

ACTS OF THE 2015 SYNOD

of the

**FREE REFORMED CHURCHES
OF AUSTRALIA**

BALDIVIS, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

22 June to 1 July 2015



Back row: Rev J Plug (RCN), Br D Veltkamp, Br S Dethan (GGRC), Dr K H Kwon (KPCK), Rev F Tipa Kaya (GGRI), Br A van der Net (GKN), Br G van der Wal, Br L Y Hoong (FERC of Singapore), Br O Bouwman (CanRC), Br J van Laar (CanRC).

Middle row: Rev L deVos (RCNZ), Rev P Archbald (RCNZ), Rev A van Delden, Br R Fokkema, Rev J Kroeze, Rev RD Anderson, Rev D Poppe, Br H Hamelink, Br G Groenewold, Rev H Alkema, Br H Moes (FRCSA).

Front row: Br GJ Kleyn, Br H Olde, Br P Witten, Rev C Vermeulen, Rev E Rupke, Rev S 't Hart, Br D Bonker, Br H Gunnink, Rev D Song (Jayoo RCK), Pastor Nam Tuck Chong (FERC of Singapore).

Absent: Br J de Jong (RCN).



Moderamen:

Br D Bonker (First Clerk), Rev E Rupke (Vice Chairman),
Rev S 't Hart (Chairman), Rev C Vermeulen (Second Clerk).

GLOSSARY OF ECCLESIASTICAL ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Belgic Confession
BoP	Book of Praise
CanRC	Canadian Reformed Churches
CO	Church Order
DGK	De Gereformeerde Kerken (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored))
ESV	English Standard Version
FERC	First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore
FRC	Free Reformed Church
FRCA	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRCSA	Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
GGRC	Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvinis
GGRI	Gereja-Gereja Reformasi de Indonesia
GKN	Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
LRCA	Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford
NGK	Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken
KPCK	Kosin Presbyterian Churches in Korea
RCN	Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
RCNZ	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
URCNA	United Reformed Churches of North America

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EVENING SESSION
Monday 22 June 2015

Article 1 - Opening of Synod by Convening Church of FRC Baldivis

Synod is convened in the Baldivis church building. The Chairman of consistory, Rev S 't Hart, on behalf of the convening church of Baldivis invites all present to stand and sing Psalm 122:1-3, followed by the profession of their faith by singing Hymn 1. He then leads in opening prayer.

Rev 't Hart reads Ephesians 4:1-16 and meditates on verse 3 (refer Appendix 1a) and invites all present to sing Hymn 49:1-4. He then prays to God for His blessing over the Synod.

Rev 't Hart then speaks his opening address and declares Synod opened. Psalm 133:1 and 2 is sung, after which the delegates are invited to the Synod table.

Article 2 - Examination of Credentials

The three classes had previously submitted the credentials. The Chairman of Baldivis advises that the consistory had already examined all the credentials and were satisfied with them. The Chairman of Baldivis welcomes the following delegates from Classis North, Classis Central and Classis South West:

Classis North

Rev J Kroeze
Rev D Poppe
Rev E Rupke
Elder D Veltkamp
Elder H Hamelink
Elder G J Kleyn

Classis Central

Rev C Vermeulen
Rev R D Anderson
Rev A van Delden
Elder H Gunnink
Elder D Bonker
Elder G Groenewold

Classis Southwest

Rev H Alkema

Rev S 't Hart

Elder H Olde

Elder G van der Wal

Elder P Witten

Elder R Fokkema

Article 3 - Election of Officers

The following officers are elected:

Chairman:	Reverend S 't Hart
Vice Chairman:	Reverend E Rupke
First Clerk:	Elder D Bonker
Second Clerk:	Reverend C Vermeulen

Article 4 - Overseas Delegates

The Chairman advises that, as not all the overseas delegates are as yet present, he will invite the overseas delegates to sit at tables at the commencement of Synod the following day.

Article 5 - Constitution of Synod

The Chairman, Rev S 't Hart, declares Synod duly constituted.

Article 6 - Delegates Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity

The Chairman asks delegates to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

All delegates rise.

Article 7 - Agenda

A bound copy of the Agenda is tabled.

Article 8 - Administrative Assistant

All delegates agree to the appointment of Sr K van Duyn as administrative assistant for Synod 2015.

Article 9 - Adjournment

Following some housekeeping matters, the Chairman requests all present to sing Hymn 63 and the Vice-Chairman, Rev E Rupke, leads in closing prayer. The Chairman adjourns the Synod meeting to 9.00 am on Tuesday 23 June 2015.

MORNING SESSION

Tuesday 23 June 2015

Article 10 - Reopening

Rev H Alkema invites those present to sing Psalm 121:1. He reads Hebrews 4:14-16 and, followed by a short meditation, leads in prayer. He invites all present to sing Hymn 42:1 and 6.

The Chairman declares the meeting open.

Article 11 - Agenda

The final draft agenda is presented.

Delegate attendance

The FRC West Albany wrote a letter to the Synod advising the reasons why they did not wish to allow Rev R Pot to attend the Synod. Discussion is held regarding whether it is according to the rules that a delegate not attend on the grounds provided by the FRC West Albany.

It is agreed that the letter be received and accepted with regret and a complaint was raised by a delegate but the item not be placed on the agenda.

Additional Items to be placed on the Synod Agenda

It is agreed that the following items are to be added to the Synod agenda:

- Audit from FRC Kelmscott
- Audit of Needy Churches South Africa
- Article 48 FRC Mt Nasura – appendix not included with original proposal

Items not to be included on the Synod Agenda

It is proposed that the supplementary report (spring letter) from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, received on 22 June 2015, will not be included on the Synod agenda due to its lateness.

ADOPTED

Article 12 - Adoption of Agenda

The final agenda is duly adopted.

1. Opening by the Convening Church – Baldivis
2. Signing of 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. Letter from FRC of Albany
 - i. Sister Church relationship with Presbyterian Church of Korea
 - b. Letter from FRC of Armadale
 - i. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Netherlands restored (DGK)

- c. Letter from FRC of Baldivis
 - i. Overture regarding training for the Ministry
 - ii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Netherlands
 - iii. Overture regarding Book of Praise
- d. Letter from FRC of Busselton
 - i. Appeal, Article 11 Classis South West (October 2013)
- e. Letter from FRC of Byford
 - i. Pulpit exchange proposal for Classis Central
 - ii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches of Netherlands
 - iii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches of Netherlands – DGK and GKN
 - iv. Overture regarding Book of Praise
- f. Letter from FRC of Darling Downs
 - i. Overture regarding Book of Praise
 - ii. Overture regarding Sister Church relations with RCNZ
- g. Letter from FRC of Kelmscott
 - i. Overture regarding Book of Praise
 - ii. Overture regarding Sister Church relations with RCNZ
 - iii. Overture regarding Training for the Ministry
 - iv. Overture regarding Article 48
 - v. Overture regarding FERC of Singapore
 - vi. Overture regarding Deputies Sister Churches
 - vii. Proposal to Synod regarding Appeals
- h. Letter from FRC of Launceston
 - i. Evaluation of Bible Translation
- i. Letter from FRC of Melville
 - i. Proposal for adoption of ESV Bible for use in worship services
- j. Letter from FRC of Mount Nasura
 - i. Overture regarding Book of Praise

- ii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in New Zealand
 - iii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Netherlands
 - iv. Additional information Reformed Churches in Netherlands
 - v. Overture regarding Bible Translations
 - vi. Overture regarding Training for the Ministry
 - vii. Overture regarding Article 48 of Church Order
 - viii. Outline of CTRS discussion paper
- k. Letter from FRC of Mundijong
 - i. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Netherlands
- l. Letter from FRC of Rockingham
 - i. Proposed revision and supplement to the recommendations to Deputies – Training for the Ministry
- m. Letter from FRC of Southern River
 - i. Proposal CRTS levy (training for the Ministry) North America
 - ii. Overture Training for the Ministry Mandate
- n. Letter from FRC of West Albany
 - i. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Netherlands
 - ii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Indonesia
 - iii. Overture regarding Reformed Churches in Brazil
 - iv. Overture regarding Article 48 of Church Order
- o. Letter from Deputies for Contact with the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore
 - i. FERC of Singapore delegates request to address Synod

- p. Letter regarding Appeal or Objection to a retired Minister delegated to Synod
- q. Letter regarding Classis Central Alternative Br G Groenewold
- 9. Instructions
- 10. Reports by Classes
 - a. Classis North
 - i. Credentials Delegates to Synod
 - ii. Submissions for judgement of Synod
 - i) Overture regarding Establishing Theological Training in Australia
 - ii) Overture regarding Fraternal contact with United Reformed Churches of North America
 - b. Classis Central
 - i. Credentials Delegates to Synod
 - ii. Submissions for judgement of Synod
 - i) Overture regarding Book of Praise
 - ii) Proposal regarding Pulpit Exchange
 - c. Classis South West
 - i. Credentials Delegates to Synod
 - ii. Submissions for judgement of Synod
 - i) Overture regarding Changing Article 45 Church Order
 - ii) Overture regarding Book of Praise
 - iii) Overture regarding contact with URNCA
- 11. Reports of Deputies and discharge of Deputies
 - 1. General Secretary's Report
 - 2. Deputies for Sister Church Relations
 - 2.1. Free Reformed Churches of South Africa
 - 2.2. Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)
 - 2.3. Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea
 - 2.4. Reformed Churches in Netherlands restored (DGK) / Reformed Churches Netherlands (GKN)

- 2.5. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN)
3. Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches – Indonesia
4. Deputies: Relations Reformed Churches of Brazil
5. Deputies Contact First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore (FERC of Singapore)
6. Deputies: Relations Reformed Churches of New Zealand
7. Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise
8. Deputies for Training for the Ministry
9. Report on evaluation of ESV and NIV
10. Deputies Article 48
11. Deputies Article 66 Church Order (Days of Prayer)
12. Report On Deputies for Indexing Synod Decisions
13. Report On Archives And Library Of Synod
14. Deputies Auditing books art 17, 18 the Church of Mt Nasura
15. Deputies re: Marriage Act 1961
12. Audit of the books of the Treasurer and discharge of Treasurer
 - 12.1 Audit Report – Synod Treasurer from Church of Kelmscott
 - 12.2 Audit Report – Needy Churches South Africa
13. Calculation of the percentages of the churches' share of Synod costs
14. Appointment of Deputies
15. Appointment of Convening Church, place and date next Synod
16. Personal Questions
17. Adoption of the Acts
18. Approval of Press Release
19. Censure according to Article 47 of the Church Order
20. Closing of Synod

Article 13 - Homepage

A daily agenda and the Acts to be placed on the internet once adopted.

ADOPTED

Article 14 - Overseas Delegates

The letters of credentials for the following visitors are read:

Canadian Reformed Churches	Br O Bouwman Br J vanLaar
Reformed Churches of New Zealand	Rev P Archbald Rev L de Vos
First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore	Pastor Chong Nam Tuck Br Leong Yew Hoong
Free Reformed Churches of South Africa	Br J Moes
Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI)	Rev F Tipa Kaya
Gereja Geraja Reformasi Calvinis (GGRC)	Br S Dethan
Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored)	Br A van der Net

The Chairman welcomes the overseas visitors and requests that the delegates be seated at the tables specified for overseas delegates.

Following a discussion, the overseas visitors are accorded privileges as follows:

Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC), Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (RCN), Free Reformed Churches of South Africa (FRCSA) and the Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI) are afforded privileges under 6.1 of the Rules for Synod.

Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ), First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore (FERC of Singapore), Gereja Geraja Reformasi Calvinis (GGRC) are afforded privileges under 6.2 of the Rules of Synod.

After discussion, it is agreed that the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Restored) (DGK) be afforded privileges under 6.2 of the Rules of Synod.

Jayoo (Free) Reformed Church in Korea is afforded privileges under 6.4 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 15 - Overseas Delegates

The Chairman requests that the overseas delegates all rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. All the delegates rise.

Article 16 - Overseas Addresses

The Chairman proposes a schedule for the addresses from and responses to the overseas delegates.

Article 17 - 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 18 - Synod Advisory Committee and Schedule

The moderamen propose nominations for Advisory Committees in the event that the recommendations of the deputies do not find general support of the majority. A schedule for dealing with the items on Synod's agenda is circulated and the Chairman explains the schedule.

ADOPTED

Article 19 - Synod Rules

Pursuant to the Rules of Synod, it is requested that a discussion be held first in relation to deputies' reports in rounds to get an understanding of where everyone sits on the issue.

Article 20 - Appeal or Objection to a Retired Minister Delegated to Synod

I. Material

Agenda Item 8(p) – Letter regarding Appeal or Objection to a retired Minister delegated to Synod.

II. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

III. Recommendation

To deny the appeal.

Grounds

1. A retired minister retains his title “minister of the word” and his official bond with the church he served last.
2. The minister in question, was, in fact, an actively serving minister at the time he was delegated.

ADOPTED

Article 21 - Bible Translation (Refer Art 24)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.9 – Deputies Report on Evaluation of ESV and NIV.

Agenda Item 8(h)(i) – Letter from FRC Launceston regarding Evaluation of Bible Translation.

Agenda Item 8(i)(i) – Letter from FRC Melville regarding Proposal for adoption of ESV Bible for use in worship services.

Agenda Item 8(j)(v) – Letter from FRC Mt Nasura regarding Overture regarding Bible Translation.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

Article 22 - Adjournment

Rev P Archbald reads Mark 9:9-14, and following a short meditation, leads the Synod in prayer. He then asks all present to sing Psalm 84:1.

Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION Tuesday 23 June 2015

Article 23 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens the afternoon session of Synod.

Article 24 - Bible Translation (Refer Art 21)

I. Proposal

Delete Ground 2.

ADOPTED

II. Proposal

Delete Ground 3.

ADOPTED

III. Proposal

Delete Ground 4.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To amend Ground 4 to read "Synod may recommend one or more Bible translations for use in the worship

service, but leaves the final choice of one of them to the local churches (ref. page 32 of Acts Synod Byford 1994, art. 55, ground 3)."

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To amend Proposal 1 to read "To recommend the English Standard Version for use in the church worship services."

DEFEATED

VI. Proposal

To include the words "To phase out the use of the NIV 1984 by July 2018" to Proposal 3.

Grounds

The continued use of the NIV 1984 may cause confusion, and, inadvertently, lead to the 2011 version being used in error.

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To amend Proposal 1 to read "To recommend that the English Standard Version as suitable for use in the church worship services."

DEFEATED

VIII. Proposal

1. To acknowledge that the English Standard Version (ESV) is suitable for use in the church worship services.
2. To leave it in the freedom of the churches to use the NKJV or ESV in the church worship services.
3. To disallow the use of the NIV 2011 and to phase out the use of the NIV 1984 by July 2018.

Grounds

1. The deputy report and the supporting material from the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) Committee for Bible Translation (CBT) - as per the appendix - shows that the ESV is a reliable, readable, and understandable translation, and therefore suitable for use in the church worship services, and wider study and reading.
2. Synod may recommend one or more Bible translations for use in the church worship services, but leaves the final choice of one of them to the local churches (ref. page 32 of Acts Synod Byford 1994, art. 55, ground 3).
3. The deputies' report has clearly demonstrated that the NIV 2011 is unsuitable for use in the churches on theological grounds.
4. The continued use of the NIV 1984 may cause confusion, and, inadvertently, lead to the 2011 version being used in error.

ADOPTED

Article 25 - Book of Praise (Refer Art 29, 61, 65, 76)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11(7) – Report of Deputies for an Australian Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 10(b)(ii)(i) – Overture by Classis Central regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 10(c)(ii) – Overture by Classis Southwest regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 8(c)(iii) – Overture by FRC Baldivis regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 8(e)(iv) – Overture by FRC Byford regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 8(f)(i) – Overture by FRC Darling Downs regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 8(g)(i) – Overture by FRC Kelmscott regarding Book of Praise.

Agenda Item 8(j)(i) – Overture by FRC Mount Nasura regarding Book of Praise.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

III. Proposal

To amend the suggested revised wording to read "if the interest of the churches demands such" (taken from Art 81 of the Church Order).

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To amend the suggested revised wording to read "Resume investigations regarding copyright, printing costs and feasibility of producing an Australian version of

the Book of Praise, if this is deemed desirable or beneficial”.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To amend the second Ground by deleting the material in brackets.

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To delete the words “majority of our Australian” so that it reads “To resume investigations regarding copyright, printing costs and feasibility of producing an Australian Version of the Book of Praise, if the churches deem this desirable or beneficial.”

Grounds

The phrase ‘substantially altered’ is very ambiguous.

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To accept the overture by Classis Central with amendments:

The FRC Armadale requests that Classis Central requests Synod 2015 for a revision of Synod 2009 decision as found in Acts 2009 Art 24 item XI and particularly the wording:

- a. 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.

The suggested revised wording is:

- b. To resume investigations regarding copyright, printing costs and feasibility of producing an Australian Version of the Book of Praise, if the churches deem this desirable or beneficial.

Grounds

1. The existing decision excludes the possibility of the FRCA to improve on the BoP.
2. The phrase "Substantially altered" is very ambiguous.
3. The existing decision excludes and nullifies unjustly, the right of the churches in our bond to make changes by common consent.

ADOPTED

VIII. Proposal

To accept the contents of the proposal of Classis Southwest:

To further investigate the adoption of the 19 additional hymns from the 2010 Authorised Provisional Book of Praise (including changes as made by Synod Carman in 2013), for use within the churches, taking into account the investigations that have already been done.

Grounds

1. Synod Legana 2009 Art 42 decided to invite the churches to scrutinize these hymns because they are a "needed addition". Art 42 Ground 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. Synod Armadale 2012 noted that the additional hymns were not adopted because the churches had not specifically requested them (Art 106 Ground 4). Thus this proposal comes to Synod in the church orderly way from a local church via the route of Classis and so Synod Armadale 2012's ground for not accepting the hymns is no longer applicable.
3. The Canadian Reformed churches have printed a final edition of the Book of Praise, and have taken steps to reduce the addition of more hymns. Thus the fear of significant increases to the hymnal section is no longer warranted.
4. The investigations made concerning these hymns prior to Synod 2012 (Standing Committee CanRC; ad hoc Committee of CanRC and previous deputies Book of Praise FRCA) should be taken into account when further investigating these hymns (including table attached).

5. Synod Legana 2009 Art 42, Ground 3 reads: "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".

ADOPTED

Article 26 - Reformed Churches of Korea

Discussion is held regarding whether the Rules of Synod allow a delegate from the Reformed Churches of Korea, Rev DongSup Song, with whom we do not have official contact, to introduce himself and his churches. It is agreed in principle but to leave the final decision with the moderamen.

Article 27 - Adjournment

The Vice-Chairman, Rev E Rupke, closes the session in prayer. Synod adjourns for dinner.

EVENING SESSION **Tuesday 23 June 2015**

Article 28 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod by inviting all present to sing Psalm 91:1. A special welcome is extended to Rev Dr Kyong Ho Kwon from the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea. Dr Kwon is requested to rise to show his agreement to the Three Forms of Unity. He does so. He is accorded privileges of Synod for delegates from sister churches as per 6.1 of the Rules of Synod.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda items for the evening for the benefit of the audience.

Article 29 - Book of Praise (Refer Art 25, 61, 65, 76)

After two rounds of discussion, the proposals on the issue of an Australian version of the Book of Praise are put to an Advisory Committee for further discussion.

Article 30 - Address of Delegates of FERC of Singapore and RCNZ

The Chairman invites Pastor Chong Nam Tuck to present his address on behalf of the First Evangelical Reformed Church in Singapore (refer Appendix 1B).

Rev L de Vos addresses Synod on behalf of the Reformed Church of New Zealand (refer Appendix 1C).

Article 31 - Adjournment

Rev R D Anderson leads the meeting in prayer followed by a request for all present to sing Psalm 43:3. The Chairman adjourns the meeting to 9.00 am on Wednesday morning.

MORNING SESSION
Wednesday 24 June 2015

Article 32 - Reopening

The delegates spend some time having photos taken.

Br D Bonker requests all present to sing Psalm 103:1 and 4 and reads Isaiah 55:1-9. After a short meditation, he leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

The Treasurer's Report, which had not previously been provided to the delegates, is accepted to be added to the agenda.

A special welcome is extended to Rev J Plug of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Rev Plug is requested to stand to acknowledge his agreement to the Three Forms of Unity. He does so. He is granted privileges according to 6.1 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 33 - First Evangelical Reformed Church (FERC) of Singapore (Refer Art 52, 58)

The delegates of the FERC of Singapore are invited to sit at the table with the delegates during the discussion.

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.5 – Deputies Report regarding Contact with the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore.

Agenda Item 8(g)(vi) – Overture from the FRC Kelmscott regarding FERC of Singapore.

Several rounds of discussions were held, specific questions were asked and responses were given by the Singapore delegates. The material was put to a separate advisory Committee to provide advice to Synod.

Article 34 - Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ) (refer Art 38)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.6 – Deputies Report for Relations with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

Agenda Item 8(f)(ii) – Overture from FRC Darling Downs regarding Sister Church relations with RCNZ.

Agenda Item 8(g)(ii) - Overture from FRC Kelmscott regarding Sister Church relations with RCNZ.

Agenda Item 8(j)(ii) - Overture from FRC Mount Nasura regarding Sister Church relations with RCNZ.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

After two rounds of discussion and the opportunity for the New Zealand delegates to answer questions raised by the Synod delegates, the discussion is adjourned.

Article 35 - Adjournment

Pastor Nam Tuck reads Psalm 121. He asks all present to sing Hymn 65:1 after which he leads in prayer.

Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION Wednesday 24 June 2015

Article 36 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 37 - Acts of Synod

After amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 1 to 31 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 38 - Reformed Churches of New Zealand (refer Article 34)

Further discussion was held regarding the deputies report and the overtures received from various churches regarding the RCNZ.

I. Proposal

To amend Recommendation 3 of the deputies report to read “To invite delegates from the RCNZ to attend our next Synod.”

ADOPTED

II. Proposal

To accept Recommendations 1-5, together with the grounds, of the deputies report:

1. Express thankfulness for the faithfulness deputies have observed in the RCNZ and in their decision to discontinue a sister church relationship with the CRCA.
2. To offer sister church relationship to the RCNZ under the established rules, and to accept their offer of a sister church relationship.
3. To invite delegates from the RCNZ to attend our next Synod.
4. To authorise two delegates to visit (if invited) the next Synod of the RCNZ.
5. To discharge deputies and thank them for their work, and to appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
 - a. To convey Synod’s decisions to the RCNZ and provide them with a copy of the Acts as well as the ‘Rules for Sister Church Relations’;
 - b. to continue to monitor the impact of the Ecumenical Fellowship relation of the RCNZ

with the CRCA, and to encourage the RCNZ to be consequential in this relationship in light of the concerns expressed in the report to Synod 2015;

- c. to promote increased familiarisation of the memberships of the RCNZ and FRCA by way of exchange of speakers where opportunity arises as well as exchange of publication of articles;
- d. monitor developments within the RCNZ for mutual benefit according to the established 'Rules for Sister Church Relations' and keep the churches informed;
- e. to report to next Synod along with recommendations.

Grounds

1. The final impediment identified by previous Synods to becoming sisters, being the sister relationship between RCNZ and CRCA, has now been removed.
2. The RCNZ has placed safeguards in place in the new "Rules for Ecumenical Fellowship" in an effort to maintain the purity of the preaching and the sanctity of the Lord's table.
3. The RCNZ is showing in many ways and in many areas to be a faithful church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. For a sister relationship to function in a meaningful way, it is important for the membership to become acquainted.

ADOPTED

III. Proposal

To accept deputies Further Recommendation 5f.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To accept deputies Further Recommendation 5g.

DEFEATED

The Chairman leads the meeting in prayer thanking God and praying for His blessing over the decision made in relation to entering into sister church relationship with the RCNZ.

Article 39 - United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA)

I. Material

10(a)(ii)(i) – Report from Classis North regarding Fraternal contact with United Reformed Churches of North America.

10(c)(ii)(iii) – Report from Classis Southwest regarding contact with United Reformed Churches of North America.

II. Admissibility

The items are both declared admissible.

III. Proposal

To proceed with the proposal of Classis Southwest:

That Synod mandates deputies for relations with churches abroad to provide the URCNA with information about our churches in response to their letter to us, to take up contact with them, and to report to the next Synod with:

- a. information about these churches;
- b. a recommendation about how to proceed.

Grounds

1. The URCNA are an English-speaking confessionally-Reformed federation of churches with a history, principles, and practices similar to our own.
2. Our sister churches in Canada are in a close relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship with these churches and pursuing federative unity with them. The CanRC Coordinators of the Committee for Church Unity strongly encourage us to establish this contact, noting that "it will also jibe wonderfully with the pursuit of ecclesiastical unity in which the CanRC and URCNA are engaged."
3. There are people from the URCNA who visit our churches and members of our churches who visit them.
4. The URCNA produce numerous resources and also have experience in church planting that we could potentially benefit from.

5. The URCNA is involved in mission work in the Asia region, notably the Philippines.
6. Due to the fact that we share a common language and similar culture, should a sister church relationship develop this would mutually benefit our federations in the areas of mission work, the calling of ministers from our respective federations and the use of sermons in our respective services.
7. While Synod 1990 art. 58 decided to concentrate on relations and contact with churches that are geographically closer to us, the above grounds are compelling reasons to pursue this relationship.

ADOPTED

Article 40 - Deputies for Sister Church Relations

I. Material

Agenda Item 11(2) – Report of Deputies for Sister Church Relations.

Agenda Item 8(g)(vi) – Overture from FRC Kelmscott regarding Sister Church Relations.

II. Admissibility

The items are declared admissible.

III. Proposal

Recommendation 1 and Ground 1 of the deputies report be accepted.

