

ACTS OF THE 2009 SYNOD

of the

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

**Legana, Tasmania
15-24 June 2009**



Delegates to Synod Legana 2009

Back row: P Posthuma, W Geurts, B Veenendaal, R Heerema, Rev PKA de Boer, H Swarts, J Houweling (RCNr)
Middle row: K Wezeman (RCN), Rev JGR Kroeze, W Spyker, Rev C Vermeulen, W Pleiter, Rev E Rupke, P Drijfhout (RCNr)
Front row: J Bronsema (RCN), Prof. H-M Yoo (PCK), Rev R Eikelboom, Rev A van Delden, Rev A Veldman,
Rev J Smith, Rev P Archbald (RCNZ), D Veltkamp



Moderamen:

Rev R Eikelboom (second clerk), Rev A van Delden (chairman), Rev A Veldman (vice chairman), Rev J Smith (first clerk)

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ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Belgic Confession
BoP	Book of Praise
CanRC	Canadian Reformed Churches
CO	Church Order
FRCA	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRCSA	Free Reformed Churches of South Africa
GGRC	Gereja Gereja Reformasi Calvin
GGRI	Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia
NGK	Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken
PCK	Presbyterian Churches in Korea (Kosin)
RCB	Reformed Churches in Brazil
RCN	Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
RCNr	Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored)
RCNZ	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
SCBP	Standing Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise

EVENING SESSION
Monday, 15 June 2009

Article 1 - Opening by the Convening Church

The Synod is convened in the Legana church building. On behalf of the convening church of Legana, Rev JGR Kroeze invites all present to sing Ps 33:1, followed by Hy 47:1,2 and then leads in prayer. He then reads Ps 101 and delivers a meditation on this passage (refer Appendix 1a).

Rev Kroeze then invites all present to sing Ps 72:1,2,10, leads in prayer, and invites all to sing Ps 122:2,3.

He then invites the delegates to the Synod table.

Article 2 - Examination of Credentials

All delegates sign the attendance list. The credentials are examined, and Rev Kroeze notes that all primary delegates are in attendance.

Classis North

Rev PKA de Boer
Rev R Eikelboom
Rev JGR Kroeze
Rev A Veldman
Elder P Posthuma
Elder W Spyker
Elder H Swarts
Elder D Veltkamp

Classis South

Rev E Rupke
Rev J Smith
Rev A van Delden
Rev C Vermeulen
Elder W Geurts
Elder R Heerema
Elder W Pleiter
Elder B Veenendaal

Article 3 - Election of Officers

The following officers are elected:

Chairman
Vice chairman
First Clerk
Second Clerk

Rev A van Delden
Rev A Veldman
Rev J Smith
Rev R Eikelboom

Article 4 - Constitution of Synod

The chairman declares Synod duly constituted.

Article 5 - Delegates Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity

The chairman asks all delegates and advisers to rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

All delegates rise.

Article 6 - Adjournment

The chairman invites all present to sing Ps 24:1,2, leads in closing prayer, and adjourns synod.

MORNING SESSION ***Tuesday, 16 June 2009***

Article 7 - Reopening

Rev de Boer invites all present to sing Ps 89:1,7, reads 1 Timothy 3, and leads in prayer.

Article 8 - Time Schedules

Synod adopts the following time schedule:

Monday to Friday:	9:00 am to 10:30 am	Break
	10:45 am to 12:00 pm	Lunch
	1:30 pm to 3:00 pm	Break
	3:15 pm to 5:00 pm	Dinner

Evening Sessions: 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Article 9 - Adoption of Agenda

The final draft agenda is presented:

1. Opening by the Convening Church
2. Signing of the Attendance List and Examination of Credentials
3. Election of Officers
4. Constitution of Synod
5. Delegates' agreement with the Three Forms of Unity
6. Adoption of the Agenda
7. Adoption of Meeting Procedures
8. Incoming Correspondence
 - a. FRC Mt Nasura Appeal re Art 7 Acts Classis North 2008
 - b. FRC Mt Nasura Overture re term of synod appointed deputyships
 - c. FRC Mt Nasura Overture re Synod Acts publication time delays
 - d. FRC Southern River Overture re Art 13 Acts Synod 2006 re non delegated ministers being invited as advisors to Synod
 - e. FRC West Albany Appeal re Art 94 Acts Synod 2006 re Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

- f. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Art 102 Acts Synod 2006 re RCNZ
- g. FRC Darling Downs Appeal re Art 76 Synod 2006 re Appeal FRC Mt Nasura
- h. FRC Mt Nasura Overture re RCNZ
- i. FRC Mt Nasura Appeal & Overture Art 95 Synod 2006 re RCN
- j. FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 102 Synod 2006 re RCNZ
- k. FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 93 & 94 Synod 2006 re RCN
- l. FRC Southern River Overture re Deputies for Training for the Ministry report
- m. Canadian Reformed Churches Letter of greeting
- n. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Training for the Ministry report
- o. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Canadian Reformed Churches report
- p. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Presbyterian Church of Korea report
- q. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands report
- r. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches of NZ report
- s. FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report
- t. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 190509 declining invitation
- u. FRC Southern River Overture re Deputies for Australian Book of Praise report
- v. FRC Albany Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report
- w. FRC Albany Overture re Deputies for Australian Book of Praise report
- x. FRC Mt Nasura Overture re General Secretary's report re Reformed Churches of Brazil
- y. FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCN(r)
- z. FRC Launceston Overture re Deputies Australian Book of Praise report
- aa. FRC Armadale Overture re Deputies Australian Book of Praise report
- bb. FRC Mt Nasura Overture re Deputyships
- cc. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 290409 declining invitation
- dd. Greetings from FRCSA
- ee. Greetings from GGRC,GGRI
- ff. Appeal Rev Bosch Re Classis North

9. Instructions
10. Reports Classis South
 - a. Overture re Rules for Synod relating to appeals
 - b. Credentials Delegates to Synod
 - c. Overture re Formation Three Classes
 - d. Overture re 28 Additional Hymns and Book Of Praise
11. Reports Classis North
 - a. Credentials Delegates to Synod
12. Reports of Deputies and discharge of Deputies
 - a. General Secretary's Report
 - b. Deputies for Sister Church Relations
 - I. General Report
 - II. Canadian Reformed Churches
 - III. Korea
 - i. Supplementary Report re Korea
 - IV. South Africa
 - i. Supplementary Report re South Africa
 - V. General Report: Netherlands
 - i. Letter from BBK 09/03/09 re invitation
 - ii. Letter to BBK 07/04/09 re invitation
 - VI. Reformed Church in Netherlands: restored
 - VII. Minority Report: Reformed Churches in Netherlands restored
 - VIII. General report on visit to RCN
 - c. Report of Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches - Indonesia
 - d. Report of Deputies: Relations Reformed Churches of New Zealand
 - e. Deputies for Training for the Ministry
 - f. Report of Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise
 - g. Report of Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961
 - h. Report of Deputies for Church Order
 - i. Deputies Article 66 Church Order (Days of Prayer)
 - j. Report Deputies Synod Treasury
 - k. Deputies Inspection Archives and Library
 - l. Deputies Synod Archives and Library
13. Audit of the books of the Treasurer and discharge of Treasurer
14. Calculation of the percentages of the churches' share of synod costs
15. Appointment of Deputies
16. Appointment of Convening Church, and place and time of the next Synod

17. Personal questions
18. Adoption of Acts
19. Approval of Press Release
20. Closing of Synod

ADOPTED

Article 10 - Homepage on Internet

Rev Smith proposes that the Acts of Synod be published on the FRCA website on the proviso that matters of a personal nature are excluded and that discretion be used in matters relating to other churches.

ADOPTED

Article 11 - Welcome to Overseas Visitors

The chairman welcomes delegates P Drijfhout and J Houweling of the RCN_r, seated under 6.2 of the Rules for Synod, and Rev P Archbald of the RCNZ, seated under 6.3 of the Rules for Synod. No credentials are received for these delegates, though Synod did receive letters that they were delegated to this Synod.

Article 12 - Synod advisors and Closed session

The moderamen have decided that there are no advisers, nor advisory committees, nor closed sessions needed for this Synod.

Article 13 - Agenda Items Schedule

The chairman distributes and explains a schedule for dealing with the items on Synod's agenda.

Article 14 - Overseas Visitors Indicate Agreement to Three Forms of Unity

The chairman asks delegates of RCN_r and RCNZ to rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. The brothers rise.

Article 15 - Overture from Southern River re Article 13 Synod West Kelmscott

I. Material:

8d - FRC Southern River Overture re Art 13 Acts Synod 2006 re non delegated ministers being invited as advisors to Synod.

This item is declared admissible because it arrived on time and from the churches.

II. Recommendation:

To deny the overture of Southern River.

Grounds:

1. The admission and function of advisers at Synod is adequately covered in the Rules for Synod 5.1 and 5.2.
2. Southern River does not request a change to these rules.

III. Amendment: to add ground 3:

3. Synod West Kelmscott did not intend to set a precedent (Acts Synod West Kelmscott, Article 13).

THE AMENDMENT IS ADOPTED

THE AMENDED RECOMMENDATION IS ADOPTED

Article 16 - Overture from Mt Nasura re Deputies' mandates and authority

I. Material:

8bb - FRC Mt Nasura Overture re Deputyships

II. Overture:

Mt Nasura asks Synod 1. to ensure that deputies' mandates are clear and concise and that deputies are held properly accountable for the manner in which they have executed their task; 2. to use clear language in its recorded decisions and 3. to explicitly record that deputies' reports have no formal status.

This item is declared admissible.

III. Recommendation:

Synod takes note of Mt Nasura's overture and decides that this overture needs no formal decision since deputies reports are exactly what they are, working documents of synod (Rule 10 of Rules for Synod).

ADOPTED

Article 17 - Training for the Ministry

I. Materials:

12 e - Deputies Report

8l – FRC Southern River Overture re Deputies for Training for the Ministry report

8n - FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Training for the Ministry report

Items 8l and 8n are declared admissible.

II. Recommendations of the Deputies Report:

Deputies recommend that Synod decides to:

- 13.1 Request the churches to contribute A\$50 per communicant member per annum for the maintenance of Hamilton as from 1 January 2009.
- 13.2 Set aside \$6,000 from general Synod funds for the costs of a visit to Australia by a guest lecturer from Hamilton or Kampen, together with his wife.
- 13.3 Set aside \$3,500 from general Synod funds for travelling and accommodation costs of a delegate of Deputies to attend a meeting of Hamilton's Board of Governors in September 2009, being the 40th Anniversary of the Hamilton College.
- 13.4 Adopt the Australian adaptation of the guidelines for the Pastoral Training Program prepared by Deputies.
- 13.5 Discharge Deputies and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 1. continue to collect funds for "Hamilton" and forward them to the College;
 2. continue to correspond with "Hamilton", "South Africa", "Kampen" and "Korea" in order to maintain contact and obtain information;
 3. continue to collect funds for our own theological library and theological training;
 4. continue with our own theological library;
 5. continue to ensure that relevant information is published concerning the training for the ministry, so that the churches understand the need to support the colleges and the training of the students;

6. continue to arrange the support of theological students whenever required in accordance with Art 18 CO, and as agreed in Art 50 of Acts of Synod 1992 as amended by Art 56 of Acts of Synod 1994;
7. continue to make arrangements for a guest lecturer from one of the theological seminaries of our sister churches once every three years;
8. continue to be as closely involved in the work of the Board of Governors of Hamilton as practically possible;
9. monitor the practical implications of including the Australian Churches in the Pastoral Training Program of the Hamilton College and collect and disburse funds for this purpose in accordance with the Australian adaptation of the guidelines for the Pastoral Training Program;
10. investigate the feasibility of offering a basis year of theology to the churches in Australia, for the purpose of establishing a Theological University in the future.

III. 8I - Overture of Southern River:

Southern River proposes that recommendation 1 of Deputies be amended to increase the contribution amount to A\$65 per communicant member per annum.

Grounds:

1. Deputies have not recommended any increase to the contribution amount to that decided upon by Synod 2006.
2. Our Canadian sisters contribute an amount of CAN\$69 per communicant member per annum. On the present exchange rate this equates to around A\$80.
3. The FRCA make full use of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, both with respect to the training of FRCA men for the ministry and for the calling of ministers.
4. The churches are responsible to ensure that the ministry of the gospel be maintained, and ought to take full financial responsibility for this.
5. In general terms, the FRCA churches are financially blessed and can be expected to bear the increased contribution amount.
6. The FRCA do not presently have any immediate plans to develop their own institution for theological training.

7. In the event that the FRCA do (at some time in the future) develop their own theological training, the contribution towards Canada could be reduced to allow the FRCA to absorb the cost of our own training costs. This would coincide with our reduced use of Canada's Theological College.
8. The increase to A\$65 allows for a stepped increase, with a view to matching the contribution of our Canadian sisters in 2012. A stepped increase (rather than an immediate increase to A\$80) is for the purpose of allowing this to be properly allowed for in the budgets of the churches within the bond.

Amendment:

To delete Ground 8 because it is a further proposal.

ADOPTED

THE AMENDED PROPOSAL IS PUT TO THE VOTE AND ADOPTED.

IV. 8I - Overture of Southern River:

Southern River proposes that recommendation 3 of Deputies not be accepted (i.e. there be no funds set aside for the purposes of attending the Hamilton College in September 2009).

Grounds

1. The recommendation of Deputies is made on the assumption that there is a tangible benefit to attendance in person by a Deputy in Hamilton
2. Deputies' report does not mention what such benefits are, how these benefits are expected to be achieved by an attendance of a Deputy in Hamilton, and/or whether there are other ways of achieving these benefits.
3. The Deputies do not include any report regarding the attendance in Hamilton by a Deputy in September 2008 which addresses an account of what was done, what the objectives of the attendance were and an analysis of whether these were achieved.
4. It is for Deputies to demonstrate that an attendance is necessary and beneficial.

DEFEATED

V. 8l – Overture Southern River

Southern River proposes to discontinue the collection of funds for our own theological library. Since it may be argued that this matter has been proposed previously (see Article 16 of the Acts of Synod 2006), Southern River gives the following new Grounds:

1. As at November 2008, the Australian Theological Library Fund had a balance of around \$70,000.
2. Deputies are yet to purchase any theological books or materials, noting that such material will become outdated prior to being put to use.
3. It is apparent from Deputies' report that there is no immediate intention to commence purchasing materials.
4. The Fund of \$70,000 is an adequate resource from which any necessary materials can be purchased over the next 3 years, should this occur.
5. If additional funds for a Theological Library are required at some time in the future, further money can be collected at that time. We trust that the Lord will provide the necessary funds if and when they are required.

VI. Amendment:

To delete grounds 1,2,3.

Grounds:

1. Ground 1 is not a ground.
2. Ground 2 is no reason to discontinue collection of funds.
3. Ground 3 is not admissible because synod needs to decide whether deputies will purchase materials.

ADOPTED

VII. The amended proposal is put to the vote and adopted.

VIII. 8n – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Training for the Ministry report

Darling Downs proposes:

1. that Synod decide to instruct the deputies to address the College on the point of the temporary appointment of an instructor, who is not a member of a sister church of our Canadian sister churches. To remind them that our support of the college is based on the fact that we agree with their

foundation, and the by-laws that go with that. That we are therefore concerned with this course of action, and urges the college to abide by the instructions of our Lord Jesus Christ to let its yes be yes by sticking to its bylaws, especially those of a principal nature.

2. that an additional mandate be given to Deputies for Training for the Ministry, namely, to report matters of concern to the churches.

IX. Recommendation:

Not to adopt the proposal of Darling Downs

Grounds:

1. The bylaws concern the governance of the Theological College and are therefore a matter for the Canadian Reformed Churches which maintain it, not for the FRCA which support it.
2. Our support of the Theological College is not based on the bylaws but on the sister relationship which we enjoy with the CanRC.
3. The suggestion to report matters of concern to the churches falls within the general mandate of deputies to report to the churches and thus does not require an additional mandate.
4. The Board of Governors has acknowledged that they wrongly applied the bylaws of the Theological College when appointing a temporary instructor.

