

The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

**Acts of the
36th Synod held at the FRC Pretoria
June 13th – 16th, 2011**



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Contents

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THESE ACTS 5

ARTICLE 1 OPENING..... 6

ARTICLE 2 CREDENTIALS 6

ARTICLE 3 ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND CONSTITUTION OF SYNOD 6

ARTICLE 4 AGREEMENT WITH THE THREE FORMS OF UNITY 7

ARTICLE 5 FRATERNAL DELEGATES 7

ARTICLE 6 OBSERVERS 7

ARTICLE 7 PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS 7

ARTICLE 8 AGENDA OF SYNOD 8

ARTICLE 9 ADDRESS BY THE FRATERNAL DELEGATE OF THE FRCA..... 9

ARTICLE 10 ADDRESS BY THE FRATERNAL DELEGATE OF THE GKNV 10

ARTICLE 11 GREETING LETTER FROM THE CANRC 10

ARTICLE 12 ADDRESS BY THE OBSERVER OF THE GKSA..... 11

ARTICLE 13 GREETING LETTER FROM REV. P.J. RETIEF 12

ARTICLE 14 CLASSIS NORTH OVERTURE FORM PRAYERS 12

ARTICLE 15 CLASSIS NORTH REQUEST WORKLOAD MINISTERS 12

ARTICLE 16 CLASSIS NORTH OVERTURE SOLEMNISATION OF MARRIAGES 13

ARTICLE 17 CLASSIS NORTH OVERTURE NEW SKRIFBERYMINGS 14

ARTICLE 18 REPORT COMMITTEE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH FEDERATION..... 14

ARTICLE 19 DEPUTIES RELATIONS WITH CHURCHES ABROAD. 15

ARTICLE 20 DEPUTIES RELATIONS WITH CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA..... 20

ARTICLE 21 DEPUTIES FOR THE REVIEW OF THE LITURGICAL FORMS. 20

ARTICLE 22 MISSION DEPUTIES..... 21

ARTICLE 23 DEPUTIES LITURGICAL MUSIC. 22

ARTICLE 24 DEPUTIES AFRIKAANS BIBLE TRANSLATION. 25

ARTICLE 25 DEPUTIES AD ARTICLE 19 CO. 25

ARTICLE 26 DEPUTIES AD ARTICLE 11 CO. 26

ARTICLE 27 DEPUTIES FOR THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT..... 26

ARTICLE 28 DEPUTIES AD ARTICLE 49 CO. 27

ARTICLE 29 DEPUTIES CURATORS. 27

ARTICLE 30 SYNOD TREASURER..... 29

ARTICLE 31 STATED CLERK AND ARCHIVE..... 29

ARTICLE 32 INSPECTION OF THE SYNOD TREASURER’S BOOKS. 30

ARTICLE 33 INSPECTION OF THE ARCHIVE. 30

ARTICLE 34 INTERNET COMMUNICATION..... 30

ARTICLE 35 CLASSIS FOR DAYS OF PRAYER AD ARTICLE 69 CO. 31

ARTICLE 36 APPOINTMENTS. 31

ARTICLE 37 LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT..... 32

ARTICLE 38 PERSONAL QUESTION PERIOD..... 33

ARTICLE 39 APPOINTMENT OF CONVENING CHURCH OF NEXT SYNOD..... 33

ARTICLE 40 ADOPTION OF ACTS AND APPROVAL OF PRESS RELEASE 33

ARTICLE 41 CENSURE AD ARTICLE 48 CO 33

ARTICLE 42 CLOSING OF SYNOD..... 33

Appendices:

1.1 Report Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.....35

1.2 Additional Report of Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad on a visit to the
Synod Harderwijk 2011 of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (liberated).....84

2. Report Deputies contact with churches in South Africa.....96

3. Report Mission Deputies.....102

4. Report Deputies Liturgical Music.....141

5. Report Deputies Bible Translation.....151

6. Report Deputies ad article 19 CO.....156

7. Report Deputies ad article 11 CO.....	163
8. Report Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.....	179
9. Report Deputies ad article 49 CO.....	185
10. Report Deputies Curators.....	187
11. Report Synod Treasurer.....	235
12. Report Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.....	240
13. Report Church for the Inspection of the Archive.....	248
14. Report Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.....	249
15. Rules of Synod 2005	
- English.....	250
- Afrikaans.....	256
16. Persverslag van die 36ste sinode van die VGKSA.....	262



Members and Foreign delegates of Synod Pretoria 2011

Top from left to right: elder T. De Wit, elder J.C. du Plessis; Rev. B.A. Matlaela, Rev. C. Kleijn, elder J. van der Linden, Rev. G. Mnisi, dr. J.A. Breytenbach, elder R. Meeske, G.B. Veenendaal (FRCA), M.A. Blok-Sijtsma (GKNv), Rev. P.G. Boon.
 Bottom from left to right: Rev. J. Mhlanga (insert), elder C. Roose, A.W. Herder (stated clerk), Rev. J.M. van Leeuwen (GKNv), Rev. E. Viljoen.

List of Abbreviations used in these Acts

Abbreviations of some Church federations as used in the proceedings of the ICRC

BoP	Book of Praise (CanRC)
CanRC	Canadian Reformed Churches
CESA	Church of England in South Africa
CO	Church Order
CRTS	Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton
DRCSA	Deputies for the relations with Churches in South Africa
DC	Deputies Curators
DGK	De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (hersteld)
DRCA	Deputies for the Relations with Churches abroad
FCSA	Free Church in South Africa
FRCA	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRC	Free Reformed Church
FRCSA	Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
GKNv	Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt)
GKSA	Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
GTOI	Gereformeerde Teologiese Opleidings Inisiatief
GWC	George Whitefield College
ICRC	International Conference of Reformed Churches
KA	Kerklike Advieskomitee (Bible Society of South Africa)
MTC	Mukhanyo Theological College
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika
NHK	Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika
NIV	Bible in New International Version
MDSA	Mission Deputies of South Africa
MTS	Ministerial Training Structure
NC	National Coordinator (MTS)
PCEA	Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia
PD	Parliamentary Desk
RCNZ	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
RTTI	Reformed Theological Training Initiative
TKR	Tussenkerklike Raad (GKSA, NGK, NHK)

Acts synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

held at FRC Pretoria June 13 – 16, 2011

Article 1 Opening

After a prayer service led by Rev. E. Viljoen, Rev. E. Viljoen, requested by the convening church of Pretoria, called the meeting to order.

Article 2 Credentials

The credentials were examined and all classes were properly represented.

Classis South delegated:

Primary: Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Bethal Rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town Elder W. van der Westhuizen, Bethal Elder R. Meeske, Johannesburg Elder J. van der Linden, Cape Town	Alternates: Rev. C.A. van Wyk, Cape Town Rev. P. Abrahams, Belhar Elder J.C. du Plessis, Bethal Elder J. Struwig, Johannesburg
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Classis North delegated:

Primary: Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata Rev. J. Mhlanga, Pretoria-Maranata Rev. B.A. Matlaela, Soshanguve-North Elder C. Roose, Pretoria Elder G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata Elder F.J. van Dijk, Pretoria-Maranata	Alternates: Rev. M.P. Magagula, Pretoria-Maranata Rev. G.F. Mnisi, Pretoria-Maranata Rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi Elder T. de Wit, Pretoria Elder D.L. Mogotsi, Mamelodi Elder T.W. Tamane, Soshanguve-North
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All primary delegates were in attendance, except for the elders Hagg and Van Dijk, who were replaced for the duration of synod by elder De Wit and Rev. Mnisi and elder Van der Westhuizen, who was replaced for the duration of synod by elder Du Plessis.

Article 3 Election of Officers and Constitution of Synod

The following officers were elected to serve synod for its duration:

Chairman:	Rev. C. Kleijn
Vice-chairman:	Rev. P.G. Boon
Clerk:	Elder T. de Wit

On behalf of the convening church, Rev. E. Viljoen declared synod constituted. The elected officers took their places.

Article 4 Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity

The chairman asks delegates and delegates from sister churches to rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. All delegates rise.

Article 5 Fraternal delegates

The following delegates were present from the churches abroad:

FRCA: Br. G.B. Veenendaal.

GKNv: Rev. J.M. van Leeuwen and sr. M.A. Blok-Sijtsma.

Article 6 Observers

Rev. P.W. Kurpershoek, Middelburg (MP), represents the GKSA on the afternoon and evening session of June 15th, 2011. He is welcomed as observer.

Article 7 Practical arrangements

Minutes: The convening church has appointed br. A.W. Herder, stated clerk, to take the minutes. The chairman welcomes him.

Privileges of the floor:

A. Female delegation from the GKNv.

Material:

Addendum report DRCA. Appendix 1

Synod observes:

1. That the GKNv delegation consists of one male and one female member;
2. That our synod rules grant full privilege of the floor to all representatives of the churches in ecclesiastical fellowship in an advisory role;
3. That by implication such representatives seem to have the status of office bearers.

Synod considers:

1. That it is questionable whether it is appropriate to allow female delegates to share in the extensive privileges extended to foreign delegates;
2. That the synod rules regarding the full privilege of the floor stems from the time that the federation was very small;
3. That the rules regarding the advisory role of foreign delegates need to be reviewed.

Synod decides:

1. To give under the present regime of synod rules the male foreign delegates the full privilege of the floor;
2. To restrict the female delegate's privilege of the floor to the deliberation of the report DRCA and the section in the DRCSA report concerning contacts with the GKSA;
3. To mandate new deputies to re-formulate article 2 of our Rules of Synod in order to make provision for foreign delegates which are not elders or ministers, by formulating the status of advisors in such a way that it is in line with Scriptural teachings concerning the functioning of females and non-office bearers in the church.

Grounds:

- a. Female deputies are acceptable.
- b. The status of advisors is not determined by Biblical principles and can be amended.

B. Synod will give the floor to non-delegated deputies during the deliberations of their reports.

Language: The meeting language will be English, but those delegates not fluent in English will be allowed to speak in their native tongue. Rev. P.G. Boon and Rev. C. Kleijn will act as translators. The Acts are to be published in English.

Time Schedule: Morning session 9:00-12:30, afternoon session 13:30-17:00, evening session 19:00-21:00. Tea breaks at 10:30 and 15:00.

Devotions: Synod shall begin and close each day in plenary session with Scripture reading, prayer and singing. A schedule will be handed out.

Acts: Synod decides not to publish in the acts the appendices of DRCSA's report.

Committees: Advisory committees shall provide each delegate with a copy of their reports before they are dealt with in plenary sessions. The following committee was appointed: Committee to investigate the financial aspects of the deputy reports Curators, MDSA, article 19 CO and article 11 CO: Elders C. Roose (convenor), R. Meeske and J. van der Linden.

Instruction:

1. To investigate the overlap in the aforementioned reports with regard to the finances and its sustainability;
2. To investigate the issues these deputies address in their reports as far as the finances are concerned;
3. To prepare for synod proposals regarding the financial aspects to address the differences in the reports and direction for the future.

Article 8 Agenda of synod

The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening by the convening church.
2. Examination of credentials.
3. Constitution of synod and election of officers.
4. Agreement with Three Forms of Unity by delegates and advisors.
5. Greeting addresses.
 - 5.1. Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
 - 5.2. Canadian Reformed Churches.
 - 5.3. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt).
 - 5.4. Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika.
6. Adoption of agenda.
7. Adoption of meeting procedure.
8. Overtures from classes.
 - 8.1 Overture from Classis North regarding Form Prayers.
 - 8.2 Request from Classis North regarding workload ministers.
 - 8.3 Overture from Classis North regarding solemnisation of marriages.
 - 8.4 Overture from Classis North regarding new Skrifberymings.
9. Appeals.
10. Deputies' reports.
 - 10.1. Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.
 - 10.2. Deputies contact with churches in South Africa.
 - 10.3. Deputies Revision Church Order, Rules for Synod and Liturgical Forms.
 - 10.4. Mission Deputies.

- 10.5. Deputies Liturgical Music.
- 10.6. Deputies Bible Translation.
- 10.7. Deputies ad article 19 CO.
- 10.8. Deputies ad article 11 CO.
- 10.9. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.
- 10.10. Deputies ad article 49 CO.
- 10.11. Deputies Curators.
- 10.12. Synod Treasurer.
- 10.13. Stated Clerk and archive.
- 10.14. Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.
- 10.15. Inspection of the Archive.
- 10.16. Internet Communication.
- 10.17. Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.
11. Appointment of deputies.
12. Letter to the President.
13. Personal question period.
14. Appointment of convening church, and place and time of the next synod.
15. Adoption of acts and approval of press release.
16. Censure ad article 48 CO.
17. Closing of synod.

Article 9 Address by the Fraternal Delegate of the FRCA

In the morning session of June 16th, 2011 the chairman introduced br. G.B. Veenendaal to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the FRCA with the following words.

Dear brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

It is a privilege to be here in your midst once again (!) and extend to you the greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Yes, it is now just over a decade that we have been regularly invited and have attended your synods, and it says something of the development of the relationship, the growing bond, between our churches. I say "development" because it is an ongoing part of getting to know each other better. We think we have some South African blood in us because of a large contingent of South Africans that are members in our Australian churches, but yet we recognise there is so much about your churches, your culture, the opportunities and challenges that you face, of which we have yet to learn. We therefore appreciate the invitation to your synod and this opportunity build on the unity of faith, that rich foundation of Jesus Christ, that which we already share.

When we consider the past decade and how the Lord has led us as His churches on two continents on the west and east shores of the Indian Ocean, we can only marvel at how He has directed our relationship. You have an Australian minister and we have a South African minister. There are many church members, families and friends who travel back and forth to visit families and acquaintances. Through requests for support, we have learned something about Khotasong and the work among the AIDS victims, the Lesaedi School in the black townships of Soshunguve, and the various struggles and needs among needy churches, particularly regarding the church at Bethal. We also had the privilege of hosting your deputy br Kees Roose a few years ago (in 2009) who gave us some more information on the churches in South Africa. These means of getting to know each other better are an important part of being able to encourage and assist each other as sister churches, something that we need more and more as we recognise the attacks on the church and the struggles that we face in this world.

I'd like to update you about developments in our churches since we were here 3 years ago at your last synod. Since then we have received two more siblings, namely the churches of Mundijong (instituted in December 2009) and Busselton (instituted a few months ago in March 2011). That brings the total number of churches in our bond to 15. What has also changed over the past years is the number of vacancies of ministers in our bond. I recall telling you three years ago that we only had 1 vacancy, but now we have 5 vacancies,

including the fact that one of our churches (that at Southern River) also now has two ministers. Our Deputies for Training for the Ministry are putting in a greater effort to generate the awareness of the need for ministers of the Word, and encouraging especially young men to consider preparing themselves for the beautiful task of ministry. Our Deputies are also considering the possibilities of having the first year of training for the ministry provided in Australia, possibly through a combination of using local ministers and online learning.

Our churches continue to support the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Canada, and we also continue to be involved in mission fields in Lae in Papua New Guinea, Sumba in Indonesia, and in China.

At this synod of yours, you are busy with many matters that affect your bond of churches, and the relationships with other churches. Whereas our mission fields are quite distant to us, geographically and physically, your many mission fields are right on your doorstep. It is heartening to see the growth and developments there, and the fact that there is a hunger and thirst for the gospel. May the Lord bless your work there and the support that is provided, and may He especially work with the Holy Spirit in the hearts of these young believers that they may be faithful covenant children amidst a world of sin and darkness. May the Lord also provide ministers and missionaries who are able to bring the glad tidings of gospel of salvation to these people. We are very thankful that the Lord has blessed the mission work so that you may have quite a number of ministers and missionaries who are direct fruits of that mission work. How marvellous are the Lord's ways in providing shepherds who are privileged to bring the gospel of peace and salvation!

We pray that the Lord will also bless you as bond of churches in the economic and political climate that you live in, here in South Africa. It is something that we hear of but do not really understand or appreciate. Yet, the Lord can use these circumstances to hold on to His people, to strengthen and refine His church, and to cause His light to shine so that His church may be preserved.

We are thankful for the mutual contact and support that we could share with your Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad. We could experience this most recently in the Netherlands when our deputies were able to discuss and even have the privilege of sharing accommodation and the Synod table with your deputy, br Kees Roose. In hearing the speech of your deputy at Synod Harderwijk, we could hear similar concerns as were expressed by our own Synod Legana 2009. In discussions with your deputy, we could experience the closeness of our bond as sister churches. May we continue to be united together, also as it finds expression in our love for our sister church in the Netherlands as we mutually exhort, encourage and warn our dear sister.

May God bless your deliberations at synod, the decisions you come to, and your churches in actively working with the outcomes. We will continue to pray for your churches and God's work in this country. In the meantime, continue to pray for us also, that we, amidst the abundance and blessings that the Lord does provide, may remain faithful and true to Him in all we do.

With the words of Paul to the Philippians (3:14 to 4:1), let us *press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus...For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body...Therefore my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.*

Rev. Kleijn responded shortly to br. Veenendaal.

Article 10 Address by the fraternal Delegate of the GKNv

In the afternoon session of June 15th 2011 the chairman introduced Rev. J.M. van Leeuwen to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the GKNv.

Rev. Boon responded shortly to Rev. Van Leeuwen.

Article 11 Greeting letter from the CanRC

On behalf of the CanRC Rev. A. Souman has sent the following letter:

Langley, June 8, 2011.

To the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

Esteemed brothers in Christ,

On behalf of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad, I thank you for your invitation to send a delegation to the synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa. Much to our regret, I have to inform you that we are not able to send delegates..

However, we do wish to take the opportunity to extend Christian greetings to you as our sister churches in South Africa. May the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, through His Holy Word and Spirit, so guide your deliberations and decisions that they may build up the churches in your country and thus bring honor and glory to our God and Father in heaven.

Through the Canadian Reformed Church in Coaldale, many Canadian Reformed churches and individual members are supporting the Free Reformed Churches as well as the mission work being done by the Free Reformed Churches financially, and we can assure you that we remember you in our prayers as well. We know about many of the challenges which you face in South Africa, and at the same time we are thankful that the Lord opens many doors for the preaching of the gospel in your country. May the Free Reformed Churches remain faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ and thus be a blessing for many in your country and beyond.

May God grant you His peace and His blessings.

Article 12 Address by the Observer of the GKSA

In the afternoon session of June 15th, 2011 the chairman introduced Rev. P.W. Kurpershoek to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the GKSA with the following words.

Beloved moderator and brothers in Christ Jesus

It is a wonderful privilege to greet you as churches, but also each one of you personally, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be with you at your Synod and to bring greetings on behalf of the Reformed Churches in South Africa is part of an experience – especially in this week following Pentecost – of the unity of the Spirit which exists between us.

Both your churches and our churches have the sincere desire to be truly one in Christ. But the reality is that we still are separated. That is why we are today with you in humbleness ... with the sad realisation that we as broken people continue to struggle to live visibly in obedience to our Lord Jesus by concretising our confession of being one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

During the past years - as a result of several situations – we did not have much contact between our churches through our respective deputies. On behalf of the Reformed Churches in South Africa I want to assure you that we still have the desire to fulfil our responsibility before our Lord Jesus Christ to talk with you actively and thoroughly. In times to come we will exert ourselves to assure that these talks will proceed. With our local churches we look forward to grow organically towards each other. Both our churches have made sound decisions about the need to make local contact and the guidelines which your deputies have developed will be of great help. May our Lord bless our churches in these endeavours.

Since your last synod in 2008 the Reformed Churches in South Africa experienced in 2009 an historic event with the abolition of the former national synods and the coming together of all our churches (except some of the churches from Synod Soutpansberg) in the First General Synod. In this we saw and experienced the merciful work of our Lord. We pray and trust that our Lord will use this in the upbuilding and expansion of his church – especially through the churches' trustworthy witness in our society.

As Christians in South Africa in 2011 we experience unique challenges. Our society is marked by uncertainty, despair and severe trauma. Poverty, illnesses, crime and violence are taking on huge proportions. Misunderstandings about our Lord and about our position as people in relation to our Lord are huge. In this situation we as Christians and churches have the

privilege to proclaim – by using the Word of our Lord - Jesus Christ as our Hope en our only Lord. In this we can join hands in order to witness – with the necessary discernment – about the year of the Lord’s favour which is being fulfilled in Jesus Christ!
As churches you are in Synod to prayerfully reflect about your call as churches of Jesus Christ. We pray that you – in obedience to the Spirit and to the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ – will be able to discern what is best and that you as churches will experience the Spirit as the Spirit of power, love and self-discipline!
May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all and with your churches!

After his address the chairman invited Rev. Kurpershoek to respond to questions from the floor as well as to respond to the report of DRCSA.

Article 13 Letter of Greeting from Rev. P.J. Retief

On Thursday June 16th, 2011 synod received an email from Rev. P.J. Retief, in which he wishes the synod God’s blessing for the work to be done. Synod received it in gratefulness.

Article 14 Classis North Overture Form Prayers

Material:

Overture from Classis North March 2011 regarding Form Prayers.

Classis referred the following proposal from the Pretoria Consistory to Synod:

The form prayers that appear in the Afrikaans Psalter were written many years ago. Seeing that elders who have to lead the Sunday service often make use of these prayers, we are of the opinion there is merit in the case for these form prayers to be rewritten in modern Afrikaans. One brother in our congregation, br. Harm Snijder, has volunteered to serve as a deputy to rewrite these prayers. We ask the classis to send a request to the next synod to appoint deputies for rewriting the current Afrikaans form prayers that appear in the Psalter in modern Afrikaans.

Synod decides:

To accept the proposal and appoint deputies with the mandate to look into the matter of rewriting form prayers in the Psalter and serve the next synod with a proposal.

Article 15 Classis North Request Workload Ministers

Material:

Request from Classis North March 2011 regarding workload ministers.

Classis referred the following request to Synod:

Some of the ministers in our churches can be overloaded with work that has to be done as deputies appointed by the synod. This additional workload can result in the ministers being unable to optimally perform their primary task as pastors and teachers in their congregation. We are convinced that some of this work can be done by other members (e.g. deputies for art.11). We ask the classis to send a request to the synod to carefully consider the workload of ministers before appointing them as deputies. Members attending a classis meeting can also keep this in mind when appointing deputies for certain tasks in the classis.

Synod decides:

To take note of this request when making appointments for deputies.

Article 16 Classis North Overture solemnisation of marriages

Material:

Overture from Classis North March 2011 regarding solemnisation of marriages.

Classis proposal:

1. References

- Acts of Synod Cape Town 1990, article 16, page 13.
- Solemnisation of marriages: Presentations, background and proposals resulting from classis discussions and brainstorming sessions.

2. Present status

- The present status is as decided in the conclusion of the Synod 1990: The performance of the marriage ceremony, as well as the churchly confirmation of the marriage, should take place in the same ceremony, and the ceremony should be seen as a private concern. (Abbreviated)
- The Bible does not prescribe that the solemnisation of a marriage has to be either an official service or a private gathering.

3. Considerations – problem statements

- Developments in older churches after 1990: There is a tendency that solemnisations of marriages held lately are not accessible to the congregation in terms of place and time. Secondly it is not always in a venue supporting the worshipping of our Lord.
- The present status is that the church council has to approve the marriage-ceremony, asking for the approval of the congregation by means of proclamation, and asking the congregation to attend the ceremony in the presence of their fellow congregational members. However in practice the congregation is often not a witness to the private ceremony. Furthermore, the venue is sometimes not conducive to the orderly and undivided attention required for the service. Also the minimum requirements set for the liturgy are not always present.
- The decision made by the Synod 1990 did not consider the cultural aspects in the Sepedi speaking congregations. Churches in these communities desire to play a more prominent role before the marriage ceremonies. The current often pagan practices where the church is not involved leads to a lot of problems for the couple and the congregation. The church is sometimes not aware of a marriage (secret) and the wedding is seen as a family concern full of pagan rituals. Marriage catechism and guidance is mostly not in place, especially if one of the couple is not a church member. The church council needs to play also a more prominent role in the facilitation of a reasonable dowry (lobola) to prevent an unnecessary burden on the wedding couple. Also it is very important that the couple, already from the start of their relationship, becomes completely involved in the congregation. This should lead to pastoral support and guidance by fellow members. The basis of the marriage should be the mutual believe in God and the love of Christ.
- The solemnisation of a marriage is an illustration of the future marriage between Christ and the Church, his bride. For this the solemnisation of a marriage could be a church service and celebrated as a feast day for the whole congregation. Unfortunately this possible format of the marriage solemnisation is excluded by the 1990 decision.

4. It is proposed that synod takes into consideration:

- Different situations and cultures in the federation of churches should lead to a re-evaluation of the decisions regarding the solemnisation of marriages.
- The FR Church Councils in the Sotho and Tswana communities want to play a more prominent role in marriages.
- The solemnisation of a marriage is an illustration of the future marriage between Christ and the Church, his bride.

- The decision of 1990 can be changed according to Article 33 CO which states that there should be space for change if it is decided that there is a necessity for change.
 - An ecclesiastical solemnisation of a marriage can be treated as one of the feast days as described in Article 68 CO.
5. It is proposed that Synod decides:
- The synod decision of 1990 article 16 (b) is changed as follows: The ecclesiastical solemnisation of marriages can either be done in a private gathering or in a service in terms of article 68 CO. This can be decided by the local church.
 - The ecclesiastical solemnisation is based on a minimum liturgy (blessing, scripture readings, sermon, confession of faith and the use of the approved form for the solemnisation of marriages and the singing of the approved psalms and hymns.
 - The solemnisation of marriages should be accessible in terms of time and place for the congregation to be a witness.

Synod decides:

1. To change the decision of 1990 article 16 (b) as follows: The ecclesiastical solemnisation of marriages can either be done in a private gathering or in a service in terms of article 68 CO. This can be decided by the local church;
2. To encourage consistories to maximize their involvement in giving guidance to engaged couples in preparation for a truly Christian marriage. This should include education and guidance with regard to the Christian character of the solemnisation ceremony.

Article 17 Classis North Overture New Skrifberymings

Material:

Overture from Classis North March 2011 regarding new Skrifberymings.

Classis proposes:

1. That the Skrifberymings 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, 60, 61, 62, 63 (with one condition), 64, 68, 71, 76, 77, 78 and 79 be approved for use in our churches.
2. That the other Skrifberymings be referred to the Deputies for Liturgical Music for further study and recommendation.

Synod decides:

To deal with this proposal together with the report deputies Liturgical Music. (See article 23)

Article 18 Report Committee Financial Aspects of the Church Federation

Material:

Report Committee.

Conclusions

1. The committee is not able to make a concrete detailed proposal within a time span of two days of synod meetings and therefore makes general proposals;
2. Proposed overall increase of the contribution of the churches from 2011 to 2012 = 30 % = R177,000.00;
3. The present situation is unsustainable and rethinking of strategies and policies is absolutely essential;
4. The basis for our mission – and church support actions should be that it is **first of all the responsibility of the local churches**. The fact that our mission and church support actions are heavily supported by foreign sister churches may never be a reason for local churches to neglect their own responsibility;

5. To be dependent on foreign funds is risky as such financial sources are prone to unpredictable fluctuations.

Synod decides:

1. To approve an overall increase of the contributions of the churches for 2011 calendar year of 10 % = R59,000.00;

Ground:

An increase of 30 % in the contributions of the churches for 2012 should be avoided.

2. To appoint deputies for Financial Review with the following instruction:
 - 2.1. To investigate the overall financial impact of the budget proposals of various deputies involved, on the churches;
 - 2.2. To investigate the financial situation of each deputyship and to encourage deputies to rethink their current working methods in order to develop a financially sustainable system;
 - 2.3. To make proposals in the form of a working document to be discussed in an indaba during September/October 2011, where all the relevant parties are involved;
 - 2.4. To appoint a competent facilitator for the indaba;
 - 2.5. To coordinate the preparation of the indaba with MDSA;
 - 2.6. To report back to an ad-hoc synod during February 2012 and propose an overall strategy to be discussed and decided on by this synod;

Grounds:

- a. Synod has not been able to formulate detailed proposals during its meetings as this requires a lot of study;
 - b. Proposals should be developed in a responsible way and it will take a lot of discussions to reach such a responsible proposal.
3. To instruct all deputies to present a revised budget before the end of 2011 to deputies for Financial Review to be presented at the ad-hoc synod.

Ground:

The financial situation is so serious that timely action is of the utmost importance.

Article 19 Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.

Rev. D.M. Boersma, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report and Additional Report DRCA.

19.1 Synod decides:

1. To maintain sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules;
2. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Armadale 2012 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.

Grounds:

- a. The FRCA give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed confessions and the Church Order;
- b. Personal visits are an effective means of developing, building and maintaining good relations;
- c. Both the FRCA and the FRCSA are small church federations with a similar background and some similar challenges. By maintaining good contacts and by learning from each other, both church federations will be better equipped to fulfil their God-given task to remain faithful churches of Christ in a secular world.

19.2 Synod decides:

1. To maintain sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules;
2. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Carman West 2013 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.

Grounds:

- a. The CanRC give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed confessions and the Church Order;
- b. Personal visits are an effective means of developing, building and maintaining good relations;
- c. Both the CanRC and the FRCSA are church federations with a similar background and some similar challenges. By maintaining good contacts and by learning from each other, both church federations will be better equipped to fulfil their God-given task to remain faithful churches of Christ in a secular world.

19.3 Synod decides:

1. To continue the sister church relationship with the GKNv according to the established rules;
2. To wholeheartedly accept the invitation of the Dutch delegates to have an open discussion on the issues raised listed in point 3 below;
3. To instruct DRCA to address the following issues as raised by DRCA with the GKNv deputies. If any of these issues remain after these discussions, DRCA are authorized to communicate them with the GKNv Synod:

i. The decision-making process at GKNv Synods

As mentioned in § 2.3.4a of the report, deputies notice a change in the way Synods weigh issues and made decisions. Although the Bible is still considered as giving direction (Dutch: 'richtinggevend') and authoritative for decisions, it is apparent that other considerations are gaining weight.

On the basis of our sister church relationship, we need to call on our Dutch sister churches to prayerfully reconsider their direction. We need to remind them of their responsibility to continue to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God; and to encourage them to reject all thoughts that undermine it.

We also call them to have courage to overcome the fear for lack of support ('draagvlak') in the churches and to make decisions that are biblical but not popular in a post-modern age.

ii. Consultation with sister churches

Future GKNv Synods should pay more attention to the advice of their sister churches. Delegates' involvement is restricted to the 'Buitenlandweek', which tends to become a formality. Their advice is rarely seen back in later rounds of discussion of Synod. Synod should also follow the rules of sister church relationships and give clear instructions to its deputies to deliberate with sister churches, before far-reaching decisions are proposed with regard to – for example – the offices of the church, and the church order.

iii. Women in office

There are real concerns regarding the impact of Deputies M/V in the church on the churches in the Netherlands. The publications of these deputies cause the Reformed doctrine on the offices to become a matter of debate – see explanation under § 2.3.3a of the report. The process is not supervised properly, leading to limitless discussions, including pleads to open the offices for women. We sense too little respect for the Word of God as the ultimate

norm for church life.

iv. Proposed new Church Order

Deputies are shocked by the fact that the Deputies who wrote the *Werkorde* unilaterally came to the proposal to open the (unchanged) office of deacons for women.

v. Deputies Church Unity

There are serious concerns with regard the process Deputies Church Unity (DKE) are involved in with regard to the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*. How can they claim to have reached unity with regard to hermeneutical questions with their counterpart deputies in the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*, whilst the differences with this federation with regard to hermeneutical issues are so evident? The *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken* allow women in the offices, and are currently debating whether homosexuality is allowed.

Deputies also have concerns about how the Deputies *DKE* participated in the so-called National Synod of Dordrecht. We are of the opinion that this strife towards unity is not according to Belgic Confession articles 27-29.

vi. Guarding the Reformed Doctrine at the Theological University

Deputies have reason to doubt that the Reformed doctrine is adequately maintained and protected at the Theological University in Kampen. In this regard we mention the names of Harinck, Paas, Kwakkel and Van Bekkum. We are also concerned because the churches in the GKNv do not receive enough feedback on how curators deal with the complaints that have been lodged against these lecturers/researchers.

Ground:

In the sister church relationship with the GKNv, we provide mutual encouragement and brotherly criticism. The issues described in § 2.3.2 - 2.3.4 of the DRCA report that give rise to concern, should be discussed with the deputies of GKNv as an expression of this relationship. Since this process has not been finalized yet, this needs to be done in the next term.

4. To call upon the consistories to remember in their prayers to the LORD the problematic ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands, and to pray to the LORD that the discussions to be held may be blessed;

Ground:

Our Saviour taught us to pray for the church in John 17. The FRCSA is a small federation, but we should not underestimate the power of prayer.

5. To mandate DRCA to cooperate closely in the coming years with the deputies of the CanRC and the FRCA in studying the developments and addressing our concerns with the GKNv;

Ground:

The FRCSA is a small federation; we have limited manpower to study the developments on our own.

6. To inform the GKNv in writing about the decisions concerning them.

19.4 Synod decides:

1. To mandate DRCA to investigate developments in the DGK to ascertain whether the decision to acknowledge the brotherhood with them should be maintained;
2. To request DRCA to report in writing about this investigation to the next Synod and make recommendations;

3. To inform the DGK in writing about the decisions concerning them.

Grounds:

Synod Pretoria-Maranata 2005 acknowledged the brotherhood with the DGK, although the Vrijmaking of 2003 was denounced. A call was made to restore the split between the GKNv and the DGK. Humanly speaking, it does not seem that this split will be healed in the foreseeable future. In light of the developments on the Dutch church scene there is reason to investigate the right of existence of this federation further.

19.5 Synod decides:

1. To mandate DRCA to maintain contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches;
2. To instruct the DRCA to remain informed about the ecclesiastical relations between the RCNZ and the FRCA.

Grounds:

- a. According to decisions of previous Synods we should utilise our limited manpower to focus on our own region;
- b. The FRCA is in a better position to maintain more intensive contacts with the RCNZ;
- c. For the sake of immigrants from our churches who wish to settle in New Zealand, it would be wise to remain informed about developments in the RCNZ.

19.6 Synod decides:

To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in North America via the CanRC.

19.7 Synod decides:

1. To instruct DRCA to remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences;
2. To instruct DRCA to ask the mission boards of the FRCSA to delegate at least one of the missionaries to the next Africa mission conference;
3. To share the cost for attending this conference with the appropriate mission board;
4. To remind DCRA of the decisions of previous synods to deal with the existing contacts in Africa via the ICRC regional conferences and the sister churches.

Grounds:

- a. The missionaries are the people who profit most from the ICRC regional missions conferences;
- b. Since the missionaries / mission boards profit from sending a delegate, it is reasonable to share the cost.

19.8 Synod decides:

1. To continue ICRC membership;
2. To authorise DRCA to send one delegate to the ICRC 2013 meeting in Wales.

Grounds:

- a. The ICRC has again shown that it truly wishes to maintain and adhere to its basis;
- b. The ICRC provides a platform to maintain contacts with Reformed churches all over the world;

- c. The ICRC provides us with opportunities to co-ordinate and structure our own mission activities in a more effective way.

19.9 Synod decides:

To instruct DRCA to keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date, to adjust it when specific needs arise, and to publish it electronically through the FRCSA website.

Grounds:

- Since the booklet contains church details, it should be kept up-to-date;
- Several churches use the information contained in the booklet in their own publications. It is therefore not necessary to provide printed copies.

19.10 Synod decides:

- To provide the consistories with appropriate information regarding churches abroad;
- To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.

Ground:

There is an on-going need for the liaison function of DRCA since they gather information regarding churches abroad.

Synod decides to approve the following budget for DCRA:

	Item	ZAR
1	One delegate to Australia: Synod FRCA 2012	12,000.00
2	One delegate to Canada: Synod CanRC 2013	15,000.00
3	One delegate to the Netherlands: Synod GKNv 2014	8,000.00
4	Extra visit to the Netherlands by two delegates	16,000.00
5	ICRC membership fee 2011 – 2014	1,500.00
6	One delegate to ICRC Mission conference Africa Region (50% to be paid by deputies, 50% by Mission Board)	4,000.00
7	One delegate to ICRC Conference 2013 in Wales (England)	10,000.00
8	Other costs	500.00
	Total 2011-2014	67,000.00

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

- To continue sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules;
- To send one delegate to attend the next synod of the FRCA and to instruct this delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA;
- To continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules;
- To send one delegate to attend the next synod of the CanRC and to instruct this delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA;
- To continue the sister church relationship with the GKNv and consequential actions using the instructions as listed in 19.3;
- To send one delegate to the synod of the GKNv in 2014;
- To continue contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so

- that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches;
8. To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in Northern America via the CanRC;
 9. To remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences;
 10. To continue membership of the ICRC;
 11. To send one delegate to the next conference to be held in Wales, 2013;
 12. To keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date and to adjust it periodically and when specific needs arise;
 13. To provide the FRCSA consistories with appropriate information regarding churches abroad;
 14. To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.
 15. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 20 Deputies relations with churches in South Africa.

Material:
Report DRCSA.

Synod decides:

1. To mandate deputies to pursue contacts and discussions with English speaking churches with whom there is collaboration with regard to training of our theological students;
Ground: The CESA must be mentioned as a bond of churches with which discussions can be held to pursue possible further cooperation as churches and understanding each other's doctrinal position.
2. To pursue the possibility of attending the TKR as observers;
3. To continue contact with the GKSA on the national level;
4. To take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts between churches where work is in progress to seek formal unity with other churches;
5. To continue contacts with the FCSA on a national level;
6. To approve the following budget:

Travel expenses (air travel and car hire)	R6, 000.00
Literature and accommodation	R1, 000.00
Total	R7, 000.00

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To pursue contacts and discussions with English speaking churches with whom there is collaboration with regard to training of our theological students;
2. To pursue the possibility of attending the TKR as observers;
3. To continue contact with the GKSA on the national level;
4. To take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts between churches where work is in progress to seek formal unity with other churches;
5. To continue contacts with the FCSA on a national level;
6. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 21 Deputies for the Review of the Liturgical Forms.

Material:
Overture from Classis North March 2011 regarding Form Prayers.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To review what the GKSA has done and are doing regarding the liturgical forms and advise next synod;
2. To rewrite the form prayers in the Afrikaans Psalter in modern Afrikaans and serve the next synod with a proposal;
3. To be in contact with the deputies of Classis North, that deals with the Sotho translation of liturgical forms;
4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 22 Mission Deputies.

Brs. Harm Snijder and J. Smit, deputies, were present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report MDSA.

Synod decides:

1. To assess the churches with a minimum amount of R130 per member for 2011 and to finalize the assessment for the following years at the ad hoc synod planned for early 2012.
2. To appoint deputies to call a national conference (indaba) as alluded to in section 7.2 of the report and to instruct these deputies to formulate recommendations for an ad-hoc synod in February 2012. Synod recommends to organise this conference if at all possible to coincide with the Dutch visitation as planned for October 2011;
3. That deputies approach the churches not yet signatories of the "Agreement of Co-operation between the FRC's in South Africa" with the goal to have them sign;
4. To accept the policy of separation of functions as outlined in section 4.3 of the report;
5. To take cognizance of the agreement with the church of Cape Town regarding the retirement provision for sr. Nicholson, wife of the late missionary Rev. Charles Nicholson.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To continue the contact between the mission churches of the FRCSA and the supporting churches abroad;
2. To act, within this contact, in accordance with the agreement of cooperation, which synod made with the supporting churches abroad and the agreement of cooperation regarding the mission between the FRCSA churches;
3. To receive annually the policies and work plans from the mission churches, the budget for the next year and the statements of the previous year;
4. To consolidate the various budgets and present it to the deputies of the supporting churches abroad;
5. To distribute, in accordance with the approved budgets of the mission churches, the incoming funds;
6. To ensure that the money is spent in accordance with the budget, policies and work plans;
7. To assess the churches with a minimum amount of R130 per member for calendar year 2011 and to assess the churches for 2012, 2013 and 2014 with an amount to be finalized at an ad hoc synod early 2012;
8. To present a revised budget before the end of 2011 to deputies for Financial Review to be presented at the ad-hoc synod;
9. To request from the mission churches the minutes and reports related to mission work;
10. To coordinate necessary mission affairs of mutual interest of the various mission fields;

11. To have the “Agreement of Co-operation between the FRC’s in South Africa” signed by all co-operating churches;
12. To divide the different tasks amongst themselves;
13. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 23 Deputies Liturgical Music.

Rev. J. van der Linden, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

1. Report deputies Liturgical Music.
2. Proposal Classis North regarding new Skrifberymings.

Synod decides:

1. To accept the following criteria and principles as the new way to look at the whole of our Hymnal:

1 The Hymns of the church must be faithful to Scripture

With regard to content, form and spirit the hymns must be faithful to Scripture and our Confessions. The work of God must be central in our Hymnal, and therefore the hymn must be saturated with Scripture. When a passage of Scripture is versified and composed (typically a ‘Skrifberyming’), the content and form must be faithful to the inspired Scripture text. When a hymn is not based on one specific Scripture passage, but is in accord with the message and doctrine of Scripture (Gesange/Skrifmatige lied), then it should at the very least be clear and obvious on what Scripture passages it is based. These hymns must also keep the symbolic imagery and language of Scripture itself.

2 The hymns are (a) earmarked for the whole congregation and (b) must be of the highest standard poetically and musically.

(a) Singing is an essential element in the congregation’s answer to and proclamation of the work of God. Hymns must be understandable to the congregation, but still with a rich and profound content in order for it to be to the edification of the congregation. The secret to a hymn is therefore: Simplicity with depth.

(b) Hymns must be of a high poetical value. Good poetics is that which can say a lot with only a few words. The content of the hymn must be free of cheap sentiment and artificiality. The music of the hymns must support, further and intensify the words of the hymn. The melodies must be singable to the congregation. It must be free from complicated cadences and a wide spectrum of tonalities. Hymns to the glory of God must be a harmonious unity of powerful and quality poetics and music.

Normally with the “Criteria for the selection of Hymns” there tends to be a focus on the criteria according to which each hymn individually has to be evaluated (the criteria we mentioned above). And we can try and make this set of criteria as extensive as possible. A wide range of things have been proposed in the past, formally and informally (e.g. the hymns must sing about the collective “we” as church etc). And in fact it is possible to make pages of these characteristics of our Psalms. The problem is, you cannot evaluate each hymn to all of these characteristics. No hymn will ever qualify. But no individual Psalm will qualify either, if you test it to all of these characteristics. Therefore we decided on broad criteria for the evaluation of Hymns. But there is another road that is important for our process of acquiring hymns.

According to us, the criteria for the evaluation of an individual hymn does not say enough, and is only half of the picture. We want to call attention to a second aspect which is just as important for the selection of hymns: according to which criteria will a hymn *be considered* for evaluation? In other words, what is the character and aim of *the whole of*

the Hymnal (the church's corps of all songs to sing in worship) that we hope to have one day? According to us this is implicitly part of the criteria according to which we have to look at hymns. We can't just blindly choose a few hymns just because they are scripturally sound. What have we then really gained as churches? Regulating the amount of hymns we must choose (see the instruction of the Synod), does not help us very much either. It still does not show a principled way in which we must continue this path in the future. According to what principle will our children have to make decisions on more or less hymns for our worship services? We have to be accountable, for now and for the future this is very important. Therefore, according to us it is self-evident that we also have to make decisions with regards to our Hymnal in general (the church's corps of all songs to sing in worship).

According to synod the following principles are important for the whole of our Hymnal:

1. The Psalms form the basis of the Hymnal. New hymns that are included in the Hymnal, basically have the function to enlarge the Psalm book. It has the function to add to the Psalm book, not to replace the Psalms or to draw attention away from the Psalms.

The Psalms are something that has been given to the church as a Hymnal by God Himself. It contains more than only the guidelines for how our hymns of worship should be, they *are* the hymns for our worship services. Just as the Old Testament is still the beginning and basis of God's revelation to his New Testament church, so the Psalm book is still the beginning and basis of God's Hymnal to his church. Just as the substance of the covenant in the old and new dispensation has not changed, so the Psalms are today still suitable and valuable for the New Testament church.

2. The above mentioned entails that hymns that are being added to the Psalms, will be hymns that deal with the "more" of the new covenant. Although in principle almost all God's works are already revealed in the Old Testament (and in the Psalms), it is important that the congregation must live and sing according to the riches of the new covenant. According to this principle it is not merely "acceptable" to add new hymns to the Psalms, but necessary (a practice that is also already known to us through the 'Skrifberymings').

The hymn especially has the purpose to remember God's great deeds. This is the reason why Scripture calls for a "new hymn" every time God does something new. If this is already applicable in the Old Testament, how much more, then, does this apply to the great deeds of God in and through his Son, Jesus Christ? The New Testament hymn clearly has direct ties to the Old Testament revelation, yet it sings of a new wealth and reality that greatly surpasses the Old Testament. In this regard the church of Christ may not live spiritually poorer than the life that God bestowed upon her! Both aspects of the hymn, as proclamation (of the Word) and as answer (to God's Word), makes the hymn on the New Testament reality necessary and indispensable.

3. To come to a balanced Hymnal for our worship services, it is necessary that this "more" of the new covenant is translated into themes and subjects according to which hymns can be looked for. Instead of evaluating all the hymns that we can possibly find, we think it will be better to look for hymns according to these specific themes and subjects, and even to encourage translations and new hymns on these subjects.

Although it is not so easy to put together such a list of themes and subjects, we think it is necessary for this process in which we are looking for hymns on the "more" of the new covenant. On the one hand this will help to establish and keep the specific place and value that the Psalm book has in our tradition, on the other hand it will keep us focused on what we wish to achieve with the whole of our Hymnal. Instead of being flooded with hymns ("he who accepts the one hymn, cannot, with the same principles, refuse the next Scripturally sound hymn"), we can now look at what this specific hymn offers to help us sing the fullness of God's words and deeds – especially in the light of those subjects on which we have no or very little hymns. We believe that a clear and limited process like

this will also help to establish peace in the churches with regard to this issue, while still living in the full riches of the New Testament.

4. Naturally we will bring into calculation the ‘Skrifberymings’ we already have, when looking for hymns on the “more” of the New Testament. The ‘Skrifberymings’ are already part of the Hymnal. We are grateful for this and accept them for use in our churches. Themes and subjects that are already sufficiently covered by these ‘Skrifberymings’, do not need any extra work and attention.

5. The rich diversity of faith experience in the Psalms must be preserved at all cost. The Hymnal as a whole must give a balanced view of the normal Christian life, namely sin, struggle, judgment, grace, righteousness, suffering, charity, atonement, godliness etc.

If point 3 is taken seriously, then maybe it is not necessary to make this proposition, because the faith experience of the Psalm book will not be in question. But this issue is so important that we feel we still have to draw specific attention to it. Unfortunately we see in a lot of the new Hymnals (as well as in a lot of the hymns themselves), a one-sided focus on a one-sided form of praise. Although a hymn like that can be accepted as Scripturally sound, a Hymnal full of these hymns will most probably bring a totally new faith experience in the churches. Let us be very careful here, because the faith experience of the “Evangelicals” have dragged a lot of people away from the Reformed faith – especially through hymns and “praise and worship”! In other words, putting together a Hymnal is not about “what the congregation likes to sing”, but about the path and the faith experience the Lord puts on her lips to sing.

“If you wish to see the holy church depicted in living colours, and given a living form, in a painting in miniature, then place the Book of Psalms in front of you” - M Luther (Preface to the Psalms).