ADOPTED

IV. Proposal

Recommendation 2 and Ground 2 of the deputies report be accepted.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

Recommendation 3 and slight grammatical rewording of Ground 3 to be accepted:

Synod decide:

1. That:
 - a. consistories be advised to visually examine declarations as confirmation of their ministerial status and faithfulness when inviting ministers from sister churches to their pulpits;
 - b. advising consistories, upon request, to grant ministers of the Word a declaration as confirmation of their ministerial status and faithfulness when intending to serve on the pulpits of sister churches.
2. That the treasurer be instructed to, as yet, pay the \$1,500.00 expense for the trip to Synod Ede in May 2014.
3. That from now on deputies continue to use the allocation of its funds as a guideline, but be permitted to use its overall budgeted funds as they see fit within possible changing circumstances.

Grounds

1. From previous, as well as this present, deputies' reports to Synod it is evident that the present system of declarations to assure that only faithful ministers in good standing of sister-churches are invited to the pulpits is not functioning. This is an important matter that should be remedied. The proposed change puts the onus on the churches to guard their own pulpits.
2. While recognising that sending a deputy to Synod Ede for a second session is an anomaly, (could not have been foreseen by Synod Armadale) in view of the circumstances, i.e. Synod Ede, dealing with the FRCA (among others) admonitions, Synod endorses the deputies decision to send someone to be present and therefore will not leave the deputies out of pocket.
3. In view of decision 2 above, and with the realisation that there may be unforeseen circumstances where it would be wise for deputies to travel in ways that vary from precise Synod decisions, to grant deputies discretion to allocate funds as they see fit so long as the allocations are kept as a guideline and the expenses remain within budget.

ADOPTED

Article 41 - Pulpit Exchange (Refer Art 44)

I. Material

Agenda Item 10(b)(ii)(ii) – Submission from Classis Central regarding Proposal for Pulpit Exchange.

Agenda Item 8(e)(i) – Letter from FRC Byford regarding Pulpit Exchange Proposal for Classis Central.

II. Admissibility

Agenda Item 10(b)(ii)(ii) is declared admissible.

III. Proposal

To amend Recommendation 2 to read “To take care that in emergencies when no minister is available (e.g. the administration of the sacraments, ordination of office bearers, profession of faith) one of the ministers within the bond is requested to lead that particular church service.”

DEFEATED

Article 42 - Adjournment

Rev C Vermeulen closes the meeting in prayer. The Chairman adjourns the meeting for dinner.

EVENING SESSION **Wednesday 24 June 2015**

Article 43 - Reopening

The Chairman requests all present to sing Psalm 98:1. A special welcome is extended to Br J de Jong from the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Br de Jong is requested to stand to show his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. He does so. He is accorded privileges of Synod for delegates from sister churches as per 6.1 of the Rules of Synod.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda items for the evening for the benefit of the audience and the delegates.

Article 44 - Pulpit Exchange (Refer Art 41)

I. Proposal

To amend Recommendation 2 to read “To organise the regular pulpit exchange between the ministers of the Free Reformed churches in accordance with the decisions of the local churches.”

DEFEATED

II. Proposal

To amend Recommendation 2 to read “To take care that in emergencies when no minister is available (e.g. the administration of the sacraments, ordination of office bearers, profession of faith) one of the ministers within the bond shall be sought to lead that particular church service.”

DEFEATED

III. Proposal

To accept the proposal submitted by Classis Central:

To appoint a Deputy(ship) for Pulpit Supply within the Free Reformed Churches of Australia with the mandate:

1. To organise the regular pulpit exchange between the ministers of the Free Reformed churches in accordance with the arrangements agreed to by the churches;
2. To take care that in emergencies when no minister is available (e.g. the administration of the sacraments, ordination of office bearers, profession of faith) one of the ministers within the

bond is allocated to lead that particular church service;

3. To take care that the vacant churches in the midst of the Free Reformed Churches have pulpit supply for at least the fourth Sunday of the month for the AM and PM church service and where feasible the PM service of the second Sunday of the month;
4. To take new developments into account (e.g. in situations of church planting, duties of ministers as a result of appointments of Synod/Classis) after concurring advice of the Classis; and
5. To report to the next Synod about the activities of the Deputy(ship) and - if necessary - about possibilities and problems involved in this task.

Grounds

1. Scripture urges the churches to be of mutual assistance, e.g. Acts 11: 29f; Acts 15: 22; Acts 16: 9; Eph 4: 3.
2. Scripture tells us that everything in church has to be done 'decently and in good order', e.g. Eph 4: 3; 1 Cor 14: 40.
3. Our Reformed Confessions and Church Order point to the mutual assistance of the local congregations (BC art 27-29; CO art 1).
4. In the history of the Free Reformed Churches the local churches did not give the ministers so called 'free Sundays' on top of their holiday Sundays but diminished the workload of the ministers by organising the regular pulpit exchanges mainly between churches in close geographical proximity.

5. In the history of the churches it was a common thing to have a deputyship for 'vacancies and loving care' (in Dutch 'vacature and liefde beurten').
6. Although at least one Classis has a deputy of pulpit supply it is a matter of common sense to organise the pulpit supply for all the churches in a more general way so that all the churches within the bond of the Free Reformed Churches may share in the benefits of living in a bond of churches.

DEFEATED

Article 45 - Introduction by visitor of the Reformed Churches in Korea

Rev DongSup Song of the Jayoo Reformed Church in Jeonju, Korea is invited to introduce the Reformed Churches in Korea to the Synod (refer Appendix 1E).

Article 46 - Address of Delegate of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 53)

The Chairman invites Rev J Plug to present his address on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (refer Appendix 1F).

Article 47 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 48, 54, 57, 60, 72, 75, 89, 110, 119)

The Chairman requests Rev P K A de Boer, as Deputy for Sister Church Relations, to sit at the table with the delegates to give an outline regarding the work undertaken in relation to the RCN. He is also asked to rise to show his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. He does so. Rev R D Anderson is requested to join Rev de Boer as a Deputy.

Article 48 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 53, 54, 57, 60, 72, 75, 89, 110, 119)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11(2)(2.5) – Deputies for Sister Church Relations Report regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN).

Agenda Item 8(c)(ii) – Overture by FRC Baldivis regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Agenda Item 8(e)(ii) – Overture by FRC Byford regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Agenda Item 8(j)(iii) – Overture by FRC Mount Nasura regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Agenda Item 8(j)(iv) – Additional Information from the FRC Mount Nasura regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Agenda Item 8(k)(i) – Overture from FRC Mundijong regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Agenda Item 8(n)(i) – Overture from FRC West Albany regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

After the deputies report and overtures are tabled, the Chairman leads the Synod in prayer.

Article 49 - Response to address of Delegate of RCNZ

The Chairman gives Rev J Kroeze the opportunity to respond to the address of Rev L de Vos of the Reformed Churches in New Zealand (refer Appendix 1G).

Article 50 - Adjournment

Rev J Kroeze asks all present to sing Psalm 16:1 and 3 and leads the meeting in prayer. The Chairman adjourns the meeting to 9.00 am on Thursday morning.

MORNING SESSION Thursday 25 June 2015

Article 51 - Reopening

Br G Groenewold requests all present to sing Hymn 52:1 and reads Revelation 3:7-13 and 11:1-8. After a short meditation, he leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

Article 52 - First Evangelical Reformed Church (FERC) of Singapore (Refer Art 33, 58)

The Advisory Committee presents its proposal after having discussed the matter between them.

I. Proposal

1. Synod recognises the First Evangelical Reformed Church (FERC) of Singapore as a true and faithful church of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Synod extend an offer of a sister church relationship with the FERC of Singapore, according to the adopted rules of the FRCA.
3. Should the FERC of Singapore accept the offer of a sister church relationship, this relationship is to take effect from the date of such written acceptance by the FERC of Singapore.

4. The current deputies be discharged from their appointment, and that Synod appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. Contact the FERC of Singapore with the decision of Synod Baldivis 2015.
 - b. Work through the practical issues that arise from having a sister church relationship with a single church, such as those arising from Rules c and h of our Rules for Exercising Sister Relations.
 - d. Continue contact and oversee the carrying out of the decision of Synod.
 - e. Report to the next Synod the results of their work.

Grounds

1. Deputies have sufficiently demonstrated that the FERC of Singapore shows the marks of the true church of the Lord according to Art 29 of the Belgic Confession.
2. Deputies have shown that there are tangible benefits for both the FERC of Singapore and the FRCA from a sister church relationship.
3. Appointing new deputies will ensure that the decision is followed up and carried out. Furthermore, there needs to be a liaising body between the FRCA and the FERC of Singapore.
4. The existing Rules for Exercising Sister Relations do not prohibit a sister church relationship with a single church.

During the first round of discussion, a notice of intention of a revised motion is given. Also during this round, various aspects are raised and Synod mandates the Advisory Committee to take this away and do further work on this for presentation back to the Synod later in the day.

Article 53 - Address by Second Delegate of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 46)

The Chairman gives Br J de Jong the opportunity to address the Synod (refer Appendix 1H).

Article 54 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 57, 60, 72, 75, 89, 110, 119)

The material submitted is put to the meeting for discussion. A round of discussion is held until lunchtime, but is interrupted due to the lateness.

Article 55 - Adjournment

Br D Bonker leads the meeting in prayer after which Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION
Thursday 25 June 2015

Article 56 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 57 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 60, 72, 75, 89, 110, 119)

The round of discussion interrupted by lunchtime is continued.

The delegates of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) are given the opportunity to respond to the comments made and questions asked by the Synod delegates.

Article 58 - Free Evangelical Reformed Church (FERC) of Singapore (Refer Art 33, 52)

The Advisory Committee put forward a set of proposals for discussion by the Synod. There is a short discussion regarding those proposals.

I. Proposal

That Proposal 4 and Ground 6 be deleted on the grounds that this is not a proposal.

ADOPTED

II. Proposal

To delete 5(e) and add “To request Classis South Central to offer to the FERC of Singapore and co-ordinate with the churches of the FRCA any assistance required and requested by the FERC of Singapore.

Grounds

1. The FERC of Singapore is currently a single congregation which lacks the assistance/fellowship which is enjoyed by a federation.
2. The FRCA is currently geographically the closest sister to the FERC of Singapore.

DEFEATED

III. Proposal

To accept the proposal of the Advisory Committee with the amendments made:

1. Synod recognises the First Evangelical Reformed Church (FERC) of Singapore as a true and faithful church of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Synod extends an offer of a sister church relationship with the FERC of Singapore, according to the adopted rules of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA).
3. Should the FERC of Singapore accept the offer of a sister church relationship, this relationship is to take effect from the date of such written acceptance by the FERC of Singapore.
4. The current deputies be discharged from their appointment, and that Synod appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. Contact the FERC of Singapore with the decision of Synod Baldivis 2015.
 - b. Work through the practical issues that arise from having a sister church relationship with a single church, such as those arising from Rules c and h of our Rules for Exercising Sister Relations.
 - c. Visit the FERC of Singapore two times in the next three years to learn more about them and strengthen our relationship.
 - d. Give timely reports concerning the FERC of Singapore to members of the FRCA.

- e. Offer assistance to the FERC of Singapore where requested and feasible.
- f. Report to the next Synod the results of their work.
- g. Invite delegates from the FERC of Singapore to our next Synod.

Grounds

1. Deputies have sufficiently demonstrated that the FERC of Singapore shows the marks of the true church of the Lord according to Art 29 of the Belgic Confession.
2. Deputies have shown that there are tangible benefits for both the FERC of Singapore and the FRCA from a sister church relationship.
3. Appointing new deputies will ensure that the decision is followed up and carried out. Furthermore, there needs to be a liaising body between the FRCA and the FERC of Singapore.
4. The existing Rules for Exercising Sister Relations do not prohibit a sister church relationship with a single church.
5. Since the FERC of Singapore has no official bond with another church they may require assistance from time to time and could benefit from the resources the Lord has given us.

ADOPTED

Article 59 - Response to address of Delegates of the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore

The Chairman requests Rev E Rupke to respond to the address of the delegates of the FERC of Singapore. Pastor Nam Tuck from the FERC of Singapore is then given the opportunity to respond.

Rev E Rupke prays for God's guidance on the decision made and blessings on the relationship with the FERC of Singapore which has been extended.

Article 60 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 72, 75, 89, 110, 119)

The matter is put to a further two rounds of discussion, together with responses from the RCN delegates.

After the discussions, the matter is put to a show of hands to obtain a clear indication from the delegates whether they broadly support either Alternative 1 or 2 of the deputies' report. After the delegates' preference for Alternate 2 is established, the matter is put to an Advisory Committee to prepare further proposals.

The Chairman requests Synod to sing Psalm 139:13 and leads in prayer, asking God for strength to continue to stay true to God's Word.

Article 61 - Book of Praise (Refer Art 25, 29, 65, 76)

The Advisory Committee provides to the delegates a copy of the proposals and grounds they have formulated:

I. Proposal

1. To thank the deputies for their work and discharge them from their duties.
2. To adopt an Australian version of the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise. This version is to consist of:
 - The Psalms and Hymns of the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise minus the 19 unapproved hymns;
 - Changes to the creeds, confessions and liturgical forms as made by the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, as well as the Australian Church Order;
 - References to Scripture reflecting the ESV and thus throughout the BoP no capitalisation of pronouns referring to God.
3. To appoint a standing committee, the Australian Standing Committee of the Book of Praise (ASCBOP) with the mandate to expedite preparation and printing of the Australian version of the Book of Praise in liaison with the Canadian Standing Committee who remain responsible for copyright, licensing and regulative matters. In addition to take account of the matters raised in deputies report item 4.3 (pp.324-25).
4. To request the next Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches to adopt a formal agreement of cooperation between their Standing Committee and the Australian counterpart. This committee would be a co-operative (or joint) committee with Canada's Standing Committee for the BoP (which

is an incorporated body), provide feedback from our Synods and churches to Canada, and also update our Synods and churches with changes made in Canada. Thus it will be possible for future revisions and changes to be jointly addressed.

5. In the event that the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches does not accede to our request as per point four, Synod decides that the Australian Standing Committee (ASCBOP) will take charge of copyright, licensing and regulative matters.

Grounds

- a. The Synod of the CanRC 2013 Art 197 indicate that they welcome close cooperation with Australia.

4.1 To express its regret to the FRCA that due to the circumstances listed above, the degree of cooperation and consultation re: the work on the Book of Praise was limited;

4.2 To instruct the SCBoP to continue contact with the Australian Deputies for the Book of Praise in order to assist the FRCA's pursuit of a possible Australian version of the Book of Praise.

- b. While maintaining a significant similarity with the 2014 Canadian BoP, an Australian version allows our churches to use a BoP that reflects the changes made over the years to the creeds, confessions and liturgical forms as well as the Australian Church Order.
- c. A standing committee would continue to provide our churches with good notice of events as they

unfold in Canada, and also be able to provide Canada with Australia's input.

- d. The majority of churches are in favour of an Australian version of the Canadian Book of Praise.
- e. Copyright is no impediment to producing an Australian version of the Canadian Book of Praise (deputies report, p.326).
- f. With respect to feasibility there is no signal that the cost to church members would increase if an Australian version of the Canadian Book of Praise was produced.

The proposals are put to a round of discussion.

Article 62 - Adjournment

Br O Bouwman reads Psalm 13 and asks all present to sing Hymn 8. He leads the meeting in prayer.

Synod is adjourned for dinner.

EVENING SESSION

Thursday 25 June 2015

Article 63 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod and gives an overview of the evening's agenda for the benefit of the delegates and the audience.

Article 64 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 32 to 50 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 65 - Book of Praise (Refer Art 25, 29, 61, 76)

A further round of discussion is held.

Notices of intention are given to recommend amendments to the proposals prepared by the Advisory Committee.

Article 66 - Response to Address of Delegates of the RCN

The Chairman gives Rev R D Anderson the opportunity to respond to the addresses of Rev J Plug and Br J de Jong of the RCN (refer Appendix 1I).

Article 67 - Address of Delegate of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK)

The Chairman invites Rev Dr K H Kwon from the KPCK to present his address on behalf of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (refer Appendix 1J).

Article 68 - Address of the Delegate of the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)

The Chairman invites Br O Bouwman from the CanRC to present his address on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches (refer Appendix 1K). After he presents his address, he asks for all present to sing Hymn 52:2.

Article 69 - Adjournment

Br H Gunnink requests all present to sing Psalm 16:1 after which he leads in prayer. The Chairman adjourned the meeting until 9.30 am on Friday morning.

MORNING SESSION
Friday 26 June 2015

Article 70 - Reopening

Br H Hamelink reads Psalm 113 and, after a short meditation, he requests all present to sing Psalm 113:1. He leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

Article 71 - Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.2.3 – Deputies Report for Sister Churches – Presbyterian Church of Korea – Kosin.

Agenda Item 8(a)(i) – Overture from FRC Albany re Sister Church Relationship with Presbyterian Church of Korea.

II. Admissibility

The items are declared admissible.

The Deputy was given the opportunity to introduce the report provided by the deputies.

The matter was put to two rounds of discussion.

Notices of intention were given to recommend amendments to the proposals prepared by the deputies.

III. Proposal

To amend the deputies proposals to read “in order to assist us, but also to discuss with the KPCK the appropriateness of their doing mission work with local

churches, in the vicinity of congregations of the FRCA, when there is no contact with the FRCA.”

Ground

It is important that federations who recognise each other as faithful federations do not ignore each other when working in the same vicinity.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

Delete from ground 1 the words “and Church Order.”

Ground

The church government of the KPCK is Presbyterian as distinct from Reformed.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To accept the proposals of the deputies with the adopted amendment:

1. To continue sister-church relations with the Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea (KPCK) according to the established rules.
2. To discharge deputies, thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. maintain the sister church relations according to the adopted rules;

- b. send two delegates, including (if possible) one Korean speaking delegate, to the KPCK General Assembly in 2016;
- c. further investigate the model and the mode of missionary work being undertaken by the KPCK in order to assist the local churches of the FRCA to determine whether and how they might cooperate together in their missionary calling.

Grounds

- 1. The Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea as far as can be known, shows faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions.
- 2. The attendance of two delegates on official visits is preferable (cf. 2 Cor 13:1). The inclusion of a Korean speaking delegate has proved beneficial.
- 3. It is helpful for us to have a clear understanding of the mission work undertaken by the KPCK for our instruction and to determine if and how cooperation is possible where we are working in the same geographical locations.

ADOPTED

Article 72 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 60, 75, 89, 110, 119)

The Advisory Committee made the following proposal:

To suspend the sister church relationship with the RCN as follows:

- 1. To deny ministers from the RCN the privilege of

preaching in our federation, or to be called to serve in the FRCA unless the call is approved by Classis.

2. To not accept attestations from or issue attestations to the RCN.
3. To discharge deputies, to thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate:
 - a. to send to the next RCN Synod a second letter:
 - to express our deep sadness at the response of Synod Ede to our letter of admonition sent by Synod Armadale and advise of the suspension of our sister church relationship;
 - appeal their decisions with respect to our letter of admonition and reiterate our concerns as summarised in the deputies report to Synod Baldivis;
 - to declare that the FRCA will terminate sister relations with the RCN if the next Synod of the RCN in 2017 does not express and demonstrate evidence of repentance from the deviations mentioned in the letter of the Synod of Armadale 2012 to the Synod of Ede 2014;
 - b. to encourage the FRCA congregations to pray that the Lord grant the RCN to uprightly uphold and defend the Scriptural truth as maintained in the three forms of unity;
 - c. to interact with the deputies BBK;

- d. to monitor and analyse responses by the RCN;
- e. to report to the next Synod;
- f. to send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN.

Grounds

1. There is ample evidence of a systemic failure to practise church discipline both within some congregations in the RCN and in mutual discipline among the churches through classes and Synods, which leads to the profanation and defilement of the Lord's Holy Supper among them.
2. There is ample evidence of the toleration of the use of a hermeneutic among them which allows man to transgress God's commandments and invalidates the Word of God.

The proposals are put to several rounds of discussion. The Advisory Committee are given the opportunity to respond to the discussion. Synod requests that the Advisory Committee takes the comments made, rework it and come back to Synod with a reworked proposal.

Article 73 - Adjournment

Br H Moes reads from Psalm 133 and John 17:17-23, followed by a short devotion. He requests all present to sing Psalm 133:1 and 2 and leads the meeting in prayer after which Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION
Friday 26 June 2015

Article 74 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 75 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 60, 72, 89, 110, 119)

The Advisory Committee tables a reworked proposal to the Synod.

I. Proposal

To add 4(e): “to send to the consistories of the RCN, a copy of the first and second letter sent to the next Synod of the RCN in 2017”.

Ground

It is evident that many members of the RCN have no knowledge of the matters contained within the letters addressed to the Synod of the RCN.

ADOPTED

II. Proposal

To delete 2(c) or to renumber 2(c) as 4(c).

Ground

This is not the task of a Synod. The Dutch are also well aware of and conversant with the traditional defence of the position against having women in office.

ADOPTED (to renumber 2(c) as 4(c))

III. Proposal

To delete the explanation under 1(a).

Ground

Those coming from overseas come from a suspended federation and ought not to expect the privilege of Lord's Supper celebration. This in no way judges their individual faith.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To accept the proposal of the Advisory Committee as amended:

1. To suspend our relationship with the RCN. This suspension applies to the rules of our sister church relationship agreement:
 - a. "Rule e) The churches shall accept one another's attestations, which also means admitting the members of the respective churches to the sacraments upon presentation of these attestations." To accept attestations only from those members of the RCN whom the consistory is convinced are faithful in doctrine and conduct, and to issue attestations to the RCN with due care.
 - b. "Rule f) The churches shall in principle open their pulpits to each other's ministers in agreement with the rules adopted by the respective church federations." To deny ministers from the RCN the privilege of preaching in our federation, or to be called to

serve in the FRCA unless the call is approved by Classis.

- c. “Rule h) The churches shall receive each other’s delegates at their broadest assemblies and invite them to sit as advisers, as much as possible.” Delegates from the RCN will be invited to attend our next Synod **and** be accorded the privileges as per rules for Synod 6.2.
2. To send to the next RCN Synod a second letter:
 - a. to express our deep sadness at the response of Synod Ede to our letter of admonition sent by Synod Armadale and advise of the suspension of our sister church relationship;
 - b. to declare that the FRCA’s sister relationship with the RCN will become untenable if the next Synod of the RCN in 2017 does not express and demonstrate evidence of repentance from the deviations mentioned in the letter of the Synod of Armadale 2012 to the Synod of Ede 2014.
 3. To encourage the FRCA congregations to pray that the Lord grant the RCN to uprightly uphold and defend the Scriptural truth as maintained in the three forms of unity.
 4. To discharge deputies, to thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate:
 - a. to interact with the deputies BBK;
 - b. to monitor and analyse responses by the RCN;

- c. to interact with the request of Synod Ede for advice with respect to the role of men and women in the church, and present the clear biblical teaching on this matter;
- d. to send to the consistories of the RCN, a copy of the first and second letter sent to the next Synod of the RCN in 2017;
- e. to send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCN;
- f. to report to the next Synod.

Grounds

1. The RCN acknowledge that they have changed (see decision in response to admonitions 2.a.3.), but deny any Scriptural or Confessional deviation, and consequently feel no need for repentance and return.
2. There is ample evidence of the toleration of the use of a hermeneutic among them which allows man to transgress God's commandments and invalidates the Word of God.
3. As sister churches we have promised to 'exhort one another to live as churches of God in this world... and to mutually care for each other that they do not depart from the reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline and liturgy.' (Rules for sister churches).
4. The RCN have clearly communicated to us that concerns and objections are to be addressed directly to their Synod. Synod Ede has asked that objections are to be addressed directly to their Synod. Synod Ede has specifically asked for advice from sister churches regarding the role of men and women in the church.
5. By suspending the sister church relationship, our call for obedience and submission to the clear meaning of Scripture may yet be heard and acted upon by many in the RCN.
6. Because of the grave concerns we have for our sister in The Netherlands, the churches should

bring this matter regularly in prayer before the LORD.

ADOPTED

The Chairman leads in prayer.

Article 76 - Book of Praise (Refer Art 25, 29, 61, 65)

The Advisory Committee tables its proposals, together with a proposed amendment to point 2.

The matter is put to a round of discussion.

I. Proposal

To amend the minority report amendments to point 2, to read “To print an interim (provisional) Australian version of the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise excluding the 19 hymns not adopted for use in the churches and the changes to the creeds, confessions and liturgical forms as made by the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, as well as the Australian church order, requesting the Canadian Standing Committee for the BoP to grant and oversee copyright.”

ADOPTED

II. Proposal

To replace point 2 of the Advisory Committee’s proposals, with the minority report including amendments.

DEFEATED

III. Proposal

To amend 3(a)(iii) to read “to use the NKJV for all scripture quotations and capitalising all pronouns referring to God” and to amend Ground 5 to read “The NKJV is the endorsed Bible translation in the FRCA.”

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To amend proposal 2 to read “To direct the churches to use the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise for the interim.”

Ground

Churches need a clear message to encourage change.

DEFEATED

V. Proposal

To accept the proposal tabled by the Advisory Committee:

1. To thank the deputies and discharge them from their duties.
2. To encourage the churches to use the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise for the interim.
3. To appoint new deputies and mandate them to:
 - a. To develop an Australian Version of the Canadian Book of Praise and present it to the next Synod that:
 - i. contains the Psalms and Hymns of the 2014 Canadian Book of Praise that are

- approved for use in the FRCA and not to include any unapproved hymns;
- ii. incorporates changes to the creeds, confessions and liturgical forms as made by the FRCA, as well as the Australian Church Order;
 - iii. to prepare two versions, one using the NKJV for all Scripture quotations and capitalising all pronouns referring to God, the other retaining the ESV without capitalisation;
 - iv. contains a list of all hymns with the corresponding numbers of the hymns in the Canadian Book of Praise.
- b. To work through all legal as well as practical matters including but not limited to:
- i. arranging that copyright permissions be granted to an appropriate legal entity within our churches;
 - ii. proposed size(s), covers and bindings;
 - iii. working with one or more printers to set scope and priority if any, as to alternate edition/formats, e.g. printed with a Bible, large text etc, or digital editions;
 - iv. determining the need and/or usefulness in appointing an Australian standing committee for the Book of Praise.
- c. To solicit feedback from the churches and propose suggested names for an Australian version of the Canadian Book of Praise.

