



**AGENDA
FOR
SYNOD
1985**



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1985**

JUNE 11 TO 21, 1985

At the Fine Arts Center Auditorium
of Knollcrest Campus, Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U. S. A.

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Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church
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Preface

The service of prayer for the Synod of 1985 will be held Monday evening, June 10, 1985, at 8:00 P.M. in the First Christian Reformed Church, 8360 Cottonwood Drive, Jenison, Michigan. The pastor of this church, Rev. John L. Witvliet, will be in charge of the prayer service.

The synod begins its sessions Tuesday morning, June 11, at 9:00 A.M. in the Fine Arts Center on the Knollcrest Campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The pastor of the convening church will serve as president pro-tem until the Synod of 1985 is duly constituted and its four officers have been elected.

Our congregations are also requested to remember the synodical assembly in intercessory prayers on Sunday, June 9. Let us pray that God may bless our denomination in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and send his Holy Spirit to endow our synod with love and wisdom.

Leonard J. Hofman
Stated Clerk
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560

DELEGATES—PLEASE NOTE

1. Delegates who travel by automobile are reminded of the decision of synod, that traveling together will effect considerable savings to synod.
2. Plane travel is the most economical for delegates since expenses for lodging and meals are not incurred.
3. No allowance will be made for travel insurance, since a synodical policy covers all delegates.
4. Bring with you your copy of the *Agenda for Synod 1985* and all other supplementary materials that may be sent to you.

Announcements

I. TAPING OF SYNODICAL SESSIONS

The Synod of 1979 authorized the making of an official audio recording of the entire proceedings of the general sessions of synod. It was also decided that synod designate the office of the stated clerk to be responsible for the usage and storage of these materials according to the job description of the office of the stated clerk.

The stated clerk and the Synodical Interim Committee take this opportunity to inform synod that while the general sessions of synod have been recorded since 1979, the rule has been followed that executive sessions are not taped.

The Synodical Interim Committee, at the request of the stated clerk, has also adopted the rule that all delegates to synod be advised at the opening session of synod that all the general sessions are being taped.

II. CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSIONS OF SYNOD

The Synodical Interim Committee calls the matter of confidentiality to the attention of the Synod of 1984 and urges that all necessary precautions be taken to prevent violations of confidentiality.

The Synod of 1952, which drafted rules for executive sessions, stated that "the various principles of executive sessions, or sessions that are not open to the public, involve the practical implication that reporters may not 'report.'" If reporters are not permitted to report on executive sessions of synod, it is certainly a breach of confidentiality also for delegates to the synodical assembly to report—publicly, orally, or in print—on the discussions held in an executive session of synod.

(Acts of Synod 1982, Art. 11, pp. 15-16)

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DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD OF 1985

Delegates	Alternates
Classis Alberta North	
Ministers Alvin H. Venema Charles T. Fennema	Ministers Gordon H. Pols Arie Vanden Berg
Elders Evert B. Emmelkamp James Visser	Elders John Leder Uilke Bouwman
Classis Alberta South	
Ministers Wayne A. Brouwer Jacob H. Binnema	Ministers James Joose Jelle Tuininga
Elders H. William Verveda John Vander Wekken	Elders Hank Klok William Doeve
Classis Atlantic Northeast	
Ministers Farquhar J. MacLeod Robert D. Steen	Ministers Jerry Van Dyk Robert A. De Lange
Elders Henry Lane Kittredge Haven	Elders Gilbert Baker Evert Burgess
Classis British Columbia	
Ministers Robert De Moor John G. Groen	Ministers Peter Plug Peter Sluys
Elders Gerry Ensing Hank L. Vander Veen	Elders Dick Bouwsema John Vander Hoek
Classis Cadillac	
Ministers John Morren Steven C. Elzinga	Ministers Timothy J. Brown Gerard L. Essenburg
Elders Ronald V. Brink Lane Bonnema	Elders Bernard L. Mulder John Rozeveld
Classis California South	
Ministers Cornelis P. Venema LeRoy G. Christoffels	Ministers William Verhoef Harold Hiemstra
Elders Norman D. Hogan Cecil Gosliga	Elders Herman T. Peterson W. Robert Godfrey
Classis Central California	
Ministers Vernon Vander Zee Jack Huttinga	Ministers Laverne K. Tanis Barry B. Blankers
Elders Rein J. Groen Eugene M. Vander Wall	Elders Charles Hiemstra Harold Velting
Classis Chatham	
Ministers Dirk Miedema John Kerssies	Ministers Johan D. Tangelder Peter Kranenburg
Elders Jack Geschiere Harry Klomps	Elders Harry Van Gorp Enno Ennema
Classis Chicago South	
Ministers Carl G. Kromminga, Jr. Richard M. Hartwell, Sr.	Ministers Lester W. Van Essen Russell Palsrok
Elders Bruce C. Nikkel Henry Bruinooge	Elders Richard P. Kooy Raymond Togtman, Sr.

Delegates		Alternates
Classis Columbia		
Ministers	Alvin J. Machiela Neal R. Rylaarsdam	Ministers Gary P. Hutt Cornelius Pool
Elders	Keith E. Fennema William E. Taylor	Elders Harley E. Dykema Albert Elenbaas
Classis Eastern Canada		
Ministers	B. Bernard Bakker William Suk	Ministers Wieger De Jong John Tenyenhuis
Elders	John Holleman Melis Melissen	Elders Tony Alblas Ebel Geertsema
Classis Florida		
Ministers	Ralph W. Bronkema John H. Looman	Ministers John Van Hemert Harvey A. Ouwinga
Elders	Arthur Vander Griend Elmer Miedema	Elders Willard F. Vander Werf Richard Zeeff
Classis Grand Rapids East		
Ministers	Harold E. Botts Jack Roeda	Ministers Henry Admiraal Carl L. Kammeraad
Elders	George N. Monsma Philip J. Quist	Elders Robert A. Pohler William C. Haverkamp
Classis Grand Rapids North		
Ministers	Donald J. Van Beek Charles Steenstra	Ministers Jay De Vries John Joldersma
Elders	David Kruithoff Peter D. Vander Bent	Elders William Flikkema John Van Timmeren
Classis Grand Rapids South		
Ministers	Ray B. Lanning Gerald R. Erffmeyer	Ministers John H. Engbers Gerald F. Van Oyen
Elders	John Van Laar John F. Kuiper	Elders John Moes Philip Wiltjer
Classis Grandville		
Ministers	Calvin Bolt Roger A. Kok	Ministers Leonard Van Drunen Syburn M. Voortman
Elders	John Feyen Alfred Pals	Elders Theodore Howerzyl, Sr. Wilson E. Haarsma
Classis Hackensack		
Ministers	Ronald J. de Groot Daniel B. Mouw	Ministers Stanley J. Vander Klay Terry J. Lapinsky
Elders	Henry J. L. Fortuin George Monsma	Elders Lambertus Braunius Otis Daniels
Classis Hamilton		
Ministers	Jelle Nutma Henry Katerberg	Ministers Jack B. Vos Cecil Van Niejenhuis
Elders	Stan Antonidus Peter Bulthuis	Elders Cor Schuurman Jan Vander Woerd

Delegates		Alternates	
Classis Holland			
Ministers	Louis J. Dykstra Michael De Vries	Ministers	Lee R. Smits Peter Borgdorff
Elders	Eugene Laninga Louis Hekman	Elders	Harold S. Soper Sidney Staal
Classis Hudson			
Ministers	Raynard Vander Laan Thomas D. Draayer	Ministers	Norman B. Steen Mark J. Lucas
Elders	Albert Borduin, Sr. Peter Moen	Elders	John Woudenberg Paul Ruitenberg
Classis Huron			
Ministers	Ralph Koops James R. Payton	Ministers	Albert Dreise Harry Friend
Elders	Theodore Ferwerda Remkes Kooistra	Elders	Hilbert Rumph Bert Haverkamp
Classis Illiana			
Ministers	Calvin L. Bremer Allan H. Jongmsma	Ministers	George P. Holwerda Calvin P. Van Reken
Elders	Richard Wunderink John M. Van Der Aa	Elders	James Swets
Classis Kalamazoo			
Ministers	Charles Terpstra William D. Buursma	Ministers	Harry G. Arnold J. William Van Der Heide
Elders	Philip Bushhouse Ernest S. Feenstra	Elders	Ralph Balkema William Veldkamp
Classis Lake Erie			
Ministers	Jacob P. Heerema Raymond Opperwall	Ministers	Donald H. Postema Dick M. Stravers
Elders	Fred C. Visser Kenneth W. Hermann	Elders	George J. Kamps
Classis Minnesota North			
Ministers	Norman Shepherd John Bylsma	Ministers	Edwin D. Roels Ralph Fluit
Elders	Marion Van Someren Herman Ahrenholz	Elders	Jerry Hammink Frank J. Van Someren
Classis Minnesota South			
Ministers	Ronald L. Scheuers Peter W. Brouwer	Ministers	Norman B. Haan Allen P. Vander Pol
Elders	Martin Kramer Peter J. Nieuwsma	Elders	Clarence Mast Evert J. Krosschell, Jr.
Classis Muskegon			
Ministers	Norman L. Meyer Gerald D. Postema	Ministers	Keith W. Tanis Eugene W. Los
Elders	Ronald J. Van Valkenburg Eugene Rothi	Elders	Henry Betten, Sr. Jay De Koning

Delegates	Classis Northcentral Iowa	Alternates	
Ministers	Aldon L. Kuiper Thomas R. Dykstra	Ministers	Raymond Graves Gilmer Compaan
Elders	Andrew M. Cannegieter Gary Dewaard	Elders	Harm C. Meyer Henry L. Eckhoff
Classis Northern Illinois			
Ministers	Bert De Jong Hendrik De Vries	Ministers	Fred F. Gunnink George D. Vanderhill
Elders	John R. Swierenga Roger Westrate	Elders	Sidney Dykstra John M. Post
Classis Orange City			
Ministers	Thomas C. Vanden Heuvel Jerome M. Julien	Ministers	Marvin Van Donselaar Carl E. Zylstra
Elders	Dean A. Schmidt Henry Addink	Elders	James Heynen Robert Zwier
Classis Pacific Northwest			
Ministers	Andrew A. Cammenga Peter J. Holwerda	Ministers	Karl Wiersum Gerrit W. Sheeres
Elders	James Van Andel Duane Kuik	Elders	Walter S. Werkhoven Edward G. Kok
Classis Pella			
Ministers	Paul E. Bakker Andrew Zylstra	Ministers	Alfred S. Luke James D. Stoel
Elders	William W. Dieleman Ronald T. Holwerda	Elders	Bass Van Gilst John Hugen
Classis Quinte			
Ministers	John Zantingh Ronald G. Fisher	Ministers	John Heidinga Henry Wildeboer
Elders	Henry Meinema John Feenstra	Elders	Ralph Pypker Jim Bandstra
Classis Red Mesa			
Ministers	Thomas J. Niehof Paul H. Redhouse	Ministers	Anthony Begay Marinus A. Harberts
Elders	Everett D. Manuelito Tom Tso	Elders	Chester D. Hubbard, Sr. Bruce Tempest
Classis Rocky Mountain			
Ministers	John Terpstra Rodger J. Buining	Ministers	Duane K. Kelderman Hendrik De Young
Elders	Vernon Smith Gary L. Lenderink	Elders	William Borger Carl J. Toeset
Classis Sioux Center			
Ministers	Stanley De Vries Clarence Van Essen	Ministers	Robert J. Timmer Jerry D. Buwalda
Elders	Ted Maas Warren Snieder	Elders	George A. Faber Charles D. Veenstra

Delegates	Classis Thornapple Valley	Alternates
Ministers	Bernard W. Mulder John C. Medendorp	Ministers Merlin N. Buwalda James E. De Vries
Elders	Andrew K. Vander Wall Uko Zylstra	Elders Roger Ondersma Peter Paap
Classis Toronto		
Ministers	Jack Westerhof Jake Kuipers	Ministers John W. Van Stempvoort Leonard T. Schalkwyk
Elders	Jan De Koning Joe Feddema	Elders Karl Schenk John Holtrop
Classis Wisconsin		
Ministers	James Cooper Sam Keyzer	Ministers Theodore Wevers Jay R. Pruijm
Elders	Milton Kuyers Art Kuiper	Elders Henry Otte Willard Vander Galien
Classis Zeeland		
Ministers	Arthur Besteman Henry B. Vanden Heuvel	Ministers Edward J. Knott Kenneth E. Van Wyk
Elders	Thomas Spriensma Delvin R. Huisingh	Elders Herman Leestma John A. Timmer

REPORT 1 THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

"The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught" (Isa. 50:4).

Praise the Lord for the word that sustains the weary! Praise the Lord for the way he wakens us each day and tells us the message that must be announced to the world. Our message is ancient, but God says, "Ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16). The age-old message has never been needed more desperately.

In the writings of our brother Isaiah, the message we proclaim over the airwaves can be found. "Turn to me and be saved all you ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none other. I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. I will create new heavens and a new earth" (45:22, 44:3, 55:6-7, 65:17).

In Christ Jesus all the prophet's words have been fulfilled. Now it is the blessed duty of the church to herald the message of salvation through the cross to the ends of the earth. On the pages that follow, which scan our denomination's widespread work and outreach, every issue, every plan must be evaluated in the light of the Savior's program which will bring every knee in obedience to his glory. We submit this brief summary of this agency's work with the prayer that those who read it may give God the adoration for what he has enabled our church to do in this particular expression of our mission. May it be read with interest, evaluated with wisdom, and used to provide us who represent you with direction and counsel.

Before examining the various ministries of the Back to God Hour, we would like to express a plea to the church to take its broadcast mission seriously. This may seem strange, for there is ample evidence that our denomination has demonstrated that it does exactly that. Indeed, and we have been enormously encouraged by this. We make this plea, now, however, because we are convinced that even more will be required of us in the years ahead in terms of our use of the electronic media. And we are aware that certain elements of the current scene could well result in the church's turning aside from its broadcast responsibilities.

In contrast to the early years of our work when the Back to God Hour was one of few similar programs, our broadcast missions are now carried on in a situation in which religious broadcasting has grown impressively. Gospel television has become a prominent part of our environment and some have become cynical about the developments. It is possible that this cynicism could

result in a less than enthusiastic evaluation of our church's broadcast ministry. It would be easy to overlook the fact that our broadcast ministries are uniquely ecclesiastical, supervised and supported by the church, with the result that what we do and accomplish differs from independent gospel broadcasting. The fact that our mission employs natives of foreign countries to prepare messages for these countries and to broadcast to them sets our mission apart from most others.

But we also make this plea because we feel great urgency to improve and expand our work in terms of the nature of the mission obligation that presently confronts the church as a whole. With each passing year, we are becoming more aware of the magnitude of the mission challenge that accompanies the burgeoning world population. Gross world population figures are impressive in themselves, but what is even more impressive are the new realities they will establish. For example, we are looking ahead to the urbanization of the world, to the growing importance of the developing nations, and to the increasing youthfulness of world populations.

For example, Third World cities are now the home for approximately one billion people; by 2025, they will be home for four billion. Latin America is already an urbanized region; over the next forty years, Africa and Asia will become the same. With the growing importance of the developing nations, the mission of the church must shift its emphasis increasingly to reaching urban centers in such countries. And the youthfulness of world populations means that there will be millions more people, but also millions of young people who are at the crossroads of religious choice.

An awareness of future realities such as these is significant for our work in two ways. First, it is obvious that we need to increase our use of broadcast media so that our ministry will keep pace with expanding world populations. Second, and this is even more important, what we know about future population configurations places special pressure upon us *now*. For the future will not simply drop out of the sky forty years from now, but we will move into it gradually over the next decades. This means that what we do now, at this very moment, in gospel presentation will have a direct bearing on the shape of the future. For instance, we are told that Mexico City will be the largest city in the world with thirty million inhabitants in 2025. If we can find ways to reach Mexico City today with Christ's gospel, with God's blessing our efforts could be a factor in assuring that a high percentage of the population in 2025 will be followers of Christ.

It is our conviction that more of our denominational resources will have to be concentrated on using the electronic media in its mission. Such a concentration can be accomplished in various ways. It has been gratifying for us to have a significant meeting with World Mission Board staff members, at their suggestion, in which we have discussed some of these issues. The meeting was preliminary, but we are sure that such discussions will continue, and we look forward to examining the implications of some of the new developments for our church's mission.

Now, then, let us turn to a brief examination of the various language ministries of the Back to God Hour. Before doing so, the church would be interested in knowing that we now broadcast in forty-five different formats, over 1,341 regular stations, and we release 93,848 broadcasts a year. This does not include the broadcast of FAITH 20 available to approximately 1,200 cable stations. This

ministry is supplemented by literature and by approximately 130 counselors who deal directly with those who respond.

I. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The English-language ministry consists of the following elements: the *Back to God Hour* radio program, the *Back to God Hour* radio program for overseas, the *Insight* radio program, the daily operation of Voice of Life Radio on Dominica, FAITH 20 television, television documentaries and spot announcements, followup by letter and telephone contact, and the *Today* devotional guide.

The *Back to God Hour* program deals with biblical subjects; it announces the message which Isaiah already spoke so clearly and which has been perfected in the work of Christ. This program provides an opportunity for us to deal in depth with many biblical subjects such as Jesus' suffering and death. The program also speaks biblically to current issues such as abortion and education. The *Back to God Hour* program is sent overseas after careful editing to insure that it will be acceptable in foreign contexts. It is especially heartwarming to notice that overseas response to these programs continues to grow. These programs are also distributed on cassette. The *Insight* program, a four-and-one-half-minute weekday public service presentation of a human interest subject from a Christian perspective, is heard widely.

Since 1981, we have been responsible for the programming of the Voice of Life Radio Station on the eastern Caribbean island of Dominica. This station's signal is especially powerful southward, and impressive listening audiences have been developed in such countries as Grenada and Barbados. Voice of Life facilities were upgraded during 1984 with the construction of a duplex which provides housing for the resident agent, for visitors, and for itinerant personnel who come to service the station. A new studio was also constructed and the radio linkage between the studio and the transmitter were improved. This project was completed by volunteers and was supervised by RACOM International, the organization that owns the station and makes it available to the Back to God Hour.

The Back to God Hour distributed the television documentary *Sea Salt*, which depicts the harbour ministry in Montreal, as well as a special Christmas children's program *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. FAITH 20 television has continued to develop—the regular production of such a weekday program necessarily demands constant attention to countless details and examination of new ways to improve the presentation. We were able to sign a two-year contract with WGN television in Chicago, one of the major satellite stations in our country. This station gives us continent-wide coverage, and this means that, though the station is located in Chicago, WGN FAITH 20 is, in actuality, an outreach to North America. We also use Global Network in Canada. It has been possible for us to strengthen our position in Los Angeles by switching from Channel 11 to Channel 5, Monday through Friday at 5:30 A.M. We have also made our program available to many local cable stations and encourage our local churches to contact us if they have a cable outlet in their area that might wish to carry our program. We continue to tailor-make the program for our church in Alaska, where the program is presented as if it originates locally. *We are willing to explore such adaptations of our programs with other interested churches as well.*

Our report last year featured a thorough discussion of FAITH 20, and those

who desire more information about our approach to television should consult the *Acts of Synod 1984*, pages 16–20.

In addition to our contact with listeners and viewers by means of broadcasting, we develop continued personal contact wherever possible. Rev. Henry Bruinooge is the minister for listener contact and among his duties is the supervision of counselors in Chicago and the Los Angeles area who talk with those who call in to the television program. We especially give thanks when some who call and write become members of churches. All sorts of people respond; some of them, such as a call girl in Oklahoma City, have had ties with our churches but they have strayed away from the Lord and now want help in coming back to him. A special team of thirteen went to Grenada and did special followup for the Dominica station. Dr. Nederhood had services in the Central American country of Belize, where many people watch the FAITH 20 program.

The *Today* devotional guide is one of the major ministries of our denomination. More than a million people read each issue, and 85 percent of them are of non-Christian Reformed background. For many, *Today* is their major source of biblical teaching. The large-print *Today* has proven popular.

It is important that, when we think about our English broadcast ministry, we remember that English is a major missionary language. It is impressive that our programs can be useful overseas. And we must remember that, as we broadcast to North America, we touch the lives of foreign students and others who return to their homelands.

II. ARABIC-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The Arabic-language ministry of the Back to God Hour, begun in 1958, is the oldest foreign language ministry of this organization. The offerings of this department are distributed under the generic name *Saatu'l Islah* and consist of the following programs: the weekly thirty-minute sermon program, fifteen-minute Bible Study programs Monday through Friday, and the fifteen-minute Saturday *Reflections* program which features catechism discussions and comments on current cultural matters as well as faith and life questions and answers. These programs are currently heard on the following stations: Trans World Radio, Monte Carlo and Cyprus; ELWA, Monrovia, Liberia; FEBA, Seychelles; and WFYR, Oakland, CA. Discussions with Cyprus Broadcasting are currently underway which may well open the way to increasing our Arabic ministry to two and one-half hours each day. These programs are supported by a wide range of literature, much of it consisting of program transcripts which constitute commentaries on entire books of the Bible. Rev. Bassam Madany, of Antioch, Syria, conducts this ministry.

The impact of our Arabic ministry on the field has been strengthened considerably through the presence of Rev. Victor Atallah, of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, in Larnaca, Cyprus, where he works with listeners to our broadcast. The establishment of Rev. Atallah's office in Cyprus is part of a five-year development during which he worked closely with Rev. Madany in our office and the Middle East. With the establishment of this office, it will be possible to have personal contact with many of our listeners with a view to helping them find their way into local Reformed and evangelical churches.

Rev. Madany's comments on the Arab world underscore the confusion, turmoil, and hopelessness in that region. He says: "Notwithstanding all that

we hear about some Arab lands which are 'floating on petro-dollars,' the mood of the Arabs themselves is that of despair. Strife is everywhere: between Iraq and Iran, Arabs and Israelis, Lebanese and Lebanese, Moroccans and Saharawis, Libyans and the rest of the world! A population explosion, the creeping Sahara, and unemployment compound the problems of Arab lands." Madany continues to be astonished that all sorts of people respond to this ministry—simple people, young and old, scholars, religious leaders (even Muslim), and business people are all found among those who write him more than 9,000 letters a year. "It has pleased our sovereign Lord to use us in the spread of his saving word among a people who have sunk into the valley of despair," this Middle Eastern preacher concludes. Indeed, over the years there has been response from every village, town, and city that is found on the map of the Middle East. And people write from Europe and America where there is a new dispersion of Arab people.

Rev. Madany, who is assisted by his wife Shirley, also deals with an increasing response from individuals and groups who are attracted by the offer of "evangelistic material in Arabic," as advertised in certain Christian magazines.

III. SPANISH-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The Spanish Department has developed the following programs: *La Hora de la Reforma*, a half-hour program which has been the main program of the department since 1968; *Reflexion*, a five-minute daily broadcast; and *Alfa y Omega*, a daily half-hour program which includes news and music, along with a message from the Scriptures. We also release spot announcements for radio. In addition, this department produces and distributes the following television programs: a series on the life of Christ, a television version of *Reflexion*, spot announcements, specials for the church calendar, and regular preaching programs.

Our Spanish broadcast ministry is conducted in a highly urbanized setting where there are many and varied broadcasting opportunities. Presently we are using 237 radio stations, and we release 30,088 Spanish radio and television programs annually.

Each quarter, 130,000 copies of the radio messages are printed and mailed to many homes. *Curso Basico de la Doctrina Cristiana*, based on a catechism dealing with basic Christian doctrine, has been distributed widely. The Spanish Department also provides a booklet of daily devotions, much like the English language *Today*. Whenever feasible, Spanish Literature Committee materials are incorporated into our work.

The Spanish Department pioneered the use of cassette distribution; this ministry is now being expanded. Bookstores throughout Latin America offer these cassettes.

Mr. Jack Roeda, a veteran missionary to Latin America and now the administrator of our Spanish work, travels regularly to arrange for showings of our television materials and for the distribution of cassettes. Rev. Juan Boonstra, the director of this work, spends a great deal of time overseas, especially in connection with the evangelistic campaigns he conducts. Last November thousands attended his evangelistic campaign conducted in Temuco, Chile.

IV. CHINESE-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

Our Chinese program offerings are characterized by variety, with different

kinds of programs designed to reach different groups of people. All programs are broadcast in Mandarin and some also in Cantonese. Rev. Isaac Jen, who directs this ministry, explains that the programs present a "three-pronged" approach: evangelistic sermons aimed at the general non-Christian public, bilingual and youth-oriented programs specifically targeted to young people, and a "Theology on the Air" program designed to train house church leaders. Long-standing Chinese-language programs include a fifteen-minute preaching format program, a theology program, and a devotional program. Over the last two years, four additional programs have been added: a Bible study program, and the programs "Youth World," "English Classroom," and "English World" which appeal to the millions who want to learn English. A highlight this year was the second presentation of *Messiah* sung by the Calvin Oratorio Society, with Chinese subtitles, in Hong Kong.

Our Chinese-language programs are now broadcast each week from seven stations: HCBC, a commercial station in Hong Kong; KTWR, Guam; Vila Verde, a commercial station in Macao; Far East Broadcasting Corporation, Saipan; MSW, an FEBC station in Manila; HLAZ, an FEBC station on Cheju Island, Korea; and HLKX, in Inchon, Korea. Speaking about the coverage of our Chinese ministry, Rev. Jen says, "On the basis of very reliable reports, broadcast signals from both mediumwave and shortwave are clearly heard in China. Most house church Christians listen to these stations regularly, and many young people and nonbelievers tune to these stations. It is impressive that the signal from the mediumwave (AM) station on Cheju island carries 1,300 miles—the all the way to western China."

The farflung outreach which Rev. Jen directs has an office in Hong Kong which is expected to expand during the next years. Already, to facilitate serving those who respond, listener files for the Far East have been transferred to Hong Kong. Response to this broadcast increased during 1984, especially when President Reagan visited China. We have now heard from every province in China. All production is done in Palos Heights, and it benefits from the support and services of the deeply interested Chinese Christian community in Chicagoland, which provides capable on-air talent and clerical personnel.

The Chinese-language ministry is supplemented by a literature ministry which includes a Chinese/English version of *Today*, a Chinese-language edition of the Heidelberg Catechism, and a correspondence course.

V. FRENCH-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

French-language programming consists of the radio programs *Perspectives Reformees*, and *Perspectives Bibliques* (Canada only). The programs distributed under these labels actually consist of a variety of presentations including sermons, doctrinal expositions, and liturgical programs. In addition, the French Department has produced a television version of *Messiah* with French subtitles and four thirty-minute television documentaries dealing with the Bible and its history. The radio programs are carried by two powerful stations which blanket Europe and part of North Africa, Radio Luxembourg and Radio Monte Carlo. Three local stations carry our programs daily in France. Four stations carry *Perspectives Bibliques* in Canada. Radio ELWA, Monrovia, Liberia; TWR in Swaziland; and Radio Africa I in Gabon enable us to reach most of Francophone Africa. In the Caribbean, our own Dominica station provides

coverage for the French-speaking islands there. From Florida, WYFR sends the broadcasts to both Europe and Africa.

Rev. Aaron Kayayan considers our French literature an extremely important element of his total outreach. He has produced a book which contains daily meditations for an entire year called *Aujourd'hui Devant Dieu* (Today before God). In addition, our French broadcast distributes a French-language edition of the Heidelberg Catechism, a Confession of Faith, and a Church Order. It also continues to publish *Perspectives Reformees* which deals with fundamental biblical matters.

Over the last several years, the French-language ministry has been especially influential in Zaire. Rev. Kayayan has visited that country several times, once with Rev. William Van Tol of the Christian Reformed Board for World Missions, and has met with church leaders who want to form a thoroughly Reformed church. They have eagerly used the Heidelberg Catechism, the Gallican Confession, and the Reformed Church Order provided by our office. In December, Rev. Kayayan was invited to accompany Rev. Paul Treick of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) (Eureka Classis) to act as a consultant as that church organized and sponsored a new Reformed denomination in Zaire. As a result of this visit, the *Église Reformee Confessante au Zaire* was established, consisting of upwards of seventeen congregations and possibly as many as 15,000 people who have responded to the French ministry.

We praise God for this development and consider it providential that the Reformed Church in the United States was interested in becoming involved in Africa. This church supplied the funds necessary for the new church to be properly registered by the government, ordained the first minister, Rev. Kishimba Kasantika, a graduate of the Reformed Seminary in Aix en Provence, France, and the first elders. The RCUS intends to stay close to the church, providing it with help in forming local congregations and spiritual, educational, and material aid. It has been a pleasure and a privilege for us to work with the RCUS, and we rejoice that their interest has made it possible for the formation of this Reformed church in Zaire. We commend this new church to the prayerful concern of our denomination.

VI. JAPANESE-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

The two programs of our Japanese ministry, *Window to Tomorrow* and *Morning Word*, blanket Japan from HLAZ, the powerful station on Cheju Island, Korea. They are also heard over Radio Nippon in the Tokyo area and in Kochi. KTWR, a Trans World Radio outlet on Guam, also beams the programs into this country. An innovative supplement to the broadcasting schedule is a telephone hotline which allows those who have missed a program to call in and hear it on the telephone. This service is well used.

Rev. Shojiro Ishii, a Reformed Church of Japan pastor, directs this ministry. He prepares broadcasts along with several other Reformed Church ministers. The Japanese ministry continues to be characterized by earnest efforts at developing close ties with listeners who respond and it provides them with an introduction to local congregations. Some listeners attend retreats where they receive fuller instruction in the Scriptures.

As a result of Rev. Ishii's visit to our board last October and the visits of other members of the Reformed Church of Japan to our organization, we are now

investigating the establishment of even closer ties with the Japanese denomination. As these relationships develop further—and they may take some time, we will keep synod informed.

VII. INDONESIAN-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

Our Indonesian-language programs, *The Majestic Plan*, *Word for Today*, and *Guidelines for Living*, blanket the country by shortwave from Manila and Guam, and are broadcast on many local stations. The Rev. Junus Atmarumeksa, who directs this ministry, also provides listeners with a devotional guide similar to *Today*, called *Wasiat*.

This ministry was strengthened significantly at the end of 1984 with the purchase of its first headquarters; formerly it had used rented facilities. Rev. Atmarumeksa reports that the new offices will provide him with what he needs to improve and expand this ministry which is now reaching the world's largest Muslim nation, a nation which covers a vast area that stretches a distance equivalent to that between Vancouver and Nova Scotia. Visits of Indonesian representatives to the Back to God Hour at the time of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod meeting last August indicate that the Reformed Church in Indonesia wants to develop closer relationships with our broadcast ministry.

VIII. RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE MINISTRY

Our Russian-language coverage has recently been doubled—we now have two releases weekly over Trans World Radio in Monte Carlo. We also broadcast this program over station WYFR of the Family Radio network in Florida. Though we continue to use translations in the production of these programs, we have increased our contacts with Russian people in the United States with a view to strengthening the broadcasts through consultation with those who know Russia intimately. In the nature of the case, response is virtually nonexistent, but occasionally we receive encouraging indications that people are listening and benefiting from this material. A note from a Russian who had come to our country from Siberia spoke specifically about the way people there listened to the programs and appreciated them.

IX. ADMINISTRATION

In 1981, the ministry and business elements of the Back to God Hour were separated, so that the ministers do not have to be involved in the business dimension of this work. At that time, Mr. Ira Slagter assumed the duties of the newly created post of executive director. Dr. Joel Nederhood continues as the director of ministries. This year, Dr. Nederhood marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination of service to our church at the Back to God Hour. Mr. Terry Greenfield, our administrative manager, works closely with Mr. Slagter; and Revs. Madany, Boonstra, and Jen supervise, in addition to their own ministries, the Indonesian, Portuguese, and Japanese ministries, respectively.

Regarding salaries paid to our executive personnel, we report the following, according to synodical instructions:

Job level	Number of positions in job level	Compensation quartile
7	1	3rd (100%—110%)
7	1	2nd (90%—100%)
5	5	2nd (90%—100%)

The compensation quartile includes salary plus housing allowances.

One of the major concerns of our executive director, Mr. Slagter, has been the careful management of our revenue to insure that our debt picture improves. Debts incurred during the recession must be liquidated as soon as possible; and we are happy to report that significant progress has been achieved. We continuously monitor our revenue flow and carefully assess our position each month with a view to insuring that our expenditures are in phase with our income. However, the denomination should know that, in spite of the business upturn, our revenues are, at this writing, falling behind budget projections.

It is necessary for us to generate funds along three fronts. First, there is the quota support of our organization. This remains the major single source of revenue. Since we are committed to producing our programs as bonafide ministries of the church and not as fundraisers, we should all remember that the Back to God Hour is dependent upon quota funds very directly, and if we are to maintain the level of work we are doing and expand it as we must, it will be necessary for this support to be raised. To be sure, we can expect that our listeners and viewers will voluntarily help us with this work, but we can never expect them to carry most of the cost so long as we continue to present the programs as ministries and not as fundraisers.

Second, we depend on churches to include this ministry in their special mission giving. We are at a disadvantage in this respect, because we do not have many ministers to offer the church for its support. But the ministers we do have are each involved in ministries that take hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is our hope that more and more churches will elect to support a ministry like the Spanish-language ministry or the Arabic ministry, for example. We are nowhere near having enough churches supporting our ministries through special mission giving.

And third, we must continue to work diligently with individual givers. Our mailing program is part of this picture. Each mailing gives us a significant return—some as high as \$100,000. We know the church understands how necessary these mailings are.

Approximately thirty-five people comprise our staff in Palos Heights, and another twenty or so work in our offices overseas. To think that the program described on the foregoing pages is carried on by such a small group of people is astonishing, especially to those who are acquainted with the broadcasting field. We demand many hours of our people and great versatility and adaptability. That our team works together as it does reflects the sense of purpose and conviction which is felt within the organization.

In addition to the personnel who make up our organization as such, a growing number of people are working with us on a volunteer basis. RACOM, an organization of businessmen which exists to promote this cause, and RACOM International, its subsidiary, have provided outstanding services in fundraising and in matters related to the Voice of Life station on Dominica. It is gratifying for us to acknowledge RACOM's fifteen years of service to the Back to God Hour. Mr. Jerry Jonker, its president, and the entire organization have made an invaluable contribution to our church's broadcast mission.

At the 1984 meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the Committee on Radio and Television was expanded, with Dr. Nederhood as convener. We expect that our work will be affected by this development to some degree.

Article 2, Section 2, of the "Global Media Missions Order" commits the Back to God Hour to "conduct its work in the full awareness of the activities of other

synodical agencies and will, whenever possible, coordinate its efforts with those of the synodical boards." We believe that the denominational machinery is in place to accomplish this coordination. And great progress is being made. Mr. Slagter meets regularly with the Interagency Advisory Council, and Dr. Nederhood meets regularly with the Mission Coordination Council—in addition, he meets with the executives of the other mission agencies to deal with operational matters that involve the agencies collectively.

The members of our ministerial staff work closely with the World Literature Committee—Rev. Jen is a member of this committee, and Revs. Madany, Boonstra, and Kayayan serve on subcommittees dealing with the Arabic, Spanish, and French languages, respectively.

The Back to God Hour Board meets three times a year to supervise the work of the staff, formulate policy, and represent the synod as its interim committee charged with the task of bringing the gospel to the world through broadcasting. The board consists of the following members: Rev. Hans Uittenbosch, president; Rev. Kenneth D. Koeman, vice president; Rev. Howard J. Vugteveen, secretary; Mr. Jerry Hertel, treasurer; Dr. Henry Ottens, Revs. Merle Den Blyker, Jack S. Hielema, Louis Kerkstra, James R. Kok, and Frank E. Pott; Messrs. George Groen, Fred LeFebre, Richard Loerop, and Jack Thalen; and Mrs. Jean Bilthouse. The board has also appointed a special Television Review Committee which evaluates television programming.

As the Back to God Hour Board and staff concluded its study of its Five-Year Plan last October, they noted the glory of the work which God has entrusted to them and to all of us as a church by means of this ministry. We sense the glory of God's sovereign plan which, we believe, includes the work which we do as we use broadcasting to tell the world of his saving love. Here is the glory of God's splendid gospel which is powerful beyond description—how we pray that nothing we do will dull its luster or inhibit its power. And there is the glory of souls won for the Master, as throughout the world men and women are moved to repentance and salvation.

In an age in which there is so little splendor, we do what we must, realizing that by means of this work, too, God is preparing creation for our Savior's return. So much must happen if the plans we make in God's service will be even minimally realized: it will take so many heartbeats, so much study of the Scripture, so much thought and writing, so much generosity and sacrifice, so much of all the things we cannot bring to the task by ourselves. So we depend on him for everything. Faith is the key. If it does not fail, something good will come of the work we do together for God's glory.

We believe that our great God will waken us every morning and give us the word of the gospel that sustains the weary.

* * * * *

MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION:

1. The board requests that its president, Rev. Hans Uittenbosch; its director of ministries, Dr. Joel Nederhood; and its executive director, Mr. Ira Slagter, be given the privilege of the floor when the Back to God Hour matters are discussed.
2. The board requests that Dr. Joel Nederhood, director of ministries, be given permission to address synod on behalf of the Back to God Hour.

3. Nominations for board membership for three-year terms are:

British Columbia (addition to the board)

Mr. Gerald De Haan who manages a variety of activities, including real estate, and is a member of Richmond (BC) CRC.

Mrs. Mary Kooy, a graduate student of the University of British Columbia, and a teacher at Christian High in Surrey, BC. She is married and the mother of three children, and a member of Surrey CRC.

Florida Area (addition to the board)

Rev. Harvey Ouwinga, pastor of Bradenton (FL) CRC.

Rev. Jack Vander Laan, Chaplain, Waste Management, Inc., of Florida, and a member of Fort Lauderdale (FL) CRC.

Wisconsin Area (addition to the board)

Mrs. Mary DeSmith—married and the mother of three children, she is a member of the Wisconsin Citizens Concerned for Life and a member of Oostburg (WI) CRC.

Mr. Anthony J. Huizenga, Sr., a dairy farmer, and a member of Second CRC, Randolph, WI.

Michigan Area

Rev. Louis Kerkstra, pastor of Kelloggsville CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, is eligible for a second three-year term.

Rev. Charles Steenstra, pastor of Westview CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

Chicagoland Area

Mr. Richard Loerop is eligible for a second three-year term. He is a member of Ebenezer CRC, Berwyn, IL, and is corporate officer of a small manufacturing company.

Mr. David Latal, a member of Faith CRC, Elmhurst, IL. He is director of Consumer Affairs, Montgomery Ward.

Eastern Area

Rev. Howard J. Vugteveen, pastor of Faith Community CRC, Wyckoff, NJ, is eligible for a second three-year term.

Rev. Brent Averill, pastor of Immanuel CRC, Wappingers Falls, NY.

Michigan Area

Dr. Henry Ottens is eligible for a second three-year term. He is an orthopedic surgeon and a member of Second CRC, Grand Haven, MI.

Mr. E. F. Bushouse, a member of Second CRC, Grand Haven, MI. He is chairman/president and CEO of People's Bank and Trust Co., Grand Haven, MI.

4. The board requests that the proposed budget for 1985-86 be approved and the quota of \$52.00 be adopted for the Back to God Hour ministries, and the quota of \$17.00 be adopted for CRC-TV ministries.

5. The board requests that synod recommend the Back to God Hour for one or more offerings for above-quota needs.

6. The board requests that CRC-TV be recommended for one or more offerings for above-quota needs.

The Back to God Hour Board
 Joel Nederhood, Director of Ministries
 Ira R. Slagter, Executive Director

REPORT 2

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

Sent to Proclaim Good News, God Reigns is the theme of the five-year plan adopted by the Board of Home Missions in 1984. Directions set by the plan are expressed in eight affirmations which were endorsed by the synod last year. Simply stated, these affirmations are as follows:

1. Our mission is to proclaim the good news; God reigns.
2. Beginning new churches is important for church growth.
3. Evangelism is an essential task of the church.
4. Recruiting and equipping people has high priority.
5. A multiracial denomination is desired.
6. Communities with limited resources provide opportunities.
7. Good stewardship requires wise use of mission dollars.
8. Each classis should have a mission strategy.

These affirmations are expanded in the *Acts of Synod 1984*, pages 35-38.

The theme, along with the song "Our God Reigns," is inspiring many people. The celebrative tone and the affirmation of divine sovereignty in this theme combine to encourage and excite those who are engaged in the church's mission outreach in Canada and the United States.

Making a five-year plan for an organization such as Home Missions is hard work, but accomplishing the things described in the plan is even harder. Staff, regional home missionaries, and other personnel are now working at the implications of the plan for all aspects of the program. Five-year goals have been defined for each of the affirmations; in all there are forty-six such goals. In February the board members received a report showing progress made during the initial period of the plan, as well as objectives set for the next year. The following pages describe in greater detail some of that progress and the plans for the future. Persons who are interested in more information about the five-year plan should review the SEED '85 Report. Board members and all Home Missions personnel have a copy of this report; copies are also available at the Home Missions office.

II. THE BOARD

There are forty-four members on the board. Forty of these represent classes, and four are members-at-large. Presently twenty-seven are clergy and seventeen are church members serving in other vocations. The full board met February 26-28. The executive committee, consisting of nineteen members, met six times during the year.

A. Officers of the Board

- Rev. Milton Doornbos, president
- Rev. John M. Hofman, vice president
- Rev. John G. Van Ryn, executive secretary

Rev. Edward Tamminga, assistant secretary
Mr. Gerard J. Borst, treasurer
Mr. Howard De Haan, assistant treasurer

B. *Members of the Board*

Synod has urged classes to elect persons to the board who are serving on their classical home missions committees. This is even more important now in light of the board's commitment to be partners with classes. The board also requests that the classis consider the person's commitment to missions, as well as his or her willingness to invest the time and energy required. Consideration should be given to electing people who will help the board itself reflect the multiracial development of the denomination, the gifts of women, and the expertise of various professions and occupations.

Board members-at-large positions have been reduced to four, who serve with expertise in such areas as architecture, banking, finance, and real estate. The board presents the following nominations to synod:

Finance

Cor Baarda—Graduated in top ten as R.I.A. (registered industrial accountant) in Canada; served as elder and budget director for Meadowvale Community CRC, Mississauga, ON. He is a controller with Emery Industries in Canada.

Jay Morren—A graduate of Calvin College, he earned his MBA from the U of M. He has served as deacon and elder, and on a Christian school board. He is completing his second term on the Board of Trustees, Calvin College and Seminary. He is in the investment and real estate business.

Don Dekker—A Calvin College graduate. A member of Shawnee Park, CRC, Grand Rapids, MI. He has served as deacon; as an alternate to the Board of Home Missions, and on the Chaplain's Committee. He is a consultant in marketing at Steelcase.

Architecture

Paul Vander Leek—Attended Chicago Technical Institute. He served as both elder and deacon, and is a member of Maranatha CRC, Holland, MI. He is president of KSV Architects, Inc., Holland.

Jay Volkers—Graduated from U of M; he is a member of Boston Square CRC, Grand Rapids and has served as deacon and elder. He is chairman of Daverman Associates, Inc., Grand Rapids.

Marvin De Winter—Graduated from Calvin and the U of M. He is a member of LaGrave Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, and has served as elder and deacon. He is president of DeWinter Associates, Inc., Grand Rapids.

Banking

James Fredricks—Graduated from Calvin College. He is a member of Georgetown CRC, Hudsonville, MI; has served as deacon and is presently clerk of the consistory. Formerly with Old Kent Bank, he is now president of a Hudsonville bank.

Jerry Van Solkema—Attended Grand Rapids Junior College. He is a member of Cottonwood Heights CRC, Jenison, MI, and has served as deacon and elder. He is vice president of Mutual Home Federal Savings, serving as manager of the downtown Grand Rapids office.

Warren Faber—Attended graduate school of U of M. A member of Twelfth Avenue CRC, Jenison, MI, he has served as deacon and elder. He is manager of the Wyoming branch of Old Kent Bank.

III. OFFICE AND REGIONAL PERSONNEL

A. Executive

Executive Secretary	Rev. John G. Van Ryn
Treasurer	Mr. Gerard J. Borst
Personnel Secretary	Rev. Duane E. VanderBrug
Field Secretary	Rev. Alfred E. Mulder
Minister of Evangelism	Rev. Dirk J. Hart
Associate Minister of Evangelism	Rev. Alvin J. Vander Griend
Communications Coordinator	Mr. R. Jack De Vos

B. Administrative

Controller	Mr. Howard Meyers
Church Relations Secretary	Mr. Stanley E. Koning
Graphic Artist	Mr. Joe Vriend
Coffee Break Administrator	Mrs. Laurie Deters*
Bookkeeper	Miss Jeanne Faber

C. Secretarial/Supportive

Mrs. Betty Grasman	Mrs. Edi Bajema*
Mrs. Gert Rotman	Mrs. Wilma Vanden Bosch*
Mrs. Vicki Vander Lugt	Mrs. Betty Veldman*
Mrs. Fran Vander Molen	
Miss Lori Vis	

D. Volunteers

Planned Giving Consultant	Mr. Ed Berends*
Communications Volunteer Director	Mr. Bernie Sharpe*
Church Relations	Miss Dorothy Ibershof*

E. Regional Home Missionaries

Central US	Rev. Earl Dykema
Columbia	Rev. Henry De Rooy
Eastern and Central Canada	Rev. John Van Til
Eastern US	Rev. Ron Peterson
Mid-Eastern US	Rev. Paul Vermaire
Southwest (Indian Field)	Mr. Jack De Groat
Western US	Rev. John Rozeboom

*Parttime

F. Staff Appointments

1. Reappointment of Duane VanderBrug as Personnel Secretary

The board has a policy requiring that the work of staff persons be evaluated after ten years by a committee of board members before being considered for reappointment. Rev. Duane E. VanderBrug was appointed by the Synod of 1975 to be personnel secretary. Prior to that he served in the Home Missions office as urban field secretary. A special committee evaluated the work of Mr. VanderBrug and in its report to the board indicated appreciation for his administrative skills and general competence. Some areas of potential growth were identified and an adjustment to the position description was also suggested. The report ended with an enthusiastic recommendation that he be reappointed. The board approved a revision of the position description for personnel secretary.

The board recommends to synod that Duane VanderBrug be reappointed as personnel secretary for another four-year term.

Ground: He is gifted and a qualified staff person who is respected for the competent service he has rendered to Home Missions.

2. Search for an Executive Secretary

Rev. John Van Ryn's term as executive secretary extends to August 1986 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 575). The Synod of 1986 will be asked to appoint another person to the position. The board is now searching for suitable candidates for this very important and responsible position. Six board members have been appointed to a search committee: Rev. John M. Hofman, Mr. Cor Baarda, Rev. Theodore Verseput, Rev. Henry Numan, Dr. Ward Stienstra, with Rev. Edward J. Tamminga serving as secretary. The committee invites those who desire to apply for the position themselves or to recommend someone else to correspond with the secretary, Rev. Tamminga, 6475—40th Ave., Hudsonville, MI 49426.

After widely publicizing the search for potential candidates, the committee will screen the candidates and then proceed with intensive contact with the most promising ones. A nomination of at least two will be presented to the board in February 1986. At its annual meeting the entire board will interview the nominees and select the one they will recommend to synod for appointment.

The challenge of missions and evangelism in Canada and the United States is tremendous. Good leadership is critically important. Home Missions requests the denomination to pray that the Spirit will guide the church in this search and appointment process.

IV. TWO SPECIAL REPORTS

During the past two years two special reports were proposed, each addressing a developing concern of Home Missions. One grows out of the eighth affirmation, "Each classis should have a mission strategy." The other comes with the awareness that the population of our two nations is growing older and that this presents a new challenge to the church. Copies of the complete reports can be obtained from the Home Missions office. Following is a summary of each.

A. *Partners with Classes*

In keeping with its affirmation to be partners with classes, Home Missions has committed itself to assist classical home missions committees (CHMCs) to "study their own situations and develop strategies to meet their own opportunities—including evangelism through local congregations, beginning new churches, and carrying on specialized ministries." The first step was taken by means of the Partners with Classis Study Committee Report.

The basic approach of the CRC in obeying the missionary mandate *at home*, as outlined in Church Order Articles 74-76, is that of *partnership*: congregations with one another, the classes with the congregations, and the denominational board with the congregations and the classes. Also, the primary thrust of "joint supervision" is that of a consulting partnership, a commitment to communicate and confer and cooperate as *partners in mission*.

In keeping with the committee mandate, the desired impact of this report is to challenge and assist classes and their CHMCs to develop and implement more effective outreach strategies for their areas. The regional home missionaries and the CHMCs occupy especially crucial roles in effecting the recommendations below.

In summary, Home Missions formally affirmed its commitment to a partnership role with CHMCs. Materials to be provided to all CHMCs will include a manual of Home Missions programs, a CHMC self-evaluation guide, and recommended CHMC guidelines regarding mandate, membership, and duties (for possible incorporation into classical bylaws). In addition, it is proposed that by March 1986 at least six classes—with the assistance of their regional home missionaries—will have done a classical MAP (Mission Analysis and Projection) and will have developed and adopted a new strategy for evangelistic outreach in their area.

B. Senior Ministry

During 1984 a committee researched the needs of senior citizens and possible approaches to evangelism among them.

The committee found that there are more than 30 million people in the US and Canada age sixty-five and over. The fastest-growing age group is the eighty-five-plus generation, and the committee report identified the areas most heavily populated with older people. It concluded that the church is graying right along with the rest of society, and that there is considerable evidence that the CRC also has more older people than ever before. This trend is more visible in some classes than in others.

According to the report, we live in a society which is afflicted by gerontophobia (fear of aging) and ageism (discriminating against and stereotyping the elderly). The Bible, however, teaches us gerontophilia—love for the aging. The committee found that our church has never officially articulated a theology of aging, and that the church frequently associates covenant theology with nurturing the youth. A well-rounded covenant theology, however, must also include the elderly (cf. Zech. 8:3–5 and Acts 2:17–18).

The church frequently cares for the aged by providing specialized housing for them. However, as the committee discovered, only 5 percent of the elderly live in such housing. The report urged that, as church and society age, the church must be a primary resource for the elderly; it is their friend and supporter. Even though there are a growing number of government and private resources for the elderly, only the church can provide wholistic spiritual well-being. The church should explore two areas: specific evangelistic strategies for the elderly and greater use of the elderly in church ministry, including training for various kinds of ministries.

In the light of the committee's extensive report, the board instructed Home Missions staff to explore, with CRWRC, a ministry among urban poor and elderly, to develop a concept of ministry with location, and to propose such a ministry as a new field to the annual board meeting in February 1986. This concern is related to Affirmation 6—"Communities with limited resources provide opportunities." In addition, the board invites proposals for a grant-in-aid to a church, churches, or classis wishing to do an evangelistic church-growth ministry to elderly of average or limited means, using the resources of the elderly within the church.

But the challenge is far greater than the mandate of Home Missions; therefore, the Board of Home Missions recommends that synod appoint a committee with the mandate to

1. study the denomination by means of demographic survey on aging in the CRC;
2. identify media resources for local groups;
3. prepare a brief statement on the theology of aging from a Reformed perspective;
4. discover our churches' involvement with the aged and explore the possibility of a network for mutual assistance;
5. formulate strategies for a denominational response to aging in church and society; and
6. advise agencies such as Christian Reformed Home Missions, Board of Publications, SCORR, Volunteer Resource Bank, the Back to God Hour, Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Chaplain's Committee on their responses to aging in light of their respective mandates.

V. FIELDS

A. *General Information*

Field ministries funded by Home Missions are located throughout Canada and the United States. Some are clustered in areas such as Chicago, Los Angeles, and the Navajo reservation; but most are scattered throughout seven of the ten Canadian provinces and twenty-nine of the fifty United States. Field ministries' salaries and other expenses represent approximately 86 percent of the total Home Missions budget. Depending upon the current status of those graduating and beginning, the total number of field ministries fluctuates between 140 and 150. As a means of differentiating according to primary focus and expected duration of funding, all field ministries are grouped within the three basic categories.

1. Type A: Specialized Ministries

This category includes ministries at eighteen university campuses, four harbors or seaways, four hospitality houses for military personnel, three Christian schools in New Mexico, and several training programs. These ministries contribute to church development only indirectly, and the extent and duration of Home Missions' involvement varies greatly.

2. Type B: New Church Development—Indefinite Term

The nature and length of Home Missions support cannot be determined at the beginning of these ministries, which usually are located in communities of great need and limited economic resources. There are approximately forty-five Type B ministries in all, and they form a rich mosaic of Anglo, Asian, Black, Hispanic, American Indian, and multiracial congregations. Frequently the financial support continues a longer time and is often nontraditional; but always its goal is to develop self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting churches.

3. Type C: New Church Development—Definite Term

The sixty-plus churches of this type are being developed among Anglo and

non-Anglo people with average to above-average economic resources. Thus they are expected to achieve financial independence from Home Missions within ten years. Type C ministries that began ten or more years ago and are not now making significant progress toward graduation will be required to seek alternative ways for continuing ministry that will not depend on long-term Home Missions funding. This category also includes a dozen second-staff positions that assist larger, growing churches in their outreach ministries on a short-term funding basis.

B. Major Developments Since February 1984

1. New field ministries	Date funding began
a. Boston, MA/Hispanic	March 84
b. Arroyo Grande, CA	April 84
c. Berkeley, CA/Korean	April 84
d. Salt Lake City, UT/Cambodian	April 84
e. Bremerton (Silverdale), WA	April 84
f. Orange County, CA/Korean-American	June 84
g. Ste. Croix, PQ/French	July 84
h. Chandler, AZ	August 84
i. Merced, CA	November 84
j. Springfield, IL	November 84
k. Arlington, TX	January 85
l. Austin, TX	January 85
2. Ministries that graduated	Date
a. Meadowvale, Mississauga, ON, Rev. H. Lunshof	3-31-84
b. Peace, Cedar Rapids, IA, Rev. G. Hoek	12-31-84
c. Flanders Valley, Flanders, NJ, Rev. D. Recker	12-31-84
d. Good Samaritan, Miami, FL/Hispanic, Rev. R. Borrego	12-31-84
e. Edmonton, AB/Campus (GIA), Rev. T. Oosterhuis	12-31-84
f. Trinity, Richfield Springs, NY (GIA), Rev. F. MacLeod	3-31-85
3. Partnership with Rehoboth Christian School	

Effective September 1, 1984, all personnel working at Rehoboth Christian School formally became employees of this parent-controlled, 350-student school. This was an important development. Home Missions funding, which still underwrites approximately one-half of the total school budget, is based primarily on the financial need of qualifying students from Christian Reformed member or prospective member families. Ministry expectations and relationships are defined and reviewed annually by way of a Partnership Agreement and Campus Use Agreement. Superintendent Gordon Kamps reports regularly to Home Missions regarding the school's progress and activities.

4. Miscellaneous field concerns

After seven years of ministry in the Appalachia region, Rev. Timothy Limburg accepted the call to the Washington, DC, CRC; the nature of future ministry in Appalachia is now under study.

Funding was terminated at three locations: Des Plaines, IL/Korean; Grass Valley, CA; and an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship position at the University of New Mexico campus in Albuquerque, NM.

Home Missions and CRWRC are exploring new opportunities for cooperative ministry in communities of unusual need.

C. *Statistical Summary of New Church Development Ministries*

	1983			1984	
	Totals	Den.	GIA	Totals	Est.*
Churches reporting	79	67	28	95	
Member families	1,728	1,451	937	2,388	
Sunday A.M. attendance	6,422	5,344	3,531	8,875**	
Sunday P.M. attendance	2,273	1,880	1,113	2,993	
Church school	3,469	2,250	1,866	4,116	
Child baptisms	181	164	113	281	(365)
Professions of faith	157	92	56	148	(192)
Adult baptisms	56	67	13	80	(104)
Reaffirmations	86	47	37	84	(109)

*Due to a change in the Home Missions reporting schedule, total baptisms and professions reported in 1984 are based on eight- and eleven-month reporting periods. Estimated twelve-month totals are obtained by multiplying the reported totals by 1.3 (example: $281 \times 1.3 = 365$). Actual twelve-month totals again will be available for 1985.

**Sunday attendance totals do not include worship services sponsored by campus and harbor ministries.

D. *Improvements in New Church Development*

1. The developmental stages

With a view to promoting more effective development of its churches, Home Missions has continued to refine and implement the Guidelines for New Church Development, especially in relation to the four stages: I—Exploration, II—Organization, III—Maturation, and IV—Graduation. All Type C churches were assisted in developing time lines for reaching the subsequent stages; Type B churches are being encouraged to project time lines at least one stage at a time. The challenge continues for all church development ministries to plan and evaluate their own ministry progress in the light of specific goals and objectives they have adopted for their particular stage of development.

2. Begin

Affirmation 2 states, "Beginning new churches is important for church growth." Integral to its commitment toward starting new churches, Home Missions now provides a structured beginning for such churches that emphasizes promoting growth primarily through evangelism. This new program, appropriately called "Begin," evolved from informal research of the last eleven starts, and now has been field-tested in new church development ministries. The initial phases of (1) field research, (2) recruitment of, (3) preparation for, and (4) orientation of the new missionary are followed by (5) a series of training/planning retreats. Retreats help the group and new missionary to address basic ministry questions, skills training, and other curriculum appropriate to a new church. By the end of this training/planning phase, the group has committed itself to a beginning concept of ministry, basic program plan, and related budget—and (6) begins public worship and other local programs. Various helpful components of "Begin" also are being incorporated into other Home Missions programs and activities.

3. Renew

In recent years Home Missions has been responding to a rising denominational concern regarding slow-growing or non-growing Home Missions

churches. Out of determination to find alternative models for such ministries which will avoid long-term dependence on outside resources, Home Missions has adopted an aggressive redevelopment and/or restructuring process called "Renew." Basic components are (1) intensive review and analysis of the church's ministry, (2) assistance in training and planning, and (3) a time line for phasing out Home Missions funding.

Ordinarily "Renew" will be implemented in two phases where feasible, the first called "Re-Vision." In concept, "Re-Vision" is the same program as "Begin," but designed for use in a more established church setting. Its purpose is to lead the members and leadership to a new vision for growth through evangelism. The purpose of the second phase, "Re-Model," is to develop a new model for ministry. This new model is to be responsive to the new vision, appropriate to the ministry situation; it may include a new model for leadership, and is designed to reduce or conclude Home Missions support on a mutually agreed-upon schedule. Home Missions proposes to implement "Renew," in cooperation with the respective classical home missions committees, with one church development ministry in each region during 1985.

E. *New Ministries in 1985*

1. Albuquerque, NM/Southwest Campus Christian Fellowship

In 1982 Home Missions entered a special arrangement with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in support of the ministry of the Rev. Tony Begay to Native American students at the University of New Mexico. Now, under the sponsorship of the newly incorporated Southwest Campus Christian Fellowship Board, and in response to the endorsement of Classis Red Mesa and RHM Jack De Groat, Home Missions will provide partial funding for this unique ministry to Native American university students.

2. Bramalea and Heartlake, ON/New Church Development

The greater Brampton area immediately northwest of Toronto, and including the Bramalea and Heartlake communities, is one of the faster growing areas of Canada. The 100,000 population of ten years ago expanded to 165,000 by 1984, and is projected to reach 325,000 by the year 2000. Upon consultation with the consistories of the two Christian Reformed congregations in Brampton, the Classis Toronto Home Missions Committee and RHM John Van Til are agreed that gains through evangelism can best be realized through a Home Missions sponsored new church development ministry. A nucleus will be gathered only after the new home missionary and concept of ministry are in place and "Begin" can be scheduled.

3. Halifax, NS (North End)/New Church Development

In accordance with a MAP (Mission Analysis and Projection) team report in 1982, the All Nations CRC in Halifax reaffirmed its ministry in its present location and initiated exploration of a second ministry at a new location. The result is a proposed new church development ministry (Type B) in old North End Halifax, a community of great economic need. The incentive for this proposed multiracial ministry comes primarily from members of All Nations Church living in this historically derelict area of the city, including nine families involved in developing an urban cooperative housing project there. The concept of ministry calls for the cooperative participation by All Nations Church,

CRWRC and the Maritime Diaconal Conference, Classis Eastern Canada, and Home Missions.

4. Houston, TX (Southeast)/New Church Development

The first Christian Reformed Church in Houston began in the far north sector in July of 1979, with the understanding that the Houston metropolitan area could sustain numerous Christian Reformed congregations. Five years later, in July of 1984, New Life CRC elders informed Home Missions "that 1985 is the time to begin a second ministry in Houston, TX." With the anticipated doubling of population in southeast Houston within the next ten years, RHM Earl Dykema believes that this is an opportune time to begin a Christian Reformed Church there. Five Christian Reformed families living in southeast Houston must travel forty-five to sixty-minutes to attend New Life Church, and are supportive of a new church development ministry in their area.

5. San Antonio, TX/New Church Development

In 1983 the elders of New Life Church in Houston called attention to the opportunity for a church growth strategy in Texas, and urged an investigation of San Antonio and Austin. Subsequently new ministries have begun in Austin and Arlington, and San Antonio is approved for 1985. San Antonio is eighty miles southeast of Austin, two hundred miles west of Houston and the center of Bexar County which boasts a population of 1,063,000. The northern one-third of San Antonio has grown at a rate of 34 percent in the past decade, and is projected to continue at that rate through the 1980s. The rapid increase in population, especially in the northeast and west-northwest, and the scarcity of churches with a consistent Reformed emphasis, make San Antonio an ideal place to begin a new Christian Reformed ministry.

6. San Francisco, CA/New Church Development

The historical city of San Francisco is compact and heavily populated with approximately 700,000 people. Only four out of every one hundred San Franciscans attend church, resulting in a church to population ratio of 1 to more than 2,500. In response to three years of observation and study by RHM John Rozeboom and Classis Central California's Home Missions Committee, Home Missions now proposes to recruit a church developer for a Type C ministry, with staffing for social needs possibly being considered at a later date. The core group for the ministry will be young families and singles who typify the target sector of population for this ministry, and who share an intense desire to grow through an evangelistic ministry of word and deed.

7. New Grant-in-Aid Ministries

The forty-seven Grants-in-Aid approved for 1985-86 (compare Section G below) include ten first-time requests that reflect an exciting array of new ministry opportunities. Five are for new church development ministries: two Anglo, two Asian American, one Haitian. The other five are for second or multiple staff positions designed to promote growth through evangelism. The ministry approaches and target audiences are varied: young Asian American professionals, ministry to singles, and growing suburban communities.

F. *Ministries and Personnel as of January 1, 1985*

Explanation of Listing:

1. Each ministry is in English unless another language or cultural group is indicated; a + sign means that English also is used.

2. ADM = Administrative arrangement. All ministries are "denominational" unless indicated GIA (Grant-in-Aid) or SFA (Special Funding Arrangement).
3. Roman numerals I, II, and III refer to the stages of church development described in Section V, D, 1 of this report.
4. Types A, B, C are described in Section V, A of this report.

LOCATION/LANGUAGE	PERSONNEL	ADM	TYPE	OTHER
Abbotsford, BC/Chinese	Rev. L. Chen	SFA	B	Unorganized
Albany, CA/Korean	Rev. H. K. Hwang	GIA	C	Unorganized
Akron, OH	Mr. K. Hermann	GIA	A	Campus
Albuquerque, NM	Rev. A. J. Veltkamp		C	II
Ames, IA	Rev. F. Walhof	GIA	A	Campus
Anaheim, CA/Spanish	Rev. C. J. Nyenhuis		B	II
	Mrs. C. Tapanes			
Appleton, WI	Rev. D. J. Steenhoek	GIA	C	Organized
Arlington, TX	Rev. D. R. Tigchelaar		C	I
Arroyo Grande, CA	Rev. A. A. Mulder	GIA	C	Organized
Atlanta, GA	Rev. W. W. Leys		C	I
Austin, TX	Rev. P. W. Deckinga		C	I
Beclabito, NM/Navajo	Mr. J. Talley		B	I
Big Rapids, MI	Rev. L. Ausema	GIA	A	Campus
Boise, ID	Rev. J. P. Vosteen		C	II
Boston, MA/Spanish	Mr. J. Vanga	SFA	B	I
Boulder, CO	Mr. A. De Jong		A	Campus
Brigham City, UT	Rev. E. Boer		B	II
Burke, VA	Rev. V. Geurkink		C	III
Calgary, AB	Rev. K. J. Verhulst	GIA	C	Organized
Champaign, IL	Rev. J. Reiffer		C	II
Chandler, AZ	Rev. A. Lindemulder		C	I
Chicago, IL				
Amer. Indian Chapel	Rev. R. J. Van Antwerpen		B	I
Hyde Park/Chinese	Rev. P. Yao		C	II
Lawndale	Mr. L. Tucker	GIA	B	Organized
Muslim	Dr. P. Ipema		B	I
Pullman	Rev. C. Kromminga, Jr.	GIA	C	Organized
	Rev. R. E. Williams			
Roseland	Rev. A. Van Zanten	GIA	B	Unorganized
Spirit & Truth/Spanish +	Rev. M. Ortiz	SFA	B	Organized
	Rev. R. Crawford			
Church Rock, NM/Navajo +	Mr. B. Garnanez		B	II
Cochrane, ON	Mr. J. Reitsma	SFA	B	II
Columbia, MO	Rev. T. Pettinga		C	II
Columbus, OH	Rev. E. T. Lewis		A	Campus
Corvallis, OR	Rev. H. B. Spaan		C	II
Crownpoint, NM/Navajo +	Rev. G. T. Stuit		B	II
Crownpoint, NM	Miss Luella Helland (prin.)		A	School
	Mr. Richard Yzenbaard			
Crystal Lake, IL	Rev. D. Einfeld	GIA	C	Organized
Davenport, IA	Vacant		C	III
Dayton, OH	Rev. A. A. Arkema		C	III
Denver, CO				
Indian	Recruiting		B	I
Sun Valley/Spanish +	Rev. J. Vande Lune	GIA	B	Unorganized
Detroit, MI	Rev. N. Newell	SFA	B	Uncl.
Detroit, MI	Rev. J. D. Natelborg		A	Campus
East Grand Forks, MN	Rev./Mrs. E. Marlink, IHM		C	II
East Islip, NY	Recruiting		C	III
El Paso, TX	Rev. W. C. De Vries		C	II
Enumclaw, WA	Rev. K. Wiersum	GIA	C	Organized
Fairfield, CA	Rev. G. G. Hofland		C	II
Farmington, NM/Navajo +	Rev. S. T. Yazzie		C	II
	Rev. T. J. Niehof			

LOCATION/LANGUAGE	PERSONNEL	ADM	TYPE	OTHER
Flagstaff, AZ	Rev. D. J. Klop		C	II
Fort Collins, CO	Rev. P. Jordan	GIA	C	2nd Staff
Fort McMurray, AB	Rev. C. Vink		C	I
Fort Wingate, NM	Rev. G. Haagsma		B	II
	Miss S. Clahchischilli			
Fresno, CA	Recruiting	GIA	C	2nd Staff
Gaylord, MI	Mr. V. Schaap	GIA	B	Unorganized
Guelph, ON	Rev. E. Den Haan		A	Campus
Hamilton, ON	Rev. A. Geisterfer	GIA	A	Campus
Helena, MT	Rev. C. Pool	GIA	C	Organized
Hialeah, FL/Spanish	Mr. (Rev.) J. Sanchez		B	I
Honolulu, HI	Mr/Mrs W. Vander Heide		A	H. House
Honolulu, HI	Rev. W. D. Dyk		B	II
Houston, TX	Rev. J. Holleman		C	III
Indian Harbour Beach, FL	Rev. J. G. Aupperlee		C	III
Iowa City, IA	Rev. J. Chen		A	Campus
Jacksonville, FL	Rev. F. T. Wevers		C	II
Kamloops, BC	Rev. S. Sikkema		C	II
Kanata, ON	Rev. H. G. Gunnink		C	II
Kincheloe, MI	Rev. N. J. Thomasma	GIA	B	Unorganized
Kingston, ON	Dr. W. D. Van Groningen		A	Campus
LaCrosse, WI	Rev. A. L. Louwerse		C	III
Lafayette, IN	Dr. W. R. Lenters		A	Campus
London, ON	Rev. P. Slofstra		A	Campus
Long Beach, CA	Dr. J. Koopmans	GIA	A	Harbor
Los Angeles, CA				
Chinese	Rev. J. T. C. Tong		B	I
Community	Rev. S. E. Ver Heul		B	I
	Rev. T. Doorn			
Crenshaw	Rev. G. Van Enk		B	II
Hacienda Hts./Korean	Rev. K. Cho	GIA	C	Unorganized
Loveland, CO	Rev. H. De Young		C	III
Madison, WI	Rev/Mrs. W. Vander Hoven, IHM		A	Campus
Mason City, IA	Rev. J. Vanden Heuvel		C	III
Merced, CA	Rev. A. R. Schaap	GIA	C	Unorganized
Miami, FL/Spanish +	Mrs. S. Menchaca		C	2nd Staff
Middlesboro, KY	(Not recruiting)		A	Uncl.
Montreal, PQ/French	Rev. H. Kallemeyn		C	I
Montreal, PQ	Rev. H. Uittenbosch	GIA	A	Harbor
Mt. Pleasant, MI	Rev. J. Versluys	GIA	C	Organized
Nanaimo, BC	Rev. A. E. Likkel		C	II
Naschitti, NM/Navajo +	Mr. C. Brummel		B	II
	Mr. A. Henry			
Nashville, TN	Rev. R. Brouwer		C	II
	Ms. N. Goeman			
Navajo, NM/Navajo +	Mr. T. Tso	SFA	B	I
New Glasgow, NS	Rev. A. J. De Vries		C	III
Norfolk, VA	Rev. J. C. Rickers		C	III
Norfolk, VA	Mr./Mrs. B. Frens		A	H. House
Norfolk, VA	Mrs. N. Olthoff		A	H. House
Ogden, UT	Rev. A. W. Heersink		C	III
Orange Co., CA/Korean-American	Rev. Y. T. Kim		C	I
Orange Co., CA/Vietnamese	Rev. N. X. Bao		B	I
Paterson, NJ				
Madison Ave.	Rev. J. A. Algera	GIA	B	Organized
	Miss J. Gill		B	
Northside Comm.	Miss J. Harrington	GIA	B	2nd Staff
William Paterson College	Rev. K. J. Vander Wall		A	Campus
Porterville, CA	Rev. B. N. Huizenga	GIA	C	Unorganized
Puget Sound, WA	Rev. J. M. Moes	GIA	A	Harbor
Rapid City, SD	Mr. M. Manning	GIA	C	2nd Staff

LOCATION/LANGUAGE	PERSONNEL	ADM	TYPE	OTHER
Redding, CA	Rev. D. W. Lagerwey	GIA	C	Unorganized
Red Valley, AZ/Navajo	Mr. H. Begay		B	I
Rehoboth, NM	Mr. G. Kamps (Supt.)	SFA	A	School
Rehoboth, NM/LTC & CEO	Mr. D. Tamminga		A	Uncl.
	Mrs. M. Kurley			
Richfield Springs, NY	Rev. F. J. MacLeod	GIA	C	Organized
Richmond, BC/Chinese	Rev. S. Jung		C	II
Roseville, MI	Rev. J. Busscher	GIA	C	2nd Staff
St. Croix, PQ/French	Mr. G. Dubé		C	I
Salt Lake City, UT				
Cambodian	Mr. C. Phim	GIA	B	Unorganized
	Mr. M. Tak			
Immanuel	Rev. D. J. Kruijs	SFA	C	III
Indian	Mr. H. Bielema		B	I
Utah Min. Com.	Mr. M. Anderson		A	Uncl.
San Diego, CA	Mr./Mrs. D. Rottenberg		A	H. House
Sanostee, NM/Navajo	Mr. F. Curley		B	I
Seattle, WA/First	Mr. J. Schipper	GIA	C	2nd Staff
Shiprock, NM/Navajo +	Rev. A. W. Koolhaas		B	I
Silverdale, WA	Rev. D. Snapper		C	I
Springfield, IL	Rev. M. L. De Young		C	I
Stockton, CA/Hmong	Mr. Jack Andriese	GIA	B	Unorganized
Sun Valley, CA/Spanish	Rev. L. Wagnveld		B	I
Syracuse, NY	Rev. R. D. Steen		C	III
Tacoma, WA	Mr. H. Bauer	GIA	C	2nd Staff
Tec Nos Pos, AZ/Navajo +	Rev. P. H. Redhouse		B	II
Tempe, AZ	Recruiting		A	Campus
Terre Haute, IN	Rev. C. Aardsma		C	II
Toadlena, NM/Navajo	Mr. F. Frank		B	I
Tohatchi, NM/Navajo +	Mr. G. Klumpenhower		B	II
Tohlokai, NM/Navajo +	Rev. M. A. Harberts		B	II
Toronto, ON	Rev. D. Pierik		A	Campus
Traverse City, MI	Rev. J. O. De Bruyn		C	I
Vancouver, BC	Rev. J. E. F. Dresselhuis	GIA	A	Harbor
Virginia Beach, VA	Rev. W. D. Ribbens		C	I
Washington, PA	Vacant		C	III
Waterloo, ON	Rev. G. E. Morbey		A	Campus
Window Rock, AZ/Navajo +	Mr. C. Grey		C	II
Windsor, ON	Rev. P. C. Hogeterp		C	III
Winnipeg, MB	Rev. D. N. Habermehl	GIA	B	Unorganized
Yakima, WA	Rev. D. Vander Wall		C	III
Zuni, NM/Zuni +	Rev. R. D. Posthuma		B	I
	Mr. R. Chimoni			2nd Staff
Zuni, NM	Mr. S. VanderMolen (principal)		A	School
	Miss C. Leekity (secretary)			
	Mrs. B. Berghuis (teacher)			
	Miss V. Boone (aid)			
	Miss N. Chimoni (teacher)			
	Mr. Sam Chimoni (maintenance)			
	Mr. A. Benally (teacher)			
	Miss D. Natachu (aid)			
	Miss M. Scheeres (teacher)			

G. Grant-In-Aid and Amounts Approved

The amounts for new grants-in-aid, usually based on a three-year cycle and the amount of previously approved grants, are established by the board at its annual meeting. The grant year is April 1 through March 31, although in 1985 most new grants will be delayed until October 1 due to budget constraints.

LOCATION OF MINISTRY	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
Akron, OH/Campus	\$ 16,500	\$	\$
Albany, CA/Korean	7,000	6,000	
Ames, IA/Campus	12,000	12,500	
Appleton, WI	6,400		
Arroyo Grande, CA	13,000	12,000	
Barstow, CA (New)	5,000	- ? -	- ? -
Big Rapids, MI/Campus	14,700		
Calgary, AB	3,700		
Chicago, IL/Lawndale	11,000		
Pullman	7,800		
Roseland	9,000		
Crystal Lake, IL	7,000	6,000	5,000
Denver, CO/Sun Valley	11,400		
Enumclaw, WA	9,000	6,000	
LOCATION OF MINISTRY	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
East Lansing, MI/Single Point	7,500	10,000	5,000
Fort Collins, CO	14,500	12,000	10,000
Fresno, CA	12,900		
Gaylord, MI	3,000		
Hacienda Hts., CA/Korean	11,000	9,000	7,000
Hamilton, ON	3,300		
Helena, MT	8,000	6,000	
Kincheloe, MI	9,000	8,000	7,000
Lake Worth, FL/Haitian (New)	16,500	- ? -	- ? -
Lansing, MI/Asian (New)	6,600	6,600	
Long Beach, CA/Harbor	14,000	12,800	
Long Beach, CA/MOE (New)	2,000	1,000	
Meadowvale, ON/2nd Staff (New)	16,600	20,000	
Merced, CA	19,000	17,000	15,000
Montreal, PQ/Harbour	14,000		
Mt. Pleasant, MI	2,800		
Paterson, NJ/Madison/2nd Staff	9,000		
Madison/3rd Staff	11,200		
Northside/2nd Staff	13,100		
Porterville, CA	9,000	8,000	
Puget Sound, WA/Harbor	14,000	13,000	12,000
Rapid City, SD/2nd Staff	11,600	10,000	8,500
Redding, CA	14,000	10,000	9,000
Roseville, MI/2nd Staff	12,300		
Salt Lake City, UT/Cambodian	18,000	17,000	16,000
San Francisco, CA/GG (New)	9,400	- ? -	- ? -
San Jose, CA/Korean (New)	15,000	10,000	5,000
Scottsdale, AZ/2nd Staff (New)	16,500	12,000	6,000
South Winnipeg, MB (New)	11,100	21,000	- ? -
Stockton, CA/Hmong	16,500	16,000	14,000
Tacoma, WA/2nd Staff	3,700		
Vancouver, BC/Harbour	4,300		
Winnipeg, MB/Hope Centre	7,500		
Total Grants-In-Aid	\$490,400		

VI. PERSONNEL

Home Missions is people. This is dramatically underlined by the number of people directly employed by Home Missions and their overall level of maturity, skills, and gifts for mission ministry. God has provided excellent people resources for new church development, for specialized ministries, and for assisting congregations in evangelism. Affirmation 4 states, "Recruiting and equipping people has high priority."

Because Home Missions ministries are located in communities that are constantly changing, the task of training for Home Missions service is continuous. Also, as home missionaries themselves grow and mature, they desire to learn new skills to meet new challenges. Therefore each year Home Missions formally evaluates approximately one-third of its personnel through its personnel assessment program and makes individualized recommendations for continued education needs.

Home Missions enables its personnel to obtain training through various resources by providing money and time each year. Home Missions also provides an annual training conference for missionaries and their spouses. The April '85 training conference was designed to concentrate on the vital signs of a healthy Home Missions ministry and to provide missionaries with tools to use back home. Dr. Harvie Conn was engaged to lecture on some of the major components of a healthy ministry. During this year the missionaries and fields are working on identifying the vital signs of their ministry and verifiable indicators for these signs. Regional training conferences will be held in the spring of '86 for the missionaries and the key leaders in these congregations who deal with major aspects of mission ministry.

Some staff and regional home missionaries also participated in three Fuller Institute of Evangelism's "How to Plant a Church" seminars, by attending with missionaries in the initial stages of new church development and persons being recruited for this ministry. In January Home Missions coordinated a training event for twenty-five Christian Reformed ministers and their spouses in connection with the Institute for Successful Church Leadership.

Home Missions continues to cooperate with Calvin Theological Seminary in the Master of Ministry program for American Indian leaders in the churches of Classis Red Mesa. Mr. Don Tamminga serves on Home Missions staff as the Leadership Training Coordinator in the Southwest.

A program called "Directions" was designed and will be implemented for the first time in October 1985. It is a three-phase training and recruitment event for ministers or others, together with their spouses, who are interested in exploring their possible interest in serving either in a Home Missions field or in a more intentional outreach ministry in their present church. The program will include instruction, involvement with a home missionary on the field, and a time of reflection and evaluation.

VII. EVANGELISM

Affirmation 3 of Home Missions states, "Evangelism is an essential task of the church." The Evangelism Department offers all the churches of the denomination a variety of workshops and materials, as well as consultations—all designed to stimulate the local church to win the lost and incorporate them into its fellowship. The Evangelism Catalog contains complete descriptions of these resources.

Many churches use CET (Congregational Evangelism Training), but there is a trend toward friendship, small-group, and sanctuary evangelism. The most popular evangelistic program in the denomination is Coffee Break, an evangelistic Bible study largely for women. During 1984, there were fifty-five leadership training workshops, as well as inspirational rallies and other leadership training events. The success of the first international Coffee Break convention

held in Chicago was beyond all expectation, and another is planned for the summer of 1986 near Seattle. Besides sponsoring training events, several new and revised Bible studies were published. A ten-minute slide/tape explanation of Coffee Break is available.

Home Missions is now also offering the denomination a strategy, leadership training, and materials for men's evangelistic Bible studies. The new program, called Men's Life, has already been field-tested. The Men's Life strategy involves evangelizing and discipling men through small-group Bible studies. Leadership is shared among three or four spiritually mature men, who are trained in a daylong workshop.

The first edition of the workshop materials, *Evangelism and Worship* was published in 1984. This edition quickly sold out and a second edition is now available. The interest in these materials demonstrates that many congregations are working hard at making visitors feel at home in the worship service—a vital first step towards gaining and incorporating new members into the church. Revised editions of *Guidelines for Ushers and Greeters* and *When You Worship with Us* have also been published.

Other programs—such as Witnessing Where You Are, Summer Workshop in Ministry (with the Young Calvinist Federation), and an intensive local evaluation program called Mission Analysis and Projection—continued with good response. In addition, approximately half the pastors in the denomination asked for and received a new *Pastor's Class Handbook*.

For any congregation—one well established in the community and denomination or a new Home Missions church just getting started—evangelism must have high priority, since evangelism is essential to the life and work of the church.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND CHURCH RELATIONS

A. Purpose

Affirmation 7 states, "Good stewardship requires wise use of mission dollars." Most people in the Home Missions organization are primarily concerned for the exercise of stewardship in the expenditure of funds. The Communications Department, however, focuses on the stewardship of those who provide the funds. It makes known the needs, opportunities, and accomplishments of Home Missions in order to obtain necessary prayer and financial support. Such communication is making members of the denomination aware that Home Missions is a worthy cause through which they may exercise their own stewardship, by supporting the mission outreach of the church.

B. Contributions

A review of the receipts of the past year is both encouraging and discouraging. The percentage of quota receipts dropped a bit. Church offerings and salary support were slightly less than last year. Salary support received was \$983,700, which is \$13,000 less than the prior year. Above-quota gifts and offerings from churches amounted to \$214,700, which was \$20,000 less than last year. It is difficult to determine the reasons for this. Various possibilities: the unrest caused by synod's decision regarding women in the office of deacon, the unusual needs of other mission boards which were communicated throughout

the denomination, and the economic situation in some parts of the US and Canada.

It is encouraging, however, to review the receipts from individuals: Home Missions received \$306,000; that was \$63,000 above last year. The year-end mailing, which is the only direct mail appeal to individuals, resulted in \$102,000 for new ministries. Bequests totaled \$229,861, as compared to \$97,000 in the previous year. It is rewarding to see how individuals exercise their stewardship. Being entrusted with peoples' gifts is a serious responsibility.

C. Program

Communication involves much effort in several areas. *Home Missions News*, *Mission Courier*, news releases, and the *Prayer Guide* are all valuable. Each year there are new audiovisual programs, bulletin covers, displays, brochures, and missionary information cards. This year there will be a renewed emphasis upon faith promise giving and mission emphasis events. Both office and field personnel are available to speak and present programs in churches. Advanced planning is very important. Some home missionaries are able to couple appearances in supporting churches with their vacation travel plans.

Salaries or other support relationships with particular missionaries have potential for mutual blessing. Recently one congregation began supporting a missionary at the rate of a \$1,000 per month and also assisted his church to buy a van for transporting young people. Another church is providing regular salary support and is making an additional \$10,000 contribution to the building fund of the Vietnamese congregation in California. These relationships resulted because of local church initiatives and the respective congregations' personal involvement with the missionaries and their missions. Churches interested in such arrangements are urged to contact the office.

A communications volunteer network is being developed. Twenty people are now working in fifteen classes; they are available to call on churches to raise their awareness level of Home Missions activities and needs. Presently the following are serving as volunteers: Mrs. Betty Walpot (Alberta South), Mr. Earle Hinkle (Atlantic Northeast), Mr. Don Boes (Cadillac), Dr. Roy Gritter (Central California), Mr. Willard Vander Werf (Florida), Mr. Richard Gruessing (Grand Rapids South), Mr. Eric Slothouber and Mr. Dirk Wesseling (Hamilton), Mr. Gordon Vander Bie (Holland), Mr. Henry Schoonejongen (Hudson), Mr. Daniel Walstra (Illiana), Mr. & Mrs. Gary Dolislager (Muskegon), Mr. Ernie Blankers (Pacific Northwest), Mr. & Mrs. Bass Van Gilst (Pella), Mr. John Rekker, Sr. (Quinte), Mr. Kasjen Tebben (Sioux Center), and Mr. Allen Van Dyken (Wisconsin). Mr. Bernard Sharpe, a volunteer-at-large, is director of the network.

Planned or deferred giving will continue to be emphasized in cooperation with the Barnabas Foundation and Christian Stewardship Services.

R. Jack De Vos (communications coordinator) and Stanley Koning (church relations secretary) stand ready to serve individuals and churches interested in exercising Christian stewardship through Home Missions, providing for the support of those sent to proclaim good news: God reigns.

IX. FINANCE

The 1984 financial report covers the fiscal year from September 1, 1983,

through August 31, 1984. A full, audited report for the year ending August 31, 1984, by Seidman & Seidman, Certified Public Accountants, is being presented to synod through the Synodical Interim Committee.

A. General Information

Actual total receipts during the 1984 fiscal year were below budgeted expectations. Disbursements for the twelve-month period were also a little less than planned, so the board was able to meet all of its obligations to missionaries and approved programs. Home Missions is committed to good stewardship through wise use of mission dollars (Affirmation 7).

1. The percentage of total quota-income received in 1984 (86.9 percent on an annual basis) was approximately 2.1 percent less than the amount received in 1983. This is the fifth consecutive year where the percentage has decreased, going from 91.5 percent in 1980 to 86.9 percent in 1984.

2. Income from missionary salary support for the twelve months was less than the planned budget by \$108,300 and was less than the amount received in the prior year.

3. Income from above-quota sources, other than missionary salary support, though less than planned budget, was \$57,800 more than the amount received in the prior year. The amount received from churches taking offerings for above-quota needs decreased in 1984, as did the number of churches taking offerings. A comparative analysis of the number of churches taking above-quota offerings in 1984 and 1983 reveals the following:

Churches	US		Canada		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
F/Y 1983	366	63	65	35	431	56
F/Y 1984	316	54	68	35	384	50

Other above-quota receipts for designated causes continue to be encouraging. The special solicitation (nonbudgeted) for the Houston Property Fund raised \$28,000 during the year. Also, \$246,300 was received for the Church Building Loan Fund from undesignated estates.

4. Income from real estate payments was approximately \$44,000 over the budgeted amount, with certain churches making an extra payment during the period and one church making an early payoff.

5. A compilation of the loans to those Home Missions churches which have been developed with denominational assistance, as of August 31, 1984, is included in the audited report and is summarized as follows:

Former Home Missions churches (Stage IV)	\$2,098,895
Present Home Missions churches	<u>4,257,399</u>
Total Loans	<u>\$6,356,294</u>

6. Site selection and building program activity on fields is reflected in the following:

- a. Site selection in progress:
 - Corvallis, OR
 - Ft. McMurray, AB
 - Kanata, ON

- Navajo, NM
- Virginia Beach, VA
- b. Site selection completed:
 - Nanaimo, BC
 - Nashville, TN
 - Richmond, BC
- c. Building programs in progress:
 - Champaign, IL
 - Fairfield, CA
- d. Building program completed:
 - Houston, TX
 - Kamloops, BC

B. *Proposed Budget for 1986*

Based on the budget for 1985, summarized below, the board requests synod to grant a 1986 per-family quota of \$88. (The 1985 quota was also increased \$4.50, or 5.6 percent, over the quota for 1984.) These minimal quota increases represent a determined effort by the Board of Home Missions to be sensitive to the current economic conditions. A more detailed budget will be submitted to the finance committee of synod.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET
Period September 1, 1985, to August 31, 1986

	AMOUNT (in thousands)	TOTAL	% of TOTAL
SUPPORT			
QUOTA		\$5,389.0	72.7%
ABOVE-QUOTA			
Churches and individuals	\$1,120.0		
Church missionary support	<u>580.0</u>		
TOTAL ABOVE-QUOTA		1,700.0	23.0
OTHER RECEIPTS			
Real estate repayments	150.0		
Indian Field payments	18.0		
Interest and other	<u>150.0</u>		
TOTAL OTHER RECEIPTS		318.0	4.3
TOTAL SUPPORT AND OTHER RECEIPTS		<u>\$7,407.0</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
EXPENDITURES			
PROGRAM SERVICES			
Evangelism	\$ 297.9		
Regular fields	2,310.6		
Minority fields	2,149.8		
Indian fields	960.8		
Indian schools	864.3		
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES		\$6,583.4	88.9%
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES			
Management, general	533.0		
Fundraising	<u>290.6</u>		
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE SERVICES		823.6	11.1%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		<u>\$7,407.0</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

C. Salaries

1. Field Personnel

The following schedule for 1985-86 is intended to provide a fair compensation to missionaries for the work they perform. By granting certain allowances (e.g., children's allowance), assistance is given to those with extra responsibilities. This is in harmony with the mandate from synod to provide adequately for missionaries. Housing, hospitalization, insurance, and pension are provided, as well as mileage allowance for church business.

Ordained ministers		
D.Min./Th.D.		\$20,300
B.D./M.Div		\$20,100
A.B. or less		\$19,500
Evangelists and unordained workers		
Ph.D. degree		\$20,100
M.A. degree		\$19,500
A.B./B.R.E. degree		\$18,800
No degree		\$15,800-\$17,900
Service allowance: \$100/year to 20 years		
Children's Allowance		
Ages 1-6		400
Ages 7-14		500
Ages 15-21		600
Christian school allowance, per child (lesser of \$500 or 1/3 of tuition)		
Social Security allowance (ordained-US only)		50%

2. Office Personnel

Staff and administrative persons are being paid within the salary ranges approved by synod (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 636). Using the system approved by synod and the job-level ranking assigned by the special denominational committee, the board reports that its executive personnel will be compensated during calendar year 1985 as follows:

Job level	No. of positions in job level	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
8	1	paid in 2nd quartile
6	1	paid in 2nd quartile
5	2	paid in 3rd quartile
5	1	paid in 4th quartile
4	1	paid in 3rd quartile
3	1	paid in 3rd quartile

D. Land Grants and Loan Funds

Land grants were provided to Nanaimo, BC; Nashville, TN; and Richmond, BC, enabling them to purchase property for a church site. Church building loans were extended to Kamloops, BC, and to Houston, TX, to make possible the erection of their church buildings. Loans were extended to Ft. McMurray, AB, and to Champaign, IL, to be used as a down payment in the purchase of a parsonage.

X. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The board requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to its president, executive secretary, and treasurer when matters pertaining to Home Missions are discussed.

B. The board requests permission to make a presentation of its program and some of its personnel at one of the sessions of synod.

C. The board requests that synod reappoint Duane E. VanderBrug as personnel secretary for another four-year term (see Section III, F, 1).

D. The board requests synod to remind the churches and classes that Home Missions will be seeking a new executive secretary and that recommendations should be sent to the board secretary, Rev. Edward Tamminga (see Section III, F, 2).

E. The board requests synod to appoint a committee on Senior Ministry (see Section IV, B for the mandate of the committee).

F. The board requests that synod elect three board members-at-large with alternates from the following nominationsB3

Finance

Cor Baarda	Don Dekker	Jay Morren
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Architecture

Paul Vander Leek	Marv De Winter	Jay Volkers
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Banking

Jim Fredricks	Warren Faber	Gerry Van Solkema
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*The person not elected as the regular delegate will be nominated for the alternate position.

G. The board requests synod to place Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions on the list for denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings.

H. The board requests that synod approve the Hospitality House Ministries, previously known as the Armed Forces Fund, for one or more offerings from the churches.

I. The board requests that synod approve a quota of \$88.00 per family for the year 1986.

Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions
John G. Van Ryn, executive secretary

REPORT 3
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS
OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

I. INTRODUCTION

Covenantalize the World; Evangelize the Church

Using the above words as his title, Dr. Roger E. Van Harn, the retiring president of the Board of Publications, opened the 1985 annual meeting of the board with an address that served as an excellent foundation for the work that was to follow and, in fact, for the entire ministry of the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church.

Dr. Van Harn began his address by acknowledging that, when growing up in the Christian Reformed Church, he "envisioned a covenantalized church in an evangelized world." The point of his address was to ask the board to consider the need for "an evangelized church in a covenantalized world." He noted three essential components in covenantalizing as he experienced it: (1) teaching Reformed orthodoxy, (2) applying moral principles to life, and (3) exalting the parent-child relationship. From inside his covenantalized church he could see a world, far beyond, that needed the gospel—that needed to be "reached" and evangelized. The implication, of course, was that the world was at a distance and "between the church and the world was a great moat that was too deep to wade and too dangerous to swim."

To correct this vision he proposed that we remove the great distance between the church and the world and the radical distinction between covenantalizing and evangelizing. Along with the world the church knows and struggles with the human questions of life; indeed, "it gives voice to the world's need before the face of God." The church needs to be evangelized and it needs to keep on evangelizing itself. It does not simply remember "the hour I first believed." We should not speak of a covenantalized church in a world that needs to be evangelized as though a great gulf lies between them. "Evangelizing and covenantalizing cannot be separated any more than faith can be detached from life."

The first part of Dr. Van Harn's vision, therefore, is that the church that is *in* the world needs to be evangelized. The second part of the vision now becomes clear, "namely, that a church covenantalizes the world after the example of the apostle Paul who brought Jews and Gentiles together in Christ. Bending its ear to hear the story of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, the church receives the gifts of dignity in the face of weakness, meaning in the presence of chaos, and hope in the midst of danger. Thus evangelized, the church covenantalizes. It teaches, exhorts, and converts all relationships into channels of mutual servanthood."

Mr. Van Harn then pointed out some of the implications of his vision for the ministry of the Board of Publications:

The first implication is simply that the Board of Publications should praise God, thank the church, and applaud our staff for our ministry. The ministry we have received from Christ through the church shows signs of living the vision.

We have a single curriculum that overcomes the dangerous separation between evangelizing and covenantalizing that was implied in the two-track system. We have extended the curriculum to include adults as well as children. We have welcomed the mentally impaired with the *Friendship Series*. We are producing a hymnal that gathers the fruits of different times and traditions and gives them to the whole church. We are creatively engaging our world with the biblical story and are being stretched toward new possibilities in our long-range plan.

The Banner has become a magazine about which more kinds of people than ever before can say, "Here is a paper that understands us." *The Banner* evangelizes and covenantalizes when it sets the fire of grace to wooden shoes, when it listens to homosexuals as well as speaks to them, when it warns not to confuse Israel with the Christian Reformed Church during the All Nations Heritage celebration, when it wonders aloud about children at the Lord's Supper, and when it shows us women preaching the gospel and asks, "Why?" and "Why not?" *The Banner* stings and delights, but it is always the voice of an evangelized church that longs for a covenantalized world.

In its business practices, the Board of Publications acts as the evangelized church that works for a covenantalized world. It offers employment to people who are otherwise overlooked. It seeks ways to employ the gifts as well as hear the testimony of a conscientious tax resister in a community of conscientious tax payers. It watches with careful stewardship the bags of money that pass through its books to be sure that they will enrich an impoverished world and not merely make paychecks.

The first implication of my vision is that God should be praised for what he has given us to see and do. I offer only one more implication, namely, that we keep seeking more and better ways to evangelize and covenantalize and that we never do one differently or apart from the other. . . .

When our task finds us weak, when chaos confronts us, and when danger attends our way, let us listen again to the story of the birth, death, and resurrection of our Lord. . . . Thus evangelized, let us teach, exhort, and carry all the gifts our small hands can hold to covenantalize the world.

It was most appropriate that Dr. Van Harn give the opening address for this board meeting since he is one of three officers of the board who are retiring this year; each retiring officer has unselfishly given many years of dedicated service to the Board of Publications. Because of this significant contribution to the ministry of the board it is fitting that a brief summary of their work be included in this report.

Dr. Van Harn was first appointed to the Board of Publications in 1979. In 1981, and every year since then, Roger was elected board president. He provided firm leadership during a time the Board of Publications was going through significant change and growth.

Rev. William D. Buursma is our second retiring officer. Bill started his involvement in 1964 and since that time he has served a number of committees and the board itself (starting in 1968 when the board was organized) in a variety of ways. Since 1980 he has given continuous and consistently excellent service as board secretary.

The third retiring board officer is Mr. Bernard M. Scholten. Bernie also started his service in 1964. His business expertise was a mainstay on this committee for many years, including the crucial years of 1966-68 when a reorganization plan was designed and implemented and the Board of Publications was formed. In 1979, synod appointed Bernie as member-at-large of the board. He has served as board treasurer since 1983.

In addition to the retirement of these three officers, these are years of transition for the Board of Publications in many ways. A cursory review of some of the key events of the past year and the coming year easily provides evidence for that claim.

First of all, after serving five years as the first executive director of the Board of Publications, Mr. A. James Heynen stepped aside on October 1, 1984. Jim's success in pulling together the various staff groups into one team and in setting a course for the future for this fledgling organization was truly outstanding. When Jim left his office, Mr. Gary Mulder, synod's choice for his replacement, had completed two months of orientation activities, so he was ready to assume the position of executive director.

We were delighted to hear that another key Center of Hope case has been dismissed. It appears that we can soon put at least the legal aspects of this long ordeal behind us.

We have completed the final year of the *Friendship Series*, an excellent curriculum for people with mental impairments.

After 118 years, *De Wachter* will cease to be published as of December 31, 1985.

We have developed a long-range plan for providing a variety of music and liturgy resources to local congregations—a significant new undertaking for the Board of Publications.

Finally, during the past year we have begun implementation of the long-range plan for the Board of Publications as a whole, "Setting a Course," that was approved by the Synod of 1984.

But while it is true that these are years of transition for the Board of Publications, there is much that remains the same; and most of that which remains the same should, in fact, do so.

We continue to employ a very stable, dedicated, capable staff (now seventy strong) that is loyal to the church of Jesus Christ.

We continue to be less like a traditional church "agency" and more like a Christian publishing company governed wholly by the church. We do not seek to make a profit; our goal is ministry. But we seek to achieve that goal by thoughtfully operating on a (Christian) businesslike basis. Quota, which once accounted for more than 20 percent of this ministry's income, should bring in less than 5 percent of the 1984-85 income. *The Banner* is, once again, virtually self-sustaining. As another example of our businesslike approach, we more and more look to our customer's needs to help us determine the direction we should go, and the products we should develop.

Our core product base continues to be the BIBLE WAY curriculum, *The Banner*, and our production services. The BIBLE WAY curriculum continues to receive very positive reviews, and sales to non-CRC churches continues to grow. *The Banner*, our flagship publication, continues to receive high reviews for being a quality denominational periodical, although some people con-

tinue to express their consternation over some of its editorial stances. Our printing and production facilities continue to print virtually everything we write, and they are utilized by more and more other Christian organizations to serve their printing needs.

All of us—staff, board, officers—work in full awareness that our task is ministry and our goal is to serve the church. We look to synod to help us review how well our work and our plans serve that goal.

II. BOARD ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

A. The Board of Publications is governed by a board of forty-three delegates, forty from the classes and three (at-large) elected by synod. The board ordinarily meets annually in February.

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

B. *Committee Membership* (through August 1985)

Dr. Roger E. Van Harn, president—Periodicals
 Rev. Alvin L. Hoksbergen, vice president—Administrative
 Rev. William D. Buursma, secretary—Periodicals
 Mr. Bernard Scholten, treasurer—Periodicals
 Mr. Stan De Jong—Education
 Dr. Hendrik Hart—Periodicals
 Rev. Peter Hogeterp—Administrative
 Mr. Henry Kuntz—Administrative
 Mr. James Lipscomb—Periodicals
 Mr. Gordon Quist—Administrative
 Ms. Wilma Runia—Education
 Rev. Norman J. Thomasma—Education
 Dr. Michael Vanden Bosch—Education
 Mr. Jerry Van Spronsen—Education

C. *Fraternal Delegates*

The 1984 Synod approved the continuation of fraternal delegate positions on our board and approved the reappointments of Revs. Allan Baldwin and George Brown (each to a second three-year term). The Board of Publications promised to inform synod of future procedures to be followed in appointing fraternal delegates.

The Board of Publications hereby informs synod that it has adopted the following procedure for appointing fraternal delegates:

1. When there is a prospective vacancy for the position(s) of fraternal delegate, staff will contact the person or committee having authority in matters of church education in the RCA and in the NAPARC denominations respectively, requesting several nominations for each vacant position. The Board of Publications will consider these nominations, select one nominee for each vacancy, and recommend this person for synodical approval.

2. The term of service will be for three years, with a possible second three-year term.

3. Staggered term and alternate delegates are not necessary.

4. In case a fraternal delegate cannot complete a term, the Board of Publications (or its executive committee) will go through the steps outlined in number one above to fill this vacancy and make a temporary appointment pending synodical approval.

D. Nominations for At-Large Delegates

Along with a revised structure for the board and its committees, the 1981 Synod approved three at-large delegate positions. In 1984 synod assigned terms to the three delegates appointed to fill those positions. Mr. Bernard Scholten's term expires August 31, 1985.

The board respectfully requests that synod elect one of the following persons as an at-large member for a three-year term beginning September 1, 1985, until August 31, 1988.

Mr. Calvin D. Matthyse

Mr. Matthyse attended Grand Rapids Junior College and in 1968 graduated from Wayne State University (Department of Mortuary Science). In 1969 he studied at Calvin College (Liberal Arts courses). At the present time Mr. Matthyse is vice president of De Vries-Kuiper-DeGraaf-Matthyse Funeral Directors, Inc., and is the manager of Posthumus-Matthyse Funeral Chapel in Grandville, MI. Mr. Matthyse and his wife, Nancy, have two sons aged five and eleven. They are members of South Grandville CRC. Mr. Matthyse has served as a deacon at both Riverside CRC and South Grandville CRC. Currently he's a member of the Grandville American Business Club as well as both local and national funeral directors' associations.

Mr. Philip R. VandenBerge

Mr. VandenBerge attended Calvin College (major: Economics) from the fall of 1955 to the spring of 1957, and Michigan State University (AB in Accounting including post-graduate work) from the fall of 1957 to the summer of 1959. In 1959 he joined Touche Ross & Company, was awarded his CPA, and became a firm partner in 1972. Before leaving Touche Ross in 1980 he worked for several years in their Philadelphia office. In 1980 he accepted the position of vice president of finance at Bil-Mar Foods, Inc. of Zeeland, MI, and is presently serving there in this capacity. At Burton Heights CRC (Grand Rapids) Mr. VandenBerge served two terms as a deacon, at Trinity CRC (Philadelphia) he served two elder terms, and at Beckwith Hills CRC (Grand Rapids) he's now completing his final year as an elder. He has also served on the Board of Directors for Wedgewood Acres Youth Homes, Inc., and the WMCA. Mr. VandenBerge married Mary Brouwer and they have four children ages twenty-four, twenty-two, and twins aged twenty. All of their children have attended or are presently attending Calvin College.

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

For the Board: Dr. Roger Van Harn, president
 Rev. William D. Buursma, secretary
 Mr. Gary Mulder, executive director

For *The Banner*: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, editor
 For *De Wachter*: Dr. Sierd Woudstra, editor
 For Education: Dr. Harvey Smit, director
 For Business: Mr. Allen Van Zee, business manager

III. PROGRAM MATTERS

A. Education

1. Introduction

Since 1972 the Board of Publications' Education Department has produced and marketed the BIBLE WAY curriculum. The generic term for this material is "unified church school curriculum." What's "unified" (made one) is the dual tradition in the Christian Reformed Church: catechism and Sunday school. The strengths of each tradition have been merged into one lifelong, year-round program called "church school." The curriculum is consistently biblical and doctrinal, evangelical and Reformed, and has overcome the dangerous separation between evangelizing and covenantalizing.

The success of a curriculum can largely be judged by its results in the marketplace. On that score, the BIBLE WAY curriculum has done well. It's used in more Christian Reformed congregations than ever, but CRC users now represent less than a third of the total accounts:

Christian Reformed	853 (28%)
Reformed	661 (22%)
Presbyterian	825 (27%)
Baptist	143 (5%)
United Church of Christ	61 (2%)
Others	302 (10%)
Anglican	70 (2%)
Bookstores	136 (4%)

In 1982 the second generation of the BIBLE WAY curriculum began appearing. These were all new (revised) materials, retaining those concepts and strategies that had worked best in the previous ten years while replacing all others. Artwork, illustrations, stories, and all the material provided for teachers and students were replaced.

2. Product Update

When synod convenes, Education Department staff members will be available to answer questions regarding new products released, products currently being developed, and so forth. For reference purposes the following information may be helpful.

Product	Status	Comments
Curriculum for Younger Students		
3's	Available	Revision
<i>Bible Footprints</i>	Available	Revision—uses NIV
	Fall 1985	
<i>Intermission</i>	Available soon	Devotional reader to accompany <i>Bible Crossroads</i>
Curriculum for Young Adults		
<i>Get a Job</i>	Available	Video/film on vocation

<i>Landmarks, Year I</i>	Available	Revision
Curriculum for Adults		
<i>Into His Presence</i>	Available soon	Course on worship and liturgy
<i>Covenant Keeping:</i>	Available	Course—includes video
<i>Sharing the Family Story</i>	Fall 1985	component
<i>In His Service</i>	Available	Booklets for officer's training or
	Winter 1985	adult education course
<i>Handbook on Adult Education</i>	Available soon	
General Publications		
<i>At Issue</i>	Two completed and available	Series of broadsheets on social issues—cooperative project with CRWRC
<i>CRC Viewpoint</i>	Four completed and available	Pastors' pamphlets giving advice and guidelines on pastoral problems
<i>Living the Heidelberg</i>	Available	Formerly <i>Social Implications of the Heidelberg Catechism</i>
<i>Write Back Soon</i>	Available	Translation of Dr. Herbert Brink's
	Winter 1985	book of letters from Dutch immigrants
<i>My Father's World</i>	Available	Collected essays by Ms. Joanne De Jong
	Fall 1985	

3. Curriculum for People with Mental Impairments

The idea of producing a special curriculum for people with mental impairments was first suggested to Education Department staff by a group from Grace Christian Reformed Church (Grand Rapids) in 1979, a general proposal was approved by the board and synod in 1980, plans were approved by the executive committee in September 1980. No other program reaches out so far beyond our own circles to diverse Christian groups and churches throughout North America and other parts of the world. About 6,400 students are now using *Friendship* materials in a total of 300 churches/groups.

We've also created a separate corporation, the Friendship Foundation, to assist in fundraising especially outside the Christian Reformed Church. The Board of Publications requests that synod recommend the Friendship Foundation to the churches for financial support in 1986.

4. The New *Psalter Hymnal*

In 1977, synod appointed a committee "to revise and improve the Centennial Edition of the *Psalter Hymnal*." During the past eight years the *Psalter Hymnal* Revision Committee has worked hard to carry out synod's mandate. In 1982 synod decided that this committee should become part of the Board of Publications.

The dedication of the people on this committee is laudable. They have held innumerable meetings and the members have worked countless additional hours on their own trying to complete their assigned tasks. They are all volunteers and almost all the members have stayed with the work through the entire eight years. The work load during the last six months has been especially taxing.

In 1982, Dr. Emily Brink was selected to be the Christian Reformed Church's first fulltime music editor. She has acted as the Board of Publications' liaison person with the Revision Committee.

a. Background:

(1) Table of Contents

The 1984 Synod approved the following table and order of contents of the new *Psalter Hymnal*:

- (a) Introductory Materials (approximately 10 pages)
- (b) Psalms (approximately 200 pages)

This section would consist of a single, complete versification of each of the 150 psalms in the numerical order in which they appear in the Bible.

- (c) Bible Songs (approximately 80 pages)

This section would include 60 to 80 Scripture songs arranged according to the order of the English Bible. A number of the shorter, chorus-type psalm settings would be included here.

- (d) Hymns (approximately 400 pages)

This section would include about 350 hymns taken from the present *Psalter Hymnal* and from other sources. Additional psalm settings, partial and complete, many taken from the current *Psalter* section would be placed under the appropriate heading. Hymns would be arranged in the following order:

- i) The Worship Service
- ii) The Church Year
- iii) General Hymns

- (e) Liturgical Forms of the Christian Reformed Church (approximately 140 pages)

- (f) Doctrinal Standards of the Christian Reformed Church (approximately 130 pages)

- (g) Indices (approximately 40 pages)

Total Pages: approximately 1,000

(2) Procedure:

Synod also adopted the following procedural steps and time line for approving the new *Psalter Hymnal*:

- (a) The appointment of separate synodical advisory committees to serve the 1985 and 1986 Synods with recommendations regarding Board of Publications matters, especially the new *Psalter Hymnal*
- (b) The Board of Publications include in its report to the 1985 Synod:
 - i) A complete listing of all the Bible songs and hymns recommended by the board for inclusion in the new *Psalter Hymnal*.
 - ii) Edited versions of all the liturgical forms approved by the 1984 Synod for inclusion in the new *Psalter Hymnal*.
- (c) The Board of Publications include in its report to the 1986 Synod:
 - i) The recommended words and music for the 150 psalms (except those recommended from the present *Psalter Hymnal* with only minor literary and musical editing).
 - ii) The recommended indices for the new *Psalter Hymnal*.
 - iii) Any recommended alterations to the Bible songs, hymns, or liturgical forms based on reconsideration directed by the 1985 Synod (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 632–33, 643–44).

(3) Progress:

The first major result of the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee work was received by the Board of Publications at its February meeting. In fact, a substantial portion of the annual board meeting (one and one-half days) was devoted to a painstaking, careful review of the proposed songs. The board was first divided into a number of small review groups each of which was given the task of intensely examining an assigned section of the proposed new *Psalter Hymnal*. Then the full board received, and reviewed, the proposals from the small groups in a session that lasted a full day. As a result of this intensive analysis, the board made a number of changes to the proposals and referred other recommendations back to the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee for reconsideration.

Thus the proposals you will receive are coming to you as recommendations from the Board of Publications. The board authorized its executive committee to review the revised proposals for those items that had been referred back to the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee.

Because of the sheer volume of material, it was impossible to include all the proposed hymns, songs, and liturgical materials in the *Agenda for Synod*. By arrangement with the stated clerk a separate mailing will be sent to all synodical delegates prior to synod. In addition, all CRC congregations will receive at least one copy of the proposed hymns and songs and will be invited to send representatives to study conferences which will be held in eleven locations to help acquaint people with the proposals and to hear their reactions and advice.

In order that the 1985 Synod may carefully weigh and evaluate all the proposed songs and hymns for the new *Psalter Hymnal* and arrive at a deliberate decision that will best serve the church, the Board of Publications is recommending a procedure by which synod will use the board as a recommending body, not only initially, but also for any alterations synod may desire in the contents. Accordingly, the Board of Publications brings the following to synod:

b. Recommendations:

- (1) That synod consider the Bible songs and hymns section by section following the table and order of contents approved by the Synod of 1984.

Grounds:

- (a) This will give synod manageable portions to consider and discuss.
 - (b) The revision committee has been working at selecting, replacing, and adding hymns according to these categories.
- (2) That synod be requested not to entertain motions from the floor that would add, delete, or alter any particular hymn but to entertain motions that refer back to the Board of Publications any inclusion, omission, replacement, or alteration (of words, melody, or

arrangement) of any particular hymn or Bible song or of any section that synod judges unsatisfactory. The board will reconsider any particular hymns or sections referred back to it and bring new recommendations to the Synod of 1986.

Ground: This will permit a deliberate, ordered decision regarding which Bible songs and hymns are included in the new *Psalter Hymnal*.

Note: As mentioned previously, the actual proposals will be sent to you under separate cover. However, we have *listed* in Appendix A all the board's recommendations regarding the retentions, inclusions, and deletions of hymns and Bible songs. (Because of time constraints the list of Bible songs is only a partial one; the remaining Bible songs will be included in next year's proposals to synod.)

- (3) That the edited version of the liturgical forms be approved for inclusion in the new *Psalter Hymnal*.

Grounds:

- (a) The editing changes bring a consistency of Scripture version and of style to forms that were written over a number of years.
- (b) The stylistic changes reflect the policy of language choice and style that is embodied also in the proposed Psalms, Bible songs, and hymns.

Note: As with the hymns and Bible songs, these liturgical forms are included in the separate mailing; you will find a list in Appendix A.

I encourage you to keep several things in mind as you review this mass of information. *After* the key decisions are made regarding inclusion of hymns and songs, a substantial amount of work still remains for each song (final editing, permission, engraving, etc.). Thus it is important that, as much as possible, decisions be made now so that we can begin this process and meet our goal of releasing the new *Psalter Hymnal* in the spring of 1987. I also would urge you to consider only "major" matters (e.g., inclusion or exclusion of songs) for decision-making purposes; a great deal of editorial work will be performed by staff and the committee right up to the final stages of production.

B. *The Banner*

During 1984 the number of *Banner* subscribers reached an alltime high—51,960 (representing over 100,000 readers). The average number of paid subscriptions during 1984 was also at an alltime high—51,383. However, the last two months of the year did show a slight decline in the total number of subscribers.

Judging by the mailbag, the two issues which elicited the most reaction were two theme issues—"Women" (January 23) and "Homosexuality" (September 17). As you know, much of this correspondence vociferously expresses consternation at positions taken by the editor or by the writer of an article. You should also know, however, that many letters come to the office weekly, often accompanying subscription renewal payments, containing words of sincere

appreciation for *The Banner*. These letters serve as a leveling influence, allowing those responsible for publishing our magazine to realize that thousands of subscribers eagerly read and enjoy *The Banner* each week. The synod issue (July 2) drew many favorable responses, as did the "The Devotional Life" (July 30) and "Lawsuits" (December 10) issues.

Another source of affirmation came from our readership survey, completed in August. Readers were asked how good a job *The Banner* is doing in accomplishing each of four stated purposes. Research shows that readers believe *The Banner* does best in the area of providing information about current church activities (nine out of ten readers said "good" or "excellent").

Readers are least positive about how well *The Banner* educates readers about the Bible, Christian doctrines, and Christian ethics. While the majority still rate it as doing a "good" or "excellent" job, the size of the majority decreases. As a way to better fulfill this purpose of our magazine, Rev. Kuyvenhoven introduced a series of articles on the Heidelberg Catechism in the January 14 issue. This will be published weekly throughout 1985 and continue next year.

Many readers also felt that family-related issues and issues such as depression, loneliness, and feelings of guilt should be covered in *The Banner*. The staff also was encouraged to find that most readers believe that (1) the editor's voice is an informed and respected opinion, not the official position of the CRC; (2) the editor should always defend the Reformed confessions; (3) the editor should not always defend Christian Reformed practices and traditions; (4) the editor does not need to defend every position taken by CRC synods; and (5) the editor may take a position on an issue synod is about to consider.

We're pleased that subscription rates had remained unchanged since September 1, 1982. This is unique in the magazine industry. However, because of increased expenses (paper and production, plus postage and currency exchange costs in Canada), a price hike took effect January 1, 1985.

We now charge our subscribers \$16.00 (US) and \$25.25 (Canadian) for a one-year subscription to *The Banner*. This price continues to remain lower per issue than many other Christian magazines.

We now publish the names of seventeen news correspondents in the masthead of each *Banner*, having expanded our news network from the original twelve who began their work in September 1983, after participating in a three-day workshop in Grand Rapids earlier that summer. After September, having had news correspondents for two years, the staff will make an in-depth study of our news network and thereafter make recommendations to the periodicals subcommittee. Meanwhile, the staff is encouraged by the readership-survey results; they show that 84 percent of our readers always read, or frequently read, the news section. There are still those who feel that *The Banner's* news coverage is "biased"—a complaint heard often, of course, by the news media in general. We want you to know that two key questions that *The Banner* asks to determine if something is news are (1) Will it help readers to make decisions? and (2) Is it an unusual event?

The Kuyvenhovens are making their final scheduled trip, this time to the Far East, this spring. We again anticipate positive reader reaction to the reports of their trip to CRC mission fields.

At its February meeting the Board of Publications took note of the fact that Classis Florida had approved an overture to synod asking Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven to give "further explanation" of his views according to the Form of Subscription.

In response to this information, the Board of Publications adopted the following resolution for inclusion in its report to synod:

1. The Board of Publications judges that Classis Florida's request for "further explanation" contains a serious charge against Rev. Kuyvenhoven, that it should have been addressed either to his supervising consistory (Boston Square CRC, Grand Rapids) or to his supervising agency (Board of Publications), and that it is not properly addressed to synod.

2. The Board of Publications and its executive committee, having regularly reviewed the work of Rev. Kuyvenhoven, is grateful for his work and finds no grounds for questioning his faithfulness to the Scriptures, his loyalty to the confessions, or his love for the church.

C. *De Wachter*

Of a magazine that is slated to disappear at the end of the present year one can hardly truthfully say that everything is well. However, apart from that consideration, *De Wachter* may be said to be as alive and well as one might expect from an oldster who is now in his (or is it "her") 118th year.

The decision to cease publication of this oldest periodical in the CRC "no later than January 1, 1986," was made by the Synod of 1982. That synod also decided to terminate *De Wachter* if before January 1, 1986, the number of subscribers would drop below the 1,500 mark. The synod was too pessimistic about the loyalty of the readers of *De Wachter*. Presently, *De Wachter* has slightly under 2,000 paid subscribers. That is why *De Wachter* will run the full course of 1985. The first issue for this year was dated January 1, 1985, and the final issue will be dated December 31, 1985.

Dr. Sierd Woudstra assumed the role of editor in chief of *De Wachter* on January 1, 1984. He has ably served in that role throughout 1984 and, the Lord willing, plans to do so all of this year as well. Hardly a week goes by in which he does not receive one or more letters from readers in which they express their appreciation for the paper.

In 1984 two highly appreciated writers for *De Wachter* were taken home by the Lord. They were Rev. Henry Van Anandel and Dr. Louis Praamsma. Rev. Van Anandel was one of the meditation writers, and Dr. Praamsma wrote in a department dealing with sundry topics.

Plans have been drawn up for including special historically oriented articles in the final issues of *De Wachter*. It is also the intention of the Board of Publications that the final issue of *De Wachter* be a commemorative one.

IV. LONG-RANGE PLANNING

The 1984 Synod adopted a six-year plan for the Board of Publications called "Setting a Course." The plan's schedule calls for a progress report to the 1985 Synod on a number of items. The staff and board have been working hard on these items and, while we have not met the suggested schedule in a few instances, overall we are very pleased with the progress we have made to date in implementing "Setting a Course."

For each of the following items, the appropriate statement from "Setting a Course" will first be quoted; then an appropriate update will be provided and/or your approval of a proposal sought. We've included only those items from the long-range plan for which last year's synod (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 68-83, 457-58) required a report to the 1985 Synod.

A. "Change the name of the publishing organization so that the term Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church is used only to describe the board that governs the ministry."

A task force made up primarily of staff was asked to consider this issue and, after several false starts, proposed the name CRC PUBLICATIONS: *Christian Reformed Church in North America*. Since this proposed name is similar to an existing registered name, CRC Press (part of the Chemical Rubber Company), our attorney advised us to approach CRC Press directly to see if they would object to our adoption of the proposed title. We have done that and initial responses have been quite favorable. However, since we had not yet received a definitive answer from CRC Press at the time of the February board meeting, the board was reluctant to make a *firm* proposal to synod for adoption.

However, for your information, the board overwhelmingly approved a motion to endorse in *concept* the name

CRC PUBLICATIONS

Christian Reformed Church in North America

as the new name for the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church.

The board also asked the executive committee to make the final decision on a recommendation to synod based on an acceptable response from CRC Press to the proposed new name.

B. "That the 1984 Synod direct a merger of efforts between these two organizations [the Liturgical Committee and the Board of Publications] and request that they jointly recommend to the 1985 Synod a plan for structural unity" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 458).

Several amicable meetings took place between representatives of the Board of Publications and Liturgical Committee members. As a result of these discussions, a plan for merger was developed. This plan was approved by the Liturgical Committee on December 20, and by the Board of Publications at its February meeting.

The Board of Publications respectfully requests synod's approval of the following:

Plan for Merger with the Liturgical Committee

1. Background

The 1984 Synod approved the Board of Publications' long-range plan, "Charting a New Course, A Plan for Christian Reformed Publishing Ministries, 1984-1990" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 647). This plan included, and synod took special note of, a joint resolution of the Liturgical Committee and the Board of Publications: "That the 1984 Synod direct a merger of efforts between these two organizations and request that they jointly recommend to the 1985 Synod a plan for structural unity."

2. Plan for Structural Unity

a. That, as of September 1, 1985, the Liturgical Committee cease to be a standing committee of synod and become a standing committee of the Board of Publications.

- (1) Reports and recommendations concerning the work of the Liturgical Committee will come to synod via the annual report of the Board of Publications.

- (2) The Board of Publications will be responsible for all financial expenditures of the Liturgical Committee. Planning for such expenses will be included in the board's annual budget.
 - (3) The task of the Liturgical Committee as a committee of the Board of Publications shall be:
 - (a) To write and revise liturgical forms (sacramental and nonsacramental) as directed by synod.
 - (b) To write reports on liturgical matters.
 - (c) To lead and advise the churches on liturgical matters.
 - (d) To serve as a resource for liturgical expertise and advise.
 - (4) The agenda of the Liturgical Committee shall be determined by:
 - (a) Tasks of a liturgical nature assigned by synod to the Board of Publications (Liturgical Committee).
 - (b) Tasks of a liturgical nature assigned by the Board of Publications.
 - (c) Discerned needs within the churches.
 - (d) Self-generated projects of the committee.
 - (e) Requests from staff of the Board of Publications.
 - (5) Composition of the Liturgical Committee:
 - (a) Membership will be maintained at the present level of eight for the next several years.
 - (b) From September 1, 1985, new members will be selected by the Board of Publications from a list of nominations drawn up by the Liturgical Committee.
 - (c) Members will ordinarily serve two three-year terms.
- b. The time line for this merger will be:
- (1) June 1985—Synod discusses and approves the merger.
 - (2) August 1985—Synodical Interim Committee closes its books on the Liturgical Committee as a standing committee of synod.
 - (3) September 1985—Liturgical Committee begins to work as a standing committee of the Board of Publications.

C. "Seek the support of the World Literature Committee to propose to the 1985 Synod that those tasks now assigned to the Christian Reformed Church's World Literature Committee be reassigned to the Board of Publications."

In late summer an *ad hoc* committee made up of World Literature Committee and Board of Publications representatives was formed to discuss this issue. Discussions are continuing and proposals are being considered. A recommendation should be forthcoming to synod by 1986.

D. "In consultation with other organizations and experts, plan to make curriculum materials appropriate for use in film (video), radio, and/or television."

During this past year, the Education Department has become progressively more involved in using media, both as part of curriculum material and for promotional purposes. For example, *Get a Job* was produced in both a film and video form. Also available now are the videotaped presentations by Dr. Emily Brink of the plans and progress in the development of the new *Psalter Hymnal*. We have been working on a video component to the adult course, *Covenant Keeping*.

While not eliminating film from future consideration, it seems to us that, for

use with curriculum, video is the more promising medium. Most church education tends to occur in relatively small groups, and a high degree of involvement is desirable for effective learning. However, there seems little point in including a video component in curriculum materials if churches are unwilling or unaccustomed to using the video equipment. But before many churches will expend money for equipment and learn to use it, enough Reformed educational materials must be available and readily accessible to make it worthwhile. This is a sort of chicken and egg dilemma.

The procedure that appears to be most feasible is to develop a rental library that would make available to the churches at a reasonable price video materials from not only the Education Department, but also from other institutions and agencies of the CRC and from other Presbyterian/Reformed sources. The availability of such a library would encourage congregations to move in the direction of purchasing and using video equipment in church education classes. A plan for developing such a library is attached (Appendix B). The Board of Publications has approved the plan and the recommendation below:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Publications (Education Department) develop a rental library of video resources for church education and training.

Grounds:

1. A number of congregations/classes have expressed an interest in such a library and indicated they would use such video materials if they were available.
2. Many of the other church agencies/institutions and education leaders in the RCA and NAPARC churches have expressed interest in participating in such a project.

E. "In consultation with Christian Schools International (CSI), adopt a statement of purpose for church education and Bible instruction in the Christian day school. On the basis of that statement a decision will be made whether joint publishing ventures are feasible."

The consultation took place. A statement of purpose, however, proved impossible to formulate. CSI has begun to review their entire program of Bible instruction and to formulate plans for a complete revision. Until that has been accomplished, they will not know the direction or format of the new materials. We agreed to regular quarterly consultations in which we will discuss planned projects in early stages and explore areas of possible cooperation.

F. "Develop plans and produce a full range of musical and liturgical resources and guidelines for use in the church's worship, education, and evangelism, paying special attention to the needs of nontraditional congregations; and provide information and training services to Christian Reformed congregational worship and music leaders."

A task force was appointed to develop the plans mentioned above. This task force was composed of two members of the Liturgical Committee, two members of the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee, two members of the education committee, and two staff members. Meeting in November 1984, this task force drew up the five-year plan for development of music and liturgical resources that you will find in Appendix C. At its February board meeting, the Board of Publications approved this plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

That synod approve the five-year plan described in Appendix C.

G. "Begin publication of a monthly periodical whose primary purpose will be to aid and equip Christian Reformed church leaders in their congregational ministries. The publication should be published ten times per year (September-May, with one "summer issue") with 24-36 pages per issue. This publication should be sensitive to the various racial and cultural aspects of the church's ministry. If needed, this periodical should be produced in multilingual editions."

As the Board of Publications began to identify the specific form that the publication should take, and as we started discussions with the Calvin College Social Research Center to discuss a research plan to help us identify what was needed, it became clear that we were in a typical "answer in search of a question" situation; in other words, we think we have the answer: leadership periodical; now let's go find the questions that people have: survey.

The Social Research Center folks suggest that instead the Board of Publications do some basic analysis of the needs of CRC local leadership. We then can use the results to (1) validate whether or not a periodical is the best way to fill those needs (or whether some other product[s] might be more appropriate), and at the same time (2) obtain input regarding the purposes/content of a periodical (or other product).

The Social Research Center prepared a proposal for this study. It strongly suggested that we use a concept called "focus groups" (brainstorming with small groups of people of several areas of the US and Canada) to get this input. Their rationale and proposal sounded reasonable so we are proceeding with the study.

Because the results were not yet available for discussion at our February board meeting, any proposals that result from this study will come to you in a supplementary report.

H. "Develop, in consultation with the Long-Range Planning Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee (SIC), a plan (including financing) for relocating the Board of Publications operations either at the current site or in an existing, renovated facility within the Grand Rapids area."

The Board of Publications was represented on the Long-Range Planning Committee mentioned above. The proposals of the committee regarding facility are contained in the SIC report to synod. Synodical delegates should be aware that at its February meeting, the Board of Publications passed the following motion:

To approve the recommendation of the Long-Range Planning Committee regarding expansion of current facilities and financing of construction.

V. PERSONNEL

Because *The Banner* is the most visible of our publications, many people assume that everyone at the Board of Publications "works for *The Banner*." That is a false impression. In fact, *The Banner* department employs "only" 7 of our 72 current employees. Most of our employees (38) work in our production department. This department finally took on "its own identity" recently when Mr. Charles Vlieg was hired to fill the newly created position of Production Director.

Most of the other employees at the Board of Publications are concentrated in two departments: the Education Department (12 staff members) and the business office (11 staff members).

The 1982 Synod authorized the Board of Publications "to create within the Education Department the position of music editor, this position to be limited to the period of production and introduction of the revised *Psalter Hymnal*." In early 1983, Dr. Emily Brink joined the staff to fill this position.

However, as the board continued to implement the decision of 1982 "that synod authorize the Board of Publications to produce musical and liturgical resources for Reformed worship and provide a program of education in their use" (p. 66), it has become increasingly evident that this cannot be accomplished without the services on staff of an editor with expertise in these areas.

RECOMMENDATION:

That synod make the position of music and liturgy editor a continuing position with the Education Department of the Board of Publications.

Grounds:

- A. In 1984, synod approved a long-range plan for the Board of Publications ("Setting a Course") that included the tasks of producing "a full range of musical and liturgical resources" and "providing information and training services to Christian Reformed congregational worship and music leaders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 76-77). The approved merger with the Liturgical Committee will be one step in this direction. But to carry out these tasks in the future, it will be necessary to have a continuing editor on staff qualified in these areas.
- B. Sales of musical and liturgical resources will cover the expenses involved in retaining this position.

VI. FINANCE

Several years ago the Board of Publications set a goal that most products should be financially self-supporting. Furthermore, in the future, quota support should be sought only for those products or services that needed "start up" funding or those ongoing products that we consciously decide should be done as a ministry even though they cannot be self-supporting. These goals came out of a conscious desire to operate "like a business." There was, and is, a strong feeling that, since our primary purpose is to develop products that we sell, a viable way to make us accountable is to evaluate us like a business. There is no basic contradiction between that philosophy and the need to serve the church. In both cases we need to meet the needs of people.

We have reached that goal in almost all areas of our work. Except for a very small quota request to support *The Banner*, all of the quota dollars requested will be utilized to develop new products or services. In fact, quota requests for 1986 constitute only 5 percent of our annual budget.

A. The Board of Publications respectfully submits for synod's information audited financial statements for the fiscal year that ended August 31, 1984, and the budgets for fiscal years 1985 and 1986. These reports have been submitted to the stated clerk, who will place them in the *Agenda for Synod 1985—Financial and Business Supplement*.

B. The Board of Publications respectfully requests that synod approve a quota

of \$3.00 per family (assumes development of leadership periodical—see Section IV, G) to support the ministries of the Board of Publications during (calendar year) 1986.

C. The Board of Publications respectfully requests that synod recommend the Friendship Foundation to the churches for financial support in 1986.

D. Salary/Compensation Data

In accordance with action taken by the 1984 Synod, the Board of Publications respectfully submits annual compensation data. The method for reporting this data was adopted by synod from the Hay Associates Report (Report 19-A, Appendix II, *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 503-09).

Job level	No. of positions in job level	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowances)
8	1	2nd quartile (90-100%)
6	1	3rd quartile (100-100%)
5	2	3rd quartile (100-110%)
4	1	3rd quartile (100-110%)

The information listed above represents compensation data for the five top positions in our organization. These are the only positions to date that are part of the Hay Associates analysis program. As in past years, our complete salary schedule that includes compensation ranges for all of our staff members is part of the *Agenda for Synod 1985—Financial and Business Supplement*.

VII. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

- A. Election of at-large delegate for Board of Publications (see Section II, D)
- B. Board of Publications representation at synod (see Section II, E)
- C. Approval of procedures for synodical consideration of *Psalter Hymnal* Bible songs and hymns (see Section III, A, 4, and Appendix A)
- D. Approval of the proposed Bible songs and hymns (see Section III, A, 4, and Appendix A)
- E. Approval of the edited version of the liturgical forms for inclusion in the new *Psalter Hymnal* (see Section III, A, 4, and Appendix A)
- F. Approval of proposed new name for the Board of Publications (contingent on response from CRC Press) (see Section IV, A)
- G. Approval of plan for merger with Liturgical Committee (See Section IV, B)
- H. Approval of development of a video resource library (See Section IV, D, and Appendix B)
- I. Approval of five-year plan for development of music and liturgical resources (See Section IV, E, and Appendix C)
- J. Approval of position of music and liturgy editor (See Section V)
- K. Allocation of quota for Board of Publications (See Section VI, B)
- L. Recommendation of Friendship Foundation to churches for financial support (See Section VI, C)

Board of Publications of
the Christian Reformed Church
Gary H. Mulder, executive director

APPENDIX A (Index Version)

PART 1: PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

A. The first lines of all songs recommended for inclusion as well as replacement in the new *Psalter Hymnal* are arranged according to the order of contents approved by the Synod of 1984. Each song is assigned a category, then given a number within that category. In the Board of Publications Report, Appendix A (Complete Version), each category sheet is followed by actual song recommendations.

B. Each hymn category sheet (1–20) contains the following information:

1. First lines and an ID Number for all songs, listed alphabetically in three divisions:

- a. songs from the current *Psalter Hymnal*; PH refers to numbers recommended from the current *Psalter Hymnal*.
- b. new hymns: SB refers to hymns from other sources gathered into a committee "Source Book."
- c. RPH refers to songs from the current *Psalter Hymnal* recommended for replacement in the new edition.

2. The centuries in which the text and music were written.

3. Asterisks to indicate those songs included in a listing by the Consultation on Ecumenical Hymnody. This list of the hymns that are most widely used by major Christian denominations in North America was prepared to assist committees preparing hymnals. The list, released in 1977, has since been used also in the alphabetical index of several recently published hymnals.

4. Notes

a. For *Psalter Hymnal* songs, the following notes are offered.

(1) Text

(a) If nothing is mentioned, the text stands unchanged.

(b) Textual changes:

minor ed: minor editing

alt. text: substantive changes of a line or more

from Ps. #: a song from the (present) *Psalter* section is recommended for that hymnal category.

st. 1–3: the number of stanzas are indicated only if changed from the *Psalter Hymnal*.

(2) Music

(a) If the key has been changed from the present *Psalter Hymnal*, the new key is named.

(b) If the tune has been changed, the new tune is named.

b. For recommended additions to the *Psalter Hymnal*

- (1) If the text or music come from recent ethnic sources which are non-European, the ethnic group is named.
- (2) If a recommended tune is presently in the *Psalter Hymnal*, the PH number is given.

C. The Bible Song category (#21) lists the recommendations in biblical order. As mentioned in the report, the Bible songs included here are an incomplete listing; the remaining songs in this section will be presented along with the 150 psalms to the Synod of 1986.

PART 2: NUMERICAL LISTING OF ALL PRESENT PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS INCLUDED IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Part II is included for your convenience to assist you in determining in which category the present *Psalter Hymnal* numbers were studied. The list includes the following information:

- A. Numbers from the current psalter section of the *Psalter Hymnal* recommended for transfer to a hymn or Bible song category.
- B. A complete listing of all hymns in the current *Psalter Hymnal*.

PART 3: AN INDEX OF LITURGICAL FORMS APPROVED FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEW PSALTER HYMNAL

The forms are listed with page numbers from the Service Book as well as from the edited forms which are included in the supplement to the agenda.