6. As churches we have a strong bond with the church of Jesus Christ through the ages – also with regard to our hymns and singing. Our Hymnal must show that we have this believe and conviction by adding hymns of the church of Christ through all times and places.

2. To mandate deputies to evaluate the new Skrifberymings with the approved criteria using the report from Classis North;
3. To approve the BoP (including the liturgical forms and confessions) for general use in our bond of churches;
4. To approve the following hymns 124, 239, 241, 244, 273, 290, 305, 430, 431, 435, 485 from the Liedboek van die Kerk (2001) for use in worship services for a trial period;

Ground:

These hymns have been tested and approved by deputies according to the approved criteria but have not been sent to the churches for comments.

5. To appoint deputies with the following mandate:
 1. To send within 18 months a provisional collection of the approved and possibly to be selected hymns and new skryfberymings and the approved criteria to the Afrikaans churches for evaluation by these churches, asking the churches to respond within 6 months;
 2. To take into account the incoming comments in a proposal for next synod for final approval of those hymns and skrifberymings;
 3. To find a practical way to publish the approved hymns and skrifberymings and take copyright issues into consideration;
 4. To have a (new) look at the list of themes and subjects for our church hymns (Psalms, Skrifberymings, etc) as included in the supplement of the report 2011, with the purpose of possible expansion and improvement;
 5. To have another look at the *Liedboek* for hymns that can be added to our current Psalm book/Hymnal to sing the fullness of Scripture. After this has been completed, to regard the contribution of the *Liedboek* for our Hymnal as finished and look at other possibilities and sources for suitable hymns;

6. To send the “Criteria for the selection of hymns” to the Sotho- and English speaking churches for discussion and consideration and to take it as basis for their own process of putting together a Hymnal;
7. To translate the document ‘Skryf en kerklied’ into English (within six months) and send it to all the churches;
8. To investigate the possibility of singing of the Psalms in the Sotho-speaking churches;
9. To evaluate the current Hymnal of the Sotho speaking churches on the basis of the current criteria, and standardise (at least for the moment) their hymnal;
10. To contact the deputies of the GKSA regarding the revision of the Totius Psalmberyming with the intention to:
 - a. Relay our wish to retain the Totius beryming;
 - b. To investigate whether the revised Totius beryming can be used for our Psalter.
11. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 24 Deputies Afrikaans Bible Translation.

Material:

Report Deputies Bible Translation.

Synod decides:

1. To appoint two deputies from the north of the country as full members of the KA in order to represent the FRCSA in the process of the Afrikaans Bible translation;
2. To appoint deputies with the following mandate:
 - a. To supervise and be involved with new developments, regarding the new translation of the Bible into Afrikaans;
 - b. To take part in the proceedings of the KA, and if necessary with reference to our confession regarding the written Word of God and the distinction between canonical and apocryphal books;
 - c. To inform the churches of progress and developments with the Afrikaans translation;
 - d. To keep the readers up to date with the progress of the Afrikaans translation, and involve them as soon as needed;
 - e. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 25 Deputies ad article 19 CO.

Br. B. Meijering, deputy, was telephonically present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 19 CO.

Synod decides:

1. To add to the proposed bursary form the following under E3: A loan or bursary does not guarantee a call into the ministry;
2. To approve the amended form;
3. To assess the churches an amount of R65 per member for 2011.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To financially support students from within the MTS or those who are undergraduate students with a view to study for the ministry of the Word, in accordance with article 19

- CO and the synodical regulations;
2. To assess the churches an amount of R65 per member for 2011 and to assess the churches for 2012, 2013 and 2014 with an amount to be decided at the ad-hoc synod early 2012;
 3. To present a revised budget before the end of 2011 to deputies for Financial Review to be presented at the ad-hoc synod;
 4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod;
 5. Since the current deputies will all be replaced, synod requests them to stay on until the ad hoc synod, in order to safeguard continuity.

Article 26 Deputies ad article 11 CO.

Br. H. Pouwels, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 11 CO.

Synod acknowledges:

1. That institution of churches depends on a certain level of financial accountability and the ability in supporting their minister's basic needs.

Synod recommends:

1. Consistories determine the stipend of their ministers according to their own circumstances.
2. That other options (such as part-time or tent maker ministries) be considered by consistories if support from art 11 is not sufficient.

Synod decides:

1. To assess the churches for 2011 an increased amount per member that falls within the approved increase of 10% for the overall denominational contributions;
2. To approve the allocation of the former disenchanted fund of R110,000 (R128,000 with interest) to support the purchase of a manse in Bethal;
3. To approve deputies' approach not to search for additional assistance abroad but to maintain current support structures in Canada and Australia;
4. Not to appoint ministers as deputies ad article 11 CO to avoid them being subjectively involved.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To assess the churches for the calendar year 2011 for R220 per member and to assess the churches for 2012, 2013 and 2014 with an amount to be decided at the ad-hoc synod early 2012;
2. To consider any request for financial support coming from one of the churches and once the merits of the request have been ascertained to send a proposal to the other churches to help the needy church according to ability;
3. To present a revised budget before the end of 2011 to deputies for Financial Review to be presented at the ad-hoc synod;
4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 27 Deputies for the Correspondence with the Government.

Br. J. Smit, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report deputies for the correspondence with the Government. Appendix 12

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. In matters pertaining to the interest of the country, in happiness or in sorrow, depending on the circumstances, to condole with or congratulate the government;
2. To react appropriately on government measures that compromise the protection of the preaching of the gospel;
3. To testify to government in cases where the government transgresses the universal law of God and to reflect on the specific nature and function of this mandate to the next synod;
4. To receive correspondence from government and to make such correspondence known to the churches;
5. To stimulate the congregations within the FRCSA for an active approach to government and investigate the possibility to react to the invitation from government on new and revised laws;
6. To stay in contact with the deputies of the GKSA and the PD to investigate the most appropriate way of co-operation;
7. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 28 Deputies ad article 49 CO.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 49 CO.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To render services to the classes in accordance with article 49 CO;
2. To submit their reports of a visit to a classis immediately after that visit;
3. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 29 Deputies Curators.

Material:

Report deputies curators.

Synod acknowledges:

1. That God has given different gifts and opportunities to different people, and that He follows his own path with each of them;
2. That God uses people in his churches in different ways and ministries. Because of this the churches need to consider via deputies which other ministries could function in our churches. Functioning on different expertise levels necessitates different levels of training. This implies that there will be different routes at different stages for different students.

With regard to the office of minister of the Word, synod recommends in general that the following routes would be the most appropriate:

- 1 That theological students from the older churches in the federation make use of the CRTS of the sister churches in Canada, after attaining their BA degree (with the languages Hebrew, Greek and preferably also Latin) at a university in their neighbourhood. For the future students are discouraged to make use of the Theological University in Kampen (Netherlands) for pre-graduate studies.

Grounds:

It has been experienced in the past that it is difficult for South African students to adapt in Kampen, especially because of a different academic organisation of the

theological program of studies. In South Africa students are used to the Anglo Saxon system, comprising of a BA degree of 3 years and a BTh degree of 3 to 4 years. The system in the Netherlands is different, and therefore South African students with a BA degree are not credited for this in the Netherlands. Students are forced to study a couple of years longer, causing unnecessary duplication. Since South African students in the FRCSA in general no longer have Dutch passports, studying in the Netherlands will be increasingly expensive. Studying in Canada however has become financially feasible due to the decision of the Canadian sister churches to support all theological students from the FRCSA.

It also became clear that the cultural adaptation in the Netherlands is a huge challenge for South African students.

The report of DRCA indicates that there are concerns with regard to the allegiance of some Kampen lecturers to Scripture and confession, and that this situation is not addressed adequately by the churches.

- 2 That theological students from the mission churches and newly instituted churches in Classis North make use of the MTC, followed with a Plus Program presented under the responsibility of DC, making use of the CRTS wherever possible.
- 3 That theological students from the mission churches and newly instituted churches in Classis South make use of the GWC, followed with a Plus Program presented under the responsibility of DC, making use of the CRTS wherever possible.

Ground to 2 & 3:

- Practical participation of theological students on the mission field is regarded as very constructive for their education and spiritual development.

Synod decides:

- 1 To mandate DC to consult with the MTC regarding ongoing support whether in the form of finances or lecturers;
- 2 To officially participate in the RTTI initiated by the Reformed Church of Rietvallei, Pretoria, with the objective of working towards a single and local training institution suitable for all the theological students from the FRCSA, in line with the decisions made by synod Cape Town 2006 to work towards a MTS;

Grounds:

The objectives of the RTTI are in line with what previous synods have decided regarding theological training.

- 3 To mandate DC to interact and cooperate with the local churches in the FRCSA in the process of establishing the RTTI;
- 4 To mandate DC to request the next convening church for an ad-hoc synod, if need be, for the formal implementation of the RTTI;
- 5 To mandate DC to appoint either a NC or a special committee tasked with:
 - a. To refine the description of the modules and content based on the outcomes set by synod Cape Town 2006;
 - b. To work towards a uniform standard for all students in the federation, starting to compile a training manual with profiles, outcomes and learning goals in theological training format and context.

Ground:

The development of theological training within the FRCSA remains a priority.

- 6 To appoint as regional coordinator for classis North: Rev. P.G. Boon;
- 7 To appoint as regional coordinator for classis South: Dr. J.A. Breytenbach;
- 8 To present a revised budget before the end of 2011 to deputies for Financial Review to be presented at the ad-hoc synod;
- 9 To approve the following budget and to set the contribution per member at R 90.00 per annum for calendar year 2011 with an annual increase according to the inflation rate;

Item	Description	Amount (ZAR)
1	Administration, archiving	8,000.00

2	Administrative assistant	50,000.00
3	Lecturing costs for Plus Program	50,000.00
4	Conferences (office bearers / men)	25,000.00
5	Pastors Seminars	30,000.00
6	Expenses for Regional Coordinators and for the execution of mandate 6	150,000.00
7	Costs Deputies Curators	30,000.00
	Total:	343,000.00
	Total expected income: ca. 1300members x R 90 x 3 years = R 351,000.00	

- 10 To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 30 Synod Treasurer.

Br. E.J. van Vondel, deputy, was telephonically present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report synod treasurer. Appendix 15

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To issue semiannual statements at the end of May and September to the churches;
2. To request the churches to settle their accounts within 30 days;
3. To assess the churches with the following amounts for the calendar year 2011:
 - a. Denominational expenses: R20 per member
 - b. Needy churches: R220 per member
 - c. Needy students: R65 per member
4. To cooperate with the deputies Financial Review on the annual assessments;
5. To accept a collection schedule instead of the aforementioned assessment per member from the following churches: Belhar, Bethal, Mamelodi and Soshanguve-North and possibly newly instituted churches that will fall within this schedule;
6. To pay the deputies the assigned budgets at their request;
7. To reimburse travel expenses and other expenses made by deputies at their request;
8. To reimburse the air travel expenses of classes at their request;
9. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 31 Stated Clerk and Archive.

Synod decides:

1. To request the classes to inform the stated clerk and the other classes when changes are made in deputies;
2. To revise the current rules of synod to include the changes made since the synod of 2005;
3. To request the deputies ad article 49 CO to submit their reports of a visit to a classis immediately after that visit;
4. To investigate whether the synodical archive needs to be moved to a secure place with more space or whether the archiving church can accommodate for the required space;
5. To mandate deputies to request the appointed deputies on the progress of their mandates;
6. To request the various deputies to submit their reports no later than 4 months before opening of synod;
7. To request the various deputies to submit their reports in English, except those deputies

who deal with mainly Afrikaans issues. They are requested to submit with their report an English summary.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To include the current Rules of Synod as an appendix in the acts;
2. To serve the next synod with a proposal regarding revised Rules of Synod;
3. To re-formulate article 2 of Rules of Synod in order to make provision for foreign delegates which are not elders or ministers, by formulating the status of advisors in such a way that it is in line with Scriptural teachings concerning the functioning of females and non-office bearers in the church.
4. To run upon instruction from the synod or the convening church the administration of the synod;
5. To act as the archivist in collaboration with the archive church;
6. To sell acts of the synods against cost price to those who are interested;
7. To eventually merge and publish the revised Church Order and Rules of Synod in all three languages used in our churches, as well as the order of the service, as established in 1990, article 14;
8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 32 Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.

Material:

Report auditor of the treasurer's books. Appendix 16

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To audit the books of the synod treasurer annually;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 33 Inspection of the Archive.

Material:

Report Inspection of the archive. Appendix 17

Synod decides:

1. To reaffirm that incoming proposals from classes and outgoing letters are duly signed by chairman and clerk. Electronic scans are accepted in this regard;
2. To appoint deputies with the following mandate:
 - a. To examine the synodical archive in accordance with the rules of synod;
 - b. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 34 Internet Communication.

Synod decides to appoint new deputies with the following mandate:

1. To come forward with a Web policy for the FRCSA (making use of the material already available amongst our sister churches). Such a policy must at least define:
 - a. Purpose of the Website
 - b. The type of content to be published.

- c. The responsible parties for providing the content.
- d. The control over content.
- e. The rights individual entities (churches, schools, classes etc) have over their own part of the Website. (to place and update content)

Ground: There is no such policy currently.

2. To continue with the current website until the policy has been accepted.

Ground: The current website would otherwise disappear.

3. To present a budget needed to put the policy into practice.
4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.
5. Three Deputies are needed:
 - a. One deputy for executing the mandate and an alternate.
 - b. One deputy for making sure existing website stays live.

Article 35 Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.

Material:

Report from Classis North regarding days of prayer. Appendix 18

Synod decides to appoint classis North with the following mandate:

1. To nominate, in line with article 69 CO a day of prayer;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 11 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 36 Appointments.

Synod went into closed session. The officers of synod presented their proposal with the use of confidential letters from various deputies with their recommendations for appointment. Classis South nominated candidate curators and both classes nominated candidates for deputies ad article 49 CO.

Synod decides to request the deputies of MDSA, Article 11, Article 19 and curators not re-appointed at this synod to make themselves available for the Indaba.

Material:

Request from Classis North March 2011 regarding workload ministers.

Synod appoints:

- 1. Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.**
Br. C. Roose (convenor), Pretoria, Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. D.M. Boersma, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. H. de Jager, Pretoria, Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Bethal
- 2. Deputies Relations with churches in South Africa.**
Rev. H.H. van Alten (convenor) Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town, Rev. J.J. Drijfhout, Pretoria
- 3. Deputies Revision Liturgical Forms and Form Prayers.**
Rev. C. Kleijn (convenor), Johannesburg, Rev. J.J. Drijfhout, Pretoria, Br. H. Snijder, Pretoria
- 4. Mission Deputies.**
Br. R. Snijder (convenor), Johannesburg, Br. T. de Wit, Pretoria, Br. H. Snijder (accountant), Pretoria, Sr. T. Bijker, Pretoria, Br. J. Smit, Pretoria

- 5. Deputies Liturgical Music.**
Br. F.J. van der Meer (convenor), Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. J. van der Linden, Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. B.A. Matlaela, Soshanguve-North, Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. G.F. Mnisi, Pretoria-Maranata
- 6. Deputies Afrikaans Bible Translation.**
Rev. H.H. van Alten, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), Rev. J. van der Linden, Pretoria-Maranata
- 7. Deputies ad article 19 CO.**
Br. E.J. de Wit (convenor), Pretoria; Br. M. Bijker, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. A. Boon, Pretoria, Br. A. de Lange, Pretoria
- 8. Deputies ad article 11 CO.**
Br. H. Pouwels (convenor), Br. M. Bijker, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. W. Miske, Pretoria-Maranata
- 9. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.**
Br. G.R. Stolper (convenor), Pretoria, Br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. M.P. Magagula, Pretoria-Maranata
- 10. Deputies ad article 49 CO.**
Classis North: Rev. P.G. Boon Pretoria-Maranata, Rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi
Substitute: Rev. T. de Boer, Pretoria-Maranata
Classis South: Rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg, Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town
Substitute: Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Bethal
- 11. Deputies Curators.**
Br. R. Meeske (convenor), Johannesburg, Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town, Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Bethal, Rev. J. Mhlanga, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. A.J. van der Lugt, Cape Town Br. A Smit (accountant), Pretoria-Maranata
Substitutes:, Rev. C.A. van Wyk, Cape Town, Rev. J. van der Linden, Cape Town, Rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi
- 12. Synod Treasurer.**
Br. E.J. van Vondel (convenor), Cape Town, Br. W.R. Hoving, Cape Town
- 13. Stated clerk, archive and Revision of Synod rules.**
Br. C. Roose (convenor), Pretoria, Br. A.W. Herder, Johannesburg
- 14. Archive Church.**
Church of Pretoria
- 15. Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.**
Br. H. van der Linden (convenor), Cape Town, Br. C. Kooyman, Cape Town
- 16. Inspection of the Archive.**
Sr. M.A. Bijker, Johannesburg (convener); Br. D.A. Byker, Johannesburg
- 17. Internet Communication.**
Br. T. De Wit (convenor), Pretoria, Br. G.D. Bijker, Pretoria
Substitute: Br. H. Bijker, Pretoria
- 18. Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.**
Classis North
- 19. Finances and National Conference / Indaba**
Br. H. Pouwels (convenor), Pretoria, Br. H. Snijder, Pretoria, Br. R. Meeske, Johannesburg

Article 37 Letter to the President

The following letter is approved to be submitted to the president:

The President,
Mr. J. Zuma
Private Bag X1000

Pretoria
0001

The synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa met from the 13th of June till the 16th of June 2011 in Pretoria. The delegates expressed the wish to assure you of their prayers for you in your responsible task as President of our country. We realise this is no easy task in a country with so many needs and challenges. We pray that the Lord our God may grant you the necessary wisdom, guidance and strength for that task.

We pray that through your government the kingdom of Christ may be promoted and His church may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. May you seek your help in Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Ruler of the kings of the earth, and in the Word of God.

We greet you in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour,

Rev. C. Kleijn	Chairman
Rev. P.G. Boon	Vice Chairman
Mr. T. de Wit	Clerk

Article 38 Personal question period

No questions are raised.

Article 39 Appointment of convening church of next synod

The church of Bethal was appointed to convene next synod, to be held in May 2014, with the church of Johannesburg as the alternate.

Ground: it is a good habit that Synod is held alternately in Classis North and Classis South.

Article 40 Adoption of Acts and approval of press release

The office bearers of the moderamen were appointed to prepare the Acts for publication. The press release will be prepared by the vice-chairman.

Article 41 Censure ad Article 48 CO

The chairman concluded with gratitude that censure ad article 48 CO was not necessary and noted with thanks that synod could work through the items on the agenda in good harmony.

Article 42 Closing of Synod

On behalf of synod the vice-chairman expressed his appreciation for the capable manner in which Rev. Kleijn had chaired the sessions and addressed synod. The meeting sang Ps. 146 (BoP) and the vice-chairman read Rev. 22 after which he led in closing prayer. The chairman declared synod Pretoria 2011 closed.

Finis

Appendix 1.1: Report Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad

Reports for Synod Mamelodi 2011 of the FRCSA / VGKSA

**Report of Deputies for
Relations with Churches Abroad**

Contents

Table of Contents

1	GENERAL	37
1.1	DEPUTIES	37
1.2	MANDATE	37
1.3	ACTIVITIES	37
1.4	COMPILATION OF THIS REPORT	38
2	CONTACT WITH SISTER CHURCHES	38
2.1	FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA (FRCA)	38
2.2	CANADIAN AND AMERICAN REFORMED CHURCHES (CANRC)	41
2.3	REFORMED CHURCHES IN THE NETHERLANDS (LIBERATED) (RCNL)	44
3	CONTACT WITH OTHER CHURCHES	61
3.1	REFORMED CHURCHES IN NEW ZEALAND (RCNZ)	61
3.2	CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA	62
3.3	CHURCHES IN AFRICA	62
4	ICRC	64
4.1	REPORT ON THE ICRC MEETING DURING OCTOBER 2009 IN CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND	64
5	FRCSA INFORMATION BOOKLET	68
5.1	ACTIVITIES	68
5.2	CONCLUSION	68
6	LIAISON FOR THE CHURCHES	68
6.1	ACTIVITIES	68
6.2	CONCLUSION	68
7	BUDGET	69
8	PROPOSED MANDATE FOR 2011-2014	69
9	APPENDICES	71
9.1	ADDRESS TO SYNOD BURLINGTON (EBENEZER) 2010 (§2.2)	71
9.2	MINUTES OF MEETINGS WITH THE DGK AND GKN (§ 2.3.5)	75

1 General

Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad (DRCA) herewith submit to Synod Mamelodi 2011 its report on the period 2008-2011 and its recommendations for the period 2011 – 2014.

1.1 Deputies

Synod Cape Town 2008 appointed the following brothers as Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad: Rev. DM Boersma, Rev. PG Boon, Rev. C Kleijn and br. C Roose (convenor). All four brothers served as deputies for the full period of 3 years.

1.2 Mandate

Deputies report on the mandate given by Synod Cape Town 2008, found in Acts of Synod, art. 19. The applicable mandate is mentioned at the beginning of each section. Where necessary, other decisions of Synod Cape Town have been included.

1.3 Activities

In order to spread the workload, the deputies assigned geographical regions to the members as follows:

ICRC conference 2009	: C Roose
Europe	: PG Boon & C Roose
Australia, New Zealand	: C Kleijn
Northern America	: DM Boersma
Secretary/minutes	: DM Boersma

Deputies met 10 times: 4th August 2008; 1st December 2008; 9th March 2009; 25th May 2009; 31st August 2009; 22nd February 2010; 6th May 2010; 12th August 2010; 25th November 2010 and 3rd February 2011. Additional meetings together with Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa (DCCSA) were held on 5th November 2008 and 9th January 2009. A representative of the *Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad* (CRCA) of the RCNL, Rev. JM van Leeuwen, was also present during the January meeting.

DRCA accepted four invitations to visit sister churches abroad:

- Rev. PG Boon visited the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (liberated) (RCNL; in Dutch: GKv) and addressed their Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008. He also used the opportunity to meet with members of the *Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad* of our Dutch sister churches.
- Br. C Roose visited the Free Reformed Churches in Australia. Although DRCA was invited to attend the FRCA Synod, it was not possible to do that, as this visit was supposed to coincide with a visit to New Zealand to attend the ICRC conference 2009. Br. Roose however was able to provide information on our churches to members of the FRCA in congregational meetings in Western Australia. He also attended a meeting of the FRCA's DRCA.
- Rev. DM Boersma visited the Canadian and American Reformed Churches and addressed their Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) 2010. He was also able to do some co-ordination work for financial support by the Canadian churches for mission work and needy churches in South Africa.
- Deputies also accepted an invitation to attend and address Synod Harderwijk 2011 of the RCNL and appointed br. C Roose to be the FRCSA's delegate to that Synod. As this meeting is scheduled to take place after writing this report, deputies intend to submit an additional report on his visit to Synod Harderwijk as soon as possible.

Br. Roose also attended the ICRC conference 2009 which took place in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Due to the confusing situation around the RCNL and some groups of Reformed believers who separated from that bond of churches, DRCA decided to schedule an extra visit to the Netherlands in order to get some clarity on the whole situation. This was deemed necessary in order to be able to serve Synod Mamelodi with sound advice and responsible recommendations. Rev. PG Boon was appointed as our representative and he travelled to The Netherlands and had meetings with most of the relevant groups.

Deputies also co-ordinated actions to support needy church communities in Zimbabwe by means of providing religious literature and clothing.

After the catastrophic earth quake In Haiti, DRCA co-ordinated financial support activities from our churches for that country, to ensure that the aid was used in the correct way.

1.4 *Compilation of this report*

This report was compiled by all four deputies. It includes reports from each member of DRCA concerning his specific area of responsibility. All these reports were finally brought together in one main report. DRCA assumes full responsibility for the total content of this report.

Recommendations

DRCA requests Synod to adopt the following general recommendations:

3. To appoint new deputies for the 2011 – 2014 period.
4. To honourably discharge Rev. C Kleijn as a deputy for Relations with Churches Abroad after his service of 3 x 3 years from 2002 – 2011.
5. To appoint the following brothers as deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad for the 2011 – 2014 period: Rev. PG Boon, Rev. DM Boersma, Br. C Roose (convenor) and Br. Herman de Jager.

Grounds

1. According to art 9 of the Rules of Synod (art 10 in the old blue booklet), as adopted by the FRCSA Synod 2005 (art 25), deputies should not serve for more than three consecutive terms.
2. Rev. C Kleijn has served three consecutive terms in DRCA.

2 Contact with sister churches

This chapter describes what deputies did to carry out the mandates of Synod Cape Town 2008 to maintain relations with our sister churches.

2.1 *Free Reformed Churches in Australia (FRCA)*

Mandate

1. To continue sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules.
2. To authorise deputies to send one delegate to the FRCA in 2009 (to coincide with the ICRC) and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.

2.1.1 *Activities*

Deputies sent the Acts of Synod Cape Town 2008 to the FRCA deputies in electronic format. DRCA

received the Acts of Synod Legana 2009 in electronic format. They also sent br. C Roose to visit the FRCA and to give presentations on the FRCSA. He addressed two meetings, one in Albany to the combined FRC congregations of Albany and West Albany and one in Armadale to combined FRC congregations in the Perth Metropolitan area. He also attended a meeting of the FRCA's DRCA, where he gave two hard copies of the Acts of the Synod Cape Town 2008 to the Australian brothers and where he in turn received two hard copies of the Acts of Synod Legana, 2009. Information relevant for both federations of churches was exchanged and the following matters of mutual interest were discussed:

- The FRCSA's relation with the Reformed Church "Die Kandelaar".
- Effect of the merger of churches in the Netherlands to form the PKN, on the Reformed churches in South Africa (RCSA).
- Needy Churches within the FRCSA bond of churches.
- Developments in our Dutch sister churches, the RCNL.
- Relation of the FRCA with the RCNZ.
- The FRCA's opinion of the Christian Reformed Churches in Australia (CRCA).
- The FRCA's opinion on certain developments in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA).

Information was also obtained that two new FRCA congregations were to be instituted in Western Australia, being:

- the FRC of Busselton as a daughter of the FRC of Bunbury.
- the FRC of Mundijong, originating from the FRC of Byford.

The FRC of Armadale takes care of a growing house congregation in Cairns, Queensland, which apparently includes Afrikaans speaking South African members.

2.1.2 Synod Legana 2009

a) Theological Training

Synod decided to continue to support the Hamilton Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches. Synod mandated deputies to investigate the feasibility of offering a basis year of theology to the churches in Australia, for the purpose of establishing a Theological University in the future, and to continue to investigate the possibilities of theological training by extension (IT).

b) Book of Praise

Synod decided that although there is a desire for an Australian Book of Praise, at present the Canadian Book of Praise sufficiently meets their needs. Synod also decided to invite the churches to scrutinize and test that portion of the 28 additional hymns to be adopted at the CanRC Synod 2010 outside the church services so that a following Synod, upon advice from deputies, can determine whether to adopt them.

c) Sister Church Relations

Synod decided to maintain sister church relations with the Reformed Churches of Indonesia (GGRI), the Presbyterian Churches of Korea (Kosin), the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (RCNL) and the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

d) Relations with the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA)

Synod decided to mandate deputies to coordinate responses to any requests received, and to involve the churches and/or other deputies as appropriate. Synod also mandated deputies for Relations with Sister Churches to coordinate the support for needy churches in South Africa, and give opportunity for the Australian churches to take on particular 'projects' in order to involve the congregations beyond simply finances in the support for their South African sisters. This could include continuing the support for the manse in Bethal, supporting a minister in Bethal, and/or supporting further needy church projects.

e) Relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCNL)

Synod decided to take a comprehensive approach with regards to its decision about the sister church relationship with the RCNL, instead of dealing separately and in detail with every agenda item relating to this matter. The reason to take this approach was:

1. Many of the decisions mentioned in the submissions from the churches have come to a conclusion within the RCNL. It is therefore difficult to discuss them again in detail with the deputies of the RCNL.
2. Most of these decisions appear to have a common denominator, namely a particular way of interpreting Scripture. This way of interpretation takes a starting point in man, rather than in God's Word, and it may be the result of the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age' in the church.
3. In their report deputies identify a concern that decisions made by Synod are not always upheld by the local churches. There is a measure of independentism growing within the RCNL.

Synod decided to exhort the RCNL with love and care to be faithful in their approach to hermeneutics and combating the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age'.

Some specific examples mentioned were:

- The ongoing concerns about the position of the RCNL on connecting the fourth commandment to the Lord's Day as a day of rest, as we confess in Q/A 103 of the HC.
- The concerns that the public comments of Dr. Harinck have not been retracted, even though he remains a professor in Kampen.
- The ongoing concerns regarding the administration of both sacraments for military personnel.

Deputies to be appointed were mandated to also discuss with their Dutch counterparts:

- The concerns expressed in the Report of Rev. M Nap of which Synod Zwolle Zuid 2008 has pronounced to agree with the desire of further hermeneutic study.
- The way deputies *Male/Female in the church* formulate and discuss within the RCNL the framework in which men and women serve in pastoral and diaconal tasks.
- Ongoing concerns regarding the RCNL decisions on Divorce and Remarriage.
- The continuing proliferation and the contents of new hymns.
- The view of the RCNL towards recent developments in the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken* for justifying women as elders and ministers, since this is a barrier to unity.
- The need for the RCNL to uphold the plain meaning of Scripture regarding Genesis 1-11.

In addition Synod decided:

- To share with the RCNL the observation that their current direction is placing tension on the sister church relationship.
- To call on the FRCA to frequently remember the RCNL in their prayers in view of the continuing tensions within the RCNL and between the RCNL and the FRCA.

f) Relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (restored) (RCNr)

Synod decided not to accept the RCNr request to acknowledge them as sister churches. At the same time Synod decided to continue contact with the RCNr and to encourage them to discuss the issues and

struggles of concern with the RCNL in humility and love.

g) Relations with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ)

Synod confirmed what was said by Synod 2003, namely to recognise that the RCNZ are true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Synod noted that no substantial progress has been made in the understanding between the FRCA and RCNZ on the importance of the fact that the RCNZ's relationship with the Christian Reformed Churches in Australia remains an impediment for entering into a sister church relationship with the RCNZ. Synod reaffirmed that the positive view of the FRCA towards the RCNZ has consequences in practical support and interaction, e.g. working together on the PNG mission field and supporting the theological training at the Bible College in PNG.

2.1.3 Conclusions

1. From the Acts of Synod Legana and from other contacts with them, it is clear that the FRCA wants to remain faithful to the Word of God and the Reformed confessions.

Recommendations

1. To maintain sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules.
2. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Armadale 2012 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.

Grounds

1. The FRCA give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed confessions and the Church Order.
2. Personal visits are an effective means of developing, building and maintaining good relations.
3. Both the FRCA and the FRCSA are small church federations with a similar background and some similar challenges. By maintaining good contacts and by learning from each other, both church federations will be better equipped to fulfil their God-given task to remain faithful churches of Christ in a secular world.

2.2 Canadian and American Reformed Churches (CanRC)

Mandate

1. To continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules.
2. To send one delegate to attend the next CanRC Synod and to instruct that the delegate also give presentations on the FRCSA.

2.2.1 Activities

Deputies kept contact with the Deputies of the CanRC according to the approved rules for sister church relationships.

In order to carry out mandate 2, Rev. Boersma visited churches in the Toronto area while attending Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) in May 2010. He gave presentations about the FRCSA and its mission work in two church buildings. The members of 8 churches in the region had been invited. The attendance at these evenings was low but he noted a lively interest in the hearts of the people present.

Before and after the Synod he also made contact with the Coaldale Committee for the support of the FRCSA on behalf of SDSA and our deputies ad art. 11. The results of these contacts were shared with the deputies.

Deputies are grateful for the willingness God has given in the hearts of our Canadian brothers and sisters to support our federation. Synod Smithers 2007 declared us worthy of ongoing support and asked the churches to support us financially. The church of Coaldale was appointed to coordinate this. It is our impression that the Coaldale committee works diligently at informing the Canadian churches. A lot of support has already come in.

At Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) the same spirit was present. Rev. Boersma's speech was appreciated and the desire to support us was repeated. After Synod was concluded, Rev. Aasman, one of the editors of *Clarion*, the official CanRC magazine, wrote an editorial about our federation. Just before that, the Coaldale committee also informed the readers. We have many reasons to be thankful for the support of our sister churches.

2.2.2 Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) 2010

Rev. Boersma visited the CanRC Synod in May 2010.

The discussions at Synod showed a strong commitment to the authority of the Scriptures and an awareness of the challenges that face the church today.

a) Theological Seminary

The former Theological College is now officially called The Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary.

Two new professors were appointed: dr. Jannes Smit as the successor of dr. C. van Dam in Old Testament and Dr. Jason van Vliet as the successor of dr. N Gootjes in Dogmatology. Prof Van Dam has reached retirement age, while Prof Gootjes received early retirement due to health issues.

A process has been started to rearrange the workload of the professors over five professors instead of four.

The mandatory *Pastoral Training Program* for future ministers is functioning well.

b) Church unity process with the URCNA

During Synod, a dialogue was held with representatives of the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA). The CanRC is pursuing unity talks with this federation (which came out of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) after 1996) but the process is slow. Since most of the URCs are in the USA, the URCs feel they don't know the CanRC well enough. Also, there are questions in the URC about the doctrine of the covenant in the CanRC.

Synod decided to reappoint the committee for **Theological Education**. This committee hit an impasse in the discussions with the URCNA. The URC does not have any theological seminaries that are under supervision of their Synod (through deputies curators). The CanRC, however, has their own federational seminary. Synod Smithers 2007 did say that a federational seminary is not a Scriptural mandate, but the CanRC wants to keep a federational seminary because the churches keep better control of the training of ministers. Therefore, the committee proposed a hybrid model: the combined federation allows for two non-federational seminaries (as the URCNA is used to) and places the supervision of the Theological Seminary in Hamilton in the hands of a provincial Synod in Canada.

Synod did not accept this proposal but decided to continue to strive for a seminary governed by all the churches in the new federation (under the supervision of General Synod).

The Committee for a **Common Songbook** did not report any progress in the discussions with their counterpart of the URC. URC Synod Schererville 2007 had changed the mandate of their committee and they have begun changing their own *Psalter Hymnal*. Synod Burlington decided to remain committed to a new Common Songbook in the future federation with the URC.

The proposed **Church Order** for a future joint federation was largely adopted and provisionally adopted until such time as the joint federation becomes a reality. In the meantime, the existing Church Order (1983) remains in effect.

URCNA response

Later that year, the URCNA had their Synod. They reappointed their Church Order committee with a limited mandate and did not reappoint the committees for the Common Songbook and Theological Education, due to concerns within the URCs about the unity process. The letter from their Synod expressed that they remain committed to work toward 'reconciliation in obedience to the ecumenical imperatives of Scripture', but indicated that more work must be done within the URCNA on a local level first, before the process can move forward. This may slow down the unity process considerably.

c) Contact with the RCNL (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated))

The report of deputies for contact with churches abroad (CCCA) showed concern regarding the RCNL because of questions regarding teachers at their Theological University. Synod shared their concern about the apparent change of hermeneutics in the RCNL and the discussions about the role of women in the church. Therefore it appointed a temporary subcommittee to investigate the situation in the Dutch sister churches. This committee was tasked to discuss the concerns of Synod with the Dutch deputies.

d) Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

Synod repeated the 2007 decision that the FRCSA is worthy of financial assistance. It recommended to the churches that they help our federation with our mission work and relief efforts among the disadvantaged.

e) Relations with other churches abroad

Many delegates of sister churches were received at Synod. Among them were: Église Réformée du Québec, URC, OPC, FRCA and the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

A new relationship was created with the Reformed Churches of Indonesia. Synod decided not to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the RPCNA because they appoint women deacons.

f) Revision of the *Book of Praise*

The discussions with the URC about a new Common Songbook did not stop the CanRC from improving their current *Book of Praise*. A committee has been busy to revise the Psalms and to add new hymns. Deputies were instructed to publish the interim version of the hymnbook for use in the churches, and to present the final version to Synod 2013 for approval.

g) Lord's Supper

Synod decided that celebrating the Lord's Supper outside the church building (and the regular worship service) in places like old age homes is within the limits of the Church Order.

2.2.3 Conclusions

1. From the Acts of Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) and from other contacts with them, it is clear that the CanRC wants to remain faithful to the Word of God and the Reformed confessions.

Recommendations

1. To maintain sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules.
2. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Carman West 2013 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA .

Grounds

1. The CanRC give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed confessions and the Church Order.
2. Personal visits are an effective means of developing, building and maintaining good relations.
3. Both the CanRC and the FRCSA are church federations with a similar background and some similar challenges. By maintaining good contacts and by learning from each other, both church federations will be better equipped to fulfil their God-given task to remain faithful churches of Christ in a secular world.

2.3 Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) (RCNL)

The Dutch abbreviation is GKv: Gereformeerde Kerken (vrijgemaakt). Website: www.gkv.nl

Mandate

Decisions of Synod Cape Town 2008:

1. To express its thankfulness to the LORD for the diverse contacts with the RCNL, varying from the exchange of attestations, assistance with Theological training, cooperation in mission, mutual use of publications, etc.
2. To continue the sister church relationship with the RCNL.
3. To call on the FRCSA to frequently remember the RCNL in their prayers, in view of the continuing tensions within these churches.
4. To beseech the LORD that the ecclesiastical divisions, that occurred until the recent past, will be healed through his grace and blessing.
5. To send one delegate to Synod Harderwijk 2011.

2.3.1 Activities

In June 2008 Rev. P.G. Boon, was delegated to the Synod Zwolle-Zuid.

The address he delivered to Synod is available with deputies. Furthermore his contribution to Synod discussions on the report *M/V in de kerk* is also available with deputies.

The recent years show growing tensions within the RCNL. A few reasons for this can be mentioned briefly, as they surfaced on Synod Zwolle-Zuid in 2008.

2.3.2 Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008

a) Appeals against publications of dr. G. Harinck, part time professor at the Theological University in Kampen

Dr. Harinck shocked church members in the Netherlands with certain views he expressed in the press in 2008. The university addressed the matter and published a joint declaration with dr. Harinck. Synod backed this declaration and did not deal with appeals in this regard.

However this declaration doesn't cover everything. Dr. Harinck continues to hold to his view regarding women in office, although he accepts that women cannot be office bearer in the church of which he is a member. After this declaration dr. Harinck has pleaded again in public for women in the special offices of the church. (See further Acts of Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009 Chapter 9)

Evaluation

This declaration doesn't deal with all the complaints. Although dr. Harinck is only a part time lecturer at the university, the views which he publicly expressed are not in line with the Biblical doctrine of the offices as professed in the Belgic Confession art. 30-31. It will be to the detriment of the churches and theological students when Synod and curators turn a blind eye to this.

b) Further appeals against publications of professors

Appeals have also been brought in at Synod Zwolle-Zuid against publications of other professors, complaining about liberal publications. Synod Zwolle-Zuid did not deal with these appeals substantially. They rejected the appeals on a technical point, namely that they were too late. Synod Amersfoort 2005 decided that a term of 1 year after a publication is long enough to discern a heresy. (See further Acts of Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009 Chapter 9)

Evaluation

It is a concerning tendency that the possibilities of appeal is restricted, especially with regard to issues where the Biblical doctrine is concerned. How can this term of one year serve the peace in the churches in the long term? The unrest since Zwolle-Zuid 2008 is indicative of this.

c) Report Deputies Church Unity (DKE) and contacts with the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*

From these deputies there was a majority and a minority report on Synod Zwolle-Zuid. The majority report concluded with thankfulness that there is a willingness in the NGK to bind them to the Confession. And although the *national meeting* of Lelystad of the NGK in 2004 decided to allow women in all offices in the church, this can be discussed according to the deputies and it should not be an obstacle to start with concrete preparations towards unity. Therefore they asked the following mandate from Synod Zwolle-Zuid: to start concrete preparations towards unity.

The minority report however highlights that there is no clarity yet as for the way the Confession is adhered to within the NGK. Also the so-called VOP-decision (Women Elders and Pastors) is for them a major obstacle that arose on the road towards unity.

Some churches warned Synod about the growing discrepancy between the national policy regarding

negotiations with the NGK and what is happening locally.

Evaluation

Presently there is a variety of forms of local cooperation without any existing national / federational expression of unity. Some churches warned Synod to act more principally and carefully in formulating the parameters for local cooperation. Synod however did not take the concerns of these churches on board. (See further Acts of Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009 Chapter 10)

d) Report of Deputies *M/V in de kerk* (Male/Female in the church)

Synod Amersfoort 2005 appointed deputies *M/V in de Kerk* to concentrate especially on the task of women in the church. These deputies conducted an elaborate statistical research amongst church members, from which they drew a number of conclusions like: At this stage about half of the members of the RCNL and a considerable majority of pastors are in favour of accepting women in the office of deacons. Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008 accepted their report. With regard to the above-mentioned conclusion was decided:

Decision 8: *With regard to the preparation of practical decisions Synod decided to give deputies the mandate to deal with the following questions:*

- a. Within which parameters can men and women be employed for diaconal tasks? And what are the consequences for the way the diaconal office is functioning at present?*
- b. What can be the role of women in the church service (liturgy, prayer, reading)?*
- c. Within which parameters can men and women be employed for pastoral tasks? How does this relate in practice to the office of pastor and elder?*
- d. Is it possible practically to dissociate the question regarding admitting women to the office of deacon from the question regarding admitting women to the office of elder and pastor?*

Synod Zwolle-Zuid also decided:

Decision 9: *To mandate Deputies to consider the following in the execution of their duties in decision 8:*

- a. Is there a sound and widely supported argumentation in order to take decisions in these matters?*
- b. To what extent is it necessary to take a decision in these matters as churches together? Is it possible that churches allow one another freedom in these matters? Are guidelines preferable, and if so, which?*
- c. What are the eventual implications for church and society: which consequences or side effects can the conclusions in b. have, and how should one deal with them?*
- d. At which moment is it preferable or even mandatory, in view of current agreements, to deliberate with sister churches and other church we have contacts with in Holland and abroad?*

(See Acts of Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009 Chapter 3)

Evaluation

Substantially one cannot really label the report of these deputies as right or wrong, since it focuses especially on statistics and viewpoints prevalent in the churches. A worrying side effect is however that the matter at stake (the Reformed doctrine on the offices) is made a matter of relativity. The impression arises that there is no clarity on this aspect of the Reformed doctrine (being the question whether both sexes can function in the offices), and that whilst it was clear for the church of Christ for more than

twenty centuries as is reflected in the Belgic Confession art 30 and in the reformed Church Order, the danger is that the attention shifts more to what the needs of people are, instead of asking what God expects from us. This is apparent in how deputies formulated their proposals to Synod: they concluded that, on the basis of their empirical research, there is the possibility on the short term to make a study on whether women can be ordained in the office of deacons, but (at the moment) not in the office of elder or pastor. Deputies try to address the needs. The danger is that the needs start determining the agenda.

Our observation is that the grounds for Synod decisions are under pressure to shift. Deputies often talk about whether there is support for something. Synod decided that an investigation throughout the federation had to take place. The classical approach is that deputies are appointed to study a matter and come up with Scriptural grounds, after which Synod is the body to decide. Our impression is that there is too much room for the effect of the empirical investigations, and that the views of church members, influenced by the spirit of the age, can become decisive. The churches have mandated Synod to boldly make decisions regarding all matters that have lawfully been placed on the agenda, on the basis of Scripture and Confession. She should not let itself be led by the degree of support in the churches. Article 31 of the Church Order determines how the churches are to deal with the decisions made.

2.3.3 Developments after Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008

Since 2008 the tensions in the RCNL only increased and the situation became more and more complex. For this reason Deputies RCA decided to send Rev. Boon on a fact-finding mission in October 2010, in order to be able to write an up-to-date and responsible report to the FRCSA Synod in 2011. The Deputies RCA also sent br. C. Roose to the 'Buitenlandweek' (week for foreign delegates) of Synod Harderwijk, which is scheduled for March 2011.

Within the RCNL there is a strong conviction that bridges have to be built between the church and the world, and that the church should be relevant to unbelievers. However there is a significant difference of opinion on how this missionary focus should be lived out. This results in on-going discussions on what is essential and what is only a matter of tradition. For the one the singing of Psalms is essential, for another it can be replaced by contemporary songs. For the one the organ as instrument in the church is irreplaceable, for the other not. The embarrassment of ecclesiastical division is also felt strongly, and there is an urgent desire to repair historical splits. On the one hand there are church planting initiatives within the Netherlands, leading unbelievers to repent and profess their faith. On the other hand there are some church members who are not able to deal responsibly with this focus on the world; they feel alienated from the church. The membership numbers of the RCNL are steadily decreasing. This is not only due to the secessions (towards other federations), but also to members joining Charismatic movements or withdrawing from the church altogether.

The polarisation in the churches is increasing. Unfortunately debates dealing with non-essential issues consume a lot of time and attention, like for example the use of data projectors in the church. However, deputies are convinced that in other instances essential issues are at stake, as already pointed out above

concerning Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008:

a) Women in office

According to the mandate Deputies M/V received from Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008 (see decision 8 above), they published a brochure *Handleiding M/V met het oog op het gesprek over de inzet van mannen en vrouwen in de kerk*, containing guidelines for the churches to engage in discussions about the questions posed by Synod. The brochure states that the churches haven't taken a position on the matter yet:

"The RCNL has not taken any position about the roles of men and women in the church yet. Although art. 30 and 31 of the Belgic Confession presuppose that the offices are reserved for men – based on the practice in the churches at the time – the confessions do not make explicit statements about this issue. There was no need for this for a long time, but now this need exists."

(Handleiding M/V met het oog op het gesprek over de inzet van mannen en vrouwen in de kerk, p. 4)

In this brochure Deputies also plead strongly that those in favour and those against women in the offices should respect one another's viewpoints:

"How beautiful is it when you recognize the other as a fellow believer. When you discover that your discussion partner stands on the same foundation, it gives room for a good discussion; such a discussion is not characterized by fear but influenced by God's Spirit."

A documentary DVD was compiled for the same reason.

Deputies M/W in the church also made contact with the Theological University in Kampen concerning scientific research on the matter. However, they discovered that the TU was not interested in cooperating with the Deputies in order to use them as a sounding board, and decided to report to Synod on their own. (*Rapport Deputaten M/V in de kerk*, p.3)

Deputies M/V also noticed that the Deputies busy with revising the Church Order (*Deputaten Herziening Kerkorde*) proposed in their concept the introduction of woman deacons. It was part of the mandate of Deputies M/V to investigate this matter. However the *Deputaten Herziening Kerkorde* did not have any contact with them:

"It struck us that deputies for revision of the church order have made proposals in their 'Werkorde' to change the position of deacons and thereby open the way for female deacons. They did not consult us about this. Deputies M/V chose not to make any specific proposals to hinder the discussion on this issue." (*Rapport Deputaten M/V in de kerk*, p. 4)

Evaluation

The material Deputies *M/V in de kerk* sent to the churches create a platform where members of the RCNL (including office bearers) can express themselves publicly in favour of women in the special offices of the church. This is reflected in the documentary these deputies made in 2010. It shows statistics that 25% of church members and 10% of pastors are in favour of women in the office of elder and pastor¹. In this documentary people are pleading openly for women in the offices, without refutation from the side of the deputies. The result is that the Reformed doctrine

¹ The empirical research was done in 2008 by *Deputaten M/V in de kerk*

on the offices has become a matter of debate in the RCNL. In the accompanying brochure deputies plead strongly that those in favour and those against women in the offices should respect one another's viewpoints and shouldn't denounce them. In the debate, those who are in favour of women in the offices often stress that they are not liberal. They want to remain faithful to Scripture, however they regard keeping the offices closed to women untenable in present day society.