DEFEATED

X. Recommendation:

1. To instruct Deputies for sister church relations to inform the CanRC that our support for their theological college is based on the fact that we agree with their foundation and the by-laws that go with it.
2. To modify the mandate for the Deputies for the Training of the Ministry (insert 13.5.h: "and to report relevant matters to the churches).

Grounds:

1. The Board of Governors has acknowledged that they wrongly applied the by-laws, but they still insist that it was legitimate in light of the circumstances.

2. It is regrettable that our deputies did not report this matter to the churches.

DEFEATED

XI. Recommendation:

1. In view of the temporary appointment of a non-sister church lecturer, to grant the request of the Church of Darling Downs by reminding the Canadian Churches that our support of the college is based on the fact that we agree with their foundation and by-laws so that their maintenance remains highly important to us.
2. To note that the deputies' mandate to "maintain contact and obtain information" includes that information which may cause concern is reported to Synod.

Grounds:

1. Deputies Training for the Ministry are appointed in view of Church Order Article 17 so that the churches are assured the Australian theological students receive an appropriate training for the ministry.
2. The present mandate of deputies "to maintain contact and obtain information" sufficiently includes matter that may be of concern. Just what matters ought to be reported and helpful for the churches is entrusted to the appointed deputies.

ADOPTED

XII. Motion:

To add 13k to Deputies recommendations: investigate the possibilities of theological training by extension (IT).

Grounds: Even though Hamilton at this point in time is reluctant to explore the use of distance learning/IT, there may be opportunities that arise among our sister churches.

ADOPTED

XIII. Final Decision

Synod decides to:

- 13.1 Request the churches to contribute A\$65 per communicant

- member per annum for the maintenance of Hamilton as from 1 January 2009.
- 13.2 Set aside \$6,000 from general Synod funds for the costs of a visit to Australia by a guest lecturer from Hamilton or Kampen, together with his wife.
 - 13.3 Set aside \$3,500 from general Synod funds for travelling and accommodation costs of a delegate of Deputies to attend a meeting of Hamilton's Board of Governors in September 2009, being the 40th Anniversary of the Hamilton College.
 - 13.4 Adopt the Australian adaptation of the guidelines for the Pastoral Training Program prepared by Deputies.
 - 13.5 Discharge Deputies and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. continue to collect funds for "Hamilton" and forward them to the College;
 - b. continue to correspond with "Hamilton", "South Africa", "Kampen" and "Korea" in order to maintain contact and obtain information, noting that the deputies' mandate to "maintain contact and obtain information" includes that information which may cause concern is reported to Synod; further, in view of the temporary appointment of a non-sister church lecturer, to remind the Canadian Churches that our support of the college is based on the fact that we agree with their foundation and by-laws so that their maintenance remains highly important to us.
 - c. continue to collect funds for theological training, but discontinue the collection of funds for our own theological library;
 - d. continue with our own theological library;
 - e. continue to ensure that relevant information is published concerning the training for the ministry, so that the churches understand the need to support the colleges and the training of the students;
 - f. continue to arrange the support of theological students whenever required in accordance with Art 18 CO, and as agreed in Art 50 of Acts of Synod 1992 as amended by Art 56 of Acts of Synod 1994;
 - g. continue to make arrangements for a guest lecturer from one of the theological seminaries of our sister churches once every three years;

- h. continue to be as closely involved in the work of the Board of Governors of Hamilton as practically possible;
- i. monitor the practical implications of including the Australian Churches in the Pastoral Training Program of the Hamilton College and collect and disburse funds for this purpose in accordance with the Australian adaptation of the guidelines for the Pastoral Training Program;
- j. investigate the feasibility of offering a basis year of theology to the churches in Australia, for the purpose of establishing a Theological University in the future.
- k. investigate the possibilities of theological training by extension (IT).

Grounds:

1. Deputies have not recommended any increase to the contribution amount to that decided upon by Synod 2006.
2. Our Canadian sisters contribute an amount of CAN\$69 per communicant member per annum. On the present exchange rate this equates to around A\$80.
3. The FRCA make full use of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, both with respect to the training of FRCA men for the ministry and for the calling of ministers.
4. The churches are responsible to ensure that the ministry of the gospel be maintained, and ought to take full financial responsibility for this.
5. In general terms, the FRCA churches are financially blessed and can be expected to bear the increased contribution amount.
6. The FRCA do not presently have any immediate plans to develop their own institution for theological training.
7. In the event that the FRCA do (at some time in the future) develop their own theological training, the contribution towards Canada could be reduced to allow the FRCA to absorb the cost of our own training costs. This would coincide with our reduced use of Canada's Theological College.
8. The Fund of \$70,000 is an adequate resource from which any necessary materials can be purchased over the next 3 years, should this occur.

9. If additional funds for a Theological Library are required at some time in the future, further money can be collected at that time. We trust that the Lord will provide the necessary funds if and when they are required.
10. Deputies Training for the Ministry are appointed in view of Church Order Article 17 so that the churches are assured the Australian theological students receive an appropriate training for the ministry.
11. The present mandate of deputies “to maintain contact and obtain information” sufficiently includes matter that may be of concern. Just what matters ought to be reported and helpful for the churches is entrusted to the appointed deputies.
12. Even though Hamilton at this point in time is reluctant to explore the use of distance learning/IT, there may be opportunities that arise among our sister churches.

ADOPTED

Article 18 - Formation of Three Classes

I. Materials:

10c – Overture Classis South re Formation Three Classes

II. Proposal:

Synod takes note of the submission of Classis South and decides to amend the Rules for Synod 2 as follows: in the event that three Classes will be instituted, the delegation to Synod for each Classis will be three ministers and three elders.

ADOPTED

Synod appoints W Spyker and W Pleiter to prepare a proposed change to article 45 of the Church Order.

Article 19 - Rules for Synod Appeals

I. Materials:

10a – Classis South Overture re Rules for Synod relating to appeals

II. Proposal:

Classis South April 20th 2007, proposed to Synod Launceston [sic] to

add the following to the Rules for Synod for the sake of clarification of Synod and appellants in relation to Appeal to Synod:

Rules concerning appeals to Synod

1. For an Appeal to be considered by Synod it must be in the possession of the convening church no later than 42 days before the date that Synod is scheduled to commence.
2. Each appeal shall be checked by officer bearers of the convening church appointed by the convening church for the purpose of ensuring that the appeal complies with all of the following criteria for a competent Appeal:
 - a. The Appeal is to be signed, dated, and received by the convening church within the time period required under these Rules;
 - b. The Appeal shall include the appellants full name(s), address(es) and signature(s);
 - c. The Appeal shall provide a summary or quotation of the decision that has led to the Appeal, and shall also state the body responsible for that decision, and the date(s) and location(s) of that decision;
 - d. The Appeal shall include a clear statement of what the appellant is asking Synod to do.
 - e. The Appeal shall contain clear statements that provide the issues, facts and contentions involved in the decision that is being Appealed;
 - f. The Appeal shall contain clear statements outlining the grounds of Appeal; and
 - g. Where the Appeal relies upon documents or other evidence, these shall be clearly referenced and attached if practical.
 - h. The convening church is to verify that that the appellant has informed the classis concerned of the appeal against it.
3. Within 14 days of receiving an Appeal, the convening church shall provide the Appellant with written advice, confirming whether or not the Appeal complies with the criteria for a competent Appeal pursuant to these rules. Where an Appeal does not comply the Appellant(s) are also advised that an Amended Appeal can be lodged as long as it complies with the applicable rules under point 4
4. For an Amended Appeal to be considered by Synod, it shall initially have complied with the 42 day deadline pursuant to rule number one (1) of this part, and the Amended Appeal shall be received by the convening church no later than 21 days before the date that Synod is scheduled to commence.
5. The convening church shall ensure that all Appeals submitted

in accordance with rule number one (1) of this part, are included on the Agenda for Synod, irrespective of whether they comply with the criteria for a competent Appeal pursuant to rule number two (2) of this part. If the appellant specifies that the appeal is not to be checked by the convening church, it shall be sent directly to Synod.

6. An appellant is entitled to insist that an Appeal, although assessed as not being competent pursuant to rule number two (2) of this part, shall be submitted to Synod, but in doing so greatly increases the possibility that it is declared inadmissible by Synod.
7. The convening church will publish the Guidelines for Appeals at least 90 days prior to the convening of Synod.

Grounds:

1. Synod(s) have had to spend much time deliberating the admissibility of Appeals that were sent directly to Synod. This has at times cost hours of valuable time.
2. Synod(s) have had to try and determine what the Appeal is actually seeking, due to the confusing material submitted.
3. The appellant(s) are helped by the proposed rules, in that they are guided to submitting a suitably structured and clear appeal for consideration by Synod. This avoids disappointment of inadmissible or rejected appeals, and the possible result of having to wait for another 3 years before resubmitting.
4. The proposed procedure does not seek to add another step in the appeal process, but is an advisory procedure for the benefit of the appellant and broader assembly.

III. Motion:

Not to accede to the proposal of Classis South April 20th 2007 to add new rules concerning appeals to Synod.

Grounds:

1. The current rules for admissibility of appeals are already outlined in Rules for Synod 7.3.
2. While the publication of the “criteria of an appeal” prior to synod can be helpful, it does not substantiate the need for a ‘pre-synod’ review committee.
3. The proposed rules add another step in the appeal process, and may make the appeal process cumbersome.

4. Adding a 'pre-synod' review committee can give the perception that the decision making process may be prejudiced prior to the convening of Synod.
5. The determination of admissibility of appeals is an important element of providing justice and peace to the churches and thus belongs in the jurisdiction of Synod.
6. While the time spent on admissibility may have been lengthy for past Synods, that does not mean it will always be this way.

ADOPTED

Article 20 - Length of Term of Synod Deputyships

I. Material

8b – FRC Mt Nasura Overture re term of synod appointed deputyships

II. Proposal:

Mt Nasura requests Synod to take the necessary measures to ensure that any future deputy appointments made by Synods are subject to a maximum term of 9 years. Mt Nasura further requests that should Synod accede to this request, this ruling be taken into consideration in the re-appointment of any current deputies, while taking the necessary care that current "committees" are not disabled as a result.

Grounds:

1. It is "healthy" for deputyships to rotate on a regular basis in order to avoid individual deputies from gaining influence or simply becoming stale.
2. The proposed provision will regularly introduce fresh ideas or approaches in to deputyships.
3. The proposed provision is the norm within our Canadian and Dutch Sister churches.

III. Amendment:

Having taken note of the submission of Mount Nasura, Synod decides that:

The terms of deputies who are reappointed will, as a rule, be limited to a maximum of 9 years unless Synod decides that there are good reasons to reappoint (eg. to maintain continuity, expertise, etc.).

Grounds:

1. It is healthy for deputyships to have new individuals who are able to contribute.
2. It is good to maintain continuity and expertise among the deputyships.

ADOPTED

Article 21 - Reformed Churches of Brazil (RCB)

I. Materials

12a - General Secretary's Report

8x - FRC Mt Nasura Overture re General Secretary's report re Reformed Churches of Brazil

II. Overture Mt Nasura

Proposal:

To declare the overture of Mt Nasura inadmissible.

Grounds:

1. This matter has not been dealt with by the minor assemblies, being classis, as per Church Order Article 30.

DEFEATED

III. Proposal:

Mt Nasura requests Synod to ensure that a deputyship be mandated to take up contact with these churches with a view to possible sister church relations, on the grounds mentioned in their letter, as follows.

Grounds:

1. The FRCA have fraternal contacts with RCB's sister churches in Holland and Canada.
2. The RCB will have contacts with one more church faithful and involved with the Word of God.
3. These contacts will create the possibility of exchange of advice and experience for Reformed Faith and Practice.

IV. Amendment:

To add the following: that synod respond to the RCB in writing, informing them of our decision.

ADOPTED

V. Amendment:

to change the words "with a view to possible sister church relations," to "to investigate whether meaningful sister church relations are possible"

Ground:

1. Synod 1990 decided to concentrate on relations and contacts with churches which are geographically closer to us (Article 58, Acts of Synod 1990).

ADOPTED

VI. Final Text of Adopted Proposal:

1. Synod ensure that a deputyship be mandated to take up contact with these churches "to investigate whether meaningful sister church relations are possible"
2. Synod respond to the RCB in writing, informing them of our decision.

Grounds:

1. The FRCA have fraternal contacts with RCB's sister churches in Holland and Canada.
2. The RCB will have contacts with one more faithful church and involved with the Word of God.
3. These contacts will create the possibility of exchange of advice and experience for Reformed faith and practice.
4. Synod 1990 decided to concentrate on relations and contacts with churches which are geographically closer to us (Article 58, Acts of Synod 1990).

ADOPTED

VII. Recommendations General Secretary's Report

1. The churches take note of the request from the Reformed Churches of Brazil.
2. Synod Legana provide the General Secretary Deputy with guidelines relating to the use of the church web site.
3. Synod when appointing a General Secretary Deputy also appoints an alternate.

VIII. Proposal:

1. To temporarily adopt the current practice of the General Secretary as a guideline for the use of the church web site, as follows:
 - a. Only organizations which by their constitution restrict their membership to the FRCA are allowed to place material on the web site.
 - b. Each church can have its own address and is responsible for the content within that page.
2. To instruct the General Secretary to liaise with those who could potentially add material to the church web site, and recommend guidelines to the next synod regarding the use of the church web site.

ADOPTED

IX. Proposal:

To adopt Recommendation 3 of the General Secretary's report, namely that Synod when appointing a General Secretary Deputy also appoints an alternate.

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION
Tuesday, 16 June 2009

Article 22 - Reopening

The chairman invites all present to sing Ps 1:1,2.

Article 23 - Training for the Ministry

The chairman proposes that Synod thank Deputies for Training for the Ministry and the General Secretary for their work and discharge them.

ADOPTED

Article 24 - Book of Praise

I. Materials:

8u – FRC Southern River Overture re Deputies for Australian Book of Praise report

8w – FRC Albany Overture re Deputies for Australian Book of Praise report

8z – FRC Launceston Overture re Deputies Australian Book of Praise report

8aa – FRC Armadale Overture re Deputies Australian Book of Praise report

10d – Classis South Overture re 28 Additional Hymns and Book Of Praise

12f – Report of Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise

II. Recommendations Deputies Report

Deputies propose the following:

1. The 2006 version of the Canadian Book of Praise is taken as the common basis to start our Australian Book of Praise with the understanding that;
2. changes agreed upon and approved by our previous Synods (form ordination for office bearers, Australian Church Order, removal of the word Christian from the Apostles Creed (also in Lord's Days 7 and 21), replacement of the Canadian Church Order with the Australian one) are incorporated by deputies into the 2006 Canadian version
3. Synod 2009 adopt a new title for the Australia Book of Praise as per the stipulations of the Standing Committee Book of Praise (see Acts of Synod 2003, page 166), e.g. "Worship Book of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia" ("Worship Book" for short), or mandate deputies to select a title, perhaps soliciting feedback from the churches.
4. a suitable preface be drafted by deputies in addition to the current preface, which should be retained because of its valuable background information. The new additional preface will explain the need for an Australian edition and include a

statement that the Standing Committee Book of Praise of the CanRC has permitted the FRCA to use their material, as stipulated by the Standing Committee Book of Praise (see Acts of Synod 2003, page 166), as well as acknowledging the copyright permission of W. Helder.