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>1 OPENING OF WORSHIP</u>					
1-1 All Glory Be to God on High	PH 319	16	16	*	new translation of original text
1-2 Amid the Thronging Worshipers	PH 37	Bible	20		minor ed.; from Ps. 22
1-3 Come, All That Fear the Lord God	PH 483	Bible	19		minor ed.; from Ps. 22
1-4 Come, All You People, Praise Our God	PH 120	Bible	19		minor ed.; from Ps. 66; st. 1-3 only
1-5 Come, O Almighty King	PH 317	18	18	*	minor ed.
1-6 God Himself Is with Us	PH 324	18	17		minor ed.
1-7 Holy, Holy, Holy	PH 318	19	19	*	minor ed; key of D
1-8 I Greet Thee	PH 432	16	16		minor ed; key of G
1-9 How Lovely Is Your Dwelling	PH 159	Bible	19		alt. text; from Ps. 84
1-10 Now with Joyful Exultation	PH 184	Bible	19		minor ed; from Ps. 95; st. 1-3 only
1-11 Praise to the Lord	PH 327	17	17	*	alt. text, in 4 st.; key of F
1-12 We Praise You, O God	PH 311	20	17	*	alt. text; key of C
1-13 Father in Heaven	SB 52	20			folk
1-14 I've Come to Tell (Te Vengo A Decir)	SB 1114	20	20		Hispanic
1-15 Jesus, We Come to Meet	SB 130	20	20		African
1-16 This Is the Day	SB 798	20	20		
1-17 We Come, O Christ, to You	SB 998, 403	20	20		
Father, Again in Jesus' Name We Meet	RPH 323	19	19		
O Day of Rest and Gladness	RPH 321	19	19		
Safely Through Another Week	RPH 320	18	19		
We Gather Together	RPH 312	17	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>2 CONFESSION AND LAW</u>					
2-1 From Out the Depths I Cry	PH 273	Bible	20		alt. text; from Ps. 130
2-2 God, Be Merciful to Me	PH 94/95	Bible	20		alt. text, in 4 st.; from Ps. 51; tune PH94
2-3 Just As I Am	PH 424	19	19		in 4 st.
2-4 My Faith Looks Up to Thee	PH 446	19	19		alt. text.
2-5 Not What My Hands Have Done	PH 389	19	19		minor ed.
2-6 And Can It Be That I Should Gain?	SB 13	18	19		
2-7 For the Glories of God's Grace	SB 647	20	19		
2-8 Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive	SB 65	20	17		tune of PH 108
2-9 Lord, I Pray, If Today	SB 142	20	trad.		
2-10 Lord, I Want to Be a Christian	SB 143	trad.	trad.		Black spiritual
2-11 Lord, We Cry to You	SB 152	16	16		
2-12 O Christ, the Lamb of God	SB 309	16	16		
2-13 Out of Need	SB 483	20	20		
2-14 Standing in the Need of Prayer	SB 1101	trad.	trad.		Black spiritual
Lord Jesus, I Long to Be Perfectly Whole	RPH 379	—	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>3 BAPTISM</u>					
3-1 O God, Great Father	PH 415	19	18		minor ed.
3-2 Our Children, Lord, in Faith and Prayer	PH 416	19	19		alt. text
3-3 The Lord Our God in Mercy Spoke	PH 419	18	20		alt. text, in 4 st.; new tune: ARDEN
3-4 Almighty Father, Covenant God	SB 614	20	20		
3-5 Baptized in Water	SB:BS 132	20	folk		
3-6 We Know that Christ	SB 507	20	20		
3-7 You Are Our God; We Are Your People	SB 499	20	20		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>4 WORD OF GOD</u>					
4-1 Teach Me, O LORD, Your Way of Truth	PH 240,49,52	Bible	19		minor ed., in 5 st.; from Ps. 119; tune of PH 252
4-3 Blessed Jesus, at Your Word	SB 626	17	17	*	
4-4 Break Now the Bread of Life	SB 1006	19	19		
4-5 God Who Spoke in the Beginning	SB 80	20	20		
4-6 Holy Spirit, Mighty God	SB 931	20	20		
4-7 O Word of God Incarnate	SB 1008	19	17		tune of PH 291
4-8 Thanks to God Whose Word Was Spoken	SB 371	20	20		
4-9 The Lord Almighty Spoke the Word	SB 788	20	17		
4-10 The Power of Your Word	SB 384	20	20		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>5 DEDICATION AND OFFERING</u>					
5-1 Have Thine Own Way, Lord	PH 452	20	20		minor ed.
5-2 O Jesus, I Have Promised	PH 480	19	trad.		alt. text; new tune, NYLAND
5-3 Take My Life	PH 462	19	20	*	alt. text; new tune: TEBBEN, as well as PH tune
5-4 We Give You But Your Own	PH 482	19	19		alt. text.
5-5 As Saints of Old Their First Fruits	SB 15	20	20		
5-6 Because You Gave So Much for Me	SB 903	20	20		
5-7 Father, I Adore You	SB 645	20	20		may be sung as a round
5-8 Living for Jesus	SB 1000	20	20		
5-9 Lord of All Good	SB 464	20	20		
5-10 Lord of All Power	SB 148	20	20		
5-11 May the Mind of Christ My Savior	SB 302	20	20		
5-12 What Does the Lord Require	SB 413	20	20		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>6 LORD'S SUPPER</u>					
6-1 Clothe Yourself (Deck Thyself)	PH 423	17	17	*	alt. text; tune in original rhythm
6-2 O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts	PH 422	11	19		minor ed.
6-3 What Shall I Render to the Lord	PH 230	Bible	20		minor ed; from Ps. 116; new tune: ROCKINGHAM OLD (PH 26)
6-4 As We Walk Along Beside You	SB: BS 108	20	20		
6-5 Eat This Bread	SB: BS 277	20	20		
6-6 Gift of Finest Wheat	SB 513	20	20		
6-7 I Come with Joy	SB 109	20	trad.		
6-8 In the Quiet Consecration	SB 119	20	20		
6-9 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence	SB 131	1	17		
6-10 Let Us Break Bread Together	SB 134	trad.	trad.		Black spiritual
6-11 Lord, Like the Grain	SB 141	2	20		
6-12 Praise the Lord, Rise Up	SB 350	20	17		
6-13 Taste and See	SB 772, 773	20	20		
According to Thy Gracious Word	RPH 421	19	19		
Come, for the Feast Is Spread	RPH 420	19	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>7 CLOSE OF WORSHIP</u>					
7-1 Blest Be the Tie That Binds	PH 447	18	19		
7-2 God Be with You Till We Meet Again	PH 473	19	20		minor ed; new tune RANDOLPH
7-3 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing	PH 325	18	18		minor ed.; in 2 st.
7-4 May the Grace of Christ Our Savior	PH 487	18	folk	*	minor ed.; new tune HOLY MANNA
7-5 Savior, Again to Your Dear Name	PH 326	19	19	*	minor ed.
7-6 Forth in Your Name, O Lord	SB 66b	18	20		
7-7 Go Now in Peace	SB 1017	20	20		may be sung as a round
7-8 The Day You Gave Us, Lord, Is Ended	SB 375	19	19	*	
7-9 The Peace of Christ	SB 66a	20	17		
7-10 We Lift Our Hearts to God	SB 405	20	20		
Blest Be That Sacred Covenant Love	RPH 485	18	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>8 ADVENT</u>					
8-1 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	PH 335	18	17	*	minor ed.
8-2 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	PH 331	12	15	*	alt. text, in 7 st.
8-3 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding	SB 95	17	19		
8-4 Hark! The Glad Sound	SB 96	18	18		
8-5 O Christ! Come Back to Save Your Folk	SB 955	20	17		
8-6 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You	SB 320	17	17	*	
8-7 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry	SB 334	18	17	*	
8-8 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers	SB 976b	18	19	*	tune of PH 52
8-9 Savior of the Nations, Come	SB 355	4	16		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>9 CHRISTMAS</u>					
9-1 Angels, from the Realms of Glory	PH 340	19	19	*	minor ed; in 5 st. with new st. 4
9-2 Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light	PH 344	17/20	17	*	minor ed.; in 2 st.
9-3 Christians, Awake	PH 346	18	18		minor ed; in 3 st.
9-4 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come	PH 345	16	16	*	alt. text
9-5 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	PH 339	18	18	*	minor ed.
9-6 Joy to the World	PH 337	18	18	*	in 4 st.
9-7 O Come, All Ye Faithful	PH 341	18	18	*	in 4 st.
9-8 Silent Night! Holy Night!	PH 342	19/20	19	*	alt. text, in 4 st.
9-9 Angels We Have Heard on High	SB 14	18	trad.	*	
9-10 Away in a Manger	SB 18	19	19	*	both tunes
9-11 Come and Stand Amazed	SB 632	trad.	trad.		Dutch
9-12 Go, Tell It on the Mountain	SB 73	19	19		Black gospel
9-13 Good Christians, All Rejoice	SB 88	med.	14	*	
9-14 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly	SB 937	trad.	trad.	*	Polish
9-15 Lo, How a Rose	SB 139	15	16	*	
9-16 Of the Father's Love Begotten	SB 332	4	13	*	
9-17 Once in Royal David's City	SB 335	19	19	*	
9-18 That Boy Child of Mary	SB 1018	20	20		African

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>10 EPIPHANY</u>					
10-1 His Wide Dominion Shall Extend	PH 134	Bible	19		alt. text; from Ps. 72; new tune: NATIVITY
10-2 How Bright Appears the Morning Star	PH 336	19	16	*	minor ed.
10-3 Your Arm, O Lord, in Days of Old	PH 347	19	16	*	minor ed.; new tune: HOPP'S 14
10-4 Amen	SB 1103	trad.	trad.		Black spiritual
10-5 As with Gladness Men of Old	SB 16	19	19	*	tune of PH 213, 320
10-6 Bright and Glorious Is the Sky	SB 1019	19	folk		
10-7 Christ, Upon the Mountain Peak	SB 35b	20	20		
10-8 Have No Fear, Little Flock	SB 97	20	20		
10-9 I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands on Me	SB 1102	trad.	trad.		Black spiritual
10-10 Lord of the Universe	SB 149	20	20		
10-11 O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High	SB 326	15	15	*	
10-12 O Son of God the Father	SB 480	19	20		
10-13 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise	SB 1121	19	17		
10-14 The King of Glory	SB 378	20	20		Israeli
Brightest and Best of the Sons	RPH 343	19	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>11 LENT</u>					
11-1 Ah, Dearest Jesus,	PH 351	17	17	*	minor ed.
11-2 All Glory, Laud, and Honor	PH 348	9	17	*	alt. text; key of Bb
11-3 Hosanna, Loud Hosanna	PH 349	19	18		minor ed.
11-4 Man of Sorrows	PH 381	19	19		in 5 st.
11-5 O Sacred Head	PH 355	12	16	*	alt. text; in 3 st.
11-6 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	PH 350	18	19	*	minor ed.
11-7 Christ the Life of All the Living	SB 1011	17	17		
11-8 Go to Dark Gethsemane	SB 74	19	19	*	tune of PH 94
11-9 Lift High the Cross	SB 136	20	20		
11-10 No Weight of Gold or Silver	SB 306	20	20		
11-11 O Christ Our Lord	SB 475	20	20		
11-12 O Perfect Life of Love	SB 328	19	16		tune of PH 5
11-13 Ride On, Ride On in Majesty	SB 354	19	20	*	
11-14 Were You There	SB 412	trad.	trad.	*	Black spiritual
11-15 What Wondrous Love	SB 417	trad.	19	*	
Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed	RPH 352	18	18		
Beneath the Cross of Jesus	RPH 353	19	19		
From the Mouth of the Stone	RPH 354	10	10		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent</u>	<u>Music Cent</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>12 EASTER</u>					
12-1 Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven	PH 360	19	20		in 4 st.
12-2 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today	PH 356	18	18	*	minor ed; in 5 st.
12-3 Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain	PH 362	8	19	*	alt. text
12-4 Hail, O Once Despised Jesus	PH 369	18	trad.	*	alt. text; new tune ARFON
12-5 Low in the Grave Christ Lay	PH 357	19	19		minor ed; key of Bb
12-6 O Christ, Our Hope, Our Heart's Desire	PH 376	6	19		alt. text
12-7 Praise the Savior, Now and Ever	PH 361	6	17		minor ed.
12-8 The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done	PH 358	17	16	*	minor ed.
12-9 A Shout Rings Out	SB 509	19	19		Dutch
12-10 Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks	SB 613	20	20		
12-11 Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Band	SB 35a	16	16	*	
12-12 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing	SB 89	20	16	*	
12-13 I Serve a Risen Savior	SB 1020	20	20		
12-14 Jesus Lives and So Do We	SB 125	18	17		
12-15 O Sons and Daughters	SB 427	15	15	*	
12-16 O How Good (Oh Que Bueno Es Jesus)	SB 1119	trad.	trad.		Hispanic
12-17 This Joyful Eastertide	SB 397	20	17	*	
12-18 You Choirs of New Jerusalem	SB 426	11			
Angels, Roll the Rock Away	RPH 359	18	19		
The Day of Resurrection	RPH 364	8	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>13 ASCENSION</u>					
13-1 Alleluia, Sing to Jesus	PH 366	19	20	*	minor ed.
13-2 Jesus Shall Reign	PH 399	18	18	*	alt. text
13-3 Rejoice, the Lord Is King	PH 368	18	19	*	alt. text; new tune: DARWELL'S 148
13-4 See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph	PH 365	19	18		alt. text, key of G
13-5 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns	PH 400	18	18		minor ed.
13-6 Christ the Lord Ascends to Reign	SB 31	16	16	*	
13-7 Crown Him with Many Crowns	SB 46	19	19	*	tune of PH 89; Key of D
13-8 Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise	SB 92	18	19	*	
13-9 The Head That Once Was Crowned	SB 377	19	17	*	
Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices	RPH 367	19	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>14 PENTECOST AND HOLY SPIRIT</u>					
14-1 Breathe on Me, Breath of God	PH 391	19	19		alt. text
14-2 Creator Spirit	PH 393	9	19		minor ed.
14-3 Eternal Spirit, God of Truth	PH 390	20	19		alt. text; new tune: ST. ENODOC
14-4 Spirit Divine, Inspire Our Prayer	PH 392	19	17	*	alt. text
14-5 Spirit of God, Who Dwells Within	PH 394	19	19		minor ed.
14-6 Filled with the Spirit's Power	SB 59	20	20		
14-7 For Your Gift of God the Spirit	SB 648, 922	20	20		
14-8 Holy Spirit, Truth Divine	SB 104	19	17		
14-9 O Holy Spirit, by Whose Breath	SB 39	9	17	*	
14-10 Spirit of the Living God	SB 1012	20	20		
14-11 Spirit Working in Creation	SB 491	20	18		
14-12 We Have Shouted Blessed Tidings	SB 404	20	20		
Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove	RPH 396	18	19		
Dwell in Me, O Blessed Spirit	RPH 397	19	19		
Holy Spirit, Light Divine	RPH 395	19	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>15a CREATION</u>					
15a-1 Beautiful Savior	PH 373	17	19	*	
15a-2 Exalt the Lord	PH 282	Bible	18		minor ed.; from Ps. 135; key of G
15a-3 O, Worship the King	PH 315	18	18	*	minor ed., in 5 st.; key of G
15a-4 Praise the Lord, Sing Alleluia	PH 304	Bible	19		minor ed.; from Ps. 148
15a-5 The Heavens Declare Your Glory	PH 31	Bible	18		alt. text; from Ps. 19
15a-6 This Is My Father's World	PH 374	19	19	*	alt. text
15a-7 All Creatures of our God and King	SB 902	13	17	*	
15a-8 All Things Bright and Beautiful	SB 611	19	20		
15a-9 Earth and All Stars	SB 50	20	20		
15a-10 For the Beauty of the Earth	SB 62	19	19	*	tune of PH 213, 320
15a-11 For the Fruits of His Creation	SB 63	20	20		
15a-12 He's Got the Whole World	SB 100	folk			Black spiritual
15a-13 Let All Things Now Living	SB 941	20	folk		with descant
15a-14 Thank You, God, for Water	SB 991	20	20		
15a-15 We Sing the Mighty Power of God	SB 408	18	folk	*	

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>15b PROVIDENCE</u>					
15b-1 Abide with Me	PH 470	19	19	*	minor ed.
15b-2 Give Thanks to God, for Good Is He	PH 284	Bible	19		minor ed; from Ps. 136; key of Eb
15b-3 God Moves in a Mysterious Way	PH 461	18	17	*	minor ed.
15b-4 Hours and Days and Years and Ages	PH 474	18	18		alt. text; key of F
15b-5 It is Good to Sing Your Praises	PH 180	Bible	19		minor ed; from Ps. 92
15b-6 Now Thank We All Our God	PH 316	17	17	*	minor ed.
15b-7 O God, Our Help in Ages Past	PH 176	18	18	*	minor ed.
15b-8 Oh, Praise the Lord, For It Is Good	PH 302	Bible	19		minor ed.
15b-9 To the Hills I Lift My Eyes	PH 260	Bible	19		minor ed.
15b-10 When Morning Gilds the Skies	PH 322	19	19	*	alt. text, in 5 st.; key of B flat
15b-11 All Praise to You	SB 620	18	16	*	may be sung as a round; tune of PH 32
15b-12 Children of the Heavenly Father	SB 29	19	folk	*	
15b-13 Eternal God Beyond All Time	SB 642,740	20	19		
15b-14 If You But Trust in God to Guide You	SB 112	17	17	*	
15b-15 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	SB 113	19	folk	*	tune of PH 296
15b-16 O God Our Father	SB 733	20	20		
15b-17 Sing to the Lord of Harvest	SB 360	19	16	*	
15b-18 We Come to Thank You, God	SB 410	18	18		Dutch
15b-19 We Plow the Fields	SB 406	18	18	*	

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u> <u>Notes</u>
<u>16a REDEMPTION: PLAN AND GRACE OF GOD</u>				
16a-1 Amazing Grace!	PH 380	18	19	*
16a-2 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	PH 444a	16	16	* minor ed.
16a-3 God Is Our Fortress and Our Rock	PH 444b	16	16	new translation of original text; tune in original rhythm
16a-4 Hallelujah, Praise the Lord God	PH 301	Bible	19	minor ed; from Ps. 146
16a-5 I Will Extol You, O My God	PH 298	Bible	19	minor ed; from Ps. 145
16a-6 O Come, My Soul, Sing Praise to God	PH 204	Bible	19	minor ed; from Ps. 103
16a-7 O Love of God	PH 329	19	18	minor ed; new tune (PH 477) WAREHAM
16a-8 Sing a New Song to the Lord God	PH 190	Bible	20	minor ed; from Ps. 98; new tune HERMON
16a-9 With Grateful Heart My Thanks I Bring	PH 286	Bible	19	minor ed; from Ps. 138; key of F
16a-10 Father, Long Before Creation	SB 53	20	20	tune of PH 370; Chinese text
16a-11 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven	SB 347	19	19	*
16a-12 Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above	SB 359	19	16	*
16a-13 To God Be the Glory	SB 504	19	19	tune of PH 14

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>16b REDEMPTION: CHRIST'S WORK</u>					
16b-1 At the Name of Jesus	PH 372	19	20	*	in 6 st.; new tune: KING'S WESTON
16b-2 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies	PH 448	18	19	*	minor ed.; key of F
16b-3 How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds	PH 384	19	19	*	minor ed.
16b-4 I Will Sing of My Redeemer	PH 439	19	19		in 3 st.; new tune: HYFRYDOL (PH 151)
16b-5 In the Cross of Christ I Glory	PH 429	19	19	*	
16b-6 Jesus, the Very Thought of You	PH 375	11	19	*	alt. text.
16b-7 O Jesus, We Adore You	PH 330	19	19		minor ed.
16b-8 All Hail the Power	SB 5	18	18	*	tune of PH 118
16b-9 O Lord My God (How Great Thou Art)	SB 327	19	folk		
16b-10 When Israel Was in Egypt Land	SB 419	folk			Black spiritual
16b-11 You Servants of God	SB 428	18	18	*	tune of PH 313
Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned	RPH 382	18	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>16c REDEMPTION: EXPERIENCE AND INVITATION</u>					
16c-1 Come, O Fount of Every Blessing	PH 314	18	19	*	alt. text; in 2 st.
16c-2 Come, You Disconsolate	PH 458	19	18		minor ed.
16c-3 How Firm a Foundation	PH 411	18	folk		alt. text; new tune: FOUNDATION (PH 16)
16c-4 How Vast the Benefits Divine	PH 386	18	19		minor ed.
16c-5 Humble Praises, Holy Jesus	PH 435	20	19		alt. text; key of D
16c-6 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say	PH 413	18	20		minor ed.
16c-7 I Sought the Lord, and Afterward I Knew	PH 387	19	20		
16c-8 My God, How Wonderful You Are	PH 328	19	19		minor ed., in 7 st.
16c-9 My Lord, I Did Not Choose You	PH 385	19	19		minor ed.
16c-10 Oh, For a Thousand Tongues	PH 383	18	19	*	minor ed; in 7 st.; key of G
16c-11 When Peace, Like a River	PH 445	19	19		minor ed.; in 4 st. without refrain
16c-12 Blessed Assurance	SB 625	19	19		
16c-13 Lord Jesus Is Calling	SB 145	20	20		
16c-14 Our Lives Are Filled with Sorrows	SB 969	20	17		
16c-15 Our Voice Would Be a Useless Cry	SB 343	20	20		
16c-16 Precious Lord, Take My Hand	SB 1106	20	20		Black gospel
16c-17 There Is a Balm in Gilead	SB 1104	folk			Black spiritual
I Know Not Why God's Wondrous Grace	RPH 378	19	19		
Rock of Ages	RPH 388	18	19		
We Have Heard the Joyful Sound	RPH 377	19	19		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>17a HISTORY AND GENERAL CHURCH</u>					
17a-1 For All the Saints	PH 442	19	20	*	minor ed.; in 7 st.
17a-2 Glorious Things of You Are Spoken	PH 402	18	19	*	minor ed; in 4 st.; new tune: RUSTINGTON
17a-3 God of the Prophets	PH 468	19	16		alt. text; in 5 st.
17a-4 Onward, Christian Soldiers	PH 466	19	19		minor ed
17a-5 The Church's One Foundation	PH 398	19	19	*	minor ed.
17a-6 We Love Your Church, O Lord	PH 479	18	18	*	minor ed; in 4 st.; key of F
17a-7 Built on a Rock the Church Doth Stand	SB 27	19	19	*	
17a-8 Christian Hearts in Love United	SB 36	18	18		tune of PH 474
17a-9 God Is Here	SB 1015	20	20		
17a-10 God the Father of Your People	SB 658	20	20		
17a-11 Holy God, We Praise Your Name	SB 1005	19	18	*	based on the TE DEUM
17a-12 Hope of the World	SB 105	20	16	*	
17a-13 I Believe in God the Father	SB 1004a	4	17		Apostles' Creed
17a-14 In God the Father I Believe	SB 1004b	(20)	20		Apostles' Creed
17a-15 I Believe in One God	SB 1005	4	20		Nicene Creed
17a-16 Lift Your Hearts to the Lord (Hail Thee)	SB 93	20	20	*	
17a-17 Lord, You Give the Great Commission	SB 949	20	20		
17a-18 There's No God As Great (No Hay Dios)	SB 1118	folk			Hispanic
17a-19 When in Our Music God Is Glorified	SB 511	20	20		
17a-20 Your Hand, O God, Has Guided	SB 1014	19	17		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>17a HISTORY AND GENERAL CHURCH continued...</u>					
Faith of Our Fathers	RPH 443	19	19	*	
Jesus, with Thy Church Abide	RPH 426	19	19		
O God, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand	RPH 477	19	18		
O Lord, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand	RPH 486	20	20		
We Praise Thee, O God	RPH 313	19	18		

PROPOSED REVISED PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS BY CATEGORY

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>17b MISSION MESSAGE</u>					
17b-1 Christ Shall Have Dominion	PH 135	Bible	20		minor ed.; from Ps. 72; new tune: KING OF GLORY (PH 372)
17b-2 Lord, Speak to Me	PH 404	19	19		minor ed.; key of G
17b-3 The Ends of All the Earth Shall Hear	PH 36	Bible	19		minor ed.; from Ps. 22
17b-4 Zion, Founded on the Mountains	PH 166	Bible	20		alt. text; from Ps. 87; new tune: WORCESTER
17b-5 Awake, You Who Sleep	SB 621	19	19		Dutch
17b-6 Come, Labor On	SB 40	19	20		
17b-7 Come, You Thankful People	SB 45	19	19	*	tune of PH 198
17b-8 In Christ There Is No East or West	SB 114	20	20	*	
17b-9 O Christians, Haste	SB 331	19	19		
17b-10 O God of Every Time and Place	SB 313	20	20		
17b-11 Our God Is Mighty	SB 342	20	20		
17b-12 Speak Forth Your Word	SB 364	20	trad.		
Come to the Savior Now	RPH 410	19	19		
Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming	RPH 405	19	19		
From Greenland's Icy Mountains	RPH 401	19	19		
I Love to Tell the Story	RPH 412	19	19		
Speed Thy Servants, Savior, Speed Them	RPH 403	19	19		

18a CHRISTIAN AND SOCIETY: FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

18a-1	Christian, Do You Struggle	PH 464	8	19		alt. text.
18a-2	Fill All My Life	PH 449	19	18		minor ed
18a-3	Great Is Your Faithfulness	PH 408	19	20	*	alt. text
18a-4	Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer	PH 407	18	20	*	minor ed.
18a-5	Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult	PH 459	19	19		minor ed.; new tune SHARON
18a-6	Jesus, Lover of My Soul	PH 425	18	19		alt. text, in 3 st.; new tune: ABERYSTWYTH
18a-7	Jesus, Priceless Treasure	PH 441	17	18	*	alt. text, in 4 st.; new tune: JESU, MEINE FREUDE
18a-8	Lead On, O King Eternal	PH 484	19	19		minor ed.
18a-9	O For a Closer Walk with God	PH 453	18	19		
18a-10	O Jesus, Let Me Walk with You	PH 450	19	19	*	minor ed.
18a-11	Our Father Clothed with Majesty	PH 431	20	16		new text for Lord's Prayer based on Heidelberg Catechism
18a-12	Rejoice, You Pure in Heart	PH 409	19	19		minor ed.; in 5 st.
18a-13	Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus	PH 467	19	19		minor ed.
18a-14	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	PH 436	19	19		minor ed.; new tune BEACH SPRING
18a-15	Abide with Us	SB 3	17	17		
18a-16	Beams of Heaven	SB 1107	20	20		Black gospel
18a-17	God Works His Purposes in Us	SB 661	20	17		
18a-18	In You Is Gladness	SB 120	17	17		
18a-19	Jesus Loves Me	SB 126	19	19		
18a-20	Lead Me, Guide Me	SB 1108	20	20		Black gosepl
18a-21	Like a River Glorious	SB 461	19	19		
18a-22	Lord of All Hopefulness	SB 147	20	20		
18a-23	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	SB 154	18	19	*	
18a-24	Make Me a Captive Lord	SB 469	19	18	*	
18a-25	O God, My Faithful God	SB 316	17	16	*	

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
18a-26 Praise the Lord with the Sound of Trumpet	SB 748	20	20		may be sung in canon (round)
18a-27 Praise to God in the Highest	SB 351	19	trad.		
18a-28 Soldiers of Christ, Arise	SB 361	18	20		
18a-29 The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power	SB 1110	20	20		Black gospel
18a-30 We've Come This Far by Faith	SB 1111	20	20		Black gosepl
18a-31 When We Walk with the Lord (Trust & Obey)	SB 421	19	19		
Am I a Soldier of the Cross?	RPH 465	18	18		
He Leadeth Me	RPH 463	19	19		
I Need Thee Every Hour	RPH 427	19	19		
In the Hour of Trial	RPH 455	19	19		
Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken	RPH 456	19	18		
Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me	RPH 460	19	19		
Lord Jesus, Can It Ever Be?	RPH 457	18	19		
Lord, Like the Publican I Stand	RPH 430	19	19		
More Love to Thee, O Christ	RPH 437	19	19		
My God, Is Any Hour So Sweet	RPH 433	19	19		
My Jesus, I Love Thee	RPH 440	19	19		
Nearer, Still Nearer	RPH 454	19	19		
Out of My Bondage	RPH 428	19	19		
Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire	RPH 434	19	19		
Sun of My Soul	RPH 472	19	19		tune retained for Holy God, We Praise Your Name (17a)
Take Time to Be Holy	RPH 451	19	19		
Thy Love to Me, O Christ	RPH 438	19	19		

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<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>18b CHRISTIAN AND SOCIETY: MARRIAGE, FAMILY, EDUCATION</u>					
18b-1 How Shall the Young Direct Their Way?	PH 237	Bible	19		minor ed.; from Ps. 119; new tune: BROOKSIDE
18b-2 Jesus, Our Mighty Lord (Shepherd of Tender Youth)	PH 414	3	20		new translation of orig. text; new tune: (MENNES)
18b-3 Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds	PH 150	Bible	20		alt. text
18b-4 O Perfect Love	PH 481	19	19	*	alt. text
18b-5 In Our Households, Heavenly Father	SB 117	20	folk		
18b-6 Lord, Today Bless This New Marriage	SB 151	20	19		
18b-7 O God of Heaven, Whose Loving Plan	SB 477	20	20		
18b-8 Our Father Whose Creative Love	SB 341	20	20		
18b-9 Praised Be the Father	SB 352	20	18		
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	RPH 417	19	19		
Savior, Who Thy Flock Art Feeding	RPH 418	19	19		

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<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>18c CHRISTIAN AND SOCIETY: GOVERNMENT, JUSTICE, AND THE KINGDOM</u>					
18c-1 From Ocean unto Ocean	PH 478	19	16		minor ed; new tune: FAR OFF LANDS (PH 18)
18c-2 My Song Forever Will Record	PH 169-71	Bible	18		minor ed.; from Ps. 89; 5 st.; new tune MORNING HYMN
18c-3 Christ Is the World's True Light	SB 34	20	20	*	
18c-4 Creating God, Your Fingers Trace	SB 635	20	20		
18c-5 Father, Help Your People	SB 917	20	20		
18c-6 Fill Us with Your Love (Jesu, Jèsu)	SB 918	20	20		African
18c-7 God Is Working His Purpose Out	SB 81	20	19		
18c-8 How Would the Lord	SB 452	20	20		
18c-9 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word	SB 146	16	16		
18c-10 O God of Every Nation	SB 312	20	19		
18c-11 O God of Love, O King of Peace	SB 314	19	20	*	
18c-12 Our Faithful God	SB 338	19	18		
18c-13 The City Is Alive, O God	SB 495	20	folk		
18c-14 Where Cross the Crowded Ways	SB 423	20	19	*	tune of PH 222
	RPH 476	19	19	*	

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<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text Cent.</u>	<u>Music Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum. List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>19 NEW CREATION</u>					
19-1 By the Sea of Crystal	PH 469	19	19		minor ed.; key of G
19-2 Day of Judgment	PH 370	18	17		minor ed.; new tune: MEINE HOFFNUNG
19-3 Jerusalem the Golden	PH 471	12	19		alt. text; key of C
19-4 Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying	PH 371	16	16	*	alt text.
19-5 Isaiah the Prophet Has Written	SB 692	20	folk		
19-6 Jesus Comes (Lo, He Comes with Clouds)	SB 138	18	18	*	
19-7 Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	SB 1105	folk			Black spiritual
19-8 Thousand Times Ten Thousand	SB 370	19	19		
19-9 The God of Abraham Praise	SB 376	18	18	*	
19-10 The King Shall Come	SB 380	20	19	*	

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Text</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Music</u> <u>Cent.</u>	<u>Ecum.</u> <u>List</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>20 RESPONSE AND DOXOLOGY</u>					
20-1 Glory Be to the Father	PH 491	2	19		key of D
20-2 Hear Our Prayer, O Lord	PH 489	19	19		minor ed.
20-3 Now Blessed Be the Lord Our God	PH 488	Bible	18		minor ed.; from Ps. 72
20-4 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow	PH 493a	17	16	*	minor ed.
20-5 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow	PH 493b	17	20		minor ed.; new Black gospel tune
20-6 Praise God, You Angel Hosts	PH 490	Bible	16		minor ed.; from Ps. 150
20-7 Amens	SB 1021			trad.	
20-8 Alleluia (a)	SB:BS 280a		20		
20-9 Alleluia (b)	SB:BS 280b		20		
20-10 Bless the Lord, O My Soul	SB 905	Bible	20		Black gospel; from Ps. 103:1
20-11 Hallelujah, Praise the Lord	PS 150B	Bible	13		from Ps. 150
20-12 Holy, Holy, Holy (Santo, Santo, Santo)	SB 1116	Bible	folk		Hispanic; based on Isa. 6:3, the SANCTUS
20-13 Kyrie	SB 1007	4	20		
20-14 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying	SB 1023	20	20		
20-15 Magnify the Lord	SB 1022	Bible	20		may be sung as a round
20-16 Praise and Thanksgiving	SB 346	20	folk		may be sung as a round
20-17 Sing Praise to the Lord	SB 329	19	19		
20-18 To God Be the Glory (from My Tribute)	SB 471	20	20		
20-19 Unto Christ That Loved Us	SB 996	Bible	20		from Rev. 1:5-6
20-20 Worthy Is the Lamb (Digno Es Jesus)	SB 1120	trad.	trad.		Hispanic
Glory Be to the Father	RPH 492	2	19		

<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>21 BIBLE SONGS</u> (incomplete list)			
21-1 In the Beginning	BS 1	BS: Gen. 1	
21-2 My Soul Recall	SB 305	BS: Ex. 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments
21-3 The LORD Bless You and Keep You	BS 17	BS: Num. 6:24-26	
21-4 Love God with All Your Soul and Strength	BS:SB 16	BS: Deut. 6:15	tune of PH 143
21-5 The Lord Is My Shepherd (El Senor Es Pastor)	BS:SB 1117	BS: Ps. 23	Bolivian folk song
21-6 Send Out Your Light	BS:PH 79	BS: Ps. 43:3	minor ed.; tune abbreviated
21-7 God Is My Rock (El Senor Es Mi Fuerza)	BS:SB 1122	BS: Ps. 46	Peruvian folk song
21-8 I Will Sing	BS:SB 455	BS: Ps. 89:1, 5, 8	
21-9 The Glorious Gates of Righteousness	BS:PH 234	BS: Ps. 118	minor ed.
21-10 I Will Exalt My God (Te Exaltare')	SB 1121	BS: Ps. 145	Ecuador
21-11 The People Who in Darkness Walked	SB 385	BS: Isa. 9:2 ,3 ,6 ,7	
21-12 Comfort, Comfort Now My People	BS:PH 406	BS: Isa. 40:1-5	minor ed., in original rhythm
21-13 How Lovely on the Mountains	BS 50	BS: isa. 52:7-10	
21-14 They That Wait upon the Lord (Teach Me Lord)	BS 242	BS: Isa. 40:30	
21-15 See Christ Was Wounded	BS 52	BS: Isa. 53	
21-16 If You Turn Again to Me	BS:SB 457	BS: Hos. 14:4-7	
21-17 Fear Not, Rejoice and Be Glad	BS 65	BS: Joel 2-4	
21-18 Blessed Are All Contrite Folk	BS 77	BS: Matt. 5:3-16	
21-19 The Lord's Prayer	BS 81	BS: Matt. 6:9-13	tune of PH 431; see also extended version in 18c: Our Father

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<u>First Line</u>	<u>IDNumber</u>		
21-20 Seek Ye First the Kingdom	SB 759	BS: Matt. 6:33	
21-21 Whatsoever You Do to the Least	BS 300	BS: Matt. 25:34	
21-22 The Lord Is Risen Indeed	BS 92	BS: Matt. 28	
21-23 Tell Out My Soul	BS:SB 493	BS: Luke 1:46-55	
21-24 Blest Be the God of Israel	BS 97	BS: Luke 1:67-79	
21-25 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks	BS:PH 338	BS: Luke 2:8-14	minor ed., tune of PH 490
21-26 Now May Your Servant Lord	BS:PH 334	BS: Luke 2:29-32	minor ed; tune of PH 334
21-27 Jesus Remember Me	BS 278	BS: Luke 23:42	
21-28 Rejoice in the Lord Always	SB 754	BS: Phil. 4:4	
21-29 You Are Worthy	BS 182	BS: Rev. 4:11	
21-30 Here from All Nations	BS 188	BS: Rev. 7:9-17	
21-31 Then I Saw a New Heaven	SB 390	BS: Rev. 21-22	

NUMERICAL LISTING OF ALL PRESENT PSALTER HYMNAL SONGS INCLUDED IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>NO.</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	
A. <u>PSALTER NUMBERS RECOMMENDED FOR TRANSFER TO HYMN AND BIBLE SONG SECTIONS</u>			
31	The Heavens Declare Thy Glory	15a	Creation and Providence
36	The Ends of All the Earth Shall Hear	17b	Church and Its Mission
37	Amid the Thronging Worshipers	1	Opening of Worship
79	Send Out Thy Light and Thy Truth	21	Bible Song
94	God, Be Merciful to Me	2	Confession and Law
95	Gracious God, My Heart Renew	2	Confession and Law
120	Come, All Ye Peoples, Bless Our God	1	Opening of Worship
134	His Wide Dominion Shall Extend	10	Epiphany
135	Christ Shall Have Dominion	17b	Church and Its Mission
150	Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds	18b	Christian and Society
159	O Lord of Hosts, How Lovely	1	Opening of Worship
166	Zion, Founded on the Mountains	17b	Church and Its Mission
169	My Song Forever Shall Record	18c	Christian and Society
170	Almighty God, Thy Lofty Throne	15a	Creation and Providence
176	O God, Our Help in Ages Past	15b	Creation and Providence
180	It Is Good to Sing Thy Praises	15b	Creation and Providence
184	Now with Joyful Exultation	1	Opening of Worship
190	Sing a New Song to Jehovah	16a	Redemption
204	O Come, My soul, Bless Thou the Lord	16a	Redemption
230	What Shall I Render to the Lord	6	Lord's Supper
234	The Glorious Gates of Righteousness	21	Bible Songs
237	How Shall the Young Direct Their Way	18b	Christian and Society
240	Teach Me, O Lord, Thy Way of Truth	4	Word of God
249	Thy Word Sheds Light upon My Path	4	Word of God
252	Thy Wondrous Testimonies, Lord	4	Word of God
260	To the Hills I Lift Mine Eyes	15b	Creation and Providence
273	From out the Depths I Cry	2	Confession and Law
282	Exalt the Lord, His Praise Proclaim	15a	Creation and Providence
284	Give Thanks to God, for Good Is He	15b	Creation and Providence
286	With Grateful Heart My Thanks I Bring	16a	Redemption
298	I Will Extol Thee, O My God	16a	Redemption
301	Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah	16a	Redemption
302	Praise Ye the Lord, for It Is Good	15b	Creation and Providence
304	Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah	15a	Creation and Providence

(Combined with 94)

(Combined with 169)

(Combined with 240)

(Combined with 240)

<u>NO.</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>SONGS SCHEDULED TO BE REPLACED</u>
B.	<u>HYMNS (No. 311-493)</u>		
311	We Praise Thee, O God	1	Opening of Worship
312	We Gather Together	1	Opening of Worship
313	We Praise Thee, O God	17a	Church and Its Mission
314	Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	16c	Redemption
315	O Worship the King, All-Glorious Above	15a	Creation and Providence
316	Now Thank We All Our God	15b	Creation and Providence
317	Come, Thou Almighty King	1	Opening of Worship
318	Holy, Holy, Holy!	1	Opening of Worship
319	All Glory Be to Thee, Most High	1	Opening of Worship
320	Safely Through Another Week	1	Opening of Worship
321	O Day of Rest and Gladness	1	Opening of Worship
322	When Morning Gilds the Skies	15b	Creation and Providence
323	Father, Again in Jesus' Name We Meet	1	Opening of Worship
324	God Himself Is with Us	1	Opening of Worship
325	Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing	7	Close of Worship
326	Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise	7	Close of Worship
327	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	1	Opening of Worship
328	My God, How Wonderful Thou Art	16c	Redemption
329	O Love of God, How Strong and True	16a	Redemption
330	O Jesus, We Adore Thee	16b	Redemption
331	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	8	Advent
332	My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord	21	Bible Song
333	Blest Be the God of Israel	21	Bible Song
334	Now May Thy Servant, Lord	21	Bible Song
335	Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	8	Advent
336	How Bright Appears the Morning Star	10	Epiphany
337	Joy to the World!	9	Christmas
338	While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night	21	Bible Song
339	Hark! the Herald Angels Sing	9	Christmas
340	Angels, from the Realms of Glory	9	Christmas
341	O Come, All Ye Faithful	9	Christmas
342	Silent Night! Holy Night!	9	Christmas
343	Brightest and Best of the Sons	10	Epiphany
344	Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light	9	Christmas

345	From Heaven Above to Earth I Come	9	Christmas	
346	Christians, Awake, Salute the Happy Morn	9	Christmas	
347	Thine Arm, O Lord, in Days of Old	10	Epiphany	
348	All Glory, Laud, and Honor	11	Lent	
349	Hosanna, Loud Hosanna	11	Lent	
350	When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	11	Lent	
351	Ah, Dearest Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended	11	Lent	
352	Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed	11	Lent	Replaced
353	Beneath the Cross of Jesus	11	Lent	Replaced
354	Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross	11	Lent	Replaced
355	O Sacred Head, Now Wounded	11	Lent	
356	Christ the Lord Is Risen Today	12	Easter	
357	Low in the Grave He Lay	12	Easter	
358	The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done	12	Easter	
359	Angels, Roll the Rock Away	12	Easter	Replaced
360	Alleluia! Alleluia!	12	Easter	
361	Praise the Savior	12	Easter	
362	Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain	12	Easter	
363	Welcome, Happy Morning	12	Easter	Replaced
364	The Day of Resurrection	12	Easter	Replaced
365	See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph	13	Ascension	
366	Alleluia! Sing to Jesus	13	Ascension	
367	Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices	13	Ascension	Replaced
368	Rejoice, the Lord Is King	13	Ascension	
369	Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus!	12	Easter	
370	Day of Judgment! Day of Wonders!	19	New Creation	
371	Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying	19	New Creation	
372	At the Name of Jesus	16b	Redemption	
373	Beautiful Savior	15a	Creation and Providence	
374	This Is My Father's World	15a	Creation and Providence	
375	Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee	16b	Redemption	
376	O Christ, Our hope, Our Heart's Desire	12	Easter	
377	We Have Heard the Joyful Sound	16c	Redemption	Replaced
378	I Know Not Why God's Wondrous Grace	16c	Redemption	Replaced
379	Lord Jesus, I Long to Be Perfectly Whole	2	Confession and Law	Replaced
380	Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound	16a	Redemption	
381	"Man of Sorrows," What a Name	11	Lent	
382	Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned	16b	Redemption	Replaced

383	O For a Thousand Tongues	16c	Redemption	
384	How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds	16b	Redemption	
385	'Tis Not That I Did Choose Thee	16c	Redemption	
386	How Vast the Benefits Divine	16c	Redemption	
387	I Sought the Lord, and Afterward I Knew	16c	Redemption	
388	Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me	16c	Redemption	Replaced
389	Not What My Hands Have Done	2	Confession and Law	
390	Eternal Spirit, God of Truth	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	
391	Breathe on Me, Breath of God	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	
392	Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayer	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	
393	Creator Spirit, by Whose Aid	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	
394	Spirit of God, Dwell Thou within My Heart	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	
395	Holy Spirit, Light Divine	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	Replaced
396	Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	Replaced
397	Dwell in Me, O Blessed Spirit	14	Pentecost and Holy Spirit	Replaced
398	The Church's One Foundation	17a	Church and Its Mission	
399	Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun	13	Ascension	
400	Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns	13	Ascension	
401	From Greenland's Icy Mountains	17b	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
402	Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	17a	Church and Its Mission	
403	Speed Thy Servants, Savior, Speed Them	17b	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
404	Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak	17b	Church and Its Mission	
405	Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming	17b	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
406	Comfort, Comfort Ye My People	21	Bible Song	
407	Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah	18a	Christian and Society	
408	Great Is Thy Faithfulness	18a	Christian and Society	
409	Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart	18a	Christian and Society	
410	Come to the Savior Now	17b	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
411	How Firm a Foundation	16c	Redemption	
412	I Love to Tell the Story	17b	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
413	I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say	16c	Redemption	
414	Shepherd of Tender Youth	18b	Christian and Society	
415	O God, Great Father	3	Baptism	
416	Our Children, Lord, in Faith and Prayer	3	Baptism	
417	Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	18b	Christian and Society	Replaced
418	Savior, Who Thy Flock Art Feeding	18b	Christian and Society	Replaced
419	Thus Saith the Mercy of the Lord	3	Baptism	
420	Come, for the Feast Is Spread	6	Lord's Supper	Replaced

421	According to Thy Gracious Word	6	Lord's Supper	Replaced
422	O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts	6	Lord's Supper	
423	Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness	6	Lord's Supper	
424	Just As I Am, without One Plea	2	Confession and Law	
425	Jesus, Lover of My Soul	18a	Christian and Society	
426	Jesus, with Thy Church Abide	17a	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
427	I Need Thee Every Hour	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
428	Out of My Bondage, Sorrow, and Night	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
429	In the Cross of Christ-I Glory	16b	Redemption	
430	Lord, Like the Publican I Stand	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
431a	Our Father, Clothed with Majesty	18a	Christian and Society	
431b	The Lord's Prayer	21	Bible Song	
432	I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art	1	Opening of Worship	
433	My God, Is Any Hour So Sweet	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
434	Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
435	Humble Praises, Holy Jesus	16c	Redemption	
436	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	18a	Christian and Society	
437	More Love to Thee, O Christ	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
438	Thy Love to Me, O Christ	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
439	I Will Sing of My Redeemer	16b	Redemption	
440	My Jesus, I Love Thee	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
441	Jesus, Priceless Treasure	18a	Christian and Society	
442	For All the Saints	17a	Church and Its Mission	
443	Faith of Our Fathers	17a	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
444	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	16a	Redemption	
445	When Peace, Like a River	16c	Redemption	
446	My Faith Looks Up to Thee	2	Confession and Law	
447	Blest Be the Tie That Binds	7	Close of Worship	
448	Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies	16b	Redemption	
449	Fill Thou My Life	18a	Christian and Society	
450	O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
451	Take Time to Be Holy	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
452	Have Thine Own Way, Lord	5	Dedication and Offering	
453	O For a Closer Walk with God	18a	Christian and Society	
454	Nearer, Still Nearer	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
455	In the Hour of Trial	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
456	Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
457	Lord Jesus, Can It Ever Be	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced

458	Come, Ye Disconsolate	16c	Redemption	
459	Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult	18a	Christian and Society	
460	Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
461	God Moves in a Mysterious Way	15b	Creation and Providence	
462	Take My Life, and Let It Be	5	Dedication and Offering	
463	He Leadeth Me	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
464	Christian, Dost Thou See Them	18a	Christian and Society	
465	Am I a Soldier of the Cross	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
466	Onward, Christian Soldiers	17a	Church and Its Mission	
467	Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus	18a	Christian and Society	
468	God of the Prophets	17a	Church and Its Mission	
469	By the Sea of Crystal	19	New Creation	
470	Abide with Me	15b	Creation and Providence	
471	Jerusalem the Golden	19	New Creation	
472	Sun of My Soul	18a	Christian and Society	Replaced
473	God Be with You Till We Meet Again	7	Close of Worship	
474	Hours and Days and Years and Ages	15b	Creation and Providence	
475	Another Year Is Dawning	15b	Creation and Providence	Replaced
476	God of Our Fathers	18c	Christian and Society	Replaced
477	O God, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand	17a	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
478	From Ocean unto Ocean	18c	Christian and Society	
479	I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord	17a	Church and Its Mission	
480	O Jesus, I Have Promised	5	Dedication and Offering	
481	O Perfect Love	18b	Christian and Society	
482	We Give Thee but Thine Own	5	Dedication and Offering	
483	Come, Ye That Fear Jehovah	1	Opening of Worship	
484	Lead On, O King Eternal	18a	Christian and Society	
485	Blest Be That Sacred Covenant Love	7	Close of Worship	
486	O Lord, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand	17a	Church and Its Mission	Replaced
487	May the Grace of Christ Our Savior	7	Close of Worship	
488	Now Blessed Be Jehovah God	20	Response and Doxology	
489	Hear Our Prayer, O Lord	20	Response and Doxology	
490	Praise Ye the Lord, Ye Hosts Above	20	Response and Doxology	
491	Glory Be to the Father	20	Response and Doxology	
492	Glory Be to the Father	20	Response and Doxology	Replaced
493	Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow	20	Response and Doxology	

INDEX OF LITURGICAL FORMS
IN THE SERVICE BOOK
RECOMMENDED FOR THE PSALTER HYMNAL

AGENDA FOR SYNOD 1984 (pp. 197-98)

Introduction to Worship

Sacramental Forms

	<u>Service Book Page</u>	<u>Doc. page</u>
Baptism of Children No. 2	Part 1, pp. 8-10	No Changes
Baptism of Children No. 3	Part 1, pp. 11-13	1-3
Baptismal Service No. 3	Part 3, pp. 56-60	4-8
Baptism of Adults No. 2	Part 1, pp. 18-21	9-11
Baptism of Adults No. 3	Part 1, pp. 22-25	12-15
Preparatory Exhortation	Part 1, pp. 26-27	No Changes
Lord's Supper No. 2	Part 1, pp. 35-41	16-21
Lord's Supper No. 3	Part 1, pp. 42-47	22-27
Lord's Supper Service	Part 3, pp. 11-16	No Changes

Nonsacramental Forms

Profession of Faith No. 1	Part 2, pp. 5-6	28-29
Profession of Faith No. 2	Part 2, pp. 7-8	No Changes
Excommunication No. 2	Part 2, pp. 33-35	No Changes
Readmission No. 2	Part 2, pp. 39-41	No Changes
Ordination of Ministers No. 1	Part 2, pp. 18-29	30-38
Ordination of Ministers No. 2	<u>Acts of Synod 1983</u>	Scheduled to be approved by Synod of 1984
Ordination of Evangelists	Part 2, pp. 16-17	39-40
Ordination of Elders and Deacons No. 2	Part 2, pp. 13-15	41-43
Marriage No. 1	Part 2, pp. 42-45	44-46
Marriage No. 2	Part 2, pp. 46-49	No Changes
Collection of Prayers	Part 4, pp. 5-35	47-49
Responsive Readings of the Law	Part 4, pp. 36-41	50-53

APPENDIX B
PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VIDEO LIBRARY

I. AUDIENCE

A. The primary audience for such a library would be adult groups (adult education classes, societies and fellowship groups, households, etc.) within Christian Reformed churches.

B. A secondary audience would be similar adult groups in other NAPARC churches or other Reformed/Presbyterian congregations now using BIBLE WAY materials.

C. The Reformed Church in America has their own film distribution center (TRAVARCA) and is developing video programs (primarily related to world missions) for release through that center. They have expressed an interest in distributing through their own channels video materials that we may produce or make available.

II. KINDS AND SOURCES OF MATERIALS THAT WOULD BE INCLUDED

A. Video components related to Education Department courses and other video materials developed by the department for distribution through the library (e.g., *Get a Job, Covenant Keeping*, a possible review of the catechism for people contemplating profession of faith, Bible studies).

B. FAITH 20 programs of the Back to God Hour suitable for viewing and discussion in a church education context.

C. Educational (not promotional) materials developed by other agencies of the CRC or institutions of the CRC community (e.g., informational presentations on various aspects of the church's missions, lectures by college or seminary professors, workshops).

D. Church education programs developed by other Reformed/Presbyterian denominations, or by groups working within those communities (e.g., Ligonier Study Center materials).

Note: All the video programs would be accompanied by study guides to enable groups to use them effectively. If such guides are not already provided, they would be developed and produced by the Education Department staff.

III. STEPS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING THE VIDEO LIBRARY

A. Inform other agencies and institutions in the CRC of the kind of video resources that would be distributed through this library and work with them in developing such resources.

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- B. Determine what video resource materials are being produced by other Reformed/Presbyterian churches and organizations and under what terms these might be made available through our rental library.
- C. Develop a system of reasonable rental (and, in some cases, selling) prices that would compensate other agencies and institutions for the video materials entrusted, lent, or sold to us, and also cover Board of Publications' handling and promotion expenses.
- D. Begin developing and procuring video materials, inform churches of their availability, and develop a program for rental (and sale) of these materials.
- E. Arrange for churches in Canada and the US to be able to purchase video (VCR and monitoring) equipment at a reasonable price either through local stores or through a central distributorship and provide information on the use of such equipment in church education programs.
- F. If the number of video programs available and increased rental use warrant it, develop a library membership program by which churches, for a blanket yearly fee, can gain unlimited access to this library of video materials.

APPENDIX C
REPORT OF THE MUSIC AND LITURGY TASK FORCE
FOR THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS
NOVEMBER 1984

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Background Statement*

The Christian Reformed Church has always attached great importance to the role of worship in the life of its members. Accordingly, it has emphasized good preaching and has assured that its official liturgical forms are biblically sound and contemporary. It has also provided needed resources for Reformed worship; a denominational worship book (the *Psalter Hymnal*), guidelines for music, and principles of worship.

To carry out some of the above task, the Synod of 1964 created a Liturgical Committee and mandated it:

1. To review all our liturgical literature in the light of its history, its theological content, and the contemporary needs of the churches; and to recommend such revisions or substitutions as the result of this review might recommend.
2. To study liturgical uses and practices in our churches in the light of Reformed liturgical practices and past synodical decisions, and to advise synod as to the guidance and supervision it ought to provide local congregations in all liturgical matters.

The first part of the mandate (1) was largely accomplished with the writing of the 1968 report, the production of new forms and other liturgical materials, and the publication (by the Board of Publications) of the *Service Book*.

The second part of the mandate (2) has proven more difficult to accomplish. The Christian Reformed Church currently lacks a coherent program for education in liturgy and music and the published resources needed to carry out such a program. The church also lacks an adequate mechanism for providing musical and liturgical resources for worship services, that is, a way to elicit such materials from the membership and disseminate them to the church at large. Furthermore, while the Liturgical Committee will continue to provide guidance and leadership for worship in the denomination, the development and production of educational materials and worship resources is beyond its capabilities. To accomplish this there must be provided a staff, financial resources, and means of production and dissemination.

This report proposes that the Board of Publications be given primary responsibility for eliciting, producing, and disseminating worship resources, and for providing educational materials and training services in Reformed liturgy and music. The assigning of such responsibility arises naturally out of recent developments.

The Synod of 1982 requested the Board of Publication to publish and introduce the revised edition of the *Psalter Hymnal* and to provide a program of education for its use. It also created the position of music editor and made the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee a task force of the Board of Publications.

Synod of 1984 approved the long-range plan for the Board of Publications, which included the following provisions (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 76, 77, 458, 647):

1. "That the 1984 Synod direct a merger of efforts between these two organizations [the Liturgical Committee and the Board of Publications] and request that they jointly recommend to the 1985 Synod a plan for structural unity."
2. That the Board of Publications "develop plans for and produce a full range of musical and liturgical resources and guidelines for use in the church's worship, education, and evangelism, paying special attention to the needs of nontraditional congregations."

Grounds:

- a. There is currently no source of consistently excellent and Reformed musical and liturgical resources. As a result, Christian Reformed congregations must work with materials which fails commonly accepted standards for church use.
 - b. There is sufficient demand ("market") both within and beyond the Christian Reformed Church to make such a ministry financially self-sustaining.
 - c. New resources are being created at congregational levels which could—more efficiently and probably more effectively—be produced at a denominational level.
 - d. Reformed musical and liturgical resources are needed for use in programs of church education and evangelism, by choral or instrumental groups, and for special occasions or special presentations.
 - e. Those Christian Reformed congregations which have received the least helpful resources from denominational leaders are multicultural churches, where musical and liturgical traditions appropriate to both various cultural traditions and the Reformed faith have not yet been widely recognized.
3. That the Board of Publications "provide information and training services to Christian Reformed congregational worship and music leaders."

Grounds:

- a. Publication of the Conference on Liturgy and Music (COLAM) newsletter, founded to achieve this purpose within the CRC, has ceased.
- b. Education in this area is an identifiable need in many Christian Reformed congregations.

B. Mandate and Membership of the Task Force

1. Mandate

The Board of Publications (at its February 1984 board meeting) authorized the executive director to create a task force mandated to develop a five-year plan for the production of a full range of musical and liturgical resources for use in the church's worship, education, and evangelism, which pays special attention to the needs of nontraditional congregations.

2. Membership

Appointed by the executive director to serve on this task force were:

- Mr. Stan De Jong
Board member, Board of Publications
- Mr. Jerry Van Spronsen (chairperson)
Board member, Board of Publications
- Dr. Harry Boonstra
Liturgical Committee member
- Mr. James Vanden Bosch
Liturgical Committee member
- Rev. Jack Reiffer
Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee member
- Mr. Verlyn Schultz
Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee member
- Dr. Emily Brink
Board of Publications staff member
- Dr. Harvey Smit
Board of Publications staff member

II. THE GENERAL GOAL OF THIS PLAN

The general goal of this plan is that the Board of Publications accept the responsibility to guide local congregations in Reformed worship by:

- A. Developing and producing a full range of musical and liturgical resources and guidelines for their use in the church's worship, education, and evangelism.
- B. Developing and providing educational materials and training services in the biblical and Reformed principles, history, and appropriate practices of worship.

III. SPECIFIC GOALS OF THIS PLAN

The specific goals of this plan include the following responsibilities:

- A. Educate congregations in the nature and purpose of worship.
Congregations need to be taught, for example, that worship is done by the people of God and consists largely of a dialogue of proclamation and response.
- B. Provide continuing guidelines and procedures for developing and evaluating Reformed worship by local congregations.
Congregations, and especially worship committee members, need to be provided with principles and a framework which will help them to evaluate specific liturgical issues.
- C. Provide continuing leadership for congregational singing and other responses.
The dialogic nature of worship demands that the people be instructed both in the appropriateness of the congregational response (sung and spoken), and in how that response is most fittingly framed and expressed.
- D. Establish the proper role of music in Reformed worship.
The principle of "liturgical integrity" requires that all music be integrated into

the worship service. The performance of anthems and "special music" should never be, although it often is, an inappropriate intrusion.

E. Provide principles and resources for nonliturgical (non-Sunday) worship occasions.

Although the principal focus will be on "church time," there is also a need for worship resources for more informal occasions, church school gatherings, VBS, retreats, conferences, etc.

F. Promote composition and publications of musical and liturgical materials.

The gifts of God's people can be stimulated by providing opportunities for the writing of worship materials. These materials can, in turn, be made available for use in the churches.

G. Develop and implement these goals for nontraditional congregations and for evangelistic contexts.

Certain congregations have distinctive needs and require special materials and programs, e.g., the newer Home Missions congregation as compared with the longer established "traditional" congregation, or the multicultural congregation as compared with the mostly white-Dutch-American congregation. All the above goals may need special implementation in nontraditional churches.

IV. AUDIENCE

The development and production of appropriate musical and liturgical resources and education in worship require a clear perception of the intended audience—the groups one means to serve. At least the following groups should be targeted:

A. *Congregations* ("multicultural" and "regular"; nontraditional and traditional)

In addition to the *Service Book* and *Psalter Hymnal*, congregations often need liturgies and music for special occasions, such as, litanies and music for Thanksgiving, commissioning service liturgies, children's musical programs. The educational programs can also be served by courses, video programs, speakers, and training workshops.

Beyond the common liturgical needs of every congregation, special groups and churches have peculiar needs. Churches with diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds need special assistance to integrate diverse worship traditions with the Reformed faith and to develop appropriate liturgical styles.

Attention should also be given to subgroups within the church that require specialized worship materials; children, youth, people with physical and mental impairments. Furthermore there is a need for musical and liturgical resources appropriate to special church gatherings; retreats, conferences, camps, etc.

B. *Worship Leaders*

Various people in each congregation hold positions of supervision and leadership in worship. The consistories are charged with supervising all worship practices. Other worship leaders include pastors, worship committee members, church school superintendents, choir directors, organists, and other

accompanists. In a few churches, a music director has been appointed, someone who can provide important coherence to the entire musical life of the congregation.

C. *Training Institutions and Educational Agencies*

Colleges, seminaries, Christian Schools International, and similar agencies will be able to use worship materials produced by the Board of Publications in training musicians, pastors, and teachers.

D. *Other Denominations*

The Board of Publications can provide liturgical leadership to other denominations and churches, particularly the NAPARC churches and the Reformed Church in America. There is a high potential for joint projects that would be mutually beneficial.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations constitute a five-year plan through which the Board of Publications can produce a full range of musical and liturgical resources for use in the church's worship, education, and evangelism.

A. That the Board of Publications produce a quarterly publication (in loose-leaf format) of Reformed worship resources, guidelines, and instructions.

This publication would be intended for worship leaders in the Christian Reformed Church. Target date for the first issue would be January 1986, with materials directed at serving the worship needs of the church during the first quarter of that year, e.g., Epiphany, Lent, and Easter.

The loose-leaf format would permit subscribers to easily extract and file materials that fit their particular needs and interests. Included in this periodical might be:

- Liturgies for special (or seasonal) services
- Litanies, prayers, calls to worship, responses
- Forms for commissioning of church school teachers, etc.
- Children's sermons—actual ones, or "how to" articles
- Children's bulletins (models and ideas)
- Book reviews, and reviews of new music (choral, vocal, organ)
- Articles on church architecture and the use of visual worship materials (banners, advent wreaths, etc.)
- Creative hymn introductions and alternate harmonizations
- Instrumental transcriptions of hymns
- Choral music samples
- Specific musical and/or liturgical materials for minority groups in the church
- Articles on the history of music in Reformed worship
- Rehearsal suggestions for choir directors
- Suggestions for effective hymn playing for less experienced organists

While not all of the above suggested materials would find a place in each issue, each should include something for the pastor, the organist, the choir director, and perhaps the church school superintendent. Also included in most issues would be actual music for performance.

The editor of this periodical would serve as a "Worship Resource Clearing House" to which worship leaders throughout the denomination could either send copies of special services, litanies, music, and so forth, for possible publication, or request materials to fill their specific needs.

Publishing such a loose-leaf periodical will permit the Board of Publications to begin producing in the near future a wide variety of musical and liturgical resources and guidelines. At a later time, some of this material can be gathered, organized, and published in separate form.

B. That the Board of Publications produce a children's song book.

This book would fill an important need in the church school, as well as providing a well-balanced repertoire for use in Christian schools, VBS, Cadets, Calvinettes, etc. Target date for production would be 1989, with work commencing during 1986.

C. That the Board of Publications publish a companion to the *Psalter Hymnal*.

Such a handbook would contain informational material on hymn texts, hymn tunes, authors, translators, composers, and arrangers, as well as essays on the history of music in the Christian Reformed tradition, the appropriate use of congregational singing, the teaching of new hymns to congregations, and similar subjects. This companion would be an invaluable source of information and help to pastors, musicians, and other worship leaders.

D. That the Board of Publications develop an ongoing program of producing recordings of materials from the new *Psalter Hymnal* to serve as models of good congregational singing.

Such recordings will help congregations, music leaders, families, and individuals to learn new hymns and melodies contained in the new *Psalter Hymnal*. It would also provide good material for devotional listening in the home or car.

E. That the Board of Publications cosponsor with local educational or church agencies (classical committees, colleges, family Bible camps, etc.) conferences and workshops on worship throughout the denomination.

The response to the Conference on Liturgy and Music (COLAM) indicates a desire and need for such conferences and workshops in our church. A variety of formats would be advisable, e.g., a major conference held every four years (at a different geographical location each time) and smaller regional conferences in the intervening years. The music editor should be directed to develop a national network of resource persons capable of conducting workshops and speaking at conferences; information about the availability of these persons should be disseminated to local conference leaders, to Bible camps, to active Inter Nos groups, and other interested groups.

F. That the Board of Publications direct the music editor to cooperate with such agencies as SCORR, the Board of Home Missions, and any others which could contribute valuable insights, in developing musical and liturgical materials for evangelistic contexts.

All Reformed worship should have an evangelistic dimension and all Reformed worship resources should reflect this. However, there is a need for special materials for what are primarily evangelistic services. The music and liturgy quarterly can become an avenue for the distribution for such materials from other agencies to the church at large.

G. That the Board of Publications produce an adult education course on church music.

There is a need of educational material (7 to 10 lessons) to instruct church members on the role music plays in the Reformed worship tradition, the use of congregational psalm and hymn singing, the role of the choir, the use of organ and instruments in church, music for weddings and for funerals, the role of the worship (music) committee, remuneration for the services of the music leaders, and more. Target date for release of such a course would be 1988.

H. That (in addition to the forms, services and prayers included in the new *Psalter Hymnal*) the Board of Publications continue to produce and distribute forms, services, and prayers for more specific occasions and church year seasons.

As many of our congregations adopt greater variation in worship styles, there remains an ongoing need for such materials. The loose-leaf periodical will be a convenient vehicle for distributing these.

I. That the Board of Publications provide guidelines and advice in church architecture.

Most people serving on new church building committees have had no previous experience in planning a church building. Many architects do not understand the philosophy of Reformed worship nor how this should be expressed through the physical placement of congregation, minister, pulpit, table, font, choir, and the instruments of music. A booklet or resource packet dealing with these matters would be a valuable contribution.

J. That the Board of Publications publish a handbook on Reformed liturgy.

Such a handbook could include essays on principles for worship, the place of choral music in Reformed worship, the liturgical year, the various steps in the worship service, symbolism, explanations of the acts of the worship service, and bibliographies. Target date for release would be 1985-87.

VI. STAFFING

It is unlikely that all of these recommendations can be achieved with the present level of staffing. Additional staff may have to be secured at the clerical level, or perhaps an assistant/associate editor in the area of music and liturgy. Much of the work projected in this plan, however, can be accomplished through the use of voluntary sources and contract authors or editors.

VII. RESOURCES

This report has placed the responsibility for producing musical and liturgical materials and providing education in these areas with the Board of Publications. However, this should not convey the impression that the Board of Publications will begin such a venture *de novo*, or will be the sole agency involved in these activities.

The past and current work of the Liturgical Committee, of the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee, and of COLAM will prove to be a good foundation for further development. SCORR, the various ethnic churches, and our mission fields can be resources on music and worship patterns from different

traditions. There are also competent musicians and worship leaders in many congregations. The colleges and seminaries are rich in scholarly resources and musical performance expertise. We can also benefit from work being done in these areas by Christian Schools International, by professional organizations (e.g., the Presbyterian Association of Musicians), by consultants (e.g., church architects), and by other denominations (e.g., the Lutheran Worship Committee, or the Presbyterian Office of Worship). The role of the Board of Publications will frequently be one of coordination and dissemination, ensuring a wide and readily available distribution of contributions from various sources.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The Music and Liturgy Task Force submits these recommendations with the hope and prayer that the plans and developments projected here will become a reality within the next five years. The worship of the church constitutes a central part of the Christian life. It is our desire that God's people worship in a rich and meaningful manner as they give of their best to the Lord. We pray that the recommendations of this report and the subsequent work of the Board of Publications may contribute to such worship.

REPORT 4**BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MISSIONS**

We are now midway through the decade of the Eighties. In just five years the contours of our world have shown radical shifts, and changes of allegiances are underway in the hearts of millions of people. During these five years the population of the world has grown by 407,000,000. There are approximately 116,000,000 more Christians than at the beginning of this decade though the gain in affiliated church members stands at 10,000,000 since 1980. The awesome specter of famine reached also to the Christian community and fully 13 percent of our fellow Christians live in absolute poverty. While we rejoice in knowing that many have come to know the Lord in this half-decade, we also face the stark reality of the presence of the demonic at those points where light breaks into the darkness. We press on to announce the coming of the kingdom of God in those areas where opportunity and need have led us.

During 1984 missionaries under regular Christian Reformed World Missions appointment were on site in nineteen countries. In addition to these fields, missionaries are associated with CRWM in Dominica and Venezuela. Our supportive ministries continue also in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba. Synod last year authorized the addition of Belize to the Central America field and continued CRWM supervision over ministries in Australia and New Zealand. Thus CRWM is involved in twenty-seven nations overseas.

The 1984 Synod also authorized the opening of a new field in the nations of Mali and Guinea, aimed specifically at the Fulbe people of those areas. Here, too, there was hunger and our missionaries began to reach out with both bread and hope. Perhaps this new venture may stand as a symbol of all our sending, as it gears itself to the massive opportunity before us. In the following pages CRWM gives an accounting of that sending into God's world.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**A. The Board**

The annual meetings of the board took place from February 20 to 22, 1985. In addition, the executive committee of nineteen members met on five occasions during the year. The officers during 1984 were David Radius, president; Neal Punt, vice president; Jack De Kruyter, treasurer; John S. Bronsema, recording secretary.

The members of the executive committee are elected annually by the board. During 1984 eleven lay persons and eight clergymen made up this committee. Administrative subcommittees and area committees bring recommendations to the executive committee. Generally the materials are received from the fields and produced by the field councils. These field councils are often intimately related to the national church, and in certain cases the national church is the authoritative entity overseas. An interdependence policy defines the manner

in which CRC resources are allocated in such cases. The CRWM Global Outreach Committee meets twice yearly to assess the overall deployment of resources and to coordinate the strategies for the worldwide endeavor.

Administrative positions and personnel are as follows: executive secretary, Dr. Eugene Rubingh; Africa secretary, Rev. William Van Tol; Asia secretary, Rev. Edward A. Van Baak; administrative services secretary, Mr. Richard J. Eppinga. Due to a vacancy in the office of Latin America secretary, Rev. W. Thomas De Vries is currently serving as the interim secretary for Latin America. During the first half of 1985, while Rev. Van Baak is on sabbatical, Rev. Dick Kwantes is providing valuable service in the Asia secretary's office. Additional support persons function in the areas of communication, accounting, personnel, and secretarial aspects.

B. Representation at Synod

The board requests that its president, executive secretary, treasurer, and administrative services secretary be authorized to represent the board in all matters pertaining to Christian Reformed World Missions.

C. Members-at-large

1. The term of member-at-large Raymond Browneye has expired and he is not eligible for reelection. To fill this position CRWM submits the names of Mr. Nick Kroeze and Miss Julie Vander Laan. The individual not elected will then serve as alternate.

Mr. Nick Kroeze and his wife Gloria served as CRWM missionaries in Mexico for seven years. They have three children. They live in Kalamazoo, MI, and attend Knollwood CRC. Mr. Kroeze is vice president of the consistory and chairman of the church education committee. He is working on a doctorate in administration at Western Michigan University and is presently serving as assistant principal and Spanish teacher at Kalamazoo Christian High School.

Miss Julie Vander Laan lives in Grand Rapids and attends Boston Square CRC. She served as a nurse midwife in Nigeria for two terms and as a dietitian at Hillcrest School for one term. She now works as a nurse at Metropolitan Hospital in Grand Rapids.

2. The term of member-at-large Mr. Stanley Ellens will expire in 1985. Mr. Ellens has consented to stand for reelection and CRWM also submits the name of Mr. Roger Rottschafer. The individual not elected will serve as alternate.

Mr. Stanley Ellens and family live in Hamilton, MI, and are members of the East Saugatuck CRC, where he has served as deacon and Sunday school teacher and superintendent. He has traveled widely and visited missions in South America, Europe, Japan, China, India, and Sri Lanka. He formerly owned and administered three long-term nursing care units and is now self-employed in the management and leasing of land and properties. Mr. Ellens has served the CRWM board as member-at-large for one three-year term and is eligible and willing to serve another term of three years.

Mr. Roger Rottschafer and family moved from Grand Rapids to Holland, MI, about two years ago. While living in Grand Rapids they were members of Alger Park CRC and are now members of the Harderwyk CRC of Holland. While at Alger Park he served as elder and deacon many times, was a member of the church executive committee, and a member of the choir. At Harderwyk he served on the education committee and is a member of the choir. Mr. Rott-

schafer is president of Standard Supply and Lumber Company. His mother is Mrs. Esther Rottschafer who has served as a volunteer for CRWM in Puerto Rico on an annual basis for many years.

3. It is necessary to elect an alternate for member-at-large Mr. Harold Padding. CRWM submits the names of Miss Joy De Boer and Miss Joan De Jonge for this position.

Miss Joy De Boer lives in Grand Rapids and is a member of First CRC. She has been involved as a volunteer for innercity projects and is chairperson of the worship committee at First CRC. She attended Calvin College and received her M.A. at the University of Denver. She has taught junior high school and has been the Dean of Women at Calvin for the past six years.

Miss Joan De Jonge lives in southwest Grand Rapids and is a member of Fellowship CRC of Grandville, MI. She is active in her church and is a member of the choir and the evangelism committee. She has just completed serving on the board of Christian Singles Fellowship and presently is serving on the Young Calvinist Federation board and on the committee for Young Adult Ministries. Miss De Jonge has traveled to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China, where she visited our missionaries and mission stations. She has friends and family who have been in missions, which has kept her interest in missions alive. Miss De Jonge is a psychologist at the Christian Counseling Center in Grand Rapids.

D. *Presentation of Missionaries*

Synod has annually received members of its missionary family who are on home service and carry greetings to synod. In this way synod may become personally acquainted with these delegates from the church's missionary enterprise. Therefore CRWM again requests permission to introduce to synod those missionaries on home service or under appointment.

E. *Appointment of Executive Secretary and Latin America Secretary*

Early in January the Latin America secretary, Rev. G. Bernard Dokter, accepted a call to Allen Avenue CRC of Muskegon, MI. The board decided to defer selection of a nominee for this office until after synod had met, inasmuch as important matters of CRWM office structure may well be decided at this synod.

Dr. Eugene Rubingh indicated to the board his decision not to stand for reappointment to a fourth term as executive secretary. It was also decided to defer the search for a new executive secretary until after the synodical sessions. Meanwhile Rev. William Van Tol has been appointed to serve as the interim executive secretary upon the departure of Dr. Rubingh from CRWM service.

II. GENERAL MATTERS

A. *Communications*

The missionary story when it is simply told is in itself the most compelling and exciting drama in the world today. Thus the task of the World Missions Communications staff is clear; it is to tell the missionary story—to share the challenges and the joys, and also the setbacks, of the missionary enterprise with the members of the Christian Reformed denomination.

The story is told in a variety of ways. Articles in *The Banner*, *Calvinist Contact*,

and other periodicals regularly highlight mission activities. *Banner* inserts, such as "Letters from Asia" in the September 10, 1984, issue, illustrate activities on various fields. The CRWM annual report, entitled "World to Win," appeared in February 1985. *Mission Courier* highlights the work of CRWM along with other denominational agencies. Numerous additional publications and promotions—such as the *Prayer Guide*, *Prayer Bulletin*, missionary leaflets, special giving project sheets, and various newsletters—also tell the story.

The 1985 edition of the World Missions Calendar marks the fifth year the calendar has been produced. Ninety-one thousand copies were mailed across North America in the first week of November 1984. Response continues to be enthusiastic on the part of church members who write letters to and pray for our missionaries, and also on the part of the missionaries who are the beneficiaries. The 1984 World Missions poster contest brought a record number of entries—1,106, up almost 15 percent from the year before—from children aged three to eighteen and from all across the continent. In the last year CRWM has issued a number of new posters, bulletin covers, mobiles, and placemats for use by churches and schools.

The work of the Holy Spirit among destitute sugarcane cutters in the Dominican Republic is vividly portrayed in a recently released CRWM motion picture called "Cane Fire." The half-hour film shows how souls are mended and bodies healed through CRWM missionaries working in cooperation with the Back to God Hour, the World Relief Committee, and the Luke Society.

Because a personal encounter with a missionary has greater impact upon church members than mailed material, CRWM knows the importance of the speaking engagements and appearances of missionaries on home service. This deputation work is being intensively reviewed so that fuller use can be made of the talents of the missionaries and so that the work can be conducted more efficiently and effectively.

In this regard CRWM will attempt to foster more widely among the churches the holding of mission emphasis weeks or Sundays. The Women's Missionary Union is also a valuable resource for bringing together missionaries and church members. In 1984 ten missionaries participated in four Women's Missionary Union tours.

The Missionary/Church Support Program continues to grow, but only very slowly. At the end of the last calendar year, 524 churches were supporting one or more missionaries, up from 506/491 the previous two years. This represents 68 percent of the 774 organized churches in the denomination. For the last two years, however, the amount of financial support received by CRWM has fallen significantly behind budgeted levels. This program, too, is being evaluated.

In another area CRWM attempts to communicate an important fact to church members—namely, that most people who die do so without a written will. In such cases no contributions whatsoever can be made to Christian causes. Stewardship demands that every Christian have a written will, and CRWM offers a significant service to church members in matters of estate planning and planned giving.

Although CRWM attempts to tell the mission story in numerous ways through a variety of vehicles, mailings of various kinds are central to the communication effort. In this CRWM faces a serious and growing problem—"mailbox competition" from a host of other causes. Unfortunately in our denomination there is some uncritical giving to undeserving causes, on the one

hand, and a tendency to throw away unopened all solicitations, on the other. Too often the work of our denominational agencies is not differentiated from causes in general. Therefore, CRWM must work diligently to improve the quality of its mailings and materials, trusting that the historic commitment of CRC members to their denominational agencies will continue.

B. *Address to the World Missions and Relief Commission*

At its annual meeting the CRWM board decided to address the World Missions and Relief Commission on several salient points central to CRWM's ministry and its relationship to CRWRC. These points are as follows:

I. CENTRALITY OF PREACHING

CRWM reaffirms WMARC's carefully articulated position on the centrality of preaching and the priority of church development. We urge WMARC to maintain this fundamental and historic commitment of the CRC.

II. ONE BOARD AND ONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Since June 1984 CRWM has been operating with the expectation that WMARC would continue on the course set before it when synod gave "general approval" to the plan to place CRWM and CRWRC under one board and one executive committee. We urge WMARC to reaffirm this position and thus confirm the unification of word and deed ministry in a consistent organizational structure with a single executive director.

III. STUDY OF THE DELEGATION OF DEACONS TO MAJOR ASSEMBLIES

WMARC's decision to recommend the study of the delegation of deacons to major assemblies will be strengthened by making synod aware of the fact that the development of diaconal conferences is taking us in the direction of parachurch structure. The study should be done in the context of the place, task, and authority of deacons.

IV. ON-FIELD ORGANIZATION

CRWM has consistently pleaded for major attention to this critical area and is thankful for the unified field organizational structures which have been adopted on several joint fields. These agreements provide for single onfield administrative structure, a unified budget, and a comprehensive system of evaluation and accountability. We praise the Lord for the progress thus made in unifying that which existed in separation. We are grateful for the proposals presented by the commission and wish to indicate four provisos with respect to onfield organization:

A. *Definition of Mission Fields*

CRWM has come to recognize that a field can no longer be equated with the boundaries of a nation. A field must be a target group of people. It is no longer appropriate to give an agency carte blanche to work anywhere in a country.

For our purposes we urge WMARC to adopt the following definition of a field: *an overseas location or group of locations among a group of people or among cohesive groups of people where CRWM and/or CRWRC appointees are authorized to be present and are engaged in ministries designed to develop the church and kingdom of God.*

Adoption of this definition will give each agency the freedom to develop single-agency fields or single-agency relationships with other organizations in the same country where this is appropriate without the obligation that all missionaries in a country be part of a joint field council. It will give both agencies smaller administrative units, which are more effective and efficient.

B. *The Mandate of the Board and Its Agencies*

Board structure cannot be fixed before the mandate and responsibility of each

agency is decided. We request that a recommendation on structure be made to synod this year only if it is accompanied by a recommendation on the mandate of the board and its agencies.

C. Relation of Field Executive Council to National Churches

We inform WMARC that on some fields we think it is inappropriate to have field executive councils. Where a national church has matured it may be appropriate to have these councils abrogated and provide that CRC resources be administered directly by a regional director and a field or liaison director. In these cases the field assembly would continue to function but would serve the field or liaison directors and the regional directors with advice as they plan the continuing relationship to national organizations. We request such a provision in recommendations regarding field structure in the event a field executive council can be displaced in this manner.

D. Role of the Field Assembly

On some fields, the field assembly functions as more than an advisory body. On these fields it receives annual plans, budgets, policies, and strategy from the field executive council and recommends them to the board. We believe this is appropriate and should be continued in the case of fields where the number of personnel is small. In such cases the field assembly might even take the place of the executive council.

Finally, we endorse the idea that joint fields have comprehensive accountability and evaluation standards. However, this statement does not go far enough. The Board for World Missions and its agencies need one standard system of accountability and evaluation. This system should be developed by agency directors, approved by the board, and applicable to all fields.

V. LOCATION OF AREA (REGIONAL) DIRECTORS

CRWM expresses its concern about the following four factors which follow from the WMARC proposal to relocate the area (regional) directors on the fields:

- A. The costs involved in replacing the area secretaries in the home office with other personnel to carry out those parts of their job descriptions applicable to North America.
- B. The loss of assistance they provide to the area committees and executive committee.
- C. The loss of the services they perform in the areas of recruitment and orientation.
- D. The possibility that communication with the fields where they do not reside may be worsened rather than improved by their relocation.

VI. SELECTION OF FIELD DIRECTORS

CRWM's historic philosophical position is that the mission experts are located on the field. The missionaries are in an excellent position to gauge the leadership capabilities of the mission personnel. Therefore, their judgments on the matter of field director selection are valuable and must be given weighty consideration. While the home office would make the final appointment, this would occur only after due regard is given to the advice from a field through the vote of the field assembly and/or consultation with all of the missionaries.

VII. MISSION ORDER FOR THE BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD MINISTRIES

CRWM has instructed its staff to forward to the commission a proposed Mission Order for the Board for Christian Reformed World Ministries.

VIII. TIME FRAME

We urge that WMARC proceed with haste to complete its task and make its final

report and recommendation to the 1985 Synod.

Ground: The uncertainty that surrounds the reorganization of World Missions and World Relief is affecting our planning and operations.

III. FIELDS

A. Africa

1. Missionaries

MALI/GUINEA

Vanderaa, Larry & Ann

Whyte, George & Rhonda

LIBERIA: BASSA DIVISION

Enter, Margaret

Slager, Donald & Marty

Haan, Katie*

Slager, Tim & Dianne

Hubers, Mark & Thriesa**

Stehouwer, Rick & Kathy

Owens, Joe & Mary

Tinklenberg, Perry J. & Kathy

Scheffers, Mark & Pat

LIBERIA: CAPE MOUNT DIVISION

Broekhuizen, Ren O. & Jan

Lotze, Ken & Gerri***

NIGERIA: CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF NIGERIA (CRCN)

Arends, Jerry & Bev

Palmer, Tim

Bratt Ragnagni, Mary

Porter, Susan

De Jonge, Ann

Vander Steen, Wilma

Doezema, Lambert & Jo*

Vander Zwaag, Frances

Geerlings, Mark & Maureen

Van Dyk, Fred J. & Bette

Gray, Herm & Bea

Van Wyk, Case & Gremar

Hart, Bill & Alie

Veltkamp, Ruth

Horlings, Andy & Lin

Viss, Norm & Cyndi

NIGERIA: CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE SUDAN AMONG THE TIV (NKST)

Anderson, Sid & Louise***

Karnemaat, Fran

Bahson, Fred & Julie

Kooiman, Dennis & Kathy

Baker, Ralph D. & Verna

Lobdell, Larry & Lin

Baker, Reed & Sharon*

Niessink, Peter & Ineke

Bierma, Lyle & Dawn*

Noble, Kay

Channer, John*

Roos, Chris

Disher, Mike*

Schaapman, Al*

Dykgraaf, Dave & Jan

Vanden Berg, Gerry

Dykstra, Don & Elaine

Van Staalduinen, Tina

Freswick, David & June

Visser, Henk & Kathy

Hunse, Lambert & Grace*

Zinkand, John & Mary*

NIGERIA MISSION EDUCATION, SERVICES, ADMINISTRATION

Bierling, Al & Kay

Koop, Tom & Marilyn

Boer, John H. & Fran

Koops, Rob & Esther****

Broersma, Jim & Kathy

Korhorn, Cornie & Martha

Cremer, Jerry & Mary

Krabbe, Case & Ruth

De Jong, Harold & Joanne

Mulder, Roger & Gerry*

De Young, Roger & Debbie

Persenaire, Al & Jacie

Geerlings, Ron & Sue

Plate, Keith & Carol**

Huisken, Steve**

Rumph, Al & Sue

Jameson, Steve & Karen

Seinen, Dick & Margaret

Kass, Connie

Termorshuizen, Bill & Diane

Terpstra, Phil & Ruth
Tinklenberg, Keith & Bev
Van Der Dyke, Mike

Vandersteen, John & Irene
Van Dyken, Rick & Sue
Verhoef, Dan & Lois

NIGERIA: NEW WORK IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

Berends, Willem & Henny
Evenhouse, Bill & Nelle

Van Zee, Larry & Rose

SIERRA LEONE

De Kuiper, Bill & Jacki
Drenth, Stanley A. & Barbara

Kortenhoven, Paul & Mary
Kraker, Roger & Yvonne

Key:

- *Short term, volunteer, or medical extern
- **Associate missionary
- ***On loan from other missions
- ****On loan to other missions

2. General Information

Three concerns presently put Africa in the news: famine, apartheid, and war.

The immediate cause of famine is two large belts of drought. One belt stretches across the continent south of the Sahara Desert. The other descends along the eastern coast from Ethiopia to South Africa. In over thirty affected countries other factors such as civil war, mismanagement, abuse of land, poverty, and booming populations compound the immediate cause. Famine is reaching epidemic proportions in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Mozambique—over one million people have died.

Pressure is increasing upon South Africa to end apartheid. Modification of policy is so slow that levels of violence will increase in the next years unless the government takes more radical steps. There is another form of apartheid practiced in Black Africa that often is glossed over. A Sierra Leonian writer recently called this "ethnic apartheid," an affliction so severe that it keeps many intertribal wars alive on the continent.

War drags on in many African countries although major news is focused on intertribal war and international war in Chad, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, and the Sudan. Africa has over two million political refugees. On the average, African governments spend four times as much on armaments as they do on agriculture. A sardonic African musician recently composed "The March of the Coup d'Etat." It has become a popular song among Africa's young people as they satirize this most common and often violent means of change in national governments.

In the midst of this turbulence and pain the church in Africa grows at a rate of over 16,000 new Christians each day. The Nigerian churches we serve exemplify this growth. They reported nearly 20,000 baptisms this year. Your missionaries were privileged to be part of this exciting spread of the kingdom of God. We now estimate that the churches our missionaries serve in Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have an approximate baptized membership of 250,000 and an approximate average attendance at worship of 550,000.

CRWM concentrates its Africa mission work in West Africa. We belong to a small church and cannot spread our limited resources throughout Africa. Indeed, our surveys show that promising opportunities in West African countries are far beyond the reach of the \$3,250,000 and seventy-eight missionary

positions which we have allocated for this needy and responsive continent. We must double the resources we provide to West Africa.

3. Christian Reformed Mission in Liberia: Bassa Division

We began work in Liberia among the Bassa people in 1975 after a year of survey work and strategy development. The Bassa people number about 260,000 and live in Grand Bassa County. About 75 percent of the Bassa people are agrarian, and 85 percent are illiterate. The infant mortality rate is high—18 percent die before reaching the age of five. The Bassa have three main socio-religious institutions: secret societies, Bassa traditional religion and the church. Nearly all Bassa adults are involved in the first two and over 60 percent also have some commitment to a church.

There are about 600 worship centers in over fifty AICs (African Independent Churches) among the Bassa. The purpose of our mission among the Bassa, based on its agreement with the Christian Education Foundation of Liberia (CEFL), is to provide support to the AICS through Christian Extension Ministries (CEM). These ministries include evangelism, leadership training, church education, Bible translation, development of literacy and literature, and development of communities—especially in the areas of health and agriculture. Secondly, CRWM provides support to the Liberian Christian College (LCC) of the CEFL.

Christian Extension Centers are organized in villages. Village committees supervise the efforts of these centers to promote Christian development in the areas of health, agriculture, education, and literacy. Seven Theological Education by Extension (TEE) centers give three years of training (with three courses per year) to nearly 400 church leaders.

In the next five years we hope that the number of Christians will increase by 5,000, that 300 church leaders will complete their training, that the Old Testament translation will be finished and that at least twenty-five communities will improve literacy rates, health conditions, and food production.

4. Christian Reformed Mission in Liberia: Cape Mount Division

Our second mission project in Liberia began in 1983 and is directed toward the Vai people. There are at least 50,000 Vai in Liberia and they spill over into Sierra Leone, where they are called the Galina. The salt trade brought the Vai to this area over five hundred years ago and they brought Islam with them. Today most of them are Muslims. About 20 percent of the Vai adults are literate. Traditional religion and secret societies have not died out in spite of the long presence of Islam.

There is little Christian witness among the Vai today. The Episcopalians and National Baptist Convention operate a few schools and small churches and there is a Lutheran Bible translator at work on the Scriptures.

Our purpose is to develop a growing, evangelizing Christian community of 5,000 members within the next twenty-five years that is equipped and empowered to build an indigenous biblical expression of the kingdom of God in Vailand.

Two missionary families now live among the Vai learning their language and culture. We are seeking a third evangelist and may add a community-church developer.

5. Nigeria: General Information

Johanna Veenstra arrived in Nigeria in 1920. Her vision brought our mission

to Nigeria in 1940 when, seven years after her death, a synodical decision made our mission an autonomous branch of the Sudan United Mission (SUM). It was assigned an area that is now called Southern Gongola State. The Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) grew from this work and was organized in 1951 and is growing rapidly.

In the 1950s our mission expanded to the Tiv people of Benue State when the Dutch Reformed Mission of South Africa was forced to withdraw. The Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) was organized in 1957 and continues to grow rapidly.

In 1971 the Nigeria Mission Services Committee (NMSC) was formed and made responsible for service functions such as aviation and education of mission children and for ministries which are not in the province of the CRCN and NKST.

Last year we began mission work in Northern Nigeria among the Kambari and Kanuri peoples.

Thus we actually have four mission fields or administrative units in Nigeria: the CRCN area, the NKST area, a new mission in the North, and the mission services of NMSC. A new organizational structure was initiated by the board last year and recently approved in final form. It provides for a CRWM regional office with a regional secretary for Nigeria. He reports to the Africa secretary and is responsible for administration of interdependence agreements with the Nigerian churches and a variety of other organizations. A CRWM liaison secretary for CRCN and a CRWM liaison secretary for NKST are part of these agreements and give administrative support to the regional secretary. He is also responsible for services and development of field councils for new work in the North.

Under an agreement which was approved in 1983 CRWM and CRWRC work together in Nigeria as autonomous divisions of the Sudan United Mission, Christian Reformed Church Branch (SUM-CRC). Both organizations provide support to the CRCN and to the Institute of Church and Society. Both organizations also support other organizations independently of each other.

Information on each area of our work in Nigeria follows.

6. Nigeria: Mission to the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN)

An interdependence agreement with the CRCN sets the conditions under which we loan missionaries and provide grants to the CRCN in support of its ministries of evangelism, church education, leadership training, and community development.

The CRCN reports that it baptized 8,210 adults and 4,205 children this year. About 150,000 people attend Sunday worship of which nearly 70,000 are baptized members. The CRCN had an active year in church development and evangelism. Two missionaries help supervise about twenty CRCN evangelists working for the CRCN Evangelism Board. Two missionaries work with a team which is evangelizing the Fulani people. CRCN has asked for three more missionaries to evangelize unreached peoples in the CRCN area. One missionary represents CRCN on the staff of New Life for All's radio-television ministry.

Twenty-three pastors are being trained at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) and Veenstra Seminary. Continuing education through TEE is being provided. About 250 future church leaders are being trained at Smith Bible College and three Bible schools at Wukari, Serti, and Baissa. Six missionaries are involved in this leadership training.

CRCN has requested missionary consultants to help it in the areas of literacy and church education. A volunteer administrator or accountant may also be provided for a few years to strengthen the church's central office.

The literature ministry, still assisted by a missionary, had a difficult year because of a ban on importation of paper and books. Bibles and hymnbooks are in very short supply. Some agencies have now obtained importation permits and this crisis should ease soon.

Church choirs are becoming a major source of fellowship and learning for the church's youth and women. The number of choirs has quadrupled in the last few years and thousands have joined choirs not only to enhance the church's liturgy but for fellowship and Bible study at frequent rehearsals.

The Rural Health Ministry is vital to the church's witness. A central drug-store and administration building are now in use. New dispensaries and maternity centers are being opened by churches. Improved health and declining rates of infant mortality are important signs of God's grace in cultures that place high value on children. Five CRWM medical missionaries support this effort.

CRCN is implementing a new church order to help it deal with its ethnic variety.

7. Nigeria: Mission to the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST)

An interdependence agreement with the NKST sets the conditions under which we loan (second) missionaries and provide grants to the NKST in support of its ministries of evangelism, church education, leadership training, and community development.

NKST baptized 3,521 adults and 3,720 children last year. About 270,000 people attend Sunday worship of which about 75,000 are baptized members. The NKST Mission Board supports eleven evangelists working among the urban Tiv, the Utange, the Utur, the Fulani peoples, and other needy areas. A radio minister uses free air time from government radio stations.

Church choirs have become a main source of fellowship and learning for the church's youth and women. Over 5,000 people attended the denominational choir festival this year and thousands have joined choirs to enhance the church's liturgy and for fellowship and Bible study at frequent rehearsals.

The Reformed Theological College of Nigeria has fifty-nine students in four classes and the Benue Bible Institute has about eighty students.

The Literature Ministry now has a Nigerian director and the missionary in charge will phase out and relocate this year. The same problems reported for the CRCN area have reduced sales and availability of Bibles here.

Although the health facilities of NKST continue to grow, our involvement in them is gradually declining. There are now five hospitals and over 100 dispensaries and maternity centers. These facilities treat over 500,000 patients a year. One hospital, Benue Leprosy Settlement (BLS), still belongs to CRWM but we hope this will be transferred this year. Our medical support has declined to five medical missionaries and a \$66,000 program grant for BLS.

NKST now operates 495 primary schools, 37 secondary schools, and 1 teachers' college. It is requesting CRC-related colleges to help it set up a Christian technical college. Our support for its educational efforts is now limited to one missionary and one associate missionary.

NKST operates a Christian Agricultural Cooperative program with cooperatives in each congregation. CRWM loans a director to NKST and has been providing volunteers on a regular basis.

8. Nigeria: New Mission Work in Niger and Borno States

Based on survey information gathered in 1983–84 we selected two areas for future work that will require at least twelve missionaries.

a. Kambari Area in Niger State. There are over 50,000 unreached people in this isolated area. The initial evangelism goal is to establish forty worship centers with 12,000 baptized members among the Eastern Kambari by the year 2005. The strategy calls for nine church and community developers who will initially work among the Eastern Kambari people and move on from them to a larger area of several tribes in Northern Niger State.

b. Kanuri Area in Borno State. There are three million Kanuri people in Borno State. Most are Muslim. Survey work and strategy development among them have been difficult. By traditional agreement with the British in colonial days, the Muslims consider much of this area to be an Islamic empire inaccessible to Christian witness. The first missionaries lived in Geidam among the Manga (Kanuri) people for a time but have not gained permission from authorities to live there permanently. They have moved back to Jos and alternative approaches to the Kanuri are being explored. This may become a joint venture with the mission board of the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN).

9. Nigeria: Mission Services

NMSC's education department consists of all missionaries who work in or for Mountain View Hostel, Hillcrest School, and the Institute of Church and Society. Mountain View Hostel is a boarding facility which provides a home for twenty-four CRWM children while they attend Hillcrest School, a cooperative effort with other missions—most of the children of missionaries in Northern Nigeria receive their education there. We are assigned a quota of eight teachers at Hillcrest. There is also a tutorial service staffed by one volunteer teacher at Mkar which trains a group of kindergarten through grade three children. The Institute of Church and Society promotes awareness of the significance of the gospel for Nigerian society.

NMSC's technical services department consists of the aviation program which flies two aircraft to assist churches and mission in travel, a network of radios to help in communication among mission locations, and a mechanic to maintain vehicles and generators. Five missionaries serve this department.

Due to the decline in Nigeria's economy the government is no longer employing foreign teachers. This greatly reduces the opportunities for the associate missionary program which is designed to recruit Christian staff for Nigerian employers such as Nigeria's Ministry of Education. The number of associate missionaries has fallen to three from a high of about twenty.

10. Guinea-Mali: Mission among the Fulbe People

In June 1984 Synod approved a new field for CRWM in Francophone Africa among the Fulani and Manding peoples of Guinea, Mali, and Senegal, work to

begin immediately among the Fulbe (Fulani) people in Guinea, Mali, and Senegal and among the Manding peoples within five years.

There are at least six million Fulbe people spread across West Africa. Some of them herd cattle and are nomadic. Others have settled down to mixed farming. Some are leaving the life of farm and herd and moving to the city. Nearly all are Muslims.

a. Guinea. Approximately 1.5 million Fulbe live on the Futa Jalon Highlands of Guinea. Most of them are mixed farmers. We will be aiming our mission initially at the province of Labe which has a population of 1,041,000 Fulbe people.

Rev. and Mrs. George Whyte began work in Guinea in February 1985. Among the first assignments will be obtaining registration of our mission with the government and learning the Fulbe language and culture.

b. Mali. Approximately 800,000 Fulbe of the Masina Fulbe group live in central and northern Mali along the Niger River. Many of them are nomadic cattle herders but some have begun to settle and are mixed farmers. At this time they are experiencing a severe drought and shortage of food which may necessitate immediate relief.

Larry and Ann Vanderaa have been living in Bamako, the capital of Mali, since July in order to obtain registration of our mission from the government. They are learning the Pulaar language and will be relocating soon near the town of Nampala in Northern Mali.

Discussion with CRWRC about making this a joint mission is in progress.

II. Sierra Leone

We participate with CRWRC in two of the three projects in Sierra Leone. The total program is called Christian Extension Services. An agreement approved in 1980 assigns CRWM the responsibility of church development. An administrative and strategy agreement providing one onfield administration was approved by both boards in 1982 and revised in 1984. The field is presently responsible to a Joint Agency Committee composed of the Sierra Leone field leader, the CRWRC Africa director, and the CRWM Africa secretary.

a. Kuranko. The Kuranko people live in northern Sierra Leone. Their population is over 300,000 and the majority is Muslim. The Missionary Church of Africa has a small church among them. We work among about one-third of the Kuranko.

Among the Kuranko two CRWM missionary families are now witnessing regularly in fourteen villages. Groups of people are meeting each week to worship or hear evangelism presentations. The weekly attendance at these groups averages 440.

b. Krim. The Krim people live along the southern coast of Sierra Leone. Their population is less than 80,000 and the majority is Muslim. A few Krim belong to the United Brethren Church but we have now assumed responsibility for the evangelization of all of the Krim people.

Among the Krim two CRWM missionary families are witnessing on a regular basis in nine villages. Groups of people are meeting each week to worship or hear evangelism presentations. The weekly attendance at these groups averages 355.

B. *Asia*

1. Missionaries

JAPAN

Bergwall, Grace*
 Boerman, Mary*
 Boersma, Jack & Gayla****
 De Berdt, Michiel M. & Trudy
 De Jonge, Philip V. & Carol
 Herweyer, Allan & Judy
 Hommes, Raymond & Sharon
 Kort, Lori*

Kress, Arnold S. & Lorraine
 Leigh, Wayne E. & Barbara
 Spalink, Lawrence K. & Ruth
 Sytsma, Richard E. & Sandy
 Theule, Paul & Laurie
 Vellekoop, Martin & Cynthia
 Young, George R. & Ruth

CHINESE MISSION

Afman, Carl J. & Janice
 Herz, Peter*
 Reilly, Thomas H.
 Roest, Gary

Tong, Peter & Freda
 Vander Pol, Mike & Lois
 vanHouten, Richard & Christina****

PHILIPPINES

Apostol, Vicente & Lucy
 Boeve, Joseph
 Bouma, Dick C. & Evelyn
 Fox, Joseph D. & Barbara
 Glewen, Arlyn & Lois
 Helleman, Adrian & Wendy
 Hogan, Joel & Patricia
 Knoper, Mark & Ruth
 Koedoot, Gerrit & Ruth
 Kruis, Stanley
 Kwantes, Dick & Anne

Mobach, Marvin & Sandra
 Munro, Alexander & Renona
 Navis, David
 Smidstra, Henry & Marianne
 Steen, Henry & Joan
 Stravers, David & Janet
 Vander Bilt, Maas & Eloise
 Vander Griend, Ronald & Marilou
 Vander Vliet, Joyce*
 Winkle, Steven*

GUAM

Culbertson, E. Neil & Janie Lou

Norman, Sidney & Janice

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Schering, N. Erik & Penny

BANGLADESH

Hamstra, Albert & Melinda****

JORDAN

Vander Berg, Edward & Jenniete****

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

Cooper, Sidney & Janice****

Van Ens, Clarence & Marge****

*Volunteer

***On loan from other missions

****On loan to other missions

2. *Asia General*

An historic meeting in the Philippines in 1984 brought mission leaders from several Asian Reformed churches and their North American counterparts. The Reformed churches in Asia have agreed together to develop a communications network to keep each other informed of the opportunities and activities in mission in their areas. The 1984 meeting of Asia missions and churches (AMCAM) has laid the groundwork for planning for joint work and interchange of resources, on the basis of our shared conviction that God has graciously endowed each church with gifts to be used in the extension of the

kingdom. Churches in Korea, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, and North America joined in exploration of each other's goals in mission. Christian Reformed World Missions was host to the conference, but each church which participated made its own contribution to the overall success of this pioneer effort in cooperative international mission work.

3. Japan

In Japan the Reformed Church exists in five presbyteries, each of which has its own outreach in evangelism, and in each of which there are cooperative agreements with overseas missions of other churches. There are over a hundred congregations in five presbyteries and about 7,000 members.

The mission of the CRC has its focus in the evangelism plans of three presbyteries which have invited the missionaries into joint projects. Each of the mission posts has as its goal the development of a congregation supporting its own pastor and outreach. Some of the older congregations formed through the efforts of the mission are now establishing daughter congregations. Church buildings are helpful in this work, so the mission has loaned building funds when requested. These loans are repaid into a revolving fund.

The CRWM staff was increased by one new missionary in 1984, and another new missionary family, the Vellekoops, is to leave for Japan in September 1985. These persons sustain the same cordial relations to the church as the former veterans, and continue working in new urban areas as determined by mutual agreements between field council and Reformed Church of Japan mission committees.

The mission integrates its diaconal outreach through the established congregations and the Reformed Church of Japan's Shizuoka Blind Center and Takehara Rehabilitation Center. The mission responded last year to an emergency at the Rehabilitation Center and made a contribution to a project to increase safety in the movement of personnel between buildings.

4. Mission to the Chinese in Taiwan and Hong Kong

The mission finds increasing hope for broader involvement in church-planting work. The Taipei urban area comprises about 10 percent of the sixteen million population of Taiwan. The city-state of Hong Kong is the most congested urban area in the world. And China has in its mainland provinces thirty cities of over a million population, including Shanghai, the largest city in the world. The mission views people in all these areas as part of its mission to Chinese people.

The mission works with congregations of the (Christian) Reformed Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, a predominantly Mandarin-speaking group of fifteen congregations most of whom are in the northern part of Taiwan. The congregations, forming two presbyteries, are cooperating in a new pastor-training program which has enrolled fifteen pastors and students in regular theological night school courses.

The mission has an informal agreement of joint work with the original presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. There also is an agreement with Taipei International Church.

Broadcasting and literature programs have continued with some marked successes. The radio program is prepared in Taipei and aired in China from Manila by Far East Broadcasting Company. Consultation with the Back to God

Hour will ensure greater cooperation in future broadcasting. Sermons and other writings are part of a series of books which have been prepared on the field. Continued sales of these books have confirmed hope that the publishing projects are viable.

The missionary assigned to work in Hong Kong is loaned to the Chinese Church Research Center, which provides a large part of the information available to the world regarding the church in China. The mainland Chinese churches have experienced opposition, oppression—and phenomenal growth; the church emerges as a contemporary example of church survival in a communist society.

The churches in Hong Kong have met regularly in drafting a statement of their plans and expectations for a future which will be one of life and work under a communist government.

In 1985, Rev. Carl Afman and Rev. Mike Vander Pol will leave their work in Taiwan and return to pastoral work in the United States. Their missionary service represents a total of thirty-nine years of experience in the CRC Chinese Mission.

5. The Philippines

The nation was in political and economic crisis during all of 1984. This year dawned with official predictions of progress toward economic recovery, but continuing political uncertainty. Whether stability will prevail is a matter of much concern and prayer. The Reformed Church needs to be the voice of a reformer throughout the land.

There are twenty-six congregations in the Christian Reformed Church in the Philippines, of which ten are organized with elders and deacons. There was both growth and decline during 1984. The growth was marked by festive gatherings at Easter, Pentecost, and Reformation Day. There were baptisms and professions of faith in each congregation, as the Word was preached and the sacraments were celebrated. Another mark of the church is the exercise of discipline—painful, disappointing, and necessary. We pray for the return of two gifted pastors to places of leadership and example. Their departure from service was related to the delicate exercise of stewardship of church diaconal funds. One of the joint church-mission evangelism projects has been set back by this crisis.

Blessings not only overshadow disappointments, they point the way to new victories. During 1984 three missionaries departed, but we rejoiced at the addition to the staff of five new missionaries and two volunteers in 1984 and two new missionaries in 1985. The year 1985 will see the entry of all these new personnel into their work—all except one are assigned to church planting.

The field council administrative structure has been streamlined. The development of a spirit and organization of teams working in four or five geographical areas is a goal in 1985. Eighteen of the missionary positions are specifically designated for church-planting work. The others are in administration of the Christian Reformed Seminary and Bible College (CRSBC), teaching at CRSBC, and teacher for missionary children.

Presently there are forty-five students at CRSBC. It is still the mission's hope that the church will assume responsibility for the school. During 1985 continued redirection of the extensive field-work program of the school will be coordinated with an academic program by extension.

The mission has developed a diaconal committee to deal with family crises and personal emergencies which occur in congregations not yet blessed with elders and deacons. The possibilities for growth are great, abetted by the political and economic stresses which the country experienced during 1984.

6. Guam

In Guam, Faith Presbyterian Reformed Church has grown in its sense of independence and identity—precisely what was hoped for when the bookstore ministry moved to a new location in 1984. The distinctive goals of each ministry are already being better achieved.

Faith Church has a large change in membership annually. This is taxing and requires annual articulation of the goals and procedures of the church. The congregation conducts a vigorous ministry to Kosraen, Ponapean, and Trukese students at the University of Guam. Outreach into the scattered island groups in the Federated States of Micronesia is possible through the extensive contacts with graduates of the University of Guam. Community outreach on Guam is substantial in that Faith Church and its pastor have consistently spoken to the moral issues which are critical on Guam—gambling, violence, prostitution, honesty in government.

The Faith Bookstore has grown each year and emerges from competition with one secular and one Christian bookstore as the most respected and effective booksales agency on the island. The sales reached \$300,000 gross in 1980, dipped in 1981 and 1982, and reached new highs in 1983 and 1984. The bookstore has been located in Agana Shopping Center since June 1984.

The Sidney Norman family will be returning to North America this summer and recruitment for the position of bookstore manager is underway.

7. Loaned Ministries

a. Papua New Guinea

The Sepik Valley of northwestern Papua New Guinea is a dense jungle through which the main thoroughfare is the Sepik River. Along this river there are congregations in Ambunti, Yawa, Maposi, and Wayawas. Distances and primitive conditions permit only limited intercommunication among remote tribes and their churches. Rev. Erik and Mrs. Penny Schering and their children work in cooperation with Pacific Island Ministries, which has established schools in these areas, and encourages development projects using local timber resources and river travel. Rev. Schering works in church development and leadership training. He is on loan to the Pacific Island Ministries and is now in his fourth year of service there.

During 1984 four congregations affiliated with the indigenous New Life Bible Churches. Large groups were baptized—sixty-five in September and over a hundred in December in two of these churches. Rev. Schering trains pastors, explores new areas with the pastors, trains leaders, and examines candidates for baptism. Because of these successes, and after thorough review, the request of the Board of Pacific Island Ministries for the loan of the Scherings for another term of service was approved at our annual board meeting.

b. Bangladesh

Rev. Albert and Mrs. Mindy Hamstra work under the auspices of the Bangladesh Bible Society. Their program is the production of audio cassette

tapes of the Scriptures, the provision of tape players, and the distribution of tapes and players in Bangladesh.

The recording of the Scriptures is done with several voices and sometimes with background music. The players and recording equipment are provided through the innovative ministry of Portable Recording Ministries in Holland, MI.

The success of this ministry has resulted in a board decision to continue this work for another three-year term.

c. Jordan

In a land where Christians are a decreasing minority, now probably at a 5 percent level, the importance of religious instruction of the younger generation is of critical importance. Rev. Edward and Mrs. Nita Vander Berg are on loan to the Arab Evangelical Church which has assigned them to the Ahliyyah schools. The missionary is responsible for religious instruction in the schools, which enroll both Christian and Muslim students.

The invitation of the church and the qualifications of the missionary family are both of unique dimension. The assignment is one of limited duration, but provides the CRC with an opportunity for witness in an area of missionary outreach to which few are able to go. The Reformed faith has a great responsibility and opportunity in this troubled area.

d. Australia and New Zealand

Because of the deep appreciation shown to the CRC for the ministries of loaned pastors during a five-year period, synod in 1984 decided to continue the CRC responses to requests for pastors on loan. Service was given in 1984 by Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Van Ens in Box Hill; by Rev. and Mrs. Paul Stadt in Christchurch, before their return to North America early in 1984; by Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Werkema, as volunteers, in Nelson; and by Dr. and Mrs. Andrew Bandstra in a lecture program at Geelong Seminary.

The Van Ensens will continue into 1985 as volunteers at the request of the Box Hill consistory, and Rev. and Mrs. Sidney Cooper will serve in the Palmerston North Church in New Zealand. A third pastor on loan will be arranged during 1985 in response to a request from the churches.

e. Korea

The Synod of 1984 approved the development of a pilot program within three years to supply educators to Chong Shin College in Seoul, Korea. During the course of this academic year, Rev. Richard Sytsma has lectured there and Dr. Melvin Hugen will also visit. These "educational missionaries" are much appreciated by our Korean colleagues. After evaluations, the future course of this educational assistance will be determined.

C. Latin America

1. Missionaries

ARGENTINA

Rooy, Sidney H. & Mae

Zondervan, James & Betty

BRAZIL

Bosma, Carl J. & Anneke

Uken, Charles & Clarice

CENTRAL AMERICA

Belize

Meyer, Dorothy**

COSTA RICA

Bergsma, Paul & Barbara
 Drenth, Cecelia**
 Green, Wm. P. III & Aletha
 Koning, Gerald & Laura

Stam, Jeff & Denise
 Teja, Gary & Jackie
 Van Den Berge, Rick & Karen
 Van Hofwegen, Michael H. &

HONDURAS

Canche, Pablo & Sheryl
 Danielson, Michael & Bonnie**
 De Vries, Helen
 Diemer, Fred & Betty
 Fast, Janelle**
 Konynenbelt, Glenda**
 Kruize, Grace**
 Kuipers, Arla**
 Mulder, Peter & Birgit
 Peterson, Eunice**

Feikema, Roger & Rebecca**
 Heeringa, Samuel & Barbara**
 Helmus, Sid & Elaine*
 Jasperse, Dirk & Joy
 Jones, Bryn & Carla
 Renkema, Bill & Theresa
 Schipper, Gary & Rose***
 Soerens, Tom & Cheryl
 Strong, Joseph & Nellie
 Wind, John & Shirley

DOMINICA

Oosterhouse, Ken & Nancy**

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Brinks, Raymond & Gladys
 De Jong, Jeffrey & Kathy
 De Young, Wayne R. & Sandy
 Duimstra, Cheryl*
 Hegeman, Neal & Sandy
 Martinez, Jose & Pamela

McCullough, Jane*
 Oostendorp, Derk & Nancy
 Roeda, Daniel & Janette
 Veeneman, Ryan W. & Julie
 Walcott, Thomas J. & Jaci

MEXICO

De Young, John & Jerre
 Geurkink, Daniel & Jean
 Kuiper, Daniel R. & Jeananne
 Marcus, Abraham & Doris

Nyenhuis, Gerald & Francisca
 Redondo, William & Mary
 Rumph, Arnold & Marie****
 Van Ee, Jan & Darlene

PUERTO RICO

Bolt, Jane*
 De Vries, W. Thomas & Evelyn*****
 Gritter, Winabelle
 Leder, Arie C. & Olga

Rottschafer, Esther*
 Sawyer, Frank & Aria
 Sprik, Ronald & Judy
 Vander Ziel, Thomas & Judy

VENEZUELA (temporary)

Dekker, James & Rose

Key:

*Short term, volunteer, or medical intern

**Associate missionaries

***On study leave

****Teaching at International Theological Seminary

*****Interim Latin America Secretary

2. Introductory Remarks

There is no doubt that the people of Latin America are suffering. The media places Latin America in the spotlight because of its contested elections, its new highs in inflation, and its bloody episodes of terrorist activities, but the day-to-day needs of the common people often are ignored. Millions of people in Latin

America have no access to the means and materials that we consider essential to a life of human dignity. Education, medical care, jobs, freedom of expression, decent housing, and food are still out of reach for many.

There are many superficial reasons for this suffering in Latin America, but there is only one basic cause—man's rebellion against the claims of his God. It is man's rebellion, in reality, which has damaged relationships in economics, in human interaction, in political systems, and in the stewardship of the earth. The true solution to this basic problem is to be found in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the claims of his kingdom. During the past year his gospel has been proclaimed fruitfully by our church's missionaries in Latin America. It has been preached in chapels and churches, in houses and rented quarters, and on the streets of towns and cities. By word and deed this gospel has been brought through the power of Christ's Spirit. We praise God and give him thanks for his blessings and care through troublesome times. We recognize his goodness and leading through the year which has past.

3. Cooperative International Theology by Extension (CITE)

CITE is the program used in Central America and several other areas of Latin America for the purposes of promoting discipleship in the church. Many leaders and pastors as well as others are being trained—both by missionaries and by other churches and groups—with the materials that are prepared by this CRWM ministry. New materials continue to be developed.

4. Argentina

Two CRC missionary families continue to work in Argentina—one in theological education, the other in church planting. Although the elected civilian government has been able to govern, the economic situation remains serious. Inflation during 1984 rose to above 700 percent. The struggle for justice after several years of military rule continues.

The Reformed Church in Argentina shows slow internal growth. However, some hopeful signs are evident. The church is working with other groups in a word-deed mission program in the northern part of the country. Furthermore in its synodical meeting it was decided to decrease the request of the church from exterior missions for funding for its personal expenses by 10 percent per year in order that those funds might be used strictly for mission outreach in other parts of the country.

5. Brazil

For several years our work in Brazil has been carried on by two missionary families. Contributions are being made on a local level to the outreach program of the Presbyterian Church in Brazil. Much discipling is being done in response to a continuing interest and openness to the gospel in this South American field.

6. Central America

We give thanks that the political situation in this area of Latin America has not negatively affected the work being carried out by local believers or by our missionaries.

Although our missionaries are residing only in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Belize at the present time, periodic visits are made to El Salvador and Nicaragua. Several sites are being worked actively in San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica. The churches are growing. There are about 200 people worshipping in

the CRC in Nicaragua and 165 in El Salvador. There are also four organized churches and twenty-six missions in Honduras.

There is an extensive program of training by extension for pastors and other leaders, with approximately eighty persons in training. For training of pastors, a program somewhere between seminary by extension and resident seminary has been adopted.

A plan for the coordination of work by CRWRC and CRWM has been made and is working well.

7. Cuba

This past year two representatives of the Christian Reformed Church of Cuba were able to visit the synod of the CRC in Grand Rapids. Their visit was most helpful. Thirteen groups and churches continue to meet and worship in Cuba. During 1984 some material aid was given to the Cuban church.

8. Dominica

One Christian Reformed family is living on this small island, helping the Christian community there by teaching in a Christian school. CRWM is involved in this work by means of its associate missionary program. It does not appear that our presence in this island will be of long duration.

9. Dominican Republic

Our work in this field is primarily with Haitian sugarcane cutters, although work is also being done with Dominicans. One new family joined the missionary team during 1984. Our missionaries live in the capital of Santo Domingo, Barahona, La Romana, and Sabana Grande De Boya. New groups are constantly joining the mission; they now number about 135. The growth continues at a very rapid rate.

Leadership training includes about two hundred people. Moreover, since some of the leaders are illiterate, this effort must begin with literacy training. Many are also unfamiliar with the doctrines of the church and, therefore, our missionaries spend much of their time in a discipling ministry. The program of day schools continues to expand with about ten such schools serving about seven hundred students at the present time. There are great physical needs on this field, thus making it necessary for our work to include a deed ministry which assists with proper nutrition, health care, sanitary facilities, and housing. CRWM requests permission from synod to expand the Dominican Republic field to include work in Haiti. The area where work is contemplated involves those who, through their contacts with the Haitian cane cutters who travel between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, have come to know of the CRC.

10. Mexico

The Independent Presbyterian Church in Mexico, with which the CRC has been working for many years, was divided in 1984. This division was mainly due to difficulties regarding personalities and questions of leadership. We have continued to work with the larger of the two groups.

One of our missionaries is teaching in the John Calvin Seminary; others are involved in church planting and extension, media evangelism and movie clubs, and InterVarsity work among university students. There are seven missionary families on the field who have once again formed a Mexico Field Council. Until June 1985 one other missionary is involved in teaching at the

International Theological Seminary in California. A multilateral agreement as to our work in Mexico has been initiated.

This past year has been a very difficult and trying one for our missionaries. They have been defamed in the newspapers and before the government by being called US spies. We ask for your prayers that the work in Mexico may continue.

11. Puerto Rico

During the past year five missionary families formed our CRWM staff on this Caribbean island. Two of them dedicated themselves to church planting; the other three taught in the local Reformed seminary and engaged in development work in addition to their church planting responsibilities.

There are three organized churches and five preaching posts or chapels on the island.

The strategy of the field has been that of strengthening the already existing churches in discipleship and raising up new churches through the ministry of both the students in the seminary and the missionaries.

During the year a careful study and evaluation of the field was made by a CRWM committee with the resulting decision to reduce considerably the number of personnel on the field during 1985, thus encouraging the national church to become more independent in its government and its outreach into the island. By and large the national church has taken a very positive attitude regarding this opportunity for independence—in December 1984, in response to the action taken by the visiting study committee of CRWM, three seminary students were ordained to the ministry. This action raises to four the number of ordained pastors in the Christian Reformed Church of Puerto Rico. An interdependence agreement with the national church will be forthcoming.

12. Venezuela

There is one missionary family present in Venezuela whose responsibility, among other things, is that of determining to what extent CRWM should become involved in work in this northernmost South American country.

13. Haiti

The constant traveling of Haitian cane cutters back and forth between the Dominican Republic and Haiti caused the CRC to become known in the Republic of Haiti itself. These contacts resulted in certain groups in Haiti approaching our missionaries in the Dominican Republic regarding the possibility of the CRC initiating work in Haiti. Surveys taken by our missionaries led them to recommend that work be begun in neighboring Haiti. CRWRC also mentioned its willingness to assist in some way. As a result of this, CRWM makes the following proposal to the synod of the CRC:

CRWM requests the 1985 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to authorize the expansion of its work to include Haiti. This, with the Dominican Republic field, will be called the "Hispaniola" field.

Grounds:

1. Our very successful work in the Dominican Republic has been originally and still is primarily with the Haitians. These people are ripe for the gospel.

2. Because our missionaries in the Dominican Republic have learned the language (Creole) and the culture of the Haitians, it would be easier to move into Haiti proper than to enter a totally new country.
3. Haiti is the western half of the island of Hispaniola of which the Dominican Republic is the eastern half. Distances between Haiti and the Dominican Republic and between Haiti and North America are short. Travel is economical.
4. Haitians traveling between the Dominican Republic and Haiti have already introduced the CRC to their fellow citizens.
5. CRWRC has been in Haiti for some time. Although CRWM does not envision working in the area where CRWRC is presently at work, the Christian Reformed name is known to the government, and CRWRC has offered to work with us.
6. Although many denominations and missions are present in Haiti, they work in the cities and along the main roads. There are no other Reformed groups in Haiti, and in the area of Mare Pintad there is no evangelization effort at all.
7. CRWM missionaries from the Dominican Republic, having done three separate surveys of Haiti three times and have submitted enthusiastic reports.
8. At the moment there exists a situation similar to that of the Dominican Republic some years ago: A local leader with some assistant preachers has organized several preaching stations and schools and has invited us to come in. Knowledge of the gospel is minimal since most rural Haitians are illiterate. If not aided by an evangelical mission, they would be easy prey for a sect.
9. Since the Haitians themselves have organized "churches" and "schools," all exceedingly primitive, the work would remain indigenous; our assistance would be in leadership training, better educational methods, and such deed ministries which will not produce dependence.
10. After extensive analysis of possibilities throughout the world, the two "finalists" before choosing a country to be the focus of our denominational "World Hunger" effort, were Haiti and Sierra Leone. The conditions which caused Haiti to be considered in 1978 remain the same in 1985.
11. Although we would enter with caution and discretion, the opportunity to fulfill the goals of CRWM's "Concentration and Diffusion" policy appears to be excellent.
12. Missionaries in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere have expressed an eagerness to go to Haiti. Some Central America countries remain closed to us and work in Puerto Rico is being reduced; therefore, it seems logical to enter a country practically on our doorstep which is desperately poor both physically and spiritually.
13. Funds previously designated for Puerto Rico and Mexico are now available for use elsewhere.
14. The deployment scale ratings of this field strongly encourage opening this work.

IV. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. General Overview

CRWM is grateful to report that to date all financial obligations have been met despite the fact that income fell below our projection. In the process, however, financial reserves have been depleted and a loan was secured for a three-month period. CRWM cut back on capital spending, and missionary positions on the field went unfilled. At the time of this writing, World Missions projects that even with curtailed spending, outgo will still exceed income for the fiscal year.

Although there is desperate need and enormous opportunity for the gospel, high economic inflation rates have for the most part intensified; at the same time North American economic conditions continue to affect mission giving. However, the CRC is a mission-minded church and God will maintain work done in his name.

B. Salary Scale Disclosure

The Synod of 1984 adopted a compensation and position analysis program for executive and managerial personnel. Each agency, in its annual report to synod, is instructed to report compensation data indicating job level, number of positions, and compensation quartile. CRWM data is as follows:

Job level	Number of positions	Compensation quartile including housing allowance
8	1	2nd quartile (\$40,010-44,456)
6	4	2nd quartile (\$35,370-39,300)

Missionary salary-scale information for fiscal 1986 (September 1, 1985, through August 31, 1986) is as follows:

1. Basic Salary \$12,900
2. Marriage Allowance 4,400
3. Education Allowance
 - A.A. Degree 100
 - B.A. Degree 200
 - M.A. Degree 400
 - B.D. or M. Div Degree 500
 - Doctoral Degree 600
4. Prior service increase: \$75.00 per year of prior service with a ten-year maximum. Prior service is defined as applicable work undertaken previous to employment with CRWM in a field similar to or qualifying the individual for CRWM service.
5. Service increase: \$150.00 per year for each year of service with CRWM.
6. Children's allowance: \$500.00 per year per child.
7. Cost-of-living subsidy on all fields where applicable.
8. Allowance to ordained staff members for Social Security purposes.
9. Pension plan payments and all medical and hospitalization costs.
10. 50 percent of dental expenses.
11. Housing on field and during home service.
12. Automobile or transportation costs overseas.
13. Assistance toward exceptional education costs for children.

C. Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 1984

The 1984 financial report covers the period from September 1, 1983, through August 31, 1984. The audited report and related financial statements for the year ending August 31, 1984, as prepared by Jack L. Jipping, Certified Public Accountant, are presented to synod through the Synodical Interim Finance Committee.

D. Budget for Fiscal Year 1986

The CRWM budget for fiscal year 1986 is for the period from September 1, 1985, through August 31, 1986. A complete budget will be submitted to synod and to members of its Finance Advisory Committee through the Synodical Interim Finance Committee. A summary of the budget follows:

INCOME	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
Quota	\$4,909,775	52.3
Missionary support	2,350,000	25.1
Gifts and offerings	1,475,000	15.7
Legacies	432,275	4.6
Miscellaneous	193,910	2.1
From estate funds	15,000	.2
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,375,960	100.0
DISBURSEMENT		
PROGRAM SERVICES:		
Africa	\$3,321,445	
Asia	2,184,775	
Latin America	2,512,440	
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$8,018,660	85.5
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:		
Administration	\$997,700	
Promotion	359,600	
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	\$1,357,300	14.5
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$9,375,960	100.0

E. Quota Request for 1986

Quota requested for 1986 is \$86.75 per family. In addition CRWM requests that synod grant an additional quota of \$.30 per family for 1986 to continue the Australia-New Zealand program as assigned by synod to CRWM.

F. Request for Special Offerings

CRWM is requesting approval of a budget of \$9,375,960 and quota income of \$4,909,775, which is 52.3 percent of the total. The balance of \$4,466,185 (47.7 percent) must be raised through missionary support, gifts and offerings, legacies, and other income. In order to meet this financial need, it is necessary that CRWM be recommended for special offerings. Therefore CRWM earnestly requests that synod continue CRWM on the list of denominational agencies recommended for one or more offerings during 1986.

V. CONCLUSION

Two matters gained the highest visibility during the past year: the relationship of CRWM and CRWRC and the disturbance in the church in Mexico.

We are thankful to report that great strides toward resolution of both these issues took place. Agreements on joint organizational structures were agreed upon for each of the joint CRWM-CRWRC fields. In Mexico the field council was reorganized and functions in excellent harmony internally and with the larger section of the divided church. The attention focused on these items easily overshadows the unprecedented blessings which occurred in almost all of the fields of ministry worldwide. This was matched by deepened prayer support from the home base. Over two thousand prayer volunteers have now been enrolled and fifteen prayer chains operate regularly on behalf of our missionaries. We are grateful for the 320 missionaries who proclaim the kingdom in word and deed. During 1984 twenty-four regular missionaries were appointed plus three interns, six short-term workers, eight associate missionaries, and sixteen volunteers.

As we now look ahead it is clear that the pastoral care of missionaries and the provision of psychological services remain an important challenge for us.

It is clear that the prospect of increased unrest must be faced throughout the world. Contingency plans must form a part of each field council's documentation. The possibilities for tentmaking ministries continue to be very promising. It is imperative that consideration be given to tapping this pool of resources within the CRC for doing evangelism in those areas where organized mission will no longer be welcome.

The ongoing urbanization in all the CRWM areas shows the need for increased attention to urban missions and the provision of an urban strategy. Future planning also must make provision for closer relationships between the missionaries and the sending churches.

Finally it is clear that the prayer mobilization effort that took place during the past year has born great fruit both among the missionaries and those involved on the home front. We may continue to expect an increasing confrontation with the demonic as light breaks into the darkness. The enemy sees God's kingdom spreading and increases his counterattacks. Our missionary family must be undergirded with spiritual power and we shall then observe how the Lord will triumph through us in the years ahead.

VI. SUMMARY OF ITEMS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

- A. Representation at synod (see Section I, B)
- B. Election of members-at-large and alternates (see Section I, C)
- C. Presentation of missionaries (see Section I, D)
- D. Request to open CRWM work in Haiti (see Section III, C, 13)
- E. Financial matters
 1. Budget for 1986 (see Section IV, D)
 2. Request for basic quota of \$86.75 (see Section IV,E)
 3. Request for special offerings (see Section IV, F)

Board for Christian Reformed
World Missions
Eugene Rubingh, executive secretary

REPORT 5 CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

This report covers the actions of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary from June 1984 to February 1985. A supplementary report will be submitted following the May 1985 meeting of the board.

I. INFORMATION

A. *The Board of Trustees*

1. The semiannual session of the Board of Trustees was held February 4-7, 1985. The board is composed of forty-three members, of whom forty are classical trustees and three are district trustees. Twenty-seven ministers and sixteen laymen represent the classes and the three district representatives are all laypersons, including one woman. Of the ministerial trustees, five are not serving churches and two are retired. The following trustees were elected as officers at the February board meeting:

President	Mr. Jay Morren
First vice president	Rev John Joldersma
Second vice president	Dr. Harry Holwerda
Secretary	Rev. Wilbert M. Van Dyk
Assistant secretary	Rev. Jerry J. Hoytema

2. The board is honoring synodical regulation to phase out district, or "at-large" trustees. Since, in recent years, the district trustees have been non-ministers, the result is a depletion of lay membership on the board. It appears that it will be impossible to meet the board's own requirement of half minister and half non-minister trustees on its executive committee. According to synodical advice, the board has alerted classes "so that they in turn may take this information into consideration when electing delegates."

3. Board member visits to college and seminary classes were assigned and carried out in keeping with the regulation that requires such a visit of faculty members eligible for reappointment.

4. In February the board and faculty enjoyed its annual conference. This year's topic was "Calvin College and Seminary's response to the Brandt Commission Report (1980), a profile of two disparate sets of societies on the same planet and the implications of their growing disparity."

B. *The Seminary*

1. Faculty and Staff Matters

a. Sixteen professors serve fulltime at Calvin Seminary. In the Biblical Division, Dr. Andrew J. Bandstra teaches New Testament; Dr. David Engelhard, Old Testament; Dr. David E. Holwerda, New Testament; Rev. John

H. Stek, Old Testament; and Dr. Marten H. Woudstra, Old Testament. In the Church and Ministry Division, Rev. Harold Dekker teaches Missions; Dr. Richard R. De Ridder, Church Polity and Administration; Dr. Melvin D. Hugen, Pastoral Care; Dr. Carl G. Kromminga, Practical Theology; Rev. Robert Recker, Missions; and Dr. Marion Snapper, Church Education. In the Theological Division, Dr. James A. De Jong teaches Historical Theology; Dr. Fred H. Klooster, Systematic Theology; Dr. Theodore Minnema, Philosophical and Moral Philosophy; Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., Systematic Theology; and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra, Historical Theology.

b. Eleven parttime instructors complement the work of the regular teaching faculty. They are Dr. Melvin Berghuis, Homiletics; Dr. Paul Bergsma, Missions; Dr. Paul L. Bremer, Systematic Theology; Rev. Dean Deppe, New Testament; Dr. John Hamersma, Worship; Dr. Anthony A. Hoekema, theological reflection; Dr. John H. Kromminga, Church History; Dr. Henry Stob, theological reflection; Rev. Wilbert M. Van Dyk, Preaching Practicum; Dr. David Van Gelder, Pastoral Theology; Rev. James B. White, Old Testament.

c. Dr. T. Minnema and Rev. J. Stek completed sabbatical leaves during the 1983-84 academic year; and Dr. A. Bandstra completed one quarter of teaching at the Reformed Theological College in Geelong, Australia.

d. Miss Lynda Cockroft was appointed as coordinator of Support Services for two years.

e. The Chair of Old Testament

The retirement of Dr. Marten Woudstra necessitated immediate work to staff the Old Testament Department. The faculty reviewed twenty-seven possibilities for the position. It interviewed four. It presented a nomination of Dr. Barry Bandstra and Dr. Raymond Van Leeuwen to the board. From that nomination the board appointed Dr. Raymond Van Leeuwen as Assistant Professor of Old Testament for three years. Synod will be asked to approve this appointment according to the regulations adopted by synod (*Acts of Synod 1979*, Art. 60, II, pp. 69-70).

f. The Chair of Philosophical Theology

In the spring of 1978 the board declared a vacancy in the field of philosophical theology. Since that time the position has been filled by lectureships. During 1984 the faculty and board aggressively sought qualified candidates to fill this position with a regular appointment. The faculty considered fifty-six candidates for the position and interviewed two: Dr. John Cooper and Dr. Henry Schuurman. From that nomination the board appointed Dr. John Cooper as Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology for three years. Synod will be asked to approve this appointment according to the regulations adopted by synod (*Acts of Synod 1979*, Art. 60, II, pp. 69-70).

g. Concerning the two above appointments, the board would like synod to know that since both Dr. R. Van Leeuwen and Dr. J. Cooper have had limited practical experience in the ministry, the board adopted an arrangement by which some such experience may be gained within the first six years of teaching. Furthermore, since neither is ordained, the board recommends that synod follow the same procedure it did in 1953, 1954, 1959, and 1965 and declare that both Dr. Van Leeuwen and Dr. Cooper are eligible for a call to the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church; and refer the matter of a calling church to the Synodical Interim Committee,

with the understanding that the appointees will receive a call, sustain the classical examination, and be ordained (*Acts of Synod 1965*, pp. 101-02) Apropos the above: the board appointed a committee to review the question of ordination and a teaching position at Calvin Seminary.

h. Leaves of Absence

The board approved a sabbatical leave of absence for Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., for the second and third quarters and the summer following of the academic year, 1985-86.

i. The board approved the request of the International Theological Seminary in Los Angeles to provide a Calvin Seminary professor to teach in fulltime residence during either the first or third quarter of the 1985-86 academic year.

2. Academic Matters

a. The board approved the new course, Old Testament 108, entitled "The Holy Land Yesterday and Today."

b. Curriculum Revision

The board has spent a number of years dealing with the revision of the curriculum at Calvin Seminary. More recently the faculty has done a sizable amount of work on this project. Although no final curriculum revisions have been adopted, the faculty will continue its efforts in that direction.

c. The International Congress on Calvin Research is a prestigious organization that normally holds its meetings on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. The board was pleased to note that the committee on arrangements has accepted the seminary's invitation to hold the 1990 meeting of the congress on the Calvin campus. The board asked the seminary to plan appropriately for this significant event.

3. Student Matters

a. Student Financial Aid

At its May 1983 meeting the board appointed a Student Financial Aid Committee to study the escalating costs of seminary education, mounting student indebtedness, wide disparities among classical aid policies, and a move towards bringing seminary tuition into line with college tuition. The Synod of 1983 took note of the above matters and asked the board to report its findings to the Synod of 1984. Because of the size of its mandate the committee was not able to finish its work until shortly before the February 1985 board meeting. The report documented the historical commitment of the church to theological education at Calvin Seminary, the fact that since 1979 seminary tuition has doubled, the fact that in 1984-85 the average cumulative student indebtedness will be \$6,244.00, and the fact that the seminary is receiving a decreasing share of the quota dollar. To help ease these financial tensions, the board has already put into place a Seminary Revolving Loan Fund and a loan forgiveness policy. It has worked on funding the John H. Kromminga Scholarship for Multiracial Leadership, the Foreign Student Scholarships, a "cottage industry program," and sixteen units of seminary housing that are now on the drawing board.

At the February meeting the board adopted several internal regulations in its address to this continuing concern. It also decided to "inform synod that the board favors the development of a Denominational Student Aid Fund to provide financial assistance for M.Div. students at Calvin Seminary prepar-

ing for the ordained ministry in the Christian Reformed Church." It is envisioned that the committee to administer the proposed fund would work alongside existing classical student aid committees. A subcommittee of the board is trying to work out the basic contours of this concept. It is hoped that it will be available as a recommendation to synod in June in the Board of Trustees supplementary report.

b. Women M.Div. Students and Exhorting

Since February 1974 the seminary has had a board-approved policy to "include women (M.Div.) students in fieldwork other than exhorting." In the years that followed, it became obvious that the 1974 formulation was subject to differing interpretations. At its February 1985 meeting the board was served by a faculty report, without recommendation, on this matter. After considerable deliberation in committee and plenary session, the board adopted the following policy (reported here in its entirety) governing women M.Div. students at Calvin Seminary:

1. Calvin Seminary will admit women to its M.Div. program.

Grounds:

- a. As an educational institution Calvin Theological Seminary has a mission which is broader than preparing men for Christian Reformed ministry.
- b. Even though the M.Div. degree program is "primarily for persons wishing to prepare themselves for the ordained ministry," admission to and/or graduation from the program does not require that the student will be or intends to be ordained.

2. Calvin Seminary will not require exhorting (understood as the explanation and application of Scripture at an official worship service) in its requirements for the M.Div. degree for women students.

Grounds:

- a. As a seminary of the Christian Reformed Church, the requirements of the school must be consistent with the position of the church which has not opened the office of minister to the Word to women.
- b. The Synod of 1976 permitted "the seminary to waive the requirement of exhorting in field education for women students enrolled in the M.Div. program" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 51, p. 54).
3. Calvin Seminary will not solicit, promote, or provide opportunities for exhorting by its women M.Div. students; nor will it place its women M.Div. students in field education assignments without the clear understanding that exhorting is not required nor expected.

Grounds: Same as 2 above.

4. Calvin Seminary will promote, evaluate, and credit all fieldwork by women M.Div. students other than exhorting, including public teaching and speaking in places such as rest homes, chapels, retreats, and other such nonofficial worship settings.

Grounds:

- a. The M.Div. degree presupposes some level of supervised, evaluated, and credited fieldwork.
- b. The Synod of 1976 urged "the churches to make all possible use, within biblical guidelines and the restrictions of the Church Order, of the talents and abilities of women in the work of the church" (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 48, p. 47).

C. *The College*

1. Faculty Profile, September 1984

In the fall of 1984 there were 216 persons on fulltime appointment, plus a parttime staff of 41. Of the 216 fulltime staff, 25 were on leave of absence or had reduced teaching loads, thus a staff of just over 211 FTE (fulltime equivalent) was available for teaching and other duties in September 1984.

a. Staff needs

The student-faculty ratio of 18.20:1 (exclusive of nursing) will be used as a guideline for staffing in 1985-86. The enrollment projection for 1985-86 is 3,838. There are staff openings for 12 regular positions and 17 temporary positions.

b. Leaves of absence

Sabbatical leaves of varying lengths were approved for 19 faculty members, and nonsabbatical leaves were approved for 7 faculty members for 1985-86.

c. Appointments and reappointments are listed in Section II of this report.

2. Academic Matters

The board approved the following:

- a. Seventeen new courses, six in physical education
- b. AuSable Trails Environmental Institute Program
- c. Courses taught by Multicultural Lecturer Professor D. Cloete (one offering only):
 - Religion and Theology 245, Surpassing Righteousness
 - Religion and Theology 255, Refugee and Stranger
- d. A course taught by Visiting Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship Fellow Professor R. Snow (one offering only):
 - Interdisciplinary 2XX, Public Controversy in Science and Technology
- e. Calvin Research Fellowships to Charlotte Otten and Corwin Smidt
- f. Appointment of a one-third-time director of off-campus study opportunities
- g. The creation of a new position entitled "Director of Undergraduate Teacher Education"
- h. Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship Fellowships to Hessel Bouma, III, Theodore Rottman, and Visiting Fellows Douglas Diekema, Edward Langerak, and Allen Verhey
- i. The selection of the topic "Toward a Reformed Response to the Conflicts in Central America" in the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship for the 1986-87 year

3. Student Matters

The board receives regular reports on student matters from the president. For the past two years the board has joined faculty and student representatives in a study of the need for a chapel on Calvin's campus in the light of the need for a place of worship. The committee made recommendations that would strengthen the college chapel program, and is postponing a final recommendation concerning the need for and nature of a college chapel until the May meeting of the board.

D. *Business and Finance*

1. The board adopted a motion to request synod to approve a 5 percent quota increase for 1986.
2. The board adopted the following college tuition rates for 1985-86:

Non-Christian Reformed	\$4,980
Local Christian Reformed	4,620
Michigan Christian Reformed beyond 10 miles	4,520
Out-of-state within 300 miles	4,200
Out-of-state within 1,000 miles	4,100
Out-of-state beyond 1,000 miles	4,000
3. The board approved the fees for room and board for 1985-86 at \$2,220.
4. The board authorized the administration to proceed toward the construction of eighteen apartments for college students and sixteen apartments for seminary students on the East Campus.
5. The board authorized the administration to convert the dining hall from a "line" system to a "scatter" system; and to enlarge and renovate the dining hall at an estimated cost of \$550,000.
6. The board adopted a \$3,390,700 fundraising goal for 1985-86
7. According to synodical regulation, the board submits the following executive level compensation report for 1985.

Job level	No. of positions in job level	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
9	1	3rd quartile (100-110%)
7	2	4th quartile (110-120%)
7	2	3rd quartile (100-110%)
5	1	3rd quartile (100-110%)

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *Seminary*

1. The board recommends the following appointments:
 - a. John Cooper, Ph.D., as Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology for three years
 - b. Raymond Van Leeuwen, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Old Testament for three years

2. The board recommends that if synod approves the board's appointees to the chair of Old Testament and to the chair of Philosophical Theology, it declare them eligible for a call to the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, and refer the matter of a calling church to the Synodical Interim Committee (*Acts of Synod 1965*, pp. 101-02; also 1953, 1954, 1959).

B. *College*

1. Faculty Appointments

The board recommends the following:

- a. Regular two-year appointments
 - (1) Randall Bytwerk, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Communications Arts and Sciences

- (2) Bonnie W. Medema, M.N., Instructor in Nursing
- (3) Gloria Stronks, Ed.D., Professor of Education
- b. Terminal appointments
 - (1) Eric H. Beversluis, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Economics and Business for one year
 - (2) David De Heer, Ph.D., Professor of Biology for one and one-half years
 - (3) Stanley D. Pikaart, M.A., Assistant Professor of History for one year
 - (4) Dean E. Rietberg, J.D., Instructor in Economics and Business for one year
 - (5) Douglas J. Schuurman, M.Div., Instructor in Religion and Theology for one year
- c. Academic Administration
 - Corrine E. Kass, Ph.D., Dean for Academic Administration for three years

2. Faculty Reappointments

The board recommends the following:

- a. Reappointment with tenure (*Italics indicates a promotion to that rank*)
 - (1) Kenneth D. Bratt, M.A., *Professor of Classical Languages*
 - (2) Barbara Carvill, Ph.D., *Professor of Germanic Languages and Literature*
 - (3) Carl W. Kaiser, M.Mus., Associate Professor of Music
 - (4) Gregory F. Mellema, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy
 - (5) Carl T. Mulder, Ed.D., Professor of Education
 - (6) Corwin E. Smidt, Ph.D., *Professor of Political Science*
 - (7) John P. Tiemstra, Ph.D., *Professor of Economics*
 - b. Regular two-year reappointments
 - (1) Martinus A. Bakker, M.A., Associate Professor of Germanic Languages
 - (2) Claude-Marie Baldwin, Ph.D., Visiting Associate Professor of French
 - (3) Ynes M. Byam, M.A., *Associate Professor of Spanish*
 - (4) Derald D. De Young, Ph.D., *Visiting Professor of Music*
 - (5) Mary M. Doornbos, M.S., Instructor in Nursing
 - (6) Stanley L. Haan, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Physics
 - (7) Lee P. Hardy, M.A., M.A., *Assistant Professor of Philosophy (reduced load)*
 - (8) Roland G. Hoksbergen, M.A., Instructor in Economics and Business
 - (9) Merle R. Mustert, M.M., Assistant Professor of Music (reduced load)
 - (10) Delvin L. Ratzsch, Ph.D., *Professor of Philosophy*
 - (11) Shirley J. Roels, M.B.A., Assistant Professor of Economics and Business
 - (12) Darlene G. Rubingh, M.S.N., *Assistant Professor of Nursing*
 - (13) Michael J. Stob, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science
 - (14) Charles E. Strikwerda, Ph.D., *Professor of Political Science*

- (15) Barbara B. Timmermans, M.S., Instructor in Nursing
- (16) James Vanden Bosch, M.A., M.A., Associate Professor of English
- (17) Marvin L. Vander Wal, M.S.E., Associate Professor of Engineering
- (18) Randall G. Van Dragt, M.S., *Assistant Professor of Biology*
- (19) Nancy L. Van Noord, Ph.D., *Associate Professor of Physical Education*
- (20) Glenn D. Weaver, Ph.D., *Visiting Professor of Psychology*
- (21) James B. White, Th.M., *Associate Professor of Sociology*
- (22) Karla M. Wolters, M.A., *Visiting Assistant Professor of Physical Education*
- (23) Charles R. Young, III, Ph.D., *Visiting Associate Professor of Art*
- (24) Timothy S. Zwier, Ph.D., *Associate Professor of Chemistry*
 - c. Regular one-year reappointment:
Gertrude Huizenaga, Ph.D., *Associate Professor of Music (reduced load)*
 - d. Terminal one-year reappointments:
 - (1) Esther F. Driesenga, M.S., *Assistant Professor of Physical Education*
 - (2) Nancy L. Meyer, M.S., *Instructor in Physical Education*
 - e. One-year extension of appointments: Ellen Monsma, Gerard Venema
 - f. Reappointment of Dr. Cynthia Kielinen as Chairperson of the Hope-Calvin Nursing Department
 - g. Administrative reappointments:
 - (1) Warren J. Boer, D.Min., *Director of the Broene Counseling Center (with faculty status) for four years*
 - (2) Thomas J. Ozinga, Ph.D., *continuing appointment as Director of College Relations*
 - (3) Rodger Rice, Ph.D., *Dean of the Division of Social Sciences and of the Division of Languages, Literature, and Arts for three years*
 - (4) Gordon Van Harn, Ph.D., *Dean of the Division of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science and of the Division of Contextual Disciplines for three years*

C. Business and Finance

The board recommends a 5 percent increase in the denominational quota for Calvin College and Seminary.

Board of Trustees of
Calvin College and Seminary
Wilbert M. Van Dyk, Secretary

REPORT 6

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

We are thankful that the Lord has enabled his children to respond to the needs of the poor so that the Lord may be praised.

We are reminded of the blind man who was touched by the Master in John 9 ". . . One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." The Christian Reformed Church, through CRWRC, was able to touch over 33,460 families in the name of the Lord last year. As in New Testament times, some of those who were touched responded by praising the Lord.

Why should the people who have been helped praise the Lord? Because the Lord has responded to their cries. As CRWRC states in its *Orientation Manual* for new employees, "When CRWRC is successful . . . the praise does not belong to the staff, the administration, the board, or even the denomination. The praise belongs to the Lord. . . . *And we may not embezzle the praise.*"

CRWRC is only a small part of the denominational work, as the denomination's work is only a small part of the Lord's work. Within the denomination, CRWRC finds its place as an extension of the diaconal office. According to CRWRC's "Statement of Purpose" and policies:

CRWRC's purpose is to serve as the benevolent arm of the denomination. CRWRC shall respond with Christlike compassion to the sufferers of disasters. It shall plan and implement longer-term outreaches in areas of need through programs of rehabilitation and development. Whenever possible, programs shall be carried on in communities where a word ministry by local or other witnessing agencies can bring about a continuing comprehensive expression of Christ's concern for man's needs. When needs call out from areas where such planned total witness is not readily possible, CRWRC shall evaluate the prospects for and its capability of providing a ministry of Christian love that reflects Christ's total concern for the needy and stimulates a desire by the recipient "to see Jesus."

That purpose is clearly rooted in the work of the deacons, who not only do deeds of mercy but also speak "words of Christian encouragement."

Today a large part of the world's population faces untold hardship, hunger, and poverty. For many, it is increasingly becoming a degree of poverty that defies description. It is a poverty so aptly defined by economist John Galbraith as the "unedifying mortification of the flesh— from hunger, sickness, and cold." To this world dilemma CRWRC has focused its attention, concern, and resources since its inception in 1962.