This reasoning sounds as if they don't want to be liberal in the modern sense of the word. However this reasoning implies that present needs and views determine how a person uses and interprets Scripture. This reflects a postmodern attitude, copying and pasting whatever you can utilize from Scripture.

Regrettably one has to conclude that because of the decisions of Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008 the validity of the classical Reformed doctrine on the offices has become a matter of debate. Perhaps they will deny this. Nobody prohibits a church member to be of the opinion that only men are allowed to serve in the special offices. However Synod Zwolle-Zuid did create the field for alternative views. Instead of emphasizing the importance of doing thorough Biblical research to convince those office bearers and church members who disagree with the Reformed doctrine on the offices, calls are now being made to continue studying to see whether the deviant views can perhaps be accommodated in the future. In their publications since Zwolle-Zuid deputies warn not to take a decision in the matter yet. In their documentary deputies do not refute the views of interviewed people who plead for women in office.

It is regrettable that Deputies M/V haven't deliberated with the sister churches yet (see in this regard decision 9.d above). Instead of following the rules of sister church relationships (to consult sister churches in cases where the confession has to be changed and in other major decisions, Synod merely suggested to deputies that they consult the sister churches. They failed to do this.)

Especially with regard to this matter – where probably women can be allowed to (some) of the offices, it has a huge impact. It would necessitate changing the Confession. The Belgic Confession, when talking about the offices of pastors, elders and deacons in art. 30, refers explicitly to the rule that the apostle Paul gave to Timothy (1 Tim 3):

“By these means everything will be done well and in good order when faithful men are chosen in agreement with the rule that the apostle Paul gave to Timothy.”

In the Dutch version this reads:

“wanneer personen gekozen worden die trouw zijn, overeenkomstig de regel die de apostel Paulus daarvoor geeft in de brief aan Timoteüs.”

(NGB art. 30) The Dutch word “personen” goes back to the French version of the Belgic Confession: “quand tels personnages seront esleuz, fidele”. In the official text of the Belgic Confession as accepted by the Synod of Dordt, which is in Latin, we read: “cum viri fideles eligentur”. The Latin text explicitly refers to men.

It is therefore untenable when Deputies pose on the basis of the translation ‘personen’ that the Belgic Confession is not explicit about the matter. It clearly refers to men, leading us directly to

the instructions of the apostle Paul. And to limit Paul's instructions to his times and cultural surroundings, is a move that deputies RCA find alien to Reformed hermeneutics.

b) Proposed new church order) (Werkorde)

Synod 2008 requested deputies to rewrite the current Church Order. This – as it is called – *Werkorde* has been completed and deputies have presented it to Synod Harderwijk for a first reading.

Extensive criticism has been lodged against the *Werkorde* in several publications².

This *Werkorde* differs drastically from the current church order. For example, it creates an option to include women in the (unchanged) office of deacon, even before Synod decided anything in that direction. These deputies took this step unilaterally, without consulting with Deputies M/V in the church.

The *Werkorde* also proposes to abolish the *Particuliere Synodes*, the Provincial Synods. As a consequence, General Synod will need to meet every second year; many of the tasks of Provincial Synods need to be assigned by deputies in the future.

Evaluation

The unilateral proposals of these deputies are very worrying. It is at least disturbing that they mentioned the present agreement regarding the office of deacons as an alternative, while putting their proposal to appoint women as deacons in the main text. The proposal to abolish the Provincial Synods shows also a worrying tendency of centralisation of authority in the federation with the General Synod and deputies. The danger of '*deputyocracy*' (the rule of deputies over the church) should not be underestimated, as some of the sister churches abroad know from experience (e.g. the churches that now form the URCNA experienced this in the Christian Reformed Church).

c) Other denominations like the NGK

Since Synod Zwolle-Zuid 2008 the RCNL have an increasingly ambivalent policy with regard to cooperation with the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*. Although steps towards unity on a national level have been postponed, it proves that cooperation on a local level can be extensive. This entails amongst others pulpit exchange, joint services and celebrations of the Lord's Supper. In some cases, this involves NGK congregations who have ordained women as elders, or who do not discipline homosexual couples living together. How can the RCNL congregations live together with this? Deputies do not see any indication that major assemblies are seriously trying to halt these developments.

d) Infant baptism

In church planting projects (in Amsterdam) professed members are not expected to baptise their

² The Magazine *Nader Bekeken*, dedicated their entire October 2010 edition to the *Werkorde*. Further, dr. H.J.C.C.J. Wilschut published *De Werkorde Nagerekend. Kanttekeningen bij de conceptkerkorde voor de GKv (2010)*.

children. They have the choice for only 'consecrating' their children. Until present this practice has not been stopped by the consistory or major assemblies.

e) Theological publications

Dr. S. Paas received his doctorate in Old Testament some years ago. In his dissertation he adopts certain liberal suppositions current in the contemporary Old Testament elite of scientists with regard to the Old Testament. An example is the denial of the historicity of the exile out of Egypt as it is described in the Pentateuch. These liberal suppositions he continued to uphold in later publications. Dr. Paas is a member of the CGK. When he was appointed lecturer in Kampen a few years ago, some churches objected against his appointment.

Recently dr. K. Van Bekkum acquired his doctorate in Old Testament under the responsibility of prof. dr. G. Kwakkel in Kampen. In his dissertation dr. Van Bekkum denies the historicity of Joshua 10:12-14 (the fact that God made the sun to stand still on Joshua's request). He also questions the historicity of the fall of Jericho, as described in Joshua 6. Both dr. Paas and dr. Van Bekkum follow the reasoning that – if you want to be taken seriously in the contemporary scientific discourse, you will have to make certain hypotheses that are in conflict with Reformed hermeneutics. If you – their argumentation continues – embrace liberal viewpoints, you are able subsequently to make a positive contribution on some detail points.

Evaluation

It doesn't become clear anywhere, however, whether these theologians have denounced these liberal viewpoints afterwards.

In our opinion, the dissertation of dr. Van Bekkum also should lead to critical questions regarding the position of prof. dr. G. Kwakkel, who did not distance himself from the liberal views published. We would strongly call on the curators to execute their right in interrogating prof. dr. Kwakkel about his views in this regard. By signing the subscription form as a professor, he promised to explain his views when doubts arise about his views on any aspect of the Reformed doctrine.

It is also very worrying to us that dr. Van Bekkum has been appointed in a part-time *post doctorate* position as researcher in Old Testament studies at the TU in Kampen. According to the press release this appointment serves to start preparing successors for the current professors when they retire and to lead the scientific research in that field of study.

f) New Synod of Dordrecht

Deputies Church Unity of the RCNL decided to participate in the so-called 'New Synod of Dordrecht', that took place in December 2010. The participants in this 'Synod' issued a sort of confession or *Credo*, written by the participating churches and addressed to the population of the Netherlands.

Evaluation

The text of this confession is such that doctrinal differences between the different church federations are omitted or ignored using ambivalent formulations. The question can be asked how

much Biblical doctrine remains when the PKN, Baptist churches, Charismatic groups, the Remonstrant Brotherhood, the Algemene Doopsgezinde Sociëteit (Anabaptists), the Vrijzinnige Geloofsgemeenschap (Liberal Faith Community), the RCNL, the CGK and the NGK draft a document together. Wouldn't it have been better when the RCNL also decided, just like the Roman Catholic Church, only to be observers? The participation in this Synod betrays a change in view on the difference between the true and the false church, as professed in Belgic Confession art. 27-29.

2.3.4 Recommended approach

In this paragraph, we highlight two main issues that need to be considered in the continuation of our sister church relationship with the RCNL.

a) The decision-making process at RCNL Synods:

Underlying the issues mentioned above, deputies notice a change in the way Synods weigh issues and made decisions. The grounds for Synod decisions are shifting. Although the Bible is still considered as giving direction (Dutch: 'richtinggevend') and authoritative for decisions, it is apparent that other considerations are gaining weight:

- Hermeneutical questions undermine the authority of traditional proof texts
- Practices that have grown in the churches, although they deviate from the Church Order
- The degree of support that can be expected from church members and churches for controversial decisions (Dutch: 'draagvlak')
- The need for an open discussion, in which the accepted practices of Reformed church polity are no longer the starting point.

This development is especially evident in the discussions and decisions regarding the role of women in the church ('m/v in de kerk').

We do not doubt the sincere desire to address current questions and the good intentions to continue to do justice to the Bible. However, this direction leaves insufficient protection against modern and postmodern ideas that society imposes on the church.

We share with our sister churches the responsibility to preach, teach, and practice the Word of God in a changing society. We identify with the challenge of the Dutch churches. South African society is also rapidly changing and under the influence of postmodernism and humanism, although it seems as these have influenced Dutch church members much more deeply.

We need to call on our Dutch sister churches to prayerfully reconsider their direction in the light of their responsibility towards our Lord Jesus Christ. They need a renewed trust in the Word of God as authoritative and able to address and defeat all thoughts that are brought in against it. This will give them the courage to overcome the fear for lack of support ('draagvlak') in the churches and to make decisions that are biblical but not popular in a postmodern age. Both delegates at Synod and churches that receive their decisions need to be reminded of their promise to accept decisions according to art. 31 of the Church Order.

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Therefore,

since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” (Hebrews 4:12–14)

b) Responsibility towards our churches

The developments mentioned in § 2.3.3 deal with doctrinal matters and illustrate the growing polarisation in the RCNL.

Deputies realize that the church was never perfect. Through the ages the church has been populated by humans with their own crooked and time-bound ideas. But still the church realised through the ages that heresies had to be combated and isolated, especially when office bearers were involved. What is important for our sister church relationship, is that the RCNL guard the purity of doctrine by exercising discipline over office bearers (including professors at the Theological University) who deviate from Reformed doctrine. Deputies fear that this is no longer adequately done.

We want to avoid getting stuck in a discussion of either everything or nothing. In such a scenario one will be forced to choose for either a 100%-functioning sister church relationship or no relationship at all. Such a scenario would force one to terminate the relationship with the RCNL, to choose another sister church relationship.

The above-mentioned circumstances are the cause that sister church relations cannot function anymore as they did in the past. As Deputies RCA it is our task to point Synod to the fact that the FRCSA should be guarded against unreformed tendencies in the RCNL. Members of the FRCSA who plan to move to the Netherlands will have to be informed as well that the reformed doctrine is not adhered to fully in all congregations of the RCNL.

These comments should not be read as if the FRCSA don't have any mistakes. The matter at stake is whether a federation also takes the step to address heresies and isolate them (as agreed by signature at the ordination of each office bearer). Exactly at this point there is concern.

Approach

Considering these two main issues, deputies recommend to Synod the following approach:

1. On the basis of our sister church relationship, to express our sincere concerns to the RCNL.
2. to exercise greater care in accepting ministers and candidates from the RCNL. This can be done by starting to use the Reformed practice of having a colloquium doctum for ministers and candidates from overseas.
3. to call upon our church councils to exercise care when accepting and issuing attestations from and to the RCNL.

More detailed recommendations can be found in § 2.3.6.

2.3.5 Newly-formed church federations

In 2003 a secession took place from the RCNL, which is called the new *Liberation*. From this liberation *De Gereformeerde Kerken (Hersteld)* (DGK) came into being, claiming to be the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (indicated by Synod Cape Town as GKNh). Although there were correspondence between these churches and the RCNL, especially on Synod level, this did not result into the restoration of the split. At the moment the trend continues that disenchanted

brothers and sisters separate from the RCNL to become members of the DGK. From time to time new congregations are instituted.

In the recent years there were however also separations from the DGK. These churches, together with disenchanted members seceding from the RCNL, have organized themselves in a temporary federation called *De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN). They were previously known as *Voorlopig Kerkverband* (= interim federation).

Deputies RCA sent Rev. P.G. Boon in October 2010 on a fact-finding visit to the Netherlands, during which he also made contact with these two federations (see appendices 9.2.1 and 9.2.2).

a) De Gereformeerde Kerken (hersteld) (DGK)

Translation: Reformed Churches (restored). Website: www.gereformeerde-kerken-hersteld.nl.

With regard to our stance toward the DGK and the GKN it is important also to be aware of the present ecclesiastical fragmentation. A choice for maintaining a relationship with the RCNL and denouncing a relationship with the DGK and/or GKN, or perhaps vice versa, is at this stage not in line with reality. With regard to the DGK it can be said that they present a mirror of how the RCNL looked like 25 and more years ago. They apparently confront the RCNL with their own past, both positively and negatively. The DGK consists of 11 churches at the moment.

Synod Pretoria-Maranata 2005 declared that our churches acknowledge the brotherhood with the DGK, but that the new *Liberation* of 2003 was unlawful, and that efforts should be done from both sides to repair the split. Since the new *Liberation* in 2003 both the RCNL and the DGK took some initiatives to meet again, mostly by way of letters. Humanly spoken it is not likely that the split will soon be healed. The worrying tendencies within the RCNL (as noted above) complicate matters only further. Although the DGK still maintain the *Liberation* of 2003 as lawful, they don't use it as a *shibboleth* for new members to join (see appendix 9.3.3).

Conclusion Re: DGK

In view of the worrying tendencies in the RCNL, and since the brotherhood with the brothers and sisters within the DGK has been acknowledged, Deputies RCA have to investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections to enter into a sister church relationship with these churches.

b) Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN)

Translation: Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Website: www.gereformeerdekerkennederland.nl

This federation exists partly of some churches that broke away from the DGK, because of according to them radical tendencies in the DGK. The proverbial drop that caused the bucket to overflow was the question whether there – because of the brokenness on earth – can be more than one true church in the same place, as well as the accusation of hierarchy in the way the DGK function. Furthermore the GKN exist of congregations that originated from the RCNL. This also applies to the two pastors in this federation, Rev. R. van der Wolf and Rev. E. Hoogendoorn. The latter claims together with the Ichthus

congregation to be the lawful continuation of the church of Kampen-Noord, where a split occurred a few years ago. For an outsider it is difficult to get a grip on the many years of conflict in Kampen. The one part of the consistory concluded that Rev. Hoogendoorn as a person was incapable to be the pastor of the congregation. The other part of the consistory backed Rev. Hoogendoorn, pointing to the fact that personal issues were not at stake, but the Reformed direction Rev. Hoogendoorn wanted to continue in. The conflict resulted in Rev. Hoogendoorn to be deposed by the (RCNL) consistory of Kampen-Noord, with the support of Synod of Zwolle-Zuid 2008. On the one hand Synod stated that Rev. Hoogendoorn was suspended lawfully. On the other hand Synod stated that Rev. Hoogendoorn – after complying with some procedures set by Synod - is free again to be eligible for a call in the RCNL. How do you combine these two decisions? (ACTA GS Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009 Chapter 4) How can a pastor who is suspended and deposed in one congregation, be able to work fruitfully in another congregation? In general it can be said that it is difficult – as is probably the case throughout church history – to distinguish the personal issues from the real ones. Is Rev. Hoogendoorn as a person incapable to be a pastor, was he a schismatic, or did he only want to continue in a reformed direction? One hopes that these questions will become clear in future.

Both the GKN and the DGK advise their theological students presently to study at the Theological University of the CGK in Apeldoorn. There is a clear advice against Kampen. The conviction is strong that (some) Kampen professors are leading the RCNL on the road of deformation.

Talking with the GKN it became evident that they don't have a clear vision of the future. They see much division between the faithful. They recognise also sincere believers and experience unity with brothers and sisters in the Hersteld Hervormde Kerk and the CGK. The GKN exist at the moment of 5 congregations (see appendix 9.3.4).

How should the FRCSA view the GKN? This question is the more pressing since several Synods of the FRCSA expressed their concerns during the past years about worrying tendencies in the RCNL. Many of these same elements have led to the present existence of the GKN.

Conclusion re: GKN

Deputies RCA recommend acknowledging the brotherhood with members of the GKN. Many of the concerns the last three Synods of the FRCSA expressed towards the RCNL, form the reason why these brothers and sisters separated from the RCNL. Deputies also have to investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections to enter into a sister church relationship with these churches.

c) Secession: yes or no?

At present there is an on-going discussion in the RCNL on whether you are allowed to separate, and if yes when? Dr. H.J.C.C.J. Wilschut, pastor of the church of Smilde, published on this very question a book in 2010: *Afscheiding? Over oproepen om zich van de GKv af te scheiden. Bijdrage aan een bezinning op de situatie in de GKv* (transl.: *Secession? About calls to separate from the RCNL. A contribution to the evaluation of the situation in the RCNL*). In this book dr. Wilschut draws the

conclusion – after dealing with many matters – that the RCNL are at the present moment severely ill, and that the federation is busy to disintegrate at a fast rate. However this doesn't bring him to the conclusion to separate – there is still a calling. The secessions that did take place he therefore calls premature. Also dr. J. Douma, retired professor on Ethics, addresses the question explicitly whether to separate. He discerns radical tendencies in the DGK, but sees – apart from the criticism he also has – hopeful tendencies in the GKN. He himself chooses also explicitly not to separate³, although he expresses severe criticism on the current developments in the churches. He mentions for example the participation in the so-called national Synod of Dordrecht, in which different denominations cooperate without confronting them with the truth question. He regards this as a betrayal of the Reformed identity, would the RCNL continue to associate with this Synod⁴.

Next to these worrying tendencies in the RCNL there are still good things happening. One can think of vibrant local churches faithful to Scripture and the Confession, maintaining the church order. Also still on a regular basis solid reformed publications are published from among the RCNL.

This emphasizes the fact that at the moment one has a complex situation within our sister churches that is quite ambivalent. There are severe problems. This isn't merely an easy conclusion drawn from overseas, but the analysis of many publications within the RCNL themselves. The situation is ambivalent. On the other hand one cannot just continue as if nothing is happening. The danger exists that then the FRCSA will be confronted with the same problems.

2.3.6 Final conclusion

Recommendations

On the basis of the ecclesiastical developments in the Netherlands as explained above, Deputies RCA propose the following to the Synod Mamelodi:

Synod decides:

a) With regard to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated) (RCNL)

1. To continue the sister church relationship with the RCNL according to the established rules.
2. To subject the relationship to the following restrictions:
 - a. In case of pastors, missionaries and candidates from the Netherlands coming to minister in the FRCSA, the Classis of the respective church will conduct a *colloquium doctum*, during which it will be determined whether the person involved is heartily committed to the doctrine of Holy Scripture, as summarized in the three Forms of Unity, and expressed in the church order. Those elements of Reformed doctrine that are especially at stake within the RCNL at present, should not be avoided.

³ Dr. Douma writes on his website concerning the book of dr. Wilschut: “Evenals dr. H.J.C.J. Wilschut, *Afscheiding?* (2010) beantwoord ik de vraag die hij stelt ontkennend. De GKv zijn geen valse kerk, maar dreigen wel los te raken van hun gereformeerde wortels (*a.w.*, 46). Zijn betoog kent niet meer de vroegere engte die destijds de discussies over de ware en valse kerk kenmerkten. Wie opkomt voor het gereformeerde karakter van de GKv, zet zich daarmee nog niet in voor het behoud van het eigen vrijgemaakte verleden (*a.w.*, 50)”

⁴ See his website: www.jochemdouma.nl

Ground:

Until present pastors, missionaries and candidates from the RCNL could minister without restrictions within the FRCSA. However, deputies are concerned that the RCNL do not address and isolate deviations from the Reformed doctrine adequately (see § 2.3.3). The colloquium doctum is an existing instrument in Reformed church polity to guard the pure Reformed doctrine, but our federation has not practiced it yet.

- b. To call upon consistories, when RCNL members hand in attestations, to talk with them about their willingness to subject themselves to the Reformed doctrine.

Ground:

In § 2.3.3 above is explained that at present a confusing situation exists within the RCNL. On the one hand there are many local congregations faithful to Scripture, confession and church order. But on the other hand deviation from Scripture, confession and church order is tolerated.

- c. To call upon the consistories when issuing attestations to members leaving to the Netherlands, to make them aware about the concerns we have about the RCNL and to prepare them for the complicated ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands.

Ground:

Members of the FRCSA who move to the Netherlands or stay there for a longer period, are not always adequately informed about the complicated ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands, and the developments in the RCNL. In order to carry out their responsibility, consistories can call upon Deputies RCA for information and advice.

3. To communicate our concerns to the RCNL in two ways:
 - a. Writing a letter to Synod Harderwijk, expressing our serious concerns with regard to the matters mentioned below
 - b. To instruct Deputies RCA to address these same issues with the RCNL deputies RCA:

i. The decision-making process at RCNL Synods

As mentioned in § 2.3.4a, deputies notice a change in the way Synods weigh issues and made decisions. Although the Bible is still considered as giving direction (Dutch: 'richtinggevend') and authoritative for decisions, it is apparent that other considerations are gaining weight.

On the basis of our sister church relationship, we need to call on our Dutch sister churches to prayerfully reconsider their direction. We need to remind them of their responsibility to continue to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God; and to encourage them to reject all thoughts that undermine it.

We also call them to have courage to overcome the fear for lack of support ('draagvlak') in the churches and to make decisions that are biblical but not popular in

a postmodern age.

ii. Consultation with sister churches

Future RCNL Synods should pay more attention to the advice of their sister churches. Delegates' involvement is restricted to the 'Buitenlandweek', which tends to become a formality. Their advice is rarely seen back in later rounds of discussion of Synod. Synod should also follow the rules of sister church relationships and give clear instructions to its deputies to deliberate with sister churches, before far-reaching decisions are proposed with regard to – for example – the offices of the church, and the church order.

iii. Women in office

There are real concerns regarding the impact of Deputies M/V in the church on the churches in the Netherlands. The publications of these deputies cause the Reformed doctrine on the offices to become a matter of debate – see explanation under § 2.3.3a. The process is not supervised properly, leading to limitless discussions, including pleads to open the offices for women. We sense too little respect for the Word of God as the ultimate norm for church life.

(die laaste gedeelte het ek uitgehaal omdat ek dit onder nr. i reeds genoem het)

iv. Proposed new Church Order

Deputies are shocked by the fact that the Deputies who wrote the *Werkorde* unilaterally came to the proposal to open the (unchanged) office of deacons for women.

v. Deputies Church Unity

There are serious concerns with regard the process Deputies Church Unity are involved in with regard to the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*. How can they claim to have reached unity with regard to hermeneutical questions with their counterpart deputies in the NGK, whilst the differences with this federation with regard to hermeneutical issues are so evident? The NGK allow women in the offices, and are currently debating whether homosexuality is allowed. Deputies also have concerns about how the Deputies *DKE* participated in the so-called National Synod of Dordrecht. We are of the opinion that this strife towards unity is not according to Belgic Confession art. 27-29.

vi. Guarding the Reformed Doctrine at the Theological University

Deputies have reason to doubt that the Reformed doctrine is adequately maintained and protected at the Theological University in Kampen. In this regard we mention the names of Harinck, Paas, Kwakkel and Van Bakkum. We are also concerned because the churches in the RCNL do not receive enough feedback on how curators deal with the complaints that have been lodged against these people.

Grounds:

As an expression of the sister church relationship we have with the RCNL, it is our duty to express our concerns when they show signs of deviating from the Reformed doctrine. The explanations given in § 2.3.2 - 2.3.4 serve as the ground for this recommendation.

4. To call upon the church councils to remember in their prayers to the LORD the problematic ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands, and to pray for the RCNL.

Ground:

Our Saviour taught us to pray for the church in John 17. The FRCSA is a small federation, but we shouldn't underestimate the power of prayer.

5. To mandate Deputies RCA to cooperate closely in the coming years with the deputies of the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches in Australia in studying the developments and addressing our concerns with the RCNL.

Ground:

Because the FRCSA is a small federation, we have limited manpower to study the developments on our own.

6. To inform the RCNL in writing about the decisions concerning them.

b) With regard to De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK)

1. To continue to acknowledge the brotherhood with members of the DGK, as expressed by Synod Pretoria-Maranata 2005.
2. To mandate Deputies RCA to investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections – on the basis of Scripture, confessions and Church Order – to consider a sister church relationship with these churches.
3. To request Deputies RCA to report in writing about this investigation to the next Synod and make recommendations.
4. To inform the DGK in writing about the decisions concerning them.

Grounds:

Synod Pretoria-Maranata 2005 acknowledged the brotherhood with the DGK, although the Vrijmaking of 2003 was denounced. A call was made to restore the split between the RCNL and the DGK. Humanly spoken it does not seem that this split will be healed in the foreseeable future. In light of the growing concerns regarding the RCNL there is reason to investigate the right of existence of this federation further.

c) With regard to the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) – previously known as 'Voorlopig Kerkverband'

1. To acknowledge the brotherhood with members of the GKN.
2. To mandate Deputies RCA to investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections – on the basis of Scripture, confession and church order – to consider a sister church relationship with these churches.
3. To request Deputies RCA to report in writing about this investigation to the next Synod and make recommendations.
4. To inform the GKN in writing about the decisions concerning them.

Ground:

Several of our Synods expressed during the past years their concerns about elements of deformation within the RCNL. Many of these elements have now led towards the existence of the GKN (see 2.3 above).

d) Further recommendations

1. To enable Deputies RCA financially to attend the next Synod of the RCNL in 2014 as well as to attend to the activities as described in recommendation 5 above.
2. To enable Deputies RCA financially to carry out the investigations mentioned in § 2.3.5 and – when deemed necessary by deputies – to attend the Synods of the DGK and GKN.

Ground:

It is the task of Deputies RCA to remain updated on the changing ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands. They have to be enabled to provide the local consistories with actual information and advice. Personal contacts and communication on Synod level and between deputies remain important to develop a responsible and balanced view.

2.3.7 Sources

The following sources have been consulted for § 2.3:

- 1 ACTA Synode GKv Amersfoort-Centrum 2005.
- 2 ACTA Synode GKv Zwolle-Zuid 2008-2009.
- 2 ACTS of the 35th Synod of the FRCSA held at Cape Town, May 12-15, 2008.
- 3 Handeling van die 33ste Sinode van die VGKSA gehou van 23-27 Mei 2005 en 18 Maart 2006 in Pretoria-Maranata.
- 4 Acts of the 35th Synod FRCSA Cape Town May 2008.
- 5 *De Reformatie* (several issues).
- 6 *Nader Bekeken* (several issues).
- 7 *Lux Mundi* (several issues).
- 8 Reports of deputies of the RCNL (o.a. Deputaten BBK, Deputaten Herziening Kerkorde, Deputaten Kerkelijke Eenheid, Deputaten M/V in de kerk).
- 9 *Documentaire M/V in de kerk* (published by Deputies M/V in de kerk) .
- 10 *Handleiding M/V met het oog op het gesprek over de inzet van mannen en vrouwen in de kerk* (Brochure published by the Deputies M/V in de kerk and presented to all churches).
- 11 H.J.C.C.J. Wilschut, *Afscheiding? Over oproepen om zich van de GKv af te scheiden. Bijdrage aan een bezinning op de situatie in de GKv* 2010.
- 12 H.J.C.C.J. Wilschut, *Vrouw en kerkelijk ambt. Een bijbelse verkenning* 2010.
- 13 *De Bazuin. Landelijk Kerkblad van De Gereformeerde Kerken (hersteld)* (several issues).
- 14 Website www.jochemdouma.nl.
- 15 S. Paas, *Schepping en oordeel: een onderzoek naar scheppingsvoorstellingen bij enkele profeten uit de*

achtste eeuw voor Christus 1998.

- 16 K. van Bekkum, *From Conquest to Coexistence: ideology and antiquarian intent in the historiography of Israel's settlement in Canaan* 2010.
- 17 Inleiding op forumavond door E. Hoogendoorn te Capelle a/d IJssel op 8 april 2010.
- 18 Inleiding op forumavond door R. van der Wolf *De dwaasheid van het kruis* te Capelle a/d IJssel op 8 april 2010.
- 19 Toespraak voor de forumavond door ds. E. Heres in Capelle a/d IJssel op 8 april 2010.
- 20 Website www.eeninwaarheid.nl
- 21 Website www.nd.nl
- 22 Website www.gereformeerdbleiven.nl
- 23 A. Velthuis *Radicaal Gereformeerd of Gereformeerd Radicalisme? Over de moeiten in De Gereformeerde Kerken (hersteld). Een oproep tot eenheid.* September 2010.
- 24 *De Reformatie van de Kerk en het Evangelie van Vrije Genade* Uitgave van de Gereformeerde Kerk te Zwolle e.o.
- 24 CRCA Sub-Committee on Relations with Churches in the Netherlands (The last Synod of the CanRC appointed a sub committee within the Deputies RCA specifically to study the developments within the GKv, consisting of Rev. J. DeGelder, Rev. J. Moesker, br. G.J. Nordeman and dr. C. van Dam. We made with this subcommittee the arrangement to exchange material and to assist one another).
- 25 H.J.C.C.J. Wilschut, *De Werkorde nagerekend. Kanttekeningen bij de conceptkerkorde voor de GKv* 2010.

3 Contact with other churches

3.1 Reformed Churches in New Zealand (RCNZ)

Mandate

- 1) To continue contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches.

3.1.1 Activities

While attending the ICRC conference in New Zealand, br. C Roose had several discussions with ministers and members of the RCNZ and he attended worship services at the Reformed Church of Dovedale, Christchurch.

At the request of Rev. Bruce Hoyt, br. Roose provided him with an electronic version of the Acts of Synod Cape Town 2008.

3.1.2 Conclusions

Recommendations

3. To mandate DRCA to maintain contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches.
4. To instruct the DRCA to remain informed about the ecclesiastical relations between the RCNZ and the FRCA.

Grounds

- 1) According to decisions of previous Synods we should utilise our limited manpower to focus on our own region.
- 2) The FRCA is in a better position to maintain more intensive contacts with the RCNZ.
- 3) For the sake of immigrants from our churches who wish to settle in New Zealand, it would be wise to remain informed about developments in the RCNZ.

3.2 Churches in North America

Mandate

- 1) To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in North America via the CanRC.

3.2.1 Activities

Deputies remained informed. There is nothing noteworthy to report except the relationship between the URCNA and the CanRC, as reported in § 2.2.2.b.

3.2.2 Conclusions

Recommendations

- 1) To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in Northern America via the CanRC.

Grounds

- 1) According to the policy adopted by Synod Bethal 2000, to focus on our own region, it is better to leave more intensive contacts to the CanRC.

3.3 Churches in Africa

3.3.1 Regional ICRC Mission Conference in Africa

Mandate

Synod Cape Town 2008 did not give DRCA a specific mandate but decided (art. 19):

- 1) that DRCA remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences
- 2) if the mission conference 2008 does realise, its attendance will be left to the FRCSA mission.

Synod gave this mandate since attending ICRC mission conferences in particular benefits the South African mission. Although DRCA was aware of the Mission Conference 2008, the missionary who attended the conference did not know that DRCA also had an interest in that conference. Deputies tried to get the minutes of this conference from two different persons but they do not seem to be available.

For the future, it will be helpful to keep contact with the mission boards of the FRCSA Mission regarding the ICRC Missions Conferences.

The next Africa Missions Conference should be held in 2012. Deputies propose the same

arrangements. Since one of the deputies is a member of the ICRC Missions Committee (which has a mandate to make sure that regional missions conferences are organized), it will be easier to stay informed about the 2012 conference.

Recommendations

- 1) To instruct DRCA to remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences.
- 2) To instruct DRCA to ask the mission boards of the FRCSA to delegate at least one of the missionaries to the next Africa mission conference.
- 3) To share the cost for attending this conference with the appropriate mission board.

Grounds

- 1) The missionaries are the people who profit most from the ICRC regional missions conferences.
- 2) Since the missionaries / mission boards profit from sending a delegate, it is reasonable to share the cost.

3.3.2 Support for churches

DRCA were approached by the Church Council of the FRC Pretoria-Maranata with the request to investigate the possibility of providing support to Reformed churches in Zimbabwe. At the time, these churches were in need of basic life support goods and Christian literature (including Bibles). We were also asked to co-ordinate such actions if possible.

When it was established that there were indeed reliable ways of providing such support, deputies requested the FRCSA consistories to contribute financially to a fund, which was used to buy goods and literature for that purpose.

After obtaining all the goods br and sr Andreas and Mieke Boon travelled with it to specific churches in Zimbabwe to deliver the aid items. They reported about that visit in the March 2010 issue of *Kompas* magazine.

Recommendations

None.

Grounds

- 1) If other requests for support are received in the future, they can be handled by DRCA on an ad-hoc basis. No instructions for DRCA are necessary.

4 ICRC

Mandate

Synod Cape Town, 2008, of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) made the following decisions concerning the Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad (DRCA):

- 1) To authorise the deputies to send one delegate to the next conference to be held in New Zealand, 2009. (Acts of Synod 2008, art. 19, page 23)

Based on this decision, DRCA appointed br. C Roose as the delegate to attend the ICRC meeting in New Zealand.

4.1 Report on the ICRC meeting during October 2009 in Christchurch, New Zealand

4.1.1 Highlights of the ICRC meeting

At the beginning of the meeting, the ICRC counted 25 member churches. 21 of them were represented by delegates.

a) Membership applications

Eight churches applied for membership, being the following:

- Heritage Reformed Congregations (USA and Canada)
- Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)
- Independent Reformed Church of Korea
- Reformed Presbyterian Church of India
- Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (Kenya)
- Evangelical Reformed Church of Burundi
- Igrejas Reformadas do Brasil
- Nongo u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv

Another application from the Reformed Churches of Soutpansberg, South Africa, was withdrawn before the meeting started.

Three churches sent observers to the meeting being:

- Christian Reformed Churches in Australia
- Grace Presbyterian Church of New Zealand
- Reformed Church in Japan

(See for more information on these churches below, under f).

b) Executive Committee.

As members of the new Executive Committee for the next four years were elected:

Chairman:	Rev. Bruce Hoyt (RCNZ)
Vice chairman:	Rev. C. Richard H. Holst (EPCEW)
Recording secretary:	Rev. Dr. Peter Naylor (EPCEW)
Corresponding secretary:	Rev. Cornelius van Spronsen (CanRC)
Treasurer:	Mr. Henk Berends (CanRC)

c) Advisory Committees.

Some delegates were appointed as members of Committees to advise on:

- Finance Report
- Press Release
- Arrangements for ICRC 2013
- Mission Committee Report
- Admission of new member churches
- Review of the constitution of the ICRC

d) Workshop arrangements.

The main theme of the 2009 ICRC conference was: 'The Vitality of the Reformed Faith'. Four speakers highlighted the following four different challenges under the main theme:

- *'Facing the challenge of the charismatic movement'*, presented by Dr. George W. Knight III
- *'Facing the challenge of individualism in church life'*, presented by Dr. Nelson Kloosterman
- *'Facing the challenge of Islam'*, presented by Rev. Frank van Dalen
- *'Facing the challenge of the Asian context'*, presented by Dr. Mohan Chacko

All the papers were presented during the evening sessions, which were all held in the Bishopdale Reformed Church, Christchurch. This proved to be a very good arrangement as the members of the three Reformed congregations in Christchurch were able to attend these presentations, resulting in a full church building during each of the presentations.

e) Amendments of Constitution

A proposal from the Advisory Committee: Constitution and Regulations, as appointed by the ICRC 2005 (Proceedings of the ICRC 2005, § 75 & 92), which was sent to the member churches prior to the ICRC 2009 meeting, was discussed and a final count of the votes, in favour or not in favour, was recorded. The proposal was to replace the present Article IV. 1a of the Constitution, which reads:

*"1. Those churches shall be admitted as members which:
a. faithfully adhere to the Reformed Faith stated in the confessional documents listed in the Basis, and whose confessional standards agree with the said Reformed Faith "*

with:

*"1. Those churches shall be admitted as members which:
a. adhere and are faithful to one or more of the confessional standards stated in the Basis, as each church has adopted one or more of these as its own standards, or adhere and are faithful to Reformed Confessions which are equivalent in content to the Confessions listed in the Basis (art. 2), and which Confession (or Confessions) shall be proposed to be added to Article II of the Constitution "*

As the meeting's votes were not unanimous, it was decided to refer the proposal to a Constitution Review Committee for further consideration.

f) Information on churches applying for membership:

- **The Reformed Presbyterian Church of India (RPCI).** This church community was founded during the 1960's. There are 7 congregations and 35 so called 'fellowship groups' with about 3000 members and 21 pastors. They hold the Westminster Confession and Catechisms and also use the Three Forms of Unity. They have links with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (I) and with some Mission organisations.
- **The Independent Reformed Church in Korea (IRCK).** Established in 1964, as a result of a schism in the largest Presbyterian denomination in Korea, this church community comprises of 4 congregations with about 620 members, served by 5 ministers and 1 'licentiate'. This is one of the

few Reformed Churches in the world which had an Episcopal form of church government, as they were not aware of other forms of church governments of Reformed and Presbyterian churches in other parts of the world. Only in 2009, a General Synod was held in order to revise their form of government after studying the Westminster Standards and the Church Order of Dordt. They have ecclesiastical relations with the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (I).

- **The Reformed Churches of Brazil (RCB) (Igrejas Reformadas do Brasil).** This church community was established in the year 2000 as a result of mission work by the CanRC and the RCNL. There are 3 instituted congregations and several more are in the process of institution. 6 Local pastors are serving those congregations. These churches adopted as their confessional standards the Three Forms of Unity and an adapted version of the Church Order of Dordt was adopted as their church polity.
- **The Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC).** Information on this church was already provided in reports by DRCA to previous Synods. The representative of this church, who was supposed to provide more information, was prevented from leaving his country, Kenya, apparently due to problems with his travelling documents. More information was therefore not obtained.
- **The Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC).** This group of churches in the USA and Canada was established in 1993 after a division in the original Netherlands Reformed Congregations took place. The group consists of 10 congregations with about 2000 members. Of the total number of 16 ministers, only 11 are serving in the HRC. The remaining 5 are active in other related churches or in mission work. The HRC has its own theological college, the Puritan Reformed Theological College, with about 110 students, in Grand Rapids, MI, USA.
- **Free Church of Scotland (continuing) (FCC).** Information on this church, which resulted from a split in the Free Church of Scotland (FCS), was already provided in previous reports. As this church was well known to the other ICRC member churches, no more information was required except for the information that all court cases between the two groups were withdrawn. ICRC 2005 decided that this was a condition for membership of the ICRC.
- No information was available on the two remaining applicants, the **Evangelical Reformed Church of Burundi (ERCB)** and the **Nongo u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv (NKST)**.

The following churches were accepted as new members of the ICRC:

- Independent Reformed Churches of Korea (IRCK)
- Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (FCC)
- Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC)
- Reformed Churches of Brazil (RCB)
- Reformed Presbyterian Church of India (RPCI).

Applications from the following churches were rejected:

- Evangelical Reformed Church of Burundi (ERCB)
- Nongo u Kristu u ken Sudan hen Tiv (NKST).
- Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC).

g) Churches represented by observers:

- The Christian Reformed Churches in Australia. This 'family of churches' came into being in the same way as the RCNZ, the FRCA, the CanRC and the FRCSA, as a result of a wave of Reformed emigrants leaving The Netherlands after WW2. In this case the majority of the emigrants came from the RCN (syn) and the original name of the bond of churches was the Reformed Churches in Australia. The group consists of 45 congregations with about 8500 members. An influx of Afrikaans speaking South Africans was experienced during the last decade. The CRCA has its own theological training centre in Geelong, Victoria. The CRCA was a member of the REC, but has terminated that membership and is looking for alternative organisations. They have ecclesiastical relations with the RCNZ and the RCSA.
- The Grace Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. This group of churches broke away from the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, due to widespread liberalism in that church. Independent congregations existed for a number of years but, as from 2003, they formed a bond of churches. There are 18 'places of worship'. They hold the Westminster Confession (American version) and a Presbyterian-Church-of-Australia-based Book of Order. They maintain fraternal relations with the RCNZ and the PCEA.

- The Reformed Church of Japan. Founded in 1946, this church holds the Westminster Standards. This group of churches consists of 140 congregations with about 9500 members.

h) Other matters:

The Église Réformée Confessante au Congo (ERCC), a member church of the ICRC, is in the process of adopting a new name due to problems with their liaison persons with the government. Government Regulations stipulate that each church is to be represented by certain members as official liaison persons for contacts with the government. The appointed persons however misused their privileged position with the government but could not be removed. The only solution was to start officially a new bond of churches, but consisting of the same congregations, with newly appointed representatives and thereby to get rid of the old representatives. These churches are now in the process of registering under the name: *Église Réformée Unie au Congo* (ERUC). This name change is a challenge for the ICRC, as the constitution does not make provision for such a situation. An additional task, to propose rules for such situations, was therefore added to instruction for the proposed Constitution Review Committee.

i) Mission Committee Reports

Two protocols were proposed for adoption by the meeting. These protocols were about: 1. How to respond to major disasters; and 2. About help for persecuted Christians.

Some details of the Mission Report were clarified and nominations for new members of the MC were proposed and accepted. One of the new members is Rev. DM Boersma.

The *2009 Mission Field Survey* was presented. This is available in the form of a booklet. It gives an overview of all the mission activities by all the ICRC member churches.

j) Regional meetings

A report on meetings of the European Conference of Reformed Churches (ECRC) was presented. This ECRC is a regional branch of the ICRC. Meetings were held in 2007 and 2008 and the next meeting was planned for March 2010, to be held in Edinburgh, UK.

DRCA are aware of an African Regional meeting, which took place in Kenya during 2008, but no reports on this event were received.

k) Number of ICRC member churches

At the end of the ICRC 2009 meeting the total number of member churches had increased to 30.

l) Arrangements for the next ICRC meeting

The next meeting is scheduled, DV, for September 2013 in Cardiff, Wales, UK, hosted by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW).

4.1.2 Conclusions

Recommendations

3. To continue ICRC membership.
4. To authorise DRCA to send one delegate to the ICRC 2013 meeting in Wales.

Grounds

- d. The ICRC has again shown that it truly wishes to maintain and adhere to its basis.

- e. The ICRC provides a platform to maintain contacts with Reformed churches all over the world.
- f. The ICRC provides us with opportunities to co-ordinate and structure our own mission activities in a more effective way.

5 FRCSA Information booklet

Mandate

- 1) To keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date and to adjust it periodically and when specific needs arise.

5.1 Activities

Deputies updated the details of all churches. We also added a summary of the gospel so that the booklet can be used more easily for evangelism purposes. Deputies decided not to print the booklet but to make it available electronically so that they can use it in their publications, as some churches have already done.

5.2 Conclusion

Recommendations

- 1) To instruct DRCA to keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date, to adjust it when specific needs arise, and to publish it electronically through the FRCSA website.

Grounds

- 1) Since the booklet contains church details, it should be kept up-to-date.
- 2) Several churches use the information contained in the booklet in their own publications. It is therefore not necessary to provide printed copies.

6 Liaison for the churches

Mandate

- 1) To provide the FRCSA church councils with appropriate information regarding churches abroad.
- 2) To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.

6.1 Activities

DRCA served as a liaison between the deputies Needy Churches and the sister churches in Australia and Canada. Our function has been to make the initial contact and then to leave it to the respective deputies.

No requests for information were received from the church councils.

6.2 Conclusion

Recommendations

- 1) To provide the church councils with appropriate information regarding churches abroad.
- 2) To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.

Grounds

- 1) There is an on-going need for the liaison function of DRCA since they gather information regarding churches abroad.

7 Budget

	Item	ZAR
1	One delegate to Australia: Synod FRCA 2012	12 000
2	One delegate to Canada: Synod CanRC 2013	15 000
3	One delegate to the Netherlands: Synod RCNL 2014	8 000
4	Extra visit to the Netherlands by two delegates	16 000
5	ICRC membership fee 2011 - 2014	1 500
6	One delegate to ICRC Mission conference Africa Region (50% to be paid by deputies, 50% by Mission Board)	4 000
7	One delegate to ICRC Conference 2013 in Wales (England)	10 000
8	Other costs	500
	Total 2011-2014	67 000

8 Proposed Mandate for 2011-2014

We list all the recommendations mentioned in this report in this chapter for the convenience of Synod. (Paragraphs printed in italics are not a mandate for deputies but need to be carried out by Synod or communicated to Church Councils.)

DRCA respectfully request Synod Mamelodi to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

- 1) To maintain sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules. [§2.1]
- 2) To send a delegate to Synod Armadale 2012 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA. [§2.1]
- 3) To maintain sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules. [§2.2]
- 4) To send a delegate to Synod Carman West 2013 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA. [§2.1]
- 5) To continue the sister church relationship with the RCNL according to the established rules. [§2.3]
- 6) *To subject the relationship to the following restrictions: [§2.3]*
 - a. *In case of pastors, missionaries and candidates from the Netherlands coming to minister in the FRCSA, the Classis of the respective church will conduct a colloquium doctum, during which it will be determined whether the person involved is heartily committed to the doctrine of Holy Scripture, as summarized in the three Forms of Unity, and expressed in the church order. Those elements of Reformed doctrine that are especially at stake within the RCNL at present, should not be avoided.*
 - b. *To call upon consistories, when RCNL members hand in attestations, to talk with them about their willingness to subject themselves to the Reformed doctrine.*
 - c. *To call upon the consistories when issuing attestations to members leaving to the Netherlands, to make them aware about the concerns we have about the RCNL and to prepare them for the complicated ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands.*

- 7) To communicate our concerns to the RCNL in two ways: [§2.3]
 - a. *Writing a letter to Synod Harderwijk, expressing our serious concerns with regard to the matters mentioned in §2.3.6.a.*
 - b. To instruct Deputies RCA to address these same issues with the RCNL deputies RCA.
- 8) *To call upon the church councils to remember in their prayers to the LORD the problematic ecclesiastical situation in the Netherlands, and to pray for the RCNL.* [§2.3]
- 9) To cooperate closely in the coming years with the deputies of the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches in Australia in studying the developments and addressing our concerns with the RCNL. [§2.3]
- 10) To inform the RCNL in writing about the decisions concerning them. [§2.3]
- 11) *To continue to acknowledge the brotherhood with members of the DGK, as expressed by Synod Pretoria-Maranata 2005.* [§2.3.5+6]
- 12) To investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections – on the basis of Scripture, confessions and Church Order – to consider a sister church relationship with these churches. [§2.3.5+6]
- 13) To report in writing about this investigation to the next Synod and make recommendations. [§2.3.5+6]
- 14) To inform the DGK in writing about the decisions concerning them. [§2.3.5+6]
- 15) *To acknowledge the brotherhood with members of the GKN.* [§2.3.5+6]
- 16) To investigate in the coming years whether there are lawful objections – on the basis of Scripture, confession and church order – to consider a sister church relationship with these churches. [§2.3.5+6]
- 17) To report in writing about this investigation to the next Synod and make recommendations. [§2.3.5+6]
- 18) To inform the GKN in writing about the decisions concerning them. [§2.3.5+6]
- 19) *To enable Deputies RCA financially to attend the next Synod of the RCNL in 2014 as well as to attend to the activities as described in recommendation 5 above.* [§2.3.6]
- 20) *To enable Deputies RCA financially to carry out the investigations mentioned in §2.3.5 and – when deemed necessary by deputies – to attend the Synods of the DGK and GKN.* [§2.3.6]
- 21) To maintain contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches. [§3.1]
- 22) To remain informed about the ecclesiastical relations between the RCNZ and the FRCA. [§3.1]
- 23) To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in Northern America via the CanRC. [§3.2]
- 24) To remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences. [§3.3]
- 25) To ask the mission boards of the FRCSA to delegate at least one of the missionaries to the next Africa mission conference. [§3.3]
- 26) To share the cost for attending this conference with the appropriate mission board. [§3.3]
- 27) To continue ICRC membership. [§4]
- 28) To authorise DRCA to send one delegate to the ICRC 2013 meeting in Wales. [§4]
- 29) To keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date, to adjust it when specific needs arise, and to publish it electronically through the FRCSA website. [§5]
- 30) To provide the church councils with appropriate information regarding churches abroad. [§6]
- 31) To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad. [§6]
- 32) To report to the next Synod and propose recommendations according to article 11 of the Synod Rules.