- d. To maintain good contact with the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches, alerting the churches of any proposed changes.

Grounds

1. Submissions from the churches indicate a clear desire to move towards an Australian Version of the Canadian Book of Praise.
2. Great care ought to be taken in the preparation of a Book of Praise and it would be expedient for the final product to be approved by Synod prior to publication.
3. Synod Baldivis 2015 decided to further investigate the adoption of the 19 additional hymns in the Canadian Book of Praise (art. 24). Should any of these hymns be adopted for use they should be incorporated in the Australian version of the Canadian Book of Praise before it is published.
4. Only those Psalms and Hymns as approved for public worship should be in a definitive song book for the churches.
5. Both the ESV and the NKJV are approved Bible translations in the FRCA.
6. Although the capitalization of pronouns for God is not a principle issue, it is a good tradition and seen by many to serve as a constant reminder of the fact that God is worthy of great honour and respect.
7. A list of all hymns with the corresponding numbers of the hymns in the Canadian Book of Praise would

be of great benefit e.g. when using sermons produced by Canadian Reformed ministers.

8. The deputies' report advises that a new name would be required for an Australian Version of the Canadian Book of Praise.
9. The Synod of the CanRC 2013 Art. 197 indicate that they welcome close cooperation with Australia.

4.1 To express its regret to the FRCA that due to the circumstances listed above, the degree of cooperation and consultation re: the work on the Book of Praise was limited;

4.2 To instruct the SCBoP to continue contact with the Australian Deputies for the Book of Praise in order to assist the FRCA's pursuit of a possible Australian version of the Book of Praise.

10. Both Byford and Kelmscott requested that Synod provide direction to ensure that in the interim the Australian Churches use the same Book of Praise and so remove the discrepancies and confusion occurring between churches (and schools). Kelmscott proposed that in the interim the Canadian Book of Praise (2014 edition) be used.

ADOPTED

Article 77 - Adjournment

Rev C Vermeulen leads in prayer, then asks all present to sing Psalm 136:1 and 13. The meeting is adjourned for dinner.

EVENING SESSION

Friday 26 June 2015

Article 78 - Reopening

The Chairman requests all present to sing Hymn 69:1 and 3 by which he reopens Synod. He gives an overview of what has occurred today and the evening's agenda for the benefit of the delegates and the audience.

The Chairman extends a special welcome to Rev W van der Jagt as replacement delegate. He is asked to rise to acknowledge his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. He does so.

Article 79 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 51 to 69 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 80 - Press Release

The press release for week 1 is read and adopted, following amendments.

Article 81 - Response to Address of Delegate of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK)

The Vice Chairman gives the Chairman the opportunity to respond to the address of Rev Dr K W Kwon from the KPCK (refer Appendix 1L).

Article 82 - Response to Address of Delegate of the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)

The Chairman gives Br W Pleiter the opportunity to respond to the address of Br O Bouwman from the CanRC (refer Appendix 1M).

Article 83 - Address of the Delegate of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI)

The Chairman invites Rev F Tipa Kaya from the GGRI to present his address on behalf of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (refer Appendix 1N).

Article 84 - Response to Address of Delegate of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI)

The Chairman gives Br B Bosveld the opportunity to respond to the address of Rev F Tipa Kaya from the GGRI (refer Appendix 1O), which he did expertly in both English and Indonesian.

Article 85 - Address of the Delegate of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvinis (GGRC)

The Chairman invites Br S Dethan from the GGRC to present his address on behalf of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvinis (refer Appendix 1P).

Article 86 - Response to Address of Delegate of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvinis (GGRC)

The Chairman gives Br E Heerema the opportunity to respond to the address of Br S Dethan from the GGRC (refer Appendix 1Q).

Article 87 - Adjournment

The Chairman wishes travelling mercies to the delegates of the KCPK and the RCNZ, as well as Rev D S Song of the Jayoo Reformed Church as they are returning to their respective homes on Saturday.

Br G J Kleyn requests all present to sing Hymn 52:1 and 2 after which he leads in prayer. The Chairman adjourns the meeting until 10.00 am on Monday morning.

MORNING SESSION
Monday 29 June 2015

Article 88 - Reopening

Rev J Kroeze reads Mark 11:15-25 and, after a short meditation, he requests all present to sing Psalm 122:1. He leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

Article 89 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 60, 72, 75, 110, 119)

The proposed letter to the consistories of the RCN prepared by the Advisory Committee was put to a general round of discussion. The letter was then discussed paragraph by paragraph. The Committee are asked to consider the comments made, and to rework the letter for further approval by the Synod.

Article 90 - Adjournment

Br S Dethan reads Acts 20:22-32 and leads the meeting in prayer, also asking God for travelling mercies for Br J de Jong as he travels back to the Netherlands. Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION
Monday 29 June 2015

Article 91 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 92 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 70 to 87 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 93 - Training for the Ministry

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.8 – Deputies Report for Training for the Ministry.

Agenda Item 10(a)(ii)(i) – Overture from Classis North regarding Establishing a Theological Training in Australia.

Agenda Item 8(c)(i) – Overture from FRC Baldivis regarding Training for the Ministry.

Agenda Item 8(g)(iii) – Overture from FRC Kelmscott regarding Training for the Ministry.

Agenda Item 8(j)(vi) – Overture from FRC Mount Nasura regarding Training for the Ministry.

Agenda Item 8(l)(i) – Letter from FRC Rockingham with proposed revision and supplement to the recommendations to Deputies for Training for the Ministry.

Agenda Item 8(m)(i) – Proposal from FRC Southern River regarding proposal CRTS levy (Training for the Ministry) North America.

Agenda Item 8(m)(ii) – Overture from FRC Southern River regarding Training for the Ministry Mandate.

II. Admissibility

Agenda Items 11.8, 10(a)(ii)(i), 8(c)(i), 8(g)(iii) and 8(j)(vi) are all declared admissible.

Agenda Item 8(m)(ii) is declared inadmissible.

A notice of intention is given to recommend Agenda Item 8(l)(i) be declared inadmissible.

III. Proposal

To declare Agenda Item 8(l)(i) inadmissible.

Grounds

1. The item is a new proposal that does not directly interact with the mandate given to deputies Training for the Ministry.
2. The Rules for Synod state that the churches must submit, by a date four months prior to the commencement of Synod, any new items of business for inclusion on the Provisional Draft Agenda. The item in question was received by the convening church after the 4 month cut-off point.
3. Church Order Art. 30 says that “A new matter may be put on its agenda only when the minor assembly has dealt with it.” This item, therefore, should have come to Synod via Classis.

ADOPTED

IV. Admissibility

Agenda Item 8(g)(iii) and part of paragraph 9.3 of Agenda Item 8(j)(vi) are declared inadmissible as they relate particularly to the proposals outlined in Agenda Item 8(l)(i), which has also been declared inadmissible.

The deputies' recommendations are put to the meeting for several rounds of discussion.

V. Proposal

To insert a paragraph j. into Deputies Report 12.4 as follows:

To investigate the feasibility of establishing an FRCA Theological Seminary, and report back to next Synod. Such a study should consider:

1. The desire of the churches for such a seminary.
2. The potential student numbers that would attend such a seminary.
3. The impact the establishment of such a seminary would have on the student numbers and viability of the CRTS.
4. The resources required for such a seminary, and the availability of such resources.

Grounds

1. Having only one theological training centre in the world does not prepare us well for the possibility, and may God graciously prevent it, if for any reason, the CRTS becomes unavailable due to political, economic or other reasons.
2. Article 17 of the CO states that the Churches shall support or, if possible, maintain an institution for the training for the ministry.

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To accept Proposal 1 of the overture in Agenda Item 8(m)(i):

Recommendation 12.1 of deputies be amended to increase the contribution amount to AU\$82 per communicant member per annum.

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To accept Proposal 1 of the overture in Agenda Item 8(m)(i):

Deputies be mandated to, within their report to Synod 2018, report on the amount of contribution paid by our Canadian sisters and propose a level of contribution that matches (as close as possible) such contribution.

ADOPTED

VIII. Proposal

To accept the proposals of the deputies with the adopted amendments:

- 12.1 a. Request the churches to contribute AU\$82 per communicant member per annum for the maintenance of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary as from 1 January 2016.
- b. Deputies be mandated to, within their report to Synod 2018, report on the amount of contribution paid by our Canadian sisters and propose a level of contribution that matches (as close as possible) such contribution.

Grounds

- a. Synod Legana (Act 2009 at Article 17.m, Ground 4) accepted that the FRCA are responsible to ensure that the ministry of the gospel be maintained and ought to take full financial responsibility for this.
- b. Until such time as the FRCA develop their own theological training, our support to the CRTS should be for the full amount required within their budget.
- c. Our Canadian sisters presently contribute an amount of CA\$82 per communicant member per annum, which equates to around AU\$82.
- d. The FRCA churches remain financially blessed and can be expected to bear the increased contribution amount.
- e. In the event that we do (at some time in the future) develop our own theological training, the CRTS contribution could be reduced to allow the FRCA to absorb the cost of our own training. This would coincide with our reduced use of CRTS.

12.2 In relation to the guest lecturer from the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary:

- a. Set aside \$7,500 per trip (currently \$7,000) from General Synod funds for the costs of a visit to Australia by a guest lecturer from the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary;
- b. To invite a guest lecturer once every three years, rather than every two years.

- 12.3 To set aside \$4,000 from General Synod funds for travelling and accommodation costs of a delegate of deputies to attend a meeting of Hamilton's Board of Governors and the Convocation between Synod 2015 and Synod 2018.
- 12.4 Discharge deputies and appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
- a. Continue to collect funds for the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary and forward them to the Seminary;
 - b. Continue to correspond with the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, in order to maintain contact and obtain information, and to send notification of new deputies for the purpose of communication with "South Africa", "the Netherlands" and "Korea";
 - c. Continue to collect funds for theological training;
 - d. 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;
 - e. 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;
 - f. Continue to make arrangements for a guest lecturer from the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary once every three years;

- g. Continue to be as closely involved, as practically as possible, in the work of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary;
- h. Monitor the effectiveness of the Pastoral Training Program of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary within the Australian churches by seeking feedback from the ministers and students participating in this program;
- i. Collect and disburse funds for the Pastoral Training Program in accordance with the Australian adaptation of the Guidelines for the Pastoral Training Program; and
- j. To investigate the feasibility of establishing an FRCA Theological Seminary, and report back to next Synod. Such a study should consider:
 - i. The desire of the churches for such a seminary;
 - ii. The potential student numbers that would attend such a seminary;
 - iii. The impact the establishment of such a seminary would have on the student numbers and viability of the CRTS; and
 - iv. The resources required for such a seminary, and the availability of such resources.

Grounds

1. Having only one theological training centre in the world does not prepare us well for the possibility, and may God graciously prevent it, if for any reason the CRTS becomes unavailable due to political, economic or other reasons.
2. Article 17 of the CO states that the Churches shall support or, if possible, maintain an institution for the training for the ministry.

12.5 Continue to oversee the Library Fund.

12.6 To cease to investigate the feasibility of offering the freshman (i.e. first) year of theological studies to the churches in Australia and to cease to investigate possible distance education of theological studies to the churches in Australia.

ADOPTED

Article 94 - Adjournment

Br P Witten leads in prayer. The meeting is adjourned for dinner.

EVENING SESSION

Monday 29 June 2015

Article 95 - Reopening

The Chairman requests all present to sing Psalm 46:1 by which he reopens Synod. He gives an overview of what has occurred today and the evening's agenda for the benefit of the delegates and the audience.

Br W Pleiter is asked to come forward to sit with the delegates as Deputy for Sister Church Relations (refer Annexure 1M). He is requested to stand to acknowledge his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. He does so.

Article 96 - Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.2.2 – Report of Deputies for Sister Church Relations – Canadian Reformed Churches.

II. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

The deputies' recommendations are put to the meeting for a round of discussion. The Deputy was given the opportunity to respond to any questions raised.

A notice of intention is given to recommend amendments to the proposals prepared by the deputies.

III. Proposal

To amend Recommendation 2(d) to read “Stay informed of the sister-church developments in North America (URCNA, OPC, RCUS and ERQ) and monitor the way the CanRC interact with the sisters issues of difference (specifically pulpit supervision, fencing of the Lord’s table and confessional membership)”.

Ground

The deputies have reported that issues like pulpit supervision, fencing of the Lord’s table and confessional membership continue to have the attention of the Canadian Reformed Churches in their relationship with

other churches in North America. It would be good to continue to specifically monitor these discussions.

DEFEATED

IV. Proposal

To delete Recommendation 2(c) and Ground 4.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To add a further Recommendation:

To liaise with the Canadian deputies regarding their and our relationship with the RCN.

Ground

Since the FRCA have suspended our relationship with the RCN, it would be appropriate to monitor what our sister church is doing in this respect.

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To accept the proposals of the deputies with the adopted amendments:

1. Continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the established rules.
2. To discharge deputies, thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. Monitor developments within the CanRC for mutual benefit according to the established rules and keep the churches informed;

- b. Stay informed on the developments concerning the potential merger between the CanRC and the URCNA, including changes to the Church Order, Creeds, Confessions, Forms and Prayer Forms;
- c. Stay informed of the sister-church developments in North America (URCNA, OPC, RCUS and ERQ);
- d. Send two (2) delegates to the next CanRC General Synod scheduled in Dunnville, Ontario during 2016, pending finances; and
- e. To liaise with the Canadian deputies regarding their and our relationship with the RCN.

Grounds

- 1. The Canadian Reformed Churches give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- 2. We need to foster mutual understanding and support regarding matters that our respective federations face, including their sister church relations in North America.
- 3. 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.”

4. We value our bond with the Canadian Reformed Churches and personal contact at the Synodical level reinforces our contact with them.
5. Since the FRCA have suspended our relationship with the RCN, it would be appropriate to monitor what our sister church is doing in this respect.

ADOPTED

The Chairman requests Rev H Alkema to lead in prayer to thank God for the continued relationship between the CanRC and the FRCA.

Article 97 - Address of the Delegate of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (DGK)

The Chairman invites Br A van der Net from the DGK to present his address on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (refer Appendix 1R).

Article 98 - Response to Address of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (DGK)

The Chairman gives Rev PKA de Boer the opportunity to respond to the address of Br A van der Net of the DGK (refer Appendix 1S).

Article 99 - Address of the Delegate of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA)

The Chairman invites Br J Moes from the FRCSA to present his address on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (refer Appendix 1T).

Article 100 - Response to Address of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA)

The Chairman gives Br W Spyker the opportunity to respond to the address of Br J Moes of the FRCSA (refer Appendix 1U).

Article 101 - Adjournment

Rev D Poppe requests all present to sing Psalm 19:1 and 3 after which he leads in prayer. The Chairman adjourns the meeting until 9.00 am on Tuesday morning.

MORNING SESSION Tuesday 30 June 2015

Article 102 - Reopening

Br H Olde requests all present to sing Psalm 144:1 and 2, then reads Romans 12:1-6 and Psalm 139:13-16, followed by a meditation. He leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

Article 103 - Article 48 of the Church Order (Refer Art 105)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.10 – Deputies Report Article 48.

Agenda Item 8(g)(iv) – Overture from the FRC Kelmscott regarding Article 48.

Agenda Item 8(j)(vii) – Overture from FRC Mount Nasura regarding Article 48.

Agenda Item 8(n)(iv) – Overture from FRC West Albany regarding Article 48.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

III. Proposal

The FRC Kelmscott proposes that Synod emend Article 13 of the Church Order as follows:

If a minister of the Word retires by reason of age, or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office on account of sickness or otherwise, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. He shall also retain his official bond with the church which he served last and this church shall provide honourably for his support. The same obligation exists towards a minister's widow and orphans.

Ground

The current wording of CO Article 13 implies that a minister can only retire on account of age if he is deemed incapable of performing the duties of his office. Whilst this was the intention of the original CO of Dordt, this is no longer the practice within our churches or our sister churches.

ADOPTED

IV. Proposal

To reject the addition of the words “The level of honourable support is the responsibility of the consistory” to Article 13 CO as proposed by Free Reformed Church of Mount Nasura (FRCMN).

Grounds

1. FRCMN supplies no grounds to support this change to the church order.
2. While it is true that the consistory has the responsibility to give honorable support to their minister, it has been common practice that the classis has a role in ensuring that consistory lives up to its responsibilities:
 - a. The classical regulations state that the letter of call needs to be part of the documentation submitted to classis by the church calling a minister.
 - b. The church visitors ask annually whether the minister is adequately provided for. They then report on this back to the classis.
3. Since there is typically a new financial arrangement in place with a minister when he retires, it is good for this matter to be reviewed by the classis.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To accept the addition of the words “The retirement of ministers shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis” to Art 13 CO as proposed by FRCMN.

Grounds

1. A minister may not independently decide to retire, but he needs the approval of his consistory with the deacons. The consistory is ultimately

responsible for the care of both the congregation, and their minister.

2. Classis also needs to provide concurring advice for the retirement of a minister since a minister serves not only one congregation, but also within the classis and the whole bond.
3. Classis has the responsibility to ensure that consistory adequately provides for its minister.

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To add the words “and the deputies of Synod” to Article 13 CO, so that it reads, “The retirement of ministers shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis and the deputies of Synod”.

Grounds

1. The Church of West Albany has requested Synod to change the Church Order, if necessary, to bring consistency between the Church Order and Ecclesiastical Documents.
2. Deputies of Synod should give their concurring advice for the retirement of ministers since a minister serves in the whole bond and not just one congregation.
3. In order to ensure that honourable care is provided to him, it is proper for the deputies of Synod to be involved to ensure everything is done well.
4. Despite past confusion, the deputies of Synod are expected to be present for the retirement of

ministers according to past practice, the rules of classis, Ecclesiastical Form 6 and Synod 2012, Art 110.3, which states about this matter, “It is the task of the churches in common to see to it that all the Lord’s servants receive support and care, that is honorable to Him and the bond of His churches.”

ADOPTED

The matter is put to the Advisory Committee for formal adoption.

An indication of support is given by the majority of delegates.

VII. Proposal

To delete recommendation 3 of the Deputies Report.

Ground

This has already been dealt with in the previous discussion.

ADOPTED

Article 104 - Closed Session

The Synod goes into a closed session.

Article 105 - Article 48 of the Church Order (Refer Art 103)

I. Proposal

To accept the deputies’ recommendations with the adopted amendments:

Synod:

1. receive this report, and release deputies from their task;
2. appoint new deputies to assist the classes according to Art. 48 C.O., with one deputy and one alternate from each classical region, i.e. according to the manner decided by Synod Armadale 2012, Decision 3 (Art. 110, p.80-81).

ADOPTED

Article 106 - Appeal of FRC Busselton (Refer Art 109)

I. Material

Agenda Item 8(d)(i) – Letter from FRC Busselton regarding Article 11 Classis South West (October 2013).

II. Proposal

Only those are allowed to vote on the appeal of Busselton who are not personally involved with this matter, which means the delegate from Busselton and the delegates from Classis South West who previously decided on this matter.

ADOPTED

The Chairman hands the chair to the Vice-Chairman.

III. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

The matter is put to a round of discussion.

A notice of intention is given to recommend denying the appeal of FRC Busselton.

Article 107 - Adjournment

Br J van Laar reads Psalm 92 and requests all present to sing Psalm 92:1 and 6. He leads the meeting in prayer. Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Tuesday 30 June 2015

Article 108 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 109 - Appeal of FRC Busselton (Refer Art 106)

The matter is put to the meeting for several rounds of discussion.

I. Proposal

The FRC Busselton appeals a decision of Classis Southwest which it deems to have gone “beyond the scope of Classis; becomes binding upon all the Churches of Classis Southwest, and hence can result in Classis perhaps unwittingly ‘lording it over Consistories.’” It requests us to review Article 11 of Classis Southwest, October 2013 and rule that:

1. *A major assembly should never take over the task which a minor assembly should do. In this case a classis took over the task which the minor assembly, the consistory, should do, or in the case of the appellants, should be asked to complete. This is based on the church orderly rule that a major assembly should never assume tasks which*

can and should be completed by the minor assembly (cf. Art 30 CO).

2. *This decision of Classis is in fact not a judgement on a consistory decision, but an ethical ruling; and*
3. *Classis may not lord it over the churches, and in this decision Classis oversteps the boundaries of its jurisdiction, by doing something it was not allowed to do; making a binding statement on an ethical issue none of the churches had asked for.*

The FRC Busselton also wishes “to point out that the focus of concern for Busselton Consistory relates to the church political aspects of the situation that unfolded. An opinion about membership in unions is not so relevant to our thoughts, but the church political process in this case is important.”

Decision: To deny the appeal of Busselton.

Grounds

1. That “*a major assembly should never take over the task which a minor assembly should do*” is an accepted principle of our Church Order. However the documentation provided does not indicate that Classis Southwest has transgressed this principle. The FRC Busselton wrongly assumes that the four elders of West Albany only appeal the consistory’s decision to write a letter expressing concern to those who have joined the prison officer’s union, whereas both the body and the conclusion of their appeal make it clear that they are appealing the decision of the consistory of Albany to uphold no longer the previous decision of Albany consistory made in 1956 “*that membership of a union is*

incompatible with church membership.” The elders write in their appeal to Classis:

This then brings us back to the main issue. On the basis of the above we, the undersigned, remain convinced that union membership (including membership of the WAPOU and WAPU) is incompatible with Church membership. If someone wants to be a member of the Church of the Lord then they cannot, in good conscience, be a member of a trade union. The inverse is also true: If someone (once they have all the information at hand) wants to be a union member then they cannot be a member of Christ's church. Then what they confess on Sunday (about trusting in the Lord and about honouring authority) goes against what they say on Monday (using whatever means are necessary to protect my rights, conditions and privileges). The two are incompatible! We therefore humbly appeal to Classis to consider this issue prayerfully and Scripturally and to rule on the basis of God's Word alone, for the sake of His church.

2. The statement that “*classis took over the task which the minor assembly, the consistory, should do, or in the case of the appellants, should be asked to complete*” cannot be sustained. The minutes of consistory meetings November 12th 2012 and August 22nd, 2013 indicate that the original decision of June 7th, 2012 was at least twice debated and twice upheld. The minutes of August 22nd 2013 indicate that the matter was finished as far as the consistory was concerned. The elders who dissented were told that they could appeal to Classis, which they did.

3. The statement that “*Classis oversteps the boundaries of its jurisdiction, by doing something it was not allowed to do; making a binding statement on an ethical issue none of the churches had asked for*” cannot be sustained. The FRC Busselton provides no evidence that the Church Order excludes ethical issues from the jurisdiction of Classis. In fact, Article 30 & 31 of the Church Order refer, without restriction, to “matters” and “decisions” that are dealt with and decided upon at a minor assembly, which indicates that all matters pertaining to doctrine and conduct dealt with and decided upon by a minor assembly can be dealt with by, or appealed to, a major assembly.

ADOPTED

Article 110 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 60, 72, 75, 89, 119)

The proposed letter to the consistories of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) amended by the deputies was put to a general round of discussion.

Article 111 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (DGK) (Refer Art 115)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.2.4 – Report of Deputies for Sister Church Relations – Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored).

Agenda Item 8(b)(ii) – Overture from FRC Armadale regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored).

Agenda Item 8(e)(iii) – Overture from FRC Byford regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands – DGK and GKN.

Agenda Item 8(k)(i) – Overture from FRC Mundijong regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands – DGK and GKN.

II. Admissibility

The items are all declared admissible.

The matter is put to the meeting for a round of discussion, and the Deputy and the DGK delegate are given the opportunity to respond to questions asked.

A notice of intention is given to put forward amendments to the deputies' recommendations.

Article 112 - Adjournment

Rev C Vermeulen leads in prayer. The meeting is adjourned for dinner.

EVENING SESSION

Tuesday 30 June 2015

Article 113 - Reopening

The Chairman requests all present to sing Psalm 132:6 by which he reopens Synod. He gives an overview of what has occurred today and the evening's agenda for the benefit of the delegates and the audience.

Article 114 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 88 to 101 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 115 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (DGK) (Refer Art 111)

The matter is put to the meeting for a further round of discussion.

Notices of intention are given to recommend amendments to the deputies' recommendations.

I. Proposal

To amend deputies' recommendation in the following way (to replace recommendation b) together with the grounds:

1. To investigate whether DGK and the GKN bear the marks of the true Church and have a legitimate existence and report back to the next Synod with recommendations about how to proceed.
2. To encourage the DGK and the GKN to work towards federal unity.
3. To investigate the decision of the DGK to enter into sister church relations with the LRC (Abbotsford).

Grounds

1. Synod has received a request to investigate the DGK and the GKN.
2. The DGK and GKN have rejected the errors which we are concerned about in the RCN.
3. The Church situation in the Netherlands is in a state of flux and careful investigation should be made before developing a new or restored sister relationship.

4. We have historic ties with the Netherlands, and many of our members continue to have close ties with the Netherlands.
5. The relation between the DGK and the LRC (Abbotsford) has the potential to be a stumbling block for further relations.

DEFEATED

II. Proposal

Synod decide:

- a. Not to act on the proposals of FRC Byford and FRC Mundijong at this time and await further developments.
- b. To maintain contact with both the DGK and GKN and to be receptive to future contact with those who have already, or who do withdraw from the RCN and report on further developments in this regard.
- c. To await recommendations from among the churches on how to proceed with these contacts.
- d. To discharge deputies, thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate:
 - to continue to monitor developments in both the DGK and GKN,
 - to work in close contact with the CanRC deputies regarding these developments;
 - to exhort all those who have left the RCN to reach out to others who love the Word and the Reformed faith;

- to maintain contact, and
- to report back to the next Synod.