5. adjustments are made to the table of contents where necessary
6. the introduction to the church order found on page 655 of the 2006 Book of Praise serve as introduction to the Australian church order, with the revision of the words "Canadian Reformed Churches" to "Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Also the words "Canadian Reformed Churches" in the introduction to the Belgic Confession on page 441 of the 2006 Book of Praise be changed to "Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
7. the note at the bottom of page 435 of the 2006 Book of Praise be adjusted to refer to the Australia Book of Praise.
8. printing of our Australian Book of Praise is approved at 2009 Synod without the need to come back to the next Synod first. (In the event that Synod does not adopt this recommendation, deputies request Synod to clarify whether or not the churches are permitted to use the interim edition of the Book of Praise with NIV prose section in case we run out of the current edition.)
9. If any of the churches wishes to propose changes to the text of subsequent print runs of the Australian Book of Praise, the normal church-orderly way has to be followed, i.e. by way of proposals of Consistories to Classis and if approved, to Synod for consideration and ratification.
10. Synod discharges current deputies and appoints a Standing Committee for the Australian Book of Praise.
11. Standing Committee for the Australian Book of Praise is to keep informed of the developments in Canada concerning the Book of Praise.
12. Synod mandates the Standing Committee for the Australia Book of Praise to implement points 1-7+11 above.

Grounds:

- a. None of the churches has brought any complaints against the 2006 version of the Canadian Book of Praise and it can therefore be assumed to have common approval in our bond of churches.
- b. Previous changes have been accepted already and need no further discussion.

- c. The calculations provided to Synod Rockingham 2003, and included in this report, clearly show the financial benefits of printing the Australian Book of Praise.
- d. The church orderly way helps greatly in refining proposals and working toward unanimity on changes. It also saves Synods much time and proposed changes have already been considered by the churches and consistories well ahead of Synods that eventually deal with possible changes.
- e. An appropriate committee structure and size will provide greater flexibility and continuity of the work at hand.

III. Armadale makes the following proposal:

- 1. That Synod not adopt Recommendations 1 and 8 contained in the Report of the Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise.

That instead, Synod decide as follows:

- 2. That the 2006 version of the Hymn section and the prose sections of the Canadian Book of Praise is taken as the common basis to start our Australian Book of Praise (with the understanding that recommendations 2-7 and 9-12 of the report of Deputies be implemented as proposed).
- 3. That Deputies be charged:
 - a. to await the decision of the Canadian Reformed Churches in regard to the revised Psalm section of the Book of Praise,
 - b. to examine the text of this revision, and
 - c. to make recommendations to the next Synod in regard to its possible incorporation in the Australian Book of Praise
- 4. Not to proceed with the publication of an Australian Book of Praise until our Canadian sister churches have made a decision in regard to the proposed revision of the Psalm section.

- IV. Launceston expresses a preference for reprinting the Book of Praise with the name of the Australian churches on the front instead of the name of the Canadian churches and with an adjusted Table of Contents; and with the Australian Church Order; but Launceston does not support finding our own (Australian) way forward in modifying the

confessions and the liturgical forms to reflect the usage of modern Bible Translations, for the following reasons:

- a. As the church at Launceston is presently using the NIV in the worship services, we have no problem with using the updated Canadian Book of Praise which has NIV references (see Committee Report 6.2.b). We note, as the deputies and Synod 2003 did, that the NIV has been recognized for use in the churches. (See Deputies' Report, 2.3)
- b. More importantly, if we now begin to create our own (Free Reformed) version of the confessions and liturgical forms, we will also have to maintain these versions and keep them up-to-date. We believe that this is unnecessary duplication of work.
- c. With so much travel already happening between Canada and Australia, and as long as we continue to share the use of their theological college and call their ministers and candidates for the ministry, it is good to promote and express the unity that we have by using the same songs and confessions and liturgical forms.
- d. While it may be argued that point A only applies to Launceston and Legana, and not to the churches in Western Australia, consistory requests that synod also consider whether we really want to develop our own Australian version of the psalms and our own selection of hymns. In the current 'climate' in the churches, we believe that it is prudent to follow the general direction of the Canadian Churches where it concerns the usage of a Psalter in our churches.
- e. Synod West Kelmscott, 2006, may have been correct when it stated that "the majority of the churches have indicated a preference to publish our own Australian Book of Praise." Whether that means, that the churches were happy to reprint the Canadian book at a cheaper rate, with the convenience of having the Australian Church Order in the back, or whether the churches had another motive for actually developing a distinctively Australian — or Free Reformed — worship book, is a second question. Again, consistory is in favour of the former, but it does not support the latter.

V. Southern River proposal re Deputies for Australia Book of Praise

That Synod 2009 does not approve the printing of an Australian Book of Praise and that this matter be left for a future Synod.

VI. Albany requests Synod Legana 2009 to make the following decision:

1. To discharge the deputies acknowledging that they have fulfilled their mandate admirably.
2. That although there is a desire for an Australian Book of Praise, at present the Canadian Book of Praise sufficiently meets our needs.
3. To appoint deputies with the mandate to
 - a. Monitor developments with the Canadian Book of Praise.
 - b. Resume investigations regarding copyright, printing costs and feasibility of producing an Australian Book of Praise only if the Canadian Book of Praise is substantially altered such that it is no longer suitable for use by the Australian churches.

Grounds:

1. Although Synod 2006 acknowledged the church's desire for an Australian Book of Praise, it has not yet been decided to proceed with publishing an Australian Book of Praise.
2. Report of Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise contains recommendations regarding how to proceed with a decision to publish our own Australian Book of Praise and to that extent have fulfilled their mandate as stipulated by Synod West Kelmscott 2006.
3. Deputies mandate did not allow them to recommend or investigate the feasibility of continuing to use the Canadian Book of Praise and therefore has not featured in their report.
4. In monitoring developments with the Canadian Book of Praise, it is noted that
 - a. The common songbook with the URCNA has effectively been put on hold. Therefore it is expected that the Book of Praise will remain in the same or similar format for quite some time.
 - b. Synod 2007 has adopted an updated prose section of the Book of Praise with NIV references. The NIV is an acceptable translation suitable for use in the Australian Churches.
 - c. Synod 2007 decided to publish an interim Book of Praise containing NIV references. Our people will therefore be buying that Book of Praise once they become available and we need to maintain uniformity with future versions as much as possible.
5. The Australian churches do not exist "in isolation" to other (English speaking) churches. There is an ever increasing

- amount of people traffic between Australia and Canada and therefore uniformity of Psalm Books is very practical and one less cost to incur when travelling or migrating.
6. A common Book of Praise for sister churches of the same language is a positive practical aspect of the unity in Christ that these churches have and confess.
 7. The Book of Praise is published to a very high quality and especially with the use of covers lasts for a long time. Changes should therefore be kept to a minimum to avoid constantly needing to update.
 8. The report to Synod 2003 mentioned a completed unit cost for an Australian Book of Praise to be about \$13.95 for a large order. An unfair comparison was made to the retail price - \$26.50 at that time. It should have been compared to the landed cost of buying the Canadian version to ascertain a fair basis whether producing our own would actually be cheaper if produced to the exact same quality.
 9. A further cost is the purchasing of copyrights. This only adds to the cost of producing our own Book of Praise.
 10. There is also a question regarding future updates and changes and to what extent the Australian Book of Praise would “automatically” participate or be asked to contribute towards future development costs.
 11. Although the Canadian Book of Praise has the Canadian Church Order, there is available a small and simple insert of the Australian Church Order that is currently being used by many of our members. Of itself, the different Church Order is not a compelling reason to produce our own Psalm Book.
 12. There are other minor linguistic and other changes that have been made over the years to the wording of creeds etc. These changes have been around for a long time and have not caused any significant problems. The bookshops might be able to produce small stickers to obscure or add minor changes to some wording in the creeds or forms.
 13. Further investigation of producing an Australian Book of Praise only becomes compelling if there are significant changes to the Canadian Book of Praise that make it virtually impossible for the Australian churches to continue using it. This could happen if eg a common songbook was developed with the URCNA.

After several rounds of discussion on the deputies' recommendations and the various submissions from the churches, Synod puts Albany's overture to the vote.

VII. Amendment

To add the following:

4. to permit the 2008 interim Book of Praise with NIV prose section for use in the churches.

ADOPTED

VIII. Amendment

To add the following mandate:

3. c. to keep the churches informed of, and elicit responses from the churches regarding developments with the Canadian Book of Praise.

ADOPTED

- IX.** The amended proposal is put to the vote and **adopted**. Rev. J Smith abstained from voting.

X. Amendments to grounds of adopted proposal

1. To delete ground 5
2. To delete ground 7
3. To delete ground 8
4. To delete ground 9
5. To delete ground 10
6. To delete ground 12

ADOPTED

XI. Final Text of Adopted Decision and Grounds

1. To discharge the deputies acknowledging that they have fulfilled their mandate admirably.
2. That although there is a desire for an Australian Book of Praise, at present the Canadian Book of Praise sufficiently meets our needs.
3. To appoint deputies with the mandate to
 - a. Monitor developments with the Canadian Book of Praise.
 - b. Resume investigations regarding copyright, printing costs and feasibility of producing an Australian Book of Praise only if the Canadian Book of Praise is substantially altered such that it is no longer suitable for use by the Australian churches.
 - c. Keep the churches informed of, and elicit responses from the churches regarding developments with the Canadian Book of Praise.

4. To permit the 2008 interim Book of Praise with NIV prose section for use in the churches.

XII. Grounds:

1. Although Synod 2006 acknowledged the church's desire for an Australian Book of Praise, it has not yet been decided to proceed with publishing an Australian Book of Praise.
2. Report of Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise contains recommendations regarding how to proceed with a decision to publish our own Australian Book of Praise and to that extent have fulfilled their mandate as stipulated by Synod West Kelmscott 2006.
3. Deputies mandate did not allow them to recommend or investigate the feasibility of continuing to use the Canadian Book of Praise and therefore has not featured in their report.
4. In monitoring developments with the Canadian Book of Praise, it is noted that
 - a. The common songbook with the URCNA has effectively been put on hold. Therefore it is expected that the Book of Praise will remain in the same or similar format for quite some time.
 - b. Synod 2007 has adopted an updated prose section of the Book of Praise with NIV references. The NIV is an acceptable translation suitable for use in the Australian Churches.
 - c. Synod 2007 decided to publish an interim Book of Praise containing NIV references. Our people will therefore be buying that Book of Praise once they become available and we need to maintain uniformity with future versions as much as possible.
5. A common Book of Praise for sister churches of the same language is a positive practical aspect of the unity in Christ that these churches have and confess.
6. Although the Canadian Book of Praise has the Canadian Church Order, there is available a small and simple insert of the Australian Church Order that is currently being used by many of our members. Of itself, the different Church Order is not a compelling reason to produce our own Psalm Book.
7. Further investigation of producing an Australian Book of Praise only becomes compelling if there are significant changes to the Canadian Book of Praise that make it virtually impossible for the Australian churches to continue using it. This could happen if e.g. a common songbook was developed with the URCNA.

ADOPTED

Article 25 - Adjournment

W Geurts invites all present to sing Ps 119:1 and leads in prayer. The chairman adjourns Synod.

MORNING SESSION ***Wednesday, 17 June 2009***

Article 26 - Reopening

R Heerema invites all to sing Ps 16:1,5, reads Romans 12, and leads in prayer.

Article 27 - Adoption of Acts

Article 1-20 of the acts are amended and adopted.

Article 28 - Appeal of Mt Nasura re Art. 7 Classis North October 2008.

I. Material:

8a - FRC Mt Nasura Appeal re Art 7 Acts Classis North 2008

This item is dealt with in closed session.

Mt Nasura appeals a recent decision of Classis North as recorded in Art 7.1 of the Oct 2008 Acts. This Article reads as follows:

In an appeal a brother requests Classis to decide that the following decisions made by the consistory of Mt Nasura on 7 April 2008 and communicated by letter to the brother on 28 April 2008 are in conflict with the principles of biblical justice and contrary to CO Art 31.

Classis decided to grant the brothers' request.

Grounds: Mount Nasura failed to uphold Classis decisions.

Mt Nasura requests Synod to determine that Classis should not have made the decision above, because Mt Nasura is concerned that this Classis ruling will set a precedent for material relating to objections which were not upheld to be made available outside of consistory. Mt Nasura does not believe this to be conducive to honouring the 6th and 9th commandments.

II. Proposal:

To deny the appeal.

Grounds:

1. Mt Nasura expressed concern regarding the Classis decision as setting a precedent for material relating to objections to the election process of an office-bearer. However, the decisions of a classis are made within the context of a specific matter and within local circumstances and do not constitute precedence in Reformed Polity.
2. The decision on this appeal reached by Classis is binding only on the specific parties involved. Thus it does not constitute a general pronouncement by which all the church members are bound' (With Common Consent, WWJ VanOene, page 154.)

ADOPTED

Delegates previously involved in the matter abstained from voting.

Synod decides that the item can be included in the published acts.

Article 29 - FRC Darling Downs Appeal re Art 76 Synod 2006

I. Material:

8g - FRC Darling Downs Appeal re Art 76 Synod 2006 re Appeal FRC Mt Nasura

Darling Downs proposes that Synod Legana 2009 rescind Article 76 of the Acts of the Closed Session of Synod 2006. Darling Downs is convinced that Synod 2006 incorrectly applied Article 31 of the Church Order and wrongfully declared this appeal inadmissible on the grounds that "the person who could potentially have been wronged by the decision of Synod Rockingham 2003 is the only one who has the right to appeal." (C.f. Article 76 Acts of the Closed Session of Synod, page 4). Darling Downs believes that the admissibility of Mt Nasura's submission to Synod 2006 should have been judged according to Article 33 CO (and not Article 31 CO).

II. Proposal:

To concur with Darling Downs that Synod West Kelmscott 2006 erred in Art 76 of the Acts of Closed Session.

Grounds:

Although decisions made by major assemblies are only binding on the parties involved in the appeal process, Synod West Kelmscott formulated its decision in universal terms as if a person, who could potentially have been wronged by the decision of Synod Rockingham 2003, is the only one who has the right to appeal.

III. Amendment

To add the following words after the word "erred" in the proposal: "in the formulation of the ground"

ADOPTED

The amended proposal is put to the vote and adopted.

Article 30 - Mt Nasura Appeal Article 95 Synod 2006

I. Material:

8i - FRC Mt Nasura Appeal Article 95 Synod 2006

Mt. Nasura sent an overture to Synod 2006 requesting that the sister-church relations with the RCN (Gereformeerde Kerken — vrijgemaakt) be put 'under stress'.

Synod 2006 decided, as recorded in the Acts article 95:

Material: Agenda Item 10d — Overture re relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Proposal: To defeat the proposal of Mt Nasura.

Grounds: Mt Nasura in effect asks for greater awareness and diligence in considering members and ministers from the RCN that come here. Synod regards this adequately covered in the tasks the consistories already have in the exercise as overseers of the church.

In view of the ground for which this overture was defeated, Mt Nasura requests Synod to recognise that it did not receive a proper hearing, on the following grounds:

1. Mt. Nasura's request was not for "...greater awareness and diligence..." as suggested in this ground, but that the sister-church relation with the RCN be put under stress. To help define what this stress would be, Mt. Nasura had proposed various changes to the Rules for sister-church relations.
2. While being well aware of local responsibility when receiving members with attestations and inviting ministers from sister-churches to the pulpit, the decisions concerning these relations and their regulations are made by the churches together at synod (see Church Order Article 46) so that there may be unity in action.
3. The ground to defeat Mt. Nasura's overture implies that Mt. Nasura or any of the other church is free to put the relation with the RCN under the stress that was proposed without involving the other churches of the bond. This suggests a wrong kind of independence by which the unity of the bond of churches would be undermined. Such action would clearly contravene the Church Order Article 46.

II. Admissibility

Proposal 1:

To declare the appeal admissible.

Grounds:

1. It was submitted on time.
2. The appeal claims that the original overture did not receive a proper hearing.

ADOPTED

Proposal 2:

To deny the appeal of Mount Nasura.

Ground:

1. The appeal overlooks the fact that Synod West Kelmscott tabled Mount Nasura's overture not only sub Article 95 but also sub Articles 37, 44, and 47 (as finalized in Article 94). Synod West Kelmscott's decision not to uphold the overture must be read in light of its overall decisions with respect to the RCN.

2. Guarding the Lord's Supper table and the pulpit against members and ministers "who practice or promote the identified deviations" is adequately covered in the consistories' task of oversight.

