.23 Report - mission
- 68.24 Report - mission committee re: Pinjarra
- 66.17 Report - mission
- 64.13 Report - mission possibilities
- 56.1.22 Letter from Ref. Ch. at Hollandia (New Guinea) re: mission

ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

- 75.32 Report from Canada - contact with Orth. Pres. Ch.

PASTORAL PROCEDURE

- 87.20 L'ton: advice on

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES (SEE ALSO: EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA, FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA, WESTMINSTER CONFESSION)

- 90.35 B'dale - appeal and requests re: decisions contact with foreign and / or Presbyterian churches
- 90.37 J. Numan re: contact with Presbyterian churches
- 85.3.24 A. Byl - various decisions Synod 1983 re: contact with Presbyterian churches

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA (PCEA)

- 94.26 FRC Legana
- 90.33 A'dale re: PCEA Report
- 90.34 J. Byl re: contact FCS and PCEA
- 90.46 J. Byl
- 90.47 J. Eikelboom
- 87.53 P.W. Dekker
- 87.54 J. Numan
- 85.3.23 J. Numan - report PCEA
- 85.3.28 Br & Sr B. & H.M. Postmus - report PCEA
- 85.3.31 Br P.W. Dekker - report PCEA
- 85.3.32 Letter PCEA

PSALMS

- 92.1.20 Organ committee / organists of A'dale - singing of Genevan tunes

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

- 85.1.12 A'dale

PULPIT EXCHANGE

- 87.4 A'dale - extending pulpit exchange arrangements

REFORMED CHURCHES AUSTRALIA (RCA)

- 90.42 RCA
- 90.49 L. Van Burgel re: supplementary report of Dep. RCA
- 90.54 L'ton re: contact RCA
- 85.3.21 K'scott: letter classis W.A. of the RCA
- 83.3.2 Rev. Joosse - contact Reformed Churches
- 83.3.6 W. Dekker - contact Reformed Churches
- 83.3.7 Br & Sr Braam - contact Reformed Churches
- 83.3.8 R. Vermeulen - contact Reformed Churches

RELATIONS - OTHER CHURCHES

- 92.1.17 P.W. Dekker - submission re: recognition of other churches
- 92.1.19 K. Heerema re: relationships / contacts with churches and ICRC
- 92.1.24 A. & M. Schiebaan and

M. & W. Eikelboom - contacts with churches and ICRC

- 90.22 B'dale - proposals re: contact with other churches
- 90.28 W.L. Dekker re: contact with churches within the ICRC
- 90.29 J. Eikelboom & L. van Burgel re: report on ICRC
- 90.35 B'dale - appeal & requests re: decisions contact with foreign and / or Presbyterian churches
- 90.39 P.W. Dekker re: churches abroad
- 90.41 Armadale re: churches abroad
- 87.29 Deputies - relations with ch. abroad (letter)
- 87.30 Deputies - relations with ch. abroad (letter)

SCATTERED MEMBERS

- 80.7 Report
- 78.11 A'dale
- 75.15 Reports
- 72.1.15 Report
- 70.26 A'dale
- 70.27 L'ton
- 68.20 A'dale
- 66.6 A'dale
- 66.7 L'ton
- 64.7 L'ton
- 62.32 A'dale
- 62.33 L'ton
- 59.1.15 Albany
- 59.1.16 A'dale
- 59.1.17 L'ton
- 56.1.30 Albany
- 56.1.31 A'dale
- 56.1.32 L'ton

SUBSCRIPTION FORM FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD

- 54.24 Subscription form signed by ministers of the Word (for period 27/4/54 - 8/11/84 = single sheet; Post '84 in separate booklet; copy of '54-'84 document filed in envelope with booklet)

SYNOD

- 90.36 Byford re: deciding date of Synod
- 90.43 Byford re: meeting of Synod
- 87.7 Dates of Synod

SYNOD - ATTENDANCE

- 94.21 FRC R'ham re: Synod '94 attendance (2 letters)
- 75.11A L'ton: proposal re: attendance of office bearers at Synod sessions

SYNOD - CLOSED SESSIONS

- 94.24 L'ton - proposal for

SYNOD - CORRESPONDENCE TO - RULES

- 92.1.1 Byford - proposal re:
- 85.3.20 K'scott - lateness of reports
- 56.1.28 Letter of Synod Enschede - rules of correspondence
- 56.1.29 Letter of Synod Homewood - rules of correspondence

SYNOD DECISIONS

- 87.17 Rev. van Rongen - booklet about Synod decisions

SYNOD - FINANCES

- 90.16 Albany - concerns re: costs of Synod and overseas travel

H3. Subject Index to correspondence items sent to synods, stored in synod archives (excluding deputies' reports).

- 90.17 L'ton re: costs of travel for 1 church visitor
- 90.19 Byford re: costs of Synod
- 90.24 B'dale - proposal re: costs of Synod
- 90.40 A'dale re: Synod cost allocation

SYNOD - PROCEDURES AND RULES

- 94.18 K'scott (re: revision of)
- 92.1.2 K'scott: proposal to change rules for synods
regarding frequency of synod meetings
- 90.13 B'dale: proposal re: rules
- 87.22 L'ton - rules for Synods
- 87.23 Albany - rules for Synods
- 87.24 A'dale - rules for Synods
- 87.25 K'scott - rules for Synods
- 87.26 L'ton - rules for Synods
- 85.1.17 K'scott - Synod rules
- 78.7 Proposal - working method of Synod
- 56.1.7 Rules for Synod

THREE FORMS OF UNITY

- 59.1.31 Summary in English of, from
Br J. Kroeze, L'ton

TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY

- 92.1.6 B'dale - proposal on the financial support
for needy students
- 90.30 Albany - proposal for deputies re: study
debt of dutch candidates
- 85.3.19 Br J. Eikelboom - support of theological
seminaries
- 66.21 Report - possibility - training for the
ministry

van GURP, Rev. P.

- 56.1.40 Report of Albany - approbation of call to
- 56.1.41 Report of L'ton - approbation of call to

van HULST, Rev. F.J.

- 94.20 Minutes of meeting of consistory of
Legana (classis church): approbation of
call extended to him by Launceston

van RONGEN, Rev. G.

- 75.10 Report re: departure of

VELDMAN, Rev. A.

- 85.3.2 Report: approbation of call to

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION

- 85.3.14 K'scott - proposal to appoint deputies to
thoroughly examine the Westminster
Confession

WIELINGA, Rev. J.D.

- 66.5 Declaration classis Amersf. & Consistory
Veenendaal - acceptance call from
Rev. Wielinga to Albany

APPENDIX J

J. Report of Deputies for the Civil Registration of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

Esteemed Brothers

We have understood our task to be: To apply to the civil authorities for registration of the FRCA in order that registration of the ministers as marriage celebrants may the more readily be effected.

To this end we have met as often as necessary since our appointment. We have conducted correspondence with the relevant department and had a number of direct phone conversations with various officers in Canberra. Though correspondence has been particularly slow and on one occasion not even being replied to due to some clerical oversight or change in staff, we are nevertheless optimistic about a positive outcome, eventually.

To enable synod to deliberate on this matter we summarise the legal position in respect of marriage celebrants in so far as this affects our mandate.

The Marriage Act (a Federal Act) provides for two methods by which ministers of religion may be licensed as marriage celebrants. Under both methods the authority of the celebrants is exactly the same. Either method allows them to solemnise marriages anywhere in Australia and not just in their own "denomination". (Note: the word "denomination" used in this report is the term used in the Act and we use as such only.)

In accordance with the first method some "Religious Denominations" have been declared to be "Recognised" under Sec 26 of the "Marriage Act." This permits them to nominate new ministers of religion as marriage celebrants. Once a "Denomination" is "Registered" the

central secretariat of the "Denomination" then only needs to nominate new ministers to the relevant State registering authority for consideration. Given that the minister is indeed found to be a "fit and proper person" he is then registered to act as a marriage celebrant. This method cuts out the tedious process of dealing again and again with the Federal Attorney General's Department.

The Department adds that it should be clearly understood that Registration of the "Denomination" in no way amounts to Government endorsement, nor is it an acknowledgment

that the "Denomination" has any particular standing in the community. A "Denomination" may not imply that such is in fact the case. The process under Section 26 is purely an administrative one for the convenience of effecting registration of marriage celebrants.

The second method by which a minister of religion may be authorised as a marriage celebrant is by him applying direct to the Federal Attorney General's Dept under subsection 39(2) of the Marriage Act. This is the method used by small or individual independent churches not bound together in one federation. This is in fact the method currently used by the FRCA ministers. Verbally the Department "head" admits that this method is slow and laborious. Any move to have a "Denomination" registered if at all possible would be supported.

The factors that are taken into consideration in determining whether a "Denomination" can be so registered under Sec 26 are:

- a the organisation should be independent of any other religious body or organisation;

J. Report of Deputies for the Civil Registration of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

- b a central authority should exist for the nomination of ministers of religion as marriage celebrants and to attend to other administrative functions associated with the Marriage Act;
- c there should be congregations in more than one locality, (usually around twelve) which should have a need for marriage celebrants to meet the demands of the members; and
- d there should be evidence that an organisation is firmly established with prospects of continuing existence.

When supplying information towards satisfying these criteria organisations are asked to give details relating to size and location of their various congregations, together with details of buildings and other property owned by them.

Applications under Section 39(2) however are required to satisfy the following criteria and complete the appropriate application forms:

- a an applicant must be a minister of religion within the meaning of the Marriage Act;
- b an applicant must demonstrate the he/she is a fit and proper person for authorisation as a religious marriage celebrant by virtue of his/her training or experience as a minister of religion;
- c the applicant must be sponsored by the religious organisation to which he/she is attached;
- d the marriage ceremony to be used must sufficiently state the nature and obligations of marriage;
- e the religious organisation to which the applicant is attached must be established for a reasonable period of time as evidence of stability and continued existence. Twelve months being the minimum requirement; and
- f the presence of a discrete identifiable congregation is required, having a need for the services of a marriage celebrant and meeting in a public place to give witness to the religious beliefs of its members.

In accordance with our mandate, your deputies have lodged a formal request with the Federal Attorney General's Department that the FRCA be recognised under Section 26 of the Marriage Act. At the time of writing this report no response has as yet been received. We have at this stage provided the Department with a short overview of the history of the FRCA, its origins in the great reformation, its beginnings in Australia, and its ecumenical ties with other Reformed Churches in other countries. We have provided the Dept with a copy of the "Church Order" and the "Form for the Solemnisation of Marriage". We expect that the department will request more information about property, size of congregations and so on. We trust that the churches will in due course cooperate by providing all relevant information.

With respect, your deputies RECOMMEND that:

- 1 the deputies report be received;
- 2 the action taken by deputies to formally seek registration of the FRCA under Section 26 of the Marriage Act be endorsed;
- 3 the Synod secretariat be appointed to attend to the nomination and correspondence matters required when the requested registration is effected;
- 4 your deputies be discharged of their duties;
- 5 new deputies be appointed to finalise and implement the formal registration of the FRCA if the civil authorities do so allow the registration and to report to the next Synod the Lord willing.

With brotherly greetings

SC Fokkema
S Herbert

APPENDIX K

K. Report of Synod Treasurer

K1 Financial Report

5 February 1996

Esteemed brothers,

As requested by the convening Church, I herewith submit the **Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the period 23 February 1994 to 31 January 1996**. The books were audited by the Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott on 5 February 1996.

Receipts

- Receipts from the Churches were as budgeted as all the Churches paid according to the contributions levied. Payments were generally received promptly for which the Churches are thanked. There were only minor variations in the amounts received for refunds and interest.

Expenditure

The following points are to be noted on expenditure:

- Synod costs came in \$4000 under budget. Despite a request, no account was received from Launceston for travel costs to Synod 1994.
- Deputies for Bible Translation, Revision of Church Order, and for the Training of the Ministry did not submit any accounts for costs during this budget period, however, I understand that there are still some outstanding accounts which will now go into the next budget.
- Deputies contact other Churches requested extra expenditure for Sumba and as it was contained within their overall budget, this was paid. The Deputies will account for this extra expenditure to Synod. The proposed conference was not held and no account was received for ICRC contributions.
- The extra expenditure on Church visitation/pulpit exchange is because two WA ministers went to Tasmania for Church visitation.
- The low expenditure by the Synod Archivist is because it was decided not to microfilm the records and only to photocopy selected documents.

Accounts

Synod funds are kept in a cash management account and in two interest bearing deposits with Westpac.

Draft budget

Letters will be sent to the deputies and the Churches seeking their input into the draft budget. The draft budget will be forwarded to Synod via the convening Church.

Printing Synod Acts

Synod treasury only pays for the copies of Acts that the Synod issues to the churches for their office bearers and to the Synod deputies. Acts ordered by the Churches for their members are not the responsibility of the Synod treasury (it is not budgeted for) and the Churches themselves should pay the printer for these. It is requested that the clerk bears this in mind when arranging the printing of the Acts.

With Christian Greetings,

A. Hordyk
Synod Treasurer

**FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA
SYNOD TREASURY
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD
23 February 1994 to 31 January 1996**

05-Feb-96

1	RECEIPTS	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
	CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CHURCHES			
	FRC ALBANY and WEST ALBANY	\$3,881.91	\$3,881.91	
	FRC ARMADALE	\$3,739.19	\$3,739.19	
	FRC BEDFORDALE	\$2,197.84	\$2,197.84	
	FRC BYFORD	\$2,183.57	\$2,183.57	
	FRC KELMSCOTT	\$3,282.49	\$3,282.49	
	FRC LAUNCESTON	\$2,654.54	\$2,654.54	
	FRC LEGANA	\$1,641.25	\$1,641.25	
	FRC ROCKINGHAM	\$1,127.47	\$1,127.47	
2	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CHURCHES	\$20,708.26	\$20,708.26	
	OTHER RECEIPTS			
	REFUNDS	\$500.00	\$196.62	
	INTEREST	\$750.00	\$908.16	
	BALANCE OF FUNDS AT 22 FEBRUARY 1994	\$18,941.74	\$18,941.74	
3	TOTAL OTHER RECEIPTS	\$20,191.74	\$20,046.52	
4	TOTAL BALANCE PLUS RECEIPTS	\$40,900.00	\$40,754.78	\$40,754.78

K. Report of Synod Treasurer

5	EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
6	SYNOD COSTS			
	TYPIST	\$2,000.00	\$1,691.22	
	PHOTOCOPYING	\$500.00	\$267.08	
	FURNITURE and CROCKERY HIRE	\$560.00	\$525.50	
	STATIONERY and CONSUMABLES	\$500.00	\$266.96	
	EQUIPMENT INSURANCE	\$150.00	\$157.50	
	CATERING	\$1,000.00	\$873.06	
	POSTAGE and TELEPHONE	\$400.00	\$37.25	
	UPGRADE P.A. SYSTEM	\$550.00	\$727.36	
	PRESENTATIONS	\$500.00	\$162.00	
	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE	\$300.00	\$80.00	
	LOSS OF INCOME DELEGATES SYNOD 94	\$4,680.00	\$5,040.00	
	TRAVEL COSTS TO SYNOD 94			
	FROM TASMANIA	\$3,000.00	\$1,218.00	
	FROM ALBANY	\$150.00	\$0.00	
	LOCAL	\$500.00	\$325.00	
	PRINTING ACTS OF SYNOD 94	\$2,000.00	\$1,299.25	
	PRINTING REPORTS TO SYNOD 94	\$1,300.00	\$1,250.96	
		\$18,110.00	\$14,031.44	
7	DEPUTIES BIBLE TRANSLATION			
	BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$300.00	\$0.00	
8	DEPUTIES CONTACT PCEA			
	BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$200.00	\$50.17	
9	DEPUTIES CONTACT OTHER CHURCHES			
	BOOKS ETC	\$200.00	\$57.66	
	TRAVEL COSTS PERTH / ALBANY	\$960.00	\$400.00	
	TRAVEL COSTS OVERSEAS (Sumba)	\$2,000.00	\$2,595.00	
	LOSS OF INCOME DEP OVERSEAS (Sumba)	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	
	UNA SANCTA SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$500.00	\$279.00	
	CONFERENCE	\$2,700.00	\$0.00	
	INCIDENTALS	\$1,200.00	\$1,414.34	
	ICRC MEMBERSHIP COSTS	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	
		\$9,760.00	\$5,707.00	
10	DEPUTIES REVISION CHURCH ORDER			
	BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$100.00	\$0.00	
11	DEPUTIES TRAINING MINISTRY			
	INCIDENTALS	\$100.00	\$0.00	
12	CHURCH VISITS & PULPIT EXCHANGE			
	TASMANIA	\$1,800.00	\$2,443.00	
	ALBANY/METRO	\$640.00	\$776.00	
		\$2,440.00	\$3,219.00	
13	TREASURY ADMINISTRATION COSTS	\$100.00	\$36.35	
14	SYNOD ARCHIVES			
	RECORDS	\$1,400.00	\$0.00	
	INCIDENTALS	\$100.00	\$42.25	
		\$1,500.00	\$42.25	
15	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$32,610.00	\$23,086.21	\$23,086.21
16	TREASURY OPERATING FUNDS	\$7,390.00		
17	TOTAL BUDGET	\$40,000.00		
18	BALANCE OF FUNDS AT 31 JANUARY 1996			\$17,668.57

APPENDIX L

L. Addresses to Synod

L1. Address to Synod

**By Reverend B Hoyt, - Reformed Churches of New Zealand
Given on Tuesday 11th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION**

It is a privilege for me to extend greetings in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ to this Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia on behalf of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. We testify that the Lord is gathering His church out of the small islands of New Zealand. We give thanks for this evidence of His grace. And we have recognised that He is also gathering His church in the big island of Australia. It is a privilege to be an observer at your Synod to hear first-hand what the Lord is doing in your midst. May God bless you and cause the labour of your hands to prosper.