9 Appendices

9.1 Address to Synod Burlington (Ebenezer) 2010 (§2.2)

By Rev Dirk M. Boersma, on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

Mr. chairman, delegates of Synod, brothers and sisters present,

I would like to bring you the greetings from your sister in South Africa. We congratulate you with your 60th birthday, since it was on April 16 this year that the first Canadian Reformed church was established.

Our federations are sisters and are about the same age. However, because the original SA churches that started in the 1950s are few and we have mission churches, our federation feels much younger. The average age of our churches does not come close to that of yours. So we greet you as our older sister, yet as equals before the Lord.

When I flew to Canada I saw the coast with its surf below and I was aware I was leaving one continent to arrive at another continent. We both live in coastal lands. This reminds me of the promise about the servant of the Lord in Isaiah 42:

**“He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets.
A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out.
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;
he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth.
In his law the islands will put their hope.”**

In Hebrew the word for ‘islands’ also means coastal lands. Starting in Jerusalem, Jesus has been establishing his kingdom on earth and it has also arrived on the distant shores of America and Africa. From one coastland to another, I would like to greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour, who has promised to bring justice everywhere. We, in the coastal lands put our hope in him, because in his kingdom we find life and we know we find our purpose: to worship the living God and enjoy him forever.

The churches we represent are privileged to be his instrument when they are faithful to Him.

Our churches are grateful for the invitation to attend your Synod. We have historic ties and most importantly we are one by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am personally grateful that I can be present and enjoy your warm hospitality and the brotherly love. I have witnessed your strong desire and effort to remain faithful to God’s Word and to do this in unity with each other. Judging from the many letters sent by the churches, I conclude that they take a lively interest in what is going on at their own Synod. This is an example for our churches.

I would like to introduce our federation of churches to you, especially for those who don’t already know us from your previous Synod and from the articles that have been written about us in *Clarion*.

9.1.1 The FRCSA

You probably know that our churches started at about the same time as the Canadian Reformed Churches. Dutch immigrants also landed on the shores of South Africa and founded the *Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke*. There were only three churches in the beginning. To this date, their number is still small: 5 churches in white areas. Contacts with the other, bigger federation of Reformed Churches are still strained. Recognizing them as true churches has been a long process, which is, sadly, not concluded yet because questions remain about the direction of this federation.

Fortunately, it did not stop there. Members started bringing the gospel to the black township in the 1960s. Shortly afterward, the first missionary was called (a relative of Rev. Agema here present). God blessed the mission work. Since 2002, three mission churches have been instituted. Eight more mission points have been started, and we currently have seven missionaries in the field.

9.1.2 The religious tapestry of South Africa

It may raise your eyebrows that I am serving as a Dutch missionary in South Africa. Statistics show that South Africa is a deeply religious country; 80% of the people claim they are Christians. When I think about this, I always feel I need to return to my home country, where church membership is in the single digits and most of the growth in Christianity is from immigrants from Africa and Asia.

However, the situation is more complicated than this. If one would measure church attendance, the figures would probably be much lower. Especially when one takes into consideration that the largest Christian church is the *Zion Christian Church*, a Pentecostal church that does not preach Christ. Their ‘mediator’ is bishop Lekganyane. His followers expect healing from holy water that has been blessed by the bishop, and their place of worship is Mount Moriah. Now you probably understand why missionaries in South Africa are not booking their return flights yet.

It is hard to know how many Christians our country really has. Christianity is popular among the black majority of the population, but I have often found that *having a church* is more important for many people than having a *personal relationship with Jesus Christ*. In addition, many do not see a problem combining the Christian faith with trusting in the ancestor spirits to help them in daily life and protect them against bad luck.

I would dare to conclude that many people may believe in God but hardly know Christ. This might explain why South Africa is suffering under so much lawlessness, crime, and corruption. Empty religious practice caves in under pressure. The country is rapidly becoming more secular; this is showing in politics and tertiary education and also visible in consumerism.

Instead of just lamenting the situation, the Free Reformed Churches want to follow the calling Jesus gave us to preach the good news. There are many opportunities for missionaries to preach the gospel and for members to share their faith personally. Our churches desire to make use of these opportunities the Lord is giving us.

9.1.3 Mission work

Therefore I would like to tell you about the mission work God has given us to do. We are deeply grateful to the Lord that He has blessed us with a huge increase in the number of missionaries during

the past 4 years. In 2006, the mission field near Pretoria had only two 2 missionaries left. Four years later, this number has tripled. We now have two missionaries from the Netherlands, while the other four missionaries were born in South Africa. Three of them are black. In the future, all of the missionaries will probably be South Africans.

There is also an experienced missionary in Cape Town, Dr. Breytenbach. He is an Afrikaner and works in the coloured areas outside of Cape Town. There is a vacancy there, as well.

You can imagine that a federation of only 8 churches, 3 of which are needy, cannot possibly support eight missionaries financially. The number of financially strong church members is shrinking. We suffer from South Africa's brain drain in our churches. Many young parents choose to raise the children in seemingly safe countries like Australia and New Zealand. Others have left for Holland, England or Canada. Our mission churches are growing but are hardly capable of supporting their own pastors.

We are grateful for the long-time support of two Dutch provincial Synods, who are partners in missions. Further, the Australian churches are supporting one of our needy churches. We are very grateful for that!

Rev. Kleijn addressed your Synod at Smithers and said: "We probably need your help more." This has sadly come true. We are grateful for the hand you stretched out to us at your previous Synod. We pray that this support may be such that it will keep the missionaries in the field. The bulk of the missions' budget is taken up by personnel cost: stipends and support structures for the missionaries. We are thankful that the committee at Coaldale has informed the churches of the need we have.

Our churches would be best helped by structural instead of incidental giving. I would like to use this opportunity to bring our need to the attention of your churches. It would be wonderful if a number of churches would be willing to promise support for a certain amount per year. This would relieve much of the pressure on our missions' budget.

Brothers, I can see that theological training is very important to the Canadian Reformed Churches. We share this passion. In order to have ministers who preach Jesus Christ, we need to train our students in exegesis, sound dogmatic thinking, and preaching. Our students from the mission churches were trained at Mukhanyo Theological College (a Reformed institution) and still are. During the 1990s, the local pastors were involved in our own theological training institute, but this proved too much for our small federation. We now enjoy the cooperation with your Theological College and this has been very fruitful. Cornelis Kleijn and Phineas Kgatle have profited from the teaching, and I hope that Phineas will soon finish his training and become a minister in our churches, as well. We are very grateful for this and look forward to further cooperation with the College.

9.1.4 Race

Most of you know that South Africa has a tainted history of race relations. From the moment the white settlers set foot on the Southern tip of Africa, there was distrust and fighting. It developed into a system that was aimed at keeping the white people on top and the black majority under their control. We are glad that this *Apartheid*-system has been abolished and that this happened peacefully.

Racial tensions still exist and sometimes flare up. Crime has a huge impact on it. Politics too, since the white people now feel marginalized while many black people still feel the whites are in control of the money. Satan uses the fear on both sides to create tension and hatred instead of healing and harmony. We notice even in our churches that racial stereotypes are difficult to overcome, especially since we are often not aware of them in our own mind. But black and white members are trying to grow together and understand each other.

We firmly believe that the gospel is needed more than ever in the current political and social climate. It is so meaningful for a country that suffers from crime, HIV/AIDS, corruption, greed and racial tensions. I find the gospel liberating and refreshing in different ways:

- Jesus shows us that our treasure is not on earth. He turns our grabbing-mentality into a giving-mentality because he makes us rich.
 - Fear is often at the root of racism. It is taken away when we realize that Jesus is in control and is gracious. The kingdom of God sets us free when we are selfish and only think of our own survival or comfort.
 - Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection give us the right perspective on suffering on earth. We do not deceive people with a prosperity gospel, but we comfort people with the promise of the heavenly inheritance for disciples of Jesus. While we are on earth, we show and share his love with those who suffer.
 - He unites us in a church bought by his own blood. He took away the barrier between Jews and gentiles and made them one. He calls us away from the idol of the survival or prosperity of our own racial group. He places us in a church that is composed of people of all nations, races, and cultures.
 - The gospel is sufficient. However, we need to grow in understanding and applying it to our own thinking, our fears, and our relationships. We have much to learn and discuss as members of a racially mixed federation. We ask your prayer for this difficult process.
- We thank God for his blessings, too: former mission churches that speak Northern Sotho are fully part of the Classis in the North. During the meetings, English is used as the bridge between us and we work together in unity.

We pray that the cultural uniqueness of the nations may find a place in the church and we will all praise God because of the many varied gifts that he has given us.

9.1.5 Challenges we share

Brothers, during meetings like this God reminds us of our similarities. The basis is that we share the same faith, as Ephesians 5 says: *“One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all and in all.”*

While I was reading the reports for this Synod, the Acts of Synod 2007 and the speeches that were given there, I noticed that we share challenges that are common in the world. To mention a few:

- How to remain faithful to the truth God has given us without becoming frozen in a certain stage of church history
- How to discern when and how to renew Hymns and Psalms, liturgical forms, etc. There seems to be a wave of renewal going on even in Reformed churches!
- How to spread the gospel in a secularist society
- And I would like to add: how to deal with the multicultural societies we both live in because of the immigration that is taking place across the global village; and how to use this as opportunities to proclaim the gospel and save sinners.

We are excited about the unity discussions you are having with the URCNA. It does not happen very often that mergers on such a scale are discussed. I am impressed with the depth in the discussions in the various committees, which are an example to us

in our contacts with other churches. We sympathize with the difficulties that have arisen because many local churches in both federations hardly know each other and are trying to recognize fellow pilgrims on the way to the same destination. It is a real challenge for both federations not to get stuck in your own ways but to remain truly ecumenical. But we are encouraged by the commitment that is expressed from both sides, for example regarding the views on theological education. One needs a lot of wisdom to distinguish the principle from the application and to decide which one to keep and which one can be changed. We pray for wisdom for your Synod.

9.1.6 Conclusion

I would like to conclude with the wish that all of you have brought your bifocals. I pray that you, the delegates, and the churches you serve may look up and set your heart on things above, where Jesus is seated at God's right hand (Colossians 3:1). When you do this, I am confident you will also see the need to look directly ahead of you, to know the times and to discern how to fulfil the mission Jesus gave you.

It is the prayer of your sister in South Africa that by using your bi-focals you will not blend in but stand out, "being transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

Thank you.

9.2 Minutes of meetings with the DGK and GKN (§ 2.3.5)

9.2.1 Minutes of meeting between FRCSA delegate with DGK Deputies RCA

Unfortunately, deputies do not have time to translate the following two minutes. They follow in Dutch.

Kort verslag van de vergadering tussen deputaten BBK en dr. P. van Gulp met ds. P.G. Boon, deputaat van de VKGSA in het cultureel Centrum "Het Teeuwland" te Hasselt op 12 oktober 2010 om 11.00 uur.

Opening door voorzitter

Lezen: Romeinen 7:13-27, Zingen: Psalm 18:1, Gebed door voorzitter

Presentie. Een hartelijk welkom aan ds. Boon. Fijn dat we kunnen spreken over de kerken in Nederland (DGK) en Z. Afrika (VGK). Dr. Van Gulp wordt ook als adviseur welkom geheten.

Vaststellen agenda. OK.

Voorgestelde vragen aan BBK en vragen van BBK aan Ds. Boon.

1. Algemene impressie DGK anno 2010 (br. Drijfhout):

Buitenlandse kerken:

Canada: Behalve het toesturen van de Handelingen (Smithers 2007) betreffende de DGK is er geen communicatie geweest in de afgelopen jaren. Daarin is verandering gekomen sinds september 2010. De nieuwe deputaten aangesteld door de synode van Burlington hebben contact gezocht.

Begin dit jaar mocht DGK een zusterkerkrelatie aangaan met de kerk van Abbotsford in Canada.

Australië: Twee synode (West Kelmscott en Legana) hebben zich gebogen over het verzoek van DGK om een zusterkerkrelatie. Dit is beide keren afgewezen. GS Emmen 2010 heeft daarom het verzoek om

een zusterkerkrelatie voorlopig teruggetrokken. Nadat de FRCA de relatie met de GKv verbreekt zal een nieuw verzoek overwogen worden.

Z.Afrika: Jaren is er getracht contacten te leggen tussen de deputaten, maar er was geen reactie van de VGK deputaten totdat ds. Boon dit jaar contact zocht. Wel zijn de handelingen van een synode (2004) waarop ons eerste verzoek om een zusterkerkrelatie werd afgewezen, ontvangen.

Indonesië: De kerken op Soemba hebben twee afgevaardigden die bij de GKv op bezoek waren ook opdracht gegeven om contact met de deputaten van DGK te leggen. Dat is vorige jaar gebeurd.

Met de Presbyteriaanse kerken is wel contact gezocht maar niet tot stand gekomen. Verder heeft geen kerk op ons verzoek gereageerd.

Van de kerken waar wel contact mee is verkregen (vroeg of laat) blijkt dat zij allen zich grote zorgen maken over de koers van de GKv.

Binnenland:

Er zijn verschillende verontruste groepen in de GKv. Sommigen profileren zich op Websites. Ook zijn er in verschillende plaatsen groepen uit de GKv gegaan.

Intern zijn er binnen de DGK verdrietige dingen gebeurd. Nadat de gemeente van Zwijndrecht zich niet wilde conformeren aan de synodebesluiten van Mariëberg hebben uit onvrede daarmee groepen gemeenteleden zich losgemaakt van de DGK. Ook de gemeenten van ds. Hoogendoorn en Heres hebben zich (nog) niet bij de DGK gevoegd. Indringende samensprekingen worden met beide predikanten en hun gemeenten gevoerd.

Verheugend is dat de gemeenten van DGK samen weer een synode (GS Emmen 2010) konden houden, waarop vele zaken in eendracht konden worden afgehandeld. Ook is er een kerkendag gehouden waar veel brs. en zrs konden samenkomen om te Here te loven en te luisteren naar referaten. Er is een goede voortgang in de prediking. Hoewel er veel preken gelezen worden uit vroegere jaren is het verblijdend dat daarin het Woord van de Here nog steeds krachtig verkondigd wordt. De twee predikanten ds. De Marie en dr. Van Gulp bedienen het Woord en de sacramenten in alle kerken.

2. Algemene impressie VGKSA anno 2010 (Ds. Boon)

Ontstaan in de vijftiger jaren, met name door emigratie vanuit Nederland. Eerst 3 gemeenten Pretoria, Johannesburg en Kaapstad. De kerk van Bethal is ontstaan doordat brs. en zrs zich vrijmaakten van de onschriftuurlijke leer in de NG kerk. Door de zending zijn gemeenten ontstaan in Mamelodi, Soshanguve en Belhar. De gemeenteleden zijn mensen met verschillende achtergronden en culturen, blank, zwart en kleurling (multicultureel). Dit geeft een mooie uitdaging voor de toekomst. Totaal zijn er 8 zelfstandige kerken en 6 kerken in wording. Pretoria-Maranata, Mamelodi en Kaapstad zijn de zendende kerken. De VGK kent twee Classes met elk vier kerken (zij vergaderen 3 of 4 keer per jaar. De GS wordt eens in de drie jaar gehouden. Het aantal kerkleden ligt tussen 1000 en 2000 (ongeveer 1500?). De antithese werkt op twee fronten, enerzijds een strijd tegen de voorvaderverering en anderzijds tegen de westerse secularisatie. De zondagsrust kent de bevolking van Zuid Afrika eigenlijk niet. Zo gegroeid vanuit het verleden. Grote winkels zijn dan ook, naast de vele "cafies" open. De westers georiënteerde kerken (Pretoria, Johannesburg en Kaapstad) kennen wel degelijk de

zondagsrust. In de zendingskerken is verder onderricht noodzakelijk. Ook wordt er veel op zondag gewerkt door de niet-westers georiënteerde broeders en zusters. Inherent aan veel banen. Vermaning is dan ook noodzakelijk. Er is een intensieve band met GKv inzake zending. De financiële steun daarvoor uit Nederland (90%) is groot. Ook is er fin. steun uit Canada(CANRC) en Australië (FRCA) inzake hulpbehoevende kerken.

3. Wat waren de hoofdelementen van de Vrijmaking in de jaren 2003 & 2004, en welke officiële correspondentie was er tot op heden tussen DGK en de GKv? (br.Drijfhout)

Hoofdmomenten:

3. Leer: zondag. Huwelijk en echtscheiding, H.A. in militaire dienst, uitbr. onschrijftuurlijke gezangen
4. Kerkregering: aanpassing KO m.n. art. 66.
5. Schriftkritiek en hermeneutiek (schepping, zondag, Jozua, metafoorgebruik in de Schrift)

Op twee synoden werden bezwaren ingediend en afgewezen. Volgens de KO was de kerkelijke weg afgesloten. De volgende synode heeft de weg gesloten voor nog aanwezige bezwaren.

Hierover is uitvoerig geschreven in de brochure 'Do not take words away from this book of prophecy' als antwoord op de GKv brochure 'Not beyond what is written'

Er is vanaf 2005/2006 een briefwisseling tussen de GKv-synodes en de DGK-synodes. Mariëberg 2005. Zwolle 2007 en Emmen 2010 (zie de acta van deze synodes).

4. Hoe staat de VGKSA tegenover de DGK, en is dat aan het veranderen? (Ds.Boon)

Er is binnen de VGKSA zorg over de koers van de GKv.

5. Is de zusterkerkrelatie van VGKSA met de GKv ongewijzigd. (Ds.Boon)

Ja. Er bestaat een zusterkerkrelatie.

6. Wat is de opstelling van DGK tegenover die leden/bezwaarden binnen de GKv die (nog) lid zijn van de GKv?

Het is moeilijk deze mensen persoonlijk te benaderen. Wel zijn er vanuit het deputaatschap Binnenlandse betrekkingen contacten met die groepen. Plaatselijke kerken hebben contacten met brs en zrs die in de GKv bezorgd zijn. Ook zijn er kerkenraden die abonnementen op de Bazuin nemen voor verspreiding onder verontrusten. Het is bekend dat verontruste brs. en zrs. luisteren naar de internetuitzendingen van DGK kerken als Zwolle en Berkel en Rodenrijs.

7. Welke initiatieven hebben DGK op dit moment om GKv leden te bereiken en voor te lichten?

Zie antwoord op vraag 6.

8. Ziet u wat er in de GKv aan het veranderen is en ziet u dat ook terug in uw eigen kerken? (Ds.Boon)

Er zijn verschillende zaken die de VGKSA verontrusten. Daarbij denken we aan de zaak Harinck, Paas en het proefschrift van K.van Bekkum. De ontwikkelingen op de TU vervullen ons met grote zorg.

9. Welke officiële correspondentie was er tot op heden tussen DGK en het zgn. Voorlopig Kerkverband?

Het voorlopig kerkverband bestaat uit groepen (Matrix en Zwolle) die zich hebben afgescheiden van DGK zonder de kerkelijke weg te hebben gegaan. Dat geldt ook voor de gemeente van Zwijndrecht. Met deze groepen is er alleen schriftelijk contact dat bestaat uit oproepen tot bekering en wederkeer. Met de Ichtus-gemeente van ds.Hoogendoorn en de gemeente te Dalfsen (ds. Heres) is er contact via een door de synode aangestelde commissie voor kerkelijke eenheid. Daarvoor was er al contact met de

twee laatst genoemde gemeenten via het deputaatschap binnenlandse betrekkingen.

10. Wat doet u als VGKSA tegen de afval in de GKv en is daar ook officiële correspondentie over?

(Ds.Boon) Op de GS Zwolle-Zuid heeft ds. Boon met betrekking tot een aantal zaken (o.a. het rapport M/V) indringende woorden gesproken. Achteraf blijkt dat de synode is voortgegaan op de door deputaten voorgestelde weg en dat er dus niet geluisterd is naar dat wat ds. Boon naar voren bracht.

11. Wat is de algemene opstelling van DGK tegenover het zgn. Voorlopig Kerkverband?

Het voorlopig kerkverband bestaat uit een aantal losse kerken. Voor contacten zie 9.

12. Bezoekt u ook kerkdiensten van de DGK? (Ds.Boon)

Ja, ik heb een dienst van DGK in Zwolle bezocht waar ds. De Marie voorging.

13. Hoe denken DGK bij te dragen aan de roeping tot eenheid onder hen die de HERE in waarheid willen dienen in Nederland? (br.Griffioen)

Door degenen die zich vrijmaken van de GKv. op te roepen, zich bij de DGK te voegen. Zo worden er gesprekken gevoerd met de Dolerende Gereformeerde Kerk te Dalfsen, waarvan Ds Heres de predikant is.

In de tweede plaats, de uitgave van het landelijk kerkblad De Bazuin, met vele voorlichtende artikelen. Tenslotte vindt er een briefwisseling plaats tussen de DGK en de HHK (Hersteld Hervormde Kerk). In deze briefwisseling wordt met name gesproken over de kerkorde, en worden deze Kerken, van duidelijk gereformeerde signatuur, opgeroepen terug te keren tot de Dordtse Kerkorde.

14. Hoe kijkt u aan tegen de wijzigingen op de Theologische Universiteit in Kampen en de gevolgen daarvan voor de kerken? (Ds.Boon)

Zie daarvoor het antwoord op vraag 8.

15. Hebben DGK op dit moment contacten met andere kerkelijke groeperingen in Nederland behalve de GKv en het 'Voorlopig Kerkverband'? (br.Van der Net)

Ja met de HHK via schriftelijke correspondentie op synode-niveau. Zie ook vraag 13.

16. Wat zijn de afspraken tussen DGK m.b.t. kerkelijke correspondentie met buitenlandse kerken?

DGK heeft de buitenlandse kerken die corr. hebben met de GKv aangeschreven inzake de reformatie en verzocht de corr. met DGK voort te zetten. Geen van de buitenlandse kerken heeft daarop positief geantwoord. Een verzoek van de Liberated Reformed Church van Abbotsford (Canada) heeft geleid tot een zusterkerkrelatie.

17. Met welke kerken in binnen- en buitenland heeft de VGKSA een zusterkerkrelatie. (Ds.Boon)

Met de gereformeerde kerken in Canada (CANRC), Australië (FRCA) en GKv (Nederland). Vanwege het kleine kerkverband is het niet mogelijk andere kerken ook te betrekken.

18. Hebben DGK zusterkerkrelaties op dit moment in het buitenland? (br.Van der Net)

Ja, zie vr. 16.

19. Welke afspraken zijn er binnen DGK voor wat betreft Theologische opleiding?(Ds.Van Gorp)

Er zijn momenteel drie studenten, die het eerste deel van hun opleiding aan TU Apeldoorn voltooien of hebben voltooid. Deze studenten ontvangen een intensieve bijscholing van de beide predikanten. Voor de vervolgopleiding zijn de studenten aangewezen op een nieuw opgerichte commissie van opleiding. Naast de beide predikanten zijn er een aantal gemeenteleden die deze voortgezette studie geven en de studenten begeleiden. Onderzocht wordt of deze eigen opleiding erkenning kan ontvangen van de TU

Apeldoorn, omdat delen van de studie in Apeldoorn ook wordt gevold. De GS Emmen heeft het curriculum voor deze opleiding vastgesteld. (Zie acta GS Emmen)

20. Waar is de Theologische opleiding voor de VGKSA, zijn daar ook veranderingen gaande en is er overleg/uitwisseling met de TU in Kampen? (Ds.Boon)

Er is een student die aan de TU te kampen een opleiding volgt. De niet westerse studenten wordt, na een studie aan een andere instelling, een eigen plus-opleiding gegeven door eigen predikanten en docenten (o.a. ds. Boon) .

21. U bent voor de financiering van de zending bijna geheel (90%) afhankelijk van de Gereformeerde kerken vrijgemaakt. Is dat niet een belemmering om de zusterkerkrelatie met de Gereformeerde kerken vrijgemaakt te verbreken? (Ds.Boon).

Wij beseffen dat wel, maar zullen zeker daar ons niet door laten leiden. Als die steun zou wegvallen moeten we blijven geloven dat de Heere ons zal helpen.

6. Gezamenlijk verslag vaststellen.(br.Drijfhout+Ds.Boon)

7. Rondvraag. Geen

8. Sluiting. Dr. Van Gurp.

Na afloop is er een gezamenlijke maaltijd die door br. en zr. Van der Net verzorgd is.

Hasselt, 12 oktober 2010.

9.2.2 Minutes of meeting between FRCSA delegate with a delegation of the GKN

Vergadering DV 14 oktober 2010, 10:00 te Hardenberg tussen Afvaardiging van de Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (tot voor kort bekend als 'Voorlopig Kerkverband') en ds. P.G. Boon, deputaat BBK van de Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (VGKSA)

Aanwezig van de GKN: ds. E. Hoogendoorn, br. J. Odding, br. J.A. de Wit, ds. R. van der Wolf

Aanwezig van de VGKSA: ds. P.G. Boon

De vergadering wordt met Schriftlezing (1 Petrus 1) en gebed geopend.

Ds. Boon heeft een aantal vragen / besprekingspunten vooraf toegemaïld. Besloten wordt deze zaken in een algemeen gesprek te proberen te behandelen.

1. Algemene impressie van de Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland ('voorlopig kerkverband') (verder kort aangeduid als GKN) anno 2010

Er zijn gemeenten in Kampen ('Ichthusgemeente'), Zwolle ('Vijverhoeve'), Hardenberg ('Matrixgemeente'), Zwijndrecht, Veenendaal. Daarnaast zijn er in den lande enkele groepen (ex GKV die overwegen zich aan te sluiten bij de GKN.

2. Algemene impressie VGKSA anno 2010.

Er zijn op dit moment 8 zelfstandige kerken (Soshanguve-Noord, Pretoria, Pretoria-Maranata, Mamelodi, Johannesburg, Bethal, Kaapstad, Belhar) en 8 kerkplantingsprojecten (Nuwe Eersterust, Soshanguve-CC, Soshanguve-WW, Soshanguve-XX, Akasia, Nellmapius, Wesbank, Leiden).

3. Wat waren de hoofdelementen die tot afscheiding van kerken hebben geleid vanuit de GKV?

Tijdens de vergadering is iedere vraag niet apart in detail besproken. Uit de antwoorden op de overige

vragen krijgt men wel een gedeeltelijk antwoord op deze vraag.

4. Welke officiële correspondentie is er op dit moment tussen de GKN en de GKv?

Er is op dit moment geen officiële correspondentie tussen de GKN en de GKv. Er zijn ook geen appèlschriften meer gaande vanuit plaatselijke kerken in de GKN richting de GKv. De GKv Kampen-Noord heeft wel via de rechter geëist dat ds. Hoogendoorn de pastorie moest verlaten plus de betaling van schadevergoedingen.

5. Zijn er op dit moment afgescheiden kerken / groepen die overwogen aan te sluiten bij het verband van de GKN?

Er is een aanvraag van een (uit de GKv) afgescheiden groep in Assen.

Er is een aanvraag van een (uit de GKv) afgescheiden groep in Goes.

Verder is er een (uit de DGK) afgescheiden groep in Peize (heeft zich ruim twee jaar geleden afgescheiden van de DGK en kwam daarvoor rond 2004 uit de GKv; wil zich graag aansluiten bij de GKN. De kerkenraad van Herdenberg voert daarover gesprekken met hen).

Er is ook een dolerende groep in Dalfsen waarvan de positie nog onduidelijk is. Er schijnt binnen deze groep verdeeldheid te heersen of men zich dient aan te sluiten bij de DGK of bij de GKN.

6. Wat is de opstelling van de GKN tegenover leden / bezwaarden binnen de GKv die (nog) lid zijn van de GKv?

Er zijn best veel contacten met verontrusten in de GKv. Het wordt wel langzaam minder, zeker op collegiaal vlak. Tot en met vorig jaar hebben Hoogendoorn en Van der Wolf nog gesproken op vergaderingen van verontrusten. Vanuit de GKv druppelen er individuen binnen.

In de GKN probeert men zo open mogelijk te staan tegenover de verontrusten. De Here gaat met iedereen zijn eigen gang. Er is een proces van rijping dat tijd kost. Je moet mensen ook die tijd gunnen. Sommige broeders en zusters zitten in een meer behoudende gemeente in de GKv.

Je moet er oog voor hebben dat Christus' kerkvergaderend werk dynamisch is. Elke hoek van het land is niet dezelfde. Je moet geduld met elkaar hebben en elkaar niet gaan verkwalijsen.

Men vindt het jammer dat dr. Wilschut in zijn publicatie te harde woorden spreekt over hen die zich hebben afgescheiden. Is het echt een zonde zich bij de GKN aan te sluiten? Zal dat in de toekomst ook zo blijven?

Men is dankbaar dat dr. Douma bereid is voor de waarheid uit te komen m.b.t. de situatie in de GKv.

Men ziet dat verontruste collegas in de GKv zich steeds meer isoleren van het kerkverband, door bijvoorbeeld niet meer aan de classisvergaderingen deel te nemen, selectief preekafspraken buiten eigen gemeente te maken, het avondmaal niet meer buiten de eigen gemeente te bedienen, etc.

Het is dus mogelijk om als verontruste predikant in je directe omgeving veel zelf te regelen en je van verkeerde tendenzen af te scherm. In dit verband wordt door hen beweerd dat je pas de kerk mag verlaten als je eruit gezet wordt. Deze stelling neemt echter aan dat de kerkorde (m.b.t. appèl- en tuchtprocedures) nog functioneert, maar dat is niet meer het geval.

7. Welke initiatieven hebben de GKN op dit moment om GKv leden te bereiken en voor te lichten?

Er zijn geen georganiseerde initiatieven op dit moment. Wel is er contact, zoals uit de antwoorden op de overige vragen blijkt.

8. Welke officiële correspondentie was er tot op heden tussen de GKN en DGK (hersteld)?

Er is op dit moment geen officiële correspondentie tussen de GKN en de DGK. Die was er ook nog niet.

9. Wat is de algemene opstelling van de GKN tegenover DGK?

De relatie met de DGK wordt als moeilijk getypeerd. Er is op plaatselijk vlak hier en daar contact, bijv. de afspraak tot een gesprek tussen de gemeente van de DGK in Lutten en de 'Matrixgemeente' in Hardenberg. De indruk bestaat dat de DGK de GKN als scheurkerken ziet, doelende met name op die gemeenten die zich van de DGK hebben afgescheiden. Er wordt gemeld dat de DGK wel met de 'Ichthusgemeente' in Kampen wil praten, maar dat de andere kerken van de GKN er dan niet bij mogen zijn. Er is een klacht dat die groepen die zich van de GKv hebben afgescheiden (zoals Kampen, Assen) aan de ware kerk (bedoeld DGK) voorbij zijn gegaan.

De GKN ziet geen grote leerstellige verschillen met de DGK. Wel merkt men een radicalistische sfeer in de DGK, die uitkomt in bijvoorbeeld het volgende:

- Je bent niet vrij naar een dienst te gaan waar je kleinkinderen gedoopt worden, bijv. in de GKv. Dat is censurabel.
- Er heerst een soort 'consequentialisme' – verwezen wordt naar al de 'en dus en dus en dus...' stellingen in het blad *De Bazuin*.
- In de gemeente in Zwolle wilde men bepaalde dingen bespreekbaar maken, maar het gesprek werd uitgedoofd met de vraag: belijd je nog dat deze kerk de ware kerk is? Er is geen zicht op de gebrokenheid, dat er wel degelijk soms voor een tijd twee ware kerken ter plaatse kunnen zijn.
- Er is het gevoel dat er binnen de DGK boven de Schriften uit gebonden wordt.
- Er zijn wel vragen over de ambtsvisie binnen de DGK. Dit is misschien niet direct een leerstellig verschil, maar men ziet wel hiërarchie van enkelen.

10. Wat waren de hoofdelementen die tot afscheiding van kerken hebben geleid vanuit DGK?

Zie antwoorden op overige vragen, m.n. vr. 9.

11. Hoe denken de GKN bij te dragen aan de roeping tot eenheid onder hen die de HERE in waarheid willen dienen in Nederland?

De CGK maken ook een moeilijke periode mee. In dat kerkverband worden de spanningen ook steeds groter.

Er is veel affiniteit in leerstellig opzicht met de Hersteld Hervormde Kerken. Een moeite geeft de ongezond bevindelijke stroming in dit kerkverband alsook de vraag wat de HHK met het hervormd kerkrecht (dat er nog vigeert) gaan doen.

De versplintering doet pijn. Het maakt ons nederig. Jezus vergadert zijn kerk niet alleen in je eigen gemeente of kerkverband. Er zijn meer kansels vanwaar het Woord naar waarheid wordt verkondigd elke zondag in Nederland. Het hart van de GKN gaat uit naar de reformatische hoek. Voor de middelbare schoolopleiding van de jeugd wordt steeds meer van de Reformatische scholengemeenschappen gebruik gemaakt.

Het is belangrijk ook kritisch te zijn op onze eigen traditie. In vrijgemaakte kringen hebben wij in onze aversie tegenover de zgn. Nadere Reformatie misschien het kind met het badwater weggegooid. K. Schilder heeft veel klem gelegd op de zichtbare kerk, en zijn volgelingen zijn soms te veel hiermee weggelopen. Vooral op dit punt ervaart men een soort radicalisme in de DGK.

Ook onder ons moet er meer aandacht zijn voor levensheiliging en waarachtige bekering.

M.b.t. de DGK wordt nog genoemd dat men bewogen en geduldig moet zijn met broeders en zusters in de DGK. Veel van hen hebben moeite met het radicalisme van de leiding, zoals dat vooral uitkomt in *De Bazuin*.

Laten we oog houden voor het dynamisch werk van Christus' kerkvergadering. Bij de DGK is er te snel kritiek als je spreekt over broeders en zusters in andere kerkverbanden zoals de Gereformeerde Gemeenten.

12. Hebben de GKN bepaalde afspraken m.b.t. kerkelijke correspondentie met buitenlandse kerken?

De GKN zijn nog heel jong en bestaan nog geen jaar. We zijn druk bezig zaken intern te regelen, ook financieel. Er is alleen een zusterkerkrelatie met de kerken onderling, er was nog geen tijd over de landsgrenzen te kijken. Men is wel dankbaar dat het deputaatschap BBK van de VGKSA contact heeft gezocht. Mogelijk dat een gezamenlijke vergadering tussen de GKN in december de tijd zal hebben de GKN ook te presenteren aan kerken buiten Nederland.

Men hoopt in de toekomst hier in Nederland meer contact te maken met Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken (al vormen hun concrete stappen naar eenheid met de GKv een struikelblok) en ook met de Hersteld Hervormde Kerken. De kerken hebben elkaar echt nodig in een verloederd Nederland. Binnen de GKN wordt veel gebruik gemaakt van voorstudiemateriaal dat uit CGK en HHK vandaan komt. In deze hoek vindt men nog goed onderzoek naar de Schrift.

13. Zusterkerkrelaties VGKSA op dit moment

De VGKSA hebben momenteel zusterkerkrelaties met de Canadian and American Reformed Churches, de GKv, en de Free Reformed Churches in Australia. Verder participeert de VGKSA in de ICRC.

14. Verhouding tussen VGKSA en GKv op dit moment.

Hoewel er een volledige zusterkerkrelatie bestaat met de GKv, zijn er steeds meer zorgen over de koers die de GKv opgaat. Deze zorgen zijn tot uitdrukking gebracht door de afgevaardigden van de VGKSA naar de synoden van de GKv, waaronder met name die van Zwolle-Zuid 2008.

15. Verhouding tussen VGKSA en DGK (hersteld) op dit moment

De VGKSA hebben kort na de Vrijmaking van 2003 een verzoek van de DGK ontvangen tot een zusterkerkrelatie. In 2005 hebben de VGKSA op hun synode van Pretoria-Maranata dit verzoek afgewezen, al hebben zij aangegeven dat zij veel zorgen delen mbt de GKv en dat zij de broederschap met de DGK erkennen. Zij hebben de DGK opgeroepen de breuk met de GKv weer te helen. Op de synode van Kaapstad 2008 hebben de VGKSA hun deputaten BBK verzocht ook het gesprek met de DGK aan te gaan.

16. Hebben de GKN bepaalde afspraken m.b.t. Theologische opleiding?

Er zijn op dit moment 3 theologische studenten die in Apeldoorn studeren. Men is blij dat deze studenten voor Apeldoorn hebben gekozen en niet voor Kampen. Voor bepaalde vakken kan een theologisch student ook goed in Utrecht terecht.

Men wijst wel op de uitdrukking: waar het in Kampen regent, druppelt het in Apeldoorn, al is er volgens hen wel groeiende zorg en afstand van Apeldoorn t.o.v. Kampen (daarover is binnen de CGK verdeeldheid).

Men vindt het een enorme teleurstelling dat de hoogleraren Kamphuis en Kwakkel in voorkomende gevallen zich niet kritisch hebben opgesteld tegenover ongereformeerde tendenzen. Er zijn andere hoogleraren in Kampen die zich wel grote zorgen om de ongereformeerde tendenzen maken, maar die hiermee niet in de openbaarheid treden. Onder de emeritus hoogleraren vindt men wel veel aansluiting.

**17. Zijn er al rapporten van deputaten binnen de GKV gepubliceerd voor de synode in 2011?
Welke indruk krijgt u hieruit?**

Men kan alleen afgaan op wat op de website www.gkv.nl gepubliceerd wordt.

Via de pers en websites (o.a. www.gkv.nl) volgt men ontwikkelingen in de GKV:

Er wordt door de *Deputaten Herziening Kerkorde* een nieuwe kerkorde aan de synode van Harderwijk voorgesteld, die meer is toegesneden op het burgerlijk recht dan het christelijk en kerkelijk recht. Dit is een juridisering van de kerkorde, zoals dat ook in het verleden in de PKN is gedaan. Verder is er discussie over de zgn. Nationale Synode van Dordrecht.

In de afgelopen jaren zijn er veel bezwaren ingebracht t.a.v. de benoeming van dr. S. Paas te Kampen. Helaas is er sinds de synode Zwolle-Zuid 2008 als individu geen mogelijkheid meer bezwaar aan te tekenen. De appèlgang is opgebroken, aangezien art. 31 KO niet meer functioneert volgens zijn oorspronkelijke bedoeling. Waar 'iemand' staat, wordt die 'iemand' nu gedefinieerd als een kerk, geen individu meer. Verder zijn de Curatoren rechters in eigen zaak geworden, daar zij zelf besluiten of iets ontvankelijk is op de synode al dan niet.

De vergadering wordt met gebed afgesloten.

Appendix 1.2: Additional Report Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad

Reports for Synod 2011 of the FRCSA / VGKSA

Additional Report of Deputies for
Relations with Churches Abroad
on a visit to the
Synod Harderwijk 2011
of the Reformed Churches
in The Netherlands (liberated)

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

Mandate

Decisions of Synod Cape Town 2008:

5. To send one delegate to Synod Harderwijk 2011.

Based on above mandate br C Roose visited the RCNL's synod, on behalf of DRCA, during the week in which delegates from foreign sister churches were received (buitenlandweek), by our Dutch sister churches, from Monday 28th March until Friday, 1st April 2011.

Attendance

The following churches were represented by delegates:

- o Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche Westminster Bekenntnisse (ERK-WB), Austria/Switzerland
- o Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA)
- o Reformed and Presbyterian Churches Fellowship of Myanmar (RPCFM)
- o Reformed Churches in the United States (RCUS)
- o The Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST), Nigeria
- o Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA)
- o United Reformed Churches in Congo (URCC), DRC
- o Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil (IPB)
- o Gereja Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia Kalimantan Barat (GGRI), Indonesia
- o Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC), Kenya
- o Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)
- o Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland (EPCI)
- o Presbyterian Free Church of Central India (PFCCI)
- o Evangelical Reformed Church of Latvia (ERCL)
- o Reformed Church of East Africa (RCEA), Kenya
- o Reformed Presbyterian Church of Northern India (RPCI)
- o Presbyterian Free Church Council (PFCC), Kalimpong, India
- o Protestant Reformed Christian Church in Croatia (PRKC)
- o Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales (EPCEW)
- o Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (RPCI)
- o Korea Presbyterian Church (KPC)
- o Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (FCC)
- o United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)

New information about churches

The Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche Westminster Bekenntnisse (ERK-WB), Austria/Switzerland

The ERK-WB is a small church denomination with a few congregations in Austria and Switzerland. They hold the Westminster Standards as their confessions.

Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST), Nigeria

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

The NKST is a Reformed Church in Nigeria with about 140 congregations and about 1 mio members and over 400 ordained ministers. They have their own University, a Reformed Theological Seminary and a number of Reformed schools. They also run medical institutions and an orphanage.

They have a Mission Board and have missionaries working in Niger and Sudan.

The NKST are preparing for their 100 years anniversary as a Reformed Church, during October 2011.

United Reformed Churches in Congo (URCC), DRC

This church federation is a split-off from the Eglise Réformée Confessante de Congo (ERCC). In the DRC churches are only allowed when they appoint official representatives as liaison persons with the government. Normally such persons have a privileged position and are untouchable. The two persons appointed by the ERCC misused that position and kept the churches in a stranglehold. As a result of this situation the contacts with the RCNL went sour and the RCNL withdraw their mission – and training workers from the DRC.

Disenchanted members of the ERCC tried to break that stranglehold for a number of years but failed to do so. At last they decided to break with the ERCC and to establish a new church federation. Most of the congregations and members of the ERCC went to the URCC and this new church denomination is now officially registered with the DRC government. The URCC represent themselves as the faithful continuation of the ERCC and asked for re-establishment of the sister church relations with the RCNL.

Synod 2011 of the RCNL decided to re-establish the sister church relations with the URCC and to downgrade the contacts with the remaining ERCC to ecclesiastical contacts.

Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil (IPB)

This Presbyterian Church has over 1 mio members. They have their own Theological Seminary and over 4000 ordained ministers.

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

Programme

- Monday, 28th March: Arrival of foreign delegates
- Tuesday, 29th March: Conference for foreign delegates with following topics:
- Get to know each other
 - Information concerning Reports from Deputies of the RCNL:
 - BBK
 - Church Unity
 - Man/women in the Church
 - Presentation by De Verre Naasten (DVN)
- Wednesday, 30th March: Information day on hermeneutics at Theological University, Kampen for foreign delegates and deputies BBK
- Thursday, 31st March: Sessions of Synod
- Welcoming foreign delegates
 - Discussions and decisions concerning Report on Relations with Churches Abroad
 - Speeches by foreign delegates
- Friday, 1st April: Sessions of Synod
- Discussions on Report of Committee for Church Unity
 - Speeches by foreign delegates
 - Departure of foreign delegates

Discussions

TU Kampen

In reaction to various requests for meetings from foreign sister churches, the TU organised a full day meeting in which the concerns of the sister churches concerning hermeneutical matters, could be addressed.

From the TU the following were present:

Dr Erik de Boer, chairman
Drs Kees Haak
Prof dr Barend Kamphuis
Prof dr Frank van der Pol
Prof dr Mees te Velde

Prof dr Ad de Bruijne
Prof dr Rob van Houwelingen
Prof dr Gert Kwakkel
Dr Wolter Rose
Dr Koert van Bekkum

Various delegates used the opportunity to express their concerns about, what they called, the new hermeneutics at the TU.

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

The TU personnel explained that it is important to find a realistic way of applying Biblical teaching in today's society. The following lectures within that framework were delivered:

- **Thinking of hermeneutics, from Douma to Haak**, by Prof dr B Kamphuis. In this lecture the example how the issue of relationship between man and woman in the church came on the agenda of Synod, was discussed.
- **The fourth commandment of the Decalogue and Sunday observance in ethics**, by Dr EA de Boer.
- **The Kingdom style in personal ethics, e g in marriage, divorce and re-marriage**, by Prof dr A de Bruijne.
- **Contextual Reading of the Bible**, by Drs CJ Haak.
- **Joshua, historicity and archaeology**, by Dr K van Bekkum.
- **Creation in Genesis: general and special revelation**, by Prof dr G Kwakkel.

At the end of the session most attendants expressed their appreciation for the way in which the TU personnel had addressed the concerns of many foreign sister churches. Many delegates however were still not convinced about the correctness of the 'new' hermeneutical direction of the TU, and were still of the opinion that too much weight is given to today's context, resulting in a tendency towards man-centred -, in stead of God-centred hermeneutics.

Synod sessions on Thursday, 31st of March

The Report of the Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA) from the RCNL was discussed and was generally accepted.

Highlights of discussions and decisions

Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA)

Some discussion took place about the correspondence between the CRCA and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) concerning the FRCA's allegations that the RCNL are using a "particular way of interpreting Scripture which appears to be the common denominator in decisions of (the RCNL) churches, namely one which takes its starting point in man, rather than in God's Word, and which may be the result of the influence of a post-modern 'spirit of the age'".

Another issue was the appointment of a female delegate to Synod Legana, 2009 of the FRCA. After a request from the FRCA to replace the female delegate by a male, CRCA indeed sent two male delegates, but expressed their disagreement with the FRCA's arguments on which their refusal to accept a female delegate was based.

Amendments to lists of churches with which the RCNL have (proposed) sister church relations or ecclesiastical contacts

- The Evangelical Reformed Churches in the Union of Russia were removed from the list of sister churches on the ground that these churches have apparently ceased to exist.
- The Presbyterian Church in Austria/Switzerland was added to the list of sister churches.
- The contacts with the Reformed Churches in Indonesia-Papua were upgraded to sister church relations.
- The Presbyterian Church of Brazil was added to the list of sister churches.
- The United Reformed Church in the Congo (URCC) was added to the list of sister churches on the grounds that they were the continuation of the ERCC with whom the RCNL had a sister church relation until a secession took place.
- The Eglise Réformée Confessante de Congo (ERCC) was downgraded to the list of ecclesiastical contacts after the secession of the URCC.
- The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian – Harare Synod (CCAP) was removed from the list of ecclesiastical contacts on the ground that no contacts could be maintained.
- The offer for sister church relations to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the USA (OPC) was withdrawn after the OPC’s General Assembly “found itself unable to affirm, without reservation, that the RCNL are fully Reformed”. The OPC is maintained on the list of ecclesiastical contacts.

Churches with which relations are maintained

- Full sister church relations with the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa plus 31 other church federations.
- Ecclesiastical contacts with 25 church federations.

Speeches from foreign delegates

Some of the foreign delegates got the opportunity between sessions to address the meeting. Deputies for RCA replied to each speech.

Synod sessions on Friday, 1st of April

The Report of the Committee for Church Unity was the main topic for this day. At the end of the midday session, when the foreign delegates left, no decisions were made yet.

The discussions revealed however that, not only foreign delegates, but also a number of Dutch delegates were not happy with the Report and in particular with what was reported and proposed regarding contacts with the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken. Contradictions in the report and deviations from the original instructions for deputies, were pointed out and discussed.

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

Also during this day synod sessions were alternated with speeches from foreign delegates and answering addresses by deputies for RCA.

The address to synod from our FRCSA is added as an Addendum.

Other matters

In an informal meeting with a few members of Section 5 of the deputies for RCA of the RCNL, it was revealed that they intend to send one male and one female delegate to Synod Mamelodi 2011.