Grounds

1. To recognise the situation in the Netherlands is in a state of flux.
2. There are members, ministers and churches within the RCN who continue to express serious objections and grave concerns about the developments taking place among them, and still need time to consider how to respond.
3. The DGK and the GKN both recognised the need to separate themselves from the false teachings and subsequent practices in the RCN. Given our own concerns with developments within the RCN it is wise to monitor developments in these church federations.
4. Any proposal for continuing contact with these newly formed churches should follow the normal church orderly route, that is by way of the minor assembly (CO art 30).
5. The deputies' report makes it clear that for the GKN, a formal relationship with the FRCA is presently not feasible.
6. Synod 2012 and the deputies' report notes that the DGK have decided not to entertain sister church relations with the FRCA, whilst the FRCA have sister church relations with the RCN.
7. This is consistent with the mandate to the deputies in 2012.

8. We decided in Article 96 re: CanRC 2.e. to liaise with the Canadian deputies regarding their and our relationship with the RCN.
9. The LORD calls us to pursue unity with all faithful believers.

ADOPTED

Article 116 - Adjournment

Rev A vanDelden requests all present to sing Psalm 87 after which he leads in prayer. The Chairman adjourns the meeting until 9.00 am on Wednesday morning.

MORNING SESSION Wednesday 1 July 2015

Article 117 - Reopening

Br D Veltkamp reads Hebrews 10:1-25, followed by a meditation. He then requests all present to sing Psalm 40:3. He leads in prayer.

The Chairman gives an overview of the agenda for the day.

Article 118 - Gereja Gereja Reformasi Di Indonesia (GGRI) and Gereja Gereja Reformasi Calvinis (GGRC)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.3 – Report of Deputies for Sister Church Relations with the Reformed Churches in Indonesia.

Agenda Item 8(n)(ii) – Overture from West Albany regarding Reformed Churches in Indonesia.

II. Admissibility

Both items are declared admissible.

The matter is put to the meeting for a round of discussion. The Deputy is also given an opportunity to respond to the questions raised.

Notices of intention are given to recommend amendments to the deputies' recommendations.

III. Proposal

To add the following to the deputies' mandate: "To as yet report to the churches with a clearer picture of the GGRI Papua and the GGRI Kalimantan Barat that have united and formed one federation with the GGRI NTT in February 2012, confirming their Reformed character and the implications of this union."

Grounds

West Albany rightly points out that not enough has been reported about the Reformed character of these federations, although this had been mandated by Synod 2012.

ADOPTED

IV. Proposal

To remove the words "in a well-considered and responsible way" from deputies recommendation 3.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To amend recommendation 6 to read: “To contact the church of Smithville and the Canadian deputies re Indonesian churches to develop a common understanding regarding unity amongst the Indonesian churches and to continue to seek cooperation in the theological training of future ministers.”

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To amend recommendation 9 to read: “To consult with the GGRI, the GGRC, and the Canadian Reformed Churches to determine the obstacles on the way to unity, and, to work together with all parties involved to remove or overcome those obstacles, and to encourage the national and regional Synod of both the GGRI and GGRI-NTT respectively to plan and progress towards federal unity between themselves and the GGRC, and if possible, the mission work of Smithville in Timor.”

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To accept the deputies’ recommendations with the adopted amendments:

Deputies’ recommendations

Synod 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 national and regional Synods and conferences of the GGRI subject to available finance.
3. To support the GGRI with the intention of building up the reformed character of these churches.
4. To continue to support the plans to establish a Theological Seminary in Sumba and make funds available for this cause. To encourage the church at Mundijong to make their minister available for lectures at the seminary in Waimarangu, Sumba and to ask the other churches in our bond to assist the church of Mundijong in the pulpit supply during Rev A van Delden's absence. In light of the importance for the GGRI to maintain their own college, deputies should encourage and work with the Dutch and Canadian sister churches in this matter as much as possible. Given the fact that the Dutch churches are decreasing their financial contributions to the theological training in Sumba deputies receive the mandate to approach the Canadian churches for support.
5. To encourage the GGRI and their deputyship re the Theological Seminary to seek the expertise and help of the external adviser Rev Dr AJ Pol and – if necessary – to make some finances available for his task.
6. To contact the church of Smithville and the Canadian deputies re Indonesian churches to develop a common understanding regarding unity amongst the Indonesian churches and to continue to seek cooperation in the theological training of future ministers.

7. To support two students/ministers financially 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 financial arrangements with the Dutch deputies and subject to available funding from the churches.
8. To see to it that effective communication with the people involved is possible and if necessary also to make limited financial support available.
9. To consult with the GGRI, the GGRC, and the Canadian Reformed Churches to determine the obstacles on the way to unity, and, to work together with all parties involved to remove or overcome those obstacles, and to encourage the national and regional Synod of both the GGRI and GGRI-NTT respectively to plan and progress towards federal unity between themselves and the GGRC, and if possible, the mission work of Smithville in Timor.
10. To keep in contact and share information with deputies of our Dutch and Canadian sister churches regarding the GGRI churches.
11. To encourage the churches and their members to provide the means of support for the activities of deputies 1-10 above mentioned.
12. To as yet report to the churches with a clearer picture of the GGRI Papua and the GGRI Kalimantan Barat that have united and formed one federation with the GGRI NTT in February 2012, confirming their Reformed character and the implications of this union.

ADOPTED

VIII. Proposal

To amend the deputies recommendation 3 regarding the GGRC to be in line with recommendation 10 of the GGRI recommendations, so that it reads: “To consult with the GGRI, the GGRC, and the Canadian Reformed Churches to determine the obstacles on the way to unity, and, to work together with all parties involved to remove or overcome those obstacles, and to encourage the GGRC to plan and progress towards federal unity between themselves and the GGRI, and if possible, the mission work of Smithville in Timor.”

ADOPTED

IX. Proposal

To accept the deputies’ recommendations regarding the GGRC with the adopted amendments:

1. To continue contact with the GGRC, and to help them wherever possible to strengthen the reformed character of these churches by advice or other means such as seminars.
2. To continue to visit the Synods of the GGRC subject to available finance.
3. To consult with the GGRI, the GGRC, and the Canadian Reformed Churches to determine the obstacles on the way to unity, and, to work together with all parties involved to remove or overcome those obstacles, and, to encourage the GGRC to plan and progress towards federal unity between themselves and the GGRI, and if possible, the mission work of Smithville in Timor.

4. To encourage the churches and their members to provide the means of support for the mandate of deputies detailed in point 1-3.

ADOPTED

Rev van der Jagt leads the meeting in prayer to ask God for His blessing over the Indonesian churches.

Article 119 - Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) (Refer Art 47, 48, 54, 57, 60, 72, 75, 89, 110)

The proposed letter to the RCN as amended by the Committee is put to a general round of discussion.

The letter is approved for sending to the RCN.

Rev J Plug is given the opportunity to speak some words of thanks. He mentions the brotherly love that has been shown during the discussions regarding this letter and for the hospitality afforded him during his stay.

The Chairman leads in prayer asking God for His care over the RCN.

Article 120 - General Secretary's Report

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.1 – General Secretary's Report.

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' recommendations:

Synod Baldivis discharges current deputies and reappoints new deputies with a renewed mandate:

Acts of Synod

- a. take care of the central post office box;
- b. distribute the mail;
- c. be responsible for the website of the FRCA;
- d. acknowledge correspondence not applicable to deputies, and if necessary to pass it on to the churches; and
- e. 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.

ADOPTED

Article 121 - Article 13 of the Church Order

I. Material

Article 103 of the Acts of Synod.

II. Proposal

To accept the amendments to Article 13 CO.

The new article 13 of the C.O now reads:

“If a minister of the Word retires by reason of age, or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office on account of sickness or otherwise, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. He shall also retain his official bond with the church which he served last and this church shall provide honourably for his

support. The same obligation exists towards a minister's widow and orphans. The retirement of ministers shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis and the deputies of Synod."

ADOPTED

Article 122 - Article 66 (Days of Prayer)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.11 – Report of Deputies for Article 66 Church Order (Days of Prayer).

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' report.

ADOPTED

Article 123 - Archives and Library of Synod

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.13 – Report of Deputies for Archives and Library of Synod.

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' report.

ADOPTED

Article 124 - Auditing Books Article 17 and 18

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.14 – Report of Deputies Auditing the Books per Article 17 and 18 CO (FRC Mount Nasura).

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' report.

ADOPTED

Article 125 - Adjournment

Br A van der Net speaks some words of farewell. He reads Psalm 139 and requests all present to sing Psalm 139:1 and 13. He leads the meeting in prayer. Synod adjourns for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION Wednesday 1 July 2015

Article 126 - Reopening

The Chairman reopens Synod.

Article 127 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 102 to 116 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 128 - Free Reformed Churches of South Africa (FRCSA)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.2.1 – Report of Deputies for Sister Church Relations with Free Reformed Churches of South Africa.

The matter is put to the meeting for a round of discussion.

II. Proposal

To add an additional recommendation: “Synod appreciates the clarification given by the delegates from the FRCSA and the DGK that the DGK did not require the FRCSA to sever the relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches as a precondition for closer relations.”

ADOPTED

III. Proposal

To accept the deputies’ recommendations with the adopted amendment.

1. To continue sister relations with the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa according to the established rules.
2. To appoint the Deputies Auditor for Synod Treasurer to audit the financial records of the support provided and report to the next Synod.
3. To discharge deputies, thank them for their work and to appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. maintain the sister church relations according to the adopted rules;
 - b. coordinate responses to any requests for support received from the Deputies for Needy Churches in South Africa, and to involve the local congregations of the FRCA as appropriate;

- c. keep the members of the FRCA informed regarding the support provided, both directly to consistories as well as to the broader membership via Una Sancta;
 - d. send two delegates to the next FRCSA Synod in 2017.
- 4. Synod appreciates the clarification given by the delegates from the FRCSA and the DGK that the DGK did not require the FRSCA to sever the relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches as a precondition for closer relations.

Grounds

- 1. The Free Reformed Churches of South Africa give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, maintaining the Reformed Confessions and Church Order.
- 2. Our visits to South Africa and their visits to us have proven to be very beneficial in terms of mutual support and encouragement.
- 3. Our South African sister churches request ongoing financial support. Such support should be coordinated and the churches kept informed. Financial accountability of the support provided is important.

ADOPTED

The Chairman leads in prayer asking for God's blessing over the FRCSA and the relationships between them and the FRCA.

Article 129 - Reformed Churches in Brazil (Igrejas Reformadas do Brasil – IRB)

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.4 – Report of Deputies for Relations with the Reformed Churches in Brazil.

Agenda Item 8(n)(iii) – Overture from FRC West Albany regarding the Reformed Churches in Brazil.

II. Admissibility

Both items are declared admissible.

III. Proposal

To delete Ground 2 from the proposal of West Albany.

ADOPTED

IV. Proposal

To delete Ground 3 from the proposal of West Albany.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To add Ground 2: “A sister church relationship is not required to give theological, academic or financial support to the IRB.”

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To amend Ground 1 to read: “As a small federation of churches it is important and practical for us to concentrate on relations and contacts with churches who

are geographically closer to us and for whom we have greater responsibility (see Acts of Synod 1990, Art.58).“

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To accept the recommendation of West Albany to thank the deputies for their work and not renew the mandate, with the amended grounds.

Grounds

1. As a small federation of churches it is important and practical for us to concentrate on relations and contacts with churches who are geographically closer to us and for whom we have greater responsibility (see Acts of Synod 1990, Art.58).
2. A sister church relationship is not required to give theological, academic or financial support to the IRB.

ADOPTED

Article 130 - Article 45 of the Church Order

II. Material

Agenda Item 10(c)(ii)(i) – Overture from Classis South West regarding Article 45 of the Church Order.

III. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

The matter is put to the meeting for two rounds of discussion.

IV. Proposal

To accept the recommendation of Classis South West.

To change Article 45 Church Order to the following:

“The Synod shall be held every three years. As long as 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 for extraordinary reasons at the request of two classes. Its time and place shall be decided by the church appointed as convening church for the next regular Synod.”

ADOPTED

Article 131 - Deputy Appointments

Synod requests that the Deputies for Sister Churches consider the merits of separating the sister church deputyships.

Synod thanks the previous deputies for their work and makes the following appointments:

General Secretary

Br J den Boer (convenor)

Br M Pot

Alternate: Br W Amoraal

Deputies for Relations with Sister Churches (South Africa, Canada, Korea, Netherlands) / Deputies for Relations with Other Churches (URCNA, DGK/GKN)

Rev RD Anderson
Rev A Hagg
Rev S 't Hart (convenor)
Br W Pleiter
Br W Spyker
Br M ten Haaf
Alternates: Br P Witten
Rev H Alkema

Indonesia

Br B Bosveld
Br T deVos
Br E Heerema
Rev A vanDelden
Rev W vanderJagt (convenor)
Alternate: Br E DeHaan

Singapore (FERC of Singapore)

Rev T VanSpronsen (convenor)
Br S Fokkema
Rev E Rupke
Alternate: Br Klaas VanderVeen (jnr)

RCNZ

Br M Bax
Rev R Pot (convenor)
Rev H Alkema
Alternate: Br A Vermeulen

Australian Book of Praise

Br G Spyker
Br G Groenewold
Rev C Vermeulen (convenor)

Br DJ Swarts
Alternate: Br Rob Eikelboom

Training for the Ministry

Br J vanderPlas
Rev PKA deBoer
Br B Huizinga
Rev D Poppe (convenor)
Alternate: Br T Reitsema

Article 48

SW: Rev R Pot (Alternate: S 't Hart)
Central: Rev C Vermeulen (Alternate: A Hagg)
North: Rev J Kroeze (Alternate: E Rupke)

Article 66 Days of Prayer

Church of Baldivis

Index Synod decision

Br J Numan
Br Rob Eikelboom

Synod Archive

Church of Mount Nasura

Deputies Marriage Act

Br H Faas
Br T Houweling

Synod Venue and Infrastructure

Br E 't Hart
Br A vanderWal

Synod Treasurer

Br A Braam
Alternate: Br B deVos

Audit Deputies for the Training of the Ministry

Church of Southern River

Inspection of Archives

Church of Byford

Audit Synod Treasurer

Church of West Albany

Article 132 - Report of Synod Treasurer

I. Material

Report of Deputies for Synod Treasury.

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' report.

ADOPTED

Article 133 - Proposal by FRC Kelmscott regarding Appeals

I. Material

Agenda Item 8(g)(vii) – Letter from Kelmscott with Proposal to Synod regarding Appeals.

II. Proposal

To declare the submission inadmissible.

Ground

This is a new matter, and was received by the convening church well after the three month deadline (cf. Synod Rules 7.2).

III. Admissibility

The item is declared inadmissible.

Article 134 - Marriage Act

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.15 – Report of Deputies regarding the Marriage Act 1961.

II. Proposal

To accept the deputies' report.

ADOPTED

Article 135 - Adjournment

Br R Fokkema leads in prayer. The meeting is adjourned for dinner.

EVENING SESSION **Wednesday 1 July 2015**

Article 136 - Reopening

The Chairman requests all present to sing Psalm 27:2 by which he reopens Synod. He gives an overview of what has occurred today and the evening's agenda for the benefit of the delegates and the audience.

Article 137 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 117 to 135 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 138 - Press Release

The press release for week 2 is read and adopted, following amendments.

Article 139 - Indexing Synod Decisions

I. Material

Agenda Item 11.12 – Report of Deputies for Indexing Synod Decisions.

II. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

III. Proposal

To amend the deputies' mandate 4 to read: "make all the published Acts of the general Synods since the start of the FRCA available in electronic form to FRCA members, but not to publish them on the FRCA website at this time".

ADOPTED

IV. Proposal

To add to the deputies' mandate 1 the following: "and check for accuracy."

Ground

A comparison between the on-line edition and the 1994 published edition of articles 1-20 showed discrepancies in connection with articles 13 and 17.

ADOPTED

V. Proposal

To add a further mandate: “To place one bound paper copy in the archives after the decisions of Synod 2015 have been indexed.”

ADOPTED

VI. Proposal

To add a further mandate: “To review the publication of the Acts on the FRCA website in regards to the publication of sensitive information and develop an appropriate policy for online access.”

ADOPTED

VII. Proposal

To add a further mandate:

- a. to collate the changes made to the Church Order by past Synods;
- b. to place an updated or “clean” electronic copy of the Church Order on the FRCA website; and
- c. to publish (with the cooperation of Pro Ecclesia if possible) the updated church order which can be inserted into our liturgical book.

ADOPTED

VIII. Proposal

To accept the deputies’ report with the adopted amendments to the deputies’ mandate.

The mandate for Deputies for Indexing Synod Decisions should read:

1. continue the work of the late Rev G Van Rongen in collating the decisions of Synod as they relate to articles of the Church Order and check for accuracy;
2. publish these decisions on the official web page of the FRCA;
3. notify the churches of any changes when these decisions are updated;
4. make all the published Acts of the general Synods since the start of the FRCA available in electronic form to FRCA members, but not to publish them on the FRCA website at this time;
5. to review the publication of the Acts on the FRCA website in regards to the publication of sensitive information and develop an appropriate policy for online access;
6. to place one bound paper copy in the archives after the decisions of Synod 2015 have been indexed; and
 - a. to collate the changes made to the Church Order by past Synods;
 - b. to place an updated or “clean” electronic copy of the Church Order on the FRCA website; and

- c. to publish (with the cooperation of Pro Ecclesia if possible) the updated church order which can be inserted into our liturgical book.

ADOPTED

Article 140 - Report from Deputies for Infrastructure and Venue

I. Material

Report of the Deputies for Infrastructure and Venue.

II. Admissibility

The item is declared admissible.

III. Proposal

1. To thank the deputies for the work done and discharge them.
2. To appoint new deputies with the mandate to:
 - a. compile and maintain a Synod hosting handbook;
 - b. liaise with the next convening church regarding:
 - i. requirements for Synod venue;
 - ii. pass on handbook to next convening church when that consistory calls the “Synod Committee”;

- iii. maintain contact with Synod committee in their deliberations and preparations for Synod;
 - iv. be closely involved or part of the Venue Sub-Committee;
 - v. Request that Synod committee re-evaluates and updates the hand book if necessary and pass it back to the deputies;
 - vi. Provide and operate an audio system which includes the ability for delegates and audience to follow the discussion clearly;
- c. provide and maintain a computer system for delegates which includes but is not limited to:
 - i. easy to use;
 - ii. has central data storage;
 - iii. has convenient printing capability;
 - iv. has secure internal email facilities;
 - v. has data and email backup;
 - vi. provide a data projector for the audience to follow the discussion;
- d. work closely with convening committees and coordinate the audio-visual/computer matters of the Synod venue preparations;
- e. be available and able to assist at all Synod sessions;

- f. provide full computer and sound support;
- g. provide a general logistical support role during Synod for delegates;
- h. to provide a draft budget to the treasurer within the given time frame; and
- i. to report to the next Synod.

ADOPTED

Article 141 - Synod 2018

Synod appoints FRC Bunbury as convening church for Synod, to be held in mid-2018, DV.

Article 142 - Personal questions

Personal question period was made use of.

Article 143 - Acts of Synod

After various amendments, the Acts of Synod Articles 137 to 143 are adopted and approved for publishing on the internet.

Article 144 - Censure according to Article 47 Church Order

The Chairman states that there was no need for censure in this sitting of Synod.

Article 145 - Closing Address

The Chairman delivers his closing address (refer Appendix 1V). He asks all present to sing Psalm 43:3.

Article 146 - Closing of Synod

The Vice Chairman thanks the many who were involved in organising the Synod. He also thanks the Chairman for the excellent leadership he provided. He then invites all present to stand and sing Hymn 53:1 and 2 and leads in closing prayer.

The Chairman declares the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches closed.

ACTS OF SYNOD

Baldivis 2015

APPENDICES

Appendix 1A: Meditation text by Rev S 't Hart, Chairman of the convening church of Baldvis

Synods are a good thing. The regular coming together as a bond of churches is a sign of health, of working together, a visible display of the unity that we have together under Christ. We come together as a Synod because we are one. One body, just as there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.

We will see a visible demonstration of that unity tonight when the delegates to Synod will be asked to rise in order to confirm their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

We are one. We are united together in Christ.

And at the same time a Synod is a good thing to help *maintain* this unity. If we as churches would never meet together, we would become increasingly fragmented where each one does as he sees fit. At a Synod there is the need to work together and to find one another on the basis of the one true faith that we share. And that is why we may both rejoice in the unity that we so clearly have and at the same time must work to keep, even to strengthen the unity that we share. We are, as Ephesians 4:3 says, to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We do not know too much about what was happening in the Ephesian church when the apostle Paul wrote his letter to them. When it comes to how they related to one another, it could be that there were some interpersonal conflicts going on. After all, that is quite normal in any church. But we have no reason to think that the church at Ephesus suffered more from disunity we do, either in your own congregation or we as the Free Reformed Churches of Australia do overall. And so when

Ephesians 4 calls the church to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit we should not read this in the context of a unique problem that could be seen in Ephesus, but rather because being zealous for unity is a necessary consequence of your calling to share in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We can conclude this because Paul begins his call to keep the unity of the Spirit with the word “*therefore*”.

“I, *therefore*, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called”. (Chapter 4:1) That word “*therefore*” means that Paul’s reasons for telling us to be zealous for unity and to live in peace was not a new topic he wanted to raise, but the consequence or the result of what he had written before, in chapters 1-3.

Ephesians 1-3 reflect on and marvel at the wonder and the beauty of the Gospel, and at what a life-changing thing the Gospel is. Ephesians 2 paints the picture of what we were like before we received the Gospel. At that time we were dead in our trespasses and sins. We walked according to the ways of the world. We were sons of disobedience and slaves to Satan. We were aliens and strangers and were far off from God, having no hope and being without God in the world. In these verses Paul paints a picture of fallen mankind in a state of conflict, at enmity with God and with each other. Humanity was in an absolute mess. Brokenness, separation and disunity was the state that we were in.

But that is what God had come to change. And so the focus of these first chapters in Ephesians is not on our sin and misery, but on the blessed call that God has placed on our lives. Paul begins his letter in verse 3 of chapter 1 by saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.” And then Paul begins to list those blessings that we have received in Christ, starting with the miracle of our election. Out of sheer love, before we were even born, even before the foundation of the

world, God predestined us, He chose to call us out of a life of disunity and enmity and separation to be adopted to be His children and heirs of eternal life. He has redeemed us with the precious blood of Christ, granted us the forgiveness of sins and filled us with His Holy Spirit.

But there is also something else that is stressed in these first chapters of Ephesians. God has chosen us in Christ not just for our benefit, but “to the praise of His glory”. (Verse 12 and 14 of chapter 1.) And God is glorified in our election because it is in this way that He is uniting all things to Himself. He is doing all this, it says in chapter 1:10, so that “He might gather together in one all things in Christ.” This restoration of peace, of harmony, in both heaven and on earth, where all things are united in God through Christ, to His praise and glory, is the plan that God had before Him when He decided to gather His church. This is explained further in Chapter 1:22,23 –

“And He [that is God] put all things under His [that is Christ’s] feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

The Church is Christ’s body and *the fullness of Him who fills all in all*. This text is one of the great mysteries of the Bible. For what it says is that we God’s children have been brought together to become one body, and that this one body is both in Christ and is the body of Christ. And even more, the Church has become “the *fullness* of Christ.” In some mysterious way the united body that is Christ’s Church makes Him complete, makes him whole. Although Jesus is true God and therefore is self-sufficient and does not need anything, He has chosen to consider Himself complete when His Body the Church is complete and in full unity. John Calvin writes concerning this verse,

“This is the highest honour of the church, that, until He is united to us, the Son of God reckons Himself in

some measure imperfect. What consolation it is for us to learn that, not until we are in His presence, does He possess all His parts, or does He wish to be regarded as complete.”

So we have been elected to be a part of the Body of Christ. We as His Church have become one single united body in Him and in this way we become the fullness of Christ to the praise of His glory. And that’s our calling: that we might become the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

In Ephesians 4:3 Paul calls this the unity of the Spirit. It is a unity that has been created by God when He chose and gathered us together to become the one body of Christ. It is a unity that is at the very heart of what it means to be the Church of Christ.

And therefore we *are* united in one hope, in one Lord, one faith, one baptism. It can not be that when we are all joined to the One Head, Jesus Christ, that we are not united together at the same time. As Paul explained in Ephesians 2, Jews and Gentiles, who before were at enmity with each other are now fully united in Christ. Christ, who is our peace, has broken down the middle wall of separation and so now both Jew and Gentile have been reconciled together and are a part of the one body of Christ, His one Church. By nature we might be enemies, but in Christ we become His one, united body.

And *therefore*, says Paul in chapter 4:1, because of all that, let us now walk worthy of the calling to which we were called. Let us be zealous for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

And that makes the unity of the church a fundamental concern for all of us. Living in peace and unity as the church, the body of Christ, is the way in which we walk worthy of the calling to which we were called.

That applies to how we live and act together as brothers and sisters in our own congregations. It applies to how we resolve our differences and preferences over small matters. And it also applies to how we deal with matters that are of greater consequence, also with respect to that matters our Synod will need to make decisions on over the next week or two.

Yes, there is one Lord and one faith and one baptism. And yes, the unity that we enjoy is, Ephesians 4:13 says, the unity of the faith – even as our catechism puts it, the unity of the *true* faith. It is our task to uphold that faith and to defend it, that “we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:13). We must stand firm in these matters because those things affect the unity that we have *in Christ*. But even then, even when we deal with matters of such great importance we must always have the glory of God as our focus. In all humility we must place God and His glory first and seek to honour and praise Him by maintaining the unity of the Spirit, that unity that can be found in the one faith and in the one Lord, and by maintaining this unity in the bond of peace.

In practice that looks like this. Ephesians 4:2 – “with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.”

As we walk with all lowliness and gentleness we will submit ourselves to God and humble ourselves before Him. We will be longsuffering, patient with others. We will make allowances for other peoples’ shortcomings, being gracious when we see their faults. And we will bear with one another in love. We are not perfect and we are all different, but we will accept one another and love them for who they are in Christ. The fact that we may all rise and truly affirm our full agreement with the Word of God and the confessions is the foundation of how we speak and deal with one another.