Personal Background

For those of you who don't know me let me introduce myself. I am Bruce Hoyt, pastor of the Reformed Church of Hastings, NZ, and presently serving as Stated Clerk of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. I have been appointed by the Inter-church Relations Committee of the RCNZ as an observer to your 1996 Synod in response to your kind invitation.

You will have noticed that I do not have the proper New Zealand accent even though English is my native language. I was born and raised in the U.S.A. in a godly Christian home of anabaptist persuasion in an association of Brethren churches with a strong dispensational, anti-paedobaptist, anti-confessional and Amyraldian theology. In God's providence I was led through various circumstances to a small conservative Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church during my post-graduate studies in mathematics at the University of South Carolina. After much struggle with several Reformed doctrines I became a convinced adherent of the Reformed faith. My session pressed me to study for the ministry of the Gospel and after some struggle with that external call, I took up theological studies at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS, U.S.A.

When I finished, I accepted a call and was ordained in a small congregation of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Memphis, TN where I served for two and a half years. I also supplied the vacant pulpit of another Presbyterian church for about a year and a half.

I immigrated to New Zealand in December of 1981 when I was extended a call by one of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. I spent 12 years in Masterton, first of all as a home missionary on behalf of the Reformed Church of Silverstream for 5 years, and then, after the Reformed Church of Masterton was instituted, I served as their pastor for 7 more years until September of 1994. Since then I have been at my present congregation in Hastings.

My wife and I have been blessed with 8 children, three of whom were born in New Zealand. And we rejoice that God has also added to His church our three grandchildren.

Strength through Diversity of Backgrounds

I give this personal background because my story is not at all untypical of many of our ministers. A few years ago we discovered during an informal discussion at one of our ministers' conferences that half of our ministers were not raised in the Reformed faith but came to Reformed convictions later in life. Our ministers come from Brethren, Presbyterian, Baptist, non-christian, ... and even Reformed backgrounds.

L. Addresses to Synod

Our membership is also of quite diverse backgrounds. We have people from Romanism & nominal Anglicanism; from Baptist, Pentecostal, Brethren, Methodist and from both liberal and conservative Presbyterian churches; from the Reformed Churches of Australia, from the Canadian Reformed Churches; from the Dutch Reformed Church and the Reformed Church of South Africa; from the Hervormd, the Gereformeerd, the Gereformeerd (Vrijgemacht), and even the Gereformeerde Gemeente in the Netherlands.

This wide range of backgrounds in our federation is a great strength and also gives us a strong motivation to work diligently at the task of maintaining the unity of the faith in the bonds of love. God has blessed us in this by enabling us not only to remain together in our common confession of the Reformed faith but also to grow closer as we work together on the basis of our agreed order. That growing unity has been quite evident to me in my 15 years of service in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

We continue to work on many things which arise out of this diversity of backgrounds. Some of these are things which have never been an issue with you. But we know that the faith we confess is not limited to one culture or language or church tradition and so we continue to work with joy on the issues that arise from this diversity. It is a diversity which in God's grace has led us to greater unity.

We believe this diversity is a little fore-taste of the eternal state which God has already allowed us to experience. We eagerly anticipate that day when the whole church will be gathered in perfect unity from every tribe and tongue and nation and culture. In obedience to the command of Christ we seek already now to maintain and to further that unity which according to Scripture already underlies our diversity of culture, language and backgrounds.

When you consider the issues with which we are wrestling, keep in mind the diversity of church tradition and background with which we are blessed. It is a diversity seen in the surnames of our members: McDonald, Brown, Smith, Durante, James, Gulliksen, Phillips, Flinn, and Nihoniho as well as the "van ders" and the "sonder vans". We give thanks to the Lord for this Pentecostal richness.

We have learned that it is important to distinguish carefully between that to which we are bound by the infallible word of God as confessed in our standards on the one hand and that which is national, cultural or church-traditional, however good and profitable it may be on the other. We have learned that close interaction with believers and churches of other traditions and cultures helps us to make these distinctions which we in our sinful weakness find it difficult to make. Perhaps our experience may be helpful to you as you see Christ gathering His church in New Zealand. We do invite you: come over and see.

Desire for Wider Ecclesiastical Contact

This diversity is one motivation for our desire to participate in the International Conference of Reformed Churches. We have found the contributions of those with different backgrounds and perspective to be a healthy correction for small-mindedness that arises in our thinking about God's great church-gathering work. We need continually to rub shoulders with others who can contribute to our struggles theologically and in mission outreach. And we hope that we in turn may make a contribution to others. For these reasons as well as the feeling of being isolated, it is not surprising that the vote to apply for membership in the ICRC was unanimous.

If we are received as members, the ICRC will also be a vehicle for maintaining a second level of ecclesiastical relations in addition to that of sister-church. We know that there are many true and faithful churches around the world and that some contact with them would be profitable for us. But because of cultural differences and our limited resources and geographical remoteness, it is impossible to carry on sister-church relations with more than a very few. Membership in the ICRC will enable a

limited contact with such churches without the practical demands required by a sister-church relation. This is our solution to a practical difficulty we have as a small federation.

For over a decade we have wanted to be more actively involved in Reformed mission work but we have had few opportunities. Although we are actively involved with the Middle East Reformed Fellowship, as are your sister churches in the Netherlands, we hope that the ICRC will provide opportunities for increased mission work closer to home through contact with Reformed Churches in the Asia-Pacific region.

Commitment to Faithful Ecclesiastical Relations

As a federation of churches we are committed to maintaining faithful ecclesiastical relations. It was noted in your Deputies' Report that decisions of our 1995 Synod are a testimony to this fact. We believe the bond between us and our sister-churches is a precious one, not one to be cast aside or broken lightly or quickly. Our commitment to our Lord and His Word requires this of us. It is that commitment which means that we will not easily divorce churches who are our sisters in the faith.

We can understand that your committee would like to have seen us completely sever the relationship with the CRC/NA. Some of us have felt the same way for several years already. But we have recognised the wisdom of those who have reminded us that such a close relationship held for many years should not be broken quickly. So only in our last Synod did we take the step of suspending the sister-church relation with the CRC/NA. We did so because of their unscriptural allowance of women in office and their continued use of a relativising hermeneutic. We have observed that our sister in Holland, the CRC/Neth, have also broken their relations with the CRC/NA for similar reasons.

Our ties with the Reformed Churches of Australia are even stronger than those we have had with the CRC/NA. We have worked together in many ways for many years. Although our Synod stated very plainly that we regard their decisions on Word and Spirit to be an error and that we are concerned about views on women in office among them as well as various worship practices common in some of their congregations, nevertheless we are not ready to break that bond. On the contrary we believe it is our duty to use that bond to remonstrate with our sisters, to call them to faithfulness in the areas of our concern. Our rules for sister-church relations make clear that we understand this to be one of the main purposes of the sister-church relation:

1. Bringing to each other's attention our spiritual and ecclesiastical problems together with our attempts at their scriptural solution; and offering each other help upon request thereof.
2. Warning each other in respect of spiritual dangers that arise and spread and imperil the Church of Christ.
3. Correcting each other in love in the event of unfaithfulness whether by commission or remission on the score of profession and/or practice of the faith once delivered to the saints. (Acts 1962, Art. 28)

We pray that our admonition and warnings may be used by God to bring about a change of direction.

Disappointment Regarding Recommendation 2

With this in view it is a great disappointment to read the recommendation of your deputies, namely, not to acknowledge the RCNZ as true churches because of our relationship with the RCA. Your deputies indicate in their report that such a declaration, according to your 1985 decision, would oblige you to pursue sister-church relations with us while our relations with the RCA would make that 'problematic' (p.18 of Deputies Report). Your deputies recommend that such a declaration should be postponed until our "relation with the RCA has been resolved" (Rec. 2).

L. Addresses to Synod

Although your deputies have gratefully acknowledged that the decisions of our 1995 Synod indicate faithfulness in regard to our sister-church relations and that the marks of a true church are present, Recommendation 2 is a considerable step backwards. I say a step backwards because your 1994 Synod mandated your deputies "to work towards a resolution about third parties, so that the way can be opened towards sister relations (78.3) and "to investigate how the relation of the RCNZ with the RCA should impact our relation with the RCNZ" (78.4).

Does the mandate given to your deputies to work towards resolution of third party relations so that the way would be opened towards sister relations mean that we must break off all third party relations that do not meet your approval? Will our sister-church relations with the OPC be the next "impediment" in your way. Your deputies were given the mandate to investigate how the relation between the RCNZ and the RCA should impact your relation with us. Is Recommendation 2 the conclusion of this investigation?

It appears from your deputies' report that the implications of your 1985 decisions are regarded as having priority over any subsequent actions or words you have spoken. No matter how faithful we may be, we must resolve our relation with the RCA before you can even recognise us as true churches. It appears that 'resolve' means dissolve in this case. If so and if that is what you meant in 1985, then I urge you to say so plainly. Then we will know where we stand.

Our decision to formally acknowledge you as true churches and request that you reciprocate was made in light of your decisions of 1994 and the very positive remarks of Rev. W. Huizinga at our 1992 Synod. He said, "Since the RCA no longer has sister relations with the GKN (syn) and that was the historical objection we had to your sister relations with the RCA, to that extent your sister relations with the RCA cannot be viewed as being an impediment on that score. This matter does not return explicitly in the mandate given to the deputies for contact with you. We may need to spell that out in black on white for you" (Acts 1992, 1-34).

We understood that your decisions of 1994 and the statements of Rev. Huizinga meant that our relation with the RCA was no longer an obstacle. But the report of your deputies states that our relation with the RCA is not only an obstacle to the pursuit of sister-relations, it even stands in the way of acknowledging that we are true churches of Jesus Christ.

I speak plainly because Rev. Huizinga said, "please tell us honestly if we have offended you in any way by our stance or attitude. For we sincerely wish for reconciliation and unity in order to work towards sister relations with you" (Acts 1992, 1-34). That was and is our desire also. We recognise that you may not be ready yet to enter into formal sister-church relations. We also are not yet ready. But we took your expression of an earnest desire to work towards sister relations at face value. Recommendation 2, if passed, would make us question whether this was your desire. The report of your deputies speaks of a hesitation to recommend recognition of the RCNZ as true and faithful churches because our relation with the RCA would be problematic for you. Yes, we know that. Right now this relation is problematic for us! We are not happy to have to tell the RCA that her decisions on Word and Spirit are in error. The worship practices in some of their congregations are a problem for us. The views of some leaders in their churches regarding women in office are a problem for us. I am not speaking behind the back of the RCA. We have told her these things. Rev. Huizinga has used the analogy of marriage and courtship in his reports. I would like to continue that analogy. Regarding our marriage with the RCA, we believe it would be unfaithful for us to sue for divorce while there still remains the hope of biblical reconciliation. Did Jehovah write a bill of divorce against His people on the first or second or third instance of unfaithfulness? In His lovingkindness He did not. And His dealings with His people are the pattern we seek to follow.

If you expect us to sue for divorce at this point, then we shall certainly hesitate about marriage with you. We will ask ourselves a question: Will you divorce us when we struggle with error or sin as quickly as you expect us to divorce the RCA? We sincerely hope not.

The reasons for hesitating to enter a marriage may be relatively small: background and language, even education and lack of maturity may be reasons to hesitate. But the reasons for breaking a marriage must be very strong indeed. If you have hesitations in pursuing marriage with us, we can understand that. We may also have some. These things we can discuss. But Recommendation 2 will effectively end discussion for an indefinite period until such time as you decide to take up contact with us again.

I have spoken plainly. I have done so out of the sincere desire which we, the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, have to work with you for our mutual benefit in the service of the King and Head of the Church.

May He direct you in your deliberations and guide you to wise, profitable, and Christ honouring decisions.

Rev. Bruce Hoyt
June 1996

L2. Response to Reverend B Hoyt

**By Brother J van Dijk - Deputy for Relations with other churches
Given on Wednesday 13th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION**

It is with heartfelt thankfulness that I may welcome you Reverend Hoyt to our midst on behalf of the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and may we express our sincere and brotherly thanks to you and the RCNZ for being present at this Synod. It is a great joy to us to listen to your witness of faith and that you also recognise the Church gathering work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Southern Hemisphere where both our countries are situated.

There has been a mutual time of courtship over the last years which has given us insight into your federation. As we have voiced in the past: nothing can replace seeing a face to the contacts and relations that we maintain. So often personal contacts can clarify misunderstandings and promote a trust that is needed in a relationship. The insight that you have given us into your personal background as well as the strengths and diversities of the backgrounds in your churches opens up for us a greater dimension to understanding not only the make up of your federation but also sets before us Psalm 87 as a living example. We are thankful that you continue to work together on the basis of the Reformed faith and agreed order, that you are bound by the infallible Word of God as confessed in your four Forms of Unity, the continental Three Forms of Unity and the fourth being the "Westminster tradition", the Westminster Confession.

We can also appreciate your desire to participate in the International Conference of Reformed Churches, a conference of which we are also a member and have attended since 1985, even though this membership has been and still is a thorny issue in our churches.

Also it is pleasing to hear of your involvement with the Middle East Reformed Fellowship. We have had the opportunity to send one of our own ministers the Reverend W Huizinga to give a series of lectures there for instruction purposes. Over the last few years the Reverend V Attalah has been able to visit us and inform us of the latest developments in regard to the spread of the gospel in the Middle East,

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allowing us to see that God's continuing Church gathering work cannot be hindered by Satan's attacks.

It is good to hear that you as federation want to maintain ecclesiastical relations faithfully, and that you see it as a very precious part of your "marriage relationship" using His Word as the ruler of measure. In your speech you have made it quite clear in what manner your last Synod has acted in relation to the CRC/NA and we are thankful for this. From your address Synod Kelmscott 1996 has heard that you also see error, deviation from the truth, in the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA) and that you see it as your duty in your sister relationship to "remonstrate with your sister" and to call her back to faithfulness in the areas of your concern which was evident at your last Synod Avondale. May your admonitions and warnings truly bring repentance.

We appreciate your openness in your speaking plainly as was requested by Reverend Huizinga when he said, "please tell us honestly if we have offended you in any way by our stance or attitude. We sincerely wish for reconciliation and unity in order to work towards sister relations with you." (Acts 19:22, 1-34) It is pleasing to hear from you Reverend Hoyt that it is your churches desire also, even though you as well as us are not ready yet to enter into formal sister-church relations. Yes it is true that there is a hesitation to recommend recognition of the RCNZ as true and faithful churches because of your relation with the RCA. As you mentioned last night your relationship certainly is a problematic issue for you, and yes it is also for us, as you are fully aware.

You have taken us at our word - to speak plainly - and we are very thankful for your openness. It is good to call a spade a spade.

May you Reverend Hoyt continue to be a blessing to your federation of churches and may the Reformed Churches of New Zealand continue on the path of faithfulness and in all things look to the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ for its direction and existence. May we both look forward to the return of our Bridegroom, who said "I am the Alpha and Omega ... who is and who was and who is to come." Thank you.

L3. Address to Synod

By Reverend P Hawu and M Radjah - GGRI-NTT
Given on Thursday 13th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION

Dear Brothers in Christ,

On behalf of the churches Sumba, Savu and Timor of GGRI-NTT, I bring you brotherly greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour who brought us here to attend the Synod of the Australian churches at Kelmscott. It is the second time that the delegates from Indonesia, with the help of the Australian churches are able to attend for which we are very thankful.

We like to tell you a little bit about our churches in Indonesia. There are 14 churches and 29 mission posts. The first missionary was Reverend van Alphen. He arrived in Sumba in 1881. So it was just over 100 years ago that mission work was allowed to start by the Dutch government. It was a very difficult task - first of all the Sumbanese language was not a written language, then there was always fighting among the tribes. After a year the wife of Reverend van Alphen died. He went back to Holland a broken man. It took a long time before the first member could be baptised. Slowly the Dutch got control over Sumba and peace came to the island and made the work of the missionary easier. Also during that time many churches, schools and hospital were built. God blessed the efforts of them and at the moment

there are now about 4,200 members altogether. There are 4 classes and every 2 years a Synod.

The first Synod of our churches was held in WandaPongu/Sumba in the year 1985. So the churches became independent in that year. There was still financial support from Holland, but that was stopped in 1990 except for the Theological School. At the following Synods were also delegates from Holland, Timor (GGUU) and sometimes from Australia.

The work in churches is the same as here but the difficulties are a lot bigger. For example to call a meeting together, to get the deputies together you first have to write to them. Transport is another problem and sometimes non-existent.

One other example is Evangelist Amos Tuke Bjodi works in Wula. He is married and has 5 children. His stipend is 6 dollars per month. So he also has to work in the rice fields. He is a faithful preacher and has said to someone the Lord will provide.