ADOPTED

Article 31 - Mt Nasura Overture re RCN

I. Material:

8i - FRC Mt Nasura Overture Article 95 Synod 2006 re RCN

II. Admissibility

Proposal:

To declare the overture admissible, but limited to the new grounds.

Grounds:

1. Under Art 33 CO, matters may be proposed again provided they are substantiated by new grounds.
2. The overture is able to be dealt with on these limited grounds as they are clearly defined in the overture.

ADOPTED

Article 32 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Material:

8e – FRC West Albany Appeal re Art 94 Acts Synod 2006 re Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

8i - FRC Mt Nasura Overture Article 95 Synod 2006 re RCN

8k – FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 93 & 94 Synod 2006 re RCN

Synod has a general round of discussion on the RCN.

EVENING SESSION
Wednesday, 17 June 2009

Article 33 - Reopening

The chairman invites all present to sing Ps 3:2,3.

Article 34 - Church Order Amendment

I. Material:

Article 18 Acts re Formation of Three Classes

II. Proposal

Consequent upon the decision to amend the Rules for Synods under Article 18 ACTS, Synod decide to amend Article 45 Church Order as follows:

Article 45 – Synod

The synod shall be held every three years. As long as there are two classes each classis shall delegate four ministers and four elders. In the event that there are three classes, each classis shall delegate three ministers and three elders.

At the close of synod the time and place for the next synod shall be determined and a church shall be appointed to convene it. A synod shall be convened before the appointed time at the request of a classis. Its time and place shall be decided by the church appointed as convening church for the next regular synod.

Grounds:

An amendment to the Church Order is necessary to reflect the decision of Synod to amend the Rules of Synod to accommodate the introduction of three classes.

ADOPTED

III. Proposal

To print the revised church order as an appendix to the Acts

ADOPTED

Article 35 - Address of Delegate of RCNZ and RCNr

The chairman invites Rev P Archbald to address Synod on behalf of the RCNZ (refer Appendix 1b). Rev JGR Kroeze responds to this address (refer Appendix 1c).

The chairman invites P Drijfhout to address Synod on behalf of the RCNr (refer Appendix 1d).

Article 36 - Canadian Reformed Churches

I. Materials:

8m - Canadian Reformed Churches Letter of Greeting
12b.II – Deputies' Report for Sister Church Relations - Canadian Reformed Churches
8o – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Canadian Reformed Churches report

Rev PKA de Boer reads out the letter of greeting from the Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad of the CanRC (8m).

II. Recommendations of Deputies

1. Express thankfulness for how the Canadian Reformed Churches continue to show the marks of a true church as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession.
2. Continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the established rules.
3. Mandate deputies to:
 - a. Monitor developments within the CanRC for mutual benefit according to the established rules.
 - b. Seek clarification and discuss with Canadian deputies matters including the proposed Art 41 C.O.(61), approach to addressing outstanding differences with other churches, concerns with RCN and RCNr, and changes to Psalms and Hymns.
 - c. Send one delegate to the next General Synod in 2010.

Grounds:

- a. The Canadian Reformed Churches give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the

- Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- b. We need to foster mutual understanding and support regarding matters that our respective federations face.
 - c. We value our bond with the Canadian Reformed Churches and personal contact at the synodical level reinforces our contact with them.

III. Darling Downs requests Synod Legana 2009

- 1. To ensure that deputies make every effort to attend the next CanRC General Synod in 2010. Darling Downs believes that it would be wise to change the mandate to include the sending of two delegates to the next General Synod.
- 2. To add to the mandate for the deputies to “express concern to the CanRC about the changing manner in which they deal with significant differences with other church federations in their unity discussions.”
- 3. To add to the mandate for the deputies to “investigate the impact of the pending merger of the CanRC and the United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA) into one church federation.”
- 4. To add to the mandate for the deputies to ‘express to the CanRC the importance of the principle of maintaining one federally maintained Theological College in their unity discussions with the URNCA.’
- 5. To admonish the deputies for not clearly communicating the decision of Synod Kelmscott 2006 regarding our relationship with the RCNZ.
- 6. To add to the mandate of the deputies to express our regret to the CanRC for not expressing clearly the impediment that exists between the FRCA and RCNZ, and to urge the CanRC to express to the RCNZ that this impediment must be addressed.

Synod held several rounds of discussions on the deputies' recommendations and the overture of Darling Downs.

Article 37 - Adjournment

W Pleiter invites all present to sing Ps 40:4,7 and leads in prayer. The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION
Thursday, 18 June 2009

Article 38 - Reopening

P Posthuma invites all present to sing Ps 25:2,5, reads Jeremiah 31:1-14, and leads in prayer.

Article 39 - Adoption of Acts

Article 21-27 are amended and adopted.

Article 40 - Canadian Reformed Churches

I. Material:

8m - Canadian Reformed Churches Letter of Greeting
12b.II – Deputies' Report for Sister Church Relations - Canadian Reformed Churches
8o – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Canadian Reformed Churches report

II. Proposed Amendment to Deputies Recommendations 3:

3. Mandate Deputies to:
 - a. Monitor developments within the CanRC for mutual benefit according to the established rules and keep the churches informed
 - b. Stay informed on developments concerning the pending merger between the CanRC and the URCNA, including the proposed revisions to the Church Order
 - c. Seek clarification about and discuss the changing manner in which they deal with significant differences with other church federations in their unity discussion
 - d. In the unity discussion between the CanRC and the URCNA, encourage the CanRC to maintain the principle that the churches maintain a theological college on the basis that we use their college for our Australian churches
 - e. Encourage the CanRC to continue supporting the FRCA as much as possible in our discussions with the RCNZ

- f. Invite the CanRC to combine a visit to Australia with their planned visit to New Zealand in October 2009
- g. Send two delegates to the next CanRC General Synod 2010 pending finances.

Additional Grounds:

- d. rules for sister relations state that “in cases of substantial changes or additions to the confessions” our preference is that “as much consultation as possible can take place before a final decision is reached.”
- e. The changing manner in dealing with significant differences in inter-church relations is substantial and worthy of discussion (e.g. Confessional Membership, Fencing of the Lords Supper etc.)
- f. Our churches maintain the principle that a church federation ought to take responsibility for maintaining a theological college (Article 17 Church Order).
- g. The CanRC have had experience with a situation where a third party relationship with the Christian Reformed Church was an impediment (c.f. Acts CanRC Synod Lincoln 1992, Art. 72, Rec.C.5c, page 55, and Acts CanRC Synod Abbotsford 1995, Art. 106, Rec. D. 2., page 75.)
- h. The CanRC deputies have requested a meeting with our deputies to discuss matters of common interest including third party relationships with GGRC/GGRI:

ADOPTED

III. Amendment

To delete recommendation 1

Ground:

- 1. Recommendation 1 is inconsistent with previous formulations of grounds for maintaining sister church relations.

ADOPTED

IV. Final Text of Adopted Decision

1. Continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the established rules.
2. Mandate Deputies to:
 - a) Monitor developments within the CanRC for mutual benefit according to the established rules and keep the churches informed;
 - b) Stay informed on developments concerning the pending merger between the CanRC and the URCNA, including the proposed revisions to the Church Order;
 - c) Seek clarification about and discuss the changing manner in which they deal with significant differences with other church federations in their unity discussions;
 - d) In the unity discussion between the CanRC and the URCNA, encourage the CanRC to maintain the principle that the churches maintain a theological college on the basis that we use their college for our Australian churches
 - e) Encourage the CanRC to continue supporting the FRCA as much as possible in our discussions with the RCNZ
 - f) Invite the CanRC to combine a visit to Australia with their planned visit to New Zealand in September
 - g) Send two delegates to the next CanRC General Synod 2010 pending finances.

Grounds:

- a. The Canadian Reformed Churches give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- b. We need to foster mutual understanding and support regarding matters that our respective federations face.
- c. We value our bond with the Canadian Reformed Churches and personal contact at the synodical level reinforces our contact with them
- d. Rules for sister relations state that “in cases of substantial changes or additions to the confessions, Church Order, or liturgical forms” our preference is that “as much consultation as possible can take place before a final decision is reached.”
- e. The changing manner in dealing with significant differences in inter-church relations is substantial and worthy of discussion (e.g. Confessional Membership, Fencing of the Lords Supper etc.)
- f. Our churches maintain the principle that a church federation ought to take responsibility for maintaining a theological college (Article 17 Church Order).

- g. The CanRC have had experience with a situation where a third party relationship with the Christian Reformed Church was an impediment (c.f. Acts CanRC Synod Lincoln 1992, Art. 72, Rec.C.5c, page 55, and Acts CanRC Synod Abbotsford 1995, Art. 106, Rec. D. 2., page 75).
- h. The CanRC deputies have requested a meeting with our deputies to discuss matters of common interest including third party relationships with GGRC/GGRI.

ADOPTED

Article 41 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Material:

8e – FRC West Albany Appeal re Art 94 Acts Synod 2006 re Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

8i - FRC Mt Nasura Overture Article 95 Synod 2006 re RCN

8k – FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 93 & 94 Synod 2006 re RCN

II. Proposal

To deny West Albany's request for revision

Grounds:

1. Whilst the FRC West Albany requests Synod to rescind Article 94.1 of Synod 2006, it fails to:
 - a. prove that the decisions and grounds under Article 94.1 are contrary to Scripture;
 - b. provide new grounds which were not already considered by Synod 2006.
2. In denying the request for revision, Synod notes that Article 94.1 of Synod 2006 accepts Amersfoort's decision as largely allaying our concerns, which implies that these concerns were not completely removed.

DEFEATED

III. Proposal:

Synod is not in a position to judge the appeal of West Albany.

Grounds:

1. the decision and grounds of Synod 2006 and its supporting documentation do not provide sufficient information for Synod to make a clear judgment on the matter.
2. the appeal of West Albany contains issues that are still a matter of concern to the deputies and is currently on the table of Synod.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal Re Article 94.I of Acts Synod West Kelmscott 2006

Grant the appeals of West Albany and Kelmscott only to the extent of acknowledging that Synod West Kelmscott 2006 had incorrect grounds for the decision: *to accept Amersfoort's decision as largely allaying our concerns.*

Grounds:

1. The quotation given in ground b of Synod West Kelmscott 2006 was not based on the official Acts of Synod Amersfoort.
2. The quotation given in ground c of Synod West Kelmscott 2006 does not provide clear evidence to support the decision.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal Re West Albany's appeal Re Article 94.II of Acts Synod West Kelmscott 2006

Not to accept the appeal of West Albany against art 94 Acts 2006 regarding divorce and remarriage

Grounds:

1. West Albany presents the decision of Amersfoort 2005 as if divorce is not necessarily considered censurable. However:
 - a. Instead of quoting the Synod decision West Albany makes a general statement about an unwillingness of consistories to apply church discipline in cases of divorce. It bases this statement on material that has been selectively quoted and does not do justice to the complete issue;
 - b. West Albany states that Dutch Synods have not unequivocally answered the basic question about the command to apply church discipline to members

who contravene God's Word by divorcing their spouse for reasons contrary to God's Word. Synod West Kelmscott also lamented this;

- c. When reference is made to a 'new approach' to divorce and remarriage West Albany quotes from a report which Synod Amersfoort 2005 did not adopt. Even though Synod Amersfoort 2005 states that it is not always clear how and when to exercise church discipline in cases of divorce, Synod does clearly state that divorce is sin and should be firmly dealt with even in situations when church discipline is not yet exercised.

DEFEATED

VI. Proposal

Not to accept the appeal of West Albany against art 94 Acts 2006 regarding divorce and remarriage

Grounds:

1. As per Decision 1 and Ground a of Synod West Kelmscott 2006 94.II, the Dutch sister churches did outline a strong and clear Scriptural guidance regarding divorce and remarriage in the Report Principles and Guidelines.
2. However, the application (also from the Report), regarding approval for divorce for reasons that go beyond Scripture, were not endorsed by Synod Amersfoort, but Synod did not give explicit guidance or a view on this. This was regretted by Synod West Kelmscott 2006 (Decision 2, Ground b).
3. West Albany raises a valid point in that the Report gives room to Consistories to not apply discipline in cases of divorce that go beyond Scripture. However, whether this belongs to the "main thrust" or to the part that was not endorsed by Synod Amersfoort, is debatable.

VII. Amendment

To delete ground 3

DEFEATED

The proposal is put to the vote and **adopted**.

Article 42 - Book of Praise

I. Material:

10d – Classis South Overture re 28 Additional Hymns and Book of Praise

Classis South proposes:

1. To recommend to synod to allow the new additional 28 hymns to be tested outside the church services so that a following synod can determine whether to adopt them.
2. To extend the mandate of the Deputies for the Book of Praise to include the following:
 - a. To scrutinize the revised sections of the Book of Praise, especially the completely revised Psalter, and the 28 proposed Hymns.
 - b. To invite comments from the churches on these revisions.
 - c. To receive and assess comments from the churches about the new 28 hymns.
 - d. To pass on the findings to the Standing Committee of Book of Praise so that the Standing Committee of Book of Praise can use them.
 - e. To report to our next synod so that it can decide on the above matters.

II. Amendment:

To delete recommendation 1 of Classis South Proposal re the additional 28 hymns

Ground:

All hymns should be scrutinized before being recommended to the churches for testing.

DEFEATED

III. Amendment:

To change proposal 1 to read:

to invite the churches to scrutinize and test the 28 additional hymns outside the church services so that a following synod can determine whether to adopt them.

IV. Amendment to Amendment:

To change "28 additional hymns" to "that portion of the 28 additional hymns to be adopted at the CanRC Synod 2010" in proposals 1 and 2.a and 2.c.

ADOPTED

The amended proposal 1 is put to the vote and **adopted**.

V. Amendment:

To add the following:

2.f. to give account to synod of the principles and guidelines used to scrutinize these hymns

ADOPTED

The proposal as amended is put to the vote and **adopted**.

VI. Final Text of Decision

1. To invite the churches to scrutinize and test that portion of the 28 additional hymns to be adopted at the CanRC Synod 2010 outside the church services so that a following synod can determine whether to adopt them.
2. To extend the mandate of the Deputies for the Book of Praise to include the following:
 - a. To scrutinise the revised sections of the Book of Praise, especially the completely revised Psalter, and that portion of the 28 additional hymns to be adopted at the CanRC Synod 2010.
 - b. To invite comments from the churches on these revisions.
 - c. To receive and assess comments from the churches about that portion of the 28 additional hymns to be adopted at the CanRC Synod 2010.
 - d. To pass on the findings to the Standing Committee of Book of Praise so that the Standing Committee of Book of Praise can use them.
 - e. To report to our next synod so that it can decide on the above matters.
 - f. To give account to synod of the principles and guidelines used to scrutinize these hymns.

Grounds:

1. These new hymns, as the printed version explains, are a needed addition to supplement the sections of the Apostles' Creed which do not receive enough coverage in the present edition. (The hymns are arranged according to topics of the Apostles' Creed.) Thus they are not loosely selected hymns but they have a definite purpose.
2. The 2007 General Synod of our Canadian sister churches has received extensive letters with comments on them from the churches and the General Synod has approved them for

use within the churches. This should give us the confidence to allow the churches to use them provisionally with the aim of testing them.

3. We share the Book of Praise with our Canadian sister churches and thus should keep up with these developments. If possible we should try to keep a common Book of Praise. The influence of our larger Canadian sister churches as a bond on us as a smaller bond is very healthy.
4. At present there is no body responsible for checking changes and revisions to the Book of Praise.
5. The new revisions of the Psalter need to undergo a thorough investigation, especially if we are to use them in the future.
6. The Canadian sister churches have invited our input.
7. As churches we ourselves need to be proactive in this area of church songs and music. God's worship has always demanded much attention. The Lord wants his worship regularly, and He wants it properly.
8. In the past we had deputies look into this, but of late it has not received attention.

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION
Thursday, 18 June 2009

Article 43 - Reopening

The chairman asks all present to sing Ps 5:1,4,8.