It is striking that the call to walk in lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering etc. is repeated in many of the letters in the New Testament. Although we have the unity of the Spirit in principle, it is something we must endeavour to keep. And we all need to grow in godliness to do that. For while others in the church might be saints, they still come with sin and weakness. And more importantly, *I* and *you* come with sin and weakness. And therefore we must strive and work hard and be zealous to keep the unity of the Body through a life of lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.

But now can we do it? Can we keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? No, of ourselves we can not. But it is the unity of the *Spirit*. And the Holy Spirit is able! Ephesians 3:20 says that He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. And moving forward in the power of the Holy Spirit we live and work in unity today, looking towards the future when this unity is complete and we are fully in Christ and He in us. Amen.

Appendix 1B: Opening address by the Chairman of the convening church of Baldivis

Delegates to Synod, Overseas delegates and visitors, brothers and sisters.

On behalf of the convening church of Baldivis it is my pleasure to give a word of welcome at the beginning of Synod Baldivis 2015.

The hosting of a Synod in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia is fast becoming a once-in-a-lifetime event. With sixteen churches in our federation and a Synod every three years, each church can be expected to host a Synod once every 48 years. However with the way that the Lord has

blessed our churches in continued growth Baldivis might be waiting a lot longer than that before it is our turn once again. I don't know whether to be happy or sad about that. Although it has been a lot of work for a lot of people it is a blessed privilege to welcome you all for the duration of this Synod. We are honoured to have you and we have already experienced the truth of Acts 20:35 that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

We are delighted not just to welcome the delegates from Classis North, Classis Central and Classis SouthWest but also from overseas.

From our sister churches we welcome the following:

From the Canadian Reformed Churches: Br. O. Bouwman and Br. J. VanLaar

From the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa: Br. H. Moes.

From the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands: Rev. J. Plug and Br. J. de Jong.

From the Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea: Dr. Kyong Ho Kwon.

From the GGRI of Indonesia, Rev. Ferdy Tipa Kaya of Sumba and for the first time a minister from Papua, Indonesia, Rev. Yan Wambraw.

Then from the churches with whom we have official contact:

From the GGRC of Indonesia, br. Soleman Dethan.

From the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore: Rev. Chong Nam Tuck & Br. Leong Yew Hoong.

From the Reformed Churches of New Zealand: Rev. L de Vos and Rev. P. Archbald.

From the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (restored), now referred to as the DGK: Br. A. VanderNet

We also welcome Rev. DongSup Song of the Jayoo Reformed Church in Korea. Although we have no formal contact with these Reformed Churches, they desire to establish contact with us.

A number of these delegates have not yet arrived but by the end of tomorrow we anticipate that most will be here.

With such a large number of overseas guests and a relatively small area at the front of the church building, as convening church we decided that the Australian delegates would sit at the table. Overseas delegates will be seated behind desks at the front of the church also. That will all be set up by tomorrow morning.

The delegates have had to do a lot of preparation for the Synod with deputies' reports numbering about 450 pages and then a large amount of incoming correspondence from the churches. We wish the delegates strength from the Lord and the blessed presence of His Holy Spirit as they discuss these things in the days ahead.

With these words I declare Synod Baldivis 2015 to be open.

Appendix 1C: Address by Pastor Chong Nam Tuck on behalf of the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore

Beloved brethren in Christ

We bring warm Christian greetings from First Evangelical Reformed Church, Singapore.

Firstly, we would like to express our appreciation to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia for your invitation, through your deputies, to attend this Synod. It is a privilege for us to witness and learn how a Synod of a reformed federation of churches conducts her proceedings in a way that is in accordance to God's word.

The First Evangelical Reformed Church, Singapore, was founded more than 33 years ago with the help of the Protestant Reformed Church of America (PRCA). We subscribe to the same confessions as you do - the Three Forms of Unity.

As the Lord increased our church in Singapore; we split into two churches and became a denomination called the Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore (ERCS). And our denomination also formed a sisterly relationship with the PRCA.

About 10 years ago the ERCS had a split due to the issue of remarriage of the innocent party. And because the denomination was dissolved, our sisterly relationship with the PRCA was likewise dissolved.

Today, we are an independent congregation and our membership currently stands at about 320.

The reach of the ministry of the gospel has so far been mainly within Singapore; nevertheless, whenever the Lord opens doors elsewhere with like-minded churches, we take them as opportunities to co-work with them in the work of the gospel. An example is with the Covenant Grace Church in Penang, Malaysia.

In fact, just last year, we formally entered into a relationship of fellowship with them after many years of informal contact. Currently, our work with them includes the supply of pulpit once a month and evangelistic outreach work in a rural village.

We acknowledge that the work of the gospel is bigger than what we can do alone; we thus recognize the need for mutual support and help from Reformed brethren in fulfilling the Great Commission in Singapore and in the neighboring countries.

We are also thankful to God for the past contact with FRCA that started many years ago due to the friendship of brother Spike Fokkema and a member of our church.

After the split of our churches, and with the resignation of our Pastor, FERC received much needed helps from the Canadian Reformed Churches and the FRCA. Particularly we are thankful for all the pulpit assistance rendered to us till date from ministers like Pastor Rupke and Pastor Huizinga and ministers from CanRC like Ptr Conellis Van Spronson, Ptr Ben Barrans; Dr Van Dam and Dr Vissher, Ptr Wes Bredenhof, Ptr Steven T'Hart; Ptr Ted Van Spronson.

We are also thankful for the provision of ministerial training in CanRC Theological Seminary to our present minister Pastor Chong Nam Tuck at a short notice.

Our exchanges with the FRCA to date have by the leading hand of God progressed well and we are delighted with the deputies' recommendation for sisterly relationship with FERC in this Synod.

We look forward to a fruitful and God honouring discussion on this matter and we pray with you for the Lord blessings and for a successful Synod meeting. May His will be done and His name magnified in all the decisions you will take at this meeting.

In the Lord

Pastor Chong Nam Tuck

On behalf of the Session of the First Evangelical Reformed
Church, Singapore

Appendix 1D: Address by Rev L de Vos on behalf of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand

Esteemed brothers in our Lord, Jesus Christ:

I grew up near Winnipeg, Manitoba, so I share some knowledge of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

When I began my ministry in the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches in Surrey British Columbia, I organized a ministerial meeting made up of Canadian Reformed men, Free Reformed (Canada), and others. Rev Van Delden reminded me today that we held one of our meetings at his home in Lynden WA at the time. While in Surrey I met Rev. Gerry and Jack Visscher and greatly appreciated their friendship.

I enjoyed meeting some of your brothers and getting to know far more about your churches at our meeting in Geelong, November of 2013. It is possible that you were more diligent in gleaning information from us, than we were from you. Your report reflects that we had a thorough discussion and grew to know each other better and as a result, I believe, trust each other more than previously.

I suppose that the key questions we must answer here are: So what mutual advantages would developing a sister-church relationship have for us? I will try to list a few:

Just as a good marriage is usually made up of a man and wife with differing strengths and personalities, to complement one another, so are federations of churches.

1. Mutual Edification in our Confession and Practice of the Reformed Faith.

I do not know you nearly as well as brother Paul, here. But from what I do know I believe that you can help sharpen our thinking about covenant theology. (Your report reflects this regarding the title to our Form for Adult Baptism.)

I believe that you understand church order principles and practice very well. We have had a blend of pastors and backgrounds in our churches. Not each pastor or church is as well grounded in understanding the principles of the Church Order of Dort.

I also believe that you are strong in upholding confessional orthodoxy. You know the Confessions and endorse strong explanations of the Heidelberg Catechism in your teaching and preaching ministry. From my experience, we might be a little weak on our confessional knowledge.

Perhaps we can offer you some benefits as well. Although we do not practice strict uniformity, we manage to stay together and grow stronger together. Our churches are made up of a number of Reformed and Presbyterian backgrounds that have been blended together. These strands can become complicated at times, but have a peculiar strength and beauty.

All of our churches are very friendly and welcoming. Michael King in his History of New Zealand says that the first of many European imports consumed in New Zealand was a dead Dutchman! Abel Tasman's crewman was killed and then eaten by the Maori in Golden Bay (Tasman called it Moodreenaar's Baai!). I can assure you that we no longer eat Dutchmen as we once did! Many of our churches are looking outward with a zeal to see the saving power of Jesus Christ in the lives of our neighbours.

2. Mutual Encouragement Before the Watching World.

We live in evil times. It is clear that the western world is fast collapsing. We call good evil and evil good. We see

foundations from the beginning collapsing regarding the institution of marriage. When God's creation ordinances and commandments are spurned, society loses its foundations. I believe that such times call for like-minded believers to stand strong, shoulder to shoulder.

3. Mutual Accountability Regarding Confessional Orthodoxy and Integrity.

Like you, we are alarmed when we see hermeneutics that we believe undermine the authority of God's Word. I grew up in the Christian Reformed Churches and saw how gradually this process begins. I also see how destructive it is today. But the problems we face are not just out there. There is always a temptation in each of us to think that we are wiser than God. We are weak sinners, and need to be held accountable. What a blessing that we all can look to Christ alone as our wisdom, sanctification and redemption.

It is my prayer that the Lord will continue to give you much wisdom, patience and love in your deliberations.

Acts 20:28-32 ²⁸ "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. ³² "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Appendix 1E: Address by Rev D Song on behalf of the Jayoo Reformed Church in Korea

Esteemed brothers in the Lord,

Thank you, Brothers. Thank you Chairman. I am DongSup Song, a Minister of the Reformed Churches in Korea. I wish to express thanks for your kind welcoming. On behalf of our federation, I would like to extend sincere heartfelt greetings to you. As you know I visited you last year with my fellow ministers, and stay in John Bosveld' house. At that time John was my best organizer with Stephen 't Hart. So I enjoyed my visit so much.

It is a great honor and privilege for me to stand here. Let me introduce our church Reformed Churches in Korea briefly. The history of our churches is very young. The federation was founded in 2005 and it adopted Three Forms of Unity as our confessional standards, Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, Canons of Dort. Even though we are living in a secularized apostasy surroundings, we are trying to hold fast on to the rich tradition of Reformed heritage. We are using Korean-Genevan Psalter for worship service. This is the first in Korean church history.

Most of Korean churches have only one unified songbook. And there is general decline in the churches. This decline is not equally noticeable in every respect in all the congregations. For example Gospel songs and Christian contemporary musics are prevailed over most of churches. So they don't know psalms-singing in Geneva tune. Even more they think it a practice of heretical sects.

The many hymns in their unified songbook owe to the false notion that in the worship service not the glory of God but the believer's personal thinking and feeling stand central.

So our use of the Psalms as Songbook of the covenant is the first liturgical practice in the Korean church history over 120 years.

Now we have a small beginning of the Psalms singing and enjoy this Geneva tune Psalms singing so much for almost 10 years. We experience all colourful spiritual inspirations in Psalms singing. No wonder that our children like them much more than adults. But you know, we have a few difficulties in Korean Christian culture. First of all, these Psalmic melodies can not be accustomed so well to contemporary common Christians. For this reason sometime we sing the psalms in 4 parts Sop, Alto, Tenor, Bass recorders and piano without organs in our churches, RCK. We are trying to sing the Psalms in 4 parts. This is the second difficulty to overcome against Korean church cultural atmosphere. Most of Korean churches have their own choirs in their worship service. This decline is by itself already sufficient reason for reformation in liturgy. It is not easy for us to overcome this Korean music tradition.

Just like CanRC and you, we have revised our Korean Book of Praise since last year. Our first edition has some errors. This revision will be taken about 5 years. We hope then so much. As you said, we will have better treasure in Korea sooner or later. Would you give me any advices in this project?

It is well known to outside that there are many protestant denominations and more than fifty groups splitted from one Presbyterian body since 1951 in Korea. In view of this situations some of you may think that founding the reformed Church in Korea may be another splitting. But we could not find another alternative in order to build up a true and faithful church in the present situations of Korean Churches. Our federation RCK has four congregations and about 200 members now. The King of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us so richly till now from the small beginning.

There are still some ministers who come to our study meeting with a desire to join our federation sooner or later.

As I said, the federation of our churches is about 10 years old. Therefore, we are eager to have cooperation through a close relationship with faithful reformed churches in the world for building up the true church of the Lord in this country. As a young federation we are not yet in the capacity to do all things about. Our foremost duty for the moment is to concentrate on strengthening the bond of our Churches in Korea, coming up with all of you in ICRC.

Furthermore, we are also called to seek unity with those who wholeheartedly want to place themselves under the authority of Christ Jesus and the Word of God. Thus it is our duty to turn towards you and to ask you to acknowledge us as being a true Reformed Churches in Korea. Especially I introduce Dr S G Hur. As you know, he was your emeritus minister of Kelmscott church. According to our Lord's command, we have a mission for our being one in Korea and all over the world.

We can only address this acknowledging our own many weaknesses and dependence on our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Church. We also confess guilt in relation to the deformation and desertion of the covenant within Protestants in Korea. May the Lord sanctify and bless us on the road of ongoing reformation in being faithful to His Word.

You may be certainly aware that the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches will be held from 30 October 2013 in Busan, Korea. The spirit of modern ecumenism is so deep and wide penetrated into Korea that even churches which have been regarded as conservative in the past are in confused situations. Denominationally true and faithful church that challenges against the spirit of modern ecumenism can hardly be found in Korea. Many churches seem to disarm themselves. There is not so much interest to preserve reformed truth and to build up a true and faithful church.

Please pray for us in facing serious struggles in Korea that the Lord allows to happen. In facing all these struggles we see them as lessons of faith of our Lord to teach us to grow more and more in fear of Him and obey His Words in this atmosphere of apostasy.

Our churches have much interest in FRCA, so we are here as visitors. In due time we will certainly take serious considerations to have an ecclesiastical fellowship with you. We hope and pray to have a close relationship with all your churches from now on.

Here West Australia, there may be our footprints for the first time with your 50-year footprints, and unseen footprints of our Lord according to Psalm 77:19 "Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."!!!

I would like to finish our introduction of our churches (RCK) in just quoted prayer.

Thank you for your welcoming and hospitality. May our Lord bless FRCA and lead all of you continually.

Appendix 1F: Address by Rev J Plug on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

Dear brothers

How many of you would be comfortable explaining just what hermeneutics is? I mean, for instance, what exactly the difference is between that and exegesis? And, of course, how to identify a 'new' hermeneutics and how that differs from the 'old' hermeneutics? How many of you here would be able to do that? Show of hands?

Tricky, isn't it? But this does suggest a problem. We use words. We don't like not using certain words, especially when

everyone else seems to be using them. But we tend to fill them by osmosis. Meaning trickles in. And a word like hermeneutics begins to take on a life of its own. It becomes a reflection of our gut feeling. There are changes happening. A shift which does not feel right. To us. Then someone, somewhere, said: *the bits and pieces that make up this shift have a common thread. A 'new hermeneutics'.* And this term seems to help make sense of our discomfort.

So far so good. But then something else starts happening. We start attaching the new word to other things we observe, and aren't convinced are okay. And before long it becomes a catchall for everything we do not understand, or do not agree with, or are worried about. And because we know that the *new hermeneutics* is not to be trusted, all these developments are by definition suspect.

Brothers, you may not agree with my analysis. But I have become leery of using words to which most people cannot attach a precise meaning. Because they are risky. I think we are better served by the simple words of Scripture. And to stick to their plain meaning.

The apostle Peter in his second epistle, writes: *knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.* No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation. Scripture is its own interpreter. No man, academic or unstudied, minister or 'layperson' dare interpret Scripture upon his own authority.

25 years ago, you sent me to be trained in the spirit of these words. You entrusted to me an awesome responsibility. You exhorted me, in the words of Paul: *be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* Neither you nor I could foresee where the Lord would call me to serve Himself

and his people by that word of truth. With conviction I have done so in your sister churches in the Netherlands.

Those churches have changed. Life and history is change. By experience. By treasures old and new, brought forth from an inexhaustible source of wisdom, God's word. *I've changed, during the course of my life as student and minister. I have had many teachers. Some academic, many more far from that. I recall with respect brother Hans Vermeulen. Just before our departure from Albany, he took me aside. He said: are you sure that you will be able to correct people, firmly speaking the truth, even when they are not willing to hear it? I treasure that lesson. He spoke because he knew me, and I needed this scriptural reminder. Just last week I visited sister Hummel, a member of my congregation. 95 years old. Twice each Sunday, she shuffles 800m to church, leaning on her walker. I'm so thankful, she said, for our worship services. For the preaching, but also for our songs. Especially Opwekking. I understand these songs, and they remind me of what's truly important. Don't be discouraged if you have to deal with criticism. Be faithful, and remember that there are always people praying for you.*

My training in Hamilton changed me. Sometimes I didn't want to be changed. I struggled with some of the things Professor van Dam said. The genealogies of Genesis 5, he insisted, should be re-interpreted. The idea that you can calculate how many years after creation the great flood occurred, on the basis of what that chapter says, should be abandoned. It simply does not match what we have discovered outside of Scripture. So we need to accept that there are questions, some of which we cannot answer. I still struggle with that. But I recognise my teacher's faithfulness to Scripture. And it inspires me. I thought I knew things about preaching. But Prof. de Jong pointed me to a book by John Stott on the art of preaching: *Between Two Worlds*. This book still holds a place of honor on my bookshelf. And it doesn't just stay there. It has taught me something I keep reminding myself: preaching

is bridge building, between God's holy word, and people who live in this unholy world. Both ends of the bridge need to be given full weight. Professor Gootjes brought my appreciation of John Calvin to a new level. He impressed upon me what he called Calvin's *exegetical conscience*. The humility and the courage not to let what you always thought Scripture says, nor predominant church points of view, determine your interpretation. But always to be open to new insights, if Scripture provides arguments for such.

I do not have the time to tell about all of my teachers. Prof. Geertsema, who took such great pleasure in unearthing new treasures which had always been hidden in the New Testament. Or Rev. Kernohan, who in his retirement started me off on biblical Hebrew, a Baptist but truly a man of God. André, who waged a constantly losing battle against alcoholism, but continued to witness of the grace of Jesus Christ. I thank God for each and every one of them. And I pray he will send me many more such teachers. To challenge me, to change me, to make me ever more a worker approved to God, with no need to be ashamed.

You may wonder, brothers, where is the point of all of this. Are we listening to a delegate from a foreign sister church speaking to our Synod, conveying greetings and speaking to us on matters of common interest? There are greater issues at stake. We have decisions to make. Recommendations to deal with. Let him speak to those!

No, brothers. I do not think that there are greater issues at stake. There is no greater issue than God's gracious dealings with the stumbling, fallible, committed, insecure, saved sinners who make up his church. Brothers and sisters who belong together because they belong to Christ. And who need each other in order to grow after his image.

You stand before decisions concerning your sister churches in the Netherlands which you feel you need to make. You will be

doing so on the basis of your deputies' report, with its two alternative recommendations. This, in turn, is embedded in a long history of - most recently - admonition, and before that of expressed concerns.

Reading and rereading that long history, reports of the present deputies and of their predecessors, I see the portrayal of a church federation in which the authority of Scripture is not maintained. A church federation in which prophecy of Scripture is made subject to private interpretation. A church federation where its workers no longer rightly divide the word of truth. Unfaithfulness is the common thread which brings together the changes which have occurred and which continue to occur. Unfaithfulness, even willful disobedience, motivated by a desire to accommodate God's word to cultural demands.

Brothers, you need to do what you need to do. But I stand before you today, and say to you that this is not a portrayal of the churches within which I serve. You have constructed a reality which does not match the reality of which I am a part. Your view of the intents and purposes of those who train our future ministers, their commitment to the authority of Scripture and their determination to let Scripture be its own interpreter is mistaken. From Lord's Day to Lord's Day faithful ministers of the word continue to make an honest effort to fulfill their awesome responsibility. You were wrong to frame your concerns in the form of an admonition, and your sister churches were justified in not acceding to this admonition. The reformed churches in the Netherlands continue to reject all errors contrary to the word of God, and are firmly committed to upholding the reformed confessions.

Yes, some of the decisions they make, before God and in his service, are decisions you disagree with. Your understanding of His will does not coincide, in all respects, with theirs. Some of the questions they are facing, should, from your perspective, not even be acknowledged as legitimate questions. But they are, and will remain, your sister churches.

Even if you should, which we sincerely hope will not be the case, decide to formally end or curtail the relationship. Synod decisions do not make or break who and what we are to each other in Christ. Synod decisions do have the potential to hinder or to promote the fulfilment of our mutual mandate in His kingdom.

Materially:

1. Synod Ede did not accept the M/V deputies report; they rejected the deputies line of argumentation; they were adamant that any discussion of a possibly renewed role of women in the church be solidly based on Scripture, and on a thorough exploration of the scriptural idea of office. Whatever varied opinions there are (among our 120.000 church members and almost 300 churches!) the position of *the* churches is not reflected in the report.
2. The decisions with respect to the Netherlands Reformed Churches do not appear consistent with that. Not to you, and not to many within our churches. There is every room for appeal, and the appeals will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
3. You received a letter on behalf of Synod which was, in my judgment and in some respects, inappropriately worded. I believe this was in large part due to language problems. We have no authority to apologise for this letter, but I would express regret at offense caused, and take responsibility for it. The sentiment intended was *not* that you cease addressing us on issues of real concern, but to stop repeating yourself on those issues which have already been taken note of and which are not of paramount concern, and about which you yourselves are far from unanimous.
4. Hermeneutics *are* and need to be a matter of discussion. Robust theological discussion, as Hamilton

demonstrates. This discussion needs to take place, and is taking place, in the Netherlands. But it is a discussion which is far broader than can take place fruitfully within the scope of *the maintenance of* sister-church relations. We plead with you to stand with us, *within* a firm, non-adversarial, and committed sister-church relationship, *while* the discussion takes its course, here, there, and in other parts of the world. We are convinced that we need you, and that you need us; that the Lord of the church has given us to each other in order to further this discussion.

5. The same is true with respect to the discussion on what Scripture teaches with regard to the special office. There are real questions here which we – at least in the Netherlands – can no longer leave unaddressed. And we have sincerely asked for and continue to say that we need your engagement in this respect. Please do not withdraw from your responsibility towards us, and allow us to continue to exercise ours towards you.

Your sister churches greet you, and pray that the Lord of the church will bless your deliberations, will cause you to remain faithful to his revealed will, and will grant us – from both sides - the ability and the commitment to speaking (and hearing!) the truth in love.

**Address 1G: Response to the address of Rev L de Vos
by Rev J Kroeze**

I have been given the privilege of responding to our RCNZ delegates, br. Rev. Leo de Vos and Rev. Paul Archbald. I suppose I have been chosen to reply as a sometime deputy to the RCNZ as the present deputies are not present.

We thank you for the greetings you passed on. At the time you gave your address I wondered how I would have to respond. I had prepared a speech, but had to change it substantially as events moved faster than I had anticipated. This evening I am thankful to be able welcome you as deputies of a sister church. Tonight I can say, welcome brothers as we rejoice together in this historic step.

Our churches have finally taken the step. The road began already in 1962 when the RCNZ is first mentioned in our Synod Acts in connection with concerns about the relations to the Dutch Synodical churches. In 1985 it was noted that they had cut those ties. Then in 1996 the move towards sister church relations was begun by the RCNZ recognizing us as true churches of our Lord. The road to sister church relations has not been smooth, but at long last we have been able to take this step, for which we thank God.

However, although this might seem to be the end of the road, it is not. It is the beginning of a new road where we have to learn to walk together. Just as you have built strong ties with the CRCA, so now we will have to build strong ties between us. As there are different cultures in our two federations, so we will have to learn to understand each other and our ways of doing things.

This can't be left to chance, but we will have to work at that. Rev. Leo de Vos spoke of cooperation between our churches, about the strong and weak points of each federation and how we can be mutually of assistance. May we constructively engage with each other, not as lesser and greater sisters, but as equals mutually assisting each other and strengthening each other in the faith in the manner the Apostle Paul so beautifully expresses in Rom 1:8-15.

Address 1H: Address by Br J de Jong of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

To the Synod of the FRCA gathered in Baldivis June 2015.

Dear Brothers and sisters. Thanks for being again invited to your Synod and being allowed to address your Synod. My name is Johan de Jong, elder in the Reformed church of Ede-Zuid and starting to know your Churches better as I happen to be here now for the third time in three years time. I wished for better reasons off course. Rather than talk about what differs between us, I would have preferred to talk about what unites us. A lot more actually, I believe. Still I feel obliged to spend a some words on the current situation between our two churches. I liked to add to the words of Johan Plug a personal observation as an engaged believer in our churches.

It is very tempting now to talk directly about why we as Churches in the Netherlands think that the admonitions sent to us by your Synod don't have a firm ground. I would try not to do that, as I want to ask your attention for a more fundamental issue on our mutual understanding. I'm not talking here about a religious or theologically fundamental difference of which the perceived difference in hermeneutics is one, but a practical one. I refer to what I call the extent of our responsibility while living in God's world.

This reach was made clear to Adam when he was ordained to give names to animals according to their nature, explore the world and govern it. That reach wasn't diminished after the fall but needed Christ to make us God's co-workers again. An immense responsibility as we face it today in many ways. A responsibility essential to human beings, not living as robots but as humans, able to sincerely praise God. Luckily we face this responsibility equipped with gifts to understand, to fail as well because of our imperfection, to recognize failure in the end, inspired by the Holy Spirit and then reassess the issue again but ... all this in order to grow as believers! Grow as

matured adults, who don't drink milk anymore, to grow as humans empowered and enlightened in Christ and the Holy Spirit, to grow in his Kingdom coming.

How serious do we, as individual believers, take this call upon our 'enlightened' capabilities? Enlightened in Christ and the Holy Spirit.

How often did we fail by using God's word for slavery, unjust wars, forced conversions, etc. The History of misinterpretations of biblical words is really too long to recall here. What did we learn from all that? That we are likely going to make mistakes again, and for that we need each other. However, we should not conclude from this to stop interpreting the world around us and God's Word about that world. The latter by consequence always in new contexts. Contexts which determine our questions, as well as our ways of answering. But never to dismiss from our calling to use our image of God capacities within us, which enables us to make our own choices in life again and again. The Bible itself is a long recall of that history of church development in time, always a struggle in understanding. And we need to use the Bible for that in a non-Historical-Critical, Canonical, Ecclesiastical and Confessional Way. And I see ministers doing precisely that every Sunday during their sermons.