We hope that through the visits of delegates the bond of churches will be strengthened through the grace of our Heavenly Father. Let us pray that still many may be called unto Him and gather unto Himself a Church from all tribes and nations in which He is glorified.

Thank you.

L4. Response to Reverends Radjah & Rawu

**By Brother J Bosveld - Deputy for Relations with Other Churches
Given on Friday 14th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION**

Pendeta Hawu and Pendeta Radjah, the chairman of the Synod has already welcomed you, but may I also do it in your native language.

"Kepada Pendeto Hawu dan Radjah. Kami Menerima anda Di Sinodo dengan Hati senang dan tangan Terbuka."

Which means you're heartily welcome.

We are pleased that you could address the Synod last night, wherein you gave us an overview of your Churches, your beginning, and how it has grown. We realise your struggle to be independent and your struggle to remain faithful to God's Word. But be assured that you do have sister Churches in us and that also our bond has strengthened and since our last Synod our contact has grown. I was allowed to be in Indonesia three times and Brother deMan twice. We attended your Synod and experienced the struggle you have, also with the different opinions of each other. You experience it here among us as well, be it on a different level. Scripture has foretold us the struggle of the Church, already in Paradise; God said I will put enmity. Also the New Testament speaks about those who want to live faithfully will endure many hardships; yet the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal. The Lord knows those who are His, and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Now that our bond together has grown and we start to understand each other better, let us as servants of God, in all humility correct each other that we may walk on the road to eternal life, finding out together what is acceptable to the Lord. And we as deputies are also trying to give you some assistance. We gave you some financial assistance especially for Bibles, the money collected by the youth of the Church. Mission Aid is also supplying some help in different Churches and associations. A small group of the Bedfordale Church is also supporting the consistory in Kataka so that they can do some mission work in two places.

We had Pila in our midst for three months. This Synod will also decide if we, with the help of Holland, can send him to Hamilton. We were allowed to invite and fi-

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nancially support you to come to Synod. We hope that it will benefit both of you, your Churches and our relationship. You also mentioned the situation with Amos, we understand the great difficulty some of these people, our brothers and sisters, are in.

But Reverend Hawu and Reverend Radjah, in April we had a discussion together in Melolo about our help and we came to the conclusion that we do our activities through your deputies, so that also you know what is going on. We also said that any request must come via your deputyship, and now that we received your Acts of your last Synod we can also see what mandate your Synod has given you.

We fully agree with your closing words, of your address, may all this work be done to God's glory, that many may hear the rich gospel of salvation, repent and be saved. Yes God gathers Himself a Church from all nations, tribes and tongues. He does so in a covenant relationship. He has given us the full way of salvation, for the Holy Scripture fully contains the will of God and that all that man must believe in order to be saved is sufficiently taught therein. The whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in it at length.

We therefore reject with all our heart whatever does not agree with this Gospel. May our love toward each other grow, may this Synod also renew the mandate for our contact together, may the appointed deputies do their work with zeal and love. May your stay among us be pleasant. May you take back with you our greetings to your Churches. May God bless us all.

Terima Kasih

L5. Address to Synod

By Reverend Fangidae - GGMM-NTT

Given on Friday 15th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION

Mr Chairman and dear brothers,

I am honoured again, to be in the midst of you for the third time. Thank you for your welcome to me and the honour given to me to address this Synod. The Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir Nusa Tenggara - Timor (GGMM-NTT), brings you the Christian greetings in the name of our only Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. We also thank you for your continuing concern for our church by sending deputies from your churches, attending and addressing our Synod Assembly, which was held from the 12th - 13th April, 1996.

As this is the second Synod of our Churches, you may probably ask the question: What about the previous Synod that was held last December 1995?

The Synod December 1995 was planned to be the official Synod of our Churches, that is the GGMM churches.

The convening church, who was supposed to be the host church, prior to the opening of the Synod digressed from the subject.

The name of Synod that was supposed to be the Synod of GGMM has been changed to Gereja Masehi Musyafir Indonesia (GMMI).

Not only the name of the church, but also the stamp of the church was changed.

A number of people, that are members of the convening church, strongly rejected the decision of Synod 1992, which accepted the reformed doctrine and confessed in the Three Forms of Unity - the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt. They also rejected the system of the reformed doctrine of the churches government (System of Deputies - they want to go back to the synodical system). They showed their disagreement to the reformed doctrine by changing the name from Gereja Gereja (plural of churches), to only Gereja (singular, church). The

changing of the name from plural to the singular, had been decided prior to the Synod.

This is a strong indication that showed disagreement, not only to the reformed doctrine but also against the church order that has been approved by the Synod in 1992. Because this was done prior to the Synod, and the changing of the church name from plural to singular forced on us by a small number of dominant people without giving a change for the issue to be discussed and approved, we think of the Synod December 1995, not as the Synod of GGMM but as the Synod of the "so-called" GMI (Gereja Musyafir Indonesia). This is because we want to remain faithful and truthful to God's Holy Word as it is confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, and this confession is rejected by the Gereja Musyafir Indonesia (GMI).

The nine churches of GGMM-NTT that have remained faithful, stated their disagreement and rejected the Synod of Gereja Musyafir Indonesia, as the Synod of GGMM-NTT.

For this reason, the nine churches of GGMM agreed to have their own Synod and that was already held from the 12th - 13th April, 1996. In this Synod, an affirmation was made, not only to remain faithful and truthful to God's Holy Word but also to protect and defend our church's confession in the Three Forms of Unity.

We have had to pay the price by remaining faithful to God's Holy Word. We have experienced oppression, terror, and mistreatment for remaining faithful to God's Holy Word.

Nine churches remain faithful. Small in the eyes of man. But we believe that it pleased the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the churches. We also strongly believe, that the separation of nine churches has occurred only because the Lord allowed it to happen in order to lead this church according to His Holy Word.

The relation between the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and the GGMM-NTT, has been strengthened by the visit of your deputies, Brother Buist and Brother Bosveld. They were the witnesses when our Synod unanimously agreed to accept the Free Reformed churches of Australia as our sister churches.

Now after our second Synod, from 12th - 13th April, 1996, we have more strong reasons to seek further relations with you, not only to strengthen the bond so far, but to accept each other as sister churches.

We realise that our expectation to have you to accept us as sister churches, since we have accepted you as sister churches, will not happen from your side as a blink of an eye.

It takes time for you to consider, to pray and ask the Lord to guide you for the right decision before you say 'yes' or 'no' in response to our expectation.

There are maybe some shortcomings in our growing efforts, but please brothers, don't hesitate, especially after the separation. So far, we have been blessed by knowing you, related to you, and have enjoyed the spirit of a sister church relationship.

It is only a matter of time, and it is God's time, that you say 'yes' to us.

What pleases us so much is that before the time has come, we have already received from you the heart of sister churches. Do help us to strengthen our hand, that is carrying the reformed torch, to keep flaming. And when the fire is almost out, please help us to put oil in the torch.

Please brothers, be assured that we will never let you down in faith, resulting from confession in the Three Forms of Unity of the Reformed doctrine and our faithfulness, living in obedience to God's Holy Word.

Hearing that our faith has been reported to you, I think you will thank our God through Jesus Christ for all of us.

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What a joy to have you as our sister churches. Even though, the joy comes from the sound of clapping one hand. We pray the Lord Jesus Christ to give us the abundance of joy that come from the sound of two hands clapping.

May you have blessed continuous days of Synod to the glory of our Heavenly Father's Kingdom.

Thank you.

On behalf of the Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir
Nusa Tenggara Timor

Reverend Eli Fangidae

L6. Response to Reverend Fangidae

**By Brother JL van Burgel - Deputy for Relations with Other Churches
Given on Monday 17th June, 1996 - EVENING SESSION**

Reverend Fangidae, Brothers and Sisters,

It is with great joy that once again we can welcome you and your wife in our midst and receive your greetings from the Gereja Gereja Masehi Musyafir. This is your third visit to our Churches, having addressed Synods in 1992, 1994 and now 1996. In the meantime, our delegates have been able to visit your Synods in 1992, 1995 and 1996.

In 1992 you pleaded with us for help in training good leaders for the churches: good ministers and good elders. You wanted someone to help train good leaders.

In response we provided support for Yonson Dethan and this is continuing. The latest report from Professor Faber is encouraging. Yonson is expected to complete his studies in 12 months time and be available to serve the churches in Timor. Meanwhile his brother Edwar is being sponsored by the Dutch sister churches in obtaining further English training with a view to commence studies at Hamilton. We pray that in Yonson you will have someone who can make a beginning on the important task for which you asked help.

Reverend Fangidae, having listened to our discussions on relations with the RCNZ you heard on more than one occasion the example of a young couple courting. In fact for those who did not follow all of the discussion they would be surprised to hear that Reverends van Delden and vander Jagt, both happily married men, expressing their love for the same girl. Not surprisingly then in the context of those discussions when you come to us appealing for closer relationship you wondered what sort of dowry was required.

Reverend Fangidae I can assure you, the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, when discussing your appeal for closer relationship, will not consider the dowry you have for us but rather the dowry your churches bring forward when you want to present yourselves as a spotless bride for THE bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Canons of Dordt Chapter 5 Article 15 speak of it: "the doctrine of the perseverance of true believers and saints, and the certainty of it, which God has most abundantly revealed in His Word for the glory of His Name. Satan hates it, the world ridicules it ... The Bride of Christ however has always most tenderly loved and constantly defended it as a treasure of inestimable value...."

It is the Confessions of the Church, the Three Forms of Unity, which is the Church's treasure, the Bride's treasure and when we want to move forward, then we must be satisfied of each other not only that we cherish that treasure, but also that we uphold and defend it.

It is thus with thankfulness we note that your latest Synod could make an affirmation to remain faithful and truthful to God's Holy Word and also to protect and defend our church's Confession in the Three Forms of Unity. That this affirmation could be made after severe attacks on the GGMM by those which moved away from these Confessions and sought to introduce hierarchy into the GGMM, is an indication of God's grace.

For with you we can acknowledge that the separation of the nine churches occurred only because God allowed it to happen in order to lead the church into the paths of obedience. Previous deputies had reported the reluctance of some of the GGMM to adopt Reformed practices after the decision of 1992, and the reluctance to act on matters such as women elders and certain hierarchical tendencies. God gave you reformation, he gave you liberation from those who would draw you away from obedient service to the Head of the Church. That you recognised the tyranny of synodical hierarchy when the Synod of 1995 tried to change the name of your federation from Gereja Gereja (churches) to Gereja (church) when it was only in 1992 that the Church Order of Dordt was adopted in your churches, is evidence of the work of the Spirit who guides and enlightens us through the Word. It reflects already in you a growing understanding about the purpose and intent of the Reformed Church Order. May we sound a note of caution. Your 1996 Synod was remarkably short, considering the upheaval in the churches. Important items such as your relations with the GGRI, the possibilities for theological training and the request for sister relations with the FRCA were discussed. But much of the work was delegated to the appointed deputies. As you have seen in the discussions in our Synod, deputies are but servants of Synod and care should be taken that they do not usurp the authority of the local churches.

We are very thankful that your 1996 Synod could accept the Free Reformed Churches as sister churches. You ask us to reciprocate, to also accept the GGMM as sister churches. This request we cannot formally deal with at this Synod as it was not placed on our agenda by the churches. In any case, you will have noticed from your various visits here that we take sister relations very seriously and decisions of that nature we like to make with great caution. We should also point out that it will be necessary - for you and we - before we can exercise sister relations - that there should be a good understanding among you of what it means, and that involves both rights and responsibilities. Your churches have taken a courageous step in liberating yourselves from the hierarchal decisions of 1995. And you will come under the attacks of the evil one, who will try to draw you away from the true service of the Lord. We do want to be a hand and a foot to you, to encourage you to stay close to God's truths. This Synod will discuss recommendations to continue support to your churches by way of visits and Reformed literature. Our support for Yonson will also continue.

You spoke of carrying a Reformed torch, to keep it burning. Before we can from our side accept you as sister churches we must be sure that the Reformed torch which you are carrying, does keep burning and the fire does not go out. That you continue to fill the torch with oil, the oil of Psalm 133. In this we want to be a help and encouragement to you so that on the final day when the Bridegroom comes, we both may be as the five wise virgins, with lamps which have not gone out, ready to participate at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

Reverend Fangidae we ask you to pass on to the GGMM warmest Christian greetings from the FRCA and to express our thankfulness for the Reformation the Lord could give to your churches. We stand prepared to build on the contacts we have established so far, and to give proper consideration to how we can best assist the GGMM in their desire to present a Reformed witness in Indonesia.

APPENDIX M

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

Submitted by Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott

Introduction

The current document follows in the footsteps of various previous attempts to form classes within the bond of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. This submission goes beyond previous attempts in that herein is contained a concrete proposal as to how to make the formation of classes possible and feasible.

This proposal does not pretend to provide the ideal solution, as if now all the requirements of the adopted Church Order are satisfied. The Church of Kelmscott is well aware of the deficiencies of this proposal. However, the Church of Kelmscott is also convinced that this proposal represents a big step forward in attaining the norms captured in the Church Order. Only when this proposal is read in the light of the deficiencies of the current system (ie, no inter-church ecclesiastical meetings except for the bi-annual Synod, and classis churches acting as chambers of second thought in the event of discipline or appeals) has it any chance of being accepted. We would plead that Synod consider this proposal not in light of whether it matches up to the norm (it doesn't), but rather whether it constitutes an improvement over our current practice.

The following pages comprise three parts:

A.the development of classes in the course of church history

B.classes in the history of the FRCA

C.actual proposal for formation of classes in FRCA

A. The Development of Classes in History

Preamble

In His sovereign good pleasure, the Lord God has chosen a people for Himself to eternal life. This people is saved by faith in Jesus Christ. This faith is in turn granted by God through the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those chosen to life. It is pleased the Lord to ordain that the Holy Spirit work this faith through the preaching of the holy gospel (cf Canons of Dort, Chap I; LD 25). This preaching of the gospel has in turn been entrusted to the Church. Specifically, in the Church the Lord is pleased to use (sinful) men to administer the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Persons, then, who wish to be saved, must submit themselves to the instruction and discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ (cf Art 28, Belgic Confession).

Need for Bond of Churches

A church, though, can by the ordinance of God not be content to be by itself.¹⁰ Christ gathers a catholic church, spread over all the world. Yet this catholic church

¹⁰ For more detail on the argumentation behind a bond of churches, the reader is referred to the following works:

·WWJ vanOene, *Decently and in Good Order*, Winnipeg: Premier Printing.

·J Kamphuis, "Roeping en Recht tot Oefening van het Kerkverband", in *Verkenningen III* (Goes: Oosterbaan & leCointre, 1966), pg 59ff.

·S Greijdanus, *Schriftbeginselen van Kerkrecht inzake (cont)*

is united in one faith (Art 27, Belg Conf). This confession is not only to be believed, but also to be practised. As no Christian is to be content to be by himself (but is instead to join the Church, and use his gifts to “serve the edification of the brothers and sisters”), so also no Church is to be content to be by itself, but is instead to unite with other churches of Jesus Christ in one bond. God’s revelation about the catholicity of the Church excludes all independentism.

A second reason why no church of Jesus Christ may be satisfied to be alone lies in the reality of our continuing sinfulness. Specifically, the men the Lord is pleased to use in the proclamation of His Word are sinful men. As sinners, ministers have it within themselves to misuse their position to subject the congregation to their will. The same must be said of the elders charged with supervision over the ministry of the Word and over the spiritual health of the congregation. Though these men are given by God for the good of His chosen people, these office bearers (be it consciously or not) can be a burden to the well-being of the saints entrusted into their care. The congregation needs the Word, in its purity and in its totality; that Word, after all, is the way to life. But no one may be surprised when office bearers place themselves between the congregation and the Word (cf 1 Pet 5:3; Ill John 9f). Through haughty self-righteousness, a minister and/or consistory can enforce a heresy upon a congregation. Equally, with a show of gentleness and apparent tender empathy for the sufferings of congregation members, a minister and/or consistory can agree to take the offence out of the gospel – and so lead the congregation astray. Not for nothing have the churches (in Art 32 of the Belgic Confession) summarised God’s Word to teach that “those who govern the Church...must at all times watch that they do not deviate from what Christ, our only Master, has commanded.” The churches have learned from Scripture that Christ is the only Lord (Jude 4), and men are all brethren, with none above another (Mt 23:8). As a tool to assist office bearers in watching that they do not deviate from Christ’s commands, the churches have developed the Church Order as it has come down to us over the years.¹¹

Motivation at the Convent of Wezel

Essential to this Church Order (at least, according to its historical development) is the effort to safe-guard the churches (and hence their members) from the tyranny of ministers and/or consistories. Prof J Kamphuis, in a book about the beginnings of

Meerdere Vergaderingen, (Enschede: Uitgeverij J Boersma, n.d.), esp pg 28f.

· J vanDalen, *De Schriftuurlijke Beginselen van het Kerkrecht*, Goes: Oosterbaan & leCointre, 1946.

· H Bouma, *De Kerkorde, regel voor vrede in de kerk*, Ermelo: Uitgeverij Woord & Wereld, 1988.

· AN Hendriks, “Kerk en Kerkverband” in *Dienst*, Vol 41 No. 6, 1993, pg 19-27.

· C Trimp, “Eenheid en Hereniging” in *De Reformatie*, Vol 63, No. 6, 7 Nov 1987, pg 134ff.