Article 44 - Welcome to PCK delegate

The chairman welcomes Prof. Dr. Hae-Moo Yoo as fraternal delegate of the PCK, reads out a letter of credentials for him, and asks him to rise to indicate his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. Prof. Yoo rises.

The chairman asks Prof. Yoo to speak in behalf of the PCK. Prof. Yoo delivers his address (refer Appendix 1e), and is warmly thanked by the chairman.

The chairman asks Rev Veldman to respond to the address of the delegates of the RCNr. Rev Veldman delivers his response (refer Appendix 1f).

Article 45 - Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

I. Material:

8dd – Letter of Greeting from FRCSA

12b.iv – Deputies' Report Free Reformed Churches of South Africa
12b.iv.1 – Supplementary Report re South Africa

B Veenendaal reads out a Letter of Greeting from FRCSA (8dd).

II. Deputies' Recommendations

1. To continue sister relations with the Free Reformed Churches South Africa according to the established rules.
2. To instruct deputies to send one delegate to their next synod (2011).
3. To mandate deputies to coordinate responses to any requests received, and to involve the churches and/or other deputies as appropriate.
4. Synod mandates the Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches to coordinate the support for needy churches in South Africa, and give opportunity for the Australian churches to take on particular “projects” in order to involve the congregations beyond simply finances in the support for our South African sisters. This could include continuing the support for the manse in Bethal, supporting a minister in Bethal, and/or supporting further needy church projects.

Grounds:

- a. The Free Reformed Churches of South Africa give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- b. Our visits to South Africa and their visits to us have proven to be very beneficial in terms of mutual support and encouragement.
- c. Our South African sister churches are receiving our support and will continue to do so in the future. Requests for support need to be responded to and coordinated in a timely manner.

ADOPTED

The chairman proposes that Synod thank deputies and discharge them.

ADOPTED

Article 46 - Presbyterian Church of Korea

I. Material:

8p – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Presbyterian Church of Korea report

12b.iii – Deputies' Report
12b.iii.1 – Supplementary Report

II. Deputies' Recommendations

1. To continue sister relations with the PCK in accordance with the established rules and to publish the fruit of these relations for the churches.
2. To express thanks that visits to the PCK have resulted in continued improved lines of communications.
3. To authorise deputies to send one delegate to visit the PCK once in the next three years subject to available funds.
4. To ask the deputies to stay informed about the IRCK + RCK+ IRPK and to offer any help that is possible and practical through the sister relations with the PCK.

Grounds:

- a. From more recent contacts there is evidence that the PCK abides by the Word of God, the reformed confessions and their Form of Government.
- b. Visits to Korea in the past years have helped to build better lines of communication and a growing, mutual understanding of each other.
- c. Pledges have been given for a good line of communication, as well as regular English summaries concerning their annual general assemblies.
- d. The initial contacts with the IRCK + RCK + IRPK, which came via the PCK, are very encouraging and we should extend whatever help we can to these small bonds who strongly desire to build up reformed churches.

III. Darling Downs Overture

Darling Downs requests Synod Legana 2009 not to support recommendation 4 on the basis that the deputies have clearly acted outside the bounds of its mandate from Synod Kelmscott 2006.

IV. Proposal

Not to adopt the overture of Darling Downs

Grounds:

1. While it is true that requests to investigate new federations should come to synod via the local churches, deputies have not requested synod to investigate the IRCK and RCK, but became aware of these churches via a visit to the PCK,

contacted these churches via delegates from the PCK, and suggest to stay informed about these churches through the PCK.

2. Deputies reports confirm that communication with the PCK has improved in recent years, making our relations with the PCK a good vehicle by which to remain informed about the IRCK and the RCK.

ADOPTED

V. Amendment

To add the following recommendation:

1. To thank deputies and discharge them.

ADOPTED

VI. Amendment

To change ground c to read as follows:

- c. The PCK have initial contacts with the IRCK and RCK about which the FRCA should remain informed.

ADOPTED

VII. Final Text of Adopted Decision

1. To thank deputies and discharge them.
2. To continue sister relations with the PCK in accordance with the established rules and to publish the fruit of these relations for the churches.
3. To express thanks that visits to the PCK have resulted in continued improved lines of communications.
4. To authorise deputies to send one delegate to visit the PCK once in the next three years subject to available funds.
5. To ask the deputies to stay informed about the IRCK + RCK + IRPK and to offer any help that is possible and practical through the sister relations with the PCK.

Grounds:

- a. From more recent contacts there is evidence that the PCK abides by the Word of God, the reformed confessions and their Form of Government.
- b. Visits to Korea in the past years have helped to build better

- lines of communication and a growing, mutual understanding of each other.
- c. The PCK have initial contacts with the IRCK and RCK about which the FRCA should remain informed.
 - d. The initial contacts with the IRCK + RCK + IRPK, which came via the PCK, are very encouraging and we should extend whatever help we can to these small bonds who strongly desire to build up Reformed churches.

ADOPTED

Article 47 - Adjournment

Rev Smith asks all present to sing Ps 43:3 and leads in prayer. The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION ***Friday, 19 June 2009***

Article 48 - Reopening

W Spyker invites all present to sing Ps 98:1,4, reads Psalm 98, and leads in prayer.

Article 49 - Adoption of Acts

Articles 28-37 of the Acts are amended and adopted.

Article 50 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Material:

8k - FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 93 & 94 Synod 2006 re RCN

II. Proposal

Synod decides not to accede to the appeal against Article 94.II of Synod West Kelmscott 2006 re Divorce and Remarriage.

Ground:

- 1. Synod West Kelmscott 2006 stated that Synod Amersfoort gave no explicit guidance (to prevent allowance for divorce for other reasons). Kelmscott argues that Synod Amersfoort gave explicit guidance for allowing divorce for other reasons.

They base this on phrases such as ‘following Christ’ (navolging van Christus), ‘a lifestyle justifying the coming kingdom’ (een levensstijl die recht doet aan het komende koninkrijk), and ‘the style of the kingdom’ (stijl van het koninkrijk). While these phrases might give implicit evidence that Synod Amersfoort (Art 57, Decision 1 and Grounds a, b and c.) gives room for the new hermeneutics and Christian ethics and leaves room for divorce for other reasons, Kelmscott does not show that Synod West Kelmscott 2006 was incorrect in stating that Synod Amersfoort does not give explicit guidance to prevent divorce for other reasons” (which Synod West Kelmscott 2006 found regrettable).

ADOPTED

Article 51 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Material

8k - FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 93 & 94 Synod 2006 re RCN

II. Appeal

Kelmscott appeals to Synod to revise what is recorded in the 2006 Acts Articles 93 and 94 and related material as follows:

To continue sister-church relations with the RCN

To use the adopted rules for sister church relations to:

- a. advise the RCN that the FRCA observes clear evidence with the RCN of unfaithfulness to the Word of God, their Reformed Confessions and the Church Order;
- b. admonish the RCN for their deviations and to warn them that unless they change and again uphold the truth and completeness of God’s Word, the Reformed confessions and their adopted Church Order, the FRCA will not be able to continue a sister-church relationship as we did in the past.

Grounds:

1. The RCN give evidence of unfaithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and their Church Order.
2. Other grounds as set out in this appeal regarding the Day of Rest, divorce and re-marriage, sacraments in military situations and subjective inclinations.

III. Proposal

To deny the request for revision of Article 94 of Synod 2006.

Grounds:

1. The FRC Kelmscott does not appeal the decision under Article 94 (VI, decision 1), being to continue sister-relations with the RCN, but rather appeals Ground (a) which states that “The RCN give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, their Reformed Confessions and the Church Order”.
2. Synod 2006 correctly dealt with the concerns regarding matters of the 4th commandment and Sunday, divorce and remarriage, sacraments in military situations and the manner in which Scripture and the commandments are interpreted and applied in today’s circumstances. To this extent Synod 2006 recognised that we do have causes of concern regarding directions of unfaithfulness.
3. This concern regarding directions of unfaithfulness does not mean that Synod could not also acknowledge the fact that there was “evidence of continuing faithfulness” (see for example the letters to the 7 churches in Revelation 2 & 3).

ADOPTED

Article 52 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Material:

- 8i – FRC Mt Nasura Overture Art 95 Synod 2006 re RCN
- 8q – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands report
- 8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCN(r)
- 12b.v – General Report on Netherlands
 - majority recommendations
 - minority recommendations
 - deputies on minority recommendations
- 12b.v.1 – Letter from BBK
- 12b.v.2 – Letter to BBK
- 12b.viii – General Report on visit to RCN

II. Proposal

To take a comprehensive approach with regards to this Synod’s decision about the sister church relationship with the RCN, instead of

dealing separately and in detail with every agenda item relating to this sister church relationship.

Grounds:

1. Most of the submissions express concern about the same synod decisions taken by the RCN.
2. Many of the decisions mentioned in ground 1 have come to a conclusion within the RCN. It is therefore difficult to discuss them again in detail with the deputies of our sister churches.
3. A comprehensive approach is further justified by the fact that most of these decisions appear to have a common denominator, namely a particular way of interpreting Scripture. This way of interpretation takes its starting point in man, rather than in God's Word, and it may be the result of the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age' in the church.
4. Furthermore, from information available on internet websites, reports from visitors to the RCN, local church bulletins and others, it appears that some local churches show signs of independentism. It appears that decisions of General Synod are not adhered to and that local churches do not exercise mutual discipline.
5. Even though the various submissions mention a number of specific points of concern, the major concerns are the changes in interpretation of the Bible mentioned in ground 3, and the signs of independentism mentioned in ground 4.

ADOPTED

Amended in Article 71

Article 53 - Committee Appointments

Synod appoints Committee 1 to prepare a proposal re RCN, Committee 2 to prepare a proposal re RCNZ, Committee 3 for the recommendations of the synod treasurer, Committee 4 for the appeal of Rev. Bosch.

Committee 1 – Rev Eikelboom, W Geurts, Rev Kroeze, P Postuma, H Swarts

Committee 2 – Rev Rupke, W Spyker, D Veltkamp

Committee 3 – R Heerema, B Veenendaal, Rev de Boer

Committee 4 – W Pleiter, Rev Vermeulen

EVENING SESSION
Friday, 19 June 2009

Article 54 - Reopening

The chairman invites all to sing Ps 9:1,4,5,6.

Article 55 - Response to Presbyterian Church of Korea

B Veenendaal responds to the address of Prof. Yoo of the PCK (refer Appendix 1g).

Article 56 - Press Release

The press release is presented by the vice chairman and adopted by Synod.

Article 57 - Indonesia and the Philippines

W Geurts reads out a letter of greeting from Rev Yonson Dethan on behalf of the GGRC.

I. Material

12c - Report of Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches –
Indonesia

II. Recommendations of Deputies regarding the GGRI:

To appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To continue sister relations with the GGRI in accordance with the adopted rules;
2. To continue to visit the synods and conferences of the GGRI subject to available finance;
3. To support the GGRI in a well-considered and responsible way with the intention of building up the reformed character of these churches;
4. To support the plans to establish a Theological Seminary in Sumba and make funds available for this cause. In light of the importance for the GGRI to maintain their own college to thoroughly train their ministers, deputies should encourage and work with the Dutch sister churches in this matter as much as possible. Also, to offer additional support of the FRCA deputies in the monumental task of upgrading both the educational level and the buildings of the theological college.
5. To financially support two students/ministers to come to

Australia during the inter-synodical period to study English and to familiarize themselves with the Australian churches for three months subject to a financial arrangements with the Dutch deputies and subject to available funding from the churches.

6. To provide limited support to ensure that effective communication continues.
7. To monitor and report developments on the unity of GGRI with the GGRC. Where possible, to encourage these churches to achieve federal unity with the GGRC.
8. To keep in contact and share information with deputies of our Canadian sister churches regarding the Indonesian churches.
9. To encourage the churches and their members to provide the means of support for the activities of deputies 4,5,6,7 above.

ADOPTED

III. Recommendations of Deputies regarding the GGRC

To appoint deputies with the following mandate

1. To continue contact with the GGRC, and assess whether the GGRC still desires and values continued contact with the FRCA, and whether there is still value for the FRCA to have contact with the GGRC.
2. To continue to visit the synods of the GGRC subject to available finance.
3. To encourage the GGRC to work towards federal unity with the GGRI, especially in view of the anticipated unification of the three federations of the GGRI. Also, to monitor and report on developments regarding developments in this area.
4. To encourage the churches and their members to provide the means of support for the activities of deputies as mentioned in 2 above.

ADOPTED

IV. Recommendations of Deputies regarding the Reformed Free Churches of the Philippines and the Free Reformed Churches of the Philippines:

1. Synod West Kelmscott decided "to discontinue attempts to contact both Reformed Churches of the Philippines; and to maintain deputies as an address so that if these churches are still interested in contact they can contact deputies." Deputies have not received any communications from these churches. Therefore deputies recommend that this item be deleted from the mandate given to the new deputies.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To thank deputies for their work and discharge them.

ADOPTED

Article 58 - Reformed Churches of New Zealand

I. Material

8f – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Art 102 Acts Synod 2006 re RCNZ

8h – FRC Mt Nasura Overture re RCNZ

8j – FRC Kelmscott Appeal Art 102 Synod 2006 re RCNZ

8r – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches of NZ report

8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCN^r

12d – Report of Deputies: Relations Reformed Churches of New Zealand

Synod held a general round of discussion on the RCNZ

Article 59 - Adjournment

B Veenendaal invites all present to sing Ps 147:1,4 and leads in prayer. The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION
Monday, 22 June 2009

Article 60 - Reopening

Rev Vermeulen invites all present to sing Ps 86:4, reads Ephesians 1, and leads in prayer.

Article 61 - Welcome delegates from the RCN

The chairman welcomes K Wezeman and J Bronsema as delegates from the RCN, reads out a letter of credentials for them, invites them to sit as advisory members at Synod's open sessions as per Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Synod, and asks them to rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. The delegates rise.

Article 62 - Adoption of the Acts

Articles 38-53 are amended and adopted by Synod.

Article 63 - Reformed Churches of New Zealand

I. Material:

8f – FRC Darling Downs request for revision of Art 102.3 of Synod 2006 re RCNZ

8j – FRC Kelmscott appeal Art 102.2a, 2c & 3 of Synod 2006 re RCNZ

8h – Overture from FRC Mt Nasura re RCNZ

8r – Letter from FRC Darling Downs re RCNZ

8y – Letter from FRC Byford re RCNZ

12d – Report of Deputies RCNZ

II. Proposal from Committee 2 Re Request of Darling Downs:

Not to rescind Article 102.3 of Acts of Synod 2006.

Grounds:

1. Whilst the FRC Darling Downs requests that Art 102.3 be revised on the basis that it is linguistically poorly constructed, vague and ambiguous and has resulted in much confusion and uncertainty, it does not propose an alternative wording which addresses the concern. To rescind the decision in its entirety does not address the encouragement which Synod 2006 wished to give to consistories.
2. By way of Art 102.3, Synod 2006 did no more than encourage consistories. It did not bind the conscience of consistories in any way.

ADOPTED

III. Proposal from Committee 2 Re Appeal of Kelmscott:

To deny the appeal with respect to Art 102.2a & 3.

To allow the appeal with respect to Art 102.2c.

Grounds:

1. FRC Kelmscott argues that Art 102.2a should be revised in that Synod 2006 should have issued a directive stronger than “to encourage the RCNZ to admonish the CRCA where necessary.” Whilst the FRC Kelmscott may consider that a stronger directive was warranted, it merely expresses its particular viewpoint and does not prove that the decision of Synod 2006 was incorrect.
2. As to Art 102.2c, FRC Kelmscott is correct that the triangular relationship did not exist.
3. As to Art 102.3, FRC Kelmscott does not provide any basis or proof for the allegation that practical support and interaction regarding matters pertaining to the mission field and to theological education are limited to sister-churches.