CRWRC, as it looks to the 1980s and 1990s, faces a shift in focus from owning and operating its own programs to the development and strengthening of local institutions, both foreign and domestic, that are engaged in addressing deficiencies in their own communities, regions, and countries. During the last two decades the poor of the world have been taught new and effective food

production techniques, improved health care measures, and educational basics that have resulted in a skilled and knowledgeable work force. As a result, local organizations at the grassroots level, regional level, and national level are now rising to the challenge of addressing the needs of their own people. This shift in focus, however, is not to imply that CRWRC will suddenly cease what it has done for the past twenty years, but rather this shift in focus opens new avenues to reach out to the needy of the world with new and innovative approaches.

A. Hunger Alleviation Program

1. Hunger Alleviation Education

Since 1978, the Christian Reformed Church has had a program to educate its people about world hunger needs. Synod instructed CRWRC to coordinate this program, and suggested the creation of a network of hunger alleviation coordinators in the churches.

CRWRC's David Kool currently coordinates this program. About 500 congregational coordinators and 40 classical coordinators carry the information and materials into the denomination. Much of the activity centers around the annual day of prayer and fasting, called World Hunger Sunday in 1984. CRWRC's board agreed in February 1985, to drop that designation because of complaints that it violated synod's rule about "labeling the Lord's Day."

In addition to the activity centering around the special day, hunger alleviation coordinators receive news, quarterly, of the hunger program and other news about world hunger. A training session for classical coordinators is held each summer for two or three days. Several classical coordinators have, in turn, held sessions for congregational coordinators in their area.

Originally, congregations were urged to study *And He Had Compassion and For My Neighbor's Good*, the two publications of the World Hunger Task Force. An update on world hunger issues, *Hope Amid Pain*, has been available for two years now.

Income to the Special Hunger Fund dropped sharply in 1983-84, but started coming back in the fiscal year that began in September 1984. The fund will need \$1,000,000 during 1985-86 for the fund to continue to pay for the Sierra Leone and the hunger education program.

In 1983, synod approved a CRWRC/CRWM proposal to use up to \$500,000 from the fund for worldwide emergency relief in 1983-85. This, combined with growing expenses in Sierra Leone, was expected to deplete the fund's reserve.

	FUND (INCOME)	BUDGET (EXPENDITURES)
1978-79	\$250,000	\$
1979-80	800,000	300,000
1980-81	900,000	450,000
1981-82	710,000	700,000
1982-83	800,000	840,000
1983-84	545,000	900,000 (Sierra Leone and Educ.) 301,000 (Emergency Relief)
1984-85 (est.)	685,000	1,200,000 (Sierra Leone and Educ.)

As the above chart shows, by August 1985 the Special Hunger Fund will be depleted and income will have to rise sharply in 1985-86 in order to meet the costs of Sierra Leone and hunger education.

2. Hunger Alleviation Action—Sierra Leone

Staff: Bert and Ruth Adema, agriculturist
 Norm and Joyce Baker, income generation
 Dirk and Joanne Booy, team leader
 Roger and Yvonne Kraker, church developer/health worker
 Bill and Jackie De Kuiper, church developer
 Patricia De Vries, health worker
 Jan Disselkoe, literacy
 Stan and Barb Drenth, church developer
 Angie Hoolsema, health worker
 Belinda Hoots, fisheries
 Paul and Mary Kortenhoven, church developer
 Barry and Tammy Meyer (terminating in '85)
 Steve and Carol Nikkel, urban project
 Ron and Tena Prins, (terminating in '85)
 Harry and Trudy Spaling, field leader
 Brenda Vander Schuur, literacy

Sierra Leone is the Christian Reformed Church's "target country" for a "special world hunger project." Both CRWRC and CRWM are part of this project, with all staff paid from the Special World Hunger Fund. This is year five of what is designed to be a fifteen-year involvement addressing the problems of food production and income generation, health care, literacy, and church development. In '85-86, plans call for work in 26 rural villages with 1,060 families. Village response to the development program continue to be encouraging. An important challenge is how to phase over the work and to whom. Baptisms have occurred in both the Kuranko and Krim locations.

In 1985, an urban outreach is beginning in Freetown. The initial strategy suggests assistance to low-income market women through existing Christian groups.

Additional investigation will take place before another rural site is begun.

B. Social Justice

CRWRC and the Board of Publications' Education Department published two papers in a series called "At Issue." They are designed for discussion in adult church education classes or other adult groups. The editorial policy is to present a balanced view of the matter or, more popularly, "both sides" of the issue. The discussion group or reader is then urged to make his or her own decision. The first paper was on immigration policy, the second on the role of government in meeting poverty needs. The third one, planned for April 1985, will be on the question of intervention by one country in another country's affairs, using Central America as the case study.

CRWRC continues to urge CRC members to join organizations such as Bread for the World and Citizens for Public Justice, in order to bring about structural change in areas concerning justice and hunger.

Last year we reported on the first political statement CRWRC had made, and on the responses to it. This year, CRWRC's board had before it a letter to President Reagan about the administration's policy toward Nicaragua, but the board was unable to come to agreement about sending the letter.

II. OFFICERS

The officers who served the board last year are:

- James K. Haveman—president
- Rodney Mulder—vice president
- Sid Tabak—secretary
- Edgar Westenbroek—treasurer
- Gerald Van Noord—vicar
- Rev. Jacob Boonstra—ministerial advisor

New officers elected in February are:

- James K. Haveman—president
- Wendell Wierenga—vice president
- Sid Tabak—secretary
- Edgar Westenbroek—treasurer
- Gerald Van Noord—vicar
- Rev. Jacob Boonstra—ministerial advisor

III. DISASTER AND EMERGENCY RELIEF

A. Domestic Disaster Relief

CRWRC maintains a network of disaster workers ready to go into action whenever needed. This network is called Disaster Response Services. Approximately 65 volunteer singles or couples are a part of this network, serving either as disaster managers or as classis coordinators. Additional church members are prepared to serve as volunteers either in national disasters or in disasters in their own communities. The following chart summarizes CRWRC's activity in North American disasters during 1983-84.

PLACE	DISASTER TYPE	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	NUMBER OF HOURS	COST/VOL HOUR	EXPENDITURES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES HELPED
Texas	Hurricane	7	629	\$6.96	\$ 4,376.25	144
Coalinga, CA	Earthquake	68	19,547	\$2.07	\$40,393.16	226
No./So. Carolina	Tornado	137	7,280	\$4.14	\$30,169.82	251
New Jersey	Flood	75	1,875	\$5.05	\$ 9,467.97	66
Water Valley, MS	Tornado/Flood	11	683	\$6.59	\$ 4,503.96	55
Kentucky	Flood	8	294	\$8.30	\$2,440.40	55
Oklahoma	Tornado/Flood	9	665	\$4.12	\$2,738.75	195
Arizona	Floods	18	2,480	\$8.21	\$20,352.16	105
Barneveld, WI	Tornado	21	1,680	\$.28	\$463.34	15
Iowa	Tornado	95	1,425	—	—	15
Massachusetts	House fires	4	45	—	—	7
TOTAL		453	36,603		\$114,905	1,134

Between September 1 and December 31, 1984, another 117 volunteers served another 16,753 hours.

B. Foreign Disaster and Emergency Relief

Direct Response (CRWRC staff assumes responsibility)

Country	Program	Amount
Bangladesh	Hunger/Flood	\$ 20,000
Dominican Republic	Santo Domingo riots	1,500
El Salvador	Displaced persons & food assistance	20,000

Guatemala	Kekchi rehabilitation	11,000
Honduras	Choluteca relief	1,000
Nicaragua	Nueva Guinea relief	66,200
Nigeria	North Nigeria relief	5,000
Mali	Drought relief	10,500
Philippines	Flood relief	21,500

Indirect Response (work through reputable organizations)

Country	Program	Amount
Africa	CWS appeal	\$ 20,000
El Salvador	Refugee relief	10,000
Ethiopia	SIM food appeal	34,000
Ethiopia	MCC blankets	15,626
India	MCC food appeal	50,000
Mexico	Plan Hebron (Guatemalan refugees)	30,000
Mozambique	WARC	10,000
Zimbabwe	Famine relief	72,300
	TOTAL	\$398,626

In addition to these expenditures, Christian Reformed donors contributed more than \$600,000 to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. This was matched 3 to 1 by the Canadian government, bringing the total resources committed to African relief through the Foodgrains Bank to \$2,400,000.

In view of the predictions about continued food shortages in Africa, CRWRC has prepared a plan for a special response. Details follow.

1. Research needs of the major drought-affected countries in Africa. Prepare as comprehensive a list as possible of all the agencies working in each country. Identify possible needs that these countries and agencies have that could be met by CRWRC resources. Establish a country priority system:

- a. Assess the physical quality of life in the country:
 - (5) below 30 (desperate)
 - (4) 31-45 (very needy)
 - (3) 46-60 (needy)
 - (2) 61-75 (localized need)
 - (1) 75-90
 - (0) above 90
- b. Urgency of need:
 - (5) major areas of starvation
 - (4) pockets of starvation
 - (3) large scale continuous food shortages
 - (2) food shortages just beginning
 - (1) current crop failure
 - (0) projected crop failures

Taking these figures CRWRC then will look at the feasibility of assisting in each country using all or some of the following criteria:

- a. unmet needs
- b. reliability of information
- c. distribution mechanism
- d. number of foreign agencies present
- e. number of local agencies for joint work

- f. long-term development possibilities
- g. reporting mechanism intact.

2. If feasible, CRWRC will begin its own disaster outreach program in one or two of the affected countries.

Purpose

- establish a CRWRC presence in a drought-affected country where we might begin long-term development work
- supervise distribution of relief materials
- determine best means to assist drought victims, e.g.,
 - purchase food locally or abroad
 - emphasize self-help or give away
 - concentrate on preventive or curative medicine
- work closely with local agencies to make them more effective in disaster assistance and preparation
- respond to the desire within the CRC to have CRWRC become directly involved

3. Funding for these efforts will come from donations to Africa drought. Officers or executive committee will approve the proposals for these responses and budgets prior to start-up.

Plan of Action

a. CRWRC's foreign program staff coordinator is in charge of researching the needs, resources available, and approach desired for the affected countries. This is to be done in consultation with agencies in North America as well as abroad and with the Africa and East Africa directors.

b. If necessary, staff will visit countries to determine needs, resources, and approach.

c. Obtain board approval of responses.

d. Initiate response if funds are available.

IV. FOREIGN PROGRAMS

A. Background

A year ago we began to build upon a vision of CRWRC aiding one overseas family for each family in the CRC. The information below reveals how we are doing.

	Number of families in overseas CRWRC development projects		Number of families in CRC
Actual '80-81	13,758	'81	70,574
Actual '81-82	21,596	'82	71,582
Actual '82-83	27,350	'83	72,658
Actual '83-84	29,165	'84	?
Planned '84-85	34,563	'85	?
Proposed '85-86	45,166	'86	?
Proposed '86-87	?	'87	?
Proposed '87-88	?	'88	?
Projected '88-89	75,000		

In our foreign programs, Latin America utilized 25 percent of our resources and helped 43 percent of the families. Asia used 24 percent of our resources and

accounted for 40 percent of the families that were helped. Africa, on the other hand, utilized 40 percent of the resources and accounted for only 11 percent, and the Caribbean utilized 11 percent of the resources and accounted for 5 percent of the families that were helped.

The ability of CRWRC to maintain its overseas staff is reported below. In the last half of the seventies the rate of turnover was 20 percent. The three most recent years are:

Year	Number of Decisions Due	Number of Staff	Continuing	Terminating	Annual Turnover
83-84	12	52	7 (1 leave)	4	12%
84-85	14	55	8 (1 leave)	5	13%
exp. 85-86	17	50	12 (2 leaves)	3	6%

Overseas, CRWRC carries out development programs, which build long-term ongoing Christian responses to need; direct service programs, which are short-term responses to immediate needs; and disaster or emergency relief.

The development work overseas is done with a Christian witness, ideally through a local Christian agency or church. Each program also has a planned termination date so as not to encourage unnecessary dependency.

In selecting groups to work with, CRWRC concentrates on the organization's ability to respond to a serious need and the extent to which it is Reformed in its beliefs and evangelical in its practice.

B. *Description of Our Overseas Work*

1. Introduction

Foreign program staff of CRWRC developed the following description of our overseas work.

Purpose: We believe that God calls his church to a ministry of love in a needy world.

Kingdom: Because God is sovereign over all things, the world is his. He has not abandoned it, nor will he ever. We want to establish his claims and demonstrate his presence to all people. In the ministry of our Savior Jesus Christ, we see God's love for mankind as a totality. In his healing ministry and in his feeding of the hungry, the Lord clearly showed concern that men and women have food for the body and forgiveness of sin. So in his name, the church brings food and developmental aid, and in his name, the church speaks of his love and triumph over sin. Both are utterly essential. Both express the love of God.

Christian Community: CRWRC is a diaconal outreach which specializes in organizing a response to the conditions of poverty and injustice. These conditions prevent people from realizing their full potential as God's image bearers. This task is legitimate in its own right, and when done by those who make clear their allegiance to Christ, unambiguously mediates his love.

We attempt to create or assist indigenous organizations and churches that meet the needs of the poor and powerless. In so doing, we work to ensure that insofar as possible the indigenous organizations are: (1) owned and managed by Christians; (2) linked to an evangelical church; and (3) com-

mitted to the physical and spiritual development of their members and recipients of assistance. Whenever possible, we desire to join this ministry with that of other agencies of the church skilled at broadcasting the gospel and at church planting and church development.

The Church Overseas: Where there are national evangelical Christians in local churches overseas, we will identify ourselves as brothers and sisters in Christ, worshiping and joining with them in penitence, prayer, and service. We pledge, as partner with them, to help each other grow in spiritual maturity and responsiveness to human need.

In the church's expression of a mature and responsive love, there is an essential task of evangelizing the specialized presentation of the gospel story to nonbelievers. As the church preaches the Word, administers the sacraments, and lovingly disciplines, the institutional church grows.

Our Commitment: Our hope is that the people toward whom we are compassionate will recognize our Savior as Lord; however, we are committed to demonstrating Christ's love freely and unconditionally. We do not demand any reward for the love we share in Christ's name lest it lead to "rice Christians." We must even avoid giving the appearance of demanding such a false acceptance of Christ.

As individual Christians, as believers, we who work for CRWRC will bear witness to our Savior through our deeds and words. We commit ourselves to acts of kindness and justice in his name. We commit ourselves to verbal sharing of the hope we have in him.

2. Models

a. Need for models

In order to carry out their task, foreign program staff developed the summary of "considerations" and of "models" to be used in CRWRC overseas work. One danger of tying proclamation and demonstration ministries together is that acts of mercy will be used primarily as a means toward "saving souls." This "rice-Christian" syndrome, in which nationals have joined churches mainly because it was a condition of receiving the social aid, is not unknown to Christian missions, and has led to weak and ineffectual church development, as well as to poor social programs. We wish to avoid these pitfalls in our models.

The synod of 1984 approached the problem of one ministry being a means to another from a different angle when it stated that "community development should not be reduced to merely serving as a means to church planting." But it also stated that church development is integral to community development.

It is important that all programs of the CRC, whether church planting or diaconal in nature, be as efficient as possible. The needs of the Third World are staggering. We as individuals, or as a church, do not want to come under God's judgment because inefficiency, or theological or agency hassles, allowed people to go spiritually or physically hungry when they could have been fed. CRWRC places a high value on efficiently meeting the needs of Third World peoples. This also was reflected in the proposed models.

b. Suggested Models

- (1) Where there are no evangelical churches, and open proclamation of

the gospel is not allowed by the host country, three models would be considered:

- (a) CRWRC could work with an organization or agency which can proclaim the gospel, such as the Back to God Hour, or
- (b) CRWRC could develop community programs and train CRWRC staff in basic evangelism that would be appropriate to that context, or
- (c) CRWRC could send development workers and World Missions could send "teachers" or other specialists who would evangelize but not violate the agreement with the host government, or
- (d) a combination of the above.

(2) Where there are no evangelical churches, but mission work is allowed:

- (a) CRWRC and World Missions could form a team to build or enhance community organizations and churches with the same target population. The strategies would have to be interlocking so that the target population selected for church planting by World Missions has its physical needs met, and the target population selected by CRWRC has its spiritual needs met, or
- (b) CRWRC could do the "acts of mercy" in cooperation with a mission that is working—or has interest in working—in the area, to ensure that there is a holistic program and a church planting linkage.

(3) Where there is an evangelical church present, one or a combination of the following models could be used simultaneously in a single country. A small Reformed church and a great need suggests a combination would be appropriate.

- (a) CRWRC could link with a *national church*, enabling that church to do holistic ministry. This could be a national Christian Reformed Church. CRWRC could also link with other mission organizations to help a national church develop a holistic mission, or
- (b) CRWRC could link with *regional* (classis level) or *national* (synod level) *church structures* to initiate and carry on local level Christian development programs, or
- (c) CRWRC could work with a *group of local Christians* at a national, regional, or local level (Christian school model), or
- (d) CRWRC could work with a *group of churches*, denominations, or other Christian evangelical organizations who wished to do Christian development work, or
- (e) CRWRC could do *deacon training* at any level.

(4) If more than one evangelical church is present in a geographical area where a new program will be established, the decision as to which church would be the best mission partner will be based on a consideration of which church most clearly and consistently:

- (a) acknowledges the wholeness of the kingdom and theological positions not antithetical to Reformed doctrine,
- (b) recognizes the need to promote this wholeness in various types of ministries,
- (c) believes in a division of responsibility for implementing these various ministries,

- (d) supports diaconal work through the preaching of the Word,
- (e) manifests a concern not simply for "head counts" but equally a concern for spiritual growth.

c. Characteristics

In evaluating the appropriateness of a contractual relationship with a national church or an organizational unit of a national church—Model (3), (a) and (b), CRWRC proposes the following characteristics for consideration:

(1) Essential Characteristics

(a) Church or group is theologically sound, i.e., affirms the Apostles Creed, and demonstrates a desire for the glorification of God through the salvation of sinners, the building of the church, and the coming and extension of the kingdom of God.

(b) Church or group demonstrates diaconal concern and a commitment to the unity of word and deed.

(c) Church or group is established and reputable, or interested in becoming so (as indicated by registration with the government, good financial management, indigenous leadership, and organizational soundness).

(2) Desirable Characteristics

(a) Church or group is in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC.

(b) Church or group is in the Reformed tradition.

(c) Church or group has some office or structure (such as that of deacon) for ministry to the poor.

3. Additional area of concentration

CRWRC, in its development programs, has concentrated on increasing income through food production or cottage industry, improving health care through preventive measures, and increasing functional literacy rates.

In November 1984, CRWRC's executive committee decided to add diaconal training as a fourth area of concentration for overseas fields, stating that "in foreign programs emphasis is on improving the vision of the church for the diaconal task and the results from deacons' work." The key indicators of effective programs will include "diaconal effectiveness measured by actual results versus goals set by deacons."

Following synod's approval last year, CRWRC is beginning new development programs in Belize, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. This year CRWRC is considering Mali and Guinea as new countries.

If plans develop quickly enough, synod will be asked for approval in a supplemental report.

C. Programs

To be effective, appropriate, and efficient, CRWRC's overseas programs must be carried out wherever possible with Christian organizations. Each year CRWRC plans to terminate some relationships and initiate some others.

In 1983 and 1984, our work in Dominica with the Methodist Church, in Guatemala City with the Fourth of February Program, and at several remote sites in Mexico was terminated.

1. Africa

Staff: Mike and Ann Bruinooge, Africa area director

a. Liberia

Staff: Paul and Trudi Ippel, executive secretary, Christian Health Association of Liberia
Ary and Joanna Vreeken, community development

CRWRC anticipates continued work in Liberia with the Christian Health Association of Liberia.

b. Nigeria

Staff: John and Esther Orkar, field director
Tom Mulder, Fulani project

CRWRC works with the Institute of Church and Society, and two projects of the CRC of Nigeria: Christian Rural Development and the outreach to the Fulani.

c. Sierra Leone (see Hunger Alleviation Action)

d. East Africa

Staff: Doug and Gail Seebeck, field director
John and Ihla Hooyer, planning consultant
Grace Tazelaar, health

Last year CRWRC began work with refugees in East Africa. Management assistance and seed money have also helped other organizations in Uganda and Kenya.

CRWRC began programs in East Africa to assist the displaced and those seeking refuge. A response to these very needy people with the Church of Uganda is now underway in the northwest of Uganda. As CRWRC continues to attempt to respond to need around the world, East Africa continues to be a priority.

CRWRC field staff presented us with a new opportunity in Uganda, a request from the Teso Rural Development Organization (TERUDO for short). Teso is a relatively peaceful and stable area in eastern Uganda. TERUDO is a Christian development organization, independent of any single church, but directed by a small board of evangelical Christians.

TERUDO proposes a program of health, agriculture, and education for very poor villagers. The Ugandan staff of eight volunteers have been working with very few resources, sustained by their commitment to helping the poor and powerless to find solutions to almost overwhelming problems.

The CRWRC board approved expansion of the work in Uganda by providing the Teso Rural Development Organization resources and consultation costing \$27,300.

In Kenya, CRWRC has provided small grants to the Redeemed Gospel Church. This is an independent, evangelical congregation, led by Rev. Arthur Kitonga and a team of dedicated Christians. The church which has grown from their work in Nairobi has now become concerned about a slum area where 100,000 people huddle in a mass of mud homes in an area one kilometer by three kilometers, called the Mathare Valley. Disease, malnourishment, abuse, and despair are abundant in Mathare Valley, the result of unemployment. The proposal is to help form twelve business groups which will in turn increase income for 300 families, at a cost of \$26,900.

Two possibilities exist for this project. CRWRC can work directly with the Redeemed Gospel Church, or with Ambassadors' International, a "charitable,

evangelical organization, service arm to both the donors and the church communities in their efforts to blend the gospel and social needs...facilitating a holistic approach to development of human beings..." (from the Constitution of Ambassadors' International).

Ambassadors' International, however, needs to develop additional organizational skills before CRWRC is willing to provide resources to them. If these capabilities develop quickly, CRWRC will not need synod's approval since no church-to-church relationship is involved.

Pending either synod's approval of the Redeemed Gospel Church, or the development of Ambassadors' International, CRWRC's board approved the implementation of this project in the Mathare Valley.

Request to Synod: CRWRC now requests synod's approval to work with the Redeemed Gospel Church, should it prove necessary.

2. Latin America

Staff: Jim and Kathy Boldenow, Latin America director

a. Belize

Staff: Tom and Melva Post, director for Belize and Mexico

CRWRC works with both the Presbyterian Church and a refugee community in the Valley of Peace.

b. Costa Rica

Staff: Stan and Kitty De Voogd, literacy advisor

Jim and Bev Ludema, programs for Nicaragua and El Salvador

CRWRC provides (1) assistance to Alfalit International, a Christian organization which promotes reading and writing skills among adults in many Latin American countries; (2) assistance to Caravanas, a Christian organization assisting impoverished farmers; (3) a coordinated project started by World Missions and CRWRC in San Jose; and (4) a diaconal development program for Christian Reformed churches throughout Central America.

c. El Salvador

While continuing relief assistance through local Christian organizations, CRWRC is ready to explore the possibility of development work because of the need and because some national agencies are encouraging it.

CRWRC will continue to provide the CRC of El Salvador with diaconal training and will help to generate diaconal projects in each of the six CRC congregations. CRWRC's long-term goal is to train leaders within the CRC to be able to carry out integrated development work in the future. National CRC leaders agree with this plan and have encouraged CRWRC to work with other agencies in the meantime.

Since 1979 CRWRC field staff have been frustrated in finding a Christian partner who is efficient, accountable, politically moderate, and sufficiently church-based. CRWRC's past relationships include:

(1) The Christian Reformed Church of El Salvador:

In 1982, CRWRC channeled \$25,000 through the CRC of El Salvador to build latrines and pay for doctors' visits to a displaced persons community near San Salvador. The program was discontinued because of poor results, lack of accountability, and internal conflicts within the church.

(2) CESAD:

Between 1978 and 1981, CRWRC funded a CESAD program to provide food, basic household items, and clothing for 1,000 displaced families. The program was discontinued because of CESAD's excessive administrative costs, inefficiency, strong political bias, and conflicts with the CRC of El Salvador.

(3) The Archdiocese Office:

CRWRC continues to fund the Archdiocese foodstuffs program. It is an effective program, but it is relief-oriented and is scheduled to phase out of operation in September 1985.

New opportunity in El Salvador: at the present time SERCON (the development agency of the Salvadorian Baptist Church) appears to be the most viable partner for CRWRC in El Salvador.

SERCON was founded and is currently run by deacons of the Emmanuel Baptist Church of San Salvador. Because of its leadership role in caring for the poor, in 1982 the Emmanuel Church diaconate was appointed by the Baptist Association to serve as the development arm of the Salvadorian Baptist Church. In two years they have generated fifteen small projects, most of which include elements of agriculture, health, and literacy.

SERCON's development theory (results-oriented, bottom-up as opposed to top-down, emphasis on skills training and evangelism linkage) is similar to CRWRC's. Although on an administrative level the organization is directed exclusively by Baptists, SERCON's programs have the support and active participation of seven other denominations in El Salvador. SERCON also receives much of its funding from an interdenominational funding source.

SERCON's theological foundation is also similar to CRWRC's. They recognize the need for their church to offer both a word and a deed ministry and see their specific task as a concentration on the deed aspect of that ministry. All of SERCON's programs have links to Baptist and/or other evangelical churches.

SERCON's Proposal: The proposal site is located near Ozatlan in the province of Usulután, El Salvador. It is an integrated development project designed to meet the agriculture, health, and literacy needs of 62 displaced families.

SERCON's funding request to CRWRC is for one year, but the program is expected to continue until 1988.

The CRWRC board approved the '85-86 expansion plan to assist 62 families at a cost of \$15,000 as a SERCON segment of the total El Salvador plan.

The board also approved the project's agricultural element costing \$10,000 in '84-85 under the category of emergency relief work. The agricultural component is a valid emergency program by itself. By funding the agricultural component CRWRC is not committing itself to fund the rest of the program nor is it trying to influence synod's decision by "prior funding."

Request to Synod: CRWRC now requests synod's approval to begin work with SERCON, an agency of the Emmanuel Baptist Church in El Salvador.

d. Nicaragua

CRWRC participates in the funding of CEPAD (The Evangelical Committee for Relief and Development) and Provadenic, an evangelical health program.

e. Guatemala

Staff: Moises Colop, director, temporarily in Costa Rica

CRWRC works with four groups in Guatemala. Two of them are presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in Guatemala serving native people—the Maya Quiche and the MAM. The others are AGAPE, an independent group that works with a third presbytery, and Alfalit of Guatemala.

f. Honduras

Staff: Betty Roldan, director

Bob and Laurie Laarman, interns

In Honduras, CRWRC works with World Missions, Alfalit, and through regional offices of CEDEN (The Evangelical Committee for Relief and National Emergency).

g. Mexico

Staff: John Hamstra, agriculturist

CRWRC works primarily through a national evangelical development committee (AMEXTRA), through local communities, and regional groups, such as The Evangelical Committee for Rural Development.

h. Ecuador

In 1982, Alfalit, with CRWRC, began looking into the possibility of participating in a pilot agriculture project. Progress was slowed, however, when in mid-1983 Alfalit Ecuatoriana suffered internal problems and split into two competing groups. The group recognized as the remnant, FALED (Foundation for Literacy, Literature, Education and Development), had to spend much of their energies in reorganization and maintenance. In the evangelical community of Ecuador, polarized between those who follow a "fundamental" view of the gospel as opposed to those who believe Christians must be involved in their societies, FALED is having a difficult time establishing an acceptable place in and with the evangelical church.

It became difficult to work with the original target population—an evangelical Indian association—because of the internal problems of Alfalit. This Indian association had isolated itself from the larger evangelical community by rejecting help from radio station HCJB and expelling a number of North American missionaries.

FALED decided to relocate the pilot program to an adjacent community in the province of Bolivar. Two concerns that developed with the project were the lack of evangelical linkage and whether the community was impoverished enough to warrant long-term funding by CRWRC.

An attempt was made to get the National Evangelical Church of Ecuador in Guaranda (a nearby town) involved in the project through literacy and evangelism. Unfortunately, this never materialized and the only evangelism work was done through a cooperative effort

between the Bible Society and FALED, which amounted to distributing Bibles and other evangelism materials.

The program did serve very needy people. These people had lost most of their previous crop due to heavy rainfall. The two-year project (total budget—\$15,000, \$72 per family per year) included raising production of wheat, barley, and peas for 103 families. After the first harvest, the average increase in the production of wheat was 103.7 percent. For barley the increase came to 150 percent. Nine families cultivated peas, but none had done so in 1983, so a comparison study could not be made. The production increase figures are very high because the community compared their 1984 production with a very poor year, 1983. If they had compared 1984 with a normal year, 1982 for example, the increase would have been 40–50 percent.

The second year of the project (CRWRC's fiscal year '84–85) will concentrate on appropriate agricultural education in order to maintain the higher levels of production, with only small, if any, subsidies for fertilizers and herbicides.

CRWRC now plans to phase out of the Bolivar project, considering it a relative success, and the community not seriously in need of further funding.

We will spend an additional year (mid-'85 to mid-'86) studying the poverty situation in Ecuador as it relates to that of other Latin American countries, and as to which organization could be a possible partner with CRWRC in Ecuador. During this time, CRWRC could discuss an Ecuador project with World Missions and/or with other Reformed mission organizations in search of possible solutions to the lack of effective evangelism in rural Ecuador.

3. Caribbean

a. Haiti

Staff: Marv and Peggy DeVries, director
 Dick and Mary Both, agriculturist
 Pat and Eveline Franje, agriculturist/reforestation
 Nick and Fanny Geleynse, agriculturist
 Hank and Joanna Hunse, community development and diaconal training
 Lavon Tinklenberg, health
 Ray and Jane Vander Zaag, agriculturist

While improving their effectiveness and increasing the role of nationals, Haiti staff are expanding into several new projects.

b. Dominican Republic

Staff: Peter and Peggy Vander Meulen, director
 Caspar and Leanne Geisterfer, literacy
 Dawn Meyer, health
 Joel and Patti Zwier, agriculturist

CRWRC staff arrived in 1983 to join the World Missions staff in working with Haitians, who are often illegal laborers in the Dominican Republic.

4. Asia

a. Bangladesh

Staff: Rick and Edith De Graaf, director
 Paul Brink, agriculturist

Peter and Olive Vander Kooy, agriculturist and nutritionist
Peter and Geraldine Ysselstein, agriculturist and income
generation

CRWRC is phasing out of the Bogra area of Bangladesh.

While developing new projects with church linkages at Khanchanpur and Jamalpur, CRWRC has been responding to the development needs in Bogra district as per our original Memo of Understanding with the Ministry of Agriculture. As this work has greatly expanded and become increasingly managed by capable national staff, we have the opportunity to consider the possibility of initiating similar work elsewhere in Bangladesh.

CRWRC has sought for a new area in Bangladesh where we could be paired with an evangelism agency. Where once we thought there was little likelihood of finding one, God has provided.

CRWRC would like to stay in Bangladesh because of the tremendous need there, our demonstrated effectiveness, and the need to maintain a Christian witness in this very Muslim country.

In order to stay in Bangladesh, we need a "contract" with the government which states where and how we'll work. The government makes contracts only with the organization in control of the project. The projects we now have—Bogra and Khanchanpur—are being phased over to local control. So we must have a new project of our own even to continue to serve those projects nearly "independent" but still needing our help.

If synod approves this new work, CRWRC will have five staff in Bangladesh in '85-86: a field director, one staff consulting with a project under local control, and three staff working on this new site.

CRWRC also provides a visa for Rev. Albert Hamstra of CRWM so that he can continue his work.

In order to continue our ability to meet needs in Bangladesh, our staff there developed three alternative proposals. They ranked them according to need, mission partner capability, and probability of effective work.

Number 1 priority was work with the Australian Baptist Mission Society at Sirajganj. CRWRC's Executive Committee approved research and development of this project in July 1984.

The Australian Baptist Mission Society affirms this as their doctrinal basis:

- (1) The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures, or the Old and New Testament.
- (2) The existence of one God in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.
- (3) The deity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity.
- (4) The fallen, sinful, and lost estate of all mankind.
- (5) The salvation of men from the penal consequences and the power of sin through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, his atoning death, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and his unchanging priesthood.
- (6) The immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of men,

God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- (8) The resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of all men by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (9) The two ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are of perpetual obligation: baptism being the immersion of believers upon the profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a symbol of the fellowship of the regenerate in his death, burial, and resurrection; the Lord's Supper being a memorial, until he come, of the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since then, an agency of the Bangladesh government has opposed CRWRC's work in Sirajganj because it could interfere with the status of a government-supported, integrated development program.

The Australian Baptists asked CRWRC to consider an adjacent area which they had been evangelizing. This area—Jamalpur—has become the first priority. Government approval has been gained.

The VanderKooys returned to Bangladesh in January and will develop this project if synod approves.

Need

There is presently an enormous employment problem in Bangladesh. The agricultural sector cannot absorb the annual increase in the labor force. A result is that real wages are falling and landlessness is increasing. For this reason people are deprived of productive assets and development targeted at a predominantly agrarian economy often bypasses them.

The Australian Baptist Mission Society (ABMS) has been in Bangladesh for many years and is both experienced and successful at Muslim evangelism. It will work with CRWRC in the Jamalpur area. CRWRC will work at community development and the Baptists will follow up with those interested in the gospel, will develop literacy and training materials, and will train CRWRC staff in effective Muslim witnessing.

Request to Synod: In order to begin long-term Christian development work in Jamalpur, CRWRC requests synod's approval to begin work with the Australian Baptist Mission Society in Bangladesh.

b. India

The India program consists of literacy and health development programs and grants to three midday feeding programs in the Adoni area and two medical clinics among the hill people in the Tekkali area, some five hundred miles east of Adoni.

c. The Philippines

Staff: Ivan and Joy De Kam, director
 Bill and Dorothy Fernhout, community developer
 Janne Ritskes, community developer
 Tony and Rina Romeyn, community developer

CRWRC in the Philippines works closely with groups that are part of or associated with the Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines and with other evangelical development organizations and churches.

d. Indonesia

Staff: Joe and Arlyn Lamigo, management consultant

CRWRC is beginning work on Kalimantan with a mission project of the Alliance of Bible Churches and in Irian Jaya with a leadership group from a national church associated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

e. Sri Lanka

CRWRC works with the Dutch Reformed Church and the Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service.

V. DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

A. *Appalachia*

An evaluation done by Home Missions and CRWRC in the spring of 1984 recommended that both agencies phase over their work in Appalachia. Home Missions' Tim Limburg subsequently took a call to Washington, D.C., and CRWRC moved its last staff member in Appalachia to Chicago. The work Don Zeilstra was doing there involved consulting services, especially management training, for twenty-five to thirty grassroots organizations funded by the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (CORA). In 1983 CORA, with a grant from CRWRC, hired someone to replace Don. On periodic trips to the area, Don continues to work with her as she carries on the work begun by CRWRC. A decreasing grant to CORA for two more years will end CRWRC's support for the work in Appalachia.

B. *Mississippi*

Staff: Elvinah Spoelstra, director

Susie Evans, school program supervisor

CRWRC continues to fund Mississippi Christian Family Services with an annual grant and with the services of two staff people. Increasing local support allowed MCFS to commit \$100,000 of locally raised funds to an endowment fund in early 1985. In ongoing programs at MCFS during 1983-84, 98 handicapped or developmentally delayed individuals were enrolled, while 50 other families benefited from some form of at-home services.

C. *Diaconal Ministry*

1. Background

The diaconal development program aims to help local CRC diaconates and diaconal conferences become leaders in building a more compassionate church. Our goals are: (1) a network of diaconal conferences throughout the church (a goal already attained in Canada), (2) deacons who lead the congregation in outreach to needy people, both inside the church and outside the church, in the community, and (3) outreach programs which help people become as self-sufficient as is appropriate for them. This development program continues to make slow but steady progress.

The purposes of most diaconal conferences are:

- a. to promote the effectiveness of the work of the deacons by holding regular meetings for the consideration and discussion of matters related to the office of deacon and diaconal ministry,

- b. to establish closer contact and fellowship between the diaconates in the conference,
- c. to serve each other with advice on local needs,
- d. to cooperate in resolving needs which lie beyond the scope of an individual diaconate,
- e. to work cooperatively with CRWRC and other benevolent causes.

The conferences in Eastern and Midwest Canada are organized in a regional conference called All Ontario Diaconal Conference. The purpose of this regional conference is:

- a. to promote the effectiveness of the work of deacons in a larger setting through education, information, research, and coordination of cooperative efforts, and
- b. to assist the deacons and diaconates to realize their goals and fulfill their purpose.

Canadian deacons have identified areas of need for further development:

- a. listen and respond to the deacons and their needs,
- b. equip and teach deacons skills to serve and lead,
- c. integrate the congregation in diaconal work,
- d. learn to respond to needs beyond the church walls,
- e. establish an evaluation process of ongoing and new responses to needs, and
- f. create a continuity process benefiting present and long-range diaconal education and outreach.

2. Current situation in Canada

During 1983-84 the diaconal conferences continued to take part in the diaconal development program. Workshops on "God's Call to Service" and "Deacons Leading the Congregation in Diaconal Outreach" were presented in an effort to help the deacons become more effective in diaconal ministries.

The All Ontario Diaconal Conference celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with the theme, "Benevolence Is a Quality of Life in Christ." An evening of celebration was held on October 19, 1984, and well over 500 persons attended the annual meeting and workshop program the next day, October 20, 1984.

CONFERENCE PROJECTS

British Columbia

Ebenezer Home: care for the elderly

Bethseda Home: care for retarded children and adults

Cascade Christian Counseling: general counseling

M2/W2: prison ministry

"Feed My Children": conference project for CRWRC feeding program in the Philippines

Alberta South

Calgary Sunshine Centre: assistance to those who suffer from emotional and mental distress

Regina Alcohol Counseling: (with grant funding from CRWRC)

Canadian Midwest

Anishinabe RESPECT: communal care concentrating on employment skills (with grant funding from CRWRC)

Hope Centre: responds to specific need of mentally retarded (with grant funding from CRWRC)

Chatham

South West Ontario Christian Counseling: general counseling for adults and youth

Hamilton

Shalom Manor: home for the aged project

*Homestead: sheltered workshop for mentally retarded adults

*Turning Point: youth assistance program

*not all diaconates of the conference involved

Huron

Housing Needs for Elderly: study mandated to the conference by Classis Huron

Maritimes (Eastern Canada)

Inner City (Halifax, NS) Assistance Program: food, shelter, etc.

Toronto

Lighthouse: refugee assistance program (with grant funding from CRWRC)

All Ontario Diaconal Conference

Operation Manna: conference project for CRWRC to support refugee relief in East Africa

Salem Christian Mental Health Association: services and counseling for mentally disturbed

M2/W2: prison ministry

The CRWRC grant funded projects are:

- Regina Alcohol Counseling
- Anishinabe RESPECT
- Hope Centre
- Lighthouse

These projects are monitored and evaluated by CRWRC through the respective project boards.

The Regina, SK, Alcohol Counseling Program is working with 30 families in an alcohol rehabilitation program. The majority of these families are members of the Indian and Metis Christian Reformed Fellowship, an outreach of the CCRCC to native people in Regina. CRWRC and the executive of the Alberta South Diaconal Conference are monitoring this program carefully with the hope of addressing this common and recurring problem among our native brothers and sisters in a more effective way.

Anishinabe RESPECT (Rewarding Employment Skills Program Engaging Communal Tradition) works with 24 families in the Winnipeg, MB, area. It has as a goal, through the increase of job skills, to provide employment for Native Canadians. The results of the program are encouraging. Last year's evaluation of this program by CRWRC led to the recommendation that there be stronger spiritual ties with the Christian Reformed Family Centre and that there be a broader base of funding. Since that time RESPECT has moved into the new Indian Family Centre building. This has led to a greater information linkage between Indian Family Centre staff and clients of the RESPECT program. The All Ontario Diaconal Conference at its October 1984 annual meeting approved funding of the RESPECT program within its Operation Manna collection.

Hope Centre in Winnipeg, MB, is a program responding to the specific needs of the mentally handicapped. Hope Centre has been reorganized and the program for the mentally handicapped operates under the board of Hope Centre, Inc., and has its own director. A coordinating committee set up by the Winnipeg area churches, on which the diaconal conference has membership, provides the necessary linkages to diaconates and support communities.

The Toronto, ON, Lighthouse program served 97 refugee families with counseling and assistance during 1983-84 and through recreational programs was a "meeting place" for many others. Southeast Asians and Latin Americans meet regularly in Bible study and discussion groups or for other social events. There is a need for qualified evangelism leaders who speak the various languages.

3. Current situation in the United States

Deacons from the following areas have benefited from CRWRC training or consultation in the last year: California South, Central California, Chicago, Denver, Grand Rapids East and North, Grandville, Holland, Kalamazoo, Pella, Red Mesa, Siouxland, Thornapple Valley, and Wisconsin. Grants were approved or given to the Denver Diaconal Conference and the Alberta North Diaconal Conference to hire fulltime diaconal consultants, to the First CRC of Salt Lake to work with Cambodian refugees, and to the Chicagoland Diaconal Task Force to help Roseland Christian Ministries Center. In addition, several individual church councils or diaconates used CRWRC resources for training.

The first six months (September 1984 to February 1985) of Don Zeilstra's work as an onsite diaconal consultant in Chicagoland benefited both the deacons of Chicagoland and some of existing ministries there. If Don's work continues to be helpful, CRWRC will move another consultant out of the Grand Rapids office and to a local area in 1985 (funds permitting).

In 1984, CRWRC and Home Missions agreed to aim at working cooperatively in at least 10 communities of unusual economic need in the next five years. Only the ministry in Salt Lake is currently in operation, but investigation continues in the Chicago area; in Miami and Hialeah, FL; in Halifax, NS; and in the possibility of joint training of elders and deacons (in conjunction with other agencies). CRWRC and the Florida Deacons' Conference helped the Lake Worth CRC with a ministry to Haitians last year; this year that ministry has become mainly an evangelism ministry and is requesting a grant-in-aid from Home Missions, an example of cooperation that exists consecutively, rather than concurrently.

D. *Refugee Resettlement*

The refugee resettlement program in the United States continued to help CR churches resettle until September of 1984. In the twelve months before that, about 55 refugees were resettled. In September, CRWRC implemented its plan to refer churches to other agencies except when they could not receive services locally. Between September 1984 and February 1985, another 26 refugees arrived and were sponsored.

The Canadian refugee resettlement program continued with many churches sponsoring and many refugees being helped. More than 331 were resettled in 1983-84, and another nearly 300 between September 1984 and February 1985.

CRWRC Canada continues its refugee work with the following guidelines:

1. Challenge the members of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada on the basis of Scripture to respond to the continuing needs of refugees and offer practical guidelines for responsive Christian ministry.
2. Work with the deacons, diaconates, and diaconal conferences to encourage sponsorship and resettlement; and develop a responsive outreach and ministry to locally resettled refugees, realizing their needs as well as their potential.
3. Maintain a program of regular education about global refugee conditions, needs, and problems.
4. Seek alternative methods for providing relief and rehabilitation to refugees abroad, within CRWRC policy and commitments.
5. Review and respond to government policies and legislation affecting Canada and the world refugees.
6. Identify and challenge the root causes and seek ways to change the system of repression and violence that creates misery and persecution for millions of refugees.

CRWRC Canada is a member of the Interchurch Committee for Refugees, the Interchurch Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, and the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees.

E. *Canadian Foodgrains Bank*

CRWRC's membership as a partner in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank has proved to be quite popular with the Canadian CRC constituency, especially since the hunger crisis in Africa (see Foreign Disaster Relief, III, B).

F. *Disaster Response Services* (see Domestic Disaster Relief, III, A).

VI. ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE

A. *Administration*

The executive director of CRWRC is Mr. John De Haan. He is assisted by five other directors. They are Karen De Vos, director of diaconal ministries, United States; Merle Grevengoed, finance director; Wayne Medendorp, director of planning and training; Gary Nederveld, director of foreign program; and Harry Veldstra; director of diaconal ministries, Canada. The United States office has an additional staff of six administrative people and eight clerical staff; the Canadian office has one other administrative person and two clerical staff.

The Synod of 1984 approved the Hay Associates method of salary evaluation and job levels. Synod asked the agencies to report the executive salaries on these levels. CRWRC therefore reports these salaries as follows by levels and percentage of midpoint.

Classification	Number of persons	Percentage of midpoint
Level 8	1	111%
Level 6	2	106%
Level 5	2	113%
Level 4	1	93%

At the annual meeting the board authorized the staff to engage Hay Associates to evaluate CRWRC field staff and administrative level positions to establish a similar point value system for placement of personnel in these areas to harmonize this with the synodical system for executive level positions.

Clerical and secretarial staff are paid according to a pay scale which is coordinated with other agencies in the denominational building.

B. Finance

Last year was the second time in the history of CRWRC that it was necessary to borrow funds to meet expenditures. CRWRC borrowed a total of \$600,000. We were able to pay back these loans from the gifts received in December.

Income received for the 1983-84 fiscal year was as follows:

General Fund	\$3,216,652
Government Grants	741,325
Disaster Fund	113,572
Special Hunger Fund	489,688
Interest	124,025
Deferred Gift Interest	<u>7,204</u>
TOTAL	\$4,692,466

Total expenditures for the fiscal 1983-84 period were \$6,023,337, thereby exceeding income by \$1,330,871. This eliminated all surplus and cash balances in the General Fund and reduced the balance in the Hunger Fund. This balance will be entirely eliminated this year.

CRWRC reduced administration and program expenditures. The approved budget of \$6,942,321 was reduced to \$6,146,684 for the fiscal year 1984-85.

CRWRC's board gave approval for the staff to pursue possibilities for joint fundraising with the Presbyterian Church in America. If plans develop quickly enough, synod will be asked for approval in a supplemental report.

At the annual meeting, the board approved a budget of \$7,074,906 with a contingency plan to reduce this to \$6,700,000. Staff has also prepared further program reductions, should income fail to meet the \$6,700,000 figure.

The approved budget is as follows:

Foreign Program	\$4,981,490
Domestic Program	179,6608
Disaster Response	89,119
World Hunger Education	92,115
Fundraising	255,535
Refugee—United States	2,560
Diaconal Development—United States	457,810
Diaconal Development—Canada	157,622
Refugee—Canada	22,072
Administration—United States	407,000
Administration—Canada	126,375
Warehouse Rent and Expense	6,000
Deferred Giving	20,000
Planning and Training	177,600
Contingency	<u>100,000</u>
TOTAL	\$7,074,906

VII. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FOR DENOMINATIONAL OFFERINGS

CRWRC requests that synod commend to our churches the work of mercy

carried on by CRWRC and urge the churches to take offerings on a regular quarterly basis to provide the necessary funds for this ministry.

VIII. SUMMARY MATTERS REQUIRING SYNOD'S ATTENTION

A. *Representatives to Synod*

CRWRC requests that its president, James K. Haveman; minister board member, the Rev. Jacob Boonstra; and its executive director, John De Haan, be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

B. *Approval of Cooperative Relationships Overseas:*

1. Kenya (see Section IV, C, 1, d)
2. El Salvador (see Section IV, C, 2, c)
3. Bangladesh (see Section IV, C, 4, a)

C. *Approval of New Work*

Possibly Mali and Guinea (see Supplementary Report)

D. *Approval of Plans for 1985-86 Budget* (see Section VI, B)

E. *Approval of Offerings* (see Section VII)

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
John De Haan, executive director

REPORT 7 CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

I. ORGANIZATION

Synod has appointed the following persons to serve on the Chaplain Committee (dates indicate end of term):

Rev. Robert Recker, chairperson, 1986; Mrs. Jean Ettesvold, vice chairperson, 1985; Mr. Calvin Mulder, treasurer, 1987; Mr. Neal Berghoef, 1986; Mrs. Eunice Bossenbrook, 1985; Rev. A. Dirk Evans, 1987; Mr. Richard Gritter, 1985; Mrs. Cecilia Mereness, 1987; Rev. Paul H. Vruwink, 1986; Canadian Representation: Rev. Carl D. Tuyl, 1986; Rev. John Van Til, alternate, 1985.

Rev. Harold Bode has served the committee as executive secretary since 1974 and in 1982 was appointed for another four-year term.

Rev. Peter J. Niewiek assists the executive secretary on a fulltime basis.

II. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

Ecclesiastical endorsement has been given by the Chaplain Committee for ministry in specialized institutional settings to the following chaplains:

Chaplain, Louis F. Baker, Evanston General Hospital, Evanston, IL
 Chaplain, Robert Brummel, Ohio State Medical Center, Columbus, OH
 Chaplain, Arlo D. Compaan, Center for Life Skills, Chicago, IL
 Chaplain, Harold T. De Jong, St. Peter Hospital, Olympia, WA
 Chaplain, Sidney Draayer, Christian Counseling Center, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, William J. Dykstra, State Prison of Southern Michigan, Jackson, MI
 Chaplain, A. Dirk Evans, Harper-Grace Hospital, Detroit, MI
 Chaplain, Eric Evenhuis, Horizon Hospital, Pomona, CA
 Chaplain, Melvin J. Flikkema, Long Beach Community Hospital, Long Beach, CA
 Chaplain, Jan Friend, Bethesda Pastoral Counseling Center, Denver, CO
 Chaplain, Richard E. Grevengoed, Christian Care Center, Chicago, IL
 Chaplain, Terry Hager, Community Counseling & Personal Growth Ministry, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Ronald W. Hempel, Washington Veterans Home, Retsil, WA
 Chaplain, Allen J. Hoogewind, Jellema House, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Marvin P. Hoogland, Christian Counseling Center, Chicago, IL
 Chaplain, Gordon J. Kieft, Bethesda Pastoral Counseling Center, Denver, CO
 Chaplain, Donald J. Klompeen, Harper-Grace Hospital, Detroit, MI
 Chaplain, Jim Kok, Director of Pastoral Care, Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, CA
 Chaplain, Philip J. Koster, Pontiac General Hospital, Pontiac, MI
 Chaplain, John H. Lamsma, Federal Correctional Institution, Milan, MI
 Chaplain, Ronald J. Nydam, Pastoral Counseling for Denver, Inc., Denver, CO
 Chaplain, Elton J. Piersma, Marriage & Family Center, Muskegon, MI
 Chaplain, Arie Poot, Bethesda-Cascade, Bellingham, WA
 Chaplain, Henry R. Post, Jr., Foote Memorial Hospital, Jackson, MI
 Chaplain, Fred D. Rietema, Comprehensive Care Group, Tacoma, WA
 Chaplain, Curt G. Roelofs, Providence Hospital, Dearborn, MI

Chaplain, Howard A. Sponholz, Cabrini Medical Center & St. Vincent's Hospitals, New York, NY
 Chaplain, Raymond Swierenga, Dunes Correctional Facility, Saugatuck, MI
 Chaplain, Herman J. Teitsma, Christian Encouragement Center, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Robert H. Uken, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Adrian Van Andel, Veterans Administration Hospital, Palo Alto, CA
 Chaplain, Harry A. Van Dam, Calvary Rehabilitation Center, Phoenix, AZ
 Chaplain, Larry Vande Creek, Family Practice Department, OSU, Columbus, OH
 Chaplain, Thomas Vanden Bosch, Veterans Administration Hospital, Sioux Falls, SD
 Chaplain, Kenneth Vander Heide, West Mesa Hospital, Albuquerque, NM
 Chaplain, Samuel Vander Jagt, Mercy Hospital, Davenport, IA
 Chaplain, Nicholas Vander Kwaak, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, James Vander Schaaf, Criminal Justice, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Siebert A. Van Houten, Regional Coordinator of Chaplaincy, Ontario Government, Hamilton, ON
 Chaplain, Peter L. Van Katwyk, Interfaith Counseling Center, Cambridge, ON
 Chaplain, Duane A. Visser, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI
 Chaplain, Ronald C. Vredeveld, Regional Developmental Center, Mt. Pleasant, MI
 Chaplain, Kenneth R. Wezeman, South Bend Osteopathic Hospital, South Bend, IN
 Chaplain, Peter Winkle, Rehoboth Hospital, Gallup, NM

Three ministers left institutional chaplaincy this year for study and other forms of ministry. J. Karel Boersma left for further study. Peter Niewiek left to become the Assistant Executive Secretary of the Chaplain Committee. Benjamin Ypma retired. We are grateful for their many years of dedicated service.

Four institutional chaplains were added this year. They are: Ronald J. Nydam, Arie Poot, Harry A. Van Dam, and Kenneth Vander Heide.

III. MILITARY CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

Ecclesiastical endorsement has been given by the Chaplain Committee to fourteen reserve chaplains and seventeen chaplains serving fulltime on active duty in the Armed Forces. A roster of the active duty chaplains and assignments, with the date of induction, follows:

Air Force

Chaplain, Major, Ralph W. Bronkema, Patrick AFB, FL (1966)
 Chaplain, Capt., Richard M. Hartwell, Jr., Turkey (1981) (Griffiss AFB, NY, in July)
 Chaplain, Lt. Col., Louis E. Kok, McChord AFB, WA (1962) (CP New Amsterdam AB, the Netherlands in July)
 Chaplain, Capt., Marinus Vande Steeg, George AFB, CA (1982)

Army

Chaplain, Capt., Dale Ellens, Ft. Knox, KY (1983)
 Chaplain, COL, John J. Hoogland, United States Pentagon, Washington, D.C. (1959)
 (President of the Army Chaplain Board, Ft. Monmouth, NJ, in June)
 Chaplain, LTC, Herman Keizer, Jr., United States Pentagon, Washington, D.C. (1968) (Ft. Shafter, HI, in June)
 Chaplain, LT, Timothy Kikkert, Ft. Carson, CO (1985)
 Chaplain, LTC, Marvin Konynenbelt, Darmstadt, West Germany (1965)
 Chaplain, Major, Philip R. Touw, Ft. Benning, GA (1977)
 Chaplain, Capt., Jack Van Dyken, Jr., Crailsheim, West Germany (1982)
 Chaplain, Major, Karl Willoughby, Stuttgart, West Germany (1975)

Navy

LCDR Donald G. Belanus, CHC, USN Catholic University, Washington, D.C. (1979)
 (Navy Chaplain School, Newport, RI, in June)

CAPT Herbert L. Bergsma, CHC, USN Camp Pendleton, CA (1966)
LT Norman F. Brown, CHC, USN Norfolk, VA (1983)
LCDR George D. Cooper, CHC, USN USCG Support Center, Kodiak, AK (1980)
CAPT Albert J. Roon, CHC, USN COMSERVGRU TWO, Norfolk, VA (1966)

Included in the above list is Timothy Kikkert who is a new chaplain this year. He serves with the Army.

Richard Silveira, a senior seminarian and prospective candidate for the ministry, has requested, with the endorsement of the Chaplain Committee, a superseding appointment with the Navy to serve as a chaplain. Mr. Silveira will need to be inducted into the Navy as an ordained minister in the early part of July due to time limitations set by age requirements.

Two military chaplains retired from military service this year. Henry Guikema from the Air Force and William Brander from the Army. We are grateful for their many years of dedicated service.

IV. INDUSTRIAL CHAPLAIN PERSONNEL

Ecclesiastical endorsement has been given by the Chaplain Committee for ministry in industrial settings to the following chaplains:

Chaplain, Jack L. Vander Laan, Waste Management, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Chaplain, John W. Van Donk, People-At-Work Life Enrichment Resources, Inc., Hayward, CA

Business and Industrial Chaplaincy has a relatively short history with us as a denomination. The character of this ministry does not differ greatly from other forms.

V. STAFF PERSONNEL

The Synod of 1974, aware that most of the ministry of chaplaincy is accomplished beyond the boundaries of the local parish and sensing a need for better supervision in the development of chaplaincy, appointed Harold Bode to this task. Since 1974, the number of chaplains serving in specialized settings has almost tripled. Many more ministers could be placed in chaplaincy positions, if they had specialized training in pastoral care.

The Synod of 1984 granted the Chaplain Committee permission to select a second fulltime pastor to serve as assistant executive secretary of the committee. The position was advertised, a selection committee was formed, applications were received, and applicants were interviewed. The Chaplain Committee concurred with the first choice of the selection committee with the result that Rev. Peter Niewiek was offered the appointment. He accepted the appointment and began serving fulltime in January 1985.

The Chaplain Committee sincerely appreciates the support and encouragement on the part of synod in promoting the denomination's ministry in specialized settings and is challenged to develop a qualified chaplain's corps. The Chaplain Committee is grateful not only for the ministry of Revs. Bode and Niewiek, but also for the excellent clerical services of Mrs. René Koning.

VI. REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION ON A DECISION OF THE 1984 SYNOD (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 45, I, p. 592)

The Synod of 1984 made a decision regarding the support of ministers under

suspension not serving a congregation. It declared "that all agencies and consistories of calling churches who supervise ministers not serving a congregation must ensure that arrangements for adequate support be made for such ministers in event of their suspension from office and consequent inability to perform the duties of said office. These arrangements must be made prior to calling such ministers." The declaration was adopted with three grounds.

The Chaplain Committee is a standing committee of synod and is considered an agency. Is this what synod means by the term *agencies*? In contrast to most denominational agencies, the Chaplain Committee is not responsible for the salaries of the chaplains, even though we do supplement the salaries of a few chaplains on a decreasing scale. Neither are the calling churches of chaplains responsible for their salaries. Furthermore, chaplains generally do not have supporting churches make contributions toward their salaries. Approximately 90 percent of the salaries of all the chaplains come from the organization, institution, or agency they serve. Most of these organizations, institutions, and agencies employing chaplains are not church related.

The problem becomes particularly acute, then, for the prospective calling church which is not responsible for salary support of chaplains and for the Chaplain Committee which does not employ chaplains or provide for their regular salary support. The Chaplain Committee is not questioning the moral obligation of providing for adequate support of ministers under suspension until such time the matter is adjudicated. The committee does, however, wish to point out how this problem is complicated in regard to the placing of ministers in chaplaincies.

It is neither prudent or reasonable to think that the Chaplain Committee and/or the calling church could convince a non-church-related organization, institution, or agency to assure the continued adequate support of a chaplain under suspension. This is particularly true, since the organization or institution is not involved in the process of suspension from office, which is an ecclesiastical action.

Chaplains, in cooperation with the Chaplain Committee, will experience more difficulty in finding churches willing to call them as an associate minister, especially if the congregation is small. Currently there are several smaller congregations which have two or three chaplains as associate ministers. Frequently, consistories of prospective calling churches will inquire whether the calling of a chaplain will obligate them financially.

There is need for clarification on this issue in order that the continued development of chaplaincy within the denomination be not needlessly curtailed and so that there may be a clearer understanding of respective responsibilities.

VII. CANADIAN CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

Revs. Carl Tuyt, John Van Til, and Peter Van Katwyk serve a subcommittee of the Chaplain Committee on issues which are specifically Canadian. The influence of this committee on the provincial and national levels is significant, especially in view of the size of our denomination in Canada.

Many opportunities for chaplaincy have become available during the last years, but for various reasons we have not been able to fill those positions with

pastors from our denomination. Some were not interested in this kind of ministry. Some were interested but lacked the necessary training to make them competitive. During the last year, there seems to be a growing number of pastors willing to gain specialized training in pastoral care. For this we are grateful.

There continue to be openings for chaplaincy in institutions both on the federal and provincial levels. We encourage pastors who are interested in this specialized ministry to contact members of the Canadian Chaplain Committee.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. *Representation at Synod*

We request that our executive secretary, Rev. Harold Bode; or the assistant executive secretary, Rev. Peter Niewiek; or committee chairperson, Professor Robert Recker, be permitted to speak at synod on matters affecting the Chaplain Committee.

B. *Presentation of Chaplains*

We request that the chaplains who may be present while synod is in session be presented to synod, and that two of them be allowed to speak briefly to synod. The annual Chaplains' Retreat is set for June 13 through 15, and we request that permission be granted to present the chaplains immediately after the noon recess on June 14. Furthermore, we have offered the preaching services of the chaplains attending the retreat to the churches of the area on Sunday, June 16.

C. *Clarification of a Synodical Decision*

1. The Chaplain Committee respectfully requests synod to clarify the decision of the Synod of 1984, regarding "Support for Suspended Ministers" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 592). Confer Section VI of this report for the rationale.

2. Furthermore, should synod decide that the Chaplain Committee has financial responsibility in event of the suspension from office of a chaplain, the committee requests that a reasonable quota adjustment be allowed.

D. *Committee Personnel*

1. Mrs. Jean Ettesvold, completing the term of a person who was unable to continue with the committee, is not eligible for reelection. The committee submits the names of:

a. Karen Helder, Director of Professional Services at Wedgewood Acres Christian Youth Homes, a member of Eastern Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

b. Jan Schregardus, on staff at Reformed Bible College and a member of East Muskegon (MI) CRC.

2. Mr. Richard Gritter has served a three-year term with the Chaplain Committee. He has requested not to be considered for a second three-year term due to his increased responsibility with Wedgewood Acres Christian Youth Homes during a period of expansion. We submit the names of:

a. Ren Nagelkirk, former director of D.A. Blodgett Homes for Children, now retired, and member of Shawnee Park CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

b. Jack Wiersma, professor of Education at Calvin College and member of Grace CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

3. Eunice Bossenbrook has served a three-year term with the committee. She has recently taken on additional work responsibilities and has requested that she not be considered for another three-year term. We submit the following nomination:

a. Nancy Brubaker, psychiatric nurse and program coordinator at Harbinger of Grand Rapids, Inc., and member of Oakdale Park CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

b. Sylvia Cooper, professional teacher, and member of Eastern Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

4. Revs. Carl Tuyl and John Van Til serve as primary and alternate members of the Chaplain Committee. They serve as Canadian representatives with the committee and have completed their first three-year terms. We request synod to approve them for second three-year terms because of their positions on the Interfaith Committees both on the provincial and the federal levels of government in Canada. Membership on these Interfaith Committees is very important to the development of chaplaincy in Canada.

E. The Chaplain Committee requests synod to approve a quota of \$7.40 per family for fiscal year 1986. Please note the following information:

(1) that 98 percent of our operating budget comes from quota, and

(2) approximately \$168,750, or 36 percent, of the quota is used to pay pension premiums for chaplains.

IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. *Salary Disclosure Policy* (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 636-37)

Job level	No. of positions in job level	Compensation quartile (includes housing allowance)
6	1	2nd quartile (90-100%)
4	1	2nd quartile (90-100%)

B. *Financial Materials*

The financial statement, auditor's report, and the proposed budget will be published in the *Agenda for Synod 1985*, *Financial and Business Supplement*, and in that format will be available at the time of synod.

The Chaplain Committee
Harold Bode, executive secretary

REPORT 8
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH LOAN FUND

On January 1, 1984, the assets and liabilities of the former Church Help Fund were assumed by the newly formed Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund. During 1984 loans were made to nine United States and four Canadian churches under the policies of the former Church Help Fund Committee. Also during 1984, new loan policies and procedures and application forms for loans were developed.

It was anticipated that the loan fund would be operative by mid-1984. This proved to be overly optimistic. Approval of the circular describing the loan fund's offering took longer than expected. Without that approval, no promissory notes could be sold. The committee now anticipates offering the sale of notes by early 1985 in certain states in which approval has been granted.

No activity of the fund has been initiated in Canada at this point. We are waiting until the concerns expressed by both the Alberta North and Ontario Extension Funds have been resolved. Efforts remain underway to reach an agreement whereby the respective funds can work effectively together and be of service to the denomination.

Meanwhile, the committee has been contacted by many churches expressing interest in securing loans from the fund. A significant number of churches are in various stages of planning and preparation for capital additions or new church construction.

In accordance with the approved bylaws of the CRC Loan Fund, directors were elected for three-year terms, except for their initial term whereby four members would serve two years, four members would serve three years, and four members would serve four years. Because of the low level of activity in the first year of the CRC Loan Fund the two-year terms of four members were extended to three years.

Financial reports as of December 31, 1984, appear in the *Agenda for Synod 1985, Financial and Business Supplement*.

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc.
Gerald Van Wyke, secretary

REPORT 9
COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATIONAL
ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

The Committee for Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad (CEACA) is assigned by synod in the name of the Christian Reformed Church to provide assistance to overseas churches of the Reformed community in a number of ways. Our primary assignment is the provision of scholarship assistance for students of these churches, particularly from the Third World, to secure training for specialized service in their homeland churches upon completion of their course of study. Students in this category are sponsored only at the request of their churches, which certify that the applicants will fill a specific position in their home churches upon their return. CEACA only sponsors students whose churches request training which cannot be obtained at an adequate level in their home environment. More than two hundred students have been sponsored by the Christian Reformed Church since scholarships for overseas students have been offered by our denomination.

CEACA also provides internship experience for international students where necessary for their ministry. This past year we granted partial assistance to Rev. Winston Gauder from Australia for that purpose. This was done in cooperation with the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions. Another valuable service is rendered by the committee to about twenty-five Bible schools and seminaries worldwide by providing good used theological books for their libraries. We are especially grateful that Mr. Peter De Klerk, theological librarian of Calvin Seminary, so willingly continues to perform this specialized service. Donations of books are welcomed and can be sent to:

Mr. Peter De Klerk, Theological Librarian
Calvin Seminary
3233 Burton Street S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

In 1984 a total of 962 books were distributed in this program.

I. SPONSORSHIP OF STUDENTS

Synod will, we trust, catch some of the excitement we as a committee feel as we report the assistance rendered this year to the following persons:

Mohan Chacko (India) completed his work at Calvin Seminary and towards the Th.D. degree at the Free University of Amsterdam. He and his family returned to India where he serves as teacher in a seminary in Northern India.

Guy Dubé (Quebec) completed his Th.M. program in June 1984 and returned to Quebec as teacher and pastor. He is associated with the movement to

establish a Reformed church in Quebec and to provide theological education in the French language.

Kadarmanto Harjowasito (Indonesia) began graduate study at Calvin Seminary in September 1984. CEACA supplements the support given by his home church and the Prince Foundation in Holland, MI, toward the expenses of himself, his family, and the course of study. He will return to Indonesia after an additional year at Princeton Seminary.

Nikolaas He (Indonesia) began a course of graduate study for the Th.M. degree in missions at Calvin Seminary in September 1984. Upon completion of his course (one year) he will return to his homeland to teach and be a pastor.

Francis Isa (Nigeria) completed the MAT program at Calvin College in August 1984 and has returned to his homeland.

Joseph Juma (Malawi) is presently enrolled in the MCE program at Calvin Seminary. He is a minister of the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian), a member church of the RES. He will return in mid-1986 to resume his ministry as secretary/administrator of his denomination.

Cornelius Kuswanto (Indonesia). Temporary assistance was given Mr. Kuswanto, a scholarship recipient at Calvin Seminary, to begin his work towards the Th.D. degree in Old Testament studies at Westminster Seminary. His church requested that he secure such training before returning to teach in Indonesia.

Bosetin Lyngdoh (India), a pastor of the Presbyterian Church of India, began a course of study at Calvin Seminary in September 1984 leading to the Th.M. degree (one year).

Kikuzo Otsuka (Japan/Indonesia) is a missionary of the Reformed Church of Japan serving in Indonesia. His home church provided \$10,000 to support him and his family during the one-year graduate program at Calvin Seminary. CEACA supplements this amount by \$5,000.

Elizabeth Pascuzzi (Brazil), a graduate of RBC, was sponsored by CEACA for two years in the MCE program at Calvin Seminary. She completed her course of study in June 1984 and, after her husband completes his studies in Toronto, will be returning to Brazil to work in an unordained capacity in her home church.

Zakaria Ramaroson (Madagascar). Mr. and Mrs. Ramaroson both speak French. Their church has asked that they receive training for ministry (Mr.) and for church work (Mrs.) in their homeland. Because Calvin Seminary could not provide training in the French language, they are studying at Institut Farel in Quebec. Rev. Martin Geleynse serves CEACA as their counselor. They will be in Quebec for three years. Mr. Guy Dubé, a former CEACA grant recipient, also teaches at this school.

Richard Tom (South Africa) completed his MCE program at Calvin Seminary in November 1984 and returned to his homeland and church as teacher and pastor.

Yasuo Tomii (Japan) was given a grant of \$1,000 to supplement the funds his home church supplied for a quarter's study in graduate courses at Calvin Seminary. He returned to the Reformed Church of Japan in December 1984 and is once again in active ministry there.

Nell Van't Wout (New Zealand) completed the MAT program at Calvin Col-

lege in November 1984 and returned to her homeland where she will be engaged in the promotion and development of Christian education and teach the Christian philosophy of education in Australia and New Zealand.

John Victor (South India)—John and his wife, Grace, returned to South India in June 1984 after he completed the Th.M. program in Pastoral Care at Calvin Seminary. John is now pastor of a large congregation of the Church of South India, Madras Diocese, in Madras. His bishop, Rev. Sundar Clarke, expresses great appreciation for the quality of training John received at Calvin Seminary.

Cosmas Wanyango (Kenya) returned to Kenya in February 1985 after completing the MAT program at Calvin College. He plans to serve his church in Christian education.

II. COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

CEACA is more than an administrative organization. Many hours of voluntary service are provided by committee members in providing housing and personal needs, orientation to our Western culture, assistance in their academic programs, personal and family guidance, and counseling of sponsored students. We are deeply grateful for the excellent cooperation between CEACA and denominational agencies, particularly Calvin Seminary's staff and student body. Many direct and indirect blessings result from the presence on campus of our international students.

This past year the following served on the committee: Jay Van Groningen (chairman), Mark Muller (treasurer), Richard R. De Ridder (secretary), Ruth Hoekema (vicar), David Bosscher, Jacob Hasper, Tina Minnema, Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., James Tamminga, Hazel Timmer. Mr. James Tamminga assumed the responsibility of treasurer in February 1985. The committee's membership represents a broad spectrum of denominational agencies and actual field experience together with significant personal gifts.

This past year we have been in consultation with Calvin Seminary with respect to funding to enable additional international students to attend the seminary. These discussions were intended to prevent overlapping of goals and programs. An adequate program of mutual assistance has been worked out whereby each agency will contribute its expertise to the benefit of the other. Calvin Seminary will assist in raising funds and providing staff assistance for publicity; CEACA will utilize its years of experience to certify students for study, and counsel and guide them during their residence in the USA.

A few years ago an endowment fund was established, mainly through the donations of a specific foundation of some members of the church. Additions to this fund have not increased as rapidly as we had hoped—periodic appeals for offerings bring in some responses, but by no means what our budget requires. Although the returns on investments have been a great help to our cause, much valuable time must still be spent in finding ways to meet the commitments which the church asks us to assume on its behalf. We pray that the churches will respond generously even if it be with one offering a year as synod has authorized. We believe it is good mission strategy to assist in training leaders who will return to their home countries and churches to carry forward God's work.

III. NOMINATIONS

Synod must elect three members to the committee. The term of Dr. Cornelius

Plantinga, Jr., expires. He is eligible for reelection, but, due to his absence during a sabbatical leave and conflicting duties, he has asked not be considered for another term. Mrs. Ruth Hoekema and Mr. Mark Muller are completing six years on the committee and are not eligible for reelection. The committee will miss these faithful persons and we owe them thanks for their efficient service.

The committee presents the following nominations:

- (1) Mr. Peter De Klerk, theological librarian of Calvin College and Seminary Library. He has for many years administered the book program of CEACA. Peter served previously on the committee and is eligible to serve once again. He is a member of Woodlawn CRC in Grand Rapids.
Rev. Donald Van Beek, pastor of Creston CRC in Grand Rapids.
- (2) Rev. Kenneth D. Vandé Griend, pastor of Shawnee Park CRC and a former missionary to Taiwan (1969–74).
Rev. Mark D. Vermaire, pastor of Sherman Street CRC in Grand Rapids, an inner city congregation in a multiracial neighborhood.
- (3) Mrs. Marcia De Kock, a member of Woodlawn CRC, Grand Rapids; she and her husband, a member of the Calvin College faculty, served for a time in Beirut.
Mrs. Lissbeth Hoksbergen—originally from Guatemala, she is a homemaker and parttime student; and a member of Sherman Street CRC in Grand Rapids.

IV. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. The financial report for the fiscal year September 1, 1983–August 31, 1984, will be available in the forthcoming *Financial and Business Supplement*.

B. The budget for the fiscal year September 1, 1985–August 31, 1986, has been submitted to the SIC.

C. Synod should note that if we are to answer affirmatively the minimum number of requests for assistance and maintain the monthly level of support to sponsored students, we will need the full cooperation of our churches in offerings and faith promise pledges. The increase in travel costs (especially air fares) places a very heavy burden on our committee since the churches requesting our assistance are frequently unable to provide substantial support for the sponsored student.

V. ITEMS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. We request that our chairman, Jay Van Groningen, and Mark Muller be recognized as our representatives at synod when our report is under consideration and that they be given the privilege of meeting with the appropriate advisory committees of synod.

B. We request synod's approval of our work.

C. We request synod to elect three members to the committee from the nominations submitted (see Section III).

D. We request synod to adopt the same per-family quota (\$.75) as in 1983–84

and 1984–85, and to continue CEACA on the list of causes approved for one or more offerings.

Committee for Educational Assistance
to Churches Abroad

Jay Van Groningen, chairman
Richard R. De Ridder, secretary
James Tamminga, treasurer
David Bosscher
Jacob Hasper
Ruth Hoekema
Mark Muller
Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.
Hazel Timmer

REPORT 10

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

I. ORGANIZATION

The committee is composed to three laypersons and two ministers, in keeping with previous synodical decisions. The present membership is as follows: president—Mr. Herman Ottenhoff (1985); secretary—Dr. Calvin L. Bremer (1986); treasurer—Mr. Mark Van Beveren (1987); vicar—Mr. Harry Kortenhoven (1986); Rev. Calvin P. Van Reken (1987). (During the course of this past year Rev. John L. Meppelink resigned after he had accepted a call out of the area. This vacancy was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Van Reken.)

II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Statistics for 1984

- Applications processed—132
- Assistance granted—130
- Children's allowances granted—248
- Years of service credited—1,172
- Average size of congregation—35

III. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. *Representation at Synod*

We request that our secretary and treasurer be consulted on matters pertaining to FNC when considered either by synod or its advisory committee, and we request they be given the privilege of the floor. In the absence of either, we request the same privilege be granted other members of the committee.

B. *Recommendations Re Financial Matters*

1. That minimum salary for ministers serving churches receiving assistance from FNC be set at \$19,600 for the year 1986 (\$18,900 for 1985).
2. That a service increment of \$100 per year up to twenty (20) years of service continue to be granted.
3. That child allowance of \$500 continue to be granted for every unmarried child up to twenty-three (23) years of age, excluding those who have reached the age of nineteen (19) and are no longer enrolled fulltime in an educational institution in an undergraduate program.
4. That automobile allowance of \$2,000 continue to be granted (FNC to pay \$1,000, congregation to pay \$1,000).
5. That salary allowance for stated supply be set at \$200 per week for 1986 (\$175 per week for 1985).

6. That the per-family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving assistance from FNC in 1986 be not less—and if possible more—than \$330 for 1986 (\$325 in 1985).

7. That synod declare that the minimum salary and allowances (1-4) assume that the pastor is living in a parsonage and utilities in the parsonage are paid by the congregation.

Grounds:

- a. The Minister's Compensation Guide reports most of the churches provide utilities.
- b. The cost of utilities in a parsonage is influenced by many factors outside of the ability of the pastor to change (size of home, insulation, type of fuel used, efficiency of heating plant). These are choices made by congregations and should be the responsibility of the same.

That an allowance of up to 14 percent of the salary subsidy continue to be granted each congregation which elects to provide its minister with health/dental/life insurance comparable to that offered through Consolidated Group Insurance of the Christian Reformed Church. However, in no case shall the allowance exceed two-thirds (2/3) of the actual cost of the insurance premiums.

9. That congregations in the United States receiving assistance from the FNC shall pay a Social Security offset to their pastor in the amount of at least \$1,600 for 1986.

Note: This amount represents approximately one-half of the total Social Security liability based on minimum salary using the rate for self-employed persons.

Grounds:

- a. Synod has directed this committee to approach parity with Home Missions' salary scale. At present, the variation in treatment of Social Security expenses is one of the greatest areas of disparity.
- b. A recent survey shows that the vast majority of United States employees have this amount provided by their employer.

10. That FNC churches in the United States shall be assisted in providing the Social Security offset according to the following formula:

Churches shall receive assistance in the amount of .085 of the approved salary subsidy for 1986.

11. That an exchange allowance of 15 percent be added to the minimum salary and the auto allowance for Canadian churches. All subsidies and allowances paid by FNC are also to be increased by 15 percent. The Canadian churches shall also be expected to contribute at the rate of 1.15 of the per-family contribution established for 1985 (cf. 6 above).

Grounds:

- a. The present disparity in the rate of exchange between the United States and Canada makes necessary some adjustment.
- b. The Board of Home Missions presently offers a "premium subsidy" to those in her employ in Canada. The rate is set each year to reflect the economic conditions of the time.

12. That the 1986 quota for the Fund for Needy Churches be set at \$14.00 per family (\$12.00 in 1985).

C. Recommendations re Committee Membership

That synod elect one member to the committee from the following nominations:

*Mr. Herman Ottenhoff—member of Faith CRC, Elmhurst, IL, former realtor and insurance broker. He has served on the Pine Rest Board, the local Christian school board, and as elder.

Mr. Gerrit Bos—member of Orland Park (IL) CRC, retired from International Harvester, comptroller of the West Pullman plant. He has served as a trustee of the Roseland Community Hospital, as a deacon, and on the local Christian school board. He is presently treasurer of Classis Chicago South.

*denotes incumbent eligible for reelection.

Fund for Needy Churches Committee
Calvin L. Bremer, secretary

REPORT 11
HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Heritage Hall is the scene of much activity at almost any time. A visitor would be impressed with the various facets of work being performed and with the amount of material being housed there for future reference. In the lower level of the H. H. Meeter Calvinism Center, assigned to the staff for storage space, much of the shelf space is now in use as the collection grows.

Materials being sought by the staff include minutes of consistories, classes, schools, and related organizations and agencies. Through the good services of regional representatives in various classes, anniversary booklets and related programs in printed form are flowing into the office almost constantly. Regional representatives have proven to be a very significant link between the church at large and the archivist (and staff) working on the Colonial Origins collection, by procuring church records and, in one classis, by microfilming materials at substantially lower costs than have been available in Grand Rapids.

Once each year an inventory reflecting archival holdings deposited in the collection is sent to each representative to keep him/her abreast of what is on file from each church or agency in his/her area of concern. Representatives then can approach consistories with requests to update materials filed and micro-filmed. All in all, our committee is happy to sense a growing interest in preserving potentially significant materials and consequently to a lessening of resistance to releasing records. We hope all consistories will comply with synod's encouragement to submit their records. This would enable historians researching our history and roots to gain a total picture of who we were and are!

We are also happy to observe an increased interest in our denominational history in various original locations and institutions. That the transfer of our religious and ethnic heritage from Europe to America receives enthusiastic attention is evidenced especially in terms of the marvelous response shown to ORIGINS, a magazine of historical vignettes on our ecclesiastical roots, produced and edited by Dr. Herbert J. Brinks, archivist. By this means, some of the richness of the collection is being shared again with the church at large. The churches' reception of this effort is heartening and encouraging.

We believe it will be helpful to review activities being performed by our staff. Your committee is proud of the accomplishments of these people and we want synod to know about them.

Dr. Herbert J. Brinks serves as archivist and continues to oversee operations in general. Dr. Brinks demonstrates an abiding love for our roots. He hopes to write a history of the Pine Rest story in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of its organization this year.

Dr. Henry Ippel, in his function as field agent, keeps in touch with regional representatives and, through them, with the churches and agencies themselves. He produces a newsletter which offers advice and encouragement. He supervises the staff; he produces and distributes to anniversary committees in

the churches a booklet providing assistance in producing souvenir booklets and historical sketches. In return a copy or two is requested for our files. These are welcome additions because they are written by experienced and knowledgeable authors who have carefully researched their materials.

Mr. Egbert R. Post continues to serve the cause of Heritage Hall even though he has chosen to relinquish many of the duties he performed for so long. He translates correspondence, travel documents, and pamphlets of theological significance from Dutch into English. The need for qualified individuals who can and will offer help with translations increases as the number constantly decreases.

Rev. Marinus Goote, minister emeritus, and Mr. James J. De Jonge, associate professor of music emeritus of Calvin College, keep busy organizing collections of "papers" relating to the lives and careers of pastors and to Calvin College. Of growing significance as well as interest is an extensive file of photographs.

Among more recent acquisitions are the papers of a Mr. Luurt Holstein, one-time editor of *Onze Toekomst*. These consist of articles, meditations, editorials, translations, press clippings, and photos of Dutch villages.

The life and labors of the late Professor Dirk W. Jellema of the History Department at Calvin College are chronicled in his papers, consisting of class notes, correspondence, articles, and book reviews. He also did valuable research on Abraham Kuyper and was involved in the work of the Grand Rapids Historical Society, with which so much of our earlier denominational history is connected.

The usual sermons (or outlines), correspondence files, class notes, speeches in outline, and related memorabilia have been received from the estates of former ministers Frederick J. Drost, George Goris, Dick H. Walters, John Medendorp, Sr., and Cornelius Witt. The Rev. Remkes Kooistra, emeritus pastor, has also contributed valuable materials. Note should also be taken of the contribution of Pastor John A. Houseward in the form of scrapbooks he compiled reflecting on his work in three Christian Reformed congregations. This is a commendable undertaking, and personal insights such as these are a welcome addition to our collection.

One other staff person deserves recognition in that she is often the enabler of the total staff and assistants. Reference is to Ms. Zwanet Janssens who oversees a number of secretaries, both volunteer and paid. She is responsible for the constant flow of correspondence in and out of the office, and she catalogs numerous items, including tape recordings by which voices from our past are preserved. This behind-the-scenes work is very important to the success and future usefulness of Heritage Hall.

Occasionally, the committee wonders how much material fails to find its way to Heritage Hall, either because we lack the desired contact people on the scene, or because those who have this material in their possession do not consider it of significance to the denomination. In nine of our forty classes no representatives are functioning. We would like to see a bit of the enthusiasm that prevails in Heritage Hall caught by individuals who have a historical sense and an interest in preserving our past. Obviously, this would allow for more complete coverage of possible sources of the kind of memorabilia we seek, and it would insure that the total picture will reflect the marvelous things God has done for the church known as Christian Reformed.

We are happy with the arrangement by which our necessary expenses are met. In consultation with the denominational financial coordinator and with the approval of the Synodical Interim Committee, one-third of the cost of operating the library at Calvin College is "chargeable" to the work being carried on in Heritage Hall. Accordingly, the DFC reimburses Calvin College Library one-third of total expenses. In this way, our committee is paying its way while the need for handling a budget on an annual basis is obviated.

We are offering assistance and encouragement to those congregations planning to celebrate anniversaries in the next two or three years. These celebrations recalling God's blessings will provide opportunity to praise God for his faithfulness and love.

Historical Committee of the CRC

L. Oostendorp, chairman

J. Leugs, secretary

H. Ippel

H. Zwaanstra

REPORT 12

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

I. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

A. *Current Membership and Assignments*

The Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC) meets regularly each month to fulfill its mandate. Dr. John H. Primus functions as president, Rev. Tymen E. Hofman as vice president, and Rev. Clarence Boomsma as administrative secretary. Other members are Rev. Gerard Bouma, Mr. Keith Knight, Dr. John H. Kromminga, Ms. Thelma Meyer, Dr. John Timmer, Ms. Gertrude Visser, Dr. Henry Zwaanstra, and Stated Clerk Rev. Leonard J. Hofman *ex officio*.

The IRC is served by three subcommittees:

Committee 1 (Europe and Canada) T. E. Hofman, chairperson, G. Bouma, and H. Zwaanstra;

Committee 2 (Africa, Asia, South America, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico) J. Kromminga, chairperson, L. Hofman, T. Hofman, and G. Visser;

Committee 3 (Ecumenical Organizations and American churches) T. Meyer, chairperson, L. Hofman, K. Knight, J. Primus, and J. Timmer.

The administrative secretary serves *ex officio* on all committees.

B. *The Administrative Secretary*

The synod of 1983 approved the request of the IRC for a parttime administrative secretary for one year to work ten hours per week. This was extended at the request of the IRC for another year by the synod of 1984. Rev. Clarence Boomsma was appointed by the committee. Having evaluated the work of the committee and Rev. Boomsma's performance of the task assigned him, the IRC recommends:

1. That the position of administrative secretary be continued for another two years.

2. That the parttime work be increased from ten hours to twelve hours per week at the same hourly rate of remuneration.

The committee is very appreciative of the services of a parttime staff person and is impressed with the ministry Rev. Boomsma has carried out for the committee. The work of the committee has been expedited through the appointment of our administrative secretary.

C. *Fraternal Delegates*

The IRC continues to use the services of various members of the CRC as fraternal delegates to the assemblies of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship and as observers and delegates to various ecumenical organizations. In this way the IRC is able to fulfill its widespread responsibilities within the limits of its budget and the time available from its members.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION RE CHURCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL FELLOWSHIP

The relationship of Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship involves the following elements:

1. exchange of fraternal delegates at major assemblies;
2. occasional pulpit fellowship;
3. intercommunion;
4. joint action in areas of common responsibility;
5. communication on major issues of joint concern;
6. the exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

These provisions normally apply to all churches with whom we maintain fellowship, but degrees of ecclesiastical fellowship may involve less than all six elements. At present we are in full fellowship with all churches listed below, except for the restrictions which the Synod of 1983 placed on our relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN). Synod restricted pulpit fellowship and intercommunion in that case, making it the responsibility of each local consistory to determine the propriety of pulpit exchange and attendance at the table of the Lord.

The churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC (with the year in which such fellowship began) are the following:

1. Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) 1977
2. Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN) 1980
3. Christian Church of Sumba (Indonesia) 1974
4. Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria 1974
5. Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) 1974
6. Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) also officially called Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika (NGKA) 1983
7. Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka 1974
8. Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) also officially called Nederlandse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk (NGSK) 1982
9. Evangelical Reformed Church of Brazil 1974
10. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) 1974
11. Korean American Presbyterian Church 1979
12. Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken 1982
13. Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) 1975
14. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) 1975
15. Reformed Churches of Australia 1974
16. Reformed Churches of New Zealand 1974
17. Reformed Church in America (RCA) 1976
18. Reformed Church in Argentina 1974
19. Reformed Church in Japan 1974
20. Reformed Church in South Africa (RCSA) also officially known as Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika (GKSA) 1974

21. Reformed Church of Africa 1982

22. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA) 1978

Each of these churches is invited to send two fraternal delegates to each of our synods and the IRC is responsible to send fraternal delegates to the general assemblies/synods of these churches as opportunity, time, and funds permit.

Since our last synod we have sent, or are sending, the following fraternal delegates to the following assemblies:

1. To the General Assembly of the PCA, meeting in Baton Rouge on June 18–22, 1984, Dr. James De Jonge of Jackson, MS.
2. To the General Synod of the RCA, meeting in New Brunswick, NJ, on June 4–8, 1984, Mr. Ted Taylor of Washington, D.C.
3. To the Synod of the RPCNA meeting in Northfield, MN, on August 2–6, 1984, Rev. John Bylsma of Minneapolis, MN.
4. To the Synod of the RCJ meeting on October 23–26, 1984, Missionary Michael De Berdt.
5. To the General Assembly of the OPC meeting in Beaver Falls, PA, on May 31 to June 7, 1984, Rev. Dick C. Bouma of Washington, PA.
6. To the General Synod of the RCSA meeting the week of August 27, 1984, Dr. John Kromminga, Prof. John Stek, and Dr. Henry Zwaanstra.
7. To the National Synod of the RCSA meeting in January 1985, Rev. Clarence Boomsma.
8. To the Synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia meeting in September 1985, Rev. Gerald Van Den Berg of Waupun, WI, who will be visiting in Australia.

III. CHURCHES IN THE NETHERLANDS (See Appendix A)

A. *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN)

The committee has worked intensively with the GKN and its representatives since our last report to synod. Our fraternal delegates to the Netherlands churches, Tymen E. Hofman and John Timmer, met with the Committee for External Relations of the GKN in March 1984 and discussed the action of the 1983 Synod of the CRC which placed significant restrictions on the relationship between the GKN and the CRC. The impact of this decision was keenly felt by the deputies and, while they could understand the action of our synod, they regretted the unilateral nature of the action. However, they are deeply appreciative of the continuing relationship with the CRC and volunteered the conviction that "no one" in the GKN would support a move to break or weaken the relationship with the CRC. The deputies, and all persons contacted by our delegates at the synod of the GKN, urged an intensification of the discussions on matters of common concern. It was in this context that the deputies suggested sending a two-person delegation to visit the churches and classes of the CRC in order to promote understanding of the GKN and the course it is taking. This initiative indicated to the fraternal delegates that the GKN is very serious about keeping its relationship with the CRC. Therefore the project was not discouraged.

Through the office of Dr. A. Kruiswyk, administrative secretary for External

Ecumenical Relations, the IRC was able to arrange for a delegation of Dr. Fred Klooster and Prof. John Stek to meet with the Committee on Church and Theology of the GKN for an intensive review and critique of *God Met Ons*, the controversial study document on the Scripture and its authority. The matter had previously been studied by an *ad hoc* committee of the IRC, the report of which was presented to the GKN committee. This proved to be a fruitful meeting. Certain elements of *God Met Ons* were clarified to the satisfaction of our delegation, which indicated that the report itself is open to misinterpretation and is in need of clarification. The delegation expressed our reservations regarding other aspects of the report. Our delegates received a fine reception and were heartened by the attention given to our critique. However, we are disappointed that there will be no published revision of *God Met Ons*, although all agreed that it should be revised in the light of justified criticism.

The Committee for External Ecumenical Relations proceeded with its plan to send two representatives to speak in various areas of the CRC in Canada and the United States. Dr. J. Bakker and Prof. C. Schipper completed a three-week tour in October. They honestly and openly set forth the thinking and trends in the GKN, confirming much of what we had long concluded to be at the heart of radical change in the GKN. Their visit did not remove any of our concern for the trends in the GKN. However, although we were impressed with the integrity of the GKN theological struggle we are not able to affirm the fruits of their efforts. Their visit did give the GKN a firsthand insight into the fellowship and ministry of the CRC. The delegates were very positive in their evaluation of the life of the CRC.

The GKN delegation also recommended the joint study of matters of mutual concern on the theological agendas of our churches. The IRC had previously attempted to promote such an approach in order, if possible, to avoid occasions for disagreement and confrontation. This recommendation of the Dutch delegates may result in such cooperation in the future. We hope that this may materialize in the further studies on the nature and authority of Scripture planned by the Committee on Church and Theology, and in the area of human sexuality and relationships.

The IRC will send a delegation to the General Synod of Gouda 1985–86—a time when the agenda of the synod is of special concern to the committee.

B. *Other Dutch Churches*

Our delegation to the Netherlands also conferred with the interchurch deputies of our other churches in ecclesiastical fellowship, the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN) and the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK), especially concerning their contacts with and developments in the Reformed family of churches in the Netherlands. This is important to our evaluation of church life in the Netherlands. At this time we have no urgent items on our agenda with the CGKN or the NGK. Their major assemblies were not in session in 1984.

V. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

The IRC delegation to the Netherlands in March 1984 was able to include a four-day visit to the PCI which is headquartered in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Our delegates were graciously received and granted the Christian hospitality

of the members of the Interchurch Relations Board of the PCI. They were introduced to the history and life of the church in a program of orientation which included a meeting with the Interchurch Relations Board members at which both the CRC and the RES were brought into focus. IRC delegates were invited to preach in four of Belfast's churches. As reported last year, the PCI does not have a system of one-to-one relations with other denominations but limits its activities to ecumenical organizations such as WARC. However, the board is vitally interested in relations with the CRC at an informal level since its members have concluded that our churches have much in common and could be a blessing to each other.

Our delegates were favorably impressed with the PCI. They see it to be a church that takes its creed seriously, requiring subscription on the part of its officebearers. It has lived through a struggle with a heterodoxy which refused to accept subscription to the confession of the church, with the result that the dissenting element withdrew from the church. The church is presently being revitalized by a vigorous evangelicalism which warmly embraces the theology and approach of people like John R. Stott. Its faith has been and is being severely tested in the tragic political struggle in Northern Ireland. Many of its members have become victims of terrorism. It is the challenge of the churches to work against revenge and counterviolence and to seek the kind of relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and its people that will contribute to a solution of the difficult problems that have produced the violence. As a witness to its rejection of violence, the PCI has withdrawn from the World Council of Churches, believing that the WCC has not clearly taken its stand for peaceful means to solve problems.

Our committee will continue informal contacts with the PCI and is endorsing a program of pulpit exchange when and where that may be possible by which our two denominations may become better acquainted.

Our committee has encouraged contact between Calvin Seminary and the Theological College of the PCI. We also hope to interest the PCI in membership in the RES.

IV. THE SOUTH AFRICAN REFORMED CHURCHES (See Appendix B)

A. *Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA/NGKA)*

This large Black church holds its synod once in four years. In June 1983, Clarence Boomsma served as our fraternal delegate to its synod. Your committee was able to meet with a delegation of this church at the time of the RES meeting in Chicago but has had little opportunity for other contacts. We have offered them the possibility of sending graduate students to our seminary.

This church endures considerable tension because its leadership maintains a certain loyalty to the DRC, while strong opposition to the DRC has arisen in the church from those who are either members of or sympathetic to the Belijdende Kring (formerly the Broederkring). This church—as is the case with all the churches in South Africa—is in grave need of our prayers.

B. *Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC/NGSK)*

This church, made up of Reformed believers listed as "Coloured" and referring to themselves either as "Black" or "Brown," will have its next synodical meeting in 1985. Although we were not represented at its synod in 1982, we were

able to make a contribution to the effort of the DCMC to lead the Reformed churches to declare the theological defense of apartheid as "heresy." Those interested in this matter should consult the report of our committee and the decisions of the Synod of 1984.

Members of our committee were also able to meet with the RES delegation of the DRMC during the RES meeting in Chicago. This church also suffers from considerable internal tension involving the race issues of South Africa in church and state.

C. *The Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA/GKSA)*

Since 1982 the IRC has been mandated to study the issue of our ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Churches in South Africa. (The synod of 1985 changed the name from "Church" to "Churches.") The committee now presents its recommendation for synod's consideration and action.

1. Background information

a. As far back as 1976 synod expressed to the RCSA its concern about the abuses of the Terrorism Act of 1967. In 1978 synod informed them of our endorsement of the Koinonia Declaration and our concern about the Reformed churches and race relations in South Africa. In 1979 the IRC discussed with Dr. J. Postma, the fraternal delegate of the RCSA to our synod, along with various other issues the matter of interracial communion. The IRC, at the time, decided to make a special effort to evaluate the complexities, sensitivities, and urgency of race relations in South Africa as they related to the role and witness of the Reformed family of churches. The importance of this quest arose particularly because the large Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) pursued ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRC.

In the spring of 1981 a delegation of John H. Kromminga and Clarence Boomsma spent a month in South Africa to learn more about the racial positions and practices of the Reformed churches. In 1982 the lengthy report of this delegation was included in the agenda report of the IRC with the recommendation not to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the DRC at that time. Synod adopted the committee's advice. The delegates also reported on their visit with an enlarged committee of Deputies for Correspondence with Churches in Foreign Countries of the RCSA. It appeared to our delegates that the position of the RCSA had to be distinguished from that of the DRC and that the RCSA was making progress in improving racial attitudes and practices.

b. At the Synod of 1982, Overture 22 urged synod "to sever the ties of special 'ecclesiastical fellowship' with the Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika ("Doppers")." The overture adduced four grounds for its request (cf. *Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 620). Synod referred this overture to the IRC "for critical examination and recommendation to the Synod of 1982."

c. In 1983 the IRC recommended "that synod not accede to Overture 22" on the ground that "the grounds attached to Overture 22, in the judgment of the IRC, do not at this time warrant severance of ecclesiastical ties with the Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika." The IRC informed synod that it did "intend, however, to enter into correspondence with this South African church on the issues raised in the overture and will report its findings to synod."

The Synod of 1983, in response to the IRC recommendation and two overtures before synod, made the following declaration:

Synod is deeply grieved and disturbed over the unbiblical ideology and persistent practice of apartheid/separate development in the society of South Africa and within white Reformed churches and the consequences these have, such as is evidenced by the fact that there are separate churches for believers of different races so that even at the table of the Lord racial separation is maintained. Nevertheless synod judges it premature to sever the ties of ecclesiastical fellowship with the GKSA at this time as requested by Overture 22 of 1982 and Overture 41(b).
(*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 712)

Synod further instructed the Interchurch Relations Committee "to devise ways and means that effectively convey to the GKSA its concerns as stated above and to give this matter high priority" (p. 713).

Meanwhile in June 1983 Clarence Boomsma was sent to South Africa as fraternal delegate to the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa (DRCA/NGKA) (Black). He was instructed while there to meet with the Deputies of Correspondence with Churches in Foreign Countries of the RCSA for the purpose of discussing with them the grounds of Overture 22.

He was informed by the deputies that the grounds of the overture were indefensible and the position of the RCSA has significantly changed over the years from their first official declarations on race in 1961. They had made several important decisions that reflected their changing stance: a firm stand in 1979 against barring anyone from worship services or the table of the Lord on the basis of race and color; protests to the government against the Immorality Act, the Intermarriage Act, and Detention without a Hearing. They maintained the RCSA had never supported apartheid officially as a government policy nor sought to defend it on theological and biblical grounds, irrespective of what some members of their churches might have advocated. They agreed to provide the IRC with copies of all their decisions on race so we might make our own evaluation of them.

These decisions were carefully studied and reported to synod in 1984. The critique of these decisions was sent to the RCSA (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 173-76).

d. In addition to the critique mentioned above, the IRC sought synod's endorsement of its report entitled: *Is Apartheid a Heresy?* The Synod of 1984 acted favorably to the latter report and forwarded it to RES Chicago 1984. At the RES our delegates actively supported the decisions of the RES on race and defended our 1984 decision that the theological defense of apartheid is heresy.

But the IRC was not prepared to make a recommendation to synod regarding our ties with the RCSA in view of our ongoing discussions with them. Synod had an appeal before it protesting the decision of 1983 to continue ecclesiastical fellowship with the RCSA (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 531). It asserted that severance of ties with the RCSA was long overdue. Synod did not sustain the appeal on the ground that this matter is "in the hands of the Interchurch Relations Committee which is in the process of dealing with it. It would be premature to take action before the committee has made its recommendations."

c. In August of 1984 the IRC sent a three-man delegation to South Africa for two purposes. First, to attend the General Synod of the RCSA which

includes the White, Coloured, and Black delegates from the national synods of the RCSA, to ascertain whether this multiracial synod functioned as a meaningful synod with binding authority on the national synods. Second, to discuss with both the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches in Foreign Countries and with the synodically appointed committee on race relations of the RCSA, the issues of race as they pertained to the National Synod of the RCSA (White) and to which synod the committee was to report in January 1985. The delegates were J. H. Kromminga, J. Stek, and H. Zwaanstra.

The report of this delegation is found in Appendix C and must be read as an important part of this account. It was the unanimous judgment of this delegation that this is not the time to sever our ties with the RCSA.

f. Before making its recommendation to the Synod of 1985 the IRC decided to send its administrative secretary as our fraternal delegate to the National Synod of the RCSA (White) that met in Potchefstroom from January 8-22, 1985. In his official greetings the secretary sought to convey as candidly and compassionately as he could the serious threat to our continued relationship after 115 years, first as "sister churches" and since 1974 as churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. He stressed the deep concern of the CRC relative to the race issue in South Africa and the role of their church in this situation. He encouraged them, in keeping with their own committee's recommendation, to submit their decisions on race relations to the general synod so that the Coloured and Black members of the RCSA could be involved. He pressed them to continue to study and urged them to more and faster changes. He presented to them the possibility of a joint committee from our two denominations to engage in regular exchange on the racial issues that are dividing us, particularly as their study committee would be continued and expected to report to their synod in 1988. Finally, the secretary pleaded with them and sought to challenge them to be an instrument of Christ to bring healing and hope in their deeply troubled society.

g. Upon his return the administrative secretary reported to the IRC the decisions of the RCSA synod on matters of race, which in summary were as follows:

(1) The race report of the study committee was adopted with minor changes as we had been informed of it in August. The offensive decisions of 1970 were revoked, the more progressive recommendations were adopted, though the decisions of 1967 that appeared to be in conflict with the new decisions were not repealed. The secretary was told that the latter must now be read in the light of the new decisions. It was the general opinion of the progressively minded in attendance at the synod that the adoption of the report with its changes was a step forward and indicated a positive spirit.

General Secretary of the RES Paul G. Schrottenboer, in the February 12, 1985, issue of the *RES Newsletter*, reported:

Working with a report from its committee on race relations, which was in large part adopted, the synod sharpened its position on race relations on a number of points. The report . . . makes a strong plea for just personal, social, and political relations in South Africa on the basis of biblical guidelines.

Among the points the report makes are that —peace and justice are very closely related, and that true peace is not possible without justice;

—freedom and salvation according to the Bible are not limited to the “soul” but concern man’s entire life;
 —Christ has broken down the enmity between peoples of various ethnic groups by reconciling them to God and to one another;
 —the earlier support of the GKSA for the homeland policy the synod now said cannot be supported from the biblical data (“without preference for or against any political policy”);
 —“Inasmuch as the local church is fully the body of Christ, the unity within the diversity in separate congregations come to expression in the public meetings and administration of the sacraments in the local church. The unity with the diversity should, however, also come to expression in church relations crossing national and racial lines.”

(2) The entire report on race relations will be submitted to the next meeting of the General Synod in 1988, in which the Black and Coloured churches will be involved.

(3) It was decided to continue a study committee on race relations to report to the Synod of 1988. The mandate of this committee includes:

(a) the study of all scriptural data adduced in previous decisions re race for careful review;

(b) the inclusive RES Chicago 1984 decisions on race as pertain to South Africa for study and recommendation to synod in 1988;

(c) to work closely with the CRC in its continuing study so there may be mutual discussion of the issues.

(4) The synod expressed its genuine concern to maintain its ecclesiastical ties with the CRC by deciding to send a fraternal delegate to synod in 1985, although for financial reasons the synod had decided not to send any overseas delegates during the next three years.

2. Analysis

a. In reviewing the history of the RCSA, including its recent synodical decisions, your committee confesses to having serious differences with the RCSA and deep concern for its racial position, attitudes, and practices. We are disappointed in their apparent lack of awareness of and public outcry against the injustices, oppression, suffering, and diverse evils created by the apartheid system on all nonwhites, especially the Blacks.

We are convinced that the Scriptures demand that the RCSA repent of its sins against people of other races and that they must bring their position and practice into conformity with the clear will of God, as well as to seek racial justice and equality in their society. In our continuing fellowship and dialogue with the RCSA we cannot compromise our commitment to these biblical demands nor restrain our testimony against apartheid and its evils.

b. We hold that as churches in ecclesiastical fellowship we are duty-bound to admonish the RCSA in our continuing discussions as long as this avenue is open to us and we have reason to believe they are serious in seeking truth and justice.

We believe, too, that we must deal with them in love as erring brothers, even as we need understanding and compassion in our own weaknesses and sins. It is essential, if we are to be helpful, to take into account the history and experiences that have shaped and molded their lives, their

thinking, and their reading of the Scriptures. We must be aware of the strong factors involving their self-preservation in a society in which they occupy a minority status, their deep-seated fear for the future with its uncertainty, and the powerful cohesion among the Reformed people forged by past oppression and exploitation.

We must remember our own sad and sorry history in race relations, the prolonged discrimination and the strong resistance to change that has marked our country for the past 120 years under circumstances far less threatening than the white South Africans perceive their situation to be.

c. While the racial position of the RCSA leaves much to be desired, as we noted, we hold that the changes in attitude and practice, slow as they are, are nonetheless testimony to the importance of continuing our witness to them. This justifies maintaining our ecclesiastical ties—we must continue to labor with them in Christian love and concern, ever seeking to press on them the claims of the gospel as we understand them.

Of all the White Reformed churches in South Africa the RCSA has been most open to change and to deal progressively with its racial problems. It is they who have protested to the government against the Immorality Act and the Intermarriage Act, and who have made political statements on racism, migrant labor, detention without a hearing, and the use of nuclear weapons.

3. Recommendation:

a. That synod maintain the ties of ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Churches in South Africa until 1989, at which time our ecclesiastical relationship should be reevaluated.

Grounds:

- (1) The RCSA is actively wrestling with the problems of race relations in South Africa with a view to being obedient to the demands of the Word of God.
- (2) To sever our ties at this time would also separate us from the Coloured and Black members of the RCSA, who include about 25 percent of the denomination.
- (3) The RCSA is open to continuing discussion with the CRC and invites us to intensify our dialogue on racial issues.
- (4) The reevaluation in 1989 will give the CRC an opportunity to review:
 - (a) what progress they have made in their study of race relations to be reported to the national synod in January 1988;
 - (b) the decisions of the General Synod that meets in August 1988;
 - (c) their response to the RES Chicago 1984 declarations on race relations and the churches at the 1988 meeting of the RES in 1988.

b. That synod instruct the IRC to enter into an intensified exchange with the committee on race relations of the RCSA.

Ground: The 1988 Synod of the RCSA has invited such dialogue on a continuing basis.

D. *The Reformed Church of Africa (RCA)*

This church is also, historically, a member of the DRC group of churches,

composed of Asian, primarily Indian, people in origin. It is a very small denomination, is no longer a member of the RES, and is deeply troubled internally with its relationship to the DRC and the ways and means to combat racism in South Africa. Negotiations with the DRMC have been going on for a possible merger with the latter. We have not been able to maintain any significant contact with this church.

E. Dutch Reformed Church (DRC/NGK—Africa)

The IRC has had no official contact with the DRC in South Africa since in 1982 our synod decided not to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with them until we saw considerable progress in their position on race relations and their practice.

This church was represented at the RES with a large delegation, but no formal meeting of this delegation and our delegates to the RES was held.

We were shocked to learn in December that the Moderatuur of the DRC had decided to suspend the membership of the DRC in the RES, effective January 1, 1985. The General Synod of 1986 will have to make a final decision re this action of the Moderatuur. This decision was viewed with regret by the IRC and a letter has been sent to the DRC and its leaders urging them to reconsider this action. The reasons for urging reconsideration are three: the Reformed churches should manifest their unity, the Reformed churches need to remain in communication in spite of grave differences, and the DRC needs continuing ecumenical contact with other Reformed bodies.

V. THE NIGERIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

The IRC has very little direct contact with the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria and the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship. This is left to the Board for World Missions and other agencies that have dealings with these churches. Members of our committee did meet with the RES delegates from the CRCN and Tiv churches in order to establish some contact at the committee level.

VI. THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN NEW ZEALAND (RCNZ)

The synod of the RCNZ addressed a request to the CRC through the IRC to consider reverting from the Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship arrangement to the former "sister church—correspondence church" system. The RCNZ have long been unhappy with the change introduced by our Synod of 1974. Recently they engaged in an extensive study of the question of how their churches should pursue their ecumenical objectives and it is in light of that report that they are making this request. At present they consider the CRC a "correspondence" church.

The committee members discussed this matter with the RCNZ delegates to the RES and informed them that the IRC is satisfied with the approach to interchurch relations as set forth in the CEF model and assured the delegates that the relationship between our two churches is as intimate and fruitful now as it would be under the sister-church designation. It was also indicated that it would be compatible with the CRC's commitment to the RCNZ for the RCNZ to consider the CRC a sister church. We further informed them that the CEF relationship is essential for the CRC to carry out its relationships with domestic churches. Subsequently, the IRC has formally responded to the RCNZ request

setting forth this position and urging the RCNZ to place the CRC in the sister-church category. We *recommend* that synod approve this action with respect to the request of the RCNZ.

VII. THE INDONESIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

The CRC is formally in ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Church of Sumba although we have had very little contact with this church. Letters of greeting are exchanged at the time of our major assemblies. There are three additional churches in Indonesia that are members of the RES and by history and tradition are as close, or closer, to the CRC than is the church of Sumba. It was a pleasure for the IRC members at the RES to meet with the delegations from these churches. Our committee believes it is necessary for us to study our relationship with these various Indonesian churches, asking in a realistic way what can be done to bring more meaning to our ecumenical fellowship with churches in Indonesia that are scattered over an area as wide in distance as is the USA and so far removed from us geographically.

VIII. OTHER CHURCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL FELLOWSHIP

The IRC has had no official agenda with several churches in fellowship although some were represented at the RES. The press of time prohibited formal meetings of our delegates with representatives of the Reformed Churches in Australia, the Reformed Church of Japan, the Reformed Church in Argentina, or the Reformed Church of Sri Lanka. The Evangelical Reformed Church of Brazil was not represented at RES Chicago 1984. We did profit from informal contacts with the delegates from these churches.

IX. THE NORTH AMERICAN REFORMED CHURCHES

A. *The Reformed Church in America*

The IRC in recent years has had little contact with the RCA at the denominational level. Most of our ecumenical contacts have been at the classical and congregational levels. In some areas churches have engaged in more active relationships and fellowship than in others.

The discussions at the denominational level had somehow been discontinued. The RCA Commission on Church Unity noted that the RCA-CRC Joint Committee on Interchurch Relations had not met for some time and, considering the link between our two churches important, moved to resume the discussions. As a consequence a new committee was appointed and met on October 30, 1984. At this meeting a serious and profitable discussion took place reviewing our past relations and adopting an agenda for future meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for February 28, 1985.

The RCA members on the committee are: Rev. David Bast, Rev. Vernon Hoffman, Rev. Willis Jones, Rev. Fritz Kruithof, and Rev. Howard Schipper. The CRC members, appointed by the IRC are: Rev. C. Boomsma, Rev. Michael De Vries, Dr. Henry Ippel, Ms. Thelma Meyer, and Rev. Carl D. Tuyl.

The consensus of the joint committee appeared to be that while reunion of our two churches ought to be the ultimate goal set before us by the unifying lordship of Jesus Christ, any such actual discussion at this time would be premature and possibly detrimental to our conversations. Our present focus is

to monitor current areas of cooperation on the basis of previous decisions, particularly those of 1973; to labor for closer cooperation where possible; and for more mutual contacts and joint efforts on the grassroots level, which in any case must be preparatory to any serious closer fellowship.

B. The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

While the IRC has little contact with the PCA apart from the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) this past year it did have occasion to discuss with responsible officials of the PCA a problem that arose in Classis Central California. The problem was brought to the attention of the IRC by the church visitors of classis. In a troubled CRC, persons representing the PCA—with the knowledge and support of church extension personnel of the PCA—sought to exploit the situation. The IRC protested the activity to the interchurch personnel of the PCA; they were sympathetic to our position. The local presbytery continued its activities, however, and organized a PCA congregation into which the dissident CRC members and the “resigned” CR minister were received. The IRC expressed its displeasure and disappointment to their stated clerk, Dr. Morton B. Smith. We deemed such activity detrimental to good relations between our churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. The involvement of NAPARC in such situations will be noted below.

C. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC)

This church, recently organized as a result of the struggle in and defections from the Presbyterian Church USA on doctrinal and church polity issues, has expressed a “very definite interest in closer ties with” the CRC. The IRC is pursuing this interest and seeking to become better acquainted with this new denomination with a view to possible ecclesiastical fellowship.

D. Other Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship in the USA

Our relationship with other churches in fellowship in the USA is confined to the exchange of fraternal delegates and our mutual activities in ecumenical organizations. This includes the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (RES and NAPARC), the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (NAPARC), the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (RES and NAPARC), and the Korean American Presbyterian Church (NAPARC).

E. Reformed Churches in Canada

The responsibility for contacts with Reformed churches in Canada is left to the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. We receive reports from the council periodically.

X. ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES)

RES Chicago 1984 met from July 31 to August 10 at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL. The report of the CRC delegates can be found in Appendix D. Since the official acts of the synod are not yet published, its decisions and our recommendations will be brought to the Synod of 1986. The RES is in a very critical condition—its very existence is threatened—and the continuing prayers of synod and our churches are coveted.

The crisis has arisen primarily because of two difficult problems: the developments in the GKN in matters of doctrine and moral practice, and the racial issue in the South African churches.

The IRC "took note of the tremendous amount of volunteer work that so many contributed for the smooth and effective functioning of the synod on the campus of Trinity Christian College." The arrangements were under the auspices of a committee composed of CRC and OPC representatives, the two denominations which co-hosted the synod. The host churches made the best of an opportunity for service and fellowship and won much goodwill with delegates all over the world. The expenses were shared 75 percent by the CRC and 25 percent by the OPC.

B. *The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)*

As far back as 1972 synod mandated the IRC to consider membership in WARC. In 1981 synod again mandated the IRC "to make a thorough study of the matter of affiliation with WARC and come with a recommendation to the synod. . . ." After several postponements the committee has now completed its work. The full report may be found in Appendix E.

On the basis of the report the committee recommends:

1. That synod accept the invitation to membership extended to the Christian Reformed Church by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Grounds:

- a. The Christian Reformed Church meets all the requirements for membership as outlined in the constitution, and can subscribe, without compromising its Reformed confessional and ecclesiastical character, to the constitutional basis of WARC.
- b. Membership in WARC is a feasible way for the CRC to fulfill its responsibility toward historically Reformed churches as a Circle 2 ecumenical endeavor to which synod committed itself in 1944 (cf., *Acts of Synod 1944*, pp. 340, 358-59).
- c. Membership in WARC will provide the CRC with new opportunities to carry out Circle 3 and Circle 4 ecumenicity (cf. *Acts of Synod 1944*, pp. 340-41, 359).
- d. Membership in WARC will enable the CRC to support and strengthen the Reformed witness of those churches currently in the alliance which are fellow members of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, some of which are also churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.
- e. Membership in WARC will afford the CRC new opportunities to encourage and help small, struggling Reformed churches throughout the world.
- f. Christian Reformed observers and participants involved with WARC over the years have been warmly received, and the contributions of Christian Reformed participants in various study committees have been highly regarded.
- g. WARC and its representatives, recognizing the contribution the CRC has made and can make in the alliance, have repeatedly invited the CRC to full membership.
- h. That synod instruct the IRC to initiate the procedure necessary to implement the above decision.

2. Caribbean and North American Area Council of WARC

The IRC sends observers to the annual meetings of the Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAAC) of WARC. This year it will be held in Princeton, NJ, from March 13–16. Our observers will be Revs. John Primus and Clarence Boomsma.

We are grateful that Dr. Bernard Zylstra has agreed to represent the IRC as a member of the Theological Committee of CANAAAC. Dr. C. (Neal) Plantinga continues as an active member in the Roman Catholic/Reformed-Presbyterian Consultation of CANAAAC.

C. *The North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC)*

The tenth annual meeting of NAPARC was held in Atlanta on October 26, 1984, concurrently with the meetings of denominational administrators for world missions, home missions, education and business affairs, and stated clerks of the NAPARC churches. This proved to be a fruitful arrangement, allowing for a greater amount of fraternal contact, and making possible the delegation to NAPARC of persons already present for the meeting of administrators, resulting in a savings in time and money.

Dr. John Bratt and Mr. Albert Bel have retired as delegates to NAPARC, which they served from its beginning ten years ago. At the time of their retirement, Dr. Bratt was serving as president and Mr. Bel as treasurer, a position he held for ten years. We recommend that synod express its thanks for their services.

Among the actions of NAPARC we present the following items for information:

1. NAPARC suggests to its member churches that they consider a joint study of procedures to be followed in cases of application for membership by persons, including ministers, who are fugitives from the discipline of NAPARC member churches. Each member church will be asked to appoint one member to serve on such a study committee; the PCA to be the convening church. The committee will be expected to report to the October 1985 meeting of the council. The IRC awaits official notification of this action.

2. The Hermeneutics Study Committee remains active to receive and process responses to their Testimony on Hermeneutics which was published in the *Acts of Synod 1984* (pp. 181–82). Thus far the IRC has received no response from any of our churches or members. We remind synod that this testimony was given to our churches for their use.

3. NAPARC urges the member churches to consider asking other NAPARC churches to join them when a study of doctrinal or ethical matters is planned. It is understood that each participating delegation would make its own recommendations to its church. As yet the IRC awaits official information before it prepares a possible recommendation to synod.

4. Dr. John Bratt has been appointed as news officer for NAPARC and will send news items to the periodicals which serve each member church.

5. NAPARC churches have been reminded of the 1987 concurrent meetings of their assemblies/synods on the campus of Calvin College and Seminary during the second week of our synodical sessions in June.

D. *Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Christian Churches (NCCC)*

Dr. George Vander Velde serves as our representative on the Faith and Order

Commission of the NCCC. We have no other contact with the NCCC or any of the agencies related to the World Council of Churches.

XI. ECUMENICAL CHARTER FOR THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

In its annual report to synod in 1984, the IRC informed synod that a Committee on Charter for Ecumenicity had been appointed (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 164). The committee, composed of John H. Kromminga (chairman), John H. Primus, John Timmer, and the administrative secretary, were to prepare a charter for the ecumenical relations of the Christian Reformed Church for consideration by the IRC and ultimately by synod. Synod was informed that "the scope of the committee's inquiry is to comprehend all relations of the CRC, including both relations with individual denominations and participation in ecumenical organizations. The charter to be proposed shall seek to define the kind(s) of ecumenical relations which the church is to pursue, the objectives to be sought in these relations, and the manner in which they are to be pursued. The committee shall take into account biblical and confessional considerations, past statements and actions of the CRC, current commitments of the denomination, and anticipated ecumenical developments."

The fruit of this committee's labors is found in Appendix F. The IRC recommends that synod adopt this charter.

XII. NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The terms of John H. Kromminga, Thelma Meyer, and Henry Zwaanstra will expire this year. All are eligible for reelection. We present the following nominations (*indicates incumbent):

1. Dr. John H. Kromminga* and Rev. Michael De Vries
2. Ms. Thelma Meyer* and Ms. Beth Bandstra
3. Dr. Henry Zwaanstra and Dr. Henry Ippel

XIII. HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

The IRC has appointed Rev. and Mrs. Gerard Bouma as its hospitality committee to host the fraternal delegates and guests who will be present at synod at our invitation. We request that our hospitality committee be given meal privileges at synod in view of their responsibilities.

We request synod, as in previous years, to set aside the afternoon session, Tuesday, June 18, for fraternal delegates to bring their greetings. The hospitality committee will coordinate their work with the fraternal delegates and guests with this session in mind.

XIV. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The president, Dr. John H. Primus, and the administrative secretary, Rev. Clarence Boomsma, have been appointed to represent the IRC at synod. They are authorized to call on other members of the committee who may be able to serve in special matters raised in this report.

XV. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

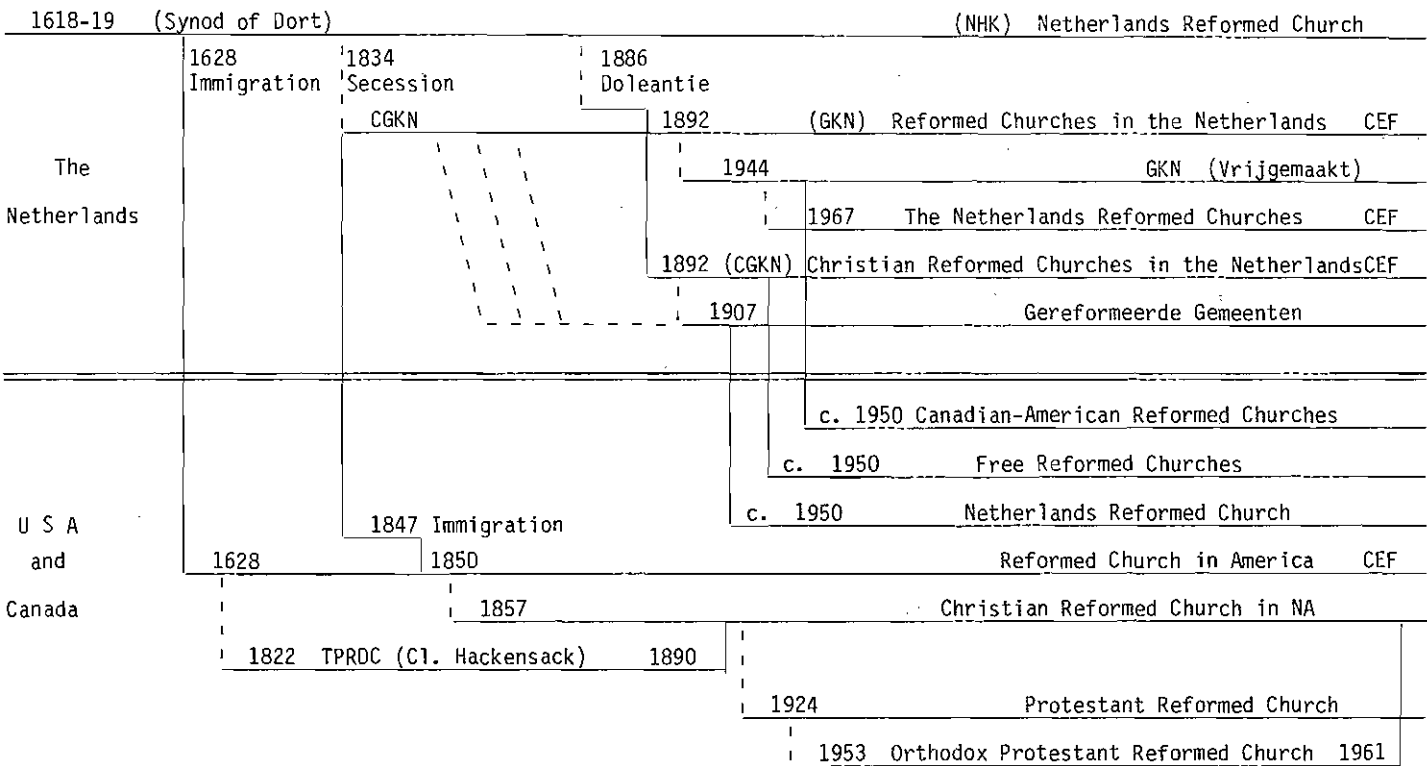
A. Recommendation concerning the reappointment of the administrative secretary (see Section I, B)

- B. Recommendation to continue ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Churches in South Africa (see Section IV, C)
- C. Recommendation regarding the Reformed Churches in New Zealand (see Section VI)
- D. Recommendation to accept the invitation to join WARC (see Section X, B)
- E. Recommendation to thank Dr. John Bratt and Mr. Albert Bel (see Section X, C)
- F. Recommendation to adopt the Ecumenical Charter (see Section XI)
- G. Election of members (see Section XII)
- H. Recommendation re reception of fraternal delegates (see Section XIII)
- I. Recommendation that the president and administrative secretary be given the privilege of the floor of synod when this report is being considered (see Section XIV)

Interchurch Relations Committee

John H. Primus, president (1987)
Tymen E. Hofman, vice president (1987)
John H. Kromminga (1985)
Thelma Meyer (1985)
Henry Zwaanstra (1985)
Gerard Bouma (1986)
Keith Knight (1986)
John Timmer (1986)
Gertrude Visser (1987)
Leonard J. Hofman, *ex officio*
Clarence Boomsma, administrative secretary

REFORMED CHURCHES - NETHERLANDS AND NORTH AMERICA



REFORMED CHURCHES - SOUTH AFRICA

1652	Dutch Reformed Church (NGK)	[Union of Six Synods in 1963]	
1799	Dutch Reformed Mission Church (NGSK)		CEF
1859	Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (NGKA)		CEF
		1947	Reformed Church in Africa CEF
1804	Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (NHK)		
		1943	Christian Reformed Church in South Africa
1859	Reformed Church in South Africa (GKSA)		CEF

APPENDIX C

REPORT OF THE DELEGATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The delegation to South Africa was undertaken in response to the instruction of Synod that the Interchurch Relations Committee devise ways and means to effectively convey to the Gereformeerde Kerk of South Africa synod's concerns relative to race relations in that church (*Acts of Synod 1983*, pp. 712-13). The background of this synodical decision was Overture 22 of 1982, which asked that relations with the Gereformeerde Kerk of South Africa be severed.

The delegation, consisting of John H. Kromminga, John H. Stek, and Henry Zwaanstra, conducted its business in South Africa from August 25 to September 10, 1984. The two major items on the agenda of the delegation were attendance at the "Algemene Sinode" of the Gereformeerde Kerk and a discussion with the committees of the Gereformeerde Kerk (White) on interchurch relations and race relations. These are described in Points II and III below.

In addition, informal discussions were held with various ministers and officials of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Sending Kerk (Coloured), the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk (White), and the South African government. These discussions centered mainly on the new South African constitution, which was in the process of adoption. Reactions to the constitution ranged from moderately positive to extremely negative. Since this subject falls outside the scope of interchurch relations, it will not be further discussed in this report.

II. THE "ALGEMENE SINODE"

Since 1965, the "Black" churches represented in the synods of Midlands, Soutpansberg, and Southlands have met with delegations from the White Gereformeerde synod in a general synod. Although the Black churches are much smaller than the White church, they each have equal representation at the general synod so that the delegates of the White church are outnumbered by a three-to-one margin.

This synod met from August 28 to August 30. The Christian Reformed visitors attended all of the sessions. The five-man moderamen consisted of two White ministers, two Black ministers, and one Coloured minister.

The Christian Reformed observers were concerned with the question whether the Black delegates, who depend on financial support from the White church, would be hesitant to speak their convictions. This question was satisfactorily answered; discussions were free and frank, without discrimination as to race.

Another concern was whether the agenda would include only matters of minor significance. A sampling of the issues discussed will indicate that this was not the case. Various matters of church order were debated, some of them

quite similar to the kinds of adjustments the Christian Reformed synod has made for Classis Red Mesa. Steps were taken to make Christian education more available to the Black communities. The discussion of diaconal matters reflected and enhanced the growing importance of the constituent synods. A question referred for later study concerned the delegation to future meetings of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Officially this synod deals with matters pertaining to confessions and church order as well as those that are of common concern to the four churches. It is expected that eventually the stance of the Gereformeerde Kerk in regard to race relations will be determined not by the White synod independently but by this general synod.

In this synod, the Gereformeerde Kerk is finding its way to a new dimension in its structure and race relations. The general synod already has an important role, and its importance is growing. The church is engaged in a venture which is open-ended and is showing a willingness to follow where the Spirit leads. Such ecclesiastical responsiveness to the synods of churches which arose out of the White synod's mission work—all too rarely evident on the South African scene—supports the contention of the Gereformeerde Kerk that it ought to be judged on its own merits in respect to race relations.

III. RACE RELATIONS IN THE GEREFORMEERDE KERK IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Christian Reformed delegation met with representatives of the committees for interchurch relations and race relations of the Gereformeerde Kerk. In an opening statement the chairman of the delegation reviewed the position of the Christian Reformed Church relative to relations with the Gereformeerde Kerk. The criticisms incorporated in the Interchurch Relations Committee's report to the 1984 Synod were reviewed, as was the synodical declaration that any theological defense of apartheid is a heresy. He stated that the CRC is concerned for the dispossessed and powerless in South Africa and is of the opinion that those who are united with the CRC doctrinally and ecclesiastically should be in the forefront in representing the Reformed and Christian conscience in these matters.

The South African representatives indicated that their previous synod had itself been dissatisfied with various previous synodical statements made on race relations, and had authorized a thoroughgoing review. That review was undertaken not by way of revisions here and there but as an effort to rewrite the entire position. The product of this effort will be submitted to their synod in January 1985, and the CRC delegation obtained an information copy of what is being proposed. The statement most sharply criticized in the IRC report to the CRC Synod of 1984 has been abandoned. A review of the exegesis of Acts 17:26 is under way. All of this may be taken as evidence of a desire to labor responsibly with this issue. It should be noted, however, that some aspects of the proposed new position remain unsatisfactory. The IRC will continue to study these proposals and will communicate its findings to the Gereformeerde Kerk when they have been formulated.

A frank discussion was held on the CRC statement relative to apartheid (which is very similar to the position later adopted by the RES in the presence of South African delegates). Some details of the statement were subjected to criticism, but the basic thrust was not repudiated. The delegations from both churches agreed that "we are sinners in process of reformation." In answer to

the question, "What do members of local congregations hear from their leaders regarding race relations?" reference was made to articles in church periodicals, to the efforts of ministers to preach the gospel in a positive way and to apply it to the lives of the members, and to their public statements repudiating racial discrimination. It was observed that some members of the church refuse to accept the presence of Blacks at public worship; but this rarely happens, and when it does the matter is addressed pastorally and, if necessary, by discipline. It was agreed that racial differences may not be an obstacle to table fellowship.

The CRC representatives raised the question of the GKSA attitude to the Broederbond. The GKSA representatives indicated that, like the CRC, they had taken a position against secret societies. Their synod has dealt with questions raised within their own churches concerning the Broederbond. It was stated that the Broederbond is a "confidential organization" rather than a "secret society"; that it has no influence in the internal affairs of the GKSA; and that many political conservatives in South Africa, finding the Broederbond too "progressive" for their tastes, have left it since 1969.

As the last formal item on the discussion agenda, the respective CRC and GKSA positions on Belgic Confession Article 36 were reviewed. The change they are considering in the wording is much less sweeping than ours. The motivation for the change is simply to affirm that the government has nothing to say about what goes on within the church. The GKSA delegates indicated that according to their understanding the GKSA's formulation makes clear the responsibility of the government to safeguard the rights and freedoms of all religious groups.

Further informal discussions were held on such questions as the relations between the constituent synods of the "Algemene Sinode," reactions to the Belhar Confession, and the assessment of the recent constitutional changes in South Africa. These discussions were informative and helpful for background, but have no direct bearing on the central agenda of the CRC representatives.

IV. ASSESSMENT

The contact with the GKSA as described above was neither a complete success nor a total disappointment. The IRC report to the 1984 Synod noted some hopeful signs on some crucial issues—some improvement has been noted, yet there are issues which need further address. The improvements include the developing multiracial "Algemene Sinode" and the pending revision of the statements regarding race relations. A continuing defensiveness regarding racial segregation and the need for greater vigor and clarity in combatting societal injustice must remain on the agenda between the CRC and the GKSA.

While such movement as we have noted is going on, relationships should not be severed. While the issues remain, constant attention to them remains necessary. The GKSA, like the CRC, is in a continual process of address to matters of integrity, obedience to Scripture, fellowship within and between churches, and injustice within the church and in the surrounding society. This is not the time or occasion for abandoning one another in this effort.

APPENDIX D

THE REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD 1984

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod met in Palos Heights, IL, from July 31 to August 10, 1984. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Christian Reformed Church served as the convening churches.

Three conferences—on mission, theology, and youth—were held prior to the opening of the synod. These will not be further mentioned except insofar as they bear on the decisions which will be reported.

Due to the inability of the designated elder delegate and alternate to attend, and with the approval of the Synodical Interim Committee, the Christian Reformed delegation consisted of voting delegates, Revs. John H. Kromminga, Clarence Boomsma, and John H. Primus; nonvoting delegates, Revs. Tymen E. Hofman, Roger E. Van Harn, and James C. Lont; and advisors, Revs. Bastiaan Nederlof and Henry Zwaanstra. The Christian Reformed Church was represented on all but one of the advisory committees and, in keeping with the RES rules, all the above-mentioned representatives were allowed full participation except for voting, which was restricted to three.

Churches from every continent of the world were represented. Africa was the most heavily represented, with fifteen denominations, three of them White, participating. Four Indonesian churches were represented. Participation by the churches from the so-called Third World was significant, aided by the rule which allowed voting by ballot on sensitive issues.

Membership in the RES has undergone some changes. Six churches terminated their membership, five of them because of dissatisfaction with the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands and the sixth citing RES reticence on the South African racial policies. Three new churches were admitted to membership.

The ecumenical functions of the RES were represented in a variety of ways. Two large study documents, the products of international cooperation, were submitted. These concerned "The Church, Science, and Technology" and an "RES Testimony on Human Rights." Conclusions from these reports were approved by the synod and provisions were made for making them available to the member churches in study form. An evening session was devoted to the presentation of the needs of the Third World churches and steps were taken toward meeting these needs. In both advisory committees and plenary sessions the value of interaction between churches of east, west, north, and south was demonstrated. Among the items of internal business of the RES it is of importance to the Christian Reformed Church to note that Dr. Paul Schrotenboer was appointed to a new term as general secretary. An annual budget was approved, with the Christian Reformed Church assigned a 21 percent share, amounting to \$28,602. This figure could be subject to adjustment during the four-year interim due to unforeseeable circumstances.

It was evident prior to the meeting that there would be at least four critical

issues before the 1984 RES. These concerned constitutional revision, the membership of the GKN, the racial stance of the White South African churches, and the question of dual membership in the RES and the World Council of Churches. In dealing with these questions, the CRC delegation operated in the spirit recommended by the delegates to the 1980 RES, seeking to work for the perpetuation of the RES. The first three of the critical issues absorbed so much time and energy that the fourth, concerning dual membership, had to be postponed until the 1988 RES. This development came in spite of the fact that a report on this issue had been available since 1982 and that there had been a firm determination to settle it once for all in 1984.

The subject of constitutional revision has been before the RES for more than a decade and was the subject of several documents submitted to the 1984 sessions. The underlying issues concern the correctness of calling the RES a "synod," the nature of its authority, the meaning of subscription to its basis, and the function of "discipline" in the RES. The outcome of the debate was a decision to appoint an international committee to propose revisions of the constitution to the 1988 RES. The mandate to the committee, however, was so severely hedged about that its task of devising meaningful change has been rendered extremely difficult. The committee is to work on a tight timetable which calls for reaction from the member churches prior to the 1988 meeting. The IRC will report to the CRC synod on the progress of this matter.

The debate concerning the GKN reflected widespread and intense dissatisfaction with that church's positions on various matters, notably homosexuality, attitude toward the Scriptures, and membership in the WCC. Both majority and minority advisory recommendations advocated change in the GKN pastoral advice on homosexuality. The minority recommended that if this advice were not withdrawn, the GKN should withdraw from the RES by 1986. Substitution of this minority recommendation for the somewhat softer majority recommendation lost by a tie vote. Continued membership of the GKN in the RES still hangs in the balance in view of both the debate and the advice which it produced. But the question of continued membership, at least for the present, is left to the actions of that church itself. The possibility that other churches will withdraw from the RES in case of an inadequate response by the GKN was clearly laid out in the decision which was adopted.

The question of race relations in South Africa also came before the RES by way of a variety of reports and communications. Debate on this question was the occasion for frequent use of ballot votes. A lengthy series of recommendations addressed to the churches of South Africa was adopted. These were buttressed by the requirement that responses to several recommendations are to be submitted to the Interim Committee of the RES so that the 1988 RES may be enabled "to evaluate the position of these churches in the light of the communications." In addition a further statement was adopted, similar to but not identical with the decision on "apartheid" adopted by the CRC synod in 1984. We quote a concluding portion of this decision:

That synod declare that, when the evil of such an ideology has been exposed from within the church itself and the church(es) nevertheless would continue to support or fail to denounce such an ideology, there is a *Status Confessionis*. This means that this particular matter has then become a point of confession about which one cannot differ without affecting the integrity of the entire Christian confession. In such a situation any teaching of the church that would defend this ideology would have to be regarded as heretical, i.e., in conflict with the teaching of Scripture.

These three interrelated issues, together with the postponed question of dual membership in RES and WCC, are clear evidence that the question of the nature, the membership, and the functioning of the RES is at a critical stage. The RES has been a valuable organization among the Reformed churches of the world, and holds the potential for continued service in the cause around which they have united. But it continues to be a real question whether and how the RES is to survive the crisis in which it now finds itself.

APPENDIX E

RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

I. HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH WITH THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

What is now known as the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) began in 1875. Twenty-three years later, in 1898, synod received an invitation to join and participate in the alliance. In 1902 synod declined membership in the alliance for two reasons. First, synod did not approve that the main requirement for admission was the Presbyterian System of Church Polity rather than the strictly Calvinistic Confession. Synod found the basis of the organization too broad. It seemed to synod "that labor apart from this confessional basis cannot produce the required fruit." Second, synod did not see its way clear to bear the expenses of membership.

Nothing further occurred until 1922, when once more synod was invited to affiliate with the alliance. In 1924 synod was advised by the committee which had been appointed to study the matter not to affiliate for five reasons:

1. The basis of the alliance is too indefinite. There is no agreement on what is Reformed.
2. The present drift is entirely away from helping each other maintain the historical Reformed faith. This should be the aim of the alliance.
3. Affiliation would mean ecclesiastical alliance and cooperation with churches in which representative liberal forces are in good and regular standing.
4. A proposed revision of the constitution of the alliance makes it well-nigh impossible to say what the character of the alliance will be in the future.
5. The practical work of the alliance lacks the specific Reformed stamp.

It is noteworthy that synod did not accept the recommendation and grounds of the committee, but instead adopted a substitute motion which read:

Synod decided not to affiliate at this time with the Alliance of the Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System, because a proposed revision of its constitution makes it well-nigh impossible to say what the character of the alliance will be in the future.

At the same time synod voiced its profound interest in the work of the alliance, and expressed its trust that the proposed revision of the constitution would set forth clearly what should emphatically be the aim of the alliance, namely, "helping each other maintain the historical Reformed faith" (*Acts of Synod 1924*, p. 160).

Between 1924 and 1951 nothing happened in our contacts with the alliance. But two important ecumenical events marked this period of our denominational history. In 1944 synod adopted the landmark statement on ecumenicity that remains very important to this day and has a significant bearing on the issue of membership in the alliance. In 1946 the Reformed Ecumenical Synod was formed after years of planning and the delaying interruption of World War

II. It was no doubt the church's involvement with this latter ecumenical endeavor that overshadowed any serious consideration of relations with the alliance.

However, in 1951 synod authorized the sending of an observer to the next meeting of the alliance "to become better acquainted with its basis, purpose, objectives, and mode of operation . . . in view of the revival of activity of this organization." We may assume that the vision of ecumenicity set forth in the report of 1944 played a role in this decision.

In 1954 the alliance, now renamed World Presbyterian Alliance, met in Princeton, NJ, and was attended by Dr. John T. Hoogstra as our observer. He reported at some length to the synod of 1955, recommending that "we do not cast our lot with them at this time" (*Acts of Synod 1955*, p. 273). Synod received the report as information. In his report Dr. Hoogstra informed synod of the efforts of the alliance to purchase and restore the Calvin Auditorium in Geneva. In 1958 synod received and approved of a request from the alliance for a contribution of \$2,000 as our fair share for the restoration project.

In 1957 the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence recommended to synod that it be charged ". . . to study existing ecumenical organizations, and to advise the Synod of 1958, in accordance with Reformed principles, practices, and action, whether synod should seek membership in one of these organizations." The committee cited in support of its recommendation "the principle as given by Calvin, and by our own Synod of 1944, that we begin first with the church or churches closest to us, and then widen the circle to churches more distant to seek perhaps some legitimate area of common agreement and interest for the Church of Jesus Christ we love." Synod adopted the recommendation on two grounds:

- a. The principle of ecumenicity honored by us points in the direction of such a study.
- b. The urgency of the world situation calls for it.

The committee reported in 1958 that it was gathering information from six different ecumenical bodies, including the World Presbyterian Alliance, but that it was impossible to make any recommendations at the time. It is interesting to read the perspective from which the committee sought to do its work:

We shall review an organization's constitution, objectives, purposes, whether or not consistent with its constitution, and whether in the carrying out of its program it has remained true in practice to the constitution and objectives. We feel that we must give some attention to the question of impact that an organization makes upon the public in its utterances and mode of operation to ascertain whether membership will be a help or a hindrance in the carrying out of our own denomination projects.

(Acts of Synod 1958, p. 265)

A comprehensive report entitled: "Membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance," was presented to synod in 1959. It was meant to be "an inquiry into the advisability of membership as mandated by synod in 1957." The report contains a helpful "denominational historical background" setting out the questions involved in membership in the alliance, followed by an informative history of the alliance from its beginning, its relationship to the World Council of Churches, a consideration of the constitution of 1954, and finally an evaluation of the World Presbyterian Alliance in both its commendable and its doubtful aspects.