- 11 See Trimp, pg 135: “Vanzelfsprekend is in deze kerkorde veel ervaringskennis vastgelegd. Met name de ervaringen uit de strijd tegen het dopers individualisme en tegen de hiërarchie in de zestiende en negentiende eeuw kunnen wij daarin herkennen.... [De kerkorde] is een konkretisering van de opdracht om zichzelf en elkaar te bewaren in de eenheid van het geloof, in de zin van de artikelen 30, 31 en 32 van de N.G.B. Belijdenisgeschriften en kerkorde geven vorm aan de nederigheid tegenover God en elkaar, aan de hulp en liefde en verdraagzaamheid, die wij aan elkaar verschuldigd zijn. Zij zijn instrumenten voor de vrede en de eendracht van de kerk.”

the Dutch reformed church federation, penned this conclusion about the labours promulgated at the Convent of Wezel in 1568:

"the bond of churches was recognised by the brothers at Wezel as a means to resist all hunger for power over the congregation. Through the bond the congregation is protected against the ambition of ministers, and possibly also the ambition of elders and consistories. In the face of her own office bearers, the congregation may not be silenced or rendered without rights. For the sake of the congregation and her God-given rights –and possibly also over against misbehaving office bearers– the bond of churches was planned.¹²

And further:

"...Wezel appreciated most positively the functioning of the bond of churches through the ecclesiastical assemblies. Here is no narrow-minded mentality in which people speak with disdain about synods! In fact, this positive appreciation turns out to be the introduction to the articles formulated at this convent. The brothers wanted to promote exercising of the bond of churches:

'since...it shall be most beneficial to achieve and maintain uniform agreement in doctrine as well as in regulating ceremonies and discipline, we consider that, as much as possible, frequent meetings of neighbouring churches ought to be organised. So that each arising item can be discussed at such meetings, we consider that all efforts must be made to divide the various Dutch provinces into fixed classes. In this way each church will know with whom she must interact and consult about the more important matters which, by her judgment, affect the common interest.' (I.1)"¹³

- 12 *Zo Vonden Wij Elkaar*, Groningen: De Vuurbaak, n.d., pg 23. The original text reads as follows:

"Het kerkverband is door de broeders te Wezel onderkend als een instantie tegen alle zucht naar heerschappij over de gemeente. *Die gemeente* wordt door dat verband beveiligd tegen de heerszucht van de predikanten, maar eventueel ook tegen die van ouderlingen en kerkeraden. *De gemeente* behoort tegenover haar eigen ambtsdragers niet mond-dood of rechteloos te zijn. Terwille van haar e'n van de aan haar geschonken rechten – ook eventueel *tegenover* zich misdragende ambtsdragers – is het kerkverband gedacht.

- 13 *Zo Vonden Wij Elkaar*, Groningen: De Vuurbaak, n.d., pg 24. The original text reads as follows:

"Het spreekt na het voorgaande als vanzelf dat Wezel de oefening van het kerkverband door middel van de kerkelijke vergaderingen bijzonder positief zal weten te waarderen. We leven hier echt niet in de krampachtige sfeer, waar men over synoden alleen maar de schouders minachtend weet op te halen! De positieve waardering is zelfs de inzet van het geheel van de artikelen die het convent heeft geformuleerd. Men wil op verbandsoefening aan werken:

'aangezien...het alleszins dienstig zal zijn tot verkrijging en bewaring van eenparige overeenstemming zowel in de leer als in de regeling van de ceremonien en de tucht, voor zover dit mogelijk is, dat er dikwijls samenkomende vergaderingen van genabuurde kerken worden ingesteld, opdat iedere voorkomende zaak daar ter behandeling worde voortgebracht...menen we dat voor alles moet gearbeid worden, opdat...de onderscheiden Nederlandse provincies in bepaalde vaste klassen of parochies worden verdeeld ten einde iedere kerk zal kunnen weten met wie zij heeft te handelen en te raadplegen over alle meer gewichtige zaken, die haars inziens het algemeen belang betreffen' (I,1)."

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

We are to note that the fathers at Wezel, in this first article of their proposed Church Order, judged ecclesiastical meetings necessary for the sake of the promotion and preservation of the truth of Scripture, both in terms of doctrine and in terms of the regulations of ceremonies and church discipline. For ecclesiastical meetings to promote and preserve this truth, the fathers stipulated that there were to be "*frequent meetings of neighbouring churches*". Contact and discussion was not to be minimalised. Minimalising of contact is what happens in systems of hierarchy as well as in systems of independentism. But Reformed church polity seeks to maximise contact between the churches, so that, by frequent contact and discussions, increasing consensus arises. Here is an application of the words of Prov 15:22:

"Without counsel, plans go awry,
But in the multitude of counsellors they are established."

Church Order

This wisdom of the fathers has been captured in the Church Order adopted by the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. As an application of what we confess in Art 32 of the Belg Conf ("We accept only what is proper to preserve and promote harmony and unity and to keep all in obedience to God."), we have agreed that "three kinds of ecclesiastical assemblies shall be maintained: the consistory, the classis, and the synod" (Art 28). Concerning the classis, the churches have agreed that "neighbouring churches shall come together in a classis by delegating a minister and an elder.... Classes shall be held at least once every three months" (Art 41). The agenda of classes shall include matters "which belong to its churches in common" (Art 30), and the chairman of each classes "shall ask whether the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church" (Art 41). By adopting a Church Order with these stipulations, the FRCA stands on the shoulders of the fathers over the centuries.

B. Classes in the history of the FRCA

By the wise leading of the Lord, however, the FRCA comprised for years of but three churches. The result was that effectively the FRCA could not fulfil the requirements adopted by the churches in Art 28 of the CO, viz, the churches could not be formed into classes, and so the (neighbouring) churches could not meet to profit from the acknowledged benefits of frequent classical meetings.

Synod 1956

The churches entertained a proposal in 1956 to establish classes, but judged that the time was not yet ripe.¹⁴ Instead, the churches at this synod adopted household regulations for Synods, specifying that synods would be held every two years as long as classes were not formed (Art 7). As to the items of the Church Order that required the involvement of classis (specifically church discipline), Synod 1954 already

14 *Acts*, Art 21: De Kerk van Armadale stelt voor: 'om te besluiten over te gaan tot het instellen van twee classes in het kerkverband van The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, namelijk een Classis Oost-Australia, waartoe de Kerken van Launceston en Wollongong, en een Classis West-Australia, waartoe de Kerken van Albany en Armadale zullen behoren.' De Synode, kennis genomen hebbende van het voorstel van de Kerk van Armadale, spreekt als haar oordeel uit, dat de tijd voor Classisvorming nog niet rijp is." Note that there were no delegates from a church at Wollongong present at this synod!

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

decided that the neighbouring church was to carry out the function of the classis (Acts, Art 30).

Synod 1983

In 1978 a fourth church joined the bond with the institution of the Church of Kelm-scott. Synod 1983, accordingly, received a request from the church at Albany to form classes, consisting of two churches each. This request, however, was denied since the existence of three churches in Western Australia and one in Tasmania made the functioning of such classes too difficult. Instead, a decision was made to collate synod decisions relating to the task of a classis church (Acts, Art 88). The resulting adaptation of the Church Order to the Australian situation was finalised by Synod 1985, in its decision regarding which tasks of classis were to be referred to classis churches and which to Synod (Acts, Art 81).

Synod 1990

The Church of Launceston petitioned Synod 1990 to "arrange for a study to be undertaken" to bring the churches into greater conformity to the Church Order. Launceston's request, including argumentation, is included as Appendix 1. Of particular interest is Launceston's "prime concern" that "the churches should live more closely together, in the joyful mutual assistance to which we have pledged ourselves in our common bond with Christ, the Head of the Church." Synod, however, decided "not to accede to the request of the Church of Launceston" (Acts, Art 64). The following two considerations played a role in reaching this decision:

- 1 It would indeed be good to come to the point that Classes could be formed and that all the directives of the CO regarding the broader assemblies could be complied with.
- 2 Launceston itself admits that distance is a great factor. At present the two churches in Tasmania would have to be included in a Classis in the West. For this reason they see little benefit in such a situation. Thus until the time that Tasmania or the Eastern states include three churches the formation of Classes has little benefit for the churches there. It is thus better to wait until the number of churches, especially in the East, increases so that formation of Classes is warranted.

Synod 1992

The Church of Kelmescott proposed to Synod 1992 that "in keeping with Article 45 CO, and Article 1 of the Rules for Synods, synods be held every three years, that two classes be formed..." (see Appendix 2). Synod decided not to accede to Kelm-scott's request (Acts, Art 122), having considered (amongst others) that:

- 1 According to Rule 1 of the Rules for Synods, the frequency of Synods hinges on the formation of classes....
- 2 Synod 1990 (Acts, Article 64) decided not to accede to the request of FRCA Launceston to study the matter of classes formation. Synod considered that it is better to wait until the number of churches, especially in the east, increases so that formation of classes is warranted.
- 3 Kelmescott has not addressed this Consideration (Acts, Article 64), neither have the number of churches increased since the last Synod.

Summary

In the course of the years, four churches have petitioned Synod to consider the formation of classes. The churches together in their synods, however, have to date not seen the way clear to move in the direction recorded in the Church Order. The will

to do so is present (as Synod 1990 also noted), but the practicalities in the Australian situation have prevented such action.

C. The Way Forward

The way forward would be to build on the considerations mentioned by Synod 1992. That synod judged that the church of Kelmescott, in her letter to Synod 1992, did not address the consideration that there remain but two churches in Eastern Australia. With the following proposal, it is the reality of there being but two churches in Eastern Australia that we shall endeavour to address. Before we do so, we note that since 1994 there exist two churches in Albany.

Synod 1990 considered that classis formation ought to wait "until the time that Tasmania or the Eastern states include three churches" (Acts, Art 64). Taken strictly, this consideration could prevent the FRCA from forming classes for many years to come, for, humanly speaking, the formation of a third church in Tasmania (given recent developments with the house congregation in Hobart) will take years to happen. In contemplating this consideration (as required by Synod 1992), three possible scenarios come to mind.

Scenario One

In the first scenario, the churches are considered as one group, making up one classes consisting of nine churches:

Classis Australia: Albany, Armadale, Bedforddale, Byford, Kelmescott, Launceston, Legana, Rockingham, West Albany

The **advantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

- Because of the formation of a classis, the churches could meet together more frequently than once in two years, as they now do.
- The churches could meet as Synod once in three years to deal with the matters properly dealt with by a Synod.

The **disadvantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

- A classis is meant to consider items of mutual concern to the churches of its resort. Given the vast distance between the three geographical centres of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, it may not be expected that the items of greater concern in, for example, Tasmania are of concern to the churches in the Albany region.
- The vast distance between east and west makes it impractical for this classis to meet every three months according to the stipulation of Art 41, CO. More realistic in this scenario would be a meeting, say, once per year. This undermines the intent of the fathers in forming classes in the first place.
- Relative to a synod, a classis (according to the Church Order) is a minor assembly in the sense that less churches are represented in a classis. A synod is "major" (meaning broader) in the sense that more churches are represented. That is why an appeal travels from minor assembly to major assembly; increasingly more churches may pass judgment on the matter. Yet when classis and synod are made up of delegates from the same churches, classis can no longer be considered a "minor" assembly in the sense of the CO. With the classis covering the same number of churches as the synod, appealing a wrong decision from a classis to a synod becomes superfluous. So the existing system of classis churches and second appeal churches would need to be continued.
- Because one classis in Australia would effectively be as "major" as the synod, the distinction between classis and synod disintegrates. Classis could as legitimately deal with churches abroad as synod could. Any distinction in agenda is essentially artificial.

Scenario Two

The churches of Australia are divided into two groups, as follows:

Classis Tasmania: Launceston, Legana

Classis Western Australia: Albany, Armadale, Bedforddale, Byford, Kelmscott, Rockingham, West Albany

The **advantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

·Of these two groupings Western Australia has seven churches, which is definitely sufficient to form a classis. By forming a classis Western Australia made up of these seven churches, these seven could distinctly benefit from a three-monthly meeting to speak together about items of common interest and concern, and so encourage each other to Scriptural faithfulness in doctrine and the regulations of ceremonies and discipline.

The **disadvantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

·According to the judgment of the churches in time past, the Tasmanian churches do not have sufficient numbers to form a feasible classis. Theoretically, one or more of the churches of WA could join the churches of Tasmania in one classical resort (be it permanently or on a temporary rotational basis). There is, however, an obvious artificiality about such a set-up simply because a functional classis should be made up of neighbouring churches. Classes, after all, are to deal (amongst other things) with matters of mutual concern, and what is a matter of mutual concern in Tasmania is not necessarily a matter of mutual concern in the metropolitan Perth area or in Albany (and vice versa). One or more of the churches of the Perth area should not be joined to a classis geographically far removed from it, but, since the matters of concern to that Perth church will be common to the other churches of Perth, that church needs to form one classis with the other churches of that area. To make one classis out of the four churches of Tasmania and Albany is again artificial because of the different concerns that live in the separate localities. Besides, it would also be a burden for Tasmania to have to travel to Albany or vice versa, meaning effectively that the frequency and effectiveness of classes diminishes.

·Since it is not feasible to join any of the WA churches to a classis Tasmania, the churches of Tasmania could continue to function with the old model of classis churches. However, it is scarcely desirable to allow some of the churches to benefit from classes while others do not.

·A lop-sided classis structure (effective in WA and lame in Tasmania) throws out of kilter the tasks which a classis can perform. While for WA the italicised part of the Church Order could be discarded, for Tasmania the italicised part could not be discarded. This would produce confusion and inconsistencies.

·A two classes structure allows for one unbiased party only to investigate matters of appeal at a synod.

Scenario Three

A third scenario divides the nine Free Reformed Churches into three geographic centres, as follows:

Tasmania: Launceston, Legana

Rainbow Coast: Albany, West Albany

Metro-Perth: Armadale, Bedforddale, Byford, Kelmscott, Rockingham

The **advantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

- The five metro-Perth churches live in obvious proximity to each other, and have sufficient numbers to form a classis, with all the benefits and obligations that follow according to the Church Order.
- The two Tasmanian churches also live in obvious proximity to each other, as do also the two Rainbow Coast churches. Each area has items of interest to the churches of that area, and would benefit from regular meetings with the neighbouring church.
- Because of the proximity of the churches within each geographic area, tri-monthly meetings are not at all impossible.
- The number of ecclesiastical meetings will increase. In the current climate, improving contact and communication is a positive, not a negative. The Lord willing, this will improve unity in doctrine and practice.
- Synod could be held once in three years, allowing more time for deputies to do their work (and consistories too).
- All the churches (as opposed to some) get to benefit from the advantages of a classis.
- In the event of an appeal at synod arising from a church (or member) of one of the classes, there remain delegates from two other classes who are new to the material of the appeal and hence can be called upon to judge the appeal (cf Art 32, CO).

The **disadvantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

- A classis Tasmania and a classis Rainbow Coast have but two churches each – not sufficient according to the judgment of the churches over the years.
- According to the judgment of Synod 1990, this disadvantage is sufficient to disqualify scenario three as a reasonable improvement to the current system of bi-annual meetings of the churches and using classis churches to carry out “the minimum level of complying with the formal requirements of the Church Order.” To overcome this weakness, we propose that Classis Tasmania and Classis Rainbow Coast be instructed to invite one of the other churches (by alphabetical order) to join them in their classical meeting. In practice this would mean that Classis Tasmania would invite one of the seven churches in WA to send delegates. Similarly, Classis Rainbow Coast would invite by turn one of the seven other churches (ie, the churches of classes Tasmania and Metro-Perth) to join in their classical meeting. It should be understood that the church invited by Classis Tasmania or Classis Rainbow Coast will continue to meet with the churches of their own geographical area and use their own classis for matters relating to the functioning of their own church. For the sake of continuity, we propose that the churches be invited to assist for a period of one year, instead of for the duration of one meeting only.

With this modification, the picture would be as follows:

Tasmania: Launceston, Legana, floating third party ‘borrowed’ from one of the other classes

Rainbow Coast: Albany, West Albany, floating third party ‘borrowed’ from one of the other classes

Metro-Perth: Armadale, Bedfordale, Byford, Kelmscott, Rockingham

Additional to the **advantages** mentioned earlier under Scenario Three, the following come to mind:

- The floating third party will become familiar with circumstances and developments in the Classis being assisted. This will assist in fulfilling the desire of the fathers to use classes to promote unity in the churches. This will also assist the minister of that third party when he joins in church visitation in the visited classis.

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

·The Tasmanian churches in particular live in great isolation from the rest of the bond of churches. Synods over the years have sought to overcome this isolation by instructing that one minister per year travel from the west to Tasmania and one per year travel from Tasmania to the west. The concept of the floating third party (as well as Tasmania's involvement in Classis Rainbow Coast) will increase contact, and so decrease isolation.

·In a working environment as a classis, there is more opportunity for cross-fertilisation than when ministers visits made with fewer ecclesiastical meetings to attend.