ADOPTED

IV. Deputies' Recommendations

1. To note that no further progress has been made in the understanding between the FRCA and RCNZ on the matter of the importance of the triangular relationship which prevents the FRCA from entering into a sister relationship with the RCNZ.
2. To affirm that Synod's positive view towards the RCNZ, shown by the past acknowledgement of the RCNZ as true and faithful churches, has consequences in practical support and interaction where these are not restricted to those between sister churches only e.g. application of membership from former members of the RCNZ, matters pertaining to the mission field and theological and Christian education.
3. To renew the mandate of deputies to strive for relations with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand by:
 - a. Monitoring the relationship between the RCNZ and the CRCA, and to encourage the RCNZ to continue to admonish the CRCA where necessary.
 - b. Authorising two delegates to attend the next Synod of the RCNZ, in order to convey greetings and discuss matters of mutual interest.
 - c. Reassuring the RCNZ that it is our sincere desire to enter into a sister relationship with them but the matter of a triangular relationship with the CRCA remains an impediment.

- d. Inviting delegates of the RCNZ to our next Synod as observers with the privileges mentioned in rule 6 of our “Rules for Synods” (Acts 1998, Appendix 12).
- f. Providing information to the membership of our churches about the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

V. Proposal from Committee 2:

- 1. To thank the deputies for their work and discharge them.
- 2. To confirm what was said by Synod 2003, namely to recognise that the RCNZ are true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3. To note that no substantial progress has been made in the understanding between the FRCA and RCNZ on the matter of the importance of the impediment which prevents the FRCA from entering into a sister relationship with the RCNZ.
- 4. To affirm that Synod’s positive view towards the RCNZ has consequences in practical support and interaction where these are not restricted to those between sister churches only e.g. application of membership from former members of the RCNZ, matters pertaining to the mission field and theological and Christian education.
- 5. To renew the mandate of deputies to strive for sister-relations with the RCNZ by:
 - a. Monitoring the relationship between the RCNZ and the CRCA, and to encourage the RCNZ to continue to admonish the CRCA where necessary.
 - b. To discuss with the RCNZ their decision made at Synod Hasting 2008, which says that the RCNZ “cannot accept that their sister-church relationship with the CRCA should be an impediment to the FRCA accepting their offer of sister-church relations”.
 - c. Authorising two delegates to attend the next Synod of the RCNZ, in order to convey greetings and discuss matters of mutual interest.
 - d. Reassuring the RCNZ that it is our sincere desire to enter into a sister relationship with them but the matter of their sister relationship with the CRCA remains an impediment.
 - e. Inviting delegates of the RCNZ to our next Synod as observers with the privileges mentioned in rules 6 of our “Rules for Synods” (Acts 1998, Appendix 12).
 - f. Providing information about the RCNZ to the membership of our churches.

6. To deny the overture of FRC Mt Nasura.
7. To decline the invitation of the RCNZ that we attend as observers at the meeting of the ICRC to be held DV in October 2009 in Christchurch.

Grounds:

1. FRC Darling Downs is correct in stating that a triangular relationship does not exist.
2. FRC Darling Downs is correct to say that ongoing recognition of the RCNZ as being a true church should be explicit. With thankfulness, Synod can confirm this recognition on the basis of the Report of Deputies.
3. FRC Darling Downs correctly states that the matter of the impediment requires further discussion and clarification, also with respect to the question of the uniformity/pluriformity of the church.
4. FRC Mt Nasura seeks to bind the next Synod of the FRCA into a decision regarding our relationship with the RCNZ. A decision of a future Synod cannot, however, be made by Synod 2009. Further, our recognition of the RCNZ as true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ obligates us to continue to strive for sister-relations with patience, humility and love.
5. Mt Nasura, at ground d of its Overture, refers to a statement of RCNZ deputies and not an official decision of Synod. The RCNZ's sister-relationship with the CRCA remains under strain (Synod Hastings 2008, Art 83). The outcome of developments in this relationship can only be evaluated by the next Synod of the FRCA.
6. The RCNZ have formally invited our attendance at the next ICRC (Synod Hastings 2008, Art 98), and so requires a response.

VI. Amendment 1:

To replace decision 5a with:

- a. Monitoring the relationship between the RCNZ and the CRCA;
- b. Encouraging the RCNZ to continue to admonish the CRCA and be consequential in this relationship.

Grounds:

1. The encouragement to the RCNZ warrants a separate mandate.

2. The admonishment of the CRCA and placing the relationship under strain has consequences.

ADOPTED

VII. Amendment 2:

To remove decision 4.

Ground:

The task of synod is to make decisions for the churches but synod has no business offering advice or encouragement to churches on how they ought to do mission work or respond to applications for membership.

ADOPTED

VIII. Amendment 3:

To change ground 2 to read:

FRC Darling Downs is correct to say that if there is to be any ongoing recognition of the RCNZ as being as being a true church, it should be stated explicitly. With thankfulness, Synod can confirm this recognition on the basis of the Report of Deputies.

ADOPTED

IX. Amendment 4:

To insert the following additional ground between grounds 5 and 6 above:

The statement of the RCNZ as true and faithful churches can be maintained as the RCNZ continue to place strain on their sister-church relationship with the CRCA by addressing areas of concern and unfaithfulness within the CRCA.

DEFEATED

X. Amendment 5:

To insert as decision 4

To affirm that Synod's positive view towards the RCNZ has consequences in practical support and interaction. e.g. working

together on the PNG mission field and supporting the theological training at the Bible College in PNG.

ADOPTED

*The proposal as amended above is put to the vote and **adopted**.*

XI. Final Text of Adopted Decision:

1. To thank the deputies for their work and discharge them.
2. To confirm what was said by Synod 2003, namely to recognise that the RCNZ are true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. To note that no substantial progress has been made in the understanding between the FRCA and RCNZ on the matter of the importance of the impediment which prevents the FRCA from entering into a sister relationship with the RCNZ.
4. To affirm that Synod's positive view towards the RCNZ has consequences in practical support and interaction. e.g. working together on the PNG mission field and supporting the theological training at the Bible College in PNG.
5. To renew the mandate of deputies to strive for sister-relations with the RCNZ by:
 - a. Monitoring the relationship between the RCNZ and the CRCA;
 - b. Encouraging the RCNZ to continue to admonish the CRCA and be consequential in this relationship.
 - c. To discuss with the RCNZ their decision made at Synod Hasting 2008, which says that the RCNZ "cannot accept that their sister-church relationship with the CRCA should be an impediment to the FRCA accepting their offer of sister-church relations".
 - d. Authorising two delegates to attend the next Synod of the RCNZ, in order to convey greetings and discuss matters of mutual interest.
 - e. Reassuring the RCNZ that it is our sincere desire to enter into a sister relationship with them but the matter of their sister relationship with the CRCA remains an impediment.
 - f. Inviting delegates of the RCNZ to our next Synod as observers with the privileges mentioned in rules 6 of our "Rules for Synods" (Acts 1998, Appendix 12).
 - g. Providing information about the RCNZ to the membership of our churches.

6. To deny the overture of FRC Mt Nasura.
7. To decline the invitation of the RCNZ that we attend as observers at the meeting of the ICRC to be held DV in September 2009 in Christchurch.

Grounds:

1. FRC Darling Downs is correct in stating that a triangular relationship does not exist.
2. FRC Darling Downs is correct to say that if there is to be any ongoing recognition of the RCNZ as being as being a true church, it should be stated explicitly. With thankfulness, Synod can confirm this recognition on the basis of the Report of Deputies.
3. FRC Darling Downs correctly states that the matter of the impediment requires further discussion and clarification, also with respect to the question of the uniformity/pluriformity of the church.
4. FRC Mt Nasura seeks to bind the next Synod of the FRCA into a decision regarding our relationship with the RCNZ. A decision of a future Synod cannot, however, be made by Synod 2009. Further, our recognition of the RCNZ as true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ obligates us to continue to strive for sister-relations with patience, humility and love.
5. Mt Nasura, at ground d of its Overture, refers to a statement of RCNZ deputies and not an official decision of Synod. The RCNZ's sister-relationship with the CRCA remains under strain (Synod Hastings 2008, Art 83). The outcome of developments in this relationship can only be evaluated by the next Synod of the FRCA.
6. The RCNZ have formally invited our attendance at the next ICRC (Synod Hastings 2008, Art 98), and so requires a response.

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION
Monday, 22 June 2009

Article 64 - Reopening

The chairman requests all present to sing Ps 12:1,4,5.

Article 65 - Address of RCN delegates

J Bronsema addresses Synod on behalf of the RCN (refer Appendix 1h).
The chairman thanks him for his address.

Article 66 - Letter of Greeting from GGRI

W Geurts reads out a letter of greeting from the GGRI.

Article 67 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Materials:

- 8i – FRC Mt Nasura Overture Art 95 Synod 2006 re RCN
- 8q – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands report
- 8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCNR
- 12b.v – Deputies General Report on Netherlands
 - majority recommendations
 - minority recommendations
 - deputies on minority recommendations
- 12b.v.1 – Letter from BBK
- 12b.v.2 – Letter to BBK
- 12b.viii – General Report on Visit to RCN

II. Majority Recommendations of Deputies

1. To continue sister relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands according to the adopted rules for sister relations.
2. To express our thankfulness to the RCN regarding the openness and frankness in which their deputies and ours could be engaged in concerns and discussions.
3. To call on the FRCA to frequently remember the RCN in their prayers, in view of the continuing tensions within these churches.
4. To beseech the Lord by his grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions that occurred until the recent past.
5. To discharge deputies and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. Discuss with the RCN deputies BBK:
 - i. the concerns expressed in the Report of Rev M Nap of which Synod has pronounced to agree with the desire of further hermeneutic study
 - ii. the way deputies M/F in the church formulate and discuss with the RCN the

- framework in which men and women serve in pastoral and diaconal tasks
- iii. the continuing proliferation and the contents of new hymns
- iv. the recent developments in the NGK for justifying women as elders and ministers, since this is a barrier to unity.
- v. how the RCN can work towards reconciliation with the RCN_r on the basis of truth, love and humility.
- b. Send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN
- c. Report to the next Synod.

Grounds:

1. Although there are worrying tendencies within the RCN which come up in the Dutch press, concerned internet sites and deputies' reports, it appears evident from the Synod's decisions that the RCN remains faithful to the Word of God, their Reformed Confessions and the Church Order.
2. Our deputies have been able to correspond with Dutch deputies in a good and brotherly way and have been given opportunity to participate in Synod's discussions in an advisory way. This is in the spirit of the rules for sister relations to which both our church bonds have committed themselves.
3. In view of the intensive nature of contacts, it is important that the sister relationship is supported by attending each other's Synod. We have the mutual task to encourage, comfort and guard each other by the truth of God's Word.
4. The FRCA acknowledge the RCN_r's desire to be Reformed, but are of the opinion that the separation from the RCN was unlawful (see further Report on RCN_r).

III. Minority Recommendations of Deputies

1. To continue sister relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands according to the adopted rules for sister relations, and using these relations to express concerns (as indicated in Decision 5 below).
2. To express our thankfulness to the RCN regarding the openness and frankness in which their deputies and ours could be engaged in concerns and discussions.
3. To call on the FRCA to frequently remember the RCN in their prayers, in view of the continuing tensions within these churches.
4. To beseech the Lord by his grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions that occurred in the recent past.

5. To discharge deputies and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. Discuss with the RCN deputies BBK:
 - i. The concerns expressed in the Report of Rev M Nap of which Synod has pronounced to agree with the desire of further hermeneutic study,
 - ii. The way deputies M/F in the church formulate and discuss within the RCN the framework in which men and women serve in pastoral and diaconal tasks,
 - iii. The continuing proliferation and the contents of new hymns
 - iv. Our concerns regarding the RCN decisions on Divorce and Remarriage (refer Art 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott 2006),
 - v. Our concerns regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel (refer Art 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott 2006),
 - vi. The view of the RCN towards recent developments in the NGK for justifying women as elders and ministers, since this is a barrier to unity,
 - vii. The RCN dealings with view on hermeneutics, work of the Holy Spirit and the application of church discipline (refer Art 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott 2006), and
 - viii. How the RCN can work towards reconciliation with the RCNr on the basis of truth, love and humility.
 - b. Monitor the application of the RCN decision regarding the Fourth Commandment and Sunday (refer Art 94, Acts Synod West Kelmscott 2006).
 - c. Provide a discussion paper on the RCN dealings with views on hermeneutics to assist deputies and synods in their discussions as per 5a (eg. (i) and (vii)) above.
 - d. Send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN and provide a synopsis of synod decisions for the benefit of our Australian churches.
 - e. Report to the next Synod.

Grounds:

1. The RCN desires to remain faithful to the Word of God, their Reformed Confessions and the Church Order, but there are worrying tendencies within the RCN which come up in the Dutch press, concerned Internet sites and deputies' reports.
2. Our deputies have been able to correspond with Dutch deputies in a good and brotherly way and have been given opportunity to participate in Synod's discussions in an advisory way. This is in the spirit of the rules for sister relations to which both our church bonds have committed themselves.
3. Deputies did not complete their mandate from Synod West Kelmescott 2006.
4. In view of the intensive nature of contacts, it is important that the sister relationship is supported by attending each other's synods. We have the mutual task to encourage, comfort and guard each other by the truth of God's Word.
5. The FRCA acknowledge the RCN's desire to be Reformed, and need to encourage the RCN to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern in humility and love.

Synod holds three rounds of discussion on a proposal from committee 1 (see Article 71).

Article 68 - Adjournment

Rev. Eikelboom invites all present to sing Ps 90:7,8 and leads in prayer.
The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION
Tuesday, 23 June 2009

Article 69 - Reopening

W Geurts invites all present to sing Hymn 48:1,4, reads 1 Peter 5, and leads in prayer.
The chairman welcomes the students of the John Calvin School and moves that the students be given the rest of the day off.

ADOPTED

Article 70 - Adoption of the Acts

Article 54-63 of the Acts are amended and adopted.

Article 71 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

I. Materials:

- 8i – FRC Mt Nasura Overture Art 95 Synod 2006 re RCN
- 8q – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands report
- 8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCN^r
- 12b.v – Deputies General Report on Netherlands
 - majority recommendations
 - minority recommendations
 - deputies on minority recommendations
- 12b.v.1 – Letter from BBK
- 12b.v.2 – Letter to BBK
- 12b.viii – General Report on Visit to RCN

II. Committee 1 withdraws its proposal re RCN

III. Motion

To revisit ground 4 of decision 1 (sub Article 52 of the Acts)

Grounds:

1. Delegates from the RCN question the honesty of this ground.
2. Synod must make every effort to ensure that it judges uprightly.
3. Ground 4 resurfaces in the proposal tabled.

ADOPTED

IV. Motion

To replace Ground 4 of Article 52.II with the following:

Deputies in their report (Report p. 53) identify a "concern that decisions made by synod are not always upheld by the local churches. There is a measure of independentism growing within those churches."