The recommendation of the committee to synod was that we "not apply for membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance." The reasons for this recom-

mentation, summarized from the body of the report, were as follows:

- a. Indistinct basis of the constitution.
- b. Its relation to World Council of Churches.
- c. Its theologically mixed constituency, a situation intensified by all types of membership on both sides of the iron curtain.
- d (minor reason). Our Reformed Ecumenical Synod has a committee reviewing this identical question on which are representative members of both positions: to join and not to join.

(Acts of Synod 1959, p. 272)

Synod took no action.

In 1960 the Ecumenicity and Interchurch Committee brought a stronger recommendation in the light of the 1959 report and after conferring with Dr. Marcel Pradervand, representing the World Presbyterian Alliance. It advised "that synod do not consider seriously membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance" on the basis of the first three grounds of the 1959 report. Synod did not adopt the committee's recommendation but decided nevertheless not to apply for membership on the ground that "such membership has far-reaching implications which have not been sufficiently explored by our church in order to take final action at this time." It is clear that synod was not as ready to close the door on the alliance as its committee was.

Synod, in 1966, approved the sending of an observer to the Theological Committee of the North American Area Council of the World Presbyterian Alliance. Dr. John H. Kromminga was appointed. The purpose of sending an observer was to obtain more information about the alliance, in keeping with the synodical decision of 1960.

In 1969 the Interchurch Relations Committee requested permission to send an observer to the General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 1970. Synod granted the request and Rev. Harold De Groot from the Nigerian Mission staff was delegated.

In the light of the positive reports from Dr. Kromminga and Rev. De Groot, the Interchurch Relations Committee in 1972 sought the authorization of synod "to investigate further the desirability and feasibility of membership in this world organization." The ground adduced was that "initial contact with WARC indicates that this organization is worthy of such investigation." Synod did so mandate the committee.

While the Interchurch Relations Committee has not forgotten this mandate of 1972, it has not to this day come to synod with a recommendation "whether or not to accept the invitation to join WARC and its affiliate, the North American Council of WARC." It has continued to send observers to the annual meetings of the North American Council, now called the Caribbean and North American Area Council of WARC (CANAAC), and has regularly sent participants to its theological committee as well as to other commissions. In 1982 two official observers attended the General Council of WARC meeting in Ottawa, ON, Canada. A full report of this meeting was included as an appendix to the annual report of the IRC to the Synod of 1983.

Several factors have contributed to this very long delay on the part of the IRC. First, priority was given to the problems arising out of our ecclesiastical relations with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in view of the changes occurring in that denomination. Second, the urgency of the racial issues in the

Reformed churches in South Africa has taken much of the committee's time and effort. Third, the committee had been handicapped in its work for lack of staff personnel until October 1983. Finally, the committee has not received unanimity of advice in its study of the issues involved in WARC membership.

In February 1984 the Caribbean and North American Council, meeting in Matanzas, Cuba, passed this resolution:

That the Council express to the CRCNA its appreciation for that church's long-standing relationship with the Council and enthusiastically invites the CRCNA to formalize that relationship in the Council.

It is our judgment that we can no longer delay the decision as to whether or not to join the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

II. OUR ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE AND TASK WITH A VIEW TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

A. *Basic Considerations to Membership*

Basic to our consideration of membership in WARC is the comprehensive and fundamental report of ecumenicity presented to the Synod of 1944.

Synod expressed agreement with the substance of twelve propositions of the report on the grounds that they present the biblical position on interchurch relationships; that they can serve as a basis for further study and action; and that present world conditions make early progress in these matters imperative (cf. *Acts of Synod 1944*, p. 85).

For our present purpose we may summarize the principal elements of these propositions as follows:

1. The ecumenical task is encompassed in the truth that all Christian churches are related as being all and severally manifestations of the one and indivisible body of Christ (Proposition 1).

2. Diversity of ecumenical relationships is seen in the fact that the churches of Christ can be classified roughly into four groups that form, as it were, four concentric circles for ecumenical relations for the CRC, beginning with those churches nearest to us in doctrine and practice and widening out to the outermost circle of churches quite different from us (Propositions 5 and 6). These four groups are:

- a. Churches similar to the CRC in doctrine, polity, and liturgy;
- b. Churches that are "Reformed" in name, but less so in practice;
- c. Non-Reformed Protestant churches;
- d. Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches.

3. The CRC has an ecumenical concern for and responsibility to all other Christian churches, but it is the part of wisdom to begin with those churches closest to us in doctrine, polity, and liturgy, and to work out progressively as time and strength and opportunity permit (Propositions 8 and 9).

4. The CRC has a particular responsibility to all Reformed churches: both to those churches that are Reformed in doctrine, polity, and liturgy officially and in their regular ecclesiastical practice, and also to those churches that are Reformed officially but not so in practice. (These Reformed churches form Circles I and 2.) "Pluriformity in the current sense of the word is contraband. Hence our church cannot properly acquiesce in it but must in deference to the

dictates of Scripture put forth every effort of which it is capable to nullify it as much as possible, though, of course, under no circumstances at the expense of the truth" (Proposition 7). Elsewhere in the report it is asserted: ". . . all Reformed churches in one and the same country ought to unite and constitute one single denomination, if the language barrier has been razed, as a matter of absolute duty. . . . To remain denominationally separate is to fail to bring into view before God and man the spiritual unity of the body of Christ . . ." (*Acts of Synod 1944*, p. 346).

B. *Ecumenical Activities Since 1944*

A survey of our ecumenical activities since 1944 from the perspective of the 1944 report shows the following:

1. Nearly all of our ecumenical efforts have been confined to churches in Circle 1. Prior to 1974 we enlarged the number of "sister churches" and included more "churches in correspondence." In 1974 we adopted the one category of "churches in ecclesiastical fellowship" and included more churches, all in the status of Circle 1. No effort was initiated in forty years to effect a union with any North American Reformed/Presbyterian churches, except for a brief period with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

2. Our participation in the forming of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in 1946 and the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council in 1974 represented ecumenical relations with Circle 1 churches.

3. Ecumenical involvement with Circle 2 churches has been officially almost nonexistent. Only the regular sending of observers to WARC and CANAAC and the appointment of participants to various commissions of these two organizations involve us with Reformed churches in the Circle 2 category.

4. The only serious venture into Circle 3 ecumenicity was our eight-year membership in the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) from 1943 to 1951. Otherwise, ecumenical relations with churches of Circle 3 have been almost completely untouched. In recent years participants have been authorized to serve on the Commission of Faith and Order of the National Council of Christian Churches (NCCC). The sending of observers to the General Assemblies of the World Council of Churches (WCC) over the years has demonstrated that we cannot ignore churches in the classification of Circle 3. In 1967 synod received two reports—a majority and a minority report—on the question of membership in the WCC. This indicated our awareness that churches in Circles 3 and 4 are part of "the one and indivisible body of Christ."

5. Through our participants presence at the Roman Catholic/Reformed-Presbyterian Consultation, sponsored by CANAAC, we have acknowledged a responsibility to this Circle 4 church.

In summary we must say that the mandate and task for ecumenicity set out by the report of 1944 has borne little fruit over the past forty years. This is all the more regrettable in view of the world's desperate need and the fragmented state of the Christian churches throughout the world.

C. *Significant Changes in the Ecumenical Scene Since 1944*

1. The emergence of the place and role of ecumenical bodies

Although the alliance had been in existence for many years and the Chris-

tian Reformed Church, as noted above, had been invited more than once to affiliate with it, surprisingly the 1944 report makes no reference to it. A brief reference is made to what was then known as the Federal Council of Churches (now the NCCC) but it is mentioned only to point out that our negative position regarding the council was a form of witness in the American church world, considered to be an encouragement "for the lovers of the Reformed position." One year before the report of 1944, synod decided to join the National Association of Evangelicals, but no reference to it appears in the report. The report, however, does anticipate and endorse the forming of an ecumenical Reformed council; this became the Reformed Ecumenical Synod formed in 1946.

These omissions may have resulted in part from the fact that the focus and vision of the ecumenical task had as their ultimate goal that the given spiritual unity of all true churches of Christ come to expression as much as is physically possible in ecclesiastical unity (Proposition 3). The ecumenical bodies do not have this as a primary goal on their agendas.

In addition to those already existing in 1944, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod was organized in 1946, the World Council of Churches in 1948, and the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council in 1974.

The emergence of ecumenical organizations as a prominent feature of modern church life has changed the ecumenical perspectives and activities from the earlier concern for church unions and direct ecclesiastical contacts between denominations, to the current expression of the unity of the body of Christ in and through these ecumenical channels. In large measure these organizations are a substitute for individual interdenominational contacts and fellowship. They are ecclesiastical associations to advance mutual understanding and appreciation, to provide cooperative avenues for mutual edification and support, and to facilitate joint efforts in witness and support of diverse programs of service in and to the world.

The various ecumenical bodies embrace the churches from the four concentric circles described in the 1944 report. NAPARC includes churches of Circle 1—those Reformed churches similar to the CRC, recognizing, of course, that distinctions must be made between essentials and nonessentials of Reformed doctrine, polity, and liturgy (Proposition 12).

WARC includes some Circle 1 churches and many that may be classified as churches in Circle 2. One third of the RES churches are also members of WARC.

The National Council of Christian Churches is composed of churches from Circles 2 and 3, although some Circle 1 churches are included. The World Council of Churches, which is the broadest of all ecumenical bodies, embraces churches from all four circles.

The rise and role of these ecumenical groups are, in many respects, a new development not envisioned by the Ecumenicity Report. They pose by their dimensions, forms, and seriousness of purpose vital questions and issues that every church must face. As mentioned above, in 1967 the CRC dealt with the question of membership in WCC. Both the majority and minority reports wrestled with the significance of the 1944 report as it bore on the issue of WCC. Unfortunately there has been no followup on the discussion. The existence of diverse ecumenical bodies poses the question of whether the goals of the 1944 report, to engage in ecumenical endeavor including all four concentric circles, may not be achieved more realistically through the avenues of associations of churches rather than by means of direct denominational contacts. That the

church has not been unaware of these possibilities is evident from the proposed study as we noted above of six different ecumenical organizations as far back as 1958. The changed ecumenical scene since 1944 must be considered when evaluating membership in WARC.

2. A modified perspective of the ecumenical task

a. The role of the CRC in its ecumenical task

The Ecumenicity Report recognizes that all Christian churches by virtue of being Christian churches possess some of the truth and also in some sense practice it, but also that all churches by virtue of being in a broken world are imperfect in their understanding of the truth and their practice of it. Some denominations are closer to the scriptural representation of the organized church of Christ than are others. Churches less close to the pattern of Scripture are not for that reason to be disowned as churches. At the same time their deficiency on the score of ecclesiastical soundness is not to be condoned or judged negligible.

The 1944 report holds that the CRC "is the nearest historical approach to the ecclesiastical ideal of Scripture, as it modestly but confidently affirms." It follows that the ecumenical responsibility of the CRC, apart from other Circle 1 Reformed churches, is, first, "to correct those churches that are officially Reformed but in practice reveal doctrinal, canonical, and liturgical delinquencies"—Circle 2 churches—and then to "make it its business to labor with [non Reformed churches, whether Protestant or non-Protestant] in love in order to help them by the blessing of God, to attain more scriptural character" (Propositions 7 and 8).

Fidelity to God and his Word lends a superiority over delinquents to those upon whom God bestows this grace. It is not immodest to admonish erring brethren, and a wise attempt at restoring them is evidence of a loving spirit. It is no disproof that erring brethren disown admonition and resist restoration vigorously, as a rule.

(Acts of Synod 1944, Supplement 21, p. 348)

Needless to say, this is not a pleasant task. Its faithful performance will expose us to the charge of pharisaism. But these considerations should not deter us.

If we believe, that all Christians should be Reformed—and this we profess to believe—then we should at least try, ecclesiastically as well as otherwise, to win them for the Reformed faith, and so pave the way for our eventual union with them, please God. Worldly wisdom may say that it is impossible; and it is true that it is impossible with men. But it is not for that reason impossible with God.

(Acts of Synod 1944, Supplement 21, pp. 348–50)

The Ecumenicity Report of 1944 has proved to be a landmark statement because of its vision of the unity of the church in confession and practice of the truth, and its worldwide scope embracing all Christians—a perspective as valid today as it was then.

But the assumption of our superiority and the consequent role that assumption provides for the CRC in its ecumenical task must be modified. In fairness to the 1944 report and its authors, it must be acknowledged that such attitudes of superiority were not limited to the CRC at the time and are also present in some churches today. Modification does not mean that fidelity to the Word is unimportant. It is fundamentally important in all ecumenical activity. Neither do we deny that differences in the perception of and loyalty to biblical truth exist among churches. To such we cannot be indifferent. Concern that all churches should confess the truth of Scripture

is a major goal of ecumenicity and a concern that we cannot compromise nor reduce to a matter of indifference in pursuing our ecumenical task and calling.

The 1944 report, however, does not take sufficiently into account the human and sinful limitations that also hinder our understanding of the biblical truth and faithfulness to it. We all see through a glass darkly. Consequently, our efforts to further the truth ecumenically must take into consideration our own imperfections. That the unity of the church of Christ is a unity in truth is undeniable. That major differences in the perception of biblical truth exist among churches is also indisputable. If unity in truth is to be achieved, those major differences must be overcome. They can realistically be addressed and overcome only if we are willing honestly and confidently to present our perceptions while humbly remaining open to those of others. Through such ecumenical dialogue we can trust God to teach us all, and thereby unite us through a deeper common grasp of his truth.

This modified perspective on the self-evaluation of the CRC allows for an openness to theological dialogue in an ecumenical body such as the World Alliance of Reformed Churches without detracting from the church's commitment to scriptural truth and the Reformed faith.

b. The scope of the ecumenical task for the CRC

The report of 1944 saw the ecumenical duty almost exclusively in terms of maintaining and advancing the biblical faith as interpreted by the Reformed confessions among the diverse denominations. The importance of this aspect of ecumenicity is basic, as we have seen above.

The Christian church's witness to its unity in the world is demonstrated in its theology, its church polity, and its worship. But its witness must also come to expression in its practice of and life in the truth. Its unity in Jesus Christ is evident in the church's evangelism, its diaconal care within and among the churches, but also in its healing ministries—its social, economic, and political concerns in the world in the light of its calling according to the gospel.

Many of these dimensions of the church's calling are beyond the ability of one denomination to fulfill. The fragmented church is seriously handicapped in ministering to the needs of our broken world. Since World War II the CRC along with most churches have learned to see our planet as "One World." Never before has the church been given the opportunity and the responsibility to witness to both compassion and justice of Christ as in our day. In the midst of our sad world of global wars, millions of refugees, new waves of persecution, heartrending famines, great and powerful anti-Christian forces and movements, the fear of nuclear annihilation, and the awful sense of meaninglessness that darkens the lives of so many, we are called to bear testimony to the gospel of God's saving work in Christ to which the existence of every church bears witness. Synod adopted the recommendation to engage in an ecumenical study in 1957 including in its grounds: "the urgency of the world situation calls for it" (*Acts of Synod 1957*, p. 103).

The world situation in the last twenty years of the twentieth century does not allow us to wait until all Christian churches have become one in doctrine before we "seek perhaps some legitimate area of common agreement and interest for the church of Jesus Christ we love" (*Acts of Synod 1957*,

Supplement 18-A, p. 307). In fact, we cannot be sure that the ultimate goal of the unity of the church should take the shape of one organization as the 1944 report envisioned. To quote the proposed revised charter once more:

The unity of the church must be visibly manifest. The ideal form of this unity is not yet known. The unity we seek is one of mutual renewal and acceptance through mutual giving and receiving.

The ecumenical movement in the life of the church today recognizes the calling to unity in the practice of the truth among denominations, but also in its united concern for the world in which it has been placed to serve the cause of God's redeeming purpose.

We must consider whether the World Alliance of Reformed Churches affords the CRC a vehicle for this larger ecumenical responsibility to the world.

III. THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

A. *A Brief History of the Alliance*

The alliance was formed in 1875 in London and held its first assembly in 1877. It was known as *The Alliance of the Reformed Churches Throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian System*. It has the distinction of being the oldest of all confessional ecumenical bodies. The 1959 report mentioned in Section I, above, observes that "its priority is an evidence of the ecumenical implications inherent in our Reformed convictions, which if in accordance with the Word of God, should be realized."

Its headquarters moved from London to Geneva, Switzerland, in 1949. In 1970, at the twentieth General Council meeting, the alliance and the International Congregational Council became one body. A new constitution was adopted and the name of the united body became *The World Alliance of Reformed Churches* (WARC).

According to the 1959 report, the earlier period of the alliance's history placed more emphasis on fellowship, whereas later the increasing emphasis fell on common service in the world. Throughout its history of 110 years it has witnessed and been influenced by the trends in theology, the movements in society, the crises of war, and the rise of other ecumenical bodies—notably the World Council of Churches.

During its history it has gone through times of growth and strength and periods of stagnation and weakness. Dr. James I. McCord, in his presidential address in Ottawa in 1982, admitted that the alliance has problems and that it constantly struggles to maintain a fruitful program. Its major problem has been its close association with the WCC. To avoid duplication and competition it defers in programs and ministry to the WCC. As a result much of the effort and money of the churches in both organizations goes to the WCC, leaving WARC a struggling entity. Dr. McCord pointed out, however, that "if there were no alliance, it would have to be created." There is need for a specifically Reformed effort for the Reformed family of churches that can be neither the concern or activity of the WCC.

At present it appears to be in a more flourishing condition, apparently fulfilling a more significant role in the life of its member churches, in comparison to the period immediately following the organization of the WCC. It includes 158 member churches with an estimated eighty million members.

Perhaps the most important factor in its revival has been the presence of Third World churches in its body. In the mid-fifties the alliance numbered 67 member churches (11 in North America, 7 in Latin America, 7 in the British Isles, 21 in Europe, 10 in Africa, 8 in Asia, and 3 in Australasia). In 1981 there were 157 member churches (16 in North America and Caribbean area, 13 in Latin America, 35 in Europe, 35 in Africa, 43 in Asia, and 6 in Australia).

B. *The Basis, Membership, and Purpose of the Alliance*

The preamble of the 1970 constitution defines its basis as follows:

The one foundation of the church is Jesus Christ, the Lord, in whom God's Word became flesh and to whom the Scriptures bear witness; and the church on earth, though composed of many members, is one body in the communion of the Holy Spirit, under the headship of the one Lord Jesus Christ.

Eligibility for membership in the alliance is delineated in Article II of the constitution:

Any church which accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; holds the Word of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the supreme authority in matters of faith and life; acknowledges the need for the continuing reformation of the church catholic; whose position in faith and evangelism is in general agreement with that of the historic Reformed confessions, recognizing that the Reformed tradition is a biblical, evangelical, and doctrinal ethos, rather than any narrow and exclusive definition of faith and order, shall be eligible for membership.

The purposes of the alliance are listed under Article III in the constitution:

The purposes of the alliance shall be:

1. to further all endeavors to proclaim the Word of God faithfully, and to order the life and worship of the church in obedience to his Word;
2. to further the work of evangelism, mission, and stewardship in all their aspects, to promote common study of the Christian faith and its implications;
3. to encourage the diversity and fraternal character of ministries in the church under the one Head, Jesus Christ;
4. to widen and deepen understanding and fellowship among the member churches and churches eligible for membership and to help them to fulfill their own responsibilities in the service of Christ;
5. to further intercourse between the member churches, through mutual visitation, through the dissemination of information, and by other practicable means;
6. to unite the forces of the member churches in common service wherever needed and practicable;
7. to help member churches which may be weak, oppressed, or persecuted; and through all available channels to stimulate and provide aid to needy churches among them;
8. to promote and defend religious and civil liberties wherever threatened throughout the world;
9. to facilitate the contribution to the ecumenical movement of the experiences and insights which churches within this alliance have been given in their history, and to share with churches of other traditions within that movement, and particularly in the World Council of Churches, in the discovery of forms of church life and practice which will enable the people of God more fully to understand and express together God's will for his people.

(A copy of the constitution and its by-laws appears as a supplement to Appendix E of this report.)

C. The Organization of the Alliance

The alliance is composed of the general council that consists of delegates appointed by the member churches. It meets once every five to seven years. At its meeting the general council elects an executive committee of thirty-two members, which exercises general oversight of the work of the alliance between the meetings of the general council. It represents and speaks for the alliance when the general council is not in session. The officers of the general council serve on the executive committee. The current president of the alliance is Dr. Alan Boesak from the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa.

The executive committee elects a general secretary who serves as the chief executive officer to direct and coordinate the work of the alliance. The present general secretary is Dr. Edmond Perret.

The work of the alliance is divided into three departments, each with its own secretary: (1) The Department of Theology, (2) The Department of Cooperation and Witness, and (3) The Department of Finance. The particular functions of the first two departments can be found in the by-laws.

WARC is divided into two area councils: the European Area Council and the Caribbean and North American Area Council. Regarding the latter area council, it meets once a year, in organization and function resembling the parent body.

D. The Privileges and Obligations of Membership in the Alliance

1. The Christian Reformed Church, if it were to become a member, would be entitled to four delegates in the general council.

2. The cost of membership in WARC for churches, able to pay full cost, amounts to 4.5¢ per communicant member per year. That would amount to approximately \$8,500 for the CRC. Out of this amount the expenses of official delegates are paid, including travel, lodging, and meals. In addition all committees appointed by WARC have their expenses paid by WARC, except for the Committee on Theology. In the latter instance WARC pays for lodging and meals while in attendance at the meetings, but travel expenses are borne by the denomination.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH AFFILIATING WITH THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

A. Consideration of the Objections Raised to CRC Membership in WARC

1. Synodical Decisions and Their Grounds

As we learned in Section I, synod in 1924 and again in 1960 did not base its decisions not to affiliate with the alliance on the grounds presented by its committees. With some justification it may be pointed out that synod's action was in both instances more a decision to delay action than to decline membership in WARC.

In 1924 synod's reason for not accepting the invitation to join the alliance was that the proposed revision of the constitution at the time made it "well-nigh impossible to say what the character of the alliance will be in the future." That synod did not intend to close the door on the possibility of membership in the future is evident from synod's profound interest in the work of the alliance and the outcome of the revision.

In 1960, after considering the evaluation of its committee and the grounds on which they based their recommendations not to join the alliance, synod decided not to apply for membership because the implications of membership had not been sufficiently explored "to take final action at this time." Again synod was not inclined to dismiss the alliance out of hand.

Since 1966 synod has authorized the regular sending of observers for the express purpose of gaining information. In 1972 it mandated the Interchurch Relations Committee "to investigate further the desirability and feasibility of membership."

This report seeks to provide synod with the information and the recommendation it has sought. We turn now to a consideration of several objections that have been raised in the past and are relevant considerations to evaluate today.

2. The Basis of the Alliance Is Indistinct or Too Indefinite.

The question must be asked: Too indefinite for what purpose? Certainly it would be too indefinite as a creedal statement for our denomination, or for as restricted as ecumenical body as the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. But is it too indefinite for the purpose for which the alliance exists? Are not the bases set forth in the preamble and the eligibility requirements of Article III of the constitution sufficiently distinct to identify and define the type of Reformed churches described in Circle 2 ecumenical status as delineated in the 1944 report?

There is nothing in either the basis or the qualifications for membership that would compromise the position of a Reformed church that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures and Reformed confessions. They are sufficiently definite to provide a forum in which a concerned Reformed church can engage in dialogue with Reformed churches of Circle 2. They form a foundation on which it is possible to bear witness to our perception of and commitment to the Reformed faith.

We hold that a reading of the basis and eligibility requirements quoted in Section III above will verify our judgment. How seriously they function in the alliance and how realistically they can be called upon to function in the life of the alliance we must defer for consideration later in this report.

3. The Relationship of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to the World Council of Churches

The alliance does not engage in programs and projects that overlap with those of the WCC. One of its avowed purposes is to share with churches of other traditions within the WCC the contributions of the Reformed churches within the alliance. Many of its member churches are also members of the WCC.

In 1959 the committee stated that the real problem was that WARC officially "seeks to induce its membership to unite, and if certain constituents for the sake of conscience cannot do so, they are out of step with one of the main objectives of the WPA [World Presbyterian Alliance]." However valid this objection may or may not have been in 1959, we believe it presents no problem for member churches today. One third of the churches currently in the alliance are not members of the WCC. We know of no evidence that would give any weight to the concern of the committee of 1959. Several of the member churches of the RES are members of the WCC and while the RES has expressed deep

concern about such membership it has to this date not declared dual membership incompatible. We may observe that the CRC at present is in ecclesiastical fellowship with three churches that hold membership in the World Council.

4. The Alliance Is Theologically a Mixed Constituency

a. The committee reports of both 1924 and 1957 use this fact as an argument against affiliation with the alliance (cf. Section I above).

b. The theological character of the alliance merits serious attention. It is true that the theological spectrum of its participants runs the gamut of current theological options, and this fact raises various questions that must be evaluated. This we propose to do now.

(1) In spite of the wide theological diversity in WARC, we need to ask: Does it provide the CRC an opportunity to exercise our ecumenical task in keeping with the mandate of the 1944 report toward those churches held to be in the second of the concentric circles? That is, is WARC a forum in which we can witness to the Reformed truth?

Our observers and participants involved with the alliance over nearly thirty years have almost unanimously urged the IRC to recommend affiliation with WARC. They all testify to the fine reception they receive and the ample opportunity they are given to express their views and to participate in the drafting of studies and documents. They are frequently encouraged by the leadership to make their contribution to the ongoing work of the alliance and its commissions.

In the judgment of one long-time participant on the Theological Commission of CANAAC, however, the Reformed confessions have little significance in the actual discussions and studies of the commission. The Bible is used in diverse ways in which our confessional stance on the Scriptures is not a dominant position. He points out that a review of all the materials published over the past years would reveal a considerable content that we would find objectionable. He is not completely opposed to CRC membership in WARC, but would want it to be very clear that such ecumenicity is on the level of Circle 2. The IRC appreciates the warning and caution this participant has contributed and has sought to take it into account. It always remains a question as to how much the presence and influence of conservative Reformed churches would have resulted in a more authentic Reformed position and activity in the alliance. Only actual participation in WARC could provide an answer.

One of the factors to be recognized is the difference in emphasis between the General Council of WARC and the Caribbean and North American Area Council. The latter, it is generally agreed, is more diverse and less conservative theologically than the parent body. Both WARC and CANAAC, however, are moving to a position more open to an orthodox witness because of the growing presence and influence of Third World churches. While these younger churches may not be distinctively Reformed, they are warmly evangelical, deeply committed to the Scriptures, and open to learn more of the Reformed faith.

In the judgment of our participants, the influx of these churches present us with an opportune time to contribute our theological input in the alliance and provide some leadership for the conservative participants. This suggests the next question.

(2) Are there sufficient member churches and participants from member churches in WARC that seek to be loyal to the Bible and the Reformed confessions with whom we could align in support of a witness to the Reformed truth?

We believe the answer to this question is yes. Therein lies our opportunity and our challenge. The fact that one-third of the member churches in WARC do not belong to the WCC says something about their theological orientation. At least thirteen of the member churches of the RES are also members of WARC. The Reformed Church in America is a member church and our representatives have frequently found support from their delegates. In addition, the presence of the many younger churches has provided a considerable constituency who are favorable to a more authentic Reformed witness. Would we not perhaps be remiss to pass up the opportunity to engage in this ecumenical venture envisioned forty years ago?

(3) Would our affiliation with the alliance compromise our testimony as a Reformed church in the world, to other Reformed churches, and to our own Christian Reformed members?

We recognize that joining WARC at this time might be interpreted by some as a weakening of our Reformed commitment and witness. That is certainly not the intention of your committee which has proceeded so cautiously, in what is in the eyes of some unjustifiably long, in coming to a decision. We would very much regret if our affiliation would be read by anyone as a lessening of our own loyalty to the Scriptures or our Reformed standards.

As a matter of fact, we need to ask what impression our apparent indifference to our ecumenical responsibility to the worldwide church says about our faithfulness to the basic teaching of the Scriptures and our Reformed concept of the given unity of the church of Jesus Christ. Loyalty to the truth includes commitment to the ecumenical dimensions of the Christian faith. The report of 1944 set before the CRC the vision and mandate that to this day has resulted in very little by way of implementation.

Two things are important—that we understand ourselves, and that we communicate effectively to others that membership in the alliance is not on a par with our membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod or in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council or with those churches with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship.

It may not be easy to make the distinction plain between Circle 1 and Circle 2 ecumenical relationships. But the distinction must be made, and the difficulty in making it, in our judgment, is no excuse to neglect our present responsibility or ignore our opportunity. This issue does suggest a related question.

(4) What measure of corporate responsibility would we share for the actions, the public pronouncements, and the published studies of WARC and CANAAC?

It is obviously true that no member church can completely dissociate itself from everything that the alliance stands for and does. Any church that found itself consistently out of step with WARC would be duty-

bound to withdraw from the body. If at this time that seems to be the case for us, we should not affiliate with it.

On the other hand, no member church can be held accountable for everything associated with the alliance. It must be understood that it is the right and duty of any church to dissent when the positions taken and the actions engaged in are believed to be in error and wrong. Such dissent should be made known publicly if the matter is of sufficient gravity.

Should we join WARC and it becomes clear to us that our membership is incompatible with our Reformed confessions and character, we would be free to withdraw. But should such ever occur, we would at least have the satisfaction that we sought to be faithful to our ecumenical task as we envisioned it.

(5) Are there not viable alternatives, better options, to carry on our ecumenical responsibility to Circle 2 churches than by joining WARC? In fact, as has been suggested, in view of the strictures about the alliance is not our nonaffiliation a stronger and clearer witness to the churches of Circle 2?

The committee of 1959 suggested the latter but, as already observed, it did not receive synod's endorsement for such an argument. Such a negative response to WARC might find favor with some Circle 1 Reformed churches who would be reassured of our Reformed character, but it would make no significant impression on Circle 2 churches.

We know of no genuine alternatives—we deem it unnecessary to seek other options in view of the existence of WARC. Further, to continue to send observers and appoint participants has become embarrassing and the resolution at the last meeting of CANAAC, reported above, expressed the feelings of that body about our long-time ambivalence.

5. Your Interchurch Relations Committee is of the opinion that arguments against membership in WARC are insufficient to warrant our continued refusal to accept the invitation to join. And, in fact, the consideration of the problems and questions considered above, we think, argue for such membership. We turn now to positive considerations that we believe favor affiliation.

B. Positive Considerations That Favor the CRC's Membership in WARC

1. By joining WARC we would be supporting and strengthening the Reformed witness of those churches presently in WARC with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship and/or fellow-members of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

2. The alliance provides for the CRC avenues to carry on ecumenical relations as described in the 1944 report with Circle 3 and Circle 4 churches. The Department of Theology of WARC, as reported by Dr. Alan Sell, its secretary, is in dialogue with organizations comparable to WARC of the Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Disciples of Christ, Roman Catholic, and the Orthodox. Currently Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., is serving as our participant on the Roman Catholic/Presbyterian-Reformed Consultation, sponsored by CANAAC.

3. WARC is providing theological assistance to member churches, especially among Third World churches, and their seminaries. It is also assisting

needy students studying for Master's degrees in theology. The Department of Theology seeks to be of service to the 286 seminaries associated with WARC through member churches.

This function of WARC could present genuine opportunities for our Reformed scholars to contribute to the advancement of our Reformed faith in the world.

4. WARC membership will afford us, as a financially self-sufficient Reformed church, an opportunity to help and encourage in various ways the many small and struggling Reformed churches throughout the world, especially in countries where religious freedom is restricted.

5. Membership in WARC can have a beneficial influence on our denomination that officially has had a long-standing isolationist mentality in spite of the forward-looking report of 1944. We believe the theological dialogue in WARC can both strengthen and increase our loyalty to our rich Reformed heritage as we witness to it. In turn, we can profit from what the Holy Spirit may have been teaching other Reformed bodies.

6. Membership in the alliance will open avenues of contact and service with Reformed churches throughout the world in ways other than theology, church polity, and liturgy. And, through WARC we will have access to many churches outside the Reformed fold with whom we now have no avenue of contact. Further, the CRC will be able to make an impact on much of the broken world through the facilities and contacts of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

SUPPLEMENT TO APPENDIX E ACT OF UNION

WHEREAS

1. Reformed Churches of the Presbyterian and Congregational traditions are found, under a variety of names, in many parts of the world, and were led in the providence of God to manifest more fully their essential oneness, within their respective traditions, in order to further the mission and unity of the Church catholic.

In particular

a) in 1975, certain Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in different nations, at a meeting in London, formed THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HOLDING THE PRESBYTERIAN SYSTEM, and adopted a Constitution, and during the ensuing years have met as an Alliance in General Council and engaged in programmes of fellowship, study and service in the name of the Gospel;

b) and in 1891, representatives of certain Congregational Churches met together in London as an International Congregational Council, and during the following years other such meetings have been held; and in 1949, at Wellesley (Massachusetts, USA), an organisation known as THE INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL was formally established with programmes of fellowship, study and service in the name of the Gospel and has met in Assembly from time to time.

2. During several years of mutual study and cooperation, both THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HOLDING THE PRESBYTERIAN ORDER* and THE INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL entered into a deeper understanding of the common history and calling of their member Churches.

3. The respective Executive Committees in 1966 formally adopted a Statement of Principles and Proposals on relations between the two organisations, wherein it was

recommended that THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HOLDING THE PRESBYTERIAN ORDER* and THE INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL be united.

4. At the 20th General Council of THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HOLDING THE PRESBYTERIAN ORDER and the 11th Assembly of THE INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL held at Nairobi, Kenya, on August 20th, 1970, both organisations became one body, recognizing in gratitude to God for his mercies that

a) such an act of union is implemented not only in order to carry out the major aims for which both organisations have existed separately, but above all in order better to serve the whole of Christ's Church, by examining together the traditions of faith and practice within the Reformed family, by supporting one another within the tremendous scope of mission to which Christ is calling all his people in our time and by working together for the unity of all men in Christ, but especially for the unity of all who now call upon the name of the Lord;

b) in entering upon this common way, they together affirm their faith in Jesus Christ and covenant to share according to such common purposes as they shall discover, in the contemporary task he lays upon the Church, seeking to order their common life by his grace alone.

THEREFORE

The following Constitution is adopted by the uniting General Council at Nairobi, Kenya, on August 20th, 1970:

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

THE ONE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH IS JESUS CHRIST, THE LORD, IN WHOM GOD'S WORD BECAME FLESH AND TO WHOM THE SCRIPTURES BEAR WITNESS; AND THE CHURCH ON EARTH, THOUGH COMPOSED OF MANY MEMBERS, IS ONE BODY IN THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, UNDER THE HEADSHIP OF THE ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

ARTICLE I—Name

The name of the organisation, hereinafter called the Alliance, shall be: THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES (PRESBYTERIAN AND CONGREGATIONAL), and in shorter form, THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES.

ARTICLE II—Membership

Any Church which accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; holds the Word of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme authority in matters of faith and life; acknowledges the need for the continuing reformation of the Church catholic; whose position in faith and evangelism is in general agreement with that of the historic Reformed confessions, recognizing that the Reformed tradition is a biblical, evangelical and doctrinal ethos, rather than any narrow and exclusive definition of faith and order, shall be eligible for membership.

United Churches which share this understanding of the nature and calling of the Church shall be eligible for membership.

Membership in the Alliance does not restrict the relationship of any Church with other Churches or with other inter-church bodies.

* In 1954 the 17th General Council of the WARC adopted a new Constitution in which the name of the organisation was amended: . . . *Presbyterian System* became *Presbyterian Order*.

ARTICLE III—*Purposes*

The purposes of the Alliance shall be:

1. to further all endeavours to proclaim the Word of God faithfully, and to order the life and worship of the Church in obedience to his Word;
2. to further the work of evangelism, mission and stewardship in all their aspects, to promote common study of the Christian Faith and its implications;
3. to encourage the diversity and fraternal character of ministries in the Church under the one Head, Jesus Christ;
4. to widen and deepen understanding and fellowship among the member Churches and Churches eligible for membership and to help them to fulfil their own responsibilities in the service of Christ;
5. to further intercourse between the member Churches, through mutual visitation, through the dissemination of information, and by other practicable means;
6. to unite the forces of the member Churches in common service wherever needed and practicable;
7. to help member Churches which may be weak, oppressed or persecuted; and through all available channels to stimulate and provide aid to needy Churches among them;
8. to promote and defend religious and civil liberties wherever threatened throughout the world;
9. to facilitate the contribution to the ecumenical movement of the experiences and insights which Churches within the Alliance have been given in their history, and to share with Churches of other traditions within that movement, and particularly in the World Council of Churches, in the discovery of forms of church life and practice which will enable the people of God more fully to understand and express together God's will for his people.

ARTICLE IV—*General Council*

1. *Composition and Meetings.* The General Council shall consist of delegates appointed by the member Churches in such numbers as shall be specified in the By-Laws. The General Council shall meet ordinarily once in five years. The Executive Committee may convene the General Council on its own initiative and shall do so at the request of one third of the member Churches. The time, place and programme may be determined by the General Council or in the *interim* by the Executive Committee.

2. *Functions.* The General Council shall have power to make and administer policies, plans and programmes in accordance with the purpose of the Alliance; to elect officers, members of the Executive Committee, Departments, Commissions and Committees; to adopt and amend a Constitution and By-Laws; to consider all matters brought before it by member Churches; and to give oversight to the affairs of the Alliance. None of these provisions shall limit the autonomy of any member Church.

ARTICLE V—*Executive Committee*1. *Composition and Meetings*

a) The General Council shall elect an Executive Committee from the delegates to that General Council, the members to hold office from their installation until their successors are elected and installed in office.

b) The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Alliance and fifteen members elected by the General Council.

The executive officers shall be corresponding members of the Executive Committee.

c) If any member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Committee, an alterante may be appointed under provision in the By-Laws.

d) The times, places, and plans of meetings of the Executive Committee shall be

according to the provisions in the By-Laws or as specified from time to time by the General Council or the Executive Committee.

2. *Functions.* The Executive Committee shall exercise general oversight of the work of the Alliance between the meetings of the General Council, shall represent and, if necessary, speak for the Alliance between meetings of the General Council and perform all duties specified elsewhere in this Constitution and in the By-Laws or committed to it by the General Council. It shall have power to fill all vacancies in the offices of the Alliance and in its own membership which may occur between meetings of the General Council.

ARTICLE VI—*Officers of the Alliance*

The General Council shall elect the following officers from the delegates to that General Council to hold office from their installation until their successors are elected and installed in office.

1. A President
2. Three Vice-Presidents
3. Chairmen of Departments

ARTICLE VII—*Executive Officers*

The Executive Committee shall elect the following executive officers, each of whom shall hold office for a fixed term of years and be eligible for reelection:

1. A General Secretary
2. One or more Associate Secretaries or Departmental Secretaries
3. One or more Assistant Secretaries
4. A General Treasurer
5. An Area Secretary and Area Treasurer for each Area which may be organized, upon nomination of the Area.

The terms of office of Associate Secretaries, Departmental Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries shall be not more than three years; of all other executive officers not more than five years.

The General Secretary shall be the chief executive officer and shall be responsible to the General Council and to the Executive Committee to direct and co-ordinate the work of the Alliance.

ARTICLE VIII—*Departments, Commissions and Committees*

1. The General Council may establish Departments.
2. The General Council or the Executive Committee may establish Commissions and Committees.

ARTICLE IX—*Organisation of Areas*

In order to promote the closest possible fellowship and cooperation among member Churches in particular areas of the world and the effectiveness of the total work of the Alliance, the General Council may authorize the organisation of an Area by the member Churches in any given area of the world. The number, bounds, and names of the Areas shall be determined by the General Council and ordinarily shall be set forth in the By-Laws of the Alliance. The organisation of an Area shall be effected by the member Churches within the Area in conformity with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Alliance, under By-Laws drawn up in the Area and ratified by the General Council or the Executive Committee

ARTICLE X—*Legal Status*

The General Council and the Executive Committee shall take the steps necessary to qualify the Alliance to own and deal with property, both real and personal.

ARTICLE XI—*Principal Office*

The principal office of the Alliance shall be in Geneva, Switzerland.

ARTICLE XII—*Amendments*

1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the delegates in attendance at any meeting of the General Council, providing the proposed amendment has been transmitted to the members of the Executive Committee, to each member Church, and to the Chairman of each Area, at least one year before it is voted.

2. The By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the delegates in attendance at any meeting of the General Council.

BY-LAWS

1. MEMBERSHIP

A Church which affirms its acceptance of Article II of the Constitution may be admitted to membership by the General Council or by the Executive Committee.

2. GENERAL COUNCIL

a. *Composition*

1) The member Churches of the Alliance will be entitled to representation in each General Council on the following basis:

Churches with up to	300	congregations:	2	delegates
Churches with	301 to 500	'	3	'
'	501 to 1,000	'	4	'
'	1,001 to 2,000	'	5	'
'	2,001 to 3,000	'	6	'
'	3,001 to 4,000	'	7	'
'	4,001 to 5,000	'	8	'
'	5,001 to 6,000	'	9	'
'	6,001 to 8,000	'	10	'
'	8,001 or more	'	11	'

2) Each of the officers of the Alliance shall have the status of delegate in any General Council which meets during his term of office.

3) Members of the Executive Committee shall be corresponding members of the General Council.

4) The Executive Committee may invite to the General Council consultants, fraternal delegates, observers and visitors from non-member Churches and inter-church bodies.

b. *Conduct of Meetings*

1) The Executive Committee shall serve as the Business Committee of the General Council.

2) The Executive Committee shall appoint or authorize the President to appoint from among the delegates such Standing Committees as may be necessary.

3) The General Council shall adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of business.

3. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

a. *Composition*

If any member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Committee, the President and General Secretary may appoint an alternate.

b. *Meetings*

1) The Executive Committee shall meet once in each year, the specific time and place to be set by the Committee or by the President and General Secretary. The President and

General Secretary may call special meetings of the Executive Committee and shall do so at the request of 2/3 of the members of the Executive Committee.

2) A quorum shall be 1/3 of the membership.

c. *Officers*

The officers of the Alliance shall be the officers of the Executive Committee.

d. *Vote by Mail*

When the President and General Secretary judge it necessary to secure a decision of the Executive Committee between its meetings a vote by mail may be taken, a majority vote of the members of the Committee being required for a decision.

4. DEPARTMENTS

a. *The Departments of the Alliance shall be:*

1) The Department of Theology

2) The Department of Cooperation and Witness.

b. *Composition*

A Department shall consist of nine persons:

1) A Chairman;

2) 6 members of the Executive Committee;

3) The President and General Secretary, *ex officio*.

The Executive Committee may, upon nomination of the Department, invite not more than 10 persons not members of the Executive Committee to serve as advisers to the Department.

c. *Functions*

1) *The Department of Theology*

The function of this Department shall be:

a) to keep under constant study the theological programme, services, and needs of the Alliance, and to make recommendations concerning them to the Executive Committee or appropriate officers, and to take such actions as are within the limitations of its authority;

b) to counsel with officers and staff of the Alliance regarding theological matters;

c) to cooperate with the President and General Secretary in direction and oversight of the theological programme and staff personnel who have responsibilities in this sphere;

d) to render any service that may enable the Alliance to make to its constituent Churches, to the ecumenical movement, and to the whole Church of Jesus Christ, the theological contributions which are available in Reformed catholic faith and life.

2) *The Department of Cooperation and Witness*

The function of this Department shall be:

a) to study what the member churches should be doing in response to specific conditions and events in the church and in society.

b) to help these churches to be more responsive to the real needs of people in church and world.

c) to make possible a fuller expression of the many and varied skills and gifts of men and women of all ages in the witness of all member churches, and of the Alliance.

d) to make the Alliance significant to its total membership as well as to the outside world through:

(1) Information gathering and disseminating.

(2) Encouragement, evaluation and collaboration among member churches in implementing resolutions of General Councils.

(3) The coordination of the Department's work with other inter-church bodies, new churches and secular institutions.

(4) A special services fund for specific needs not provided for by inter-church aid.

e) to discover ways of providing opportunities of fellowship among the members of the churches.

5. COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Commissions and Committees may be related to the Executive Committee either directly or through Departments.

6. AREAS

a. The organized Areas are:

- 1) The European Area
- 2) The North American Area.

b) Each organized Area shall meet from time to time in Area Council, provide for an Administrative Committee, and elect officers pursuant to its By-Laws.

7. FINANCES

a) The Alliance shall be financed by contributions from member Churches, gifts from individuals, congregations, organizations and from other sources. The General Council and the Executive Committee may propose to the Churches and the Areas proportionate contributions. Area Treasurers may receive funds for the Alliance and transmit them to the General Treasurer.

b) The Executive Committee may establish a Finance Committee, empowered to give supervision to the financial interests of the Alliance in cooperation with the General Treasurer.

c) The General Treasurer and General Secretary shall submit through the Finance Committee an annual budget to the Executive Committee for action.

d) The accounts of the Alliance shall be audited annually by auditors approved by the Executive Committee.

e) The General Treasurer shall report regularly on the finances of the Alliance to the President, to the General Secretary and the Executive Committee.

f) When they attend meetings of the General Council and the Executive Committee the expenses of the President, the General Secretary, the General Treasurer and members of the staff will be met from the funds of the Alliance.

g) The expenses of delegates to the General Council and of members of the Executive Committee attending the General Council and meetings of the Executive Committee shall normally be met by the Churches of which they are members.

8. PUBLICATIONS

All publications shall be under the supervision of the General Secretary.

APPENDIX F

REPORT ON THE ECUMENICAL CHARTER OF THE CRC

The need for a charter for the ecumenical relations of the Christian Reformed Church becomes apparent when decisions have to be made about relations with other churches or with ecumenical organizations. Under present circumstances such decisions have to be grounded in documents written as much as forty years ago, when ecumenical relations in the Christian church in general and in the Christian Reformed Church in particular were hardly recognizable in terms of what exists today. The need "to formulate some clear principles for ecumenical strategy" (cf. *The Banner*, September 12, 1983, p. 8) has been recognized by a number of responsible commentators within the CRC.

The charter proposed below is not so much a revision as a restatement of the position of the church. In order to evaluate and interpret it correctly, it is necessary to bear the following in mind:

First, the charter is based upon broad biblical perspectives and reflects the teachings of such passages as John 17; I Corinthians 15; and Ephesians 4; plus a host of others.

Second, the charter reflects the teachings of the ancient creeds and the Reformed confessions (e.g., the Apostles' Creed, Art. 9; Nicene Creed, paragraph 5; Belgic Confession, Articles XXVII to XXIX; Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 21) in their vision of the one holy catholic and apostolic church.

Finally, it has been the intention of the committee to maintain consistency and continuity with the formative positions adopted by the CRC (e.g., the Synods of 1944 and 1976) while making such adjustments in emphasis and approach as are suggested by the experience of the church.

ECUMENICAL CHARTER CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA PREAMBLE

In obedience to Scripture and in agreement with the Reformed confessions, the Christian Reformed Church adopts the following ecumenical charter.

1. CALLED TO UNITY

From the old and broken humanity God calls and gathers a new humanity—the church. For this purpose God called Abraham and Israel and then spoke in a unique and definitive way in Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection are the foundation of the church. The church is called to testify to what it is already—spiritually one in Christ—but also to what it should still become—visibly one in Christ.

2. UNITY IN TIME AND SPACE

The unity of the church is variously described in Scripture. The descrip-

tion "people of God" emphasizes the historical continuity between Israel and the New Testament church. It pictures the church of all ages as sojourning from Old Testament election through the present to God's future. The description "body of Christ" emphasizes that the one worldwide church is governed by a single Head and that all its members have need of each other. It pictures the union of the church with Christ and the unity of its members among themselves.

3. UNITY AS GIFT AND GOAL

Church unity is both a gift and a goal. It has already been given us by God in Christ. In spite of our divisions, we are already one in Christ. Both the local and the worldwide church are to be one body because in Christ they are one body. The given unity should be the basis of necessary work for the unity that still escapes us all.

4. DIVERSITY IN UNITY

Uniformity is not a component of unity. The various local, regional, and national churches need not, for the sake of unity, deny their origins or their unique situations. Their history, traditions, customs, language, way of life, and mode of thinking will widely differ. Such differences, however, do not subtract from the unity that is already theirs. The unity of the church allows for diversity in worship, theology, and church order.

a. *Diversity in worship.* Though all Christians confess one God, one baptism, and one Lord's Supper, they worship through various languages, liturgies, prayers, and hymns.

b. *Diversity in theology.* Though all Christians confess one God, one Lord, one hope, and one faith, they give theological articulation to this confession out of different mindsets, conceptual apparatus and terminology, traditions, and schools of thought.

c. *Diversity in church order.* Though all Christians confess one God, one Lord, one Spirit, and one body, they order their church affairs through different cultures, traditions, customs, and administrative systems.

5. UNITY AND TRUTH

The unity of the church of Christ is a unity in truth. En route to achieving such unity, major differences in the perception of biblical truth must be overcome. In the effort to overcome these differences we must not only share with others our perceptions but also be open to theirs. Through such ecumenical dialogue we must trust God to teach us all, and thereby unite us through a deeper common grasp of his truth.

6. THE UNITY WE SEEK

The unity of the church must be visibly manifest. The ideal form of this unity is not yet known. The unity we seek is one of mutual renewal and acceptance through mutual giving and receiving.

PRINCIPLES FOR ECUMENICAL PRACTICE

1. The ecumenical task does not necessarily begin in working for the return of one church to another, nor in the union of one church with another.

2. Since all perceptions of biblical truth are incomplete, we must guard against the judgment that we possess the truth in all its fullness; nevertheless, perception of the truth is not a matter of indifference.

3. In our search for unity we may not compromise the biblical message, but through dialogue must seek to come to a deeper understanding of God's revelation.

4. The ecumenical task demands that we reject those perceptions that so distort biblical truth that our witness to Jesus Christ is hindered in a broken world.

5. The unity of the body of Christ demands that we pursue our ecumenical task through all avenues which do not hinder our witness to Jesus Christ.

6. Our ecumenical task requires that we seek to discover those elements in our understanding of the truth which reflect human and societal diversities in ourselves and others. Such elements need not be barriers to our pursuit of visible expression of our given unity in Christ, or to our continuing search through dialogue for a common grasp of God's truth.

7. The pursuit of visible unity of the church requires that we seek to heal past wounds by overcoming our differences with those who are closest to us in the understanding and practice of the truth.

8. The ecumenical task is the responsibility of the whole church at all levels of its organization and in all areas of its life.

I. THE ECUMENICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

A. *Guiding Principles for the Ecumenical Task of the Christian Reformed Church*

1. The ecumenical task of the Christian Reformed Church derives from our being one denomination among many which together make up the one body of Christ.

2. For the purpose of pursuing our ecumenical calling the churches of Christ may be roughly classified into three groups in ever widening circles from the Christian Reformed Church: Reformed churches, non-Reformed Protestant churches, and the roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. Thus the inter-church relations of the Christian Reformed Church with these groups should be of various kinds.

3. The Christian Reformed Church should seek rapprochement with all churches of Christ but should attach first priority to churches which are Reformed as to confession, polity, and liturgy, as determined not only by their formal standards, but also by their actual practice.

4. The unity of those churches which are Reformed in confession and practice should come to organizational expression as soon as possible.

5. The interim aims of this unity should include resolution of doctrinal differences where necessary, joint action in Christian endeavors where possible, and a common Reformed witness to the world.

6. The shape of this organizational unity should be determined in keeping with prudence and such circumstances as language, distance, and nonessential differences in formal standards and practices.

B. *Responsibility for the Ecumenical Task of the Christian Reformed Church*

1. The ecumenical task is the responsibility of all members, congregations, consistories, classes, and the synod of the Christian Reformed Church.

2. On the synodical level the Church Order, Article 49, provides for the appointment of a standing committee on interchurch relations as follows:

“a. Synod shall appoint a committee to correspond with other Reformed churches so that the Christian Reformed Church may exercise Christian fellowship with other denominations and may promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

“b. Synod shall decide which denominations are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship, and shall establish the rules which govern these relationships.”

3. The basic mandate of the Interchurch Relations Committee is expressed in Church Order Article 49: namely, to serve as the official agency of liaison between the Christian Reformed Church and other Reformed churches throughout the world. The committee in addition bears other ecumenical responsibilities as assigned by synod from time to time. As a committee of synod it shall exercise only those powers which are assigned by synod.

C. Scope of the Work of the Interchurch Relations Committee

1. The Committee on Interchurch Relations, in accordance with Church Order Article 49, shall actively seek to promote and maintain relations of the Christian Reformed Church with churches which confess and maintain the Reformed faith

a. by establishing relations of ecclesiastical fellowship subject to the following rules adopted by synod which govern these relationships:

(1) There shall be one relationship with other Reformed churches designated by synod as “churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.”

(2) The receiving of churches into ecclesiastical fellowship implies, and where possible and desirable involves:

(a) exchange of fraternal delegates at major assemblies,

(b) occasional pulpit fellowship,

(c) intercommunion (i.e., fellowship at the table of the Lord),

(d) joint action in areas of common responsibility,

(e) communication on major issues of joint concern,

(f) the exercise of mutual concern and admonition with a view to promoting the fundamentals of Christian unity.

b. by contact with other churches of Reformed persuasion with a view to closer relations and possibly receiving them into ecclesiastical fellowship.

c. by participation in ecumenical organizations in which the Christian Reformed Church cooperates with other denominations of Reformed faith, in accord with Church Order Article 50.

2. The Interchurch Relations Committee, in conformity with the preamble and principles for ecumenical practice of its charter and in accord with synodical decisions, shall maintain and promote an interest in the worldwide church through:

a. study and contact with other denominations as opportunity and prudence make possible;

b. study and contact with ecumenical organizations that embrace broader segments of the worldwide church as opportunity and prudence permit.

II. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- A. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall continue close relationships with the denominations which have been named by synod as churches in ecclesiastical fellowship.
- B. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall remain abreast of current developments within those churches with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship to assure that such fellowship continues to be warranted.
- C. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend to synod which additional churches are to be received into ecclesiastical fellowship.
- D. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall recommend which specific kinds of fellowship and cooperation shall apply to each church in ecclesiastical fellowship.
- E. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall initiate and/or pursue contact and closer relationship with churches other than those in ecclesiastical fellowship in accord with the principles and scope of its ecumenical responsibility.
- F. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall serve as the agency of contact with ecumenical organizations.
 1. It shall serve as the agency of liaison of the Christian Reformed Church with those ecumenical organizations with which the denomination is affiliated: the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council. It is responsible:
 - a. to study the activities of the above-named ecumenical organizations and present to synod reports on the work of these organizations and such recommendations as may be necessary;
 - b. to welcome suggestions from the churches and present to synod names of nominees as delegates to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and designate those who are to serve as delegates to the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council and its various committees.
 2. It shall observe and study various ecumenical organizations and report the results of such observations and studies to synod.
 3. It shall maintain contact with ecumenical organizations with which the Christian Reformed Church has not affiliated, as circumstances warrant and its ecumenical charter envisions.
- G. The Interchurch Relations Committee shall annually present to synod in the printed agenda a report of its activities which shall include a résumé of all the interchurch relations comprehended in its mandate.

REPORT 13 LITURGICAL COMMITTEE

The work of the Liturgical Committee during this past year has consisted primarily of two issues: (1) Discussions with the Board of Publications about the merger of the Liturgical Committee with the BOP; and (2) the report on Liturgical Dance. The discussion with the BOP can be briefly summarized; the Liturgical Dance issue will constitute the major part of our report.

The proposed merger with the Board of Publications was discussed during 1983-1984, and submitted as a joint resolution to Synod 1984 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 458). We continued discussions with the BOP during 1984, and are again submitting a joint recommendation, requesting that the Liturgical Committee become a standing committee of the BOP (see the BOP Report for the recommendation). The Liturgical Committee is convinced that the proposed merger is a desirable development. The committee will continue to provide liturgical leadership to the churches, but its liaison with the BOP will promote much better dissemination of liturgical and educational materials.

I. LITURGICAL DANCE

Outline

- A. Mandate
- B. Historical Perspective
- C. Analysis of the Mandate
- D. Terminology
- E. Liturgical Dance in the Scriptures
- F. Liturgical Dance in Church History
- G. Further Development in our Circles After 1982
- H. Stylized Movement in Traditional Reformed Worship
- I. Implications of Liturgical Dance
- J. Is Implementation Feasible?
- K. Recommendations

Appendix: Some Bible passages dealing with dancing

A. *Mandate*

The Synod of 1982 gave to the Liturgical Committee the mandate to study certain aspects of liturgical dance and to report on its findings to Synod 1984. The aspects to be studied were "the implications and the feasibility of the implementation of the liturgical dance" in our worship services. Synod 1984 decided to prolong the time of study by one year. The Liturgical Committee is thankful that it is now ready to present its report to synod and to the churches.

B. *Historical Perspective*

Rather than referring the members of synod to a number of *Acts of Synod*

which may not be readily accessible, your committee will begin with a condensed historical survey.

Dance has been discussed in the CRC for a long time. It was mentioned officially for the first time in the famous decisions of 1928, when synod warned the churches against the so-called worldly amusements, especially theater attendance, card playing, and dancing. This decision was reinforced twenty-three years later, when synod decided in 1951:

. . . that although synod did not pass judgment as to whether or not theater attendance, card playing and dancing are always sinful in themselves, it did urgently warn, in no uncertain terms, against theater attendance, card playing and dancing, and did not condone participation in them. *(Acts of Synod 1951, p. 65)*

However, after 1951 changes came, mainly for two reasons:

- A growing number of church members found it more and more difficult to isolate certain cultural areas as sinful in themselves. It seemed to them that the spirit of withdrawal from the world, rather than that of its renewal and redemption, had led to these earlier decisions.
- Moreover, it also became difficult to place all films, plays, and dances under the simple heading of "amusements." A film, a play, and a dance can be the result of much serious artistic labor, and each one of them may have as its objective to be a work of art rather than entertainment.

These changes in attitude toward "worldly amusements" led to the appointment in 1966 of a synodical committee which was given the task of considering the place and responsibility of the Christian with regard to the fine arts.

The prevailing motive was no longer the Anabaptist attitude of world avoidance, but rather the Calvinistic deal of claiming and redeeming the world for Jesus Christ, our Savior and King.

Some of the decisions of 1966 might be summarized as follows (for a complete text we refer readers to the *Acts of Synod 1966 and 1982*):

1. The Christian's Relationship to the World

- a. God gave man the cultural mandate to develop all creation to the glory of God.
- b. Because of sin all works of man are defiled, but sin is still restrained by God's grace.
- c. By God's particular grace sinners are restored to their threefold office to serve Christ in all their activities.
- d. The difference between believers and unbelievers cannot always be detected in the products of their activities, but becomes evident in their motivation, direction, and purpose.
- e. Worldliness is the evil of giving the love of the heart to sinful things.
- f. Every area of human life is a battlefield between good and evil; here the Christian must learn to discern and to do the will of God.
- g. The Christian must lead a life of spiritual separation from the world.
- h. The Christian must also call society to obedience to Christ, thus serving as the salt of the earth.
- i. All Christians are called to use their talents to fulfill the cultural mandate.

2. The Exercise of Christian Liberty

a. Whenever the Scriptures make known the will of God, the Christian accepts this in faithful obedience.

b. The Christian is free from every ordinance not demanded in Scripture.

c. In the use of all temporal things, the Christian must be guided by an enlightened conscience.

d. The Christian honors all human authority only insofar as this is in harmony with the Word of God.

e. The exercise of the Christian's freedom is restrained by his concern for his own spiritual welfare and that of others.

f. The exercise of Christian liberty requires a measure of maturity.

In 1971, Classis Hamilton approached synod with the request to reevaluate the church's stand on "worldly amusements." The reason for this request was that many young people did not understand why they were allowed to see some films, but not permitted to engage in certain dances.

Synod 1971 evaluated the 1966 decisions and then included dance in the perspective of the scriptural mandate, namely to "redeem every area of human talent and culture in the name of Christ."

When, however, the Board of Trustees of Calvin College decided in 1978 to allow "social dancing" on campus—in the light of the decisions of 1966 and 1971—a storm of protest broke loose. The Board of Trustees postponed implementation of its decision, and synod asked a committee to study the matter of dance.

This committee reported to the Synod of 1981, which decided to refer the report for study to the churches; the report came to the Synod of 1982 for action. Almost all of the recommendations of the study committee report were accepted. The 1966 principles were reiterated, and, regarding the dance in general, it was decided:

3. That synod adopt the following summary statements with respect to dance as a cultural expression:

a. In the most basic sense, the human capacity to dance roots in creation. God gave us bodies that are instruments of sense and motion, and made us capable of responding to musical themes and rhythmical movement. This capacity is rooted in creation, not in the fall.

b. This capacity to dance is a universal human phenomenon, which finds expression in every human culture. It shows itself in various forms, including religious dances, artistic dances, and social dances. Each of these types has legitimate reference points in our creation in God's image, for God made us creatures of faith, artistic sensitivity, and sociability, each of which can find valid expression in dance forms.

c. Dancing, along with every other created human capacity, suffers from our fallen and sinful condition. This fallenness enters dance in all its forms—religious, artistic, and social—and affects the entire context of dance, including setting, music, and motivation of participants, as well as the structure of the dance itself.

d. The Christian is not called to a rejection of the human capacity to dance, but is called to redeem this ability to a God-honoring use. The challenge of a redeemed use of dancing includes religious, artistic, and social forms of dance, and extends to the entire context of dancing, including motivation, setting, and music, as well as the structure of the dance itself.

(Acts of Synod 1982, p. 89)

The Synod of 1982 accepted a number of recommendations dealing with various dance forms, such as folk dances, ballroom and social dances, and contemporary dances. Some dances were found acceptable, whereas others were labeled "difficult to redeem." Synod also formulated a number of guidelines for Christian institutions which might teach dance courses or sponsor social dances for their students.

However, a major objection was voiced in connection with the so-called liturgical dance. This objection resulted in the acceptance of the motion mentioned in the mandate. Hence the Liturgical Committee must now report to synod on *the implications* and *the feasibility* of the implementation of liturgical dance.

C. Analysis of the Mandate

What exactly is the task of the Liturgical Committee with regard to its mandate? It certainly cannot be the task of the committee or the expectation of the church that the Liturgical Committee review the entire matter of dance in the light of Scripture. The committee is not to go back to 1928 or before, but to stand on the basis of the principles accepted in 1966, 1971, and 1982. The task of the committee is a limited one; namely

to study the implications and the feasibility of the implementation of the liturgical dance and to report its findings to Synod 1984.

The mandate itself was the result of the discussion of Recommendation 2, a of the 1982 synodical study committee on dancing, which read:

It is biblical and altogether fitting that God's people use appropriate liturgical dance forms for the expression of their deep feelings of praise to their God. The God who gave us bodies responsive to music and capable of rhythmic movement does not require that we ignore our bodies in worship or that we praise him only with our minds and voices (Ps. 150:4).
(Acts of Synod 1982, p. 574)

Note: Synod's advisory committee in 1982 accepted this recommendation with only a small change, an editorial improvement. The Liturgical Committee agrees and proposes that the beginning of the recommendation read as follows:

"It is biblical and therefore fitting that," etc.

This statement speaks of "bodies responsive to music and capable of rhythmic movement" and of the use of "our bodies in worship." Before we can study these concepts in the light of Scripture, it is necessary that we first define some of the terminology used in this report.

D. Terminology

1. What is the meaning of the term *liturgical* in the expression "the liturgical dance"? The history of the word *liturgy* is rather complex. From a linguistic point of view the word consists of two parts, namely "people" (*laos*) and "work" (*ergon*). Originally the word had a "political-technical" meaning (Kittel's *Theological Dictionary*) and referred to a service to the people, rather than by the people. In the pagan religion it obtained a new meaning, namely, the worship of the gods by the people. In this way the word found its way into the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It became the technical term for the way the people, the congregation, expressed and maintained their covenantal relationship to God as the worshipping community. Liturgy became

the form of communication between God and His people as determined by the special officebearers. K. Dijk writes in his *De dienst der kerk* (in translation):

. . . in the liturgy we do not deal with the personal adoration of God by the individual Christian, with his prayer and his song, with his communication with God, neither do we deal with the prayers and spiritual songs of a group of believers, who meet somewhere in a special devotional gathering; on the contrary, in liturgy we deal very specifically with the work for and by the people, that is, the people of God, the church of the Lord, the congregation of Jesus Christ, gathered together in his name. Liturgy is an ecclesiastical matter; the answer to the question what liturgy really is, depends on what we think about the church; only if we consider the church to be the flock of the Good Shepherd, and the people of the Lord, as the body of Christ, can we understand liturgy correctly. . . .

The 1968 Report of the Liturgical Committee also sought to define *liturgy*. It made a valuable contribution to our understanding of what liturgy is by pointing out that the *enduring structure* (of the worship service in the Reformed churches) has always been and is *Word of God addressed to man—word of man addressed to God*. Both Dijk and the 1968 report stress strongly that liturgy brings us in the sphere of the church at worship: "Liturgy is an ecclesiastical matter." It will be good to keep this in mind for our final decision on this matter. We must, however, not forget that from a historical point of view liturgy was not always that narrowly defined.

The 1968 report begins with this pronouncement: "Liturgy is what people do when they worship." It also reminds us of the fact that the use of the word and not the etymological meaning defines liturgy. It points out further that "the scholars who translated the Old Testament into Greek used the word *liturgy* for the service performed by the priests in the tabernacle and temple."

But in the New Testament the word is used in a broader sense. In Hebrews 8:6 all of Jesus' life is called a "liturgy," which reminds us of Paul's expression in Romans 12:1 that life is "spiritual worship," and of the way in which Paul speaks in Philippians 2:17 of the faith of the congregation as a *sacrifice and service* ("liturgy").

In the history of the church, however, the word *liturgy* took on the meaning of "those acts done by the church in its solemn assembly with God."

2. The term *worship* is defined in the 1968 report in much the same way as the word *liturgy*. Like the word *liturgy*, *worship* can be used in a broader sense or in a more restricted sense. The Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, provide us with various examples. The report summarizes:

Worship, in the proper sense, is indeed tied to life, relevant to life, a part of life; it is not an escape from life. But it is the act of the people of God in concert, as they articulate their praise and petitions, their faith and obedience, and as they listen to the articulation of God's Word, an act which has its peculiar character, its peculiar significance and its peculiar effect, distinct from the common life in all life's common spheres.

If "liturgy is what people do when they worship," one might ask whether *liturgy* and *worship* are the same thing. The 1968 report stated that there is no consensus on what worship is. The report continues by saying: "The variations in the *liturgies* of Christian churches betray . . . the variety of ways in which worship is understood."

Our conclusion might well be that *liturgy* refers mainly to the prescribed manner in which the congregation worships, and that *worship* stands for the sum total of all that happens when the congregations meets with God.

Liturgy stresses the *how* of worship and worship stresses the *what* of the

liturgy. Liturgy concerns itself with the *manner* of worship and worship with the *content* of liturgy.

3. To sum up the above, we reach the following conclusions:

- the literal meaning of the words *liturgy* and *worship* is not very helpful in defining them.
- *liturgy* and *worship* are used in a broader and in a more restricted sense.
- today *liturgy* and *worship* refer mainly to the activity of the congregation gathered for the specific purpose of meeting God under the guidance of the appointed officebearers.
- *liturgy* and *worship* shape the meeting between God and the congregation as a dialogue. The various elements in the worship service constitute this dialogue between God and his people.
- liturgy points more to the *how* of worship, and worship stresses more the *what* of liturgy.

4. What do we mean when we speak of *liturgical dance*? Here too we have to keep in mind that the Scriptures often refer to "liturgical dance" in a broader sense. Dance is used to glorify God, not always in formal worship, but often in the more spontaneous, improvised "service of praise," as in Exodus 15, with the dance of Miriam after the crossing of the Red Sea.

Many use a distinction between *liturgical* and *sacred* dance to indicate the difference between the official and the nonofficial dance-in-worship. However, the word *sacred* has potentially undesirable overtones, since all of life is to be regarded as sacred.

Other words have also been suggested for the word *dance*, since dance is often associated with modern dance forms and has obtained a rather secular meaning in the area of entertainment and amusement, sometimes with strong sensual overtones.

Margaret Fisk Taylor in her *A Time to Dance* mentions other options to describe the liturgical dance, such as motion choir, rhythmic choir, sacred dance choir, liturgical dance choir, symbolic movement choir, worship choir, creative movement choir, dramatic movement choir, interpreting choir, and dance choir. One may notice the strong preference for the word *choir*, which is much more a church-word than is the word *dance*. *Choir* originates from the Latin word *chorus*, which indicates a circling movement by a (singing) group.

Your committee nevertheless retained the term *liturgical dance*, not because it is the best term, but because the general understanding is that it stands for certain rhythmic movements during worship. In general we agree with Taylor's statement that liturgical dance is "symbolic movement for the purpose of assisting in acts of worship" (p. 2).

5. Dealing in this section with the more formal aspects of liturgical dance, we want to discuss here also the question: Where is liturgical dance appropriate in our Reformed worship services?

As mentioned above, the various elements of the Reformed worship service represent the way the dialogue between God and his people takes place. In which of these elements might liturgical dance be possible and helpful? Careful examination leads to the conclusion that, in the worship service, dance may function in two ways. It may stress the Word of God to man, or it may stress man's response to God.

Liturgical dance could supplement or in some cases even perform the task of the following elements of the traditional worship service:

prelude, postlude,
 introit, recessional,
 our votum and God's greeting,
 God's law and our confession,
 God's assurance of pardon and our communal prayer,
 God's speaking to us in Scripture reading,
 our response to God's message in the sermon,
 our offerings and doxology,
 our singing of psalms and hymns, and
 God's benediction.

In conclusion, liturgical dance has the potential to function meaningfully in the dialogue between God and man. Liturgical dance does not eliminate these elements of the dialogue, but may function meaningfully within this dialogue.

E. Liturgical Dance in the Scriptures

Did liturgical dance have a place in biblical times? We certainly find much evidence in the Scriptures that it did, especially in the broader sense of the word, as the "sacred" or the nonofficial liturgical dance. Many instances of liturgical dance were mentioned in the 1982 report on dance. One might even conclude that the only dance the Old Testament knows is liturgical dance, whereas the New Testament refers also to a nonliturgical dance, but this in a negative context (the dance of Salome, in Matthew 14:6-8).

We summarize the report as it analyzes various Hebrew words used to typify the dance.

1. The first word is *raqad*, which means "to skip" or "to dance." It is used in I Chronicles 15:29 for David as he danced before the ark on its way into Jerusalem. Nature also takes part in that kind of liturgical dancing. Psalm 29:6 reads: "Lebanon skips like a calf and Sirion like a young wild ox," and in Psalm 114:4, 6, "mountains skip like rams and hills like lambs."

2. The next word is *karar*, which means "to whirl about." "It comes to expression in Israel's worship of the Lord," the 1982 report says. It is used in II Samuel 6:14, 16 and in I Chronicles 15:29, referring again to David's dance before the ark.

3. The next word is *pazas*, used only for David's liturgical dance in II Samuel 6:16.

4. The word most often used is *chul*, and its derivatives, which means "to dance," "writhe," or "whirl." It too has a strong liturgical emphasis. The reports states: "*Chul* frequently refers to dancing which occurred at religious festivals." The example mentioned is the festival described in Judges 21:19-23, the annual festival of the Lord of Shiloh, when the Benjaminites found wives for themselves. It is also the word used in Psalms 149 and 150:

Praise his name with dancing (149:3);
 Praise him with timbrel and dance (150:4).

The distinction between a liturgical dance and a festival folk dance is not always easy to make or to maintain. By way of example, we mention Miriam's dance after the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex. 15:20). It meant not only to express

joy, but also to praise the Lord (v. 21). Israel's folk dance for the golden calf at Mount Sinai was certainly also a liturgical dance, but, of course, one inspired by the wrong kind of joy.

The report also mentions Jeremiah's prophecy of the return of his people when he sees "the maidens rejoice in the dance," whereas the "young men and the old shall be merry" (Jer. 31:31). Here the report stated: "God is in the midst of his people as Lord and Savior—whose feet can be still?"

The Old Testament also uses other words to indicate the ritual of dance. In the Hebrew of the Old Testament, we find at least a dozen words to express the act of dancing. Later literature of the Midrash and the Talmud add at least ten more words to the description of the various species of the dance.

No wonder that some scholars find that where there is singing and music in the Old Testament there is dancing. Alfred Sendry states: "Dance is as old as music itself. Dance originated from the perpetual need of man to express his emotions in the form of bodily movement" (*Music in Ancient Israel*, p. 441).

Historically it should be noted that Israel, during its long stay in Egypt, was exposed to many of Egypt's highly developed religious dances, "sacred" as well as liturgical. Israel developed its own distinctive music, songs, and dancing. The dances of the Israelites were diametrically opposed to the Phoenician dances in honor of Baal Markod, the Lord of Dancing. The same can be said about the ecstatic Greek dances, the unbridled Bacchanalia. However, as we will see later, the dance came to the early Christian church via "the sacred bridge" of the synagogue and the temple, not via the Greek and Roman pagan celebrations.

The references to the dance in the New Testament are less frequent than in the Old Testament. This is not surprising, since the New Testament gives us only the very beginning of the New Testament church history. Apparently the Holy Spirit did not want to bind the church to certain models, customs, or orders of service. Whereas the New Testament Christian church was trying to understand what it meant to be the church in the world, the people of God in the Old Testament had many more prescribed rituals and a much more developed framework for their worship. In this climate, liturgical dance could come to its own and reach esthetic and liturgical fruition.

In the book of Revelation, however, we find several scenes that remind us of the ritual dances of the Old Testament. These passages can perhaps be considered to be part of that "sacred bridge" we mentioned above. For example, in the great celebration of praise at the close of chapter 5, nature and church, all creatures, great and small, unite in the liturgy of the doxology. The elders leave their thrones and in solemn procession approach the holy seat of God and of the Lamb, where they kneel down and take off their crowns. Here one stands in awe, witnessing the ultimate liturgical dance of the future in which everybody and everything will move in joyous adoration.

Very remarkable is the reference to dancing in Jesus' own words in Luke 6:22-23: "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets."

For further study we refer to the appendix attached to this report, in which we have listed many of the relevant Bible passages. Here are some of the conclusions of the 1982 report on dance in biblical times:

- Dance was an accepted part of Israel's corporate worship.
- Israel regarded dance as a natural and valid expression of gratitude to God and a festive way to celebrate a joyful event.
- Depending on motivation and intent, dancing could be either an appropriately exuberant response to God's grace, or it could be an occasion for degenerate revelry.
- The forms of dance found in the Bible are difficult to identify with current forms of (social) dancing.

F. Liturgical Dance in Church History

From the section of the 1982 report entitled "Church and Dance, Historical Excursus," we learn further that all through the Middle Ages liturgical dance retained its place, even though heretical influences could be noticed. The report reads here as follows:

. . . dance continued to be performed, and even flourished in the context of the church. Given a sacred theme, and brought within the confines of the worship of the church, a variety of dances was approved and applauded, particularly a ring dance which, under the influence of Gnostic thought, turned into an attempt to rise above and beyond the body in order to experience fusion with the divine and participation with the angels who were popularly held to be dancing the ring dance in praise to God in heaven. In those early centuries, bishops never tired of holding up David's dance before the Lord as a model of what Gregory of Nazianzus (ca. 369) called "the swift course of revolution manifold ordained by God." Gregory denounced the emperor Julian for reviving "the dissolute dances of Herodias and the pagans" and challenged him to "dance to the honor of God," as an exercise "worthy of an emperor and a Christian."
(Acts of Synod 1982, p. 562)

In her *A Time to Dance*, Taylor devotes a chapter to the history of symbolic movement. Here she notes that Ambrose, the bishop of Rome (around A.D. 385) reflected upon Luke 7:32 ("We piped and you did not dance") with these words:

Let us not be ashamed of a show of reverence which will enrich the cult and deepen the adoration of Christ. For this reason the dance must in no wise be regarded as a mark of reverence for vanity and luxury, but as something which uplifts every living body instead of allowing the limbs to rest motionless upon the ground or the slow feet to become numb. . . . But thou, when thou comest to the font, do thou lift up thy hands. Thou art exhorted to show swifter feet in order that thou mayest thereby ascend to the everlasting life. This dance is an ally of faith and an honoring of grace.

Ambrose said later: "He who dances the spiritual dance . . . acquires the right to dance in the ring of all creation." With these words he reminds us of what we noted earlier, in Revelation 5.

Chrysostom, in Constantinople, was no less convinced of the value of sacred dance. He wrote in almost the same year: "Of those in heaven and those upon the earth a unison is made—one general assembly, one single service of thanksgiving, one single transport of rejoicing, one joyous dance" (Taylor, p. 78).

Taylor noticed that during the early Middle Ages "dancing was a customary accompaniment of the processions." In a liturgy of about A.D. 900 we read: "here the canon shall dance at the first psalm" (Taylor, p. 85).

Later in the Middle Ages the mystery and miracle plays were scenes of more rhythmic movements. Monastic orders developed certain dances in support of their communal search for peace. Franciscans sang and danced as "singing servants of God." And, in the words of the 1982 report, "Until about the twelfth

century, dancing existed as a formal, if disputed, part of the church's worship" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 562).

In the worship service of the early Christian church and the church of the Middle Ages, the emphasis in the dance was likely more on active, enthusiastic participation than on the graceful execution of intricate patterns of movement.

During the latter centuries of the Middle Ages the church, and especially the higher clergy, became more critical of liturgical dance, partly because of the influence of the Aristotelian philosophy, which divided life into a dichotomy of body and soul, and partly because of the deterioration of many of the liturgical dances. During these years synods, priests, and bishops condemned dancing inside the churches, in the graveyards, and in processions. Participants were threatened with excommunication. It was not only the dancing that was condemned; it often took place in the context of night watches, wrestling, play-acting, and indecent games. In the fourteenth century, priests had to be warned against singing immoral ditties to the music during the mass and the benediction. During the Renaissance (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), there was no renovation of liturgical dance but a further condemnation of the so-called festival of fools, which consisted of dancing, laughter, and banter, and in which the priests were the main revelers. Liturgical dance almost died out.

This explains also why the Reformers did not discuss liturgical dance, but only social dancing. We know that Martin Luther allowed "a place for dancing." We mention this reformer's position, summarized in the 1982 report, since it has, by implication, significance for our evaluation of liturgical dance.

According to the report, it was Luther's opinion that "children dance without sinning; hence if you wish to dance, become childlike and it will do no harm to you" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 563). This attitude could be applied to liturgical or sacred dances as well. John Knox, the Scottish reformer, would allow dancing only if one had the time for it. But the report informs us that "John Calvin . . . declared himself foursquare against dance." According to him, "dancing aroused passion and invited promiscuous relationships." Some of the later Puritans were more generous and allowed "folk or country dances."

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries we notice a new discovery of liturgical dance and a returning appreciation of its powerful expression of devotion. Thus Steward Headlam wrote in 1884: "The art of dancing . . . perhaps more than all other arts, is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, ordained by the Word of God himself; . . . the poetry of dance is the expression of unseen spiritual grace" (in Taylor, p. 130).

The Christian Reformed Church has until recently not concerned itself with the issue of liturgical dance, but social dancing has been discussed for a long time, be it mainly in negative terms. "The Christian community wisely opted for better places for boys and girls to meet." They saw that the social dances of the twentieth century had very little in common with the joyful dances of the people of God mentioned in the Scriptures. "The secularization of life had seemed . . . to put dance, both liturgical and social, off limits for and beyond redemption by the Reformed community" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 563).

Finally, the report points out that in recent years there is to be noticed within the CRC an "increasing restlessness" with the negative stance assumed by the older generation. Indeed there are increasing demands for participation in social and liturgical dances. An increasing number of members of the Christian Reformed Church are working seriously to introduce certain dances express-

ing praise, prayer, or other responses to God's Word in the regular worship of God's people.

G. Further Developments in Christian Reformed Circles after 1982

In 1983 liturgical dance was not only discussed but also demonstrated at the annual Ministers' Institute. Lillian V. Grissen reported on this event in *The Banner* (August 15, 1983, pp. 12f.). The lecture/demonstration was given by Ellen Van't Hof, dance instructor at Calvin College. She told the audience that for the Old Testament Hebrews "dance was 'an important ingredient in worship.'" Much of it was spontaneous, rising out of a need to rejoice with one's whole being. . . . Even children could participate." To demonstrate this, "Two men, two women, and several children joined hands in a circle to dance 'Children at Your Feet.' Varying degrees of skill and rhythm didn't detract from the joy of the adults and children. Adults responded warmly to children and children to children. Together they praised their God."

The article points out—rightly so—that the introduction of liturgical dance will produce a measure of conflict, just as in former days the introduction of organs, choirs, soloists, and hymns often caused bitter conflict. If the introduction of liturgical dance is a parallel case, the problem is relatively simple. Its acceptance becomes a matter of time, from "no" to "not yet" to "now."

In the meantime, some churches have continued to address the issue. One church council, Second Christian Reformed Church of Sarnia, made a statement regarding the dance to the congregation, following the direction of the decisions of the Synod of 1982. Although dealing with social dancing, the church council refers also to dance in a liturgical context. The statement reads in part:

The dance of Miriam expresses the great joy in the Lord who saved the people of Israel from destruction and brought them out of the house of bondage. We also have been brought out of bondage through the blood of Christ, and therefore are obligated to serve him in all forms of entertainment. Our aim must always be to distinguish right from wrong, to be in the right frame of mind as we participate in dancing. We should be well aware beforehand whether we dance around the calf or before the Ark.

H. Stylized Movement in Traditional Reformed Worship

We have seen that every worship service—even the most traditional or sober one—has its own liturgy. We also concluded that in the liturgy the official worship of the congregation receives its shape. Moreover, we defined the liturgy as the expression of the dialogue between God and his people in the worship service. This dialogue is never only verbal—our bodies also move in worship. Liturgy includes the folding of our hands for prayer (our hands can express the attitude of prayer in various ways) and our standing up and sitting down at certain points of the worship service, to mention only some of our physical actions.

Even in our most traditional Reformed worship services, motions and movement constitute an essential part of the liturgy. The entrance of the members of the church council through a special door, their solemn procession, with the ritual handshake of the minister by the elder in charge, represent stylized, almost rhythmic, movements expressing solemn expectation. The former manner in which the deacons went around with their black bags on long handles to gather in the offerings represented an action of devotion by means of which the

gifts of thankfulness were presented to the Lord. Today the deacons pass the collection plates around in a precisely timed ritual movement, usually starting from the liturgical center of the church (the pulpit area); later they move from the back of the church simultaneously through the aisles toward the pulpit in a stylized walk; they present the offerings to the Lord by placing them on the communion table, and occasionally one of them turns towards the congregation to lead in the offertory prayer—all this is done rhythmically, in physical, participatory movements as part of the usual worship service. So with our stylized, ritual celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is a moving experience to see the elders bring bread and wine to the people in the pews; it is just as moving, if not more so, to see the celebrating community gather around the communion table to receive and pass on the bread and the cup.

These and other elements prove that even in the most sober worship setting God's people find ways of worshiping with their entire bodies. Not only the spirit or the heart, but we in total, body and soul, belong to God, and thus we must reach up and out to him, and we often do so spontaneously. There is not such a great distance between the movements just described and a more stylized, prescribed liturgical dance. Could not such a dance be appreciated by the congregation as yet another sign of the total redemption of all of life in Jesus Christ, and another way of expressing our devotion to God by the use of our bodies?

I. Implications of Liturgical Dance

We are now ready to deal with the mandate proper, that is, the implications of the liturgical dance and the feasibility of its implementation.

Much of what is to be said about the implications of liturgical dance holds also for other aspects of the worship service, such as the role of the choir, the soloist, the organist, and so on. Misuse of God's gifts is always possible. Such potential misuse explains why many of our fathers and mothers in the previous century opposed hymn singing in the church, or later opposed the introduction of church choirs.

It is true that the church may not be dominated by the culture in the midst of which she lives and serves; on the other hand, the church, also in her liturgy, is not asked to remove itself from this world. In order to bring the Word in a relevant way to this world, the church must speak the language of its time and use the media, the means of communication, of that time.

We have seen that the liturgy of the congregation regulates and reflects the dialogue between God and his people. We have already considered at what points in this dialogue between God and his people a liturgical dance might be both possible and meaningful.

Keeping all this in mind your committee proposes the following:

1. General Principles

a. The liturgical dance is an act of worship; it cannot be introduced as some form of entertainment.

b. The liturgical dance takes its place in the dialogue between God and his people in the official worship service.

c. At other occasions the dance can certainly also express adoration and function in the worship of congregational groups. We could call this the use of the "sacred" or nonofficial liturgical dance.

d. Liturgical dance can support various elements of worship service, such as our prayer, our praise, God's blessing.

e. The task of a liturgical dance group is similar to that of a church choir; the task of a solo-dancer is similar to that of the vocal or instrumental soloist.

f. The liturgical dance should be performed with a measure of expertise in order not to detract from the purpose of the service.

g. The liturgical dance should be introduced only in congregations where this can be done in an edifying manner.

h. Any liturgical dance should be prepared with extreme care and dedication. This part of the worship service should be *spiritually meaningful* and *artistically pleasing*.

i. The liturgical dance group or choir should at times involve the whole congregation in meaningful body movement. This too will prevent the mistaken notion of the congregation that the dance is done merely *for* them and not *on behalf* of them and *by* them.

2. Steps for Implementation

a. For a meaningful implementation of the liturgical dance in the Christian Reformed worship service, your committee suggests:

- that local consistories consider establishing liturgical dance committees within their congregations; and
- that such a liturgical dance committee (which could well be part of the worship committee) would be mostly concerned with making known to the congregation what liturgical dance is, what possibilities are available, and how it could be incorporated into their worship services. This could be done through talks, demonstrations, and dialogues at congregational meetings.

It would also be the responsibility of the local committee to see to it that any person leading the congregation in liturgical dance should:

- profess a deep biblical faith;
- be a mature believer of the Reformed confessions;
- have respect for the history of the church;
- proceed with pastoral care for the congregation;
- be aware of liturgical principles and traditions;
- have some training or background in dance.

b. The denominational Liturgical Committee would:

- (1) prepare literature and write articles that could be distributed to the local churches.
- (2) organize demonstrations of and workshops on liturgical dance. If these could not be brought to the churches in person, videos and films should be provided.

3. Additional Concerns

Some other areas on which the Liturgical Committee could focus are:

a. Music: to give recommendations on music styles; pros and cons of music with lyrics, and of instrumental, live, and recorded music; different types of sound equipment; and how to fit liturgical dance in with the music of the service. The guidelines for music used with dance should be in harmony with the generally accepted guidelines for music in worship.

b. Dress: to prepare a handbook of examples, stressing a discreet style which yet allows for fluid movement.

c. Architecture: to give suggestions on how to adjust a dance to each individual church's architecture.

d. Placement in a worship service: to prepare studies on how liturgical dances can best supplement certain parts of the worship service. Emphasis should be placed on the integration of dance into the liturgy, and the need for cooperation between the minister and other persons organizing the service.

e. A liturgical dance repertoire: to help dance groups develop appropriate dances. A repertoire is usually developed by a given group after working together for a while. Many dances are developed according to a specific theme and thus can be used in only one service. Others are more general and can fit different themes. It would be possible to videotape or film certain dances and so develop a repertoire which other churches would draw from. The Liturgical Committee could assist in assembling and distributing such repertoires.

J. *Is Implementation Feasible?*

1. The mandate also requires the Liturgical Committee to study the feasibility of the implementation of liturgical dance.

Even though a full assessment of the feasibility of the introduction of liturgical dance is perhaps beyond the scope of the task and ability of the committee, yet we judge that implementation of liturgical dance in Reformed worship is feasible at this time. The following grounds, as summarized from the 1982 report, might be mentioned:

- a. The place of liturgical dance in the Scriptures.
- b. The place and role of liturgical dance in church history.
- c. The changed and changing evaluation of dance in the Christian life.
- d. The readiness and ability of some congregations to introduce liturgical dance.

2. More specifically, the feasibility can be argued upon the following considerations (reference below are from the *Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 89):

- a. Dance was an accepted part of Israel's corporate worship.
- b. History shows that liturgical dance had its legitimate place in early Christian worship.
- c. Synod stated in 1982 that the human capacity to dance is rooted in creation (Art. 90, 3, a).
- d. Synod affirmed also that the capacity to dance is a universal human phenomenon, which finds expression in every human culture (Art. 90, 3, b).
- e. Synod adopted the theological stance that "the Christian is not called to a rejection of the human capacity to dance, but is called to redeem this ability to a God-honoring use" (Art. 90, 3, d).
- f. Synod 1982 specifically included liturgical dance in this redemptive activity, stating: "the challenge of a redeemed use of dancing includes religious, artistic and social forms of dance" (Art. 90, 3, d).

g. At present the Christian Reformed Church has among its members those who are artistically and theoretically well qualified to give responsible leadership in this area of worship.

h. Traditionally the liturgy serves to maintain the unity of the church. Yet when changes in the liturgy are proposed, difficulties often arise. Then liturgy often seems to have a divisive influence. The committee would regret it if synod's decision should result in serious division among us. Yet the development of liturgy cannot be frozen at a certain moment. It will be the challenge of synod not to offend those who resist specific changes, nor to disappoint those who want to reclaim for contemporary use another part of the church's tradition.

K. *Recommendations*

The Liturgical Committee asks synod to adopt the following recommendations:

1. That it is biblical and therefore fitting that God's people appropriate liturgical dance forms for the expression of their deep feelings of praise to their God. The God who gave us bodies responsive to music and capable of rhythmic movement does not require that we ignore our bodies in worship or that we praise him only with our minds and voices (Ps. 150:4).

Grounds:

- a. This is the recommendation in the 1982 report on Dance and the Christian Life given to the Liturgical Committee for its evaluation.
 - b. Synod in 1982 withheld action on this recommendation when it mandated the Liturgical Committee to study "the implications and the feasibility of the implementation of the liturgical dance."
 - c. The recommendation is already implicit in the "summary statements" accepted in 1982, especially in C, 1, b; where it is stated that "this capacity to dance is a universal human phenomenon, which . . . shows itself in various forms, including religious dances, artistic dances, and social dances."
2. That congregations be allowed to introduce and make use of liturgical dance in the worship service, with the provision of I Corinthians 14:40: ". . . everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."

Grounds:

- a. There is a significant place assigned to liturgical dance in the Scriptures.
 - b. We must be responsive and obedient to the encouragement and exhortation of the Scriptures to "praise the Lord with dancing" (Ps. 149:3 and Ps. 150:4).
 - c. Liturgical dance has a significant place and role in church history.
 - d. Changes have taken place and are taking place in the Reformed community with regard to the evaluation and use of dance as part of the Christian life.
 - e. A number of Christian Reformed congregations are ready and able to introduce the liturgical dance in their worship services.
3. That synod encourage the Liturgical Committee to develop adequate resources for the implementation of liturgical dance in Reformed worship as outlined in this report.

Grounds:

- a. Such resources are available.
- b. Many congregations will need further guidance and instruction with regard to liturgical dance.
- c. Such resources will promote an orderly development and constitute the best possible safeguard for a thoroughly Reformed implementation of liturgical dance.

II. NOMINATIONS

At its December meeting the committee expressed its appreciation to Harry Boonstra, Remkes Kooistra, and Shirley Van Zanten. These three members have served the committee faithfully for the past six years.

We present the following nominations, from which three persons are to be selected:

1. Dr. David Diephouse, professor of history at Calvin College, and member of Fuller Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

Dr. Henry Hoeks, professor of religion at Calvin College, and a member of Woodlawn CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

2. Rev. LeRoy L. Christoffels, pastor of Trinity CRC in Artesia, CA, and a member of the Synodical Interim Committee.

Rev. Anthony Van Zanten, missionary at Roseland Christian Ministries Center, Chicago, IL, and a member of Park Lane CRC, Evergreen Park, IL.

3. Judith Vander Kooy, a homemaker and a student of liturgy at the University of Waterloo, and a member of Waterloo (ON) CRC.

Ellen Van't Hof, an instructor in dance at Calvin College, and a member of Hamilton (MI) CRC.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. We request that Dr. Remkes Kooistra and Dr. Carl G. Kromminga be recognized as our representatives at synod, that they be given opportunity to meet with the advisory committee, and that they be given the privilege of the floor when our report is considered.

B. We recommend that synod approve the merger of the Liturgical Committee with the Board of Publications.

C. We recommend that synod approve the liturgical dance report and its recommendations.

Liturgical Committee

Harry Boonstra, chairman
James Vanden Bosch, secretary
Henry Admiraal
Carl G. Kromminga
Remkes Kooistra
John Koole
Joan Ringerwole
Shirley Van Zanten

Appendix
(Some passages in the Bible which deal with dancing)

Exodus 15:20–21. Festal exodus, women chanting and dancing the round dance and playing hand drums, led by Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister (*mahol* from *chul*).

Exodus 32:6. Israelites' heathen dancing around the golden calf (*sahak*).

Exodus 32:19. Moses saw the calf and the dancing (*mahol* from *chul*).

Judges 11:34. Mizpah, Jephthah's daughter dancing with tambourine—welcoming procession for a victorious army (*chul*).

Judges 16:25. Samson is called to dance for the Philistines (*sahak*).
The RSV has "to make sport" and the NIV "to entertain" and "to perform."

Judges 21:21. Maidens dance rounds in vineyards.

I Samuel 18:7. The women sang as they made merry (*sahak*).

Here the NIV translates more accurately: "As they danced they sang. . . ."

I Samuel 30:16. The Egyptian man leads David to the Amelekites as they were "eating and drinking and dancing" (*hagag*). This word is also used for the observance of the religious feasts in which Israel is to participate.

(In *Exodus 23:14–17*: *gag* means "to keep a feast.")

II Samuel 6:5. David's dance before the ark on its way to Jerusalem (*sahak*).

II Samuel 6:14, 16. David dancing before the ark (*kerar* and *pazas*).

I Kings 18:26. Prophets of Baal doing a heathen hopping dance around the altar (*pasah*).

I Chronicles 13:8. David's dance before the ark on its way to Jerusalem (*sahak*).

I Chronicles 15:29. David dancing before the ark (*rakad*).

Job 21:11. Nonritual dancing of children (*rakad*).

Psalms 30:11. God turns wailing into dancing by his deliverance from affliction (*mahol* from *chul*).

Psalms 68:24–25. A festive procession to the sanctuary.

Psalms 87:7. "Singers and dancers alike say,
"All my springs are in you' " (*chul*).

The NIV translates: "as they make music they will sing," and the TEV reads: "they dance and sing."

Psalms 114:4, 6. Mountains skipping like rams (*rakad*).

Psalms 118:27. Festal procession included dance in circles around the altar (*ragal*, moving feet).

Psalms 149:3 and 150:4. Praise the Lord with dancing (*mahol*).

Ecclesiastes 3:4. "A time to mourn, and a time to dance" (*rakad*).

Jeremiah 30:19. The voices of those that make merry in the restoration of Israel (*sahak*).

NIV: "the sound of rejoicing."

Jeremiah 31:4. "Again" you shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers" (*sahak*).

Here the NIV also has *dance* as it translates:

"Again you will take up your tamborines
and go out to dance with the joyful."

Jeremiah 31:13 describes the coming redemption in these terms (NIV):

"Then maidens will dance [*mahol*] and be glad,
young men and old as well.
I will turn their mourning into gladness."

Lamentations 5:15. Dancing has turned into mourning (*mahol*).

Matthew 11:16-17 and *Luke 7:31-32.* Example of not responding with dance when music was played for dancing.

Matthew 14:6-7 and *Mark 6:22.* Salome dancing to please king Herod.

Luke 6:23. Rejoice and leap for joy in times of persecution.

Luke 15:25. Dancing to celebrate the return of a prodigal son.

REPORT 14

MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

I. PERSONNEL AND NOMINATIONS

A. *Committee Members*

The committee members are Rev. Harold Hiemstra, chairman; Mr. Larry Van Noord, secretary; Mr. William De Groot, treasurer; Rev. Donald Draayer, vicar; Mr. Conrad Douma; and Rev. John F. Hollebeek.

B. *Nominations*

Mr. Wayne Van De Brake, owner, WACO Sales Inc.; former consistory member; member of First CRC, Artesia, CA.

Mr. John W. De Vries, manager of receiving and shipping, Golden West Refining Company; present consistory member; member of Trinity CRC, Artesia, CA.

Mr. Larry Van Noord has completed six years on the Ministerial Information Service and is not eligible for reelection. During most of that time Mr. Van Noord has served as the secretary of this committee. The committee expresses its gratitude to Mr. Van Noord for his years of unselfish service on this committee.

II. STATISTICS

During 1984 the committee sent out 1,118 ministers' profiles to churches of the denomination. Some of these were specific requests from churches; others were those which the committee sent out after analyzing both the church profile and ministers' profiles. In this way we were able to respond over two hundred times to requests from CR churches. We were unable to honor numerous requests for profiles of ministers because those ministers have chosen not to submit a profile to us.

In addition to the above, the secretary sent church profile forms and other materials related to the calling process to 84 vacant churches. Overall the statistics of our work are quite consistent with that of previous years.

III. SERVICES

In this past year the Ministerial Information Service made a concentrated effort to update its files. This was done by requesting a minister's profile from all of those who had been in their present charge for more than four years and who were not in our files. In addition, we sent new profile forms to those ministers who were still on file under the old form. Although we did not receive the response we had hoped for (only 26 percent of those contacted responded) we were able to increase our number of available ministers' profiles by nearly one hundred.

We continue to strive to be helpful in bringing into contact churches and ministers. Though not all vacant churches decide to use our services, we believe that the information we provide on calling a minister will be helpful to them, no matter how they carry out the process. One of our continuing concerns is communication; we are not always aware when vacancies occur.

The Ministerial Information Service met last spring with Rev. Louis Tamminga, Director of Pastor-Church Relations Services for the Christian Reformed Church. Areas of mutual concern were discussed and the necessity of continuing communication was emphasized. Rev. Tamminga requested that we give special consideration in our work to those ministers who feel an urgency to move and those who are less than five years from retirement. The Ministerial Information Service recognizes that these are areas of concern and we have tried to keep this in mind while at the same time presenting to the churches the names of those whose profiles indicate the possibility of a fruitful ministry.

We continue to receive requests from churches for interim pastor help, or parttime employment. We encourage ministers who are willing to do this, particularly those who have retired, to notify us of their willingness to serve. It might be possible to design a ministers' profile specifically for those who have retired which could be presented to vacant churches as an option during their time of vacancy. At the present time we have no specific plans for this. However, we do desire to have a larger list of those available and willing to serve in this way. Any retired pastor who desires to serve on an interim basis should contact the secretary of the committee.

Another area of concern is the increased workload of the secretary during the past few years due to format changes and the number of churches served. For the past five and one-half years we have been privileged to have the services of a secretary who was retired and willing to take the time necessary to do the work. This may not be true in the future; therefore we are requesting that synod authorize the committee to hire a person to assist in the work of this committee. This will insure providing quality service to Christian Reformed churches.

IV. REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The committee will not have a representative at synod this year. We do stand ready to discuss matters with you by phone, or to send a representative in person, if you desire. Please contact the committee secretary at (213)867-8323 or the committee chairman at (213)804-1259.

V. FINANCES

The operating expenses for the year 1984 totaled \$1,625.50. An audited financial report will be submitted to the denominational financial coordinator.

VI. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. We request that synod appoint a committee member from the list of nominees the Ministerial Information Service presents to synod (see Section I, B).

B. We request that synod authorize the committee to hire a person to help carry out the work of this committee. The committee anticipates that \$4,000 would be sufficient to meet this need.

Grounds:

1. The amount of work of the Ministerial Information Service has significantly increased in recent years.
2. The person is needed to expedite the work of the committee and to aid in its ongoing program development.

Ministerial Information Service
Larry Van Noord, secretary

REPORT 15 MINISTERS' PENSION FUNDS

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective January 1, 1983, two Ministers' Pension Funds were established, each administered by its own committee as follows:

A. Retirement Plan for Ministers of the Christian Reformed Church in the United States of America, including Shared Ministers, administered by five United States Pension Committee members. (Shared Ministers are those ministers who are not pastors of churches but are in ministries which serve the entire denomination, such as the Back to God Hour, Board for World Missions, etc.)

B. Retirement Plan for Ministers of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada administered by five Canadian Pension Trustees.

II. THE PENSION AND INSURANCE OFFICE

All office routines and other administrative duties are delegated by the pension committees to the administrator and his staff of two.

Additionally, the same office administers the life, dental, and health insurance plans for the Christian Reformed Church Consolidated Group Insurance Committee.

By administering the two ministers' pension plans and the church insurance matters out of one office, overhead expenses are allocated to three areas of operation.

III. CANADIAN PLAN IS REGISTERED

The Christian Reformed Canadian Ministers' Pension Plan is registered with the Pension Commission of Ontario and the Pension and Profit Sharing Plan Section of the Department of National Revenue.

IV. MINISTERS' PENSION CALCULATIONS

All ministers who retire on and after January 1, 1983, will have their pensions calculated under the new plan. However, if the former plan results in a higher pension in a particular case, then that pension will be paid. Ministers who retired before January 1, 1983, will continue to receive their pensions under the former pension plan. The former pension plan was established by the Synod of 1969. It became effective January 1, 1970.

V. COPIES OF THE PLAN

Reference is made to the *Acts of Synod 1982* for complete copies and supporting exhibits of the new plans.

Easy-to-read booklets describing the new United States plan and, separately, the new Canadian plan are available by addressing requests to:

The Administrator
CRC Ministers' Pension Plans
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560

VI. THE QUOTA AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The principal source of income for the Ministers' Pension Funds is the per-family quota. The quota is not a per-congregation matter but a per-family responsibility. The Synod of 1982 mandated that even though it established separate pension plans for the United States and Canada, the quota would be the same for both plans because the church's total pension obligations to ministers and their dependents is an across-the-board denominational responsibility requiring joint financing (cf. *Acts of Synod 1982*, Art. 44, C, 4, p. 50).

Ministers serving in synodically approved ministerial capacities (but who are not the "principal" ministers of organized churches) need to have contributions paid into the ministers' pension funds in order for them to be members of the plan. Synod annually sets the amounts of such contributions.

VII. CONCERNS OF THE MINISTERS' PENSION PLANS COMMITTEES

The Ministers' Pension Committees call synod's attention to the following situations of concern:

A. A few organized churches pay substantially less than the required amount of the Ministers' Pension Fund quota. Yet their ordained ministers are fully covered under the plan and the cost must be borne by churches paying full quota.

B. A trend to move quickly into the status of an organized church appears to be developing. From the point of view of the Ministers' Pension Plan, there are two concerns:

1. One ordained CRC minister in each organized church is a member of the Ministers' Pension Plan regardless of the amount of quota paid by the church (see A above).

2. Ministers of unorganized churches are members of the plan by payment of \$2,175 (1985) as the required contribution. The Ministers' Pension Fund per-family quota multiplied by a very small number of families represents a substantially lower cost for that church.

3. There are cases where a CRC minister fails to complete the application for membership in the Ministers' Pension Plan. In several cases, there is no response to correspondence from either the church or the minister even though it is sent certified mail, return receipt requested. The committees are concerned that the full responsibility for retirement pension, disability benefits, and widow benefits falls on the local church. This defeats the very purpose for which a denominational plan was established many years ago.

VIII. CENSUS

A. Participants

As of December 31, 1984, there were 1,324 participants in the Ministers' Pension Plans. (Additionally, the office maintains files on 101 ministers who

have withdrawn from the plan; of these 86 have some vested interest.)

Of the 1,324 participants, we present first a national breakdown as follows:

1,101	United States Ministers and Shared Ministers and Widows
<u>223</u>	Canadian Ministers and Widows
1,324	Total

A second breakdown is as follows:

811	Active United States and Shared Ministers
<u>196</u>	Active Canadian Ministers
<u>1,007</u>	Total Active Ministers
185	Retired United States and Shared Ministers
<u>15</u>	Retired Canadian Ministers
<u>200*</u>	Total Retired Ministers
105	United States Widows and Orphan
<u>12</u>	Canadian Widows
<u>117*</u>	Total Widows and Orphan

*Both United States and Canadian retired ministers and widows include Shared Minister service.

B. *Deaths in 1984*

Mrs. Dirkje Van Dyke	January 20, 1984
Rev. Isaac Couwenhoven	February 21, 1984
Rev. Ralph Bos	April 4, 1984
Rev. Arie Disselkoen	May 10, 1984
Mrs. Henrietta Westra	May 15, 1984
Rev. John Pikaart	May 31, 1984
Rev. Anthony A. Koning	July 14, 1984
Mrs. Sibyl Monsma	August 1, 1984
Rev. Harold Sonnema	August 29, 1984
Mrs. Cornelia Vande Kieft	October 9, 1984
Rev. Lawrence Veltkamp	October 14, 1984
Rev. Peter W. Vis	October 18, 1984
Mrs. Jennie Van Dyk	October 25, 1984
Rev. Gerard Van Laar	October 27, 1984
Rev. Henry Van Andel	November 12, 1984
Rev. Lambertus Van Laar	November 15, 1984
Mrs. Ottolena Gelderloos	November 16, 1984
Rev. Kasjen Tebben	November 24, 1984
Rev. John Verbrugge	November 29, 1984
Rev. Louis Praamsma	December 2, 1984
Rev. Jack Zandstra	December 21, 1984

C. *Emeritations in 1984*

Under the United States retirement plan:

Rev. Donald Van Gent, because of disability, Classis Columbia, effective October 1, 1983

- Rev. Bernard T. Haan, because of age, Classis Rocky Mountain, effective December 31, 1983
- Rev. Benjamin Ypma, because of age, Classis Muskegon, effective February 5, 1984
- Rev. James Howerzyl, because of age, Classis California South, effective February 28, 1984
- Rev. Nicholas Vogelzang, because of age, Classis Pella, effective February 29, 1984
- Rev. Albert Walma, because of disability, Classis Northern Illinois, effective March 29, 1984
- Rev. John H. Piersma, because of age, Classis Atlantic Northeast, effective April 1, 1984
- Rev. C. William Flietstra, because of age, Classis Minnesota North, effective April 30, 1984
- Rev. John Lawrence Roberts, because of age, Classis Central California, effective April 30, 1984
- Rev. John A. Petersen, because of age, Classis Pacific Northwest, effective May 7, 1984
- Rev. Richard D. Sytsma, because of age, Classis Grand Rapids South, effective May 20, 1984
- Rev. Leonard Bossenbroek, because of age, Classis Grandville, effective June 10, 1984
- Rev. Harold Sonnema, because of disability, Classis California, effective June 23, 1984
- Rev. Henry Bajema, because of age, Classis Minnesota South, effective June 30, 1984
- Rev. Bernard Den Ouden, because of age, Classis Cadillac, effective June 30, 1984
- Rev. Gerard Van Groningen, Sr., because of age, Classis Chicago South, effective August 31, 1984
- Rev. Clarence Van Ens, because of age, Classis Florida, effective September 30, 1984
- Rev. Herman Hoekstra, because of age, Classis Grandville, effective October 31, 1984

Under the Canadian retirement plan:

- Rev. James W. Van Weelden, because of age, Classis Hamilton, effective September 1, 1984

IX. AUDITORS

Both the United States Pension Committee and the Canadian Pension Trustees appointed the public accounting firm Touche, Ross and Company to audit the books and prepare certified financial statements for the Ministers' Pension Funds and the Supplemental Funds for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1984. Financial statements appear in the *Financial and Business Supplement to the Agenda for Synod 1985*.

For the fiscal year ended August 31, 1985, the United States committee and the Canadian trustees reappointed Touche, Ross and Company to audit the books and prepare certified financial statements.

X. ACTUARIAL AND OTHER REPORTS

As of January 1, 1983, the Wyatt Company prepared an actuarial report for the Ministers' Pension Plan.

The Canadian Pension Trustees employed the actuarial firm of C. W. Hartog and Associates of Willowdale, ON, for actuarial functions and to file government-required reports.

XI. INVESTMENTS AS OF AUGUST 31, 1984

A breakdown of investments (at current value) held in trust by financial institutions for the United States and Shared Ministers' Pension Plan as of August 31, 1984, is as follows:

Cash	\$ 39,502
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	337,030
Institutional Liquid Asset Fund	950,000
National Bank of Detroit:	
Short-term Investment Fund	92,100
Common Trust Equity Fund	5,279,329
Group Annuity Insurance Contract	396,100
United States treasury notes	1,919,373
Federal agency obligations	5,467,648
Corporate bonds	2,094,784
Foreign obligations	194,750
Total	<u>\$16,770,616</u>

A breakdown of investments (at current value) held in trust by a financial institution as custodian for the Canadian Ministers' Pension Plan as of August 31, 1984, is as follows (in Canadian dollars):

Cash	\$ 61,136
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	66,087
Canadian short-term investments	198,606
Canadian term deposit receipts	650,000
Canadian government bonds	993,219
Canadian equity investments	1,228,042
United States equity investments	218,036
Total	<u>\$3,415,126</u>

XII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. *Privilege of the Floor*

The committees respectfully request synod to grant the privilege of the floor to members of the Canadian Pension Trustees and of the United States Pension Committee; to Mr. G. C. Van de Riet, the administrator; to Mr. Ray Vander Weele; and to Counselor Donald Oosterhouse when matters pertaining to the Ministers' Pension Plans are discussed.

B. *Supplemental Payments and Final Moving Expense Funds and Quota*

Synod is requested to approve a uniform 1986 quota of \$1.00 per family for the United States Supplemental Fund and for the Canadian Supplemental Fund.

Ground: For day-to-day operations and to meet emergency situations of retired ministers, widows, and orphans, the committees have determined that a minimum working balance in each fund should be \$25,000. Several times during the past year balances have fallen below \$25,000. In order to avoid delayed consideration of needs, the committees request synod to increase the Supplemental Payments Fund from \$.75 per family to \$1.00 per family.

C. *Housing Allowance*

The United States Pension Committee requests synod to designate up to 100 percent of the minister's early and normal retirement pension or disability pension for 1984 as housing allowance for United States income tax purposes (IRS Ruling 1.107-1) but only to the extent the pension is used to rent or provide a home.

D. *United States Pension Committee Members*

The United States Pension Committee requests synod to elect, effective September 1, 1985, two committee members as follows:

1. One member for a two-year term from the following nominees (to succeed Mr. Ray Vander Weele):

a. Mr. Ted Berkompas—holds a MBA degree from the University of Michigan, is a self-employed CPA in Walnut Creek, CA; has served as deacon and elder, on the board of the Contra Costa Christian High School, Walnut Creek, CA, and the Friendship House in San Francisco.

b. Mr. Lloyd Bierma—is a graduate of Calvin College and has a Juris Doctorate from the University of Valparaiso; is a member of the law firm of Oostr, Bierma, and Schouten, Sioux Center, IA; is assistant county attorney; has served as elder and on the Christian school board, and the Board of Trustees of Calvin College.

2. One member for a three-year term from the following nominees:

a. Mr. Joe Kaldenberg—whose schooling includes LUTC I,II,III, A.M. College CLU DES, is sales representative for Bankers Life, working in pensions, health, and financial planning fields; is a member of various professional associations.

b. Mr. Garrett C. Van de Riet—is a graduate of Calvin College, has a MBA from the University of Michigan School of Business Administration; was vice president of finance at Detrex Chemical Industries thirty-seven yrs; administrator of the Ministers' Pension Fund for eight and one-half years; treasurer of the CRC Consolidated Group Insurance Committee; has served as elder, deacon, and Christian school board member.

E. *Canada Pension Trustee Members*

The Canadian Pension Trustees request synod to elect, effective September 1, 1985, two trustees as follows:

1. One member for a three-year term from the following nominees:

a. Mr. A. J. Bakker, incumbent—is a partner in the law firm of Bakker, Atamanuk, Taylor, and Wenglewski, St. Catharines, ON; served on the committee to prepare the separate United States and Canada Ministers'

Pension Plans; has served as elder, delegate to synod, on the Christian school board, Board of Governors of Redeemer College, and as a Ministers' Pension Fund Trustee.

b. Mr. John A. Van Rooyen—is a registered industrial accountant in the position of vice president of finance for Canadian Fram Limited, Chatham, ON, managing an eight-million dollar pension fund; has served as elder and deacon, on a Christian school board, board of Redeemer College, on the finance committee for the Hamilton Home for the Aged.

2. One member for a three-year term from the following nominees:

a. Rev. John G. Klomps, incumbent—is a graduate of Calvin Seminary with doctorate from the Free University; has served as delegate to synod, on its Advisory Committee on Finance; on the Synodical Interim Committee, classical committees, and as a Canadian Ministers' Pension Fund Trustee. Presently he is minister-at-large for Christian Horizons; in the spring of 1985, he will be the executive secretary of the World Home Bible League in Canada.

b. Ms. Helmie Verver—is a member of the Institute of Canadian Bankers, is manager of Consumer Loans and Services of the St. Catharines branches of the Royal Bank of Canada; has served various committees for the Windsor and Trinity CRCs, and as secretary of the Niagara Young Calvinist League.

F. Thanks

The Ministers' Pension Committees suggest that synod express appreciation to the following members for their services:

1. Canadian Ministers' Pension Trustees who have served three years and are eligible to serve three more years:

- a. A. J. Bakker
- b. Rev. John G. Klomps

2. United States Ministers' Pension Committee members as follows:

- a. Mr. Kenneth Olthoff who has served six years and is not eligible to serve again without an intervening lapse of time, and
- b. Mr. Ray Vander Weele who has served one year and is not eligible to continue serving because he will be the administrator effective September 1, 1985

3. Mr. Garrett C. Van de Riet who will have served eight and one-half years as administrator of the Christian Reformed Church Ministers' Pension Plan(s) since April 1, 1977 to his planned retirement in the fall of 1985.

G. New Administrator

The United States Pension Committee and the Canadian Pension Trustees are pleased to announce that Mr. Ray Vander Weele has accepted the appointment of Administrator of the Ministers' Pension Funds effective September 1, 1985. Mr. Vander Weele is a certified public accountant, a certified management accountant, and he has a Ph.D. degree in accounting. Until September 1, 1985, he has been employed by the University of Wisconsin in various capacities in the Graduate School of Business Administration and in the Management Institute since 1971. He has served the CRC in Madison, WI, as elder. He has also been a delegate to synod.

H. Benefits, Quotas and Contributions

On September 21, 1984, the United States Pension Committee members and the Canadian Pension Trustees in joint session decided the following:

1. To recommend that synod increase the former plan maximum pension benefits from \$6,750 to \$6,900 for 1986.

Ground: This represents a modest 2.2 percent increase in partial recognition of the cost of living increase.

2. To recommend that synod increase the per-family quota from \$41.00 to \$43.00 for 1986 and Contributions-Other from \$2,175 to \$2,250 for 1986.

Grounds:

- a. Pensions for former plan retirees is increased 2.2 percent.
- b. The average cash salary for new plan retirees in 1985 is 6.6 percent higher in the United States and 7.4 percent higher in Canada. (The 1985 average cash salary used in the formula is based on average cash salaries for the years 1982, 1983, and 1984, and these are 6.6 percent and 7.4 percent higher in the United States and Canada, respectively, than the 1984 average cash salaries.)
- c. Gradually to take into account the cost of changing the United States funding period from thirty years to twenty years. (The Canadian past service cost is being funded over fifteen years because that is the legal requirement. It is also quite realistic.)

Canadian Pension Trustees	United States Pension Committee
Albert J. Bakker, chairman	Ray Vander Weele, chairman
Bruce Dykstra	Roger Helder
Rev. John G. Klomps	Rev. Herman Hoekstra
Rev. William Suk	Kenneth E. Olthoff
John Woudstra	David Vander Ploeg
	Garrett C. Van de Riet, Administrator

REPORT 16
PASTOR-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

I. BACKGROUND OBSERVATIONS

The Synod of 1982 launched a ministry of pastoral care for pastors and councils and appointed a standing committee to supervise that ministry. Synod stipulated that the Pastor-Church Relations Committee (PCRC) ministry focus on both healing and prevention, that regional pastors be appointed in all classical areas, that newly ordained pastors be afforded the privilege of a mentor, that every congregation have a pastoral relations committee for the benefit of the local pastor(s), and that a fulltime director of Pastor-Church Relations Services be appointed. Synod also took note of a number of stress-causing factors that had come to beset the ministries in CR churches, especially during the seventies.

II. THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED MINISTRY

Synod of 1982 instructed the PCRC to alert the denomination to trends and developments affecting the quality of the CRC ministries. Synod noted that during the seventies some seventy-five CRC pastors had resigned, been deposed, or been released from service in their congregation (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 77). That trend continued at about the same rate during the first few years of the eighties as the following figures indicate:

	Resignations	Depositions	Releases via Article 17	Total
1979-80	7	0	2	9
1980-81	2	2	5	9
1981-82	6	0	2	8
1982-83	3	6	3	12
1983-84	4	5	1	10
1984-85	5	0	2	7
(projection)	<u>27</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>55</u>

Pastors facing these traumatic experiences come from every age group, every size church, and every type of theological inclination. Since 1980, however, the age of pastors suffering from burnout has crept upward.

We live in an age of momentous problems involving increased levels of education, constant mobility, decreased family size, sophisticated communications systems, economic upheavals, and new and imaginative worship patterns in evangelical churches. None of these have left church life among us unaffected. People expect more from the churches than in the past. The ministry has become more demanding.

Added to the complexity of ministry is the growing polarization in our circles. In subtle ways various groupings solicit the backing of the pastor, and,

often without realizing it, withhold loyalty and encouragement when they feel the pastor doesn't give it to them. And pastors themselves have at times mistaken partisan approval for guileless response to the gospel ministry. Polarization tends to dim the vision of the central biblical kingdom themes and the core challenges of the Christian life. The silent majority in our churches seeks a type of church life that will restore them to spiritual joy and afford them genuine Christian fellowship. Where they don't experience that many tend to join nearby evangelical churches. Our denomination is no longer growing in terms of numbers. The young people among us do not stay with their parents' churches automatically, for reasons of loyalty only. The churches must be concerned to upgrade the quality of ministry to a new generation.

III. REGIONAL PASTORS

The institution of regional pastors in every classical area, as part of the PCRC ministry, was also a provision of the 1982 Synod. Appointments were made with the approval of classical committees, and in several cases by classes themselves. The following are now serving:

Classis:	Regional Pastor
Alberta North	Nicholas B. Knoppers
Alberta South	Jacob H. Binnema
Atlantic Northeast	Farquhar J. MacLeod
British Columbia	Peter M. Jonker
Cadillac	James E. Versluys
California South	John F. Hollebeek
Central California	Case Admiraal
Chatham	Morris N. Greidanus
Chicago South	Franklin D. Steen
Columbia	Allen Petroelje
Eastern Canada	Dick C. Los
Florida	Harvey A. Ouwinga
Grand Rapids East	Gordon D. Negen
Grand Rapids North	Charles Steenstra
Grand Rapids South	Jacob D. Eppinga
Grandville	Roger A. Kok
Hackensack	Vernon Geurkink
Hamilton	Jack B. Vos
Holland	Peter Borgdorff
Hudson	Donald P. Wisse
Huron	Jacob Kuntz
Illiana	Lugene A. Bazuin
Kalamazoo	Charles Terpstra
Lake Erie	Benjamin Becksvoort
Minnesota North	John Bylsma
Minnesota South	Henry Lamsma
Muskegon	Eugene W. Los
Northcentral Iowa	Aldon L. Kuiper
Northern Illinois	Donald J. Negen
Orange City	Carl E. Zylstra
Pacific Northwest	John A. Petersen
Pella	Siebert Kramer
Quinte	Repko W. Popma
Red Mesa	Gerrit Haagsma
Rocky Mountain North	Jay C. Vander Ark

Rocky Mountain South
Sioux Center
Thornapple Valley
Toronto
Wisconsin
Zeeland

Ted Medema
Duane Timklenberg
Durant T. Van Oyen
Peter Van Egmond
John Kroon
Arthur W. Hoogstrate

The ministry of these pastors, often assisted by their wives, has proven to be of much benefit to pastors and consistories in their classes. Increasingly pastors, struggling with problems, felt free to contact their regional pastors, or gratefully accepted their overtures toward pastoral assistance. The regional pastors have also become instrumental in arranging educational events helping officebearers and congregations relate more imaginatively to each other. The relationship of the PCRC ministry to the various local church structures has been given careful attention and presents few problems. The work of the regional pastors is supplementary to, not competitive with, the work of consistories and classes. Consistories and classes have a prior responsibility in providing pastoral care to pastors. Regional pastors and Pastor-Church Relations Services can provide additional pastoral skills sometimes not available to a local church. In many cases they are in a more favorable position to do this since they are not part of the supervisory structures of the church.

From a year-end report submitted by the forty-one regional pastors it appears that they ministered to pastors in their classes in no fewer than 440 instances. In the case of 119 of these, followup care was agreed upon. Rev. Louis Tamminga has also been in contact with many pastors and consistories directly.

With gratitude we make mention of the services rendered on an interim basis by several pastors emeriti in churches that have gone through a period of turmoil. Without exception these men and their wives have contributed greatly toward healing, helping the congregation ready itself for another chapter of growth under the guidance of the next regular pastor.

IV. THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Newly ordained pastors and those entering the CRC ministry by way of Church Order Articles 7, 8, and 14, c are being assigned a mentor with whom they establish a one-to-one trust relationship. This provision was also made by the 1982 Synod. Under this program an older pastor (the mentor) accompanies a younger pastor (the mentee) as he functions in his own right in his ministerial calling. All of those ordained to the ministry following the Synods of 1982, 1983, and 1984 now have mentors. Without exception they have welcomed their involvement in this program and the benefits have been significant. The quality of the mentorship relationship, however, depends on the input of the participants. In the few instances where this did not happen fully, benefits were minimal.

Copies of the manual explaining the mentorship program will be available to members of synod.

V. PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

About one hundred congregations now have a pastoral relations committee for the benefit of their pastor(s). The Synod of 1982, which made this provision, stated that the purpose of such support forces was to "promote better communications between the congregation and the pastor, and vice versa."

During 1984 a lot of feedback and suggestions from those churches enabled us to write a supplementary guide which has proved helpful to committees and pastors alike. Copies will be available to synodical delegates. PCRC stands ready to assist councils and pastors in organizing pastoral relations committees. They provide a setting in which the pastor can relate to fellow believers in trust and confidence and find spiritual refreshment. These committees do not have decision-making or policy-setting power and do not in any way detract from the responsibilities or authority of the consistories.

VI. THE CRC CALLING SYSTEM

One need for which the PCRC has not been able to find a satisfactory solution is that of many pastors having been in their present charge for too long a time. Relational problems are often the result. Most of those pastors are able, seasoned, motivated men who would serve acceptably in another congregation. But vacant churches tend to select for their nominations names of younger pastors who have been in their charge only a limited number of years.

The director of Pastor-Church Relations Services shared the following findings with PCRC at its February 1985 meeting.

- During 1984 the younger half of active CRC pastors accepted eighty-one calls (68 percent of the total). The older half of the pastors accepted thirty-eight calls (32 percent of the total).
- The average length of stay in the last charge by the younger half of the pastors was 4.9 years. The average length of stay of the older half was 7.4 years.

This means that more than two-thirds of the circulation of pastors now takes place among the younger half of the CRC pastors. With a reduced vacancy rate, the circulation among the older half of the pastors is just too slow.

Director Tamminga also presented some detailed figures about CRC pastors over the age of fifty. From a survey made by the regional pastors in their classes, it appears that the average size of the churches shepherded by this age group is 108.4 families. They have served an average 6.8 years in their present churches. According to the judgment of the regional pastors 51 percent of them do not desire a call at this time (January 1985), 35 percent hope for a call, and 14 percent hope with some urgency for a call. Of these pastors over fifty 45 percent would probably face at least some relational problem if they were not to receive a call before emeritation.

These observations demonstrate that the calling system as presently in vogue in our denomination needs considerable upgrading if it is to serve the denomination well during the coming years. The number of churches and pastors has grown steadily through the years and the number of vacancies has proportionately decreased. The present calling system is no longer helpful in every respect in meeting existing needs.

The PCRC, therefore, recommends to the Synod of 1985 that synod appoint a study committee to assess the CRC calling system and to present recommendations for bringing it more in tune with present and future needs.

Grounds:

1. This is a denominational matter.
2. The calling system is not equipped to contribute toward finding solutions for problems such as outlined above.

VII. THE PASTOR-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Serving on the committee until 1987 are: Robert C. De Vries, Carl L. Kam-

meraad, and Eugene W. Los. Until 1986: Peter Borgdorff, Mirth Vos, and Richard Westmaas.

Concluding her term on the committee is Joanne De Jong. She was appointed by the Synod of 1983 for a two-year period with the provision that she be eligible for another three-year term. We submit the following nomination:

Joanne De Jong (incumbent): Member of Faith CRC of Tinley Park, IL. Her husband, Alexander, is a pastor emeritus. She has been a teacher of Bible and English at the junior high school level for many years.

Anita Schoonveld: Member of Orland Park CRC where her husband, Arthur, is the pastor. She is a graduate of Calvin College and taught Christian school for six years. She is now a homemaker.

VIII. ACTIVITIES AND REAPPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR LOUIS TAMMINGA

The Synod of 1982 authorized the appointment of Rev. Louis M. Tamminga as the first director of Pastor-Church Relations Services. Under the direction of the committee Director Tamminga has worked diligently at establishing the direction of this new ministry. Focusing his efforts in three main areas, under his supervision rapid strides have been made in establishing the mentorship program for candidates, the regional pastors program for preventive and healing ministries to churches, and the establishment of pastoral support committees within congregations.

The Pastor-Church Relations Committee conducted an extensive evaluation of both the work of the committee and the leadership provided by Rev. Tamminga. Based on that evaluation, we heartily endorse his reappointment for a three-year term. We have established program goals for the committee's work through 1988; therefore a three-year appointment, rather than one for four years, is proposed to coincide with the evaluation of the program scheduled by the Synod of 1988.

It is, therefore, recommended that synod reappoint Rev. Tamminga to the position of Director of Pastor-Church Relations Services for a term of three years (August 1, 1985 through June 31, 1988).

Ground: The evaluation conducted by PCRC has amply demonstrated Rev. Tamminga's qualifications to serve in the position.

IX. SUMMARY: MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

- A. That synod grant Committee Chairman P. Borgdorff, Secretary R. De Vries, and Director L. Tamminga the privilege of speaking before synod and its advisory committee on matters pertaining to the committee's ministry.
- B. That synod elect one member to the committee from the nominations submitted.
- C. That synod reappoint Rev. Louis Tamminga as the Director of Pastor-Church Relations Services for a period of three years.
- D. That synod appoint a committee to study the CRC calling system with a view to bringing it more in line with present needs and situations.
- E. That synod approve the work of the committee.

Pastor-Church Relations Committee

Peter Borgdorff, chairman

Robert De Vries, secretary

Carl Kammeraad

Joanne De Jong

Eugene Los

Mirth Vos

Richard Westmaas

REPORT 17
SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

Last year our committee sent out thirty-nine sermons to some two hundred churches and individuals. The publishing of Volume 29 of the *Living Word* sermon series encountered no major problems, and our committee has reason to believe that most of the subscribers are satisfied with our ministry.

The majority of our subscribers are Canadian. Only twenty-one churches and individuals in the United States are using our services. In Australia and New Zealand ten churches are receiving our sermons. This picture is very much the same as it has been over the last few years.

Our plans are to publish thirty-five sermons in 1985. We have notified our subscribers that we have had to raise the annual fee by \$5.00 to the amount of \$40.00. Furthermore, we have decided to publish this year's sermons in five booklets of seven sermons each, and we hope that one of the booklets will contain sermons on key issues addressed by the Contemporary Testimony.

The honorarium will remain at \$50.00 per sermon, although our committee is considering a substantial increase for next year. We believe that much time and a great deal of effort are needed to prepare an *excellent* sermon for publication, and consequently we like to adequately remunerate those whose contributions enhance our ministry.

Mr. Stan De Jong of K. Knight Publishing Company in St. Catharines looks after the printing and mailing of our sermons. His work for the committee and his interest in our services to the denomination are much appreciated. Mr. Tom Tiemens of Brampton helps us keep the financial records in good order. His assistance is also rated highly.

Rev. Markus J. Lise has served two terms and is not eligible for reelection. Our committee is grateful for all the work he has done. Together with him we thank the Lord that he has given us many opportunities to help our church proclaim his living Word.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod approve the publication of the *Living Word* sermon series from January 1, 1986, to December 31, 1986.

B. That synod commend the use of this sermon series to the churches.

C. That synod appoint a regular member to replace Rev. Lise from the nomination of Rev. Ralph Koops and the Rev. William C. Veenstra.

Sermons for Reading Services Committee
John De Jong, chairman
Peter W. De Bruyne, secretary-treasurer
John G. Klomps
Markus J. Lise

REPORT 18 SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Christian Reformed Church has embarked on an exciting new phase of her history as, in recent years, she has affirmed and embraced growing racial diversity. At congregational, classical, and denominational levels there are signs of the Spirit's blowing upon us. Our growing diversity equips us for more effective evangelism in a pluralistic North American society; our understanding of what it means to be Reformed is enriched by the perspectives of many different races and nationalities and cultures; our schools and our agencies increasingly discover how to respond to a multiracial constituency; our ability to equip our children to serve in Christ's "all nations" kingdom is enhanced as we are blessed to nurture them in a multiracial denomination.

No longer does the denomination think of "problem solving" as characterizing our ministry of racial reconciliation. SCORR observes with deep gratitude to God the joyful commitment with which the CRC has responded to the opportunities God places before us as he makes us an increasingly multiracial church. Perhaps most notable during the past year have been the clear evidences of that commitment—everywhere one looks one sees the signs. Our denomination is stretching and flexing to respond to our new diversity. And there is every indication that, by God's grace, the Christian Reformed Church will persevere in the task it has set itself.

II. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Mr. Bing S. Goei, chairman; Grand Rapids, MI (1985)
- Ms. Barbara Clayton, vice chairman; Chicago, IL (1986)
- Mr. Richard Bandstra, secretary; Grand Rapids, MI (1986)
- Mr. Herbert Van Denend, treasurer; Hawthorne, NJ (1985)
- Mr. Floyd Kurley, at-large; Rehoboth, NM (1986)
- Mr. Fernando Aviles; Chicago, IL (1987)
- Mr. Gary Avalos Sr.; San Diego, CA (1985)
- Ms. Evelyn Benally; Shiprock, NM (1987)
- Rev. Jason Chen; Iowa City, IA (1985)
- Mr. Ho Young Chung; Buena Park, CA (1986)
- Mr. John De Haan; Grand Rapids, MI (1986)
- Dr. James A. De Jong; Grand Rapids, MI (1986)
- Mr. George Fernhout; Edmonton, AB (1987)
- Ms. Toni Goreé; Dartmouth, NS (1986)
- Mr. John Van Zanten; Rock Valley, IA (1985)
- Dr. James B. White; Grand Rapids, MI (1987)

III. PROGRAM

A. *Leadership Development*

The blessings in ordained multiracial leadership continue to be experienced. This number has increased to 47 representing an increase of 25 over 1981 when

these numbers were first recorded. We are pleased with this growth because it matches the need among churches. The number of churches with 10 percent or more multiracial worshipers has jumped to 77—a growth of 27 congregations in this category since 1981.

On the other hand, multiracial denominational agency staff have decreased to 45 from a high of 55 in 1982. We are concerned about this decrease and call the denominational agencies to recognize the need for opening staff positions to multiracial people.

The number of multiracial board members in denominational agencies has remained at 10. We are concerned that synod's recent ruling that the number of at-large members on denominational boards be diminished has curtailed a method by which multiracial board members were often selected. Since this approach is no longer available, SCORR calls the attention of the classes to the need for multiracial board membership. It is essential for multiracial leadership development in all areas of the life of the church to have multiracial people in decision-making roles.

The major challenge in multiracial leadership development continues to be to move the traditional feeder systems—such as Christian Schools International's member primary and secondary schools—as well as the colleges to function effectively in developing multiracial leadership.

The multiracial churches have repeatedly informed SCORR of the need for training and employment of individuals who have not been able to enter the job market. At the same time SCORR and many denominational agencies and churches have indicated the need for trained secretary/clerks. Therefore SCORR has developed a *Training Program* in Grand Rapids and Oak Park in which individuals with very limited or no skills are trained to work in the agencies, churches, or businesses related to the churches. Under the direction of SCORR staff Mary James and Carolyn Vessel, eight individuals per year will be prepared as secretary/clerks, and in the process much of SCORR's secretarial work will be done as well.

B. Congregations

Multiracial membership continues to grow in the denomination; congregations grow, new congregations are added, and increasingly this multiracial membership is represented in the classical and synodical decision-making process. Over the past year the worshipers in CRC multiracial congregations increased by 12 percent; as noted above, the number of congregations with 10 percent or more multiracial worshipers increased from 62 to 77!

A major event of 1984 was the Multiracial Ministry Conference sponsored by the Board of Home Missions, World Relief, and SCORR. Just before synod met, 130 leaders from multiracial congregations and agencies of the denomination gathered to pray, plan, fellowship, and worship together. The purpose of the conference was to understand, from the various racial perspectives, what it means to be Reformed. Conferees attended seminars on leadership development, worship, Christian education, publications and materials, social justice.

In its work with congregations SCORR continues to focus on the 120 churches in the denomination located in multiracial ministry settings, to work toward our goals of assisting these congregations to grow in size and increase their number, and to help the denomination to be sensitive and responsive to

their needs. Home Missions, World Relief, and SCORR will work together to develop 10 new joint ministries in locations of limited resources within the next 5 years.

C. Church Education

As the CRC's diversity increases, a growing focus of SCORR's attention is the need for racial understanding in the denomination. The celebration of our All Nations Heritage in the first week of October is one important way that SCORR is meeting this need; holding regular SCORR meetings in various locations in the denomination, combined with educational and inspirational events, is another way. Discussion guides for use in the churches are available from SCORR.

In this context SCORR monitors classical and synodical decisions, seeing them as important signals of our corporate recognition of our growing diversity. The decision of the Synod of 1984 to declare that a *status confessionis* exists where churches support or fail to oppose the policy of apartheid, is an example of a decision shaped by our growing sensitivity. Cooperation between SCORR and the staff of the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee, leading to the development of task forces from the various cultural groups which submitted lists of recommendations for inclusion in the new *Psalter Hymnal* during the past year, was another such indicator.

D. The Celebration of Our All Nations Heritage

For the second year synod encouraged the churches of the denomination to celebrate our All Nations Heritage on the first Sunday of October. SCORR again provided resources to the churches for use in designing their observances of that day and was again gratified by the widespread response. For the second year in a row SCORR and the seminary cooperated in promoting offerings on that day to be shared between SCORR's Scholarship Fund and the Kromminga Multiracial Leadership Development Scholarship Fund. SCORR's report this year includes a recommendation to synod to invite the churches to observe this celebration during the first week in October of 1985.

SCORR wishes to explain its position re an action some have perceived to be in contradiction to a decision of synod: Materials printed *prior to* synod were distributed *after* synod. It was not our understanding that synod had prohibited SCORR from using the phrase "All Nations Heritage Sunday" in its materials. We regret that the confusion about the terminology caused misunderstanding. We also regret that this misunderstanding came to our attention too late for us to address it substantively in this report. We respectfully inform synod that in a supplementary communication we will present a discussion and a recommendation about the designation of Lord's Days. This year our plan is to avoid the use of the word *day* and focus on the *week*.

E. South Africa

Last year in our report to synod, SCORR dealt at some length with the crucial importance of our denomination's relationships with Reformed denominations in South Africa, noting that these relationships are a key factor in the CRC's ministry of racial reconciliation. If our denomination is not absolutely clear in its opposition to the system of racial injustice called "apartheid," then the integrity of our witness is imperiled, and our efforts to build an "all nations"

denomination will fail. Time and again we hear, particularly from black Christians who are inquiring about the CRC, and from black members of the CRC as well, the concern about our denomination's stance with regard to Dutch and Reformed denominations in South Africa. We belong to Jesus Christ in whose power walls are broken down and by whose spirit unity is restored. We are called to "do justice." We simply cannot minister with integrity in pluralistic North American society if we leave room for any ambiguity in our opposition to apartheid.

What will it mean for our denomination to be unambiguous in our commitment to justice in South Africa? Important steps have already been taken. For example, synod has declined to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the Dutch Reformed Church; synod has declared that a *status confessionis* exists where a church supports or does not oppose the ideology of apartheid. In the light of these decisions and in the light of the urgent need for a clear witness to racial justice, SCORR has decided to recommend to synod this year that our denomination sever its ties of ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Church in South Africa (RCSA).

Although long-suffering patience is appropriate, it should be noted that for thirty years we have maintained fellowship, through the RES, with the RCSA, while they supported apartheid. Recent statements by the RCSA do contain alterations of their position, i.e., accommodation to influence by other denominations; but the RCSA's basic support for apartheid remains and continues to characterize these statements and the RCSA's understanding of Scripture. Not only has that church failed to oppose the system of apartheid, but she continues to produce studies of Scripture that undergird the system; her pastors and prominent decision makers continue to participate in the Broederbond (an organization dedicated to preserving the apartheid system) without objection from their church.

SCORR believes that to continue in pastoral dialogue with the RCSA is important and valuable; we must sever our ties and then redouble our efforts to call the church to repentance and the pursuit of justice so that relationships between us may be restored. But we must no longer continue in fellowship with them while they continue to lend support to the system of apartheid lest we add strength to the hand of the oppressor and call our own witness into question. (See Recommendation VII, C below.)

F. Goals Report

Category	1981	1982	1983	1984	5 year target 1986
1. Number of multiracial ordained pastors	22	31	41	47	26
2. Number of multiracial unordained staff in churches	24	26	32	30	33
3. Number of multiracial Christian school teachers	³	17	25 ¹	25	27
4. Number of multiracial CRC agency staff	41	55	50 ²	45 ²	51
5. Number of multiracial members of denominational boards and committees	³	5 ²	10 ²	10 ²	15
6. Number of congregations with 100 or more multiracial worshippers	7	10	11	11	9

7. Number of congregations with 10 percent or more multiracial worshippers	³	50	62	77	52
8. Number of classes dealing with multiracial issues	1	5	7	21	3

¹The 17 Christian schools contributing to these statistics are those Christian Schools International members which are located in areas where Christian Reformed churches are located and have a significant number of multiracial students. In addition to the fulltime teachers, they have 39 parttime teachers and assistants and 34 board members who are multiracial.

²The agencies surveyed include all Advisory Council member agencies and those listed in 1985 Yearbook, pages 454-88.

³Data not available in 1981.

IV. RESOURCES

A. *The Denomination*

The gifts and prayers of God's people and their commitments to the ministry of racial reconciliation as expressed in congregational and agency life are key resources for SCORR's work. The evidences of openness and of commitments to obedient response to growing diversity are not only heartening but are what make the growth possible. SCORR has experienced rapid growth in the last couple of years, both in income and in program; we have added staff in a couple of areas of extra challenge: leadership development and the development of resources for SCORR's ministry. The committee has been committed to making the quota portion of the budget a decreasing percentage; we will request a quota of \$5.26 for next year in response to growing programs and expanding opportunities.

B. *Scholarships*

The SCORR multiracial student scholarship fund continues to be an extremely valuable tool in building the multiracial churches. Though SCORR has refined its scholarship policies to insure that only students giving strong promise of leadership in the church, good academic performance, and demonstrated financial need are eligible, the number of approved applicants continues to grow. This year because of limited budget some approved applicants were turned down.

The United Negro College Fund says it all, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." We may not waste the leadership potential in deserving students. Thus we plead with synod and churches to open their hearts with offerings for this worthy cause.