The **disadvantages** of this scenario may be listed as follows:

·There is an awkwardness in a "foreign" church being represented at classes in Tasmania and the Rainbow Coast. These "foreign" churches will be asked to give a judgment on matters relating to the (two) churches of that classes, matters that may be far removed from the life of the third church. It is readily admitted that the proposed scenario is not ideal, and does not conform fully to the adopted requirements of the Church Order. However, it should be remembered that the current system of classis churches also requires churches at a great distance to pass a judgment on affairs far removed from them. Think, for example, of the relation of Kelmscott to Launceston, Legana to Rockingham, Rockingham to West Albany, etc. In the light of our current practice, the involvement of "foreign" churches in a classis must be judged as less of a disadvantage than the current use of distant classis churches.

·The floating third party is not familiar with the local circumstances of the classis wherein it is giving assistance. This weakness needs to be acknowledged, and one would expect that the delegates of the floating party accordingly act with the necessary wisdom and caution. Still, to provide a measure of continuity, the floating third party would be appointed for a period of a year.

·Because the appointment of the floating third party would be for a one year period, that church will be faced with an extra burden for the duration of that year, for it will have two sets of classical meetings to attend throughout that year. The following points should be remembered, though, in consideration of this disadvantage:

1. Normally, a classis meets every three months (Art 45, CO). Sister churches overseas have the stipulation that, in the event there is nothing for the agenda, one meeting of classis may be cancelled, allowing for meetings every six months. While four classes per year would be optimum (and hence eight for the floating third party), it should be borne in mind that the figure of eight is not fixed.
2. In the Canadian sister churches, a classis does not normally last more than one day.
3. In the event a classis meeting is brief and straightforward (as various will be, DV), a telephone linkup could be considered with the classis far away. This concept was already muted by Synod 1992 (Acts, Art 114).

·This proposal will cost more money. Appendix 3 presents a cost comparison. The church at Kelmscott feels that, if the advantages of this proposal are found to be more weighty than the disadvantages, cost ought not to hinder going in the direction of this proposal.

Concluding remarks

For the sake of completeness, we mention yet that, by our judgment, delegation to synod ought to remain a matter of the local churches (that is, one minister and one elder from each church) at least until such time as each classical resort has three churches. It should further be understood that all travel costs evolving from adopting this proposal should be borne by the churches in common, through the Synod treas-

ury. A period of a couple of months should be allowed for existing matters currently at classis church to be processed.

Recommendations

- 1 That the proposal be adopted to form three classes in the bond of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, to wit, Classis Tasmania (consisting of the churches of Launceston and Legana plus one floating church), Classis Rainbow Coast (consisting of the churches of Albany and West Albany plus one floating church), and Classis Metro-Perth (consisting of the churches of Armadale, Bedfordale, Byford, Kelmscott, and Rockingham).
- 2 That the words and articles of the Church Order printed in italics be declared obsolete.
- 3 That the convening church for the first meeting of Classis Tasmania be Legana, the convening church for the first meeting of Classis Rainbow Coast be West Albany, and the convening church for the first meeting of Classis Metro-Perth be Rockingham.
- 4 That the decision for form classes take effect on 1 September 1996, with the various classes being convened in the course of that month.
- 5 That the Church of Armadale be the floating church to assist in Classis Tasmania for a period of sixteen months, and the Church of Kelmscott be the floating church to assist in Classis Rainbow Coast for a period of sixteen months. Thereafter the next church in alphabetical order shall be invited for a period of one year.
- 6 That the next Synod be convened in 1999.

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

Quarterly classis													
Total triennial synod plus													
Difference between biennial													
Total triennial synod plus													
Difference between biennial													
Class	Row	Cost	Perth	Credit	18 delegates	Cumulative	% of	Difference	No of	Ave extra	18 delegates	Cumulative	% of
P	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
P	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$27,500	\$27,500	123	\$5,100	1	\$5,100	\$18,000	\$18,000	80	(\$4,400)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$32,600	146	\$10,200	2	\$5,100	\$5,100	\$23,100	103	\$700
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$38,200	72	(\$14,800)	3	(\$4,933)	\$5,600	\$28,700	54	(\$24,300)
\$6,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$40,000	\$78,200	148	\$25,200	4	\$6,300	\$24,000	\$52,700	99	(\$300)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$83,300	100	(\$300)	5	(\$60)	\$5,100	\$57,800	69	(\$25,800)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$88,900	106	\$5,300	6	\$883	\$5,600	\$63,400	76	(\$20,200)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$40,000	\$128,900	122	\$22,900	7	\$3,271	\$24,000	\$87,400	82	(\$18,600)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$134,000	126	\$28,000	8	\$3,500	\$5,100	\$92,500	87	(\$13,500)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$139,100	108	\$9,900	9	\$1,100	\$5,100	\$97,600	76	(\$31,600)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$28,000	\$167,100	129	\$37,900	10	\$3,790	\$18,500	\$116,100	90	(\$13,100)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$176,500	116	\$24,100	11	\$2,191	\$9,400	\$125,500	82	(\$26,900)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$181,600	119	\$29,200	12	\$2,433	\$5,100	\$130,600	86	(\$21,800)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$28,800	\$210,400	120	\$35,600	13	\$2,738	\$18,900	\$149,500	86	(\$25,300)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$219,800	126	\$45,000	14	\$3,214	\$9,400	\$158,900	91	(\$15,900)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$224,900	114	\$27,700	15	\$1,847	\$5,100	\$164,000	83	(\$33,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$28,300	\$253,200	128	\$56,000	16	\$3,500	\$18,400	\$182,400	92	(\$14,800)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$258,800	118	\$39,200	17	\$2,306	\$5,600	\$188,000	86	(\$31,600)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$268,200	122	\$48,600	18	\$2,700	\$9,400	\$197,400	90	(\$22,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$27,500	\$295,700	122	\$53,700	19	\$2,826	\$18,000	\$215,400	89	(\$26,600)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$301,300	125	\$59,300	20	\$2,965	\$5,600	\$221,000	91	(\$21,000)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$310,700	114	\$38,100	21	\$1,814	\$9,400	\$230,400	85	(\$42,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$27,500	\$338,200	124	\$65,600	22	\$2,982	\$18,000	\$248,400	91	(\$24,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$343,300	113	\$40,100	23	\$1,743	\$5,100	\$253,500	84	(\$49,700)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$348,900	115	\$45,700	24	\$1,904	\$5,600	\$259,100	85	(\$44,100)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$31,800	\$380,700	117	\$55,100	25	\$2,204	\$22,300	\$281,400	86	(\$44,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$385,800	118	\$60,200	26	\$2,315	\$5,100	\$286,500	88	(\$39,100)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$391,400	112	\$42,600	27	\$1,578	\$5,600	\$292,100	84	(\$56,700)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$31,800	\$423,200	121	\$74,400	28	\$2,657	\$22,300	\$314,400	90	(\$34,400)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$428,300	115	\$56,300	29	\$1,941	\$5,100	\$319,500	86	(\$52,500)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$433,400	117	\$61,400	30	\$2,047	\$5,100	\$324,600	87	(\$47,400)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$36,200	\$469,600	119	\$75,200	31	\$2,426	\$20,200	\$344,800	87	(\$49,600)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$479,000	121	\$84,600	32	\$2,644	\$9,400	\$354,200	90	(\$40,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$484,100	116	\$67,300	33	\$2,039	\$5,100	\$359,300	86	(\$57,500)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$36,200	\$520,300	125	\$103,500	34	\$3,044	\$20,200	\$379,500	91	(\$37,300)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$529,700	121	\$90,500	35	\$2,586	\$9,400	\$388,900	89	(\$50,300)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$534,800	122	\$95,600	36	\$2,656	\$5,100	\$394,000	90	(\$45,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$27,500	\$562,300	122	\$100,700	37	\$2,722	\$18,000	\$412,000	89	(\$49,600)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$567,900	123	\$106,300	38	\$2,797	\$5,600	\$417,600	90	(\$44,000)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$577,300	117	\$85,100	39	\$2,182	\$9,400	\$427,000	87	(\$65,200)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$28,300	\$605,600	123	\$113,400	40	\$2,835	\$18,400	\$445,400	90	(\$46,800)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$611,200	117	\$88,400	41	\$2,156	\$5,600	\$451,000	86	(\$71,800)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$9,400	\$620,600	119	\$97,800	42	\$2,329	\$9,400	\$460,400	88	(\$62,400)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$28,300	\$648,900	119	\$103,700	43	\$2,412	\$18,400	\$478,800	88	(\$66,400)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$664,000	120	\$108,800	44	\$2,473	\$5,100	\$483,900	89	(\$61,300)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$669,600	116	\$91,200	45	\$2,027	\$5,600	\$489,500	86	(\$78,900)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$31,800	\$691,400	122	\$123,000	46	\$2,674	\$22,300	\$511,800	90	(\$56,600)
\$5,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$696,500	118	\$104,900	47	\$2,232	\$5,100	\$516,900	87	(\$74,700)
\$5,500	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,600	\$702,100	119	\$110,500	48	\$2,302	\$5,600	\$522,500	88	(\$69,100)
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$0	\$1,000	\$31,800	\$733,900	120	\$119,900	49	\$2,447	\$22,300	\$544,800	89	(\$69,200)

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

Synod and classis cost estimate comparisons

(based on eligible delegates claiming 50% loss of income and a synod duration of 10 days)

Synod at											Floating third party for classis at:				Biennial synod 10d		Triennial - Triennial	
Year											No				Cumulative		18 deleg's	
A B C D E F G H I J											K L M N				O P		Q R	
A B C D E F G H I J											K L M N				O P		Q R	
1996											Armadale	Byford			\$16,800	\$16,800	\$16,800	\$11,000
1997											Bedfordale	Kelmscott				\$16,800		
1998											Albany	Rockingham			\$24,400	\$41,200		
1999											Byford	Launceston				\$41,200	\$24,400	\$12,500
2000	Triennial synod full cycle										Kelmscott	Armadale			\$24,400	\$65,600		
2001											WAlbany	Bedfordale				\$65,600		
2002											Rockingham	Legana			\$16,800	\$82,400	\$24,400	\$12,500
2003											Armadale	Byford				\$82,400		
2004											Bedfordale	Kelmscott			\$17,600	\$100,000		
2005											Albany	Rockingham				\$100,000	\$16,800	\$11,000
2006											Byford	Launceston			\$17,600	\$117,600		
2007											Kelmscott	Armadale				\$117,600		
2008											WAlbany	Bedfordale			\$16,800	\$134,400	\$17,600	\$11,300
2009											Rockingham	Legana				\$134,400		
2010											Armadale	Byford			\$16,800	\$151,200		
2011											Bedfordale	Kelmscott				\$151,200	\$17,600	\$11,300
2012											Albany	Rockingham			\$16,800	\$168,000		
2013											Byford	Launceston				\$168,000		
2014											Kelmscott	Armadale			\$16,800	\$184,800	\$16,800	\$11,000
2015											WAlbany	Bedfordale				\$184,800		
2016											Rockingham	Legana			\$24,400	\$209,200		
2017											Armadale	Byford				\$209,200	\$16,800	\$11,000
2018											Bedfordale	Kelmscott			\$24,400	\$233,600		
2019											Albany	Rockingham				\$233,600		
2020											Byford	Launceston			\$16,800	\$250,400	\$16,800	\$11,000
2021											Kelmscott	Armadale				\$250,400		
2022											WAlbany	Bedfordale			\$17,600	\$268,000		
2023											Rockingham	Legana				\$268,000	\$16,800	\$11,000
2024											Armadale	Byford			\$17,600	\$285,600		
2025											Bedfordale	Kelmscott				\$285,600		
2026											Albany	Rockingham			\$16,800	\$302,400	\$24,400	\$12,500
2027											Byford	Launceston				\$302,400		
2028											Kelmscott	Armadale			\$16,800	\$319,200		
2029											WAlbany	Bedfordale				\$319,200	\$24,400	\$12,500
2030											Rockingham	Legana			\$16,800	\$336,000		
2031											Armadale	Byford				\$336,000		
2032											Bedfordale	Kelmscott			\$16,800	\$352,800	\$16,800	\$11,000
2033											Albany	Rockingham				\$352,800		
2034											Byford	Launceston			\$24,400	\$377,200		
2035											Kelmscott	Armadale				\$377,200	\$17,600	\$11,300
2036											WAlbany	Bedfordale			\$24,400	\$401,600		
2037											Rockingham	Legana				\$401,600		
2038											Armadale	Byford			\$16,800	\$418,400	\$17,600	\$11,300
2039											Bedfordale	Kelmscott				\$418,400		
2040											Albany	Rockingham			\$17,600	\$436,000		
2041											Byford	Launceston				\$436,000	\$16,800	\$11,000
2042											Kelmscott	Armadale			\$17,600	\$453,600		
2043											WAlbany	Bedfordale				\$453,600		
2044											Rockingham	Legana			\$16,800	\$470,400	\$16,800	\$11,000

M. Formation of Classes in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

Quarterly classis					Total triennial synod plus			Difference between biennial			Total triennial synod plus			Difference between biennial		
					classis costs - 18 delegates			and triennial 18d synod+classis			classis costs - 6 delegates			and triennial 6d synod+classis		
Tas	Row	Cst	Perth	CV & PE	18 delegates	Cumulative % of	P	+/-	No of years	Ave extra cost pa	6 delegates	Cumulative % of	P	+/-	No of years	Average saving pa
T	U	V	W		X	Y	Z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
					R=18U+V+W	Y-P			a/h	S=T+U+V+W			e-P			g/h
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$21,400	\$27,500	164		\$10,700	1	\$10,700	\$15,600	\$18,000	107	\$1,200	1	\$1,200
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$32,100	191		\$15,300	2	\$7,650	\$4,600	\$22,600	135	\$5,800	2	\$2,900
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$37,200	90		(\$4,000)	3	(\$1,333)	\$5,100	\$27,700	67	(\$13,500)	3	(\$4,500)
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$33,100	\$70,300	171		\$29,100	4	\$7,275	\$21,200	\$48,900	119	\$7,700	4	\$1,925
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$74,900	114		\$9,300	5	\$1,860	\$4,600	\$63,500	82	(\$12,100)	5	(\$2,420)
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$80,000	122		\$14,400	6	\$2,400	\$5,100	\$68,600	89	(\$7,000)	6	(\$1,167)
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$33,100	\$113,100	137		\$30,700	7	\$4,386	\$21,200	\$79,800	97	(\$2,600)	7	(\$371)
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$117,700	143		\$35,300	8	\$4,413	\$4,600	\$84,400	102	\$2,000	8	\$250
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$122,300	122		\$22,300	9	\$2,478	\$4,600	\$89,000	89	(\$11,000)	9	(\$1,222)
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$21,900	\$144,200	144		\$44,200	10	\$4,420	\$16,100	\$105,100	105	\$5,100	10	\$510
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$152,900	130		\$35,300	11	\$3,209	\$8,700	\$113,800	97	(\$3,800)	11	(\$345)
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$167,500	134		\$39,900	12	\$3,325	\$4,600	\$118,400	101	\$800	12	\$67
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$22,700	\$180,200	134		\$45,800	13	\$3,523	\$16,400	\$134,800	100	\$400	13	\$31
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$188,900	141		\$54,500	14	\$3,893	\$8,700	\$143,500	107	\$9,100	14	\$650
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$193,500	128		\$42,300	15	\$2,820	\$4,600	\$148,100	98	(\$3,100)	15	(\$207)
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$22,200	\$215,700	143		\$64,500	16	\$4,031	\$15,900	\$164,000	108	\$12,800	16	\$800
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$220,800	131		\$52,800	17	\$3,106	\$5,100	\$169,100	101	\$1,100	17	\$65
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$229,500	137		\$61,500	18	\$3,417	\$8,700	\$177,800	106	\$9,800	18	\$544
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$21,400	\$250,900	136		\$66,100	19	\$3,479	\$15,600	\$193,400	105	\$8,600	19	\$453
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$256,000	139		\$71,200	20	\$3,560	\$5,100	\$198,500	107	\$13,700	20	\$685
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$264,700	127		\$55,500	21	\$2,643	\$8,700	\$207,200	99	(\$2,000)	21	(\$95)
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$21,400	\$286,100	137		\$76,900	22	\$3,495	\$15,600	\$222,800	107	\$13,600	22	\$618
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$290,700	124		\$67,100	23	\$2,483	\$4,600	\$227,400	97	(\$6,200)	23	(\$270)
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$295,800	127		\$62,200	24	\$2,592	\$5,100	\$232,500	100	(\$1,100)	24	(\$46)
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$25,500	\$321,300	128		\$70,900	25	\$2,836	\$19,700	\$252,200	101	\$1,800	25	\$72
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$325,900	130		\$75,500	26	\$2,904	\$4,600	\$256,800	103	\$6,400	26	\$246
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$331,000	124		\$63,000	27	\$2,333	\$5,100	\$261,900	98	(\$6,100)	27	(\$226)
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$25,500	\$356,500	133		\$88,500	28	\$3,161	\$19,700	\$281,600	105	\$13,600	28	\$486
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$361,100	126		\$75,500	29	\$2,603	\$4,600	\$286,200	100	\$800	29	\$21
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$365,700	128		\$80,100	30	\$2,670	\$4,600	\$290,800	102	\$5,200	30	\$173
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$29,500	\$395,200	131		\$92,800	31	\$2,994	\$17,600	\$308,400	102	\$6,000	31	\$194
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$403,900	134		\$101,500	32	\$3,172	\$8,700	\$317,100	105	\$14,700	32	\$459
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$408,500	128		\$89,300	33	\$2,706	\$4,600	\$321,700	101	\$2,500	33	\$76
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$29,500	\$438,000	137		\$118,800	34	\$3,484	\$17,600	\$339,300	106	\$20,100	34	\$591
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$446,700	133		\$110,700	35	\$3,163	\$8,700	\$348,000	104	\$12,000	35	\$343
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$451,300	134		\$115,300	36	\$3,203	\$4,600	\$352,600	105	\$16,600	36	\$461
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$21,400	\$472,700	134		\$119,900	37	\$3,241	\$15,600	\$368,200	104	\$15,400	37	\$416
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$477,800	135		\$125,000	38	\$3,289	\$5,100	\$373,300	106	\$20,500	38	\$539
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$486,500	129		\$109,300	39	\$2,803	\$8,700	\$382,000	101	\$4,800	39	\$123
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$22,200	\$508,700	135		\$131,500	40	\$3,288	\$15,900	\$397,900	105	\$20,700	40	\$518
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$513,800	128		\$112,200	41	\$2,737	\$5,100	\$403,000	100	\$1,400	41	\$34
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$8,700	\$522,500	130		\$120,900	42	\$2,879	\$8,700	\$411,700	103	\$10,100	42	\$240
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$22,200	\$544,700	130		\$126,300	43	\$2,937	\$15,900	\$427,600	102	\$9,200	43	\$214
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$549,300	131		\$130,900	44	\$2,975	\$4,600	\$432,200	103	\$13,800	44	\$314
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$554,400	127		\$118,400	45	\$2,631	\$5,100	\$437,300	100	\$1,300	45	\$29
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$25,500	\$579,900	133		\$143,900	46	\$3,128	\$19,700	\$457,000	105	\$21,000	46	\$457
\$4,600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$4,600	\$584,500	129		\$130,900	47	\$2,785	\$4,600	\$461,600	102	\$8,000	47	\$170
\$5,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,100	\$589,600	130		\$136,000	48	\$2,833	\$5,100	\$466,700	103	\$13,100	48	\$273
\$4,600	\$5,100	\$0	\$1,000	\$25,500	\$615,100	131		\$144,700	49	\$2,953	\$19,700	\$486,400	103	\$16,000	49	\$327