Today's Dutch society and our broader position in a globalized world has brought that day to day struggle to interpret, to understand God's will today, fully back again, when we are facing a world moving away from his commandments, even moving away from the awareness of a higher being. Within the Netherlands the once comfortable pillars are torn down partly enforced partly as the result of our own deliberate choices, choices put before us. On a global scale environmental issues, war & poverty and injustice fight for attention asking for our choices and help.

Why am I telling this to you? I started my conscious life in very much the same church as you. Born in 1958, Church life wasn't much different from yours at the time. Not so long before that date instituted and born out of the GKV, if I may say so. When I arrived here for the first time, now 3 years ago I recognized our churches from my youth and seriously asked myself, couldn't we have maintained this containment? No doubts, being solely raised within the church community is a tremendous help to learn to know God's word and his love for his Children in almost all aspects of life. But at a risk as I better understand now. Society is unstoppably inclining towards individualism, basically a very much reformation initiated phenomena after all. Aren't we all individually held responsible to live the life with Christ?

This trend, however towards individualism will have a special appeal to adolescents who are to make very profound choices on matters where society is pervasively pointing in other directions. The more so this happens if youngsters follow higher education, travel the world, read newspapers. And I'm sure that happens here as well. I also made that journey and recognized that questions concerning God's plan with this world transcend Church boundaries and this is increasingly so recognized by our Children. I see the youngsters in our churches longing for a life with the love of Christ visible in their day to day choices, choices, requesting a fully personal involvement and confrontation within **their** lives. They ask the elder people to show them what it means a life with Christ in this world, to give the example. How do we bring the Gospel to our neighbours, to the Muslim people in our country, how do we fight injustice, reach out to the poor and refugee's asking for help every day. How can I personally praise God and experience his presence in my life? We need to do that with our fellow Christians. I'll come back to these questions when reading Matthew 5 later on.

These are the needs which we share!!

Within our Churches I see relevant sermons on these issues, with the church as indispensable base. I see a real longing for a life with Christ during every day of the week. These sermons give new answers to this longing, not necessarily the only possible answers, but please don't mix these new answers which are indeed sometimes based upon new interpretations of the Word, with modernity as it appeared in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century and running parallel or even following from Historical-Critical use of the scripture. This would undervalue the sincere intentions and outcomes of these sermons which honestly respond to the earlier mentioned longing for a life with Christ every day, fit to the individuals in their personal circumstances in a fully secular society. I see for instance new answers developing in critical confrontation with science, but seldom if ever undervaluing God's Word which clearly and sufficiently tells, without any doubts on what we need to know and to believe for our salvation, as is stated in article 7 of our Dutch/Belgian confession.

I want to finish by reading Matthew 5 verses 17-20.

In these verses we are urged to the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets, not by destroying them but by looking for righteousness, for which so many long these days. And to do this by enlarging our righteousness to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. What this means in today's society is in a profound way explained in the following verses (But I say to you). These verses asks for many new answers in today's world not by doing away the framework of the Law and Prophets but by taking them one step further in our lives today as taught by Jesus.

I firmly believe that we need each other to learn how to do that.

Address 1I: Response to the address of Rev J Plug by Rev RD Anderson

Geliefde gebroeders Johan, dear brothers,

It is, on the one hand, a privilege for me to be able to address you as delegates from a church federation which I was able to serve for some 16 years. My – in total – 20 years in the Netherlands have taught me much, and much of that has come from the RCN itself. My experience among the Dutch churches taught me, for example, about the functioning of Reformed church polity, particularly in a large federation. I had many pleasurable experiences with colleagues, including a trip to Israel with, among others, Rev. J. Plug here in 1998. The churches entrusted me with lecturing on their behalf in many far flung lands and – dare I say – during my time there they also managed to file off some of my rough edges, although they never managed to get rid my beard.

However, my response this evening also has a sad note. Already during my final years in the Netherlands the winds were changing. Although I could thoroughly enjoy serving a faithful local church right up to the last day, the experiences with the federation were becoming more and more difficult. Three years ago I accepted a call to move here to Australia.

As Synod we have not yet finished our discussion of our deputies' proposals with respect to our sister relationship. Synod Baldivis has, however, already concluded a number of things: to wit, a *unanimous* agreement that we have genuine serious concerns about what is happening in the RCN, concerns which have resulted in admonition and which demand consequences. Synod has also decided to go in the direction of a suspension of our sister relationship. The details are still to be worked out.

This is nothing if not serious. Family members that will no longer be welcome at table with each other. What has

happened?

Is it just a serious case of real miscommunication? Are we talking past each other? After all, both the RCN and the FRCA claim to want to take God's Word seriously. Both claim to love the Lord. Both claim to want to serve the Lord with heart and soul.

Nevertheless, as Scripture warns us. Such claims are not enough. It is our concern that there are those in the RCN who are misinterpreting Scripture, setting aside its plain meaning, with the result they are in many ways conforming themselves to the norms of secular modern society. Two prime examples, also mentioned in our deputies' report, being that of women in office and the so-called pastoral tolerance of practising homosexuality. All the learned reasoning in the world cannot change what our Lord has clearly and plainly taught with respect to these things. We here in Australia, from young to old, tradesman to university graduate, are simply stunned and astonished that such views could exist among those professing to follow Christ.

Now, don't get me wrong. We well know that it is certainly not the case that everyone in our Dutch sister churches has begun thinking in this way. It is perhaps not even the majority. But we are astounded that such views are tolerated. We are astounded that the church leadership, whether that be lecturers at Kampen or the broader assemblies of the churches, are prepared to tolerate such things. I think of Christ's warnings to many of the churches in Asia Minor in Revelation 2 and 3. The church at Thyatira, for example, commended for their works, love, service, faith and patience, but severely reprimanded and told to repent for the *toleration* of evils.

Brothers, it is our hope and prayer that the Lord may yet grant repentance to your churches. Repentance for the toleration of those espousing views that clearly contradict God's holy Word.

We pray that He would grant wisdom to the many brothers and sisters we have there who would still seek to honestly find the righteous path to follow, for churches in the federation earnestly desiring to remain truly Reformed in complete subservience to the Lord of the church.

We pray, brothers, that you might yet be able to stand in our shoes and begin to understand what it means for us to feel compelled to say these things. We pray that you would hear in our words and decisions, not only a love for our Saviour and His Word, but also our genuine love for you.

**Address 1J: Address by Rev Dr Kwon Kyong Ho of the
Kosin Presbyterian Churches in Korea**

I greet you warmly in the wonderful name of our Lord, whom we confess with full our hearts as our only Saviour, the beginning and end of our common faith.

Introduction

It is my wonderful privilege to be here on behalf of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK) and to bring you greetings from our brothers and sisters who still stand firmly in their faith. For me it is a unique privilege to visit Australia for the first time and to get to know your beautiful country. Today is the memorial day of Korean War. Korean people really appreciate to Australia for that you sent the army troops to help our country against North Korean communists during Korean War in 1950 to 1953. Through making the supreme sacrifice of your many people, we kept the freedom of our country out of menace of communism and also we kept our faith to believe in God. We also thank you for the invitation to this, the meeting of the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. I want to reassure you that we, the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea truly treasure our relations with

your churches and we want to assure you that you are always in our prayers. We are thankful to share with you a hearty unity and pray that our relations may grow and be strengthened by our Lord so that the name of God may be glorified by our commitment to each other. It is a great blessing and pleasure to the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea to have a sister church relationship with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. It is a heartfelt desire for us as deputies for foreign relations to inform each other as churches about how church life is developing. I know that we have linguistic and cultural barrier between you and us. For all that, mutual relationship can help us to remember each other, to assist each and to pray for each other. Even though I had got over 20 hours for journey for Synod from home to here, but I am very glad to see Australian brothers and sisters, and I have seen the Synod and family life with my deep emotion. I will tell to our churches about yours and Synod.

Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea

By 2014 General Assembly's report, we have 38 local Presbyteries, about 1,800 local churches and 470,000 congregations. We try to make a constant effort for 3,000 local churches movement. Our churches are sending more 370 overseas missionaries for 50 countries for Evangel to all over the world now. Especially our churches are preparing to widespread the Gospel to the all of North Korea after a reunified Korea. Now in North Korea, unfortunately there are no real church, but are some underground churches. North Korean people has not ordinary human right, only they shrine and serve to Kim's family as god. All of North Korean Christians hardly suffered persecution by North Korean communist government. Please could you pray for North Korean people and underground Christians? Now there are about 30,000 North Korean refugees in Korea, we thank to God for that many North Korean refugees received the Gospel and have the right to become children of God.

Our Faith

The Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK) is a branch of the true church of Jesus Christ, founded on God's Holy Word, and holds to the Reformed Faith. Since the coming of Protestant missionaries to Korea in 1884, the Korean churches have had an astonishing development. For about half a century from the first entry of the Gospel, the Korean churches grew steadily, but under Japan's imperialistic domination the churches underwent many difficulties. In this period two kinds of problems afflicted the Korean church:

First, the infiltration of theological liberalism.

Second, the Japanese Shinto shrine issue.

Finally, on September 10, 1938, the yet undivided Korean Presbyterian Church, at its 27th General Assembly meeting at the Pyongyang Westgate Church, broke down under this repression, and approved shrine observance. Both before and after this tragic decision, ministers, elders, deacons, and ordinary believers, who merely wished to live according to the Bible and so refused shrine worship, were arrested in large numbers. Eventually some fifty became martyrs of their faith under this terrible persecution.

On August 15, 1945, Japan was defeated, Korea was liberated, and on August 17, those who had been imprisoned for their opposition to Shinto shrine observance were released. Two among them, Rev. Joo NamSun and Rev. Han SangDong, founded Korea Theological Seminary a year later in Busan on September 20, 1946, to train church leaders in order to reform the erring Korean churches. This action began anew the training of church leaders in the historic Presbyterian tradition. However, the still undivided church's General Assembly would not recognize the new Korea Theological Seminary. The delegates from the Kyongram legal Presbytery who were supporting the new Korea Theological Seminary

spent three years trying in vain to normalize their relationship with the General Assembly. But the seminary continued not to be recognized and they were refused membership. Accordingly, on September 11, 1952, organizing its own General Assembly, the Kosin Presbyterian Church was instituted.

Struggled with sister churches

We have a seriously historical background to keep for His Word, so we acknowledge that it is a struggle to remain faithful to the Lord. We really want to keep unity with your Dutch sister churches and so that we can continue to recognize them as churches of our Lord. If you have any advice or can give help, we would appreciate it. Our hearts desire is that they, our sister churches in the Netherlands, and we all together may continue to confess the same Lord in His true word and together live as His children, but we will pray for them and to wait for them who will reach decision properly in future. We expect to hear good news to decide according to the Bible from Dutch sister churches. Even though having said this, we must value to your decision in this afternoon and what you will arrive at any conclusion in future.

Encouragement and final remark

I suggest now to you regarding possible cooperation in mission work. We want a willing talk with you about the possibility of cooperation, and can make assistance in these mission field like Southern Pacific areas. We also apologize to you that we hadn't send our documents of General Assembly, but we will try to send the summarised documents letter which concern General Assembly quickly as possible as after General Assembly.

We pray that the 2015 meeting of the Synod will be blessed, so that your churches may continue stand firm on the foundation of the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. May all

your efforts, discussions and decisions be guided by the power of the Holy Spirit, and may your churches be guided in the light of the Word in order for the joyous message of salvation and hope to be proclaimed in your country and further to the ends of the earth. We are thankful for our continuous unity and we want to confirm that we treasure it deeply and certainly look forward to receive your delegates at our next General Assembly.



Dr. Kwon Kyong Ho
Chairman, Fraternal Relations Committee of the Kosin
Presbyterian Churches in Korea (KPCK)

**Address 1K: Address by Br O Bouwman of the
Canadian Reformed Churches**

Brother delegates and guests:

On behalf of the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches, it is our privilege to offer you heartfelt greetings. Br. Jake VanLaar and I are here to represent our church federation, though we admit to being mildly concerned when we were expected to sit behind the label “CRC.” In fact, we thought we were here because the CRCA sent us. Yes, we are aware that from your perspective there is expected to be some distance between the FRCA and the CRCA. We are not experiencing that at all, so we thank you for the warmth and fellowship we have experienced. For the record, we understand “CRCA” to stand for “Committee on Relations With Churches Abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches.”

We thank God for the heritage and relationships that God has given to us. Though it is simply a matter of semantics, the term “Ecclesiastical Fellowship” doesn’t capture quite the

same warmth of sentiment as does the term “Sister Church.” The shared heritage that our churches have is a profoundly rich one. We are sisters of the same mother, and the fellowship and communion we feel because of our shared heritage and shared language is a powerful one. What a joy it is to notice and experience so many commonalities between our churches.

Besides the frequent travel back and forth across the Pacific Ocean, there are numerous other evidences of the close relationship between our respective federations. We are very grateful for the continued support that you have demonstrated for our seminary. It is remarkable how many ministers here have received their theological training in Hamilton. The generous financial support that your federation continues to provide is gratefully received and makes a substantial difference for the continued operation of the CRTS. On the one hand the CRTS is considered a federational seminary, which is understandable and laudable. On the other hand, we are aware that you have a keen interest in our seminary, and over the years have suggested that the CRTS explore making modifications in order to accommodate Australian interests. We are also aware that there is a certain level of interest in your churches to consider the establishment of an additional seminary here in Australia. We hope that your desire to consider this is in no way a reflection of an urge to create a distance between yourselves and your Canadian Reformed brethren – that trajectory would be a regrettable one. We have great pleasure and see benefit in the cross-pollination that has been evident between our federations, and we hope that can continue in the coming decades. Furthermore, we note that there is a limited pool of potential English-speaking theological professors deliberately in the continental Reformed tradition; from that perspective the notion of pooling our resources might be consideration to seriously continue to support the existing structures.

In sum, with regards to the CRTS in Hamilton: we genuinely thank you for your support in the past and we hope we are able to look forward to continued cooperation in the future. It would be great to see both of our federations continue to benefit from this fine institution for many years to come.

We are happy to continue to share the fruits of the thousands of hours of work that have been done by our Standing Committee of the Book of Praise. Never underestimate how much has been done and will continue to have to be done as the Book of Praise keeps our churches “on the same page.”

While acknowledging the closeness of the relationship between our respective federations, it's appropriate to also acknowledge a growing distance that the Canadian Reformed Churches feel vis-à-vis the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Canadian Reformed Churches have a separate committee which has been tasked with the responsibility to monitor and review developments in the RCN. Readers of *Clarion* will be noting a current series of articles about the developments in the Netherlands by one of the members of this committee, Dr. VanDam. Despite sincere gratitude for much faithfulness within many of our Dutch sister churches, our committee continues to have serious concerns with regards to the institute for theological training, women in office, their relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, an evolving Church Order, and some of the developments that seem to be happening – or not happening – within some individual churches. Where this all leads is deeply distressing to our churches, and it is our hope and prayer that unity can again be restored on the basis of Scriptures and confessions as they historically have been understood.

At the same time what this all means for relations with the new federations of Reformed churches in the Netherlands is not entirely clear – particularly as there has been formal acknowledgement of a very small group of people who have been worshipping independently in the Abbotsford area and

who have used strong critical language against our federation of churches. As we move ahead, we hope that the situation does not become any more complex than it currently is, and that the evident disunity that we experience here is replaced with what we find expressed in Psalm 133.

The theme of unity and disunity is also abundantly evident when we consider some realities in Indonesia. That country has over 250 million people, is spread over thousands of islands, is divided into 34 provinces, and is not tied together by a common language. Furthermore, it has a strong oral rather than written cultural tradition. In other words, common written understandings are sometimes difficult to achieve. All this to remind you of the reality of a broken life – which becomes abundantly clear when one tries to understand many subtleties associated with a GGRI, a GGRC, a GGRI-NTT, unique realities of different authority structures in Indonesian society, to say nothing about official government recognition of a seminary. There are also complicated and difficult questions related to cross-cultural interactions – questions from both a financial perspective as well as others related to contextualization.

As you are aware, one of our churches, Smithville, has a mission field in Timor. We see much potential benefit if there would be an increase in communication and transparency between our federations with regards to the Indonesian churches. We acknowledge that there are different observations and assessments coming from those involved from Canada and Australia as they pertain to what has happened in the past, what is happening today, and what should be happening in the future.

General Synod has mandated our committee to continue to gather information regarding the GGRI as well as the GGRC. You are aware that we have ecclesiastical fellowship with the GGRI-NTT, but not with the GGRC – though we would like to work towards that goal. At this time, there are simply too

many unanswered questions for us to responsibly move ahead. Maybe you can understand our hesitation to quickly accept all your findings and conclusions without further investigation and discussion – I think I’ve heard you say something like that in other matters previously discussed around this Synod table. In sum, whatever we can do to facilitate meaningful and ongoing communication between the significant players involved in spreading the gospel in the complicated country called Indonesia would be a good thing.

A more straightforward topic has been our relationship with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. As a result of our committee’s study of developments in the RCNZ, we will thankfully report gratitude to Synod Dunnvillie that the RCNZ evidently seeks to continue as faithful churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are thankful for the combined work that we have been able to do in mission together with both yourselves and the RCNZ in PNG. We are thankful for the trajectory the RCNZ has continued on with regards to the CRCA. Finally, it is our hope and prayer that this Synod’s decision with regards to the RCNZ proves to be a blessing to both yourselves and your Kiwi brothers and sisters.

We know too that you have an interest in our ongoing relationship with United Reformed Churches. Synod Carman mandated the appropriate committee “to seek ways to facilitate the work of building unity on the local level, as well as visiting churches and classes of the URCNA, particularly in the United States.” That has been happening since 2013. One specific example of cooperation where there is geographic proximity is in the area of education, so that in quite a number of schools it is not unusual for United Reformed children to be thoroughly integrated into school life. Honesty compels us as well to share that in Ontario there seems to be a greater deal of United Reformed enthusiasm towards our federation compared to some other regions in Canada or the United States.

Free Reformed brothers, we enjoy a strong relationship with you. As a matter of fact, somehow our church federations have a combined yearbook. There are evident desires for continued cooperation on your part with regards to many different facets of church life. Our churches share those sentiments. Certainly Br. VanLaar and I will be happy to discuss particular topics with you privately and in committee; we are practicing some self-restraint – we have heard you as you articulated sensitivities regarding simply being expected to follow decisions made by Canadian Reformed Synods. We view you as genuine equal sisters and we hope your perception matches ours. As your equal sister, it is our hope and prayer that our mutual relationship continues to be meaningful as we together serve our Head. Once again: thank you for your generous hospitality. God bless you in your continued deliberations; may the work done here in Baldvis serve the furtherance of Father's kingdom.

Can I invite you to sing Hymn 52:2.

**Address 1L: Response to the address of Rev Dr Kwon
by Rev S 't Hart**

Rev. Dr. Kwon Kyong Ho.

Chairman, Fraternal Relations Committee of the Kosin Presbyterian Churches.

Dear brother in the Lord.

On the Last Day, when our Lord Jesus Christ returns on the clouds of heaven, we shall all be standing before the throne of God. We will be a great multitude that no one can number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. We look

forward to that day. We pray “Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.”

On that day we will rejoice greatly. But already today we rejoice. We rejoice because we know that our God is faithful to His promises and that He is gathering His Church from all places.

And the Church is indeed a vast multitude. Last night you told us that the Kosin Presbyterian Church has 1800 local churches and 470,000 members. To us that is staggering. The Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea is about 100 times bigger than the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Praise God for His people! Praise God that there are so many believers in South Korea.

You also told us, however, that the work is not finished. Your churches are very active in planting new churches in South Korea and also doing mission work in many countries in Asia and the rest of the world. We are thankful for your missionary zeal and we pray that as the true gospel is preached, it might be met with faith by the hearers. You also asked us to pray for the people in North Korea. For us the Korean War happened a long time ago and the men who fought in that war, if they are still alive, are all old men. For you and our South Korean brothers and sisters, however, the split between North and South Korea is still there and is still painful. What is most troubling is that there is great persecution in North Korea and it is impossible to openly speak of our Lord Jesus Christ there. You asked us to pray for the people of North Korea. You asked us to pray for the people who are persecuted, and also the 30,000 North Korean refugees living in South Korea. We will pray for them. We will also pray that the Lord will make North Korea open for the gospel so that the gospel may be preached there again.

There has been some increase in contact with you over the past three years and it is our hope that this contact will

increase even more in the future. We hope that as we learn more about your work of mission that we will understand better if and how we can support one another in that.

We thank you for the comments you made regarding the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and along with you we hope that they make their decisions according to the Bible. May we and you and also our sister churches be true to the clear teachings of the Word of God.

May I conclude this speech with the words of Ephesians 6:10-13.

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and the Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea.

Thank you.

Address 1M: Response to the address of Br O Bouwman by Br W Pleiter

Good evening,

I have been requested by the brothers of Synod Baldivis to respond to the official address of the Canadian Reformed Churches as delivered by br. Otto Bouwman. I would like to begin, by expressing my concern – not because this brother appears to be representing the CRC at this Synod – but

because he is not a member of the Canadian Reformed Churches. Yes he is Canadian, but does not live Canada. Does that make him an imposter? Well, no – you see while both he and br. Jake VanLaar are here as official representatives of the Canadian Reformed Churches – the CanRC –it should be noted that there are three American Reformed Churches within its bond – of which br. Bouwman is a member of the American Reformed Church in Lynden!

Brothers, you rightly noted that the title of ecclesiastical fellowship – which is formally and technically correct - does not express the warm and cherished relationship that we express as sister-churches. Indeed we are close sisters, and it would be fair to say, that we share more in common with you, the Canadian Reformed Churches than any other of our sister's churches. In fact, there is a lot of cross-pollination between our respective churches and our church members, and I think that has allowed both our churches to grow and to blossom.

As we grow and blossom, together, as sisters, it is important for us to 'remain on the same page', to borrow one of your phrases from your speech last night. We are thankful that we share the riches of God's Word and share in the rich heritage of the Reformed faith, as we express that in our confessional standards. Indeed we are very much on the same page with you, our dear sisters.

We continue to be thankful for the gift of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) – and indeed we have gratefully benefited from this Reformed institution, which is clearly evident with the ministers present at the table of Synod Baldivis. Judging by the reports of the deputies, it is clear that our prayerful and financial support will not only continue, but also increase. That's right - the deputies have a proposal to increase our (financial) support to the CRTS, and so you can be confident, that we will continue to pool our resources together for the training of the ministry. Yes, there is that proposal before Synod, but – like all proposals – it has

not even past the admissibility test yet – and I am convinced that the brothers of Synod Baldivis will value your input during these discussions.

Thank you for sharing your experiences regarding the revisions to your Book of Praise or as it is now known - the Anglo Genevan Psalter. It is a beautiful product and yet you mentioned it was a result of a somewhat difficult and lengthy process. We too have benefitted from your work and overall there is great appreciation for the 2010 provisional Book of Praise in Australia. Being a provisional book, it is understandable that the provisional nature of the Book of Praise gives credence to the idea of adapting it for our Australian situation with nuances in the liturgical forms, confessions and with our church order. Based on Synod Baldivis decision today, you can be sure that we will continue to be on the same page with you singing the Psalms and (approved) Hymns just as loud as you.

With the decision to enter into a formal sister church relationship with the Reformed Churches in New Zealand, we now share another mutual sister church relationship. In our past Synods, we requested your support and patience in our dealings with the RCNZ – and we are thankful for the understanding that you gave – and now rejoice that we are on the same page with you, in our new sister church relationship with the RCNZ.

While we can rejoice together at this new sister church relationship, we together share the profound sadness and disappointment in the unfaithfulness we have seen with our mother church in the Netherlands (RCNlib). Synod Baldivis has been consequent in its decision in regards to the status of our sister church relationship with the RCNlib, and it's our prayer that it has the desired impact.

In your speech you highlighted the difficulties in dealing with such a diverse country as Indonesia with the complexities of

language, culture and geographic diversity. Our deputies too, have had to work through these same struggles, so it is good for us to work together, to communicate together, so that we can provide a united front to our brothers in Indonesia. In your speech you ask for increased communication, and I noticed right after the ‘close’ of Synod last night you were surrounded by our passionate deputies, eager to arrange a meeting with you. How’s that for instant results.

There is one only comment that I hesitate to address but think it’s important - just to make sure we are on the same page. In your speech you alluded to comments made on the floor of Synod – about not just following what Canada does. While I cannot speak for the brothers of Synod, I will say that comments like this are not intended as disparaging. Rather it highlights the need for the Australian churches to do their own work, to thoroughly examine the issues, to carefully consider the matters in question, and come to well reasoned recommendations. This does not mean we don’t value your finding on certain issues, or value your contributions, and it certainly does not mean we won’t make use of your resources. It simply means that the Australian churches must go through due process and take corporate responsibility for its decisions and directions. I am not sure if your comment was said tongue in cheek, but just wanted to ensure that no offense was made.

Brothers Bouwman and VanLaar, we warmly welcome you in our midst, and wish to express our gratitude for your presence here at Synod. To be here in person, not only gives you greater insight into the workings of Synod Baldivis, but also provides opportunities of fellowship – to get to know and understand your brothers and sisters down-under – and that way we can be sure to be on the same page!

**Address 1N: Address by Rev F Tipa Kaya of the
Gereja-Gereja Reformasi de Indonesia**

Dear brothers (and sisters) of our Lord Jesus Christ,

First of all I would like to thank and praise our God and Father who has chosen us to be His children and who gives us opportunity to meet together at this time of Synod.