The products of God's blessings, current and potential, are found in the following list of this year's Multiracial Student Scholarship Fund recipients:

Name of Student	Ethnic Origin	Career Goal	School Attending	Home Town
Samuel Kim	Korean	Ministry	Calvin College	Burbank, CA
Rogelio Torres	Puerto Rican	Ministry	Calvin College	Jacksonville, FL
Sang Wook Yi	Korean	Evangelist/ Missionary	Calvin College	Fullerton, CA
Victor Anderson	Black	Church/Minister of Education	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Pedro Aviles	Puerto Rican	Pastor	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Raul Gimenez	Argentinian	Ministry/ Church Education/Evangelist	Calvin Seminary	Kentwood, MI

Frank Gipson	Black	Pastor	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Rafael Maldonado	Puerto Rican	Pastor	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Juan T. Matias	Puerto Rican	Pastor	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
John Nash	Black	Ministry	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Ramon L. Nieves, Jr.	Hispanic	Church/ Community Ministry	Calvin Seminary	Chicago, IL
Jung S. Rhee	Korean	Minister	Calvin Seminary	S. Korea
Daniel H. Ryou	Korean	Local Ministry	Calvin Seminary	Grand Rapids, MI
Annette Singer	Navajo Indian	Physical education	Dordt College	Jefferson, OR
Anthony Pomaes	Hispanic	Pastor	RBC	Bronx, NY
Chou Houa Yang	Asian	Ministry	RBC	Pella, IA
Lazaro Santana	Hispanic	Physical Education	Trinity Christian College	Paterson, NJ
Hector Vasquez	Hispanic	Ministry	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL

EXCEPTIONS

Toni Goreé	Black	Nutrition	Dalhousie University	Halifax, NS
Kathy Lancaster	Black	International relations	De Paul University	Chicago, IL

NEW APPLICANTS

Lorie Tensen	Black	Political Science/ History	Calvin College	Brooten, MN
Maurice Williams	Black	Accounting	Calvin College	Chicago, IL
Young Kyoo Chung	Korean	Theology	Calvin Seminary	Grand Rapids, MI
In-Kyu Song	Korean	Professor	Calvin Seminary	Grand Rapids, MI
Randal Young	Chinese	Pastor	Calvin Seminary	San Francisco, CA
Stephen Kelley	Egyptian	Missions	Calvin Seminary/ SCUPE*	Cincinnati, OH
Jose LaLuz	Puerto Rican	Pastor	Calvin Seminary/ SCUPE*	Chicago, IL
Seung Kwon Han	Korean	Christian Education	RBC	Los Angeles, CA
Brenda Dykema	Korean	Religious Education	RBC	Holland, MI
Teresa Maldando	Puerto Rican	Social Work	North Park College	Chicago, IL
Debbie Ortiz	Puerto Rican	Sociology	North Park College	Chicago, IL
Joseph Ortiz	Puerto Rican	Pastor	North Park College	Chicago, IL
Walter Barney	Black	Physical Therapy	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Edwin Caraballo	Hispanic	Theology	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Yolanda Johnson	Black	Special Education	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Martha Perez	Hispanic	Education	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Migdalia Perez	Hispanic	Nursing	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL

*Seminary Consortium for Urban Education

Ramon Rivera	Hispanic	Ministry	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Randall Smith	Black	Political Science	Trinity Christian College	Chicago, IL
Chi Hsu	Chinese	Computer Science	University of Iowa	Iowa, IA
Manuelita Phillips	American Indian	Nursing	University of New Mexico	Shiprock, NM

C. Grants

SCORR grants are intended as "seed money" and are available to churches, schools, and other groups whose applications indicate they are eligible under our guidelines. These grants are intended to serve SCORR goals in the areas of leadership development and ministries in multiracial and transitional churches. In the past year SCORR provided the following grants:

- Trinity Christian College, (Palos Heights, IL)/
- Chicago Pastors Urban Inter Nos—Multiracial staff for recruitment and program development for urban pastors
- Spirit and Truth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, Chicago IL—College preparatory program for Hispanic young people
- Spanish Christian Reformed Church, Wyoming, MI—Summer evangelism program
- Roseland Christian Ministries Center, Chicago, IL—Development of staff position for the training component of their ministry
- Grand Rapids Christian High School, Grand Rapids, MI—assistance with hiring a black teacher
- Gospel music consultant available to churches seeking to train leaders in the use of gospel music for worship
- Classis Red Mesa Summer Church Leadership Program

D. Multiracial Leadership Development Advisory Council

The united effort of many CRC and related agencies in multiracial leadership development continues to be a valuable tool. Agency heads meet twice per year to advise staff and SCORR and to do united planning on items related to multiracial leadership development. Each agency has designated a staff person to work directly with the Director of Multiracial Leadership Development. Frequent work sessions and united efforts are coordinated by the Director of Multiracial Leadership Development.

During the past year a comprehensive plan has been developed at Trinity Christian College to make every facet of the institution more efficient in developing multiracial leadership. The president of Calvin College has appointed a task force representing all strata of Calvin's institutional life to do similar planning. These comprehensive plans represent potentials for long-term development of multiracial leaders. The Director of Multiracial Leadership Development spends much of his time in this activity.

Brenda Elmore has joined SCORR as a Multiracial Leadership Development Trainee.

E. Materials

SCORR continues to publish a quarterly newsletter, the primary purpose of which is to attract leaders to denominational leadership positions. A secondary purpose is to provide news for and about multiracial ministries in the denomination. SCORR also produces occasional resource materials in the form of

study guides, cassettes, and long-range planning assistance for use in congregations.

V. SALARY DISCLOSURE

SCORR reports two staff at Job Level 5, second quartile.

VI. NOMINEES

Two members of SCORR, Mr. Gary Avalos and Rev. Jason Chen, have served two terms and are not eligible for reelection. Mr. John Van Zanten, having served one term, has requested retirement. To replace retiring SCORR members in accord with synodical guidelines for SCORR membership, the committee presents the following slate of nominations:

Replacing Mr. Gary Avalos

Mr. Robert Argueta—a member of Good Shepherd CRC, Prospect Park, NJ. He is employed by the US Post Office.

Mr. Jose Tagle—a member of Good Samaritan CRC, Miami, FL, where he serves in the consistory. He is an employee of the US Post Office.

Replacing Rev. Jason Chen

Mr. Gary Lim—an aircraft engineer, a member of Crenshaw CRC, Los Angeles, CA, where he has served on the consistory

Rev. Alfred S. Luke—pastor of the De Moines, IA, CRC

For Mr. Bing Goei's position

Mr. Bing Goei—serving currently as chairman of SCORR, in the consistory of East Leonard CRC, Grand Rapids, MI, and a Grand Rapids businessman.

Mr. Eldon McCabe—a member of Fellowship CRC, Albuquerque, NM. He is an attorney.

Replacing Mr. John Van Zanten

Ms. Doris Tuinstra—co-owner of a Grand Rapids business, and a member of Plymouth Heights CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That SCORR quota be set at \$5.26 for 1986.

B. That synod encourage the churches to celebrate our All Nations Heritage during the week of September 30–October 6, 1985.

Grounds:

1. The enthusiastic participation of the congregations in the past two All Nation Heritage celebrations affirms the value of such a week as an expression of denominational praise to God and commitment to the ministry of racial reconciliation.
2. It provides a focused way for SCORR to increase denominational awareness and knowledge about our growing diversity, and to coordinate the exercise of stewardship through offerings.
3. It testifies to our denomination's commitment to increasing racial diversity.

- C. That synod sever ties of ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Church in South Africa.

Grounds:

1. The RCSA has not made a clear statement on the matter of prominent decision makers, including pastors, in their denomination participating in the Broederbond, an organization designed to support the present political system.
 2. The RCSA continues its history of support for apartheid in its use of Scripture and in its theology.
 3. The RCSA shows no indication of active opposition to the injustice of the system and ideology of apartheid.
 4. The worldwide Reformed community has spoken clearly on this matter in its suspension from WARC of both the Reformed Church in South Africa and the Dutch Reformed Church on account of those denominations' support of apartheid.
- D. That synod reappoint Rev. William Ipema to the position of Director of Multiracial Leadership Development for a terminal two-year term.

Grounds:

1. Rev. William Ipema has served SCORR with competence and enthusiasm.
2. SCORR has reviewed Rev. Ipema's work and heartily recommends him to the synod for reappointment.
3. This terminal appointment is in line with the plans of both Rev. Ipema and SCORR to phase out the codirector arrangement and move to a single multiracial executive director of SCORR.

Synodical Committee on Race Relations
Karl J. Westerhof

REPORT 19
 SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE
 CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
 CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH SYNOD TRUSTEES

The Synodical Interim Committee, serving corporately as the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees, presents this report as a summary of the activities carried on in behalf of synod during the interim between the Synods of 1984 and 1985.

I. ORGANIZATION

The following synodically elected persons have served as corporate trustees and members of the SIC during the present church year:

Rev. L. G. Christoffels, Mr. G. Vander Sluis (Far West United States); Rev. P. W. Brouwer, Mr. G. Vermeer (Mississippi River to Rocky Mountain); Rev. J. A. De Kruyter, Rev. J. Hasper, Mr. H. Johnson, Mr. G. Raterink, Dr. R. P. Seven, Mr. A. Van Tuinen (Central United States); Rev. I. Apol (Eastern Coast United States); Rev. N. B. Knoppers (Western Canada); Rev. A. De Jager, Mr. M. Koole (Eastern Canada). The stated clerk, Rev. L. J. Hofman; the denominational financial coordinator, Mr. H. J. Vander Meer; and the synodical treasurer, Mr. L. Ippel, serve *ex officio* as corporate trustees and members of the Synodical Interim Committee.

The committee elected the following officers and committees to serve for the current year:

A. *SIC Officers*: president, John A. De Kruyter; vice president, Jacob Hasper.

B. *Corporation Officers*: president, John A. De Kruyter, vice president, Jacob Hasper; secretary, Leonard J. Hofman; treasurer, Lester Ippel; and assistant treasurer, Jack A. Peterson.

C. *Alternate Stated Clerk for 1984 to 1985*: John A. De Kruyter

D. *Church Polity and Program Committee*: J. A. De Kruyter, A. De Jager, J. Hasper, H. Johnson, D. J. Negen, R. P. Seven, W. R. Witte, and *ex officio* members L. J. Hofman and H. J. Vander Meer.

E. *Finance Committee*: A. Van Tuinen, R. Mulder, W. Postma, G. Raterink, H. Rempe, M. Veltkamp, and *ex officio* members L. J. Hofman and H. J. Vander Meer.

F. *Administration Committee*: J. A. De Kruyter, J. Hasper, A. Van Tuinen, and G. Raterink.

The Synodical Interim Committee meets three times each year and its sub-committees meet several times each year.

II. Nominations for Synodical Interim Committee Membership

Members and trustees whose terms expire in 1985 are the following:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Central US	*Rev. J. A. De Kruyter	**Rev. W. Witte
	*Rev. J. Hasper	**Rev. D. Negen
	Mr. G. Raterink	Mr. H. Rempe
	Mr. A. Van Tuinen	Mr. M. Veltkamp

*indicates members eligible for reelection

**indicates alternate members eligible for election

Nominations for election at the forthcoming synod:

Clergy member

*Rev. John A. De Kruyter—pastor of Calvin CRC, Oak Lawn, IL; a member of the Board of Publications.

**Rev. Wilmer R. Witte—pastor of Mayfair CRC, Grand Rapids, MI; presently an alternate on the Synodical Interim Committee.

Clergy member alternate

Rev. Leonard Van Drunen—pastor of South Grandville CRC, Grandville, MI; he serves as stated clerk of Classis Grandville.

Nominee not elected as member.

Clergy member

*Rev. Jacob Hasper—pastor of Pillar CRC, Holland, MI.

**Rev. Donald J. Negen—pastor of the Lombard CRC, Lombard, IL; presently an alternate on the Synodical Interim Committee and stated clerk of Classis Northern Illinois.

Clergy member alternate

Rev. James E. Versluys—pastor of Trinity CRC, Mount Pleasant, MI (combination of congregational and campus ministries); and regional pastor of Classis Cadillac. He has served on the Board of Home Missions and Board of Publications.

Nominee not elected as member.

Nonminister member

Mr. Stewart Geelhood—member of Calvin CRC, chairman of Finance Committee; he is vice president of finance and treasurer, of C & F Stamping Co. A graduate of Calvin College and University of Michigan, he has served as member of Calvin College Board of Trustees and as member of Christian school boards in Kalamazoo MI, and Elmhurst, IL.

Mr. Ira Slagter—member of Palos Heights CRC, Palos Heights, IL, he is the executive director of the Back to God Hour. He has served as a member of the Synodical Interim Committee.

Mr. Donald Molewyk—member of Highland Hills CRC, Grand Rapids, MI; he is Director of Development, Christian Schools International Foundation and a member of Christian Rest Home Board. He is a graduate of Calvin College and University of Michigan; is retired from General Motors where he served in a management position for twenty-one years, and has served as president of Muskegon and Grand Rapids Christian Schools boards.

Nominee not elected as member.

Nonminister Member

Mr. James Hertel—member of Trinity CRC, Fremont, MI; he is owner of James Hertel Insurance Agency, Inc., in Fremont, and a member of the Old State Bank of Fremont Board of Directors. A graduate of Calvin College, he has served on Calvin College and Seminary Board of Trustees as well as Christian school boards in Fremont and Muskegon.

Mr. Martin Ozinga—Member of Evergreen Park CRC, Evergreen Park, IL; he is the president of the First National Bank of Evergreen Park; and is presently a member of the Coordinated Air Transportation Committee. He formerly served on the Synodical Interim Committee.

Nonminister alternate member

Mr. August Van Der Wall—member of South Grandville CRC, Grandville, MI, he is vice president—administration, Bissell, Inc., Grand Rapids. He served on the Center of Hope Pastoral Committee.

Nominee not elected as member.

III. INTERIM APPOINTMENTS

A. Board Appointments

Board	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term
Synodical Deputies	Alberta North		Rev. C. T. Fennema	
	Columbia		Rev. G. G. Vink	
	Eastern Canada		Rev. W. Suk	
	Grandville		Rev. J. S. Meyer	
	Minnesota No. Pella		Rev. M. Toonstra	
Calvin College Bd. of Trustees	Grandville		Rev. S. Kramer	
	Hudson		Rev. J. L. Witvliet	
World Missions	Quinte	Rev. J. Zantingh	Rev. S. J. Van Heest	1987
	Brit. Columbia	Rev. S. M. Jung	Rev. J. M. V. Koole	1987
Home Missions	No. Cent. Iowa		Rev. J. A. Houseward	
	Rocky Mtn. Wisconsin		Rev. J. Gunnink	
	Alberta So. Grandville Illiana		Rev. J. Kroon	
Minnesota So.		Rev. P. W. Brouwer	Rev. D. J. Tigchelaar	
			Rev. A. J. Bultman	
Sioux Center Publications	Rocky Mtn.		Mr. R. Wunderink	
	Rev. J. D. Buwalda	Mr. K. Kredit	Rev. R. J. Buining	1987
Orange City Wisconsin CRWRC	Alberta No. Minnesota So.		Rev. G. H. Pols	
		Mr. C. De Boer	Rev. D. Wyenberg	
	Sioux Center Zeeland	Mr. A. De Jong	Mr. J. Obbink	1987
		Mr. D. Postma	Mr. K. Johnson	

Board for World Missions—Mr. Harold Padding was appointed to a second three-year term as a board member-at-large.

B. Committee Appointments

1. Fund For Needy Churches—Rev. Calvin P. Van Reken was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the move of Rev. John L. Meppelink.

2. Volunteer Resource Bank—Mrs. Marian Vanden Berg was appointed for a

three-year term replacing Mrs. Deborah Vance who resigned. Rev. Verlan G. Van Ee was approved as an alternate to the committee.

3. **Judicial Code Committee**—Because the committee was not called upon to meet, and did not supply nominations for those members whose terms are expiring, the Synodical Interim Committee recommends that the terms of the members of the Judicial Code Committee be extended one more year. The SIC also approved the appointment of Mr. Wietse Posthumus to serve one year, replacing Judge John Feikens who is not available to serve an additional year.

4. **Reformed Ecumenical Synod**—The Synodical Interim Committee approved the following replacements for delegates to the RES: Dr. John H. Primus, voting delegate, for Dr. John Vanden Berg; Rev. Tymen E. Hofman, nonvoting delegate, for Dr. Primus; Mr. A. E. Bakker, nonvoting delegate, for Mr. Dan Vander Ark; Rev. James C. Lont, nonvoting delegate, for Mr. Bakker.

IV. STUDIES CARRIED ON AT THE DIRECTION OF SYNOD

A. *Long-Range Planning Joint Task Force*

The Synod of 1984 adopted a recommendation whereby a joint Synodical Interim Committee-Board of Publications Task Force would be formed to develop the 1985 report (to synod) relating to space requirements for the denominational agencies headquartered at 2850 Kalamazoo Ave., Grand Rapids, MI.

The combined group met during 1984 and 1985 and has submitted their report and recommendations to the Synodical Interim Committee and to the Board of Publications.

The Synodical Interim Committee adopted the recommendations as shown in the Appendix of this report and these are being recommended to synod for adoption.

B. *Study of the Structure of the CRC*

1. The members of the Committee to Study the Structure of the CRC are: Frank Velzen, chairman, Anthony Diekema, Kenneth Horjus, John G. Klomps, Richard Postma, Raymond Seven, and Wayne Vriesman.

2. Consultations:

World Missions and Relief Commission

A helpful dialogue was held with members of WMARC focusing on parallel studies, with promises to share mutually beneficial information, and on several areas of study where the committees' activities intersect. The committees agreed that communication between them should be continued.

RCA—Dr. Marvin Huff, president elect of Western Theological Seminary

Dr. Huff presented a report in connection with structural study and revisions carried on by the RCA.

3. Procedure

The committee approved a time line and process steps (subject to revision at a later date) by which a series of studies can be completed.

It was decided to request the Synodical Interim Committee to seek synod's approval to establish 1987 as the committee's time line for final reporting. This

takes into account the study of a parity of representatives on denominational boards, referred to the committee with a deadline of 1986 established by synod for a progress report.

The committee adopted a bimonthly meeting schedule, January 1985 through May 1987.

4. Contact with Agencies and Other Constituents

It was decided that when the committee's mandate is more clearly defined questionnaire(s) be developed for use in interviews with the head of each major agency and with a board member to be selected by the agency head. The interviews are to be completed in the spring of 1985, between February 1 and April 1. The results will be used in creating the committee's report.

A questionnaire will also be developed to be used in a mailed survey of selected denominational leaders. Not less than 10 percent of the survey population are to be representatives of minority or "new" populations within the CRC.

Persons participating in the prewriting surveys will have opportunity to review and critique the report drafted from the results of the questionnaire.

The committee's goals and intended process will be discussed with the Interagency Advisory Council.

5. Parameter of the Committee's Mandate

Because the mandate of the committee was not clearly defined in Overture 22 of the Synod of 1983, the committee, utilizing a prepared study document, is establishing a "working mandate." The committee agreed on a tentative mandate at its January 23, 1985, meeting.

6. Budget

Budgetary requests are being processed through the Finance Committee of the SIC for presentation to the SIC. The budgetary projections being recommended total \$40,000 for the fiscal year 1986 and an estimated \$37,000 for the fiscal year 1987, to be confirmed in 1986.

7. Recommendation:

That synod establish the Synod of 1987 as the time line for the final report of the Committee to Study the Structure of the CRC.

C. *Revise Basis of the Quota System*

Synod 1984 appointed the Synodical Interim Finance Committee to examine the present quota policy of determination by family count with a view possibly to changing to a policy of determination on a professing-member basis, or other means of determination, and to report its recommendations to the Synod of 1985.

After considerable discussion by the Finance Committee it became apparent that the mandate given by synod demands more than simply a development of an arithmetical formula for allocating denominational costs to the churches. Therefore the Finance Committee appointed a special *ad hoc* committee to address the overall subject. The special committee was requested to seek advice from classes and churches. The committee has prepared a questionnaire directed to all of our church consistories/councils and classical treasurers.

The questionnaires are being mailed at the time of this writing. Responses will help the committee in preparing its recommendations to the Synodical Interim Finance Committee later in 1985. The Finance Committee expects to

present its recommendations and report to the Synod of 1986.

V. AGENCY COORDINATION

A. *Interagency Advisory Council (IAC)*

The IAC, comprised of the heads of staff of all the major denominational agencies, called together by the stated clerk, agreed upon a *modus operandi* for a period of two years. Guidelines for coordination were endorsed by the SIC and were noted by the Synod of 1983. It was reported in 1984 that the previous year was a time of learning and was marked by some achievements. The effectiveness of the peer review model, involving the study of one agency by a team of council members, was evaluated after the first year.

It was decided that the peer review will be considered a service of IAC which is optional. It is to be done at the request of the individual agency. The head of each agency also has the option of requesting an overall review or a review focused upon a specific area of concern. In the discussion it was obvious that though there may be differences of opinion regarding the value and place of peer review within the IAC, there is enthusiasm for the IAC meetings, the coordination that is taking place between the agencies, and the opportunity to discuss common concerns. There is a good level of trust and an openness to presenting problems in order to receive the advice of the members. (Minutes of IAC, Sept. 27, 1984).

IAC meetings were held on September 27, 1984, and January 24, 1985. On November 1, 1984, the IAC sponsored an Urban Strategy Conference at Calvin Seminary, featuring Dr. Roger S. Greenway as the main speaker. Group strategy sessions and a time for plenary discussion focused on the church's response to the trend toward urbanization in our countries and world.

Other areas of cooperation include the exchange of written reports reviewing major changes in program or personnel within the respective agencies, interagency planning and participation in the ongoing review of position descriptions and salaries by an *ad hoc* committee.

The officers of the IAC for the year are John G. Van Ryn, chairman, John De Haan, secretary, and Gary Mulder, vicar.

B. *Missions Coordination Council*

The MCC, comprised of the presidents and heads of staff of the BTGH, CRBHM, CRBWM, CRWRC, and the SIC meets regularly to exchange information, joint communication projects, joint formation of work to be done together, long-range plans, and to aid in the resolution of interagency difficulties.

VI. BARNABAS FOUNDATION PROPOSAL

At their September 19 and 20, 1984, meeting, the SIC appointed an *ad hoc* committee "to explore the dimensions of initiating and promoting a program of better financial stewardship among the leaders and members of our church, in consultation with the Barnabas Foundation and Christian Stewardship Services, and to draft a proposal for presentation to the SIC at its January 1985 meeting."

The *ad hoc* committee has met and in consultation with Barnabas and CSS presents the following report.

The overall focus of this report will be a program of improved financial stewardship; the emphasis will be in the area of planned giving through estate

planning and wills for CRC people, such that the following can be stated as the major goal:

By the year 2000 every adult member of the CRC over twenty-five years old will have an up-to-date will to care for loved ones and leave at least 10 percent (or an equal additional child's share) of the estate at final distribution to favorite designated Christian causes. (Barnabas Foundation letter)

To begin a program that will lead to achieving the goal involves *two* interrelated complementary steps:

1. Creating a felt need, and responsibility to achieve the above goal—in other words denomination-wide promotion; and an expectation that all adult members of our churches will in fact want to participate in the above goal.

2. Providing sufficient knowledgeable and objective personal assistance to each adult family and individual so that they actually accomplish the above goal in the most economical and efficient way possible for all family members and Christian organizations.

The first step would involve the church with its existing mandate, structure, and natural access to all of its members. The second step would involve organizations such as Barnabas and Christian Stewardship Services who, within their mandate and purposes, are engaged in one-on-one personal contacts throughout the denomination.

At the present time Barnabas and CSS work on Step One activities in order to create the one-on-one personal visits of the second implementation step. At the rate of 600 personal contacts per year made by these organizations, it would take over 120 years to cover the entire denomination. If, by assigning the first implementing step to the church and the initial work spread among a larger group, a greater number of contacts would be made in far fewer years.

The Role of the Church (Step #1)

As a first move toward a denomination-wide introduction to improved stewardship via estate planning and wills, SIC approved the production of an audiovisual program on stewardship for use by congregations throughout the United States and Canada. This program is being planned for fall viewing in place of the usual "Your Church in Action" slide presentation.

As a second move, the *ad hoc* committee recommends that the Church Polity and Program Committee of the SIC present the challenge of participation (in Step 1) to the following agencies of the CRC:

1. CRWRC with their mandate for diaconal training.
2. Board of Publications—Education Department with its emphasis on educational materials and programs.
3. Calvin Seminary with its role in the training of ministers.

Based on response from these agencies, CP&P Committee would assign the task, subject to the approval of synod, to one or more of those responding who would best demonstrate how "Step 1" could be accomplished. This agency would then be the denominational coordinator for stewardship training as they carry out "Step 1" in achieving the goal defined earlier.

As to the need and the challenge facing us, Dr. Hoekstra has made this observation in a letter addressed to the *ad hoc* committee:

You have the figures for the past several years on the current dollar value for

Christian causes of the approximately 300 estate plans produced by Christian Reformed people each year through Barnabas-related people. My estimate of the total current average estate value, including life insurance and vested pension plan benefits, of all Christian Reformed families throughout the United States would be between \$200,000 and \$300,000, with the likelihood of it actually being nearer to \$300,000. I also find that there is very little resistance to the idea of leaving a significant percentage to Christian causes at final distribution at the death of the last spouse and when the youngest child is at least 23 years old. (Of the eight families and individuals I worked with in Kalamazoo last week, all left for the first time at least an additional child's share to Christian causes.) However, *neither the drafting of wills nor leaving any portion to Christian causes will be accomplished by most of these members of our churches without the kind of coordinated effort I attempted to sketch out in the enclosed memo.*

In addition to the direct financial returns of such a coordinated effort, there are important pastoral and pedagogical considerations. Without wills which list Christian guardians, the parents and the church have no assurance that the baptismal vows taken will in fact be carried out if both parents should pass away. Also without wills, and even with many simple attorney-drafted estate plans, the children and grandchildren will receive their entire lump sum of the estate at age 18. Then also, seldom are there good provisions for distribution of personal items of sentimental value—an area often causing long-term tensions between family members. And finally, not making wills, not caring about family tensions and saving of unnecessary taxes and administrative costs, and not leaving anything to Christian causes is a poor example which will probably reappear among children and grandchildren, thus not boding well for Christian stewardship in the next several generations. On the other hand, careful Christian stewardship on all of these matters by parents should have the opposite desired positive effects among children and grandchildren.

The Role of Barnabas and Christian Stewardship Services (Step #2)

Each of these organizations, from their beginning and under their bylaws and mandates, have provided assistance and personal service in the areas of planned giving through estate planning and the preparation of wills. The bylaws and mandates under which they operate are similar although they may differ in extent and breadth. The goals of these organizations relate well to the major goal described earlier. Each of the organizations welcomes supporting the church in the attainment of this goal by continuing to provide the assistance and personal services that has made them so effective throughout the denomination in both Canada and the United States.

The Synodical Interim Committee, in response to the above report, recommends that synod direct the SIC and its Church Polity and Program Committee to solicit ideas from CRWRC, Board of Publications, and Calvin Seminary concerning stewardship responsibility of the membership of the CRC and how this may best be promoted by these agencies.

VII. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CRWM AND IPC

A. As reported to the Synod of 1984 the relationship between CRWM and the Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico (Iglesia Presbiteriana Independiente de Mexico, IPIM) has been a matter of much concern. The relationship between CRWM and the IPI deteriorated and the IPIM experienced division and internal turmoil. The rupture in the IPIM has become even more deeply entrenched, with the "old" IPIM severing all relationships with CRWM. The "new" IPIM wishes to continue fellowship with CRWM and the ministry of its

missionaries in Mexico.

In connection with the report of CRWM and in response to an overture requesting it, the Synod of 1984 appointed "a committee with respect to the problems that have arisen on the Mexico field, seeking to effect healing and reconciliation" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 649).

The committee has completed its investigation and has presented its report to the Synodical Interim Committee. The report of the *ad hoc* committee follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

Your committee was appointed by the Synod of 1984.

A. Mandate

"1. That synod appoint a committee with respect to the problems that have merged on the Mexico field, seeking to effect healing and reconciliation. The committee shall discuss with past and present missionary personnel, staff, CRWM board members, and IPIM members the issues which caused the rupture between CRWM and the IPIM [Iglesia Presbiteriana Independiente de Mexico].

"2. That this committee report to the Synodical Interim Committee when it has completed its work."

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 98, p. 649)

The above mandate indicates two facets of the work of your committee:

1. To investigate "the problems which have emerged on the Mexico field," and
2. To seek "to effect healing and reconciliation."

In order to accomplish the above, your committee was charged to "discuss with past and present missionary personnel, staff, CRWM board members, and IPIM members the issues which caused the rupture."

B. Materials

Background materials for the mandate above are contained in the article above and in Overture 47, from Classis Central California (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 524-25). In its overture Classis California called to synod's attention that they had received a copy of a letter to the stated clerk of synod from the synodical interim committee of the Independent Presbyterian Church in Mexico announcing the 'rupture, complete and immediate, of our relation with the Christian Reformed World Mission agency of the Christian Reformed Church, and the total and continuing cessation of its activities in all of our Mexican territory.' "

II. STUDY AND INVESTIGATION OF PROBLEMS ON THE MEXICO FIELD

A. Study of Materials

Your committee studied relevant materials in the acts of IPIM synods of 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1984; minutes of the CRWM board executive committee; the Mexico Field Council minutes; correspondence from the "old" IPIM; reports of Mexico visits of CRWM executives and board members; and letters, reports, and protests by missionaries.

B. Scope of Discussion with People in the United States

Beginning July 13, 1984, over the course of about four months, the committee interviewed many people both in the USA and in Mexico. In the USA interviews were held with CRWM executives, board members, and resource people not directly connected with World Missions, including Dr. Eugene Rubingh, executive secretary of the Board for Christian Reformed World Missions; Rev. G. Bernard Dokter, area

secretary for Latin America of Christian Reformed World Missions; Rev. Juan Boonstra, Spanish Department, Back to God Hour; Mr. David A. Radius, president of Christian Reformed World Missions; and Mr. John S. Brondsema, member of the Board for World Missions and the Latin American Committee.

C. Scope of Discussion—People Interviewed in Mexico

From October 15 to October 23 your committee met with several individuals and groups directly related to the conflicts. These interviews were conducted in Merida, Mexico City, and Los Angeles.

In order to get the picture, the following categories of people were interviewed: all Christian Reformed missionaries, former missionaries of the CRC, representatives of the "old" IPIM, representatives of the "new" IPIM, and other resource people.

On Thursday, October 18, your committee met with thirteen representatives of the "old" IPIM in the building located on Vienna Street in Coyoacan. This building was purchased by the CRWM in 1965 and served as seminary and dormitory. Since the rupture of late 1983 this building complex is claimed by the "old" IPIM.

It was evident that the "old" IPIM desires no reconciliation. The ultimatum given us is their only desire: remove the missionaries. They stipulated that they must all be out by November 5, 1984. The committee deeply regrets that no opportunity was given to the committee to seek any kind of reconciliation.

On Friday, October 19, your committee met with nine representatives of the "new" IPIM in Mexico City. We had met previously with six representatives of the "new" IPIM (all six members of the Zacil Be Presbytery in southeastern Mexico) on October 16 in Merida. All these representatives, individually and unitedly, denounced the actions of the "old" IPIM and desire continued relations with and help from CRWM.

Your committee also met with many other resource people who contributed to our understanding of problems in the field.

III. ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM

A. Background

Although the problems which brought about a break with CRWM and a division within the IPIM are of long standing, a large part of our investigation dealt with matters that took place between 1979 and 1984. Already in 1961, synod declared Mexico a regular mission field of the CRC. It was decided to work in cooperation with the IPIM, since Synod 1963 stated: "It is neither necessary nor proper for us to establish another denomination in Mexico" (*Acts of Synod 1963*, p. 40). The *Acts of Synod 1964* give a detailed description of the IPIM, along with a "statement of cooperation with the Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico." During the early years of this relationship the Revs. J. J. Pott, G. Nyenhuis and R. S. Greenway served as CRC missionaries; all three were also instructors at the Juan Calvino Seminary in Mexico City. During these years the IPIM continued to grow steadily until in 1979 five presbyteries met for the first synodical meeting of the IPIM. At the same synodical meeting it was decided that the statement of cooperation of 1963 should be changed and revised in order to reflect new developments and maturity within the IPIM. It was the desire of the IPIM that all CRC missionaries work under the direct supervision of their presbyteries.

B. Facets of Conflict

The matter of direct supervision by the IPIM soon brought about differences of opinion among the missionary personnel. Some of the missionaries accepted these new directives while others did not. To resolve such differences a special field council meeting was held in January 1980, at which time a multilateral mission strategy was drawn up. The majority of the missionaries believed the multilateral plan to be a good one.

Division on the field was reflected at the August 1980 meeting of the synod of the IPIM. At that meeting two lists of missionaries were drawn up; one list included names of those who would be permitted to stay in Mexico, while the other named missionaries to be dismissed (*Actas-IPIM, 1980*, pp. 20-24). In view of such divisions and demands, some CRWM staff began to work independently of the IPIM (Gerald Nyenhuis, Hans Weerstra) and others left the field altogether (Derk Oostendorp, Nick Kroeze, Winabelle Gritter).

In 1981 certain revisions requested by the first IPIM synod of 1979 were agreed upon by both CRWM and the IPIM (*Actas-IPIM, 1981*, pp. 36-40). The relationship between these two groups began to deteriorate rapidly, however, because of alleged violations of this new basis of cooperation. The unrest became more evident during the years 1981-1982. At the same time there was a marked polarization within the CRWM missionary staff; this was also reflected within two opposing groups of the IPIM.

C. Rupture with CRWM and Division within IPIM

In November 1983 the Executive Committee of the IPIM Synod (a group supported by Rev. J. Larry Roberts and Mr. John Paul Roberts) broke relations with the CRWM. All missionary staff, with the exception of the Robertses were asked to leave Mexico within thirty days. This notice of rupture with the CRWM was quickly followed by another letter (dated December 3, 1983) from the Zacil Be Presbytery (one of five presbyteries of the IPIM synod) denouncing the decision of the executive committee. The Zacil Be Presbytery called for: (1) a special synodical meeting; (2) J. P. Roberts to leave Mexico; (3) the resignation of the Executive Committee of the IPIM; (4) an investigation by CRWM re alleged misuse of mission funds; and (5) a restructuring of agencies within the IPIM.

Subsequent to the notice of rupture with CRWM and the communication from the Zacil Be Presbytery, two synodical meetings were called. Both groups claimed to be legally represented and acted as the official IPIM. One group met in Coyoacan on January 24 and 25, 1984, with Rev. Efen Haro Robles acting as chairman. The other group met in Campeche on January 27 and 28, 1984, with the Rev. Josue G. Tah Noh acting as president.

IV. ATTEMPTS TO EFFECT HEALING

A letter dated November 12, 1983, from the executive committee of the IPIM officially broke all relations with the CRWM. All missionary personnel, with the exception of Rev. and Mrs. J. Larry Roberts, were asked to leave Mexico within thirty days. Because of this drastic decision, and out of concern for the safety of the missionaries, a committee composed of Mr. D. Radius, Rev. G. B. Dokter, and Dr. E. Rubingh visited the field on December 8 and 9, 1983. A meeting was arranged with the missionary staff, with the exception of Rev. and Mrs. J. L. Roberts. A meeting with the Robertses was scheduled for the next day. A letter from Rev. Dokter and Dr. Rubingh explained the motive for such separate meetings. They pointed out that the Robertses, unlike the other missionaries, had not been asked to leave within thirty days.

Rev. Roberts strongly objected to the committee's procedure, as his letter of December 3, 1983, makes clear, and expressed the opinion that a deeper division would follow, not only among the missionaries but also among members of the IPIM. At the time the committee was in Mexico they also met with members of the Coyoacan consistory and students of the Juan Calvino Seminary. Shortly thereafter a letter (dated December 12, 1983) was received by CRWM from the Coyoacan consistory listing irregularities in the conduct of Mr. J. P. Roberts.

In January 1984, Rev. Roberts was asked to visit with Rev. Dokter in Grand Rapids in an attempt to come to an understanding. Mr. Donker of the Ripon CRC was also present. At a meeting with Rev. Dokter and Dr. Rubingh it was agreed that Rev. Roberts would not pursue the matter further. It appeared that an agreement had been reached. A week later, however, Rev. Roberts indicated that he would withdraw from such an agreement.

The Board for CRWM dealt with an appeal from Mr. J. P. Roberts in February 1984. The appeal dealt with the decision of CRWM not to reappoint Mr. Roberts to another term in Mexico. Mr. Roberts's appeal was not sustained. A short time later he and his family returned to Mexico as independent missionaries to work with the "old" IPIM.

In early April 1984 a CRWM-appointed committee visited Mexico. Board members Revs. Roger A. Kok and Gerry G. Heyboer visited with representatives of both groups of the IPIM in Campeche and Mexico City. Rev. Harvey Stob, recently returned from Argentina, acted as interpreter. The committee was sent to seek healing between the two segments of the IPIM. A number of suggestions were made but no healing was effected. A very amicable meeting was held with members of the "new" IPIM in Mexico City. This group urged our missionary staff to remain in Mexico.

In May 1984 Rev. Roberts addressed a letter of petition and protest to the stated clerk, Rev. Leonard Hofman. This matter was declared not legally before synod. An overture from Classis Central California asked synod to "appoint a committee to investigate the breakdown between CRWM and IPC of Mexico" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Overture 47, p. 524). Synod then appointed your present committee with the mandate as included at the beginning of this report (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 98, p. 649).

Your committee acknowledges that there were weaknesses and errors of judgment made by representatives of the CRC in dealing with problems on the field in Mexico as well as weaknesses and errors of judgment on the part of representatives of the IPIM in its dealings with our CRC representatives and missionaries. We should all pray for God's forgiveness for misjudgments and injurious actions, and we should humbly ask that God's blessings rest upon his church despite its weaknesses.

As a synodical committee we regret that the "old" IPIM refused to give us opportunity to reason or dialogue with them, or to deal in any way with the issues which led them to break all relations with the CRWM. They refused us any opportunity to effect healing.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the Christian Reformed Church and its agencies recognize that the "old" IPIM has broken all relations with CRWM and that any healing at the present time seems unlikely.

1. The declaration of rupture dated November 12, 1983, has been received by the stated clerk of the Christian Reformed Church.

2. Pastors and elders representing several presbyteries have taken action to sever their relations with the "old" IPIM, and have implemented this decision by a reorganization which has the support of the majority of churches on the field.

B. That CRWM maintain relationship with the "new" IPIM, which represents the overwhelming majority of churches and pastors on the field in Mexico.

1. The "new" IPIM has requested this relationship.

2. The "new" IPIM desires the help of the CRC in its educational and outreach programs.

C. That CRWM be encouraged to continue the multilateral approach as our missionary strategy in Mexico.

1. The CRC must maintain supervision of the missionaries we send to the field to protect our missionaries from complete subjection to the authority of a national church.

2. In mission agreements with national churches our board should carefully guard the integrity of our mission and, while maintaining good relations with national churches, should not make agreements in which our missionaries lose their ecclesiastical identity and responsibility.

3. This approach will enable and encourage our board to withdraw, or move, our missionaries as the national church assumes more responsibility.

D. That the CRC recognize the factors which brought about the rupture between CRWM and a segment of the "old" IPIM.

1. There has been a long-standing conflict among our missionaries re the mission policies and educational philosophy on the field.

2. The formulation of a new basis of agreement in 1981 curtailed the right of CRWM to assign and supervise the work of its own missionaries.

3. Our mission executives have failed to act decisively and consistently in the management of funds and personnel. Specific examples are:

a. The transfer of property deeds to officers of the IPIM.

b. Dissolution of the field council at a strategic moment in our work in Mexico.

c. The disbursement of funds to national treasurers without exercising proper control over their use.

d. The failure to exercise prompt discipline in dealing with personnel.

4. The CRWM has failed to screen adequately personnel appointed to the field. Psychological inventories as well as unfavorable recommendations should have prevented the employment of some persons sent as missionaries to Mexico.

5. The CRWM did not properly distinguish between missionaries and "ministers on loan."

a. The Rev. Gerald Nyenhuis, for instance, serves as a fulltime employee of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and a parttime employee for two educational institutions. He is a valuable advisor to our mission, but is, in effect, a minister on loan to another agency.

b. All such relationships should be carefully defined by synod, CRWM, and the calling church.

William P. Brink
Edward P. Meyer
J. Jerry Pott

B. The SIC has endorsed the four recommendations of the committee.

C. The SIC has forwarded the report of the committee to CRWM for action.

D. The SIC has forwarded the report of the committee to the World Missions and Relief Commission as they have requested.

E. Recommendations A and B of the committee report have been forwarded to the "old" IPIM.

F. Recommendations A and B of the committee report have been forwarded to the "new" IPIM.

G. The SIC requests that synod dismiss with appreciation the committee appointed to investigate the relationship between CRWM and the IPIM.

VIII. PUBLICATIONS AND SERVICES

A. *The Yearbook*

The Yearbook is published under the editorial direction of the stated clerk.

Twice each decade a listing of deceased ministers of the Word appears in the *Yearbook*. Edition 1985 contains this updated list.

Among those who deserve thanks is Dr. Richard De Ridder who authored the section "The Year 1984 in Review," as well as articles in memory of those ministers who died in 1984. We also express our appreciation to the staff of the Board of Publications, and especially to Wilma Kloostra and Gladys Wildeboer for the work done in preparing this publication.

The production of the *Yearbook* is a time-consuming and difficult task. This difficulty is increased by the fact that some consistories present incomplete or inaccurate responses to the questionnaires for the *Yearbook*. This year twenty-five churches submitted no information at all, and twelve sent in partial information. Only a small percentage of the churches send in their reports prior to the deadline. Inaccuracy, lateness in reporting, follow-up phone calls, et cetera, delay the production of the *Yearbook*.

B. *The Acts and Agenda*

The *Acts of Synod 1984* was edited and prepared by the stated clerk with the assistance of staff members and personnel from the publications office. Changes in format, introduced in 1983, were continued in the publication of the *Acts of Synod*. These changes were explained once more in the foreword in the volume. Some improvements were made in the indexing, the highlighting of supplementary material, and in the quality of paper on which the minutes of synod were printed.

The deadlines for the *Agenda for Synod* have been established in the Rules for Synodical Procedure. February 15 is the deadline for reports from standing and study committees. March 15 is the latest date for materials to be received from classes, consistories, and individuals. The schedule calls for the printing of the *Agenda for Synod* to be completed by April 10 of each year. Late arrival of important reports delays the production of the *Agenda for Synod*.

C. *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure*

The Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure has been updated by the stated clerk and a new edition has been published by the Board of Publications.

Copies are supplied to our consistories and synodical delegates, and *Church Order and Rules for Synodical Procedure* is also available from the Board of Publications.

D. *Agenda for Synod—Financial and Business Supplement*

The *Agenda for Synod—Financial and Business Supplement* is being compiled for the Synod of 1985. This volume will be sent, as heretofore, to all synodical delegates. It is also available to our consistories upon request.

E. *Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church*

During the past year the Synodical Interim Committee has again sent to all of our consistories updated materials for the Handbook of the Christian Reformed Church, "Your Church in Action." Several consistories ordered a new notebook because the old one had been lost or misplaced (some having never been used). This large blue notebook should be kept available in every consistory room.

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

1. *Quotas and Offerings*—This section of the booklet contains financial data and a description of the programs carried on by all of our boards and agencies as well as by accredited agencies. Assistance in scheduling special offerings is given and announcements to be made prior to receiving such offerings are suggested.

2. *Denominational Insights*—After a brief statement on the nature of the church and some of the principles of Reformed church government, information is provided about the nature of our assemblies, the function of major assemblies, the agenda for synod, and the denominational program structure.

3. *Congregational Helps*—This section contains helps which are available for consistories and congregations; suggested rules of procedure; model agendas for general consistory, elders', and deacons' meetings; suggestions for congregational committees; helpful information on the use of members' gifts; and other useful information.

4. *Ministers' Compensation Guide*—By mandate of synod the SIC has presented each year since 1974 a "Compensation Guide for Ministers of the Word." The compensation guide is updated and approved by synod each year. The information received through completed salary questionnaires enables us to prepare a more accurate, meaningful Ministers' Compensation Guide which, it is hoped, will be useful to our pastors and consistorial finance committees. The Synod of 1982 adopted a recommendation to "require all ministers to complete the salary questionnaire annually to enable the Pension Committees to accurately calculate the average cash salary as a base for computing ministers' pensions" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 51).

5. *Sight-Sound Programs*—Every congregation should avail itself, when looking for interesting program materials or information, of the wealth of artistic and effective presentations of the work of our Lord being carried on by our denomination through its agencies. The handbook for the consistory contains a complete directory of sight-sound programs available from our denominational agencies for showing in our congregations.

6. *Doctrinal and Ethical Decisions*—This section is indispensable for all who wish to know the stand of the Christian Reformed Church on various matters of doctrine and ethics.

From time to time the synodical office receives requests for multiple copies of the "Doctrinal and Ethical Decisions" section. It should be noted that there is no objection to churches making copies of this material. If copies are to be supplied by this office a charge will be made.

7. *Your Church in Action Audiovisual Presentation*—In 1984 the Synodical Interim Committee returned to preparing a sight/sound presentation, focusing specifically on quotas, and distributed this program to the churches for showing at congregational meetings and other meetings of the local church.

IX. THE STATED CLERK

The stated clerk is an *ex officio* member of the Synodical Interim Committee, as well as its secretary. He also serves as the general secretary of the denomination's corporate entities, the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Christian Reformed Church Synod Trustees.

All official publications authorized by synod and/or the Synodical Interim

Committee are edited by the stated clerk. His office has also processed all correspondence, surveys, questionnaires, reports, minutes, and materials produced by and for synod. He is responsible for the filing and preservation of all synodical materials.

During the course of the year the stated clerk receives progress reports and/or minutes from all of the committees that have been appointed by synod. He also provides these committees with help or information when requested.

Conferences with representatives of our boards and agencies are handled by the stated clerk, and callers are received regularly for consultation or information. The stated clerk also provides advice to our classes, consistories, committees, and to all members of our denomination asking his assistance.

Reports and minutes of our classes are sent to the office of the stated clerk by the stated clerks of the classes. These are surveyed by the stated clerk, and he keeps the SIC abreast of various decisions, activities, and problems in the denomination.

The stated clerk has many opportunities to represent the Christian Reformed Church to other denominations and to the general public. He serves as an *ex officio* member of the Interchurch Relations Committee and represents our church at various interchurch gatherings.

Contacts with national, state, and local government leaders and agencies are maintained by the stated clerk as occasion indicates and/or time permits.

During the past year, the stated clerk has preached in many of our churches; he has conducted conferences and, upon invitation, has delivered addresses to congregations and organizations both within and beyond our denomination.

X. DENOMINATIONAL FINANCIAL COORDINATOR

The financial coordinator is an *ex officio* member of the Synodical Interim Committee and reports regularly to its Finance Committee. He is the liaison between the denominational agencies and synod through the Finance Committee in matters of financial support, financial reporting, requests for quota support, etc. His office is responsible for the management of the synodical office budget with its expenditures for synod, standing and service committees, and denominational building operations. His office also provides accounting and administrative services to denominational agencies which are without administrative staff.

Other areas of activity in which the DFC has been involved are as follows:

A. *Coordinated Services*

The year 1984 again showed an increase in coordinated services activity in both the Grand Rapids and Burlington offices. Both offices are now equipped with word processing and computer capabilities, which make for more effective use of time and resources. New updated telephone equipment has been installed in the Burlington office and in the offices of the agencies located in the Grand Rapids denominational building. Coordinated Services activity includes mailing services provided the denominational agencies in both Grand Rapids and Burlington; this activity showed a marked increase over the previous year as a larger volume of printed materials was sent to our churches and organizations at their request.

The Coordinated Services activity also includes the management and admin-

istration of the Consolidated Group Insurance Trust. In accordance with original plans of the trust, the health and dental coverages for over fourteen hundred ordained and nonordained persons along with their dependents are now provided by a self-funded benefit plan. This means that all premiums go towards actual claims and administrative costs only. Life insurance coverage is provided by an insured plan. In spite of rising costs in health care there has been no increase in CGI premiums during the past year.

B. *Agenda for Synod 1985—Financial and Business Supplement*

Each year since 1978 an extensive agenda supplement containing financial reports from our denominational agencies and nondenominational accredited agencies has been prepared for synodical delegates. The agenda supplement is also available to our churches upon request. This year the following reports will be presented:

Section I & II—Denominational agencies

- 1984 Balance sheet as prepared by certified public accounts (US) and chartered accountants (Canada)

- 1984 Statement of activity compared to 1983 budget

- 1985 budget—revised where necessary

- 1986 proposed budget

Finance Committee interview guides

- Combined summary statement of budgets 1985 and 1986 .

- Combined summary statement—assets, liabilities, and fund equities 1984.

A financial reports summary as appears in the agenda supplement will appear in the *Acts of Synod 1985*.

Section III—Study reports of all nondenominational agencies recommended for support.

C. *Office Facility—Burlington Office*

In May 1980 the Christian Reformed Church in North America Ontario Corporation entered into a three-year lease arrangement for office space at 760 Brant St., Burlington, Ontario. The lease was renewed in May 1983 for another three-year term expiring in May 1986. The lease provides for office and storage space for Coordinated Services, CRWRC, and the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

The Coordinated Services Committee, consisting of representatives from the various denominational agencies whose activities in Canada require facility space, has recommended to the Synodical Interim Committee that a building be purchased to serve the needs rather than renewing a lease in a rented facility. These grounds are given: The present facility is inadequate for receiving, storing, and shipping of materials as is presently carried out by the personnel. There is inadequate office space as required by the agencies served. Furthermore since the need for a facility to serve the Canadian churches has been well established, it is economically sound to consider purchasing rather than continuing to rent.

In response the Synodical Interim Committee recommends that Synod 1985 approve the concept of purchasing an office facility in Canada, and, further, authorize the SIC Finance Committee to execute this recommendation at a cost of \$500,000 and/or having 10,000 sq. ft.

D. Salary Disclosure Policy

The Synod of 1984 adopted the following regarding salary disclosure:

1. Approved the compensation/position analysis program for executive/managerial personnel together with its continuation and maintenance as presented in the Hay Associates Report and as summarized in Report 19-A, Appendix II (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 503 ff.).

2. Approved the salary ranges for job levels 1-9 as proposed for 1985 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 508).

3. Adopted the following procedures:

a. Compensation ranges be recommended annually by the SIC and be published in the printed *Agenda for Synod*. Accordingly, the SIC recommends the following salary ranges for 1986 budget purposes which reflect a 5 percent increase over the approved 1985 ranges:

Job Level	Standard Points	Minimum 80%	90%	Midpoint 100%	110%	Maximum 120%
9	2028	\$45,568	\$51,264	\$56,960	\$62,656	\$68,352
8	1388	37,343	42,011	46,679	51,347	56,015
7	1162	34,439	38,744	43,049	47,354	51,659
6	1051	33,012	37,139	41,265	45,392	49,518
5	937	31,547	35,491	39,434	43,377	47,321
4	832	30,198	33,973	37,748	41,523	45,298
3	656	26,550	29,869	33,188	36,507	39,826
2	561	25,114	28,254	31,393	34,532	37,672
1	323	21,516	24,205	26,895	29,585	32,274

b. Annual compensation data is to be reported by each agency in its annual report to synod via the printed agenda. Such reports are to indicate each job level, the numbers of positions in each, and the compensation quartile of each job level.

E. Salary Disclosure—Synodical Office

Executive/managerial positions in the synodical office under the supervision of the Synodical Interim Committee are as follows:

Job level	No. of positions in job level	Compensation quartile (incl. housing allowance)
8	1	3rd quartile (100-110%) of 1985 range
7	1	3rd quartile (100-110%) of 1985 range

1985 ranges as approved by the Synod of 1984 appear on page 508, *Acts of Synod 1984*.

F. Coordinated Air Transportation Service

For the fiscal year ended August 31, 1984, the Coordinated Air Transportation Service provided flight service to over thirty denominational and accredited agencies of the CRC. A total of 253,000 passenger miles were flown on over 600 flights. The actual operating costs exceeded the charges made to the agencies served. Adjustments to billing rates have been made to correct this. Even so,

there were significant dollar savings realized by the agencies over commercial rates. But more so were the savings in travel and task time over that with other means of transportation.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod honor the request of the SIC that Rev. John A. De Kruyter, president; Rev. Leonard J. Hofman, stated clerk; and Mr. Harry J. Vander Meer, denominational financial coordinator, represent the committee before synod and its advisory committees when matters pertaining to its report are discussed; and that Finance Committee representatives also represent the committee when matters of finance are discussed.

B. That synod note the nominations for Synodical Interim Committee membership (see Section II).

C. That synod approve the SIC interim appointments to various boards and committees (see Section III).

D. That synod approve the extension of the terms of the members of the Judicial Code Committee for one year (see Section III, B, 3).

E. Long-Range Joint Planning Task Force

1. That synod approve the expansion of the present denominational building.

Grounds:

1. Alternative options were thoroughly explored and not found feasible.
2. This is the recommendation of the Long-Range Building Study Committee.
3. This harmonizes with the findings of the WBDC Space Needs Study.

2. That synod approve that approximately one-half of the projected amount be raised by a denominational quota of \$5 per year with the raising of the remaining amount to be assigned to participating agencies on an equitable basis as determined by the Finance Committee of the SIC (see Appendix I).

F. That synod take note of the progress being made by the committee to Study the Structure of the CRC and establish the Synod of 1987 as the time line for its final report (see Section IX, B).

G. That synod take note of the progress being made by the Finance Committee of the SIC in examining the present policy of quota determination by family count, and approve the recommendation that the committee present its report to the Synod of 1986 (see Section IV, C).

H. That synod take note of agency coordination and cooperation as evidenced in the report of the Interagency Advisory Council (see Section V, A).

I. Barnabas Foundation Proposal. The SIC recommends that synod direct the SIC and its Church Polity and Program Committee to solicit ideas from the CRWRC, Board of Publications, and Calvin Seminary concerning stewardship responsibility of the membership of the CRC and how this may best be promoted by these agencies (see Section VI).

J. CRWM and IPIM. The SIC recommends that synod dismiss with appreciation the committee appointed to investigate the relationship between CRWM and the IPIM (see Section VII).

K. That synod take note of the publications and services of the SIC and commend their use by the consistories of our denomination (see Section VIII).

L. That synod take note of the reports on Coordinated Services and the *Agenda for Synod 1985—Financial and Business Supplement* (see Section X, A and B).

M. Office facility—Burlington, ON. The SIC recommends that synod approve the concept of purchasing an office facility in Canada, and authorize the SIC Finance Committee to execute this recommendation at a cost of \$500,000 and/or having 10,000 square feet.

N. Salary Disclosure Policy

That synod approve the proposed salary ranges for 1986 within which the denominational agencies are to report actual salaries in the *Agenda for Synod 1986*.

Synodical Interim Committee
Christian Reformed Church
in North America
Christian Reformed Church Synod
Trustees
Leonard J. Hofman, stated clerk

APPENDIX
LONG-RANGE PLANNING JOINT TASK FORCE
REPORT TO THE SYNODICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Synod of 1982 approved a long-range building study. An interim report by the SIC-appointed subcommittee was presented to the Synodical Interim Committee and, in turn, submitted to the Synod of 1982. The Synod of 1984 adopted interim recommendations as follows:

A. Approved arrangement whereby the majority of denominational agencies would be located in a single facility in a single geographical area.

B. To meet facility needs a long-range plan should be developed and presented to the 1985 Synod.

C. That the plan should outline a means by which the Board of Publications will relocate on the existing site or on a new site suitable to meet their current and future needs.

D. That a joint SIC/BOP task force should be formed to develop the 1985 report.

1. Cost of the project to be met by the entire denomination.

2. Title (if newly acquired property) would be in the name of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

To fulfill the mandate as outlined paragraphs B, C, and D above—and as further elaborated in the report to the Synod of 1984—the committee studied and considered at length a number of options. The options that were considered and the reasons for rejecting them are as follows:

Option I

Move all the agencies to a different facility and sell the present facility and property, and

a. Construct an entire new facility on a new site in or near Grand Rapids;

or

b. Purchase another existing facility and renovate/modify it to meet agency requirements.

Reasons for rejection:

1. The present property is large enough to accommodate all anticipated facility expansion needs.

2. The location of the current site has many advantages, e.g., it is accessible to the airport, in an attractive section of city, easily accessible to many people in Western Michigan.

3. A tax exemption has been obtained for all the present property.

4. There is no evidence that either I, a, or I, b, above would result in cost savings.
5. The marketability of the current property and facility is questionable.
6. Option I, a, might be perceived to be too "grandiose."

Option II

Ask the Board of Publications to vacate their entire space in the current facility. Move the other agencies into the space vacated by the Board of Publications; and

- a. Construct another separate facility on the current site for the Board of Publications; or
- b. Purchase an existing facility (perhaps in inner-city) and renovate/modify it to meet Board of Publications' requirements.

Reasons for rejection:

1. The space vacated by the Board of Publications would be substantially greater than the needed expansion space of the other agencies.
2. There is no evidence that either II, a, or II, b, above would result in significant cost savings. In fact, alternative II, a, would probably cost more.
3. The following additional concerns regarding alternative II, b, above were noted.
4. There is some evidence that the other CRC agencies would be less likely to utilize the Board of Publications for their printing needs.

Significant ongoing additional costs would be incurred (e.g., a "presence" would probably have to be maintained in the current building, constant commuting between buildings would be necessary, etc.)

6. Obtaining tax exempt status for a new facility is not a certainty.

Option III

Move the printing plant and related activities into another facility.

Reasons for rejection:

1. There is no evidence that this option would reduce costs. New property *and* facilities would need to be purchased, current space occupied by the plant would need to be totally renovated, etc.
2. The vacated space would not be sufficient to serve all needed expansion space.

Locating the Board of Publications on two different sites would have several negative results:

- a. Increased costs for the constant traveling between sites for getting cost estimates, checking status of work, blueprints, etc.

The organizational unity of the Board of Publications would be adversely affected.

E. *Space Needs Survey*

Following this study and review, the Long-Range Planning Joint Task Force

retained the architectural/engineering firm of WBDC, Inc. to conduct a space-needs study involving the denominational agencies at 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue. The agencies were requested to project their facility requirements to 1990 based upon firm, approved programs and ministries, or, as appears in the 1984 report, on demonstrable needs. Each of the following agencies worked closely with WBDC representatives:

Board of Publications	Coordinated Services
Ministers' Pension Fund	Building Maintenance Services
Home Missions	World Relief
Volunteer Resource Bank	SCORR
Chaplain Committee	World Missions
Synodical Office	Pastor-Church Relations

Following various conferences, personal interviews, and written comments, WBDC published their findings in a very detailed report.

F. Recommendations

WBDC recommends an expansion of the present facility by adding 61,400 square feet. As indicated in the report, this addition would accommodate all the growth as projected by the denominational agencies and, further, brings onsite office and warehouse space currently leased elsewhere.

The Long-Range Planning Joint Task Force endorses the findings of the WBDC Space Needs Study and Recommendations. It recommends adoption by the Synodical Interim Committee and the Board of Publications for recommendation to the Synod of 1985 at a cost of approximately 4.5 million dollars. The word *approximately* is used because of variances which may occur in construction costs, and in the finalization of construction plans and financing arrangements. This would translate into a denominational quota of approximately \$10.00 per family for ten to fifteen years. The program is complex—it requires new expansion; renovation of existing building; and replacement of the present heating, ventilating, and air conditioning plant/system with one that is capable of meeting the needs of the expanded facility.

To finance the expansion the Long-Range Planning Joint Task Force recommends that approximately one-half of the projected amount be raised by a denominational quota of \$5.00 per year with the remaining amount to be assigned to participating agencies on an equitable basis as determined by the SIC Finance Committee.

Long-Range Planning Joint Task Force Committee

January 23, 1985

REPORT 20
UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES PENSION FUND

The Pension Committee supervises the administration of the Unordained Employees Pension Fund, a defined contribution plan which benefits qualifying unordained employees of all denominational agencies, some classical home missions committees, and several churches.

The Pension Committee also administers and manages a relief fund from which benefits are paid to selected former employees or their dependents in cases of special need.

The Pension Committee consists of five persons, three of whom are representatives of agencies participating in the plan and two of whom are not associated with the participating agencies in any way. Terms of agency representatives are rotated on a regular basis. Pursuant to this system of rotation, the term of the Calvin College representative (Lester Ippel), will expire on September 1, 1985; he is to be replaced by the Board for World Missions representative (Don Zwier).

In addition, the term of Lynwood P. Vanden Bosch expires on September 1, 1985. Because the committee has recently made significant changes in the administration of the plan, and because Mr. Vanden Bosch's experience and expertise are of value to the committee during this period, the committee recommends his reappointment.

The committee has also authorized the preparation of a restatement of the plan. The restated plan, prepared at the direction of the committee, includes in one document the twelve amendments made to the plan over the last several years, all of which have been approved by synod. In addition, the restated plan incorporates the following specific changes for which the committee requests approval.

1. The restated plan gives to the Pension Committee more flexibility to purchase investments and annuities from entities other than TransAmerica Occidental Life Insurance Company. Presently, the plan is established and maintained as a contract with TransAmerica Occidental Life Insurance Company, and all contributions are required to be deposited with TransAmerica, and all benefits to be paid out by utilizing TransAmerica annuities. Although the Pension Committee continues to invest plan assets with TransAmerica, and although benefits may continue to be purchased through TransAmerica if its annuity rates are competitive, it is nevertheless in the best interest of the participants that the Pension Committee have the ability to purchase plan investments and annuities from entities other than TransAmerica. Until recently, for example, the cost of annuities purchased through the existing contract was often in excess of 140 percent of the cost of identical annuities available through other companies.

2. The restated plan clarifies the fact that eligibility for plan participants usually is available only to a participant who works at least thirty hours per

week. The plan presently provides that eligible employees whose annual base pay is \$2,000.00 or more, or whose regular employment is for at least thirty hours per week, may participate. The plan is presently, and has always been, construed to permit participation in the plan only if the thirty-hour-per-week requirement is met. The restated plan would affirm this practice.

3. The restated plan provides that in the event of a participant's permanent disability, he would be entitled to receive his entire account balance. The plan previously provided that unless the sum of the participant's age and service exceeds forty-nine, he would be entitled to receive only a portion of his account if he terminates his employment, calculated under the plan's vesting schedule. The rest of his account would be forfeited. This is unfair when applied to a termination of employment because of permanent disability, and the restated plan corrects this inequity.

4. Other minor changes of a technical or procedural nature are included.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That any member of the committee be accorded the privilege of the floor when the recommendations for action are considered by synod.

2. That Donald Zwier be appointed to the committee for a three-year term, as representative of the Board for World Missions.

3. That Lynwood P. Vanden Bosch be reappointed to the committee for a three-year term.

4. That the restatement of the plan, including the items described above, be approved.

Unordained Employees Pension
Fund Committee

Lester Ippel, chairman

Gerard Borst

Terry Greenfield

Lawrence D. Bos

Lynwood P. Vanden Bosch

REPORT 21

VOLUNTEER RESOURCE BANK

I. BACKGROUND

The Volunteer Resource Bank (VBR) was established by the Synod of 1979 with the explicit purpose of encouraging volunteerism within the CRC and to coordinate the services of volunteers with needs of denominational boards, classes, and churches. Although the idea of volunteerism was by no means new to the CRC, establishment of the VRB has given volunteerism specific focus.

Since its establishment, the VRB has been encouraged by synods and agencies to continue the service to both volunteers and organizations. We have developed a centralized file of volunteers, categorizing volunteers according to skills, location, time of service, and availability. We have also made this file available to Christian Reformed boards, agencies, churches, and organizations which might find it useful.

The Synod of 1984 adopted a more concise mandate for the VRB, which more lucidly describes its goals and methods. The VRB operates under the direction of the SIC and the stated clerk's office and maintains contact with both of them.

II. SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS

A. *Statistics*

The VRB is pleased to have been of service to agencies, organizations, and churches over the past six years of its existence. We attempt to maintain close touch with local congregations by requesting them to select members as contact persons. We now have a total of 452 contact persons. Our file of volunteers presently contains 308 names. Over the past five years we have received 280 requests for volunteers and have had more than 200 reported placements, of which more than 50 were completed in 1984. Of the 941 total referrals, our office has processed 174 during this past year—1984.

B. *Staff*

The VRB is staffed by one person, Mrs. Marcia Lagerwey, who has served on a parttime basis as corresponding secretary and office manager for three and a half years.

C. *Promotion*

Our committee has attempted to implement its mandate to encourage volunteerism by placing ads in *The Banner* and *Calvinist Contact*. A number of ads address themselves to agencies and churches to encourage them to contact the VRB when volunteers are required. To stimulate use of volunteers lists and notices of volunteer service offers are sent to agencies housed in the denominational building and to various other Christian Reformed organizations. Materials are sent to church contact persons to make them aware of needs for help and to encourage the recruitment of volunteers within their churches to meet those needs.

Members of our committees have been asked by local churches to make presentations during mission emphasis weeks and to adult Sunday school classes. The responses of these congregations have been very positive. We strongly encourage other congregations to follow these models.

D. Centralization

The Synod of 1983 encouraged "our denominational agencies to cooperate with the VRB in establishing a centralized file of volunteers." Subsequently we have had a few interagency meetings which, although helpful, have not led to a centralized file as Synod of 1983 envisioned. We must continue to work in this area.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE VRB

The Synod of 1983 adopted the following recommendations pertaining to the future of the VRB: "That synod approve the continuation of the VRB for two years, subject to review at the end of that time." As ground it is stated: "This will give the VRB a year to review its mandate of 1980 and, subject to approval by the Synod of 1984, a year to implement it."

We have wrestled with questions and options relative to the future of the VRB. We have also consulted with volunteer agencies of other denominations. We strongly believe that the VRB should continue as a viable element within the CRC.

IV. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The terms of Mr. James Hoekenga and Rev. John Kerssies expire in 1985. Mrs. Deborah Vance resigned in October 1984. Her term also would have expired in 1985. The appointment of Mrs. Marian Vanden Berg was approved by the Synodical Interim Committee as a replacement to fill the position and to serve for a three-year term, beginning September 1, 1985. Rev. Verlan Van Ee was approved as an alternate to the committee.

We submit the following nominees for the two positions:

Rev. Jacob P. Heerema—minister of Covenant CRC, Lansing, MI

Mr. Melvin Medema—Burton Heights CRC, Grand Rapids, MI; retired engineer in the structural field

Mrs. Margaret Sterken—North Street CRC, Zeeland, MI; Bible study leader

Mr. Donald Vander Haar—Alger Park CRC, Grand Rapids, MI; retired insurance company executive

V. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The VRB requests the privilege of the floor for representatives of the committee when matters regarding the VRB are discussed.

B. We request that synod approve the continuation of the Volunteer Resource Bank.

Grounds:

1. The purpose of the VRB is to involve members of the church in volunteer service (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 30, C. 2, p. 583) which is a continuing process.
 - a. Current trends toward longevity and early retirement indicate a growing number of qualified persons who will use the services of the VRB.
 - b. The development of the Service Committee for Use of Members' Gifts

and the VRB show the denomination's commitment "to enhance the mission of its members." The VRB is uniquely qualified to continue the implementation of this commitment. The large number of available volunteers confirms the need for the VRB's services.

2. The involvement of volunteers has served to encourage and strengthen their commitment to Jesus Christ as well as to enhance their appreciation for the ministries of our denomination, thus bringing the organizations closer to the constituency.
 3. The facilitation of our mandate is dependent on the existence and maintenance of a centralized file of volunteers and service opportunities. Equally important is the provision for a sympathetic and supportive entry into volunteer service.
 4. In addition to our service to the major boards, smaller organizations are substantial beneficiaries of the services of the VRB and are effectively served by the centralized file.
 5. The placement of volunteers in the service of various organizations by the VRB has proven to be economically advantageous to the denomination.
- C. We request that synod authorize the expanded outreach of the VRB through the employment of a fulltime director and support services.

Grounds:

1. It has become increasingly obvious that the task of administration has eclipsed the present parttime secretarial arrangement. Presently there is insufficient time for planning and preparation for instructional and/or promotional materials.
 2. The following tasks must be addressed more fully and effectively by a person who will encourage and stimulate the concept of volunteerism throughout the constituency by:
 - a. promoting the VRB, traveling and speaking to church groups;
 - b. informing and educating organizations on more effective use of volunteers;
 - c. being actively involved in recruiting;
 - d. giving orientation (as opposed to training);
 - e. implementing a plan for use of regional representatives;
 - f. coordinating the work of the contact persons and regional representatives;
 - g. providing the constituency with a person with whom the VRB can be identified.
- D. We request synod to appoint two committee members from the list of nominees and one alternate from the remaining nominees.

The Service Committee for the
 Volunteer Resource Bank
 Louis Van Ess, chairman
 Joan Bulthuis, secretary
 Carl Bergman, vicar
 James Hoekenga
 John Kerssies
 Vonnie Poortenga
 Marian Vanden Berg
 Douglas Van Essen

REPORT 22

WORLD LITERATURE COMMITTEE

I. MANDATE

The Christian Reformed Church is committed to helping fellow Christians grow in faith by making Christian literature available to them inexpensively. To accomplish this, the Synod of 1982 organized the World Literature Committee (WLC) of the Christian Reformed Church. This committee is responsible for the preparation and publication of Reformed literature in the major or strategic languages of the world. This involves:

- A. Determining the need for Reformed literature in major or strategic world languages.
- B. Developing plans to meet these needs as resources allow.
- C. Organizing and supervising literature committees to develop and carry out literature programs in specific major or strategic world languages.
- D. Coordinating plans or programs with other denominational and church-related agencies working in literature preparation and publication.

II. ORGANIZATION

The WLC is an umbrella organization supervising the following five literature committees: Arabic Literature Committee (ALC), Chinese Literature Committee (CLC), French Literature Committee (FLC), Hausa Literature Committee (HLC), Spanish Literature Committee (SLC).

III. MEMBERSHIP

WLC did its work during the past year with the following members (included are their terms of membership):

- Mr. G. Brinks, Board for World Missions (1984)
- Rev. I. Jen, The Back to God Hour (1986)
- Mr. W. Medendorp (treasurer), World Relief Committee (1986)
- Rev. R. Recker, Calvin Theological Seminary (1987)
- Dr. E. D. Roels, member-at-large (1986)
- Dr. H. A. Smit (chairman), Board of Publications (1987)
- Dr. A. J. Vander Griend (secretary), Board of Home Missions (1986)
- Dr. R. Vander Vennen, member-at-large (1985)

Dr. Edwin Roels resigned midyear due to a change in position and a move out of this area. He was replaced by alternate Mr. John Brondsema.

IV. THE WORK OF WLC

A. *Meetings*

The committee met on June 21 and on December 14, 1984. It reviewed the work of the five literature committees and kept under investigation the need for additional literature committees.

B. *Specific Actions*

1. The WLC approved a report entitled "Guidelines and Questions to Be Asked about Target Audiences for WLC Literature." This report suggested that three main questions should be considered by each language committee preparing new materials or translating existing materials:

- a. What is the target audience for this literature? That is, whom are we seeking to reach or influence with this material?
- b. What is the reading level of the people in the target audience?
- c. What kinds of materials or types of literature are most needed at this time by people in the target audience?

The committee feels very strongly that the WLC and the various language committees should not concentrate exclusively or even primarily on producing more learned works for highly educated readers. Though the production of such works is both necessary and proper, it is also necessary to recognize the importance of providing fresh, simple, succinct materials for that vast group of people who are unable to profit from the weightier tomes but who would respond readily and joyfully to materials produced especially for their reading level.

2. The WLC received a report on marketing/distribution which recognizes that the issue of marketing/distribution of WLC materials is extraordinarily complex. The range of cultures, languages, political entities, and economies is enormous. The aim of WLC should be to have the elements of book publishing—selection of topics, selection of manuscripts, translation of books, design of physical aspects of the book, book production, marketing, and reprinting—completed with economy of time, effort, and money, in ways in which the materials get to the widest possible audience.

3. The WLC discussed the Board of Publications's long-range proposal suggesting that the WLC mandate and work come under the umbrella of the Board of Publications. This matter is still under consideration.

4. The committee adopted the 1986 budget.

5. The committee requests placement on the list of synodically recommended causes in the coming year.

6. Our chairman and treasurer will represent WLC at synod, with the secretary as alternate.

V. REPORT OF THE ARABIC LITERATURE COMMITTEE (ALC)

A. *Membership*

The ALC was founded in 1981. Its members with their terms of office are as follows: Rev. V. Atallah (1985), Dr. B. De Vries (1985), Prof. S. S. Hennein (1987), Dr. P. Ipema (1987), Rev. B. Madany, chairman (1986).

B. Meetings

The ALC held two scheduled meetings at the Back to God Hour building in Palos Heights, IL, on May 4 and on December 7, 1984.

C. Specific Actions

1. The revision of *A Guide for Leaders of the Church* has been completed and sent to the press. Due to the unsettled conditions in Beirut, Lebanon, the printing of this book has been delayed.

2. During October, while Rev. Bassam Madany was in the Middle East, he met with the other members of the editorial committee of the ALC to evaluate the translation of the first part of *Our Reasonable Faith* by Herman Bavink. The editorial committee decided to make a thorough revision of the translation. This revision will be undertaken by the Rev. Dr. Abd-El-Masih Istifanous. Dr. Istifanous is general secretary of the Bible Society in Egypt and lectures regularly in Systematic Theology at the Evangelical Coptic Seminary in Cairo, Egypt.

3. A third translation project, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer, is about to be published in Cairo.

4. Rev. Madany's stay in Cyprus last October enabled him to discuss with missionary agencies working in the Middle East the subject of distribution of Arabic literature in the area. Information is also being gathered about other evangelical agencies' activities in producing Christian literature in Arabic.

D. Situation in the Middle East

While the work of the Arabic Literature Committee has been rather slow due to the unique circumstances in the Middle East, it is hoped that its publications will fill a great need in the Arabic-speaking world. The revival of Islam which has been sweeping the lands of the Middle East since the Khomeini takeover of Iran is having a great impact on all the Arab world from Iraq to Morocco. Not all thinking Muslims today are sure that their faith has the answer to the problems which face them at the end of the twentieth century. Western ideologies of various types have been very disappointing. Zionism appears to them as their greatest challenge. This is why Reformed literature in Arabic is so needed to show the Arabs of today that the only consistently theistic answer to the neopaganisms of the world can be found in biblical Christianity.

The prayers and support of the Christian Reformed Church are greatly needed so that the work of the ALC may progress in the service of our great Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

VI. REPORT OF THE CHINESE LITERATURE COMMITTEE (CLC)

A. Membership

The CLC was founded in 1980. Its members with their terms of office are: Rev. I. Jen (1987), Dr. S. Ling (1985), Dr. T. H. Tsien (1987), Rev. P. Yang (1986), Rev. E. A. Van Baak (1986).

B. Meetings

The committee met twice in 1984 to discuss and decide on Reformed books to be translated for publication. Translation is done by contract with various

individuals on a per-book basis. Books are jointly published under the name of Dao Kuang (Way—Light) by the CLC and the Tien Dao (Heavenly Way) Publishing House in Hong Kong. CLC is responsible for selecting, translating, and editing the books, while Tien Dao is responsible for their printing, distribution, and administrative details.

C. *Work Accomplished in 1984*

1. Manuscripts for the following titles are in the hands of the printer:

- a. *An Introduction to the Science of Mission*, H. Bavink
- b. *Israel in Prophecy*, W. Hendriksen

2. The following manuscripts are being edited:

- a. *Perspectives on Pentecost*, R. Gaffin, Jr.
- b. *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy*, W. Hendriksen
- c. *Holy Spirit Baptism*, A. Hoekema
- d. *More Than Conquerors*, W. Hendriksen
- e. *The Mystery of Providence*, J. Flavel
- f. *Every Thought Captive*, R. Pratt, Jr.

3. The following manuscripts are being translated:

- a. *The Glorious Body of Christ*, R. B. Kuyper
- b. *Reason to Believe*, R. C. Sproul
- c. *Beyond Doubt*, C. Plantinga, Jr.
- d. *The Other May 4th Movement*, S. Ling
- e. *Women and the Word of God*, S. T. Foh

4. The following titles have been approved for translation:

- a. *God's Plan Unfolded*, J. B. Scott
- b. *Call to the Ministry*, E. Clowney
- c. *Preaching and Biblical Theology*, E. Clowney
- d. *Genesis*, G. C. Aalders
- e. *Know Your Christian Life*, S. B. Ferguson

VII. REPORT OF THE FRENCH LITERATURE COMMITTEE (FLC)

A. *Membership*

The FLC was founded in 1983. Its members with their terms of office are: Mr. G. Dubé (1985), Rev. H. Kallemeyn (1984), Rev. A. Kayayan (1985), Dr. A. Otten (1986), Rev. W. Van Tol, chairman (1986).

B. *Specific Actions*

1. The committee has identified and analyzed the needs of the three Francophone worlds found in Europe, North America, and Africa. It has identified and examined existing French materials and has chosen a number of English-language works for translation, publication, and distribution in such areas as Bible commentary, theology, ethical problems, devotional literatures, and church education.

2. Among the books selected for early publication are the following:

- a. *The Christian Looks at Himself*, A. A. Hoekema
- b. *They Shall Be My People*, J. Timmer
- c. *Commentaries*, J. Calvin

- d. *L-Autorite' du Nouveau Testament*, P. Marcel
- e. *La Bible, Prole de Dieu*, P. Wells
- f. *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, N. Wolterstorff
- g. *When the Kings Come Marching In*, R. Mouw
- h. *Promise and Deliverance*, S. G. DeGraaf

VIII. REPORT OF THE HAUSA LITERATURE COMMITTEE (HLC)

A. Membership

The committee was founded in 1983. Its members with their terms of office are: Rev. D. G. Angye (1985), Dr. J. H. Boer (1986), Mr. A. Horlings (1987), Rev. A. W. Machinga (1986), Miss R. Veltkamp (1987).

B. Meetings

By way of exception HLC is established in the geographical area where the language is spoken. All the other language committees and their members are located in North America. The location makes it possible for the Hausa Language Committee to do its work in the context of realism.

C. Specific Actions

1. The committee established the following program priorities:
 - a. Discovering suitable writers.
 - b. Encouraging, teaching, or improving the writing skills of those who have already shown interest or talent in writing.
 - c. Creating conditions conducive to writing and/or relieving over-worked people so they have time free to write.
 - d. Producing literature in the Hausa language by printing original writings or translating materials which appeared first in other languages.
2. HLC's first printing venture was to make arrangements for reprinting *Living in God's World* by John Boer.

IX. REPORT OF THE SPANISH LITERATURE COMMITTEE (SLC)

A. Membership

Members of the SLC with their terms of office are: Mr. H. Baker (1985), Rev. J. Boonstra (1987), Rev. P. Borgdorff (1987), Rev. G. B. Dokter (1985), Dr. R. S. Greenway (1986), Rev. J. J. Pott (editorial supervisor).

B. Meetings

The Spanish Literature Committee met on February 1, April 18, July 2, and October 5 in regular meetings to hear reports, study financial statements, and discuss new titles and promotional matters.

C. Specific Actions

1. New titles approved for publishing were:
 - a. *Promise and Deliverance*, S. G. De Graaf, vols. 3 and 4
 - b. *Providencia y revolucion*, P. Arana
2. The following new books were received from the printer in 1984:
 - a. *Dreams and Dictators*, H. Veldkamp
 - b. *New Testament Commentary on Ephesians*, W. Hendriksen

- c. *You Can Recover Joy*, A. W. Blackwood, Jr.
- d. *You Can Stop Feeling Guilty*, L. Caldwell
- e. *You Can Face Suffering*, L. Caldwell
- f. *You Can Avoid Divorce*, P. D. Meier
- g. *O.T. Teachers' Manual*, I. A. Schlink
- h. *History of the Reformation in Spain in the 16th Century*, M. K. Van Lennep

3. The list of books that are in various stages of production with expected date of publication is as follows:

- a. *N.T. Commentary on Galatians*, W. Hendriksen (at printer) 1985
- b. *The Bible and the Future*, A. A. Hoekema (at printer) 1985
- c. *Sunday School Papers*, year 3 (being written) 1985
- d. *Covenant of Grace*, W. Hendriksen (final editing) 1985
- e. *N.T. Commentary, Matthew*, W. Hendriksen (being typeset) 1985/86
- f. *Providencia y revolucion*, P. Arana (final editing) 1986
- g. *Sunday School Papers*, year 4 (being written) 1986
- h. *O.T. Teacher's Manual*, vol. 2, A. Schlink (final editing) 1986
- i. *N.T. Commentary, Mark*, W. Hendriksen (final editing) 1986
- j. *Notes on the Parables*, C. R. Trench (final editing) 1985
- k. *Collected Writings*, 6 booklets, J. Murray, (being translated) 1987
- l. *N.T. Commentary, Romans*, W. Hendriksen (being translated) 1988
- m. *Promise and Deliverance*, 3, S. G. DeGraaf (being translated) 1987
- n. *Promise and Deliverance*, 4, S. G. DeGraaf (approved) 1988
- o. *N.T. Commentary, Luke*, W. Hendriksen (being translated) 1987

4. The following titles have required reprinting in 1984:

- a. *N.T. Commentary, I and II Thessalonians*, W. Hendriksen
- b. *N.T. Commentary, I and II Timothy/Titus*, W. Hendriksen
- c. *Homiletics—Baker Dictionary of Practical Theology*
- d. *Hermeneutics—Baker Dictionary of Practical Theology*
- e. *Temples of God*, W. Hendricks
- f. *Mormonism*, A. A. Hoekema

5. The Spanish Literature Committee is constantly looking for manuscripts written from a Reformed perspective by Latin American authors. Suggestions come from missionaries and other interested parties. This year a book by Rev. Pedro Arana, Presbyterian pastor from Peru, is being published. Rev. Samuel Escobar has also promised a manuscript. Many more titles are suggested for translation than can be published. Yet the committee is open to suggestions.

6. The matter of better marketing of the books published was the subject of much discussion and negotiation this past year. Due to the appalling economic conditions, and the strength and shortage of dollars, the prospect for great improvement is not evident.

X. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. *Budget and Request for Offerings*

The 1984-85 financial report and proposed 1985-86 budget will be reported by the Synodical Interim Committee. We are grateful for the work done by the denominational financial coordinator and his staff in maintaining our committee's financial records. We respectfully request that synod continue the WLC on the list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

B. Request

In funding the literature programs for 1986 we submit a quota request of \$2.40 to synod. This is the same quota amount approved by the synod for 1985.

XI. SUMMARY OF MATTERS NEEDING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. Approval for Representation to Synod

Dr. H. Smit (chairman), and Mr. W. Medendorp (treasurer); and Dr. A. Vander Griend (secretary) as alternate.

B. Approval of Committee Membership

1. For a member-at-large position WLC nominates Mr. John Brondsema (former alternate) and Rev. Dennis Mulder for this position, with Rev. Chester Schemper as alternate.

Mr. John Brondsema

Christian school teacher for twenty-five years. Currently manager of the Faith, Prayer and Tract League, he has served terms on the Board of Publications and the World Missions Committee and is a member of Alpine Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

Rev. Dennis M. Mulder

Graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1969, missionary in Taiwan from 1969-76, he has served for nine years as Asian coordinator for the ministry of the World Home Bible League and is currently International Director for the Bible League. He is a member of Peace CRC, South Holland, IL.

Rev. Chester Schemper

Graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1952, he served fourteen years as a pastor in the US and Canada, and as CRWM missionary in Mexico for eight years. He has been Latin American coordinator for the World Home Bible League for the last fourteen years. He is a member of First CRC, South Holland, IL.

2. For a second member-at-large position WLC nominates Mr. John Hultink (former alternate), Mr. David Vander Hart, and Rev. Harold Kallemeyn as alternate.

Mr. John Hultink

He has several years of experience in the publishing business, including Wedge Publication Foundation and Director of Development for Institute of Christian Studies. He currently serves as president of Paideia Press and Managing Editor of Christian Renewal magazine. He is a member of Trinity CRC, St. Catharines, ON.

Mr. David Vander Hart

Graduated from Calvin College in 1972, he has since been employed by Pine Rest Rehabilitation Services and the adult special education department of the Grand Rapids schools. He is currently serving as national sales manager at William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. He is a member of Grace CRC, Grand Rapids, MI.

Rev. Harold Kallemeyn

Graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1980, he has several years of experience in the French-speaking world, including managing a publishing house. He is involved in the French Reformed publishing venture, *Kerygma*, and is a contributing editor to current Francophone magazine and translator of *Bible Way* curriculum to French. He is currently pastor of CRC Francophone Mission in Quebec and a member of the French Literature Committee.

C. Approval of Recommendation for Offerings

Request that the WLC be continued on the list of denominational agencies recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

D. Approval of Quota Support

Request for 1985 quota, \$2.40.

World Literature Committee
Alvin J. Vander Griend, secretary

REPORT 23
DORDT COLLEGE

This year Dordt College celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. We began the year with a special service in which we took note of the many blessings God has showered upon the college, i.e., our Reformed heritage, a beautiful campus, a dedicated faculty, an enthusiastic student body, an excellent academic program, a vision for the kingdom of God, and a loyal supporting constituency. These blessings of God constitute a challenge to dedicate ourselves to his service in the sphere of Christian higher education.

The story of Dordt College is a remarkable one. It began in 1955 with one small building, five professors, and approximately 35 students. Today there is a complete and impressive campus, a faculty of seventy fulltime and fifteen parttime professors, and a student body of 1,100 students.

We are wholeheartedly committed to developing and maintaining a distinctively Christian atmosphere on Dordt's campus. This is not easy because of the secular spirit of the age in which we live. The dean of students and his associates work hard, with the support of the entire academic community, in the development of a student life which is "permeated with Christianity." The pastors of the Christian Reformed churches of Sioux Center make themselves available to students on a regular basis. At the same time, the churches in the area, primarily through the Word and the sacraments, continue to minister to the spiritual needs of our students.

Even though Dordt is not officially owned and governed by the Christian Reformed Church, it does sustain a close relationship to the CRC. Its faculty and 90 percent of its students are members of the Christian Reformed Church. Therefore it is not surprising that Dordt looks to the CRC for much of its financial support.

In 1962 synod adopted a variable quota for Calvin College and Seminary. The intent and effect of this plan was to reduce the Calvin quota for churches sending relatively few students to Calvin, as a result of Dordt's existence. These churches were advised "to employ monies saved to finance their present area colleges." In 1984 synod revised and updated this plan, making it applicable to all colleges associated with the CRC. All six classes in the immediate Dordt College area have adopted the revised formula, which will result in increased support. We are in the process of presenting the proposal for revision to other classes which send large numbers of students to Dordt.

About 20 percent of Dordt's operating budget comes by way of gifts and offerings from the churches—this includes income from the annual Fall Foundation Drive. We are sincerely grateful for this financial support. It encourages us in our work and serves as a constant reminder of the commitment of the covenant community to the work of Christian education.

In 1984 Dordt publicly announced the initiation of the Heritage 21 Campaign, intended to raise funds for financial aid for students in the form of

scholarships, grants, and low-interest loans. We are more than halfway toward reaching the goal of \$8,500,000. We hope to be able to help more and more of our covenant youth receive a Christ-centered education with this money and the income it generates.

The Long-Range Planning Committee has finalized plans for a computer center, biology and agriculture laboratories, and administrative office expansion. These plans will probably be realized in stages. Even though enrollments are not increasing at this time, these buildings are needed because of new or expanded programs, such as agriculture, computer science, and engineering.

Dordt's faculty recently approved a new major in Environmental Studies. This is a series of courses designed to prepare students to deal as stewards, and from a biblical perspective, with the environmental issues facing contemporary society. Other aspects of the curriculum continue to undergo evaluation. At present the major in theology is being studied. Consideration is being given to adding courses in both the agriculture and communications majors with a possible minor in television.

Off-campus programs are becoming increasingly important at Dordt. Those presently offered are the following: American Studies Program, AuSable Institute of Environmental Studies, Chicago Metropolitan Center Program, German Overseas Program, Iowa Legislative Internship Program, Study Abroad Program in the Netherlands, Summer Study Program in Mexico. In this connection it is important to note a feasibility study on International Education being carried on this year in the Dordt Studies Institute. The study is based on the assumption that, in order to prepare students for the challenges of the twenty-first century, the college curriculum must include programs and courses from which students become more aware of their place and role in the world. Much will be done to enhance the international character of the academic program of the college if and when the results of this study are accepted.

Dordt is actively involved in the activities of the International Council for Promotion of Christian Higher Education. This council represents individuals and institutions throughout the world who are committed to promoting the cause of Christian higher education from a Reformed perspective. Last year a conference was held in the Netherlands; another is being planned for 1987 in Central Africa. The council consciously seeks participation and involvement on the part of representatives from the Third World.

Dordt has also joined in the discussion concerning the possibility of establishing a Reformed, Christian university in North America—a discussion initiated by the board and president of Calvin College. (At the 1984 conference of the ICPCHE, Dr. H. Verheul, former Rector Magnificus of the Free University of Amsterdam, challenged institutions of higher learning from North America to move toward the organization of a Christian university.) We do not know what the outcome of the discussion will be; however, many of us are convinced that we can and should move toward the establishment of such a university.

The world of Christian higher education is exciting and challenging at Dordt College. We do not know exactly what the future of this thirty-year-old Reformed, Christian college will be, but we are confident that we will continue to enjoy the blessing of the Lord if we are faithful to his Word for education.

Dordt College
John B. Hulst, president

REPORT 24
INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

In the year of our Lord 1984 the Institute for Christian Studies experienced intensive self-examination, witnessed a significant expansion of its publication program, and initiated steps for a refocusing of its goals.

Self-Examination

The self-examination in which the ICS engaged concerns the leadership of its staff with respect to major ethical issues which every Christian institution in society faces today, notably homosexuality, abortion, and the relationship between men and women. The prominence of these issues is partly due to structural changes in marriage and in the family in our industrial society, but also reflects the impact of secular humanism, including secular feminism. The Christian church as a whole is deeply divided on these issues, as we know from the polarization in the CRC on the question of the role of women in ecclesiastical office.

The ICS, as an academic institution, does not have an official stance on any of these issues, but it does have a basis, which is:

The supreme standard of the Institute shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, here confessed to be the Word of God in the sense of the historic creeds of the Protestant Reformation.

The members of the ICS staff want to deal with the controversial issues of the day on the basis of this biblical standard. But then a particular problem arises which every institution of Christian leadership faces: how can one work out the implications of this biblical basis without being influenced by the spirit of the age, in this case, secular feminism?

The ICS Board of Trustees focused on this and parallel questions in its dialogues with the staff. The board concluded that there is no departure from the Scriptures and the ICS Educational Creed on the part of its staff members. At the same time, the trustees, aware of the differences within the staff with respect to the implications of these fundamental biblical teachings, appointed a committee to advise them as to how the single confessional stance should function in the staff's approach to the complex cultural and ethical issues of our time.

Publications

During this time of self-examination our regular work continued. A significant number of students completed their Master of Philosophical Foundations degree, now recognized by a charter from the Ontario government. The usual number of conferences were held, among which the one on the work of the Holy Spirit, organized by George Vandervelde, was the most innovative.

Of particular importance are numerous recent publications. Here the most

outstanding one is Hendrik Hart's *Understanding Our World: An Integral Ontology*, published in cooperation with the University Press of America—the most important philosophical book published thus far by an ICS professor. It relates the major thrusts of reformational philosophy, particularly Herman Dooyeweerd's, to contemporary North American debates on the foundations of philosophy and science.

Paul Marshall, professor of political theory, published *Thine Is the Kingdom: A Biblical Perspective on the Nature of Government and Politics Today* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott). Two ICS alumni, Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton, published *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View* (InterVarsity Press). This book grew out of their ICS courses for undergraduate students at public universities in the Toronto area. The ICS also took the initiative in publishing Peter Steen's *The Structure of Herman Dooyeweerd's Thought* (Wedge) and Albert Wolters's *Plotinus "On Eros": A Detailed Exegetical Study of Enneads III, 5* (Wedge) and *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Eerdmans). Robert Vander Vennen, ICS Director of Educational Services, played a key role in getting most of these books in print.

Sharpening Our Focus

Al Wolters left for Redeemer College in Hamilton. C. T. McIntire was given appointment by Trinity College of the University of Toronto. The undersigned resigned as president in order to return to his old task as political theorist at the ICS. After ten years of fighting cancer, the Lord called Peter Steen home. Peter represented ICS to the larger Pittsburgh area, and was one of the outstanding "missionaries-among-students" produced by the CRC. He reached—and changed—the world view of hundreds, if not thousands.

These changes contribute to a sharpening of focus with respect to our goals. Times change and needs change. Are we in touch? We are, but our tasks are too many. So while we are searching for new professors and a new president, we are also defining our mission more sharply—that of being a Reformed graduate school in North America—at a time when all of the colleges within the Christian Reformed orbit are beginning to discuss an even larger challenge, the need for a Reformed university. My successor will have the privilege of reporting on the ICS role in that challenge!

Institute for Christian Studies
Bernard Zylstra, president

REPORT 25
REDEEMER COLLEGE

Another year of blessings—1984—another year of blessings, of challenges, and of memories.

Redeemer College started the 1984–85 academic year with 208 fulltime students. This compares with 97 students in September 1982 and 168 in September 1983. It is projected that the student body will grow to approximately 240 fulltime students in September 1985.

Because of the enrollment growth, much expansion took place in the curriculum. Redeemer College now offers a three-year curriculum and next year hopes to expand to a four-year curriculum so that the first "pioneer" students of Redeemer College will graduate in the spring of 1986. The Lord has truly been good.

With the expansion of the student body and the curriculum, one of the most significant challenges Redeemer faced was the appointment of additional qualified faculty. The faculty will experience additional growth in preparation for the 1985–86 academic year. Seeking to appoint only the very best to its faculty, perhaps the greatest challenge Redeemer faces is finding people qualified to teach from a distinctly Reformed, Christian perspective. We solicit the prayers of the Christian Reformed churches as we address the challenge of faculty recruitment.

It has become abundantly clear during the current academic year that our present facilities will not adequately meet the needs of Redeemer College after the 1985–86 academic year. For that reason, much effort has been put into investigating the possibility of purchasing property and commencing construction and development of a campus. Property has now been purchased in the picturesque village of Ancaster, adjacent to Hamilton, ON, and, subject to membership approval, construction will begin during the summer of 1985 with anticipated occupancy of the new campus during the summer of 1986. Redeemer College received this past year an unsolicited and unexpected anonymous gift of over one million dollars from a group of Ontario businessmen. While many more millions are needed for the development of the campus, with over seven thousand members, most of whom belong to the CRC, we believe that it is possible to raise the necessary funds.

Placing an emphasis on high academic standards and quality student life, Redeemer is committed to preparing young men and women for service in the name of the Lord. Committed to the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life, Redeemer College is concerned about the development of the whole person.

During 1984 we lost one of our "pioneer" students, Art Vander Stelt. Art's presence among us while battling a brain tumor and his subsequent death had a profound impact on all of us. Art has been referred to as the first "graduate" of Redeemer College. We ask that you will remember Art's family during this time of mourning.

This year—1985—promises to be a year of unprecedented challenge. We walk confidently into the future. Though we face many challenges—student recruitment, faculty appointments, and development of the Redeemer College campus—yet we rely in all things on our Lord. We solicit the prayers of the Christian Reformed churches.

Redeemer College
Henry R. De Bolster, president

REPORT 26

REFORMED BIBLE COLLEGE

As synod delegates gather in Grand Rapids in June 1985, the forty-sixth academic year will be drawing to a close at Reformed Bible College (about two miles northwest of Calvin College campus). We pray that God will bless synod's sessions and continue to bless the strong bond that exists between Christian Reformed congregations and the college.

We thank God for his favor during another year of RBC's "mission." Highlights are submitted in this report, with gratitude to the Christian Reformed denomination for its endorsement and support of RBC.

1. *Celebration*—Early this year RBC's forty-fifth anniversary was observed with special dinners and programs in five places: Grand Rapids, Rehoboth, Denver, Orange City, and Palos Heights. At the Grand Rapids dinner, greetings and reminiscences were brought by Rev. William Van Peurse, Christian Reformed minister emeritus from Redlands, CA, who helped to form Reformed Bible Institute in 1939 (while he was pastor of Sherman Street CRC, Grand Rapids). The speaker that evening was Dr. James M. Boice, pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, PA, who spoke on the topic, "Is a New Day Dawning for the Calvinists?" RBC President Dick L. Van Halsema and Vice President William Jansen spoke at anniversary dinner meetings in Rehoboth, Denver, and Orange City. Dr. Burt Braunius, RBC associate professor of education, spoke at the Palos Heights event.

2. *Commencement*—Speaker for the forty-fourth commencement on May 3 was RBC's vice president for academic administration, Dr. Paul Bremer. More than sixty graduates received degrees and certificates for completion of academic work at RBC. Once again, members of an RBC graduation class were planning to enter missionary service, church staff assignments, graduate study (especially in theology), and other vocations. The number of available assignments in all of these areas annually exceeds the number of graduates.

3. *Enrollment*—During the past year, RBC enrollment did not reach the goal of 240 credit students (which would have been an alltime high). Fall semester registration of 223 was followed by a drop of about ten students for winter semester. Traditional entering students (i.e., those who enter RBC immediately following high school graduation) continue to be outnumbered by "nontraditional" students (those who enter RBC after spending a number of years in a nonacademic occupation). Efforts are being made to attract a larger number of applicants from both student categories, since RBC's unique curriculum is advantageous to both.

4. *Uniqueness*—RBC's distinctiveness has not been duplicated. It is the only educational institution in the world where students can concentrate on the study of Bible, Christian doctrine, evangelism, missions, church education,

and related subjects on the college level from the Reformed point of view. RBC provides opportunities for spiritual growth and preparation for ministry for a far greater number of individuals than those who have utilized its services until now. Reformed men and women, young and not-so-young, from congregations across North America should be encouraged to come to RBC for one or two years of post-secondary study—whatever the person's academic, professional, or vocational goals may be. RBC's biblical and doctrinal instruction provides an indispensable foundation for personal spiritual growth, and development of Reformed faith and worldview.

5. *Programs*—Demand continues for each of RBC's academic programs: the four-year Bachelor of Religious Education degree program (BRE), the two-year program leading to the Associate in Religious Education degree (ARE), the one-year graduate program for those who already hold a baccalaureate degree—Certificate of Biblical Studies (CBS), and the one-year Diploma of Biblical Studies for high school graduates. Work continues on plans to inaugurate the Master of Religious Education degree program, approved by the Michigan Department of Education several years ago. Community guest students continue to patronize RBC evening classes several nights per week, and a special Summer Course in New Testament Greek follows the three-week Spring session in May.

6. *Missionary Orientation and Service*—For the eighteenth year, RBC is conducting *Mexico Summer Training Session*, the academic and practical cross-cultural orientation to Christian missions which has prepared a large number of persons for ministry abroad. *Training and Service Corps* observes its tenth anniversary this summer. This two-year program of academic study, language learning, and missionary assignment in evangelism and Bible teaching currently has three teams of two persons each on the field: Ken and Pat Vanderploeg, serving the Independent Presbyterian congregation in Tzucacab, Yucatan, Mexico; Dan Vanden Hoek and Gary Van Veen, serving the Christian Reformed Church in Sabana Grande de Boya, Dominican Republic; and Pat and Pam Toonstra, working with the Christian Reformed Church in Catacamas, Honduras. Two other teams are in training, with field service assignments scheduled for early 1986. The purpose of these programs is the recruitment and intensive training of missionary candidates who can be considered for placement by the national church and/or denominational agency. For another year, RBC has provided two-day workshops in missions, evangelism, and discipleship for newly appointed workers serving with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.

7. *Faculty*—No personnel changes were noted during the academic year. However, Fuller Theological Seminary awarded the Ph.D. degree in Church History to Rev. George Kroeze in November and the D.Min. degree to Rev. William Shell in December. Both men are members of the Bible-Theology department. Professors Bruxvoort and Ritsema made progress toward the goal of completing Ph.D. programs. During the year, RBC continued efforts to fill a faculty vacancy in the area of missions and anthropology.

8. *Finances*—We thank God that RBC ended the 1984 fiscal year on June 30, 1984, with a small balance in the current fund. Contributions from many Christian Reformed congregations and individuals played a major part in this encouraging development for another year. A copy of the annual financial

statement once again has been forwarded to the office of the denominational financial coordinator.

9. *Request*—RBC requests synod's approval for continued prayer and financial support on the part of Christian Reformed churches. We heartily thank the denomination, and its member churches, for more than four decades of blessed partnership and eagerly look forward to continued growth in this relationship.

Reformed Bible College
Dick L. Van Halsema, president

REPORT 27
THE KING'S COLLEGE

The 1984-85 academic year has seen The King's College inaugurate its second president, Dr. Henk W. H. Van Andel, who assumed his duties in January 1985. It has been an exciting period for the college as the prospect of government funding draws near and as a new degree program is being prepared for the new provincial Private Colleges Accreditation Board.

Academics

The 1984-85 year has been one of consolidation rather than growth. Faculty members worked on program and curriculum development as plans unfolded for achieving degree-granting status. The great bulk of the college's one hundred or so courses are transferable to the University of Alberta, so the way is prepared for the next stage of development, an accredited degree. Faculty development is planned in the social sciences and drama.

Finances

Finances continue to be a problem for King's, but as the prospect of government funding grows more likely, the college is planning for greater financial stability and for expansion of programs. Meanwhile, the supporting community is reminded that government funding will not diminish the need for donation support. Rather, it will allow the college to grow to a more viable scale.

Projections

Current plans call for building, after a period of consolidation and careful preparation of a program of high academic quality and Christian integrity. Strengthened by the Reformed tradition, the college has a unique contribution to make in Western Canada as it approaches degree-granting status. Programs will be launched at a deliberate pace, eventually providing three-year and four-year arts and science degrees as well as an "after degree" B.Ed. within a few years.

The Christian Reformed Church has been very involved in the development of The King's College, and we are grateful for its support. We expect that the increased quota for Christian colleges will make a significant improvement in the college's financial picture, and we trust that by God's grace we will live up to the responsibility that such support places on us.

The King's College
Henk Van Andel, president

REPORT 28

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Today we are writing the first pages in a new chapter of the story of Trinity Christian College. God has called us all—faculty, students, administration, board, and community—to work together to help Trinity mature as we begin the second quarter-century of the college's history. Trinity has been, is, and will always be seeking the best ways to educate our students in the light of God's Word and the framework of our Reformed confessions, for our ultimate goal is and always shall be to prepare young men and women to serve God and his people in his world.

We are looking to the future by setting realistic goals and seeking our Lord's guidance and blessing in reaching them. We are attempting to establish a positive posture with respect to our fiscal operation; we are cultivating our academic strength by continuing to build an excellent faculty and curriculum; and we are beginning to make plans for the growth of Trinity's campus so that we will be able to provide excellent educational facilities for our students. Together we must continue our efforts to grow, so that more students can benefit from a *Christian* liberal arts education with all the advantages of Trinity's metropolitan location.

Trinity Christian College lies within a quiet, suburban setting. But because it is located just forty-five minutes from the heart of Chicago—a significant educational, economic, and cultural city—Trinity, distinctively, has been provided an opportunity for testing and refining the dynamics of faith and learning within a large metropolitan context. Christian social concern is found at the heart of the gospel and is embodied in the Reformed view of life. For students attending this institution, contact with the larger world means exposure to a living urban-suburban laboratory in which the dynamics of faith and learning can be tested and refined. For Trinity, this interaction rightly reflects Christian higher education on the cutting edge. Student employment and internship opportunities provide additional avenues for service for education, business, nursing, and other major areas.

A result of the Trinity quest for excellence is the high rate of placement for its graduates. Applicants to such professional schools as medicine and law enjoy a rate of acceptance in the range of 90 percent; others have been accepted into graduate schools of the highest caliber. The rate of placement of the undergraduates enrolled in professional programs likewise has experienced a high degree of success: 87 percent of the education students received teaching positions in recent years; several accounting graduates each year pass the entire CPA examination at the first sitting; medical technology and business administration graduates have excellent records in securing positions of their choice immediately after graduation. Trinity makes an effort to provide every student with a strong Christian perspective through the core studies, a broad exposure to the liberal arts, and meaningful preparation for a specific vocation.

And as Trinity Christian College begins the second quarter-century of its history, it also begins with a new president. Dr. Kenneth Bootsma, inaugurated January 15, 1985, is the fifth president of the college, and comes with a wide range of administrative experiences in education as well as in business. He also served as the executive director of development for Calvin College and Seminary between 1974 and 1977. Dr. Bootsma and his family moved to Palos Heights from Bellflower, CA, where he served as superintendent of the Bellflower Christian Schools.

Included in the first pages of this new chapter of Trinity is the exciting news of a continued increase in enrollment. The fulltime equivalent (FTE) for the past five years is as follows: 359 in 1980, 379 in 1981, 390 in 1982, 425 in 1983, and a record 500 last September. This 17.9 percent increase was the largest for all private Illinois institutions of higher learning. The enrollment report for 1984-85 also provides the following information: 7 of our students are nonresident aliens, 8 are Hispanic, 6 are Pacific Islanders, 42 are Black; 65 percent are from supporting churches; 68 percent are from Illinois, 8 percent are from Wisconsin, 7 percent are from Michigan, 6 percent are from Indiana, and 3 percent are from Iowa.

For the past twenty-five years, the prayers, service, and gifts of God's people have helped Trinity Christian College to grow into a maturing institution. And now as we begin this new chapter in Trinity's history, we ask that you join us as we prayerfully commit ourselves to helping Trinity mature into a solidly Reformed institution of higher learning. Be a real part of *our* future!

Trinity Christian College
Kenneth Bootsma, president

REPORT 29
UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH

YOUNG CALVINIST FEDERATION

The Young Calvinist Federation is an organization of 634 church youth groups across North America. This federation of forty-nine leagues is based on a common confession with the Christian Reformed Church, and a commitment to serve the youth ministry of each member church.

The key word in our federation is *reciprocity*: what can we give, and what can we get from those with whom we've joined in league? Changes in church and society, both cultural and social, continue to challenge YCF's programming and publications. Even our administrative structure and methods of doing ministry are currently being evaluated. The winds of necessary change are blowing. As YCF approaches the end of this century and envisions the advent of the twenty-first, we become increasingly aware that "old wine skins" may not adequately serve our basic historical goals.

YCF's aim is to help the churches' young people to live the Christian life and employ their gifts and talents for kingdom building. A primary concern is committed, capable voluntary leadership at the local church level.

Of special note for us in 1984 were one of the largest YCF North American conventions in history, an excellent Young Adult Conference, and a new leadership periodical, *TEAM*. Added to this was a successful Summer Workshop in Ministries (SWIM) program, plus new as well as continuing publications. *INSIGHT*, for teens, and *YAM*, for young adults, continue to focus on their respective constituencies. "Youth Line," YCF's newest piece, is an informative public relations tool that appears twice yearly in *The Banner*.

YCF's Armed Services Ministry is expanding and has added a new major contact person for the Canadian Armed Forces. We continue to solicit from churches the names and addresses of service persons. We need your assistance.

YCF is entering its sixty-sixth year of ministry. We ask your ongoing support for the resources to provide the churches with programs, publications, and consultation services. The churches' participation in the annual "Give Youth a Boost" campaign and the two annual collections per church which YCF is authorized to request are our financial lifeline. Your continued support is needed and appreciated.

The Young Calvinist Federation
Robert S. Hough, executive director

CALVINIST CADET CORPS

"Go west, young man." Although it was more than a hundred years ago that Horace Greeley made this phrase popular, his advice was taken in 1984 by over

eight hundred men and boys as they made their way to the Cadet International Camporee near Yosemite National Park in California. With the theme "Explore the Rock," the group spent eight spiritually fulfilling days in the wilderness, building their own shelters and preparing their own meals. For many, this was a spiritual highlight, and that's good, because that is the direct intention of the Corps as they plan the event.

Another opportunity for inspiration, fellowship, and instruction was the annual Cadet Counselors' Convention. In 1984, the convention was held in Des Moines, IA. The theme was "Celebrating Freedom Through Christ," and it was brought to the denomination's attention again during Cadet Week in January 1985. As always, the convention was an excellent opportunity for counselors and their families to get together and share ideas and experiences. We often receive as much benefit from the unscheduled sharing as from the structured workshops.

Cadeting continues to grow both within the organization and in new memberships. Not only is the total number of clubs increasing, but more and more of the existing clubs are utilizing the available Cadet programs. The Junior Cadet program, for seven- and eight-year-old boys, is used in about 25 percent of churches having our clubs, and the Guide Trails program, for twelve- to fourteen-year olds, in over 60 percent. The mainstay of the Cadet program continues to be the Recruit-Pathfinder-Builder program, which is structured for the nine- to eleven-year-olds. This program, commonly known as the R-P-B program, is in about 98 percent of the churches with Cadet Clubs.

We praise God for the blessings that he keeps on giving, and look forward to his guidance for 1985. We will continue our service for him as we recall our motto, "Living for Jesus."

Calvinist Cadet Corps

G. Richard Broene, executive director

CALVINETTES

We thank the Lord for another year in which he has blessed our Calvinette ministry.

We continue to grow, now numbering 731 clubs in North America. The Calvinette organizations in Australia, New Zealand, and New Guinea also continue to do well.

We are grateful for the over 4,000 dedicated Christian women who willingly give of their time and their gifts to serve over 17,000 girls. Last summer 625 of these leaders gathered in Grand Rapids, MI, for training, growth, and fellowship. In July of this year, we expect to convene in La Mirada, CA. In the past year presidents of twenty-four councils attended a three-day training seminar in Grand Rapids and returned to their councils better equipped to encourage, train, and lead counselors in their areas.

Touch magazine continues to receive wide acceptance among our membership. Many girls have indicated that the lessons and articles have helped them see how God works in their lives. *Cable*, a newsletter for counselors, is mailed quarterly in an effort to maintain communication and exchange ideas within the organization. *Connections* is mailed free of charge three times each year to all registered counselors. It contains helps for Bible lesson leadership and assistance for counseling girls in church education. *In Touch with Calvinettes*

continues to inform our supporting community of the ministries of Calvinettes.

One of our major goals for 1985 will be the revision of program materials for junior high girls. As these girls approach young womanhood they face a time of emotional, physical, and spiritual growth and especially need the support and encouragement of other Christians who can help them see themselves as created in God's image.

We are excited by the recent decision to sponsor regional leadership training conferences in addition to the annual international convention. These conferences will involve counselors in intensive leadership training for one and a half days.

We thank God for the opportunity he has given the Calvinette ministries to serve him for twenty-seven years. We are grateful also for the support and interest the CRC has shown in youth ministry; we ask for your prayers that Calvinettes will continue to be effective in sharing Christ's love with girls of your church family and the community.

Calvinettes

Joanne Ilbrink, executive director

REPORT 30-A
 BELGIC CONFESSION TRANSLATION COMMITTEE
 MAJORITY REPORT

The new translation of the Belgic Confession here presented for final adoption was prepared by a committee appointed by the Synod of 1977. The committee was instructed "to prepare a new translation of the Belgic Confession, incorporating the textual references," with the following grounds for this action:

- (a) A new translation of the Belgic Confession would increase its usefulness for church education.
- (b) It would benefit the churches and pastors who use the Belgic Confession for preaching purposes. . . .
- (c) It would match the contemporary language of the Heidelberg Catechism. . . ."
(Acts of Synod 1977, p. 88).

In 1979 the committee submitted a provisional translation based on the original confession authored by Guido de Bres and first published in 1561. The Synod of 1979 decided to continue the work of the committee by instructing it to prepare another translation based on the 1619 Synod of Dort text of the confession and "to publish, in side-by-side columns, both the de Bres text translation and the one of the version approved by the Synod of Dort . . ." (*Acts of Synod 1979, pp. 126-27*).

The committee completed this task and submitted an extensive report to the Synod of 1983 complete with a detailed endnote comparison of the two French texts. The Synod of 1983 decided to submit the new translation of the 1619 Dort text to the churches for study and reaction, instructed the Board of Publications to make the new translation available to the churches in booklet form, and urged the churches to submit reactions and suggestions for improvement to the committee no later than May 15, 1984, with a view to final adoption by the Synod of 1985 (*Acts of Synod 1983, p. 648*).

The committee received eight responses indicating general satisfaction with the translation along with some suggestions for change. In response to these suggestions the committee made several revisions which are incorporated later in this report.

Synod of 1983 itself decided to make one significant amendment to the committee's translation of the 1619 Dort text. Classis Eastern Canada had overtured the Synod of 1982 to alter the wording of Articles 34 and 36 in such a way as to soften the objectionable language regarding the Anabaptists. This overture was referred to the translation committee for consideration. The translation committee recommended to Synod of 1983 that synod "not accede to the overture of Classis Eastern Canada" on the following grounds:

1. It is not the intent of Articles 34 and 36 to teach us to detest people.
2. The difference between the French words *detester* and *rejeter*, both used in Article 36, should be respected in translation.
3. The Synod of 1961, confronted with a similar request for amendment, decided not to do so for reasons that remain sound and relevant today.

(Acts of Synod 1983, p. 279).

The synodical advisory committee, however, recommended a change. Consequently, synod decided to amend the new translation of the 1619 Dort text in Article 36 by substituting the phrase:

And on this matter we denounce Anabaptists, other anarchists, and in general . . .
for the phrase:

For that reason we detest the Anabaptists and other anarchists, and in general . . .
as found in line 10, *Agenda for Synod 1983*, p. 363. Synod gave three grounds for this action:

- a. There have been repeated requests to find an alternative to the expression, "we detest the Anabaptists. . . ."
- b. The above translation attempts a faithful rendering of the French 1619 Dort text.
- c. This is but a provisional translation which may lead to further suggestions and improvement prior to final adoption."

(Acts of Synod 1983, pp. 647–48).

Implicit in Ground c is an invitation to make "further suggestions" regarding the 1983 amendment of Article 36. The translation committee has therefore considered the matter further and believes that the grounds given for our advice not to amend the articles in question are still valid and were not adequately addressed by the Synod of 1983. We fully recognize that the language about the Anabaptists used by the 1619 Dort editors of the Belgic Confession was unfortunate, excessive, and embarrassing for us today. We fully agree, as we stated in 1983, that "it is contrary to Scripture to detest not only fellow Christians but all persons created in the image of God" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 277). And yet, the arguments against changing the text of the creed remain strong. The 1983 amendment is not simply a matter of translation, but is a redactional modification, a revision of the text. If such a revision is made in Article 36, consistency would require revisions of other articles as well. A confession is an historical document, however, and must be so understood and interpreted. It was on this basis that the Synod of 1961 refused to revise the Belgic Confession. That synod was persuaded, as we pointed out in 1983, that "whenever a historical-textual approach to the confession offers satisfactory answers to objections raised, the confession should not be subjected to redactional modifications," and that "the demand for incidental corrections in the confession suggests a too literalistic approach to the confession; that modification of disputed passages means at best a patchwork approach to the confession; and, most importantly, that a historical-textual approach to the confession will provide satisfactory answers to the questions raised" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 278).

It nevertheless remains true, as Classis Eastern Canada pointed out, and as was observed in the floor debate at the 1983 Synod, that the severe language of Article 36 may jeopardize our contemporary witness. Hence some official, ecclesiastical acknowledgement of our disavowal of the creed's harsh references to the Anabaptists is necessary. How can this be done without tampering with the text of the creed itself? Your committee proposes that its original translation be restored, and that a footnote reference be added to the effect that the Christian Reformed Church deplores and disavows the unbiblical, un-Christian attitude expressed in this article. Such a procedure would show dual sensitivity—both to the integrity of the historical creed and the integrity of our

current witness. It would also be consistent with the way in which we have handled another unbiblical statement in Article 36 regarding the relationship of church and state.

Finally, some consideration must be given to the procedure synod will follow in adopting the new translation. We propose that synod adopt a procedure similar to that followed in 1965 when the revised Church Order was adopted, and in 1975 when the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism was adopted. We here cite that procedure as it was outlined in 1965, as a possible guide for the consideration of additional changes in the new translation.

That synod adopt the following rules of procedure regarding further suggestions for change in the proposed Church Order:

- a. That all suggestions by members of synod for deletion, revisions, and changes be given to the advisory committee in writing.
- b. That a deadline of 12:00 noon on Friday be set for all such suggested changes.
- c. That synod allow no new suggestions of this kind after this deadline except those pertaining to such matters as are treated in the overtures or such as are brought to the floor of synod by the advisory committee.

(Acts of Synod 1965, p. 12)

The members of the translation committee stand ready to assist synod and its advisory committee in evaluation suggestions submitted by the delegates of synod.

Recommendations

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to committee members John Primus and Arthur Otten when these matters are discussed.
2. That synod adopt the new translation of the Belgic Confession.
3. That synod approve a procedure for adoption similar to that used in 1965 when the revised Church Order was adopted, and in 1975 when the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism was adopted.
4. That synod reconsider the amendment to Article 36 made by the Synod of 1983, return to the translation committee's version of that article, and add a footnote indicating the Christian Reformed Church's rejection of the unbiblical attitude toward the Anabaptists expressed in the article.

Grounds:

- a. The committee's translation of Article 36 is a very faithful and accurate rendering of the French 1619 Dort text.
- b. The amendment adopted by Synod of 1983 is not a translation but a textual revision.
- c. The Synod of 1961 decided against revising the confession for reasons that remain sound and relevant today (cf. *Acts of Synod 1961*, pp. 211f.).
- d. A footnote reference would address both the concerns about the historical character of the creed and the current integrity of our witness.
- e. A footnote reference indicating our rejection of the attitude toward Anabaptists would be consistent with the way the church has dealt with another unbiblical statement in Article 36.

Note: Committee member Leonard Verduin takes issue especially with Recommendation 4 above. His minority position appears immediately following the list of changes in the 1983 translation.

Excerpts of the 1983 Translation*Article 7, paragraph 1*

We believe
that this Holy Scripture fully contains
the will of God
and that everything one must believe
to be saved
is sufficiently taught in it.
For since the entire manner of service
which God requires of us
is described in it at great length,
no one—
 even an apostle
 or an angel from heaven,
 as Paul says—²
ought to teach other than
what the Holy Scriptures have
already taught us.

Article 7, paragraph 3

Therefore we must not consider human writings—
 no matter how holy their authors may have been—
equal to the divine writings;
nor may we put custom,
nor the majority,
nor age,
nor the passage of time or persons,
nor councils, decrees, or official decisions
above the truth of God
 for truth is above everything else.

Article 9, paragraph 1

All these things we know
from the testimonies of Holy Scripture
as well as from their effects,
especially from those we feel within ourselves.

Article 17, paragraph 2

And he comforted him,
promising to give him his Son,
 born of a woman,³¹
to crush the head of the serpent,³²
and to make him blessed.

1985 Revision*Article 7, paragraph 1*

We believe
that this Holy Scripture contains
the will of God completely,
and that everything one must believe
to be saved
is sufficiently taught in it.
For since the entire manner of service
which God requires of us
is described in it at great length,
no one—
 even an apostle
 or an angel from heaven,
 as Paul says—²
ought to teach other than
what the Holy Scriptures have
already taught us.

Article 7, paragraph 3

Therefore we must not consider human writings—
 no matter how holy their authors may have been—
equal to the divine writings;
nor may we put custom,
nor the majority,
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nor the passage of time or persons,
nor councils, decrees, or official decisions
above the truth of God,
 for truth is above everything else.

Article 9, paragraph 1

All these things we know
from the testimonies of Holy Scripture
as well as from the effects of the persons,
especially from those we feel within ourselves.

Article 17, paragraph 2

And he comforted him,
promising to give him his Son,
 "born of a woman,"³¹
to crush the head of the serpent,³²
and to make him blessed.

Excerpts of the 1983 Translation

Article 19, paragraph 6

These are the reasons why we confess him
to be true God and true man—
true God in order to conquer death
by his power,
and true man that he might die for us
in the weakness of his flesh.

Article 21, paragraph 3

So he paid back
what he had not stolen⁴⁶
and he suffered—
the just for the unjust,⁴⁷
in both his body and his soul—
in such a way that
when he sensed the horrible punishment
required by our sins
his sweat became like "big drops of blood
falling on the ground."⁴⁸
He cried, "My God, my God,
why have you abandoned me?"⁴⁹

Article 22, paragraph 5

But Jesus Christ is our righteousness
in making available to us all his merits
and all the holy works he has done
for us and in our place.
And faith is the instrument
that keeps us together with him
in communion with all his benefits.

Article 26, paragraph 4

Suppose we had to find another intercessor.
Who would love us more than he who gave his life for us,
even though "we were his enemies"?⁶⁵
And suppose we had to find one who has prestige and power.
Who has as much of these as he who is seated
"at the right hand of the Father,"⁶⁶
and who has all power
"in heaven and on earth"?⁶⁷
And who will be heard more readily
than God's own dearly beloved Son?

1985 Revision*Article 19, paragraph 6*

These are the reasons why we confess him
to be true God and true man—
true God in order to conquer death
by his power,
and true man that he might die for us
in the weakness of his flesh.

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and who has all power
“in heaven and on earth”?⁶⁷
And who will be heard more readily
than God’s own dearly beloved Son?

Excerpts of the 1983 Translation*Article 36, paragraph 5*

For that reason we detest the Anabaptists, and other anarchists,
and in general all those who want
to reject the authorities and civil officers
and to subvert justice
by introducing common ownership of goods
and corrupting the moral order
that God has established among human beings.

Article 37, paragraph 6

Therefore,
with good reason
the thought of this judgment
is horrible and dreadful
to wicked and evil people.
But it is very pleasant
and a great comfort
to the righteous and elect,
since their total redemption
will then be accomplished.
They will then receive the fruits of their labor
and of the trouble they have suffered;
their innocence will be openly recognized by all;
and they will see the terrible vengeance
that God will bring on the evil ones
who tyrannized, oppressed, and tormented them
in this world.

1985 Revision*Article 36, paragraph 5*

*And on this matter we denounce Anabaptists, other anarchists,
and in general all those who want
to reject the authorities and civil officers
and to subvert justice
 by introducing common ownership of goods
 and corrupting the moral order
 that God has established among human beings.

Article 37, paragraph 6

Therefore,
with good reason
the thought of this judgment
is horrible and dreadful
to wicked and evil people.
But it is very pleasant
and a great comfort
to the righteous and elect,
 since their total redemption
 will then be accomplished.
They will then receive the fruits of their labor
and of the trouble they have suffered;
their innocence will be openly recognized by all;
and they will see the terrible vengeance
 that God will bring on the evil ones
 who tyrannized, oppressed, and tormented them
 in this world.

*Amendment by Synod of 1983 (c.f., *Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 647)

The Belgic Confession
Translation Committee
John H. Primus, chairman
Philip C. Holtrop
Arthur J. Otten
Lois Read
Henry Zwaanstra

REPORT 30-B
BELGIC CONFESSION TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

MINORITY REPORT

The undersigned agrees with the Majority Report that "the severe language of Article 36 may jeopardize our contemporary witness." I have found it necessary to do considerable talking to get people on a university campus, and elsewhere, to take seriously a church that says what the CRC says about detesting Anabaptists in Article 36 of the Belgic Confession.

The majority of the committee proceeds upon the assumption that there are only two escape routes out of the difficulty: (1) revise the confession at this point, (2) take back in a footnote what has been said in the text. I find it difficult, however, to go along with either of these alternatives. With respect to the first alternative, for a synod to *revise* a formula-of-unity is to depart from the procedure of Reformed church polity that begins with the tendering of a gravamen. In view of the fact that no gravamen has been presented this escape route is not open to synod.

However, I have even greater difficulty with the footnote escape route. To confess with tongue in cheek, as it were, with the intention of undoing it again, in whole or in part, is to lessen seriously the dignity to which a formula of unity is entitled. Moreover, I must point out that the CRC tried this escape route between 1910 and 1938, and repudiated it. Because of the presence of "a conflict between the objectionable clauses in the Confession and its footnote," synod "decided to eliminate the footnote and to make the change in the text..." (cf. footnote in *Psalter Hymnal*, 1959 edition, re the *Acts of Synod* of 1910 and 1938). It would not be wise to return now to the footnote escape path the CRC was led to abandon long ago.

There is a third escape route open to synod; one which I heartily recommend. We are in this matter confronted with options very much like those involved in an English translation of the New Testament Scriptures. For example, when we come to Luke 2:14, should we follow the text known as the Sinaiticus (as do all the translations of our times), in which we have a two-member angel song? Or should we follow any one of the other manuscripts in which we have a three-member angel song (the manuscripts followed by the King James as well as by the *Staten Vertaling*)? In a closely parallel situation we are obliged to make a choice between divergent wordings of the passage that is giving us trouble. One of the texts does not mention the Anabaptists by name, but only says that we detest those who "want to reject the authorities and civil officers"—a reading that ought not to give anyone trouble, not even with the verb "detest" left intact. God himself is prepared to pronounce a curse upon people who seek to put an end to the institution which he has called into being to keep human society from being chaotic. So why should not God's church do

the same—so that the church leaves it to him to determine whether a given group is guilty of this sin.

It is true, the reading which is giving us all our trouble is said to have the thumb prints of Dordt on it. That fact causes us, rightly or wrongly, to speak “with a holy hush” (as an editorial in *The Banner* stated) whenever the name “Dordt” is attached. We must point out, however, that our Reformed fathers in the Low Countries did not think that anything and everything having the name of Dordt attached to it was “cast in concrete.” This may be evident from the fact that fifty years *after* Dordt a printing of the confession was put out by the Reformed Church (a project supervised by one of its ministers, Antoine Hulsius) in which at some one hundred junctures (not all of them equally important, although several of them are exceedingly important) we witness a return to the text as it had been prior to Dordt. This printing was put out a second time in 1726, and a third time in 1769. This indicates that the Reformed churches did not think that the Dordt text was by definition the last word. Moreover, for a long time *after* Dordt the so-called “*Waalsche Kerken*” (French-speaking churches in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands) were still requiring their ministers, upon ordination, to sign the copy of the confession (done on parchment for the purpose) which went back to 1580, nearly forty years prior to Dordt. What, we cannot help asking, is there to forbid us English-speaking churches in the New World from exercising the same privilege, more so since by doing this we can emerge gracefully out of the present predicament?

We, therefore, recommend to synod that it resolve the problem by returning to the text of the original printing done in 1561, at two places simultaneously, offering the following English translation: “For that reason we detest all those who want to reject the authorities and civil officers. . . .”

We thank the church we love for letting us serve it in the preparation of a new English translation of the Belgic Confession. We have traveled a rather long road, perhaps longer than it needed to be; but we have enjoyed working at the assignment; and we hope and trust that the cause we love will be served by what the committee has done.

Minority Report
Leonard Verduin

REPORT 31

SERVICE COMMITTEE FOR MINISTRY WITH RETARDED PERSONS

I. INTRODUCTION

The joy of full participation continues in many congregations where members have worked to integrate persons with retardation into the life of their communities. Your committee has witnessed the marvelous work of the Spirit when by God's grace many people have established extended personal relationships with persons having disabilities.

The health of the denomination has been strengthened when support groups and respite groups have sprung from the concern of Christian friends for the families with members having impairments. Likewise, the health of the Christian community has been improved when business people sharing a Christian perspective have opened employment opportunities to persons with mental retardation. There are incredible implications for the future health of the denomination when young people extend themselves to others in need. The committee is encouraged by the large number of people within the denomination who have established personal relationships with people having disabilities.

II. ACTIVITIES

Through its coordinator, Mr. Lee Vander Baan, the committee has served as a catalyst for growth. Individuals, including pastors, friends, and parents, have sought and received counsel regarding issues affecting the lives of persons with mental retardation. Some of the issues have been generated by changing public policies in Canada and the United States. The closing of large state-run institutions and the "placement" of persons with disabilities into communities—sometimes in group homes in the neighborhoods of our congregations—have given our congregations new opportunities to examine attitudes and practices with respect to persons having disabilities. Some congregations and pastors have asked some provocative questions, such as: "How can our congregation minister to the residents of a new group home established in our neighborhood?" The events prompting these questions have created continuous opportunities for healing ministries. Throughout our denomination in North America these questions are likely to be asked with greater frequency during the next decade as the number of community-based alternative services increases.

The administrative coordinator has provided counsel to other church agencies and related organizations in addition to families, pastors, and other individuals. By working with other organizations, including the All Ontario Diaconal Conference, the Young Calvinist Federation, and the Education Department of the Board of Publications, he has been able to increase the efficiency of the committee and avoid duplication.

Through its newsletter, *Christian Companions*, nearly seven thousand readers—families, pastors, friends, and others who share an interest in the needs of persons with mental impairments—receive information, service models, and biblically based counsel. It is exciting to note that some of the recipients of *Christian Companions* are associated with public human service agencies and non-Christian Reformed organizations. Truly, the Spirit may use the work of the committee to affect the lives of people in institutions and living in unhealthy conditions. The title of our newsletter highlights our belief that extended, supportive personal relationships are an integral part of the biblical message. *Christian Companions* emphasizes ways in which Christian companionship can be expressed in relationships with persons who have disabilities. Also, the newsletter has demonstrated ways that our congregations have been able to minister to individuals and families with disabilities.

The increased rate of survival for infants with profound impairments also validates and supports the ministry of the committee. With existing sophisticated medical technology, children with profound impairments are surviving birth and infancy more frequently and are requiring extraordinary care considerations for longer periods of time. Because of the increasing numbers of infants surviving, families and congregations will soon confront the necessity of extraordinary care needs for adolescents and young adults. The committee continues to struggle with the care and financial burdens of these families. Although the committee at this time makes no formal recommendation for a specific course of action, support from the entire denomination, as well as individual congregations, is required for these families.

The number of persons with mental retardation who have been incarcerated has reached significantly high percentages, perhaps as high as 15 percent. Limited resources prevented the committee from extending its ministry to persons with mental retardation in prisons and jails. Because persons with mental retardation who are incarcerated are frequently overlooked by public and private human services and support or advocacy groups, the need for ministry to these people has reached desperate proportions. Christians concerned with this ministry can help to stop the cyclical victimizations experienced by persons with mental retardation who are imprisoned. Often persons with mental retardation are victimized by others because of their social and economic limitations. Once they confront the judicial systems they are less likely to avoid incarceration; and once incarcerated, they too frequently become victimized again by other inmates and by penal systems which are insensitive to them and their disabilities.

In its work the committee has received requests from individuals and groups concerned with the needs of persons with disabilities other than mental retardation. Because some of the needs of wounded people cross the artificial boundaries of convenience labels, the committee has chosen not to erect artificial barriers, based on categorical labels, to its ministry. Consequently, the committee has provided counsel, as its limited resources have allowed, to other disability interests, realizing that its service focus lies with persons having mental retardation. In support of these people the committee recommends that synod urge congregations to greet wounded and devalued people, whatever their artificial classification, with Christian dignity and compassion, welcoming them and their contributions to the body of believers.

III. RESOLUTION ON DISABILITIES

Several denominations in the last few years have passed resolutions on disabilities, and we ask this synod to do the same. Giving official status to the resolution which follows would affirm the denomination's commitment to full participation in the church by people with disabilities. It would give encouragement to members of the denomination who have disabilities, or to those who work and live with them. Also, the committee could use the resolution to encourage congregations and individuals to increase their involvements with persons who have disabilities and with their families.

A Resolution on Disabilities

Whereas the Bible calls us to be a caring community as the covenant people of God, Whereas we recognize that our Lord Jesus Christ requires the involvement of all his people in the ministry of his church,

Whereas we have not always made it possible for people with disabilities to participate fully in the community and have often isolated them and their families,

We pledge ourselves to be the caring community according to I Corinthians 12, paying special attention to the needs and gifts of people with physical, sensory, mental, and emotional impairments.

We pledge ourselves to make public these needs and capabilities through our various communication and educational materials.

We pledge ourselves to overcome three barriers:

- 1. the attitudinal barriers which make persons with disabilities feel unwelcome;*
- 2. the communication barriers in sight, sound, and understanding which may impede participation; and*
- 3. the physical and architectural barriers which make it difficult for persons with some disabilities to enter.*

We commend those within the denomination who have made efforts to eliminate these barriers in order to use the gifts of all people in our life together as God's family.

Note: The above has been revised from resolutions adopted by the Church of the Brethren and the General Conference of the Mennonite Church in 1983.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

The composition of the committee changed during 1984. After serving with the first study committee in 1978 through the 1984 term of the Service Committee, Mr. Kenneth Ooms resigned. Mr. Ooms served the denomination, committee, and persons with impairments compassionately and sensitively. His warmth and genuine concern is missed by the remaining committee members who thank God for his contributions and pray for God's blessing on his work in the Chicago area. Replacing Mr. Ooms is Rev. Ronald C. Vredeveld, a pastor serving persons who have developmental disabilities in Mount Pleasant, MI.

Needless to say, the work of the committee has grown since the Synod of 1981 made its initial appointment and subsequently in 1983 gave the committee a reappointment with an expanded mandate. That mandate has provided the committee and its coordinator with an ambitious challenge—to provide service, advice, counsel, and education within the time constraints of a volunteer

committee and a parttime coordinator. The coordinator, in particular, has had to balance the requirements of a fulltime professional career with the demands of committee work. Consequently, the committee has had to prioritize its services. Because of the limited resources the committee has proceeded deliberately, utilizing the time of the coordinator and committee members as efficiently as possible.

The committee has been cognizant of the need to maintain financial responsibility and stewardship. It has reduced the number of committee meetings from four to three, thereby reducing travel expenses. Committee members when traveling to committee meetings have made private arrangements whenever possible to avoid lodging expenses. Nonetheless, the committee expects to incur increased expenses for fiscal year 85-86, largely due to the increased number of materials and publications it expects to produce. The committee requests a budget of \$32,600 to underwrite the expenses of the committee including those of a parttime coordinator. In presenting this budget, the committee recognizes a serious dilemma—the needs within our denomination and the requests made to the committee for service exceed the resource capacity of the committee as authorized by the Synod of 1983. Also, the committee has tempered the long-term growth of its ministry. Without assurance of future viability the committee has been reluctant to commit its resources to projects which could span several years. During the next year, the committee will be examining its ministry in the context of long-term needs within our denomination.

Despite its limited resources, the committee looks to the future with enthusiasm and with gratitude for the opportunity to be of service. The biblical ministry of full integration and participation stands in sharp contrast to common practices of isolation and segregation. The denomination has a unique opportunity not only to improve the lives of individuals, but also to offer dramatic alternatives to common understandings of how devalued people are to be treated. With a well-developed program of Christian advocacy the spiritual and physical needs of many persons with handicaps can be met. In addition, public policy makers can be challenged to reflect the sanctity of life in their public policies. Individual congregations are urged to advocate for brothers and sisters with disabilities whenever specific causes appear which concern the needs of persons with disabilities.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That Dr. Thomas Hoeksema and Mr. Lee Vander Baan, chairperson and administrative coordinator, respectively, be given the opportunity to address the synod when this report is considered.

B. Approval of our budget request of \$32,600.

C. Approval of Rev. Ronald C. Vredeveld as a member of the committee.

D. Approval of the "Resolution on Disabilities."

E. That synod urge congregations to actively advocate for brothers and sisters with disabilities and to greet wounded and devalued people with Christian

dignity and compassion, welcoming them and their contributions to the body of believers.

Committee for Ministry with
Retarded Persons

Thomas Hoeksema, chairman

Peter Breedveld

Peter De Bruyne

Collin Myers

Robert Uken

Ivan Wassink

Dorothy Wiersma

Lee Vander Baan, adm. coordinator

REPORT 32

COMMITTEE FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN QUEBEC

INTRODUCTION

The Synod of 1981 endorsed "the concept of assisting in the establishment of a Francophone lay leadership and theological school in Quebec City under the auspices of a local governing board, such assistance to provide support and related costs for the position of a coordinator." In implementing that decision synod appointed an *ad hoc* committee ". . . responsible to synod, to oversee the Christian Reformed Church's assistance to this institution."

The Synod of 1984 approved the "continued support of the Christian Reformed Church in the ministry of the Rev. Martin D. Geleynse as the coordinator of Institut Farel for a period of three years (September 1984–August 1987) with another review to be conducted by the *ad hoc* committee in time for the Synod of 1987 to determine further CRC involvement after August 1987."

The synod also appointed "the present committee as constituted for a second period of three years (1987)" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 570).

The present report is, therefore, an interim report.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUT FAREL

The academic year 1984–85 has been an important one.

For the first time in its short history Institut Farel was able in September 1984 to offer a full program of courses to a group of five fulltime students and seven parttime students.

In January 1985 an increased number of students registered: six fulltime and nine parttime students and five auditors.

Among these students is a couple from Madagascar who are supported by CEACA. They have now finished their first year at Institut Farel and their studies are progressing well.

In October 1984 the authorities of the University of Quebec decided to respond positively to efforts on the part of Institut Farel to obtain help from the university. An advisory committee was appointed by the university, to which Institut Farel appointed its own members. This committee has just started its work at the time of writing this report. We expect great things from it for the development of Institut Farel and for the official recognition of its courses and programs.

Upon the request of the Council of Reformed Churches in Quebec the institute is at present coordinating a program of training for evangelism and church planting. The need for such training is keenly felt by our churches and Institut Farel can play a significant role in this area.

A major challenge facing the institute is the finding of qualified French-speaking faculty. Such persons are rare in the world, and the hiring of such

personnel demands a major capital outlay for which the institute is not equipped. Continued prayer and support on the part of our churches and our members is urgently needed.

THE FINANCES

One of the recommendations of our committee to the Synod of 1984 was "that synod approve the continuation of \$1.00 quota through the fiscal year 1987 to permit the implementation of" the recommendation to reappoint the coordinator for a period of three years (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 276).

Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, this recommendation was adopted when synod approved the quota of \$18.50 for denominational services (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 89, B, 3, p. 639).

In view of repeated inquiries on the part of churches and members, it would be helpful if the Committee for Theological Education in Quebec could be explicitly mentioned among the committees whose expenses are assumed under Denominational Services.

The committee is grateful for the ready help and assistance of Mr. Harry Vander Meer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Your committee recommends:

- A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman of the committee, Dr. John H. Kromminga, and to the secretary, Rev. Peter Borgdorff.
- B. That synod gratefully note the continued development of Institut Farel with the support of the Christian Reformed Church.
- C. That synod instruct the stated clerk to explicitly mention the Committee for Theological Education in Quebec among the committees whose expenses are included in the \$18.50 quota for Denominational Services.
- D. That synod approve the work of the committee.

Committee for Theological Education
in Quebec

John H. Kromminga, chairman

Peter Borgdorff, secretary

Andrew J. Bandstra

Walter Hobé

John Van Til

John Visser

REPORT 33
COMMITTEE FOR TRANSLATION OF THE CANONS OF DORT

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Statement of Mandate and History of Translation Committee*

The Synod of 1983 appointed this committee to complete the mandate given by the Synod of 1979 (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 128) and to submit its report by 1985. Its decision (*Acts of Synod 1983*, pp. 676-77) was in response to Overture 44, Classis Toronto (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 579), which pointed out, among other things, that "our present English translation [that is, the one printed in the current edition of the *Psalter Hymnal*] is often a free, rather than theologically precise translation" and there are points at which "there are [documented] omissions and inaccuracies." The overture observed further, "The present translation appears to be based on the Dutch translation (officially approved at Dort) rather than on the original Latin text adopted and signed by the full Synod of Dort. The latter should be the basis of translation."

The present English translation of the Canons used in the Christian Reformed Church dates from the late eighteenth century. As far as the committee can determine, the Canons were translated from the Dutch in the 1780s by John Livingston, one of the fathers of the Reformed Church in America. This translation, adopted by the RCA and first published in *The Constitution of the Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America* (New York: Printed and sold by W. Durell, 1793), omits the Rejection of Errors sections.

When Classis Hackensack joined the CRC in 1890, it brought with it the RCA English translation of the Canons (without the Rejection of Errors). See, for example, the *Doctrinal Standards of the Christian Reformed Church* (Paterson, NJ: Publication Committee of Classis Hackensack, 1907).

At the Synod of 1910 a committee for the translation of the confessional writings submitted a report containing a new translation of the Rejection of Errors and suggestions for the improvement of the rest of the Canons. This version, based on the old RCA translation, was approved by the Synod of 1912 and first appeared in the *Psalter* of 1914.

Attempts to obtain a new translation of the Canons go back as far as 1936, when a committee for translation was appointed (*Acts of Synod 1936*, pp. 73, 151). That committee, having reported in 1938, submitting a sample of the First Head of Doctrine (*Acts of Synod 1938*, pp. 43, 290), and again in 1942 (*Acts of Synod 1942*, pp. 79, 344), was apparently not heard from after 1942. One of the original committee members, Dr. William Hendriksen, had, it appears from various correspondence, made a translation of the Canons, which, after Dr. Hendriksen's withdrawal from the committee, was made briefly available to Dr. Anthony A. Hoekema.