APPENDIX N

N. Ecclesiastical Ordinances

N1. Certificate of Admission to the Office of Minister of the Word

To whom it may concern
The Synod of The Free Reformed Churches,
held on at
has examined according to Article 6 of the Church Order and in accordance with the
synodical regulations for the Peremptory Examination Candidate
who has been called to the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments by the church
of
Having witnessed the subscription to the Form for Ministers of the Word by the above
mentioned brother Synod has admitted him to the Ministry of the Word and the Sac-
raments in The Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

For the Synod:
..... chairman clerk

N2. Certificate of Release of Minister (by the Church)

The consistory of The Free Reformed Church of has been advised by
the Reverend , its minister of the Word since , that he
has accepted the call extended to him by

- At its meeting held on the consistory decided to:
1. grant the Reverend an honourable discharge from his duties with
The Free Reformed Church of , effective as from the day of
..... 19.., from which day he shall be deemed engaged in the service of
.....;
 2. declare that during the period of his ministry within The Free Reformed Church
of he has been faithful and diligent in discharging the duties of his
office, pure in doctrine and confession, and godly in his walk of life within the con-
gregation;
 3. provide him with two copies of this Certificate of Release for presentation, in ac-
cordance with Article 7 of the Church Order, to the church of , and to clas-
sis , as proof of proper and lawful release from this church, and as a
testimony of sound life and doctrine;
 4. record its thankfulness for the faithful labour which he has performed during his
..... year stay in The Free Reformed Church of , and on his departure
commend him to the LORD and His grace with the fervent prayer that the LORD
may confirm the fruits of his labour and cause him to be a blessing within the church
which he may now begin to serve.

For the consistory:
..... chairman clerk

N3. Certificate of Release of Minister (by Classis)

The consistory of The Free Reformed Church of, acting as classis church for The Free Reformed Church of, acknowledges the advice received from The Free Reformed Church of, that the Reverend has accepted the call extended to him by the, and that the consistory of The Free Reformed Church of has, at its meeting held on (date), decided to grant the Reverend an honourable discharge from his duties with The Free Reformed Church of, effective as from the day of, 19.., from which day he shall be deemed engaged in the service of

At its meeting on (date) this classis church has decided to:

1. grant the Reverend an honourable discharge from his duties within the bond of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia;
2. declare that during the period of his ministry within The Free Reformed Churches of Australia he has been faithful and diligent in discharging the duties of his office, pure in doctrine and confession, and godly in his walk of life.
3. provide him with two copies of this Certificate of Release for presentation, in accordance with Article 7 of the Church Order, to the church of, and to classis, as proof of proper and lawful release from The Free Reformed Church of and the bond of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and as a testimony of sound life and doctrine;
4. record its thankfulness for the faithful labour which he has performed during his year stay in The Free Reformed Church of and in the bond of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and on his departure commend him to the LORD and His grace with the fervent prayer that the LORD may confirm the fruits of his labour and cause him to be a blessing within the church which he may now begin to serve.

For the Classis Church:

..... chairman clerk

N4. Regulations for the Financial Aid of Students

(As amended by Synod 1992, Acts Article 50, and by Synod 1994, Acts Article 56)
(Re.: Article 18 of the Church Order)

Article 1: Financial aid will be provided only to students who intend to become a minister in one of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia or in one of their sister churches. It will be provided in accordance with these Regulations and the RULES FOR THE SUPPORT OF NEEDY STUDENTS.

Article 2: Financial aid will be provided only for studies at a college or seminary of one of the sister churches mentioned in Article 1.

N. Ecclesiastical Ordinances

- Article 3:** Financial aid will be provided in the form of interest-free loans for the purpose of meeting study costs and cost-of-living expenses of the student. Any additional aid for a married student will be provided on the same basis. The church to which the eligible student belongs when he begins his studies has secondary responsibility to provide support, after the student's family and before the federation of churches. The deputies, when assessing the churches, must take into account the financial commitments which the local churches have assumed with respect to the support of needy students.
- Article 4:** Students proposing to enrol at one of the approved colleges must comply with the pre-requisites of that college before financial aid will be made available. A student who needs to complete additional studies after having obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree at an Australian university, and before being admitted to a college, may be financially supported by deputies for that time of his study.
- Article 5:** In normal circumstances financial aid will be given only for the duration of a normal-length study course at the college concerned.
- Article 6:** Payments will be made via the student's parents. In the event that it is considered more expedient to have the payments made directly to the student, a written request to that effect may be made to deputies.
- Article 7:** To assist deputies in determining the student's need for financial aid, they may request information concerning his financial situation from the consistory of the church of which he is a member. Similar information may be sought about the student's parents. For this purpose an Application Form For Financial Assistance will be supplied.
- Article 8:** The parents of the student, or - in the case of a student being paid directly - the student himself, shall annually submit a budget of expenditure. Any proposed increase in expenditure must be sufficiently substantiated.
- Article 9:** The student must keep deputies informed about his study progress. Deputies may also make their own inquiries at the college or seminary. If the student fails to make satisfactory progress and desires to continue with his studies he may request a continuation of financial aid. This request will be given consideration only if the college senate supports his case. After a second failure approval to continue financial aid can be given only if the failure was caused by circumstances beyond the student's control (sickness, accident etc.)
- Article 10:** The maximum amount of financial aid will be determined by deputies, if necessary after consultation with the college or seminary. Deputies will take into account the income of the student (including that of his wife if he is married), and the support from his parents or from any other source.
If a student is not eligible for government support for tertiary education, then financial aid will be given by deputies only in exceptional circumstances.
- Article 11:** Circumstances which will tend to raise the level of financial aid needed will be considered by deputies on their merit.
- Article 12:** The financial aid may include an allowance, as determined by deputies, for the purchase of books. This allowance is for the purpose of starting the student's library (dictionaries, commentaries, etc.). Proof of purchase of these books must be supplied by the student.
- Article 13:** A student whose financial position changes due to either an increase or decrease in income or of assets must inform deputies accordingly,

as this may affect the extent of financial aid received by him from the churches.

Article 14: A student who desires to end his studies in the case he no longer wants to become a minister, or for any other reason, must inform deputies accordingly as soon as possible.

Article 15: The financial aid will end at the time when the student, after having completed his studies and ecclesiastical examinations, becomes the responsibility of a church. If the student does not receive a call from a church the financial aid will end five weeks after his preparatory examination.

Article 16: Subject to the provisions of Article 18, repayment of the provided loans will be waived once the student has been ordained as minister of one of the churches mentioned in Article 1, at the rate of two years of financial aid for every year of ministry, in the same order.

Article 17: The provided loans or any outstanding amounts thereof must be repaid and are instantly claimable when:

- a the student terminates his studies.
- b the student decides not to become a minister.
- c the student, after having completed his course of studies, does not within two years make himself available for call by one of the churches mentioned in Article 1.
- d the student does not accept a call extended to him or, after having accepted a call, withdraws and does not accept another call.
- e the student ceases to be a member of the sister church either by his withdrawal or by excommunication.
- f the student, having become a minister, withdraws from or is dismissed by the church or sister church concerned.

In the case of financial hardship when immediate repayment in full would be too difficult, deputies may consider a request for repayment by instalments.

Article 18: If it becomes clear that too high a level of financial aid was given in the past, the total sum of excess money must immediately be repaid in full.

Article 19: The obligation to repay loans may be waived in case of sickness, death or in other exceptional circumstances.

Article 20: In any cases for which these Regulations do not make provision deputies have the authority to decide.

Article 21: Deputies must report to the next synod concerning any special actions which were taken.

Article 22: A copy of these REGULATIONS and of the RULES FOR THE FUND FOR THE SUPPORT OF NEEDY STUDENTS will be supplied to the student and to all who are directly involved in the financial aid to needy students ad Article 18 of the Church Order.

Article 23: In the case of disputes the home church's classis (classis church) shall adjudicate.

V5. Rules for the Fund for the Support of Needy Students

Re.: Article 18 of the Church Order)

- 1 Students who apply for financial aid for their Theological study, on the ground of Article 18 of the Church Order, may be supported by the Fund for the Support of Needy Students (FSNS).
- 2 The FSNS provides financial aid for the following expenses:
 - a Tuition fees.
 - b Study books.
 - c Living expenses.
 - d Clothing.
 - e Pocket money.
 - f Fares.
 - g Health insurance.
 - h Incidental expenses.
 - i Other expenses as detailed.
- 3 To become eligible for support from FSNS the student must:
 - a be a confessing member of one of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
 - b be accepted by one of the recognised theological colleges.
 - c undertake full-time studies.
 - d have made satisfactory progress in the study for an Australian Bachelor of Arts degree and/or in the previous study year of the college.
- 4 The FSNS distinguishes two classes of students:
 - a Students who are financially dependent on their parents for their studies at a theological college.
 - b Independent student who have their own income and/or are supported by their wife; and all students who were married prior to the beginning of their theological study.
- 5 In the case of a 'dependent' student the income of his parents must be assessed annually by way of a 'means test', before the student can be supported by FSNS.
- 6 In the case of an 'independent' student his income and/or that of his wife must be assessed annually by way of a 'means test', before the student can be supported by FSNS.
- 7 The basis for applying the 'means test' referred to in Articles 5 and 6 will be the student's gross income together with reasonable assets.
- 8 The forms for the 'means test' must be duly completed and signed.
- 9 An agreement between deputies and the parents and/or the student - as the case may be -, must be completed and signed before financial aid can be given by FSNS.

APPENDIX P

P. Revision to Form for Ordination of Elders and Deacons

TO: Synod 1996 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

c/- The Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott

PO Box 186

Kelmscott WA 6111

12-02-1996

Esteemed brothers,

RE: Proposal concerning the Form for Ordination of Elders and Deacons.

The Free Reformed Church of Armadale requests Synod to delete from this Form the words "Do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith," which are found in the charge of the deacons on page 633 of the "Book of Praise".

Consistory with deacons had several discussions on the validity of this quotation of Galatians 6:10 in the charge to the deacons. After due consideration we decided to make submission to Synod 1996 to have this sentence deleted from the Form or alternatively have it relocated to the section of the Form which addresses the congregation.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1 The offices within the church were instituted by God for the benefit of the church. Elders or judges were instituted to reduce the workload of Moses. (Exodus 18:17 etc) Apostles and disciples were taught by Jesus for the furtherance of the gospel and for leadership in the churches. In the same vein the deacons were appointed by the apostles to do the work they could no longer do themselves.
- 2 Galatians 6:10. In this verse the apostle addresses the congregation and not in particular the deacons. The context does not allow us to use this text in particular to deacons. It can therefore not be used as a Scriptural basis for this charge to the deacons of Christ's church. It is true that also the deacons are to do good to all men etc. but then as church members, and not specifically as office bearers.

CONCLUSION:

Considering the above arguments as well as the historical information as enclosed, the Church of Armadale proposes that this sentence and reference to Galatians 6:10 be deleted from the Form.

For the benefit of those considering the proposal we enclose material collated from various sources concerning this matter. A separate paper is a translation and interpretation of Galatians 6:10 which was received by a consistory member in private correspondence. The latter is from the hand of Reverend P VanGurp from Holland. With brotherly greetings,

SIGNED by:

W Huizinga (Chairman)

W Amoraal (Secretary)

Enclosures:

1. Set of 'Notes'
2. Translation/Interpretation on Galatians 6:10

Enclosure 1:

NOTES on Galatians 6:10 and the task of the deacons

- 1** From the very beginning of their organised life The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands have dealt with the office of the deacons. At the Convention of Wesel, 1568, already some directives were issued (chapter V of the 'Wesel Articles').

However, only the National Synod of The Hague, 1586, inserted in its Church Order an article on the calling of ministers who had not yet served before. It mentioned the requirements of election, examination, approbation, and ordination. This ordination should be carried out "with proper stipulations, questions, exhortations, a prayer, and the laying on of hands", all this "according to the appropriate Form".

The same reference to a Form is made in the articles on the ordination of elders and deacons. It is not clear whether synod itself compiled these Forms, or mandated a committee to do so. However, in the year 1590 they were included in the liturgical writings which were printed in the back of the Dutch Bible, and in the next year after the Psalm-version by Marnix of St.Aldegonde. The great National Synod of Dordrecht 1618/19 confirmed all this.

- 2** The Form for the ordination of elders and deacons was revised at the General Synod of Kampen 1975, and after a 'trial period' it was definitely adopted (with slight amendments) by the General Synod of Heemse 1984/85.

- 3** The Canadian Reformed Churches, together with The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, adopted the Dutch liturgical writings, first of all for their services in the Dutch language, held during the 'transition period', and soon after this phase for their services in the English language. For the latter the texts in the Psalter Hymnal of the Christian Reformed Church were used until they were replaced by the versions in the respective editions of the Book of Praise.

The General Synod of Smithville 1980 adopted a revised text of the majority of the Liturgical Forms, including the Form for the Ordination of elders and deacons. Slight linguistic amendments were made afterwards, and Scriptural references added.

At the synods of Launceston 1985 and Albany 1987 our own churches adopted the texts as printed in the 1984 edition of the Book of Praise.

- 4** In the original Dutch text of 1590 and 1618/19 Galatians 6:10 was not (in margin) mentioned when the duties of the deacons are explained. However, when after their formal ordination they are addressed, this text was quoted when it said: "bewijst weldadigheid aan alle menschen, maar inzonderheid aan de huisgenooten des geloofs". (The text of the Form as we read it in Psalter Hymnal differs from the original text, and does not refer to Galatians 6:10).

In the Provisional Edition of the Book of Praise, 1961, this is the same ("show liberality to all men, but especially to the household of faith").

The revised text of the Dutch form no longer has this Scripture reference in this address. However, when earlier in the form the task of the deacons is explained, we find "Gal.6:10" in the margin, although the text itself is not quoted. It is therefore really striking that, whilst the Canadian churches made ample use of the recent Dutch revision, they maintained - or re-inserted - the reference to Galatians 6:10 in the address, although no longer at its end, but in the middle: "Do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith". Besides, "Gal.6:10" can still be read in margin at the end of the exposi-

tion of the duties of the deacons (first line on page 632). Not possessing the Acts of the latest Canadian synods, this could not be traced.

- 5 Historically the inclusion of Galatians 6:10 - either in full quotation or as a reference-in-margin - can be explained in a rather simple way. As a matter of fact there was no clear 'separation' between the duties of the civil government and those of the church.

Whereas in the course of church history the office of the deacon had been given an entirely different character, the care for the poor had fallen into different hands. During the Middle Ages it had been adopted by e.g. the Order of the Holy Spirit. Although this was not an official ecclesiastical institution, the name may show that this was an organisation established by Christians. They looked after widows and orphans, the sick. They even established hospitals homes for the poor, and orphanages.

Later on this organisation lost its Christian character, and became a more or less public institution under the authority of the civil government, usually the city magistrates.

However, the Reformation tried to restore the office of deacons. This is why since the Convention of Wesel synods of The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands dealt with their election and their duties.

However, since there was no clear separation between Church and State - this became a fact during the occupation of The Netherlands after the French Revolution - a situation full of confusion came into existence. At several places the deacons were considered to be the proper persons to care for all the poor, church members and non-members alike. Apart from the side of the church members their funds were filled by what they received from the "Heylighe Gheest Meesters". (Holy Spirit Masters)

At some places this led to a disastrous situation.