Ground:

This more accurately reflects the source of the concern regarding independentism as coming from the Report of Deputies.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

1. See proposal with grounds adopted above sub Article 52 of the Acts (To take a comprehensive approach with regards to this Synod's decision about the sister church relationship with the RCN, instead of dealing separately and in detail with every agenda item relating to this sister church relationship).
2. Continue the sister church relations with the RCN under the adopted rules.
3. Express our thankfulness to the RCN regarding the openness and frankness in which their deputies and ours could be engaged in concerns and discussions.
4. Exhort the RCN with love and care to be faithful in their approach to hermeneutics and combating the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age' (Ground 3). As specific examples, we mention the following:
 - a. Our ongoing concerns about the position of our Dutch sister Churches on connecting the fourth commandment to the Lord's Day as a day of rest, as we confess in Q/A 103 of the HC.
 - b. Our concerns that the public comments of Dr. Harinck have not been retracted, even though he remains a professor in Kampen.
 - c. Our ongoing concerns regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel (refer art. 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott).
5. Express and discuss our concerns regarding trends towards unfaithfulness to Scripture, Confessions and Church Order mentioned in Grounds 3-5 (relating to Decision 1).
6. To discharge deputies and thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to use the adopted *Rules for Sister Church Relations* to discuss with the RCN deputies BBK:
 - a. Matters raised in Decisions 4, 5 and 7,
 - b. The concerns expressed in the Report of Rev M Nap of which Synod has pronounced to agree with the desire of further hermeneutic study,
 - c. The way deputies *Male/Female in the church* formulate and discuss within the RCN the framework in which men and women serve in pastoral and diaconal tasks,
 - d. Our ongoing concerns regarding the RCN decisions on Divorce and Remarriage (refer Art 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott 2006),
 - e. The continuing proliferation and the contents of new hymns,

- f. The view of the RCN towards recent developments in the NGK for justifying women as elders and ministers, since this is a barrier to unity,
 - g. The need for the RCN to uphold the plain meaning of Scripture regarding Genesis 1-11,
 - h. The concern regarding the signs of independentism as mentioned in Ground 4 (which is related to Decision 1).
7. Inform the RCN that their current direction is placing tension on our sister church relationship.
 8. Call on the FRCA to frequently remember the RCN in their prayers in view of the continuing tensions within the RCN and between the RCN and the FRCA.
 9. To beseech the Lord by his grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions between the RCN and RCNr.
 10. Send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN and provide a synopsis of synod decisions for the benefit of our Australian churches.

Grounds:

6. Though the RCN give much evidence of continued faithfulness to the Word of God, Confessions and the Church Order, there are also serious concerns.
7. Our deputies have been able to correspond with the Dutch deputies in a good and brotherly way and have been given opportunity to participate in synod's discussions in an advisory capacity. This is in the spirit of the rules for sister church relations, to which both our bonds of churches have committed themselves.
8. Synod West Kelmescott 2006 (Art 94.I) and Synod Legana 2009 (Art 41.IV) show that our concerns concerning the Fourth Commandment and Sunday rest have not been completely allayed. General Synod of Zwolle Zuid 2008 dealt with several requests for revision and clarification concerning this matter. This included the request that synod would clearly affirm the Scriptural obligation to rest from non-essential work on Sundays. These appeals were denied by the RCN synod.
9. Although our deputies discussed the concerns regarding the public statements of Dr Harinck with deputies BBK and in their address to Synod Zwolle-Zuid, the responses from Synod Zwolle Zuid and Deputies BBK were not satisfactory (see pp. 60, 115 of Deputies Report to Synod Legana 2009; see Synod Zwolle Zuid 16-5-2008 Besluit 3,

<http://www.kerkrecht.nl/main.asp?pagetype=onderdeel&item=358&subitem=7566&page=>).

10. Synod West Kelmscott 2006 identified our concerns *regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel as going beyond the common consent of the Church Order and leading to the danger of interdenominational (against Article 28 Belgic Confession) administration of sacraments (Art 94.IV Acts Synod West Kelmscott 2006).*
11. Deputies need to engage with specific points of concern in the broader context of the major concerns as expressed in Ground 5.
12. In view of the intensive nature of contacts, it is important that the sister relationship is supported by attending each other's synods. We have the mutual task to encourage, comfort and guard each other by the truth of God's Word.
13. The FRCA acknowledge the RCN's desire to be Reformed, and need to encourage the RCN to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern in humility and love.

VI. Amendment 1

To replace decision 7 with the following:

To share with the RCN the observation that their current direction is placing tension on our sister church relationship.

Grounds:

This decision clarifies that Synod makes an observation of the situation as it presently stands.

ADOPTED

VII. Amendment 2

To replace ground 13 with the following:

The FRCA need to encourage the RCN to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern between them and the RCN in humility and love.

ADOPTED

VIII. Amendment 3

To replace decision 5

5. Express and discuss our concerns regarding trends towards

unfaithfulness to Scripture, Confessions and Church Order mentioned in Grounds 3-5 (relating to Decision 1).

with

5. Express and discuss our concerns regarding the direction the RCN is taking, mentioned in grounds 3-5 of decision 1.

Ground:

1. The words 'trends towards unfaithfulness' is a logical fallacy. Unfaithfulness can only be concluded at the end of a process. The way to that unfaithfulness goes along directions taken.
2. The words 'trends towards unfaithfulness' is inconsistent with ground 6 which mentions serious concerns, but does not specify that these concerns can effectively lead to unfaithfulness.

DEFEATED

IX. Amendment 4

To add to decision 8:

Such prayers ought to reflect Synod's decision with respect to the RCN rather than personal opinion.

Ground:

This addition will promote unity in our prayers for the RCN.

DEFEATED

The proposal as amended is put to the vote and **adopted**.

The chairman leads in prayer, thanking the Lord that Synod could come to this decision, and praying for the RCN and for the relationship between the FRCA and the RCN.

X. Motion:

To revisit decision 7 and change the word "direction" to "situation"

DEFEATED

XI. Final Text of Adopted Decision

1. To take a comprehensive approach with regards to this Synod's decision about the sister church relationship with the RCN, instead of dealing separately and in detail with every agenda item relating to this sister church relationship.
2. Continue the sister church relations with the RCN under the adopted rules.
3. Express our thankfulness to the RCN regarding the openness and frankness in which their deputies and ours could be engaged in concerns and discussions.
4. Exhort the RCN with love and care to be faithful in their approach to hermeneutics and combating the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age' (Ground 3). As specific examples, we mention the following:
 - a. Our ongoing concerns about the position of our Dutch sister Churches on connecting the fourth commandment to the Lord's Day as a day of rest, as we confess in Q/A 103 of the HC.
 - b. Our concerns that the public comments of Dr. Harinck have not been retracted, even though he remains a professor in Kampen.
 - c. Our ongoing concerns regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel (refer art. 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott).
5. Express and discuss our concerns regarding trends towards unfaithfulness to Scripture, Confessions and Church Order mentioned in Grounds 3-5.
6. To discharge deputies and thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to use the adopted *Rules for Sister Church Relations* to discuss with the RCN deputies BBK:
 - a. Matters raised in Decisions 4, 5 and 7,
 - b. The concerns expressed in the Report of Rev M Nap of which Synod has pronounced to agree with the desire of further hermeneutic study,
 - c. The way deputies *Male/Female in the church* formulate and discuss within the RCN the framework in which men and women serve in pastoral and diaconal tasks,
 - d. Our ongoing concerns regarding the RCN decisions on Divorce and Remarriage (refer Art 94, Acts of Synod West Kelmscott 2006),
 - e. The continuing proliferation and the contents of new hymns,

- f. The view of the RCN towards recent developments in the NGK for justifying women as elders and ministers, since this is a barrier to unity,
 - g. The need for the RCN to uphold the plain meaning of Scripture regarding Genesis 1-11,
 - h. The concern regarding the signs of independentism as mentioned in Ground 4.
7. To share with the RCN the observation that their current direction is placing tension on our sister church relationship.
 8. Call on the FRCA to frequently remember the RCN in their prayers in view of the continuing tensions within the RCN and between the RCN and the FRCA.
 9. To beseech the Lord by his grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions between the RCN and RCNr.
 10. Send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN and provide a synopsis of synod decisions for the benefit of our Australian churches.

Grounds:

1. Most of the submissions express concern about the same synod decisions taken by the RCN.
2. Many of the decisions mentioned in ground 1 have come to a conclusion within the RCN. It is therefore difficult to discuss them again in detail with the deputies of our sister churches
3. A comprehensive approach is further justified by the fact that most of these decisions appear to have a common denominator, namely a particular way of interpreting Scripture. This way of interpretation takes its starting point in man, rather than in God's Word, and it may be the result of the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age' in the church.
4. Deputies in their report (Report p. 53) identify a "concern that decisions made by synod are not always upheld by the local churches. There is a measure of independentism growing within those churches."
5. Even though the various submissions mention a number of specific points of concern, the major concerns are the changes in interpretation of the Bible mentioned in ground 3, and the signs of independentism mentioned in ground 4.
6. Though the RCN give much evidence of continued faithfulness to the Word of God, Confessions and the Church Order, there are also serious concerns.
7. Our deputies have been able to correspond with the Dutch deputies in a good and brotherly way and have been given opportunity to participate in synod's discussions in an

advisory capacity. This is in the spirit of the rules for sister church relations, to which both our bonds of churches have committed themselves.

8. Synod West Kelmscott 2006 (Art 94.I) and Synod Legana 2009 (Art 41.IV) show that our concerns concerning the Fourth Commandment and Sunday rest have not been completely allayed. General Synod of Zwolle Zuid 2008 dealt with several requests for revision and clarification concerning this matter. This included the request that synod would clearly affirm the Scriptural obligation to rest from non-essential work on Sundays. These appeals were denied by the RCN synod.
9. Although our deputies discussed the concerns regarding the public statements of Dr Harinck with deputies BBK and in their address to Synod Zwolle-Zuid, the responses from Synod Zwolle Zuid and Deputies BBK were not satisfactory (see pp. 60, 115 of Deputies Report to Synod Legana 2009; see Synod Zwolle Zuid 16-5-2008 Besluit 3, <http://www.kerkrecht.nl/main.asp?pagetype=onderdeel&item=358&subitem=7566&page=>).
10. Synod West Kelmscott 2006 identified our concerns *regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel as going beyond the common consent of the Church Order and leading to the danger of interdenominational (against Article 28 Belgic Confession) administration of sacraments (Art 94.IV Acts Synod West Kelmscott 2006)*.
11. Deputies need to engage with specific points of concern in the broader context of the major concerns as expressed in Ground 5.
12. In view of the intensive nature of contacts, it is important that the sister relationship is supported by attending each other's synods. We have the mutual task to encourage, comfort and guard each other by the truth of God's Word.
13. The FRCA need to encourage the RCN to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern between them and the RCN in humility and love.

ADOPTED

XII. Proposal

To deny the overture from FRC Mt Nasura.

Grounds:

The FRC Mt Nasura requests that the relations with the RCN be put

under stress by way of restrictions to the adopted rules for sister-church relations. Synod has, however, decided to continue sister-relations with the RCN under the adopted rules.

ADOPTED

Article 72 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored)

I. Materials:

8s – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report

8t – Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 190509 declining invitation

8v – FRC Albany Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report

8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCNr

8cc - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 290409 declining invitation

12b.vi – Majority Report of Deputies

12b.vii – Minority Report of Deputies

12b.viii – General Report on visit to RCN including RCNr

Synod holds two rounds of discussion on the RCNr.

II. Majority Recommendations of Deputies:

1. Not to accept the accusations against our sister churches, the RCN, but to defend the honour and reputation of the RCN.
2. Not to acknowledge the RCNr as “the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands”.
3. To maintain official contact with the RCNr, so that we can work for reconciliation between them and the RCN, on the basis of truth and love.

Grounds:

1. The Letter of the RCNr, dd 4 Feb 2005, in which they explain their liberation of 2003, and the booklet of Sept 2006, in which they defend their liberation and maintain to be the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, have not substantiated their claim that the RCN has no right any more to the title of true church.
2. It is a serious matter to separate when it is not warranted. The injunctions to remain one in the Lord (e.g. John 17 and

- Eph 4), sometimes even when serious problems arose as in Corinth, can be read repetitively in the Bible.
3. The RCN_r have the strong desire to be reformed. Therefore we should use contacts with them to urge them to work for reconciliation with our sister, the other Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, who struggle to remain reformed.

III. Minority Recommendations of Deputies:

1. While defending the honour and reputation of the RCN by recognising their sincere desire to remain faithful to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order, there is evidence of worrying tendencies.
2. To refrain from deciding at this time whether RCN_r is “the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands”.
3. To acknowledge the RCN_r desire to be Reformed and continue contact with view to encouraging the RCN_r to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern in humility and love.

Grounds:

1. The Letter of the RCN_r, dd 4 Feb 2005, in which they explain their liberation of 2003, and the booklet of Sept 2006, in which they defend their liberation and maintain to be the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands show that there are serious concerns regarding the direction of the RCN.
2. It is a serious matter to separate and may never been done hastily nor without exhausting every effort to maintain the unity of the faith. The injunction to remain one in the Lord (e.g. John 17 and Eph 4), sometimes even when serious problems arose as in Corinth, can be read repetitively in the Bible. It is very difficult for the FRCA to determine whether all efforts to maintain the unity have been exhausted.
3. Before the FRCA can conclusively decide that the RCN_r liberation was lawful or not, time is needed to address its own concerns of trends in the RCN and evaluate its responses.
4. The RCN_r show faithfulness to God’s Word as upheld in the Reformed Confessions. While refraining from a decision as to the lawfulness of the liberation, the FRCA share many of the concerns for which they liberated from the RCN. Contact with them can be helpful in efforts to maintain the unity of faith with the RCN on the basis of God’s Word as upheld in the Reformed Confessions and agreed upon in the Church Order.

IV. Proposal

1. Not to accept the accusation of the RCN_r against our sister churches, the RCN, that she is not a true church, but to defend the honour and reputation of the RCN.
2. Not to acknowledge the RCN_r as "the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands".
3. To acknowledge the RCN_r desire to be Reformed and continue contact with a view to encouraging the RCN_r to discuss the issues (and struggles) of concern in humility and love.

Grounds:

1. Synod has decided to continue sister church relations with the RCN on the ground that „the RCN give much evidence of continued faithfulness to the Word of God, Confessions and the Church Order".
2. The acceptance of the RCN as true and faithful church means that those who break away from this church can not be a "lawful continuation".
3. The RCN_r have the strong desire to be reformed. Contact with them can be helpful in efforts to maintain the unity of faith with the RCN on the basis of God's Word and the Reformed Confessions.

V. Amendment:

To delete decision 2, but maintain the three grounds

DEFEATED

The proposal amended was put to the vote and **defeated**.

VI. Proposal:

Synod decide to:

1. not acknowledge the RCN_r as "the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands";
2. communicate our response by letter to the RCN_r;
3. maintain official contact with the RCN_r, so that we can work for reconciliation between them and the RCN, on the basis of truth and love.

Grounds:

1. By letter dated 4 February 2005, the Deputies of the RCN_r requested that "we agree they [the RCN_r] are the lawful

- continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.”
 Courtesy requires that Synod respond to such letter.
2. A separation from the church is only lawful once a church can positively be said to be false (see Art 28 & 29 BC). Whilst the RCN_r has made this declaration regarding the RCN, Synod does not concur with this judgment.
 3. In an effort to strive for the unity of the church in the Netherlands, we should maintain contact with the RCN_r.

DEFEATED

EVENING SESSION
Tuesday, 23 June 2009

Article 73 - Reopening

The chairman invites all present to sing Psalm 16:1,2.

Article 74 - Response to RCN Delegates

Rev. Veldman responds to the address of the RCN delegates (ref. Appendix 1i).

The chairman thanks him for his response.

Article 75 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored)

I. Materials

- 8s – FRC Darling Downs Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report
- 8t – Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 190509 declining invitation
- 8v – FRC Albany Overture re Deputies for Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) report
- 8y – FRC Byford Overture re Deputies reports RCNZ, RCN and RCN_r
- 8cc - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored) letter 290409 declining invitation
- 12b.vi – Majority Report of Deputies
- 12b.vii – Minority Report of Deputies
- 12b.viii – General Report on visit to RCN including RCN_r

II. Proposal

1. Not to accept the RCN_r request to acknowledge them as sister churches.
2. To acknowledge the RCN_r desire to remain reformed.

3. To beseech the Lord by His grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions between the RCN and RCN_r.
4. To thank the deputies for their work and mandate new deputies to:
 - a. Remain informed about developments in the RCN_r,
 - b. Continue contact with the RCN_r with a view to encouraging them to discuss the issues and struggles of concern with the RCN in humility and love.