DRCA of the FRCSA have some concerns about the female delegate as a result of the position of foreign delegates in our synod meetings. Regarding this issue we would like to draw your attention to article 2 (previous 3) of our Rules of Synod, as finally amended and adopted by Synod 2005, Pretoria-Maranata (Art. 25).

According to that article, the delegates should be ministers or elders and in cases where no such office bearers are available, the appointment of a deacon is indicated as a possible alternative, but synod has to decide about that deacon's status in the synod meeting.

One can conclude from this part of art. 2 that the members of synod are therefore supposed to be elders or ministers. The article continues then by stating that: "Official delegates from churches with which the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa correspond, will also be admitted as advisors".

In line with the general meaning of article 2 it could be argued that delegates from foreign sister churches should also be elders or ministers. Article 2 however does not clearly say that.

As females cannot be elders or ministers, the question arises what the status of a female foreign delegate in our synod meeting should be.

DRCA therefore request Synod Mamelodi to review article 2 of the Rules of Synod and to create clarity about the following issues:

- What is the actual status of an advisor in terms of art 2 of the Rules of Synod?
- Should an advisor be an elder or a minister?
- If an advisor is not required to be an elder or a minister, does that mean that the advisor's status in our synod meetings should be subject to restrictions?

Considerations by DRCA

1. Female deputies are not new in the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa and were never considered as clashing with Scriptural principles. Female deputies have appeared in synod meetings in the past, to advise about the subject for which they were appointed as deputies. DRCA therefore does not consider such actions as wrong.
2. Delegates from sister churches are most of the time members of a Committee for Contacts with Churches Abroad. DRCA have no problems with female members of such a Committee. But as soon as such deputies are appointed as delegates of the sister church and have represented themselves in the synod meeting, they are, according to our Rules of Synod, invited to be advisors for the duration of the meeting and in principle entitled to advise on all matters on the synod's table. It is at this point that the question should be asked whether it is appropriate to grant a female delegate such a status as full member of synod apart from the right to vote.
3. DRCA suggests that the issue of female delegates can be handled in two ways:
 - a. Female delegates are refused on the basis of our present practices and rules concerning synod meetings;
 - b. Female delegates are accepted but only when the status of advisors is restricted.

DRCA would like to point out that female and male deputies are appointed on the basis of specific knowledge and expertise in certain fields and female deputies are becoming more common.

DRCA therefore would like to suggest that possibility b is investigated and that article 2 of the Rules of Synod is to be reviewed by newly appointed deputies in order to accommodate female delegates.

Report on visit to Synod 2011 of Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Harderwijk

4. In the mean time DRCA decided to write a letter to the Dutch deputies with the request to consider replacing the female delegate by a male delegate on the grounds that our present practices and rules do not make provision for female delegates.

Additional Recommendations

1. That Synod approves DRCA's actions concerning a female delegate from the RCNL.

Ground:

- a. The Rules of Synod of the FRCSA are not clear about the acceptability of a female delegate.
 - b. It is questionable whether it is appropriate to allow female delegates to share in the extensive privileges extended to foreign delegates.
2. That synod instructs new deputies to re-formulate article 2 of our Rules of Synod in order to make provision for foreign delegates which are not elders or ministers, by formulating the status of advisers in such a way that it is in line with Scriptural teachings concerning the functioning of females and non-office bearers in the church.

Grounds:

- a. Female deputies are acceptable.
- b. The status of advisors is not determined by Biblical principles and can be amended.

Compiled by C Roose
09/05/2011

Addendum to
Additional Report of Deputies for
Relations with Churches Abroad
on a visit to the
Synod Harderwijk 2011
of the Reformed Churches
in The Netherlands (liberated)

Brother chairman, delegates

It is a privilege for me to represent the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) in your Synod and to convey sister church greetings to you from your sister at the southern tip of Africa.

The fact that our churches originated from your churches, the support that we received from your churches over a period of more than 60 years and especially the fact that we both exist and function on the common basis of the Bible and the same confessions, are still very good reasons for us to consider our relations with you as very important.

Right at the beginning of that 60 year period, we were just a tiny extension of your churches, but that time is gone. During those 60 years we developed in different directions. The FRCSA became a Reformed church federation in an environment which is in many ways different from the Dutch environment.

Our country is a place where the first – and the third world meet. And apart from that, it is a melting pot of different cultures and languages. That creates certain challenges such as how to handle racial and social differences from a Christian point of view, or how to deal with a lack of proper education, poverty, HIV/Aids, etc.

Our country is also considered to be a dangerous country where a high rate of criminality affects every South African's way of living.

But it also offers opportunities, e.g. for mission activities on our own doorstep.

Partly due to this different environment we grew somewhat apart.

But there are also other reasons for drifting apart. One of them is our observation that your churches also went through a process of changing. But in this case the changes are of a different nature and we are very concerned about some of those changes.

We hear of statements from personnel and students from your Theological University, in which Biblical teachings are questioned and where this practice is condoned and defended with the argument that this is a scientific requirement. Bearing in mind that your Theological University was, humanly speaking, created by the churches with the aim to serve the churches, one wonders whether those practices are still within the framework of serving the churches.

Such practices also raise a question about the meaning of the subscription form for office bearers in the church. Sometimes we get the impression that this form is not considered as binding anymore.

We also observed that quite a lot of issues in your churches result from re-interpretations of the Word of God. Previous synods had to deal with new understandings of the Bible concerning the 4th commandment and the Sunday as a day of rest, and also concerning the issue of divorce and re-marriage. On your table is the issue of Man and Woman in the church. We realise that re-interpretations of Biblical revelations are not always wrong, but in most of the mentioned cases we have serious concerns.

Looking at the way your deputies handled this issue according to instructions by Synod Zwolle-Zuid, we are even more concerned. We assume that it was not the intention to undermine Biblical teachings concerning the place of man and women in the church by asking the church member's opinion about this matter, but we feel that this method creates an

impression that the opinion of church members is one of the criteria for a decision on this issue.

I could carry on with a list of other concerns, but it makes probably more sense to search for the roots of the changing process in which your churches are involved.

I told you that the development of the FRCSA was partly dictated by the local environment in which it functions. That is of course not only true for South African churches but for all other churches in the world. But apart from the local environment, we also have to deal with a global environment.

I think we all know what the main characteristics of our global -, and specifically our Western environment are. Individualism and self expression are some of the main buzz words of our Western society. And if we analyse the meaning of those buzz words and try to find the roots of them, we find in many cases that a desire to promote the individual's own importance, if necessary at the expense of someone else's importance, is behind it.

Church members are not immune to this environment. As descendants of Adam and Eve we should realise that a desire to be important is natural for us, because they already wanted to be like God.

If we study church history we see a never ending repetition of churches becoming false churches, and the main reason for them to become false, was that they assigned more authority to ideas of church members than to the Word of God (BC art 29).

In this respect there is something very important for all of us. And that is that we should be aware of the fact that one of the main aspects of the process to become a false church, was, and still is, re-interpretation of Biblical teachings.

I am not saying that it is always wrong to search for new meanings of Gods revelation to us. All I want to say is that, considering our own nature and the pressure from our environment, it is very easy to fall in the trap of trying to explain the Word of God in such a way that it suits our own ideas. In other words our ideas are than becoming more important than the Word of God. According to what we confess in art. 29 of our Belgic Confession that is a mark of a false church.

Against that background you will understand that we are worried about developments in your churches. We observe that a lot of re-interpretations of the Bible are taking place in your churches, resulting in some new understandings of what the Word of God really teaches us. We also observe a desire for more involvement by the average church member in worship services. Is that to promote the glory of God, or is it a desire for self expression? We note that some congregations within your church federation, follow their own ideas without considering the rules as formulated by past synods, e.g. concerning co-operation with other churches, such as the NGK. Is that not a form of individualistic behaviour?

In such an environment it is of the utmost importance for you as synod to be precise and clear in your decisions in order to serve the churches with clear guidelines. In that respect I would

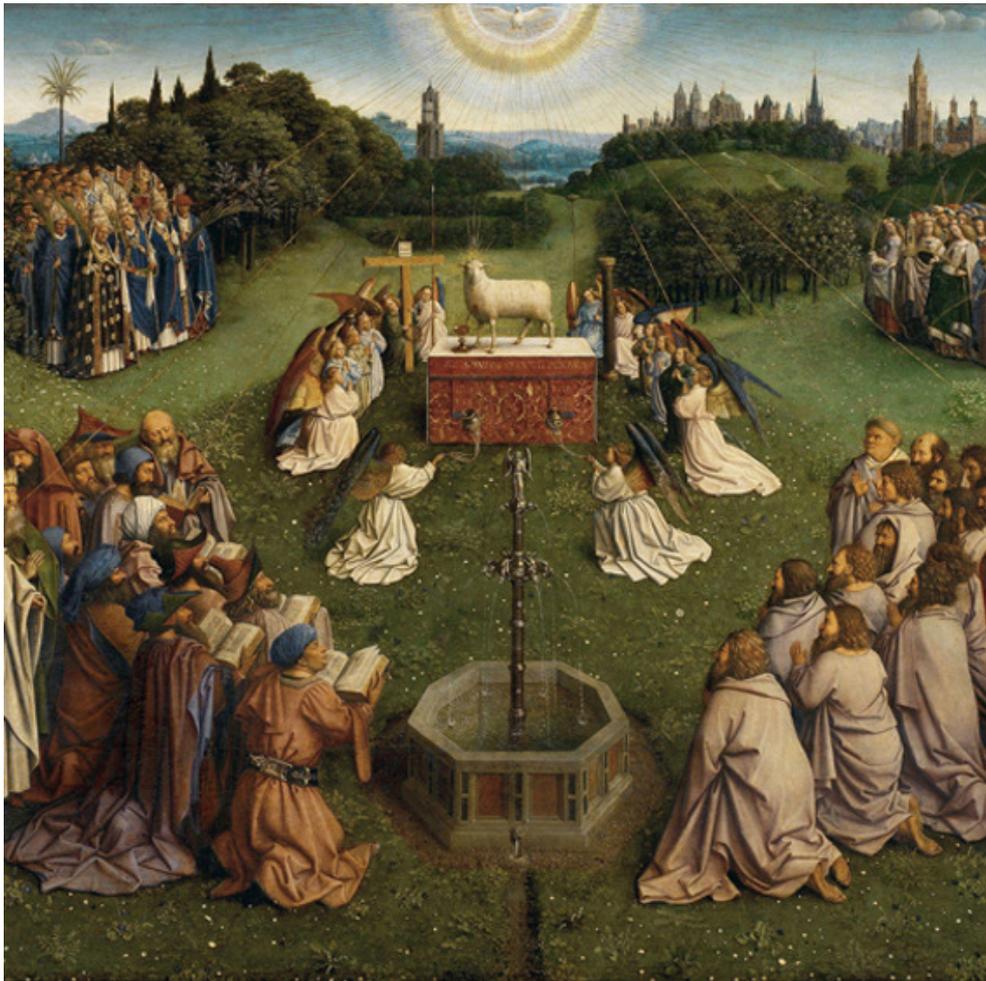
like to refer to 1 Corinthians 14: 8 (NKJV): "For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?"

It is our prayer that your synod will provide that clarity. That it may serve to promote the unity of your churches on the basis of the Holy Scriptures and the reformed confessions and by doing so, promote the world wide church gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." (Hebr. 4: 12, 13 NKJV)

We pray that our heavenly Father will give you wisdom and that He will bless you, that He will guide you through the Holy Spirit in your discussions and in formulating your decisions and that He will make you a blessing for your churches and for other churches in the rest of the world.

DEPUTIES CONTACT CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA



Contents

- 1. Deputation**
- 2. Prosedure**
- 3. Mandate**
- 4. Execution of mandate**
- 5. Recommendations**
- 6. Budget**
- 7. Appendixes**

1. Deputation

Deputies comprised br. P. Bouwman and revs. P. Nel, J.A Breytenbach, K.T Mogale and E. Viljoen. For all practical purposes rev. Mogale. Nel and br. Bouwman did not function as part of deputies.

2. Prosedure

The functioning of deputies was hindered greatly as a result of the unavailability of br. Bouwman, revs. Nel and Mogale. The withdrawel of the convenor Bouwman and later Nel, made it very difficult to function as deputies.

3. Mandate

- a. To distribute the document compiled by the deputies on contact with the GKSA to the churches;
- b. To pursue the possibility of attending the TKR as observers
- c. To convey synod's concern about the differences in the GKSA with regard to women serving in an office and monitor and evaluate the development regarding the issue
- d. To continue contact with the GKSA on national level
- e. To make these contacts on a bilateral basis
- f. To cooperate with the GKNv in matters of mutual concern, such as the abovementioned and other issues
- g. To request the GKSA deputies to supply the GKSA's official stance, in writing, on the basic principles of the socio-historical hermeneutic in response to the document deputies presented to them in collaboration with the GKNv in 2004
- h. To request the GKSA deputies to serve them with an assessment of the situation in the GKSA with regard to controversial issues they struggle with
- i. To take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts;

j. To design guidelines for local contacts and, within 6 months, supply them to the churches. These guidelines must contain, amongst others:

- A uniform declaration by the churches for the purpose and outcomes of the contact;
- Topics for discussion and aspects to be surveyed;
- The forms and fields of cooperation;
- The role the federation of churches play;
- Mutual agreement.

k. To document our view on church and on the relationship between the local church and the federation of churches;

l. To strengthen our ties with the FCSA by attending, either each year or bi-annually, the annual assemblies of the FCSA

m. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod

4. Uitvoering van die opdrag

4.1. To distribute the document compiled by the deputies on contact with the GKSA to the churches

The document could not be distributed. Deputies are waiting for the deputies of the GKSA to react to the contents of the report. Deputies of the GKSA are convinced that there are misrepresentations in the report that first need to be corrected. We feel that it is important to be very sensitive not to spread any possible misrepresentation that can lead to unfortunate conclusions.

4.2. To pursue the possibility of attending the TKR (Tussen Kerklike Raad) as observers

The desire of the FRCSA to attend the TKR as observers, was conveyed to the deputies of the GKSA. The only possible way we will be able to attend, is when we will be invited to attend by one of the existing members. Deputies of the GKSA undertook to investigate this possibility. We were not yet able to receive any feedback from them in this regard. This still seems to us a very important goal to pursue, because it will give us a good impression of what the relations with the NGK and the NHK mean for the GKSA and in what ways we will be able to partake in the same.

4.3. To convey synod's concern about the differences in the GKSA with regard to women serving in an office and monitor and evaluate the development regarding the issue

Synod's concern was conveyed in our meeting with deputies of the GKSA on 12 September 2008. Deputies of the GKSA objected to the motivation of the decision of synod to call the service of women in the office of elder and minister characteristic of deformation. We think that we indeed need as synod to speak in a more nuanced way about

the decisions of other churches. The context in which decisions are made and the outworking of it in the life of the church, need to be taken in consideration. This even more when there is a clear indication that an honest attachment to the authority of Scripture is maintained. The matter of the possible hermeneutical differences could not be discussed at a deeper level and therefore need to be pursued further in future.

4.4. To continue contact with the GKSA on national level

Contact with the GKSA was continued on national level via the deputies of their national synod.

4.4.1 On 12 September 2008 a meeting between deputies of the FRCSA and the GKSA was held.

4.4.2 As a result of withdrawal of three members of the deputies and other practical circumstances further meetings was not possible in 2009. Through the whole of 2010 Deputies of the GKSA could not make themselves available for further meetings.

4.4.3 Rev Nel and Breytenbach attended the synod of the GKSA during January 2009 in Potchefstroom. Rev. Nel conveyed the greetings of the VGKSA and our congratulations on the 150th commemoration of the GKSA.

4.4.4 Rev Breytenbach attended the continued synod of the GKSA during June 2009 in Potchefstroom. The purpose of this continuation was to further discussions on the function of women in the offices in the church. (See Appendix A).

4.5. To make these contacts on a bilateral basis

See 4.4.

4.6. To cooperate with the GKNv in matters of mutual concern, such as the abovementioned and other issues

A meeting was held in January 2009 involving Deputies of the FRCSA for relations abroad, Deputies for contact with churches in South Africa and the rev. Jan-Matthijs van Leeuwen of the Deputies Contact with churches abroad of the GKNv (See Appendix B). Discussions included the relations of the FRCSA and the GKNv with the GKSA.

Implications of Synod Zwolle-South decisions as far as the tripartite relations are concerned, were discussed.

4.7. To request the GKSA deputies to supply the GKSA's official stance, in writing, on the basic principles of the sosio-historical hermeneutic in response to the document deputies presented to them in collaboration with the GKNv in 2004

See the decisions of the synod of the GKSA regarding the hermeneutics in connection with the role of women in church offices in Appendix A.

4.8. To request the GKSA deputies to serve them with an assessment of the situation in the GKSA with regard to controversial issues they struggle with

No new issues surfaced in the life of the GKSA as far as could be ascertained that we need further information on. The well-known new so-called “Cloete Book of praise”, the restructuring of the bond of churches to integrate all races and the function of women in church offices are still the main concerns that lead to situations for which the GKSA need our prayerful attention.

4.9. To take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts

Deputies assisted local churches by taking note of the local contacts between the FRCSA Pretoria-Maranatha and the GKSA Pretoria-Kandelaar.

4.10. To design guidelines for local contacts and, within 6 months, supply them to the churches. These guidelines must contain, amongst others:

- **A uniform declaration by the churches for the purpose and outcomes of the contact;**
- **Topics for discussion and aspects to be surveyed;**
- **The forms and fields of cooperation;**
- **The role the federation of churches play;**
- **Mutual agreement.**

Deputies made available to the churches some guidelines for local contacts (See Appendix C). The purpose of these guidelines was to assist churches who are in contact with local churches from the GKSA. Therefore it was made available only in Afrikaans, but can in future be adapted and translated to suit the needs of our Sotho-speaking churches.

4.11. To document our view on church and on the relationship between the local church and the federation of churches

Work on this document could not be completed to the satisfaction of deputies. Deputies want to recommend as a framework for understanding the relationship between the local church and the federation of churches, the article (Kerkverband in saamhorigheid) of rev M. H. Sliggers attached in Appendix D. The article has been sent to the churches. Translation of the article still need to be completed.

4.12. To strengthen our ties with the FCSA by attending, either each year or bi-annually, the annual assemblies of the FCSA

Appendix 3: Report Mission Deputies

Mission Deputies of the Free Reformed Churches in SA Report to Synod 2011

20 April 2011, V2.01

Dear Brothers

Attached you find the report of the mission Deputies, appointed by Synod 2008.

Not all relevant information is included in this report, like minutes of MDSA meetings and reports of workshops and conferences. This information is available on request at the email address specified in the report.

Without delving into details, MDSA would like to highlight that an important conclusion we as MDSA came to over the past 3 years is that a national indaba is required with all stakeholders in order to discuss the impact of the mission work on manpower and finances. This topic comes back in the report at various occasions.

We pray that you as synod delegates, may receive strength and wisdom in order to have positive discussions and that God may bless all decisions made.

With sisterly and brotherly greetings, for MDSA:

Br. R Snijder Sr. T Bijker
Chairman Secretary

Table of contents:

Table of contents:	
1. Deputyship	
2. Instructions of Synod 2008	
3. Meetings	
4. Activities	
4.1 Report on visitation (from NL) 2008	
4.2 New institutions and MDSA role.	
4.3 Separation of functions	
4.4 National Conference as per Synod mandate 13.	
4.5 Mission Planning	
4.5.1 Workshops	
4.5.2 Mission Congress 2008	
5. Mission information sessions.....	
6. Finances	
6.1 Current situation	
6.2 Budget next three years	
6.3 Implications of budgets	
6.4 Pension scheme	
6.5 Fundraising and relations with Canada/Australia	
7. Functioning and future plans.	
7.1 Functioning of MDSA	
7.2 Future plans.	
8. Suggestions	
Appendix A, Visitation instructions 2008	
Appendix B, Visitation report 2008	
Appendix C, Agreement of co-operation	
Appendix D, Financial Statements	

1. Deputyship

As per date of this report, MDSA consists of the following members:

- Roel Snijder (Chairman)
- Harm Snijder (Treasurer)
- Jaap Smit, co-opted by MDSA in order to replace deputy br JD de Mooij, who left for Australia.
- Tjeerd de Wit
- Tanya Bijker, co-opted by MDSA in order to replace deputy sr CH Hagg, who resigned end of 2010.

2. Instructions of Synod 2008

Synod 2008 decided to appoint Mission Deputies with the following instructions. A short response on how each instructions was followed up, is included:

1. To continue the contact between the mission churches of the FRCSA and the supporting churches abroad;

MDSA have maintained contact with Mission Deputies in the Netherlands throughout the past 3 years. Information like minutes, budgets, reports etc. have been communicated with these deputies. There is also regular contact with a committee of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Coaldale. This committee is collecting money for mission in SA as well as for needy churches.

2. To act, within this contact, in accordance with the agreement of cooperation, which synod made with the supporting churches abroad and the agreement of cooperation regarding the mission between the FRCSA churches;

These agreements of co-operation were indeed followed. It should be noted that not all churches within the FRCSA have signed the agreement of co-operation. This issue is dealt with in this report.

3. To consider more concrete results for the national mission vision for the next five to ten years and to engage in this process different role-players;

This instruction dates back from Synod 2002 and was repeated in the Synod 2005 and 2008 instructions. As can be seen from the MDSA 2005 and 2008 reports, not much was reported back on this instruction and to be honest, MDSA is not sure how to follow this up. Deputies are of the opinion that this instruction was followed up if it means that the mission vision can only be executed insofar as there are funds. This instruction was not followed up if it means that the execution of the mission vision should not be hampered by financial constraints. In that case, deputies would have to find additional funds. This issue is discussed in more detail in the rest of this report.

4. To receive annually the policies and work plans from the mission churches, the budget for the next year and the statements of the previous year;

This information was received regularly by MDSA. These plans and policies are also discussed at a yearly conference, normally in October, attended by all role players. The budgets for the year following arises from the input received from these policies and plans.

5. To consolidate the various budgets and present it to the deputies of the supporting churches abroad;

At the end of every year the budget for the following year is shared with deputies in the Netherlands. Also the long term budgets for the next 5 years are shared. Since 2011, this information is also shared with the committee in Coaldale, at their request.

6. To distribute, in accordance with the approved budgets of the mission churches, the incoming funds;

Funds have been distributed according to accepted budgets.

7. To ensure that the money is spent in accordance with the budget, policies and work plans;

This has been attempted all times, although it should be noted that budgets had to shrink at times due to declining income, mainly due to the strength of the Rand.

8. To assess the churches with a minimum amount of R100 per member for 2008, R110 for 2009 and R120 for 2010;

Except from the needy churches in our bond of churches, all the other churches (i.e. Maranata, Pretoria, Kaapstad and Johannesburg) paid their respective assessments for the 3 years under review. As at 31 December 2010, no outstanding contributions were due to MDSA.

9. To request from the mission churches the minutes and reports related to mission work;

Deputies received minutes and reports from the respective Mission Boards on a regular basis.

10. To coordinate necessary mission affairs of mutual interest of the various mission fields;

This happened mainly at the yearly joint mission strategy meetings, attended by the Mission Boards, MDSA and other relevant parties. These meetings are held every year in October and are also used to discuss the budget for the year

following.

11. *To divide the different tasks amongst themselves;*

Done.

12. *To implement, in collaboration with the deputies ad article 11 CO, the already agreed procedure that newly instituted congregations, established out of the mission work and that are financially needy, will approach the deputies ad article 11 CO with immediate effect and that the MDSA will, if necessary, temporarily assist financially the deputies ad article 11 CO for shortfalls accumulated by these newly instituted congregations, ensuring that the proper church channels be followed;*

See paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3.

13. *To request the deputies ad article 11 CO to convene a national conference on the growing financial support required in the short-, medium- and long term by our growing federation, with special reference to the newly instituted churches established as a result from the mission work;*

This conference was held 6-7 Feb 2009. The title of this conference was:

Sustainable Financial Support". See 4.4 of this report.

14. *To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.*

Via this report.

3. Meetings

As result of the regional nature of the composition of the MDSA it was possible to meet regularly (minutes of the meetings can be provided upon request by Tanya Bijker tanya@bijker.co.za)

Meetings were also held with Deputies Needy Churches, Deputies Theological Training, Mission Boards from Maranata, Mamelodi and Cape Town as well as representatives from the Mission Deputies Netherlands. The following table provides a breakdown of the meeting schedule for the period March 2008 – March 2011.

Date Invitees and purpose

18 March 2008 MDSA

22 April 2008 MDSA

5 June 2008 MDSA

30 June 2008 MDSA

11 August 2008 MDSA

8 September 2008 MDSA

22 October 2008 Deputies Article 11, Deputies Curators, Visitation Team from the Netherlands and MDSA

24 – 25 October 2008 MDSA Mission Workshop (see 4.5)

20 November 2008 MDSA

26 January 2009 MDSA

6 – 7 February 2009 National Conference (see 4.4.)

23 February 2009 MDSA

30 March 2009 MDSA

4 May 2009 MDSA

8-9 May 2009 MDSA, Deputies Article 11, Belhar and Bellville Church Councils, Mission workers and Mission Commission Bellville

8 June 2009 MDSA
17 August 2009 MDSA
5 October 2009 MDSA
23 – 24 October 2009 MDSA Mission Workshop (see 4.5)
27 October 2009 MDSA + Church Council Maranata
16 November 2009 MDSA
25 January 2010 MDSA
12 April 2010 MDSA
15 June 2010 MDSA
26 July 2010 MDSA
5 Aug 2010 MDSA + Deputies Curators
30 August 2010 MDSA
4 October 2010 MDSA
22- 23 October 2010 MDSA Mission Workshop (see 4.5)
22 November 2010 MDSA
31 January 2011 MDSA
21 February 2011 MDSA
28 March 2011 MDSA

4. Activities

4.1 Report on visitation (from NL) 2008

Nobody from MDSA was directly involved in this visitation, but MDSA was instrumental in organizing the visitation. The visitation took place in October 2008 and the following persons participated:

From The Netherlands

Drachten: H. Jellema for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

Drachten: Rev. J.H. Tempelman for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

Schildwolde: O.D. van IJren for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

From South Africa

Pretoria: H. Lubbinge for visitation at Nelmapius and Cape Town

Pretoria: C. Roose for visitation at Cape Town

Mamelodi: Rev. T. Mogale for visitation at Soshanguve and Cape Town

Cape Town: B. van Dalen for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane

MDSA defined the instructions to visitors. These and the visitation report can be found in the Appendices A and B of this report.

The recommendations that came out as a result of the visitation were:

1. Visits from South Africa to The Netherlands should also be evaluated and reported to the ZDNL.
2. The MDSA should formulate the purposes of the visitation and give instructions with basic questions. It is very important that the purpose and contents of each part of the visitation program is clear to every role player.
3. It is the responsibility of the Church Council to give pastoral care and support for the ministers and missionaries.
4. The cooperating churches should be informed more clearly about mission issues.
5. For the continuity of the mission work it is important that a missionary commits himself for a certain time. It is strongly recommended that he should inform the Mission Board timeously so that they can call a new

missionary before he leaves.

6. Organizational skills and talents should be developed which are necessary for the church to become independent.

7. The way the stipends of the missionaries and mission workers are put together must be transparent.

8. From previous visitation recommendations it became clear that missionaries could easily become overloaded. The responsible churches should try to prevent this from happening again.

9. The possibility for the Mission Boards to become a body who delivers a service to all mission churches in Tshwane and Cape Town. Why should all the work and skills be duplicated in every mission church?

10. The visitation team noticed that Wesbank has drawn up a good diaconal policy. This could be fruitfully used by the other mission congregations.

11. It would be good if theological students from Tshwane and Cape Town visit each other's mission areas.

4.2 New institutions and MDSA role.

During the past 3 years the congregation of Belhar was instituted. There was little MDSA involvement in this process. MDSA has discussed the growth and institution of churches with the Mission Boards and it became clear that this, the institution of new congregations, is in fact the responsibility of the Mission Board, the Missionary and the bond of churches (for example Classis). MDSA therefore has no role to play in this process.

The MDSA did however also have meetings with the deputies Art 11 CO in an attempt to stipulate the process that should be followed by these newly instituted churches in the event of them being needy. The process was finalised and it was agreed that deputies Art 11 and MDSA will together meet with these new churches and do an assessment of the situation based on their budgets and, if so requested, an agreement will be reached in terms of the funding of these newly instituted churches. MDSA is not committing to any funding, because newly instituted churches no longer fall under mission. However, depending on the situation, some startup capital may be needed and MDSA may decide to make some funds available. In such a case, these funds will be transferred to Deputies Art 11 and they monitor the progress with the needy churches.

The current Financial position of MDSA is such that we are not in a position to fund newly instituted needy churches according to a fixed formula. More clarity on this matter is reported under 4.3 (a).

4.3 Separation of functions

The deputies' main function is in connection with mission work. During the first year of meetings (2008), we soon discovered that there are a number of issues which kept rearing its head on the agenda and which are not part of mission work. We would like to take the opportunity to discuss these under the 3 main functions being a. Art 11 Deputies Needy Churches, b. Theological Training and c. Art 19 Deputies Needy Students.

a. Art 11 Deputy Needy Churches (DNC)

Since mission work results in the institution of new congregations, we were of the opinion that once the church is instituted it is no longer part of mission work or any of the mission's budgets. Should the newly instituted church become needy, they should approach the appointed deputies Art 11 for support. Discussions were held with DNC in order to discuss this matter and find a workable solution to this problem. Although the newly instituted churches often receive a gift in the form of a church building and manse, the financial needs of the church is now its own responsibility and they need to

take ownership. As part of the mission work, ownership by the congregation should form part of the process towards instituting the church. Although mission deputies have funded newly instituted churches through a relieve programme which stretches over 5 years, we believed that this should be dealt with in a different manner.

The meeting with DNC went a long way in finding a workable solution. It was agreed that these newly instituted churches must prepare their financial needs and call on the congregation to support these needs. Where the support from the congregation falls short of the budgeted amount, the needs are presented to DNC who will do an assessment of the situation and, if needed, approach MDSA. MDSA will determine whether there is sufficient scope within its own resources to assist in funding the shortfall. This means that the newly instituted churches will not form part of the mission churches' budget and support will be given where MDSA has sufficient resources to do so.

An important decision that we as MDSA made is that we do not guarantee any financial support to the newly instituted churches and the mission churches must work towards funding their own needs from the beginning. This will create a sense of ownership and responsibility.

b. Theological Training (TT)

Students formed part of the mission budget and we questioned why this was indeed so. The history behind this is that DVN in the Netherlands has pledged funds towards the funding of students studying at MTC. The students in Cape Town did not receive the same support as DVN was only prepared to support the students studying through a recognised institution. Various discussions were held and a decision was made during one of our meetings with the Mission Boards (MB) that we need to separate the functions of mission work and TT. The reason for this decision was that TT provides training towards ministers and not necessarily mission workers or missionaries. We as MDSA are certainly neither qualified nor tasked to identify men that have the calling towards studying theology.

The need to separate this issue also came to light when DVN requested (from MDSA) progress reports and motivation for further support for students. Discussions with TT were held and it was agreed during 2010 that the responsibility for students lies with TT. They mentor students and monitor their progress and success and are in a position to recommend whether students may continue with their studies. TT are also the deputies that have the discussions with potential candidates wanting to study theology. The financial support of the TT students is handled by DNS and further discussions took place with TT and DNS and agreements were reached.

The separation of the function is important in that students studying through TT are studying towards the calling within the ministry. By linking their studies directly with mission work creates an expectation that they are guaranteed a calling within the mission work. We believe that this should not be the case and although there are some students that obtain practical experience within the mission churches, this does not mean that they are guaranteed a calling within this work.

c. Art 19 Deputies Needy Students (DNS)

As mentioned above the financial needs of students are assessed and handled by DNS. It was therefore necessary that the funds that are made available by DVN are transferred to them for the support of the students. MDSA will receive funds from DVN during 2011 and these will be transferred to DNS for the funding of the students currently busy with their studies. There is a proposal from DVN relating to the continued support for students beyond 2011. This has been referred to TT and DNS and we trust they will elaborate on this matter in their respective reports.

d. Conclusion

What is important to note from the above is that there are various deputies dealing with their responsibilities, however the long term viability and sustainability of all this work needs to be clearly understood. MDSA has in the past perhaps had the luxury of substantial reserves, however the progress in the mission work the past 3 years has been such that many long term goals have come to fruition resulting in substantial increases in our operating budgets. We thank the Lord for his blessing in the mission work and are grateful for the support we have received through the various deputies.

4.4 National Conference as per Synod mandate 13.

This conference was held on 6 and 7 Feb 2009 with the following topics:

- i. The economy of South Africa – a brief overview and advice
- ii. The historical and Biblical context for CO, Article 11
- iii. The church and business: Can the church participate as a player in the economy and become involved in business?
- iv. The current situation in the FRCSA
- v. Presentation by church council representatives 'The ROAD AHEAD'

The above topics were covered with the following lectures:

- i. An economic analysis.
- ii. A Biblical and historical view on CO Art 11.
- iii. Tentmaker Church, Can the Church Use Other Means To Support Herself?
A look at 1 Corinthians 9.
- iv. A report from the questor.

A complete report of the conference is available on request from Tanya Bijker
tanya@bijker.co.za.

The conclusions of the conference were:

1. Establish contacts with foreign churches for funding.
2. Prepare proper overview of the situation in South Africa, with photos.
3. Give detailed statistics: tithing's, collections, members.
4. Send a person overseas with proper itinerary and plan.
5. Get consent from Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad.
6. Personalise the link between the donor and the recipient.
7. Establish contacts with ICRC in this regard.
8. Communicate clearly that Art. 11 is the orderly channel for needy churches.
9. Align mission strategies with Art. 11-strategies.
10. Clarify whether our 'no' on church as a business is a practical 'no' or a principle 'no'.
11. Question: is Art. 11 only to support churches who cannot support minister **or** also for other church expenses?
12. Define needy church.
13. Establish contacts between Art. 11 and the visitors from classis.
14. Draw up a guideline of how to evaluate a request for support – classify neediness and evaluate make-up of stipend.
15. Request statistics/info from all the congregations within 90 days of date of letter.
16. All churches are equally accountable – for needy and non-contributors.
17. Should Deputies Art. 11 be accountable to classis and/or synod?
18. Recommendations to church councils for sharing manpower / ministers between churches.
19. Create awareness that a church can be church without a minister.
20. To be financially responsible = to only call a minister when funds are available or allocations have been made by Art. 11.

Final Conclusion by the conference: a very fruitful exercise with actions to achieve a sustainable financial platform for the future. This will not be achieved overnight but needs quite a lot of work.

Most of the conclusions fall outside the mandate of MDSA and MDSA hopes the suggestions, questions and conclusions found their way to the relevant parties. As for MDSA, the conference has strengthened the idea that Mission, Art 11 and Art 19 need to cater each for their own funding, as explained in section 4.3.

4.5 Mission Planning

4.5.1 Workshops

Every year the MDSA hosts a mission workshop where members from the respective mission boards, representatives from the missionary churches, representatives from Deputies Netherlands and representatives from the instituted churches are invited to discuss issues of mutual concern. These discussions centre on issues of strategic concern and each mission board is responsible for proposing their strategic direction for the coming year, supplemented with their budgets. The following issues are typically discussed during these meetings:

- Strategic plans of various Mission Boards
- Budget next year
- Long term budgets (5 years)
- Funding and fundraising
- Support for Theological students and how Art 19 is involved
- Next visitation from the Netherlands
- Information sessions/PR overseas and local
- Pension scheme
- Support exit plans for new congregation

4.5.2 Mission Congress 2008

It was reported to previous synod that a mission congress was planned for 25/26 July 2008. This congress took place on mentioned dates and was well attended. There were lectures by dr AJ de Visser from Canada and the topics discussed were:

- Session 1 – Vision
- Session 2 – Strategy
- Session 3 – Maturation of newly established churches
- Session 4 – Continued expansion to new areas
- Session 5 – Concluding remarks

A complete report of this congress is available on request from Tanya Bijker tanya@bijker.co.za

5. Mission information sessions.

The purpose of information sessions are to promote the mission work and keep all supporting churches directly involved, informed about progress and challenges on the mission field.

To comply with this requirement two information sessions per year are planned for the supporting churches in The Netherlands and one information session per year for the FRCSA churches.

For the period 2008 – 2010 all sessions took place as planned in The Netherlands with positive feedback. Unfortunately no officially planned sessions took place for the FRCSA due to many reasons. This does not mean that no information was presented to the churches. Ad-hoc information sessions were held by missionaries, which were received well. Unfortunately not all churches within the FRCSA had information sessions. As the mission churches are responsible for the presentation coordinated by the deputies, in depth discussions were held with the mission boards to solve the problem. As deputies we are positive that the information presentations will be on schedule soon.

6. Finances

6.1 Current situation

During the past 3 years, the financial position of the MDSA changed drastically. There were 2 main reasons for this change:

- a. The exchange rate - i.e. the ZAR strengthened against the Euro
- b. The mission work expanded resulting in an increase in cost

The next table shows the change in income and expenditure totals during the past 3 years:

Income in ZAR 2008 2009 2010

Income: Netherlands 4 129 000 4 182 000 3 638 000

Income: South Africa 128 000 247 000 348 000

Other income 305 000 248 000 382 000

DVN student support 316 000 332 000 212 000

Total 4 878 000 5 009 000 4 580 000

Expenditure in ZAR 2008 2009 2010

Direct mission work -3 321 000 -3 443 000 -4 213 000

Costs in Netherlands -233 000 -190 000 -174 000

Costs MDSA and other -263 000 -99 000 -113 000

Student cost – DVN support -212 000 -254 000 -294 000

Art 11 support -122 000 -150 000 -80 000

Support to MTC -143 000 -150 000 -150 000

Exchange differences - positive 529 000

Exchange differences - negative -145 000 -212 000

Total -3 765 000 -4 431 000 -5 236 000

Operating Surplus / -deficit 1 113 000 578 000 -656 000

Capital expenditure -225 000 -1 089 000 -2 552 000

Transfer of reserves 717 000

Surplus / -deficit after capital 888 000 -511 000 -2 491 000

As can be seen in these tables, the income declined whilst the expenditure increased dramatically. As a result, MDSA was forced to stop any expansion of the mission work, and freeze all capital budgets as far as new items are concerned. See Appendix D for more detailed financial information.

The reserves of the MDSA are as follows:

Reserves 2008 2009 2010

General reserves 2 784 000 2 274 000 -217 000

Special purpose reserves 915 000 1 545 000 357 000

Contingency reserves 3 580 000 3 619 000 3 890 000

You will notice that the "special purpose reserves" reduced from R1 545 000 in 2009 to R356 000 in 2010. This due to 2 reasons:

- i. The reservation for the shortfall on rev Breytenbach was after intense consultation and planning less than budgeted for.
- ii. The reserve has been transferred to Bethal as a lump sum for rev Breytenbach's retirement provision.

iii. The only amount still remaining is the amount invested for support of sr Nicholson for post-retirement shortfalls, for which MDSA agreed to provide.

The contingency reserves are kept for funding shortfalls, capital expenditure and contingencies. This reserve should not be less than 6 months operating expenses for the mission work, i.e. R2.2 million, leaving only R1.7 million for financing expansion, capital and shortfalls.

There is an urgent need to rethink the sustainability of the mission work as it currently is. The churches either have to revise their mission strategies and costs, or the funding for the mission work needs to expand drastically.

6.2 Budget next three years

It is currently very difficult to do a 3 year budget. Currently the mission work in Cape Town is under discussion by the mission board and the church council, mainly due to the vacancy that was created by the departure of rev Breytenbach. We do not have updated forecasts as yet, and therefore we cannot supply reliable information. What we do know however is that there is a great need in looking into the financial sustainability of the mission work in South Africa.

In determining the annual assessment for the mission work, one needs to take the following factors into account:

- Financial ability of the churches
- The annual assessment of our supporting churches in the Netherlands
- The financial needs of the mission work

The churches in the Netherlands contribute €23.10 per annum which increases by around 2.5% per annum per member. The South African churches currently contribute R130 per annum per member. This works out at 60% of the contribution per member compared to the Netherlands. However, one cannot simply convert the Euros in Rands as the buying power of a Euro is higher than a Rand. If we assume that a fair conversion rate for buying power is rather R6 for a Euro compared to the actual exchange rate of around R9.50, we are on par with the churches in the Netherlands.

6.3 Implications of budgets

As mentioned in 6.1, the financial constraints we currently experience have a serious impact on the mission work. The current work is already under pressure, and growth is something we cannot fund at all. Later in this report, we mention that it is imperative to arrange a conference to discuss the work the bond of churches is supporting, of which mission work is probably the largest portion.

6.4 Pension scheme

As part of the stipends, provision is made for the retirement of missionaries. The question about how and who has been around for many years and has served on previous synods. The decisions were repeated that the provision for retirement lies with the individual churches themselves. Reality is that we have 2 churches within our bond that jointly have 10 ministers in their employment. MDSA has 8 of them on their budgets and the question arose: "Isn't it time that we consider a group scheme for our churches?"

At the request of Pretoria Maranata, supported by Cape Town, a conference was arranged and facilitated by MDSA. All the churches were invited to this conference and we believe the outcome was very positive. MDSA addressed a letter to the various churches advising them of the outcome and the decision made by the conference to move ahead and investigate a retirement scheme for the churches in support of the

churches. Not all churches have the required expertise within their congregation to deal with this complex aspect of a stipend.

You would think: why is MDSA involved with this? The answer is simple in that 8 missionaries are part of our budget and we have to ensure that we do not end up using mission funding for retirement funding.

The result of this is that a separate committee was formed. Each church council was invited to delegate representatives to this committee which is investigating the possibilities and the way in which such a fund can be implemented within the bond of churches and we believe that they will serve the bond of churches well with their recommendations that will be made available in due course.

MDSA is certainly supporting this initiative and will consider this, if not for all churches, certainly for the missionaries.

Another reason why this aspect is important to MDSA is that the mission board in Cape Town had to deal with a very unfortunate situation in the disappearance of the late Rev Nicholson. MDSA together with the Church Council in Cape Town have put together a plan for the funding of the shortfall in the retirement funding for Mrs Nicholson. This again highlighted the importance of proper structuring and funding of a retirement plan. It is noted that as a result of the situation with the late Rev Nicholson, MDSA have committed themselves to the funding of the shortfall together with the Church Council of Cape Town with a clear understanding that MDSA is not able to guarantee such funding for the full period, but will commit to the contribution stipulated for as long as MDSA is financially able to do so. The ultimate responsibility remains with the Church Council of Cape Town.

6.5 Fundraising and relations with Canada/Australia

Fundraising does not form part of the instructions the MDSA received from Synod, not in 2008 and not before. Funds are mainly from two sources:

- Co-operating churches in the Netherlands (±95%)
- FRCSA churches. (±5%)

In both cases, the contribution per church member has been fixed at a certain amount (Euros in the first case and Rands in the second case). As a result, the main factor influencing MDSA income is the exchange rate. The Budget does not fluctuate with the exchange rate, hence at times there may be a surplus and at times a deficit. With the recent strengthening of the Rand (declining from about R13 to R8.60 to the Euro over quite a short period), MDSA had severe worries about the road forward, because even at a rate of R9.50 to the Euro, the planned Budgets for the five years ahead would not be sustainable. In the meantime, MDSA has curtailed budgets according to what is possible within funds available at this stage.

However, as a result, a discussion arose within MDSA whether we should be involved in fundraising or not and to what extent. Of course MDSA cannot make that decision, but considered a few options in the meantime:

- 1) Broaden the base in the Netherlands
- 2) Approach churches in Canada and Australia
- 3) Approach ICRC churches.

At the moment, only option 2) is being worked on. The last Synod in Canada of the Canadian Reformed Churches has appointed Coaldale as the congregation to collect money for good causes in South Africa. Mission was identified as one of them. Coaldale consistory has appointed a local committee responsible for this mandate. So far, MDSA has received a considerable amount via the Coaldale committee for which we are very thankful.

However, the way money is collected in Canada is different from the Netherlands. There

is no levy per church member, so MDSA never knows in advance what to expect and hence it is difficult to allocate this income to a budget. It is a nice bonus afterwards to be used to fill an unexpected gap or for an unplanned item.

Maybe, as our relationship with Canada grows, this could change in the future, but at this stage there are no indications that this can be achieved easily.

As for Australia, MDSA is trying via various contacts to find the correct entity representing multiple congregations. This has appeared to be more difficult than meets the eye, but at the moment of writing this, we were advised to contact their Deputies Churches Abroad.

Considering the above, MDSA would like to highlight the following:

1) MDSA should **not** be the body responsible for fund raising, because fundraising for mission (apart from the funds raised in the Netherlands within the existing contract) cannot happen in isolation. Art 11 and 19 also have needs. See section 7 for a further exposé on this issue.

2) Despite 1) above, what should be the target of fundraising for mission work?: **a)** to cover the costs of the existing program, or **b)** also to secure funds for expansion, in accordance with the Mission Vision? (Which is: *"To establish a network of living churches across the Republic that will instill the unity of the Kingdom of God amongst a multi-cultural and multi lingual nation."*)

3) In connection with b) above, should a limit be considered i.c.w. expansion due to **i)** the growing costs of the program, **ii)** limited manpower to manage it all, **iii)** as well as new congregations potentially being dependent on Art 11 and **iv)** most students presenting themselves depend on Art 19 for support?

i), ii), iii) and iv) above relate back to what was mentioned under instruction 3 in the beginning of this report and can also be phrased as follows:

On a number of occasions the question has been asked: "What is the long term viability and financial sustainability of all the mission work?" The Lord has always provided in different ways, even the calling by Bethal and acceptance by rev Breytenbach was certainly a way to relieve our dire financial position. MDSA suggests hosting a separate indaba around this topic and we recommend that this is not specifically around mission work but also the impact of the work we as bond of churches do in South Africa. The Lord is certainly calling on all of us to preach and teach without hesitation, but we also have to consider the availability of manpower, availability of financial support and our approach in all of this. MDSA cannot do this on their own as we have limited resources available. See section 7 where this issue is further discussed.

7. Functioning and future plans.

7.1 Functioning of MDSA

The co-operation within the MDSA team over the past three years has been excellent and we feel that the Lord was with us in our work. There are no periodical resignations at this time.

7.2 Future plans.

In many ways in our report it becomes clear that we have many deputies with their own responsibilities and instructions, yet they are intertwined and close cooperation is required as the ultimate outcome of their work remains a common goal. To what extent is a single "FRCSA VISION" necessary with all Instructions built around this vision in order to build a sustainable methodology for our bond of churches?

A conference was held, hosted by Art 11 about the sustainability issue specifically around the institution of new churches who often are needy churches (See 4.4). From the outcome there is mention of cooperation between MDSA, Art 11, ICRC and Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad and elsewhere in the MDSA report there is mention of

close relationship between MDSA, Theological Training, Art 19 and Art 11 and it all revolves around Manpower, International Contacts and Funding.

The general view often heard is that we just have to go and look overseas and funds will be made available. Have we ever looked at our own bond of churches and the manpower we have available and how we could approach all this work in a different way and still be in a position to manage the work that is all done with the common goal of **"... go and make disciples of all nations, ..."** and **"... store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, ..."**. Does this only apply to our churches or to all churches worldwide? Don't they, other churches elsewhere, have their own calling for this work in their respective countries and areas for which they require their own manpower and resources? Is our continuous call on them to support the work in SA depriving them from their own calling?