Therefore it was no wonder that at the Synod of Middelburg 1581 the churches in the provinces of South-Holland and Gelderland asked synod to try to come to an agreement with the civil authorities. Earlier, at the Synod of Dordrecht 1574 the Church of Den Briel had to report: they had done their best to care for all the poor, but the local section of the "Holy Spirit Order" was very greedy. In the text of the official instruction, tabled at that synod, they therefore suggested a kind of 'separation': the deacons would help the "household of faith" ("de Huysgenoten des Geloofs"), whereas others would be sent to the "H.Geest meesters", who had to care for the poor of the city. (Still in the year 1620 the situation was the same: the magistrate of Den Briel decided that every Saturday two of its members would join the deacons "om over de bedieninge der armen te staan").

It is in this context that Galatians 6:10 is mentioned: the context of a situation in which there was no separation between church and state, in which situation the deacons were expected to care for all the poor.

(It is the only place I could find in the documents available to me that mentions Galatians 6:10).

- 6 Since then the situation has changed in the right direction.

This may explain why in the revised Dutch text the exposition of the duties of the deacons ends with this sentence: "Zo zullen wij toenemen in liefde tot elkaar en tot alle mensen", (Thus we shall increase in love toward one another and to all people) and that here we find in the margin: "Gal.6:10". This is done in a context which clearly emphasises the duty of the congregation: the deacons must stimulate the members of the congregation to render help wherever needed ("Het is daarom de taak van de diakenen te zorgen voor de goede voortgang van dit dienstbetoon in de gemeente", translation: "It is

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therefore the task of the deacons to care for the good progress of this servitude in the congregation) and: "Zij zullen ... de leden van de gemeente tot hulpbetoon opwekken" *translation: "The shall... exhort the members of the congregation to serve one another).*

This may also explain why in the address the deacons are no longer referred to Galatians 6:10.

- 7 Several times C.Trimp and A.N.Hendriks have let us know that they were strongly in favour of omitting the reference to Galatians 6:10 from the form. In the year 1971 (so before the revision of the Form!) at the Centrale Diaconale Conferentie Hendriks delivered a paper on "Werelddiakonaat?" From this paper the following quotations may be helpful:

22/3 : "Wij krijgen uit de Handelingen en de Brieven inderdaad de indruk, dat de reikwijdte van het diakonaat beperkt is gebleven tot de gemeente(n). Wij lezen niets over hulpacties ten opzichte van hen 'die buiten zijn'". (*translation: From the book of Acts and the Letters we indeed get the impression that the scope of the deacon work had been restricted to the congregation(s) We do not read anything about aid appeals for the benefit of "those who are outside"*) He mentions three texts which point at assisting "those who are outside": Galatians 6:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:15b, and 2 Peter 1:7, but comes to the following conclusion: "Het mag ons niet ontgaan, dat in deze teksten niet het ambt, maar de **gelovigen** worden aangesproken". Page 26, footnote 33: "In het Formulier van bevestiging der ouderlingen en diakenen vinden wij een wat vrije aanhaling van Gal.6:10: "bewijst weldadigheid aan alle mensen, maar inzonderheid aan de huisgenoten des geloofs". Deze aanhaling in een formulier, dat over de taak van ambtsdragers spreekt, is niet juist". (*translation: It may not escape us, that in these texts not the office is addressed but the **believers***" Page 26, footnote 33: "In the form for the ordination of elders and deacons we find a somewhat liberal quotation of Gal 6:10 "show mercy to all people, but in particular to those of the household of faith" This reference in a form which speaks about office bearers is not correct")

On page 37 he mentions Galatians 6:10 once again, but in the context of our christian duties not to neglect the misery which is there even in this modern world.

In an "Open Brief" of the Committee of the Central Diaconal Conference, published under the title "Blijvende Diaconale Taak in veranderende tijden" (*translation: Continuing diaconal task in changing times*) (year of issue unknown), we read:

"Zeker, het moet worden vastgehouden, dat de specifieke arbeid der diakenen zich heeft te beperken tot de hulpbehoevende leden der gemeente" (*translation: Sure, it must be maintained that the specific work of the deacons should limit itself to needy members of the congregation*")

The same Letter refers to the duties of the christians to have their eyes and hearts open for the misery in the world. It quotes J.C.Sikkel, who wrote: "Niet slechts de Gereformeerden, maar de mensen, die in ellende zijn, moeten de barmhartigheden des Heren door zijn kerk ondervinden. Als de barmhartige Samaritaan zich in deze over de Jood ontfermde, zal dan nu de ware Israëliet, d.i. de Christen, en nog wel de Gereformeerde zeggen: "Die Samaritaan gaat mij niet aan, hij moet nu maar zien, dat de Samaritanen hem helpen; onze Diaconie is niet voor Joden, Rooms en Remonstranten, Synodalen, maar alleen voor Gereformeerden, en dan niet slechts voor hen, die met ons gaan"! O, als dat de Gereformeerden zijn, dan gelijken zij wonderwel op die priester en die leviet uit de gelijkenis van de barmhartige Samaritaan; - en dan zou men haast komen tot het gebed: "Here, laat mij, als ik

ongelukkig word, toch geen Gereformeerde ontmoeten, maar zend mij dan een Samaritaan! ... Voor goddelozen kwam Gods Zoon in het vlees, Hij liet ze niet, waar ze waren. En naar goddelozen gaat Zijn ware Kerk uit ..(*translation: Not just the Reformed people, but people who find themselves in great need must experience the mercy of the Lord through His Church. If the good Samaritan showed kindness to the Jew in this matter, would than the true Israelite i.e. the Christian, yes even the Reformed Christian, say: "That Samaritan is no concern of mine, it is up to him to see to it that the other Samaritans help him; our deaconry is not for Jews, Roman Catholics, Remonstrants, Synodicals, but only for the Reformed and even than only for those who go with us!" O, if that is being Reformed than they show a miraculous resemblance with the priest and the Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan; and one could nearly come to the prayer: "Lord, when I become disabled, do not let me meet a Reformed person but send me a Samaritan!.... For the godless Gods Son became incarnate, He did not leave them as they were. And to the godless His true Church is reaching out...*)

Hendriks in a paper delivered at the Central Diaconal Conference of 1985: "De gemeente zelf is tot helpen geroepen. Zij is het lichaam van Christus, waarvan de leden voor elkaar hebben te zorgen (1 Kor.12:25). Zij moet zich steeds het woord van de Here Jezus herinneren: "Dit is mijn gebod, dat gij elkander liefhebt, gelijk Ik u heb liefgehad" (Joh.15:13). De Heer ging haar voor op de weg van het dienen (vgl.Mark 10:45). De gemeente heeft haar Heer op deze weg te volgen (Vgl.Joh.13:14,15). De dienst van Christus is de bron én de norm van haar dienstbetoon. Zo wordt de gemeente in het Nieuwe Testament opgeroepen om goed te doen (Gal.6:10), om overvloedig te worden in de liefde tot elkander (1 Tess.3:12), om herbergzaam te zijn (Hebr.13:2), om de weldadigheid en de mededeelzaamheid niet te vergeten (Hebr.13:16).

... Diakenen hebben niet het monopolie van de hulpverlening. Zij zijn er niet om de gemeente inactief te maken. Maar zij zijn er, om -zoals het bevestigingsformulier zegt - te zorgen voor de goede voortgang van het onderlinde dienstbetoon in de gemeente".(Dienst 33-4 p.24).

(*translation: "The congregation itself is called to help. She is the body of Christ in which the members ought to care of each other (1Cor 12:25). She should continually remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:13) The Lord led her by example on the road of servitude (according to John 13:14,15) To serving of Christ is the source and the norm for the serving of the congregation. Thus the congregation in the New Testament is called to do good (Gal.6:10), to overflow in showing love to one another (1Tess. 3:12), to show hospitality (Hebrews 13:2), to not neglect to show mercy and share it's goods (Hebrews 13:16)*

.. Deacons do not have the monopoly on showing mercy. They are not there to render the congregation inactive. But, as it says in the ordination form, they are there "to look after the good progress of the mercy work within the congregation" (Dienst 33-4 p.24).

Referring to the revised Form C.Trimp, at the 1991 Conference, said: "Wij moeten toenemen in liefde tot alle mensen. Die 'wij' zijn niet de diakenen, maar de leden van de gemeente. Diakenen staan met hun gezicht naar de gemeente - dàar is hun werkterrein. Maar die gemeente staat met het gezicht naar de wereld.

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Leden van de gemeente van Christus kijken blijkbaar naar binnen en naar buiten. Dat blijkt ook wel uit de teksten die daarbij staan" (1 Thess.3:12; 2 Petr.1:17; Gal.6:10). (Dienst 39-4 p.13/4).

H.J.Siegers, at a provincial diaconal conference: "Deze teksten (zie hierboven, GvR) spreken over de liefde die we als gemeente jegens elkaar en jegens allen hebben te tonen." (Dienst 39-5 p.13. "Niet alleen met woorden, maar ook met de daad moeten we ook aan de wereld laten merken dat we een goede boodschap hebben. En het bevestigingsformulier wijst hier ook terecht op" (footnote: the three texts mentioned above). (same page 18).

Hendriks, at the Central Conference of 1992: "Wat het Nieuwe Testament verder zegt, maakt duidelijk, dat wij de dienende liefde, waartoe de gemeente in navolging van haar Heer geroepen is, niet tot de naasten binnen de gemeente moeten beperken". Reference is made to Galatians 6:10, and 1 Thesalonians 3:12, 5:15. (Dienst 40-4 p.35).

In response to a question regarding helping those who are outside: Dr.Hendriks is van mening dat door werk naar buiten te doen, men elkaar van binnen ook bouwt, en omgekeerd. Beide dingen moeten gebeuren, al zit er wel een zekere orde in. De apostel zegt: maar het meest aan de huisgenoten van het geloof" (same p.18).

Furthermore: "In het oude Formulier van de bevestiging van ouderlingen en diakenen wordt tot de diakenen gezegd: "...bewijst weldadigheid aan alle mensen, maar inzonderheid aan de huisgenoten des geloofs". Deze opwekking is ontleend aan Galaten 6:10, waar Paulus echter niet de diakenen, maar de gemeente aanspreekt. Het nieuwe formulier dat wij in ons Gereformeerd Kerkeboek vinden, heeft dan ook terecht deze opwekking aan het adres van de diakenen weggelaten. Historisch zal wat het oude formulier zegt, wel samenhangen met de positie, die de gereformeerde kerk in de 16e en 17e eeuw innam. Zij was veelszins een volkskerk, droeg een publiek karakter en werd gezien als een dienstverlenend orgaan voor de gehele gemeenschap. Op verschillende plaatsen moesten de diakenen voor alle behoeftigen zorgen. Ook kwam het voor dat men terwille van de doelmatigheid het terrein verdeelde. In Oudewater bijvoorbeeld trof men de regeling, dat de diakenen voor de gelduitdeling zouden zorgen en de Heilige Geestmeesters voor de brooduitdeling, beide zonder onderscheid naar de religie te maken. Het nieuwe formulier ziet mijns inziens terecht de diaken binnen de gemeente functioneren. Diakenen zijn ambtsdragers, die Christus aan zijn gemeente geeft, om haar zijn barmhartigheid te bewijzen, om haar op te wekken toe dienstbetoon en om te zorgen dat dit dienstbetoon goede voorgang heeft. ... De 'heiligen' moeten aan het werk! En zij moeten dat in en buiten de gemeente, want deze 'heiligen' hebben liefde te bewijzen jegens elkaar en jegens allen" (same 38)

(translation: We should increase in love to one another. That 'we' are not the deacons but the members of the congregation. Deacons stand with their faces toward the congregation; that is their field of work. But the congregation stands with her face towards the world. Members of the congregation of Christ apparently look inside as well as outside. That is also evident from the texts mentioned" (1 Tess 3:12; 2Peter 1:17; Gal 6:10) (Dienst 39-4 p 13/4).

HJ Siegers at a provincial diaconal conference: "These texts (just referred to) speak about the love which we as congregation ought to show to one another and everyone. (Dienst 39-5 p13) "Not only in word but also in deed we should show to the world that we have the good message. And the ordination form correctly points this out.

Hendriks at the Central Conference of 1992: "What the New Testament furthermore says, shows clearly that the serving love to which the congregation is called, thus following the example of her Lord, we should not restrict to the 'neighbour' within the church. Reference is made to Gal 6:10 and 1 Tess 3:12, 5:15 (Dienst 40-4 p35)

In response to a question regarding helping those outside: Dr Hendriks is of the opinion that by doing work outside one also builds up those inside and visa versa. Both things must happen, although there is a certain scale of priority in it. The apostle says: but especially to the household of faith"

Furthermore: "In the old Form for the ordination of elders and deacons, the deacons are addressed in this way: "... do good to all man but especially to the household of faith". This exhortation is derived from Gal 6:10 where Paul however does not address the deacons but the congregation. The new Form which we find in our Reformed Church book has correctly so, omitted this exhortation from the address to the deacons. Historically the wording of the old form is connected with the position which the reformed church had in the 16th and 17th century. She was very much a 'church of the people', had a public character and was viewed as the service rendering organisation for the whole population. In several place the deacons had to care for all the needy people. It also happened that they split up the regions to be more effective. In Oudewater for example they arranged that the deacons would look after the distribution of funds and the 'Holy Spiritmasters' did the distribution of bread, both without making any distinction in religion. The new form is in my opinion correctly sees the deacons function within the congregation. Deacons are office bearers who Christ gives to His congregation to show mercy to her, to exhort her to show mercy and to make sure that this show of mercy makes good progress. ... The 'saints' have to go to work! And they have to do that within and outside the congregation because these 'saints' have to show kindness to one another and towards everyone. (Same 38)

- 8 Conclusion from this historical material is: Galatians 6:20 was mentioned in the old version of the Form in view of the situation.

Dutch 'experts' in the field of diaconalia are of the opinion that the deletion of this text in the revised Form is correct.

However, they also strongly emphasis the duties of the congregational members to help those who are outside. This is why prof.Trimp strongly pleaded for support to DVN (De Verre Naasten) (Dienst 37-3, 1989). See also Sikkel (above).

Enclosure 2:

On the translation and interpretation of Galatians 6:10

Reverend Van Gulp in a letter dated 24-12-1993 gives the following exegesis which we pass on for additional information.

Er is reden om nog even meer over Gal 6:10 na te denken. Algemeen wordt vertaald: weldoen aan alle mensen. Dus betreft iedereen dat op het werk van barmhartigheid. Maar er staat in het Grieks: laten we het goede werken. Vers 9; laat ons niet nalatig zijn het goede te doen. Dat wat echt goed is, en dat is meer dan alleen barmhartigheid. Alles wat naar God's wil is, wordt ermee bedoeld.

Dat wordt nu nog eens gezegd in vers 10: laten we ermee doorgaan, zolang we daarvoor nog tijd hebben, om het goede te werken, dat is om de wil van de Here te doen.

P. Revision to Form for Ordination of Elders and Deacons

Wat dan volgt zou ook zo vertaald kunnen worden: dat geldt voor alle mensen (dat ze de wil van God moeten gehoorzamen) maar het meest geldt dat de gelovigen.

Translation:

There is reason to delve a little deeper into Gal 6:10. Generally it is translated: Do good to all people. That makes everybody relate it to mercy work. But in the Greek it says: let's us do what is good. Verse 9: let us not neglect to do what is good. That which is really good, and that is more than just mercy work. It means: everything which is according to God's will.

That is now repeated in verse 10: let us continue with it, as long as we are given time, to do good things, that is to do the will of the Lord.

What follows next can also be translated as: that applied to all people (that they have to obey the will of the Lord) but even more so to believers.

APPENDIX Q

Q. Acts of Classis Kelmscott 1995

Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott is acting as Classis Church for the approbation of the call to Reverend W vander Jagt, who arrived with his family some days ago. The chairman, Reverend C Bouwman calls the meeting to order at 8pm, invites the meeting to sing Psalm 147:1 and 6, reads the Scriptures at 2 Corinthians 5:12-21 and leads the meeting in prayer.

The chairman welcomes the brothers present, especially Reverend W vander Jagt. Absent with notice is brother J Janssen.

The brothers J de Vos and P Terpstra (who arrived somewhat later) are present on behalf of the consistory of the Free Reformed Church of Byford, accompanied with proper credentials.

The ministers A van Delden and W Huizinga are present at the request of Kelmscott to assist in the Colloquium Doctum. A word of welcome is extended to the audience as well.

The executive offices are established:

Reverend C Bouwman - chairman

Br D Pot - vice chairman

Br J van Dongen - clerk

In his introductory comments, the chairman makes mention of the most recent developments within the bond of churches: Reverend A Veldman who has received a call from the Canadian Reformed Church of Fergus and the expected arrival of the Poppe family on Australian soil during the early hours of December 7th.

Classis then proceeds with the appointment of Reverend W Huizinga and Reverend A VanDelden as advisors to classis.

EXAMINATION of the REVEREND VANDER JAGT'S ECCLESIASTICAL PAPERS

Reverend vander Jagt tables the following documents:

- 1 The letter of call with attachments.
- 2 The letter of acceptance of call.
- 3 A certificate of release from the classis to which Schildwolde belongs.
- 4 A certificate of release from the church of Schildwolde.
- 5 A certificate from the calling church stating that the required announcements were made to the congregation.
- 6 An attestation from the church at Schildwolde stating that Reverend W vander Jagt is sound in life and doctrine.