Grounds:

1. Synod 2009 has already decided to continue the FRCA's sister church relationship with the RCN.
2. Synod 2009 maintains the position of Synod 2006: "not being able to recognise them as the continuing RCN means that we cannot enter sister relations with them" (Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.4).
3. Synod 2009 maintains the position of Synod 2006: "We hear in the voice of the brothers of the RCN_r a strong desire to remain reformed" (Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.5.a).
4. It is a serious matter to separate and may never be done hastily nor without exhausting every effort to maintain the unity of the faith. The injunction to remain one in the Lord (e.g. John 17 and Eph 4), sometimes even when serious problems arose as in Corinth, can be read repetitively in the Bible. It is very difficult for the FRCA to determine whether all efforts to maintain the unity have been exhausted, realising that there are events at the synodical level as well as at the local church level that influence the decision to separate. Our judgment is therefore limited by these circumstances.

III. Amendment 1:

- a) Amend decision 4b to read:

Continue contact and encourage the RCN_r to discuss the issues and struggles of concern with the RCN in humility and love.
- b) To amend ground 4 to read:
 4. It is a serious matter to separate and may never be done hastily nor without exhausting every effort to maintain the unity of the faith. The injunction to remain one in the Lord (e.g. John 17 and Eph 4), sometimes even when serious problems arose as in

Corinth, can be read repetitively in the Bible. The encouragements to discuss the issues and struggles need to continue because it is very difficult for the FRCA to determine whether all efforts to maintain the unity have been exhausted.

Ground:

Ground 4b is not a ground under decision 4b.

ADOPTED

IV. Amendment 2

to change ground 2 to read:

Synod 2009 maintains the position of Synod 2006: “not being able to recognise them (at that time [Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.3]) as the continuing RCN means that we cannot enter sister relations with them” (Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.4).

ADOPTED

The proposal as amended is put to the vote and **adopted**.

V. Final Text of the Decision

1. Not to accept the RCN^r request to acknowledge them as sister churches.
2. To acknowledge the RCN^r desire to remain reformed.
3. To beseech the Lord by His grace and blessings to heal the ecclesiastical divisions between the RCN and RCN^r.
4. To thank the deputies for their work and mandate new deputies to:
 - a. Remain informed about developments in the RCN^r,
 - b. Continue contact and encourage the RCN^r to discuss the issues and struggles of concern with the RCN in humility and love.

Grounds:

1. Synod 2009 has already decided to continue the FRCA’s sister church relationship with the RCN.
2. Synod 2009 maintains the position of Synod 2006: “not being able to recognise them (at that time [Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.3]) as the continuing RCN means that we cannot enter sister relations with them” (Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.4).

3. Synod 2009 maintains the position of Synod 2006: “We hear in the voice of the brothers of the RCN^r a strong desire to remain reformed” (Synod 2006 Acts 92.III.5.a).
4. It is a serious matter to separate and may never be done hastily nor without exhausting every effort to maintain the unity of the faith. The injunction to remain one in the Lord (e.g. John 17 and Eph 4), sometimes even when serious problems arose as in Corinth, can be read repetitively in the Bible. The encouragements to discuss the issues and struggles need to continue because it is very difficult for the FRC^A to determine whether all efforts to maintain the unity have been exhausted.

ADOPTED

Article 76 - Synod Archives and Library

I. Materials

- 12k - Deputies Inspection Archives and Library from FRC Byford
- 12l - Deputies Synod Archives and Library

FRC Byford reports that the Synod archives and library have been inspected and are complete and in good order. The Archivist and Librarian of Synod, sr. A. Hordyk, reports that the Archives of Synod are being maintained in accordance with the ‘Rules for the Archivist’ as outlined in the Rules for Synod.

II. Proposal

To accept the report on the Archives and Library of Synod and to thank sr. A Hordyk for diligently maintaining the records of Synod.

Grounds:

The Archivist and Librarian of Synod report that the Archives of Synod are being maintained in accordance with the ‘Rules for the Archivist’ as outlined in the Rules for Synod.

ADOPTED

III. Proposal

To thank the deputies for completing the inspection of the Archives and Library of Synod and accept their report on the matter, and to discharge deputies.

Grounds:

The inspection reveals that the Synod archives and library are complete and in good order.

ADOPTED

Article 77 - Days of Prayer

I. Material:

12i – Deputies Report for ‘Days of Prayer’

II. Proposal:

To thank the Church at Launceston for their work as deputies for ‘Days of Prayer’ and accept their report as the completion of the mandate, and to discharge deputies.

Grounds:

The deputies have carried out their duties in accordance with Article 66 of the Church Order. Their report notes that a national Day of Prayer was proclaimed for Sunday 15th February 2009, in view of the Victorian bushfire disaster of February 2009.

ADOPTED

Article 78 - Deputies Report for Church Order

I. Material:

12h – Deputies Report for Church Order

II. Proposal:

1. To thank the deputies for Church Order and accept their recommendation to publish the collated decisions of Synod regarding the Church Order, online, on the official web page of the FRCA, rather than in a printed format, and to discharge deputies.
2. To mandate the deputies for Church Order to:
 1. continue the work of the late Rev. G. VanRongen in collating the decisions of Synod as they relate to articles of the Church Order.

2. publish these decisions on the official web page of the FRCA.
3. notify the churches of any changes when these decisions are updated.

Grounds:

1. Providing an online version of the decisions of Synod allows for easy excess to the information for the members of the FRCA, ease of updating the information by the Deputies and still allows for the document to be printed and made available to those without Internet accessibility.
2. The recommendation of maintaining an on-line version of this document is consistent with the appointment of this deputyship to provide the churches "easy access to synodical decisions" (c.f. Acts of Synod West Kelmscott, Art 25 Ground a.). Additionally, discretion was provided to the deputies to determine 'the best format in which to publish' the decisions of Synod regarding the Church Order (c.f. Acts of Synod West Kelmscott, Article 25 Ground d.).
3. Providing a new mandate for the Deputies for Church Order allows the work of the late Rev. G. VanRongen to continue for the benefit and edification of the churches.

ADOPTED

Article 79 - Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961

I. Material:

12g – Report of Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961

II. Recommendation of Deputies:

To appoint new deputies officially designated as the Nominating Authorities to discharge duties under the Marriage Act 1961.

III. Proposal:

1. To thank the Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961 for having completed their mandate and for their report, and to discharge deputies.
2. To appoint new Deputies officially designated as the Nominating Authorities to discharge Deputies under the Marriage Act 1961.

Grounds:

1. It is evident from the report of Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961 that the deputies have carried out their task in accordance with the mandate of Synod West Kelmscott 2006.

2. It is necessary to re-appoint duties to continue this work.

ADOPTED

Article 80 - Overture Regarding Publication of the Acts

I. Material

8c - FRC Mt Nasura Overture re Synod Acts publication time delays

Mount Nasura requests Synod to take the necessary measures to ensure that for this and future Synods, the period for publication of the printed Synod Acts does not exceed six months.

II. Proposal:

To deny the overture of Mount Nasura.

Grounds:

1. Mt Nasura does not specify what the "necessary measures" are.
2. While Synod can set guidelines for the publication of the Acts, it cannot "ensure" that such guidelines are followed, since its authority only lasts for the duration of the session of Synod.

DEFEATED

III. Proposal to Amend Rules for Synod:

To insert the following words after the following sentence in Rule 3.2:

At the conclusion of Synod he shall be responsible for printing and distributing these Acts and have them published within six (6) months of the close of Synod.

Grounds:

Mt Nasura requests it.

ADOPTED

Article 81 - Farewell Delegates RCNr

P Drijfhout gives a farewell address on behalf of the RCNr. The chairman thanks him for his address.

Article 82 - Adjournment

P Posthuma invites all present to sing Psalm 33:1,3,6 and leads in prayer. The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION **Wednesday, 24 June 2009**

Article 83 - Reopening

W Pleiter invites all present to sing Ps 146:1,2,3, reads Ps 146, and leads in prayer.

Article 84 - Adoption of the Acts

Articles 64-72 are amended and adopted by Synod.

Article 85 - Synod Treasury

I. Material:

12j - Report Deputies Synod Treasury

II. Proposal:

That Synod decides to:

1. Accept the Synod Treasurer's Financial Report which comprises a Report, Statement of Receipts and Statement of Expenditure for 12 April 2006 to 31 March 2009.
2. Accept the report of the Auditor for Synod Treasury, thank the Free Reformed Church of Kelmscott as Auditor and discharge them from their mandate.
3. Suggest to the churches to put forward a proposal to amend the Rules for Synod to incorporate relevant aspects put forward by the Deputies for Synod Treasury in their proposed *Synod Treasury Rules and Guidelines to Delegates and Deputies*. A draft proposal for amendment is provided (refer Appendix 3o).
4. Set the rate for reimbursement of motor vehicle travel at 41 cents per kilometre.
5. Set the rate for reimbursement of loss of income at \$195 per day.
6. Adopt the 2009-2012 Budget as amended by Synod.
7. Adopt the cost sharing arrangement for the churches as amended by Synod.
8. Thank the Treasurer and the deputies for Synod Treasury for

the work they have done, and discharge them from their mandate.

ADOPTED

Article 86 - Convening Church for Next Synod

Synod appoints FRC Armadale as convening church for Synod 2012, to be held July 2012, DV.

Article 87 - Appeal Rev. Bosch Re Classis North 20 February 2009

Synod goes into closed session.

I. Material:

8ff - Appeal Rev Bosch Re Classis North

Appeal from Rev. C. Bosch re: the decision of Classis North (Feb. 20, 2009) that denied his request to 'as yet investigate and rectify what [he was] convinced was a miscarriage of justice.'

Classis North (Feb. 20, 2009) decided not to grant the request on the following grounds:

1. The appellant has not shown that the family was judged rashly and unheard. Instead the ward elders did visit the family.
2. Since the alleged miscarriage of justice took place more than 15 years ago, it is difficult to establish what happened.
3. If injustice has been done, there does come a time when we must leave it in the hands of the Lord.

II. Proposal Re Admissibility:

Synod decide to declare this appeal as admissible on the following ground:

1. it follows the process required in Article 31, Church Order.

ADOPTED

Article 88 - Farewell of PCK Delegate

Synod goes into open session.

Prof. H-M Yoo gives a farewell address to Synod on behalf of the PCK. The chairman responds with words of appreciation for the relationship the FRCA enjoys with the PCK.

Article 89 - Appeal Rev. Bosch Re Classis North 20 February 2009

Synod goes into closed session.

I. Material:

8ff - Appeal Rev Bosch Re Classis North

II. Proposal:

Not to uphold the appeal in which Rev Bosch asks Synod to investigate and rectify what he is convinced was a miscarriage of justice, that "the family" was judged rashly and unheard by the Classis Church.

Grounds:

1. There is no evidence presented that "the family" was judged rashly and unheard. At the time when this incident took place, it was customary that an appellant submit their appeal to the Classis Church. In this appeal, the appellant was required to thoroughly present its case. The Classis church was under no obligation to give the appellants a personal audience.
2. It was also customary at that time for the consistory (whose action or decision was being appealed) to either send a delegation of elders to the Classis church to present its case, or to send a letter with the same intent. The consistory's presentation would be dealt with in closed session, which means that the appellant would not be privy to the consistory's presentation.
3. It is not known how the original appellant further pursued the matter. Whilst Rev Bosch mentions an appeal to the Second Appeal Church, he does not interact with its decision. Interaction with this decision is crucial in deciding whether justice was done.

ADOPTED

Article 90 - Deputies for Synod venue and infrastructure Coordination

Proposal:

1. To thank the Deputies and discharge them.

2. To appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. provide and operate an audiovisual system which includes the ability for delegates and audience to follow the discussion clearly;
 - b. provide and maintain a computer system for delegates which includes but is not limited to:
 - i. central data storage
 - ii. convenient printing capability;
 - iii. secure internal email facilities;
 - iv. data backup;
 - c. liaise with convening committees and coordinate the audio-visual/computer matters of the Synod venue preparations;
 - d. be present and able to assist at all Synod sessions;
 - e. provide full computer and sound support;
 - f. provide a general logistical support role during Synod for delegates.
3. To make allowance on the budget for one deputy to attend the next Synod.

Grounds:

1. Synod must be able to do its work smoothly through the provision of technical equipment that allows:
 - a. delegates must be able to clearly understand each other;
 - b. the audience to be able to follow the discussion;
 - c. flexibility to expand as the number of delegates changes;
 - d. a computer system that can service Synod with:
 - i. email facilities
 - ii. central storage so that all delegates can access documents/reports they require;
 - iii. printing service to print documents and reports;
 - iv. central backup system.
2. This role has been of great benefit in enhancing the smooth preparation and operation of Synod.

ADOPTED

Article 91 - Appointments

General Secretary Deputy

Br JL VanBurgel

Assistant General Secretary: Br J (Jack) den Boer

The duties of the general secretary deputy are to:

- take care of the central post office box
- distribute the mail
- be responsible for the website of the FRCA
- acknowledge correspondence not applicable to deputies, and if necessary to pass it on to the churches.
- collate all deputies reports (apart from that of the Treasurer) and have them printed in a bound format similar to that for the Acts. Deputies reports are to be submitted in an appropriate format six months prior to the next Synod so that they can be printed and distributed to the churches as per the Rules of Synod.

Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches (Canada, Netherlands, Korea, South Africa)

Rev PKA de Boer
Br W Pleiter
Br W Spyker
Br W Vanderven
Rev A Veldman (convenor)
Br GB Veenendaal

alternate: Rev C Vermeulen

RCNZ

Rev JGR Kroeze
Br JL VanBurgel (convenor)

alternate: Rev R Eikelboom

Indonesia

Br B Bosveld
Br E Heerema
Br H Swarts
Rev A van Delden
Rev W van der Jagt (convenor)

alternate: Br P van Dyke

Brazil

Rev JGR Kroeze (convenor)
Rev R Eikelboom

alternate: Br J (John) Wielstra

Australian Book of Praise

Rev J Smith (convenor)
Br A (Aart) Plug
Br H (Hans) Schoof
Br A (Andrew) Vermeulen

Training for the Ministry

Br R Heerema
Br M Hoogerdijk
Rev E Rupke (convenor)
Br J (Jim) van der Plas

alternate: Br B (Bruce) Huizinga

Deputies for Indexing Synod Decisions

Br J (Jelte) Numan (convenor)
Rev R Eikelboom

Nominating Authorities

Br T (Tim) Houweling (convenor)
Br H Faas

Deputies for Synod Venue and Infrastructure

Br E (Eric) 't Hart
Br A (Alan) van der Wal

Deputies re Art 48&76 of the Church Order

Rev PKA de Boer (Classis North)
Rev A Veldman (Classis North)
Rev W van der Jagt (Classis South)
Rev A van Delden (Classis South)

alternates: Rev E Rupke, Rev J Smith

Treasurer

Br E Eikelboom

alternate: Br D Bonker

Website Assistant

Br D Veltkamp

Deputies for Article 66 of the Church Order (Days of Prayer)

The Church of Launceston

Deputies for auditing the books for Deputies for Articles 17 and 18 of the Church Order

The Church of Mount Nasura

Archives and Library of Synods

The Church of Mount Nasura

Inspection of Archives and Library

The Church of Byford

Auditors for Synod Treasury

The Church of Kelmscott

ADOPTED

Article 92 - Censure according to Article 47 Church Order

The chairman states that there is no need for censure in this sitting of Synod.

Article 93 - Personal Questions

No one has any questions.

EVENING SESSION
Wednesday, 24 June 2009

Article 94 - Reopening

The chairman invites all present to sing Psalm 18:1,10.

Article 95 - Adoption of the Acts

Articles 73-93 of the Acts are amended and adopted.

Article 96 - Adoption of the Press Release

The press release is amended and adopted.

Article 97 - Farewell Delegates RCN

J Bronsema delivers his farewell address on behalf of the RCN, then invites all present to sing Ps 67:1. The chairman thanks him for his words.

Article 98 - Farewell Delegate RCNZ

Rev P Archbald delivers his farewell address on behalf of the RCNZ. The chairman thanks him for his words.

Article 99 - Closing Address

The chairman delivers his closing address (refer Appendix 1j).

Article 100 - Closing

The vice chairman thanks the chairman for the good and brotherly way that he chaired Synod. He then invites all present to sing Hy 46:1,2, and then leads in closing prayer. The chairman declares the 24th Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia closed.