The history of our present committee appears to begin in 1973, when synod instructed the New Confession Committee, chaired by Dr. Lubbertus Oosterdorp, to interpret its mandate to include "evaluating the need for translating the

Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort into contemporary English" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 65, 107). The New Confession Committee recommended "that synod acquire a new translation of the Canons of Dort for use in the churches," and also that a small committee be appointed, "including one Latin expert and one English expert," to study the feasibility of adopting and completing Dr. Hoekema's 1968 partial translation of the Canons (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 542). Synod adopted the first recommendation, including the committee's grounds (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 104), but adopted the following revision of the second: "That synod instruct the New Confession Committee to provide synod with a new translation of the complete text of the Canons, making use of the translation made by Dr. A. Hoekema, and of the services of English and Latin experts as needed" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 105).

The Synod of 1978 continued the New Confession Committee "to complete . . . the production of a new translation of the Canons of Dort" (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 509). Reporting the willingness of Dr. Ford Lewis Battles, "an expert Latinist," to undertake a new translation, and requesting the assistance of Mr. Peter De Klerk, theological librarian, in that task, the committee recommended its own discharge and the appointment of a new committee consisting of Dr. Lubbertus Oostendorp and Dr. John H. Kromminga of a former committee, and of Dr. Battles and Mr. De Klerk. The recommendation was adopted by synod, with the modification that Dr. Hoekema be added to the committee and that Dr. Battles be designated a consultant (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 138).

The newly constituted committee never met (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 460), and it questioned synod in 1983 whether its mandate should be continued. Prompted by Overture 44 from Classis Toronto, synod reaffirmed the committee's mandate as described above in this report, and reconstituted its membership to consist of Mr. Peter De Klerk (chairman), Rev. Elco H. Oostendorp, Mr. Donald Sinnema, Dr. Richard R. Tiemersma (reporter), and Dr. Albert M. Wolters.

B. Description of the Committee's Work

The committee began its work in the summer of 1983. At its first meeting, on October 14, 1983, it adopted, with the changes considered necessary, the guidelines entitled "Principles of Translation" (*Acts of Synod 1970*, p. 461) approved by synod (*Acts of Synod 1970*, p. 60) for the translation of the Heidelberg Catechism and adapted for the translation of the Belgic Confession:

1. We take it to be our task, in keeping with the mandate of synod, to prepare a new translation and not only to revise or correct the present translation. And therefore we shall try, as objectively as possible, to understand fully what the original is trying to say, and then, as fully and accurately as possible, to relay that meaning into contemporary English. We believe we ought to make this translation into English wholly modern and idiomatic, yet without being colloquial, dignified without being archaic.

2. We further believe that there is no virtue per se in attempting to transmit into English matters of style, syntax, structure, word order, sentence division, etc., which are part of the natural characteristics of the original, but which are less natural when brought over into English. In such matters the demands of good style for contemporary English should be followed.

3. And we believe that it follows from this that the main unit of translation must be, not the individual word or phrase, but the larger unit of thought

which so frequently helps determine the meaning of individual words and phrases, viz., the sentence.

4. We recognize that the original language of the Canons is Latin, and so we take as our standard and authoritative text the original Latin. But we shall not hesitate to let early translations, e.g., Dutch and English, illuminate, clarify, or give detail to our understanding of the Latin text.

5. We assume that this is to be, in the full sense, a translation and not a paraphrase, and furthermore that this is to be a translation aimed at no particular goal, e.g., ease of memorization, other than one which can with dignity bear the name of an official translation.

Mr. Sinnema and Dr. Wolters were appointed translators for the committee. From Dr. Richard F. Wevers of the Calvin College Department of Classics they received invaluable aid in the form of a computerized concordance of the original Latin manuscript.

Our committee has based its translation on the original manuscript of the Latin text of the Canons. It is the handwritten Latin text (now kept in the Archives and Library of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk in The Hague) which was signed by all the delegates of the Synod of Dort and is therefore legally the most authentic text. Because of printing errors, the printed editions of the Latin text do not agree on a few points with the handwritten manuscript.

In the latter sessions of the Synod of Dort a Dutch translation from the Latin was officially approved (but not signed by the delegates). Since it is a translation, this official Dutch translation is secondary in status to the original Latin text. Our committee has used this Dutch translation to assist in interpretation of the Latin text.

The decision to base our translation on the original Latin manuscript has implied:

1. That we have restored the official title of the Canons. The Latin title is *Judicium Synodi Dordracenae de Quinque doctrinae Capitibus in Belgio controversis*. This we have translated "THE DECISION OF THE SYNOD OF DORT on the five Chapters of Doctrine in Dispute in the Netherlands." This title makes clear that the Canons are first of all an ecclesiastical statement of a judicial nature concerning doctrinal points in dispute during the Arminian controversy. Since, however, this document has from the beginning been commonly known as the "Canons," we have prefaced the official title with the phrase "THE CANONS OF DORT formally titled."

2. That we have restored the official subtitle of Chapter One, which was dropped in most printed editions. The subtitle in Latin is *Sententia de Divina Praedestinatione, quam Synodus Verbo Dei consentaneam, atque in Ecclesiis Reformatis hactenus receptam esse judicat quibusdam Articulis exposita*. This we have translated "The Judgment Concerning Divine Predestination Which the Synod Declares to Be in Agreement with the Word of God and Accepted Till Now in the Reformed Churches, Set Forth in Several Articles."

3. That our translation does not include some references to Scripture which are found in the printed editions and translations.

4. That Scripture citations may reflect a different original text than that on which modern versions are based, for example, as in Chapter I, Article 6 (Acts 15:18).

To aid in the interpretation of fine points in the Canons, we have consulted copies of early drafts of the Canons and of amendment suggestions submitted by the various delegations at the Synod of Dort. Since these documents show the formation of many of the articles, it is sometimes possible to discover the reason for the use of certain words and phrases, as well as their precise meaning.

Also used in translation were a wide range of translations of the Canons, compiled by Mr. De Klerk, some fifteen in all, ranging from the first handwritten Latin text, through the first printed Dutch translation, to the translation by Dr. Hoekema.

Having considered using a strophic format for the translation, as was suggested in the overture of Classis Toronto (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 579, point 2), we have decided against doing so, on the grounds that the Canons are a judicial definition (as distinct from a "confession") of certain points in the Belgic Confession. As such, they are a limited commentary (indeed, relegated to the secondary role of an "explanation" in the Form of Subscription) which does not lend itself to quasi-poetic treatment.

We have also decided not to translate the original preface to the Canons. Although this preface was officially approved at the Synod of Dort and appears in many early editions of the Canons, it was not signed by the delegates of Dort and so does not have the same status as the five chapters of the Canons and the Conclusion. This original preface well conveys the controversial context in which the Canons were formed and indicates the purpose of the Canons, but its dated character and polemical tone do not recommend it for inclusion along with the doctrinal standards of the CRC.

Scripture texts quoted in the Canons constituted a special problem. Not only may they reflect an imperfect understanding of the Hebrew or Greek, but they may also be based on a corrupt original text (notoriously in Chapter I, Article 6, where the *textus receptus* of Acts 15:18 is quoted). Moreover, the Latin sometimes merely refers to a text which the Dutch quotes, at least partially (for example, Ephesians 1:11 in Chapter I, Article 6). Since the argument of an article frequently depends on the reading of a Scripture passage as cited in the Latin (otherwise, for example, the citation of Acts 15:18 is incomprehensible), we have decided to follow the Latin text in translating Scripture quotations. This means that the translations of quoted Scripture texts do not reproduce current English Bible versions, except insofar as they may correspond to the Latin of the Canons. Where it has been possible we have followed the language of the New International Version.

A further problem in translation was caused by the long, involved Latin sentences in which the original Canons were couched. Extreme care had to be taken to avoid conceptual distortion by breaking the text into shorter, simpler English sentences. When faced with the choice between conceptual precision and felicitous, idiomatic style, we have given priority to precision. We have, however, tried to avoid heavily Latinate phraseology and diction, technical theological terminology, and "King James" English, hoping to produce a text which is not only dignified but also, as far as possible, readable by other English-speaking Reformed churches.

On the question of "inclusive language," we acknowledge that the language of the Canons may sometimes offend modern sensibilities. Here, again, we have taken as our standard the Latin text. We have, however, chosen wherever possible such unambiguous English equivalents as "people," "persons,"

"human beings" for generic Latin terms when the common English equivalent (*homines*—men, for example) would be ambiguous.

II. A PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION OF THE CANONS OF DORT

THE CANONS OF DORT
formally titled
THE DECISION
OF THE SYNOD OF DORT
on the Five Chapters of Doctrine
in Dispute in the Netherlands

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF DOCTRINE
ON DIVINE ELECTION AND REPROBATION

THE JUDGMENT CONCERNING DIVINE PREDESTINATION
WHICH THE SYNOD DECLARES TO BE
IN AGREEMENT WITH THE WORD OF GOD
AND ACCEPTED TILL NOW IN THE REFORMED CHURCHES,
SET FORTH IN SEVERAL ARTICLES

Article One

Since all people have sinned in Adam and have come under the sentence of the curse and eternal death, God would have done no one an injustice if it had pleased him to leave the entire human race in sin and under the curse, and to condemn them on account of their sin. As the apostle says: *The whole world is liable to the condemnation of God (Rom. 3:19), All have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), and The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).*

Article Two

But this is how God showed his love: he sent his only begotten Son into the world, so that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Article Three

In order that people may be brought to faith, God out of mercy sends proclaimers of this very joyful message to the people he wishes and at the time he wishes. By this ministry people are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified. *For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without someone preaching? And how shall they preach unless they have been sent? (Rom. 10:14–15).*

Article Four

God's wrath remains on those who do not believe this gospel. But those who do accept it and embrace Jesus the Savior with a true and living faith are delivered through him from God's anger and from destruction, and receive the gift of eternal life.

Article Five

The cause or blame for this unbelief, as well as for all other sins, is not at all in God, but in man. Faith in Jesus Christ, however, and salvation through him is a free gift of God. As Scripture says, *It is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is a gift of God* (Eph. 2:8). Likewise: *It has been freely given to you to believe in Christ* (Phil. 1:29).

Article Six

The fact that some receive from God the gift of faith within time, and that others do not, stems from his eternal decision. *For all his works are known to God from eternity* (Acts 15:18; Eph. 1:11). In accordance with this decision he graciously softens the hearts, however hard, of his chosen ones and inclines them to believe; but by his just judgment he leaves in their wickedness and hardness of heart those who have not been chosen. And in this especially is disclosed to us his act—unfathomable, and as merciful as it is just—of distinguishing between people equally lost. This is the well-known decision of election and reprobation revealed in God's Word. This decision the wicked, impure, and unstable distort to their own ruin, but it provides holy and godly souls with comfort beyond words.

Article Seven

Election [or choosing] is God's unchangeable purpose by which he did the following:

Before the foundation of the world, by sheer grace, according to the free good pleasure of his will, he chose in Christ to salvation a definite number of particular people out of the entire human race, which had fallen by its own fault from its original innocence into sin and ruin. Those chosen were neither better nor more deserving than the others, but lay with them in the common misery. He chose them in Christ, whom he also appointed from eternity to be the mediator, the head of all those chosen, and the foundation of their salvation.

And so he decided to give the chosen ones to Christ to be saved, and to call and draw them effectively into Christ's fellowship through his Word and Spirit. In other words, he decided to grant them true faith in Christ, to justify them, to sanctify them, and finally, after powerfully preserving them in the fellowship of his Son, to glorify them.

God did all this in order to demonstrate his mercy and to give praise to the riches of his glorious grace.

As Scripture says, *God chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, so that we should be holy and blameless before him with love; he predestined us whom he adopted as his children through Jesus Christ, in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, by which he freely made us pleasing to himself in his beloved* (Eph. 1:4–6). And elsewhere, *Those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified; and those whom he justified, he also glorified* (Rom. 8:30).

Article Eight

This election is not of many kinds; it is one and the same election for all who were to be saved in the Old and the New Testament. For Scripture declares that there is a single good pleasure, purpose, and plan of God's will, by which he chose us from eternity both to grace and to glory, both to salvation and to the way of salvation, which he prepared in advance for us to walk in.

Article Nine

This same election took place, not *on the basis of* foreseen faith, of the obedience of faith, of holiness, or of any other good quality and disposition, as though it were based on a prerequisite cause or condition in the person of his choice, but rather *for the purpose of* faith, of the obedience of faith, of holiness, and so on. Accordingly, election is the source of each of the benefits of salvation; from election faith, holiness, and the other saving gifts, and at last eternal life itself, flow forth as its fruits and effects. As the apostle says, *He chose us (not because we were, but) so that we might be holy and blameless before him in love* (Eph. 1:4).

Article Ten

But the cause of this undeserved election is exclusively the good pleasure of God. This does not involve his choosing certain human qualities or actions from among all those possible as a condition of salvation, but rather involves his adopting certain particular persons from among the common mass of sinners as his own possession. As Scripture says, *When the children were not yet born, and had done nothing either good or bad. . . , she (Rebecca) was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated"* (Rom. 9:11–13). Also, *All who were appointed for eternal life believed* (Acts 13:48).

Article Eleven

Just as God himself is most wise, unchangeable, all-knowing, and almighty, so the election made by him can neither be suspended nor altered, revoked, or annulled; neither can his chosen ones be cast off, nor their number reduced.

Article Twelve

Assurance of this their eternal and unchangeable election to salvation is given to the chosen in due time, though by various stages and in differing measure. Such assurance comes not by inquisitive searching into the hidden and deep things of God, but by noticing within themselves, with spiritual joy and holy delight, the fruits of election, pointed out in God's Word, which do not deceive—such as a true faith in Christ, a childlike fear of God, a godly sorrow for their sins, a hunger and thirst for righteousness, and so on.

Article Thirteen

In the awareness and assurance of this election God's children daily find greater cause to humble themselves before God, to adore the fathomless depth of his mercies, to cleanse themselves, and to give fervent love in return to him who first so greatly loved them. This is far from saying that this teaching

concerning election, and reflection upon it, make God's children lax in observing his commandments or carnally self-assured. By God's just judgment this does usually happen to those who casually take for granted the grace of election or engage in idle and brazen talk about it but are unwilling to walk in the ways of the chosen.

Article Fourteen

Just as, by God's wise plan, this teaching concerning divine election has been proclaimed through the prophets, Christ himself, and the apostles, in Old and New Testament times, and has subsequently been committed to writing in the Holy Scriptures, so also today in God's church, for which it was specifically intended, this teaching must be set forth with a spirit of discretion, in a godly and holy manner, at the appropriate time and place, without inquisitive searching into the ways of the Most High. This must be done for the glory of God's most holy name, and for the lively comfort of his people.

Article Fifteen

Moreover, Holy Scripture most especially highlights this eternal and undeserved grace of our election and brings it out more clearly, in that it further bears witness that not all people have been chosen but that some have not been chosen or have been passed by in God's eternal election—those, that is, concerning whom God, in his entirely free, most just, irreproachable, and unchangeable good pleasure, made the following decision:

- to leave them in the common misery into which, by their own fault, they have plunged themselves;
- not to grant them saving faith and the grace of conversion;
- but finally to condemn and eternally punish them (having been left in their own ways and under his just judgment), not only for their unbelief but also for all their other sins, in order to display his justice.

And this is the decision of reprobation, which does not at all make God the author of sin (a blasphemous thought!) but rather its fearful, irreproachable, just judge and avenger.

Article Sixteen

Those who do not yet actively experience within themselves a living faith in Christ or an assured confidence of heart, peace of conscience, a zeal for childlike obedience, and a glorying in God through Christ, but who nevertheless use the means by which God has promised to work these things in us—such people ought not to be alarmed at the mention of reprobation, nor to count themselves among the reprobate; rather they ought to continue diligently in the use of the means, to desire fervently a time of more abundant grace, and to wait for it in reverence and humility. On the other hand, those who seriously desire to turn to God, to be pleasing to him alone, and to be delivered from the body of death, but are not yet able to make such progress along the way of godliness and faith as they would like—such people ought much less to stand in fear of the teaching concerning reprobation, since our merciful God has promised that he will not snuff out a smoldering wick and that he will not break a bruised reed. However, those who have forgotten God and their Savior Jesus Christ and have abandoned themselves wholly to the cares of the world and

the pleasures of the flesh—such people have every reason to stand in fear of this teaching, as long as they do not seriously turn to God.

Article Seventeen

Since we must make judgments about God's will from his Word, which testifies that the children of believers are holy, not by nature but by virtue of the gracious covenant in which they together with their parents are included, godly parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom God calls out of this life in infancy.

Article Eighteen

To those who complain about this grace of an undeserved election and about the severity of a just reprobation, we reply with the words of the apostle, *Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?* (Rom. 9:20), and with the words of our Savior, *Have I no right to do what I want with my own?* (Matt. 20:15). We, however, with reverent adoration of these secret things, cry out with the apostle: *Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Or who has first given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen* (Rom. 11:33–36).

REJECTION OF THE ERRORS BY WHICH THE DUTCH CHURCHES HAVE FOR SOME TIME BEEN DISTURBED

Having set forth the orthodox teaching concerning election and reprobation, the Synod rejects the errors of those

I

Who teach that the will of God to save those who would believe and persevere in faith and in the obedience of faith is the whole and entire decision of election to salvation, and that nothing else concerning this decision has been revealed in God's Word.

For they deceive the simple and plainly contradict Holy Scripture in its testimony that God does not only wish to save those who would believe, but that he has also from eternity chosen certain particular people to whom, rather than to others, he would within time grant faith in Christ and perseverance. As Scripture says, *I have revealed your name to those whom you gave me* (John 17:6). Likewise, *All who were appointed for eternal life believed* (Acts 13:48), and, *He chose us before the foundation of the world so that we should be holy. . .* (Eph. 1:4).

II

Who teach that God's election to eternal life is of many kinds: one general and indefinite, the other particular and definite; and the latter in turn either incomplete, revocable, non-preemptory (conditional), or else complete, irrevocable, and preemptory (absolute). Likewise, who teach that there is one election to faith and

another to salvation, so that there can be an election to justifying faith apart from a peremptory election to salvation.

For this is an invention of the human brain, devised apart from the Scriptures, which distorts the teaching concerning election and breaks up this golden chain of salvation: *Those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified; and those whom he justified, he also glorified* (Rom. 8:30).

III

Who teach that God's good pleasure and purpose, which Scripture mentions in its teaching of election, does not involve God's choosing certain particular people rather than others, but involves God's choosing, out of all possible conditions (including the works of the law) or out of the whole order of things, the intrinsically unworthy act of faith, as well as the imperfect obedience of faith, to be a condition of salvation; and it involves his graciously wishing to count this as perfect obedience and to look upon it as worthy of the reward of eternal life.

For by this pernicious error the good pleasure of God and the merit of Christ are robbed of their effectiveness and people are drawn away, by unprofitable inquiries, from the truth of undeserved justification and from the simplicity of the Scriptures. It also gives the lie to these words of the apostle: *God called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of works, but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time* (2 Tim. 1:9).

IV

Who teach that in election to faith a prerequisite condition is that man should rightly use the light of nature, be upright, unassuming, humble, and disposed to eternal life, as though election depended to some extent on these factors.

For this smacks of Pelagius, and it clearly calls into question the words of the apostle: *We lived at one time in the passions of our flesh, following the will of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in transgressions, made us alive with Christ, by whose grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with him and seated us with him in heaven in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith (and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God) not by works, so that no one can boast* (Eph. 2:3-9).

V

Who teach that the incomplete and nonperemptory election of particular persons to salvation occurred on the basis of a foreseen faith, repentance, holiness, and godliness, which has just begun or continued for some time; but that complete and peremptory election occurred on the basis of a foreseen perseverance to the end in faith, repentance, holiness, and godliness. And that this is the gracious and evangelical worthiness, on account of which the one who is chosen is more worthy than the one who is not chosen. And therefore that faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, godliness, and perseverance are not fruits or effects of an unchangeable election to glory, but indispensable conditions and causes, which are prerequisite in those who are to be chosen in his complete election, and which are foreseen as achieved in them.

This runs counter to the entire Scripture, which throughout impresses upon our ears and hearts these sayings among others: *Election is not of works, but of him*

who calls (Rom. 9:11); All who were appointed for eternal life believed (Acts 13:48); He chose us in himself so that we should be holy (Eph. 1:4); You did not choose me, but I chose you (John 15:16); If by grace, not by works (Rom. 11:6); In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son (1 John 4:10).

VI

Who teach that not every election to salvation is unchangeable, but that some of the chosen can perish and do in fact perish eternally, with no decision of God to prevent it.

By this gross error they make God changeable, destroy the comfort of the godly concerning the steadfastness of their election, and contradict the Holy Scriptures, which teach that *the chosen can not be led astray (Matt. 24:24)*, that *Christ does not lose those given to him by the Father (John 6:39)*, and that *those whom God predestined, called, and justified, he also glorifies (Rom. 8:30).*

VII

Who teach that in this life there is no fruit, no awareness, and no assurance of one's unchangeable election to glory, except as conditional upon something changeable and contingent.

For not only is it absurd to speak of an uncertain assurance, but these things also militate against the experience of the saints, who with the apostle rejoice from an awareness of their election and sing the praises of this gift of God; who, as Christ urged, *rejoice with his disciples that their names have been written in heaven (Luke 10:20)*; and finally who hold up against the flaming arrows of the devil's temptations the awareness of their election, with the question *Who will bring any charge against God's chosen ones? (Rom. 8:33).*

VIII

Who teach that it was not on the basis of his just will alone that God decided to leave anyone in the fall of Adam and in the common state of sin and condemnation or to pass anyone by in the imparting of grace necessary for faith and conversion.

For these words stand fast: *He has mercy on whom he wishes, and he hardens whom he wishes (Rom. 9:18).* And also: *To you it has been given to know the secret things of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given (Matt. 13:11).* Likewise: *I give glory to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding, and have revealed them to little children; yes, Father, because that was your pleasure (Matt. 11:25-26).*

IX

Who teach that the cause for God's sending the gospel to one people rather than to another is not merely and solely God's good pleasure, but rather that one people is better and worthier than the other to whom the gospel is not communicated.

For Moses contradicts this when he addresses the people of Israel as follows: *Behold, to Jehovah your God belongs heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and whatever is in it. But Jehovah was inclined in his affection to love your ancestors alone, and chose out their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day (Deut.*

10:14–15). And also Christ: *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! for if those mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes* (Matt. 11:21).

THE SECOND CHAPTER OF DOCTRINE ON CHRIST'S DEATH AND HUMAN REDEMPTION THROUGH IT

Article One

God is not only supremely merciful, but also supremely just. His justice requires (as he has revealed himself in the Word) that the sins we have committed against his infinite majesty be punished with both temporal and eternal punishments, of soul as well as body. We cannot escape these punishments unless satisfaction is given to God's justice.

Article Two

However, since we ourselves cannot give this satisfaction or deliver ourselves from God's anger, God in his boundless mercy has given us as a guarantee his only begotten Son, who was made to be sin and a curse for us, in our place, on the cross, in order that he might give satisfaction for us.

Article Three

This death of God's Son is the only and entirely complete sacrifice and satisfaction for sins, and it is of infinite value and worth, more than sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world.

Article Four

This death is of such great value and worth for the reason that the person who suffered it is—as was necessary to be our Savior—not only a true and perfectly holy man, but also the only begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Another reason is that this death was accompanied by the experience of God's anger and curse, which *we* by our sins had fully deserved.

Article Five

Moreover, it is the promise of the gospel that whoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be announced and declared without differentiating or discriminating, to all nations and people, to whom God in his good pleasure sends the gospel.

Article Six

However, that many who have been called through the gospel do not repent or believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, is not because the sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross is deficient or insufficient, but because they themselves are at fault.

Article Seven

But all who genuinely believe and are delivered and saved by Christ's death from their sins and from destruction receive this favor solely from God's grace—which he owes to no one—given to them in Christ from eternity.

Article Eight

For it was the entirely free plan and very gracious will and intention of God the Father that the enlivening and saving effectiveness of his Son's costly death should work itself out in all his chosen ones, in order to grant justifying faith to them only and thereby to lead them without fail to salvation. In other words, it was God's will that Christ through the blood of the cross (by which he confirmed the new covenant) should effectively redeem from every people, tribe, nation, and language all those and only those who were chosen from eternity to salvation and given to him by the Father; that he should grant them faith (which, like the Holy Spirit's other gifts of salvation, he acquired for them by his death); that he should cleanse them by his blood from all their sins, both original and actual, whether committed before or after believing; that he should faithfully preserve them to the very end; and that he should finally present them to himself, a glorious people, without spot or wrinkle.

Article Nine

This plan, arising out of God's eternal love for his chosen ones, from the beginning of the world to the present time has been powerfully carried out and will also be carried out in the future, the gates of hell seeking vainly to prevail against it. As a result the chosen are gathered into one, each in their own time, and there is always a church of believers founded on Christ's blood, a church which steadfastly loves, persistently worships, and—here and in all eternity—praises him as her Savior who laid down his life for her on the cross, as a bridegroom for his bride.

REJECTION OF THE ERRORS

Having set forth the orthodox teaching, the Synod rejects the errors of those

I

Who teach that God the Father appointed his Son to death on the cross without a fixed and definite plan to save anyone by name, so that the necessity, usefulness, and worth of what Christ's death obtained could have stood intact and altogether perfect, complete and whole, even if the redemption that was obtained had never in actual fact been applied to any individual.

For this assertion is an insult to the wisdom of God the Father and to the merit of Jesus Christ, and it is contrary to Scripture. For the Savior speaks as follows: *I lay down my life for the sheep, and I know them* (John 10:15, 27). And Isaiah the prophet says concerning the Savior: *When he shall make himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days and the will of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand* (Isa. 53:10). Finally, this undermines the article of the creed in which we confess what we believe concerning the Church.

II

Who teach that the purpose of Christ's death was not to establish in actual fact a new covenant of grace by his blood, but only to acquire for the Father the mere right to enter once more into a covenant with men, whether of grace or of works.

For this conflicts with Scripture, which teaches that Christ *has become the guarantee and mediator of a better—that is, a new—covenant* (Heb. 7:22; 9:15), and that *a will is in force only when someone has died* (Heb. 9:17).

III

Who teach that Christ, by the satisfaction which he gave, did not certainly merit for anyone salvation itself and the faith by which this satisfaction of Christ is effectively applied to salvation, but only acquired for the Father the authority or plenary will to relate in a new way with men and to impose such new conditions as he chose, and that the satisfying of these conditions depends on the free choice of man. Consequently, that it was possible that either all or none would fulfill them.

For they have too low an opinion of the death of Christ, do not at all acknowledge the foremost fruit or benefit which it brings forth, and summon back from hell the Pelagian error.

IV

Who teach that what is involved in the new covenant of grace which God the Father made with men through the intervening of Christ's death, is not that we are justified before God and saved through faith, insofar as it accepts Christ's merit, but rather that God, having withdrawn his demand for perfect obedience to the law, counts faith itself, and the imperfect obedience of faith, as perfect obedience to the law, and graciously looks upon this as worthy of the reward of eternal life.

For they contradict Scripture: *They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ, whom God presented as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood* (Rom. 3:24–25). And along with the ungodly Socinus, they introduce a new and foreign justification of man before God, against the consensus of the whole church.

V

Who teach that all people have been received into the state of reconciliation and into the grace of the covenant, so that no one on account of original sin is liable to condemnation, or is to be condemned, but that all are free of the guilt of this sin.

For this opinion conflicts with Scripture which asserts that we are by nature children of wrath.

VI

Who make use of the distinction between obtaining and applying in order to instill in the unwary and inexperienced the opinion that God, as far as he is concerned, wished to bestow equally upon all people the benefits which are gained by Christ's death; but that the distinction by which some rather than others come to share in the forgiveness of sins and eternal life depends on their own free choice (which applies itself to the grace offered indiscriminately) but does not

depend on the unique gift of mercy which effectively works in them, so that they, rather than others, apply that grace to themselves.

For, while pretending to set forth this distinction in an acceptable sense, they attempt to give the people the deadly poison of Pelagianism.

VII

Who teach that Christ neither could die, nor had to die, nor did die for those whom God so dearly loved and chose to eternal life, since such people do not need the death of Christ.

For they contradict the Apostle, who says: *Christ loved me and gave himself up for me* (Gal. 2:20), and likewise: *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died, that is, for them* (Rom. 8:33–34). They also contradict the Savior, who asserts: *I lay down my life for the sheep* (John 10:15), and *My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends* (John 15:12–13).

THE THIRD AND FOURTH CHAPTERS OF DOCTRINE ON MAN'S CORRUPTION, HIS CONVERSION TO GOD, AND THE WAY IT OCCURS

Article One

Man was originally created in the image of God and was furnished in his mind with a true and saving knowledge of his Creator and things spiritual, in his will and heart with righteousness, and in all his emotions with purity; and, indeed, the whole man was holy. However, rebelling against God at the devil's instigation and by his own free will, he deprived himself of these outstanding gifts. Rather, in their place he brought upon himself blindness, terrible darkness, futility, and distortion of judgment in his mind; perversity, defiance, and hardness in his heart and will; and finally impurity in all his emotions.

Article Two

Man brought forth children of the same nature as he was himself after the fall. That is to say, being corrupt he brought forth corrupt children. The corruption spread, by God's just judgment, from Adam to all his descendants—except for Christ alone—not by way of imitation (as in former times the Pelagians would have it) but by way of the propagation of his perverted nature.

Article Three

Therefore, all people are conceived in sin and are born children of wrath, unfit for any saving good, prone to evil, dead in their sins, and slaves to sin; without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they are neither willing nor able to return to God, to reform their distorted nature, or even to dispose themselves to such reform.

Article Four

There is, to be sure, a certain light of nature remaining in man after the fall, by virtue of which he retains some notions about God, natural things, and the difference between what is moral and immoral, and demonstrates a certain eagerness for virtue and for good outward behavior. But this light of nature is far from enabling man to come to a saving knowledge of God and conversion to him—so far, in fact, that man does not use it rightly even in matters of nature and society. Instead, in various ways he completely distorts this light, whatever its precise character, and suppresses it in unrighteousness. In doing so he renders himself without excuse before God.

Article Five

In this respect, what is true of the light of nature is true also of the Ten Commandments given by God through Moses specifically to the Jews. For man cannot obtain saving grace through the Decalogue, because, although it does expose the magnitude of his sin and increasingly convict him of his guilt, yet it does not offer a remedy or enable him to escape from his misery, and, indeed, weakened as it is by the flesh, leaves the offender under the curse.

Article Six

What, therefore, neither the light of nature nor the law can do, God accomplishes by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the Word or the ministry of reconciliation. This is the gospel about the Messiah, through which it has pleased God to save believers, in both the Old and New Testament.

Article Seven

In the Old Testament, God revealed this secret of his will to a small number; in the New Testament (now without any distinction between peoples) he discloses it to a large number. The reason for this difference must not be ascribed to the greater worth of one nation over another, or to a better use of the light of nature, but to the free good pleasure and undeserved love of God. Therefore, those who receive so much grace, beyond and in spite of all they deserve, ought to acknowledge it with humble and thankful hearts; on the other hand, with the apostle they ought to adore (but certainly not inquisitively search into) the severity and justice of God's judgments on the others, who do not receive this grace.

Article Eight

Nevertheless, all who are called through the gospel are called seriously. For seriously and most genuinely God makes known in his Word what is pleasing to him: that those who are called should come to him. Seriously he also promises rest for their souls and eternal life to all who come to him and believe.

Article Nine

The fact that many who are called through the ministry of the gospel do not come and are not brought to conversion must not be blamed on the gospel, nor on Christ, who is offered through the gospel, nor on God, who calls them

through the gospel and even bestows various gifts on them, but on the people themselves who are called. Some in self-assurance do not even entertain the Word of life; others do entertain it but do not take it to heart, and for that reason, after the fleeting joy of a temporary faith, they relapse; others choke the seed of the Word with the thorns of life's cares and with the pleasures of the world and bring forth no fruit. This our Savior teaches in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13).

Article Ten

The fact that others who are called through the ministry of the gospel do come and are brought to conversion must not be credited to man, as though one distinguishes himself by free choice from others who are furnished with equal or sufficient grace for faith and conversion (as the proud heresy of Pealgius maintains). No, it must be credited to God: just as from eternity he chose his own in Christ, so within time he effectively calls them, grants them faith and repentance, and, having rescued them from the dominion of darkness, brings them into the kingdom of his Son, in order that they may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called them out of darkness into this marvelous light, and boast not in themselves, but in the Lord, as apostolic words frequently testify in Scripture.

Article Eleven

Moreover, when God carries out this good pleasure in his chosen ones, or works true conversion in them, not only does he see to it that the gospel is proclaimed to them outwardly, and enlighten their minds powerfully by the Holy Spirit so that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God, but also he, by the effective operation of the same regenerating Spirit, penetrates into the inmost being of man, opens the closed heart, softens the hard and circumcises the one uncircumcised. He infuses new qualities into the will, making the dead will alive, the evil one good, the unwilling one willing, and the stubborn one compliant; he activates and strengthens the will so that, like a good tree, it may be enabled to produce the fruits of good deeds.

Article Twelve

And this is the regeneration, the new creation, the raising from the dead and the making alive so clearly proclaimed in the Scriptures, which God works in us without our help. But this certainly does not happen only by outward teaching, by moral persuasion, or by such a way of working that, after God has done his work, it remains in man's power whether or not to be reborn or converted. Rather, it is an entirely supernatural work, one that is at the same time most powerful and most pleasing, a marvelous, hidden, and inexpressible work, which is not lesser or inferior in power than that of creation or of raising the dead, as Scripture (inspired by the author of this work) teaches. As a result, all those in whose hearts God works in this marvelous way are, certainly, unfailingly, and effectively reborn and do actually believe. And then the will, now renewed, is not only activated and motivated by God but in being activated by God is also itself active. For this reason, man himself, by that grace which he has received, is also rightly said to believe and to repent.

Article Thirteen

In this life believers cannot fully understand the way this work occurs; meanwhile, they rest content with knowing and experiencing that by this grace of God they do believe with the heart and love their Savior.

Article Fourteen

In this way, therefore, faith is a gift of God, not in the sense that it is offered by God for man to choose, but that it is in actual fact bestowed on man, breathed and infused into him. Nor is it a gift in the sense that God bestows only the potential to believe, but then awaits assent—the act of believing—from man's choice; rather, it is a gift in the sense that he who works both willing and acting and, indeed, works all things in all men produces in man both the will to believe and the belief itself.

Article Fifteen

God does not owe this grace to anyone. For what could God owe to one who has nothing to give that can be paid back? Indeed, what could God owe to one who has nothing of his own to give but sin and falsehood? Therefore the person who receives this grace owes and gives eternal thanks to God alone; the person who does not receive it either does not care at all about these spiritual things and is satisfied with himself in his condition or else in self-assurance foolishly boasts about having something which he lacks. Furthermore, following the example of the apostles, we are to think and to speak in the most favorable way about those who outwardly profess their faith and better their lives, for the inner chambers of the heart are unknown to us. But for others who have not yet been called, we are to pray to the God who calls things that do not exist as though they did. In no way, however, are we to pride ourselves as better than they, as though we had distinguished ourselves from them.

Article Sixteen

However, just as by the fall man did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will, and just as sin, which has spread through the whole human race, did not abolish the nature of the human race but distorted and spiritually killed it, so also this divine grace of regeneration does not act in people as if they were blocks and stones; nor does it abolish the will and its properties or coerce a reluctant will by force, but spiritually revives, heals, reforms, and—in a manner at once pleasing and powerful—bends it back. As a result, a ready and sincere obedience of the Spirit now begins to prevail where before the rebellion and resistance of the flesh were completely dominant. It is in this that the true and spiritual restoration and freedom of our will consists. Thus, if the marvelous Maker of every good thing were not dealing with us, man would have no hope of getting up from his fall by his free choice, by which he plunged himself into ruin when still standing upright.

Article Seventeen

Just as the almighty work of God by which he brings forth and sustains our natural life does not rule out but requires the use of means by which God has wished to exercise his power, according to his infinite wisdom and goodness,

so also the aforementioned supernatural work of God by which he regenerates us in no way rules out or cancels the use of the gospel, which God in his great wisdom has appointed to be the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul. For this reason, the apostles and the teachers who followed them taught the people in a godly manner about this grace of God, to give him the glory and to humble all pride, and yet did not neglect meanwhile to keep the people, by means of the holy admonitions of the gospel, under the administration of the Word, the sacraments, and discipline. So even today it is out of the question that the teachers or those taught in the church should presume to test God by separating what he in his good pleasure has wished to be closely joined together. For grace is bestowed through admonitions, and the more readily we perform our duty, the more lustrous the benefit of God working in us usually is and the better his work advances. To him alone, both for the means and for their saving fruit and effectiveness, all glory is owed forever. Amen.

REJECTION OF THE ERRORS

Having set forth the orthodox teaching, the Synod rejects the errors of those

I

Who teach that, properly speaking, it cannot be said that original sin in itself is enough to condemn the whole human race or to warrant temporal and eternal punishments.

For they contradict the apostle when he says: *Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death passed on to all men because all sinned* (Rom. 5:12); also: *The guilt followed one sin and brought condemnation* (Rom. 5:16); likewise: *The wages of sin is death* (Rom. 6:23).

II

Who teach that the spiritual gifts or the good dispositions and virtues such as goodness, holiness, and righteousness could not have resided in man's will when he was first created, and therefore could not have been separated from the will at the fall.

For this conflicts with the apostle's description of the image of God in Ephesians 4:24, where he portrays the image in terms of righteousness and holiness, which definitely reside in the will.

III

Who teach that in spiritual death the spiritual gifts have not been separated from man's will, since the will in itself has never been corrupted but only hindered by the darkness of the mind and the unruliness of the emotions; and since the will is able to exercise its innate free capacity once these hindrances are removed, which is to say, it is able of itself to will or choose whatever good is set before it—or else not to will or choose it.

This is a novel idea and an error and has the effect of elevating the power of free choice, contrary to the words of Jeremiah the prophet: *The heart itself is deceitful above all things and wicked* (Jer. 17:9); and of the words of the apostle: *All*

of us also lived among them (the sons of disobedience) at one time in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of our flesh and thoughts (Eph. 2:3).

IV

Who teach that unregenerate man is not strictly or totally dead in his sins or deprived of all capacity for spiritual good but is able to hunger and thirst for righteousness or life and to offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit which is pleasing to God.

For these views are opposed to the plain testimonies of Scripture: *You were dead in your transgressions and sins (Eph. 2:1, 5); The imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil all the time (Gen. 6:5; 8:21).* Besides, to hunger and thirst for deliverance from misery and for life, and to offer God the sacrifice of a broken spirit is characteristic only of the regenerate and of those called blessed (Ps. 51:17; Matt. 5:6).

V

Who teach that corrupt and natural man can make such good use of common grace (by which they mean the light of nature) or of the gifts remaining after the fall that he is able thereby gradually to obtain a greater grace—evangelical or saving grace—as well as salvation itself; and that in this way God, for his part, shows himself ready to reveal Christ to all people, since he provides to all, to a sufficient extent and in an effective manner, the means necessary for the revealing of Christ, for faith, and for repentance.

For Scripture, not to mention the experience of all ages, testifies that this is false: *He makes known his words to Jacob, his statutes and his laws to Israel; he has done this for no other nation, and they do not know his laws (Ps. 147:19–20); In the past God let all nations go their own way (Acts 14:16); They (Paul and his companions) were kept by the Holy Spirit from speaking God's word in Asia; (and) When they had come to Mysia, they tried to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit would not allow them to (Acts 16:6–7).*

VI

Who teach that in the true conversion of man new qualities, dispositions, or gifts can not be infused or poured into his will by God, and indeed that the faith by which we first come to conversion and from which we receive the name "the faithful" or "believers" is not a quality or gift infused by God, but only an act of man, and that it can not be called a gift except in respect to the power of attaining faith.

For these views contradict the Holy Scriptures, which testify that God does infuse or pour into our hearts the new qualities of faith, obedience, and the experiencing of his love: *I will put my law in their minds, and write it on their hearts (Jer. 31:33); I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring (Isa. 44:3); The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (Rom. 5:5).* They also conflict with the continuous practice of the Church, which prays with the prophet: *Convert me, Lord, and I shall be converted (Jer. 31:18).*

VII

Who teach that the grace by which we are converted to God is nothing but a gentle persuasion, or (as others explain it) that the way of God's acting in man's

conversion that is most noble and suited to human nature is that which happens by persuasion, and that nothing prevents this grace of moral suasion even by itself from making natural men spiritual; indeed, that God does not produce the assent of the will except in this manner of moral suasion, and that the effectiveness of God's work by which it surpasses the work of Satan consists in the fact that God promises eternal benefits while Satan promises temporal ones.

For this teaching is entirely Pelagian and contrary to the whole of Scripture, which recognizes besides this persuasion also another, far more effective and divine way in which the Holy Spirit acts in man's conversion. As Ezekiel 36:26 puts it: *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; and I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. . . .*

VIII

Who teach that God in regenerating man does not bring to bear that power of his omnipotence whereby he may powerfully and unfailingly bend man's will to faith and conversion, but that even when God has accomplished all the works of grace which he uses for man's conversion, man nevertheless can, and in actual fact often does, so resist God and the Spirit as God intends and wishes to regenerate him, that man completely thwarts his own rebirth; and, indeed, that it remains in his own power whether or not to be reborn.

For this does away with all effective functioning of God's grace in our conversion and subjects the activity of Almighty God to the will of man; it is contrary to the apostles, who teach that *we believe by virtue of the effective working of God's mighty strength* (Eph. 1:19), and that *God fulfills the undeserved good will of his kindness and the work of faith in us with power* (2 Thess. 1:11), and likewise that *his divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness* (2 Peter 1:3).

IX

Who teach that grace and free choice are concurrent partial causes which cooperate to initiate conversion, and that grace does not precede—in the order of causality—the effective influence of the will; that is to say, that God does not effectively help man's will to come to conversion before man's will itself motivates and determines itself.

For the early church already condemned this doctrine long ago in the Pelagians, on the basis of the words of the apostle: *It does not depend on man's willing or running but on God's mercy* (Rom. 9:16); also: *Who makes you different from anyone else? and What do you have that you did not receive?* (1 Cor. 4:7); likewise: *It is God who works in you to will and act according to his good pleasure* (Phil. 2:13).

THE FIFTH CHAPTER OF DOCTRINE ON THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Article One

Those people whom God according to his purpose calls into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord and regenerates by the Holy Spirit, he also sets free from the reign and slavery of sin, though in this life not entirely from the flesh and from the body of sin.

Article Two

Hence the daily sins of our weakness arise, and blemishes cling to even the best works of God's people, giving them continual cause to humble themselves before God, to flee for refuge to Christ crucified, to put the flesh to death more and more by the Spirit of supplication and by holy exercises of godliness, and to strain toward the goal of perfection, until they are freed from this body of death and reign with the Lamb of God in heaven.

Article Three

Because of these remnants of sin dwelling in them and also because of the temptations of the world and Satan, those who have been converted could not remain standing in this grace if left to their own resources. But God is faithful and mercifully strengthens them in the grace once conferred on them and powerfully preserves them in it to the end.

Article Four

Although that power of God strengthening and preserving true believers in grace is more than a match for the flesh, yet those converted are not always so activated and motivated by God that in certain specific actions they cannot by their own fault depart from the leading of grace, be led astray by the desires of the flesh, and give in to them. For this reason they must constantly watch and pray that they may not be led into temptations. When they fail to do this, not only *can* they be carried away by the flesh, the world, and Satan into sins, even serious and outrageous ones, but also by God's just permission they sometimes *are* so carried away—witness the sad cases, described in Scripture, of David, Peter, and other saints falling.

Article Five

By such monstrous sins, however, they greatly offend God, deserve the sentence of death, grieve the Holy Spirit, suspend the exercise of faith, severely wound the conscience, and sometimes lose the awareness of grace for a time—until, after they have returned to the way by genuine repentance, God's fatherly face again shines upon them.

Article Six

For God, who is rich in mercy, according to his unchangeable purpose of election does not take his Holy Spirit from his own completely, even in the sad cases of their falling. Neither does he let them fall down to the point that they forfeit the grace of adoption and the state of justification, or commit the sin which leads to death (the sin against the Holy Spirit), and plunge themselves, entirely forsaken by him, into eternal ruin.

Article Seven

For, in the first place, in these cases of falling God preserves in his people his imperishable seed from which they have been born again, lest it perish or be dislodged. Secondly, by his Word and Spirit he certainly and effectively renews them to repentance so that they have a heartfelt and godly sorrow for the sins

they have committed; seek and obtain, through faith and with a contrite heart, forgiveness in the blood of the Mediator; experience again the grace of a reconciled God; adore through faith his mercies; and from then on more eagerly work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

Article Eight

So it is not by their own merits or strength but by God's undeserved mercy that they neither forfeit totally faith and grace nor remain to the end in their downfalls and are lost. With respect to themselves this not only easily could, but also undoubtedly would happen; but with respect to God it cannot possibly happen, since his plan cannot be changed, his promise cannot fail, the calling according to his purpose cannot be revoked, the merit of Christ as well as his interceding and preserving cannot be nullified, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit can neither be invalidated nor wiped out.

Article Nine

Concerning this preservation of those chosen to salvation and concerning the perseverance of true believers in faith, believers themselves can and do become assured in accordance with the measure of their faith by which they firmly believe that they are and always will remain true and living members of the church, and that they have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Article Ten

Accordingly, this assurance does not derive from some private revelation beyond or outside the Word, but from faith in the promises of God which he has very plentifully revealed in his Word for our comfort, from the testimony of the *Holy Spirit testifying with our spirit that we are God's children and heirs* (Rom. 8:16–17), and finally from a serious and holy pursuit of a clear conscience and of good works. And if God's chosen ones in this world did not have this well founded comfort that the victory will be theirs and this reliable guarantee of eternal glory, they would be of all people most miserable.

Article Eleven

Meanwhile, Scripture testifies that believers have to contend in this life with various doubts of the flesh and that under severe temptation they do not always experience this full assurance of faith and certainty of perseverance. But God, the Father of all comfort, *does not let them be tempted beyond what they can bear; but with the temptation he also provides a way out* (1 Cor. 10:13), and by the Holy Spirit he revives in them the assurance of their perseverance.

Article Twelve

However, this assurance of perseverance, so far from making true believers proud and carnally self-assured, is rather the true root of humility, of childlike respect, of genuine godliness, of endurance in every conflict, of fervent prayers, of steadfastness in crossbearing and in confessing the truth, and of well-founded joy in God. To consider this benefit provides an incentive to a serious and continual practice of thanksgiving and good works, as is evident from the testimonies of Scripture and the examples of the saints.

Article Thirteen

Neither does the renewed confidence of perseverance produce immorality or lack of concern for godliness in those put back on their feet after a fall, but it produces a much greater concern to observe carefully the ways of the Lord which he prepared in advance. They observe these ways in order that by walking in them they may maintain the assurance of their perseverance, lest, by their abuse of his fatherly goodness, the face of the gracious God (for the godly, looking upon his face is sweeter than life, but its withdrawal is more bitter than death) turn away from them again, with the result that they fall into greater anguish of spirit.

Article Fourteen

And, just as it has pleased God to begin this work of grace in us by the proclamation of the gospel, so he preserves, continues, and completes his work by the hearing and reading of the gospel, by meditation on it, by its exhortations, threats, and promises, and also by the use of the sacraments.

Article Fifteen

This teaching about the perseverance of true believers and saints, and about their assurance of it—a teaching which God has very richly revealed in his word for the glory of his name and for the comfort of the godly and which he impresses on the hearts of believers—the flesh does not understand. Satan hates, the world ridicules, the ignorant and the hypocrites abuse, and the spirits of error attack. The bride of Christ, on the other hand, has always loved this teaching very tenderly and defended it steadfastly as a priceless treasure; and God, against whom no plan can avail and no strength can prevail, will ensure that she will continue to do this. To this God alone, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

REJECTION OF THE ERRORS CONCERNING THE TEACHING OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Having set forth the orthodox teaching, the Synod rejects the errors of those

I

Who teach that the perseverance of true believers is not an effect of election or a gift of God produced by Christ's death, but a condition of the new covenant which man before what they call his "peremptory" election and justification must fulfill by his free will.

For Holy Scripture testifies that perseverance follows from election and is granted to the chosen by virtue of Christ's death, resurrection, and intercession: *The chosen obtained it: the others were hardened* (Rom. 11:7); likewise, *He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not, along with him, grant us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised—who also sits at the right hand of God, and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* (Rom. 8:32 ff.).

II

Who teach that God does provide the believer with sufficient strength to persevere and is ready to preserve this strength in him if he performs his duty, but that even with all those things in place which are necessary to persevere in faith and which God is pleased to use to preserve faith, it still always depends on the choice of man's will whether or not he perseveres.

For this view is obviously Pelagian; and though it intends to make men free it makes them sacrilegious. It is against the enduring consensus of evangelical teaching which takes from man all cause for boasting and ascribes the praise for this benefit only to God's grace. It is also against the testimony of the apostle: *It is God who keeps us strong to the end, so that we will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Cor. 1:8).

III

Who teach that those who truly believe and have been born again not only can forfeit justifying faith as well as grace and salvation totally and to the end, but also in actual fact do often forfeit them and are lost forever.

For this opinion nullifies the very grace of justification and regeneration as well as the continual preservation by Christ, contrary to the plain words of the apostle Paul: *If Christ died for us while we were still sinners, we will therefore much more be saved from God's wrath through him, since we have now been justified by his blood* (Rom. 5:8–9); and contrary to the apostle John: *No one who is born of God is intent on sin, because God's seed remains in him, nor can he sin, because he has been born of God* (1 John 3:9); also contrary to the words of Jesus Christ: *I give eternal life to my sheep, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand* (John 10:28–29).

IV

Who teach that those who truly believe and have been born again can commit the sin that leads to death (the sin against the Holy Spirit).

For the same apostle John, after making mention of those who commit the sin that leads to death and forbidding prayer for them (1 John 5:16–17), immediately adds: *We know that anyone born of God does not commit sin* (that is, that kind of sin), *but the one who was born of God keeps himself safe, and the evil one does not touch him* (v. 18).

V

Who teach that apart from a special revelation no one can have the assurance of future perseverance in this life.

For by this teaching the well-founded consolation of true believers in this life is taken away and the doubting of the Romanists is reintroduced into the church. Holy Scripture, however, in many places derives the assurance not from a special and extraordinary revelation but from the marks peculiar to God's children and from God's completely reliable promises. So especially the apostle Paul: *Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Rom. 8:39); and John: *They who obey his commands remain in him and he in them. And this is how we know that he remains in us: by the Spirit he gave us* (1 John 3:24).

VI

Who teach that the teaching of the assurance of perseverance and of salvation is by its very nature and character an opiate of the flesh and is harmful to godliness, good morals, prayer, and other holy exercises, but that, on the contrary, to have doubt about this is praiseworthy.

For these people show that they do not know the effective operation of God's grace and the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and they contradict the apostle John, who asserts the opposite in plain words: *Dear friends, now we are children of God, but what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he is made known, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure* (1 John 3:2-3). Moreover, they are refuted by the examples of the saints in both the Old and New Testament, who though assured of their perseverance and salvation yet were constant in prayer and other exercises of godliness.

VII

Who teach that the faith of those who believe only temporarily does not differ from justifying and saving faith except in duration alone.

For Christ himself in Matthew 13:20 ff. and Luke 8:13 ff. clearly defines these further differences between temporary and true believers: he says that the former receive the seed on rocky ground, and the latter receive it in good ground, or a good heart; the former have no root, and the latter are firmly rooted; the former have no fruit, and the latter produce fruit in varying measure, with steadfastness, or perseverance.

VIII

Who teach that it is not absurd that a person, after losing his former regeneration, should once again, indeed quite often, be reborn.

For by this teaching they deny the imperishable nature of God's seed by which we are born again, contrary to the testimony of the apostle Peter: *Born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable* (1 Pet. 1:23).

IX

Who teach that Christ nowhere prayed for an unfailling perseverance of believers in faith.

For they contradict Christ himself when he says: *I have prayed for you, Peter, that your faith may not fail* (Luke 22:32); and John the gospel writer when he testifies in John 17 that it was not only for the apostles, but also for all those who were to believe by their message that Christ prayed: *Holy Father, preserve them in your name* (v. 11); and *My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you preserve them from the evil one* (v. 15).

CONCLUSION*

And so this is the clear, simple, and straightforward explanation of the orthodox teaching on the five articles in dispute in the Netherlands, as well as

*The heading "Conclusion" is not found in the original manuscript adopted by the Synod of Dort, but is already used in the earliest printings. The contents are not so much a conclusion in the logical sense as a concluding rejection of false accusations (as it is referred to in the Acts of the Synod of Dort) and an admonition as to how the Canons should be understood and used.

the rejection of the errors by which the Dutch churches have for some time been disturbed. This explanation and rejection the synod declares to be derived from God's Word and in agreement with the confessions of the Reformed churches. Hence it clearly appears that those of whom one could hardly expect it have shown no truth, equity, and charity at all in wishing to make the public believe:

—that the teaching of the Reformed churches on predestination and the points associated with it by its very nature and tendency draws the minds of people away from all godliness and religion, is an opiate of the flesh and the devil; and a stronghold of Satan where he lies in wait for all people, wounds most of them, and fatally pierces many of them with the arrows of both despair and self-assurance;

—that this teaching makes God the author of sin, unjust, a tyrant, and a hypocrite; and is nothing but a refurbished Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, and Mohammedanism;

—that this teaching makes people carnally self-assured, since it persuades them that nothing endangers the salvation of the chosen, no matter how they live, so that they may commit the most outrageous crimes with self-assurance; and that on the other hand nothing is of use to the reprobate for salvation even if they have truly performed all the works of the saints;

—that this teaching means that God predestined and created, by the bare and unqualified choice of his will, without the least regard or consideration of any sin, the greatest part of the world to eternal condemnation; that in the same manner as election is the source and cause of faith and good works, so reprobation is the cause of unbelief and ungodliness; that many infant children of believers are snatched in their innocence from their mothers' breasts and cruelly cast into hell so that neither the blood of Christ nor their baptism nor the prayers of the church at their baptism can be of any use to them;

and very many other slanderous accusations of this kind which the Reformed churches not only disavow but even denounce with their whole heart.

Therefore this Synod of Dort in the name of the Lord pleads with all who devoutly call on the name of our Savior Jesus Christ to form their judgment about the faith of the Reformed churches, not on the basis of false accusations gathered from here or there, or even on the basis of the personal statements of a number of ancient and modern authorities—statements which are also often either quoted out of context or misquoted and twisted to convey a different meaning—but on the basis of the churches' own official confessions and of the present explanation of the orthodox teaching which has been endorsed by the unanimous consent of the members of the whole Synod, one and all.

Moreover, the Synod earnestly warns the false accusers themselves to consider how heavy a judgment of God awaits those who give false testimony against so many churches and their confessions, trouble the consciences of the weak, and seek to prejudice the minds of many against the fellowship of true believers.

Finally, this Synod urges all fellow ministers in the gospel of Christ to deal with this teaching in a godly and reverent manner, in the universities as well as in the churches; to do so, both in their speaking and writing, with a view to the glory of God's name, holiness of life, and the comfort of anxious souls; to think and also speak with Scripture according to the analogy of faith; and finally, to refrain from all those ways of speaking which go beyond the bounds set for us

by the genuine sense of the Holy Scriptures and which could give impertinent sophists a just occasion to scoff at the teaching of the Reformed churches or even to bring false accusations against it.

May God's Son Jesus Christ, who sits at the right hand of God and gives gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth, lead to the truth those who err, silence the mouths of those who lay false accusations against sound teaching, and equip faithful ministers of his Word with a spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all they speak may be to the glory of God and the building up of their hearers. Amen.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod grant to committee members Dr. Richard R. Tiemersma and either Mr. Donald Sinnema or Dr. Albert M. Wolters the privilege of the floor when matters concerning this report are discussed.

B. That synod accept this committee's translation for recommendation to the church for study and reaction and for final adoption by the Synod of 1986.

C. That this committee be continued in order to make whatever revisions are deemed necessary in the light of the church's reaction.

D. That, with respect to format, synod declare that future printings should incorporate the following features of this translation:

1. The use of separate and distinct printing fonts to distinguish the body of the text, Scripture quotations, and the errors cited in the Rejection of Errors and in the Conclusion.

2. The indentations in Chapter I, Article 7, and in Chapter I, Article 15.

E. That synod authorize to be published in the *Acts of Synod 1985*, along with the above translation, the appendix that follows:

Ground: Although not of such a nature as to merit inclusion in the new translation of the Canons, the Scripture references listed in the proposed appendix constitute material of potential value for further study and identify the scriptural bases on which numerous statements in the Canons are made.

F. That synod mandate this committee to prepare and submit for publication a new introduction to the Canons of Dort replace the one currently printed in the *Psalter Hymnal* and in separately printed editions of the Doctrinal Standards of the CRC.

Ground: The present introduction, first included in the 1934 *Psalter Hymnal* contains several references to historical details that are erroneous or misleading. Examples:

1. Though the Synod of Dort had an international character, it was, strictly speaking a national synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands with invited foreign theologians.

2. There were twenty-six foreign theologians at the Synod of Dort, not twenty-seven.

3. Some of the errors ascribed to Arminius are more correctly attributed to his early followers who went beyond Arminius's more cautious position.
4. To speak of *five* Canons is not historically correct. The term "canons" originally referred to the individual articles, particularly the articles of the Rejection of Errors sections.

We conclude by requesting that reactions to this report be sent to the chairman of the committee: Mr. Peter De Klerk, Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

Committee for Translation of the Canons of
Dort

Peter De Klerk, chairman
Richard R. Tiemersma, reporter
Elco Oostendorp
Donald Sinnema
Albert M. Wolters

APPENDIX

Scripture References in the Canons

In the Canons five types of Scripture references may be distinguished:

1. Actual quotations identified as such in the original Latin text of the Canons. Sometimes these quotations are not very precise. In some instances the same passage is quoted in a variety of ways. Ephesians 1:4, for example, is quoted in four different ways (I, 7; I, 9; I, Rej. 1; I, Rej. 5).

2. Clear paraphrases of Scripture passages worked into the text of the Canons and identified in the original Latin. For example, III/IV, 9 paraphrases the parable of the sower in Matthew 13.

3. Clear paraphrases of Scripture passages worked into the text of the Canons but not identified. For example, I, 2 paraphrases 1 John 4:9 and John 3:16. In some instances such paraphrases are identified in the original Dutch translation.

4. Passing, but unidentified, allusions to Scripture passages in the text of the Canons. For example, I, 6 alludes to 2 Peter 3:16.

5. Other scriptural proof texts, not paraphrased or alluded to, intended to support various articles of the Canons. These are not found in the Canons themselves but are identified in the margins of early drafts of the Canons.

For the benefit of the churches we list for each article the Scripture references we have found which are not identified in the Canons. They fall into the last three categories. For the sake of simplicity we combine categories 3 and 4.

No doubt the committee has overlooked a number of scriptural allusions in the text of the Canons. If anyone identifies biblical allusions other than those we have listed, please call them to the attention of the committee.

Key: (a) Scripture passages paraphrased or alluded to in the official Latin text of the Canons but not actually identified.

(b) Scriptural proof texts identified in the margins of early drafts of the Canons.

I, 2 (a) 1 John 4:9; John 3:16

(b) 1 John 4:9; John 3:16

I, 4 (a) John 3:36

(b) John 3:36; Mark 16:16

I, 5 (b) Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29

I, 6 (a) 2 Peter 3:16

(b) Acts 15:18

I, 7 (a) John 6:44; John 17:2, 6, 9, 24

(b) Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:30; Romans 9; Romans 11; Acts 13; 2 Thessalonians 2; John 6; John 17; 1 Peter 1; 2 Timothy 1

I, 8 (a) Ephesians 1:4-5; Ephesians 2:10

(b) 2 Thessalonians 2; 1 Peter 1; Romans 8; Ephesians 1:4-5; Ephesians 2:10

- I, 9 (b) Ephesians 1:4
I, 10 (a) Ephesians 1:5
(b) Ephesians 1:7(5); Matthew 11; Romans 9; Mark 13; Romans 8; John 13:18; John 17
I, 11 (b) Romans 8; Romans 11; Matthew 24; 2 Timothy 2
I, 12 (a) 2 Corinthians 7:10; Matthew 5:6
(b) Romans 8:15–16; 2 Corinthians 13:5
I, 14 (a) Acts 20:27; Romans 11:33–34; Romans 12:3; Hebrews 6:17–18
(b) Acts 20:27; Romans 12:3; Romans 11:33–34; Hebrews 6:17–18
I, 15 (b) Matthew 20; John 13; Romans 9; John 17
I, 16 (a) Romans 7:24; Isaiah 42:3; Matthew 13:22; Luke 8:14
I, 17 (a) Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14
I, Rej. 4 (b) Ephesians 2:10
I, Rej. 7 (a) Ephesians 1; Ephesians 6:16
(b) 2 Timothy 1:12; Psalm 100:3
I, Rej. 9 (b) Psalm 147:20
II, 1 (b) 2 Timothy 2:13; Exodus 20:5; Psalm 5:5–6(4–5); 2 Thessalonians 1; Romans 1:32
II, 2 (a) Hebrews 7:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13
(b) Romans 8:3; Hebrews 7:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:15, 19
II, 4 (b) Hebrews 2:11(9), 14; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 9:14
II, 5 (a) John 3:16
(b) Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:47; Acts 17:30
II, 6 (b) Luke 7:30; Acts 13:46
II, 7 (b) 2 Timothy 1:9
II, 8 (a) Revelation 7:9; John 17:9; 1 John 1:7; Ephesians 5:27
(b) 2 Corinthians 5:18–19; John 10:11; John 11:51–52; Revelation 5:9; Romans 8:34; John 17:9, 19; 1 John 1:7; Ephesians 5:25–27
II, 9 (a) Matthew 16:18; John 11:52; Ephesians 5:25
(b) John 10:16; John 11:52; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25; 2 Corinthians 5:15
II, Rej. 4 (b) Galatians 2:21
II, Rej. 5 (a) Ephesians 2:3
III/IV, 1 (a) Genesis 1:26–27; Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24
(b) Genesis 1:26–27; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; John 1:5; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21; Romans 3:9 ff.
III/IV, 2 (b) John 3:6; Romans 5:12 ff.; Psalm 51:7(5); Ephesians 2:3
III/IV, 3 (a) Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:5; Romans 6:17
(b) Psalm 51:7(5); Ephesians 2:5; Romans 3:12; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Romans 6:17; John 3:5–6; Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14
III/IV, 4 (a) Romans 1:18; Romans 1:20
(b) Romans 1:18, 20; 1 Corinthians 1:21
III/IV, 5 (a) Romans 8:3
(b) Romans 3:20; Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:12, 21
III/IV, 6 (a) 2 Corinthians 5:18–19
(b) 2 Corinthians 5:19; 2 Corinthians 3:8; Acts 15:11; Ephesians 2:20
III/IV, 7 (b) Deuteronomy 7:7–8; Romans 10:20–21; Romans 11:33
III/IV, 8 (a) Matthew 11:28–29
(b) 2 Corinthians 5:20; Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1

- III/IV, 9 (a) Luke 8:14
(b) Matthew 13
- III/IV, 10 (a) Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Corinthians 1:29, 31
(b) Psalm 100:3; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:4, 7; Colossians 1:12–13; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Corinthians 1:29, 31
- III/IV, 11 (a) Romans 8:5; Deuteronomy 30:6
(b) 2 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Acts 16:14; Jeremiah 31:33; Jeremiah 32:39–40; Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 36:26; Philippians 2:13
- III/IV, 12 (a) Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 1:19–20
(b) John 3:3, 5; 2 Corinthians 4:6–7; Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 1:19–20; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; John 6:37, 45; Titus 3:5; John 3:38
- III/IV, 13 (a) Romans 10:8–10
(b) 1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Timothy 1:12
- III/IV, 14 (a) Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 12:6
(b) Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 12:6
- III/IV, 15 (a) Romans 11:35; Romans 4:17
(b) Romans 11:35; Romans 4:17; Romans 9:25; Romans 11:18
- III/IV, 16 (b) John 8:36; Romans 6:17–18, 22
- III/IV, 17 (b) 1 Corinthians 1:21; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 4; Ephesians 4:11–12; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23
- III/IV, Rej. 4 (b) Romans 8:7
- III/IV, Rej. 6 (b) Philippians 1:29
- III/IV, Rej. 7 (a) 1 Corinthians 2:14–15
- V, 1 (a) Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Romans 6:6
(b) Romans 6:12, 14; Romans 7:17–18; Galatians 5:17
- V, 2 (a) Zechariah 12:10; 1 Timothy 4:7; Philippians 3:12; Romans 7:24
(b) 1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Proverbs 20:9; Hebrews 12:13; James 3:2
- V, 3 (a) Romans 7:17; 1 Corinthians 1:8–9
(b) John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:8–9; 1 Peter 1:5
- V, 4 (a) Ephesians 2:3; Mark 13:33; Matthew 6:13
(b) 1 John 4:4; Matthew 26; 2 Chronicles 32:31
- V, 5 (a) Matthew 26:66; Mark 14:64; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 8:12
(b) Psalm 6; Psalm 32; Psalm 38; Psalm 73; Psalm 77:6(5), 8(7), 10(9); Psalm 130; Ephesians 4:30; Psalm 13; Psalm 80
- V, 6 (a) Psalm 51:11; 1 John 5:16; Matthew 12:31
(b) Psalm 37:24; Psalm 77:6(5), 8(7); Psalm 51; Luke 22:32; 1 John 5:18
- V, 7 (a) 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Psalm 51:19; Philippians 2:12
(b) 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9; Psalm 51; Luke 22:61; 2 Samuel 7:14(15?); Psalm 89:34(33); Jeremiah 32:40
- V, 8 (a) Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30
(b) 1 Thessalonians 5:24; John 11:42; John 17:12; 2 Corinthians 1:21–22
- V, 9 (a) Romans 12:3
(b) 2 Corinthians 4:13
- V, 10 (a) 1 Corinthians 15:19
(b) Romans 8:16–17; 2 Peter 1:10
- V, 11 (a) Hebrews 10:22; 2 Corinthians 1:3
(b) Psalm 51; Psalm 77; 2 Corinthians 10:13
- V, 12 (b) 1 John 3:2; 2 Timothy 1:12

V, 13 (a) Ephesians 2:10; Psalm 63:3

(b) Psalm 63:4(3)

V, 14 (b) Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 11

V, 15 (a) 1 John 4:6

V, Rej. 6 (a) Romans 12:12

V, Rej. 8 (b) Ephesians 4:5

V, Rej. 9 (a) John 17:20

Conclusion (a) Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:8; John 17:17

REPORT 34
CONTEMPORARY TESTIMONY COMMITTEE

Our committee has had a relatively quiet year waiting for reactions to the Contemporary Testimony, completing some unfinished tasks, and working at some revision in response to early reactions.

I. REACTIONS

The Contemporary Testimony has been sent to individuals for comment and it is apparently being used by a good number of churches and study groups. We appreciate the care with which the churches are helping us to write this testimony, and we are excited by this evident concern for a clear expression of our faith in this time. We are thankful for the reactions we are receiving—for the many positive ones, and for the critical ones too.

A surge of reactions reached us at the end of 1984, since the booklets containing the testimony listed the cutoff date for reactions as January 1, 1985. The Synod of 1984 changed that date to January 1, 1986. If we receive a comparable surge of reactions at the end of 1985, and if they contain much new material, we may have difficulty in completing the revised draft of the testimony in time for the 1986 agenda. But we will continue to work towards that date, since possible inclusion of "Our World Belongs to God" in the new hymnal would be helped by it.

II. SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

A number of respondents suggest that a list of scriptural references be added to the testimony. We note the following:

- A confessional statement must *answer* to the Word of God, stating its agreement with revelation, without necessarily quoting it.
- We are convinced that the testimony answers the Scriptures.
- It is possible to provide a list of biblical references.

The commentary section lists some passages, and the suggested sermon outline provides a few more. But it would certainly be possible to provide biblical references for the testimony. We have considered this in committee, but thought that such a step was premature for a draft of the testimony. If synod directs us to include such a list with our final revision, we will get to work on it right away.

We have now completed a number of sections for the commentary. We submitted them to synod in the spring last year, but the Synodical Interim Committee decided that they had been received too late. These sections cover a range of practical topics of interest to the churches. We request that they be distributed speedily to the churches, so that reactions to these sections may

also be obtained before the deadline. We suggest, therefore, that the Board of Publications be requested to make them available in an inexpensive booklet form, and that churches be given permission to copy them from the *Agenda* and *Acts of Synod* for use in study groups.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE CONTEMPORARY TESTIMONY

Prayer

As God's creatures
we belong to God.
Made in the divine image,
we represent God on earth.
Subject to our King,
we live in loving communion with him,
doing his will
and walking in his ways.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 13)

The most powerful antidote to secularity is prayer. Against the denial and defiance of God that marks our time, prayer is the practice of his presence. Prayer testifies to the ultimate impossibility of a world without God (secular). To fold one's hands in prayer is to confess that God holds us and his world in his hands.

A life of true prayer faces several problems in our time. First, prayer can degenerate into an attempt to manipulate God. His promises are turned into blank checks. We fill in the amount; God only needs to sign. God is placed in a box that we made. Second, prayer is reduced to our conscious submission to God's set plan. The only real petition left is "Thy will be done"—and it will be done, no matter what we pray. Here humans are put in a box that God is thought to have made. Third, prayer is reduced to a monologue. God is said to be bound to a cause-and-effect universe, or to be part of it. Either prayer makes no sense then, for God does not "interfere" with the world. Or prayer (as conversation with God) ends, for there is no longer a conversational partner distinct from the world. Here God and the world are placed in separate boxes, or enclosed in the same box. The only reason for prayer then is its therapeutic effect in organizing the mind.

These problems that box prayer in must be blown apart by a greater awareness that human life is covenant fellowship with God. While God remains sovereign in this fellowship, he takes us seriously. We are not robots or puppets, but his responsible representatives on earth.

Therefore, our prayers play a vital role in the drama of redemption. God promises to act in answer to prayer (Jer. 33:3; Ps. 145:18). When God lets Abraham, Moses, or Elijah in on his plans (Gen. 18; Ex. 32; I Kings 18), he does not evoke resignation, but earnest prayer. At times the plan unfolds as announced. At other times (Moses, Nineveh) God "repents of the evil he thought to do." God responds to prayer.

When Jesus Christ fulfills the promise of salvation, prayer gains an even larger place in the Christian life. By example and word he teaches his disciples to pray. He opens the way to God. Sinners may by grace enter God's presence (Rom. 5:2; Heb. 4:14-16). He gives the Spirit, who helps us to pray when we are

weak or at a loss for words. Prayer does not depend on our boldness or eloquence, for the Spirit and the ascended Son speak to the Father for us (Rom. 8:26, 34; Heb. 7:25).

Jesus attaches astounding promises to prayer. He promises that he will do whatever we ask in his name (John 14:13; Matt. 7:7-11). These promises are so sweeping that, in a different way than secularism, they can lead to a crisis of prayer: the problem of "unanswered prayer." Studying this problem may not resolve our questions but it can deepen our understanding of prayer.

"Unanswered" prayer becomes a problem when prayer is understood mainly as petition, and when petition is severed from the gospel of the kingdom. Prayer is "the chief part of thankfulness," and thanksgiving is to be the main part of prayer (Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 45; Phil. 4:6; Col. 1:3; 2:7). In addition to thanksgiving and petition, prayer includes confession and adoration (Matt. 6:9-13; I Tim. 2:1-2). At first the reminder that there are other elements in prayer may not seem to help a person agonizing over unanswered prayer. But when the inner connection of the elements is seen, they have an expanding effect on each other.

In the Lord's Prayer Jesus begins by honoring God's name. This expands the next petition to include the coming kingdom. When we are focused on the kingdom, the ordinary needs for bread and forgiveness are also included. But our prayers, like those of Abraham, Elijah, and the Lord, will then also intercede for God's people and for a secular world that does not pray for itself. Our confession of sins will do more than ask to be let off the hook; we will ask to be renewed in the ways of the kingdom. Prayer finds its place then in lives that are more and more directed by the King and towards his kingdom.

There is a link between God's answer to prayer and our obedience to his commandments (I John 3:22-23). But this may not reduce prayer to just asking for what we have coming. For the commandment is to believe Jesus and to love each other. Following the Lord, whose prayer to let the cup pass seems unanswered, keeps us from manipulating God. And loving our neighbor as we pray will shape what we ask. Thus, in faith and love, we do not manipulate God or simply resign ourselves. We talk our needs over with God, we expect great things from him, and we trust that he knows the deepest needs of his people and the world.

There remain, of course, situations that cry out for a clear response from God . . . and it does not come! Instead we may hear, "My grace is sufficient" (II Cor. 12:9). In these situations it may take a lifetime to learn that God's grace is not a poor second, but is more than enough.

Why do we still pray then? Because God has taught and commanded us to pray, and because as part of our loving communion we want to talk with him. In prayer we open ourselves consciously to God's presence, we focus our lives on him. We talk to God, we listen to God, and we are silent before him, attentive to his presence. As we grow in covenant communion we learn to pray with Augustine: "Grant me yourself, because without you my desire would not be stilled—even if I received everything you have made."

(Previous synodical statements: *Acts of Synod 1928*, pp. 61-62; *Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 42-43, 325-61.)

Money: Its Pursuit and Use

By sovereign appointments we are
earthkeepers and caretakers,
using our skills,

and meeting our needs,
while loving our neighbor
and tending the creation.
For its unfolding and well-being
are tied to our obedience.

(Contemporary Testimony, par. 14)

The Christian community is economically diverse. It encompasses the destitute as well as the very rich. The biblical message about the proper Christian attitude toward money, then, must of necessity be a complex one, with applications to very different economic experiences.

But there is also a sense in which there is one simple message: all things come from the hand of the Lord. To the poor this message comes as a word of hope: "Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob. . . . He upholds the cause of the oppressed; and gives food to the hungry" (Psalm 146: 5, 7, NIV). To the rich it brings a warning: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth. . . . You cannot serve both God and Money" (Matt. 6:19, 24, NIV).

All Christians, rich, poor, and of moderate means, must continually examine their attitudes toward money and economic practices. Where is the line between just and necessary individual, familial, and communal needs and an insatiable, covetous desire for material and social advantage? In what ways does the biblical call to moderation restrain us in this important area of human concern?

All who follow Jesus Christ must submit their economic practices and relationships to the discipline of the gospel. The cries of the poor reach the ears of the Lord of hosts, who plants in the hearts of his people—rich and poor alike—a yearning for an order of living in which hunger and thirst, envy and greed, have no place. No one who longs for Christ's kingdom can be content with patterns of economic injustice. We must not nurture covetous desires, but rather we must cultivate a sanctified discontent with oppression, trusting in God's promise that he wants all of us to be equipped with that which is necessary for lives of obedience to his will.

The gospel brings a special challenge to those Christians who have positions of advantage and responsibility in the marketplace. On every level of economic life—as consumers at the candy counter, owners of small businesses, factory laborers, managers of physical and human resources, decision makers in corporations and agencies—we must curb our sinful desires to get more than our proper portion, to cut corners, to take advantage of the weak and the ignorant, to establish monopolies, to cripple the competition, to use unjust measures and to perpetuate fraud and deceit. All are called upon to do what they can to provide work for the unemployed and the underemployed and to create wholesome opportunities for cooperative labor, attending especially to the needs of those groups and persons, such as the handicapped and racial minorities, who have often been victimized by economic discrimination.

The pattern of discipleship must affect our individual economic attitudes, as well as our relationship to general processes and structures. We must be guided by God's Spirit as we apply biblical norms to decisions regarding how and where we are to work, as well as to the means by which we earn our wages. Principles of Christian stewardship also apply to the issues of how we spend the money that we earn or otherwise receive. The first biblical claim is that

money, goods, and food are to be allocated for the poor, so "seeking first the kingdom and its righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). "Our" money is really God's money, which is held in trust and must be used responsibly.

Christians who are not themselves numbered among the poor ought to make their spending decisions prayerfully in view of the staggering needs of the economically deprived and on those service organizations which rely on Christian moral and financial support. The Christian community should evaluate and support worthy enterprises which Christians have begun in order to meet needs in our society in obedience to the claims of the gospel. Christians can endorse and welcome the attempts of government to meet critical human needs; but Christians cannot leave this task to government. We must support the work of the church and of other Christian agencies in ministering to the needy. This is an essential element of Christian stewardship, which is all the more urgent for us when we see the levels of comfort and luxury which many of us may enjoy.

Jesus' conversation with the rich young ruler reminds us "how hard" financial obedience to the Lord is; it shows us, too, how crucial such obedience is (Luke 18:18-27). In this practical area of whether and how we make and spend our money, we are encouraged by what our God makes "possible."

(Previous synodical statements: *Acts of Synod 1864*, June 1, Art. 12; *Acts of Synod 1970*, pp. 40-41, Supplement 42, p. 500.)

Modern Culture

All spheres of life—
marriage and family,
work and worship,
school and state,
our play and art—
bear the scars of our rebellion.

(Contemporary Testimony, par. 21)

Rest and leisure are gifts from God.
Believing that he provides for us,
we can rest more trustingly
and entertain ourselves more simply.

(Contemporary Testimony, par. 54)

Current expressions of modern culture force each Christian to make judgments and choices. Cultural activities often reveal that, due to secularization, the vestiges of Christian influence on Western culture are disappearing. History also records human violations of divine norms, which were roundly condemned by Israel's prophets. However, this secular society increasingly considers violations to the norm to be normal and acceptable; decency is rare, while blasphemy, violence, and lust are common. The area of culture, therefore, is also a battlefield between the forces of good and evil where the Christian must discern and do the will of God.

In evaluating the visual arts, music, dance, sports, and recreation, it must be recognized that gifts and talents in this area come from God, but that their use is involved in the battle of good and evil. The difference between believers and unbelievers cannot always be detected in their cultural expressions, but it ought to become plain in their motivation and purpose (Rom. 12:1-2). A Chris-

tian may accept and enjoy whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely, but must shun all evil (Phil. 4:8) and avoid giving offense to others. Since unchangeable norms are being applied to changing cultural expressions, the Christian response will vary with time and place. Christians in the pagan Roman Empire and Christians in this secular society follow the same light but travel through different forests. Therefore the spirits must be tested in communal and individual listening to the voice of God and in careful understanding of the trends in modern culture.

One phenomenon which manifests many of the dangerous trends in contemporary culture is organized athletics. Many family members devote significant blocks of time to viewing professional sports events on television. Educational institutions in the Christian community maintain programs in interscholastic athletic competition. The intense interest in sports events sometimes threatens the Christian community and the larger human society in many ways. Idolatrous attitudes and commitments are fostered. Unhealthy rivalries are encouraged. Individuals and families sometimes organize their whole lives around the viewing of, or participation in, athletic activities, and the cycles of work and rest and worship are regularly disrupted.

With the lure of glamour and high income, sports are increasingly commercialized. Human beings are bought, sold, and traded in a manner reminiscent of slavery. Play and recreation are transformed into "big business," and the proper concern for physical fitness is distorted.

Parallel difficulties can also be observed in other activities relating to entertainment and the arts. The film industry seems increasingly interested in catering to tastes and interests which are destructive of Christian values. Much of popular music exhibits violence, nihilism, and rebellion. The visual arts often seem devoted to nothing more than the expression of meaninglessness and disorder.

The Christian community must be sensitive to these trends, and to the challenges which they raise for those who are pursuing lives of discipleship. But it is not enough for us to reject—or to claim to reject—the forms and expressions of "modern culture." We must acknowledge our communal calling to be shapers of cultural patterns and products which will glorify the Creator. The world of human culture also belongs to God.

Therefore we call upon the Christian community to seek new paths of cultural obedience:

- by making stewardly use of present-day opportunities for recreation through the encouragement of appropriate attitudes toward the viewing of and participation in athletic events so that the interest in sports activity and physical fitness may promote enriched lives of Christian service and cooperation.

- by encouraging the critical study of film, music, painting, sculpture, and other art forms, so that the sensitivities of the entire Christian community may be enhanced.

- by giving support to musicians, artists, and filmmakers, so that such persons may find opportunity to develop patterns of Christian obedience in these crucial areas of cultural formation.

The Christian response to modern culture may be neither simple withdrawal nor blind acceptance, since God is to be served in all of life. But the hedonism of a society which tries to escape the grim realities of life and ruins its rest with frantic recreation or "entertainment" is to be rejected. Christians must select

and form and use cultural expressions which do not involve them in the breaking of God's law, but which praise God for the rest, joy, and beauty which he gives to his creatures.

(Previous synodical statements: "Film Arts," *Acts of Synod 1966*, pp. 32ff., 316-61; "Dance," *Acts of Synod 1982*, pp. 89-91, 556-75.)

The Handicapped

The results of sin are seen everywhere—
 in pride of race,
 in arrogance of nations,
 in abuse of the weak and helpless,
 in disregard for life, water, air, and soil,
 in slavery, deceit, terror, and war.
 We have become victims of our own sin.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 22)

In education we seek to acknowledge the Lord
 by promoting schools and teaching
 in which the light of his Word shines in all learning.
 There students, of whatever ability,
 are treated as persons who bear God's image
 and have a place in his plan.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 53)

The place of mentally and physically handicapped persons has changed throughout history as society's perception of the handicapped changed. Plato and Aristotle thought that the weak and infirm should be discarded at an early age. In the early settlement years on this continent, persons with mental defects were seen as public problems who needed restraint in jails. Later, in reaction to uncaring treatment of handicapped persons, many people began to treat them as objects of pity who should be kept out of the mainstream of life. Today, through the work of concerned individuals and agencies, much has been done to correct the injustices suffered by the handicapped in our society. Although we cannot claim that the church has led the way in giving mentally and physically handicapped persons the care and place they need in society, it is true that those who follow Christ are motivated to minister to the weak and disabled in a just and merciful way.

For in the kingdom of Christ the worth of humans is not measured by their health, wealth, looks, or knowledge. The poor and needy have always been under God's special care (Ps. 35:10). Jesus shows that he is God's ruler by caring for the needy, and by instructing his church to care for them (Ps. 72:12-14; Matt. 11:28-30; Luke 4:18; 6:20-23; James 1:27). In fact, "God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong" and to puncture our notions of worth and dignity (I Cor. 1:27-28).

Therefore, we are to ensure that handicapped persons can take a place in our congregations and communities which fits the biblical command to show no partiality in our treatment of persons (James 2:1, 9). They do not need our pity or condescension, but they may expect that our services and activities are open to their involvement. We may note with gratitude, therefore, that the mentally handicapped, who were formerly excluded from much of our school and church education, now benefit from such new programs of instruction as the

Friendship Series. Many of our churches have made great progress in including the mentally handicapped in their activities, and in improving access to and facilities within their buildings for the disabled and those who suffer hearing or sight loss.

However, we also urge all Christians to minister to the handicapped in the community at large. Christ gives us the task to protect the weak and to care for the infirm, wherever they live. We call upon our church members to be active in supporting political and community efforts to foster the well-being of those who are weak and have little influence.

Rather than consider those who are handicapped to be a burden to society, we are to encourage them to use their gifts within our churches and communities. For Jesus Christ loves them, and he reminds us by his love for the handicapped that his gospel of hope and new life is for the weak and for the humble.

(Previous synodical statements: Report 38, *Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 662-78; Report 33, *Acts of Synod 1981*, pp. 532-46.)

Israel-Zionism-Holocaust

The Creator pledged to be God
to Abraham and his children,
blessing all nations through them
as they lived obediently before him.
He chose Israel as his special people
to show the glory of his name,
the power of his love,
and the wisdom of his ways.
He gave them his laws through Moses,
he taught them by priests and Levites
so that they would be a people
whose king was God.

(Contemporary Testimony, par. 27)

To accept the Old Testament as an essential part of Scripture is to give the covenant an integral place in the Christian life. This brings with it a deep concern for the people of the old covenant, the Jewish people. In the history of redemption, they are a highly privileged people: "To them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, the promises . . . the patriarchs," and from them the Christ was born (Rom. 9:4-5).

The question of the present role of the Jewish people in God's plan of redemption is difficult to answer. The advent of Zionism, the founding of the state of Israel, centuries of persecution culminating in the extermination of six million Jews combine to make the question all the more pressing and baffling.

It is simplistic to ascribe the Holocaust to "Christianity." It was a pagan religion that formed the ideology of blood, soil, and race. It is equally simplistic to exonerate Christianity on that account. That this horror could occur on a continent where the vast majority professed faith in Christ remains a permanent blot on the record of Christianity. Furthermore, what can erase the previous history of the persecution of the Jews in the name of Christ, supposedly sanctioned by his blood ("His blood be upon us and our children")? What of the conversions of Jews coerced by the sword? It is lamentable but not

surprising that for many Jews today the cross is the symbol of persecution.

Zionism, an international movement founded in 1897, is in part a reaction to anti-Semitism. Its goal was political: the organization of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. With the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 this goal was attained. The pressing question for Christians is whether and how this event is part of God's plan of redemption. To answer that question, we must first consider whether the Jewish people continue to have a unique role in God's redemptive plan.

Some say that the New Testament church, regarded as the New Israel, replaced Israel. This is misleading. The people of the old covenant are not simply discarded, or supplanted by the "church." The New Testament knows of no such discontinuity. Gentiles are incorporated into the body of "charter members," the Old Testament people of God. Paul speaks of grafting wild shoots (Gentiles) into the natural olive tree (the Jewish people). He calls attention to the strangeness of this operation—it is contrary to nature.

Correspondingly, Gentile Christians must live and work in the expectation that Jewish people will be grafted back into "their own olive tree" (Rom. 11:17–24). Paul expected the full inclusion of the Jewish people into the new people of God (Rom. 11:26). Accordingly, his first stop on the mission field was the synagogue. We are not bound by this pattern. The long history of alienation between Christians and Jews creates a new situation. Yet the church must demonstrate in its life and mission that in Christ God has indeed broken down "the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph. 3:14).

We must acknowledge that persecution and coerced conversion, as well as the assumption that a Jew who accepts Jesus as the Messiah must abandon his Jewishness, have formed what appears to be a granite mountain between the Jew and the Messiah. Many Jews are stumbling over rocks we have strewn on their path, so that they stumble long before reaching the only decisive "stumbling stone" (Rom. 9:32). In such situations, we leave to God the judgment as to the blame for the nonconversion of Jewish people. Our responsibility is clear. Before we call them "enemies of God as regards the gospel" (as Paul dares to do), we must ask: Have they clearly seen and heard the good news through us? To the extent that we are not clear and living letters (II Cor. 3:1–5), we are enemies of the gospel. Meanwhile, there can be little doubt as to how we are to regard the Jewish people, namely, "as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs" (Rom. 11:28, NIV).

What does this mean for the "religious" status of the Jewish people today? They have a special place in God's plan of redemption insofar as they are a people of the Old Covenant. That covenant has not been abrogated nor its promised annulled. God's claim still lies in a special way on the Jewish people as a privilege and responsibility. Their own sacred writings call them to recognize Jesus, their fellow Jew, as the Messiah.

Must we attach special significance to the existence of Israel as state? After the persecutions that culminated in the Holocaust, the founding of the state of Israel may be regarded as one of God's providential ways of providing a haven for the people of the old covenant. There is no biblical warrant, however, for regarding the settlement of a minority of the Jewish people in the state of Israel as a special facet of God's plan of redemption. It is striking that even in his most direct and passionate response to the question of the destiny of the Jewish people (Rom. 9–11) Paul not once mentions the land. This does not mean that

land is insignificant. For the Jews as a people it is highly significant in view of the injustices they endured in "dispersion." Furthermore, in the Scriptures the promise of land is never replaced with a promise of heaven. It is simply enlarged to encompass a renewed earth (Rev. 11:15).

Under no circumstances may the special status of the Jews as people of the covenant be used as sanction for injustices within Israel or for acts of aggression beyond its borders. Like any other nation, Israel is subject to norms of justice. Violation of those norms cannot bring security or blessing.

(Previous synodical statements: *Acts of Synod 1958*, pp. 23-24, 138-152; "Principles and Guidelines for Jewish Evangelism," *Acts of Synod 1971*, p. 59.)

The Laity

The Spirit breathes life
 into the mission of the church
 using young and old,
 men and women,
 to send out the Good News of God's grace.
 In state and school,
 science and art,
 media and marketplace,
 we may declare the saving acts of him
 who called us out of darkness
 into his marvelous light.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 37)

One of the most radical tenets of the Reformation is the priesthood of all believers. It arose directly out of the rediscovery of the Bible, justification by faith through grace, and the rejection of all mediating agencies or persons. If one cannot be set right before God through good works, nor through a sacramental system dispensed by a priestly class, but only through faith in the gospel, then in Jesus Christ the believing community itself stands directly before the face of God. The priesthood of all believers means a total rejection of the distinction between a priestly class with special access to God and his grace (the clergy) and a lower class of people (the laity) which is dependent on the mediation of this higher class.

The universal priesthood is attested directly in I Peter 2:9, and even more powerfully in Romans 12:1. Here it becomes clear that by the grace of God each Christian is at once a priest (*present yourself*) and a sacrificial offering (*present yourself as a living sacrifice*). Moreover, this priestly sacrificial service is not restricted to a realm of "religion" or the church. By grace, believers are called to be priests in all of life: present your bodies (that is, one's entire flesh-and-blood existence) as a thank-offering to God. The whole of life is to be presented "holy and acceptable" before God.

To bring out the various aspects of the full service made possible in Christ, the office of all believers has also been elaborated as a threefold office: royal, priestly, and prophetic. As priests we stand in God's presence and dedicate ourselves to him, serve our neighbor, and intercede for the world. As royalty we are called and equipped to rule our affairs in Christ's name. As prophets we uncover and declare God's will for daily life.

The rediscovery of the office of all believers by the Reformers led to the

rejection of any division of God's people into first-class and second-class citizens of the kingdom. In all of life the tutelage by the clergy and the instituted church was broken. The effect of this breakthrough can be seen where Christians, independently of clergy and church, seek to uncover the meaning of reconciliation in Christ in areas such as education, journalism, labor, politics, and business.

In spite of this radical break with clericalism, the reformation of life has in many ways stalled at this point. For too often Christians look to the minister not so much to equip *them* to read and understand Scripture, but expect him to read the Word *for* them. The minister becomes the high priest of interpretation. Soon "the laity" is unable to discern whether the minister is rightly reading the Word "for" them. As a result a stirring homily, or a flashy presentation which is only tenuously related to Scripture, is mistaken for the Word of God.

It is ironic that within the church the office of all believers has not come into its own. As a historian has pointed out, the office of all believers was permanently secured only in congregational singing. (In the pre-Reformation church the sacred songs were chanted in a sacred tongue, Latin, by a sacred class, the priests.)

A first step towards the recovery of the office of all believers is the resolute rejection of the clergy/laity distinction. But that, of course, is not enough. Practices and notions that seem to confirm this distinction must be abolished.

First of all the notion of office itself needs clarification. It is telling that no exact equivalent of our term *office* is found in the New Testament. Instead it speaks of *diakonia*, service or ministry. This service is committed to the entire church, not to a select group of individuals. This does not exclude specialized "ministries" or "services" rendered by individuals appointed for that purpose.

From the beginning these particular ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit in the interests of good order and efficiency in the church, to enable the church to carry out Christ's work in the world most effectively. (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 63)

To break the legacy of clericalism we also need to understand the relationship of office to ordination and authority. Since the Bible does not connect "ministry" primarily with "status, dominance, or privilege" but with service, ordination does not elevate a person to a social and higher class (*ordo*).

"Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for particular ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total minority. (*Ibid.*)

Both the primacy of the office of all believers and the serving character of special office do not abolish but qualify the authority that inheres in office. The only head of the church is Jesus Christ (Belgic Confession, Art. 31). He rules his church by his Word and Spirit. Hence the authority of one in special office with respect to the community of believers is not that of one person having dominance over another. The authority of special office is the authorization to give leadership in submission to the Word of God in the task to which he or she was appointed. Required for that kind of leadership is not an authority that dominates but the authority that presupposes discernment into the leading by the Lord through his Word. There is no room for any other lordship. There is room for no other Master (Matt. 23:8-12; Luke 22:24-27).

(Previous synodical statements: "Guidelines for understanding the nature of ecclesiastical office and ordination," *Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 61-64, 635-716; *Acts of Synod 1976*, pp. 46, 602ff.; *Acts of Synod 1979*, pp. 47-49, 510-18; *Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 43-45, 559-71.)

Liturgy and Worship

The new life is celebrated and nourished
in the fellowship of congregations
where God's name is praised,
his Word proclaimed,
his way taught,
the sacraments are celebrated,
and prayers and gifts offered.
The Spirit helps each member
to do a part in the work of all,
so that hurts are healed
and each one has the joy
of adding to the life and growth of the fellowship.

(Contemporary Testimony, par. 45)

Our century, and especially the last two decades, has seen more liturgical renewal than any time since the Reformation. This renewed interest in liturgy is both legitimate and understandable. Churches of the Reformation had also developed their rigid tradition of worship. The pastors again became the main doers of the liturgy and the people were often spectators. The Lord's Supper was separated from regular worship, and each church and denomination had settled for a tradition of worship that offered the blend of intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic elements it found fitting.

We rejoice that the Reformed churches kept the basic structure of worship: God speaking to his people in the reading and preaching of his Word, and the people answering in their songs, prayers, and offerings. This essential liturgical dialogue continued to occur, even though traditions stifled some of the human voices.

In our age worship needs the sensitive attention of the church. For to worship and thank God and to invite others to join us in praising God, remain the abiding tasks of the church. Therefore, liturgy, which gives shape and order to our common worship, needs the church's study of our traditions and of the needs and gifts of the day. In our cities, where the hour of worship may be one of the few times when believers are together with other believers, the encouraging, fellowship dimensions of worship need to be developed (Heb. 10:23-25). In our largely secular times, where believers are confronted by faith in machines and techniques, we need the nourishing reminder in the sacrament that Christ alone saves us by his grace; we need the happy reassurance and the encouraging reality of worship that shows that the new life has begun (Rom. 12:1-3; Eph. 5:19). As we become more aware that God is gathering the nations into the church, we need patterns of worship which allow the whole church to recognize the cultural diversity of the body of Christ. As life becomes more regimented, the church needs to be a free fellowship where each believer's gifts can be used to God's praise, and where guilt-ridden, frustrated lives can be liberated by his Word.

Many people consider rituals to be the essence of worship and, therefore, would never tamper with them. A more open vision emerges from the Scriptures (I Cor. 14:26, 40; Col. 2:16-19). A vision of a fellowship that praises God with "order" and with a desire to "edify" the other, while using the gifts that God has given to each. In planning its worship each congregation will want to

give due care that the biblical elements of worship are present: God's Word; our prayers, hymns, gifts, and confessions; together with the sacraments in which God's actions and the response of his church are combined in true covenantal style.

Every believer and every congregation is called to the exciting task each week of offering the unique adoration and praise that the local situation and gifts make necessary and possible. For "great is our God, and greatly to be praised."

(Previous synodical statements: *Acts of Synod 1928*, pp. 60–61; Liturgical Report, *Acts of Synod 1968*, pp. 134–98; The second service, *Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 505–13; Church Music, *Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 607.)

The Sacraments

The new life is celebrated and nourished
in the fellowship of congregations
where God's name is praised,
his Word proclaimed,
his way taught,
the sacraments are celebrated,
and prayers and gifts offered.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 45)

The traditional understanding and celebration of the sacraments are being called into question in various ways. Infant baptism is challenged, on the one hand, by the insistence that salvation requires a conscious personal decision for Christ, and on the other hand, by the practice of rebaptizing those who claim an experience of being "baptized by the Spirit."

There can be no question of the need for an intense personal commitment to Christ and the new life given by the Spirit. Without faith in Christ and a continual openness to the renewing presence of his Spirit, baptism may be viewed as an automatic gateway to the kingdom of God.

At the same time, those who reject or devalue infant baptism must ask themselves whether they have not unwittingly "shortened" the saving arm of the Lord by making his redeeming activity dependent upon individual decisions. In this way, disregard is shown for his saving work through patterns and structures created and given by him—for example, the gift of family and nurture. God chose to establish his covenant with his people by way of families (Gen. 15:1–6; 17:1–8). In the New Testament God does not deal with his people in a radically different way (Acts 2:39; I Cor. 7:14; II Tim. 1:5). He does not negate but rather fulfills the old covenant.

Baptism then does not in and of itself "create" a Christian. Baptism is a visible affirmation by God of his promises. Baptism as an instrument of God's grace realizes its purpose only when it is trustingly and obediently received by the community of faith. That community surrounds the parents and child with prayer and loving support as the child is nurtured in the context of the pledged promises of the God of salvation. As children grow up, they must be urged to accept the gift of God's sealed love in Christ and to trust God's rich promises. Infant baptism is not at odds with but wholly directed to personal commitment.

Similarly, the refreshing and renewing power of the Holy Spirit that some experience in a dramatic way does not detract from the meaningfulness of

infant baptism. Rather, the innovative operation of the Spirit in the lives of believers is evidence that God does deliver on his promises, whether by a sudden conversion or by a slowly blossoming faith. To seek rebaptism by water, therefore, is to bring into question the significance of the sacrament. One thereby may reduce baptism to a symbol of one's personal commitment of faith and of a new experience of the Holy Spirit's power.

The practice of restricting participation in the Lord's Supper to those who have publicly confessed their faith is being challenged on the basis of the covenant. Since children are added to the covenant family by God, it is argued, they should not be excluded from the table that the Lord prepares for that family. In this view, baptized children who believe and trust in Christ as their only Savior must not be deprived of the spiritual nourishment and festive celebration of the Lord's Supper. This approach implies that the responsibility for the supervision of the table of the Lord is shared by the congregation, consistory, and parents.

Both the baptism of infants and the issue of children at the Lord's table point us to the truth that God's redemptive acts are bigger than our individual decisions and reach deeper than our conscious experience. God works in community and surrounds, evokes, and nourishes our faith by means of grace. The sacraments are visible signs and tangible seals of a saving God whose arm is long and powerful.

A number of difficult questions arise today with regard to the church's faithful practice of the sacraments:

What leads people who were baptized as infants to seek rebaptism as adults?

Who decides when a child is ready to partake of the sacrament?

What would then be the function of profession of faith?

At what age would profession of faith occur?

How often should the Lord's Supper be celebrated in our liturgical services?

If the Lord's Supper is a true means of grace, then what accounts for hesitancy in increasing its frequency?

The celebration of the Lord's Supper envisions the spiritual renewal of the community of believers. In view of this, how should we judge the growing practice of sharing the bread and wine outside the congregational setting, for example, in spiritual retreats, consistorial conferences, ministers institutes, and synods?

The Lord's Supper also strengthens the unity of faith among all followers of Christ. In view of this, how must we view the celebration of this sacrament in ecumenical gatherings of Christians from various churches?

(Previous synodical statements: Adult Water Baptism, *Acts of Synod 1971*, p. 162; Rebaptism, *Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 74, 77-78; Children at Communion, *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 419-24, 651; Intercommunion, *Acts of Synod 1974*, p. 57.)

Distortions of Sexuality

Since God chose to reveal his image in women and men,
one sex does not look down on the other,
nor do we flaunt or exploit our sexuality.

Our roles as men and women are shaped
 more by God's gifts and commands
 than by cultural patterns.
 Sexuality can become disordered in our broken world,
 but Christ's renewing work gives hope for order and healing,
 and surrounds suffering persons
 with a compassionate community.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 51)

Sexuality was created by God for the enrichment of human relationships. Therefore sexuality is experienced as an integral part of being human. Intimate sexuality in both its physical and psychical sense was created by God as the basis for entering marriage relationships (Gen. 2:21-25).

Sexuality is an area of life in Western societies which is highly susceptible to disorder and abuse. Rape, prostitution, sexual abuse, and incest are not new phenomena, but they appear to be on the increase. Neither is pornography peculiar to our time; yet, technological advances in print, film, and video, combined with a general increase in sexual permissiveness, have made pornography increasingly accessible, profitable, and violent. Abuses of sexuality result from distortions which in turn lead to dehumanization.

When sexuality is reduced to the individual's physical sensation, rather than the expression of a committed relationship between a man and a woman, it reduces human beings to sexual objects. Distorted views of sexuality teach women to use sex as a way to gain acceptance with or power over men, who in turn measure their own worth according to their sexual prowess. Prostitution takes this concept of sexuality to the extreme by making it a commodity for buying and selling.

Further, if sexuality is seen to be a purely physical sensation, then the search for new sexual sensations will make violence and child involvement seem more desirable. Although there are other factors that contribute to rape, abuse, and incest, distortions of what sexuality means make such acts seem more acceptable.

Similarly, pornography relies more and more on violence toward women and on child abuse. While the depiction of sexuality in writing or in the visual arts is not wrong in itself, pornography delights in a dehumanized view of sexuality which is taken out of its created context.

Christians can support efforts at more stringent enforcement of laws to curb sexual abuse and violence (cf. *Contemporary Testimony*, par. 59). We can also encourage more positive images of sexuality in the media. But we must express those positive views especially in our homes, schools, and church communities. In these settings we can revise distorted views of sexuality, and celebrate it in the spirit of "The Song of Solomon."

(Previous synodical statements: *Acts of Synod 1971*, pp. 541ff.; *Acts of Synod 1972*, pp. 396ff.; *Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 50-53, 609-33.)

Work and Vocation

In our work, even in dull routine,
 we hear the call to serve our Lord:
 to work for more than wages,
 to let mutual respect and a just use of goods and skills

shape the work place
so that, while we earn or profit,
useful products and services may result.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 54)

Christians see work as more than a means of making a living. They see work foremost as a response to God's calling to care for the creation and each other. They see work as vocation, rather than simply occupation. Some are called to minister to human needs for food and shelter, others to produce goods that make life less burdensome and more pleasant. Still others are called to provide such services as education, family nurture, healing, and justice. But in a broken world that suffers the effects of sin and destructive economic forces, some people are forced to accept work that is boring or backbreaking, and some find no work at all.

In view of these workaday problems, the Christian community must promote a view of work that emphasizes the need for every human being to find meaningful activity. In our complex technological society we must increase interest in providing work that serves people and God's creation, without always measuring its profitability. We must encourage a sense of vocation and worth in those who nurture families, and in those who serve society by volunteering their services to charitable organizations.

While temporary unemployment is a normal condition in a mobile society, long-term unemployment reflects a failure of both government and private social and economic structures to move beyond the view of the worker as a profitmaking factor. The right to work should be viewed as a fundamental right in a free society. The Christian must call government and society to a higher view of work as the opportunity for every able-bodied man and woman to serve family and/or fellow human beings. Government must promote new work opportunities where the private sector is not providing them.

As Christians stress the dignity and value of work, they must guard against the workaholic syndrome, in which work dominates and distorts life. This is also carried to an extreme in the Marxist glorification of work as the controlling factor in society, which leaves little place for the claims of the family and other societal spheres. Those who work must also be able to rest, to worship, and to follow their interests as citizens and family members.

Christians need to witness to a Christ-centered view of work in the world of labor relations. Labor unions have often been a necessary force in promoting just working conditions in impersonal workplaces. But modern secular unions have too readily sacrificed the quality of work conditions to the narrow goal of more money. Labor and management have failed to search together for meaningfulness in work. Our present structure of labor-management relations does little to foster a sense of common mission and task. It fosters antagonism and conflict instead. Christian employers and employees face an urgent challenge in reconciling broken work relationships. Their individual and communal efforts require the prayers and sympathetic support of God's people.

(Previous synodical statements: Christian Labor Unions, *Acts of Synod 1956*, pp. 105ff.; Corporate Responsibility, *Acts of Synod 1945*, pp. 102ff., 314-26.)

Gambling-Lottery

Rest and leisure are gifts from God.
Believing that he provides for us,
we can rest more trustingly
and entertain ourselves more simply.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 54)

We call on governments to do public justice
and to protect the freedoms and rights
of individuals, groups, and institutions,
so that each may freely do
the tasks God gives.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 58)

As leisure time becomes an increasingly larger part of every person's life in this modern age, the Christian community must become more discerning about the nature of the available leisure activities.

Gambling is one such leisure activity. At one time, commercial gambling was confined to a few vacation spots. Sensitive Christians tended to avoid those spots. However, the increasing popularity of many forms of gambling—from hotel casinos, to state lotteries, church bingo parlors, and office sports pools—make a Christian voice on the matter urgent.

Some form of gambling always has been with us despite sporadic efforts to make it illegal. Such efforts have met with little more success than Prohibition Era efforts to make drinking illegal. Even the Christian community has not been unified in its view of gambling. Bingo games and "Casino Nights" remain a favorite fundraising tool in some church circles. Other Christian groups have condemned all forms of gambling as an imposition on God's providence—a view that sweeps so broadly as to condemn many children's games.

Viewed from a Christian perspective, gambling is at best a morally questionable activity. It thrives on the love of money and promotes the unwarranted enrichment of the few at the expense of the many. God has entrusted each of us with resources. As stewards of those resources, whether great or small, we must use them for the well-being of self, family, and fellow human beings. God has given us hands, hearts, and minds to use these resources creatively and productively. The investment of even a small portion of the resources God has entrusted to us in regularly playing the numbers game or in the weekly purchase of lottery tickets violates every notion of Christian stewardship.

Although modest gambling as a form of entertainment or as a charitable fundraising technique may not involve violations of Christian stewardship obligations, the Christian must be extremely wary of leisure activities or fundraising techniques that exploit the human weakness for money (I Tim. 6:9–10) and seduce the poor with dreams of instant wealth. An evening at the horseracing track, or at a church bingo parlor, or participation in the office football pool, all generate a measure of excitement through an appeal to a person's baser instincts.

Although the Christian community must not hesitate to speak clearly to the evils of gambling, it must not expect governmental authorities to legislate stewardship. Many other forms of economic activity also violate Christian concepts of stewardship and promote greed and the idolization of wealth. Nevertheless, the Christian community must demand that the state, as the guardian of public justice, carefully regulate commercial gambling where it does exist and refrain from promoting gambling through state lotteries. The state may only promote activities, such as education, physical fitness, and the arts, that clearly advance the well-being of society. Government lotteries violate the state's responsibility to raise revenue in a way that meets minimal standards of distributive justice. A state revenue program may seek to raise money based

on the ability to pay, benefits received, or the consumption of certain goods or services. But no state may leave the collection of its revenue to chance.

(Previous church statements: *Acts of Synod 1928*, pp. 86ff.; *Acts of Council of CRC in Canada*, Nov. 1981, pp. 70-71.)

Futurology—Fatalism—Utopia

Our hope for a new earth is not tied
to what humans can do,
for we believe that one day
every challenge of God's rule
and every resistance to his will
shall be crushed.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 60)

We long for that day
when Jesus will return as triumphant king,
when the graves will be opened,
the sea will give up its dead,
and all people will stand before his judgment.
We face that day without fear
for the Judge is our Savior.

Our daily lives of service aim for the moment
when God's Son will open the Book of Life
and present his people to the Father;
when all who have been on the Lord's side will be honored,
the fruit of our small acts of obedience will be shown,
the courage of martyrs will be celebrated,
but the deeds of tyrants and oppressors,
of heretics and enemies of the truth
will be damned.

(*Contemporary Testimony*, par. 61)

Futurology studies the future. It should not be confused with eschatology, which studies the biblical message about Christ's return in the last days. Actually, neither study is only about the future. Futurology projects "possible futures" in the light of current trends. Eschatology talks about return, judgment, and the new heaven and earth in the light of the salvation achieved in Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Futurology is done mainly on secular assumptions, which leave faith and God out of the picture. Projections of the future are made on the basis of measurable human decisions and "natural" developments. When chance and free decision are given a place in history, the future is seen as unpredictable. When predictability is desired, planning will try for total control, at the cost of human freedom. The optimist then predicts the perfect society, Utopia, as the result of careful planning. The pessimist predicts that society will destroy itself by the nuclear bomb, by using up all resources, or by pollution. The problem in such predictions is that they assume that either humans control the future, or it's up to fate or chance. Also, the optimist reduces evil to something that can be cured by education or social control. The pessimist accepts evil, all right, but places it in the structures of this world as something inherent.

A Christian view of the future must include human responsibility, the reality of evil, and the sovereign power of God in grace and in judgment. Human responsibility and God's rule are not a 50-50 proposition, each doing half. In the covenantal relationship human actions are a response to God and take place within his sovereign will. Obedience is blessed; disobedience brings judgment, now and in the future. This implies that we do not control the future, but at the same time that our responses make a real difference. For example, an economic depression may be understood as an act of God's sovereign judgment. Yet human beings are *held responsible*, in this case, for chasing the idol of economic growth and distorting the true meaning of life.

How should Christians face an uncertain, and even frightening, future? Is nuclear war inevitable? Or don't we need to fear complete destruction because "God would never let it happen"? Both the pessimist and the optimist here reduce humans to spectators. But Christian realism faces the threat of total destruction, confesses that God, who owns this world, will not allow it, and therefore does what it can to avert such disaster.

Christians do not look at the future with faith-less pessimism, nor with baseless optimism, but with hope-filled realism. Exactly because this is God's world, we must work for economic and social policies that respond obediently to God's call to live by his will in all of life. As we work obediently for a better future we cannot overlook the power of evil in human hearts. We must realize that no human planning can erase sin, and that no social policies can take away human responsibility. While working for social policies that are more obedient to God's will for human life, we must also call for personal repentance through faith in Jesus Christ. The combination of structural reform and personal repentance places the renewing power of God's salvation over against the deeply seated evil of our society.

Our serious efforts to renew our personal lives and to better our society must be suffused with longing for the return of Christ. His victory over sin and death will then be totally plain in the judgment on evil. The beginnings of his redemptive work that are found on earth will be purified and made part of the new heaven and earth, where righteousness is normal, and all tears will be wiped away. Then "the kingdom of the world" will become "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever," and we will reign with him (Rev. 11:15; 5:10; 22:5).

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That Chairman Spykman and Secretary Recker be consulted by the advisory committee and that these committee members be granted the right of the floor when our report is discussed.
- B. That synod direct the committee as to whether it wants scriptural references prepared for the testimony.

Grounds:

1. Some respondents have noted the lack of such references.
 2. There is time to have this list prepared with the final version.
- C. That synod request the Board of Publications to make the remaining com-

mentary sections available to the churches in as inexpensive and speedy a manner as possible.

Ground: This will allow the churches to submit their reactions before January 1, 1986.

Contemporary Testimony Committee

Gordon J. Spykman, chairman

Morris N. Greidanus, reporter

Robert Recker, secretary

Larry Den Besten

Case Hoogendoorn

Richard L. Mouw

Bastiaan Nederlof

George Vandervelde

Aileen Van Ginkel

REPORT 35
WORLD MISSIONS AND RELIEF COMMISSION

I. BACKGROUND TO SYNODICAL ACTION AND COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

A. *Summary of Previous Synodical Action*

After a number of futile attempts by previous synods to effect a solution to the persistent problems between Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM)* and Christian Reformed World Relief (CRWRC), the Synod of 1982 took drastic action and appointed a five-member *ad hoc* committee to find solutions. By delegating to the committee unusual and extensive authority, synod served to underscore the seriousness of the problems with which the committee had to deal. The *ad hoc* committee was reconstituted in 1983 as the World Missions and Relief Commission (WMARC) which the Synod of 1983 invested with even greater authority.

The combined synodical mandates of 1982 and 1983 are listed in the summary below (cf. Acts of Synod 1984, pp. 377-78).

1. Study unresolved problems to gain new insights into the principles and practices which should govern the agencies.
2. Study issues arising out of the CRWRC Constitution and CRWM Mission Order and advise synod as to possible revision of the two documents.
3. Monitor the ongoing performance of the joint ministries and advise the agencies concerning the evaluation of such performance, seeking, if needed, the aid of the Missions Coordinating Council (MCC) for assistance in effecting a proper solution.
4. Secure a unified administrative organization and a single programmatic front on fields of joint ministry.
5. Permit the commission to interfere under certain circumstances, in the operations of the agencies even to the point of exercising veto power, if need be, over the decisions of the agencies.
6. Study structural systems with the intent of effecting improvement in the operations of the agencies, and making them compatible by means of a

*Glossary of acronyms used in this report

CRWM—Christian Reformed World Missions

CRWRC—Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

WMARC—World Missions and Relief Commission

MCC—Missions Coordinating Council

CRC—Christian Reformed Church

SIC—Synodical Interim Committee

comprehensive plan of reorganization, which includes special attention to certain elements in the plan to be recommended to synod for adoption.

7. Address and define a number of fundamental theological, missiological, and ecclesiological issues.

Working within its mandates the commission presented to Synod 1984 an extensive report of its work.

B. *Summary of the 1984 Report*

1. Causes of the Problems

The reports of both 1983 and 1984 contained a presentation of the causes and circumstances of the interagency problems, the former report in great detail, the latter in abbreviated form. The advisory committee of the Synod of 1984 gave an analysis of these issues and a description of the root causes of the interagency conflict (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 659-60). It is important to know that, although favorable changes have occurred in interagency relationships over the intervening years, some of the causes are still present and should be recognized by those currently called to make a judgment on the whole situation. The problems, listed earlier (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 393), which should once again be called to mind while judging the structure proposed in a later part of this report are rooted in: (1) onfield administration, (2) the unity of word and deed in principle and practice, (3) interpretation of agency mandates in constitutional documents, (4) differing management modes, (5) personal tensions in interagency relationships, (6) lapses in interagency communications, (7) incongruities in agency relationships with indigenous onfield Christian communities, (8) the place of permanent community development in the programs of both agencies, (9) issues pertaining to human rights and social justice, (10) the diaconal dynamic, (11) differences in financial policies and procedures between the two agencies, and (12) differing interpretations and implementation of agreed-upon theological affirmations.

2. Agency Cooperation with Other Denominations

Agency cooperation with other denominations became an issue with which the commission dealt when it arose out of a specific monitoring situation. The commission made a judgment based on accepted principles and gave suggested guidelines to which the Synod of 1984 gave "general endorsement." Synod at the same time advised the committee to clarify and, if necessary, revise "the statement" in consultation with CRWM and CRWRC and in the light of communications received from churches.

Further work has not yet been completed on this subject; hence, this will be deferred to a later report.

3. Guidelines

The commission proposed to the Synod of 1983 a series of guidelines to which synod gave "general endorsement" as guidelines within which the commission was to work in completing its mandate. These guidelines dealt with several premises: that the mission of the church is "a unified word/deed ministry"; that "the heralding of the gospel is central to the church's mission, witnessed to by many other ministries of teaching healing and benevolence"; that "the benevolent work of the church associated with the diaconal office is a unique witness to the compassion of Christ and constitutes an essential part of

the church's mission"; that the mission of the church is an official mission, i.e., the ecclesiastically governed mission work reflects the offices of the church; that the work is an ecclesiastical mission; that while the mission should be efficiently run, assessment of needs and development of plans should proceed as much as possible on the field level.

4. Theological, Missiological, and Ecclesiological Principles

The Synod of 1984 also gave "general endorsement" to theological, missiological, and ecclesiological principles (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 384-92 and 662). In summary, the principles which received general endorsement are as follows:

a. Unity of word and deed ministry

The unity of word and deed in the service of the Word is required by Scripture. It is well recognized in Reformed theology and mission theory. The inseparable connection between deed ministry and word ministry has been increasingly realized in mission theory and practice. There is little argument about this question, and the position taken here is endorsed in general by both CRWM and CRWRC. (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 385)

b. Centrality of the proclamation of the gospel

The mission of the church has its goal in the glorification of God through the salvation of sinners, the building of the church, and the coming and extension of the kingdom of God.

The central means to that end is the proclamation of the gospel.

The proclamation of the gospel is accompanied by a wide range of activities which support, illuminate, and confirm it.

Specialization in the pursuit of these activities is necessary and proper. Such specialization applies to programs and structures as well as individuals.

In the church's mission, the work of individuals, programs, and structures must support the proclamation of the gospel in the pursuit of the church's mission. (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 387)

c. Role of CRWM and CRWRC in the matter of permanent community development

CRWM becomes involved in permanent community development as an activity supporting its work of church planting.

CRWRC is involved in permanent community development as the most reasonable and systematic way to address its mandate to alleviate long-term needs.

Where the two agencies work together, increasing efforts must be made to coordinate their work. (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 388)

d. Relationship of permanent community development to church planting and indigenous church development

Permanent community development, when carried on as part of the church's mission, must contribute to the communication of the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Christian concern for others is concern for the whole person and for whole communities.

Intelligent concern for the person means enabling him, as far as possible, to have adequate assurances of subsistence and good health.

The goals of self-support, self-government, and self-propagation are valid in the material as well as the ecclesiastical realm.

Seen in this light, development emerges not as a questionable item, but as the best expression of Christian compassion, the most valid demonstration of

the life-embracing character of the gospel, and the whole-person counterpart of the development of the indigenous church. (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 389)

e. Role of the diaconate in the mission of the church

Stewardship is the key to the Christian life, whereby we serve God by seeking our neighbor's good.

The diaconate stimulates and regulates the corporate stewardship of the church.

The diaconate functions to provide resources, training, and personnel for applying the church's stewardship in mission fields.

The diaconate functions to stimulate the development of the deacon's office in the emerging church.

Even where diaconal work plays a pathfinding role in preparing the way for the gospel, this work must be accompanied and followed by the communication of the gospel through preaching and teaching.

Those who perform such work for the church should be commissioned by the church under the title of deacon or some other appropriate designation.

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 391)

f. With respect to the relationship of the mission of the church to (1) national churches and paraecclesiastical organizations, (2) world hunger and world poverty, and (3) human rights and social justice, the commission referred to studies already current among us, or deferred consideration of these questions to a future report.

5. The reorganization plan of 1984

The partially developed plan proposed by the commission in 1984 provided for one board, one executive committee, one constitution, two directors (with a redefinition of jurisdiction, authority, and responsibility for the director of CRWM), and changes in the names and the legal status of the agencies which would consequently require amendments of their charters and bylaws. The elements of the proposal were built upon two fundamental considerations: (1) the commission determined to retain the identity and integrity of the two agencies, and (2) it insisted on the unification of their work in the interest of the unity of the one mission of the church.

In order to achieve this twofold goal the commission proposed, among the details of organization, equal representation of the interests of both agencies in the governing structure of the organization. To accomplish this the commission proposed a "Six-Year Rotation of Classical Representation to the [one board]" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 397-400) and called synod's special attention to the developing diaconal dynamic (the growing awareness of and activity in the office of deacon) in the church. And, owing to complaints the commission frequently received concerning the conflicting modes of administration, the commission studied and analyzed the administrative modes of the two agencies and concluded:

Subjected to one board, one executive committee and one constitution, the directors of the two agencies will be in a position to guard the special character and identity of their respective bodies, yet together, to fuse the responsiveness to the needs of the indigenous church of the one agency with the broad diaconal vision and programmed efficiency of the other into a potent coordinated effort. (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 404)

The commission likewise promised synod that it will "do everything it can and as soon as possible to secure a unified administrative organization and a single programmatic front on each field of joint ministries" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 404).

To achieve this the commission advocated, both in its regular and supplementary reports, the introduction of an interagency task force accountable to the commission, which would be responsible for developing plans for onfield unification of joint ministries. This task force would be convened immediately.

6. The commission proposed a 1984-85 time schedule for initiating the reorganization plan.

C. Action of the Synod of 1984

Synod's advisory committee, appointed exclusively to advise synod on the commission's report, concluded its study by writing that it "feels that the commission's proposals offer the most likely solution to the problems of the agencies" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 660). Nevertheless, in view of the reaction received by synod expressed in overtures and communications from the churches and agencies on the commission's 1984 report, the advisory committee alerted synod that "it would be unwise to adopt the proposed structure without allowing the churches, the agencies, and the diaconal conferences, to have a voice in shaping the plans before final adoption" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 660).

Synod itself gave varying degrees of approval to the commission's recommendations running from "general approval"—with conditions—through "general endorsement," "approval," "instruct," and "refer" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 660-63).

1. Synod gave *general approval* to all of the commission's proposals for reorganization (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 396-406), including one board, legal steps, representation on the proposed board, executive committee, directors for each agency, and a new constitution; but subject to the conditions (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 661):

- a. that formal implementation, with changes, be delayed until after the Synod of 1985 and that present structures and programs remain in effect until then;
- b. that present names of both agencies be continued;
- c. that the commission and others consider whether the proposed scheme of representation on the board would assure that it adequately safeguards the distinct diaconal task;
- d. that the commission seriously consider establishing the position of "Director of World Ministries"; and
- e. that the commission receive responses from church groups before December 1, 1984.

2. Synod gave *general endorsement* to the suggested guidelines for agency cooperation with other denominations with the understanding that the commission clarify and, if necessary, revise these guidelines in consultation with CRWM and CRWRC in the light of responses of churches.

3. Synod gave *general endorsement* to the principles stated in Report 34, III, A & B (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 382-92) as guidelines within which the commission would conduct its study on condition (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 662) that the commission would:

- a. Clarify, and if necessary revise, guidelines in consultation with CRWM and CRWRC and in the light of response from churches.

- b. Spell out, in consultation with the agencies, certain practical implications of the principles.
4. Synod gave *general approval* to the proposal for a unified field council (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 515–16) on condition (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 662):
 - a. that the distinct nature of each specialized ministry will be protected;
 - b. that the commission will seek concurrence of both agencies to have a single director in each field of joint ministry.
5. Synod *approved* setting up the Interagency Task Force (the task force) but did not include the remaining parts of the proposed timetable for the implementation of the reorganization plan.
6. Synod *instructed* CRWM and CRWRC to lend their cooperation.
7. Synod *referred* the entire report and its proposals to the churches for study and reaction by December 1, 1984.
8. Synod *extended the tenure* of the commission under the same conditions and with the same mandates laid down by the Synods of 1982 and 1983, and by the mandates of the Synod of 1984 outlined above.

II. THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION IN 1984–85

The following is a summary of the activities and procedures of the commission beginning June 1984 and concluding February 1985:

A. Meetings

The commission met thirty-four times with all members present except a few times when members were absent due to illness or travel. In addition, there were many meetings of various subcommittees of the commission, meetings with representatives of the agencies by individual members of the commission, and meetings with diaconal conferences.

B. Administrative Assistant

The commission retained the services of Dr. John Vanden Berg, dean emeritus of Calvin College. He worked approximately one-half of a fulltime schedule to staff the commission and serve as secretary to the Interagency Task Force. His services contributed greatly to the commission's efficiency and capacity; his worth to the commission was far more than the cost of his modest honorarium.

C. Expenses

At the time of the writing of this report, the expenses of the commission were \$7,555.64 for meals, travel, miscellaneous supplies, and the honorarium paid to the administrative assistant.

D. Joint Work with the Agencies

During this year, the commission intentionally made provision for expanded participation by the agencies in the work of the commission. The following is a summary of these joint activities.

1. The Interagency Task Force

The membership of the task force was: Harold Dekker, chairman (chairman of WMARC); Gary Nederveld (Foreign Programs director, CRWRC); and Eu-

gene Rubingh (executive secretary, CRWM). It was the responsibility of this task force to prepare plans for the onfield unification of the ministries of CRWM and CRWRC in all areas of joint ministry.

2. The Interagency Task Force Workshop with Field Directors

After a great deal of preliminary planning, the work of the Interagency Task Force was substantially aided by a week-long workshop held in October 1984, attended by the staff leadership of each agency on fields of joint ministry. The result of this work was reported to and approved by the commission, the details of which are recorded in Section V of this report.

3. The Constitution Committee

The membership of this committee was: John H. Kromminga, chairman (WMARC); Norman B. De Graaf (WMARC); Karen De Vos (director of Diaconal Ministries, US, CRWRC); David Radius (board president, CRWM); and William Spoelhof (WMARC). It was the responsibility of this committee to prepare the constitution for the work of world ministries. The work of the committee was delayed by the commission's commitment not to make final reorganizational plans until it had the report of the Interagency Task Force (including the results of the workshop); responses from local consistories and diaconates, diaconal conferences, and agency field personnel; and advice from the agencies following joint meetings of the commission with agency leaders regarding reorganizational matters. At the time of the writing of this report, the constitution was not complete.

4. Joint Meetings with CRWRC Board and Staff Leaders

At the request of CRWRC, the commission as a whole and individual members as representatives of the commission responded affirmatively to a variety of invitations from the CRWRC board and staff leadership to meet and discuss a number of concerns. While these meetings did not achieve any particular piece of work, they were extremely helpful to the commission in giving it a greater understanding of CRWRC's concerns and values.

5. Attendance at Executive Committee Meetings of Both Agencies

At the invitation of both agencies, members of the commission attended sessions of the executive committee of each agency.

6. Meetings with Agency Boards

At the time of the annual board meetings of the agencies in February 1985, the commission responded affirmatively to an invitation from each agency to make a presentation to its board. The commission was represented by its chairman, assisted by the other members of the Interagency Task Force. This presentation consisted of (1) the commission's concerns regarding the delegation of deacons to major assemblies, (2) onfield reorganization plans to unify joint ministries, and (3) the proposal of the commission regarding the location of regional directors, which matters are summarized in Section V of this report.

7. Joint Meetings Regarding Structural Organization

By December 1984, the commission had identified a number of structural reorganization alternatives and invited representatives of the boards and staffs of each agency to meet with the commission for the expressed purpose of giving their views on the reorganizational alternatives. Each agency was free to

name its own delegates and to furnish its own proposals as well as discuss the commission's proposals.

All the above contacts of the commission and CRWM and CRWRC were carried out in response to the directives of synod and out of a desire to involve the agencies in the work of the commission. These contacts were most helpful to the commission in being informed and in understanding the agencies' viewpoints.

E. Visits to Diaconal Conferences

The commission responded affirmatively to all invitations to visit diaconal conferences. These visits, held in the fall of 1984, were as follows:

1. All Ontario Diaconal Conference visited by Berghoef and Spoelhof
2. Kalamazoo Diaconal Conference visited by Kromminga and Spoelhof
3. Alberta North Diaconal Conference visited by DeGraaf and Kromminga
4. Alberta South Diaconal Conference visited by DeGraaf and Kromminga

These visits were of great value to the commission in gaining a better understanding of the variety of local diaconal ministries, the variety of relationships between diaconal conferences and CRWRC, the variety of responses by diaconal conferences to the commission's 1984 proposals.

In addition, DeGraaf and Dekker visited the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the All-Ontario Diaconal Conference. In its final session the delegates heard a summary of the 1984 synodical decisions as presented by Rev. Derk Pierik, the reporter for the advisory committee at Synod 1984. Following that presentation, Rev. Pierik and Dr. George Vander Velde, another delegate at the 1984 Synod, answered questions and the commission representatives were given the opportunity to interpret the commission report.

F. Meeting with Structure Committee of the SIC

The commission responded affirmatively to an invitation to attend a meeting with the structure committee for the purpose of exchange of information and perspective. This meeting was marked by cordiality, mutual respect, and a sense of responsibility to keep each other informed. At the time of this meeting, the commission's reorganization proposals were not yet sufficiently developed to be discussed. Subsequently, the commission notified the structure committee that a substantive reorganization proposal would be submitted in this year's report to synod.

G. Monitoring the Agencies

The responsibility to monitor the work of the agencies was again performed by the chairman of the commission, Professor Harold Dekker. He made regular reports to the commission on developments in the agencies. The commission adhered to its self-imposed policy of not unnecessarily interfering in the operations of the agencies, and therefore did not alter any of the developments occurring in the agencies.

H. Summary of Responses from the Church

At the request of the Synod of 1984, the commission solicited responses to the commission's 1984 proposals from churches, diaconates, diaconal conferences, the agencies, and interested individuals. The commission acknowledges with appreciation the more than 150 communications it received in

response to its request. Most of these responses dealt with the following issues: (1) the need for retaining the identity of the individual agencies, especially pertaining to funding and promotion, (2) the importance of equal board representation for the agencies, (3) the desirability of a coordinated mission endeavor, and (4) the need of having deacons represented at major assemblies. The responses were helpful to the commission in preparing the new draft of its proposals. These responses will be available for examination by synodical delegates and for use by the synodical advisory committee to which this matter is assigned.

I. Survey of Field Personnel

With the approval of the commission, the task force prepared and circulated a survey soliciting opinion and comment from individual missionaries and their spouses of both CRWM and CRWRC on fields of joint ministry. This survey included some forty items pertaining to word and deed ministry, onfield problems and relationships, and the commission's 1984 plan of reorganization. Nearly 150 responses were received. Respondents were assured of individual confidentiality.

In general, the responses from both agencies' personnel confirmed the gravity and urgency of the previously recognized onfield problems, with helpful perspectives on these. The responses also demonstrated the characteristic divergencies between the agencies as to solving the problems; however, they showed surprising consensus as to the need for more unification at the board and top administrative levels, with a heavy majority in favor of a unified field organization of some kind. They also revealed a distressing disparity, confusion, and uncertainty as to relevant theological, ecclesiastical and mission principles. In general, these responses provide warrant and support for the commission's present report.

Survey results, in a form which guards anonymity, are to be shared with the agencies for their information and will be made available to synod's advisory committee.

III. PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES, AND MANDATES

A. Clarification of Guidelines Required by Synod

The Synod of 1984 did not give the commission a set of theological questions requiring answers in this year's report. Section 4 of the 1984 mandate, however, requires clarification of the guidelines within which the commission is to work and specification of their implications for both agencies (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 662). The text of this recommendation of synod and its grounds contain references to such terms as "broadly humanitarian," "distinctly Christian," "broadly Christian," "properly the work of the organized church," "church planting, church development, and community development." It is suggested that the commission ought to give some further clarification to these terms.

Because of the way these terms are used in the commission's 1984 report, it is difficult to address this clarification directly. But both the clarification and the delineation of practical implications are addressed in the various subsections of this section of the commission's report.

The first comment which must be made is that these and any other terms are open to misunderstanding when they are taken out of context. "Word and

deed," a phrase intended to indicate a comprehensive ministry, can be and has been criticized as introducing an improper distinction. Furthermore, to use "meeting needs" to describe the work of CRWRC and "church planting" to describe the work of CRWM raises more problems than it solves. On the one hand, all mission is concerned in some sense with meeting needs; and on the other hand, "church planting" is far too narrow to serve as a description of what CRWM does.

It is impossible, however, to speak meaningfully about the work of the agencies without the use of some such terms. The pitfalls inherent in the terminology must be avoided by reading the guidelines as a whole, in which the subordinate parts interpret the central contentions.

B. Unity and Distinctiveness in the Mission of the Church

As the agencies seek to understand their mutual roles, they are concerned at times with the prospect of losing their distinctiveness in the interest of unity. The interrelationship of unity and distinctiveness is clarified in the following comments.

The church has one mission in the world. The goal of that one mission has been stated in the 1984 report of the commission as follows: the goal of the mission is the glorification of God through the salvation of sinners, the building of the church, and the coming and extension of the kingdom of God.

In the pursuit of that goal there are many major and minor varieties of approach. A partial list of such varieties would include: congregational, classical, and synodical; official and unofficial; domestic and foreign; preaching, teaching, healing, feeding, and disciplining; tract distribution, broadcasting, evangelism, and relief. Wherever Christians are active as witnesses to Jesus Christ, their goal is one and the same, no matter how their approach, emphases, and tactics may differ. It is important to recognize both that unity and that distinctiveness.

The activity of all Christians as witnesses is in some sense the work of the church as the body of Christ. Therefore, the principles of unity and distinctiveness apply to all. But this general rule applies more forcibly to the effort of the church to organize its official, corporate ministries according to the will of the Spirit as revealed in Scripture. What is generally valid for all Christians is specifically required of the offices and agencies of the church.

How various special emphases are to contribute to the one work of the Spirit becomes evident from many passages of Scripture, particularly in the New Testament. Concentrated attention is given to the subject in such key passages as Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and I Corinthians 12. The last-named passage is particularly relevant. A variety of gifts is mentioned, with some specific examples listed. But "all these are the work of one and the same Spirit." These gifts are distinct from each other. But they are not independent of each other. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'" Attitudes of superiority are to be avoided; "... those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable." And the manifestations of the Spirit are given for the common good.

In harmony with this scriptural teaching it is imperative that the official ministry of the church shall manifest the unity of its mission. It is also imperative that each office or agency be allowed freedom to pursue the one goal with the distinctiveness appropriate to its own character. Such is the case at the

congregational level, where, according to the Church Order, the offices are distinguished from each other in mandate and task (although not in dignity and honor) but where they do not work independently of each other and certainly not at cross-purposes with each other. It should be no less the case when the work is pursued on a synodical rather than a congregational level.

It is such a concept, of a unity which preserves distinctiveness, which led first to the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee and then to the formation of a commission to harmonize the work of two of the church's agencies. It is this concept which has governed and continues to govern the commission's work. The commission has sought and seeks to bring unity and harmony to the mission without destroying or impairing the distinctive identity of any office or agency or impeding the freedom of the members of the church to support one aspect or another of the work as they feel led by the Spirit. The commission intends the structural recommendations submitted in this report to be clear and fitting reflections and implementations of this position.

A more complete application of this position to the work of the two agencies is given below in subsection C, 2, entitled "Agency Procedures; Two Approaches to One Goal."

C. *Development of Agency Mandates*¹

One of the most frequently cited causes of interagency problems has been the question of mandates and the interpretation of them. It precipitated synod's appointment of the *ad hoc* committee in 1982 and the continuation of it as a commission in 1983.

1. Definition of Mandates

The concept of mandates, as used with reference to the interagency difficulties, is itself illusive. In a certain sense the Mission Order of CRWM is its mandate and the Constitution of CRWRC is its mandate. Used in this sense the mandates of the reorganized agencies will not be completely stated until the commission proposes, and synod adopts, a single constitution to which proposal synod gave general approval (*Acts of Synod 1984*, F, 2 and 2, e, (3), p. 660-61). The commission plans to offer such a constitution in 1986.

In another sense the proposed reorganized structures of the agencies are themselves mandates in that they are built upon accepted principles which are recognized as fundamental to the structures. Thus, the several components of the proposed reorganized structure which will be given in this report, all with their given functions and responsibilities, constitute mandates.

Whatever the constitution shall declare when presented in 1986, or whatever the proposed reorganized structure may incorporate as to mandates, the basic concept of what mandates are must rest on accepted theoretical grounds. In this sense the principles and guidelines submitted by the commission to the Synod of 1984 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 382-92) contain mandates for the agencies. Synod gave these principles its general approval but requested the commission to clarify and explain them at certain points. This the commission does in this section of its report and thereby offers a statement of the fundamental mandates of the World Ministries and of its dual agencies under the title "Two Approaches to One Goal." It is the fundamental statement upon which the reorganized structure is built and upon which the single constitution will be based.

2. Mandates for Agency Procedures: Two Approaches to One Goal

The following sets forth in broad outline the way in which the World Mission and World Relief agencies follow distinctive paths and employ differing procedures in the pursuit of a shared goal.

a. The Goal of the Mission

The comprehensive goal of all of the mission agencies of the church is the glorification of God through the salvation of sinners, the building of the church, and the coming and extension of the kingdom of God.

b. Coordination

One or another of the church's agencies working in a foreign field may have an initial priority in the opening of the field. Their work, however, should ordinarily be planned and carried out cooperatively. Long-range work carried on independently by either agency in any field must be viewed as exceptional, requiring specific justification. In no case shall the comprehensive goal of the mission be slighted. It will be the duty of both committees to promote this and of the board to ensure that it is observed.

c. Two Approaches

Although both agencies share the same goal, they arrive at that goal from different starting points and by different avenues. The following considerations are to be observed.

d. Procedures of the World Mission Agency:

(1) When a field of world ministry is opened through an address to spiritual darkness, the immediate focus of the work is on communication of the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. But under the ultimate goal of the glory of God, the subordinate goals of planting and building the church are to be pursued from the start and without any unnecessary delay.

(2) Church planting and development includes concern for such material needs as food, medicine, and education. It should aim not only at making the Christian community self-sustaining, but at bringing it to the point where it acknowledges a responsibility for the larger non-Christian community in which it exists.

(3) The communication of the gospel should not be reserved only for fields where meeting material needs is paramount, but may include fields where spiritual darkness prevails amidst cultural and material sufficiency. In such a case the length of time spent in an area or the priority of another area may be factors in judging the need for the operation of the mission.

e. Procedures of the World Relief Agency:

(1) When a field of world ministry is opened in response to urgent and pressing material needs, the effort is addressed not only to the obvious need itself, but to its causes and sources, in order to ensure permanent amelioration through the resources developed within the community itself by means of technical education and promotion of literacy, public health, and economic well-being.

(2) Meeting material needs in such a way is a God-glorifying response of Christians to the miserable condition of their fellow human beings. But the wholeness of the response to such need cannot stop short of

an equally urgent address to their spiritual hunger. As such a response develops, it will normally call for the presence of persons trained and commissioned to perform this particular task.

(3) Material need may be present where spiritual hunger is already acceptably addressed by another church or organization. A whole response should be achieved through seeking an affiliation with an existing resource acceptable to the CRC.

The commission recognizes that there are still some unanswered questions which persist and that it should more fully address the mandate of the Synod of 1984 pertaining to the clarification of principles and guidelines. The commission intends to give further study to these matters with a supplementary report to the Synod of 1985.

IV. DELEGATION OF DEACONS TO MAJOR ASSEMBLIES

It has become increasingly apparent to the commission that the assignment given to it by synod is intimately related to the role and place of the diaconal office in the denomination at large. This impression was confirmed by the advisory committee at the Synod of 1984: "Any solution that falls short of giving full recognition to the rightful place of deacons and diaconal conferences within the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church will perpetuate the problems between the two agencies" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 660). An important aspect of this question is the question of whether deacons should be delegated to the major assemblies of the church. The resolution of this question is not directly a part of the mandate given to the commission. But there are compelling reasons why it should again be addressed. The commission is proposing that the Synod of 1985 reopen this question by way of a study committee. Reasons for this proposal are given in the following condensed historical review and analysis, designed merely to introduce and motivate the proposed study.

A. Historical Review and Analysis

Denomination-wide diaconal work entered into a new dimension in 1962 with the organization of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. In that same year the first of a series of classical overtures, leading in turn to a series of study committees and synodical decisions, brought to synod's attention the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. The grounds given for the 1962 overture concerned the following three points:

1. Diaconal work is the work of Christ, and therefore the work of Christ's church as a whole;
2. All matters pertaining to this work should be kept within the structures of the church and not entrusted to associations without ecclesiastical authority;
3. The expanding diaconal work needs to be discussed and considered at the major assemblies, which can only be done if the diaconal office is represented there. (For a complete and accurate listing of these grounds, consult the *Acts of Synod 1963*, p. 446.)

The resulting study committee, whose report was acted upon in 1967, was unanimous in recommending the inclusion of deacons in major assemblies. The synod was of a different mind, judging that the committee had not made a convincing case for its recommendations. The synodical decision, however,

was far from closing the door to future consideration of the matter. The synod adopted a recommendation to "declare that the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church is neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture and the Reformed confessions." Synod further decided not to move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies, but added the qualifying phrase, "at the present time." Discharging the study committee, synod also decided to "leave the question to the thought and reflection of the churches in the light of the report of the study committee, the material and recommendations of the advisory committee, and other relevant considerations" (*Acts of Synod 1967*, pp. 93-94).

In response to another overture, the matter was reopened in 1970 and a new study committee appointed. This committee, reporting in 1972, divided into a majority which opposed and a minority which favored delegation of deacons to major assemblies. Once again, synod decided not to move in the direction of the inclusion of deacons "at this time," and once again encouraged the churches "to continue giving constructive attention to this matter" (*Acts of Synod 1972*, p. 48).

In the ensuing years several developments have occurred which strongly suggest that the question is not closed. Several classical overtures have been submitted on one aspect or another of the question. The Synod of 1973 adopted a position on "Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination" which has an important bearing on the subject. The diaconal work represented by CRWRC has become a major part of the church's outreach and has won the generous support of the church's members. The difficulties of conducting this work on a parallel track with another of the church's outreach agencies has given rise to the appointment of the present commission. Discussion of the commission's report at the Synod of 1984, and the church responses received by the commission since, have made it clear that proper recognition of the prominence and dignity of the deacons' office is a major concern as the church seeks coordination of its ministry of gospel proclamation with that of mercy. The relevance of the role deacons are, or are not, given in the major decision-making bodies of the church has a definite bearing on this question.

Whether or not deacons are to be delegated to major assemblies, some correction of course is necessary. The facts of denominational ministry have outstripped the organization and relationship of its offices. A choice should clearly and definitely be made between making a place for deacons in major assemblies and keeping them in "associations without ecclesiastical authority" (cf. the 1962 overture of Classis Chatham, cited above).