I also want to express deep gratitude to the Free Reformed churches of Australia, who via their deputies invited me to attend this Synod. Already a few years ago your deputies for contact with the GGRI churches NTT Indonesia had made plans and invited me to come to Australia for a number of months to study the English language. These plans have just been realized. On top of that I feel deeply honored that my wife has also been given the opportunity to come with me to truly enjoy Christian fellowship in the midst of God's people in the Free Reformed churches of Australia as we experienced last Sunday as we worshipped together in church in Mundijong and Baldivis.

On behalf of the GGRI NTT churches (the federation which I am a member of) as well as the broader Federation of Churches throughout Indonesia, I express our gratitude and thanks to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia who for many years already have had a sister church relation with the GGRI NTT and more recently, since 2012 also have extended this relationship to include the all the GGRI churches of Indonesia as we became One Federation.

We have received an abundance of support from our brothers and sisters of the FRCA for the GGRI NTT churches over these years. This support was received via the work of the deputies, Mission Aid, Amos Aid, Children of Light, and Committee to sponsor students, as well as encouragement and direct support and contact given to a number of churches in Sumba and Sabu such as the GGRI of Kalu, Wera, Kataka, Taka and Gurijara. Besides financial support we have also received support in the way of Rev A vanDelden coming to Sumba to teach at the Theological College of the GGRI (STT-

GGRI) every year. We like to thank in particular Rev vanDelden as well as his family, the consistory of Mundijong for allowing their minister to do this work and the deputies for contact for arranging this work.

At this Synod, as one of the lecturers (dosen) of STT-GGRI, allow me to say that the plan to build a campus for STT-GGRI in Waingapu is still in process, which will require your input by way of advice and financial support to realize this plan. The STT-GGRI in Waingapu till this time is not yet accredited by the Indonesian Government, because we don't have a permanent building and we don't have enough full time lecturers. Via this forum of Synod we like to strongly encourage the FRCA to continue to offer this support so that we will be able to build our campus as well as prepare more full time lecturers. We still hope that the building of the campus can start this year so that by next year the STT-GGRI will have it's own permanent building. We think that if we start changing our minds with the location and look for another block of land for our building this will disturb realizing our plans, so let us continue to plan to build on the property we obtained with the support of the FRCA.

Besides the building of our campus we also need to prepare more lecturers to receive their Master of Theology (M.Th). I as one of the lecturers has just completed my studies and received my Master of Theology, next year Rev Antonius will complete his studies for M.Th at STT Setia Jakarta. So by the end of next year we will have 3 lecturers with Master of Theology but will still require 3 more. Once we have our own building and 6 fulltime lecturers with Master of Theology and a library of 2000 books then the STT-GGRI will be ready to be accredited.

As GGRI we need to remain committed to have our own Theological College by the churches for the churches. This is the only way that we as church Federation can remain

Reformed. It is for these reasons that the GGRI churches continue to desire their own Theological College.

We from the GGRI pray that the Lord will bless the work of Synod and that all decisions made may Glorify the Name of our God. It is also our prayer that the sister church relationship we share with the FRCA will continue to be strengthened.

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

In closing I like to pass on the greetings from our churches as well as from our deputies and the students and lecturers of our Theological College.

I also like to apologize for any words that could not be clearly understood.

May God King of the Church Bless your work at this Synod.

Thank you.

Address 10: Response to the address of Rev F Tipa Kaya by Br B Bosveld

Response to address of the GGRI Federation of Indonesia.

Mr Chairman and esteemed brothers of Synod,

Bapa ketua dan saudara-saudara yang mulia dari sinodi ini,

As one of the deputies for contact with the GGRI churches of Indonesia it is my privilege to respond to the address of Rev Ferdy Tipa Kaya from our sister churches in Sumba Indonesia.

Sebagai satu deputate hubung dengan GGRI Indonesia saya boleh menjawab sambutan dari pdt Ferdy dari gereja bersaudara dari Sumba Indonesia.

Thank you Rev Ferdy for your address to our Synod, for the greetings that you passed on, and for delivering it to us in English.

Terima Kasih pdt Ferdy untuk sambutanmu kepada sinodi ini, dan untuk mengucapkan selamat dari gereja-gereja masing masing, Terimakasih juga karena engkau pakai Bahasa Inggris.

As you mentioned in your address, it is the plan for you to spend some months among us to study English and to become more acquainted with our church life. It is our hope and prayer that by the time you leave us to go back to Sumba your time among us will be a rich blessing for us as well as for you.

Kamu bilang dalam sambutan, itu ada rencana kamu akan tinggal di Australia supaya kamu bisa belajar Bahasa Inggris dan mengalami keadaan di tengah-tengah gereja kami. Kami harap dan berdoa sebelum kamu berangkat kembali ke Indonesia, selama kamu tinggal di sekiling kami itu akan menjadi berkat dari Bapa di Surga untuk kamu dan kami.

Over the years our church Federation and the GGRI church Federation of NTT Indonesia have grown closer together with all the different levels of contact we have had over the years as you mentioned in your address.

Selama banyak waktu Federasi FRCA dan Federasi GGRI NTT bertumbuh lebih dekat bersama dan menjadi gereja yang dekat melalui beberapa hubungan selama tahun-tahun yang lalu.

As deputies we continue to arrange for Rev A van Delden to travel to Sumba each year to teach at your College, we also

like to pass on to the FRC of Mundijong our gratitude and thanks for allowing their minister to do this important work.

Sebagai deputate2 kami terus mengurus untuk pdt van Delden pergi ke Sumba setiap tahun untuk mengajar di sekolah Theologia di tempat Waigapu. Kami juga mau mengucapkan terimakasih kepada MG dan jemaat Mundijong karna setiap tahun mereka lepas pdt van Delden supaya ia bisa mengajar di sana.

The building of your own campus in Waingapu, as you mentioned, has been something your churches have been praying for and looking forward to receiving for a long time, as sister churches we recognise this need and have been collecting funds to support this plan. We are ready to assist as soon as the plans within the allowed budgets are complete, we realise that the temporary campus is far from desirable and therefore understand the urgency of realising these plans as per our mandate.

Bangunan Kampus untuk gereja2 di tempat Waigapu (sama yang kamu bilang) ada keinginan yang kamu sering dan tetap berdoa kepada Bapa di Surga sudah lama. Sebagai gereja bersaudara kami mengerti perluan ini, itulahsebabnya kami sudah berkumpul uang untuk rencana ini dan siap untuk membantu sesudah gambar pas anggaran. Kami mengerti kampus yang di pakai untuk sekarang kurang enak, itulahsebabnya kami mengerti itu penting bangunan harus mulai secepat mungkin.

Since the three Federations in Indonesia (GGRI NTT, GGRI Kalimantan Barat and GGRI Papua) have become one Federation we have also been able to send a delegate to the Synod held in Papua as part of our mandate to get to know the new Federation better.

Sejak 3 Federasi di Indonesia (GGRI NTT, GGRI Kalimantan Barat dan GGRI Papua) menjadi satu federasi kami juga

mengunjungi di sinodi di tempat Papua karna itu ada mandat yang kami diterima dari sinodi kami yang lalu supaya kami bisa mengenal seluruh federasi.

Part of our mandate is also to encourage greater unity between the GGRI Federation and the GGRC Federation as well as the Federation born from the work of Rev Edwar Dethan supported by the Church of Smithville Canada along with 2 supporting churches.

Kami juga diterima mandat untuk mendorong GGRI, GGRC dan ferderasi GGRTimor yang dilahir dari kerjaan pdt Edwar Dethan melalui bantuan dari Gereja Reformasi Smithville di Kanada bersama beberapa gereja lain.

We like to take this opportunity to again encourage a closer contact with these three Federations so that in time with the blessing of the Lord you may all become one Federation and be able to support each other in a deeper more meaningful way.

Kami mau sekali lagi mendorong semua federasi berhubungan lebih dekat supaya pada waktu yang akan datang dengan berkat dari Bapa di Surga semua federasi2 bisa menjadi satu federasi dan bisa berdiri bersama kepada pencobaan dari Iblis.

I have had the privilege to visit many of your churches in Sumba and have experience how as churches you desire to remain faithful to God's Word. As churches you are also very active in the work of mission, bringing the gospel to those who live in darkness, we can learn a lot from you as sister churches in this regard, may our relationship continue to grow and be strengthened by the many contacts we have.

Saya sudah sering bisa mengunjungi bebarap gereja di Sumba dan mengalami bahwa gereja gereja di sana mau tetap setia kepada Firman Allah. Gereja gereja di Sumba juga

rajin dalam tugas menginjili di mana ada orang yang masih hidup tanpa Allah, kami bisa belajar dari gereja bersaudara di Indoneisa tentang kerja ini. Semoga Bapa di Surga terus memberkati hubungan kita supaya kita bisa bertumbuh bersama dalam Annugrah Allah.

May we continue to pray for each other as the Apostle Paul did for the Colossians in chapter 1: 9-12

The Apostle Paul writes:

We pray that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding: that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and long suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Mari kita selalu berdoa untuk sesamamu. Sama seperti Rasul Paulus lakukan dalam Colosi 1: 9-12

Rasul Paulus menulis:

Kami berdoa untuk kamu. Kami meminta, supaya kamu menerima segala hikmat dan pengertian yang benar, untuk mengetahui kehendak Tuhan dengan sempurna, sehingga hidupmu layak di hadapan-Nya serta berkenan kepada-Nya dalam segala hal, dan kamu memberi buah dalam segala pekerjaan yang baik dan bertumbuh dalam pengetahuan yang benar tentang Allah, dan dikuatkan dengan segala kekuatan oleh kuasa kemuliaan-Nya untuk menanggung segala sesuatu dengan tekun dan sabar, dan mengucap syukur dengan sukacita kepada Bapa, yang melayakkan kamu untuk mendapat bagian dalam apa yang ditentukan untuk orang-orang kudus di dalam kerajaan terang.

Thankyou.

On behalf of the deputies: Brian Bosveld.

Terimakasih.

Atas nama deputate: Brian Bosveld.

Address 1P: Address by Br S Dethan of the Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvinis

Esteemed Brothers,

It is a great joy for me to address you in this Synod on behalf of the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRC).

First of all, I would like to praise the Lord our Triune God, for His love and protection that I may be here in your midst.

Secondly, through this golden opportunity, I would like to pass on Christian greetings from all the Brothers and Sisters in our federation (GGRC) Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia, for you all here. Also for all the members of Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA). Please accept our brotherly greetings and love.

Thirdly, on behalf of our federation, I would like to thank you all, and specifically your Deputy for relation with churches abroad, for its contact and correspondence via email as well as discussions at meetings through which I am able to come here, see you and sit together with you in this pivotal Assembly. It is wonderful to be here with you and to experience the Christian atmosphere of this Synod.

As federation we thank the Lord for our relation so far as Contact Churches. We were so happy and praise our Lord for this relationship that we may know each other as brothers and

sisters in the Lord and hold the same confessions. It is great that through this we are not only knowing each but also can pray for each other and help each other growing in reformed faith and characters. We would like to tell you that we love you all because of our faith in our triune God and that unites us on the same reformed confessions. We thank you for your help that in the past years you have sent Reverend Carl Vermeulen and Reverend Wilco Van Der Jagt to give some lecture to our churches leaders on reformed church order and mission and other materials.

We were so blessed with that and would like to express our gratitude to you. We also would like to thank you for always attending our Synod meeting in NTT. We hope to hold our general Synod next year. Thus through this opportunity we would like to give our formal invitation to you to please come over to our Synod next year that will hope to be held in Sabu island.

Our church is not as big as yours. Also, economically speaking our churches are weak. However, even though we are small and weak economically, we are still trying our best to serve our Lord, by opening and establishing some mission posts in these islands of Timor, Rote and Sabu, where we can bring the gospel of our Lord to them and help them know our God and Savior as well as grow in the Reformed doctrines and teaching and prepare them to be qualified leaders and members of the church as well in the community.

Brothers, it is our prayer that the Lord, our Covenant-keeping God, bless you and grant you His strength and wisdom – so that you may have a productive Synod for the up-building of God's Kingdom. May He also bless our relationship for His name's sake. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Let me close this speech with one of my favorite Psalms – Ps. 121.

This Psalm 121 is such a beautiful and comforting Psalm. The LORD is our Helper, our Keeper who never sleeps and never slumbers. He is always with us. At the end of this Psalm it talks about His promise to be with us forever. That reminds us of what our Lord Jesus said in Mat. 28: 20 before he went up to heaven. He says, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Yes, He is our Immanuel God. God is with us.

Humbly submitted

Soleman Dethan

Secretary

Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad of Calvinist
Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRC)

**Address 1Q: Response to the address of Br S Dethan
by Br E Heerema**

Response to address from Br Soleman Dethan to Synod 2015
Baldivis

Br Soleman Dethan, Delegates, Brothers and Sisters

It is my privilege to respond to the address which you gave, Br Soleman, on behalf of your churches the GGRC.

We thank our Heavenly father that you can be present at our Synod. It is with pleasure that we can have you as a visitor to our country and churches. We thank you for your warm words of greeting.

We hope that by this visit you will gain a deeper understanding of our churches and church life.

In your address you thank us for the lecture tours that the Reverend's Vermeulen and VanderJagt could do in the past

two years. Be assured it is a privilege for us to be able to share our resources with you and we pray that we may continue to do that in the future for the benefit of God's church in Indonesia.

Your churches are geographically very close to us. To visit your church in Kupang it is only a short 3 and a half hour flight from Perth to Bali and then another 40 minute internal flight. To put it in perspective it is most likely quicker and cheaper to fly to you from Perth than to catch a flight to Launceston or Cairns. For us there is therefore no excuse not to help you as you grow in the reformed faith.

You informed us of the mission posts which your churches are busy with and we commend your churches for doing this even though you are limited financially. We pray that our Heavenly Father will bless your mission endeavours.

We are thankful that we could attend your last Synod and witness how seriously you dealt with issues such as – Women in office, where your young men should study theology, supporting needy churches etc ... We can indeed learn from each other. Only last Sunday you mentioned to me whilst discussing the Lord's supper that the elders in the church where you are a member still carry out the tradition of visiting all the members of the congregation which are in their care in the week prior to the celebration of the Lord's supper.

There was however also an element of sadness at your last Synod when the GGRM, the Galilee church withdrew from your bond. We pray that in a brotherly manner you may still seek to resolve the differences that they have.

We have as churches in Australia not come to the point of having a sister church relationship with you. Over the many years we have encouraged you and the GGRI churches to unite. We have done so knowing that although you have

different gifts and callings you are however united in Christ by your common faith. Ephesians 4.

You have always been separate federations and yet you have expressed the desire to be one. However when we look from the outside of late there appears to be little evidence from both your federations that there is work being done to achieve this. In the 1990's you adopted the three forms of unity, you sent your students to Sumba to study at the GGRI theological school, you had regular pulpit exchange and office bearer conferences. Some of these thing have sadly stopped over the years

We make this plea of unity to you knowing that also in Kupang, our sister church of Smithville, Canada is busy supporting the labours of Reverend Edwar Dethan. Your young men study at the theological college which he has set up, some of your minister's lecture at the same college. Some of our young people have had the privilege of assisting in the building works at that college and orphanage over the past years.

These are beautiful developments in them self, yet as time goes on we see another separate federation being firmly established in the one country yes even in the one city. With work and effort by all parties and with the blessing of our Heavenly Father we pray that indeed one day you all may be able to be 'one' and so also a hand and a foot to each other just as we are instructed do so as individuals in our own congregations .

With God's blessing this will mean that you will be able to share each other's talents and gifts, avoid duplication of theological training, translation work, office bearer training and in so doing become a stronger united reformed voice in Indonesia, a united voice in a Muslim dominated country

We pray that we as Australian churches may humbly continue to help you achieve this for the sake of Gods Holy church.

We pray that your churches may remain faithful and be a true light to those around it.

Once again we thank you for your presence here and we also take this opportunity to wish you well Soleman as you soon hope to begin your own theological studies. May our heavenly Father bless your studies so that if it please Him you may also in the future become a minister of the word.

Please pass on the warmest greetings from our federation to your churches.

Thank you

Address 1R: Address by Br A van der Net of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored)

Esteemed chairman, delegates, brothers and sisters,

On behalf of the Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad of the DGK (RCNr) I would like to express my thanks that we were again invited by your Deputies for Relations Churches Abroad to attend this Synod. As you notice, we have accepted this invitation.

Our thanks go to the Lord Who has given us the opportunity and the strength for this. It is nice that, alongside the publications in the magazine 'Reformed Continua' we may also speak to you at this meeting. .

It is important that we encourage each other to fight the good fight.

I would like to refer to what is written in *1 Timothy 6:11-21* and quote from *verse 20*: "*O Timothy! Guard what was committed*

to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge”.

We were disappointed when we received your letter in February in which you let us know that you did not receive a direct mandate from your Synod to attend our Synod Groningen 2015, nor that funds were allocated for this. On the other hand, we learned from your letter that your Synods have appreciated the contacts with us since our liberation in 2003. We are thankful for that.

In the same letter you also mentioned that you have understanding for our decision to consider your relations with the RCN as a hindrance to further relations with you.

Your past Synods have indicated that our relationship with the LRCA, the Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford, may be an impediment for your further relations with us. We understand that your very close ties with the CanRC is a major factor for this statement.

At the same time we regret that this matter was not substantively dealt with at your Synod Armadale 2012. It is important for our contacts with you that you give this further attention.

You will remember, brothers, that Synod Armadale 2012 received a letter from the LRCA informing Synod why it was necessary for them to liberate from the Canadian Reformed Churches. In this letter they asked the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to determine whether or not they acted in faithfulness to the Reformed Confession and to the accepted Church Order, as we all have agreed to do. However, according to your rules, this letter was declared inadmissible because the request did not come from your churches and therefore you were not required to acknowledge it (See Acts, Synod Armadale 2012, art. 58).

The reason for the request of the LRCA was that the Canadian Reformed Churches had made decisions with regard to sister-church relations with churches such as the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches and others. Many appeals against these decisions were made, stating that the divergences between the CanRC and these churches were not resolved. These divergences involved the lack of guarding of the Lord's Supper table and Confessional Membership.

The fact that these divergences were an impediment to sister-church relations between the OPC and the CanRC for more than 24 years (Synod 1977 to Synod 2001) clearly shows the changes that have taken place within the Canadian Reformed Churches. The changes are also evident in the fact that many appeals against these decisions were all rejected.

Synod Armadale decided to deny this request from the LRC because: ***"It is not appropriate to delve into a local church matter which belongs within the jurisdiction of the CanRC federation of churches"*** Acts, art. 59.

However, within your own churches there were also concerns about these changes in the CanRC. The churches of Armadale, Kelmscott and Mount Nasura requested an investigation of the Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford. They wanted to know why this liberation took place. But also these requests were denied for the same reason stated earlier.

We bring this to your attention for more than one reason. The most important one is that the Apostle Paul writes to the church of Philippi:

"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God". (Philippians 1:9-11)

Chairman, Scripture teaches us that we are to discern all things. This means also that you are to see to it that as sister-churches you are called to watch over one another. That you take care that no deviation from Scripture, the Confessions and the Church Order takes place. You have accepted that obligation as a Scriptural one with your sister-church in the Netherlands, but also with your Canadian brothers and sisters.

Another reason why we have to bring this to your attention is that your Synod Legana of 2009 gave a mandate to the deputies for sister-church relations. This mandate is totally different than the decision of your Synod Armadale. Judging from this mandate it seems that your Synod Legana was of a different opinion than your Synod Armadale. This Synod Legana mandated that the deputies:

Firstly: “Monitor developments within the CanRC for the mutual benefit according to the established rules and keep the churches informed”.

Secondly: “Seek clarification about and discuss the changing manner in which they deal with significant differences with other church federations in their unity discussions”.

The grounds given for part of the second point is:

“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 Lord’s Supper etc.)” Acts, art. 40.

Chairman, I am sure you heard it right, the concern was:

Confessional Membership and the Fencing of the Lord’s Supper

Nevertheless, your Synod Armadale of 2012 declared the information sent to you by our brothers from Abbotsford as inadmissible.

We would not have mentioned this here today if it was not for the fact that your Synod Armadale acknowledged: ***that our relationship with the Liberated Reformed Church of Abbotsford may be an impediment to you for a future sister-church relationship with us.*** From this decision it seems that you are thinking of following the steps of your Canadian sister-church.

We can understand that you would like to stand together with your Canadian sister-church. But we also hope that you will come to understand the importance of studying carefully what the brothers in Abbotsford have written to you and seriously considering the arguments given by these brothers for their Liberation from the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Chairman, we would also like to elaborate on *our* contacts with the CanRC. Deputies Contact Churches Abroad of the RCN wrote a letter to their Synod Carman. This was, in our opinion, necessary for further clarification of our standpoint with regard to the developments within the CanRC. In this letter we did an extensive call to the Synod of the CanRC to reflect on their path of ongoing pluriformity and the associated tolerance. We also again defended our liberation of 2003 and requested the statement made by the Synods of Smithers 2007 and Burlington 2010, that RCN was schismatic because of its liberation from the RCN, be withdrawn. I could say more about this but that would be too time-consuming. For those interested in a copy, I have the digital letter with me.

The remark made by Synod Carman concerning this letter, was particularly disappointing.

I quote:

“Deputies Contact Churches Abroad of the RCN^r wrote their letter as an elaboration of their recent discussions with our Deputies Contact Foreign Churches. In it they try to defend their ‘liberation’ and that of the LRCA. The letter also urges the CanRC to evaluate our ecclesiastical relationships in the light of Article 28 Belgic Confession. While this letter can serve for personal reflection by the Synod members, it is not necessary to give a reply”.

Again, this was particularly disappointing.

Is everything we do all in vain?

Chairman, we find comfort in the words of *1 Corinthians 15:58*, where we read:

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”.

On the 15th May 2014 we had another meeting with the sub-committee of the Deputies Contact Foreign Churches, CanRC for further discussion. In this discussion it became clear that the insight into the developments in the RCN had increased and that there was also more understanding for the Liberation of the RCN^r.

However, there was little willingness to discuss the developments within the CanRC.

The objections of the RCN^r against the observed pluriformity and associated practice of an open Lord’s Supper were considered a difference in insight in the catholicity of the church. How this catholicity is compatible with the practice of the open Lord’s Supper, also with Baptists, could not be answered. This would be part of the already ongoing discussions.

They were also critical of the fact that the delegates from GS Emmen had not spoken with the consistory of the CanRC at Abbotsford. The answer given to them was that the grounds of the liberation was not a local but a national matter, where the ecclesiastical path had already ended in 2004.

In 2013 we convened a meeting with the VGKSA, the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa, and deputies have proposed to Synod Groningen to continue the contact with these churches. The necessity of our liberation in 2003 will continue to be emphasized. Also more information is required on the sister-church relationship with Abbotsford.

After their Synod, the VGKSA let us know that they had incorrectly concluded that we had demanded that they would first have to break their sister-church relationship with the CanRC before we continue with our contacts with them. We were informed of this by mail.

To Synod Groningen 2014/2015 of the RCNr, which ended with its final session on the 13th June, a revision request had been submitted by Dalfsen to decide whether the sister-church relationship with Abbotsford should be reviewed. This was discussed at great length and great depth at our Synod. The deputies have been able to give advice. The Synod decided not to comply with the request from the consistory of Dalfsen. Our sister-church relationship with the LRC Abbotsford has therefore been maintained.

The Synod does instruct Deputies for Contacts with Churches Abroad to get into contact with the CanRC at Abbotsford to hear the other side regarding the course of events around the secession at Abbotsford.

The Synod has also assessed a thorough study by the Deputies Contact Churches Abroad on the Westminster Standards. This study was aimed mainly at whether the vision on the church and the covenant in this confession was

Scriptural. A majority report and a minority report have been released as study reports that can serve in discussions in the contacts with other churches.

I shall not go into the contents of this report. No doubt you will be able to read it in the Acts of the Synod 2014/2015, possibly translated in the English language.

We can also inform you that General Synod Groningen has decided to seek contact with the GKN (the former 'provisionals').

On the 22nd March 2014 we had a meeting with your deputies. We were able to inform them that we have three ministers of the Word in active service. These are Rev. E Heres, Rev. C. Koster and Rev. S. de Marie and we have 1 emeritus minister, namely Rev. P. van Gurp.

In the meantime Rev. M. Dijkstra has joined the ranks, finishing his studies early this year and all being well Br. M Sneeep will complete his studies at the end of this year and will be eligible for calling.

In all this, Chairman, we may see the blessed and caring hand of our heavenly Father. He rules and reigns over His church in everything. The struggles that we have and the many attacks from Satan are also part of this. God still gives Satan this freedom. We must continue to fight until the Day of His coming.

However, we may turn to the Lord in prayer and ask Him for strength and wisdom to be able to stand fast, and we may know that He will give us no more than we can bear.

As we read in *1 Corinthians 10:13*:

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with

the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it”.

We, the RCN^r wish you, the FRCA, the indispensable blessing of the Lord in all that you have to do here in Australia. There is a lot of work to do. It is also our sincere wish, I also mentioned it at your Synod Armadale in 2012, that it would be so wonderful if we could again find each other *in true unity*. Now I say it this way: we hope and pray that all our discussions may be fruitful so that we grow towards each other. In the Netherlands we also take this to the Lord in prayer and we pray for insight and wisdom and faithfulness to do His will and to live our lives in His service.

Chairman, delegates, brothers and sisters, is this not what we live for?

Once again, we thank you for your invitation to be present here. I would like to finish with the words, slightly adjusted, of the rhymed version of *Psalms 139*.

*O Lord our God, Thou searchest us;
Our heart and mind are known to Thee!
No things are hidden from Thy eyes
When we sit down and when we rise.
And from afar Thou art discerning
Our thoughts and hopes, our secret yearning.
Search us, O God, and know our heart;
See if we from Thy ways depart.
Try us and judge our inmost thought,
And let us by Thy Word be taught.
Keep us from wicked ways and heed us;
In everlasting ways do lead us.*

Thank you.