We as FRCSA have been blessed extensively with the mission work. But should we as FRCSA go to a level we cannot carry anymore? The Lord will not place a burden on us we cannot carry. Once the mission church becomes an instituted church, they will become part of the FRCSA and the bond of churches will become responsible to care for these churches.

There is therefore a close relationship between the various deputies. Theological Training is training ministers that can go out and fulfil the task of "making disciples of all nations" to "store up treasures in heaven". Art 19 is instrumental in looking after the financial needs of these students. MDSA and Mission Boards are involved in this as well in establishing Mission Churches with the view of establishing Instituted Churches. Art 11 supports the needy churches as the congregation shall be bound to provide for the proper support of its minister(s).

As MDSA we have been having various discussions around the sustainability and in our last discussion concluded that the way our bond of churches function is unique and of great concern. The bond of churches is responsible for Art 11, Art 13 and Art 19 yet the bulk of support for specifically Art 11 & 19 is from donations abroad. Continuous growth of mission work will place a further burden on the bond of churches which in our opinion is not sustainable as it leads to a "Needy Bond of Churches"

As MDSA we are proposing a conference/indaba around the question:
"What is the long term viability and financial sustainability of all the mission work and related activities within the FRCSA?"

With viability we think about manpower to manage it and the existing methodology according to which work progresses. This includes the need for manpower for all other activities in the bond of churches as well. In summary, MDSA would like to make the following observations:

- a) We are a very small bond of churches with only three fully self-supporting congregation.
- b) There are a plethora of activities going on, like schools, outreach, evangelism, church councils, etc etc, all needing manpower and some finance.
- c) We operate according to the CO of Dordt, also as far as equality and caring for each other is concerned (Art 11, 13, 19)...
- d) The work of mission in the current way of working places enhanced strains on manpower and finances due to increased Art 11 and 19 needs, as well as other needs, like a pension scheme, exacerbated by poverty all around us.
- e) The enhanced strains on finances available have already curtailed mission related activities in the past 2 years, due to reduced budgets.
- f) The way mission is done in SA by the FRCSA and how financing takes place and manpower is deployed, is unique in the world and is the result of emigrant congregations in a country considered to be a mission area in the past.
- g) As history has taught us, budgets always tend to increase if funds allow.

h) A disproportional amount of foreign money flows into the FRCSA for mission and related activities.

i) There are currently discussions going on in Pretoria between two FRCSA churches, the Kandelaar and two other GKSA churches. This may have an impact on mission, evangelism and outreach in the future.

j) Considering what has been said in the report so far and the financial and manpower constraints, we as MDSA are of the opinion that the ways things are developing are not sustainable into the future.

k) The FRCSA have to face these challenges, hence MDSA proposes that Synod calls an indaba with all parties involved.

MDSA suggests that this indaba coincides with the visit by the ZDNL for their visitation later in 2011, so that they can also participate. Other parties that MDSA suggest to invite are Mission Boards, Church Councils, Missionaries, Art 11, Art 19, Pension Scheme committee, Deputies Theological Training, Deputies contacts with local Churches and possibly external speakers and/or advisors. To sum up, questions begging for answers are:

1. Is a central fundraising body needed?

2. We are a small bond of churches: can we manage the growth as anticipated in the mission vision?

3. Should we go for boundless fundraising relying on worldwide ecumenical contacts, attracting a disproportional ratio of the budgets of ICRC churches for our bond of churches and its activities? (6.5 refers)

4. Are there other methodologies making sustainable growth possible?

5. Is a single FRCSA vision, not only for mission work but including all other aspects, necessary and who would be the custodian of such a vision?

Section 8.ii (Suggestions) mentions how the results of such a conference and possible follow up conferences, can be used.

The reason MDSA mentions this indaba in this report is that we do not have instructions to call such a conference, hence we recommend to synod, in the interest of the bond of churches, to give instructions to an independent deputy or committee to call for such a conference.

8. Suggestions

i. That synod confirms as mission contributions in South Africa at a minimum amount of R150 per member for 2011, R162 per member for 2012 and R175 per member for 2013 and R190 per member for 2014.

ii. That synod appoints multicultural deputies or a committee or any other suitable body to call a national conference as alluded to in section 7.2. MDSA recommends that feedback and recommendations from such a conference and possible follow up conferences will not lie dormant till next synod in 2014, but that they are acted upon at a suitable time, possibly via an ad hoc synod before 2014.

iii. That synod decides to maintain the same instructions and responsibilities for mission deputies as in 2008 with the following amendments:

a. Rephrase instruction 3 so that the intention is more clear.

b. To remove instructions 12 and 13.

c. To change the amounts in instruction 8 as per suggestion 1 above.

iv. Deputies asked previous synod to have the "Agreement of Co-operation between the FRC's in South Africa" signed by all co-operating churches. This has not happened, and MDSA now propose that they will themselves approach all churches that have not signed yet. (See Appendix C for this agreement).

v. MDSA requests synod to confirm agreement with the proposed policy i.c.w.

separation of functions as discussed in section 4.3 of this report.
vi. MDSA requests synod to take cognizance of the agreement with Cape Town regarding the retirement provision for Mrs Nicholson discussed in section 6.4 of this report.

Yours in Christ,
Mission Deputies South Africa

Appendix A, Visitation instructions 2008

Instructions Mission Visitation 2008.

Investigate, evaluate and if necessary provide recommendations regarding the following:

Specific for the Mission churches and missionaries

1. Preaching

- 1.1. The second church service on a Sunday
- 1.2. Church services on other Christian holidays
- 1.3. The use of Catechism and Confession documents in the sermons

2. Sacraments and Liturgy

- 2.1. Uniformity in the liturgical forms
- 2.2. The guidelines for accepting members into the congregation
- 2.3. Singing of Psalms during church services

3. Catechism

- 3.1. Uniformity in lesson planning and reading material
- 3.2. Use of others in the presentation of catechism classes

4. House visits

- 4.1. Frequency with which members receive house visits
- 4.2. Use of mission workers, students and other brothers during house visits

5. Christian life

- 5.1. Attending church services by all members
- 5.2. Evaluate in what ways church members can be encouraged to participate as a living member so that the church functions during the week (bible studies, youth meetings, catechism etc.)

6. Social and Financial Need

- 6.1. Aid within the church
- 6.2. The impact of social and economic needs on the work of the missionary

7. Spiritual growth and road to self-governing

- 7.1. The growth (spiritual and in numbers) as compared to the previous visitation 2005
- 7.2. Gifts of specific brothers that could be utilised further
- 7.3. The short term possibility of instituting office bearers
- 7.4. Factors that contribute to the possibility of closing a missionary point

Specific for Mission Boards and Church Councils

8. Mission work (establishing new missionary points)

- 8.1. Method of evangelising in order to make the community aware of the church of Christ
- 8.2. The preparation of mission churches towards self-governing and incorporation into the federation of churches once office bearers have been established
- 8.3. The use of youth in evangelism and the supervision thereof
- 8.4. Lesson plans for toddlers and primary school children in order to enrich them by ministering to them from the Word of God
- 8.5. Possible programmes for the training of future office bearers
- 8.6. The use of the sisters in church functions

9. Training

- 9.1. Mukhanyo Theological College

- 9.2. MTC-Plus programme
- 9.3. Pastoral guidance for students
- 9.4. Place of training in mission work

10.Structures

- 10.1. Mission Board
 - 10.1.1. Functioning and status of Board
 - 10.1.2. Functioning of strategic plan
 - 10.1.3. Communication with Church Council
- 10.2. Church Council
 - 10.2.1. Relationship with missionary
 - 10.2.2. Relationship with MDSA
 - 10.2.3. Relationship with all supporting churches
 - 10.2.4. Relationship with mission churches

Specific for Missionaries/Mission workers/Mission Teams

11.Functioning of missionary

- 11.1. On the mission field assigned to him
- 11.2. Within a strategic plan
- 11.3. In the missionary church to which him and his family belongs
- 11.4. And his spiritual attitude towards his calling
- 11.5. With regards to his personal time management
- 11.6. And his functioning within the mission team
- 11.7. And his possibility for further academic development
- 11.8. Pastoral care of missionaries and their families
- 11.9.

12.Structures

- 12.1. Mission team:
 - 12.1.1. Meetings
 - 12.1.2. Job descriptions and future perspective of each missionary and mission students
 - 12.1.3. Functioning of strategic plan

Specific for MDSA and other Deputies

13.Discussion Mission Deputies and other Deputies

- 13.1 Discussions with
 - 13.1.1. Deputies Curators/Theological Training
 - 13.1.1.1. Decisions Synod 2008
 - 13.1.1.2. MTC(+) arrangements, financial support, educational support, contact deputies Curators
 - 13.1.2. Deputies Article 11
 - 13.1.2.1. Financial Support package for newly instituted churches
 - 13.1.3. MDSA
 - 13.1.3.1. Financial support structures
 - 13.1.3.2. Reserves
 - 13.1.3.3. Emeriti arrangements

Appendix B, Visitation report 2008

Report Mission Visitation 2008.

- 1.Introduction. Page 2
 - 1.1.Work method. 3
 - 1.2.What is the purpose of the visitation? 3
 - 1.3.Continuity. 3
 - 1.4.The visitation team. 3
- 2. Tshwane.

2.1. Making up the balance. (Executive Summary)	4
2.2. Mission Board.	4
2.3. Mission Team.	5
2.4. Nelmapius.	6
2.5. Soshanguve.	8
2.6. Projects funding.	12
3. Kaapstad.	
3.1. Opsomming.	13
3.2. Die program.	13
3.3. Aanbevelings.	15
4. General.	
4.1. MDSA.	17
4.2. Deputies Needy Churches.	17
4.3. Deputies Curators.	18
5. General Recommendations.	19

Chapter 1: Introduction

Isaiah 56:6-7

"...Foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant-- these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

Isaiah prophesied thousands of years ago that foreigners will bind themselves to the LORD, to serve, love and worship his holy name. This prophecy is still being fulfilled. People from all generations, backgrounds, cultures and colors worship the one God. Also in South Africa this is happening. Foreigners of all cultures and colors are joining God's kingdom. The church is growing in quality and quantity. A bond of churches out of different cultures is formed in Christ where everyone treat each other as equals. The brothers and sisters understand each other, although their first language is Afrikaans, Northern Sotho or English. Structural unity is formed and works in the churches, classes and synods. The Gospel is uniting people in a way not thought possible a few years ago. God is working wonders! The light of His kingdom is breaking through in a land and world ruled by ignorance, suspicions and fear.

The visitation team had the privilege to witness the wonder God is working in South Africa. We would like to inform the reader about what we saw happening in South Africa so that His name be glorified. Recommendations are also made by the visitation team to help the people involved in mission work.

The mission visitation was called by the Mission Deputies of South Africa in the mission fields of Nelmapius and Soshanguve in Gauteng and Wesbank and Leiden in the Western Cape. The visitation took place in South Africa from 17 October until 3 November 2008. This God will bring His children to the holy mountain, His temple. He will give them joy in prayer. He will accept their prayer and the house of God will be called "a house of prayer for all nations."

He brings His people to pray and to thank Him for His work. He creates churches being called houses of joyful prayer.

Praise God for his work! For his patience! For Christ, for without Him all our work is in vain!

Our prayer is that this report will serve the mission work.

1.1. Work method

The visitation team received instructions from the MDSA. The Instructions are very comprehensive. Not every aspect mentioned in the instructions could get attention as

this would take too much time. The Visitors considered the instructions and decided to use these in the following way:

1.2. What is the purpose of the visitation?

First it is not to be policemen or auditors who come to check where things are wrong. Visitor's purpose is to come and stand next to the people who do the work and reflect with them on their work. The visitors want to discuss with them the positive developments as well as the challenges. Together we want to thank the Lord for all his blessings. Together we want to think on solutions for the problems.

The visitation team could help people who are involved in the mission work to take a pause and evaluate for a moment, it could give them the opportunity to look back and reflect on what has happened. To look forward and make sure their focus is still on achieving the goal.

1.3. Continuity

It was good that part of the Visitation Team was the same as in 2005. They could see the difference between 2005 and 2008.

The visitation team hopes that the report will be helpful in the monitoring of developments within the mission work. This is also the reason that each area is dealt with individually. During the next visitation these recommendations will be discussed again.

1.4. The visitation team

Composition of visitation team 2008:

From The Netherlands

Drachten: H. Jellema for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

Drachten: Rev. J.H. Tempelman for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

Schildwolde: O.D. van IJren for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane and Cape Town

From South Africa

Pretoria: H. Lubbinge for visitation at Nelmapius and Cape Town

Pretoria: C. Roose for visitation at Cape Town

Mamelodi: Rev. T. Mogale for visitation at Soshanguve and Cape Town

Cape Town: B. van Dalen for visitation at Pretoria/Tshwane

Instructions to the visitation team: See Annexure B

Deputies Needy Churches: Not included in this report.

Deputies Curators: Not included in this report

Chapter 2: Tshwane

2.1. Making up the balance

During the previous visit the mission in Pretoria/Tshwane was in a very difficult position. Since then a lot of things changed for the good for which we thank the Lord. The following is a summary of these changes:

- What did not go well?
- 2 missionaries had left so that there were no missionaries for Soshanguve for a year.
- Rev. Boon was overloaded. It was a difficult time for him, doing the work of 3 missionaries and the theological training. We feared for his health.
- The students were overloaded. They had the same responsibility as a missionary.
- During this time the Mission Board had 100% new members and was inexperienced.
- The church council of Mamelodi could not cope – they needed help.

Those were worrying times.

- What went well?
- Br Lubbinge became involved to fill part of the gap left by the missionaries who left.
- Progression was made by drawing up policies and work instructions.
- Rev. van Spronsen, Rev. Kleijn, Rev. De Boer helped out temporarily..
- Br. Lubbinge built the Mission Team which resulted in cohesion and focus in the mission work.
- Rev. Boon got settled in the mission work.
- Rev. De Boer accepted the call. He is a great asset with his pastoral talent and his knowledge of Northern Sotho.
- Mamelodi became involved in the Mission Team.
- We could help Mamelodi out in their need and are very glad with the brotherly relations.
- Rev. Boersma accepted the call He is a great asset because of his English background and talent for organization.
- Students are finishing their studies. Now the work can expand. Lord willing 3 students can be called soon as missionaries.
- Classis North is becoming more and more involved in mission matters.

These are exiting times – times to rejoice!

2.2. Mission Board

The Mission Board of Pretoria Maranata is functioning well. There is a lot of experience in the Mission Board. This experience should be carried over also to our brothers and sisters in Mamelodi and Soshanguve. The Mission Board has invited the Church Councils of Mamelodi and Soshanguve North to appoint members on the Mission Board. This did however not materialize due to various factors i.e.: (although has never been officially discussed with the Church Councils)

- The pool of brothers in these congregations is small. All the existing talents are being utilized in the Church Council and other church activities..
- It is difficult for most brothers to attend meetings in Pretoria, especially in the evenings.

To solve this problem a member of the Mission Board of Maranata was incorporated into the Mission Board of Mamelodi. This was abandoned after some time as it also did not work out.

In the end the problem was solved in that the Mission Board of Maranata is now also working for the Church Council of Mamelodi. The Church Council of Mamelodi is treated by them in the same way as the Church Council of Maranata. Just as they meet with the Church Council of Maranata to discuss the reports of the missionaries and the work, they also meet with the Church Council of Mamelodi. The Church Council of Mamelodi is thus treated on the same level and having the same responsibilities as Pretoria Maranata. The invitations to the Church Councils of Mamelodi and Soshanguve North to appoint members on the Mission Board remain open.

Recommendations:

1. The invitation to the Church Councils of Mamelodi and Soshanguve North to appoint members on the Mission Board should be discussed with them. Look for possible solutions.
2. The possibility that in future the Mission Board might become a body who delivers

a service to all mission churches in Tshwane should be discussed.

2.3. Mission Team

We attended a meeting of the Mission Team in Tshwane (see 2.5) and we were very impressed by the work that is done in this team. The team consists of:

The four missionaries: Rev. D.M. Boersma, Rev. P. Boon, Rev. T. de Boer and Rev. J. Mhlanga;

The students: G. Mnisi, J. Mhlangu, S. Mathlokoane, T. Matlaela and P. Kgatle;

Rev. P. Magagula from Soshanguve North;

Rev. T. Mogale from Mamelodi and;

Br. H. Lubbinge from Pretoria as facilitator.

What started as a discussion meeting between a missionary and a few students has now developed in a formidable team with lots of experience in mission work. The task of this team is the following:

To discuss the Mission Work, to learn from each other and give advice.

To discuss common problems and draw up proposed policies.

To organize workshops.

To build a relationship between the students and the missionaries/pastors.

To guide and help one another with the studies and the work.

The team meets every two weeks. Every second meeting the mission activities are discussed and during the other meetings topics concerning the mission work are discussed. The team is a discussion forum and does not have any authority to make decisions on policies etc.

Typical topics discussed were:

- Free will
- Second church service
- Building up churches in poor areas
- Criteria to admit new members
- Building blocks for stipend
- Guide lines for meneelo (VVB)
- Working effective as Mission Team
- Strategies of the devil
- Poverty and wealth
- etc.

Advantages of the mission team for the mission could be:

- Sensitive issues are not avoided. By discussing it tension is taken away.
- The risk, that workers involved in the mission work, grow apart is diminished by their discussions in the Mission Team. They learn to know each other and work together as a team.
- The Mission Team offers the possibility to exchange experience and knowledge.

Students and young missionaries learn a lot from the more experienced colleagues.

- Since working in the churches and studying may be difficult at times the students agreed to help one another in solving problems. This includes problems encountered during house visits, with studies, and preaching. In this way make it possible for everyone to do his work faithfully and joyfully.
- All the students who are involved in the churches are expected to report on their work. In doing this the team members monitor each other and ensure that the work is continuing in the churches about:

1. House visits conducted.
 2. Classes offered to church members.
 3. Studies undertaken and reporting on the balance between studies and work.
 - Students chair the meetings and make minutes. This is to give them experience and learn skills.
 - The mission team is also a strong support base for the workers in the mission work.
 - The ministers of the instituted churches stemming from the mission stay involved with mission work.
- The Mission Board acknowledges that it is important that the Mission Team is involved in decision making. That is why all policies, changes to structures and other important decisions are referred to them for discussion and comments. The Mission Team was also involved when a new strategic plan was drawn up.

Recommendation:

1. The Mission Team considers ways of supporting each other in times of needs.

2.4. Nelmapius

The visitation started by attending the Sunday church service in Nelmapius. Sam Mathlokoane led the first part of the service and Rev. De Boer did the preaching, in Northern Sotho. An English summary of the sermon was available. The service was well attended by approximately 70 people.

It was heart-warming to see how enthusiastically the people sing and to see the zeal of br Sam Mathlokoane, the dedication and the warmth of Rev. De Boer was heartwarming. After the service the Visitors shared a meal with the congregation. While eating they had the time to meet the brothers and sisters of Nelmapius.

A meeting was held with Rev. De Boer and the two students working in Nelmapius: Sam Mathlokoane and Phineas Kgatle.

The meeting was well prepared by the team who was visited.

They reflected on their work and had four issues they identified that needs attention:

- A church stand is urgently needed for the class room is too small. A church building would give the congregation a much needed identity of their own. It will also give an opportunity to plan activities like Bible study during the week. A church stand is already been identified and the Mamelodi Church Council is in the process of purchasing the church stand.
- The catechism class did not materialize this year. First they waited for Rev. De Boer to arrive. When classes were to start the 11 youth members who should have attended did not turn up. The team decided not to start this year but to find out what went wrong first. Maybe the communication from their side was not good. The policy about catechism should be clear to all the members.
- Fathers in Church (Potential office bearers): There are only a few men who are members in the church. The problem is that the majority of the houses in Nelmapius are owned by women. Fathers need to be trained to work towards institution in about 10 years' time (see Strategic Plan).
- Involvement of church members in general. The members are passive, they wait for mission workers to take initiative. There is no sense of ownership. Church members should be involved from the start.

The team at Nelmapius is working on plans to attend to these problems.

Positive developments:

- The arrival of Rev. De Boer was a great relief. The brs. Sam Mathlokoane and Phineas Kgatle have the guidance now for which they were longing for so long. The experience of Rev. De Boer is indispensable to them.

- The church is growing in numbers and spirituality. About 10 men attend church services. The class room used for services has become too small.
 - There is a committed and enthusiastic youth group.
 - Br. Sam Mathlokoane is well known in Nelmapius. Many young people come to the church through the soccer team of br. Sam Mathlokoane. He also uses opportunities to speak during funerals and in this way spreads the gospel.
 - The cooperation between the Church Council of Mamelodi and the workers in Nelmapius is very good.
 - The support from Rev. Mogale is also very good.
 - The support of the Mission Board is much appreciated. They have the resources and man power that are needed. A very good relationship has grown between all the mission workers in the Tshwane area. They meet each other in the Mission Team meetings every two weeks. Here topics and common problems in the mission work are discussed.
- The visitors saw a very enthusiastic team working in Nelmapius doing their work with pleasure. They expressed that they are being looked well after financially and spiritually. The recommendations from the previous visitation were discussed, and everything is in place or is being dealt with.
- Meeting with Rev. Mogale.

- The mission work was a huge work load for him before Rev. De Boer came.
- He feels his work load and the mission work is under control now.
- As pastor of the students he has a lot of contact with them.
- He has very good working relations with Rev. De Boer.

Meeting with Rev. De Boer.

- He has to plan his work very careful due to his health.
- He is enjoying the work very much.
- He hopes to pass the work over to a new missionary next year and move on to Soshanguve Central.

Meeting with the Church Council of Mamelodi.

The responsibility of the administrative side of the mission work was a big burden for the church council of Mamelodi. It is with great relief that this burden has been taken over by the Mission Board. The Church Council can now concentrate on their main task of guiding and leading the mission work in Nelmapius. Work in their own congregation can now get the attention it need.

After Rev. De Boer arrived the Church Council was not so much involved any more in the mission work in Nelmapius. Rev. Mogale is still very closely involved. The Church Council does however plan to increase the visits to services in Nelmapius to six times per year. A member of the Mission Board will also attend.

The congregations of Mamelodi and Nelmapius have combined services three times per year.

There is a financial committee in the congregation of Nelmapius. They count the collection money every Sunday and bank it. The only expense paid at this stage is the rent for br. Sam Mathlokoane's house. At this stage there are no diaconal cases. The Church Council is considering calling br. Sam Mathlokoane once he is eligible for a call. Mission work is a standing item during Church Council meetings. At this stage church services are only held during the morning. It is practically not possible to have a second church service while they are gathering in the school.

Recommendations:

1. The buying of a stand in Nelmapius and the building of a church for the congregation to function properly. The Church Council of Mamelodi is taking action in this regard.
2. Materials for catechism – new members classes etc. need to be discussed between all the mission workers. The Mission Team is tasked with this.
3. Training of fathers in Nelmapius. The Church Council of Mamelodi has committed themselves to attend to this.
4. The Church Council of Mamelodi should concentrate more on their responsibility in the mission work in Nelmapius.
5. Involvement of the congregation in Nelmapius. The congregation is to be involved in all the planning for example in the strategic planning, finances etc. Tasks should be given to the members of the church to get them involved. The congregations should also be involved to make contact with new members who attend church services.
6. There is no budget for Nelmapius in place. This should get attention.
7. Mission Board. It is advisable that a person of Mamelodi or Nelmapius should become a member of the Mission Board. This will transfer and develop skills in the congregations.
8. The future of br. Sam Mathlokoane with his specific gifts and the way he will be utilized should be evaluated well. This should be the responsibility of the Church Council of Mamelodi in collaboration with the team in Nelmapius.
9. Future mentorship of the students after they have been ordained is of the utmost importance. Deputies Curators and the calling church should attend to this. Br. Sam Mathlokoane specifically indicated that this is important to him.

2.5. Soshanguve

The Visitation Team was taken for an informative visit to all the areas in Soshanguve. They saw all the existing mission sites and were also taken to the planned new mission sites like Akasia, Nuwe Eersterust and the so called Soshanguve extensions. The visit gave a very good impression of the extend of the mission work in Soshanguve. The Visitation Team attended a meeting of the Mission Team as observers. The meeting was held at the Tswaing Crater in Soshanguve. After the meeting a walk to the Tswaing Crater itself was organized. It was impressive to see what an impact something small out of the space could have on this earth. While walking there was time to mix with the Tshwane mission team in an informal way. A separate item in this report will deal with the mission team. (See 3.3)

During the visitation each one of the missionaries (Rev. De Boer, Rev. Boersma, Rev. Boon and Rev. Mhlanga) were visited separately. In these visits the focus was on the person and his functioning in the mission field and not so much on the work itself. Due to a misunderstanding no separate meetings were planned with the teams working in XX (South East), WW (South) and Central to have discussions focused on the work in each area. This was however corrected to a certain extend by the missionaries reporting during the meeting with the Church Council and the Mission Board.

A high light of the visits to the work in Soshanguve was the inauguration of the church building in Soshanguve Central. After many years of moving from one place to the other they have a place of their own now in Soshanguve CC. Rev. De Boer preached that this church should be a Christ centered (CC) church. The Scriptures (Psalm 121) were read in Northern Sotho, English and Dutch. It was heart-warming to see the bond of churches involved by all carrying their greetings and congratulations over. The Sunday school from the church sang, and our Afrikaans and Dutch brothers and sisters responding by singing Psalm 121 in Afrikaans. Afterwards we had a meal together with the

congregation and mixed with the church members. It was good to see how many church members there were, and that there were quite a number of men.

We were supposed to attend the evening prayer meeting at WW but somehow no body turned up. The second service started an hour later but due to time constraints we were not able to attend this.

WW.

Positive developments:

- Growth

For the past two to three years the church in WW has seen growth in terms of quantity and quality. They have seen within those years a growth of about 70 people, and at present the number of members in the church is standing at 150. There has been growth in terms of knowledge and Christian lifestyle. They have really witnessed how God through his grace is working to sanctify the lives of so many members. This gives them joy and reason to look to the future to the selfgoverning of the church.

- Serving

Members have started to use their spiritual gifts in the church. The church has four groups of classes which are now taught by the members of the church. There are fathers who are committed and they lead bible studies with the help of Rev. Mhlanga. These fathers also help with home visits of church members. Rev. Mhlanga and the fathers meet once a month for training and discussing church matters. If it pleases our Lord they hope that 4 fathers may become elders and 2 deacons in future. At present they have 11 fathers in the church. The young people are taking leadership in terms of their bible studies.

- Church Institution

Rev. Mhlanga is optimistic that with the present situation and foreseeing more growth in the church it is possible that the church may be instituted the end of 2011.

Challenges:

Rev. Mhlanga has identified some areas where work is still needed. God willing he hopes together with the brothers and sisters in WW to work in the coming three years on the following:

- Christian family life: The church hopes to work more on the family life in

Soshanguve, at present there are many domestic problems mainly due to the fact that either children only attend the church or only mothers attend. Therefore it is of great importance that they do outreach to men.

- Train Men: This is happening already.

- Titus 2 Women: This is the name given to women ministry which they hope to start in the church – mothers should take their responsibility in the church as Paul commanded Titus.

- Youth Leadership: Training young people to lead their activities in the church.

- Second Service: Effort must be put to improve the attendance of the second service and to highlight its importance

- Finances of the Church: Rev. Mhlanga is convinced that the people in WW are not poor, therefore if God blesses their effort it is possible that the members can be self-supporting; however this means that there is a lot of work needed to improve the contribution of the members in the church. This also includes training relevant people to manage the finance of the church.

- Church Building: They still hope that it may be possible that by next year June

the church may have their own building.

- Consolidate all training materials: The Mission team is working on it.

Central.

Positive developments:

- The main activities, especially the church services, could continue although there was a lack of manpower.
- There was a slight but steady influx of new members.
- A church stand and church building has been acquired at last. Because Central is an older suburb, it was difficult to find a church stand. Due to the dedication of the congregation they were successful.

Challenges:

- There is certain passiveness amongst some church members, expecting the missionaries and theological students to do everything. Central is already a quite old preaching point. The zeal to evangelize must not come only from the missionary.
- Although new members were added, the church did not grow in numbers as others left the church.
- Now that the congregation has a clear place of identity in the neighbourhood, evangelizing activities should be started in the surroundings.
- The parents are not motivated to send their children to catechism classes. Parents must be informed and motivated on the importance of their children attending the catechism classes.

- All church members should start to contribute financially according to their means. Furthermore they should work towards more financial accountability, enhancing the functionality of the financial committee. And in those cases where there is need, diaconal help should be improved.

XX.

Positive developments:

- The main activities, especially the church services, could continue although there was a lack of manpower.
- On an on-going basis guest from the neighbourhood can be welcomed in the church service.
- Many primary school age children visit the services, also children whose parents are not members.
- There was a slight but steady influx of new members.
- A church stand has been acquired.

Challenges:

- Reaching and evangelizing all the people who are moving into the newly built houses in the area.
- XX is a relatively new congregation. They should invest in building unity, that the members interact more, also during the week.
- The parents are not motivated to send their children to catechism classes. Parents must be informed and motivated on the importance of their children attending the catechism classes. The present place where the church services are held, will be demolished. A church building has to be built on the stand soon.
- There are very few men in the church.

Akasia.

In 2008 a new mission field was identified and work was started here. The reason for choosing this area is because many new people have moved into this area during recent years and no Reformed churches are working under the Sepedi/Setswana-speaking residents yet. Members of the free reformed churches in XX , GG and WW are moving there. A church in Akasia could have an impact on a very important segment of South Africa's population: the new black higher middle-class. The time is ripe for a new Reformed church to reach this area.

Rev. Boersma was called by the free reformed church of Maranatha to do mission work in this area. As yet there is no preaching point in this area. Rev. Boersma is busy building contacts in this area. Possibly English will be used as the language for the new church.

Meeting with Church Council and Mission Board (Pretoria Maranata)

The Mission Board understands they are playing a supportive role in the mission work (see annexure E). The core business of the mission work is done by the missionaries. As the mission board is the administrative body for Maranatha and Mamelodi they have meetings with each of these church councils 4 times a year.

The Mission board also meets with each of the students twice a year. The executive committee of the Mission Board has to meet with each of the missionaries three times a year. This does however not always materialize.

The mission team is also involved in many decisions taken by the mission board.

There are four missionaries and three students working under the responsibility of the Maranata Church council. The Church council and the Mission Board do not interfere in their working methods. The missionaries are the specialist in the mission work. It is sometimes difficult for them not to become involved with the social needs in the congregation and projects.

The Church Council takes pastoral care for the missionaries and students. This is done by bringing house visits twice a year. A visitation is been done once a year to a certain mission point. Each month an elder and a member of the Mission Board attend a church service at one of the mission points.

The Church council takes it's role to look after the doctrine and theological development of the missionaries seriously. The Church council does however encounter problems in executing their responsibility because they do not understand Northern Sotho. It is therefore not possible for example to evaluate sermons. The Church council thinks about possible solutions this.

The Church council tries to get the members of the congregation in Maranata involved in the mission work by giving them as much information as possible.

During each congregational meeting the mission work is discussed. A mission week is planned for each year. The first one that was held last year was a great success.

Various steps have been taken by the Mission Board and the Church Council to transfer different tasks that are not mission work to the responsible bodies. For example Deputies Theological Training, Deputies Needy Churches. The planning is also to transfer certain task to Deputies Article 19, needy students. Steps have been taken to request the classis to appoint Deputies Social Upliftment.

The recommendations of the visitation report 2005 were discussed. Nine of the recommendations were fulfilled and they are working on two of this.

The visitation team expressed their gratitude. Many good things are happening in the mission in Soshanguve.

Recommendations:

1. Church council must think of possible ways of evaluating sermons and follow the theological development of the missionaries.
2. Official communication between the Church Council and Mission Board and ZDNL

is by MDSA. The informal exchange of information is however not excluded by this.

2.6. Project funding

Project funds for the mission points are being coordinated by br. H. Lubbinge. Processes and policies are in place. According to the policy the local congregations have to be involved and have to contribute towards the projects. This does happen to certain extent. Improvement is however possible. It is a slow process in which the congregation has a lot to learn. In some cases this leads to the postponement in the execution of the project. But the Mission Board insists not to take over to expedite the projects. To br Lubbinge it seems as if the roles in The Netherlands are not clear. Br. Renger Doornbos has informed him that everything is now of the hand of sr. Margreet Kremer. She however informed him that the finances are still the responsibility of br. Renger. The project book in The Netherlands never materialized this year. This meant that people in The Netherlands did not have a new book to choose projects from. Funds were however received.

It seems as if there is a communication gap between the Mission Board, Mission Deputies SA and the Mission Deputies Holland. Mission Deputies Holland were looking for projects to fund but did not know about a project like the Church in Central that needed funding.

Hoofdstuk 3: Kaapstad

Die Visitatore het 'n goeie tyd gehad in die Kaap. Die visitasieprogram het voorsiening gemaak om 'n goeie beeld te kry oor die stand van sake. Almal wat ons besoek het was baie behulpsaam en vriendelik.

3.1. Opsommend

Visitatore was onder die indruk van die erns waarmee die Kerkraad en Sendingkommissie hulle taak in die sending aanpak. Ons het broers en susters beide in Bellville en in die sendinggemeentes gesien wat hulle ten volle aan die sendingswerk gee. Ondanks foute wat gemaak word, kon ons dankbaar sien dat daar 'n hartlike bereidwilligheid is om na mekaar te luister en die pad te loop om saam te werk. Die instituering van Belhar was ongetwyfeld die hoogtepunt van die sendingwerk die afgelope jare, en ons is baie dankbaar dat ons dit kon bywoon. Dit was hartverwarmend om die broers en susters in die gemeente te kon ontmoet en saam met hulle bly te wees. Die meelewe in hierdie gebeurtenis is ervaar in die groete en gelukwensings wat deur afgevaardigdes van oor die land en uit Nederland oorgedra is. As visitatore sal ons dan ook nie weer hierdie selfstandige gemeente besoek nie. Ons was bevoorreg om die selfstandigwording met hulle te kon vier in 'n feestlike erediens.

Ons wens hulle die Here se seën toe op hulle pad vorentoe. Ons weet dat hulle in goeie hande is by die Here. Ons weet ook dat hulle op die steun in die broederskap van die kerkverband kan staat maak.

Die verdwyning van ds Nicholson was 'n groot dieptepunt. Dit het baie emosies en onbeantwoorde vrae laat ontstaan. Veral in die sendinggemeentes waar ds Nicholson gewerk het was dit 'n groot slag. Dit sal waarskynlik nog 'n geruime tyd duur voordat hierdie gebeurtenis verwerk is. Hierin kan ons net ons oë opslaan na die Here wat alles weet (Psalm 123). Hy weet waarom dit moes gebeur. Hy is dit wat ook weer krag gee om vorentoe te kyk en aan te gaan met ywer en vertroue. Een afvaardiging van die visitatore het sr Nicholson besoek.

Ons besef dat die sending in die Kaap deur 'n moeilike tyd gegaan het en dat daar steeds baie uitdagings is om aan te pak. Ons weet dat die kerkrade en Sendingkommissie hierdie taak in vertroue op die Here doen. Ons wens is dat hierdie visitasieverslag ook 'n bydrae mag maak tot die bevordering van die voortgang van die sendingswerk in die Kaap.

3.2. Die program

Eerste op die program was 'n vergadering met die Sendingkommissie en 'n afvaardiging van die Kerkraad. Die visitatore het 'n aantal vrae voorberei waarop 'n goeie en openhartige bespreking gevolg het.

Visitatore het hulle meelewe betuig met die moeilike omstandighede waarmee hulle te doen het met die verdwyning van ds Nicholson. Nie net bring dit baie reëlins mee, maar baie dinge om emosioneel te verwerk. Die Sendingkommissie het verduidelik wat hulle tot dusver in dié verband gedoen het. Daar was eers 'n verootmoedigsdiens en later 'n gedenkdienst gehou. Dit is deur die betrokkenes als baie positief ervaar, tog bly dit steeds 'n baie moeilike saak. Die verdwyning laat baie onbeantwoorde vrae en afsluiting van die gebeure is daarom baie moeilik.

Die Kerkraad en sending bly verantwoordelikheid neem vir mev. Nicholson en gesin. Wat die voortgang van die sendingswerk betref het ds. Breytenbach die verantwoordelikheid oorgeneem. Peter Abrahams werk in Wesbank, Carl van Wyk in Belhar en Chris Willemse in Leiden.

Die vraag kom ook na vore hoe dit gebeur het dat Belhar geïnstitueer is tydens die klassis en nie in 'n erediens soos gebruiklik nie. Belhar het 'n unieke ontstaansgeskiedenis. Omdat die werk aanvanklik as evangelisasie beskou is, is ampsdraers van Belhar aangestel as lid van die Kerkraad van Bellville.

Visitatore wys daarop dat ampsdraers nie onder 'n sendeling kan werk en verantwoording aan hom doen nie. Daar moet besef word dat kerkregtelik die kerk geïnstitueer word sodra ampsdraers aanstel word. Dit het die konsekwensie dat die sendingwerk op daardie oomblik stop.

1. Wat aanbevelings 1 en 2 in die vorige visitasierapport betref word daar nou 'n agenda gemaak vir die ampsdraervergaderings. Notule word egter nie aan die Sendingkommissie gestuur nie. Daar is nog ruimte vir verbetering en sal aandag kry.

2. Hoe sien die Kerkraad en Sendingkommissie hulle betrokkenheid in Belhar nou dat hulle selfstandig is? Die Sendingkommissie wou nie 'n te skielike oorgang hê nie. Daar word vergaderings beurtelings in Bellville en Belhar gehou. Die Sendingkommissie van Bellville is verantwoordelik, maar die Kerkraad van Belhar is ook by weens hulle noue betrokkenheid by die sending.

Op versoek gee die Sendingkommissie hulp. Hulle beskou die kerkraad in Belhar as 'n volwaardige kerkraad en meng daarom nie in nie. Hulp word nog gegee t.o.v. boekhouding. Ds. H. Breytenbach is nog beskikbaar vir hulp waar hulle dit vra bv. met beroepingswerk.

3. In die notule van 11 Augustus van die sendingkommissie word genoem dat 'n besluiteregister bygehou moet word om onnodige dupliseringe en veranderings van besluite te voorkom. Funksioneer dit nou? 'n Besluiteregister word bygehou maar dit funksioneer nie regtig nie. In die notule word ook genoem dat beleidsake uitgesorteer moet word.

4. In 'n verslag word die moontlikheid genoem dat lidmate van die sendingsgemeentes op die Sendingkommissie kan dien. Is dit reeds so? Dit kon nog nie realiseer nie omdat die mannekrag nog nie beskikbaar is nie.

5. Wie is sendingspan waarna in notule verwys word? Vir die Sendingkommissie is dit 'n algemene term om die werkers in die sending aan te dui. Visitatore noem dat daar in Tshwane 'n spesifieke Sendingspan is (sien 2.3 van hierdie verslag). Dit het baie voordele. Die sendingswerkers in die Kaap kan dit ook oorweeg.

6. In die notule van 11 Augustus word geskryf oor moeites wat ondervind is. Hoe staan sake hiermee? Daar was kommunikasieprobleme met Belhar en die sendingswerkers. Dit is 'n pad wat vir elkeen nuut is. Foute word in die proses gemaak. Gelukkig is daar die hartlike bereidwilligheid om saam te werk as broeders in die Here.

7. Wat is die posisie t.o.v. Philipvale? Ongelukkig sien die sendingkommissie van Bellville nie hulle pad oop om daar te help nie. Hulle het nie die mannekrag en fondse daarvoor nie, maar hulle wil wel help op ad hoc basis. Die Sendingkommissie het die volgende sake aangedui wat in die komende tyd aandag moet kry:

1. Die beroeping van 'n sendeling in die plek van ds. Nicholson.
2. Die opstel van 'n nuwe kategetiese boek. Ds Breytenbach gaan hieraan werk tydens komende studieverlof.
3. Bywoning van gesamentlike eredienste tussen Belhar en Bellville.
4. Die aankoop van 'n erf en oprigting van 'n kerk in Delft/Symphony.
5. Diakonale sorg en sosiale opheffingswerk. Die Sendingkommissie wil stimuleer dat 'n aparte komitee hiervoor opgerig word.
6. Die vervoer van kerklidmate na eredienste.
7. Die beplanning vir die beroeping onder die Xhosa sprekendes in Delft/Symphony. Besoek aan ds Breytenbach.

Dit was 'n openhartige gesprek waartydens die volgende na vore gekom het:

- Ds Breytenbach is dankbaar voor die sien van die Here op sy werk in die sending.
 - Ds Breytenbach voel onseker oor die leiding van die Sendingkommissie, omdat besluite gereeld omgekeer word.
 - Tydens die gesprek het hy genoem dat dit kan gebeur dat een van die drie take aan hom toegeken al sy tyd in beslag kan neem. Jy raak betrokke by 'n taak en die een ding volg op die ander. As jy weer sien slurp dit jou heeltemal in. As al drie take die aandag moet kry wat hulle verdien is die werk veel te veel.
 - Nadat Visitatore verwys het na die Strategiese Plan vir die sending in die Kaap het dit geblyk dat hy dit pas ontvang het en nie betrokke was by die opstelling daarvan nie.
- Gesprekke is met die proponente Peter Abrahams, Carl van Wyk en student Chris Willemse gehou. Die gesprekke was baie insiggewend. Die volgende punte wat aandag nodig het, het na vore gekom:

- Proponent Carl van Wyk het nie duidelikheid oor sy posisie in Belhar nie. Hy weet nie van wie hy opdragte moet ontvang of aan wie hy moet rapporteer nie.
- Chris Willemse het gese hy is bekommerd oor die kontinuïteit van die sendingwerk in Leiden als hy voltyd met sy studie gaan begin.
- Uit die gesprekke het na vore gekom dat die aanstelling van 'n maatskaplike werker in die sending een baie goeie ding sal wees.

Visitatore het ook afskeid geneem van die kerkraad van Belhar tydens een gesprek waar ons van gedagtes gewissel het en hulle die sien van die Here toegewens het.

3.3. Aanbevelings

1. Die voortgang van die goeie werk met die ondersteuning van mev. Nicholson word aanbeveel.
2. In die huidige sendingswerk moet die ampte nie ingestel word totdat die gemeente geïnstitueer word nie. Mans wat opgelei word om in die ampte te dien kan byvoorbeeld 'vaders' of 'n ander toepaslike naam genoem word.
3. Die Visitatore kry die indruk dat die nie-funksionering van die besluiteregister moeites meebring. Daarom word aanbeveel dat 'n plan gemaak word dat die besluite byvoorbeeld elektronies beskikbaar is vir al die Sendingkommissie lede of dat beleidsdokumente opgestel word.
4. Die Sendingkommissie moet duidelike leiding gee. Besluite moet nie van die een

vergadering op die ander verander word nie.

5. Die take toegeken aan ds Breytenbach moet weer met hom bespreek word. Hy is bereid om alles te doen, maar sien in dat dit nie moontlik is om al die take tot hulle reg te laat kom nie. Byvoorbeeld die toekenning van 33% van sy tyd vir sending in Leiden, waar dit eintlik een voltyds taak is.

6. Dit is belangrik dat al die rolspelers by belangrike besluite, soos bv. in die Strategiese Plan, betrek word. Eienaarskap en eendrag is van die uiterste belang.

7. Dit is baie belangrik dat die posisie van br. Carl van Wyk so gou moontlik uitgeklaar word. Alhoewel hy steeds in diens van die Kerkraad Bellville sou wees kan hy bv. aan die Kerkraad van Belhar geleen word, totdat hulle 'n eie predikant het. Hy staan dan onder die volle seggenskap van Belhar en is die gesagslyne duidelik.

8. Die stimulering vir die daarstelling van 'n kommitee vir diakonale sorg en sosiale opheffingswerk word sterk aanbeveel.

9. Vir die vervoer van kerkklimate sou bv. gebruik gemaak kon word van taxis. Finansiële hulp hiervoor sou by die kerkverband (klassis) gevra kon word.

10. Aan Chris Willemse sal verduidelik moet word hoe die werk in Leiden sal voortgaan wanneer hy voltyds met sy studie sal begin.

11. Sorg moet gedra word dat sendingwerk en kerkverbandelike werk duidelik van mekaar onderskei word. Sendeling behoort nie in 'n selfstandige gemeente te werk nie behalve in uitsonderings.

12. Visitatore beveel aan dat duidelik gestel word dat Belville die verantwoordelikheid vir die sending in Wesbank en Leiden het. Belhar kan wel betrek word by die sending maar hulle eerste prioriteit behoort die opbouw van hulle eie gemeente te wees.

13. Daar moet grondig nagedink word of die moontlikheid van een gemeente bestaande uit Xhosaspreekendes en Afrikaansspreekendes realisties is.

14. Die visitatore beveel aan om 'n regionaal oorlegorgaan te organiseer vir diakens.

Chapter 4: General

4.1. MDSA

A meeting was held with the members of the MDSA. We also attended a workshop with the MDSA where the budget, strategic plans and plans for the future were discussed. (For detail see the minutes)

Comments from visitors:

- The informative communication between MDSA and ZDNL is lacking. Churches in The Netherlands would like to be informed in what is happening in the mission in SA. Of a lot of important developments there are only heard of afterwards. Without enough information of what is happening the congregations in The Netherlands could not partake in the mission work by praying etc. The MDSA will do their best to improve the communication. A good strategy for the MDSA to do this could be by developing a system and a policy for their communication with the ZDNL. (The MDSA would also like to get more information from ZDNL about what they are doing and want the MDSA to do.) *A possible solution is a policy on how to improve the communication between the PR teams on both sides.*
- The visitors advise MDSA to keep a reserve fund in case of emergency. In The Netherlands it is normally for a period of six months.
- As there is a workshop planned on the pension funds for ministers in SA, it would be good that the MDSA also takes part in this.
- There are mission congregations who, if instituted, would not be financially self-supporting. *MDSA should take cognizance of this and stimulate Mission*

Boards or any other responsible body to train congregations to become financially skilled.

- It was painful for the ZDNL that they were not informed about the calling of Rev. Boersma. The MDSA apologized for this.
- The MDSA should play an important role in stimulating mission boards to have policy documentation and structures in place.
- Two members of the PR committee in The Netherlands visited South Africa in 2006. Is there a need that this happens more often? MDSA are positive about this.

4.2. Deputies Needy Churches

Deputies explained the situation of needy churches in SA with the help of a presentation (see Annexure C).

When the churches of Mamelodi and Soshanguve North were instituted, a five year financial support plan from the Mission Board was agreed upon. After five years the financial support is supposed to stop. The funding for this support was budgeted by the Mission Board of Pretoria Maranata. This was principally not correct for this is support to needy churches. This support should have come via Deputies Needy churches. Since 2008 this was corrected.

The funding of the five year financial support plan was seen as the responsibility of the mission. That is why the MDSA provided the funding. After the five year plan was finished there was a shortfall of funds and Article 11 deputies received an amount of plus minus R 120 000 as a once of contribution from MDSA.

Comments from visitors:

- Visitors do not agree with the arrangement that funding is supplied by the MDSA to Needy Churches. The work in Mamelodi and Soshanguve is not mission work anymore. Visitors can understand that funds are presently supplied by MDSA but plans should be made to change this.
- In the budget of MDSA the support to Needy Churches should not be shown as mission work but as support of churches instituted from mission work.
- The ICRC (International Conference Reformed Churches), DVN (De Verre Naasten) or other ecumenical assistance are possibilities of getting funding.