If the appointment of a study committee is approved, the committee will have a ready starting point in the studies already conducted. Much of this valuable material is of direct relevance to a renewed study. Two things, however, will be necessary in addition. Synodical actions on the previous studies have isolated several questions which have proved to be obstacles to the admission of deacons to a regular role in major assemblies; chief among them the question of the kind of "authority" implied in their office. This will have to be addressed. But full recognition will also have to be given to the undeniable and remarkable growth in prominence of the denomination-wide ministry of mercy which the deacons have been conducting. The role of deacons in the church's work has grown, undeniably so; it has been recognized by synodically approved changes in the form for ordination of deacons; and there has been a

clearly expressed desire for further development of this office, on all levels of denominational work. This, too, demands serious address.

The commission is not proposing that this study, whatever its outcome, will resolve all questions involved in the coordination of the mission of the church. Nor are we proposing that all efforts at coordination need to be held in abeyance until the study is completed and synodical action taken. What we are stating is that the growth of diaconal concern on the denominational level lends support and urgency to the open-ended question of the recognition of the diaconal office as equal in dignity and honor with the other offices in the church. The question is not whether such recognition needs further development. The question is whether the church wishes to grant it by way of delegation to major assemblies or to set for itself some other avenue by which to grant a recognition whose time has come.

B. *Recommendation*

We recommend that the Synod of 1985 appoint a committee to restudy the question of the delegation of deacons to major assemblies, making use of the studies previously submitted, addressing the questions raised by previous synods, taking into account the rise in prominence of denominational work of mercy, and submitting its findings to a forthcoming synod for action.

Grounds:

1. By declaring that Scripture and the Reformed confessions neither prohibit nor demand delegation of deacons to major assemblies, past synods have put this question in a position for decision on other grounds.
2. By qualifying their decisions not to take this step "at the present time" past synods have left open the possibility of some other time when the decision might be made.
3. The growth of the church's ministry of mercy has created the necessity of further incorporation of the diaconal office into the work of major assemblies, either by delegation to those assemblies or by some other avenue yet to be proposed.
4. The need for such a study has been reflected frequently in the responses of the church received by the commission to its 1984 report and to the synodical decision thereon.

V. REORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD MISSIONS AND WORLD RELIEF AGENCIES

A. *Field Reorganization*

1. Background

The commission stated in its report to the Synod of 1984 that "the unification of ministries on the field is indeed of the highest importance and urgency." This has been consistently recognized by synod, the agencies, and the commission itself as the first priority of the commission's task. In 1984 the commission recommended and synod approved the establishment of an interagency task force for the very purpose of effecting such unification of ministries.

The essence of the mandate of the task force was to draft a plan for the unification of the joint ministries of CRWM and CRWRC within the guidelines and structure posited in the commission's report to Synod 1984. Of particular relevance are the following factors.

- a. The CRC in its world ministry must to a maximum degree speak with one voice and act in solidarity.
- b. The identity of CRWM and CRWRC as separate entities must be retained.
- c. The plan of unification must provide for strong field participation in planning and program development, as well as for uniform accountability and standards of evaluation.
- d. There must be a full regard for the unique needs and circumstances of each field.

The task force presented its recommendations to the commission, which endorsed the recommendations except for the method of appointment of the field directors. The commission now submits the recommendations of field reorganization as its own.

2. The Plan of Reorganization

The onfield organization of all fields of joint ministry shall include at least the following principles and features in order to assure the unity of the work and its effective implementation:

- a. A field director for each agency, or one field director for the joint field. Agency field directors shall be appointed, after consultation with the missionaries on the field, by the executive directors of the agencies and, if there is to be one field director, by the executive director of World Ministries. Field directors shall supervise the work of the missionaries under their jurisdiction and provide support in the development, coordination, and evaluation of all projects in their fields. They shall, in turn, report to their regional or agencies' home office directors.
- b. A field executive council to coordinate the strategies, policies, and budgets of CRWM and CRWRC in order to achieve maximum integration and effectiveness in their joint ministries. The executive council shall prepare a single annual plan, including components from each agency, a unified budget and a comprehensive accountability system. It shall monitor the execution of the single plan. It shall also represent the entire field (both agencies) in establishing relations and agreements with third parties. (Third parties are understood here to include churches, organizations, institutions, persons, and governments with which either CRWM or CRWRC, or both, do joint work).

The field executive council shall be constituted of members representing both agencies, usually six* in number as follows:

- (1) The field director of CRWM and the field director of CRWRC, in fields served by both;
- (2) Two members elected from among their number by the regular CRWM missionaries serving on the joint field at the time of the annual assembly meeting; and
- (3) Two members from among their number by the regular CRWRC missionaries serving on the joint field at the time of the annual assembly meeting.

*Exceptions will occur when there is a single field director and when there are fewer than two missionaries serving either or both agencies.

The members of the executive council shall elect one of the agency field directors to serve as chairman of the council for the first year; the other agency field director shall serve as secretary of the council for the first year. These offices shall be alternated annually between the two agency field directors.

c. A field assembly including voting and nonvoting members as follows: Voting members shall include all regular, board-appointed or approved, fulltime missionaries and their spouses. Nonvoting members shall include volunteers and associate missionaries.

The field executive council shall be responsible for making arrangements for the annual meeting of the field assembly, including preparation of the agenda. The purpose of the field assembly is to provide mutual encouragement, exchange of information, training, fellowship, and spiritual development, and to serve as a forum for giving advice to the executive field council.

The final, coordinated, single annual plan for the field shall be submitted by the executive council to the field assembly for its review and comment. Although the input of all the missionaries is sincerely sought and welcomed, the field assembly does not function as a body to approve the annual plan. The executive council alone does so. The plan is then submitted to the home office for staff and board consideration.

When advisory votes are taken on policy or strategy questions, only voting members may participate.

The chairman and the secretary of the executive council shall serve the assembly as well in their respective capacities.

CRWM and CRWRC voting members shall meet separately to elect their respective representatives to the field executive council.

Minutes, reports, and advisory actions of the field assembly shall be transmitted by the respective field directors to their regional directors and to their respective agency home office directors.

The administrative mode on all fields shall be consistent with the principles of administration established by the commission in its report to the Synod of 1984. Nomenclature on the various fields should be consistent among fields, and the lines of authority and responsibility should be delineated clearly within all fields and between each field and the home office. No field is autonomous; all fields must fit into the macro-planning that can take place only at the home administrative or board level.

Finally, all appeals on matters pertaining to program or personnel are to be made to one's supervisor and, if necessary, through the supervisor to the next level of authority and, if necessary, to successive levels of supervision and authority. Appeals regarding personal performance and program matters should not be appealed beyond the level of the Board of World Ministries.

3. Location of Regional Directors

To complete the administrative structure of onfield operations the commission proposes that regional directors should be designated for both agencies and located in the region over which they have jurisdiction. Both agency regional directors should, if at all possible, live in the same general location. The commission proposes this in principle, leaving further consideration and implementation of it to the board and appropriate administrative units.

The commission proposes this closer relationship of the regional directors with the field organization because it would bring them closer to the mainstream of action and it would provide them with an intimate firsthand awareness of all the aspects of the work within their region of jurisdiction. Moreover, the relocation would provide a consistent pattern of regional supervision for both agencies which now differ in their practice of locating their regional administrative centers. In addition, by providing matching levels of jurisdiction and authority, a principle to which synod gave general approval in 1984, regional directors would be in close proximity to one another and, consequently, would have better and more frequent opportunity for promoting the unity of the mission on the field.

4. Recommendations

The commission recommends:

a. That synod adopt the proposed plan for reorganization on all current fields of joint ministry, allowing for certain deviations from the plan of organization at the discretion of the commission in monitoring the implementation process.

Grounds:

- (1) The proposed plan achieves in a balanced way the goals of establishing a unified mission, retaining the identity of the agencies, strong field participation, and recognizing the needs and circumstances of each field.
- (2) The proposed plan was developed primarily by field personnel from both agencies, people who are well acquainted with the fields of joint ministry and know what kind of organization would be effective on joint fields.
- (3) Previous developments on certain fields necessitate some adjustments.

b. That synod adopt the proposed plan as a model for organizing all fields of agency ministry, single agency fields as well as fields of joint ministry.

Grounds:

- (1) This will provide uniform and effective administration on all CRWM and CRWRC foreign fields.
- (2) The proposed plan is flexible enough to accommodate differences among fields.

B. Board and Home Office Reorganization

1. Review of the Earlier Proposal

The commission's 1984 report to synod containing proposals for the reorganization of the agencies is a partial one. The four major structural components then recommended by the commission are: A new nomenclature for the agencies, the establishment of the Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries, a single constitution, and the retention of the identity and integrity of the two agencies, each with its own director but under a more clearly defined legal relationship to synod. The proposal was motivated especially by the following two values, both of which the commission still espouses: (1) the need for the unification of the mission of the church in its outreach programs, and (2) the

need to retain the identity of the World Missions and World Relief agencies.

The two values of unification and identification, when implemented in structure and practice, appear, however, to be contradictory. In fact, the degree of tension which exists between these two values lies at the root of the inter-agency problems. Both values cannot be achieved in their purest forms; something has to give. Since there should be no compromise with the unification of the one mission of the church, the adjustment must be made within the organizational structures of the agencies. It is at this point that the commission has had its greatest difficulty in arriving at a single and best solution.

The organizational structure of both agencies must rest, of course, on accepted theological and ecclesiological bases. This does not limit the solution, however, to one "choice" as to the best type of organizational arrangement. Even if a "best" structure could be determined, its success would still hang precariously on the uncertain and vast range of variables inherent in the human situation. The best plan can easily go awry. No plan can cover for such uncertain developments. The commission does not intend to encumber its proposal with such excessive constraints as would rob each agency of its distinctive character and its area of specialized service.

A number of factors induced the commission to alter parts of its plan proposed in 1984. Meetings with individual field personnel, a workshop with field staff members, conferences with board and home office staff representatives, communications from churches and diaconal conferences, and the request of synod to study or restudy certain aspects of the plan—all these played a part in persuading the commission to change in some ways the original plan. The commission listened attentively and appreciatively to the commentary and it learned much. The commission is confirmed, however, in its judgment as to its statements of history, causes of the interagency problems, principles guiding the study, and in recommending the one-board concept.

2. Changes from the 1984 Report on Organizational Matters

Among the organizational matters which the commission has changed are the following.

a. The commission has dropped changes in the nomenclature of the two agencies and thereby retains throughout the new report the names "World Missions" and "World Relief." The commission does, however, retain the name "Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries."

b. While retaining the one-board concept, the commission withdraws the proposal for the "Six-Year Rotation of Classical Representation." The commission was prompted to do this both by synod's request to consider whether that plan adequately "safeguards the distinct diaconal task" and by some negative reaction in the church and agency responses to the representational aspect of the proposal and its complicated character.

c. Any change in the manner of prescribing membership representation on the Board of World Ministries affects several other originally proposed organizational details concerning the board and its executive committee; hence, the commission now also makes such changes in its new report.

3. Values Which the Commission Established for Judging the Elements of Home Office Reorganization of the Agencies

Before adopting a specific plan for synod's consideration the commission set

a number of values which it judged should be present in some degree in any plan under consideration. These values are as follows, listed in order of priority only in a general way.

a. The unification of the mission of the church and retention of the identity and integrity of the two agencies, which were already stated in the 1984 reports (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 394 and 396), should hold top priority in the commission's proposal. Of the two, the unification of the mission of the church is of primary significance and should not be subordinated; therefore, some sacrifices would have to be made at the expense of maintaining the identity of the two agencies. The principle of identity should, however, remain high in the order of priorities and should be buttressed at many points in the organizational arrangement by special provisions.

b. Home office reorganization must mesh effectively with onfield reorganization.

c. Given the current dependency of CRWRC on voluntary giving, the present method of fundraising and the representational functions of its board members should not be jeopardized.

d. In restructuring the agencies, the opportunity for obtaining government grants (particularly the Canadian grant) and government contracts should not be jeopardized.

e. Close contact between CRWRC and the local diaconates, classes, and diaconal conferences should be encouraged, and diaconal representation on the governing units of World Ministries should be such as will "assure that it will safeguard the diaconal task."

f. The domestic programs and emergency relief functions should be continued under the present mandates of World Relief.

g. The unifying principles fixed by the policy decisions of a governing unit should also be secured by strong, unifying administrative implementation. Some of the points at which this priority should be exercised are: establishing clearly defined *loci* of executive and administrative authority and accountability; providing opportunity for an interagency team approach to planning and performance; creating matching levels of rank and authority; and providing similar standards of recruitment, training, pay, and perquisites.

h. The reorganization plan should allow for an early and easy transition from the existing operational system to a new plan. The plan should not be harmfully disruptive.

i. Long-range development of diaconal participation in the life and work of the church should be valued as being superior to the short-range value of such participation.

j. The plan of reorganization should be clear yet comprehensive. It should have internal integrity.

k. The reorganization recommended should preserve maximally those reorganizational components which were given "general approval" by the Synod of 1984.

1. The reorganization plan should permit a later inclusion of other denominational agencies engaged in world mission.

The commission's aim was to satisfy to some degree all twelve values, and to incorporate in its finished composition the best possible orchestration of all of them.

In the judgment of the commission, of all the alternatives considered, the new proposal satisfies these values and conditions to the greatest degree.

4. The Alternatives Considered by the Commission

There are essentially three distinct alternatives for agency reorganization which the commission considered. Each alternative, however, has so many variations that the total number actually considered is sizable. The three basic alternatives are the following. (For easy identification each alternative is given an abbreviated name which tries to depict the chief characteristic of the plan, even though the title is not fully descriptive of the plan it represents.)

a. The conventional, single-board, two-director plan

This plan calls for one board constituted of one member from each classis (forty), these members undesignated as to specialized mission interest, plus fifteen or more diaconal members, elected at large by synod. It proposes two directors, each directing one agency and reporting for the staff of the agency to one board. It proposes a coordinating committee representing board, field, and the two agencies to reconcile difficulties. This committee would operate between the field organization and the home office.

b. The merger-of-the-boards plan—joining both boards into one

This plan calls for merging the two existing boards into one and retaining the present operational system. This requires an eighty-member board with the proviso that periodically (three or five years) there would be a mutually-agreed-upon reduction in size, arrived at in agency caucuses.

c. The single, thirty-member board plan, interrelated with one overall executive director, two agency directors, and a two-agency committee system.

The commission judged that the plan described under c above satisfied to the highest degree the address to the values it established as essential to any plan.

5. The Constitutive Elements of the Reorganization Plan

The principal elements of the plan for board and home office reorganization in the commission's proposal are the following:

a. There shall be one board, called the "Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries," responsible directly to synod.

b. There shall be one executive director responsible to the Board of World Ministries.

c. There shall be two committees—responsible to the board—the Christian Reformed World Missions Committee and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, each with its own director, its own committee structure, and its own agency staff.

d. There shall be an administrative management team constituted of the executive director and the two agency directors, augmented as needed, by top-level management staff members.

e. There shall be one constitution which will be the fundamental document governing the two agencies.

The details of the plan, thus far developed, and the grounds for each part follow:

6. The Proposal for Reorganization

a. The one board

1) The one-board concept

The commission continues to recommend that synod establish one standing Board of World Ministries (Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries, hereafter referred to as "the board") which shall regulate and supervise the work of CRWM and CRWRC. The grounds for this proposal, advanced earlier by the commission (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 396), are as follows:

a) A single board can best encourage, motivate, and oversee objectively and consistently the proper interplay of interagency relationships.

b) A single board can best achieve the unity of purpose in the mission of the church as expressed in and implied from the guiding principles elucidated in Section II of our report in the *Acts for Synod 1984*, pages 382-92.

c) A single board will ensure working toward one goal and speaking with one voice, while maintaining the corporate identity of the two agencies with their benefits of balanced emphases, constituency loyalties, and the highest and best use of human resources in the mission of the church.

At this point the importance of the one-board concept lies in the unifying significance of one board over both agencies and not in its size or in its representation.

2) The membership and size of the board

The commission proposes that the board shall be constituted of thirty members, all elected by synod, in the following manner of representation:

Ten members nominated by the board, elected by synod;

Ten members nominated by and from the World Missions Committee, elected by synod;

Ten members nominated by and from the World Relief Committee, elected by synod;

3) The mandate and functions of the board

a) Its mandate

The board shall form policy and set goals for and the direction of the unified ministries. The board shall ensure that the work of the two mission agencies, World Missions and World Relief, be done in such a manner that scriptural standards for all aspects of the work be maintained and the constitution be observed. In this context the board shall supervise and regulate the work of the agencies.

b) Its functions

(1) The board shall elect annually from its membership its own officers and its own executive committee. Its officers shall be: president, elected from among the ten members nominated

and elected by synod; the vice president and secretary, elected from among the members nominated by the agency committees. Its executive committee shall be constituted of the officers of the board and six other members elected by the board—two from each membership category. The executive committee shall meet to act for the board as frequently as needed.

(2) The board shall determine, subject to synodical approval and in accordance with the mandates governing both agencies, the selection and assignment of the fields to its agencies and the manner of the coordination which shall prevail on the fields of joint ministry.

(3) The board shall be responsible for and engage in planning.

(4) The board shall be the last resort in arbitration of matters pertaining to personnel, interagency conflicts, and determination of whether a given issue is an administrative or policy concern.

(5) The board shall nominate candidates for the office of executive director of World Ministries and for the office of director in each agency, all of which staff offices must be filled by synodical appointment. Regional directors shall be appointed by the respective agency committees, subject to confirmation by the board. Further specification of rights of appointment by the committees will be made in the bylaws of respective agency committees.

(6) The board shall adopt and forward to synod a single, unified budget and an annual report.

(7) The board shall enforce the provisions of the constitution and shall have the sole power to recommend to synod amendments to it. It shall adopt and/or amend such bylaws as are needed to fulfill its own assignment in accordance with synodical decisions as well as approve the operational bylaws, and amendments to them, of the two agencies.

(8) The board shall ensure that properties are rightfully held and conveyed by its two agencies. The acquisition and sale of such property shall be subject to board approval.

(9) The board and its agencies shall exercise jurisdiction over personnel called or commissioned by local churches under the following conditions: The board and its agencies are specifically and independently responsible for the performance of employees in the duties assigned them. Local churches in which employees' memberships reside have responsibility for overseeing the doctrine and life of employees who are members of the Christian Reformed Church. In appeals from board or agency decisions, local church consistories have jurisdiction only over matters of doctrine and life; the board and its agencies have jurisdiction over matters involving the employees' performance of duties and responsibilities.

(10) The board shall evaluate annually the performance of those officers of the agencies who are appointed by the board, and review those whose appointments the board confirms.

4) The board's legal status

The matter of the legal status of the board and its agencies presented in the 1984 report to synod is still under consideration and needs further legal review. The commission will present this in a supplementary report to the Synod of 1985.

5) The grounds for the size and manner of composition of the thirty-member board and the ten-member executive committee.

(a) Its membership is representative of all the interests involved in the work of World Ministries. It secures the representation of the interests of synod, of the diaconal groups, and of classes in the highest level of agency authority. Thus, the board is in an especially favored position to unify all aspects of the ministries under its supervision.

(b) The board and executive committee are internally related to the operations of both agencies since a portion of its membership (twenty of the thirty members) coincides with the membership of the agency committees. Thus, there will exist a natural flow of action, reaction, and interaction among the board and its two agency committees in the progressive unification of the mission of the church.

(c) It is a small enough body to be manageable, deliberative, and efficient; yet it is large enough to represent all of the interests of the church involved in the mission of the church.

(d) Its manner of composition provides structural unity, proportional representation, and structural integrity in the interrelationships of the various components of the plan.

b. The World Missions and World Relief Committees

The identity of the two agencies is retained in the board through the dual membership of some members on the board and on the committees. It is retained principally, however, through the two committees of that board. The committees will be two separate entities, each with representation from and elected by each classis and confirmed by synod. Each committee will have its own director. The structures of the committees will be similar to the present board structures of the two agencies. The work of the two committees will be coordinated as to the operations through the executive director and an administrative management team of which the directors of both agencies are members.

The principal features of these two committees will be as follows.

1) Relationship of the committees to ecclesiastical bodies

a) By virtue of election each member will be related to a classis.

b) By virtue of responsibility for carrying out its mandate each committee will be related to the Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries, a board of synod.

c) By virtue of synodical confirmation of election to membership and being involved in the mutual task of all the churches the committees will be related to synod.

2) The membership

The membership of the World Missions Committee shall be constituted of one representative from each classis, elected by classis. The membership of the World Relief Committee shall be constituted of

one representative from each classis, nominated by the diaconal conference or diaconal committee of the classis and appointed by classis.

In both cases the elections shall be confirmed by synod.

The election of members and the transition to operations under the reorganized plan will be easy and natural, for it will proceed without disrupting the present system of electing members to the two boards. The incumbent classical delegates to the current Board for World Missions and the World Relief Committee will retain their memberships but transfer them to the new committees for the same terms for which the members have already been elected. The only replacements or reelections needed will be for those whose terms have been completed. The present at-large members will retain their tenure until the formation of the new committees.

- 3) The similar functions of the two agency committees are to:
- a) prepare priorities, guidelines, and proposals for endorsement by the board;
 - b) initiate and/or review preliminary planning of new projects;
 - c) nominate candidates for office which require board approval, and appoint personnel to positions as named in the bylaws;
 - d) complete and approve the annual agency budgets prepared by the staff and field personnel and management team for recommendation to the board;
 - e) engage in fundraising, communications, and promotional activities;
 - f) exercise the right to acquire, hold, and convey property subject to the approval of the board;
 - g) supervise through its director the administrative staff of the agencies;
 - h) formulate intra-agency administrative policy in agreement with board general policy;
 - i) negotiate contracts with national governments and fulfill requirements, concomitant with the purpose of the mission, in order to receive government grants, such as in the case of CRWRC in its procurement of Canadian governments grants;
 - j) be the last instance of appeal to adjudicate intra-agency personnel problems; and,
 - k) engage in such decision making as will achieve the responsibilities delegated to each committee by the board, promote the unification of the full mission of the church, enlarge the vision of that mission for the constituencies of both agencies, and fulfill the mandate of that one mission.

Note: Mandates of the two agencies are also discussed in an earlier section of the report (see Section III, C) and will be presented also in the Constitution of the Board of World Ministries.

- 4) The directors of the agencies

The functions of the directors are to:

- a) supervise, for the agency committees, the home office and field staffs of the agencies and report to the agency committees the matters of agency business which require committee endorsement;

- b) be a member of the management team;
 - c) supervise recruitment, training, and evaluation of field and office personnel;
 - d) promote agency interests throughout the church;
 - e) maintain a firsthand acquaintance with field operations; and
 - f) supervise the preparation of the budget for presentation to the management team and the agency committees.
- 5) The internal structures of the agency committees.

Such matters as officers of the committees, committee structure, bylaws, and other details of internal structure may differ in the two agencies; therefore, these details require further exploration and discussion with the staffs of the two agencies. These matters are delayed for a future report.

- 6) The grounds for the two-committee organization
- a) The two-committee plan assures the representation of the interests of both diaconal and world missions constituencies, and it retains the grassroots involvement in policy shaping and operations. It is an important factor, therefore, in ensuring the continued identity of the two agencies. By it, diaconal and evangelism representation is secured, fundraising and relationships to classes and diaconal conferences are protected, as are national and government contractual relations.
 - b) The direct election by classes of the members of the two committees not only retains but strengthens their attachment to the classes and local congregations. Yet, it also retains synod's involvement by its confirmation of such elections.
 - c) The plan permits easy transition from the old organization to the new.
 - d) The plan satisfies the principles and guidelines given general approval by synod and the appropriate values given in the earlier section of the report (see Section B, 3).
 - e) By means of the dual membership of ten persons from each agency on the committees and board (a total of twenty for both agencies), the committees' association with the formation of policy and their representation of agency interests at the highest level are assured.

c. The executive director

There shall be an executive director who reports directly to the Board of World Ministries and to whom the directors of the two agencies report. The person shall be the executive head of World Ministries. The executive director shall head the management team in which the management operations of both agencies are joined.

- 1) Functions of the executive director
- a) The executive director shall be the immediate agent and key to the translation of board policy to implementation of that policy throughout the structure of World Ministries. This person shall give leadership to, as well as be the conveyor of, that function. As such, the executive director must know each agency independently as well as jointly.

- b) The executive director shall reinforce the concept of the unified mission of the church, promoted also by agency directors, in field operations whether these be joint or independent operations.
- c) The executive director shall present one unified budget and an annual report for both agencies to the board. The executive director shall devise a clearly defined budget process, both for income and expenditures, involving all the organizational units throughout the entire chain of accountability from the individual missionary requests in the field through their consideration by the field council, regional director, management team, agency committees, and the executive director's presentation to the board.
- d) The executive director shall be a conflict-resolving agent short of the final appeal, which function shall be lodged with the board.
- e) The executive director shall head the administrative management team where, *inter alia*, interagency decisions, coordination, and conflict resolution are produced.
- f) The executive director shall be responsible for giving leadership in coordination of operations on fields of joint ministry, in the administration of both agencies, and in the implementation of policy for the whole of World Ministries.
- 2) Grounds for the establishment of the office of executive director
- a) Since the type of onfield unified structure employed will vary from field to field, and since there still remain some unanswered questions within the recommended model of the onfield unified structure, the need for an executive director becomes pressing. Such a position will be necessary, especially initially but also continuingly, for promoting the unification of the mission of the church.
- b) The differences still existing between the agencies are so deeply ingrained that they demand single executive leadership and dedication in order to accomplish most expeditiously the purposes of any reorganization plan.
- c) The executive director is needed to make certain that the unifying principle established in board policy shall be carried over into administrative implementation. The board will have an agent to carry out its policy decisions within the operational structure of both agencies.
- d) Without a single management head reporting directly to the board, the board would become too active as a conflict-resolution body. Under an executive director the conflict resolution would only be done by the board as a last resort in the case of appeal.
- e) Synod's request to the commission in 1984 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 661) to study the one-director concept aroused popular awareness of such a potential. Synod's suggestion found some favorable reaction in the church responses received, and even among some persons within the agencies themselves.
- 3) Interrelationships of the executive director with the board, agency committees, and agency directors
- a) Relationship to the board
- The executive director is nominated by the Board of World Min-

istries and elected by synod. He reports directly to the board and is vested by the board with broad executive responsibility and authority for the operation of the world ministries of CRWM and CRWRC.

b) Relationship to the agency directors

The executive director is the chief coordinator of the work of the two directors and functions as head of all coordination activities of joint ministries and of such agency activities as could or would have interagency implications. In intra-agency concerns the directors exercise direct executive authority until such matters involve or reach the stage of interagency coordination. Agency directors will normally accompany the executive director to board meetings as resource staff associates.

In the administrative management team, over which the executive director presides, decisions will usually be arrived at by consensus. In matters considered by the executive director to be major issues when no consensus can be achieved, the executive director shall make the decision.

c) Relationship to each agency committee

The executive director will normally accompany the agency director to the meetings of the agency committee. The agency director, however, takes a leadership role in the work with the agency committee; the executive director will have precedence only in matters which may bear upon interagency coordination and unification.

d) The Administrative Management Team

The management team is, in effect, an intra-office management vehicle and the development of the concept should be left to the executive director. In the context of the reorganization of the agencies, however, the management team will also be especially important in coordinating and processing the business of the two agencies in a unified approach to the missions of the church. For this reason the commission places it among the reorganization proposals.

The management team shall be a formally constituted administrative entity, the membership consisting of the executive director who is its chairman and head, the two agency directors, and principal staff officers as needed.

Although the entity should in time develop its own procedures and specific functions under the leadership and discretionary authority of the executive director, the functions of the management team, broadly stated, shall include the following:

- (1) It shall be the one readily accessible group for informing, planning, and coordinating purposes.
- (2) It shall be the locus of first instance in the home office for reconciling interagency differences.
- (3) It shall be the body which gives direction to such mutual concerns of the agencies as recruitment, training, evaluation standards, and perquisites of office, all of which may be common to both agencies.

(4) It shall play an active and important role in the budget preparation process. The budget requests arising from individual workers and proceeding through the several levels of field administration to the directors of each agency are assembled and placed in order of priority by the administrative team before they are sent to the agency committees for consideration and recommendation to the board.

This section dealing with field, board, and home office reorganization, has many details, yet is presented as a broad outline. Should synod approve the reorganization plan, there will be numerous details still left to be worked out by the personnel who will be working within the reorganized structure. Such details must remain unwritten until the structure becomes operative.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REORGANIZATION PLAN

The approval by synod of the recommendations contained in this report is essential to the completion of the work assigned to the commission. It cannot progress any further until synod takes definite action. This action needs to include the authority to implement these recommendations. The planned onfield unification of joint ministries, urgently enjoined by Synod 1983, and the reorganization of the home office, including both board and staff administration, are so principally and functionally interdependent that the one depends upon the existence of the other. Therefore, the commission recommends that synod institute the reorganization plan by approving the following steps which provide for its orderly implementation under the continuing supervision of the commission.

A. Responsibilities of the Commission

1. Preparation of the legal and ecclesiastical documents (including the constitution) establishing the Christian Reformed Board of World Ministries, the Christian Reformed World Missions Committee, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, the executive directorship of World Ministries, and the directorship of the agencies.

2. Preparation of a job description (including duties and qualifications) of the position of executive director of World Ministries.

3. Nomination of the executive director of World Ministries for appointment by the Synod of 1986. In order to prepare this nomination, the commission would function as a search committee and it would have the responsibility to involve the churches in this search.

4. Monitoring of the implementation of the field reorganization plans with the continuing assistance of the Interagency Task Force.

5. Continuing consultation on matters pertaining to agency organization with the structure committee of the SIC.

6. Nomination of the at-large members of the Board of World Ministries for election by the SIC in September 1986. The preparation of this nomination shall be done according to the rules or practice of synod stipulating regional representation. These nominations shall be double the number required for elections and for staggered terms of one, two, or three years.

7. Continuation of its monitoring of the agencies under the mandates of the commission as extended and/or amended by the Synod of 1985. In addition to the normal duties assumed under this implementation of its recommendations, the commission shall also assume the responsibilities of the office of executive director of World Ministries during the period between the establishment of that office and the filling of that office. (See Section V of this report for a definition of these duties.)

B. *Timetable for Implementation*

1. Election of the board

a. By September 1, 1985, the present Board of World Missions Executive Committee and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee Executive Committee shall furnish the SIC with the names of the ten persons each group has selected as their representative members of the Board of World Ministries. In behalf of synod, the SIC shall certify their election to the Board of World Ministries.

b. By September 1, 1985, the commission shall furnish the SIC with its nomination of at-large members of the Board of World Ministries.

c. These persons nominated by the agencies and the commission shall be elected by the SIC at its September meeting.

2. Convening the board

The Board of World Ministries shall be convened in its first meeting by the chairman of the commission, or his designee, following the concurrent February 1986 meetings of the present Board of World Missions and World Relief Committee.

3. Agenda of the First Meeting of the Board

The agenda of this first meeting will include the following:

- a. Election of board officers
- b. Reports from staff executives of the agencies
- c. Progress report from the commission on implementation of field reorganization and other items listed above
- d. Budget matters
- e. Preparation of an information report to synod
- f. Any other business that may come before the meeting.

C. *Discharge of the Commission*

Provided these implementations, and any remaining duties of the commission under its mandates, are concluded to the satisfaction of the Synod of 1986, the commission should be discharged. The responsibility for the continuing process of building the agencies into an effective, unified mission of the CRC to the world should then be transferred completely to the Board of World Ministries and its entire home-office and field-staff organization.

VII. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The commission is firmly convinced that the principles, the guidelines and mandates, and the plan of reorganization it has proposed will provide appropriate and effective measures to meet the needs in view. At the same time, neither synod nor the commission can be positive that the reorganization

which emerges will be completely adequate for every contingency and be entirely workable at every point. Therefore, the commission proposes that synod put into the plan of reorganization a mechanism for later review, evaluation, and possible improvement. A recommendation to this effect follows.

Recommendation: That the Synod of 1985 request the Synod of 1988 to appoint an *ad hoc* committee of five members including one member of the SIC at that time, two members selected from among the chairman and reporters of synod's advisory committees on world ministries during the period 1984-87, and two members of the present commission, with the following mandate:

A. Review and evaluate the operations, the functions, the internal and external relationships, and the organizational effectiveness of the newly implemented board, committee, administrative, and onfield structures of World Ministries according to the criteria and goals established by the Synods of 1983-87.

B. In this review and evaluation consult with key board, executive, and other staff personnel, including in the latter some personnel on home service from fields of joint ministry.

C. Serve the Synod of 1989 with information and recommendations as to this review and evaluation and, if appropriate, propose possible changes.

VIII. REMAINING WORK OF THE COMMISSION

A. The following is a summary of the remaining work of the commission at the time of this report.

1. The continued monitoring of the work of the agencies;
2. Consultation with the agencies as requested and required;
3. Further consideration of principles, guidelines, and mandates;
4. Completion of work on the legal status of the Board of World Ministries and its agencies;
5. Study and recommendation regarding agency relations and affiliations with third parties—churches, organizations, institutions, persons, and governments with which either CRWM or CRWRC, or both, do joint work;
6. Ordination or commissioning to ecclesiastical office of onfield agency personnel other than those already ordained as ministers;
7. Financial factors involved in the reorganization of the World Missions and World Relief agencies;
8. Some details of the administrative structure of the Board of World Ministries which are contingent upon acceptance by synod of the plan of reorganization as a whole;
9. The constitution of the Board of World Ministries and its agencies;
10. The responsibilities listed under "Implementation of the Reorganization Plan," including the duties of the executive director of World Ministries;
11. Study and recommendation regarding the questions of human rights, social justice, and world hunger and poverty; and
12. The preparation of a supplementary report to the Synod of 1985, giving

an account of the commission's work until then, any new information useful to synod in dealing with the commission's present report, any response to the reports of CRWM and CRWRC to the Synod of 1985, and any recommendations appropriate to the foregoing.

B. Synod 1983 granted the commission "a tenure of two years, under extraordinary conditions subject to extension by the Synod of 1985 for one more year" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 687). It is recommended that synod extend the tenure of the commission one more year.

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1984 delayed the reorganization of the agencies and gave the commission an enlarged mandate.
2. The commission's remaining work requires an additional year for completion.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Professor Harold Dekker and one additional member of the commission designated by him when the report is discussed, and recognize all members of the commission for representation at meetings of the synodical advisory committee to which the report is assigned.

B. That synod endorse the principles and guidelines as set forth in Section III, A and B of this report.

C. That synod adopt the mandates for the Board of World Ministries and the CRWM and CRWRC agencies as set forth in Section III, C of this report.

D. That synod adopt the plan for the reorganization of the onfield work of CRWM and CRWRC on fields of joint ministry as set forth in Section V, A of this report.

E. That synod adopt the proposed plan of field organization as a model for organizing all new fields, single-agency fields as well as joint fields.

F. That synod adopt the plan for the reorganization of board, agency committees, and home office staffs of CRWM and CRWRC as set forth in Section V, B of this report.

G. That synod adopt the implementation schedules and duties given in Section VI of this report.

H. That synod adopt the plan for review and evaluation of the operation of world ministries as set forth in Section VII of this report with the accumulated mandates of 1982, 83, 84, and 85.

I. That synod assign to the commission the duties listed in Section VIII of this report.

J. That synod extend the tenure of the commission for one more year.

* * * * *

The Lord calls all of us, both individually and collectively, to be witnesses to the grace by which we live. As witnesses, we are called to testify, by word and deed, to the joy of this grace. It is to that end that the work of this commission is dedicated, and the report is presented to the church with the prayer that the Lord will bless what we did right, forgive what we did wrong, and use this report to enlarge and strengthen the outreach ministries of the Christian Reformed Church.

World Missions and Relief Commission

Harold Dekker, chairman
Norman B. De Graaf, secretary
Gerard Berghoef
John H. Kromminga
William Spoelhof

MINORITY REPORT

UNITY, DISTINCTIVENESS, AND PRIORITY IN THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

While I am in agreement with the reorganization proposals recommended in the commission's report, I cannot concur in the "Principles, Guidelines, and Mandates" section proposed by the majority. I therefore submit this minority alternative to that section of the report.

The Synod of 1983 took note of six "Guidelines for Future Planning" unanimously adopted by the commission for its work.

The Synod of 1984 gave "general endorsement" to those guidelines. In view of the crucial importance of these guidelines in resolving at last the years of tension between World Mission and World Relief, the Synod of 1984 mandated the commission to leave no doubt as to the relation between Word and deed ministries of the church; that is, "to clarify and if necessary revise" those parts of the guidelines dealing with the relation of Word and deed.

In my judgment, what the majority now proposes under the heading of "Unity and Distinctiveness in the Mission of the Church" does little to clarify and much to confuse the guidelines of 1983.

This is because the section proposed by the majority neglects the fact, already clearly evident in the guidelines of 1983, that Christ establishes not only the unity and distinctiveness of witness and outreach, but also sets priorities in terms of the ends in view.

Briefly, the guidelines already generally endorsed contain the provisions listed below.

A. The ministry with which the church reaches out in mission in the name of Christ is a unified word/deed ministry. . . .

B. The faith by which lives are redeemed, the church built, and the kingdom advanced comes by hearing the Word of God preached. This heralding of the gospel is central to the church's mission . . . [and] is witnessed to by many other ministries [which] belong together. . . .

C. The fundamental criterion of the work of the diaconate . . . is whether the work is done in conjunction with the mission of the church, viz., the preaching of the Word and the formation of churches.

D. Although all Christians have the privilege and obligation to confess and demonstrate their faith by word and deed, the ecclesiastically governed mission work reflects the offices of the church. Tasks committed to the ministry, the eldership, and the diaconate are to be represented both in the mission work of the sending church and in the new churches which are planted by this mission work.

E. The objective of the church's mission is to plant and nourish churches which will become self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating.

F. The objective of nourishing the church of Christ requires that the assessment of needs and the development of plans proceed as much as possible on the field level.

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, Report 36, pp. 471-72).

These guidelines stress not only the unity of outreach in Christ and the distinctiveness of Word and deed witness, but emphasize also what the majority proposal neglects, namely the priority which both the Bible and our forms of unity give to the preaching of the Word.

Word Witness

I repeat the second guideline: "The faith by which lives are redeemed, the church built, and the kingdom advanced comes by hearing the Word of God preached."

This is not only consistent with Scriptures and our forms of unity, but is mandated by both. I only repeat the following familiar excerpts from Scripture and creeds:

"But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they be sent? . . . So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:15, 17).

The Belgic Confession: "We believe that this true faith, being wrought in man by the hearing of the Word of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit . . ." (XXIV).

The Heidelberg Catechism: "Since, then, we are made partakers of Christ and all his benefits by faith only, whence comes this faith? From the Holy Spirit, who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments" (Q/A 65).

Canons of Dordt: "And as it has pleased God, by the preaching of the gospel, to begin this work of grace in us . . ." (V, 14).

In summary, the second guideline establishes a priority of Word witness because this is the mandate of the Word and of our forms of unity. I am aware that this can be called a narrow view of preaching, with the implication that the believer's testimony or confession could be an alternative to the preaching of the Word. While a few instances can be culled from the New Testament, that position has no support in our forms of unity. And it would be strange for the church's synod to endorse lay witness as an alternative to the trained, called, and ordained ministry for the official mission of the church. The more so because we confess that Christ himself ordains "that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments" (Belgic Confession, XXX), and our Board for Christian Reformed World Missions exists precisely to send out such witnesses.

Deed Witness

The guidelines of 1983 turn next to diaconal witness, and declare: "The fundamental criterion . . . is whether the work is done in conjunction with the mission of the church, viz., the preaching of the Word and the formation of churches."

This is in accord with the Scriptures: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

"Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in case they speak against you as wrongdoers, they may see your good works and glorify God on

the day of visitation" (I Pet. 2:12).

This teaching is picked up by our Heidelberg Catechism, where in answer to the question, ". . . why must we yet do good works?" the answer is given ". . . and that by our godly walk our neighbors may be won for Christ" (Q/A 86). Having already made clear in Lord's Day XXV how faith in Christ is received, namely from the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the gospel, the catechism teaches us here that our neighbors will be drawn, through our deed witness, to such preaching of the Word.

Practical Consequences

The guidelines next draw out the practical consequences of the priorities established above, namely that official Word and deed mission reflect the offices of the church, and aim at the planting and nourishing of churches.

In response to the mandate of 1984 to develop further the practical consequences of the guidelines, I submit the following:

1. The Bible and the forms of unity give priority to the preaching of the Word in the creation of faith and all that follows upon faith. The majority proposal seems to level off the proclamation of the Word to an equality with other forms of witness. This would provide the Board of World Ministries with no guidance as to priorities in entrance or presence on any given field, nor would it provide any guidance as to the relationship of goal or purpose between the two agencies.

2. Because the preaching of the Word is central to all mission outreach, there can be no ecclesiastical mission where that priority is not observed. While community developments are urgent in many places in the world, to carry out this task without the official interpretive Word cannot be reconciled with the task of the church.

3. While the deed ministry is an important arm of the church, it nowhere in our forms of unity, and only by way of the miracles in the Scriptures, serves to create faith. This fact establishes an auxiliary role for deed ministry in the ecclesiastical outreach of the church, and governs the decision of the Board of World Ministries accordingly.

4. The inherent importance of deed ministry in ecclesiastical outreach is the authentication of the Word ministry. This unites the role of Word and deed ministry, each with its distinctive task and contribution. Thus, short of an immediate emergency, wherever CRWRC operates, the official proclamation needs to be present, ordinarily provided for by CRWM, otherwise by a mission or national church compatible to the CRC. When carefully put into practice, this unity, distinctiveness, and priority will at last bring resolution to the tensions which called this commission into being. If, however, this triangle of unity, distinctiveness, and priority becomes blurred or glossed over, as in the majority recommendation, there will be no end to the discord which has marred the past.

5. While the deed ministry may supplement the Word ministry in many ways, the presence and aims of the church cannot be inferred from the deed ministries alone. Many agencies feed, clothe, and train the world in response to the global needs. Many agencies undertake community development. Many Christians share in the work of such agencies, and so too Christ is honored. We all give them full credit.

The Issue

The issue before synod is the very specific relationship between two very specific agencies serving the Christian Reformed Church.

For various reasons these agencies have had difficulties in adjusting to each other, especially on foreign fields.

These difficulties will not be resolved by leveling all forms of outreach under the general term "witness." This will only lead to further clashes of interpretation and practice. The organizational changes synod may make to resolve the problems of more than a decade will make no real difference, unless it is accompanied by clear guidelines and mandates.

Therefore, synod must lay down guidelines so precise, and so clear, that both board and agencies will unmistakably recognize the priority of the Word preached in creating faith and the role of the deed in authenticating that proclamation. This perspective of unity, diversity, and priority is the key to a harmonious relation in the future.

I believe that in essence the guidelines of 1983, generally endorsed in 1984 and as supplemented here, establish the foundation out of which a constitution can be drafted which will give synod the kind of annual control and supervision over its board and agencies, which duty to those who so generously support them requires.

RECOMMENDATION

That synod substitute this minority report for Section III, B and C of the majority report.

That synod give the undersigned the right to the floor during the discussion of this section of the commission report.

Grounds

1. The majority section confuses rather than clarifies the guidelines already generally endorsed by synod.
2. The majority section neglects the importance of priority as a third factor with unity and distinctiveness in outlining the official mission outreach of the church.
3. The majority section permits inconsistency with Scriptures and the forms of unity, and can only lead to further tensions between the agencies the commission is mandated to unify.
4. The guidelines noted by the Synod of 1983 and generally endorsed by the Synod of 1984, represent real progress toward establishing a firm biblical and creedal foundation for drafting a constitution for the Board of World Ministries and should be adopted by Synod of 1985, with the clarification this minority report provides.

Minority member
Gerard Berghoef

OBSERVATIONS OF CHAIRMAN WITH CONSENT OF THE COMMISSION MAJORITY

As chairman of the commission, I am constrained to append the following observations to the minority report of Mr. Berghoef:

1. Although Mr. Berghoef did previously emphasize the considerations now stated in his minority report, he did not submit the report itself until the commission's report was complete, too late for the commission to take into consideration the assimilation of his particular formulations into its own report.

2. The entire commission reaffirms all the principles and guidelines stated in its reports of 1983 and 1984, and holds that the present proposals for the reorganization of the agencies derive consistently from these principles and guidelines. The commission majority and Mr. Berghoef differ, however, in that the majority holds that Section III of the present report is consistent with and must be viewed in the context of the reaffirmed statements of 1983 and 1984.

3. The commission, as stated in Section III of this report, recognizes that it has not yet adequately addressed the mandate of Synod 1984 as to the clarification of principles and guidelines and affirms its intention to do so in its supplementary report. Due to member schedules, absences, and emergency diversions, and due to the enormous workload involved in its total mandates, it has not yet been possible for the commission to complete its work on principles, guidelines, and mandates.

4. All members of the commission are more or less in agreement with the affirmations made by Mr. Berghoef, and in varying degrees are convinced that the areas of seeming disagreement can be reduced or eliminated altogether with precise delineation and careful resolution.

5. Mr. Berghoef repeatedly uses the distinction of "Word and deed." Neither the commission nor the Synods of 1983 and 1984 have designated "Word and deed" but rather "word and deed" as an area of issues and problems between CRWM and CRWRC. It has always been the position of the commission, evidently accepted by synod, that the relevant theological and missiological distinction is that between "word and deed in the service of the Word." This very matter, in response to synod's instruction and certain communications from the agencies, will be carefully addressed in the commission's supplementary report.

Harold Dekker, chairman

REPORT 36
 COMMITTEE ON ORDINATION OF PASTORS
 FROM MULTIRACIAL GROUPS

PREAMBLE

The Synod of 1984 appointed the Study Committee on Ordination of Pastors from Multiracial Groups because it recognized that God has given rapid growth in the Christian Reformed Church among worshipers and leaders of a variety of cultures. SCORR in its current report indicates that the number of multiracial pastors has increased from 22 in 1981 to 45 in 1984. The number of Christian Reformed churches with one hundred or more multiracial worshipers has increased from 7 to 11, and the number of churches with 10 percent or more multiracial worshipers has increased from 50 to 77 in the same three-year span.

This is cause for great rejoicing in God's blessing. He is smiling upon the CRC's bold stand in racial reconciliation and in developing the vision of the all nations church (Rev. 5:9-10; 7:9; 22:2).

A very significant step in this development is embodied in the 1984 synodical mandate to this committee to "identify issues, including Church Order ramifications, and formulate appropriate recommendations to establish procedures and requirements for the preparation, examination, and ordination of pastors of the multiracial groups which are in the CRC, or are seeking affiliation with it" (*Acts of Synod 1944*, pp. 598-99).

It should be noted that synod referred Report 2-A, II, "Receiving Clergy and Churches," to our study committee. Thus the committee mandate should include the affiliation of clergy and churches from outside the CRC.

It will aid the work of developing and affiliating leaders and churches of a variety of cultures if we have order and guidelines which are germane to the cultural practices in each of the cultures in membership in the CRC. To that end, the following report contains five sections:

- I. Affiliation of Individuals and Groups
- II. Preparation for Ministry in Multicultural Groups in the CRC
- III. Ordination of Pastors from Multicultural Groups
- IV. Review of the Church Order for Sensitivity to the Variety of Cultural Group Practices
- V. Summary of All Recommendations

I. AFFILIATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

A. *Preface*

Contact between non-CRC congregations or groups of Christians and members of the CRC can result in a mutual interest in each other. Common theological perspectives and commitments to ministry sometimes draw people into an awareness that the cause of Christ may be served by closer fellowship and even

corporate union with each other. These groups may include ordained clergy. They may be independent of or affiliated with other fellowships. The CRC recognizes that forming closer relationships with such groups or congregations holds potential for enriching the denomination and benefiting the local group.

It is imperative that there be ample opportunity for such groups and the denomination to become well acquainted with each other before making commitments. To promote this, we recommend that synod approve as a guideline a process made up of three phases. It is important that the integrity of both the group and the denomination be respected. The process of getting acquainted must be mutual, flexible, and adapted to the specific situation. The following stages are designed to provide for a growing relationship. The amount of time required is flexible, and the process at any point may be extended or discontinued as either or both parties decide.

B. Three Phases

The three phases of this growing relationship may be described as: (1) getting acquainted, (2) fellowship, and (3) affiliation.

1. Getting Acquainted

During this phase persons of the group and members of the CRC decide to find out more about each other. Usually this will begin with personal and possibly casual contact. It may lead to more formal discussions, study of documents, history, and so on. Either party may approach the other, asking if God may be guiding them to more serious discussions.

Some suggestions for this phase:

- Informal conversations between members of the group and of the denomination are of primary importance.
- Christian Reformed materials such as *Belonging*, the confessional standards, the *Church Order*, *Contemporary Testimony*, and the *Yearbook* should be made available.
- Christian Reformed persons involved in the discussion should study the background and beliefs of the group.
- If the group has different cultural or ethnic roots, arrangements shall be made for contact with other Christian Reformed people with similar backgrounds, if such are available.
- Contact between official representatives of the CRC and the leadership of the group will be valuable. Visits to the denominational offices and institutions will also be helpful.

2. Fellowship

If after getting acquainted there is mutual interest in deepening the relationship, this should be placed on the agenda of the local classis by a letter from the group or by the request of a consistory or committee of classis. Both the group and the classis should make some commitments to each other. During this time the group and the classis will regard themselves as having covenanted together to explore further the possibility of being joined together. This phase shall be described as being "in fellowship." The group and the classis will seek to acquaint themselves with the background, values, faith, and vision of the other. The group will explore how it will benefit from or be enriched by affiliation with the CRC, and the CRC how it will be enriched and how its mission will be advanced by deeper involvement with this group. Each will consider how it may serve the other.

Some suggestions for this phase:

- The members of the group shall take some appropriate action indicating they desire to be in fellowship with the CRC and to explore the possibility of affiliation.

- The classis shall decide that it desires to be in fellowship with the group and to explore the possibility of affiliation.

If the group is a part of another denomination or fellowship, that relationship shall be dealt with in Christian love. Official correspondence between the group and the other denomination would seem to be a minimum requirement. Conversation and other interaction between the leaders of the group and/or representatives of the classis with the other fellowship may be appropriate.

- Classis shall appoint a person or persons to serve as liaison with the group. A congregation also may serve as special liaison.

- In-depth orientation and instruction covering CRC history, polity, faith, and life shall be made available in whatever language is appropriate.

- CRC educational and other materials for various age groups shall be provided.

- Position papers on various issues of doctrine and life may be used to encourage dialogue. Special attention shall be given to the group mission statement or concept of ministry. Matters of agreement, as well as differences of position having been identified, the process of negotiation may begin.

- Personal contacts and visits involving various representatives and members shall be arranged.

- The CRC persons involved in liaison shall study the positions and practices of the group, giving special attention to cultural expressions and mores.

- As the group moves toward affiliation, there shall be a review of CRC structures and practices and an identification of the rights and responsibilities of membership in the CRC. This shall cover such practical things as the relationship of a local church to classis and classis to synod, the decision-making process and route of appeals, the function of denominational boards and committees, and the financial policies regarding pensions, loan funds, quotas, and so on.

3. Affiliation

If being in fellowship leads the group and the liaison person of the CRC to believe that official affiliation would serve the cause of Christ and benefit both the group and the CRC, they shall proceed to formal affiliation. The group then becomes an organized congregation within the CRC with the rights, privileges, and obligations implicit in such incorporation. This is an organizational affiliation and requires taking certain official steps. It is intended that these official steps lead to involvement in the life of the denomination and involvement of the denomination in the life of the congregation. Such involvement is intended to be a growing experience of commitment and loving service to each other.

Some suggestions for this phase:

- The group meets and decides that they desire to affiliate with the CRC. This decision is officially recorded in minutes of the meeting. If they are members of another fellowship, they inform the denomination of which they are a part. With the assistance of the liaison persons of the CRC, they draw up a petition to the CRC which becomes their half of a covenant with the CRC.

- The petition is sent to classis. The liaison person works closely with the group and with classis to provide a smooth process of affiliation.

- The churches of the classis are informed and the petition is placed on the agenda.

- If the group includes an ordained minister seeking admission to the ministry in the CRC, a doctrinal conversation with its appropriate process is scheduled according to the Church Order and related decisions of synod.

- Representatives of the classis, including the liaison person, draw up a document which becomes the CRC's side of the covenant for receiving the group. This includes a basic statement about receiving the group as brothers and sisters in Christ with common faith and vision and a statement recognizing them as a church with the rights and privileges of membership in the denomination. If there are any special arrangements regarding finances or unique positions of the group which need to be identified, these are included in this proposal for receiving.

- At the meeting of classis the petition of the group is acted upon; if clergy are involved the receiving of such is voted on; a receiving/organizing church is appointed; appropriate remarks are made by the representatives of the classis; and arrangements are made for a public celebrative service at which the church and its leaders are received.

C. *Growing Together*

Official affiliation is significant, but it is just a beginning. The relationship must grow if the new church and denomination are going to strengthen each other and together serve the Lord. Such growth will require loving cultivation. The classis and the newly affiliated congregation will be served by a special liaison committee to serve in a pastoral way to the new congregation. The dialogue must also continue. New issues will arise that need to be addressed and negotiation with classis may be needed. Reports given at classis will provide opportunity to rejoice in progress being made, to address concerns with arise, and to negotiate further agreements. Intercongregational worship, fellowship, and educational experience will also be valuable.

Eventually the usual patterns of maintaining mutual support and accountabilities, including the function of church visitors, should replace these special arrangements.

D. *Orientation Program for Multicultural Leaders and Churches Affiliating with the CRC*

A valuable tool in the affiliation process is a formal mutual orientation program. Calvin Theological Seminary, in cooperation with SCORR, the Board of Home Missions, and Classis Southern California, has developed an orientation program to introduce the CRC and church leaders from other cultural groups, both those who have recently affiliated with the CRC and those who are considering such affiliation.

The program is designed for mutual orientation: to introduce these church leaders to the CRC and to introduce them to leaders of the CRC.

The program is led by members of the seminary faculty and others and is designed to be done in contracted form in a one-week workshop and in expanded form in a three-week session. The first of such programs was held in February 1985 in Los Angeles for eighteen Korean pastors, some of whom were already affiliated with the CRC and others who are considering affiliation. The seminary will repeat this program for other cultural groups during the next

several years. In addition, the program will be on video tape for future use.

1. The program includes the following three components:

a. Church History

A presentation of the history, theology, creeds, traditions, ethnic composition, and lifestyles of the CRC, and a similar presentation from the church group of the other culture.

b. Church Polity

A presentation of the Church Order, the governing policies, the historical tradition in which they arose, and the cultural accommodations possible within the polity by representatives both of the CRC and of the church groups considering affiliation.

c. Institutions and Ministries

A presentation of cultural patterns of ministry common to the other church group and a presentation of the missions, schools, publications, diaconal ministries, and youth ministries of the CRC and the various methods by which they are funded, including the quota system.

2. The guidelines for this program are particularly important for it to serve the process of affiliation well.

a. The program provides mutual exploration of the histories, traditions, and ethnic identities of the participants.

b. The program provides a process through which each group can identify the reasons supporting affiliation as well as obstacles to affiliation.

c. Sufficient time is given for clarifying questions, for discussion, and for identification of issues which need to be negotiated at a later time and place. These negotiations will be done with classis and perhaps synod.

d. Despite the differences of size or ethnic identities, the groups must meet as peers, as brothers and sisters in Christ.

e. The program is not an ecclesiastical sales promotion to multicultural groups. The CRC comes to listen as well as to talk. She speaks of her problems as well as her strengths.

f. The program is jointly sponsored by the local classis, Calvin Seminary, and the multicultural groups participating.

E. *Recommendation:*

That synod adopt the "affiliation of individuals and groups" and encourage all classes, agencies, and congregations dealing with multicultural church group affiliations to use this process with the orientation program provided by Calvin Theological Seminary.

II. PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY IN MULTICULTURAL GROUPS IN THE CRC

The following addresses the need for specialized preparation for ministry for potential pastors of and to multicultural or ethnic minority groups in the CRC. Three sections will be covered:

A. Principles and Realities

B. Ideals for this Preparation

C. Recommendations for Preparation of Pastors to Multicultural or Ethnic Minority Groups

A. Principles and Realities Which Affect the Manner of Preparation for Ministry for Potential Pastors of the Multicultural or Ethnic Minority Groups

1. The Word of God and the values and principles found therein must form the primary and ultimate principles for preparation of all pastors for ministry in the CRC.

2. While all theological education—and particularly Reformed theological education—must represent the perspective that Christ transforms culture, and that his body, the church, must be active in transforming culture, it is at the same time essential to recognize that Christ and his church come to and are found within humankind in specific cultural contexts.

Those who would be leaders in the church of Christ must bring the Word of God to people within their cultural context. Proper theological education must develop leaders who can represent Christ as the transformer of culture and represent him fully within the cultural context. This is familiar to the CRC. Calvin Theological Seminary has developed within a cultural context and has been about contextual education within the Dutch/American culture for more than one hundred years.

As the society in which the CRC exists and the churches themselves become multicultural, Calvin Theological Seminary must be about theological education within the variety of cultural contexts in which the church lives.

3. It is essential that all pastors prepared for CRC ministry have credentials to minister in all CRC pulpits; however, the type of ministry the individual chooses, or is likely to be called to, will affect the type of preparation needed for that ministry.

4. Cultural distinctions in leadership identification and development found in the culture of the potential pastor and the potential group served by the pastor will also affect the manner of preparation.

5. Cultural group representatives must participate in the decision-making process for the preparation and credentialing of leaders who will serve that cultural group. This will ensure full participation on the part of the cultural group in the life of the church.

6. Programs of preparation of pastors will be affected by the need for pastoral leadership within multiracial or ethnic minority groups already in the CRC and those moving toward affiliation. Some of the factors affecting these programs are growth patterns, approaches to mission, leadership styles, and manner of church planting among certain cultural groups.

B. Ideals for Preparation of Pastors of and to Multicultural or Ethnic Minority Groups

1. Special cultural sensitivities in course offerings, general course content, and skill development is essential. For example, courses in preaching for prospective leaders in Black churches must be different from preaching courses in other cultural groups and should be taught by instructors steeped in the rich tradition of Black church preaching. Church history surveys must recognize the presence of the Christian church in all cultural groups and geographical locations.

2. All instructors in the educational process of multicultural or ethnic minority groups must experience orientation to the cultural groups which are represented by the students. Instructors who have had successful cross-cultural

experience will be especially suited for orientation to the cultural groups which are represented by the students. It is also essential to engage instructors who are themselves members of the ethnic minority cultures found in the student body.

3. Continued contact with the students' culture during the educational experience is essential.

a. A sizable group of students and instructors of the student's culture on location, or campus, is necessary for full social and academic development.

b. Accountability to the elders within the culture during the educational process will maintain integrity between the student and the cultural group.

c. Accountability to a home church representing the student's culture is also necessary for several of the cultures represented in the CRC.

4. Practical ministry experience by the students within the culture is essential.

5. Each student must have a mentor from within the student's culture.

6. On-location education is essential for maintaining the vital ties to the student's culture, developing the student's practical skills, and integrating theological principles with practice and cultural values.

7. Seminary training which demands long-term residency of fulltime study is inappropriate for students from some cultures. Preparation for ministry and credentialing those entering "tent ministries" and continuing education for multicultural or ethnic minority pastors and lay leaders are needed.

- For some cultures, leadership, particularly pastoral leadership on a fulltime basis, comes later in life. Some cultures never expect fulltime pastoral leadership.

- Practical financial matters play a large role in these considerations.

8. A sizable group of a given culture present on location where the learning experience takes place will aid in recruitment, curriculum design, a larger student body, good attitudes and learning potential for the multiracial or ethnic students.

9. The Master of Ministry program currently offered for American Indians through Calvin Theological Seminary is an example of a ministry preparation program which embodies most of these ideals. A full description of the Master of Ministry program for Indians follows.

The Master of Ministry is a two-year, seminary-level program. An entering student must have a college degree or its equivalent. The program has a required core of courses in Biblical Studies (English language), Church History, Church and Ministry, Field Education, and Systematic Theology. It also has courses in the history of Christianity among Native Americans, evangelism and church growth in the Native American culture, etc. Most of the courses and field education are offered onsite in Classis Red Mesa. Some field education and some course work must be done outside American Indian culture to introduce these students to patterns of life and ministry in other parts of the church. The required residency at Calvin Seminary is for two academic quarters, and these need not be taken in succession.

When the Master of Ministry (M.Min.) program was approved for Indian churches of Classis Red Mesa, it was already recognized that this same degree program and these same provisions might function for other multicultural/minority groups within the CRC.

A degree program has been devised which will qualify its graduates for ordination under the conditions envisioned by synod for Classis Red Mesa.

It is hoped and expected that some of the features of this program and some of the lessons learned from it may also be applied to Black, Hispanic, and Asiatic minorities in the Christian Reformed Church.

(Acts of Synod 1983, pp. 37-38)

Indeed, many of the grounds advanced for the adoption of the Master of Ministry program for Classis Red Mesa hold also for other multicultural groups.

a. The continued life, growth, and ministry of Black, Hispanic, Native American, Korean, and Chinese churches require indigenous pastoral leadership. They must have ordained pastors from their own culture.

b. The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree has been developed to meet the particular needs for ministry and pastoral leadership in the Dutch/American culture of the CRC. The program is effectively contextualized to that culture: it trains leaders to minister in that culture and to fill the leadership roles that culture needs and expects. However, the M.Div. program has not been contextualized to Native American, Black, Hispanic, or Asian cultures. Therefore, the Korean churches within the Christian Reformed Church are insisting that part of the training of their pastors be done in schools such as International Theological Seminary (ITS), a theological school related to the Korean CRC of Los Angeles.

c. The Master of Ministry program aims at such contextualization for other cultures in several ways. Many of the courses are taught onsite, within the culture of the student. Some cultural orientation is provided for professors before and during their teaching in those programs. Some courses will be taught by theologically trained persons from each culture. Course content and requirements are adjusted culturally. The field education component of the program is fulfilled largely within the culture of the student and within the leadership patterns of that culture. Special courses for patterns of ministry indigenous to that culture are required as part of the program.

d. The M.Div. program as currently structured has not produced the candidates for ministry from these multicultural groups which the church needs. After nearly one hundred years of mission work among Native Americans, nearly thirty-five years of history of black congregations within the CRC, and two decades of Hispanic churches, only a very few pastors indigenous to those cultures have been ordained in the CRC through the M.Div. route.

e. Many of the assumptions built into the M.Div. program do not hold for these other cultures. The M.Div. program assumes a decision to prepare for ministry at about eighteen to twenty years old, upon the completion of high school or during the early years of college, and studying fulltime for the next eight years to meet that goal. Other cultures do not encourage, or in some instances even allow for, such a pattern. The lack of access to educational programs, the uncertainties of being able to complete a program within a system of another culture, and the cost of going away to school for eight years, even with the usual financial aid, makes it impossible for many. Also, in many cultures a person's sense of calling to ministry develops through the person's active involvement in the ministry of the congregation over an extended period of time and in many roles within the church.

Only after that involvement and the church's confirmation of his spiritual leadership will a person begin to consider a formal program of education and only then is the church ready to endorse that decision. These are some of the cultural patterns which stand in the way of persons from those cultures fitting into the M.Div. program as currently designed. Not all of these factors hold for every culture; there are, for example, significant differences between the educational patterns of Hispanic culture and those of Korean or Chinese.

f. Adequate preparation for ministry within a given culture requires continued and sustained involvement within that culture. Students who leave their culture for four to eight years of training in another culture often have great difficulty returning to their original culture and ministering effectively. The M.Div. program can be redesigned to avoid such pitfalls, but this has not yet been done. The Master of Ministry (M.Min.) program has been designed to meet precisely this need for cultural identification and development.

g. The M.Div. program, as currently designed, raises serious questions about the acceptability of that person's leadership within his indigenous culture. It is not enough for synod to say that a person is a candidate for ministry. That person must also be acceptable to the Black, Hispanic, Native American, or Asian churches from which he comes and to which he will probably return to minister. Four to eight years away from the supervision of the elders of those churches and within another culture raises serious barriers to that person's acceptability within his own church group. The M.Min. program allows students to stay, live, and minister within their own culture for most of their program.

h. The M.Min. is not a terminal degree. It fulfills two years of the requirements for the M.Div. and thus allows students to continue their education and later earn the M.Div. degree. Seminaries and denominations which have developed similar programs have seen a significant percentage of graduates later enrolling in the M.Div. and completing the program. For example, nearly 70 percent of the M.A. graduates in Youth Ministry at North Park Seminary in Chicago later enrolled in the M.Div. and over 50 percent of the students graduating from a program for Native Americans at Dubuque Seminary in Iowa enrolled in an M.Div. program upon completion.

i. Finally, the requirement of a college degree or its equivalent and at least two years of theological education in a well-structured program is a significant advance over what is currently required for the ordination of persons now coming through Article 7. The church has accepted for ordination many persons without such liberal arts and theological education and is still doing so.

C. Recommendations for Preparation of Pastors to Multicultural or Ethnic Minority Groups

1. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary and the Board of Trustees to alter the entrance requirements for all students enrolling in programs leading to ordination, to the baccalaureate degree.

Grounds:

a. It can no longer be assumed that the Reformed colleges or Christian Schools International primary and secondary schools will be the ex-

clusive feeder schools. Multiracial students, particularly, will be prepared in a broader range of schools. In a survey completed by this study committee of all the multicultural or ethnic minority pastors currently ordained in the CRC, it was discovered that two-thirds of them had attended public primary and secondary schools and the majority of those who attended Christian schools did so in a foreign land. Also, in a 1982 survey of Calvin Theological Seminary students, it was discovered that students had done undergraduate work at seventy-six colleges and universities.

- b. The change in entrance requirements must be for all students rather than for only multicultural or ethnic minority students because two standards resulting in two classes of students must be avoided.
 - c. This should not be interpreted to mean that certain students will have less demand placed on them in the seminary program, depending on the educational background of the entering student. Rather the same standards in the educational process and in testing shall obtain for the whole body of students in a given degree track.
 - d. The quality of theological education should be guaranteed by the academic program and by the testing of final competencies rather than by entrance requirements.
2. That synod declare that Calvin Theological Seminary remain the primary school through which the CRC multiracial pastors are prepared, and that it move with haste to the development of four culturally oriented tracks of study; one for Asians, one for Blacks, one for Hispanics, and one for American Indians. All four of these tracks should be functioning and fully funded at the earliest possible date, not later than 1990. Each should be headed by a coordinator who is of the culture of that particular track. All four tracks must include special course offerings germane to the culture, and all should have the majority of course offerings on location where that culture is present. Not more than one year residency at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids should be required in any of these four tracks. Although these four tracks will initially be similar to the Master of Ministry program for American Indians, eventually the four tracks should become Master of Divinity programs designed to meet the pastoral leadership needs of the four ethnic minority cultures in the CRC.

Grounds:

- a. The growth of membership in these four cultural groups warrants rapid response to the needs for pastoral leadership.
 - b. Calvin Theological Seminary has already responded to the immediate need for American Indian pastoral leadership by developing the Master of Ministry program for American Indians which will serve as full satisfaction of leadership preparation and ordination of CRC Native American pastors.
3. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary faculty to submit its syllabi to a faculty-appointed committee of four curriculum consultants from the four ethnic minority cultural groups currently present in the CRC (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian) for a review of the purpose of building greater sensitivity to and enrichment of all students from the ethnic minority cultures in the CRC.

Grounds:

- a. The majority of current course work was designed by Dutch/American instructors in a Dutch/American context.

- b. The development of course materials which are sensitive to and enriching for members of the ethnic minority cultural groups demands expertise from consultants of these cultural groups.
 - c. The whole of the student and faculty body will benefit from the results of this new sensitivity and enrichment.
4. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary to develop a program of continued education offered through the culturally specialized tracks and locations as these tracks become operational.

Grounds:

- a. The need for continued education is indicated by the long-term nature of leadership preparation found in some cultures.
 - b. The economic and geographical limitations in some cultures indicate need for continued education.
5. That synod note that the feeder schools found in Christian Schools International are not functioning well as feeders to pastoral leadership among the multicultural and ethnic minority groups within the CRC and that the stated clerk be directed to write a letter requesting CSI to place this concern high on its agenda.

III. THE ORDINATION OF PASTORS FROM MULTICULTURAL GROUPS

The Master of Ministry degree program at Calvin Seminary was designed to meet the need for indigenous leadership among Native Americans. It was designed to prepare students for ordination under Article 7. The requirements of theological education for those seeking ordination through Article 7 was established already in 1971, when synod made provision for classes to make such a requirement and design a program of study (see *Acts of Synod 1971*, pp. 124-25).

Although the Master of Ministry program was envisioned as the route to ordination through Article 7 for students from Classis Red Mesa, it might better be used as the route to ordination through Article 6. Article 6 requires "a satisfactory theological education." The church through its regulations and decisions declares what constitutes "a satisfactory theological education." By declaring the M.Min. program acceptable under Article 6, synod will supervise the requirements of this program, the length of time and the conditions under which it shall be acceptable, and will not establish Article 7 as another standard way to ordination.

Therefore, we *recommend*:

A. That the Master of Ministry degree be declared to meet the requirements of "a satisfactory theological education" of Article 6 of the Church Order for multicultural or ethnic minority students and that this approval be valid for a ten-year period, with a possible extension upon review.

Grounds:

- 1. The need for indigenous leadership, the cultural distinctiveness of those churches, the lack of an M.Div. program contextualized to these cultures, and the current design of the M.Min. program all support its adoption as an acceptable way of meeting the requirement of theological education for ordination.

2. The adoption of this provision should be temporary since the M.Min. was designed to lead toward the M.Div. route to ordination.
 - a. These ethnic groups see the M.Min. as temporary until contextualized M.Div. programs are designed and implemented.
 - b. It is expected that most M.Min. graduates will eventually complete an M.Div. program.
 - c. To avoid even the appearance of two levels of qualifications for ordination by the acceptance of both the M.Min. and the M.Div., the church should not make this provision permanent but rather work toward modification of the M.Div. route so that it is equally available to all.
3. Although the M.Min. was originally adopted as a route to ordination through Article 7 (Classis Red Mesa), it should become part of the process envisioned by Article 6. Article 7 has as its original intent a route to ordination without theological education. Article 6 is the route with theological education and allows the church to examine the graduates and declare them candidates in the usual way.

B. That synod declare that the termination of the acceptability of the M.Min. for ordination for these cultural groups be conditional upon the development of M.Div. programs which are similarly contextualized to these cultures and upon the concurrence of the churches of these cultures for which the M.Min. was designed.

C. That synod declare that in those cultures with a tradition of early ordination with completion of theological education following ordination (e.g., Black and Hispanic), a student be declared a candidate for ordination after having completed one-half of the M.Min. program including the field education component upon recommendation by the church seeking to call the student and his successful examination. If he has not completed the M.Min. program within five years following ordination, he shall be suspended from his office and his ministry until he has completed it.

D. That synod declare that for multicultural or ethnic minority churches the need for indigenous leadership shall constitute the criterion for meeting the requirements of Article 7 and Article 8.

Ground: Some multicultural or ethnic minority pastors will seek affiliation with the CRC through Article 7 (for those who do not have theological training) or through Article 8, b (ministers of other denominations seeking to become a minister of the CRC). Both of these articles or decisions of synod regulating their use call for the establishing of need as a requirement for eligibility. The need for the multicultural or ethnic minority churches is significantly different from that of the rest of the churches.

E. That synod appoint a committee to develop regulations for and the process of declaring readiness for candidacy of multicultural or ethnic minority individuals who have completed their theological training at a seminary other than Calvin Theological Seminary. This committee should consist of seven individuals, four specially appointed synodical deputies, one from each cultural group referred to in the following recommendation, and one representative each from Calvin Theological Seminary, the Board of Home Missions, and SCORR.

Grounds:

1. The type of training needed for multicultural or ethnic minority individuals who apply for candidacy after completing theological training at a theological school other than Calvin will be unique from that of other students.
2. The wisdom of the provider of educational service (Calvin Theological Seminary) carrying the responsibility of administering the regulations over this service is questionable.
3. The current arrangement has kept several qualified multicultural or ethnic minority students from candidacy in the CRC.

F. That synod appoint four at-large deputies; one from each of the groups in the CRC (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian) upon nomination by the Synodical Interim Committee and in consultation with SCORR. At every examination for candidacy and/or colloquium doctum at least one of the synodical deputies shall be a member of the cultural group of the examinee. The at-large deputies will be assigned when classes are unable to supply a member of the cultural group of the examinee.

Grounds:

1. For informed judgments re examinations, it is essential to have synodical deputies of the culture of the examinee.
2. Because the multicultural or ethnic minority groups are not scattered geographically as the larger CRC is, several classes will not be able to assign a synodical deputy from one of these cultural groups.

G. That synod encourage all synodical deputies observing examination for ordination and/or colloquium doctum to become thoroughly acquainted with the "values and procedures predominant in their cultures" (*Acts of Synod 1984, 599*) by being in consultation with the candidates and leaders in the calling churches prior to examination.

Grounds:

1. Currently, copies of sermons and documentation of need are reviewed prior to examination. This is insufficient preparation for synodical deputies to make judgments which are informed by the "values and procedures predominant in their culture."
2. Thorough acquaintance with values and procedures within a particular group of a culture requires face-to-face consultation and dialogue with leaders of that group.

IV. REVIEW OF THE CHURCH ORDER FOR SENSITIVITY TO THE VARIETY OF THE CULTURAL GROUP PRACTICES

Recommendations

A. We recommend that synod adopt all of the above recommendations provisionally until the Synod of 1986.

Grounds:

1. Some of the changes are significant and synod should allow the churches opportunity to respond before final adoption.

2. The several multicultural or ethnic minority groups should also have opportunity to study these provisions and make response.
3. Provisional adoption will allow the church to test these decisions by use.
4. Provisional adoption will allow the committee to study whether any charges of the Church Order or published regulations need to be made and report to the Synod of 1986.

B. That the committee be granted another year to complete its work, including the review of the Church Order articles and how they impact the multicultural churches.

Ground: Synod asked the committee to report in one year and although we have been able to address some of the issues in the seven months given us, we have been unable to complete our mandate.

C. That all responses from the churches concerning the recommendations provisionally adopted be sent to the reporter of the committee by December 1, 1985:

Rev. William Ipema
 SCORR Office
 1109 S. Boulevard
 Oak Park, IL 60302

D. That in addition to the reporter, Rev. William Ipema, and the chairperson, Dr. Melvin Hugen, the four multicultural members of our committee be granted the right of the floor when these matters are being discussed. They are: Mr. Jack DeGroat, Dr. John Kim, Rev. Manuel Ortiz, and Rev. James White.

V. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS I-IV

I. AFFILIATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

A. That synod adopt the "affiliation of individuals and groups" and encourage all classes, agencies, and congregations dealing with multiracial church group affiliations to use this process with the orientation program provided by Calvin Theological Seminary.

II. PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY IN MULTICULTURAL GROUPS IN THE CRC

Recommendations for Preparation of Pastors to Multicultural or Ethnic Minority Groups

A. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary and the Board of Trustees to alter the entrance requirements for all students enrolling in programs leading to ordination to the baccalaureate degree.

B. That synod declare that Calvin Theological Seminary remain the primary school through which the CRC multiracial pastors are prepared, and that it move with haste to the development of four culturally oriented tracks of study: one for Asians, one for Blacks, one for Hispanics, and one for American Indians. All four of these tracks are to be functioning and fully funded at the earliest possible date, not later than 1990. Each should be headed by a coordinator who is of the culture of that particular track. All four

tracks must include special course offerings germane to the culture, and all are to have the majority of course offerings on location where that culture is present. Not more than one-year residency at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids should be required in any of these four tracks. Although these four tracks will initially be similar to the Master of Ministry program for American Indians, eventually the four tracks should become Master of Divinity programs designed to meet the pastoral leadership needs of the four ethnic minority cultures in the CRC.

C. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary faculty to submit its syllabi to a faculty-appointed committee of four curriculum consultants from the four ethnic minority cultural groups currently present in the CRC (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian) for a review of the purpose of building greater sensitivity to and enrichment of all students from the ethnic minority cultures in the CRC.

D. That synod urge Calvin Theological Seminary to develop a program of continued education offered through the culturally specialized tracks and locations as these tracks become operational.

E. That synod note that the feeder schools found in Christian Schools International are not functioning well as feeders for pastoral leadership among the multicultural and ethnic minority groups within the CRC, and that the stated clerk be directed to write a letter requesting CSI to place this concern high on its agenda.

III. ORDINATION OF PASTORS FROM MULTICULTURAL GROUPS

A. That the Master of Ministry degree be declared to meet the requirements of "a satisfactory theological education" of Article 6 of the Church Order for multicultural or ethnic minority students and that this approval be valid for a ten-year period, with a possible extension upon review.

B. That synod declare that the termination of the acceptability of the M.Min. for ordination for these cultural groups be conditional upon the development of M.Div. programs which are similarly contextualized to these cultures and upon the concurrence of the churches of these cultures for which the M.Min. was designed.

C. That synod declare that in those cultures with a tradition of early ordination with completion of theological education following ordination (e.g., Black and Hispanic), a student shall be eligible for candidacy for ordination after having completed one-half of the M.Min. program, including the field education component, upon recommendation by the church seeking to call the student and his successful examination. If he has not completed the M.Min. program within five years following ordination, he shall be suspended from his office and his ministry until he has completed it.

D. That synod declare that for multicultural or ethnic minority churches the need for indigenous leadership shall constitute the criterion for meeting the requirements of Article 7 and Article 8 of the Church Order.

E. That synod appoint a committee to develop regulations and process these

regulations for declaring readiness for candidacy of multicultural or ethnic minority individuals who have completed their theological training at a seminary other than Calvin Theological Seminary. This committee should consist of seven individuals, four specially appointed synodical deputies, one from each cultural group referred to in the following recommendation, and one representative each from Calvin Theological Seminary, the Board of Home Missions, and SCORR.

F. That synod appoint four at-large deputies; one from each of the groups in the CRC (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian) upon nomination by the Synodical Interim Committee and in consultation with SCORR. At every examination for candidacy and/or colloquium doctum at least one of the synodical deputies shall be a member of the cultural group of the examinee. The at-large deputies will be assigned when classes are unable to supply a member of the cultural group of the examinee.

G. That synod encourage all synodical deputies observing examination for ordination and/or colloquium doctum to become thoroughly acquainted with the "values and procedures predominant in their cultures" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 599) by being in consultation with the candidates and leaders in the calling churches prior to examination.

IV. REVIEW OF THE CHURCH ORDER FOR SENSITIVITY TO THE VARIETY OF CULTURAL GROUP PRACTICES

A. We recommend that synod adopt all of the above recommendations provisionally until the Synod of 1986.

B. That the committee be granted another year to complete its work, including the review of the Church Order articles and how they impact their multicultural churches.

C. That all responses from the churches concerning the recommendations provisionally adopted be sent to the reporter of the committee by December 1, 1985:

Rev. William Ipema
SCORR Office
1109 S. Boulevard
Oak Park, IL 60302

D. That in addition to the reporter, Rev. William Ipema, and the chairperson, Dr. Melvin Hugen, the four multicultural members of our committee be granted the right of the floor when these matters are being discussed (Mr. Jack DeGroat, Dr. John Kim, Rev. Manuel Ortiz, and Rev. James White).

Committee on Ordination of Pastors from Multicultural Groups

Melvin Hugen, chairman
William Ipema, reporter
Jack De Groat
Richard De Ridder
John E. Kim
Manuel Ortiz
John Van Ryn
James White

REPORT 37
ALCOHOL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Your committee is continuing its work. We have sent out questionnaires to pastors, clerks of consistories, representative congregational members, and to recovering alcoholics.

On the basis of the data received, we hope to speak concretely and relevantly, providing guidelines regarding the issues specified in the mandate given by the Synod of 1984:

That synod appoint a study committee to provide pastoral guidelines regarding the use, abuse, and addiction to alcohol and other drugs for:

- a. effective education about the use of these, the option of abstinence and the prevention of abuse;
- b. pastoral care, including early detection, ministry to the abuser and his/her family, the use of treatment programs and the reception of the recovering person in the congregation; and
- c. appropriate disciplinary ministry to the abuser and the addicted person.

(Acts of Synod 1984, p. 652)

We present this brief report to you because we were asked to complete our work in time for your consideration. The scope of the work demands more time to collect materials, collate available data from the congregations, and consult with other denominations. As we work to complete our task for consideration at the Synod of 1986, we ask for your continuing prayers.

Alcohol Issues Committee

George P. Holwerda, chairman
Alexander C. De Jong, secretary
Joyce De Haan
Martin Doot, Jr.
William R. Lenters
Rodney Mulder
Harry A. Van Dam
Richard E. Grevengoed

REPORT 38 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION AND TAX RESISTANCE

I. THE MANDATE AND ITS BACKGROUND

By way of a personal appeal addressed to the Synod of 1984, the Christian Reformed Church in North America was asked to support tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection. Paul and Fenna Stoub had concluded that the United States government is engaged in "idolatrous militarism." Acting according to their consciences, they had refused to pay that part of their income tax which, they believed, supports the military budget. Consequently, the Internal Revenue Service placed a levy on income which the Board of Publications owed to the Stoubs. After careful consultation with the Stoubs, attorneys, theologians, and ethicists, the board decided to pay IRS. The Stoubs appealed the decision of the board to synod on the ground that it had failed to support them in their coconscientious objection according to the guidelines of synod ("Guidelines for Ethical Decisions about War," *Acts of Synod 1977*). The Stoubs' church and classis expressed support for them via overtures to the Synod of 1984. In addition, Classis Grand Rapids East asked synod to clarify the meaning of "support" in its decisions on conscientious objection (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 47).

Previously synod had spoken to the question of conscientious objection and draft resistance. It was not evident to the Synod of 1984 exactly how its previous pronouncements answered these two questions:

1. How may conscientious objection apply to tax resistance?
2. What is the meaning of "necessary support" as described by the Synod of 1977?

To answer these questions, synod appointed a study committee and gave it the following mandate: (a) to study conscientious objection as it may apply to tax resistance and provide guidelines for the church in dealing with this issue; (b) to define the meaning of "necessary support" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 572) and provide direction for implementation; and (c) to report to the Synod of 1985. They gave the following *grounds*:

- (1) The church would be well served by such study and advice.
- (2) No synodical report on guidelines has specifically addressed these issues.

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 648)

Three key issues surfaced in this mandate: the church's view of conscientious objection, the legitimacy of tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection, and the nature of "necessary support" from the church for those who become conscientious objectors.

This report surveys the history of synodical pronouncements relating to these issues, states certain biblical and theological considerations as they are relevant to the issues, and presents an analysis of synodical decisions regarding these issues. Finally, this report offers guidelines for the church.

II. HISTORICAL SURVEY

There is a long history of synodical deliberation on the issues of war and the Christian's participation. It is in this context that discussions about conscientious objection began in 1936 when synod was asked by way of overture to declare that in wars of aggression, members are justified "to feel free before God not to bear arms." The Synod of 1936 was also faced with a rebuttal which claimed the overture was "seditious" and outside the sphere of the church. Unsure that these issues were proper ecclesiastical matters, synod appointed a committee to give advice (*Acts of Synod 1936*, p. 29). When advised in 1937 that Reformed tradition and confessions have dealt with political, social, and economic issues, including war and peace, but have been "silent on the rights of the individual in cases of unrighteous war," synod initiated a study of the issues raised in 1936 (*Acts of Synod 1937*, p. 11).

In 1936, synod adopted the "Testimony Regarding the Christian's Attitude Toward War and Peace." Conscientious objection was acknowledged to be one of three coordinate Christian duties: a Christian must (1) promote peace, (2) defend his country and protect the weak in the world from aggressors, and (3) "under certain definite circumstances . . . refuse obedience to the civil magistrate" (*Acts of Synod 1939*, pp. 240-46).

In 1969 and 1973, synod applied the testimony of 1939, particularly the pronouncements of the testimony regarding conscientious objection. Synod responded in 1969 to the request for support from a group of conscientious objectors by reasserting "the stand of 1939 which recognized not only the right but even the duty of a Christian to 'resort to passive resistance' . . . when he in conscience before God according to his Word is convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is unjust" (*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 98). In 1973 synod responded to an overture by urging "the President of the United States and Congress to grant . . . amnesty for those who by reason of their Christian conscientious objection to the Vietnam conflict are in exile, at large, incarcerated, or deprived of the full rights of citizenship. The request for amnesty for such men does not make a judgment on the justness or unjustness of the war; it does support the man who in good conscience could not bear arms in the Vietnam conflict. This request does not dishonor, but respects the consciences of those who fought and died. *Grounds*: Synod has consistently supported [the selective conscientious objector, and such a request] is a concrete action which implements the words of synodical decisions . . ." (*Acts of Synod 1973*, pp. 80-81).

The Synods of 1969 and 1973 also emphasized the duties of the entire Christian community. Pastors, consistories, other spiritual counselors, and church members themselves were urged to "extend Christian love and concern" to conscientious objectors (*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 99; *Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 79). In addition, the Synod of 1973 appointed a study committee to "provide pastoral counseling for those opposed to all war" and "to study the responsibilities" of all church assemblies in helping members make ethical decisions regarding any given war (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 70).

The Synod of 1977 adopted its most recent and extensive pronouncements on war, peace, and conscientious objection titled "Guidelines for Ethical Decisions about War." Christian conscience is the "proper means for Christian decision making in a sinful world." Biblical principles must underlie all deci-

sion making. Yet synod acknowledged that the living out of all biblical principles in this complex and sinful world leads to significant differences among Christians, even such opposite positions as total pacifism and conscientious military participation. In such a context, the church "at best [can] offer guidelines [which] provide help for the development and proper functioning of the Christian conscience" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, Introduction to Guidelines, B, 4, p. 570).

Guidelines adopted on war, pacifism, and amnesty in 1977 offer significant help to the churches. This synod seemed to show more patience with the troubled conscience than did the synods in previous years. In the formation and function of conscience, the individual must seek the prayer and counsel of the family and the church. In such corporate interaction the policies of government must be evaluated according to the principles of righteousness. Resulting conscientious objection must be "within the framework of law." The church must be informed. Members and assemblies of the church "should not reject fellow Christians whose conclusions and decisions differ from the majority, but in the name of our long-suffering Savior exercises understanding and forbearance. They should also provide counseling and other necessary support to those whose conscientious stand brings them any sort of hardship" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, Guidelines, pp. 571-72).

III. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. *Biblical Teachings and Tax Refusal*

1. Matthew 17:24-27

After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"

"Yes, he does," he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?"

"From others," Peter answered.

"Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him. "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

Commentary

The two drachma represented the Jewish temple tax, not a Roman tax. This tax dates back to the time of the Exodus (Ex. 30:11-16). It was collected annually from every Jew over twenty years of age. This money was used for the service and maintenance of the temple.

Why the collectors had to ask for this tax is not stated. Was the tax overdue because Jesus and Peter were absent from Capernaum? Or does the delay arise from some difference of interpretation between Jesus and leaders in the temple—the Pharisees or Sadducees—about the tax? The delay because of a difference of interpretation appears to have more support in the subsequent conversation between Jesus and Peter than the explanation of absence. The reference of Jesus to the kings of the earth collecting taxes from "others" rather

than from "sons" implies that Jesus and Peter may not have been under obligation to pay such tax. In Mark 12:41–44 Jesus does teach, in the context of the temple, voluntary giving proportionate to one's wealth. He explains his payment of the tax not in terms of legal obligation but in terms of avoiding offense.

The avoidance-of-offense purpose reflects messianic import in this tax episode. As the Messiah, Jesus fulfills the Old Testament temple demands and, in so doing, reveals the ending of the old age (dispensation) and the beginning of the new age. The new age is anticipated as a life of obedience in freedom and not one of legalism. Jesus pays the temple tax not as a legal requirement, but as a means toward his messianic reign and coming kingdom.

2. Mark 12:13–17

Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?"

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?" he asked. "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied.

Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's."

And they were amazed at him.

(See parallel accounts in Matthew 22:15–22 and Luke 20:20–26.)

Commentary

Luke in his account specifically relates this tax episode to the subsequent trial of Jesus. The Jewish leaders are seeking evidence with which to indict Jesus before the Roman law. "They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor" (Luke 20:20). The tax question was very controversial. It accentuated the tension between loyalty to the Jewish community and obedience to Roman authority. Roman taxes meant support to an oppressive foreign government which the Jews hated. For Jesus to acquiesce in such support through payment of taxes would endanger his relation to those who followed him. Refusing to pay the tax would open him to the charge of subversion. The answer of Jesus was so framed that it could not be condemned as contrary to the law of God nor as political subversion. He affirmed what was present already in the teachings of the Old Testament. Obedience to God and to human rulers can be in harmony with each other. To pay the taxes demanded by the Romans was not necessarily contrary to the will of God. In the Gospel of Luke this tax incident is not only used to show that the teaching of Jesus is not against the paying of taxes, but also that such accusations when raised at his trial were phoney. We read, for example, in Luke 23:2, "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar."

Jesus' endorsement of tax paying must be understood within the larger context of New Testament teaching. Obedience to the demands of governments is not unconditional. Acts 5:29 remains a higher moral norm than the

requirements of civil law: "We must obey God rather than men." The authority of government is always a delegated one. The ground for obedience to an earthly ruler is obedience to God, not some sacred or final claim by an earthly ruler himself or herself. Jesus, even as the rest of the New Testament, recognizes that the authority of all earthly rulers is circumscribed by the authority of God. Jesus says to Pilate, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above" (John 19:11). All activities of human government, including taxation, remain under the final judgment of God.

3. Romans 13:6-7

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Commentary

This Romans passage clearly supports the payment of taxes to civil government. What remains problematic in this passage is the question of conditional authority. Are Christians here commanded to endorse everything that a government may claim or to conclude that payment of taxes endorses government policy? To answer yes to such a question would mean isolating this passage from the rest of Scripture. Not only must Christians "obey God rather than men," but also recognize that earthly rulers are subject to great moral corruption (I Cor. 2:8; Rev. 13). The point at which a government transgresses the will of God is the point at which the Christian must resist the government. According to Jesus' words one is not allowed to give the state what belongs to God, but according to both the words of Jesus and this passage from Romans 13, one ought not deny to the state that which is necessary for its existence, such things as taxes. If the state, however, demands, as was later done by Rome, emperor worship, which to Christians was blasphemous, then the Christian has no alternative but to disobey.

Note: It should be observed that I Peter 2:13-17 bears a significant resemblance to Romans 13:1-7. Its context is apparently one of persecution. Government is assumed to have a good purpose and function and, in the light of this, believers are to be characterized by an attitude of obedience and submission. Through Christian freedom believers are to remain above all "servants of God" and express moral loyalty and respect to all authorities who "punish those who do wrong and commend those who do right" (I Peter 2:14).

B. Theological Considerations Drawn from Biblical Teachings

1. The Bible teaches that government has the authority to collect taxes and, therefore, that the divinely sanctioned obligation of the citizen is to pay them. From this authority it may be inferred that the government has the right to budget the spending of taxes.

2. It may be inferred from biblical teaching that government has the authority to budget the spending of tax money and is the agent upon which immediate responsibility rests for the moral quality of that budgeting.

3. The Bible does not specifically address the issue of moral conflict between an individual's conscience and the budgetary distribution of tax money by civil authorities.

4. Since it is clear from Scripture as a whole that the Christian ought to

challenge immorality, including government injustice, wherever it arises, it then follows that if the Christian believes immorality is present in a state budget, such immorality ought to be challenged.

5. How such immorality is to be challenged is a matter of strategy and moral means rather than a matter of moral principles or absolutes.

6. Moral means and strategies ought to be distinguished from moral principles. Moral principles are constant and universal in content while moral means and strategies are relative and particular. Moral means and strategies are applications of principles to specific historical conditions and situations. Justice is a constant and universal principle while "tax resistance" is but one of many possible means and strategies for applying the principle of justice to, for example, the present threat of nuclear war.

Another contemporary issue in which principle and strategy ought not become confused is in the moral question of legalized abortion. A Christian who believes that the 1973 United States Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion is morally wrong may decide the most effective way to bring about change is political action; another Christian may choose to counsel women in difficult pregnancy situations, trying to convince them not to abort. Though these two Christians disagree on strategy, they do agree that the policy of abortion on demand is a fundamental denial of the principle of justice for unborn children.

7. The Christian's process of selecting moral means and formulating moral strategy, however, is always done in the context of other moral obligations which remain binding. For example, the two Christians (mentioned in number 6 above) who choose different strategies for changing public policy on abortion would agree with each other that bombing abortion clinics is immoral strategy because it violates the principle of public order which God has mandated the government to uphold.

8. The selection of specific moral means and the formulation of moral strategies ought to remain accountable to the Christian community as a whole. When means and strategies generate value conflicts, as tax resistance does, between loyalty to the government and loyalty to one's conception of justice, then such conflicts ought to seek their resolution through the deliberation and guidance of the Christian community in the light of all its moral demands.

9. Tax resistance has to do with the power of money. Your committee did not consider a detailed biblical study of money to be a specific part of its mandate, but it offers these observations, based on an understanding of biblical teaching, about money and its power.

a. In correcting evil, money does not have the positive moral power and precision we may be tempted to think it has.

b. Though withholding money from an institution may alter its policies, it may also threaten its very existence, thereby destroying an institution that, in itself, is still good. Its destruction would end any avenue or opportunity for renewal within it as well. This power of money is primarily destructive and very difficult to control.

c. Further, being part of a larger group is more complex than the money people pay or withhold. Money facilitates the life of a group, but is not the moral substance of belonging to a group. People, for example, are citizens by

birth or naturalization and, as such, are responsible for their country's policies, whether or not they pay taxes. Money does not remove moral responsibility for one's country.

d. The withholding of money does not absolve people from guilt. Refusal to pay taxes does not free them from responsibility for the sin of their government. They are not, thereby, blameless or free of penalties or consequences of corporate sin, for money does not have the power to remove corporate responsibility.

IV. ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS SYNODICAL DECISIONS

Against this background or historical survey of synodical pronouncements and biblical and theological considerations, we proceed to an analysis of synodical decisions relative to the three issues of this study: conscientious objection, tax resistance, and necessary support.

A. *Conscientious Objection*

Synod is clear about what it means by *conscientious objector*. The position of those who "condemn every war and hence refuse to bear arms under any conditions" was found to be unbiblical. Synod countered that position (see *Acts of Synod 1939*, pp. 244-45) by quoting Romans 13:1-5:

Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God; and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

To bolster its opinion, synod also quoted from the confessions:

We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose he has invested the magistracy with the sword for the punishment of evildoers and for the protection of them that do well. Moreover, it is the bounden duty of everyone, of whatever state, quality, or condition he may be, to subject himself to the magistrate, to pay tribute, to show honor and respect to them, and to obey them in all things not repugnant to the Word of God. . . . (Belgic Confession, Art. 36)

Neither did Synod recognize as a legitimate position that of conscientious objectors who "would refuse to take part in any war when, and as long as, they are not persuaded of the justness of the given war." That uncertainty, synod concluded, "as to to the justness of the given war can be no justifiable ground for refusing obedience to . . . government." According to synod, that position has no basis in Scripture or the creeds (*Acts of Synod 1939*, pp. 248-49).

There is one conscientious objector whose position cannot be repudiated by the church. He recognizes his "duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms," and "has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war. . . . The only course open to such a person," synod said, "is to

resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war" (*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 249).

Synod was consistent in this opinion through the proceedings of 1969, 1973, and 1977. The church has never been ready to say that just because someone appeals to his conscience, his objection is therefore automatically valid. The individual conscience needs to be nurtured and informed by the Word of God in the presence of and with the help of the entire Christian community.

The church has long known that her recognition of only one kind of conscientious objector (he holds that the "given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war") is against the opinion of the courts. United States law, for example, also recognizes only one conscientious objector. He, however, is a person "who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war *in any form*" (Section 5, *Selective Training and Service Act 1940* [italics ours]). "Those who object to participation in a particular war are not within the purview of the act but have consistently been denied 'conscientious objector' status in the courts of the United States" (see *Gillette vs. United States*, 401 US 437, 1970).

B. Tax Resistance

The person who is withholding all or part of his income tax to resist government military policy or legalized abortion (two causes for which tax resistance is being employed by some Christians in our churches) finds that synod has never addressed in depth tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection. Synod has, however, several times, addressed *resistance*.

Synod's language, when it addresses the Christian's attitude to war or government policy, is consistent. A Christian's refusal to comply must be "*within the framework of the law*" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 572 [italics ours]), and must use "*rights and privileges of citizenship to secure such legislation as is calculated to prevent unjust war, correct moral wrong, and establish just policies*" (p. 573 [italics ours]). Resistance to war and work for peace must be characterized by both prayer and "*appropriate deeds*," the Christian working in every "*honorable way . . . to support with Christian judgment, charity, and vigor the existing agencies and institutions, national and international, which have been established to secure justice, understanding, and cooperation among nations and peoples*" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 105, [italics ours]). Church members must recognize a God-given duty to "*give discreet expression to conscientious views. . .*" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 572 [italics ours]).

Though synod does make room for an illegal or negative response of one particular kind of conscientious objection to war, namely that of refusing government orders to participate by a personal action in a war he is convinced is unjust, synod does not do that for other forms that resistance may take. For example, those who have a "financial interest in or are employees of companies that provide war materiel or in any way stand to profit from war must face the questions suggested . . . and be willing, if conscience demands, to alter their relationship with such companies" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 573). This response to corporate error is a *legal, positive* one.

Synod is saying that resistance must exhaust every avenue of *positive* or *legal* method before it employs civil disobedience. Believers must exercise rights of citizenship to work for change (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 573), and offer expertise in various fields to do the same (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 573; 1982, p. 105).

In 1972 synod called believers to a "ringing testimony against the evils of abortion as practiced in our society, [encouraging] them to *promote action and legislation that reflects the teaching of Scripture*" (*Acts of Synod 1972*, p. 64, [italics ours]).

Note: Though it may be said that tax resistance to legalized abortion is the response to an *actual* evil—not an *impending* one, as nuclear warfare might be—thus making the moral crisis more acute, synod still clearly directs that honorable means to resist the evil must be used until they are exhausted.

C. Necessary Support

What is properly the response of the church to the objector? In 1939 synod said that the church cannot repudiate the claim of the conscientious objector who believes that the "given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war" (*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 249). By so doing, synod implicitly respects the objector's claim to support from the church.

The Synod of 1969 urged "pastors, consistories, and other spiritual counselors to fulfill their duty to instruct, advise, counsel, and extend Christian love and concern to all the draft eligible, including those who struggle with the decision regarding selective conscientious objection and its consequences" (*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 99). The Synod of 1973 urged "pastors, consistories, and its church membership to fulfill their duty to extend Christian love and concern to all who have been directly or indirectly punished for resisting the Vietnam conflict because of conscience which has been informed by Scripture" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 79). Pastoral care for resisters and their families and also for those within the church who disagree with them about resistance was urged by synod (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 572, Guidelines 6, 7, 8).

Synod defines "necessary support" for the conscientious objector as the responsibility of the church to extend to him pastoral and diaconal care, not to join him in his self-chosen strategy of resistance. It does not, then, direct the church as it acts officially through its assemblies, agencies, or its officebearers to join the objector in his illegal resistance. Synod sees the responsibility of the institutional church to be what it has always been: prophetic proclamation, pastoral care, and diaconal service. "When the nation faces international crisis or war itself, those who preach the Word must seek the direction and support of the Holy Spirit so they will be able to declare prophetically from the Scriptures what Christ is saying concerning the issues at stake" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 572).

"Necessary support" must also come, synod said, from those in the churches who have access to the "best available resources." "Knowledgeable Christians [are] to offer freely their services to all in the Christian community to whom war or the threat of war present pressing problems—both conscientious participants and conscientious objectors and their families" (*Acts of Synod 1977*, p. 573, Guideline 11). The Synod of 1982 urged church members to be as helpful as they can be, using their various areas of expertise, so they will be truly "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 105, Guideline 13). When synod speaks in this way, it is referring to the *church as body or organism*.

V. SUMMARY AND GUIDELINES

A. Pertaining to the Individual Christian

1. God establishes government. The Christian's duty is to obey even when

unsure of the morality of government action. This duty to obey pertains to taxes.

2. The Christian ought to object to specific government policy or decision that he finds incompatible with biblical teaching.

3. The means and strategy of the Christian objector must be compatible with biblical teaching on government. To bring change, the Christian should exhaust honorable, legal, and discreet means. He should consider civil disobedience as a last resort.

4. If his conscience leads him to the extremity of disobeying government, the Christian ought to submit to government's authority by accepting the penalty for his disobedience.

5. The Christian may ask for and expect sympathetic concern from fellow Christians, members of the church as body or organism.

6. It is inappropriate for the Christian conscientious objector to ask the church as institute to join him in his individual strategy. The instituted church cannot assume, as its own, individual methods of resistance; it has neither the competence nor the authority from the Lord to do so.

7. The Christian may, however, expect the church to give him what it does have the authority and competence to give: prophetic proclamation of the Word, pastoral care, and diaconal support. The nature of the church's "necessary support" for him is to help him endure his hardship, not to join him in the individual methods of objection he chooses.

B. Pertaining to the Church

1. As a community of believers, the church is called upon to give spiritual care and love to conscientious tax resisters and to assure them that they are fully honored as Christians in spite of differences of opinion with fellow church members.

2. As agent of proclamation, the church is called upon concerning the issues raised by our mandate:

- a. to expose the demonic influences in society and government;
- b. to proclaim that our ultimate earthly protection is not to be found in any earthly power but in God's almighty and loving care; and
- c. to challenge its members to exercise their responsibilities to oppose evil by appropriate means or strategy.

3. As provider of pastoral care, the church is called upon, through its elders and ministers, to give counsel and guidance to believers as they weigh specific methods of strategy seeking to follow dictates of a biblically informed conscience.

4. As instrument of diaconal care, the church is called upon to provide financial assistance to conscientious tax resisters whose stand brings them material hardship. This is particularly the responsibility of the local congregation.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the chairman and the reporter of the study committee when the report is discussed.

- B. That synod receive Parts I, II, III, and IV of the Report on Conscientious Tax Resistance and submit them to the church as information.
- C. That synod adopt Part V, A and B, as its answer to requests from the church for guidance on the issues of conscientious objection, tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection, and "necessary support" for those who become conscientious tax resisters.
- D. That synod declare the mandate of this committee fulfilled, and discharge the committee.

Committee to Study Conscientious
Objection as It May Apply to Tax Resistance
James E. Versluys, chairman
Eunice Vanderlaan, reporter
Theodore Minnema
Kenneth Oosterhouse
Bernard Zylstra

REPORT 39
COMMITTEE ON THE CENTER OF HOPE NOTEHOLDERS

I. BACKGROUND

A. The story of the Center of Hope goes back to 1979 when ads appeared in *The Banner* announcing availability of notes from the Center. Interest rates advertised were above market rates at that time. Historically *The Banner* has announced the availability of promissory notes along with other types of products and services. *The Banner* has never, of course, endorsed any product or service offered by any advertiser—including denominational agencies or individual congregations.

Directly or indirectly as a result of these notices, noteholders in good faith loaned money to the Center of Hope in the belief and hope that the Center of Hope could pay the interest and repay the principal. For many noteholders, the investment turned out to be a disaster. The Center filed for bankruptcy in 1981. The Trustee in Bankruptcy sued the Board of Publications and the Christian Reformed denomination. The trustee's case was dismissed by the federal court, and the trustee did not appeal the dismissal. It now appears that the noteholders will receive little or no return of their investment.

B. *The Synods of 1982 and 1984*

A Pastoral Committee on the Center of Hope was appointed by the Synod of 1982 with the following mandate:

1. To recommend what actions, if any, the Christian Reformed Church should take regarding those persons who suffer hardship because of losses from investments with the Center of Hope.
2. That the Pastoral Committee assist local diaconates in dealing with special needs of those who suffer hardship because of losses from investments with the Center of Hope.
3. That the Pastoral Committee make recommendations to the Synodical Interim Committee in advance of the 1983 Synod if an urgent situation requires resolution. (*Acts of Synod 1982*, p. 121-22)

In the two years the Pastoral Committee was in existence, that committee:

- a. developed a definition of financial hardship;
- b. communicated with all known noteholders of the Center of Hope;
- c. communicated with all Christian Reformed consistories and classes;
- d. answered letters of correspondence from noteholders in a manner of Christian care; and
- e. reported to synod in 1984.

In 1984 the Pastoral Committee recommended that another committee be appointed to explore making some payment to the noteholders. However, the synodical advisory committee rejected that recommendation and, in turn, recommended that synod discharge the Pastoral Committee re Center of Hope with appreciation for its work.

The grounds given for discharging the committee were:

1. The committee requests this since it has completed its mandate.
2. No personal hardships have been uncovered.
3. No consistory has requested the committee's assistance.

Synod adopted this recommendation.

But then synod adopted a motion to appoint a new committee, with the following mandate:

To explore making some payment to the noteholders of Center of Hope to offset their losses.

Grounds:

1. The noteholders' willingness to make loans arose in part from the confidence that an advertisement in *The Banner* inspires.
2. The church is an organism as well as an organization. Our oneness in Christ impels our concern for each other's well-being.

(Acts of Synod 1984, p. 672)

Both committees have struggled with this complex issue from the perspective of Christian compassion and justice.

II. SUMMARY OF NOTEHOLDERS' INVESTMENTS

As nearly as this committee has been able to determine, the following summarizes the investments made in the project:

283 noteholders (63.5% of total) held notes of \$5,000 or less	\$654,522	21.3%
78 noteholders (17.6% of total) held notes of \$5,001-10,000	\$657,465	21.4%
54 noteholders (12.1% of total) held notes of \$10,001-20,000	\$784,603	25.5%
30 noteholders (6.8% of total) held notes over \$20,000	<u>\$ 977,000</u>	<u>31.8%</u>
<u>445</u> 100.0%	<u>\$3,073,590</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

III. LEGAL POSTURE

This committee has been informed, and believes, that neither the denomination nor the Board of Publications has any *legal* obligation to pay the noteholders. No noteholder has sued either the denomination or the Board of Publications and, in our opinion, such a suit would be groundless. In addition, as stated, the Bankruptcy Trustee's lawsuit against the denomination and Board of Publications has been dismissed by the United States District Court and has not been appealed. Therefore, this committee has no civil legal basis for recommending payment to either the noteholders or the trustee for the benefit of the creditors of Center of Hope. Nor is there any *legal* reason why the denomination or other person cannot pay the noteholders. Therefore, the matter is not a legal matter. Instead, this committee must explore whether the church, because it is a church, should make payment, and, if so, under what circumstances and by what means.

IV. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

A. Moral Responsibility

In considering whether the denomination has a moral responsibility to repay investors in the Center of Hope, we noted the following facts:

1. The Center of Hope advertisements appeared in *The Banner* for about three years alongside other congregational and denominational advertisements for promissory notes. Generally, the Center of Hope advertised a higher rate of interest than did the other congregations and the denominational agencies.

2. No statement which indicated that the denomination would cover any financial losses of the investors appeared in *The Banner*.¹

3. Each reader of *The Banner* was free to deal with the particular congregation or agency with which he or she desired to deal—or with none at all. In any event, when a particular reader decided to deal with the Center of Hope, he or she knew it was the Center of Hope that was expected to repay the money, not the denomination or another congregation.

4. Generally there is greater risk of loss coupled with a greater promised return.

We recognize that some CRC members and friends trusted the denomination and *The Banner* to be that which they cannot be—guarantors of investments. The denomination and *The Banner* are not in a position to judge, recommend, or evaluate investments in any affiliated congregation or agency. Some note-holders may have thought, "If it's in *The Banner*, it must be a good investment. Furthermore, if it's an investment in a Christian Reformed church, it certainly must be all right." Unfortunately, they were wrong. The Center of Hope was not a sound investment. Yet it was the Center of Hope and not the denomination to which the noteholders looked for payment of principal and interest.

B. *Good Faith and Credit of the CRC*

An important concern of the committee is the fact that no Christian Reformed church or related agency has ever defaulted on any note in the long history of building churches. Strictly speaking, at the time the Center of Hope defaulted, it was no longer in the denomination; nor was the promoter a member of the Christian Reformed Church at the time of default. This committee is concerned about the good faith and credit of the denomination and its related agencies. We must do all in our human power and with wisdom to prevent a recurrence. However, the building of structures and programs are, generally speaking, peculiarly local concerns with some assistance from established agencies such as the Board of Home Missions. When a local congregation solicits money either from a bank or private investors, the lenders know that the local congregation is expected to repay the money, not the denomination. When the denomination borrows money, it is expected to repay the money. We do not believe that the Center of Hope's default will have any lasting impact upon the credit worthiness of the denomination, its related agencies, or any other congregation.

C. *Diaconal Responsibility*

1. *Statement of Responsibility*

All this does not mean that members of our denomination are unconcerned about those who have lost money in the Center of Hope. Although this committee does not believe the denomination has a legal responsibility to

¹While disclaimers now appear on pages of *The Banner*, the thrust of such disclaimers should be assumed whenever appeals for investment funds appear in *The Banner*. Written disclaimers should continue to be given.

reimburse investors for losses sustained, we do believe that there remains a moral and diaconal responsibility toward those whose losses cause sorrow, pain, and financial difficulty.

Scripture calls upon the members of the household of faith to assist those who are hurting. Paul commended the church of Corinth for its generosity in supplying for the needy in Jerusalem: "Because of the service [deaconing] by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience which accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else" (II Cor. 9:30). In fact, ministering (deaconing) to their brothers and sisters is the evidence of the "surpassing grace God has given" to the Corinthian church.

Many noteholders have accepted their losses and have put the matter behind them. For those who have accepted their losses, this committee trusts that reconciliation between them and the denomination has occurred. But to those noteholders who may not be reconciled or who may suffer financial need, the Christian Reformed Church must *reach out*.

2. Meeting the Responsibility

The question, then, is *how* can the church *reach out* to these people and what should it do when it reaches them?

a. Nonfinancial Responsibility

We believe that the primary responsibility for reaching out to the noteholders rests with the local deacons. This committee is attempting to identify those who believe that they are suffering some sort of need so that the deacons may know whom they should contact.²

We submit that there is more to the deacons' calling than financial relief. Loss of faith in the denomination and the feeling of being duped into making a bad investment represent an injury to our fellowship. These are also diaconal concerns. Deacons are called to minister to many types of injury and pain. Our committee suggests that deacons and congregations be challenged to rise to the occasion of seeking reconciliation necessitated by all hardships suffered, not only those that are financial in nature.

b. Financial Responsibility

We also recognize that spiritual reconciliation does not feed stomachs or help meet other material needs. When we considered how the church should meet its financial (diaconal) responsibility to the noteholders, we considered the following alternative possibilities:

(1) that each investor be paid all or a percentage of his or her total investment regardless of financial need.

We rejected this alternative on the following grounds:

(a) There is no fund or ready source of income which can be tapped to repay the noteholders. The denomination and its agencies simply do not have the money.

(b) The denomination could probably raise the money through dona-

²We recognize, however, that some noteholders may find it difficult to talk with their local deacons about their feelings or their losses. It may be that deacons have not always been compassionate or understanding. Some may view the deacons' role as only serving those who are suffering extreme *financial* hardship. We will not inform deacons of those who do not want to be contacted by their local deacons but who do want to be contacted. These people will be contacted by a diaconal representative to be designated by CRWRC. Those who do not want to be contacted by anyone will not be.

tions, quotas (if synod approved), or a surcharge on *Banner* subscriptions; but then people, who themselves are struggling financially, would be expected to pay money to noteholders who may be financially well-to-do.

(c) Many worthy agencies and causes already compete for funds within the Christian Reformed Church. We do not believe it to be good stewardship to take money from a deserving and hard-pressed agency or cause in order to pay a noteholder without financial need.

(d) A pro rata distribution is unfair because persons who invested \$5,000 may need a 100 percent return in order to avoid hardship, whereas a person who invested \$20,000 may not need anything.³

(2) that "financial need" be considered in determining whether a noteholder be paid anything. In view of the above, we were forced to conclude that "need" should be a factor in determining *whether* to repay a noteholder, or to alleviate the financial hardship being suffered by a noteholder.

The problems with this alternative are:

(a) There is no readily acceptable definition of "need."

(b) There is no denominational agency presently in place which can either recognize "need" or satisfy that need.

Once again, the denomination must rely on the noteholders themselves and their deacons to determine whether financial need exists. We do not believe that the deacons should be critical or unduly harsh in determining what constitutes "need." They should remember that the noteholders lost their investments in what they believed to be a "kingdom cause." They should also remember that but for their misplaced reliance upon a Christian Reformed congregation these noteholders perhaps would not be suffering "need." Noteholders need not be destitute in order to receive financial assistance.

Once the local deacons and the noteholder determine that there is need, it should be the responsibility of the local deacons to meet that need. If local means are inadequate to meet the financial needs, *then* diaconal conferences, classes, and the denomination should help meet the need. If a conference, classes, or the denomination is called upon to help meet the need, then that organization should have the authority to hold special collections for the specific purpose of assisting those suffering financial need because of their losses in the Center of Hope.

As with all diaconal responsibilities, consultation and coordination of efforts through diaconal conferences or classes will improve effectiveness. In this respect, the CRWRC has as its mandate the training and coordinating

³Income tax effect: It may be some consolation to United States noteholders that non-business bad debts such as these may be deducted as short-term capital losses on their federal tax return. This means that they need not itemize deductions to claim the deduction on federal form Schedule D. When the amount of the loss can be determined (original investment less the partial recovery from the bankruptcy), noteholders may deduct their losses on their federal income tax returns. Financial advice should be made available to those who need to know how to take this deduction. (We recognize that this advice may be of little help to those who expected to use income from the Center of Hope to make their retirement years more comfortable.)

of the efforts of deacons and diaconal conferences throughout the denomination.

Our committee recognizes that there is no substitute for personal, face-to-face discussion between noteholders and church representatives. Noteholders should approach the deacons; they may well find the compassion and wisdom deacons are charged to offer.

V. ROLE OF CRWRC

The CRWRC is the denomination's agency which coordinates our response to people in need throughout the world. This agency consults with, and coordinates efforts of, local deacons and diaconal conferences. CRWRC also advises deacons of the availability of necessary training in listening and problem-solving skills. CRWRC is the agency which supports the local deacons and diaconal conferences if resources at the local or regional level are insufficient to meet a local need. CRWRC thus has the mandate to augment the resources of local churches, classes, and diaconal conferences with resources of the whole denomination.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That Dr. Ray Vander Weele, chairman, or other committee members be recognized as our representatives at synod, and that they be given the opportunity to meet with the advisory committee, and the privilege of the floor when our report is being considered.

B. That noteholders who experience need of any type seek reconciliation and dialogue with their deacons, pastors, or their diaconal representative in a region or conference.

C. That local deacons meet with noteholders to determine needs and that, in the first instance, local deacons attempt to meet those needs.

D. That diaconal conferences and classes provide assistance to local congregations if local resources are deemed insufficient.

E. That CRWRC be instructed to respond by using its established assistance network, and that such requests for assistance be based on individual circumstances rather than a blanket formula.

F. That congregations, conferences, classes, or CRWRC be authorized to take and disperse special collections for and to those who suffer financial need because of their losses in Center of Hope.

Committee for the Center of Hope
Noteholders

Ray Vander Weele, chairman

Arthur Hoekstra

Gordon Quist

Rev. Marinus Goote

Overtures

Overture 1 — Revise Church Order Article 40

INTRODUCTION

Classis Kalamazoo overtures the Synod of 1985 to revise Church Order Article 40, b to read: The classis shall meet at least twice a year. . . .

Grounds:

1. No valid reason can be advanced for the requirement of three meetings a year.
2. Each classis, in the exercise of its good judgment and principles of Christian stewardship of time and money, could determine for itself whether a third meeting, or more, is necessary.
3. This change permits as many meetings as are necessary, but eliminates the requirement for meetings that may not be necessary.

Classis Kalamazoo
John Leugs, stated clerk

Overture 2 — Reorganize the Structure of Denominational Boards

Classis Grand Rapids North overtures the Synod of 1985 to reorganize the structure of the Christian Reformed denominational boards in accord with the following proposal.

There are many grounds for suggesting a reorganization of our board structures.

1. The Synodical Interim Committee (SIC) reports that "all organizations the size and scope of the Christian Reformed Church require periodic review to determine the efficiency of their organizational structure" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 548).

2. The SIC will likely present a reorganization plan to the Synod of 1985. It is good for synod to consider all options.

3. The Synod of 1984 gave tentative approval to the restructuring of the boards of CRWRC and CRWM. Before this plan is finalized it would be wise to consider the total structure of our denomination.

4. Since it is unlikely that another restructuring will be considered for many years, it is wise that synod have all possible options before it.

5. Since the Board of Publications is considering a new facility because of inadequate space in the present denominational building, this is an ideal time to consider decentralization, which is a major aspect of this overture. If accepted, a new facility would not be needed.

I. STATEMENT OF PROPOSED STRUCTURE

A. There shall be only two major boards.

1. One board shall supervise all ministries primarily to ourselves (but to others as well).

2. A second board shall supervise all ministries primarily to others (but to ourselves as well).

B. Synod shall meet biennially and become a more deliberative body. Among other duties, it shall supervise the two major boards but these boards shall supervise the activities of all present boards and committees unless synod decides to have some committee report directly to itself.

C. The present boards (Calvin College and Seminary, Publications, CRWM, CRWRC, BGH, BHM) shall each be comprised of twenty delegates from twenty classes. They shall

have officers, but no executive committees. These boards shall be centered in various areas of the denomination.

II. The current situation is not ideal and will be improved by the proposed structure in several ways.

Note: The Synod of 1983 initially rejected Overture 22 of Classis Hudson requesting synod to appoint a committee to study the organizational structure of the Christian Reformed Church because "...the overture does not identify or illustrate specifically where the problems lie, and therefore why such a study should be initiated" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 663).

A. Denominational activity is concentrated in Grand Rapids. Currently all the boards mentioned in Section I, C above meet in Grand Rapids. Their officers, staffs, and executive committees are centered in the West Michigan area. Delegates and members of the CRC in all other areas are not involved in the total program of the church.

B. There are second-class memberships on present denominational boards. Each board has an executive committee which meets monthly, or bimonthly, and conducts most of its business. Executive committee members are far more knowledgeable than are other board members. Since board members who are not on the executive committee do not know the details of complex issues, and are not involved in the planning of proposals, they must often accept the proposals of the executive committee, or refer matters back to the executive committee for decision and action.

C. Our proposal will save time and money. Our present structure for synod and its boards involves great expenditure of time and money. However, the saving of money is not a prime consideration. Under the proposed structure there would be greater expense in the meetings of the boards which will assume the functions of the current executive committees.

D. It is not efficient to conduct business with forty-member boards. Furthermore, when synod must make many decisions of an administrative and supervisory nature, it is not efficient to do so with a body of 160 members.

E. The functions of many boards overlap, and synod is called on to adjudicate. Whether the proposed structure would aid in the present CRWM/CRWRC situation is not known, but certainly having our major mission agencies (CRWM, BHM, BGH, and CRWRC) under one board would make for unified purpose, coordination of effort, and efficiency of administration and operation.

F. With reference to the status of the Back to God Hour board, the present board is small, efficient, and local (goals which we seek by the proposed structure). However, the present board is not composed of classical delegates, and reports of the work of the BGH are not presented at meetings of classes.

G. Members of denominational boards and committees are often delegated to synod and wield great influence for the board, or committee, of which they are members.

H. With respect to the *Agenda for Synod*, what word can describe it (600 pages for the 1983 Synod)? Synod has many functions, such as, (1) to hear and appoint study committees, (2) to adjudicate overtures and protests, (3) to consider interdenominational affairs, (4) to review the work of all denominational boards and committees and approve future plans, including financial supervision of all denominational affairs, which are primarily those of the boards and committees (six of the eleven committees at the 1983 Synod were on these matters), (5) to declare applicants to be candidates for the ministry, (6) to deal with confessional and liturgical matters.

This agenda must be handled by a body of 160 members, many of whom are there for the first time, and most of whom were not present at the previous synod. Synod meets so soon after the busy church/school year that delegates have not had time to master the agenda. Therefore, they (properly) concentrate on their committee assignment, but must vote on all matters.

III. The church ought to seek for the following goals:

- final control by synod
- more efficiency
- more efficient board structure
- decentralization

- greater involvement of all areas of our denomination
- reduction of duplication of effort
- greater unity and coordination of programs

IV. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE

A. Synod shall be comprised of two boards, which we designate here as Boards A and B.

1. Supervision

a. Board A (service primarily to ourselves) shall supervise Calvin College and Seminary, the Board of Publications, and the following committees: Church Loan Fund, Chaplaincy, FNC, Pension, Race, Historical, Ministerial Information, Pastor-Church Relations, and any other committees synod shall assign to it, such as Liturgy, Interchurch Relations, etc.

b. Board B (service primarily to others) shall supervise BHM, CRWM, CRWRC, BGH, and any committees which primarily reach to the outside such as CEACA, World Literature Committee, Volunteer Resource Bank, and any other committees synod shall assign to it.

2. Membership of Boards A and B

Each classis shall elect one delegate to each of these two boards which shall meet annually, or oftener if required. No person shall be elected who is a classical delegate to one of the six major boards. Delegates to Boards A and B shall serve under the present rules of membership: a three-year term, with a six-year maximum. The membership shall consist of 50 percent lay persons and 50 percent ministers.

3. Function of Boards A and B

The main function of these two boards will be to evaluate and coordinate the boards which report to them. Since many members of Boards A and B will serve three to six years, they will be in a better position to do this than the present delegates to synod, most of whom do not attend consecutive meetings.

Boards A and B shall recommend to the biennial synod the quotas for the boards and committees it supervises. In the year that synod does not meet, Boards A and B shall have the authority to increase quotas only by an inflation factor provided by the denominational financial coordinator and shall have the power to make minor adjustments between its boards when such is needful for the entire church program.

Note: Currently the Synodical Finance Committee evaluates quota requests. Synod usually adopts their recommendations with very minor changes. Since the SFC is again localized in the Midwest, the proposed plan would give every part of the denomination input on budget/quota decisions, which greatly determine policy.

4. Date of meeting

If the boards and committees continue to meet, as they do now, in February, Boards A and B shall meet in May and synod in July or August.

5. Examination of applicants for candidacy

The procedure for this has been changed several times during our history. There is no perfect plan. Currently synod does so, but it does so primarily through recommendations of the Board of Trustees. It would seem reasonable that Board A should do so. By this method, a delegate from every classis would be involved in the examination, yet the body would be small enough to do so thoroughly. By this plan a person would be declared a candidate in May rather than in June as at present. Hopefully, there would be few appeals from the decisions of Board A, but if so, the appeal could be heard by synod in the year it meets. There is a problem of what to do in the year synod does not meet. The year could be used to clear up the problem that Board A found or a provisional candidacy or stated supply solution could be found.

B. Level II Boards (Calvin, CRWM, Board of Publications, BHM, BGH, CRWRC)

1. Each classis shall elect a delegate to three major boards (rather than five as at present). Synod shall assign to each classis the three boards on which that classis shall have delegates.

2. These twenty delegates shall be the board, with no executive committee, meeting as often as the present executive committees meet.

3. The officers of each board shall, as they do now, make emergency decisions between meetings.

4. Location of Level II boards:

a. Synod shall decide where Level II boards shall have their offices and where the boards shall meet.

b. Examples only:

(1) The boards of Calvin and of Publications should meet in Grand Rapids since they have extensive properties. Delegates will come primarily from mid-western classes with a few from other areas.

(2) The BGH is presently centered in the Chicago area. It shall continue to be centered there. With present air service, delegates from other areas can get to Chicago within hours.

(3) Home Missions could be centered in Denver or California, in proximity to Classis Red Mesa. Delegates would come from the Far West and Midwest.

(4) CRWM could be centered in Ontario or New Jersey.

C. Denominational Committees

Already the membership of various committees is localized. This should gradually be more widely done: FNC centered in Indiana; Loan Fund Committee in Iowa; Chaplaincy in Florida; Race in California; Pension in Ontario. These are suggestions only. The goal is decentralization to secure wider involvement and interest in the church's program.

D. Synod

No structural changes are proposed except the meeting time. It is not needful to suggest to classes that their delegates to Boards A and B not be delegated to synod since the work of synod would no longer have heavy emphasis on the supervision of Level II boards and denominational committees.

V. PROBLEMS WITH THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE

A. There is no perfect structure. This proposal has many advantages, but some disadvantages.

B. CRWRC is a diaconal board. Since synod and most classes do not have deacons as delegates, it may be better to exclude them from this plan until such time as deacons are delegates. The office, however, could be centered in Alberta, or wherever synod shall decide.

C. Reporting to classical meetings. One of the advantages of our present system is that a delegate is present at every meeting of classis to report for that board (except BGH). Under the proposed plan there would be board delegates present at classis from only three instead of five boards. However, unless that delegate is a member of the executive committee, he/she reports on the basis of what is received through the mail. Under the proposed structure, every board could appoint a liaison person for those classes not represented on its board who shall report to classis and who shall report to the board the questions and wishes of classis.

D. There will be more expense for bringing twenty delegates to the monthly or bimonthly Level II board meetings. This will be more than offset by other savings and by the advantages of the proposed plan.

E. There must be a lengthy transition period. The staffs of most boards, now largely centered in Grand Rapids, must have time to move. For some it may seem to be a traumatic move, but all are servants of the Lord. Spouses will be able to find employment in New York, or Denver, or wherever, as well as in Grand Rapids. Eventually appointments to staff positions would automatically mean finding housing and schools in Alberta or New Jersey or wherever the board is centered.

F. Temporarily there will be the added expense of new office space, moving office records and equipment and staff. Modest rental facilities should be used until Boards A and B, with the approval of synod, make decisions for permanent office space or buildings.

VI. ADVANTAGES OF LESSER IMPORTANCE

A. Currently churches in West Michigan which are "vacant," or whose pastor is on vacation, have a large selection of ministers to call on, not only from the staffs of Calvin and the various boards, but also ministerial delegates to board meetings and synod. Under this proposal, churches in all parts of the denomination would have opportunity

to call on these ministers—to the advantage both of the church and the ministry which that staff member represents.

B. Presently executive committee members are sometimes reluctant to make major decisions and refer them to the full board, thus delaying action. Under this proposal, the full Level II board performs the function of the present executive committees. All the present reports and plans and quota requests would be made to Boards A and B as they now are to synod.

C. Christian Reformed people from all parts of the denomination will have opportunities for secretarial and other employment in the relocated offices.

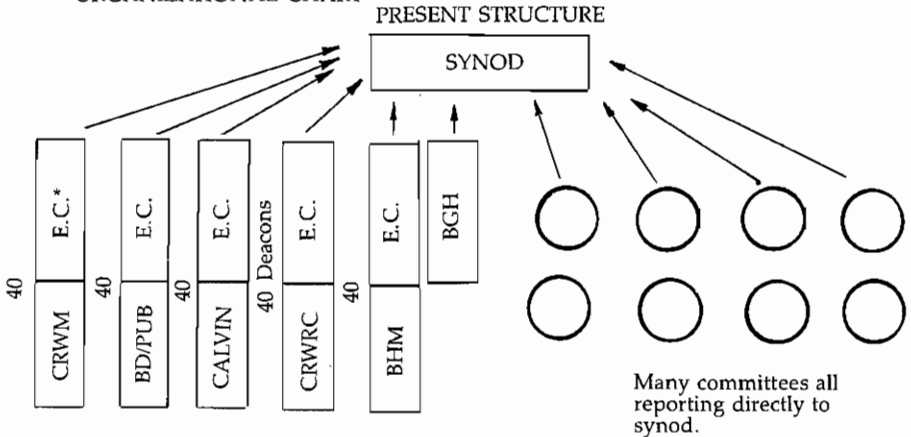
VII. CONCLUSION

A. This proposal is a major restructuring. It should be referred to the denomination for a year of study. Probably improvements can be made or disadvantages eliminated. For example, synod could meet annually with no impact on the rest of the plan.

B. Yet the proposal is not as major as it might seem. All the present six major boards and all denominational committees would continue with the same mandates. The advantages of small board size and decentralization are obtained without the sectionalism and disunity which regional synods would bring to a small denomination.

C. The proposal has the merits of proposals made in the past suggesting that various parts of our denomination be in charge of certain phases of our foreign mission program, but maintains a unity of structure and administration.

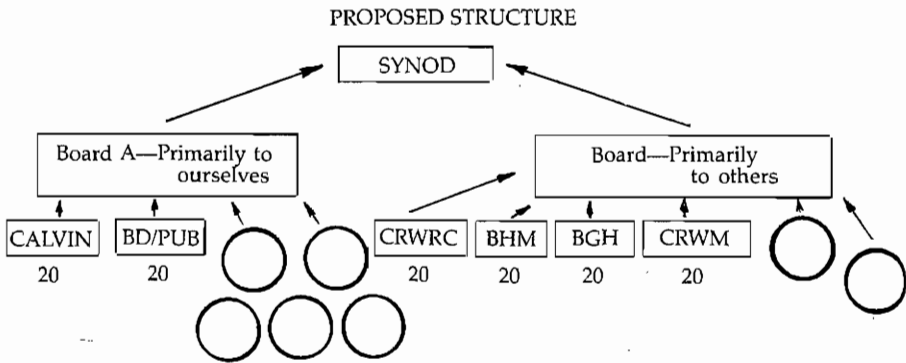
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



*E.C. indicates Executive Committee.

Deficiencies:

1. Boards are too large to be efficient: 40-45 members.
2. Many on every board are "second-class members"—executive committee members meet often and are very influential even at board meetings.
3. Synod supervises all these boards and agencies in ten days:
6 of 11 committees at 1983 Synod were supervisory committees
160-members at synod is not efficient to supervise
4. Synod membership changes—only one delegate in 1983 had been there in 1982
5. All boards except BGH are centered in Grand Rapids.
6. Boards do not cooperate too well.
7. BGH does not have classical representatives.
8. Board members are influential at synod which supervises these boards.



Improvements:

1. (see 1 above) Each Level II board (all the present boards) will have 20 members.
2. (cf 2 above) The 20-person board will have no executive committee, no second-class members.
3. (cf 3 above) Supervision by a 40-member board (A or B) rather than 160-member synod.
4. (cf 4 above) Continuity: Members of Boards A and B serve 3 to 6 years.
5. (cf 5 above) Level II boards decentralized to all parts of the denomination.
6. (cf 6 above) Cooperation enhanced by Boards A and B seeing total picture.
7. (cf 7 above) BGH similar to all other Level II boards.
8. (cf 8 above) Influence reduced because no member of Level II board may be a member of Board A or B.
9. All parts of our denomination will be more involved in our programs.
10. Level II boards will have same mandates and duties as at present.

Classis Grand Rapids North
John C. Scholten, stated clerk

Overture 3 — Establish Guidelines As to What Constitutes a Specialized Ministry of the Word

Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1985 to establish more concrete guidelines as to what type of specialized service a minister of the Word may enter.

Grounds:

1. Church Order Article 11 makes it very clear that the minister's task is to gather in and build up members of the church through proclaiming, explaining, and applying Scripture.
2. Church Order Article 12 allows for specialized service relating to this task, but offers no clear guidelines how to apply this. The Synod of 1978 only referred to the "demonstration that the position be consistent with his calling as a minister of the Word" and that it must be "spiritual in character and directly related to the ministerial calling."
3. There was sufficient question raised about this matter at the 1984 Synod to warrant better guidelines.

Classis Huron
Bernard H. De Jonge, stated clerk

Overture 4 — Amend Disciplinary Procedures

Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1985 to amend the procedures to be followed for excluding unfaithful baptized and professing members from the church.

The revised procedure re baptized members (Church Order Art. 83) would affect only Point 3 of the synodical regulations re exclusion of unfaithful baptized members which in amended form would read:

3. that before a consistory proceeds to exclude unfaithful covenant members,
 - a. An announcement, ordinarily mentioning names shall be made to the congregation with a request for prayer on behalf of them.
 - b. Thereupon the advice of classis shall be asked.
 - c. After the advice of classis has been received and before the final announcement of exclusion from the church is made, another request for the prayers of the congregation be made mentioning their names.

The revised procedure re professing members according to Church Order Article 86 would include a change in one sentence of Section b of the article; namely:

In the first announcement, the name of the sinner shall ordinarily be mentioned, but may be withheld at the discretion of the consistory.

Grounds:

1. Practically speaking, out of spiritual concern many people desire to know whom they are praying for. Secrecy fosters speculation, uncertainty, and a lack of genuine identifying with the person in question and unnecessarily postpones a more responsible involvement of the congregation in winning them back.
2. Pastorally speaking, the emphasis in the church at this point should be on more openness. For professing members, Church Order Article 86 makes it clear that the time for silent censure is past, and further admonition is in order. We do not withhold the names of those physically or emotionally sick when we are called to pray for them.
3. The option for withholding the name at the consistory's discretion is still there.

Classis Huron
Bernard H. De Jonge, stated clerk

Overture 5 — Provide for Selection of Officebearers by Lot

Classis Central California overtures synod to modify existing Church Order Articles 4, 23, a; 37; and any other related articles, so as to allow for the selection of officebearers by the casting of lots. We also request that synod establish guidelines for this method so that churches opting to use this method in place of the more traditional method of elections will do so in a way which will be in harmony with Scripture and our confessions (cf. Belgic Confession, Art. 31).

Grounds:

1. This method of choosing officebearers is a biblical one (cf. Acts 1:23–26).
2. Several churches already are using this method, although in varied ways. Since it has never been determined whether or not the casting of lots is consistent with our Reformed confessions, clear guidelines need to be presented to the churches so as to ensure a practice that would be in harmony with our confessions and Church Order, and greater uniformity of practice for those choosing this method.

Should synod adopt the above overture, the following articles in the Church Order would need to be changed:

Article 4:

Section a. The words "elected" should be changed to "selected."

Section c. The word "election" should be changed to "selection."

Section d. This section should be changed as follows:

The consistory may choose members by the casting of lots if the consistory and the congregation agree to this procedure. If an election of officebearers is held, the right to vote shall be limited to confessing members in good standing.

Section e. The former Section d should become section e and the word "elected" should be changed to "selected."

Article 23, a:

The word "reelected" should be changed to "selected."

Article 37:

The word "election" should become "selection."

Classis Central California

Robert B. Vermeer, stated clerk

Overture 6 — Delay Action on Study Committee Reports

Classis Columbia overtures synod to revise the rules re study committee reports to state: "All reports of study committees affecting doctrinal, ethical, and Church Order matters shall be published in the *Acts of Synod* the year before they are acted upon.

Ground: The very fact that a matter is committed to a study committee means that it is a very difficult, or an involved, issue. The present schedule, which permits the church and its delegates only a few weeks to study and reflect upon the study committee recommendations before taking action, does not do justice to the importance of such matters. If the issues are so important as to need a study committee to work on them for two years, they are important enough for the church as a whole to study and reflect upon their findings for at least a year.

Classis Columbia

Howard B. Spaan, stated clerk

Overture 7 — Develop Formulary for Use in Receiving Full Members from Non-Reformed Denominations

BACKGROUND

One of our congregations reported that it "has received a sizable number of people from non-Reformed backgrounds. They have been received into the church on the basis of a public profession of faith. We have been using the form for public profession of faith; however, the form is designated for people who are making profession of faith for the first time."

OVERTURE

Classis Wisconsin overtures synod to develop a new form to be used to receive into the church members who have previously been confessing or confirmed members of a non-Reformed denomination.

Ground: There is presently no form that is designated for that purpose.

Classis Wisconsin

Roger A. Bouwman, stated clerk

Overture 8 — Study Advisability of Requiring a Two-Thirds Majority Vote at Synod

Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1985 to study the possibility of requiring a two-thirds majority vote for major changes involving long-standing practices.

Grounds:

1. A major decision needs a larger support than half plus one.
2. Larger majorities tend to avoid divisions.
3. The same practice is followed at local levels.

Classis Huron

Bernard H. De Jonge, stated clerk

Overture 9 — Require a Two-Thirds Majority to Change the Church Order

Classis Alberta South hereby overtures the Synod of 1985 to revise Article 96 of the

Church Order so that it reads: "This Church Order, having been adopted by common consent, shall be faithfully observed and any revision thereof shall require a two-thirds majority of synod."

We further overture synod to revise Article VIII, K, Voting, of the *Rules for Synodical Procedure* to read as follows:

1. Majority Required
 - a. Ordinarily a simple majority vote (50% + 1) is necessary for adoption of a main motion.
 - b. When a motion is considered which would result in a change/revision of the Church Order a two-thirds majority is required for adoption.
2. The various methods of voting are (the present reading of Article VIII, K will be retained):
 - a. By voice....
 - b. By polling of the classical delegations....
 - c. By ballot....

Grounds:

1. Biblical: Paul urges the Corinthians "...in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought" (I Cor. 1:10). Decisions affecting the Church Order should reflect a substantial unity which a two-thirds majority would ensure.
2. Church Order: Article 1 of the *Church Order* commits the church to regulate its ecclesiastical activities in accordance, among other things, with the "apostolic injunction that in the churches all things are to be done decently and in order." A two-thirds majority would promote the good order of the church.

Article 29 states that "decisions of ecclesiastical assemblies shall be reached only upon due consideration." A two-thirds majority would indicate sufficient "due consideration" on the part of the delegates and churches.
3. Precedent: *Robert's Rules of Order* states under "Motions Requiring Two-Thirds Vote": "To amend (annul, repeal, or rescind) any part of the constitution, bylaws, etc. previously adopted; also requires previous notice." The Church Order is, in effect, our constitution.
4. Pastoral: The unity of the church would be enhanced and promoted.

Classis Alberta South

Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 10 — Adopt a Two-Thirds Vote Rule for Major Decisions of Synod

The consistory of Immanuel CRC, Wappingers Falls, NY, overtures synod to declare that the Church Order may be modified only by the adoption of a change by a two-thirds majority vote of synod, after which synod forwards its decision to each classis, and two-thirds of the classes ratify this decision and respond to the synodical stated clerk within twelve months of synod's mailing of its decision. Classes which do not respond within the time allowed will be deemed to be in concurrence with the modification.

Grounds:

1. Major decisions, such as the role of women in ecclesiastical office, should not be based on simple majority votes, especially when such votes can be the basis for significant divisions within the church.
2. This approach would preclude the "up again/down again" results experienced on the issue of women deacons, where one year consistories were allowed to elect women deacons and the next year they were not.
3. This approach is considerably more consistent with the broader "voice" and concerns of the denomination at large.
4. This approach represents an effective "check and balance" on decisions of synod.
5. Recent relevant decisions of synod (cf. 1984, 1976) have not addressed the issue of church unity and the ratification process which this overture envisions.
6. Many ecclesiastical bodies, Reformed and otherwise, require a two-thirds majority vote of ratification on major issues and significant proposals for change on the regional and local level.
7. This approach is in harmony with the biblical principle that all things be done properly and in good order.

Immanuel Consistory

J. Buist, vice president

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Atlantic Northeast on March 7, 1985, but was rejected by classis.

Overture 11 — Amend Rules of Synod to Require a Two-Thirds Majority

The consistory of Maranatha CRC in Woodstock, ON, overtures the Synod of 1985 to amend the Rules of Synod so that a majority of no less than two-thirds of all voting delegates shall be required to make any change of significance regarding the Church Order or anything as important as women in office.

Grounds:

1. This will prevent a small majority from forcing its will upon the denomination as a whole.
2. Such a change will aid synod in promoting peace and harmony within our denomination.
3. Important changes which can deeply affect the life of the churches, such as changes in the Church Order with regard to women in office, should require more than a simple majority vote.

Maranatha Woodstock Consistory
William De Jong, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Chatham on January 29, 1985, but was not adopted.

Overture 12 — Petition for Division of Classis British Columbia

Classis British Columbia overtures the Synod of 1985 to approve the following division of itself to be effected during the September 1985 session of Classis British Columbia.

Classis British Columbia Northwest

Port Alberni
Nanaimo
Duncan
Victoria
Vancouver I
Burnaby
Richmond
Richmond, Immanuel
New Westminster
Coquitlam
Maple Ridge
Terrace
Smithers
Telkwa
Houston
Prince George
16 congregations
1,383 families

Classis British Columbia Southeast

Delta, First Ladner
Surrey
Langley I
Abbotsford I
Abbotsford II
Abbotsford, Trinity
Chilliwack
Agassiz
Penticton
Kelowna
Vernon
Salmon Arm
Kamloops, Summit

13 congregations
1,329 families

Grounds:

1. The size and nature of Classis British Columbia, comprising 29 churches and 2,712 families, indicates that a reduction in the number of churches is desirable.
2. The division will allow greater use of human resources and more effective promotion of the ministries and common concerns pertinent to each area and can thereby also contribute to the denominational life of the Christian Reformed Church.
3. Classis British Columbia, when organized, comprised 15 churches and has since almost doubled. Future prospects for growth are encouraging.
4. The proposed division is most efficient in terms of distances traveled and, consequently, of traveling expenses.
5. While quota obligations of the current classis would remain in effect through December 31, 1985, the September reorganization will allow classes to establish proposed budgets for 1986.