**Address 1S: Response to the address of Br A van der
Net by Rev PKA de Boer**

Brother Vander Net

Thank you for being here with us and for the greetings you passed on from your churches. We are amazed at your patience and the patience of your churches. It is not only that we see you sitting there and listening to what is happening among us during this Synod; but for how many of our Synods has that already happened? You sit here as a welcomed and honoured guest without any advisory privileges or anything like that. You realise that it is already quite some time ago that your churches first sent us a letter requesting us to recognise you as the legitimate continuation of the Lord's churches in the Netherlands. When this request came, we postponed any definite decision while examining and addressing our sister-churches in the Netherlands about similar concerns for which you felt compelled to leave them. You are well aware that we have exhorted and admonished these sister-churches, but so far to no avail. As you could witness at this Synod, we are still remaining alert to what is happening among them while coming to the sad conclusion that our relations cannot continue in the present way. Our relation with the RCN is now under suspension. We still hope and pray that the Lord will grant a change heart and direction among them.

In the mean time we have kept contact with the bond of churches that sent you as a deputy. Our contact with you has not changed because we have still be busy with our sister-churches in the Netherlands. In the mean time we understand that you decided relations with you cannot be advanced while we have sister-church relations with the RCN. We do not know whether this Synod's decision means that you will review what you have decided in this regard. We will have to wait and see whether the Synod of your churches will give this matter further attention. However, so long as your decision

stands, there is no obvious purpose or possibility for us to advance further relations with your churches.

You are right that in view of our relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches we find your decision regarding Liberated Reformed Church of Abbotsford a possible obstacle. While we continue close relations with the Canadian Churches, your decision for recognition the LRC appears to us to fly in the face of what the Lord teaches about church unity. We understand that it is especially in this context that you defend the decision that your churches have made and upheld at your recent Synod. Seeing that our Synod has not made any further decisions in this matter, nothing more can be said about it except to emphasise that it is and remains our heartfelt desire to heed how the Lord teaches us as churches to be joined together as the one flock of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is for this reason that we are also thankful to hear that your Synod decided to initiate talks with the Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland (GKN) because we see no reason why those who concluded it necessary to leave the RCN to remain separated from one another. We continue to urge you to make every effort to be joined together on the well known foundation of the Scriptures as maintained in the Confessions. We furthermore are encouraged to hear how you use opportunities which arise to help members in the RCN that remain there and struggle with the same reasons for which you have left. In short, we look for all those in the Netherlands who know the Lord and rightly confess His Name to be united together as His people. Especially in an age of increasing secularization it is important for us who truly believe to remain together as the Lord children as much as possible on the one foundation of the true faith.

As we, that is, as deputies reported to this Synod, we recognise a strong desire among you to remain faithful to the Lord and what He teaches in His Word. Brother, we pray for you and your churches; that the Lord may hold you onto the path of truth and life that you clearly desire to follow. We pray

that in this time of ecclesiastical turmoil in the Netherlands the Lord will keep and preserve you in the way of truth. As among all of us here in Australia and there in the Netherlands weaknesses remain, we look to the Lord for the comfort of forgiveness and reconciliation. Let me conclude with the words of 1 John 3:18 – 24

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

**Address 1T: Address by Br J Moes of the Free
Reformed Churches of South Africa**

Mr Chairman, Esteemed Brother-Delegates, Dear Brothers and Sisters

Thank you for the opportunity to address you, as delegates to this Synod. It is a great honour for me to be present at your Synod and to convey warm greetings from your sister-churches, the F.R.C.S.A. We know that the Lord gathers his children and his church over the whole world, but it is encouraging to see this in practice and experience it. Here,

where churches from various parts of the world are in this assembly together, we see the Lord working towards His kingdom, also through the efforts of this Synod. People from all nations of the earth are being gathered under the Lord's royal reign.

If I am not mistaken, the literal meaning of the word "Synod" is "being together on the way". In this case, we are together on the Way, which Way is Jesus Christ, Who is also the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). These characteristics of our Saviour, being the way, the truth and the life, are essential to not only guide Thomas and the disciples, but also for us as Christians here and now. But being "on the way" also means that we are heading for a destination, and for us this is the way to the New Jerusalem, where we will be living together in harmony, united with the Triune God.

You have (had) important matters on your agenda. By reading through the 446 pages of your pre-Synod documents, which were available well in time, I became impressed by the thoroughness with which you prepare for your Synods. During the two weeks set aside for this Synod, there is ample opportunity for in-depth discussions, evaluation and careful and responsible decisions. It is edifying for me to experience this.

As churches we cannot exist in isolation, not locally and also not internationally. The latter is illustrated by the fact that 70% of the pre-Synod document deals with your sister-churches and ecclesiastical contacts with other churches. We need each other, in the first place in a national federation, but also worldwide. Christ calls us into unity behind the one Shepherd (John 10:16). By following in His footsteps, we will find our strength as believers and as churches. Our ecumenical unity foreshadows the New Jerusalem, where we will be united with all believers in space and time.

Two main paradigms have characterised the church over centuries, and they still play a role in how we see the church-road to be travelled. On the one hand, the church is called to keep itself pure, in line with the gospel, to not become defiled by un-godly practices of the world (Rom. 12:2), but instead be a pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). This task is familiar to us as reformed people. But on the other hand, the church is sent into the world, our missionary task (Mat. 28:19,20). For this purpose we have to conform as much as possible to the culture in which we live or are sent to (1 Cor. 9:20-23). This is generally more difficult for us to practice in the neighbourhoods where we live. The church has to find a Scriptural balance between these two paradigms: her introvert, inwardly directed preservation of the truth, and her extrovert mission work, her outreach and openness to the world with the lowest possible threshold. A challenge for all of us.

The F.R.C.S.A. share many of the issues that you are discussing, especially on how we ought to read, understand and apply the Word of God, as we have it in the Bible. This is an important issue and impacts on our unity as churches. If our vision on and practice of hermeneutics start to differ, it will be more difficult to maintain unity as sister churches since we will be applying the Word of God differently. As sister churches, we are each other's keeper and have to find *practical* ways to discuss important issues, in addition to sending letters between and attending each other's Synods. May the Holy Spirit give us wisdom and guide us in the right direction. Your decisions here will have an impact on corresponding matters to be discussed at our next Synod of Soshanguve, the Lord Willing, in 2017.

We will also be able to benefit from other aspects of your deliberations and decisions, such as your investigation of local (partial) training for the ministry and reliable English Bible translations. Concerning the latter, we can learn from your NIV-ESV-NKJV discussions, as well as from corresponding discussions of the CanRC. It may be of interest to you that we

are a tri-lingual church federation. Of the eight churches in our federation, six are Afrikaans-speaking and two are Sotho-speaking, while our federal church language is English. Four of the eight churches in our federation are from origin immigration churches, one is an Afrikaans church and three are instituted mission churches. In total, the FRCSA has about 1 600 members, of which about 2/3 are from European origin and 1/3 from African origin (I'll show you some slides at the end of my presentation). In addition, we have five mission congregations, of which one is Afrikaans-speaking, three are Sotho-speaking and one is English-speaking. You will appreciate that all this makes it complicated to communicate and strive for unity between our churches. But whatever language, liturgy and culture we may use, our fundamental unity lies in Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

We also experience similar practical problems as you do when it comes to training for the ministry. To send young men to Hamilton for four years is quite some effort and isolates the students from their home churches. So we are also investigating whether theological students cannot undertake part of their studies in the home-country, with guidance from Hamilton and local pastors. A number of our present ministerial students are studying for their BTh at the Mukhanyo Theological College in South Africa, where one of our ministers is a dean. A particular concern at present in our church federation is that three of our four "immigration churches" will become vacant either this or next year. It will not be easy to fill these vacancies from within our church federation or from available students. Because of our small number of churches, we like to fill these vacancies again with experienced ministers. Some of the new ministers will probably have to be called from sister-churches

For those of you who do not know yet, I am sorry to say that South Africa is presently a very tumultuous country, with continuous strikes, violent demonstrations and high levels of crime. This is due to a government that is more interested in

its personal material wellbeing than in the welfare of the people (although, as good politicians, they tell us that it's just the other way around). Corruption is present at all levels. The transformed police force is hardly able to control law and order and our economy is hardly growing. South Africa has just under 30% unemployment of which 60% are young people. This high unemployment has a very negative effect, especially on our mission congregations. You will have noticed the effect of all this in the many South-Africans immigrants now living in Perth. But notwithstanding our frustrations with the world in which we live, as churches we are very thankful for the freedom that we have in being able to proclaim the gospel and undertake our mission work. We are also thankful to RCN churches in the north of the Netherlands, who provide more than 90% of the funds for our mission work.

I mentioned the various languages that are used within our churches. South Africa has 11 official languages, not including a number of Khoi-San (Bushman) languages. But there are also large differences in cultural practices. The Dutch immigrant churches still have a Dutch culture, while the other churches and mission congregations in our federation have an African culture.

The African culture is strongly promoted by the present government and includes practicing witch doctors ("sangoma's"), tribal chiefs (who rule rural towns), polygamy (our President has at present four wives) and ancestral worship. We have five kings (previously called "paramount chiefs"). This culture is probably not strange to Australia, but among the majority of South Africans it is still general practice. If you need to find a job or a good wife, if you need friends who earn an income, if you have problems with family or neighbours or have a serious illness, we have a one-stop-shop: the witch doctor (\$ 5 per consultation + a few \$s for the pills and drinks). It is very hard to fully eliminate these superstitious and ancestral practices, even for members of the mission congregations, especially when Christianity is seen as

part of the “Western” culture. Black Christians need discernment in order to decide what needs to be rejected and what can be kept.

Because of our small church federation, with limited resources, we only have a sister-church relationship with three churches: the FRCA, the CanRC and the RCN. But through our membership of the ICRC we try to maintain ecclesiastical contacts with other reformed churches, particularly in Africa. We also have a growing good relationship with the Reformed Churches of South Africa (RCSA). This was started “bottom-up”, i.e. by contact between local congregations, while our two classes and the Synods take note and stimulate the contact. Sixty years ago, when the FRCSA members emigrated from the Netherlands to South Africa, the immigrants had difficulty with the sister-church relations of the RCSA. But these differences have disappeared to a large extent. The RCSA is now also a member of the ICRC.

In a wider sense, we have a number of social activities initiated by church members, such as an AIDS support organisation (“Khothatsong”), a monthly magazine (“Kompas”), three reformed primary schools, as well as local mission support organisations. One of our young emeritus ministers (emeritus due to poor health) has successfully started a gospel support project (the Reformed Study Centre / Library) by electronically distributing reformed literature in Africa (in English and now also in French). This work is supported by some CanRC churches.

In a small way we try to spread the gospel in South Africa and stimulate reformed thinking and actions, to the honour and glory of God, our Father. This is one of our prime callings as churches and we trust in the Lord to continue strengthening and blessing us in these efforts. We are very thankful in particular to the F.R.C.A. in providing financial support to the five needy churches in our federation and for the warm and brotherly contacts that are being maintained. If we all are

faithful in our work in whatever place we live in this world, of which Christ is the King, we can expect to receive His blessings. But we are also encouraged in our efforts by meeting each other as sister churches and by reflecting on our calling as churches in this world.

In conclusion, I quote the prayer of the apostle Paul to the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:9-11 - NIV): “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge (*epignosis*, discernment) and depth of insight (*aisthesis*, judgment), so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God”. May the Lord grant you wisdom and bless you in your efforts as churches, to remain a pillar and ground of the truth and to fulfil your calling in spreading the gospel in this world. May the FRCSA also continue to be blessed in having the FRCA as sister churches. May your churches, also through the efforts of this Synod, go from strength to strength, to the glory of His Holy Name.

Hans Moes

On behalf of the DRCA of the FRCSA

**Address 1U: Response to the address of Br J Moes by
Br W Spyker**

Mr Chairman, delegates, brothers and sisters, and especially our br Hans Moes

It is with great thankfulness that we may experience fellowship with you, both individually by your presence here in Australia, but also collectively as sister churches. You have covered the vast distance of the Indian Ocean to come here, yet in hearing your words we are again reminded of the closeness we have, indeed the unity we have, unity in our Lord Jesus Christ.

How blessed it is to experience that unity, indeed how important it is to experience that unity. For as churches in this world we need each other. We need each other for encouragement, for assistance, for exhortation. We have the privilege of mutually caring for each other in order that we may continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

It is fair to say that our relationship as sister churches has continued to intensify over the years. Both Rev 'tHart and I were privileged to attend your Synod Bethal last year. We could witness first hand both the opportunities and the challenges that the Lord places on your path as federation of churches in South Africa. Opportunities for the spreading of the gospel, opportunities for showing love and mercy to those within your immediate surrounds. It is humbling to consider how you as a small federation may continue to show such zeal and energy to reach out to those around you with the Word of life. We encourage you in that ongoing work, and pray that our heavenly Father may grant his blessing, that indeed many may hear and bow the knee before our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the gospel of peace may bring blessing in what you have described as a tumultuous country.

You have also spoken of the challenges that you face as federation. Challenges in manpower, challenges in economic outlook, challenges in rising crime. Blessings that we may easily take for granted here in Australia, yet it again reminds us people and as bond of churches that we do not place our confidence in man, but rather to trust in the Lord, and be strong in the power of His might.

Your federation presents a powerful testimony of unity in faith as being transcendent to unity in culture or even language. You mentioned that your churches are either Afrikaans or Sotho speaking, yet you find commonality in your second language – English. We certainly appreciated that when we attended your Synod. Whilst each of you had to struggle

along in their second language, we felt right at home! Yet in all this we could praise God that the message of the gospel unites, even where language may not.

It has been a privilege for us to be able to provide the means of financial support in order that your labour in the ministry of the gospel may continue unhindered. Our churches have offered willingly, indeed abundantly, to the point where we have ample funds to provide ongoing assistance. Whilst we appreciate your desire as federation not to be dependent on foreign support, please rest assured of our churches' willingness to continue to contribute to the extent requested by you.

In this context, I may also mention that when visiting your Synod last year we really appreciated your consideration of the broad questions of your sustainability as federation of churches in the ecclesiastical world. You noted that planning should be done responsibly, recognizing the limitations of resources, but that each should contribute according to ability, even those who are needy. We were heartened by your principled approach in this regard.

Finally, we thank you for your encouragement to be guided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in our inter-church relations. May we wish you the same, including in your local contacts with churches such as the Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA). You have mentioned the increased contact and recognition at the local level, for which we may be thankful. Yet we also read of the RCSA in reports from our sister churches in New Zealand, who felt the need to admonish the RCSA over their decision to ordain women to the office of deacon, and charged their Inter-Church Relations Committee to demonstrate how this decision is contrary to Scripture and the confessions. We wish you faithfulness and clarity in your ongoing contacts with the RCSA.

We thank you again for your presence and contribution in our midst. In conclusion we may jointly encourage each other with the words of Hebrews 12:1,2: *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Warnar Spyker
for Deputies Sister Churches

Address 1V: Closing address by Rev S ‘t Hart

Closing Speech – Synod

When Synod Baldivis began it did so with a sense of expectancy not just from the delegates but also from many in our churches. We were expected to make some decisions, to come to the conclusion on a number of matters. As far as that goes we did not disappoint. Over the course of seven long days we met, we deliberated, at times we agonised, and we decided. We have a new sister church in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. We have extended a sister church relationship to the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore. We have taken the step of suspending the rules relating to our sister church relationship with the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. We have adopted the use of the ESV Bible Translation, permitting it for use in our church services. We have made a firm step to have our own version of the Canadian Book of Praise, we have agreed to further investigate 19 additional hymns. We have agreed to have some contact and interaction with the United Reformed Churches of North America. We have made changes to 2

articles in our church order. And with thankfulness we have decided to maintain our other sister church relationships.

Although we made a number of decisions that have a considerable impact on our own churches, much of our time was taken up discussing our relationships with churches in other countries. At the Synod we were blessed to see a visible manifestation of the catholicity of the Church. We had delegates from Indonesia, South Korea, Singapore, New Zealand, South Africa, the Netherlands, and Canada. On five separate evenings we could hear greetings and information from these different churches and for me most of those greetings were a highlight of all that I experienced. We were also blessed with the input and the advice that our overseas guests helped us with and we thank them for coming and their churches for sending them to us.

Although the task of chairman was not one that I took on with pleasure, I do thank the delegates to Synod for entrusting me with this weighty task. Although it was not easy I never felt challenged by you and if you ever lost confidence in the chair, you kept it hidden very well. I thank you for that. As your chairman I have tried to be fair, I have tried to build bridges and I have tried to keep us going in the knowledge of the unity that we share in Jesus Christ. I have also tried to both let you say what was on your heart and also gently rebuke you when a line was in danger of being crossed. I recognise weaknesses and areas where I could have done better and I apologise for that. I am also confident that the Lord has indeed blessed us as we prayed and that we who have worked together in the unity of the true faith will also leave this Synod firmly convinced of the one-ness that we have in Christ Jesus.

I would also like to thank my fellow officers who did a superb job in assisting me: Rev. Rupke as vice chairman: thank you for ably taking over from me when I felt that I might not be able to chair impartially; Rev. Vermeulen: thank you for your work as 2nd clerk. I trust you will enjoy the letter writing that takes

place after this Synod. And br. Bonker: for a secretary who cannot type, you did a superb job in arranging so many things and making sure that I had the right piece of paper, a pen in my hand and I remained on track as we negotiated our way through our agenda. I would also like to thank Sr Kina VanDuyn for the great work that she did in assisting our clerk and us all. We also thank Brs Alan VanderWal and Eric 't Hart for your great support in so many ways.

There are many people to thank for the hosting and the running of this Synod and I will ask our vice chairman to do that shortly.

As chairman of the consistory of the convening church of Baldivis I began this Synod with the reading of Ephesians 4. I would also like to close this Synod with the reading of the same chapter. Let us read together Ephesians 4:1-16.

Of this Bible passage I would like to direct your attention to verse 15, "... speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ."

Speaking the truth in love means confessing and maintaining the truth as God has revealed it to us in His Word. Ephesians 4 calls us to be united together and we know that the only way to be united together as churches and to grow up to be united with Christ our Head is to embrace the One who is the Truth and to believe that He is the only reliable source of truth, and to speak His truth to one another. Indeed, the truth must prevail.

But speaking the truth is more than being factually correct. For the Truth is ultimately found in a Person, the Truth is found in Jesus Christ. As it says in Ephesians 4:21, "the truth is in Jesus". Scripture also teaches us that "grace and truth have come to us in Him", that is Christ (John 1:17.) He came to this earth to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37) and He Himself said in John 14:6, "*I am* the truth!" And it is Jesus Christ that

we see the union between truth and love, a union that can not be broken. It is therefore when we speak the truth in love that we will, Ephesians 4:15, 16 teaches us, “grow up into all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

May the Lord so bless this Synod that it might serve to the upbuilding of His Church so that we may indeed grow in all things into Him who is the head: our Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix 2: Letter to the Reformed Church of the Netherlands

To the Synod of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands

Esteemed Brothers;

It is with deep sadness that Synod Baldivis herewith informs you that it has been decided to suspend our sister-church relationship with you. In practice this means that the practical provisions of our rules for sister-church relations are no longer in effect.

That means there can no longer be invitations of your ministers to our pulpits. Your ministers cannot be called to serve in the FRCA unless the call is first approved by classis. Attestations will only be accepted from your members when the consistory is convinced they are faithful in doctrine and conduct. Attestations to the RCN will only be issued with due care.

Delegates from your churches will be invited to attend our next General Synod where, besides the usual hospitality, opportunity to address us will be given according to synod rule 6.2:

to address synod in open session for the purpose of passing on greetings and information concerning our relations; to speak in synod's open sessions on matters specifically pertaining to our mutual relations where you may give advice when you request or are requested to do so.

Please understand that we have not come to this decision quickly or rashly, but did so with prayer and in anguish. We have become convinced on the basis of God's Word that under the present circumstances we can no longer continue this relation as it has been in the past.

Rest assured that we are well aware there are many members and churches among you who desire to remain faithful. The problem is that you tolerate both unacceptable hermeneutics and resultant unscriptural decisions and practices. We see that in various situations:

Even though the Report Male/Female tabled at your Synod of Ede was rejected, the hermeneutics used as basis for this report was not rejected and consequently the clear Scriptural injunction for women to have no authority in the churches is ignored. This is evident from the decision in relation to the Netherlands Reformed Churches (NGK). You have stated in this respect that neither women in office nor the rationale behind it within the NGK is an obstacle to ecclesiastical unity any longer.

When raising concerns about the developments and teachings in the TUK your deputies responded by saying that, by changing your school for theological training into a university, the supervision over professors and courses has now fallen under civil law. Consequently your churches now appear to be less able to restrain and censure professors when questions and objections are raised concerning how some promote and use unscriptural hermeneutics.

Further, our Synods of Launceston 2009 and Armadale 2012/13 have sent an exhortation and admonition about these matters (see Appendix). Instead of heeding and returning to a sound Scriptural basis, we were informed that you do not think we have fairly and rightly evaluated these matters and you see no reason for return or change. We, however, appeal to you to reconsider your evaluation of our admonition.

Despite our disappointment in your response we have acceded to your request for assistance in evaluating the hermeneutical principles that stand behind the report M/W in the church. We have acceded to your request by instructing asking our deputies to give you this evaluation.

We have decided to suspend our sister-church relation with you instead of terminating it at this time in the hope that you will still seriously reconsider our admonition and return from the ecclesiastical path into which you have turned. We do so in our loving care for you even though you tell us no longer to address you regarding these matters. However, if by the next synod of the RCN in 2017 there is no return to the firm foundation of God's Word our sister relationship will sadly become untenable.

Our churches have and will continue to pray that there may be a change of heart. It remains our sincere, heartfelt desire to be united with you on the one foundation of God's Word as summarised in the Reformed Confessions.

In Love in our Lord Jesus Christ

On behalf of Synod Baldivis

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA SYNOD TREASURY BUDGET 2012/15 / ACTUALS 2012/15 / BUDGET FOR 2015/2018							
ITEM	INCOME	BUDGET 2012/2015		ACTUALS 2012/2015		BUDGET 2015/2018	
1	CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CHURCHES (NOTE 1)	\$71,076.69		\$75,583.44		\$46,004.64	
2	REPORTS TO SYNOD / ACTS OF SYNOD			\$3,672.93			
3	INTEREST			\$1,657.04			
			\$71,076.69		\$80,913.41		\$46,004.64
ITEM	EXPENDITURE	BUDGET 2012/2015		ACTUAL 2012/2015		BUDGET 2015/2018	
1	SYNOD COSTS						
2	VENUE HIRE/VEHICLE HIRE	\$850.00				\$850.00	
3	FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT HIRE	\$1,500.00		\$345.45		\$1,000.00	
4	STATIONERY AND CONSUMABLES	\$1,800.00		\$296.00		\$1,000.00	
5	CATERING	\$2,000.00		\$2,574.61		\$3,000.00	
6	TELEPHONE & UTILITIES	\$300.00				\$300.00	
7	PRESENTATIONS	\$500.00				\$500.00	
8	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE	\$1,500.00		\$679.41		\$1,500.00	
9	LOSS OF INCOME DELEGATES & DEPUTIES	\$15,000.00		\$3,570.00		\$15,000.00	

Appendix 3: Synod Budget 2015-2018

10	TRAVEL COSTS TO SYNOD	\$4,000.00		\$1,966.24		\$4,000.00	
11	FRCA WEB PAGE	\$2,000.00		\$936.36		\$2,200.00	
12	SYNOD TYPIST	\$2,500.00		\$2,000.00		\$2,500.00	
13	PRINTING ACTS OF SYNOD	\$1,000.00		\$3,781.80		\$1,000.00	
14	PRINTING REPORTS TO SYNOD	\$500.00		\$2,607.50		\$1,000.00	
15	DEPUTIES VENUE/INFRASTR	\$500.00		\$1,224.00		\$7,150.00	
16			\$33,950.00		\$19,981.37		\$41,000.00
17							
18	DEPUTIES CONTACT OTHER CHURCHES						
19	TRAVEL COSTS OVERSEAS INDONESIA	\$5,000.00		\$2,915.35		\$5,000.00	
20	TRAVEL COSTS OVERSEAS RCNZ	\$4,500.00		\$4,405.21		\$4,500.00	
21	TRAVEL COSTS CANADA	\$8,000.00		\$5,295.78		\$6,000.00	
22	TRAVEL COST PC KOREA	\$2,500.00		\$1,273.72		\$3,000.00	
23	TRAVEL COSTS SOUTH AFRICA	\$5,000.00		\$3,076.24		\$3,500.00	
24	TRAVEL COSTS NETHERLANDS	\$7,500.00		\$9,119.26		\$7,500.00	
25	TRAVEL COSTS SINGAPORE	\$2,000.00		\$2,642.93		\$4,000.00	
26	UNA SANCTA SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$300.00					
27	INCIDENTALS (postage, telephone, typing, printing etc)	\$500.00					
28			\$35,300.00		\$28,728.49		\$33,500.00

30	DEPUTIES TRAINING MINISTRY						
31	GUEST SPEAKER	\$14,000.00		\$5,729.82		\$7,500.00	
32	TRAVEL BOARD MEETINGS	\$4,000.00		\$3,101.45		\$4,000.00	
33	INCIDENTALS	\$500.00					
34			\$18,500.00		\$8,831.27		\$11,500.00
35							
36	TREASURY ADMINISTRATION COSTS						
37	BANK CHARGES AND MISCELLANEOUS	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$50.23	\$50.23	\$150.00	\$150.00
38							
39	SYNOD ARCHIVES						
40	INCIDENTALS	\$200.00	\$200.00		\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
41							
42	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		\$88,100.00		\$57,591.36		\$86,350.00
43							
44	TREASURY OPERATING FUNDS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00			\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
45	(Includes funds required for 2018 Synod)						
46	TOTAL EXPENSES		\$108,100.00		\$57,591.36		\$106,350.00
47							
48	NET OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)		(\$37,023.31)		\$23,322.05		(\$60,345.36)

All budget expenditure figures include GST which is refunded

Note 1:	Contributions	
	Amount levied to the churches in accordance with Synod Acts 2012	\$71,076.69
	Plus payments received owing as at 1/5/12	\$4,506.76
	Rounding	<u>(0.01)</u>
		\$75,583.44