The chairman reads out the relevant parts of the documents and the meeting finds them to be in good order. The chairman then briefly outlines the purpose and procedure of the colloquium.

COLLOQUIUM DOCTUM

A discussion takes place on the following topics:

- 1 Reverend A van Delden leads a discussion on the Doctrine of Election and Free Will.
- 2 Reverend W Huizinga engages in a discussion centred around the doctrine of Scripture.
- 3 Reverend C Bouwman discusses with Reverend W vander Jagt some of the aspects related to the doctrine of the Church and Reformed Church Polity.

Q. Acts of Classis Kelmscott 1995

At the conclusion of the discussion, the other brothers receive the opportunity to ask questions on any matter they wish.

Following these discussions classis goes in closed session to evaluate the colloquium. The meeting concludes that Reverend W vander Jagt's responses and comments to the questions indicate that he is faithful to Scripture and Confessions and wishes to be Reformed in the execution of his office as minister.

Classis then reassembles in open session and the chairman addresses Reverend W vander Jagt and advises him of the meeting's conclusion and at the same time welcomes him in the Bond of Churches.

Furthermore, he informs the meeting that the financial documents, examined in closed session, were found to be in good order.

The subscription form is read out and Reverend W vander Jagt signs the form as requested. The chairman wishes Reverend vander Jagt God's indispensable blessing on his work in Byford and in the bond of churches. The meeting then sings Psalm 134:3.

In his reply, Reverend vander Jagt thanks the chairman for the welcome extended and for organising this meeting and looks forward to continued good co-operation for the future.

The acts are read and approved by the meeting.

The meeting sings Psalm 66:1,2, after which Reverend W Huizinga leads in prayer. The chairman closes the meeting.

Chairman: Reverend C Bouwman

Secretary: D Pot.

APPENDIX R

R. Acts of Extra-ordinary Synod Kelmscott 1995

of the Free Reformed Churches held 19th - 20th December, 1995

Article 1

OPENING

Synod is opened with the singing of Hymn 119:39,40, with the reading of 2 Timothy 3 and with prayer. On behalf of the convening church of Kelmscott, Reverend C Bouwman welcomes the brother delegates, especially Candidate J Poppe, minister elect of the church of West Albany who is to undergo his preemptory exam. A welcome is also extended to Reverend W vander Jagt of Byford who is present in this broader assembly for the first time. Mention is made of Reverend Veldman's decline of the call extended to him by the Canadian Church of Fergus, Ontario. The hope is expressed that he may continue to work fruitfully in his congregation and in the bond of churches. The hope is also expressed that Bedforddale's vacancy may be filled sooner than later.

Article 2

EXAMINATION OF CREDENTIALS

The members sign the attendance register. The delegates of Byford examine the credentials and find them in good order. It is noted that the churches of Launceston and Legana have not sent delegates to this assembly due to the short notice and the great distance. By letter, the church of Legana expresses its prayer for God's blessings upon this meeting and upon Candidate J Poppe. The delegates from the churches are as follows:

Albany	Reverend A Veldman	Elder N Berkelaar
Armada	Reverend W Huizinga	Elder W Buist
Bedforddale	Elder J Eikelboom	Elder G Spyker
Byford	Reverend W vander Jagt	Elder D vanden Dool
Kelmscott	Reverend C Bouwman	Elder P Posthuma
Rockingham	Reverend A van Delden	Elder B Bosveld
West Albany	Elder J de Snoo	Elder A Mulder

The deputies of Synod ad. Article 6a.1.b. CO (cf. Acts Synod 1985, Article 81) are also present. These are Reverend C Bouwman, brother P Posthuma and Reverend A Veldman.

Article 3

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following officers are elected:

Chairman:	Reverend C Bouwman
Vice-chairman:	Reverend A Veldman
First clerk:	Reverend A van Delden

In the light of the fact that there is little or no outgoing correspondence, it is decided to forgo the election of second clerk.

Article 4

CONSTITUTION OF SYNOD

The chairman declares synod duly constituted.

The delegates, including candidate J Poppe, are asked to rise in order to show their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. All the delegates rise.

Article 5

AGENDA

The agenda is adopted as presented

- 1 Opening
- 2 Singing of attendance register and examination of credentials
- 3 Constitution of Synod
- 4 Election of Officers
- 5 Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity
- 6 Adoption of Agenda
- 7 Examination of Documents of Candidate Poppe
- 8 Examination of Candidate Poppe
- 9 Approval
- 10 Distribution of Synod Costs
- 11 Question Period ad Article 41 CO
- 12 Personal Question Period
- 13 Approval of Press Release
- 14 Adoption of Acts
- 15 Censure ad Article 47 CO
- 16 Closing

Article 6

EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTS

The following documents were examined and found to be in good order:

- 1 From the Canadian Reformed Church of Guelph, Ontario, a good testimony of the faith and conduct of Candidate J Poppe.
- 2 From Classis Ontario South (June 1995) a certificate indicating that J Poppe has passed his preparatory examination and is eligible for call in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.
- 3 Letter of Call to Candidate J Poppe.
- 4 Letter of Acceptance of Candidate J Poppe.

Article 7

EXAMINATION OF SERMON PROPOSAL OF CANDIDATE J POPPE

Candidate J Poppe is invited to deliver his sermon proposal. His text is Mark 4:1-9. After the sermon Synod goes into closed session to evaluate the sermon proposal. It is decided to proceed with the examination. Matters relating to Article 11 CO (the proper support of ministers) are also dealt with in closed session.

Article 8

ADJOURNMENT and REOPENING

The meeting is adjourned for the evening with the singing of Psalm 8:3, after which Reverend Veldman closes in prayer. It is reopened the following morning with the singing of Hymn 11:1,2, the reading of Jeremiah 23:16-29, and with prayer. All delegates are present.

Article 9

EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATE POPPE

The examination of candidate Poppe is continued with the following assignments:

- 1 Exegesis OT on Psalm 3 / Isaiah 66 - Examiner: Reverend C Bouwman - 25 minutes
- 2 Exegesis NT on James 4 and 5 - Examiner: Reverend W Huizinga - 25 minutes
- 3 Knowledge of Scripture - Examiner: Reverend W Huizinga - 15 minutes
- 4 Doctrine of the Church / Belgic Confession Articles 2,3,13-15,27-29,33-35 - Examiner: Reverend A Veldman - 15 minutes
- 5 Church History - 1800-1944 (The Netherlands) - Examiner: Reverend A Veldman - 15 minutes
- 6 Ethics - Seventh commandment (Marriage/Divorce) - Examiner: Reverend A van Delden - 15 minutes
- 7 Church Polity - Examiner: Reverend C Bouwman - 15 minutes
- 8 Diaconiology - Offices in the Church - Examiner: Reverend A van Delden - 15 minutes

Article 10

EVALUATION OF THE EXAMINATION and SIGNING OF SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Synod goes into closed session to evaluate the examination. With thankfulness Synod deems the results satisfactory. In open session the chairman informs Candidate Poppe and reads 2 Timothy 4:1-5, encouraging him to preach the Word of God faithfully. God's blessings are invoked with the singing of Psalm 134:3. Candidate Poppe then signs the Subscription Form.

Article 11

APPROVAL OF CALL

Certification is provided by the church of West Albany that the required announcements were made and that the congregation approved the call.

Article 12

SYNOD COSTS

Each Church's share of the Synod costs will be calculated by the Synod Treasurer.

Article 13

QUESTION PERIOD AD ARTICLE 41 CO

The chairman asks whether the ministry of the office bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgement and help of Synod for the proper government of their churches. All the churches present respond to the first two questions in the affirmative, and the latter question in the negative.

Article 14

PERSONAL QUESTION PERIOD

The matter of appointing a representative of Synod to the ordination of Candidate Poppe is raised. Reverend A van Delden is appointed, with br N Berkelaar as alternate.

Article 15

APPROVAL OF THE PRESS RELEASE and ADOPTION OF ACTS

The press release is read and adopted.

The acts of Synod will be adopted by the officers of Synod.

Article 16

CENSURE AD ARTICLE 47 CO and CLOSING

It is noted with thankfulness that brotherly censure is not needed. Synod is closed with the singing of Psalm 147:1,6, after which Reverend A Veldman gives thanks to God in prayer. The chairman closes Synod.

SIGNED by:

Reverend C Bouwman (Chairman e.t.)

Reverend A van Delden (Clerk e.t.)

APPENDIX S

S. Synod Budget and Cost Sharing from Treasurer

BUDGET AND COST SHARING FOR SYNOD 1996

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Printed

26-Jun-96

BUDGET EXPENDITURE

YEAR	1996	1997	TOTAL
SYNOD COSTS			
1 TYPIST	\$1,200.00		
2 PHOTOCOPIER HIRE	\$500.00		
3 FURNITURE AND CROCKERY HIRE			
4 STATIONERY AND CONSUMABLES	\$500.00		
5 COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	\$200.00		
6 EQUIPMENT INSURANCE	\$150.00		
7 CATERING	\$1,000.00		
8 POSTAGE AND TELEPHONE	\$400.00		
9 UPGRADE P.A. SYSTEM	\$500.00		
10 PRESENTATIONS	\$250.00		
11 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE	\$150.00		
12 LOSS OF INCOME DELEGATES SYNOD 96	\$12,350.00		
TRAVEL COSTS TO SYNOD 96			
13 FROM TASMANIA	\$3,500.00		
14 FROM ALBANY	\$350.00		
15 LOCAL	\$0.00		
16 PRINTING ACTS OF SYNOD 96	\$1,500.00		
17 PRINTING REPORTS TO SYNOD 96	\$1,100.00		\$23,650.00
DEPUTIES BIBLE TRANSLATION			
18 BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
DEPUTIES CONTACT PCEA			
19 BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
DEPUTIES CONTACT OTHER CHURCHES			
20 BOOKS ETC	\$100.00	\$100.00	
21 TRAVEL COSTS PERTH / ALBANY	\$350.00	\$350.00	
22 TRAVEL COSTS OVERSEAS (Indonesia)	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	
23 TRAVEL COSTS OVERSEAS (Canada May 1998)		\$3,000.00	
24 TRAVEL COSTS SUMBA CHURCH DELEGATES	\$2,000.00		
25 LOSS OF INCOME - DEPUTIES OVERSEAS		\$650.00	
26 UNA SANCTA SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$250.00	\$250.00	
27 CONFERENCE (PCEA)		\$2,700.00	
28 INCIDENTALS (postage, telephone, typing, printing etc)	\$700.00	\$700.00	
29 ICRC MEMBERSHIP COSTS	\$1,050.00		
30 POST AUDIT EXPENSES	\$800.00		\$17,000.00
DEPUTIES REVISION CHURCH ORDER			
31 BOOKS AND INCIDENTALS	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
DEPUTIES TRAINING MINISTRY			
32 INCIDENTALS (+\$44 for post audit expense)	\$94.00	\$50.00	\$144.00
CHURCH VISITS & PULPIT EXCHANGE			
33 TASMANIA 1 visit pa	\$750.00	\$1,500.00	
34 ALBANY/METRO 2 visits pa	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$2,950.00
35 TREASURY ADMINISTRATION COSTS	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
SYNOD ARCHIVES			
36 INCIDENTALS	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
37 BUDGET EXPENDITURE	\$32,344.00	\$11,900.00	\$44,244.00
38 TREASURY OPERATING FUNDS (Includes funds required for 1998 Synod)	\$20,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$45,000.00
39 TOTAL BUDGET	\$52,344.00	\$36,900.00	\$89,244.00

S. Synod Budget and Cost Sharing from Treasurer

BUDGET INCOME AND COST SHARING					
YEAR			1996	1997	TOTAL
40	CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED FROM CHURCHES		\$33,475.25	\$36,900.00	\$70,375.25
	COMMUNIT	PERCENTAGE		(See note)	
	MBRS 1996		SHARE	SHARE	2 YR TOTAL
41	FRC ALBANY	211 13.10	\$4,384.41	\$4,832.96	\$9,217.37
42	FRC ARMADALE	279 17.32	\$5,797.39	\$6,390.50	\$12,187.89
43	FRC BEDFORDALE	164 10.18	\$3,407.78	\$3,756.42	\$7,164.21
44	FRC BYFORD	160 9.93	\$3,324.67	\$3,664.80	\$6,989.47
45	FRC KELMSCOTT	279 17.32	\$5,797.39	\$6,390.50	\$12,187.89
46	FRC LAUNCESTON	185 11.48	\$3,844.15	\$4,237.43	\$8,081.58
47	FRC LEGANA	124 7.70	\$2,576.62	\$2,840.22	\$5,416.84
48	FRC ROCKINGHAM	99 6.15	\$2,057.14	\$2,267.60	\$4,324.74
49	FRC WEST ALBANY	110 6.83	\$2,285.71	\$2,519.55	\$4,805.26
	Note: 1997 contributions to be based on 1997 statistics				
50	TOTAL FROM CHURCHES		\$33,475.25	\$36,900.00	\$70,375.25
	OTHER INCOME		\$18,868.75		
51	REFUNDS				\$200.00
52	INTEREST				\$1,000.00
53	TREASURY BALANCE AT 31 January 1996				\$17,668.75
54	SUB-TOTAL OTHER INCOME				\$18,868.75
55	TOTAL INCOME		\$52,344.00	\$36,900.00	\$89,244.00

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S. Synod Budget and Cost Sharing from Treasurer

Synod and classis cost estimate comparisons

(based on eligible delegates claiming full loss of income and a synod duration of 10 days)

Synod at										Floating third party				Biennial synod 10d		Triennial synod	
Year										for classis at:				No		Cumulative	
biennial synod										triennial synod				classis		Total	
Alb	Arm	Bed	Byf	Kel	Lau	Leg	Rec	WAl	Laun	Leg	Alb	WAlb	O	P	Q	R	S
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N				
1996										Armada	Byford			\$22,400	\$22,400	\$22,400	\$12,900
1997										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$22,400	\$22,400		
1998										Albany	Rockingham			\$30,600	\$53,000		
1999										Byford	Launceston			\$53,000	\$53,000	\$30,600	\$14,600
2000										Kelmscott	Armada			\$30,600	\$83,600		
2001										WAlbany	Bedford			\$83,600	\$83,600		
2002										Rockingham	Legana			\$22,400	\$106,000	\$30,600	\$14,600
2003										Armada	Byford			\$106,000	\$106,000		
2004										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$23,200	\$129,200		
2005										Albany	Rockingham			\$129,200	\$129,200	\$22,400	\$12,900
2006										Byford	Launceston			\$23,200	\$152,400		
2007										Kelmscott	Armada			\$152,400	\$152,400		
2008										WAlbany	Bedford			\$22,400	\$174,800	\$23,200	\$13,300
2009										Rockingham	Legana			\$174,800	\$174,800		
2010										Armada	Byford			\$22,400	\$197,200		
2011										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$197,200	\$197,200	\$23,200	\$13,300
2012										Albany	Rockingham			\$22,400	\$219,600		
2013										Byford	Launceston			\$219,600	\$219,600		
2014										Kelmscott	Armada			\$22,400	\$242,000	\$22,400	\$12,900
2015										WAlbany	Bedford			\$242,000	\$242,000		
2016										Rockingham	Legana			\$30,600	\$272,600		
2017										Armada	Byford			\$272,600	\$272,600	\$22,400	\$12,900
2018										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$30,600	\$303,200		
2019										Albany	Rockingham			\$303,200	\$303,200		
2020										Byford	Launceston			\$22,400	\$325,600	\$22,400	\$12,900
2021										Kelmscott	Armada			\$325,600	\$325,600		
2022										WAlbany	Bedford			\$23,200	\$348,800		
2023										Rockingham	Legana			\$348,800	\$348,800	\$22,400	\$12,900
2024										Armada	Byford			\$23,200	\$372,000		
2025										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$372,000	\$372,000		
2026										Albany	Rockingham			\$22,400	\$394,400	\$30,600	\$14,600
2027										Byford	Launceston			\$394,400	\$394,400		
2028										Kelmscott	Armada			\$22,400	\$416,800		
2029										WAlbany	Bedford			\$416,800	\$416,800	\$30,600	\$14,600
2030										Rockingham	Legana			\$22,400	\$439,200		
2031										Armada	Byford			\$439,200	\$439,200		
2032										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$22,400	\$461,600	\$22,400	\$12,900
2033										Albany	Rockingham			\$461,600	\$461,600		
2034										Byford	Launceston			\$30,600	\$492,200		
2035										Kelmscott	Armada			\$492,200	\$492,200	\$23,200	\$13,300
2036										WAlbany	Bedford			\$30,600	\$522,800		
2037										Rockingham	Legana			\$522,800	\$522,800		
2038										Armada	Byford			\$22,400	\$545,200	\$23,200	\$13,300
2039										Bedford	Kelmscott			\$545,200	\$545,200		
2040										Albany	Rockingham			\$23,200	\$568,400		
2041										Byford	Launceston			\$568,400	\$568,400	\$22,400	\$12,900
2042										Kelmscott	Armada			\$23,200	\$591,600		
2043										WAlbany	Bedford			\$591,600	\$591,600		
2044										Rockingham	Legana			\$22,400	\$614,000	\$22,400	\$12,900