Classis British Columbia
Anthony Schweitzer, stated clerk

Overture 13 — Revise Mandate and Name of Service Committee with Retarded Persons

Classis Alberta South hereby overtures the Synod of 1985

1. to revise the mandate for the Service Committee for Ministry with Retarded Persons (dealing with the educational needs of the mentally handicapped) to include all persons with "special needs," and
2. to revise the name of the committee to reflect the focus of "special needs."

Grounds:

1. The baptismal promises require both the parents and the congregation to make certain that "all" children are instructed in the teachings of Scripture and the church.
2. Some children require special instructional methods and materials.
3. Synod has already established a committee to develop instructional materials and support for the mentally retarded.
4. The need for special instructional material and training extend beyond the mentally retarded (for example, children with impaired hearing).

Classis Alberta South
Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 14 — Study Mode of Care for Smaller Churches

Classis Sioux Center overtures the Synod of 1985 to remove the barriers that exist to alternative methods of financing churches. We ask that synod direct an appropriate body to explore possibilities other than the FNC subsidy to enable FNC churches, in consultation with an appropriate committee of their classes, to select the best way to achieve financial independence. We therefore request that the following possible methods be explored, studied, and implemented.

1. A system of reduced quotas for small churches

a. In principle, the first responsibility of a local church is to support its minister. In practice, the present system demands full quota payment first as a prerequisite for assistance in salary payment.

b. Some system needs to be devised where the money is allowed to stay and be used first in the local church, rather than be traded for a subsidy.

2. The promotion of a "shared ministry" concept (as found, for example, in Grande Prairie-LaGlacé, AB; Westlock-Barrhead, AB; and Hartley-Spencer, IA)

Note: The Synod of 1928 urged the closing of small nongrowing fields and merging these into one centralized church. Following this course often destroys the Reformed witness in an area. The possibility also exists, and should be promoted as a variable option, that two or three churches share the services of one ordained pastor, thus lessening the cost per church and keeping a Reformed witness alive.

3. Ordained or Lay Pastors

a. The CRC needs to allow the possibility of small churches employing unordained or lay pastors (who meet a certain standard of knowledge and ability) to do the pastoral work of the church, while partially or completely supporting themselves through other careers, jobs, or businesses (I Thess. 2:9; II Thess. 3:8).

b. A large percentage of the church of Jesus Christ around the world thrives under such leadership.

4. "Tentmaking" Ministries by Ordained Pastors

The CRC needs to remove the barriers to churches employing an ordained minister in a parttime capacity while allowing him to be gainfully employed for a certain percentage of the work week at a separate job, thus removing that percentage of support the church would be required to pay (I Thess. 2:9; II Thess. 3:8).

Grounds:

1. We believe that every church ought to be fiscally responsible for its own ministry, and as financially independent as possible.
2. Presently, the only option available is employing a fulltime ordained pastor, paying full quotas, and then receiving subsidy from FNC.

3. These proposals are designed to lessen the perceived feelings of being a burden to the denomination and are designed to allow small churches to assume responsibility for their own finances and ministry.

Classis Sioux Center
Stanley De Vries, stated clerk

Overture 15 — Revise Membership on the Fund for Needy Churches Committee

Classis Sioux Center overtures synod to make the FNC Committee representative of the FNC churches by having one or more members of the FNC Committee come from FNC churches.

Grounds:

1. Synod of 1958* mandated the committee to be incorporated in the area in which the committee members resided. Since then it seems that the opposite is true: that is, the members are chosen not by virtue of their expertise but by virtue of their close proximity to Chicago, which does not represent typical FNC churches.
2. Because an FNC church is by nature a small church, it is much easier for a person from a small church to assess accurately the viability of an FNC church.
3. Additional expertise may be gained by the inclusion of people who are living in the situation. They are the ones most aware of the needs and potential of small churches.

**(Acts of Synod 1958, III, C, 2, b, (3), p. 75, and Acts of Synod 1959, Supplement 13, Arts. 122, 156, 201, p. 236)*

Classis Sioux Center
Stanley De Vries, stated clerk

Overture 16 — Review Concept, Name, and Rules for FNC

Classis Lake Erie overtures Synod 1985 to review the concepts, the name, and the rules for Fund for Needy Churches with the intent that:

1. the concept focus on partnership in ministry rather than benevolence;
2. the name be changed to "Partnership in Ministry Fund";
3. the rules be rewritten to reflect ministry accountability rather than merely financial accountability.

Grounds:

1. Both the name and the rules that presently govern FNC suggest that the concept of subsidy is based on benevolence. Classis believes that the potential for ministry in a given church, and the program designed for that ministry, are more important factors than the financial ability of a congregation.
2. Home Missions, which also provides a form of subsidy to small churches, places much greater emphasis on the ministry of the church, and on such a program as will enable the ministry to be obedient and responsive to God's call in the situation in which God has placed it. There would be both consistency and practical value in continuing this approach in denominational support given beyond graduation from Home Missions.
3. Program assistance, financial assistance, and accountability for ministry ought to go hand in hand. Financial assistance without program assistance or ministry accountability is essentially unhealthy, and is more likely to breed a "welfare mentality" even in churches.

Note: The following appendix of suggested revisions of rules is also included for synod's consideration.

Classis Lake Erie
George F. Vander Weit

Appendix

For over 40 years synods have appointed a committee to administer the Fund for

Needy Churches. In 1958 the following synodical rules were adopted for the administration of the Fund for Needy Churches:

a. The purpose of the Fund for Needy Churches is the granting of salary assistance and other financial allowances (such as children's allowance and mileage) to churches which have done their utmost to meet the minimum salary as set by synod and have found themselves unable to do so.

b. The administration of this fund is entrusted to the Fund for Needy Churches Committee, appointed by synod and comprised of two ministers and three laymen. Synod stipulated that this committee shall be incorporated under the laws of the state or province from which its members are appointed.

c. Qualification for assistance from this fund shall be based on conditions of need as related to congregational income, congregational giving toward its own financial requirements, and congregational giving toward synodically set denominational quotas; with special consideration being given to exceptional causes (e.g., heavy debt on church property, poverty of the congregation, or special conditions in pastor's home, etc.).

d. At each synod the FNC Committee shall recommend a minimum salary for the year following, a mileage allowance, and a children's allowance applicable through the high school age. The final decision shall be left to synod.

e. At each synod the FNC Committee shall recommend a minimum contribution that each family, belonging to a subsidized church, shall make toward the minister's salary for the following year. The final decision shall be left to synod.

f. The individual congregations desiring assistance from this fund shall make application annually by filing a questionnaire provided by the synodically appointed committee. This questionnaire, together with the congregation's annual financial report, shall be forwarded with the action of classis as to the amount requested. In cases of special need classis shall furnish information necessary to establish need. This information shall be sent to the FNC Committee not later than the first day of November of the year preceding the one for which the request is made.

g. The FNC Committee, in consultation with the classes concerned, shall urge the following:

- 1) That recipient congregations shall become self-supporting as soon as possible.
- 2) That congregations which have no promise of future growth merge with neighboring congregations wherever possible and feasible.
- 3) That churches assist in the financial needs of daughter churches until they become self-supporting.

h. When a minister leaves a church which is receiving aid from the FNC, that church, through its classis, shall take up the matter of continued support with the FNC Committee before calling another minister.

i. The amount of aid given to each church shall be published in the *Acts of Synod* annually. (*Acts of Synod 1958*, pp. 75-76)

Suggested revision of rules from FNC to PMF (Partnership in Ministry Fund) (see rules for FNC as listed on p. 85-86 in Manual of CRC Government)

1. For "a" substitute:

The purpose of the PMF is the granting of salary assistance and other financial allowances to small churches which have a program of ministry that is both designed for growth and temporarily beyond the faithful stewardship of that church.

2. In "b" change FNC to PMF and change "two ministers" to "three ministers" in recognition that a stronger representation of ministers is appropriate because ministry evaluation concerns will receive more attention under the new concept.

3. For "c" substitute:

c. Qualifications for assistance from this fund shall be based on and related to

- 1) A specifically defined concept of ministry
- 2) Need for that ministry in the community in which the church is found.
- 3) Programs through which the above need is being addressed.
- 4) Effectiveness of those programs thus far in working toward growth of church and kingdom.
- 5) Evidence that full support of this ministry is temporarily beyond the faithful stewardship of those requesting partnership in this ministry.
- 6) Accountability for past assistance and presentation of new goals for the year ahead before assistance is renewed.

4. In remaining rule statements change FNC to PMF (Partnership in Ministry Fund)

Overture 17 — Use FNC Funds to Equip Lay Leadership

Classis Northcentral Iowa overtures synod to mandate the Fund for Needy Churches to make funds available to small churches that would provide access to, and inclusion in, training and study programs which may challenge, guide, and equip lay leadership of small churches for improved ministry; and to provide continuing education for pastors of small churches which would give them special skills for ministry in small churches.

Grounds:

1. Small churches lack adequate financial resources to better equip themselves, and thus need help and incentive for growth and progress toward a vital ministry in their locality.
2. In addition to financial assistance, small churches also need help in planning, training, and equipping if they are to heed the continuing mandate of synod to become self-supporting.

Classis Northcentral Iowa
Aldon Kuiper, stated clerk

Overture 18 — Establish Denominational Loan Fund—Canada

Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1985:

In view of the establishment of a Denominational Loan Fund, the Board of Directors of the Ontario CRC Extension Fund recommends that the Ontario CRC Extension Fund work toward the establishment of a Denominational Loan Fund—Canada, an independent organization (subject to synod) in voluntary cooperation with the Denominational Loan Fund—USA, with the Extension Fund mandate which includes loans to Christian schools.

Classis Huron
Bernard H. De Jonge, stated clerk

Overture 19 — Establish Denominational Loan Fund—Canada

Classis Toronto overtures the Synod of 1985 to adopt the following proposals:

1. That synod approve the concept of a Canadian denominational loan fund.

Ground: Legal requirements as well as other considerations suggest that the CRC and the Canadian congregations of the denomination will be best served by a Canadian fund.

2. That the name of the Canadian denominational loan fund be "Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund—Canada, Ltd." hereinafter called DLF-Canada.

3. That synod appoint the following persons to serve as a committee to form and operate a separate denominational loan fund in Canada (either by amending the existing Ontario-CRC Extension Fund, Inc., charter and/or bylaws, or as a new corporation) and to continue the present operation of the Ontario CRC-Extension Fund, Inc.:

Gerry Bruins, banker²
Tom De Vries, businessman
Jack Jagt, businessman¹
Joe Koole, banker¹
John Van Ginhoven, Edmonton Credit Union
Rev. Carl Tuyl, pastor¹
Dan Van Leeuwen, chartered accountant^{1,2}
Walter Veenstra, businessman¹
Harry Vander Meer, denominational financial coordinator, *ex officio*.

¹Currently serving on the Ontario CRC Extension Fund Board of Directors.

²Currently serving on the Denominational Loan Fund Board of Directors.

The members of the committee are to constitute the Board of Directors of the DLF-Canada.

Grounds:

- a. The Ontario Christian Reformed Church Extension Fund, Inc., already serves churches and Christian schools beyond the border of the province of Ontario.
- b. The Ontario Christian Reformed Church Extension Fund, Inc., has considerable expertise in general fundraising and the administration of its loans.
- c. The majority of Canadian classes are in favor of transforming the Ontario Christian Reformed Church Extension Fund into DLF-Canada.
4. That synod instruct DLF-Canada to serve as a depository in Canada for those who are willing to provide resources at a reasonable but not necessarily the highest return in

order that lower interest rates can be offered to the congregations, Christian school societies, and other CRC-related organizations.

5. That synod instruct DLF-Canada to submit to synod nominations for election of directors, to submit financial reports, and to conduct its affairs in accordance with synod's wishes.

6. That synod direct the transfer to DLF-Canada an amount equal to loans outstanding to Canadian churches, and a proportionate part of the cash on hand, as of December 31, 1983.

Classis Toronto
Henry Lunshof, stated clerk

Overture 20 — Express Concern re RCA Stand on Abortion

Classis Pacific Northwest overtures the Synod of 1985 to instruct the Interchurch Relations Committee to express the concerns of the CRC to the Reformed Church in America re their pastoral/ethical decision on the issue of abortion. Even though the RCA last year altered its previously established policy of an individual's right to free choice to that of being opposed to "the use of legal abortion in all but exceptional circumstances," there is still the concern that any pregnancy not wanted could immediately become an exceptional circumstance.

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1972 decided "that synod affirm that an induced abortion is an allowable option only when the life of the prospective mother is genuinely threatened by the continuation of the pregnancy" (*Acts of Synod 1972*, Art. 47, C, 3, p. 64).
2. It is reported in *Christianity Today*, December 14, 1984, that some RCA leaders still "favor abortion rights."

Since the RCA General Synod of 1983 took a decision to seek greater cooperation with our denomination, it is now essential that our concerns be expressed. Surely our concern for the life of the unborn is as great as our concern re apartheid with RCSA/GKSA and homosexuality with the GKN. Therefore, we should expect a statement re abortion from the RCA which is as strong and as clear as that of our synod if ecclesiastical fellowship is to be maintained.

Classis Pacific Northwest
Kenneth R. Slager, stated clerk

Overture 21 — Provide Orchestration of Psalter Hymnal Selections

BACKGROUND

The Ideal Park CRC has been encouraged and edified by the participation of several of its people, especially its young people, in the ministry of music through the use of band instruments. One of the problems the church has discovered is the lack of orchestrated music for playing from the *Psalter Hymnal*. In order to find out if our problem was shared by others, a survey was made by sending questionnaires to one hundred churches. We received fifty-nine replies; they indicated the following: thirty-three of the respondents had used, or were using, band and orchestra music in worship; twenty-one of them viewed bands and orchestras as part of their long-term program; twenty-six stated that an orchestrated version of the *Psalter Hymnal* would be of interest to them.

OVERTURE

Classis Grand Rapids South overtures synod to instruct the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee, in conjunction with other agencies who might benefit from it, to orchestrate a selection of songs from the new *Psalter Hymnal* and make such available to the churches.

Grounds:

1. There is proven interest in such a project as indicated by the survey.
2. The use of instruments in public worship is hampered by the lack of orchestration of the *Psalter Hymnal*, the denomination's primary source of music.
3. Our schools are producing more and more trained musicians and these talents ought to be used in the church.

4. Concern has been expressed that some of the music used in the churches is not theologically and esthetically sound.
5. The time to deal with this appears to be right since we now have a Psalter Hymnal Committee in place.

Classis Grand Rapids South
Harry J. Kwantes, stated clerk

Overture 22 — Alter Church Order Article 6

Classis Alberta South overtures the Synod of 1985 to study the advisability of changing Article 6, b of our Church Order and deleting Article 6, c. The changed article would then read:

Graduates of Reformed theological seminaries shall not be eligible for call unless they are satisfactorily examined by the classis in which they resided immediately prior to their enrollment in college and seminary.

Grounds:

1. The church is responsible for the purity and life of the candidates to the ministry. This matter is too important to delegate it to boards or committees of the church.
2. Seminaries and theological schools are responsible for the academic qualifications of the candidates.
3. Seminary is not an ecclesiastical body in the sense of our Church Order; neither is the Board of Trustees of Calvin Seminary.
4. The one year of study at Calvin Seminary, as is now required from students coming from other seminaries, does not guarantee that the candidate is sound in doctrine.
5. A study committee reporting to the Synod of 1957 proposed similar action. This report was rejected, but was given into the hands of the committee for regional synods.
6. The proposed change is good Reformed practice and tradition.

Classis Alberta South
Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 23 — Authorize Classes to Examine for Licensure Students Attending Other Seminaries

INTRODUCTION

The Synod of 1983 responded to an overture which sought advice on the matter of granting licensure to exhort to theological students not studying at Calvin Seminary. Since then, several voices have issued a call to place the matters of licensure and declaration of candidacy in the hands of classes. It appears that, in the opinion of some, the desire for good order has eclipsed the prerogative in historical Reformed polity whereby classes have examined theological students for licensure and candidacy.

The church certainly has a right to be interested in the proper training of its future ministers and in their progress toward eligibility for candidacy. This interest involves guarding good order within the churches.

The policy adopted by the Synod of 1983, however, requires that students not studying at Calvin Seminary who desire licensure must travel to Grand Rapids during May to sustain a very brief licensure interview, at quite some expense and inconvenience. Coming from as far away as California, students must first travel to Michigan, and then travel (perhaps to another part of the continent) to their assigned summer field, with wife and children accompanying them.

We believe that there is a better way to ensure both good order and good stewardship, as well as to recognize the prerogative of classes to be meaningfully involved in the licensure of theological students.

Past synods have entrusted to the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary the supervision of the educational progress of theological students not attending Calvin Seminary who intend to become ministers in the denomination. This is being implemented at present by means of the Special Program for Ministerial Candidacy (SPMC). Preenrollment in the SPMC focuses primarily on the requirements for field education received in the churches before coming to Calvin Seminary. At present, one component

of this preenrollment in the SPMC is the licensure interview.

If classes interviewed for licensure those theological students not attending Calvin Seminary who are preenrolled in the SPMC, good order in the church would be preserved while the expense and inconvenience of travel to Grand Rapids for the brief licensure interview would be removed. Moreover, the need to obtain licensure in the spring, before beginning a summer assignment and after receiving classroom instruction, would also be met. Of the forty classes in the denomination, twenty-four meet during May, and another fifteen meet during March. One classis meets in January and September. Prospective licentiates may be expected to procure the necessary certification of their preenrollment in the SPMC as a condition for their interview at a regular meeting of classis.

In addition, there is a significant historical precedent, not mentioned by the Synod of 1983, which indicates the suitability of this solution. Without committing any procedural irregularities, Classes Hudson and Hackensack have frequently licensed Christian Reformed theological students not attending Calvin Seminary, men who later attended Calvin Seminary to complete eligibility requirements for candidacy in the denomination. And past synods (through the Calvin Board of Trustees) implicitly recognized the validity and propriety of such licensure.

OVERTURE

In light of the above, Classis Minnesota South overtures the Synod of 1985 to declare that (on behalf of the Calvin Board of Trustees, and for the purpose of licensure to exhort) classes may examine theological students attending other seminaries, provided that these students are preenrolled in the Special Program for Ministerial Candidacy (SPMC) at Calvin Seminary with the understanding that the examining classes should report the result of these examinations to the Calvin Board of Trustees.

Grounds:

1. Good stewardship would be facilitated by removing the expense and inconvenience of travel to Grand Rapids for the brief licensure interview.
2. This approach does not confute the decision of the Synod of 1983 that the church has entrusted to the Board of Trustees the licensure of theological students. With this approach the classis would examine the student on behalf of the board, but the board would, in fact, still grant the licensure.
3. Good order would be preserved by continuing the supervision of such a theological student's educational progress by means of the SPMC.
4. Past synodical recognition (through the Calvin Board of Trustees) of the licensure of theological students by classes indicates the suitability of this solution.

Classis Minnesota South
Martin G. Zylstra, stated clerk

Note: A duplicate overture was received from Classis Orange City (LJH).

Overture 24 — Sever Ties of Ecclesiastical Fellowship with GKSA

Classis Hackensack overtures Synod 1985 to sever ties of "ecclesiastical fellowship" with the Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika (RCSA/GKSA, "Doppers").

Grounds:

1. The Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC) has completed its synodically mandated investigation and discussion regarding the evils of apartheid as they pertain to the RCSA/GKSA in response to Overture 22 (to sever ties with the GKSA) before Synod in 1982 and 1983 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 172-79).
2. Synod 1984 has declared that apartheid as an ideology is a theological heresy (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 602-04), and "any church that supports or warrants such an ideology in the name of the Word of God is untrue to the Word of God, and the teachings it propounds in support or defense of such ideology must be judged heretical. Any such church that does not vigorously oppose such an ideology must be judged guilty of disobedience to God's Word and to Christ its Lord" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 604).
3. "There are points at which the RCSA/GKSA gives four-square support to the policy of apartheid, seeking to base this on scriptural argument and to make its defense a

- part of the Christian's prophetic calling" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 176).
4. The RCSA/GKSA not only allows but encourages membership in a secret, oath-bound society, the Broederbond, as shown by the fact that active membership in the Broederbond is maintained by some of the most prominent and influential leaders of the RCSA/GKSA. (See October 12, 1981, *Banner* article "The Secret Society" by N. Wolterstorff, pp. 9-10, and lists of Broederbond members in *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* by Ivor Wilkens and Hans Strydom, pp. A1-A155. See also R. Mouw's article in the October 12, 1981, *Banner*, p. 13.
 5. The Synodical Committee on Race Relations (SCORR) has recommended severance of ties with the RCSA/GKSA (Report on Trip to South Africa sponsored by the Synodical Committee on Race Relations (SCORR) of the Christian Reformed Church, May 5, 1984, p. 20).
 6. The Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC/NGSK) has conveyed their deep concern to the IRC regarding the CRC's continuing fellowship with the GKSA/RCSA because of the latter's stand on race and apartheid (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 179). Inasmuch as synod has declared apartheid a heresy, and in view of our ecclesiastical fellowship with the DRMC/NGSK, we must sever ties with the RCSA/GKSA which adheres to this heresy.

Classis Hackensack
Robert W. De Vries, stated clerk

Overture 25 — Review and Restructure Compensation for Denominational Employees

Classis Eastern Canada overtures the Synod of 1985 to review and restructure the financial compensation for denominational employees. We propose that the upper limit for such financial compensation shall not exceed double the minimum salary for ministers on the Fund for Needy Churches scale.

Grounds:

1. We recognize that a worker is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7); however, the apostles themselves did not burden the churches with heavy salary demands (II Cor. 11:9). It is fitting and Christian, therefore, that the employees of the church have sufficient, modest salaries.
2. Certainly, if the denomination accepts the minimum salary for ministers serving churches, that salary must be considered an expression of just, fair, and responsible stewardship. A salary scale for all denominational employees that can escalate and double that salary must consequently be considered at least reasonable.
3. For 1985 the minimum base salary referred to above is \$18,900 (US). Thus the proposed maximum salary in the above proposal for 1985 would be \$37,800 (US), plus housing allowance and other benefits. This appears to be more responsible than the \$65,098 (US) maximum adopted by synod (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 84, VI, B, pp. 636-37; Report 19-A, IV, p. 508).
4. The salary policy and scale adopted by the Synod of 1984 is so overly generous that it is causing unrest among our church members, most of whom make far less.

Classis Eastern Canada
John Tenyenhuis, stated clerk

Overture 26 — Reject Implementation of Proposed Merger of CRWM and CRWRC Boards

Classis Grand Rapids East requests the Synod of 1985 to take the following action:

1. That synod not implement the World Missions and Relief Commission's recommendation that the Christian Reformed Board for World Missions and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee be merged under a single board of directors.
2. That the commission prepare a less radical proposal providing for the establishment of an independent committee, board, or commission with the authority to arbitrate present and future differences, disagreements, or conflicts between CRWM and CRWRC.

Grounds:

1. Those geographical areas where there is conflict between the two agencies represent only a part of each agency's respective ministry. The recommended restructuring of both agencies under a single board is an overreaction to the problems between the agencies without sufficient study of the consequences of said action with respect to each agency's total ministry, administration, and funding.
2. Serious questions exist whether a unified board will be able to maintain the unique diaconal and evangelical ministries of the two agencies. With a single board, the danger exists that either the call to "preach the Word to the world" or the command to "offer a cup of cold water to the needy" may take precedence to the detriment of the other. In the Book of Acts the apostles found that they could not properly fulfill both callings of the church on their own and therefore appointed deacons in order to maintain a proper focus on diaconal ministry.
3. The establishment of an independent committee, board, or commission with authority to arbitrate disputes between the CRWRM and CRWRC will allow each agency to carry on its unique ministry while providing a structure for resolving the differences between the agencies when their ministries overlap.

Classis Grand Rapids East
John A. Vander Ark, stated clerk

Overture 27 — Create an Executive Council of World Ministries

Classis Kalamazoo requests the Synod of 1985 to leave the present administrative and board organization of CRWRC (Christian Reformed World Relief Committee) and CRWM (Christian Reformed World Missions) intact and create an EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF WORLD MINISTRIES (ECWM), with membership and mandate as follows:

Membership

- a. Three (3) persons elected from the board of CRWM
- b. Three (3) persons elected from the board of CRWRC
- c. Three (3) persons elected from synod
- d. Nonvoting positions for the directors of both agencies
- e. We recommend three (3) year staggered terms and that the synodical members be nominated by the officers of synod

Mandate

- a. Planning for future joint fields of ministry
- b. Requiring working agreements on joint fields, with annual review of those agreements
- c. Mediating and *deciding* disagreements
- d. Recommending changes in agency operations to the agencies and to synod if necessary
- e. We recommend that ECWM meet a minimum of twice per year, join the annual CRWM and CRWRC board meetings, and submit an annual report to synod independent of the CRWM and CRWRC reports.
- f. Synod should review the need for continuing ECWM every three (3) years.

Background and Reasons

After review of the WMARC proposal (one board, two agencies) and numerous other options, we recommend this proposal because we believe it embodies the least risk with the greatest gain. Inherent in this recommendation is the perspective that:

1. The fundamental problems or issues are the mandates of CRWRC and CRWM and the operations of the agencies on joint fields;
2. The problems are already being solved on joint fields; and
3. Mandates are a matter that only synod can address.

The mandates we refer to are defined as the present-day charters, or constitutions, as practiced. It is recognized that the 1962 mandate to CRWRC focused on relief efforts. For the past ten years CRWRC has emphasized development, with synodical approval, but without concomitant changes in its constitution. ECWM would provide a responsible vehicle to recommend necessary changes in constitutions (mandates) to synod.

We believe that the word and deed must be unified; it is a Christian's duty to feed body and soul. *Diakonia* is more than a matter of attitude; it is a mandate for relief and

development (“...as imitators of Christ”). The spheres of feeding body and soul are distinct, yet overlapping. This is recognized in the proposal of WMARC. However, the WMARC proposal has several deficits, i.e., less diaconal representation in CRWRC, financial implications not addressed, concentration of power, significantly increased burden of input/output on board members. These deficits will be corrected by the formation of ECWM. In addition, it is our perspective that one board with two directors is administratively unworkable due to the differences in the two agencies at many levels. Calvin College/Seminary is not a legitimate analogy. An ECWM approach has a legitimate analogy in the executive committee that operates in the Kalamazoo Christian School System. In the Kalamazoo Christian School System each school is run by its own board and the executive committee operates as a “watchdog” and coordinating agency. The field council recommendation, likewise, departs from standard management structure. This alternative proposal emphasizes the approach of using working agreements, giving them importance and visibility, and preserving organizational accountability already in place.

Finally, the present discussions (and the WMARC proposal) are largely disregarding the overlapping mandates and spheres of operations of other CRC agencies (e.g., Christian Reformed Home Missions). CRWRC is already working with CRHM in two locations in the United States. How will the one board proposal of WMARC address what will likely be increasing interactions with this third agency? We believe that creation of an ECWM with a mandate as outlined above would not only provide effective integration of word and deed ministries abroad, but that a comparable integration of word and deed ministries in North America could be facilitated by adding three members from CRHM. Alternatively, a separate Executive Council for North American Ministries could be established with representatives from CRHM instead of CRWM.

Grounds:

1. This proposal provides an effective alternative to the one board concept suggested by WMARC. It is effective because it establishes an executive council, outlines its mandate, provides for its membership in a fair way, and gives it sufficient authority to act meaningfully.
2. This proposal adopts the premise of the WMARC recommendations, namely, that there appears to be the need at present to establish an agency with sufficient authority to coordinate the activities of both CRWRC and CRWM. This proposal does that while, at the same time, preserving more completely the identity of CRWRC and CRWM which WMARC recognized was important. While capitalizing on the benefits of the WMARC suggestions, this proposal avoids many of the perceived difficulties such as concentration of power, loss of diaconal representation and loss of existing organizational structures.
3. This proposal is flexible enough to be expanded to include CRHM if such a need should become apparent. At the same time, it includes a “sunset” provision so that the need for its continued existence will be reviewed every three years.
4. The proposal establishes a way that disagreements can be mediated and decided. At the same time, it provides a method by which any major organizational or constitutional changes can be recommended either to the agencies themselves or to synod by an independent agency.
5. This proposal was adopted by the board of the Kalamazoo Diaconal Conference at its October 1984 meeting.

Classis Kalamazoo
John Leugs, stated clerk

Overture 28 — Establish a Unified World Ministries Board

Classis Alberta South overtures the Synod of 1985 that the committee charged with examining the structure of the Christian Reformed Church be requested to include in its study consideration of establishing a single unified World Ministries Board which would include responsibility for CRWRC, CRWM, Home Missions, and the Back to God Hour. Such a board's major responsibility would likely include the overall coordination of policies, recommendations for senior agency staff positions, establishment of program priorities, and such other matters as would contribute to the effective and efficient use of resources in the ministry of the church.

Grounds:

1. The outreach mission of the church is a unified one, i.e., to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.
2. The work of the commission which has been studying the relationship of the CRWRC and CRWM has established the principle that a unified ministry is desirable.
3. The work of the other church agencies is as much in need of being coordinated by the proposed World Ministries Board.
4. A single management perspective is likely to provide a more effective utilization of available resources.

Classis Alberta South
Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 29 — Delay Implementation of Proposed Union of CRWM and CRWRC

Classis British Columbia overtures the Synod of 1985 to wait for final implementation of the proposed union of World Missions and World Relief until 1986, giving the churches and agencies another year to reflect on the changes being made.

Grounds:

1. There are far too many details, in terms of structure, constitution, finances, etc., which need to be worked out before such a large step can be taken as is presently before us.
2. So long as the present programs are not seriously hurt, waiting a year to iron out some basic differences would be very healthy.

Classis British Columbia
Anthony Schweitzer, stated clerk

Overture 30 — Revise Existing Rules of CRWM and CRWRC

Classis Chicago South overtures synod to:

1. Provide for revision and updating of existing governing documents for CRWRC and CRWM, giving clear, distinct, and biblically grounded mandates to each agency which will give them complementary and/or parallel functions as branches of the church's outreach.

Grounds:

- a. Such revision would correct shortcomings of the past when, though CRWRC has repeatedly requested revisions of its constitution in order to bring mandate and practice into conformity, synod has with a degree of ambivalence and dalliance deflected the requests with instructions to both agencies to work things out between them.
 - b. Such revision could maintain and reinforce CRWRC's strength as an active force in the growing awareness in the church of the significance of the diaconal role as it has evolved and developed in the past twenty years.
 - c. We do not wish to have two mission agencies doing virtually the same work in the same places. Our present experience has proven that this is far less than ideal—that it involves a duplication of funds and results in confusion in administration.
 - d. If it is found that it is impossible to formulate two distinct mandates and/or constitutions based upon biblical principles, then synod will be able to make a better judgment regarding such matters as one or two boards, one or two administrations, one or two agencies.
 - e. Revising each agency's governing document rather than attempting to draw up one comprehensive document for both agencies would remove the need for extensive legal changes such as changing of agency names in contracts with other churches, governments, and social and financial agencies.
2. Retain two separate boards for the two agencies for at least an additional year, or until such time as a report is given regarding revised and updated mandates and/or constitutions.

Grounds:

- a. It would appear unwise and unnecessary to unite the work under one board if their mandates are indeed distinct and different.
 - b. Uniting two boards which supervise two separate agencies cannot be done unless there is a full-scale merger of the work.
 - c. Care must be taken not to damage the grassroots support system which has been built up by CRWRC by means of personal congregational contact. Because all contributions which CRWRC receives are direct and entirely voluntary rather than assessed, they give evidence of heartfelt response to the needs of the poor. Damaging this system would threaten to diminish such support and, by default, direct it to other relief agencies.
3. Instruct the existing World Missions and Relief Commission, as it now stands, to continue to coordinate the work of the two agencies, while also assisting them in their task of updating and revising their mandates and/or constitutions.

Grounds:

- a. A neutral party is needed to coordinate the work.
- b. A neutral party is needed to help in revision and updating of mandates.
- c. The knowledge already acquired by members of the commission regarding the present impasse qualifies them well to serve in this capacity.

Classis Chicago South
Richard M. Hartwell, stated clerk

Overture 31 — Determine Respective Responsibilities of Officebearers

Classis Pacific Northwest overtures the Synod of 1985 to determine the respective responsibilities of male and female deacons on the one hand, and elders on the other. The supplement to Church Order Article 3 adopted by the 1984 Synod states, "The work of women as deacons is to be distinguished from that of the elders." However, the Church Order does not so distinguish. The Church Order distinguishes between the general consistory and the restricted consistory only once (Art. 35, c), and never really defines the latter.

Our Church Order vests great authority in the entire *consistory*, not just the elders. It is the consistory which has authority

- over the general government of the church (Arts. 35, a, 37), which is original authority (Art. 27, a);
- over all matters (including discipline) in small churches with less than four elders (Art. 35, b, c);
- to examine persons concerning doctrine and life in determining their fitness for communicant membership (Art. 59, c);
- to exercise admonition and discipline over believers (Art. 78);
- to deal with public sins (Art. 81);
- to admonish and discipline members (Arts. 83, a, 84, 85, 86, b, 87);
- to admonish and exercise special discipline upon officebearers (Arts. 89, 90, 91, 92, 93).

Classis Pacific Northwest believes it is urgent that synod determine the respective responsibilities of male and female deacons on the one hand, and the elders on the other.

Grounds:

1. Failure to so determine can lead to the circumvention of the intentions of the Synod of 1984, namely to preserve the principle of male headship in the governing of the church.
2. Good order demands that all our churches follow as much as possible the same policies in church government. Leaving this matter to the individual consistories without synodical directives fosters a form of congregationalism that is foreign to and in conflict with Reformed church polity.
3. The great unrest in the church over this matter threatens the unity of the church.

Classis Pacific Northwest
Kenneth R. Slager, stated clerk

Overture 32 — Clarify Roles of Elders and Deacons

Classis Illiana overtures synod to clarify the meaning of her decisions by making explicit the respective roles of elders and deacons, and to propose changes in the Church Order which reflect this clarification of the respective role of elders and deacons.

Grounds:

1. Synod's decisions (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Arts. 68 and 101) are confusing and, depending on the interpretation given them, may introduce local policies which are either unbiblical, un-Reformed, or inconsistent with the uniform nature of the respective offices.
2. For synod to stipulate "provided that their work is distinguished from elders" is not adequate as a regulatory principle since the Church Order itself presently does not make clearly delineated distinctions in this area.
3. This request is complementary to the decisions of 1978 and 1984 regarding women deacons and it would assist the church in harmonious implementation of these decisions.

Classis Illiana
Rein Leestma, stated clerk

Overture 33 — Study Question of Authority and Function of Deacons

Classis Holland overtures the Synod of 1985 to study in the light of Scripture the question of the authority and function of the deacon's office in minor and major assemblies with the purpose of distinguishing it from the office of elder.

Grounds:

1. The distinction between the authority of the office of elder and deacon has not been adequately and clearly articulated.
2. This study could offer a definition and delineation of the deacon's office and its authority that could remove the tension in the church re the 1984 decision approving women as deacons, and the concern respecting the headship principle.
3. This study will assist in determining the authority and role of deacons in the consistory, and in determining the propriety or impropriety of delegating deacons to major assemblies.
4. A study of this kind is beyond the scope of any consistory or classis, in that it pertains to a changing of the confessions and the Church Order.

Classis Holland
Harlan R. Roelofs, stated clerk

Overture 34 — Clarify the Nature of the Office of Deacon

Classis Central California overtures the Synod of 1985 to study the office of deacon in the light of the qualifying clause of the Synod of 1984 regarding the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. The biblical teaching on the place of deacon in the church has not been clearly defined.
2. This matter warrants careful reflection as in the history of the Reformed churches there have been differing understandings of the office of deacon, and deaconesses, for example, in the Presbyterian churches and the Convent of Wezel.
3. Synod has never dealt with the report of 1981 (*Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 77) regarding the place of deacons in the church. The study committee for the 1984 Synod did not deal with this matter.

Classis Central California
Robert B. Vermeer, stated clerk

Overture 35 — Define the Nature of the Office of Deacon

Classis Thornapple Valley overtures the Synod of 1985 to declare that the decisions of the 1984 Synod re the opening of the office of deacon to women constitute a redirecting of the office of deacon toward a specialized ministry of benevolence.

Grounds:

1. There is an apparent inconsistency in the several decisions of the Synod of 1984, one establishing a principle of headship, and another seeming to ignore it, while a third establishes restrictions upon women in the office of deacon.
2. This appears to be closer to the practice of the early church in Acts 6.
3. This will answer any indecision of the church regarding the intent of 1984 relative to the offices of minister and elder and women.
4. This will assist consistories in establishing the duties of elders, distinguishing their work from that of deacons, and drafting appropriate agenda for their meetings.

Classis Thornapple Valley
Julius Vigh, stated clerk

Overture 36 — Study the Place, Task, and Authority of the Deacon in the Consistory

Classis Hamilton overtures synod to study the place, task, and authority of the deacon in the consistory.

Grounds:

1. The qualifying clause, Supplement, Article 3, adopted by the Synod of 1984, "The work of women as deacons is to be distinguished from that of elders," raises serious questions about *the place, task, and authority of the deacon in the consistory*. These need clarification, especially in light of Articles 35, 36, and 38.
2. The biblical teaching on the *place of deacons in the church* has not been clearly defined in the Christian Reformed Church. For example, it is more and more understood that Acts 6, though speaking of deacons, does not speak of them as the officebearers the CRC today recognizes (see *Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 498 ff.).
3. The history of the Reformed churches shows that there have been *differing understandings of the office of deacon, and deaconess*—for example, in the Presbyterian churches and the Convent of Wezel. Therefore this matter warrants careful reflection.
4. Synod has never dealt with Report 32, part b, of the mandate assigned to a study committee by the Synod of 1979 (see *Acts of Synod 1981*). Point b of that mandate reads:

To study and define the office of deacon in the light of Scripture, the confessions, its historical development, especially within the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition, and the 1973 "Guidelines for Understanding the Nature of Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination."

Classis Hamilton
John W. Jongma, stated clerk

Overture 37 — Distinguish Between Office of Deacon and That of Minister and Elder

Classis Columbia overtures synod to distinguish specifically and clearly between the office of deacon and the offices of minister of the Word and elder so that the proper function of deacons in the general consistory will be clearly understood.

Grounds:

1. The decision of synod (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, 3, p. 655) is not specific enough.
2. If the office of deacon is not distinguished specifically and clearly from the offices of the minister of the Word and elder, then this lack of distinction may lead to these offices being opened to women, which is clearly contrary to the Scriptures, the Belgic Confession (Arts. 30, 31, 32), and the Church Order (Art. 35, b and 35, c).
3. Harmony and unity within the church of Jesus Christ require that this distinction be made specifically and clearly since "we admit only of that which tends to nourish and preserve concord and unity, and to keep all men in obedience to God" (Belgic Confession, Art. XXXII).

Classis Columbia
Howard B. Spaan, stated clerk

Overture 38 — Clarify the Role of Deacons

INTRODUCTION

Classis British Columbia takes note that considerable ambiguity exists about the place and role of deacons in the Christian Reformed Church. The qualifying clause "provided that deacons' work is distinguished from that of elders" has not helped to get rid of the ambiguity. Report 32 of the *Acts of Synod 1981*, gives an extensive biblical and historical survey of the office of deacon. Synod 1981 became deeply involved in the "women in office" issue, with the result that this report was not adequately dealt with. Therefore Classis British Columbia submits the following overture for consideration.

OVERTURE

Classis British Columbia overtures the 1985 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to clarify the role of deacons in view of Report 32 of the *Acts of Synod 1981*.

Grounds:

1. Synod has never dealt with the 1981 report regarding the role of deacons (cf. *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 32).
2. This matter warrants further clarification since different views of the office of deacon have existed in the Reformed tradition.
3. The question of diaconal delegates to major assemblies needs to be decided.

Classis British Columbia
Anthony Schweitzer, stated clerk

Overture 39 — Study the Nature and Extent of Authority of Diaconal Office

Classis Minnesota North overtures the Synod of 1985 to study in the light of Scripture the precise nature and extent of the authority of the diaconal office.

Grounds:

1. The authority of this office has not always been clearly defined and distinguished from that of the office of elder.
2. Such a study may contribute significantly to the removal of misunderstanding and tension in the church arising from questions concerning women as deacons.

Classis Minnesota North
David A. Zylstra, stated clerk

Overture 40 — Add Question to Church Visiting Guide

Classis Atlantic Northeast overtures synod to add this question to the Guide for Conducting Church Visiting: "If your consistory has a woman deacon, how is the work of deacons distinguished from that of the elders?"

Grounds:

1. Church visiting is our means of mutual supervision.
2. This has been synod's policy in the past; for example, the addition of a question regarding music with the 1975 decision on music (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 48, p. 47).

Classis Atlantic Northeast
Jack Gray, stated clerk

Overture 41 — Study the Office of Deacon in Light of Qualifying Clause of 1984

The Maranatha, Bowmanville, ON, consistory overtures synod to study the office of deacon in the light of Synod 1984's own qualifying clause regarding the office of deacon, "provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 655).

Grounds:

1. The biblical teaching regarding the place of deacon in the church has not been clearly defined.

2. This matter warrants careful reflection because in the history of the Reformed churches there have been differing understandings of the office of deacon and deaconesses, as for example in the Presbyterian churches and the Convent of Wezel.
3. Synod has never dealt with the report of the Study Committee on . . . Decisions Pertaining to the Offices of Deacon in *Acts of Synod 1981*, Report 32 (pp. 492-531) regarding the place of deacons in the church. The study committee for the Synod of 1984 did not deal with this matter.

Bowmanville Consistory
Andy J. Strikwerda, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Quinte on January 29, 1985, but was rejected.

Overture 42 — Study Delegation of Deacons to Major Assemblies

Classis Alberta South overtures synod to appoint a committee to consider the question of deacons being represented at and delegated to the major assemblies of the Christian Reformed Church. The committee should give particular attention to the question of diaconal responsibilities and the concomitant authority to perform and exercise those responsibilities within the framework of all church assemblies and the overall task of the church.

Grounds:

1. Article 2 of the Church Order clearly indicates that while the various special offices have different mandates and tasks, there is no difference in dignity and honor.
2. Article 95 provides that no officebearer may lord it over another officebearer.
3. The diaconal task is an integral dimension of the task of the church.
4. Major assemblies consistently deal with matters pertaining to the diaconal office without the benefit of those whose special task it is to perform this aspect of the church's ministry.
5. A study of this nature will aid in the clarification of the various issues contributing to the difficulties between CRWM and CRWRC.

Classis Alberta South
Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 43 — Reconsider Question of Delegating Deacons to Major Assemblies

BACKGROUND

In 1980 Classis Muskegon presented an interpretive history of all synodical deliberations since 1962 on the matter of delegating deacons to major assemblies (*Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 584-86).

The Synods of 1967 and 1975 declared that the preservation of the distinctiveness of the special offices had not been properly addressed. The Synod of 1975 stated that the function of the office of deacon was not explained sufficiently and it had not been demonstrated that the full expression of the diaconal task called for delegation to major assemblies.

Classis Muskegon's overture addressed itself to the objections raised by the Synod of 1975. The Synod of 1980 referred this overture to an existing committee (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 105), which in effect allowed the matter to die.

Classis Chatham in 1962 recognized that the organization of CRWRC would have a major influence on the church and the office of deacon. Classis Lake Erie's 1975 overture to study the inequitable distribution of wealth and power failed to persuade synod to act, but when Classis Rocky Mountain overtured the Synod of 1976 to address itself to the alleviation of world hunger, the Task Force on World Hunger was appointed. This task force presented its reports to the Synods of 1978 and 1979. As a result of these reports synod appointed CRWRC, the diaconal arm of our church, to implement most of its recommendations.

The new form for the installation of elders and deacons (accepted by the Synod of 1982) charges deacons to inspire, to remind, to teach, to prompt, and to be prophetic critics. It emphasizes that all the offices are to serve as motivators for the church to encourage all its

members to act and live the priesthood of all believers. Ministers, elders, and deacons have an equal share in this task.

Most of these developments in the church do very little for establishing a clear distinction between the office of elder and deacon. For instance, both carry the responsibility of teaching and pastoral care. However, in 1973 when synod adopted the Report on Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination, it declared that "the general term for 'office' in the Greek New Testament is *diakonia*, meaning 'service' or 'ministry.'" In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ" (*Acts of Synod 1973*, p. 63).

Consider the challenges for ministry which face the church today: Native Americans, urban and rural poor, minorities who cry out for racial and economic justice. In ministering to the needs and development ministries of word and deed in our overseas mission fields, deacons are challenged to be on the cutting edge of the church. The worsening social economic climate leading to greater disparities between the rich and poor demands a reshaping and broadening of the ministries of the church. Hendrikus Berkhof stated: "The diaconate is by no means an appendix to pass on God's salvation" (*Christian Faith*, p. 37).

At the time of the Reformation, when knowledge was at a disastrously low level because people had been deprived of ready access to the Word of God, it is understandable that the office of elder or bishop overshadowed the office of deacon. Today, our local churches and our denomination increasingly serve the needs of the poor, the deprived, and those who suffer from discrimination by means of a word and deed ministry. As the diaconal dimension of the ministry of the church expands, our deacons cannot continue being deprived of participation in the decision making process of the major assembly.

OVERTURE

Classis Alberta North overtures the Synod of 1985 to appoint a committee to look again at the question of diaconal representation at broader assemblies, reassessing the questions and issues raised by previous committees and synods in the light of the growing prominence of diaconal work demanded by deteriorating social structures.

Ground: Growing dissatisfaction over present church government practice leaves intolerably weak spots in communication and fails to do justice to the authority vested in deacons.

Classis Alberta North
Nicholas B. Knoppers, stated clerk

Overture 44 — Disallow Adjunct Officebearers

Classis Minnesota South overtures the Synod of 1985 to declare that adjunct officebearers (e.g., persons not in offices recognized in the Church Order who share in making decisions in the consistory or the diaconate by voting or consensus; and/or who are integrally involved in the consistorial supervision of the congregation; and/or who carry out consistorial functions, such as making discipline calls, family visiting, and practicing mutual censure) are not allowed in any Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

1. The decision of the Synod of 1983 approving the judgment of Classis Chicago South that "use of women in adjunct positions is contrary to the law and spirit of the Church Order" (*Acts of Synod 1983*, pp. 506, 708) must be understood to apply not only to the churches of Classis Chicago South, but to *all* Christian Reformed churches.
2. An explicit declaration by synod about this would be helpful to our churches by preventing misunderstanding.

Classis Minnesota South
Martin G. Zylstra, stated clerk

Overture 45 — Appoint Committee re Biblical Hermeneutics

Classis Illiana overtures synod to appoint a study committee to define clearly the

principles of biblical interpretation which relate to distinguishing between biblical revelation which is "descriptive" or "time-conditioned" in the Old and New Testament, and biblical revelation which continues to have a binding and "prescriptive" character in the church at all times.

Grounds:

1. This study would be a contribution to the church's understanding of hermeneutics. The matter of distinction between "descriptive-prescriptive" was not dealt with in the Report of the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority (1972) except as related to the "event" character of history. And the Committee on Hermeneutical Principles Concerning Women in Ecclesiastical Office (1978) did not delineate how to make the distinction between injunctions which are "time-conditioned" and those which are presently binding.
2. This will be of great benefit to the church as she brings God's Word to bear on our age.
3. This will clarify synod's past decisions and give guidance for the future, not only on the women in office issue, but other issues as well.

Classis Illiana
Rein Leestma, stated clerk

Overture 46 — Declare a Moratorium on Decisions re Women in Office

Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1985 to withhold action on all overtures requesting synod to reverse the decisions of Synod 1984 regarding the matter of women serving in the office of deacon and to defer all further decision making in this matter for at least three years.

Grounds:

1. After discussing the matter of "women in office" for some fifteen years, the churches need a rest from this concern.
2. Our discussion on the biblical evidence of our positions has reached a stalemate. This makes further decision making almost certainly fruitless at this time.
3. The decision to let the matter of "women in office" rest for a few years may well prevent further polarization within the Christian Reformed Church.
4. The Lord has blessed our denomination richly during these last decades which means that we are in danger of losing much if we allow a divisive spirit to get the better of us.

Classis Huron requests synod to address all churches in a pastoral letter with an urgent plea for maintaining the unity of the church, expressing deep regret at the politicization of the recent decision of the Synod of 1984 regarding this matter.

Classis Huron
Bernard H. De Jonge, stated clerk

Overture 47 — Declare That Women Shall Not Be Admitted to Offices of Minister, Elder, or Evangelist

Classis Kalamazoo overtures the Synod of 1985 to "declare that the headship of the man in the church implies that women should not be admitted to the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist."

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1984 made a decision which declared "that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 623).

According to Reformed church polity, the "primary leadership and direction-setting" in the church is exercised by the elders and ministers. The Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons clearly indicates this when it says that "the office of elder is based on the kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when he ascended, left his church in the world and provided it with officers who should rule in his name"; and this form adds that the elders "have the supervision of the church

together with the ministers of the Word."

The Synod of 1984 recognized the ruling nature of the office of elders when it permitted women to serve as deacons "provided that their work is distinguished from that of the elders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 655).

It is confusing, therefore, if not contradictory, for the Synod of 1984 to have refused to declare that women may not serve in the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 624). For women to serve in these ruling offices would certainly place them in positions of exercising primary leadership and direction-setting in the church, which synod declared to be the prerogative of the man, and is what headship means, according to the Bible.

2. There is much concern on the part of many church members that the opening of the office of deacon to women will inevitably lead to the opening of all the church offices to women. Adopting the overture will allay this concern and diminish further polarization within our denomination.

Classis Kalamazoo
John Leugs, stated clerk

Overture 48 — Declare a Five-Year Moratorium on Further Decisions re Women in Office

Classis Quinte overtures synod to declare a moratorium for five years on all overtures, protests, appeals, and communications regarding the 1984 synodical decisions pertaining to women in the office of deacon. This will allow each congregation to deal with the 1984 decisions in a way that is appropriate for its local situation.

Grounds:

1. This issue has been before our churches for fifteen years, and no new grounds have been adduced for reconsideration.
2. Discussions regarding biblical evidence for various positions are becoming polarized and divisive.
3. A five-year moratorium will allow the church to deal with other important matters in Christ's church and kingdom.

Classis Quinte
Peter J. De Vries, stated clerk

Overture 49 — Address a Pastoral Letter to All Churches

Classis Quinte overtures the Synod of 1985 to address a pastoral letter to all the churches with an urgent plea to maintain the unity of the denomination while at the same time allowing a diversity of practice on the matter of women in the office of deacon.

Classis Quinte
Peter J. De Vries, stated clerk

Overture 50 — Deal Pastorally with Effects of 1984 Decision re Women in Office

Classis Alberta South overtures synod to deal pastorally with the effects of the 1984 decision of synod on the life of our churches by—

1. Preparing a pastoral letter to the churches that includes:

- a. The concerns expressed in the preliminary caution of the majority report to the Synod of 1984 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 285–86).

- b. The warning that we are in danger of single issue orientation that closes our hearts and ears "to the almighty, redemptive Word of the Lord which challenges and transforms all of our thinking and acting." (Cf. "What's Happening to Us," a letter by Rev. Ken Baker, published in *Calvinist Contact*, January 25, 1985.)

2. Imposing a moratorium of at least five years on any discussion on the synodical level of opening up the offices of evangelist, elder, or minister of the Word to women.

Grounds:

- a. More exegetical work has to be undertaken to deal with the passages which concern the issue involved. Bible-believing scholars, like Walter C. Kaiser (cf. his book, *Toward an Exegetical Theology; Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981, p. 119) and F. F. Bruce (cf. his book, *Answers to Questions*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1972, pp. 51, 95, 99, 115, 116f, 184, 226, 247) shed a much different light on the interpretation of the Bible passages pertinent to our discussions than that which has thus far been adduced.
- b. The other side of the women's issue—almost totally ignored in our discussions thus far—needs examining, to wit, that the spirituality in our churches—in many ways determined by the (male) officebearers in our denominations—is at a very low ebb.
- c. The climate of fear and suspicion that currently persists only serves to paralyze our witness (cf. Ken Baker's, "What's Happening to Us?" in *Calvinist Contact*, January 25, 1985).
- d. At no point does the gravity of the abnormality and offense of individualism become more conspicuous than when it takes the turn of ignoring the unity and solidarity of Christ's body (cf. John Murray, "Do You Belong?" *The Presbyterian Guardian*, February 15, 1952, p. 7).

Classis Alberta South
Gerrit J. Bomhof, stated clerk

Overture 51 — Revise Church Order Articles Pertaining to the Consistory and the Diaconate

The council of the Rosewood CRC of Bellflower, CA, is deeply concerned over the unrest and apparent disunity among the churches of our denomination which has come to open expression since the decision of the Synod of 1984 to "reaffirm the decision of the Synod of 1978: 'That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders'" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, 2). We believe that part of this unrest is due to the fact that the present Church Order does not distinguish the assigned functions of the elders and deacons from each other as clearly as did the former Church Order (prior to 1965). Thus, for synod to stipulate "provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" is inadequate as a regulatory principle, since the present Church Order itself does not make clearly delineated distinctions in this area. Since it is the duty of all believers to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3, NIV), we believe it is also incumbent upon synod—as the broadest assembly of our church—to clarify this matter for the guidance of our churches and for the sake of the unity of our denomination.

Therefore, our council overtures the Synod of 1985 to complement the decision of the Synod of 1984 by adopting the following changes in the Church Order, in order to effect a uniform understanding of the stipulation "provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders"—when any of our churches choose "to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon."

(For reference and comparison we place the present Church Order articles on the left and the proposed changes on the right below.)

B. The Consistory

The Consistory and Diaconate

Article 35

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In every church there shall be a consistory composed of the office-bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church. b. Where the number of elders is at least four, a distinction may be made between the general consistory, to which all officebearers belong, and the restricted consistory, in which the deacons do not participate. c. When such a distinction is made, the supervision and discipline of the congregation shall be vested in the restricted consistory. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In every church there shall be a consistory composed of the elders and the minister(s) of the Word. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church. b. In every church there shall be a diaconate composed of the deacons of the church. The diaconate is responsible for the work of the Christian mercy. The diaconate shall render account of its work to the consistory. |
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The work of Christian mercy shall be the task of the deacons, who shall render account of their work to the general consistory. All other matters belong to the general consistory.

Article 36

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| <p>a. The consistory shall meet at least once a month, at a time and place announced to the congregation. Ordinarily the meeting shall be presided over by the minister, or in the absence of the minister by one of the elders.</p> <p>b. The consistory, at least four times per year, shall exercise mutual censure, which concerns the performance of the official duties of the officebearers.</p> | <p>a. The consistory and the diaconate shall each meet at least once a month, at a time and place announced to the congregation. Ordinarily consistory meetings shall be presided over by the minister, or in the absence of the minister by a designated elder. The meetings of the diaconate shall be presided over by a chairperson elected by the diaconate from among its membership.</p> <p>b. Both the consistory and the diaconate, at least four times a year, shall exercise mutual censure, which concerns the performance of the official duties of the officebearers.</p> |
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Article 38

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| <p>a. Groups of believers among whom no consistory can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring consistory, designated by classis.</p> <p>b. When a consistory is being constituted for the first time the approval of classis is required.</p> | <p>a. Groups of believers among whom no consistory and diaconate can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring consistory, designated by classis.</p> <p>b. When a consistory and diaconate are being constituted for the first time, the approval of classis is required.</p> |
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Grounds:

1. These changes are consistent with the ordering of our churches which prevailed from the time of the definitive adoption of our historic Church Order at the Synod of Dort, 1618–19, to the time of the adoption of our present Church Order in 1965, and with which the unity of the church can be maintained while allowing qualified women to serve as deacons.
2. These changes will remove the ambiguity which now exists by clearly distinguishing the work of deacons from that of elders.
3. These changes are consistent with and complementary to the decision of the Synods of 1978 and 1984 in which Church Order Article 3 was modified as follows:

Article 3

- a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister, elder, (and evangelist).
- b. All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon.
- c. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Supplement, Article 3 Women as Deacons

The work of women as deacons is to be distinguished from that of elders.

Rosewood, Bellflower, Consistory
John Oldenburger, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis California South on January 23, 1985, but was not adopted.

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Note on Terminology:

Although several of the following items use the term "overture," they have been classified as "protests and appeals" in accord with their substance. See Church Order Articles 30 and 31, Supplement, Article 31, and Rules for Synodical Procedure VIII, I, Z. Leonard J. Hofman, stated clerk

1. — Classis Pella Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Pella requests synod to revise the decision of the Synod of 1984, which allows consistories to ordain qualified women to ecclesiastical office.

Grounds:

1. The decision is contrary to the headship principle which Scripture teaches in I Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-33 (cf. v. 23); and Colossians 3:18. The Synod of 1984 itself declared this to be a biblical principle when it decided "that synod declare that 'the headship principle,' which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and the New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 623).
2. The decision of Synod 1984 does not fulfill the requirements of the Synod of 1975. The Synod of 1975 decided "that synod declare that the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, D, 1, p. 78). Compelling biblical grounds have not been advanced by the Synod of 1984 to warrant departure from our biblical, historical practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order. In addition, the Synod of 1984 cites historical precedent of the Synod of 1978: "The Synod of 1978, albeit with concern about distinguishing the office from elder, did nonetheless open the office of deacon to qualified women" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 654). This ground, however, carries no weight, since no compelling biblical grounds were adduced in 1978, and the decision of the Synod of 1978 was not reaffirmed by the ratification of the Church Order changes proposed until the Synod of 1984.
3. The decision is contrary to the teaching of the Word of God (Gen. 1-3; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Cor. 14:33b-35; I Tim. 2:11-15; I Tim. 3).

Of special significance to the matter is Paul's letter to Timothy, written "so that... you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God..." (I Tim. 3:15). In the same context, the apostle, under inspiration of God, writes, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" (I Tim. 2:12). Surely these passages lie behind Article 30 of the Belgic Confession, which prescribes the election of officebearers in accord with the rules established in the Epistle to Timothy.

For synod to say that no biblical reasons have been found to keep the office of deacon closed to women is to operate with a hermeneutic which is at variance with that which accepts plain teaching of Scripture at face value. Any such hermeneutic is contrary to historic Reformed practice, as exemplified in the citation from the Confession of Faith, Article 30.

4. The decision is contrary to the teaching of our Confession of Faith: Belgic Confession of Faith, Articles 30 and 31.

The Confession of Faith clearly views the office of deacon as an office possessing

authority when it says "...there must be...elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church." Furthermore, the confession prescribes the selection of officebearers to be the choosing of "faithful men...according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy" (Art. 30).

Classis Pella

Siebert Kramer, stated clerk

2. — Classis Chatham Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Chatham of the Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1985 to revise the decision of 1984 and not allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. There are no compelling biblical grounds for the 1984 decision.
 - a. The Synod of 1975 adopted the following motion: "that synod declare the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order *be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice*" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, p. 78; italicized for emphasis). The same synod also adopted the motion: "that synod declare that *sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order*" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D. 2, p. 78; italicized for emphasis). The Synod of 1984 completely ignored these previous synodical decisions which should "be considered settled and binding" according to Article 29 of the Church Order. The Synod of 1984 produced no *new compelling biblical evidence* which would allow women to be ordained to the office of deacon.
 - b. Romans 16:1 is the only scriptural reference used to support the decision to ordain women to the office of deacon. But Report 33, "Committee on Headship in the Bible," states that this text is not a compelling ground: "Though Phoebe then was *probably not a minister or a deacon in the official sense of these terms*, she did serve the church in Cenchera in a very significant way" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 320; italicized for emphasis). In summarizing the several scriptural passages dealing with women associated with Paul's ministry, they once again conclude: "There is no clear evidence as to . . . what is said about them [the women] as compelling proof for admitting women to the church offices today. What is clear is that the women about whom Paul wrote were deeply involved in significant ways in the ministry of the gospel" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 322). We agree that women were involved in the ministry of the church just as they are today, but, as the authors of the 1984 majority report admit, there is no convincing biblical evidence that women were ever ordained to the special office of deacon.
2. The Synod of 1984 also stated that "women functioning in the office of deacon has biblical (Rom. 16:1) and historical precedent (Synod of Wezel, 1568)" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, Ground C, p. 627). But again, the authors of 1981 Report 32 ("Studies on Women in Office," *Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 509) state: "Technically Wezel had no binding authority on the Dutch churches, for those who participated in this assembly were not delegated by their consistories. Their actions were designed to advise and guide the churches until a proper synod could be convened." Should we (may we) base such drastic change in church government by allowing women as deacons on the findings of a gathering that has no official status? Besides, church history illustrates that its conclusions were never implemented since for centuries the Reformed Church has allowed only male confessing members to be appointed to the special offices of the church. It is also ironic that synod appeals to a gathering in 1568, when it ignores synodical decisions of our own denomination adopted as recently as 1975 (see Ground 1 above).
3. The decision of the Synod of 1984 also conflicts with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession. Article 30 clearly states that ministers, elders, and deacons *together* form the council of the church. In other words, the deacons too have a goal in the government and decision-making process of the church, and they thus exercise authority (leadership, headship). The special offices of pastor, elder, and deacon in

the church reflect the triple office of Christ the head, as prophet, priest, and king. It is through these three offices that the Lord is represented in the church and in the world. And the one office is as important and necessary as the other. They are equal, as stated in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.

The Synod of 1984, however, adopted the motion: "That in consistories where the distinction between general and restricted consistory is not made, women deacons may not function as elders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 88, p. 638). Likewise, synod adopted the supplement to Church Order Article 3 which states, "The work of women as deacons is to be distinguished from that of elders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, c, p. 655). Both of these decisions indicate that the deacons may not participate in the governing, decision-making aspect of the consistory. This violates the intent of Article 30 of the Belgic Confession. This decision also makes it appear that the offices are not equal since women may be ordained to one office and not to the other. And who determines what belongs to one office and not to the other? How can this be practically implemented?

4. The Synod of 1984 gives as one of its grounds that "no study committee (1973, 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984) found biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627). The implication is that because there are no biblical grounds, it is permissible to ordain women to the office of deacon. This method of arriving at a decision is contrary to the established and acceptable Reformed approach, which insists that the church be governed by the Spirit who leads us by *the positive and clear teaching of Scripture*.

The fact is that Scripture consistently teaches, with only a few exceptions (e.g., Deborah, but this was in a time of apostasy and male inaction), that the official offices in both the Old and New Testament were occupied by men. Acts 6:3 clearly teaches that the seven chosen to take care of the widows and distribute food were "men." Paul underscores this as well when he states: "A deacon must be the husband of one wife . . ." (I Tim. 3:12).

There are those, of course, who argue that we must read such passages in their historical-cultural setting. From this they conclude that many passages concerning the place of the woman in the church no longer apply today because cultural conditions have changed. Such a view completely overlooks the fact that Scripture teaches that women ought to take a place of submissiveness in the church, not merely because of the historical-cultural situation of their time but because this is rooted in the order of creation (I Tim. 2:13), because of what the law says (I Cor. 14:34), and because the woman was the first to fall into transgression (I Tim. 2:14).

Clearly, then, these are norms or principles which apply for all time, including the present. There is, therefore, sufficient biblical evidence to exclude women from the official offices in the church, including the diaconal office since deacons together with pastors and elders form the council of the church (Belgic Confession, Art. 30; cf. Ground 3 above).

5. Synod's decision to allow women to be ordained to the office of deacon is greatly disturbing the unity of the church. As a conciliatory gesture to those who oppose this decision, synod adopted the following recommendations:
 1. That synod declare that the decision as to whether women should be ordained as deacons in any specific congregation be left to the judgment of the local consistory.
 2. That synod declare that pastors are not expected to participate in the ordination of women if it is against their consciences.

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 88, p. 638)

Instead of promoting peace, these decisions will have the opposite result. These decisions will foster division and sharpen conflict and tensions in the local congregation and consistory in which some members are in favor and others are against the ordination of women to the office of deacon. It also invites tension between a pastor who conscientiously objects to ordaining women and his consistory which favors their ordination. The ultimate consequence is that these decisions will continue to polarize our denomination. Synod, therefore, acted contrary to what Scripture teaches in Ephesians 4:3: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Classis Chatham
Dirk Miedema, stated clerk

3. — **Classis Grandville Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office**
Classis Grandville overtures synod to declare that only confessing male members of

the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. The decision of the Synod of 1984 to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon does not fulfill the requirement of the Synod of 1975 which declared "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical office recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, D, 1, p. 78).

Romans 16:1 does not constitute compelling biblical grounds (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, A, Ground C, p. 654).

2. The Synod of 1984 declared "that the headship principle, which means that the men should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testaments" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623).

Consistency requires that only confessing male members be eligible for the office of deacon since deacons are a part of the council and exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the congregation (cf. Church Order Arts. 52, 64, 72, and Belgic Confession Art. 30).

Classis Grandville

Leonard Van Drunen, stated clerk

4. — Classis Zeeland Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Zeeland of the Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of 1985 to alter the decision "That synod allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627) by reaffirming the position that only "confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices . . ." (Church Order Art. 3, unrevised).

Grounds:

1. No compelling scriptural grounds are advanced by the Synod of 1984 for this action.
 - a. Synod of 1975 declared: "...that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 1, p. 78).
 - b. The same synod declared "that sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 2, p. 78).
 - c. No compelling scriptural grounds have been advanced since that time for opening "the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order" to women, nor did the Synod of 1984 advance such grounds.
2. The grounds adduced by the Synod of 1984 do not support the decision made.
 - a. With respect to Ground a, used to support synod's decision (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627), we point out that even though it is true that no study committee (1973, 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984) found biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women, the synods have never been completely convinced that the reasons were sufficient to open the office to women without qualification.
 - (1) In 1978 the advisory committee of synod comments: "However, there are several relevant passages that the study committee did not examine, or at least did not examine in sufficient depth..." and, "The advisory committee also observes that there are problem areas, some of which are identified in the study committee report...that require further study" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, Art. 80, Observations, p. 103).
 - (2) The decisions of 1978 and 1984 include the restriction, "provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, 1, 2, p. 655).
 - (3) The reason given in Ground a, moreover, is negative, assuming that if the Bible does not prohibit women deacons, it is permissible to have them. Such a position is not Reformed. The Reformed approach to decisions regulating

the life of the church is that the church must be governed according to the explicit, positive teaching of Scripture, as expressed in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.

- b. With respect to Ground b, we would like to point out that although it is true that the Synod of 1978 opened the office of deacon to qualified women, it ignores the fact that since that time synods have failed to ratify the necessary changes in the Church Order (until 1984), and have insisted in 1980 that no consistories ordain women as deacons.
- c. With respect to Ground c, used to support synod's decision, we would like to point out that the support is controversial, and not generally understood to teach what is assumed.
 - (1) Romans 16:1 could refer to Phoebe as a deacon. But it could also mean that Phoebe was a servant of the church, and the word is used with that meaning throughout the New Testament and the Greek world (*The Biblical Requirements of Male Leadership in Marriage and the Church*, Dr. George W. Knight III, p. 13). This passage alone is not a clear biblical precedent for ordaining women deacons.
 - (2) The reference to the Synod of Wezel is no more convincing. The Synod of Wezel (1568) was not a delegated synod of the Dutch Reformed churches, but rather an *ad hoc* meeting of concerned Christians. That is why historical literature refers to the meeting as the Convent of Wezel, and does not call it a synod. Furthermore, the deacons approved by the convent are not parallel to women deacons approved by the Synod of 1984. The deaconesses in the convent's articles were not part of the consistory and did not exercise any authority in the congregation (see *Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 509). These deaconesses are like those proposed by John Calvin (*Institutes*, I, C, iii, 9). Calvin specified that they could not have authority when he said: "Women could fill no other public office than to devote themselves to the care of the poor" (Dr. W. Robert Godfrey, "The Synod of 1984 and Women in Church Office," *Christian Renewal*, September 17, 1984, p. 11).
3. The Bible does not allow the opening of ecclesiastical office to women.
 - a. Acts 6:3 states, "Select from among you, brothers, seven men of good reputation." The word used for "men" is a distinctive word for male, versus female.
 - b. In I Corinthians 11:3, 8-9, Paul states, "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ." And in verses 8-9: "For man does not originate from woman but woman from man, for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake but woman for the man's sake." The headship of the man is clearly stated, which synod also recognized, but then denied in opening the office of deacon to women.
 - c. In I Corinthians 14:33-37 Paul declares, "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let the women keep silent in the churches for they are not permitted to speak but let them subject themselves just as the law also says. And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is improper for a woman to speak in church. Was it from you that the Word of God went forth, or has it come to you only? If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. If anyone does not recognize this he is not recognized." Finally, the interesting conclusion, verse 40: "Let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner." Paul prohibits women to speak as if they were teaching the church...because the law says they must subject themselves.
 - d. Paul says in I Timothy 2:11-15: "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." This passage has the same implication as the passage in I Corinthians 14.
 - e. We read in I Timothy 3:2, 8-10, 12: "The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach"; then verses 8-10: "Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be

proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless. . . . Let deacons be husbands of one wife, rule their children and their own houses well." In this passage the title *deacons* is applied only to men.

4. The decision is in conflict with the Belgic Confession, Article 30, which speaks of ". . . elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church. . . ." The Synod of 1984 decided that women could be ordained to the office of deacon "provided their work is distinguished from that of elders," thereby creating a special kind of deacon, of which the Church Order and the confession knows nothing.

Classis Zeeland

Arthur Besteman, stated clerk

5. — Classis Thornapple Valley Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Thornapple Valley respectfully overtures the Synod of 1985 to alter the stand of the 1984 Synod "that consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided their work is distinguished from that of elders," and to declare that "the headship of the man in the church precludes women being admitted to the offices of minister, elder, evangelist, or deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Arts. 65, 68, 72, 78, 88, 101).

Grounds:

1. This decision is not in accord with the Scripture (I Tim. 2 and 3, Acts 6:1-6, I Cor. 11:2-16).
2. The biblical instruction regarding the behavior of women in the churches is not merely local, but applies also today, for the Bible declares, "as in all the churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33-36).
3. "A succeeding synod may alter the stand of a previous synod; it may reach a conclusion which is at variance with a conclusion reached by an earlier synod. In such cases the most recent decision invalidates all previous decisions in conflict with it" (cf. *Rules for Synodical Procedure*, VIII, I, 2, p. 59).
4. This decision is in conflict with synod's own declaration that the headship principle is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church.
5. This decision is contrary to the Belgic Confession, Article 30.
6. This decision is in conflict with the decision of the 1975 Synod "that the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 78).

Classis Thornapple Valley

Julius Vigh, stated clerk

6. — Classis California South Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis California South overtures the Synod of 1985 to reverse the action of the Synod of 1984 opening the office of deacon to qualified women, and to restore the following reading of Article 3 of the Church Order:

"a. Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. . . .

"c. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church."

Grounds:

1. The Synod of 1975 stated, "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the church be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice." The Synod of 1984 presented no compelling biblical grounds to substantiate the decision it made.
2. The Synod of 1984 did not find compelling the biblical evidence that stands against the idea that women may serve as deacons. Paul says in I Timothy 2:12

that women are not to have authority over men; but the Synod of 1984 gave women authority over men as members of the consistory. Paul goes on to speak of deacons as males ("husband of one wife") and distinguishes the deacons from "the women" (1 Tim. 3:8-13). Paul then declares that he is writing "instructions" on "how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:14-15). Paul stresses obedience to these instructions (1 Tim. 4:6; 6:2-3). The natural reading of these verses leads to the conclusion that Paul, speaking as the inspired apostle of Christ, did not intend women to serve as deacons in the church.

3. The Belgic Confession, Article 30, declares that "this true church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his Word; namely, that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church." The article later declares, "By these means everything will be carried on in the church in good order and decency, when faithful men (*persons* in the new translation) are chosen according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy." This article confirms that the deacons do participate in the government of the church. The present reading of Article 3 of the Church Order permits a practice in individual churches that is contrary to Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.
4. The Synod of 1984 contradicted itself. It adopted a motion declaring that the Bible teaches a "headship principle," which means that "the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and the church" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 623). Synod then permitted women to be deacons. But deacons as members of the consistory do provide primary leadership and direction-setting in the church.
5. Without any clear scriptural grounds for the present reading of Article 3 of the Church Order, its implementation in individual churches will only serve to further disunity in the church's faith and practice.

Classis California South
James Howerzyl, stated clerk

7. — Classis Grand Rapids South Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Grand Rapids South overtures the Synod of 1985 to invalidate the decision of the Synod of 1984 to "allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627) and to affirm that the headship of the man in the church implies that women should not be admitted to the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist, nor to the office of deacon as that office is presently understood and presently functions in the CRC.

Grounds:

1. This decision of the Synod of 1984 is not in harmony with the general teaching of Scripture which forbids the ordination of women to the office of deacon.
 - a. Acts 6:3: "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom." The word used for "men" is a distinctive word for male versus female.
 - b. 1 Timothy 3:12: "A deacon must be the husband of one wife" and "must manage his children and household well." The context (v. 5) tells us why this must be: "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?"
 - c. 1 Corinthians 14:33-36: "As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church. What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it to you alone?"
 - d. 1 Corinthians 11:3, 8-9: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is

- God. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man; for neither was the man created for woman; but the woman for the man."
2. If we call the above texts, together with I Timothy 2:11-15; Ephesians 5:22-24; I Peter 3:1-7; and Titus 2:5, "historically conditioned," we undermine the authority of Scripture and contribute to a widely prevalent ambiguous understanding of Scripture. The term "historically conditioned," seems for many to mean that certain Scriptures are "practically irrelevant" and becomes the steppingstone to consider more and more facts and data of Scripture as not meaningful for today.
 3. Since the decision of the Synod of 1984 is not based on biblical grounds, we are on very dangerous ground. "Neither may we consider any writings of men, however holy these men may have been, of equal value with those divine Scriptures, nor ought we to consider custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or succession of times or persons, or councils, decrees or statutes, as of equal value with the truth of God, since the truth is above all; for all men are of themselves liars, and more than vanity itself" (Belgic Confession, Art. 7).
 4. This decision of the Synod 1984 violates synod's own declarations:
 - a. "that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and the New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623).
 - b. "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 1, p. 78).
 5. The grounds adduced by the Synod of 1984 do not support the decision it made.
 - a. The reason given in Ground 1 is negative, assuming that if the Bible does not prohibit women deacons, it is permissible to have them. Such a position is not Reformed. The Reformed approach to decisions regulating the life of the church must be governed according to the explicit, positive teaching of Scripture, as expressed in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.
 - b. Ground 3 is controversial:
 - (1) Romans 16:1—This one passage alone is not "biblical precedent" for ordained women deacons. Phoebe is referred to as a "deaconess" but the word is also used to refer to "servant" of the church.
 - (2) Synod of Wezel—This single historical reference is not "historical precedent" for ordained women deacons. The Convent of Wezel was not a delegated synod. The deaconesses in the convent's articles were not part of the consistory and did not exercise any authority in the congregation (*Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 509).
 6. This decision of the Synod of 1984 conflicts with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession which reads: "We believe that this true church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his Word: namely, that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church."
 7. This decision of the Synod of 1984 is based on a new method of biblical interpretation that is foreign to Reformed Church practice and does violence to the clear teaching of Scripture.
 8. This decision of the Synod of 1984 to "leave to the judgment of the local consistory the matter of ordaining women as deacons in a specific congregation fosters a form of congregationalism within the denomination that is foreign to and in conflict with Reformed church polity.
 9. This decision of the Synod of 1984 raises numerous questions concerning the interpretation and application of Church Order Articles 4, 12, 15, 16, 17, 27, 35, 52, 53, 55, 60, 71, 72, 74, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, and 91.
 10. The decision of the Synod of 1984 was not taken in harmony and brotherly unity.
 - a. When a time-honored position is changed, greater unity and clarity must prevail than was displayed at the meeting of the last synod.
 - b. The strong impression was created that biblical truth is established by simple majority vote and by parliamentary procedure.
 - c. The confused way in which the decision was made will continue to make for ever-increasing disunity and polarization in our churches. Classis therefore requests that synod declare that churches which persist in ordaining women to ecclesiastical office do so without basis in Scripture and contrary to the Belgic Confession, Article 30, and the Church Order.

Classis Grand Rapids South
Harry J. Kwantes, stated clerk

8. — Classis Hamilton Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Hamilton overtures synod to affirm that the headship of the man in the church implies that women should not be admitted to the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist, nor to the office of deacon as that office is presently understood and presently functions in the CRC.

Grounds:

1. Synod's own declaration "that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and the New Testament."
2. As presently structured, deacons are part of the consistory and exercise oversight of the congregation.
3. The Synod of 1984 was inconsistent in its other pronouncements about women in office and its pronouncements about headship.

Classis Hamilton

John W. Jongsma, stated clerk

9. — Grace Kalamazoo, MI, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Grace CRC of Kalamazoo, MI, overtures synod to nullify the decision of the Synod of 1984, which allows consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon provided their work is distinguished from that of the elders, by adopting the former reading of Article 3 of the Church Order as follows:

Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Grounds:

1. The decision to admit women to ecclesiastical office is contrary to the teaching of the Word of God (Gen. 1-3; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Cor. 14:33b-35; I Tim. 3).
2. The decision to admit women to ecclesiastical office is contrary to the teaching of our Confession of Faith: Belgic Confession of Faith, Articles 30 and 31.
3. The decision to admit women to ecclesiastical office is contrary to the headship principle which Scripture teaches in I Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-23 (cf. v. 23); and Colossians 3:18; and which the Synod of 1984 itself declared to be a biblical principle when it decided "that synod declare that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623).
4. The decision of the Synod of 1984 does not fulfill the requirement of the Synod of 1975 which stipulated clearly "that synod declare that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, D, 1, p. 78). Compelling biblical grounds have not been advanced by the Synod of 1984 to warrant departure from our biblical, historical practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order.

Grace, Kalamazoo Consistory

Donald E. Musselman, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Kalamazoo at its meeting on January 22, 1985, but was not adopted by classis.

10. — Lynwood, IL, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Lynwood CRC herewith protests the action of the Synod of 1984 which allows for the ordination of women to ecclesiastical office and overtures the Synod

of 1985 to take such steps as are necessary to annul this decision.

Grounds:

1. No compelling biblical evidence has been adduced to warrant this decision.
2. This decision does not demonstrate our obedience to the Word of God (I Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2:12).
3. This decision vitiates that unity of the church which is necessary for her life and labor.

Lynwood Consistory
George Hoeksema, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Illiana and classis responded to this overture by the adoption of two overtures to synod. This action of classis was deemed by the consistory to be inadequate and, therefore, we now address this overture to synod directly.

11. — First Modesto, CA, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the First CRC of Modesto, CA, overtures synod to disallow implementation of the decision of the Synod of 1984, regarding the ordination of women to the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. No compelling biblical grounds have been presented to synod to justify a change in the church's historic practice of not allowing the ordination of women to the office of deacon.
2. To allow this practice is not scriptural, is in direct conflict with our Reformed confessions (Belgic Confession, Arts. 30–31), and is contrary to synod's own declaration of the validity of the headship principle (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 623).
3. To allow this practice is a radical departure from the way the historic Christian church has understood and practiced the Word of God for many centuries.
4. The decisions with regard to this issue made by the Synod of 1984 were made in a manner that was confusing and hasty, thus increasing the problems involved. No positive direction was given to our church for its future course. Instead, local congregations are now left to deal as best they can with these issues, in an atmosphere of confusion and tension. This will greatly contribute towards the disturbing of denominational unity and loyalty.
5. These decisions have served to increase tensions that were already causing division and disharmony within the church. This will prove to be schismatic for our church, as we are already beginning to see.
6. The present trends, as evidenced in the decisions of the 1984 Synod, are, we believe, just cause for great concern about the future of our denomination by many faithful Reformed believers.
7. The declaration by the Synod of 1984, releasing pastors from participating in the ordination of women, should their conscience so direct them, can only serve to create tension and confusion within the church and its consistories, and furthermore create situations within consistories that would strain the working relationship between pastors and consistories, thus leaving the pastor in an awkward, if not impossible, situation that would only invite alienation.

First Modesto Consistory
Norman Vander Veen, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Central California at its meeting on January 22, 1985, but was not adopted.

12. — Bethany, South Holland, IL, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Bethany CRC overtures the Synod of 1985 to declare the decision permitting the ordination of women as deacons to be contrary to the clear teaching of

Holy Scripture, and to alter the 1984 decision, thereby permitting only male members to be ordained to ecclesiastical office.

Grounds:

1. The Bible does not allow the opening of ecclesiastical office to women:
 - I Corinthians 11:3—here the headship of man is stated.
 - I Corinthians 14:33b–35—this is not a local church option, but “as in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches.”
 - I Timothy 2:11–15—the position of the woman is given as a creation norm.
2. The only biblical passages that give the requirements for deacons insist that they are males:
 - Acts 6:3—“Brothers, choose seven men from among you...”
 - I Timothy 3:8—“Deacons, likewise are to be men worthy of respect...”
 - I Timothy 3:12—“A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his house well.”
3. No compelling scriptural grounds were advanced by the Synod of 1984 for changing the historic Reformed position.
 - a. Synod of 1975 declared “that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice.”
 - b. It also declared “that sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order.”
 - c. No “compelling scriptural grounds” have been advanced since that time for opening those offices to women, nor did the Synod of 1984 advance such grounds. Romans 16:1 (Phoebe) alone falls very short of being “compelling biblical grounds.”

Bethany Consistory
Stanley Van Der Aa, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Illiana at its meeting on January 15, 1985, but was not adopted.

13. — Springdale, ON, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Springdale CRC overtures the Synod of 1985 (according to Article 31 of the Church Order and its supplement, *Acts of Synod 1983*, pp. 653–54) for a revision of the 1984 synodical decision which allows women to serve in the ecclesiastical office of deacon, by reverting to Church Order Article 3 in its original form.

Ground: The decision to allow women to serve as deacon is unbiblical.

Explanation: We refer to the “Be Silent” texts of I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12. In I Timothy 3:12 we read, “Let deacons be the husband of one wife.” Paul did not have female deacons in mind.

The Revised Standard Version calls Phoebe a “deaconess of the church” (Rom. 16:1). However, this does not refer to an *ordained* deaconess.

In the early church there were many women who were helpers, as seen from the extensive list of Romans 16. Calvin points out that this corresponds with the list of widows who helped the deacons in doing good deeds. These women were *appointed* to help, but *not elected* as *officebearers*.

We recognize the great value of the work of women in the church.

But, it is unbiblical to *ordain* women to the *office* of deacon. The office of deacon has developed within the CRC to include membership in the consistory. This means they take part in the *government* of the church. Women in the New Testament contributed greatly to the spiritual well-being of the church. But they were never *ordained* as deacon. They did not take part in the government of the church.

The reason for this was expressed by the 1984 Synod: “Man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testaments” (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68).

Springdale Consistory
Frank Weening, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Toronto at its meeting of January 24, 1985, but was not adopted.

14. — West Sayville, NY, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the West Sayville CRC overtures the Synod of 1985 to set aside the implementation of its decision re women in the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. This decision is contrary to the plain teachings of Scripture on church offices. We should not confuse office with gifts.
2. This decision demonstrates a complete reversal of accepted Reformed polity and procedure which calls for compelling biblical evidence of the confusing "sound of silence."
3. This decision appears to have been reached by following a new hermeneutic which compares Scripture with culture instead of Scripture with Scripture.

West Sayville Consistory
George Haun, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Hudson at its meeting on January 23, 1985, but was not adopted.

15. — Dorr, MI, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Dorr Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1985 to reverse the decision of 1984 allowing consistories to ordain women to the office of deacon and to declare that the office of deacon is not open to women.

Grounds:

1. This decision is in conflict with the teaching of Scripture concerning this office.
 - a. Acts 6:3 says, "choose 'men' to be deacons. The word for 'men' here is not *anthropos* which is used for mankind in general but instead *aner* which is a distinctive word for male in distinction from female.
 - b. The only two passages which give the qualifications for deacons specify that they are males (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12; Acts 6:3).
 - c. The women referred to in 1 Timothy 3:11 are not designated as deacons. Furthermore, the Greek word involved, *gune*, can be either women or wives according to the context. In the context, verses 2 and 12, *gune* definitely means wife. In both instances we read, "husbands of only one wife [*gune*]."
 - d. Synod's reference to Phoebe as functioning in the office of deacon does not meet the test of careful exegesis. The word *diaconos*, as applied to Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2, does not necessarily indicate an office but broadly means simply servant and is so used throughout the whole New Testament and the whole Greek world. Its meaning as applied to Phoebe must be determined by clearer passages such as Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
2. This decision is in conflict with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.
 - a. Article 30 designates pastors, elders, and deacons as the ruling body of the church.
 - b. It is required also in this article that these offices be occupied by "faithful men."
 - c. The work assigned these faithful *men* is preservation of true religion, propagating pure doctrine, Christian discipline, and care of the poor, all of which are governmental in nature.
 - d. Synod's decision to allow for a special kind of deacon shorn of "primary leadership and direction-setting...in the church" is foreign to this article.
3. This decision raises numerous questions concerning the interpretation and application of such Church Order articles as 16, 27, 34, 35, 52, 53, 55, 60, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, and 91.
4. This decision is in conflict with the convictions of a substantial majority of the membership of the Christian Reformed Church (see *The Banner*" of January 23, 1984) and thus threatens the unity and support of the church. The Synod of 1975

declared "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice" and "that sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order." As long as there is no biblical evidence or principle requiring this change, the conscientious convictions of the majority ought to prevail.

Dorr Consistory
Marvin Door, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Grandville on January 17, 1985. Since important grounds in this overture are not included in classis' overture to synod, we are sending this appeal on to synod.

16. — Coopersville, MI, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Coopersville Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1985 to reaffirm the biblical, confessional, and historical position that "confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office . . ." (Church Order, Art. 3, a—unrevised).

Grounds:

1. *Biblically* the decisions of 1984 are contrary to the previous decision of the Synod of 1975 (Art. 79) "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice." The biblical evidence used by the Synod of 1984 does *not* support this decision. The citing of but one text (Rom. 16:1) open to more than one interpretation is neither compelling nor convincing.
2. *Confessionally*, the decisions of 1984 are contrary to our own credal affirmation. The Belgic Confession, Article 30, speaks of ". . . elders and deacons, who together with the pastors, form the council of the church . . ."
3. *Historically*, the exclusion of women from *all* ecclesiastical offices is not only a part of the history of the Christian Reformed Church throughout her history but an established fact from the days of Pentecost onward. The historical precedent cited by the Synod of 1984 is no more convincing than the biblical evidence. The "Synod of Wezel" was *not* a delegated synod of the Dutch Reformed churches, but rather an *ad hoc* gathering of concerned Christians.
4. *Practically*, perhaps not intentionally, but unquestionably, the Synod of 1984 created a new "office" in the Christian Reformed Church. Women deacons without any authority! ". . . provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" *Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, Rec. 7, p. 627). The Church Order (Arts. 3 and 35) allow deacons, especially in smaller churches, to share with the elders in the government of the church. If, however, the work of women deacons is to be distinguished from that of the elders, does this mean that the women deacons may not speak or vote in council? Then they are not deacons! If they are to vote, then they rule over the congregation!
5. *Denominationally*, the decisions of the Synod of 1984 were made by a very small majority. The fallout has been divisive throughout the denomination.

Coopersville Consistory
Peter Koster, clerk

Note: This appeal was submitted to Classis Grand Rapids North at its January 1985 meeting, but was not adopted.

17. — Second Toronto, ON, Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Second CRC of Toronto overtures the Synod of 1985 to set aside the implementation of the decisions allowing women to serve in the ecclesiastical office of deacon (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, Rec. 6; Art. 88; and Art. 101:1, 2, and 3).

This decision is not in accordance with the Scriptures.

We recognize the immense value of the work of women in the church. However, it is not biblical to ordain women to the office of deacon. Historically, deacons were and are members of the consistory in the Christian Reformed Church. Therefore they also take part in the government of the church. Nobody can deny that women in the New Testament contributed greatly to the spiritual well-being of the church. But we must take note that they were never *ordained* as deacon and that they did not take part in the government of the church.

In I Timothy 3:12 we read, "Let deacons be the husband of one wife." Nowhere do we find that Paul had female deacons in mind; rather the opposite (I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12 make that clear). Much is made of the text we find in Romans 16:1, where Phoebe is called a deaconess of the church (RSV), but that does not refer to an ordained deaconess. It refers rather to a servant as we find it in the NIV to women as helpers. As we read on we find an extensive list of women, whom Paul calls my fellow workers (appointed to help, yes, but never elected as officebearers). The Synod of 1984 must have realized this by adopting the following recommendation, "That synod declare that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church is a biblical teaching in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68).

Second Toronto Consistory
J. H. M. Blom, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Toronto on January 24, 1985, but not adopted.

18. — Second Paterson, NJ, Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The council of the Second CRC of Paterson, NJ, protests the decision of the Synod of 1984 to open the office of deacon to women and, in so doing, failing to do what the Synod of 1975 called for: namely, advancing "compelling biblical grounds" for changing the church's longstanding practice, recognized in the Church Order, of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices. We ask synod to set aside implementation of this decision.

We also protest the failure of the Synod of 1984 to declare that the biblical principle of headship, acknowledged by synod, bars women from holding the other ecclesiastical offices.

Grounds:

1. It is clear from Acts 6 and I Timothy 2 and 3 that the special offices are not open to women. No "compelling biblical grounds" have been advanced, since such action would have been in clear contradiction to the above mentioned sections of Scripture.
2. The Belgic Confession in Article 30 would of necessity also need changing to accommodate women deacons.
3. The action of the Synod of 1984 in permitting women to serve as deacons is in direct conflict with Article 68 (*Acts of Synod 1984*), where synod declares "that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and the New Testament."

Second Paterson Consistory
Henry Joustra, clerk

Note: This protest was submitted to Classis Hackensack but was not adopted.

19. — Almond Valley Consistory Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Almond Valley CRC, Ripon, CA, requests the 1985 Synod to overturn the decision of the Synod of 1984 with regard to ordaining women to diaconal office.

Grounds:

1. None of the study committees appointed by synod have advanced compelling biblical grounds to place women in office.
2. There is no convincing biblical evidence that any women were ordained to any office in the New Testament church.
3. The decision of the Synod of 1984 is contrary to the mind and confession of the vast majority of the members in the Christian Reformed Church and is proving to be divisive and schismatic.
4. Although the Synod of 1984 has declared that "pastors are not expected to participate in the ordination of women if it is against their consciences" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 88, p. 638), it failed to consider the consciences of the laymen.
 - a. The conscientious objector is presently bound to support the practice of women in office through denominational quotas.
 - b. The conscientious objector is corporately responsible for the actions of the CRC as a member of the denomination.

Almond Valley Consistory
Abel Geertsema, clerk

Note: The appeal above was presented to Classis Central California at its January 1985 meeting, but was not adopted.

20. — First CRC Ripon, CA, Consistory Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First Ripon, CA, overtures the Synod of 1985 to provide definitive direction to the churches concerning how consistories can in good conscience ordain women to the office of deacon, as the decision of Synod of 1984 permits, in the light of what appear to be clear indications that to do so would be:

- contrary to the Word of God,
- contrary to the Belgic Confession,
- contrary to former synodical decisions,
- contrary to the principle of male headship in the home and in the church, and
- contributory to a divisive spirit within the Christian Reformed Church.

In the absence of a statement providing such definitive direction to the churches, synod is respectfully requested to declare that the ordination of women to the office of deacon is not an acceptable practice within the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Grounds:

1. No compelling biblical reasons have been presented to synod to establish sufficient grounds for opening the office of deacon to women. Many biblical teachings seem to prohibit such action and have historically been so interpreted (e.g., Acts 6:3; I Cor. 14:33-37; I Tim. 2:11-15, 3:2, 8-10, 12).
2. The ground of the Synod of 1984, that "no study committee found biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women," is not a Reformed approach, in which the church is governed by explicit, positive teachings of Scripture, as expressed in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.
3. The Belgic Confession (Art. 30) states: "By these means everything will be carried on in the church with good order and decency, when faithful *men* are chosen, according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy."
4. The Synod of 1984 declared that "the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68).
5. The Belgic Confession states that ". . . elders and deacons, . . . together with the pastors, form the council of the church." Therefore, women cannot be deacons without being in a position of authority over the church and, thereby, violating the principle of headship, which Synod of 1984 reaffirmed.
6. Synod of 1975 decided that "the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79).

7. That synod's 1984 decision to ordain women as deacons has very real potential for producing divisive and undesirable consequences within the body of Christ, is evident in
- the closeness of the vote on synod's 1984 decision,
 - the numerous overtures and statements on this issue by consistories,
 - the emotional climate surrounding this issue in the churches,
 - the fact that many people in our churches are considering leaving or have already left our denomination,
 - an increasing trend toward nonpayment of quotas for denominational causes, and
 - the evident trend toward erosion of denominational loyalty and unity.

First Ripon Consistory
Joseph R. Holland, clerk

Note: The appeal above was presented to Classis Central California at its January 1985 meeting, but was not adopted.

21. — Bakersfield, CA, Consistory Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Bakersfield CRC overtures the Synod of 1985 to revise the decision made by the Synod of 1984 which allows women to serve as deacons and to instruct all our churches to cease implementation of that decision, effective on the date synod adopts this revision.

Grounds:

1. This decision is an affront to the Holy Scripture which declares that man's authority over women is a creational ordinance which cannot be changed or altered (1 Tim. 2:12-14).
2. This decision ignores the caution taken by all previous synods, which hesitated to take this stand because "no compelling biblical grounds" have been advanced for changing our traditional practice (see *Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 1, p. 78).
3. This decision is in direct conflict with the headship principle adopted by the Synod of 1984, which declares that "the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church," and that this principle is "a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 623).
4. This decision reflects confusion about the duties of elders and deacons and their relationship to each other. In smaller congregations, especially, deacons must and do function as elders (see Church Order, Art. 35, b; compare decision of synod: *Acts of Synod 1938*, p. 81, and *Acts of Synod 1896*, p. 42).
5. This decision was made by a slim majority, and does not reflect the mind of the majority of the churches and classes throughout the denomination.
6. This decision is polarizing the church at large, and may possibly lead to schism within the denomination.

Bakersfield Consistory
Dean Whitlach, clerk

Note: The appeal above was presented to Classis Central California at its meeting in January 1985, but was not adopted.

22. — First Hanford Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First CRC Hanford, CA, overtures synod to nullify the action of the Synod of 1984 to "allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, pp. 627-58).

Grounds:

1. No compelling scriptural grounds are advanced by the Synod of 1984 for this action.

- a. The Synod of 1975 declared "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 1, p. 78).
 - b. Synod declared (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D, 2, p. 78) "that sufficient biblical grounds have not been advanced to warrant a departure from our present practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order."
 - c. No "compelling scriptural grounds" have been advanced since that time for opening to women "the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order," nor did the Synod of 1984 advance such grounds.
2. The grounds adduced by the Synod of 1984 do not support the decision made.
 - a. Even though it is true that no study committee (1973, 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984) found biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women, the synods have never been completely convinced that the reasons were sufficient to open the office(s) to women without qualification.
 - (1) The advisory committee of the Synod of 1978 stated, "However, there are several relevant passages that the study committee did not examine, or at least did not examine in sufficient depth . . ." and, "The advisory committee also observes that there are problem areas, some of which are identified in the study committee report that require further study" (*Acts of Synod 1978*, Art. 80, D, Observations, p. 103).
 - (2) The decisions of both 1978 and 1984 include the restriction, "provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders."
 - (3) The reason given in Ground a, moreover, is negative, assuming that if the Bible does not prohibit women deacons, it is permissible to have them. Such a position is not Reformed. The Reformed approach regulating the life of the church is that the church must be governed according to the explicit, positive teaching of Scripture, as expressed in Article 30 of the Belgic Confession.
 - b. Although it is true that the Synod of 1978 opened the office of deacon to qualified women, it ignored the fact that since that time synods have failed to ratify the necessary changes in the Church Order, and have insisted that no consistories ordain women as deacons.
 - c. The support given in Ground c is controversial, and not generally understood to teach what is assumed.
 - (1) Romans 16:1 could refer to Phoebe as deacon. But it could also mean that Phoebe was a servant of the church, and the word is used with that meaning throughout the New Testament and the Greek world. This passage alone is not clear biblical precedent for ordaining women deacons.
 - (2) The reference to the Synod of Wezel is no more convincing. The Synod of Wezel was not a delegated synod of the Dutch Reformed churches, but rather an *ad hoc* meeting of concerned Christians. That is why historical literature refers to the meeting as the Convent of Wezel, and does not call it a synod. Furthermore, deacons being approved by the convent is not parallel to women deacons being approved by the Synod of 1984. The deaconesses in the convent's articles were not part of the consistory and did not exercise any authority in the congregation (see *Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 509). These deaconesses are like those proposed by John Calvin (*Institutes*, Vol. II, Book IV, iii 9, p. 322). Calvin specified that they could not have authority when he wrote, "There is no public office which women could discharge save that of devoting themselves to the service of the poor."
 3. The Bible does not allow the opening of ecclesiastical office to women.
 - a. I Corinthians 11:3, 8, and 9 state: "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. . . . For man did not come from woman, but woman from man, . . . neither was man created for woman, but woman for man." The headship of the man is clearly stated, which synod recognized, but decided to the contrary in opening the office of deacon to women.
 - b. Paul declares in I Timothy 2:11-15: "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be kept safe through childbirth, if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."

- c. I Timothy 3:2, 8–10, and 12 state: "Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach . . . Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. . . . A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well." In this passage the title "deacons" is applied only to men.
4. The decision is in conflict with the Belgic Confession, Article 30, which speaks of ". . . elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church . . ." Synod decided that women could be ordained to the office of deacon "provided their work is distinguished from that of the elders," thereby creating a special kind of deacon, of which the Church Order and the confession know nothing.

Hanford Consistory
James P. Hoekstra, clerk

Note: The appeal above was presented to Classis Central California at its meeting in January 1985, but it was not adopted.

23. — Walker, Grand Rapids, MI, Consistory Protests the Decisions of the Synod of 1984 re Women in Office

The consistory of the Walker CRC protests the decision of the Synod of 1984 "...that synod allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 627).

Grounds:

1. The biblical precedent cited by synod (Rom. 16:1) is weak, at best. This text must be seen in the light of clearer, weightier texts which exclude women from office in the church (i.e., I Tim. 3:2, 8–10, 12; I Tim. 2:11–12; I Cor. 14:33–38; and Acts 6:3).
2. The historical precedent cited (Synod of Wezel, 1568) is meaningless, since this was not an official assembly and its decision was later nullified.
3. Synod's decision is working great harm to the peace and unity of the church.

Walker Consistory.
Gerald Breker, clerk

Note: Classis Grand Rapids North considered this protest on January 15, 1985, but rejected a motion to endorse it.

24. — Maranatha Consistory Appeals the Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Maranatha CRC of Woodbridge, ON, respectfully protests the decision of the Synod of 1984 "that synod allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Arts. 78 and 101).

Grounds:

1. This decision is in conflict with the teaching of Scripture regarding the office of deacon. The truth of an interpretation of a text in Scripture must be verified by other passages of Scripture. If it is not clear from Romans 6:1 whether Phoebe is a "deaconess of the church" (RSV) or "a servant of the church" (KJV and NIV), then other texts in the Bible (I Tim. 2:11–13; I Tim. 3; Acts 1:21–26; Acts 6:3; Luke 6:13–16; I Cor. 14:34) give consistent evidence that the offices in the church are limited to qualified men. Women did serve the church in many ways throughout the Old and New Testament but never as ordained deaconesses or in other ordained office.
2. This decision is in conflict with the decision of the Synod of 1984 regarding the "headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623).

3. This decision is in conflict with the Belgic Confession, Article 30, wherein deacons are part of the ruling body of the church.
4. This decision has created a deep division in the Christian Reformed denomination and threatens the unity of the church and its work.

Maranatha Consistory
G. Kortleve, clerk

Note: The "protest" above was presented to Classis Toronto in January 1985, but was not sustained.

25. — Lethbridge, AB, Consistory Appeals the Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First Lethbridge CRC appeals to synod to alter the decisions of the Synod of 1984 re women deacons by declaring that they violate Scripture, the creeds, and Reformed church polity.

Grounds:

1. Scripture makes clear that women may not be ordained to any ruling office in the church (I Cor. 11:3; 14:34-36; I Tim. 2:11-15; 3:12). The decision of 1984 was more influenced and impelled by the secular spirit of our age (in particular the Women's Liberation Movement) than by scriptural teaching.
2. In Reformed church polity, deacons have generally been considered part of the consistory, and as exercising a measure of authority in keeping with their office (cf. Belgic Confession, Art. 30: ". . . elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church."). A good case can be made for speaking of *one* office only—that of elder, with the minister as "teaching elder" (I Tim. 5:17), and the deacon as "assistant elder" (note the development in Acts 6, and the similarity in qualifications for elders and deacons).
3. The decision of the Synod of 1984 is in conflict with the decision of the Synod of 1975 which decided "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 78). In no way can it be said that such "compelling biblical grounds" have now been advanced. The reference to Phoebe proves nothing, but is a grasping at straws.
4. To say that the work of deacons must be distinguished from that of elders says nothing new. If this was not the case, there would be no need for two distinct offices. Furthermore, if this qualification refers only to *female* deacons, we then have two kinds of deacons, with females being placed on a lower level than males. We have then also first emptied the diaconal office of any worth in order to place women in it.
5. The decision of 1984 is part of a larger package, as was also stated on the floor of synod. As things now stand, the principle of the equality of the offices (cf. Church Order, Art. 2) virtually compels synod to open all the offices to women.
6. The decisions of the Synod of 1984 are confusing and contradictory: on the one hand, synod declared that the headship principle applies both in marriage and in the church; on the other hand, synod opened the office of deacon to women and did not close the offices of minister, elder, and evangelist to them (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, pp. 654-55).
7. Synod's instruction to leave the implementation of the decision to the judgment of each local consistory is a further step toward congregationalism, and is in conflict with Presbyterian church government.
8. Synod took a major, far-reaching decision with a very slim majority of votes. This creates unnecessary tension and division in the church. Decisions of this nature should require a two-thirds majority vote.

First Lethbridge Consistory
J. Wielinga, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Alberta North, but was not adopted.

26. — Ebenezer, Berwyn, IL, Consistory Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Ebenezer CRC overtures synod to revise the decisions of the

Synod of 1984: "That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders," and that synod declare that the office of deacon is not open to women.

Grounds:

1. There is no clear, compelling evidence in Scripture that the office of deacon should be opened to women. The study committees of the past decade have made that abundantly clear.
2. Synod declared in 1984 "that the headship principle, which means that the man shall exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament." The synodical decision to ordain women as deacons militates against this declaration both in intent and spirit.
3. The decision of synod is based on a new method of biblical interpretation that is foreign to Reformed Church practice and does violence to both Scripture and the church of Jesus Christ.
4. The Reformed understanding of the unity of the offices within the church prohibits our esteeming one office higher than another.
5. The decision is contrary to Belgic Confession Article 30.
6. The decision raises numerous questions concerning the interpretation and application of Church Order Articles 4, 12, 15, 16, 17, 27, 34, 35, 52, 53, 55, 59, 60, 66, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, and 91.
7. The synodical declaration "that the decision as to whether women should be ordained as deacons in any specific congregation be left to the judgment of the local consistory," introduces a form of congregationalism that is foreign to, and in conflict with, Reformed Church polity.
8. The decision of synod has created a divisive spirit within the church that is harmful to the unity of the church.

Ebenezer Consistory
John Huizinga, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Northern Illinois in its session of September 19, 1984, but was not adopted.

27. — Ebenezer, Berwyn, IL, Consistory Protests Decision of the Synod of 1984

The consistory of Ebenezer CRC hereby protests the decision of the Synod of 1984, "that consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders."

We believe that the above decision of synod is contrary to the clear teaching of the Word of God.

Therefore, we are conscience bound not to permit women to be ordained to ecclesiastical office.

Furthermore, synod has created a serious problem for us. We cannot in good conscience before God and in obedience to the Scripture continue unquestioned cooperation with those churches and church agencies that approve the above mentioned decision of synod.

We cannot accept the synodical decision as settled and binding (Church Order Art. 29) since it is clearly contrary to the teachings of God's Word. Neither can we in good conscience abide by Church Order Article 96, since we no longer accept the Church Order by common consent, neither can we faithfully observe the rules and regulations of this Church Order.

Ebenezer Consistory
John Huizinga, clerk

Note: Classis Northern Illinois in its session of September 19, 1984, did not adopt this protest.

28. — First Kalamazoo Consistory Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First CRC Kalamazoo, MI, overtures the Synod of 1985 to revise Church Order Article 3, to conform to its previous reading as follows: "Confessing male

members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained shall hold and exercise office in the church."

Grounds:

1. The change of Article 3 of the Church Order adopted by the Synod of 1978 and ratified by the Synod of 1984 has caused great unrest in our churches and poses the possibility of schism.
2. The Synod of 1975 decided that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices, recognized in the church, be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, p. 78). Neither the majority report nor the minority report of the Committee on Headship in the Bible presented such compelling biblical grounds for changing this historical practice of excluding women from the offices of the church.
3. This decision was reached by a very small majority, 82-75. We believe that a broader consensus is needed for such a sweeping change from that which the church has unitedly and firmly held for nearly two thousand years, and also for the sake of maintaining unity within our denomination.
4. The Synod of 1984 failed to follow through on its own adopted recommendation. This recommendation declared that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testaments (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623). Yet, synod elected to completely ignore this decision and proceeded to approve the opening of an ecclesiastical office to women.
5. The ordination of women as an optional choice left to the local consistories, and/or pastors, is divisive and detrimental to the promotion of peace and harmony among the churches. The seeds for congregationalism are self-evident.
6. We stand in grave danger of now having to face a new method of Bible interpretation which radically departs from our historical Reformed method of reading and understanding Scripture. A new method has been advanced to set aside the intent and teaching of Scripture to allow women to hold office in the church.
7. Articles 30 and 31 of our Belgic Confession still acknowledge that the government of the church and its offices are to be invested in the male members only.
8. This decision cannot be considered as settled and binding because it is in conflict with the Word of God (cf. I Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2:12; 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-6) and with Church Order Art. 29).

First Kalamazoo Consistory
Henry Van Dalen, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Kalamazoo on January 22, 1985, but was not adopted.

29. — Classis Minnesota North Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Minnesota North overtures the Synod of 1985 to clarify its understanding of Article 30 of the Belgic Confession which states that "faithful men" are to be chosen for the offices of elder and deacon.

Ground: The decision of the 1984 Synod appears to be in conflict with the historical understanding of this article.

Classis Minnesota North
David A. Zylstra, stated clerk

30. — Sussex, NJ, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The Sussex, NJ, Consistory appeals to the Synod of 1985 to declare null and void the decision of the 1984 Synod "that consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" and to

declare that the office of deacon is not open to women.

Grounds:

1. This decision is not based on Scripture and is, in fact, unscriptural. The following Scripture passages teach that the offices in the church are for men only: I Timothy 2; I Timothy 3; Acts 1; Acts 6; Luke 6:13-16; I Corinthians 11:2-16; I Corinthians 14:34-36.
2. This decision is in conflict with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession which declares that deacons are part of the ruling body of the church.
3. This decision is based on a new method of biblical interpretation that is foreign to Reformed Church practice.
4. This decision has created a divisive spirit within the church that is harmful to the unity of the church and for the work the church is called upon to do.
5. This decision is a real tragedy. It may appear to arise out of Christian understanding and charity, or at least out of chivalry, but it is a symptom of arrogant disregard for apostolic authority.

Sussex Consistory
John Vander Goot, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Hudson for adoption on January 23, 1985, but was not adopted.

31. — Classis Orange City Appeals Decision of the Synods of 1978 and 1984 re Women in Office

Classis Orange City overtures the Synod of 1985 to revert Church Order Article 3 to its wording prior to the Synod of 1978.

Grounds:

1. The Belgic Confession, Article 32, expresses our Reformed Church Polity. This article, entitled "The Order and Discipline of the Church," teaches us ". . . that we may not depart from those things which Christ our only Master, has instituted." This regulative principle of Reformed worship is reflected in the decision of the Synod of 1975: "that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices . . . be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice."

No study committee or advisory committee of synod has yet furnished scriptural proof that requires the ordination of women to ecclesiastical office. Synod's decision in 1984 opening the office of deacon to women is not based upon an explicit command of Scripture, but is rather an argument from silence, and contradicts Belgic Confession Article 32, "The Order and Discipline of the Church."

2. The second ground of the decision of the Synod of 1984, opening the office of deacon to women, is not conclusive, because the decision of the Synod of 1978 was not ratified by the following Synod of 1979 (Church Order Art. 47). Consequently, this unratified decision cannot be appealed to, or become a ground for, any subsequent decision of a synod (e. g. 1984).
3. The third ground of the decision of the 1984 Synod is in error. The meeting at Wesel 1568 was not a Reformed synod but an *ad hoc* gathering of Christians not delegated by any consistories; it is therefore called the Convent of Wesel.

Furthermore, Wesel's definition of consistory excluded deacons, and thus this body did not include women as deacons in the ruling body of the church (cf. *Acts of Synod 1981*, p. 509).

Classis Orange City
Marvin Van Donselaar, stated clerk

32. — Bethel CRC, Lacombe, AB, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The Bethel, Lacombe, consistory overtures the Synod of 1985 to reestablish the practice of having only men serve in the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. Report 33 to the Synod of 1984 has not shown convincingly that the biblical

evidence is conclusive or compelling enough to warrant a departure from our former practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices.

2. Scripture teaches that men should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and church by appealing to:
 - a. the original design of God in creation (I Cor. 11:8-9; I Tim. 2:11-14)
 - b. Old Testament practice (I Cor. 14:34; I Pet. 3:5-6)
 - c. the analogy of Christ as head of the church (Eph. 5:23-24).
3. Compelling arguments have not been presented to show that the headship principle did not apply either before the fall or that it was not applicable after redemption.
4. Articles 29, 30, 31, and 32 of the Belgic Confession imply that a biblical command or example is required to warrant any changes in the basic elements of the church's government.
5. The argument that many of the above-mentioned scriptural references should be interpreted in a cultural, local, or temporal sense is an arbitrary hermeneutical decision not warranted by Scripture itself.
6. Scripture instructs the church in Ephesians 4:1-6 to maintain the unity of the Spirit in a bond of peace. (See also Belgic Confession, Art. 32.) However, synod's decision that some pastors are not expected to participate in the ordination of women and that local consistories may decide whether or not to ordain women stands in tension with this biblical directive. Synod's decision (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 88, 101) invites and encourages a spirit of divisiveness rather than a spirit of unity.

Bethel Consistory

William Wildeboer, clerk

Note: 1. Three negative votes were recorded.

2. This overture was presented to Classis Alberta North meeting February 26 and 27, but was not adopted.

33. — First Chilliwack Consistory Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First CRC Chilliwack, BC, appeals to synod to rescind its decision of 1984 allowing consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, and to declare the office of deacon closed to women.

Grounds:

1. The consistory could not find biblical grounds in either the Old or the New Testament for changing the church's long-standing practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical office.
2. The recommendations by the majority of the committee at the Synod of 1984 were not in harmony with the argumentation of the same committee.
3. Synod's decision of 1984 re the ordination of women to the office of deacon violated the biblical norms of headship in the home and church, threatening the unity of the denomination.
4. The consistory cannot in good conscience before the Lord take responsibility for the direction-setting decision allowing women to the office of deacon in the Christian Reformed Church.

First Chilliwack Consistory

J. Ronda, clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis British Columbia meeting March 5 and 6, 1985, but was rejected.

34. — Classis Northcentral Iowa Appeals to 1984 Synod to Reverse Decision of 1978 and 1984 Synods re Women in Office

Classis Northcentral Iowa overtures synod to revise Article 3 of the Church Order and to return to the wording of Article 3 which was observed by the Christian Reformed Church prior to the decision of the Synod of 1984 and which reads as follows:

Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers

are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Grounds:

1. This is in harmony with the teachings of Scripture with respect to the headship of man in the home and in the church. Genesis 2 teaches us that the woman was created for the man; and God gave the woman to be his helpmeet (ASV), or helper (NIV). First Corinthians 11:3 teaches that "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." In I Timothy 2:12-13 we read, "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve."
2. This is in harmony with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession in which we confess "that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church. . . ." In this article of the Belgic Confession we make the confession that deacons as well as elders and ministers form the council of the church. This places the deacons in a position of headship and authority.
3. This is in harmony with the decision of the Synod of 1984 taken with respect to the principles of headship when it stated "that synod declare that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized both in the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, pp. 622-23).
4. It must be concluded, therefore, that the revision of Article 3 which was adopted by the Synod of 1978 and ratified by the Synod of 1984 is not in harmony with the Scriptures, the Belgic Confession, nor with the decision taken by synod on headship in 1984.

Classis Northcentral Iowa
Aldon Kuiper, stated clerk

35. — Alto Consistory Appeals to the 1985 Synod to Annul Decisions of 1984 re Women in Office

The consistory of the Alto, WI, CRC respectfully overtures the Synod of 1985 to annul the following decisions of the Synod of 1984 re allowing women to serve as deacons (all references below are to the *Acts of Synod 1984*).

That synod allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon. (Art. 78, p. 627).

That synod declare that the decision as to whether women should be ordained as deacons in any specific congregation be left to the judgment of the local consistory. (Art. 88, 1, p. 638)

That synod declare that pastors are not expected to participate in the ordination of women if it is against their consciences. (Art. 88, 2, p. 638)

That synod declare that in consistories where the distinction between the general and the restricted consistory is not made, women deacons may not function as elders. (Art. 88, p. 638)

That synod reaffirm the decision of the Synod of 1978: "That consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders." (Art. 101 E, 2, p. 655)

That synod ratify the amended form of Church Order Article 3 and its supplement adopted by the Synod of 1978. (Art. 101, E, 3, p. 655)

In nullifying the above ratification, synod reaffirms the original reading of Article 3 of the Church Order:

Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Grounds:

1. The decision to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon is contrary to the teachings of Scripture and the example of Jesus and his apostles.
 - a. "Let deacons be husbands of one wife" (I Tim. 3:12).

- b. "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve (I Tim. 2:12-13).
 - c. Jesus, in choosing his apostles, chose only men. Yet we know that Jesus was not afraid to speak against and act contrary to the erroneous teachings and practices of his time. Jesus was regularly in the company of women whom he respected, and whose ministry he commended, yet he did not choose any of them to be his apostles (cf. Matt. 10:1-4).
 - d. When the first deacons were ordained, the apostles chose only men, even though the primary need at that time was to minister to widows (cf. Acts 6:1-6).
2. The decision to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon has far-reaching implications for
- a. the functioning of the office of deacon,
 - b. the operation of the general and restricted consistory,
 - c. women serving in other offices,
 - d. the unity and well-being of the church.

Such a radical change should only be made on the basis of compelling biblical evidence. The Synod of 1984 provided only weak biblical evidence for its decision, namely,

Romans 16:1, "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant (Gr. *diakonon*) of the church that is at Cenchræa."

Phoebe's work as *diakonon* may well have been a service other than that of an ordained deaconess. We note that in the Bible versions approved for liturgical use by the Christian Reformed Church, only the Revised Standard Version translates it "deaconess"; the American Standard and the New International Version both translate *diakonon* as "servant."

Consistory of the Alto Christian Reformed Church
Harold Mulder, clerk

Note: This appeal was presented to Classis Wisconsin on September 25, 1984, but was not adopted.

36. — Champlain Valley Consistory Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of the Champlain Valley CRC of Vergennes, VT, hereby respectfully overtures the Synod of 1985 to return to the traditional (pre-1984) position with respect to women in ecclesiastical office by revising Church Order Article 3 and its supplement.

Grounds:

- 1. The 1984 decisions are contrary to the explicit teaching of the Word of God (I Cor. 14:33-38; I Tim. 2:12-15; I Tim. 3:12; Acts 6:3).
- 2. The 1984 decisions are contrary to our traditional understanding of our Confession of Faith (See Belgic Confession, Arts. 30 and 31).
- 3. The 1984 decisions are contrary to the "headship principle" which Scripture teaches (I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-23; Col. 3:18) and which the Synod of 1984 itself declared to be a biblical principle.

Champlain Valley Consistory
Sam Visser, clerk

Note: This overture was presented at the March 7, 1985, meeting of Classis Atlantic Northeast, but was defeated by classis.

37. — First CRC, Prinsburg, MN, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First Prinsburg overtures synod to alter the decision "that synod allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627) by reaffirming the biblical and Reformed position that only "confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office" (Church Order Art. 3, prior version).

Grounds:

1. This decision of the Synod of 1984 is contrary to the teachings of the Word of God (Gen. 1-3; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Cor. 14:33b-35; I Tim. 3) and to the declaration of the Synod of 1975 "that synod declare the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975, D, 1, p. 78*). Compelling biblical grounds were not given by the Synod of 1984 for the change in practice.
2. This decision is contrary to the teachings of our Confession of Faith (Belgic Confession, Arts. 30 and 31) and therefore, threatens to bring disunity into our church upon creedal as well as scriptural grounds. The congregational option approach to women in office advanced by the Synod of 1984 further works to destroy the church's unity as a denomination.
3. This decision is contrary to the headship principle which Scripture teaches (I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-23; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:11-14) and which the Synod of 1984 itself declared to be a biblical principle when it decided "that synod declare that the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament" (*Acts of Synod 1984, Art. 68, p. 623*).

Prinsburg Consistory
Eldon Bonnema, clerk

Note: The appeal of First Prinsburg was presented to Classis Minnesota North, but was not adopted.

38. — First Waupun Consistory Protests Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First CRC Waupun, WI, protests the decision of the Synod of 1984 "allowing consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon."

Grounds:

1. The biblical support used to defend this decision is not conclusive.
2. Bible scholars do not agree that Romans 16:1 and I Timothy 3:11 teach that women may serve in the office of deacon.
3. Scripture clearly teaches (cf. I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Tim. 2:12, 13; I Cor. 14:34) that the headship of man extends to the church.
4. The Belgic Confession in Article 30 speaks of "faithful men" being chosen for office.
5. The unity of the church is disturbed since synod accepted a hermeneutical principle that is doing violence in the church.
6. The basic issue is that of obedience, and the opening of the office of deacon to women violates the biblical norm of male leadership within the church.

First Waupun Consistory
Merle Schouten, clerk

Note: The protest above was presented to Classis Wisconsin on March 5, 1985, but was not adopted.

39. — First Oak Lawn Consistory Protests Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of First CRC, Oak Lawn, IL, protests to the Synod of 1985 the decision of the Synod of 1984 which allows consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. This decision is contrary to the teaching of the Word of God (Gen. 1-3; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Cor. 14:30-35; I Tim. 3).
2. This decision is contrary to the teaching of the Belgic Confession of Faith, Article 30 and 31.
3. This decision is contrary to the headship principle which Scripture teaches (I Cor.

11:3; Eph. 5:22-23; and Col. 3:18) and which synod itself declared to be a biblical principle when it decided "that synod declare that 'the headship principle' which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testament."

4. The decision of the Synod of 1984 does not fulfill the requirement of the Synod of 1975. The Synod of 1975 decided "that synod declare that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, D, 1, p. 78). Compelling biblical grounds have not been advanced by the Synod of 1984 to warrant departure from our biblical, historical practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order.

Consistory of First Oak Lawn
Wilmer A. Stallinga, clerk

Note: This protest of the First Christian Reformed Church of Oak Lawn was submitted to Classis Chicago South on January 16, 1985, but was not adopted.

40. — Bethel, Waupun, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Bethel CRC, Waupun, WI, respectfully reminds synod that the unifying purpose and basis for the CRC has been set forth in the first article of our Church Order as follows:

The Christian Reformed Church, confessing its complete subjection to the Word of God and the Reformed creeds as a true interpretation of this Word . . . regulates its ecclesiastical organization and activities in the following articles.

In the light of that historical commitment, Bethel consistory overtures synod to adopt the following revision to Church Order Article 3:

Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church.

Grounds:

1. The clearest reading of Scripture favors the functioning of men only in the ordained offices of the church. First Timothy 3:12 and Acts 6:1-6, indicate that those qualified and chosen for office were indeed men. Romans 16:1 and I Timothy 3:11 are not sufficiently clear to compel us to a radical change of historical practice.

The clear teaching of Scripture passages (such as I Tim. 2:12-13; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; and I Cor. 14:34) is that the headship of man extends to the church. This biblical teaching was affirmed by the Synod of 1984 (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, pp. 622f.) and would imply that only men should function in the ordained offices of the church.
2. The Belgic Confession, Article 30, "as the true interpretation of the Word of God" (Church Order Art. 1), makes clear reference to the equal authority of the offices, though it distinguishes the tasks. The Church Order consistently reflects that distinction when in Articles 24-25 it distinguishes the tasks and in Article 2 notes their equal dignity and honor.

Article 30 also notes that Timothy expects faithful men to be chosen to the offices. The stand of Synod of 1984 put us in conflict with the creed and the Word of God. The recommended change would correct that situation.
3. The decision to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon has many negative implications for the unity and well-being of the church.
 - a. There exists among us a feeling of betrayal to the purpose and basis of our Church Order as stated in Article 1. The decision was only narrowly approved, and was followed by numerous protests and appeals for evidence from Scripture and the creed.
 - b. The decision of the Synod of 1984 has left congregations, consistories, and pastors without clear regulations for "ecclesiastical organization and activity" (Church Order Art. 1). Numerous questions have been raised about the func-

- tioning of the office of deacon, the operation of the general and restricted consistory, women serving in other offices, and the distinction of the work of men and women deacons when that work overlaps with the work of elders.
- c. The decision of 1984 conflicts with the convictions of the majority of the people in our denomination. The study by Topp, De Jong (*The Banner*, Jan. 23, 1984, pp. 8ff.) indicated that slightly more than one-third favored ordination of women deacons, and still fewer favored women in the other offices.
 4. There are many nonordained functions which allow for the use of women's gifts in many ways consistent with Scripture, the creeds and the Church Order.

Consistory of Bethel, Waupun, CRC
Charles Wiersma, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to Classis Wisconsin on March 5, 1985, and but was not adopted.

41. — Classis Minnesota South Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Minnesota South overtures the Synod of 1985 to reaffirm the historical position of the Christian Reformed Church that only qualified male confessing members are allowed to serve in the office of deacon and to reinstate the wording of Church Order Article 3, "Confessing male members of the church who meet biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church."

Grounds:

1. Synod 1984 erred in reaffirming the decision of the Synod of 1978 "that consistories be allowed to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" and in ratifying the decision of Synod 1978 that Church Order Article 3 be changed to read: "All confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the office of deacon" with its supplement, "the work of women as deacons is to be distinguished from that of elders."
 - a. These decisions of the Synod of 1984 are *contrary to the teaching of the Word of God* in I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13 about qualifications for deacons, which includes the requirement that deacons are to be *men*. Church Order Article 29 states that the decisions of the assemblies shall be considered settled and binding *unless* it is proved that they conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order.
 - b. These decisions of Synod 1984 are *in conflict with Belgic Confession Article 30*, which specifies that not only the offices of minister and elder, but also the office of deacon are to be held by "faithful men...according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy." In this statement Belgic Confession Article 30 emphasizes that the qualifications given in I Timothy for *persons* who serve as ministers, elders, and deacons are to be fulfilled not only in New Testament times, but *also in our own times*.
 - c. The Synod of 1984 gave *no grounds at all* for these decisions, although the Synod of 1975 declared "that the practice of excluding women from ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, pp. 78-79). (*Note:* The first decision made by the Synod of 1984 about women deacons had grounds [*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627], but this decision and its grounds were invalidated when the Synod of 1984 decided to reconsider and approve the proposal "to ordain qualified women to the office of deacon, provided that their work is distinguished from that of elders" [*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, p.655]. This last decision about women deacons was made without grounds [cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101, E, p.655].)
 - d. Synod 1984 should not have endorsed the 1978 decision to allow women to serve as deacons, because this 1978 decision rested on *weak and questionable scriptural grounds* (Rom 16:1 and I Tim. 3:11) and bypassed the very strong testimony of Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-10, 12, 13. This is not in accord with a basic guideline followed in interpreting Scripture, that the clearer passages should explain the less clear passages and not vice versa.

- e. The Synod of 1984 should not have approved women serving as deacons, because it had *not fulfilled the requirement laid down by Synod 1979* that “whenever a recommendation is presented to synod which would require a change in the creeds and/or the Church Order, the proposal ought to specify the changes” (*Acts of Synod 1979*, p. 89). This decision of the Synod of 1979 was made in response to the reactions of the churches to the decisions of the Synod of 1978 to allow women deacons, and to change Church Order Article 3, the very decisions endorsed by the Synod of 1984. The churches had objected in 1979 that the Synod of 1978, in deciding to allow women deacons, had specified only the change to Article 3 and had not specified the change required in Belgic Confession Article 30 and the other changes required in the Church Order to accommodate two kinds of deacons, male deacons who are allowed to share in elders’ work and female deacons who are not allowed to share in elders’ work. Now, without paying any attention to the rule of the Synod of 1979, nor specifying any of the additional changes required in the Belgic Confession and the Church Order, the Synod of 1984 endorsed these 1978 decisions. (Note: In 1981 the Committee to Study Women in Office remembered this requirement laid down by Synod 1979. To comply with this 1979 requirement this committee in presenting a proposal about women deacons recommended not only a change of Church Order Article 3, but also other Church Order changes [cf. *Acts of Synod 1981*, pp. 519–20]).
2. This would restore the denominational unity which has been fractured by the decisions of the Synod of 1984 to allow female confessing members to serve as deacons.

Classis Minnesota South
Martin G. Zylstra, stated clerk

42. — Classis Minnesota South Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Statement on Headship

Classis Minnesota South overtures the Synod of 1985 to declare that the biblical teaching about “the headship principle, which means that men should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church” (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623) implies that women should not serve as ministers or elders.

Grounds:

1. Logical consistency requires this: because “the headship principle means that men should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting...in the church” and because this primary leadership and direction-setting in the church is exercised in the offices of minister and elder, it follows that only men should serve as ministers and elders. This logical inference is supported by explicit scriptural teaching that the offices of minister and elder should be held by men (cf. I Tim. 3:1–7; I Tim. 5:17; II Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:5–9).
2. This declaration would correct any misunderstandings that might arise from the decision made by the Synod of 1984 in Article 72 (p. 624), “that synod declare that the headship of man in the church implies that women should not be admitted to the office of minister, elder, or evangelist. Defeated.” The inclusion of the term “evangelist” in this proposal caused confusion. What was meant by “evangelist” in this proposal was the “ordained evangelist,” who is an elder (Church Order Art. 23b, 24b). However, delegates stated afterwards that they understood “evangelist” to mean the lay (nonordained) evangelist, a service which has been given, and is given, by both male and female lay (nonordained) members. If the term “evangelist” had been excluded from this proposal the force of the proposal would not have been diminished, since the ordained evangelist would already have been included as an elder, and the confusion, which caused the proposal to be defeated, would have been removed.

Classis Minnesota South
Martin G. Zylstra, stated clerk

43. — Burdett Consistory Appeals Decision of the Synod of 1984 re Women in Office

The consistory of the Burdett, AB, CRC requests the Synod of 1985 to alter the decision of the Synod of 1984 re the ordination of female deacons by declaring the grounds offered in support of such a decision to be inadequate and invalid.

Grounds:

1. Though no study committee set forth decisive "biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women," a considerable number of their members did so (see the minority reports, postscripts, statements of withdrawal, etc.). Furthermore, there were no "compelling biblical grounds" advanced "for changing that practice" as the decision of the Synod of 1975 stipulates (*Acts of Synod 1975*, p. 78).
2. Though the Synod of 1978 "did nonetheless open the office of deacon to qualified women," this decision met with such overwhelming disapproval by the churches that it was nullified by the following synod, even though the Synod of 1978 enjoyed a greater majority vote on this decision than did the Synod of 1984.
3. The citation of Romans 16:1 does not support the decision to ordain women to the office of deacon but only proves the existence and need for female servants within the church of Christ. This citation is especially weak in view of the fact that Scripture cites men alone as being ordained to the office of deacon (Acts 6:3-6; I Tim. 3:8-12). Moreover, in view of the authority recognized in the office of deacon in Reformed church polity (see Art. 30 of the Belgic Confession) the decision to ordain women to this office contradicts much New Testament teaching (I Cor. 11:3-16; 14:34-36; I Tim. 2:11-15).
4. The citation of the so-called Synod of Wezel (1568) is likewise insignificant in that its decision was subsequently nullified both by the Synod of Emden and by the church order of the Synod of Dordrecht (1674). Furthermore, Wezel was at least consistent in allowing no deacons in the consistory. The distinction which our synod made (Art. 88) introduces both a bipartite office of deacons and an alteration of present Reformed church polity in which deacons enter into the work of the full consistory.

Burdett Consistory
R. Dykshoorn, clerk

Note: This overture of the Burdett Consistory was presented to Classis Alberta South on February 18, 1985, but was not adopted.

44. — Classis Eastern Canada Appeals Decision of 1984 Synod re Pastor's Participation in Ordination of Women

Classis Eastern Canada requests the Synod of 1985 to revise one of the implementations in allowing the ordination of women as deacons by deleting the decision in the *Acts of Synod 1984* (Art. 88, 2, p. 638): "That synod declare that pastors are not expected to participate in the ordination of women if it is against their conscience."

Grounds:

1. This decision is contrary to the spirit of church unity. If a person disagrees with a decision of synod there are proper channels to change that decision.
2. The decision is contrary to Church Order Articles 13 and 24. This decision would remove ministers from the supervision of the elders in this particular respect.

Classis Eastern Canada
John Tenyenhuis, stated clerk

45. — Maranatha, Bowmanville, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Maranatha, CRC, Bowmanville, ON, appeals to the Synod of 1985 to affirm that the headship of the man in the church implies that women should not be admitted to the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist, nor to the office of deacon as that office is presently understood and functions in the CRC.

Grounds:

1. Synod's own declaration regarding the headship principle, which means that the man should exercise oversight of the congregation.
2. As presently structured deacons are part of the consistory and exercise oversight of the congregation.
3. The 1984 decision of synod makes an incorrect distinction between two kinds of deacons—those who are involved in the work done by the elders and those who

- may not be involved in that work.
4. The 1984 decision of synod denies the Reformed understanding of the unity of the offices in the church which prohibits us from esteeming one office higher than another.

Maranatha Consistory
Andy J. Strikwerda, clerk

Note: This communication was sent as an overture to Classis Quinte on January 29, 1985, but was rejected by the classis.

46. — Classis Sioux Center Appeals Decisions of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

Classis Sioux Center overtures the Synod of 1985 to adopt the following:

1. That synod declare that there are weighty and sufficient reasons for reaffirming the historical position that the offices of the church, including the office of deacon, be reserved only for qualified men.

Grounds:

- a. Synod of 1984 declared that the "headship principle, which means that the man should exercise primary leadership and direction-setting in the home and in the church, is a biblical teaching recognized in both the Old and New Testaments" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 68, p. 623). This implies that women should not be admitted to the offices of minister, elder, or evangelist, nor to the office of deacon as that office is presently understood and presently functions in the CRC. As presently structured deacons are part of the consistory and the consistory exercises oversight of the congregation (cf. Church Order Arts. 35a, 16, 27a, 52, 55, etc.).
- b. The decision of the Synod of 1984 allowing women to be ordained to the office of deacon does not fulfill the requirement of the Synod of 1975: "That synod declare that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, D, 1, p. 78). The Synod of 1984 did not advance compelling biblical grounds for the practice of ordaining women to the office of deacon.
- c. The weight of biblical evidence clearly suggests that the offices of the church should be reserved for qualified men (Acts 6:3; I Cor. 11:3, 8-9; I Cor. 14:33-37; I Tim. 2:11-15; I Tim. 3:2, 8-10, 12).
- d. The grounds given by the Synod of 1984 for opening up the office of deacon to women are very weak (cf. *Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627).

Ground a is negative. Neither this ground nor the others give a good, positive biblical reason for opening the office of deacon to women.

Ground b refers to the Synod of 1978 but it does not mention that the decision of 1978 resulted in a flood of protests to the Synod of 1979 and that the Synod of 1979 failed to ratify the proposed change in the Church Order.

Ground c cites biblical and historical precedents that are very questionable.

—Romans 16:1 could refer to Phoebe as deacon. But it could also mean that Phoebe was a servant of the church. The original Greek word is used with that meaning throughout the New Testament and the Greek world. The NIV translates the word in question as "servant." This passage alone is not clear biblical precedent for ordained women as deacons.

—The reference to the Synod of Wezel is equally questionable. The Synod of Wezel was not a true "synod" as we understand that term; it was rather an *ad hoc* meeting of concerned Christians. In the *Acts of Synod 1981* (p. 509), it is called a Convent of Wezel. What is more, the deacons recommended by the convent were not parallel to the women deacons approved by the Synod of 1984. The deaconesses approved by the convent were not part of the consistory and did not exercise any authority in the congregation (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 509). More than likely these deaconesses were like those proposed by John Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (IV, iii, 9). Calvin indicated that such deaconesses could not have authority when he said: "Women could fill no other public office than to devote themselves to the care of the poor."

- e. The current decision to leave to the judgment of the local consistory the matter of

ordaining women as deacons (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 88, p. 638) fosters a form of congregationalism within the denomination which is not conducive to the unity of the church.

2. That synod revise Article 3 of the Church Order to its reading prior to 1984 and that synod ask the Synod of 1986 to ratify this change. If adopted, Church Order Article 3 would again read as follows: "Confessing male members of the church who meet the biblical requirements for officebearers are eligible for office. Only those who have been officially called and ordained or installed shall hold and exercise office in the church."

Ground: This is in line with the synodical rules for changing the Church Order.

3. That synod declare that those women now serving as deacons in the CRC be allowed to fill out their term.

Ground: This will help to preserve harmony and unity in the church.

Classis Sioux Center
Stanley De Vries, stated clerk

47. — Bethel, London, Consistory Appeals to Synod for Moratorium on Decisions re Women in Office

The consistory of the Bethel CRC of London, ON, appeals to the Synod of 1985 that a moratorium be placed on the discussion of "Women in Office" at the synodical level for a period of at least two years.

Grounds:

1. This issue has been discussed at length within the denomination and it is unlikely that new insights will be gained by more discussion at this time.
2. It is time that as a denomination we direct our energies to other areas.
3. This will give local congregations an opportunity to discuss this issue (if so desired) without waiting for further synodical decisions.
4. More discussion of this issue at the synodical level will only lead to further fragmentation in the churches at this time.

Bethel Consistory
H. Klomps, clerk

Note: This appeal was sent as an overture to Classis Chatham, but was not adopted.

48. — Maranatha Consistory Protests Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Maranatha CRC, Edmonton, AB, protests the action of the Synod of 1984 in its failure to declare that the biblical principle of headship, acknowledged by synod, excludes women from holding the office of elder and minister in the Christian Reformed Church (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 72).

Consistory of Maranatha, Edmonton
J. Snaterse, clerk

Note: This protest was presented to Classis Alberta North on February 26–27, 1985, but was not adopted.

49. — College Avenue, Winnipeg, Appeals to Synod of 1984 to Revise 1984 Decision re Women in Office

The consistory of the College Avenue CRC, Winnipeg, MB, requests the Synod of 1985 to revise the decision made by the Synod of 1984 to allow consistories to ordain qualified women to serve in the office of deacon (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 78, p. 627).

Grounds:

1. This synodical decision is in conflict with clear biblical teachings on this subject (I Cor. 14:32–38 and I Tim. 2 and 3).

- a. The bulk of biblical data on the subject of the ordination of deacons lists such prerequisites and qualifications as to restrict the office to qualified male confessing members (I Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:2-6).
- b. Romans 16:1 does not furnish compelling biblical evidence that women were ordained to the office of deaconess. The KJV, NIV, ASV all state that Phoebe was a servant.
2. This decision is not in harmony with the creed (Art. 30 of Confession of Faith).
3. In order to implement this decision, changes would have to be made in the Church Order: namely, Articles. 3, 35 b, 35 c, 37, 59 c, 78, 81, 83 a, 84, 85, 86 b, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93.
4. Article 47 of the Church Order states, "no substantial alterations shall be effected by synod in these matters unless the churches have had prior opportunity to consider the advisability of the proposed changes." So far as we know, such changes have never been before the churches.
5. This decision is in conflict with the decision of the Synod of 1979 regarding changes in the Church Order (Art. 77, C, 1, and 2, a and b, pp. 89, 90).
6. The Synod of 1975 decided the following: "That synod declare that the practice of excluding women from the ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained unless compelling biblical grounds are advanced for changing the practice" (*Acts of Synod 1975*, Art. 79, D1, p. 78).
7. The Synod of 1984 did not produce any compelling biblical grounds to warrant the present change.
8. Synod of 1984 states "no study committee of 1973, 1975, 1978, 1981, and 1984 found biblical reasons to keep the office of deacon closed to qualified women" (*Acts of Synod 1984*, Art. 101). However, in all committees there was never a general agreement. Disagreement caused the committee of 1973 to break into two groups, the committee of 1975 into two groups, of 1978 into four groups, of 1981 into two, and of 1984 into three groups.
9. The unity of the church will be severely fractured as a consequence of such a radical decision. There is no biblical teaching that women should be ordained; therefore, such a decision should be reversed to bring peace back to the churches.

Winnipeg College Avenue Consistory
J. Booy, clerk

Note: This overture was considered by Classis Minnesota North in session on March 5 and 6, 1985, in the First Christian Reformed Church of Minneapolis, but defeated.

50. — Bethel, Dunnville, Consistory Appeals Decision of the 1984 Synod re Women in Office

The consistory of Bethel CRC of Dunnville, ON, appeals to synod to terminate the implementation of its Synod 1984 decision to allow women to serve in the office of deacon.

Grounds:

1. According to the creation order, God has ordained that the headship of the church lies with Jesus Christ who in turn ordained men to rule the church on his behalf. References to leaders in the early church are in masculine forms.

Even though there are several examples of women serving the church in a ministry similar to that of deacon, there is no biblical command to have such women ordained into the ecclesiastical office for them to render this valuable service.

2. The work of the Holy Spirit is that of uniting the body of Christ. There is evidence that the issue of ordaining women does not bring peace and unity in the church. The narrow majority vote of the 1984 decision clearly indicates that the Holy Spirit is not speaking clearly on this issue.

For this reason it is never wise to proceed with implementation. In I John 4:1 we read, "Test the spirits to see whether they are of God. . . ." This occurs at a time in history when there is considerable "liberation thought" in the world.

3. For 1,950 years the church, in obedience to the scriptural instructions, has been led by men. Our church fathers, the Reformers, as well as the Christian Reformed Church Order have been guided by the Holy Spirit and indicate that the church has

not been amiss by having only men serve in the ecclesiastical offices.

Bethel, Dunnville Consistory
R. Hoekstra, clerk

Note: The appeal of the Bethel Consistory was presented to Classis Hamilton at its meeting on January 23, 1985, but was not sustained.

LIST OF PERSONAL APPEALS

1. N. De Jong, R. Mulder, and J. Workman appeal the decision of Classis Chicago South and the synodical decision of 1984 re women in office.
2. F. Handlogten appeals the decision of Classis Grandville and the 1984 synodical decision re women in office.
3. M. A. Brouwer appeals the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North re transfer of general fund monies to Christian School Cost Variance Fund.
4. L. Kuiper appeals the decision of Classis Zeeland and the 1984 synodical decision re headship and women in office.
5. G. De Vries appeals the decision of Classis Alberta South and the 1984 synodical decision re women in office.
6. P. Peetsma appeals the decision of Classis Alberta South and the 1984 synodical decision re women in office.
7. A. Geurkink appeals the decision of Classis Minnesota North re disbursement of funds generated for mission work.
8. D. and A. Bredeweg appeal the decision of Classis Thornapple Valley re quota contributions from persons who feel compelled not to support a cause.
9. Consistory of Lethbridge, CRC, AB, appeals the decision of Classis Chicago South re the views of a pastor.