4.3. Deputies Curators

The visitation team requested a meeting with Deputies Curators because most of the SA theological students originated from the mission. The Deputies curators explained the developments in regard to the theological training in SA (see Annexure D).

An important development that need to be mentioned is the appointment of Rev. Hannes Breytenbach as the National Coordinator of theological studies. This will take up one third of his time.

The part of the remuneration of Rev. Breytenbach spend on theological training must be paid by the curators.

A question was asked regarding the present position of the theological training school of Mukhanyo in the theological training of the FRC. It became clear for the visitors that the curators are still dependent on Mukhanyo. Mukhanyo is also financially supported by MDSA. Missionaries out of the Free Reformed Church gives lectures where possible. Two of the curators are on the board of Mukhanyo.

At present there are six students studying theology. Three of them coming from Tshwane: George Mnisi, Thabo Matlaela and Sam Mathlokoana have finished their studies and will be examined by the classis soon. Another one from Tshwane: Phineas Kgatle is busy with a BA languages degree. John Mahlangu, also from Tshwane just started with Mukhanyo. Last but not least there is one student in Cape Town busy with

his BA languages degree: Chris Willemse from Cape Town started his theological training. God willing there will be two more students from Tshwane studying theological studies in two years' time.

Finances: The costs of theological training is partly covered by a quota from the FRC paid by the FRC. DVN sponsors the study costs of the students. *The living costs of the students are paid by the mission boards.*

Curators are presently reflecting on what possibilities there are to assist the mission. Visitors were impressed with the positive developments.

Chapter 5: General Recommendations

- 1) Visits from South Africa to The Netherlands should also be evaluated and reported to the ZDNL.
- 2) The MDSA should formulate the purposes of the visitation and give instructions with basic questions. It is very important that the purpose and contents of each part of the visitation program is clear to every role player.
- 3) It is the responsibility of the Church Council to give pastoral care and support for the ministers and missionaries.
- 4) The cooperating churches should be informed more clearly about mission issues.
- 5) For the continuity of the mission work it is important that a missionary commits himself for a certain time. It is strongly recommended that he should inform the Mission Board timely so that they can call a new missionary before he leaves.
- 6) Organizational skills and talents should be developed which are necessary for the church to become independent.
- 7) The way the stipends of the missionaries and mission workers are put together must be transparent.
- 8) From previous visitation recommendations it became clear that missionaries could easily become overloaded. The responsible churches should try to prevent this happening again.
- 9) The possibility for the Mission Boards to become a body who delivers a service to all mission churches in Tshwane and Cape Town. Why should all the work and skills be duplicated in every mission church?
- 10) The visitation team noticed that Wesbank has drawn up a good diaconal policy. This could be fruitfully used by the other mission congregations.
- 11) It would be good if theological student from Tshwane and Cape Town visit each other's mission areas.

Appendix C, Agreement of cooperation

AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA REGARDING MISSION WORK

I PURPOSE

Article 1

The Free Reformed Churches of South Africa (FRCSA) work together in fulfilling their missionary task which the Lord has given to His church, as expressed in Matthew 28:19. The responsibility regarding the implementation of the national cooperation lies with the missionary churches, which are appointed in mutual agreement.

Article 2

This agreement regulates the cooperation among the FRCSA regarding the mission work and includes the tasks and obligations and the organizational structure needed for this cooperation.

II THE SYNOD OF THE FRCSA

Article 3

The synod of the FRCSA nominates mission deputies (MDSA) who receive their instruction from the synod. This instruction will be stipulated in accordance with the regulations of the agreement of cooperation with the supporting churches in the Netherlands and the regulations of this agreement.

Article 4

The synod of the FRCSA decides on a quota for the mission contributions.

Article 5

The report and suggestions of the MDSA are discussed by the synod and new instructions are formulated without violating the responsibility of the missionary church.

III THE MISSIONARY CHURCHES

Article 6

The missionary churches maintain the formal contact with the cooperative churches in the Netherlands and in South Africa via the mission deputies (MDSA).

Regarding the contact with the churches in the Netherlands the MDSA addresses itself to the deputies of the Netherlands (ZDNL).

Article 7

The missionary churches take it upon themselves to provide the MDSA with all the essential information in accordance with the terms of the agreement of cooperation with the churches in the Netherlands.

Article 8

The missionary churches will on a regular basis provide information meetings for the cooperative churches in South Africa, regarding the activities and development in the mission work. Reports and strategic plans will be sent to the cooperative churches.

Article 9

The missionary churches formulate their policy in a strategic plan; this plan will be the base on which annually a long-term plan and a budget will be formulated.

The strategic plans, long-term plans and budgets of the missionary churches are consolidated by the MDSA and financing is determined in consultation with the ZDNL.

The available finances are divided in a responsible manner by the MDSA.

IV THE COOPERATIVE CHURCHES

Article 10

The cooperative churches accept the obligation to support the mission work of the FRCSA in word and deed. This support can be given in various manners but will at least consist of the following:

- that the mission work and missionaries are regularly prayed for in the worship services and that the Lord's blessing is asked for the ongoing mission work among the members and non-members of the mission churches so that the Lord's name is honoured;
- that regular collections are held for the mission work;
- that the church councils will encourage the concern for the mission work in the congregations by planning parish meetings on a regular basis with the help of the mission board, where the missionaries will talk about and explain matters concerning the mission work;
- that members of the congregations of the cooperative churches can be chosen to be rightful members of the mission board of the missionary churches;
- that the church councils and congregations on their own initiative but with approval of the mission board and/or as requested by the missionary churches, within means will help with any other spiritual and/or material assistance needed to fulfil the missionary task.

Article 11

If one of the cooperative churches wishes to become a missionary church in his own area, the plans must firstly be discussed with the MDSA.

The financial consequences of the plans must first be discussed with the supporting churches in South Africa and in the Netherlands. If the planned new mission work cannot be financed out of the national budget, it will be decided in joint consultation if the church in question can be exempted from his financial obligations.

Article 12

The cooperative churches can, when it is needed, ask for a conference with all churches. The MDSA will then together with the missionary churches organize such a conference.

V THE MISSION DEPUTIES

Article 13

The mission deputies receive their instruction from and are responsible to the synod of the FRCSA.

The instruction of the mission deputies in general terms is:

- unite and coordinate the mission policy of the missionary churches in South Africa;
- prepare a consolidated mission budget annually;
- check on the implementation of the mission policy by the missionary churches as described in Article 9;
- prepare a financial statement and an annual report about the pursued policy for the co-operative churches in South Africa and the Netherlands;
- make available information on behalf of the briefing about the mission work.

VI SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Article 14

In case of a difference in understanding between the missionary churches and the cooperative churches regarding the nature and extent of cooperation, as well as a difference of opinion regarding the interpretation of the articles of this agreement, the synod of the FRCSA shall decide.

VII TERMINATION OF COOPERATION

Article 15

Termination of the cooperation in joint consultation between the missionary churches and the cooperative churches is possible.

Unilateral termination of the cooperation from the side of the missionary or cooperative churches can only take place in consideration of a term of notice of two calendar years.

The termination of the cooperation must be sent in writing to the mission deputies. (MDSA)

Article 16

When a missionary church terminates his active mission work, the assets will by the agency of the MDSA be designated for missionary purposes.

VIII VALIDITY OF THE AGREEMENT

Article 17

Changes in this agreement can only be made with consent of all the cooperative churches in South Africa.

Article 18

This agreement of cooperation becomes operative after the signed approval of all church councils of the FRCSA.

Appendix D, Financial Statements

MISSION DEPUTIES SOUTH AFRICA INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2010

Page 5

	Note	Actual 2010	Budget 2010	Difference 2010	Actual 2009	Budget 2009	Difference 2009
INCOME		4,197,971	4,135,355	62,616	4,761,741	4,821,345	-59,603
Grootegast		1,210,094	1,220,981	-10,887	1,412,016	1,414,755	-2,739
Friesland		941,829	942,407	-578	1,015,680	1,015,680	-
Appingedam		645,634	665,753	-20,119	769,925	786,888	-16,963
Warffum		840,419	851,539	-11,120	984,768	985,867	-1,099
South Africa		169,697	132,000	37,697	147,198	121,000	26,198
Contribution Maranata		178,000	100,000	78,000	100,000	165,000	-65,000
DVN support: MTC students	9	212,298	222,676	-10,378	332,155	332,155	-
Other income		381,946	150,000	231,946	247,655	250,000	-2,345
Interest received		97,215	100,000	-2,785	225,594	200,000	25,594
Donations		284,731	50,000	234,731	22,060	50,000	-27,940
Exchange rate differences	1.2						
Total income		4,579,917	4,285,355	294,562	5,009,396	5,071,345	-61,949
EXPENDITURE		5,235,969	5,305,926	-69,957	4,431,225	5,163,913	-732,688
Grants: Maranata		2,777,802	2,820,655	-42,853	2,176,811	2,655,939	-479,128
Grants: Bellville		1,427,469	1,416,400	11,069	1,264,902	1,322,500	-57,598
Grants: Mamelodi		8,117	307,720	-299,603	1,249	324,742	-323,493
Grants: Mukhanyou Theological Training	9	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000	-
MTC Student cost: DVN	9	293,779	178,832	114,947	254,367	97,642	156,725
Grant: Belhar				-		100,000	-100,000
Grants: Art 11 deputies		80,000	80,000	-	150,000	150,000	-
General costs Netherlands		173,999	284,875	-110,876	189,969	254,150	-64,182
Bank charges		2,144	1,500	644	805	1,200	-395
Redemption plan: Mamelodi en Soshanguve North				-	1,000		1,000
Sundry unforseen		34,200	1,500	32,700		1,500	-1,500
Audit fees		3,300	3,000	300	3,300	3,000	300
Mission conference			7,000	-7,000		7,000	-7,000
Printing and stationary			600	-600		600	-600
Telephone and postage		4,857	4,500	357	3,654	1,200	2,454
Meeting and travel cost		6,992	4,000	2,992	12,087	3,000	9,087
Visitation cost				-	5,037		5,037
Information cost SA			8,000	-8,000		8,000	-8,000
Information cost Netherlands		61,524	37,344	24,180	72,975	82,440	-9,465
Exchange rate differences	1.2	211,784		211,784	145,068		145,068
Depreciation		2		2	1	1,000	-999
- Deficit / surplus for the year before capital grants		-656,052	-1,020,571	364,519	578,171	-92,568	670,740
Capital grants		-2,551,765			-1,088,500		-1,088,500
Transfer to general reserves		716,868					
Net - deficit / surplus for the year		-2,490,949			-510,329		
Accumulated surplus beginning of the year		2,273,768			2,784,097		
Accumulated deficit / surplus end of the year		-217,181			2,273,768		

MISSION DEPUTIES SOUTH AFRICA
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2010

Page 4

	Note	2010 R	2009 R
ASSETS			
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Computer equipment	2	-	-
Allan Gray Investments		3,058,997	3,733,354
		1,690,937	3,816,452
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank and cash		300,151	591,878
Investec moneymarket	4	913,469	1,249,674
Fund control Netherlands	5	96,354	977,762
Cash in transit	6	155,707	919,076
Control account: Belville		60,968	48,437
Control account: Maranata		164,288	12,326
Control account: Mamelodi			17,299
TOTAL ASSETS		4,749,934	7,549,806
RESERVES AND LIABILITIES			
Reserves		4,029,197	7,412,299
General reserves		-217,181	2,273,768
Contingency reserves	7	3,889,801	3,593,934
Funds with special purpose	8	356,576	1,544,597
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities		720,737	137,506
Fund control Netherlands	5	-	-
Control account: Mamelodi		32,728	-
Accounts payable	10	688,009	137,506
TOTAL RESERVES AND LIABILITIES		4,749,934	7,549,806

MISSION DEPUTIES SOUTH AFRICA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2010

1. Accounting policy

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost principle and incorporate the following accounting policies

1.1 Fixed assets

Fixed assets are depreciated on the straight line method over the expected life of the asset.

The following rates are applicable

- Computer equipments	3 years
- Projector	5 years

1.2 Foreign exchange transactions

All foreign exchange transactions are recorded at the budgeted exchange rate (€ 1 = R9.80)

The foreign exchange balances at year end are converted at the spot rate at year end and the difference is accounted for in the income statement as exchange profit or loss.

(Rate 31 Dec 2010 € 1 = R8.86)

1.3 Contingency fund

A contingency fund was created from reserves which were transferred from Friesland to South Africa as well as reserves from Assen (Netherlands).

Accumulated reserves from South Africa were also used to fund this reserve. This fund is used to finance additional manpower, expansion, once off expenses and repatriation of missionaries to the Netherlands.

2. Fixed Assets

	Cost	Accum Depreciation	Bookvalue
Computer equipment	-	-	-
Projector	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Computer equipment has been written off and the projector was stolen and not replaced.

3 Allan Gray Investment

Retirement provision	836,173
Other investments	2,222,824
	<u>3,058,997</u>

The initial investment was placed at a cost of R2950 000, and is shown at market value at 31 December 2010.

4 Investec money market

This investment earns interest at a rate of between 6 and 7 % per annum and is capitalised against the investment.

5 Fund control: Netherlands

Balance at 1 January 2010	977,762
Contributions received	3,637,976
Costs: Netherlands	-205,124
Transfers to South Africa	-3,791,270
Payment on behalf of SA	-339,864
Interest received	27,626
Donations	4,900
Exchange differences	-215,652
Balance 31 December 2010	<u>96,354</u>

MISSION DEPUTIES SOUTH AFRICA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2010 (CONTINUED)

6 Debtors

This amount represents monies transferred from Canada to South Africa during December 2010 but were received into our bank account in January 2011.

7 Contingency fund

Balance beginning of the year	3,593,934
Investment adjustment	295,867
Balance end of the year	<u>3,889,801</u>

8 Funds with special purpose

Balance beginning of the year	1,544,597
Transfer to general reserves	-716,868
Transfer to Bethal - Rev Breytenbach	-479,597
Adjustment of investment to market value	8,445
Balance end of the year	<u>356,576</u>

This fund is an Allan Gray investment to provide for the pension for the widow of rev Nicholson. Refer note 3.

9 DVN support: MTC students

DVN started a support programme for the MTC students of our church in 2006. This support will end in 2011.

Total support received in 2011 was €22 722, which converted to ZAR 212 298.

Summary	
Balance beginning of the year	177,548
Support received	212,298
Student costs	-293,779
Support to MTC limited to balance of fund	-96,067
	<u>-</u>

10 Creditors

Rev HJ Breytenbach pension fund transfer	479,597
Project money	50,037
MTC tuition fees 2010 not yet paid	61,475
Audit fees	16,900
Grants Art 11 deputies	80,000
	<u>688,009</u>

Appendix 4: Report Deputies Liturgical Music

Deputies Liturgical Music

1. Deputies and Procedure

- The deputies consisted of sr M Bron, Rev J van der Linden and br F van der Meer (convener). Sr M Bron resigned in 2008. She was of the opinion that the hymns do not have the same quality as the Psalms and thus she doesn't have the confidence to support this work.
- The remaining deputies met four times for the reflection on and execution of the work.
- The deputies once had a meeting with a delegation from Pretoria Maranata in connection with some recommendations from the FRC Maranata.
- Deputies had telephonic contact with the commission from the FRC Pretoria in connection with their proposal to Classis North regarding the new RCSA (Reformed Churches of South Africa's) 'Skrifberymings'
- As a result of health problems, the deputies could not finish all their work in time.

2. Instruction

Deputies received the following mandate from Synod:

- 2.1 To translate the document indicated as "Bylaag 1" into English and to make it available to all the churches in the federation;
- 2.2 To standardise criteria as defined by previous synods, making use of material from overseas sister churches, for example from the CanRC and "Bylaag 1" of the Deputy's 2008 report;
- 2.3 To define the term Hymn ('Gesang') as there is a difference in "Afrikaans" between the terms 'Skrifberyming' and 'Gesang' which is not there in English or Dutch
- 2.4 To produce a document as a result of (2) and (3) above in English and Afrikaans and supply it to all churches in the federation as a basis for selecting Hymns to be sung in Church services;
- 2.5 To make a selection of Hymns according the criteria of document mentioned in (4) above with consideration of comments from Pretoria-Maranata, and to give the full reason for each newly selected hymn on the basis of the standardized criteria;
- 2.6 To send the resulting report and the proposed selection of Hymns to all churches within eighteen months from date of synod 2008;
- 2.7 To invite the churches to give feedback on the report and the selection of Hymns within nine months;
- 2.8 To prepare a final report and to propose a final selection of maximum 50 Hymns for next Synod.

3. Execution of our instruction

3.1 Translation of "Skrif en Kerklied"

The instruction to translate the document "*Skrif en Kerklied*" has not been completed. We have twice asked translators, but unfortunately they both could not finish the work. The last translator we asked only told us this shortly before we had to give in our report.

3.2 Die terms *Hymn*, *Skrifberyming* and *Gesang*

We don't have to have an extensive discussion on the topic here, since we are not looking at what is a good hymn, but only at an explanation of how these terms are normally used.

In the English and Dutch church-language there is (as far as we know) not a term 'Skrifberyming' (litt:

“Scripture versification”). In the biggest part of the Afrikaans speaking ecclesiastical world this is not a well-known term either. We will rather find the use of the word ‘Gesang’ for any spiritual song – sometimes even including the Psalms.

However, in the Afrikaans Reformed tradition there has long been a differentiation between a song which is a versification of a Psalm (‘Psalms’), a direct versification of another passage of Scripture (‘Skrifberyming’), and a song that has as content the general message of Scripture (‘Gesang’). The term ‘Skrifberyming’ as distinct from ‘Gesang’ has originated from the wish only to sing words of Scripture.

The value of using a term like ‘Skrifberyming’ is that it calls attention to something very specific, namely if the church is versifying suitable passages of Scripture. In general it also emphasises the close association between Scripture and song. However, we have to be careful not to associate the term ‘Skrifberyming’ with something good and the term ‘Gesang’ with something wrong per se. Any hymn (Psalms, Skrifberymings en Gesange) is not literally the original Scripture text, and therefore an interpretation of the Scripture passage(s). Some ‘Gesange’ is a mixture of a few direct Scripture passages, while some ‘Skrifberymings’ is a free and loose versification of a Scripture passage (e.g. some of the new ‘Skrifberymings’ that have been included in the Psalmbook in 2009). All hymns are susceptible to false doctrine. The important factor is that all hymns (Psalms, Skrifberymings en Gesange) must be tested according to the doctrine of Scripture, and must be saturated with Scripture.

Therefore, these terms do not constitute something good or bad in itself, but the differentiation it wants to show is useful.

3.3 Criteria for the selection of hymns

With regards to the criteria for the evaluation of Hymns individually, we have stayed on the road that has been tried and tested, and has now already been known to us for a few years. Deputies have made use of previous reports to Synod (e.g. 1996 & 1998), as well as criteria that has been formulated and used by our sister churches in the Netherlands and Canada.

We propose the following criteria for the evaluation of hymns:

1 The Hymns of the church must be faithful to Scripture

With regards to content, form and spirit the hymns must be faithful to Scripture and our Confessions. The work of God must be central in our Hymnal, en therefore the hymn must be saturated with Scripture.

When a passage of Scripture is versified and composed (typically a ‘Skrifberyming’), the content and form must be faithful to the inspired Scripture text.

When a hymn is not based on one specific Scripture passage, but is in accord with the message and doctrine of Scripture (Gesange/Skrifmatige lied), then it should at the very least be clear and obvious on what Scripture passages it is based. These hymns must also keep the symbolic imagery and language of Scripture itself.

2 The hymns are (a) earmarked for the whole congregation and (b) must be of the highest standard poetically and musically.

(a) Singing is an essential element in the congregation’s answer to and proclamation of the work of God. Hymns must be understandable to everyone in the congregation, but still with a rich and profound content in order for it to be to the edification of the congregation. The secret to a hymn is therefore: Simplicity with depth.

(b) Hymns must be of a high poetical value. Good poetics is that which can say a lot with only a few words. The content of the hymn must be free of cheap sentiment and artificiality. The music of the hymns must support, further and intensify the words of the hymn. The melodies must be singable to the whole congregation. It must be free from complicated cadences and a wide spectrum of tonalities.

Hymns to the glory of God must be a harmonious unity of powerful and quality poetics and

music.

Normally with the “Criteria for the selection of Hymns” there tends to be a focus on the criteria according to which each hymn individually has to be evaluated (the criteria we mentioned above). And we can try and make this set of criteria as extensive as possible. A wide range of things have been proposed in the past, formally and informally (e.g. the hymns must sing about the collective “we” as church etc). And in fact it is possible to make pages of these characteristics of our Psalms. The problem is, you cannot evaluate each hymn to all of these characteristics. No hymn will ever qualify. But no individual Psalm will qualify either, if you test it to all of these characteristics. Therefore we decided on broad criteria for the evaluation of Hymns. But there is another road that is important for our process of acquiring hymns.

According to us, the criteria for the evaluation of an individual hymn does not say enough, and is only half of the picture. We want to call attention to a second aspect which is just as important for the selection of hymns: according to which criteria will a hymn *be considered* for evaluation? In other words, what is the character and aim of *the whole of the Hymnal* (the church’s corps of all songs to sing in worship) that we hope to have one day? According to us this is implicitly part of the criteria according to which we have to look at hymns. We can’t just blindly choose a few hymns just because they are Scripturally sound. What have we then really gained as churches? Regulating the amount of hymns we must choose (see the instruction of the Synod), does not help us very much either. It still does not show a principled way in which we must continue this path in the future. According to what principle will our children have to make decisions on more or less hymns for our worship services? We have to be accountable, for now and for the future this is very important. Therefore, according to us it is self-evident that we also have to make decisions with regards to our Hymnal in general (the church’s corps of all songs to sing in worship).

According to deputies the following principles are important for the whole of our Hymnal:

1. The Psalms form the basis of the Hymnal. New hymns that are included in the Hymnal, basically have the function to enlarge the Psalm book. It has the function to add to the Psalm book, not to replace the Psalms or to draw attention away from the Psalms.

The Psalms are something that has been given to the church as a Hymnal by God Himself. It contains more than only the guidelines for how our hymns of worship should be, they *are* the hymns for our worship services. Just as the Old Testament is still the beginning and basis of God’s revelation to his New Testament church, so the Psalm book is still the beginning and basis of God’s Hymnal to his church. Just as the substance of the covenant in the old and new dispensation has not changed, so the Psalms are today still suitable and valuable for the New Testament church.

2. The abovementioned entails that hymns that are being added to the Psalms, will be hymns that deal with the “more” of the new covenant. Although in principle almost all God’s works are already revealed in the Old Testament (and in the Psalms), it is important that the congregation must live and sings according to the riches of the new covenant. According to this principle it is not merely “acceptable” to add new hymns to the Psalms, but necessary (a practice that is also already known to us through the ‘Skrifberymings’).

The hymn especially has the purpose to remember God’s great deeds. This is the reason why Scripture calls for a “new hymn” every time God does something new. If this is already applicable in the Old Testament, how much more, then, does this apply to the great deeds of God in and through his Son, Jesus Christ? The New Testament hymn clearly has direct ties to the Old Testament revelation, yet it sings of a new wealth and reality that greatly surpasses the Old Testament. In this regard the church of Christ may not live spiritually poorer than the life that God bestowed upon her!

Both aspects of the hymn, as proclamation (of the Word) and as answer (to God’s Word), makes the hymn on the New Testament reality necessary and indispensable.

3. To come to a well-rounded and balanced Hymnal for our worship services, it is necessary that this

“more” of the new covenant is translated into themes and subjects according to which hymns can be looked for. Instead of evaluating all the hymns that we can possibly find, we think it will be better to look for hymns according to these specific themes and subjects, and even to encourage translations and new hymns on these subjects.

Although it is not so easy to put together such a list of themes and subjects, we think it is necessary for this process in which we are looking for hymns on the “more” of the new covenant. On the one hand this will help to establish and keep the specific place and value that the Psalm book has in our tradition, on the other hand it will keep us focused on what we wish to achieve with the whole of our Hymnal. Instead of being flooded with hymns (“he who accepts the one hymn, cannot, with the same principles, refuse the next Scripturally sound hymn”), we can now look at what this specific hymn offers to help us sing the fullness of God’s words and deeds – especially in the light of those subjects on which we have no or very little hymns. We believe that a clear and limited process like this will also help to establish peace in the churches with regards to this issue, while still living in the full riches of the New Testament.

4. Naturally we will bring into calculation the ‘Skrifberymings’ we already have, when looking for hymns on the “more” of the New Testament. The ‘Skrifberymings’ is already part of the Hymnal that we are very grateful for and fully accept for use in our churches. Themes and subjects that are already sufficiently covered by these ‘Skrifberymings’, does not need any extra work and attention.

5. The rich diversity of faith experience in the Psalms must be preserved at all cost. The Hymnal as a whole must give a balanced view of the normal Christian life, namely sin, struggle, judgment, grace, righteousness, suffering, charity, atonement, godliness etc.

If point 3 is taken seriously, then maybe it is not necessary to make this proposition, because the faith experience of the Psalm book will not be in question. But this issue is so important that we feel we still have to draw specific attention to it.

Unfortunately we see in a lot of the new Hymnals (as well as in a lot of the hymns themselves), a one-sided focus on a one-sided form of praise. Although a hymn like that can be accepted as Scripturally sound, a Hymnal full of these hymns will most probably bring a totally new faith experience in the churches. Let us be very careful here, because the faith experience of the “Evangelicals” have dragged a lot of people away from the Reformed faith – especially through hymns and “praise and worship”! In other words, putting together a Hymnal is not about “what the congregation likes to sing”, but about the path and the faith experience the Lord puts on her lips to sing.

“If you wish to see the holy church depicted in living colours, and given a living form, in a painting in miniature, then place the Book of Psalms in front of you” - M Luther (Preface to the Psalms).

6. As churches we have a strong bond with the church of Jesus Christ through the ages – also with regards to our hymns and singing. Our Hymnal must show that we have this believe and conviction by adding hymns of the church of Christ through all times and places.

3.4 The selection process

In the execution of our instruction, the above mentioned criteria required that we first of all look for and make a list according to which we can check whether we sing sufficiently of the “more” of the new covenant (See Appendix 1). We decided to use the general list that can also be found in the

Psalm book, namely “Indications of Psalms and ‘Skrifberymings’” (This list can be found after the ‘Skrifberymings’ and before the Confessions in the Psalm book). We mainly followed the different sections of the Catechism, because in general it reflects the doctrine of Scripture as a whole (including the “more” of the New Testament). Some topics were however added to this list (for example predestination, the instruction for the expansion of the gospel, etc) as well as topics which are related to special occasions (for example marriage, public confession of faith, etc). After this we tried to find the shortcomings in the current hymn-corps which is being used by the Afrikaans churches (Psalms and ‘Skrifberymings’). We also started looking at how the new ‘Skrifberymings’ could maybe help us with this deficit (the new ‘Skrifberymings’ officially still needs to be tested and approved by the churches). After this, we *only(!)* looked at hymns which deal with the topics of which we experience a shortages. As explained above, we haven’t looked at all the possible Scripturally sound hymns for consideration, but only at those hymns which address the current shortages which we (tried to) identified.

The following are the topics which we identified as having certain shortages in our hymn-corps:

The origin of misery
Punishment of sin
Satisfaction
The Trinity
Providence of God
Death, burial, descend into hell
Ascension
God the Holy Spirit
The communion of the saints
Resurrection of the body
Justification
Sacraments
The holy baptism
The need for good works
Predestination
Instruction for the proclamation/expansion of the gospel
Marriage ceremony
Public confession of faith
Ordainment of office bearers
According to this, we looked through the “*Liedboek*” and the old “*Gesangeboek 1976*”, and found 11 hymns which (according to our evaluation of the criteria above) are acceptable as hymns for our Hymnal.

The Hymns are (all from the *Liedboek*, except if mentioned otherwise):

1. Hymn 124 (From: *Psalms – Gesange 1976*)
2. Hymn 239
3. Hymn 241
4. Hymn 244
5. Hymn 273
6. Hymn 290
7. Hymn 305
8. Hymn 430
9. Hymn 431
10. Hymn 435

11. Hymn 485

With regards to two of the Hymns we just want to make a few comments (for Hymn 430 this is in line with Synod's instruction to keep in mind Maranatha's comments on some of the Hymns – see 'Bylaag 3' of the previous report):

- Hymn 430

Maranatha's comments says that we cannot accept this hymn because the Spirit already stays in the church, and this hymn does not agree with this notion. But asking for the Spirit to come and visit His church, does that necessarily mean that we hereby say He is not in his church at all? We must remember that in our Confession we are called by God to ask for the Holy Spirit, because God only gives His Spirit to those who constantly asks and thanks Him for this Gift (Lord's Day 45). We ask, but we already have Him in us as well (How else will we ask?). In the same way we can look at this hymn and sing this hymn.

According to us it is also not a problem to sing about "hierdie Pinksterdag" because we are always in remembrance of the past deeds of the Lord. In Psalm 118:12 we sing: "Dit is die dag..." – we are also not experiencing the exact same day in our worship services as the day of Psalm 118, but still we can sing it, because the God of that day is still the same. And we know in substance it is still true for us today. We are also a "Pinkster-gemeente", and especially on Sunday we live from the fullness of Pentecost – just like every Sunday we remember the day of the Lord's resurrection, without expecting a new resurrection every week.

But what if the congregation keeps on bringing these two things together: The Spirit has to come *because* this has to be a new Pentecost? Is it then worth it to put this hymn in our Hymnal? (Is it possible to change the words "op hierdie pinksterdag" to something else – with the right permission?). The problem with the New Testament hymn ('Skrifberymings' en 'Gesange') is that the congregation tends to sing it as directly applicable on them, without looking at the redemptive-historical context. The Old Testament Psalms are sometimes so different to our context that the congregation directly understands that you have to understand the Psalm in its historic context. We believe that the "testing period" in the churches will show us if it is wise to chose this Hymn for our Hymnal.

A last comment on this hymn. This is one of the hymns that we can sing with the church of all the ages. It was composed in the 8th/ 9th century, has been included in Hymnals all through the ages. Maartin Luther said of this hymn: 'The Holy Spirit Himself made this hymn about Himself, both the words and the melody' (Thijs, J 1933. De Reformatie, p202).

- Hymn 485

We also just want to make a comment about our Lord Jesus Christ being the first "sendeling". We understand that this can raise eyebrows. We believe that we must not read this in a dogmatic way, putting into this word all the ideas that we have of a missionary in our churches today. Reading this word in the light of Scripture, we believe it is possible to say that Jesus Christ was the first "sendeling". He received a mission from the Father to reveal who the Father (God) is; He was sent to this earth, but they did not know and receive Him (John 1:10-11); Like He was sent, he later sent his disciples (John 20:21). He is also our Apostle (Hebr 3:1), and in line with this fact, He sent out the other apostles.

3.5 The new 'Skrifberymings'

Although it wasn't part of the instruction to deputies (a lot of the new 'Skrifberymings' of 2009 wasn't known then), we do feel that it is in line with our instruction, and therefore we have the confidence to make a few preliminary remarks about them. We believe there are a few things that are important before we ask deputies to evaluate these 'Skrifberymings', otherwise it could mean a much longer road before we can sing these 'Skrifberymings' in a worship service.

Two things catch the eye with these new 'Skrifberymings'. Firstly, some of the new 'Skrifberymings' are a recurrence of the previous 'Skrifberymings'. It is a new composition (text and melody) on a

Scripture passage on which we already have a 'Skribberyming' (e.g. 'Skribberyming' 16 and 55). In these instances the new 'Skribberymings' are generally a more free and loose translation of the literal Scripture text. We think that it would be best to make a choice between one of the two 'Skribberymings'. We have the advantage that we can choose the best composition. We also think that a choice like this is a consequence of the abovementioned guidelines for our Hymnal. The second aspect that we noticed with the new 'Skribberymings', is that with these compositions we have already (for a part) moved away from the "precise versification of a Scripture passage". To put it like this, some of the new 'Skribberymings' aren't '*Skribberymings*' in the narrow sense of the word anymore. This makes the distinction between 'Skribberymings' and 'Gesange' more problematic, especially if we are going to have a separate section in our Hymnal for 'Skribberymings' and 'Gesange'. A even better reason to devote even more attention on the evaluating of *all* songs which we use in our churches!

4. Recommendations

Deputies want to make the following recommendations:

- 1) that Synod accepts the criteria in 3.3, also as the new way to look at the whole of our Hymnal.
- 2) that Synod makes a decision on whether we want "duplicate" 'Skribberymings', or if new deputies must make a decision on the best composition in this regard.
- 3) that Synod makes available the Book of Praise (being used by our sister churches in Canada and Australia) for general use in our bond of churches.
- 4) that Synod appoint deputies with the following mandate:
 - New deputies must make a provisional collection/volume of the selected hymns and the new 'Skribberymings' and send them to the Afrikaans churches to be tested. The "Criteria for the selection of hymns" should also be send to the churches as background and help for the evaluation process.
 - Deputies must make a proposal on how to incorporate the new hymns in a practical way in the present 'Psalms and Skribberyming-collection' (e.g. printing of an own Hymnal, or hymns in a separate volume etc.)
 - Deputies must once more take a (new) look at the list of themes and subjects for our church hymns (Psalms, Skribberymings etc), with the purpose of possible expansion and improvement.
 - Deputies must take another (new) look at the "*Liedboek*" for hymns that can be added to our current Psalm book/Hymnal to sing the fullness of Scripture. And after this process has been completed, to regard the contribution of the "*Liedboek*" (published in 2001) for our Hymnal as finished and look at other possibilities and sources for suitable hymns.
 - Deputies must send the "Criteria for the selection of hymns" to the Sotho- and English speaking churches for discussion and consideration and to take it as basis for their own process of putting together a Hymnal.
 - Deputies must translate the document 'Skrib en kerklied' into English (within six months) and send it to all the churches in our bond of churches.
 - Deputies must investigate the (possibility of) versification and singing of the Psalms in the Sotho-speaking churches.
 - Deputies must (if it has not been done yet) evaluate the current Hymnal of the Sotho speaking churches on the basis of the current criteria, and then (at least for the moment) standardise their hymn-corps.

May the Lord bless our discussions and work at Synod 2011.

With brotherly greetings,

16	Die sterwe, begrafnis en neerdaling na hel	16	22	69	6	7		*											
		88																	
17	Die opstanding van Christus	9	16	21	8	9	10												
		69:12-14	118:11-14		39														
18	Die hemelvaart	8	21	24	11	12		*											
		47	68:7-10																
19	Die verhoging aan Gods regterhand	2	110		12	31	32												
					38	39	40												
					41	42	43												
					44														
	Die wederkoms van Christus	45	72	89	13	14	29						69						
		96	98	110	30	31	32												
		118			36	37	43:5, 6												
					44:4, 5	46													
20	God die Heilige Gees	22;2	51:3-5	119:10,15	13:1-9	14:1, 2	22:1, 2	*					53			430	431	435	
		119:27,40	145:10		27:4														
21	Die Kerk	32	48	87	24	27:4, 5							52	63	75				
		133																	
	Die gemeenskap van die heiliges	133			21	27:5		*											
	Die vergifnis van sondes	32	51	85									61						
		116																	
22	Die opstanding van die vlees	16:4, 5	49:3-6		9	20	24:7	*											
					27:4, 5														
	Die ewige lewe	37	49:4-6	73:10, 11	8:1, 2	9:4-6	27:5						57						
					29:7-9														
	Die voleinding	37	72	96	23	29	30						57						
		97	98		31	32	37												
					45	46													
23	Die regverdigmaking	16:4, 5	73:10-12	84	7:8-10	10	16	*								239	241	124 c	
					18	19													
24	Die ongenoegsaamheid van die goeie werke	32	103	130	19:6, 7														
		143																	
25	Die sakramente	111						*											
26	Die heilige doop	51:4, 5, 7, 8			2:2			*								290			
27	Die kinderdoop	87	100	105:5, 6	15	25:6, 7													
28	Die nagmaal	23	114	115	16	17	18												
		117	118		19														
31	Die sleutels van die hemelryk	15	24		38	39	40												
					41	42	43												
					44														
32	Die noodsaaklikheid van goeie werke	119						*					73	75				273	
33	Die bekering	17	19	25	18:5-8	19													
		37	86:6	103															
		116	119																
34	Die Wet van God	1	119		26								70						
	Die eerste gebod	73:11, 12	79:1, 4	81:9-11	26:1, 2	34													
		96	115	135:9-11															
35	Die tweede gebod	97:1, 4	106:8, 9	115	26:3, 4														
36	Die derde gebod	1:1	15:1, 4	86:6	26:5														
		89:3	103:1	113															
		141:2	145																
38	Die vierde gebod	26:5	27:2, 3	63	18:5-8	26:6													
		84	92																
39	Die vyfde gebod	34:6-9	78:1-4	119:4, 5	26:7														
40	Die sesde gebod	1	5:4, 5		15	26:8													
41	Die sewende gebod	24	50:8-11	51:5-8															
		119:11-13																	
42	Die agtste gebod	15:1, 5	62:5-8		26:9														
43	Die negende gebod	5:5	15:1-3	34:6	26:9														
		63:6	101	140:7-9															
		141:3, 4																	
44	Die tiende gebod	19:6, 7	119	131	26:10, 11														
	Die noodsaaklikheid v wetsprediking	19	119																
45	Die noodsaaklikheid tov gebed	27:4	62:1	123															
		145																	
46	Die aanspraak van die gebed	25:3	33:11	103:5-7	28:1														

Appendix 5: Report Deputies Bible Translation

REPORT DEPUTIES BIBLE TRANSLATION



Deputies

Synod of Cape Town 2008 appointed the following deputies to be involved with the new translation of the Bible in Afrikaans:

Rev. HH van Alten (Pretoria Maranata, convenor)

Rev. P Nel (Pretoria)

Br. Nel was deposed in June 2009 and not replaced.

Instructions

1. To appoint two deputies who will serve as full members of the KA (Kerklike Advieskomitee);
2. To supervise and be involved with the new developments regarding the new translation of the Bible into Afrikaans;
3. To take part in the proceedings of the KA, and if necessary with reference to our confession regarding the written Word of God and the distinction between canonical and apocryphal books;
4. To inform the church of progress and developments with translations;
5. To identify potential readers in our churches to take part in the process of Bible translation. Available readers must be approached as soon as possible and must be requested to give periodically feedback to the deputies on their work;
6. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Proceedings

Initially there was good contact between deputies, but after the departure of rev. Nel the work was continued by rev. Van Alten. This did not matter, as the progress of the work by the Bible Society was such that not much was required from deputies.

Instruction 1: two deputies (rev. Van Alten and rev. Nel) were appointed and served as full members of the KA. The KA met once a year in November, and meetings were attended in November of 2008 (Nel/Van Alten), 2009 (Van Alten) and 2010 (Van Alten).

During these meetings updates were given by the team of translators on the progress of the work of the Afrikaans Bible translation. Detail aspects of the translation were also discussed by the members of the KA. Minutes of these meetings are available from deputies, but are not attached as they are long and tedious.

Instructions 2 and 3: unfortunately the work on the translation of the Bible in Afrikaans did not progress as the team of translators from the Bible Society intended. The planning is that the translation will go through 5 phases. Only in phase 3 will the churches – through their readers (see mandate 5) – be involved. This has not happened. Translation is still in a very early phase and is taking much longer than initially intended (see extract from minutes of November 2009 in Annexure A; the minutes of 2010 is not available yet, but shows the same pattern). Therefore deputies' involvement was limited to attending the meetings of the KA, as well as executing mandates 4 and 5 below.

Instruction 4: deputies did the following to inform the churches on the progress of the translation (most of these occurred in 2008 and 2009, after which the slow progress of the translators made any further information redundant):

- In August 2008 pamphlets on the history of the Bible in Afrikaans were distributed to all the Afrikaans speaking churches in the FRCSA;
- In October 2008 a DVD on the same subject was also distributed with an accompanying letter requesting the churches to show this DVD to their members (see Annexure B);
- Rev. Nel wrote an article in Kompas of March 2009 on the next Afrikaans Bible translation.

Instruction 5: the FRCSA is, according to the regulations of the Bible Society, entitled to three readers. The following readers were approached in July 2008, and agreed to participate (see Annexure C):

- rev. Jopie van der Linden (specifically for his knowledge of Hebrew, the source language of the OT)
- br. Henk Schuring (for the NT)
- sr. Tanya de Vente-Bijker (for her knowledge of Afrikaans)

On the 16th of October 2008 a meeting was held with the readers during which guidelines for the different readers in their field of expertise were discussed and determined (see Annexure D).

As explained above, the readers only become involved from phase 3 of the translation process. Seeing that the translators have not progressed that far, the readers have not really been active.

However, a trial translation on Genesis 1:1-2:4, Deuteronomy 5, Psalm 1, Psalm 8, Psalm 23, Matthew 6 and 1 Corinthians 13 was received from the Bible Society (in 2008) and distributed to the readers. They separately commented on this, and their comments were sent to the translators.

Other

Deputies took cognisance of a few documents that were written to the KA (or the Bible Society of South Africa) by churches or individuals:

- *Wil ons 'n Ou Testament sonder Christus hê? 'n Voorlegging in verband met die nuwe (2016) Afrikaanse Bybelvertaling*, PW Hoek & D Haasbroek, 2008.
- A document by prof. R Maré on the use of capital letters in OT texts that are indicated in the NT as Messianic.
- A letter by mr. P Stegmann regarding the Greek text used by the Bible Society, on which the BCSA reacted with a letter dated March 2011

Seeing that the translation is only in an initial phase, deputies took note of these documents, but did not want to comment on them too soon.

Recommendations

Due to the slow progress of the translators not a lot could be done by deputies. Deputies, however, foresee that the next few years may be very important as the translation is approaching a stage where we, as churches, will become more intensely involved. Therefore, the following is recommended:

3. That two deputies from the north of the country are again appointed as full members of the Kerklike Advieskomitee in order to represent the FRCSA in the process of the Afrikaans Bible translation;
4. That the following instruction is given to deputies:
 - a. To supervise and be involved with new developments regarding the new translation of the Bible into Afrikaans;
 - b. To take part in the proceedings of the KA, and if necessary with reference to our confession regarding the written Word of God and the distinction between canonical and apocryphal books;
 - c. To inform the churches of progress and developments with the Afrikaans translation;
 - d. To keep the readers up to date with the progress of the Afrikaans translation, and involve them as soon as needed.

May God grant you wisdom, and bless the work of the synod.

HH van Alten
April 2011

ANNEXURE A

Aanhaling uit notule November 2009:

Die Projekleier doen kortliks verslag oor die vordering en gebrek aan vordering in die projek tot dusver. Die beplanning was om teen einde 2010 die hele Bybel deur Fase 1 en 2 te voer.

Intussen is daar steeds spanne waar die vordering nie na wense is nie, terwyl daar ander spanne is waar die helfte van 'n lang boek reeds deur Fase 2 gevoer is.

Gedurende Maart 2009 is daar 'n audit gedoen van die vordering in al die spanne; die rol van die Projekleier is hersien en bepaalde aanpassings is gedoen om die komplekse proses enigermate te vereenvoudig en (waar moontlik) die administratiewe las van medewerkers te verlig.

Sodra al die eerste hoofstukke wat in Maart 2009 weer aangevra is, ontvang is, sal die Evalueeringskomitee weer vergader. Die Redaksionele Komitee sal so gou moontlik aan bepaalde boeke begin aandag gee.

Die vordering tot dusver is:

• **Fase 1 Boeke** Klaar

OT 3 Rut, Hooglied, Obadja	8.54%	
DKB 1 Toevoegings tot Daniël	7.07%	
NT 4 Gal, Ef, Kol, Jud	22.2%	
Totaal		11.4%

• **Fase 2 Aantal verse** deur F 2

OT	6.19%	
DKB	0.49%	
NT	14.42%	
TOTAAL F2		8.97%

Alle reaksie van individue en kerke op die 2008 proefvertaling wat ontvang word, word direk na die betrokke Boekspanne verwys wat later verslag sal moet doen oor hulle reaksie daarop.

Die Projekleier verwys ook daarna dat, weens die stadige vordering sommige taal- en letterkundiges van Fase 2 intussen aan die projek onttrek het. Hy vra egter begrip vir die groot druk waaronder akademië, kollegas in die bediening en eintlik maar alle medewerkers verkeer, en dat die vertaalwerk in werklikheid liefdeswerk is wat in ekstra tyd gedoen moet word. Daarom is daar groot waardering vir wat wel in hierdie omstandighede gelewer word.

ANNEXURE B



DEPUTAATSKAP VIR BYBELVERTALING

8 Oktober 2008

Geagte Kerkrade,

Deputate vir Bybelvertaling het onlangs 'n DVD van die Bybelgenootskap ontvang waarin 'n oorsig gegee word van die ontwikkeling van die Bybel in Afrikaans. Deputate het die Bybelgenootskap versoek om hierdie DVD na alle kerkrade te stuur. U behoort dus binnekort hierdie DVD te ontvang.

Deputate wil vervolgens die kerkrade vra om hierdie DVD, sodra dit aangekom het, aan die gemeentes te vertoon. Dit kan na 'n erediens of tydens 'n gemeentevergadering gebeur, en behoort ongeveer 15 minute te duur. Sodoende word die gemeentes bewus gemaak van 'n deel van hulle eie geskiedenis, en word hulle betrek by die nuwe Bybelvertaling in Afrikaans wat tans in proses is.

Ons vertrou dat u hierdie versoek gunstig sal ontvang.

Hartlike groete,



HH van Alten

Sameroeper

ANNEXURE C

5 Augustus 2008

Vir aandag: ds. Steyn

In 'n brief, gedateer 27 Maart 2008 gerig aan ds. P Nel, is die deputate Bybelvertaling van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika versoek om kerklike lesers te benoem vir die Afrikaanse Bybelvertalingsprojek. Met hierdie skrywe voldoen ons graag aan hierdie versoek. Ek gee vir u die besonderhede van die volgende kerklike lesers:

- 1) Ds. Jopie van der Linden
Sel: 084 629 0740
E-pos: johannesvanderlinden@yahoo.com
- 2) Mnr Henk Schuring
Naudestraat 630
Wonderboom-Suid
Pretoria
Gauteng
0084

Tel No (012) 331 - 0663
Faks: 086 634 3324
Sel : 082 565 1703

E-pos : henk@schuring.co.za

3) Me Tanya de Vente
Crotsstraat 886 A
Rietfontein
Pretoria

Posbus 23443
Gezina
0031

Tel No (012) 330 - 3603
E-pos: tanyadevente@gmail.com

Ons vertrou dat u hierdie kerklike lesers sal kontak sodra hulle insette in die projek verlang word.

Hartlike groete,

Ds. Erik van Alten (sameroeper: deputate Bybelvertaling van die VGKSA)
hhvanalten@vgkmaranata.org.za
(012) 332 3256 of 082 268 1671

ANNEXURE D

RIGLYNE: KERKLIKE LESERS

Riglyne vir 'brontekseslers'

- Vergelyk die vertaling met die bronteks om te bepaal of die vertaling 'n goeie / getroue weergawe is van die bronteks
- Let veral op die vertaling van die Godsdname (sien artikel Nederlands Dagblad)
- Let ook op hoe daar met die Christologiese verwysings in die Ou Testament omgegaan word (sien skrywe van Bybelgenootskap)
- Kyk of beelde en stylfigure goed vertaal is
- Gee kommentaar op die funksionaliteit van die voetnote
- Gee kommentaar op die voorgestelde opskrifte
- Beoordeel die inleidings tot die verskillende bybelboeke teologies

Riglyne vir 'doelteksteslers'

- Gaan die doeltekste (Afrikaans) na en let op:
 - Leesbaarheid
 - Spel- en tikfoute
 - Sinskonstruksies
 - Vertaling van die Godsdname (sien artikel Nederlands Dagblad)
 - Gee kommentaar op die funksionaliteit van voetnote
 - Gee kommentaar op die voorgestelde opskrifte

Appendix 6: Report Deputies ad article 19 CO

Synod report 2011

Deputies Article 19

26 May 2011

Dear Chairman and members of this gathering

The deputies would like to report as follows:

Acting Deputies

Br. BJ Meijering (convener)

Br JW Roos

Br F Raimond (alternate)

Contact among Deputies was primarily via e-mail. A joint meeting was held with Deputies Curators and Deputies Mission Board in November 2010 to discuss mutual matters.

1. Synod decision 2008

- To approve the bursary form as included in supplement 2 of the report
- To maintain the current contribution of R20.00 per annum
- To authorize deputies to increase the contribution with a maximum of R20.00 per member per annum for each new student.

1. Instructions:

- To financially support students from within the MTS or those who are undergraduate students with a view to study for the ministry of the Word, in accordance with article 19 CO and the synodical regulations
- To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the rules of Synod.

2. Deputies report:

a) Financial overview or the period 2008 - 2010:

Deputies gave financial support to two students during the period 2008- 2010 . One student has since given up his studies. In 2010, R92 000 was needed for support (including class fees).

Due to the fact that sufficient funds were available since Synod 2008 to April 2011, there was no need to enforce the option to increase contributions apart from the R20 00 per member as decided by Synod 2008. Payments are done in accordance of the needs of the students. The Treasurer (quaestor) is responsible for the necessary payments.

Historically Mission Deputies (MDSA) supported students from the mission field and budgeted for them. This meant that Dep. Art.19 only needed to take care of students from instituted churches.

The situation has changed after Mission deputies decided late 2010 to withdraw financial support to students that they historically supported, due to their restrained budget. After a meeting between the MDSA, Deputies Curators and Deputies Art. 19 (Nov 2010) it was decided that:

- Deputies Art. 19 would take over the administration of all needy students as of January 2011.
- MDSA would financially carry the costs needed for the students supported thus far until December 2011.
- From 2012 this ruling will change when Dep Art. 19 will take over all responsibilities of students in need.
- Deputies Art.19 would therefore approach ZDNL/DVN for financial assistance and also approach the bond of churches abroad for assistance where possible.
- It was noted that the current financial situation could have a negative effect on the churches in South-Africa and further discussions are necessary in order to address the situation.

As a result of these decisions the students in our care has increased from one to four since January 2011. After Deputies Curators, in May 2011, approved another student for theological studies at Mukhanyo Theological School, the total number of needy students has increased to five.

b) Financial overview for the period May 2011 onwards:

The contributions by members of the FRCSA is currently R26 000 per year, made up of contributions of R25.00 per member as decided by Synod 2008. As mentioned earlier in our report, we have an option to increase contributions with R20.00 for each new student.

The funds available to Dep. Art.19 in December 2010 was R84'300. We are still awaiting funds from MDSA of approx. R120 000. This will cover the amount needed for the originally budgeted (four) students till December 2011.

However, the acceptance of the fifth student in May 2011 was not budgeted for and a shortfall of R15 000 is expected. Your Deputies decided not to enforce the option of a R20.00 increase at this moment, because contributions from ZDNL and DVN are expected to adequately cover the shortfall.

Before 2009 the available funds for Art.19 grew substantially, due to the fact that for a period there were no needy students. Since 2008-2010 an average of R80 000 per year was needed for support.

However, the total expenses in 2011 will increase to R307 000. If no students are accepted in the following years, the financial outlook for 2012 – 2015 is as follows, assuming an escalation of 10% pa):

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
R 307 444.00	R 349 034.40	R 383 937.84	R 422 331.62	R 464 564.79

Since March 2011 Deputies have been in discussions with our Sister churches in the Netherlands via ZDNL/DVN for financial help. No final agreement was reached in time for this report, although there was great willingness from them to assist

ZDNL and DVN are currently offering to contribute € 11 496.00 and € 5 748.00 respectively. Based on these numbers the required contributions are as follows:

	2012	2013	2014	2015
FRCSA	R 160 515.00	R 180 980.66	R 204 055.70	R 230 072.80

DVN	R 59 534.72	R 64 291.36	R 69 441.19	R 74 996.49
ZDNL	R 119 069.44	R 128 582.72	R 138 882.38	R 149 992.97
	R 339 119.16	R 373 854.74	R 412 379.27	R 455 062.25

To make up the contribution of the FRCSA, the contribution per member needs to increase from R 25 pa to R 103 pa, escalating by 10% annually to R 137 in 2015.

Dep. Art.19 have asked ZDNL/DVN to consider a proposal whereby FRCSA contributes R 60 per member and they cover the shortfall. We hope to finalize an agreement before Synod 2011, and late amendments to this report can therefore be expected.

Dep. Art. 19 have approached our sister churches in Canada with no positive results thus far, but we will continue to search for financial help from Canada and Australia.

c) Considerations

Your deputies are of the opinion that the future financial situation in the FRCSA is precarious and significant challenges lie ahead for churches to address. Deputies Art. 19, Deputies Curators and Mission Deputies need to work in a closer relationship in order to achieve their common goals

Considering the inflated budget of deputies art 19, it is clear that mission boards and deputies curators will have to check the number of students that are accepted for theological studies. The proposed budget does not cater for additional students. Each additional B.Th student increases the contribution per member of the FRCSA by R 70 to cover a shortfall of R 370'000 over the period 2012 – 2015.

Also, when students in need apply for help, we have to cater for student fees (MTS currently R20 000 per year, George Whitfield College R17 000 per year), books, accommodation, basic living cost of the students, family support etc. Practically it is impossible for deputies to restrict support to one aspect only, for example only student fees or books or a specific set amount. This will have the effect that most students would not be able to study theology.

Deputies art 19 fear that the current situation could place a heavy burden on the local churches. As Deputies we cannot prescribe the way forward, but would recommend Synod to address and give guidance to the concerning deputyships.

d) Bursary forms

In order to streamline the current bursary application, deputies have amended the application forms. The amended form will be submitted for approval to the synod.

3. Recommendations

We recommend that the synod:

- i. increases the current contribution from the local churches of R 25 per member pa to R 103, escalating annually by 10%.
- ii. limit the total number of students to a maximum of 5.
- iii. alternatively, if the number of students exceeds 5, for each additional student increase the contribution from the local churches by an additional R 70 per member.
- iv. discuss and guide the concerning deputyships on a feasible way forward for student acceptance.
- v. approve the newly revised bursary application form (addendum B)
- vi. relieve the current deputies art 19 and appoint new deputies as proposed in addendum A.

Addendum A: Proposals for new deputies:

- br Marius Bijker,
- br Andreas Boon
- br Arend de Lange
- br Erik-Jan de Wit

Addendum B:

APPLICATION FOR A LOAN / BURSARY

**The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
Deputies CO Art 19 Application for Bursary**

May 2011

APPLICATION FOR A LOAN / BURSARY

A. General information

1. Loans / Bursaries are granted to theological students who want to be trained as minister for the ministry within the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.
2. The allocation of loans / bursaries is determined through the details that are submitted in this form. It is in the interest of the student that this form should be completed thoroughly.
3. The amount that is allocated for studying purposes is determined by the deputies.
4. Your application must be accompanied by a letter that you must obtain from the curators to confirm that you are a registered student and that you are busy with your studies full-time. A second letter is requested from the national / regional coordinator, giving a declaration regarding your studies, for example subjects that are in arrears or other information that can be of importance (sickness etc.).

B. Personal information

All information shall be treated confidentially. Please submit full details of your income and also that of your household.

1. Surname:

Names:

2. Date of birth:

ID Number:

3. Address as student:

4. Permanent address:

Tel. No:

Cell No:

5. State of marriage:

Date of marriage (if married):

Names of children and their ages:

6. Name and address of parents / guardian:

Tel no:

Cell no:

7. Banking Details

Name of Bank:

Branch Code:

Account nr:

Type of account:

Name of Account holder:

8. What study course are you following this year?

9. What academical grades have you obtained in the past?

10. Was it necessary for you to repeat some of your study years or subjects?

Please mention them if applicable:

11. Are you in the arrears with any of your subjects? Please specify:

C. Financial details regarding yourself and your household

1. Your total income expected for this academic year (supply copies of last three months of salary):

2. Total income of your wife (if married) expected for this academic year (supply copies of last three months of salary of wife):

3. Total income of your parents expected for this academic year (supply copies of last three months of salary of father and mother):

4. Are you in possession of any property? Specify the nature, address and value:

5. Income from property:

6. Is your wife (when applicable) in possession of any property? Specify the nature, address and value:

7. Income from property:

8. Are your parents in possession of any property? Specify the nature, address and value:

9. Income from property:

10. Any other source of income:

11. What is your TOTAL DEBT (if applicable):

NOTE: The amount of the loan / bursary that is granted to you is determined by the details submitted above as well as the availability of funds. The Deputies for Church Order Article 19 reserve themselves the right to verify the submitted information and they may also consult with the curators if they see the need to do so.

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that all the information that has been submitted on this form is complete and correct.

Signature:

Date:

Place:

D. Conditions under which the loan / bursary is to be granted:

The loan/bursary should be repaid with actual interest to Deputies CO Art. 19 in the case of:

1. The student terminates his undergraduate studies.
2. The student completes his undergraduate studies, but he does not qualify himself further for the ministry.
3. The student studies as a postgraduate student with the purpose of becoming a minister, but he does not complete his postgraduate studies.
4. The Curators, or Board of trustees, or the Classis, or the Synod is of the opinion that the student can not complete his studies for whatever reason.
5. In the case where the student accepts a call outside the FRCSA, the student shall make the necessary arrangements to settle the loan/bursary within 3 years.
6. If the student completes his studies and eventually receives a call as a minister or a missionary in the FRCSA, then the loan/bursary shall be written off gradually on the basis of each year in the ministry for each year of studies. This means that if a student has studied for 6 years, his loan will be turned into a bursary completely after 6 years of ministry.

7. In the case where Deputies Art. 19 and the student are in disagreement regarding any one of the conditions of the loan/bursary, then the classis under which the student falls, shall decide on the matter according to Art. 31 CO of the FRCSA.

E. Repayment of loan:

1. It is expected from the student to pay back the loan according to the fixed lending rates of the bank. The loan must be settled within the same period that it was granted in the first place. If the student terminates his studies after a period of time, then it is expected of him to pay back the loan within the same period that it was granted to him. If the student immediately pays back the loan then no interest will be added.
2. Regarding the repayment of the loan, Deputies shall draw up an agreement that is binding upon both parties.
3. A loan or bursary does not guarantee a call into the ministry.

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I accept the conditions of this loan / bursary.

Signature of student:

Date:

Place:

Signature of Deputy CO Art. 19:

Date:

Place:

Appendix 7: Report Deputies ad article 11 CO

Art. 11 Deputies Needy Churches – Report to Synod - June 2011.

Mandate:

Synod 2008 decided to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To consider any request for financial support coming from one of the churches and once the merits of the request has been ascertained to send a proposal to the other churches to help the needy church according to ability;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Synopsis:

1. It is with deep and sincere gratitude we look back to the blessings of the last three years. By the grace of God all ministers of the FRC in South Africa were cared for during this period. This was mainly due to overwhelming support from our Australian and Canadian sister churches.
2. But art.11 cannot carry on as in the past. Needy churches should take greater responsibility for the financial support of their ministers. More weight has to be applied on the needy churches consistories to “force” needy congregation’s members contribute to their minister stipend according to their ability.
3. We need to think differently about how to assist needy churches in future; it will become impossible to provide the full shortfall of the needy church minister’s stipend. We predict that more churches will apply for financial support in future placing even more stress on the available funds. The current dependency on Art 11 seems to increase and therefore our dependency also increases on external funding – this scenario is not sustainable and the responsibility needs to be shifted to the actual congregation themselves.

Index:

1. Overview: 2008-2010.
 - 1.1 Financial overview of last 3 years.
 - 1.1.1 Financial figures: 2008 - 2010 and budget 2011
 - 1.1.2 Income sources
 - 1.2 Approach followed during the last 3 years:
 - 1.2.1 Applications for assistance.
 - 1.2.2 Workshop 9 Feb 2009 – See appendix A for summery
 - 1.2.3 Evaluation of applications.
 - 1.2.4 Internal funding – additional avenues?
 - 1.2.5 Support from Outside South Africa
 - Canada – Brochure
 - Australia – Bethal
 - 1.3 Summary – last 3 years:
2. What are the problems and challenges we need to address?
 - 2.1 Financial planning: how big is the problem?
 - 2.2 Problems experienced with Needy churches:
 - 2.3 Perceptions and views within the FR bond of churches.
 - 2.4 Conclusions:
3. Biblical principles for a ministers support with focus on the FRCSA situation.
 - 3.1 The Burden We Carry
 - 3.1.1 The Legacy of Apartheid:
 - 3.1.2 Living in the Bond of Churches:
 - 3.2 Beyond the Bible
 - 3.2.1 The Priestly Support:
 - 3.2.2 Jesus and the Disciples:
 - 3.2.3 The Apostles:
 - 3.3 Deductions and conclusion:

- 4 Proposed approaches to stabilise needy churches support from Deputies Art 11:
- 4.1 More contributions from members of needy churches. Although it is accepted that
 - 4.2 Relook what it means to take proper care for your minister.
 - 4.3 Support limits: only for non basic stipend elements.
 - 4.4 Institution of new self-governing churches.
- 5.0 Composition of deputy.
- 6.0 Synod approves :
- Annex: A - SEMINAR Needy Churches FRCSA – SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- Annex: B – Example of Basic and non basic elements of a minister stipend.
- Annex C – Flow diagrams for deputy needy Churches
- Annex D Brochure to Canada and Australia

1. Overview : 2008-2010.

1.1 Financial overview of last 3 years.

1.1.1 Financial figures: Support requested and paid over – 2008 - 2010 and budget 2011

	Year						
	2008 Actuals	2009 Actuals	2010 Actuals	2011 Budget	2012	2013 Estimated	2014
Saldo/opening balance	-R 39 903	R 150 531	R 506 975	R 390 251	R 239 445	R 89 614	-R 92 209
Income							
Mission deputies	R 122 400	R 150 000	R 80 000	R 60 000	R 40 000	R 20 000	R 0
Churches contribution	R 188 116	R 245 900	R 247 300	R 239 000	R 298 000	R 298 000	R 298 000
Donations	R 10 000	R 31 040	R 27 091				
Canada - support	R 116 433	R 268 400	R 328 364	R 300 000	R 300 000	R 300 000	R 300 000
Australia - support			R 184 000	R 420 000	R 420 000	R 420 000	R 420 000
Jan Hulser fund (FRC Bellville)				R 100 000	R 100 000	R 100 000	
Interest	R 15 319	R 26 746	R 41 937	R 20 000	R 12 000	R 8 000	R 8 000
Total	R 452 268	R 722 086	R 908 692	R 1 139 000	R 1 170 000	R 1 146 000	R 1 026 000
Expenditure							
Pension Jhb		R 120 840	R 130 830	R 152 220	R 159 831	R 167 823	R 176 214
Soshanguve North FRC		R 93 001	R 168 630	R 190 000	R 190 000	R 190 000	R 190 000
Mamelodi FRC		R 126 031	R 136 836	R 127 200	R 130 000	R 130 000	R 130 000
Belhar FRC*		R 23 900	R 286 800	R 300 000	R 300 000	R 300 000	R 300 000
Johannesburg		R 0	R 100 915	R 97 886	R 120 000	R 120 000	R 120 000
Bethal		R 0	R 199 333	R 420 000	R 420 000	R 420 000	R 420 000
Bank charges		R 1 870	R 2 072	R 2 500			
Total	R 261 834	R 365 642	R 1 025 416	R 1 289 806	R 1 319 831	R 1 327 823	R 1 336 214
Surplus/ (shortfall)	R 150 531	R 506 975	R 390 251	R 239 445	R 89 614	-R 92 209	-R 402 422
Income for Projects - Manse Bethal							
Australia		R 253 418	R 534 000				
SA Disenchanted fund			R 128 214				
Total (accumulated)			R 915 632				

1.1.2 Income sources

1. Mission deputies SA: In general MDSA are still assisting an instituted church on a five year regression plan. No further assistance is expected.
2. Churches contribution: The income presents the amount donated by the FRCSA churches based on R200 per member per year.
3. Jan Hulser fund: The FRC Bellville has agreed to assist Art 11 for three years with R100 000 annually.
4. Canada – dealt with later in report.
5. Australia – dealt with later in report.

1.2 Approach followed during the last 3 years:

1.2.1 Applications for assistance.

All the applications for assistance received were dealt with and up to 2010 the total requested amount (although sometimes reduced with consent of the needy church) was fully paid during the year. The process applied to all applications is attached in Annex C

1.2.2 Workshop 9 Feb 2009 – See appendix A for summary

Art 11 was tasked to organise a workshop “sustainable financial support” which was held on 9 & 10 Feb. 2009. It turned out to be a very informative and positive workshop. The outcomes assisted Art 11 in the strategic direction and will form the basis of the proposals in this report.

1.2.3 Evaluation of applications.

Although a detailed evaluation process is in place, the relevance is limited due to no or very little information of the new instituted churches contribution ability.

All the application were scrutinised and questions were asked regarding expenses and budgets. All congregations were visited and the purpose of art 11 and the fund limitations were explained. The need to determine the tithing ability per congregation was stressed not only in these meetings but also in other correspondence and telephonic discussions. However, only two of the five needy churches could give honest feedback re the congregation’s ability to contribute to their minister’s support.

1.2.4 Internal funding – additional avenues?

The present R200 per member per year is paid by the older churches. From an ethical point of view, we need to make sure that the church members in SA contribute to their ability before we request assistance from sister churches abroad.

Therefore the consistory of Bellville was requested to contribute via the Jan Hulzer fund to art 11 mainly to support Belhar. They donated R100 000 per annum for three years for which we are grateful. To our knowledge there are no other avenues in SA to obtain additional funds except the yearly synod allocation. The proposal is to increase the allocation from the present R200 per year per member to R250 for the next 3 years i.e. 2012-2014. This is equivalent to a 7.75% per annum increase which is higher than inflation. (Synod has to look at the needs for other deputies’ annual allocation and decide which deputy should have preference in increasing the allocation amounts).

Art 11 also requests the synod to approve the allocation of the former disenchanted fund of R110 000 to support the purchase of a manse in Bethal. Australia has given their approval already.

1.2.5 Support from Outside South Africa

Canada – Brochure

We followed up on the foundations laid by rev. Kleyn during his visit to Canada in 2006. With the approval of Deputies Foreign Relations SA we tried to get a centralised deputy or organisation in Canada willing to act as coordinator but nobody was prepared for the Canadian and North American sister churches to accept the challenge. We decided to write to all churches with a proper brochure explaining the background and needs in SA re the FR churches position. (Brochure attached as Annex D)

Coaldale - centralised address North America.

Totally unexpectedly, but by the will of the Provider we got a letter from Canada with the following content:

“As you may know, the Canadian Synod Smithers 2007 decided to “recommend the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa (FRCSA) to the churches of the federation as worthy of continued and increased support in both prayer and finances as well as in the work of mission and charity.”

The *Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad* of the Canadian Reformed Churches requested that the Coaldale Canadian Reformed Church take on the project of coordinating the collecting and transferring of financial aid to the Deputies for Needy Churches (CO, art. 11) for the FRCSA.

The Council of the Coaldale Canadian Reformed Church has eagerly accepted this request and has appointed a committee, *Committee for the Needy Free Reformed Churches of South Africa*, to take care of this responsibility.”

We were and still are extremely thankful for this committee. They managed to transfer R300 000 to art 11 for the year 2010 and are willing to try to do the same for the next years.

A focus area is to keep them updated with our situation in SA. Communication is key to ensure further support from them.

Australia – Bethal

The communication with Aus. started already in 2008 when the FR Church Bethal was without a minister and were reduced to fifty odd members. It was realised that support was required from abroad to enable them to call a minister. Australia replied positive on our letters before and after the Classis South meeting in April 2009.

They also agreed that the R110 000 originally earmarked for the disenchanting project, could be used for Bethal. All in all Australia accepted to support Bethal so that they could call a minister. The total contribution in 2009 and 2010 was R 787 418 for the manse. Important to note is that should Bethal cease to exist as a FRC within the next 10 years, the manse will be sold and that the money will be paid back proportionally to the sponsors i.e. Aus =78%.

Australia has also accepted the R420 000 donation for 2011 as assistance to Bethal’s consistory for Rev Breytenbach stipend. In essence Australia has adopted Bethal as a needy church. By this means our Lord has shown us His way with Bethal. (This does not mean that Australia is responsible for the shortfall.)

The brochure was updated and also sent to Australia’s deputies relations abroad. The communication between Bethal and Australia is directly between them with a cc to Art 11. All funds however are channelled via the Art 11 account managed by the questor.

1.3 Summary – last 3 years:

The needy churches in SA were provided for by the grace of our Lord. Brothers and sisters contributed to the need with the bigger portion coming mainly from across borders and continents. It is a blessing by our Provider that no church council had shortages in supporting their ministers till 2010.

But there are some questions to be answered. For 2011 and onwards the increase in support and possible new applications exceeds the income. How do we tackle this problem? Do we have to find additional avenues to increase the financial income? Or do we have to change our thinking on how to support the needy churches in SA?

2. What are the problems and challenges we need to address?

2.1 Financial planning: how big is the problem?

From the financial figures tabled earlier in the report, the budgeted income and assistance (support) to be paid in future predicts a shortfall from 2012 onwards. The amount in 2014 will have risen to close of R400k and this calculation is based on the following conditions:

1. No needy church will increase the support level as per 2011.
2. No additional needy congregations is accepted, although Soshanguve WW could also become self governing in the next reporting period
3. Foreign support remains as is:
 - Canada has indicated that support can not be increased.
 - Australia also has limitations.
4. Local contributions increase by 25%:
 - a. The proposed increase in synod allocation from R200 to R250 is R60 000 per year and is included.

- b. No additional support from the Mission deputies is forthcoming. MDSA are short on their own budgets due to strengthening of the Rand.
- c. No additional support from Jan Hulzer fund.

2.2 Problems experienced with Needy churches:

1. Some Needy churches have a wrong perception of Art 11: they see Art 11 to be responsible for the stipend of their minister.
2. Little to no information regarding what the church members can contribute.
3. Little effort by church councils to address the unwillingness for tithing.
4. Financial accountability is lacking by newly instituted congregations.

2.3 Perceptions and views within the FR bond of churches.

1. Ministers and church councils assume that there should be a certain equality in stipends.
2. The differences in stipends and manses of the individual ministers and missionaries give rise to discord.
3. The economic financial situation differs widely between congregations.
4. Deputies will find ways to ensure the shortfall in budgets.

2.4 Conclusions:

From a planning point of view it is unrealistic to expect that Art 11 can carry on in assisting the needy churches in the total shortfall of their budgets.

It is not only an issue of not having the ability (money) to support the needy churches but also an ethical issue.

1. Can we just keep on asking for foreign assistance? Is it ethical to keep requesting more and more from our br's and sr's abroad? Up to what level?
2. How responsible are the needy congregations in supporting their own minister?
3. Is the minister's stipend realistic in terms of "proper care"? Are we not too focussed on equality re stipends for FRCSA ministers and missionaries?
4. Should church institution be conditional on a certain level of financial accountability and ability?

3. Biblical principles for a ministers support with focus on the FRCSA situation.

3.1 The Burden We Carry

It is a reality that the FRCSA is faced by a new situation. It is a situation that requires new measures for the furtherance of the gospel. No one can deny the fact that for the past years we have experienced the blessings of God in seeing three new self governing churches added in the bond of churches. This has really made the FRCSA a reflection of the South Africa we are living in. As it is referred to as the Rainbow Nation, the FRCSA can also be called the Rainbow Churches. However though God in His grace has given us the opportunity to participate in the reflection of a Rainbow Nation, He has also given us the opportunity to participate in bearing the burdens that comes with the Rainbow Nation.

These are not the burdens that come because we seek to be politically correct; they are however burdens that come as a result of God gracious work in making "the two one" (Eph 2:14-18). What does it mean to live in this unity in a country like South Africa? This is a crucial question for various reasons, which we must consider now:

- 3.1.1 The Legacy of Apartheid:** The struggle to bridge the gap between Black, White, Indian, Coloured, rich, and poor is as livelier in society as it is in the church. The fear from one group of being accused to be still practicing apartheid or legislating a new form of apartheid is rife. The manipulation game played in making either one group to feel more as victims and the other as perpetrators can have its foot in the church as it has its foot in society. In this context the church can find herself participating in institutionalized envy – whereby one group is made to believe that they are really responsible for

the sufferings of others, that their wealth is actually a cause of poverty in other people. Here then the object of envy is manipulated to feel guilty for being envied. All these aspects exert a great pressure for the church in her call to live as a community of believers. This is seen more clearly in the struggle of answering the question of: how should the care of ministers be conducted in the federation of churches? The fact that some ministers are living and function in well to do churches, while others live and function in poor areas make this a serious question, and it raises even more questions. Should we strive for equality among the ministers? Striving for equality creates another problem, and that is putting the ministers who are serving in poorer areas in a position where their living standards become higher than the people they serve among. This also creates a problem for the newly instituted churches which are in those areas which are classified as poor areas. The problem is that they cannot maintain such a high budget. In attempting to deal with these issues two guidelines have been adopted by the churches: One is, ministers should be able to work without worries, and the second is that, they should not live above the members of the congregation where they are serving. While this is nicely said in theory, when applied in practice it does not really work that way. What it is that makes the ministers to enjoy the privilege of living without worries while some of the people they minister to are consumed daily in those worries?

Besides the challenges posed by the situation the churches find themselves in, one cannot deny that even from the best effort made, one is still faced by the question of the differences that still exists. The question of how does one explain the differences that exist between ministers; the differences of location, housing, cars and etc. All these questions then make this topic a crucial one. It makes one to search for honest answers which may be painful when applied.

3.1.2 *Living in the Bond of Churches:* While it is a blessing to live in a bond of churches where advices and experiences can be shared, it is also a reality that functioning in this bond creates needs that must be met. There is no one who wants to create a situation whereby some ministers based on material things would feel inferior to others in their interaction as they work together within the bond of churches. Neither does one want to create a situation where some feel superior to others based on material things. Having said that, one cannot deny also that functioning in the bond of churches has its own needs, there is a need for an internet, car and other things for the purpose of communication and travelling to meetings as one functions in different committees. As a result of this the newly instituted churches find themselves in a position where they have to contribute for the needs within the bond of churches. However in providing their pastor with what is needed to meet these needs, they find themselves in a situation where they feel like they contribute to the luxuries of their pastor. For it is fact that most do not have access to internet, car, phone allowances, fuel allowances and etc. These to them are luxuries which they cannot afford. Added to this is the fact that they have also to contribute to the physical needs of the pastor which includes the fact that often his children are brought to better schools than their children and better medical treatment than them. Hence then raising the living standard of the township pastors to that of other pastors puts the township pastor at a higher standard compared to the people he is serving. This then creates the tension that people feel forced to give for the luxuries of the pastor to their perception. At the same time one cannot ignore the fact that putting the standard of the pastor at an average member of the congregation will render him dysfunctional within the bond of churches and may lead him to live in envy of the colleagues who are serving in well to do churches.

In a country where there is so much social inequality how then should the care of the pastor be structured? This is a necessary question for the fact that pastors are serving in different communities and at the same time living within the bond of churches.

3.2 Beyond the Bible

In seeking the solution to the problem stated above one must begin by a faithful confession. The confession will be that we need to go beyond the bible. This may raise some eye brows, however it is a confession one has to make. What is meant by this is that we can draw straight lines from the situation of the bible to our

situation in terms of applying the principles we read in the bible. Put differently one can say we do not have a situation that is equivalent to our situation from the bible. The other factor which confronts us is that the bible confronts us with different models of support, and this calls the church to carefully think about each model. For this reason a one size fit all approach will not work, for we do not have such a model from the bible. Let us concretize this argument then:

3.2.1 The Priestly Support: We know that the Priests and Levites were expected to get their support from offerings brought by the people of God (Num 18:8-32). This was a way of helping them to dedicate their service to the temple duties. However it is also clear that the offerings were coming directly from the people. Meaning people could offer what they can afford based on the laws given by God for each offering. The result was that if it goes well with the people as a result of God's blessing on them then there was more to offer. However if things were not well with the people they had less to give and the Priests has to live from that.

We also know that things did not remain like this forever in Israel. During the Davidic reign we know that the number of Priests and Levites increased and they had to be divided into groups to enable them to serve in the temple. However we are not informed about how the other groups were supported in the time they were not serving in the tabernacle and later the temple. We also have an indication that this could have been a problem later in Israel as we read in Hos 4:7-8.

On the other hand one is fully aware the Priests and Levites were not the only ones who were involved in the service of God. We also read of prophets who played a big role in bringing God's word to His people, we are not however informed as to how they receive their support.

Therefore the question is in what capacity is the pastor serving today? Is he serving as the priest or prophet? Though a line is drawn in the NT to the priestly support (1 Cor 9:13-14), it is clear that this line is not drawn to copy the structure of the OT in terms of supporting the Priests and Levites but in qualifying the command that those who preach the gospel should also get their living from the gospel. It is in this sense that we can ask the question: what does it mean that one should get his living from the Gospel? This is a principle we must battle with, because it gives those preaching a gospel a right to ask to expect a support from those to whom the gospel is preached.

3.2.2 Jesus and the Disciples: Another principle which can be drawn from as one thinks about the issue of supporting pastors is the one drawn by Christ to His disciples. This sounds more like the principle from the market world. The principle is that the worker deserves his wages or keep (Mat 10:9-10, Luk 10:3-7). In this case then the disciples diet and living were dependent on the house they visited. They ate and lived according to the standard of each house that hosted them.

So this principle makes it clear that the worker deserves his wages, however it does not provide one with the details of what it means in practice. Considering the fact that we have pastors who are functioning at different levels and possessing different qualifications how does one then apply the principle? What standard should the church follow then?

On the other hand we know that Jesus made it clear to the disciples that this principle does not apply in all situations (Luk 22:35-36). Does this mean that the church should also consider the time and the situation it is called to spread the gospel and what bearing this has in the way it will support the pastor? This is a question that we will come back to. However one thing comes out very clear, the worker deserves his wages.

3.2.3 The Apostles: Thinking about the development of the church structure from temple to synagogue and to house churches one realises different principles are argued for in the way the support of apostles and other elders who laboured in the preaching of the word is structured.

First is the principle that Christ taught the disciples that the worker deserves his wages. This is a principle is argued in different ways from the words of Christ Himself to the model of military, farming, and agriculture (1 Tim 5:17-18, 1 Cor 9:7-15). From this then the principle is build that those who labour in the preaching of the gospel have a right to support.

The *second* principle is related to the first one. Pastors are not always called to exercise this right that they have for support, though it is a right, however for various reasons one may decide to forfeit his right (1 Cor 9:15ff). Reasons for this are required by the nature of the work itself, in someone situation stressing for this right may be a hindrance to spreading the gospel. The reasons is that at times believers need to learn by example what it is to work hard (2 Thess 3:7-10, it may be necessary at times that they show what it means to meet the need of others (Act 20:34-35), and that they may not be a burden to the church (1 Thes 2:6-9). This may be more needed also to stand against those false teachers hoping to make some financial gain (1 Tim 6:3-5).

Third is the principle that this support should always be expected from those to whom the gospel is preached. This is expressed very well by Paul to the Corinthians when he informed them that the fact that the preached the gospel to them at the expense of other churches was a form of robbery on those churches which supported him (2 Cor 11:7-9). It is therefore a principle that those who receive the gospel should be willing to carry the costs that comes with furthering that gospel.

3.3 Deductions and conclusion:

It is obvious that the above does not pretend to deal with all that is said about the support of pastors within the biblical context. A lot more can be said like the fact that Jesus and his disciples had a kind of 'savings,' the 'treasurer' being Judas, and this was used to support their needs. We also know that there were women who where there caring for their needs. We also know that most preachers we not stationed in one church, however they were travelling around and being hosted by Christian families to care for their needs. There is also a clear argument that Paul was comfortable to receive support from other churches but he could not take support from other churches. The help came both from the churches but also from individuals. This help was not only organised for those who laboured in the gospel, but it was at times organised for those who were receiving the gospel. Therefore to claim to cover this vast evidence of information in this report will be proof to be dishonest to the biblical evidence.

Having said that, one cannot fail also to claim that there is concrete evidence already argued for, which can help the churches to think about the way pastors are supported within the FRCSA. Those can be summed in the following way:

- The decision for the support of the pastor should be done both by the church and the pastor involved in a way that a proper way of supporting him can be reached. This is important for the sake of the pastor's conscience; though it can be ideal that he lives free from worries, it is not ideal that he should live consumed by guilt.
- In designing this support the churches cannot avoid the situation and circumstances of the places where the pastor will be serving. The pastor should be willing to bear the sacrifices that are called by the preaching of the gospel. Where the gospel calls him to model its message he should be willing to do that even when it costs him to relinquish some of the material possessions he may gain.
- The churches should appreciate the fact that God has provided different means to make sure that the Gospel is preached. This means has served the church well in spreading the gospel, and we are called to think creatively also in our own situation.
- The one size fit all approach will not be ideal for the spread of the gospel. The ideal of equality be it in material things like housing and others or stipend is not something the churches should obliged to strive for. The church should also be a model that unity is not reached by making all people the same, but it is reached in knowing how to live as one in Christ though being different in our economic standing. In this situation Christ is working to purify us all, and to present a church that is perfect without blemish to Himself.

On the other hand one cannot deny that this subject has been given great thought by the churches in history. May be there are those who are more qualified to see how the church through history has tried to solve this puzzle. At the same time the above may in its limited view help to get the church to start thinking deeply

about the way the support of pastors is structured within our churches. If this level could be reached, then we have achieved one of our objectives. However one thing is clear and that is the bible calls us to a different form of equality, and this we should strive to achieve for the cause of the Gospel of Christ.

4 Proposed approaches to stabilise needy churches support from Deputies Art 11:

4.1 More contributions from members of needy churches. Although it is accepted that the needy churches are really needy, too little is collected from those that can give tithes. Art 11 will apply some weight on tithing by not accepting increases in support. This means that the increase in the ministers' stipend as well as inflation adjustments are for the congregations account, it has to come from the member's contribution. Only in extreme cases will exceptions be made. It will result that we will have to request less from sister churches abroad and that we can show that congregations are growing to become less dependant regarding finances.

4.2 Relook what it means to take proper care for your minister.

a. What is meant with "a calling to the ministry"? – What is the minimum support before a minister can accept a call to a congregation? How will the Lord provide a ministers support? There are no clear answers in terms of the above questions, but the responsibility is clearly on the congregation to support the called pastor to a level where the minister can function in his call. Although we know the structure in the church federation called Art 11 (deputies needy churches), they can only assist a church council in the support of the minister. Secondly, one has to accept that this structure has limits in the amount that they can assist needy church councils.

As stated previously, the churches cannot avoid the situation and circumstances of the places where the pastor will be serving. The pastor should be willing to bear the sacrifices that are called by the preaching of the gospel. Where the gospel calls him to model its message he should be willing to do that even when it costs him to relinquish some of the material possessions he may gain.. In extreme cases it could mean that a called minister has to go over to a tent-maker position or to find a part-time job.

b. Should we strive for equality in terms of minister's support within the FRCSA? Based on biblical principles one cannot argument for equality in ministers support within a church federation (refer 3.3). On the other hand we need to realise that we are all sinners and huge differences in material things can lead to dissatisfaction. Therefore the more affluent congregations need also to guard against widening the gap in ministers support between their minister support and those of poorer congregations. The reformed value of using the material possessions soberly is still very applicable and can avoid discontent.

4.3 Support limits: only for non basic stipend elements.

From the guideline that a minister should not earn (far) above the average of the congregation, one can deduct that their food and clothing should be similar to that of the congregation they live in. However internet access is maybe not seen as a basic need by the congregation he serves and it would therefore be difficult to try and motivate members to contribute to their minister's internet usage of a couple of hundred rand a month. By means of these examples, it is clear that the definition of basic needs and the value thereof will differ from area to area based on the average income of that area (community).

The proposal is that Art 11 will only support the non basic stipend elements. We realise that it is debatable what are non- and what are basic stipend elements. It could differ from congregation to congregation. It could be that in a very poor area with high unemployment medical aid schemes are seen as a luxury. But in a congregation where the majority are employed with tertiary qualification, a medical scheme is seen as a basic necessity.

Annex B shows an example in a table format of possible non basic and basic elements of a stipend. In applying the principle that the basic elements should be carried by the church, it is imperative that the non basic and basic elements should be discussed with the needy church. In accepting this proposal, it means however that the congregation should at least contribute 50% to the minister's stipend. Deputies realise that one cannot implement this with immediate effect to the existing needy churches but that one should work towards this model. Of course the end objective is to be financial independent from art 11.

4.4 Institution of new self-governing churches.

The proposal is that institution of new self-governing churches is dependant on a certain level of financial accountability and ability. To neglect this as a precondition will only shift the burden to care for the congregations' minister to art 11. But what is meant by financial accountability and responsibility?

- The new congregation is financial accountable i.e. processes to control finances and expenses, processes to budget and report. If the skills are not in house the skills can be obtained by requesting a third party to assist.
- Financial ability to support minister's basic needs (Food, housing and clothing) the financial prospective to support a minister are in place and can be maintained by the congregation.
- The knowledge to determine what the congregation can contribute and to request this level from the congregation. This includes the ability to communicate the tithing commandment to church members as well as to discipline members if there is unwillingness.

5.0 Composition of deputy.

Who should function in the deputy? In the past a number of ministers have served in the deputy. Although they functioned well and fulfilled their responsibility, there is one element where it is difficult to function completely objective or perceived to be objective i.e. deciding if a needy church ministers stipend is sufficient. Based on the economic differences we have in the federation, deputies' art 11 proposes not to appoint ministers to this deputy anymore. Secondly, one does not a theology qualification to function in this deputy; therefore normal church member can function well and more objective than ministers.

Rev van Alten and Br van Dyk have resigned during the past year. Their input and work is been appreciated. At present Br Marius Bijker, Rev Jerry Mhlanga, and Br Harry Pouwels serve in the deputy. Rev Mhlanga has requested to be released as deputy.

6.0 Synod approves the following based on the explanations above:

1. FRCSA contribution towards art 11 increases from R200 per member per year in 2011 to R250 in 2012 and the years thereafter.
2. Approve the allocation of the former disenchanted fund of R110 000 (R128 000 with interest) to support the purchase of a manse in Bethal
3. Institution of churches is dependant on a certain level of financial accountability and the ability in supporting their minister's basic needs.
4. Church councils should determine the stipend of their minister according to their own circumstances.
5. Art 11 will not search for additional assistance abroad but will maintain current support structures in Canada and Australia.
6. Options (like part-time jobs or tent maker ministries) should be considered by church councils if support from art 11 is not sufficient.
7. Ministers will not be appointed for (perceived) objectiveness.
8. Appoint one additional member to the deputy to replace Rev Mhlanga

The deputies pray that our Lord may bless the synod with his Spirit so that all decisions may be to the glory of His Name.

The deputies
Br Marius Bijker
Rev Jerry Mhlanga
Br Harry Pouwels
5 May 2011

Appendices:

Annex: A

SEMINAR Needy Churches FRCSA – SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

During May 2008 the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa mandated the Deputies for Article 11 to organize a national seminar entitled **Sustainable Financial Support**. The main reason for this mandate was the increased demand by needy churches for financial assistance, in a bond of churches that has very limited resources.

This seminar materialised on the 6th and 7th of February 2009. During the seminar delegates were informed about economic trends, listened to related topics and participated in in-depth workshops. The outcome of this seminar was the formulation of a set of advices, which, if implemented, could provide a sustainable financial solution to maximize our valuable resources.

The following advice / action points are based on four different workshops that were held during the seminar: *(short feedback in Italic)*

1. Establish contacts with foreign churches for funding – *Australia and Canada*
2. Prepare proper overview of the situation in South Africa - *Brochure*
3. Give detailed statistics: tithing, collections, members – *Not available – detail not available by consistories.*
4. Send a person overseas with proper itinerary and plan – *Not require after point 1*
5. Get consent from Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad - *Done*
6. Personalise the link between the donor and the recipient. – *Proposed to Canada no response, Australia and Bethal works.*
7. Establish contacts with ICRC in this regard – *No support fund.*
8. Communicate clearly that art. 11 is the orderly channel for needy churches – *Done at yearly visits.*
9. Align mission strategies with Art. 11-strategies – *see synod report 2011*
10. Clarify whether our 'no' on church as a business is a practical 'no' or a principle 'no' – *consensus that churches should not run businesses.*
11. Is Art. 11 only responsible to support churches who cannot support minister **or** also for other church expenses? – *Only to assist congregation in assisting support for minister.*
12. Define needy church – *done see point 11.*
13. Establish contacts between Art. 11 and the visitors from classis. *Done*
14. Draw up a guideline of how to evaluate a request for support – classify neediness and evaluate make-up of stipend. *Partly done- see flow chart. See further Report synod 2011.*
15. Request statistics/info from the entire federation within 90 days of date of letter. *Done no response.*
16. All churches are equally accountable – for needy and non-contributors. *Financial accountability should be a prerequisite for institution.*
17. Should Art. 11 be accountable to classis and/or synod? *Synod*
18. Recommendations to church councils for sharing manpower / ministers between churches. – *Statement for all FRC consistories*

19. Create awareness that a church can be church without a minister– *Statement for all FRC consistories*
20. To be financially responsible = to only call a minister when funds are available or allocations have been made by Art. 11. See *Synod report 2011*.

Conclusion:

A very fruitful seminar with actions to work towards: “achieving a sustainable financial platform for the future”.

Annex B

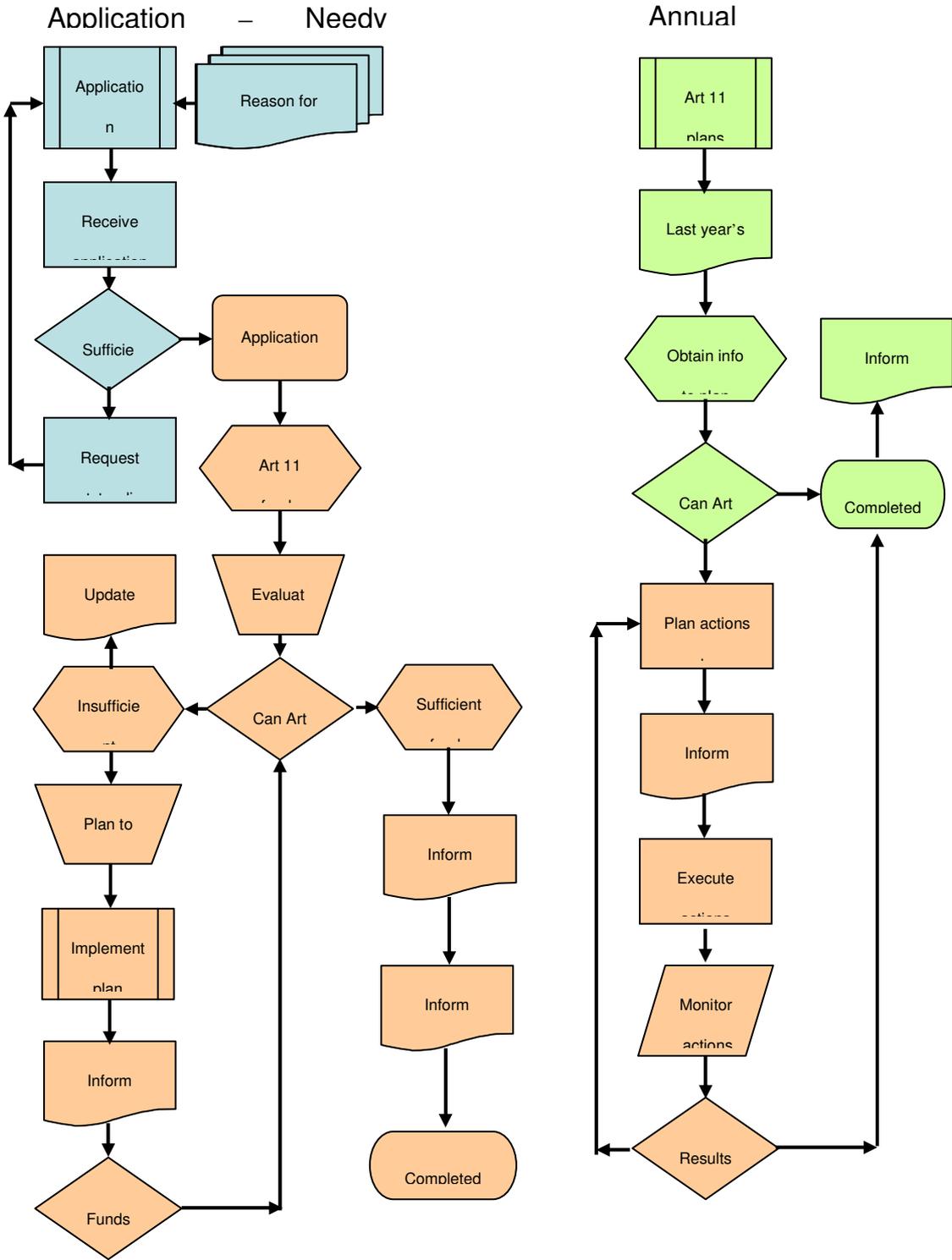
Example of Basic and non-basic elements of a ministers stipend.

The following building block are used as example:

	Non-basic
	Basic
1 Basic stipend to cover fair costs of living for the pastor and his wife.	
Food,	Congregation
Clothing etc	Congregation
2 Monthly child allowance up to a maximum age	
Clothing,	Congregation
Food, etc.	Congregation
Education i.e. fees for a 'Christian school', University	Congregation & Art 11
3 Medical fees	
Hospital plan	Congregation & Art 11
Medical expenses	Congregation & Art 11
4 Transport	
For the execution of ministers calling.	Congregation
For the family	Congregation & Art 11
5 Accommodation:	
A house to live in (maintenance).	Congregation
Electricity	Congregation
Municipal fees	Congregation
6 Allowances:	
To keep the garden clean and neat.	Congregation
To buy theological books.	Congregation & Art 11
Refreshments for visitors.	Congregation & Art 11
7 Communication costs	
Telephone	Congregation
Cell phone	Congregation
E-mail	Congregation & Art 11
8 Insurance premiums	
Death,	Congregation & Art 11
Disability	Congregation & Art 11
Pension.	Congregation & Art 11
9 Tithes to be paid.	Congregation
10 Taxes	Congregation

Annex C

Flow diagrams for Deputy Needy Churches



Annex D: Brochure to Canada and Australia

Basic overview of Cash flow 2009 - Deputies Art II			
	2009	2010	2011
Saldo / Opening balance	R175 148	R457 816	R357 536
Income			
Mission Deputies	R 150 000	R 155 000	R 60 000
Churches Contributions	R 239 000	R 239 000	R 239 000
Donations	R 299 440		
Request to Canada - support		R 300 000	R 330 000
Request to Australia - support		R 184 000	R 202 400
Jan Hulser Fund (FRC CapeTown)		R 100 000	R 100 000
Interest	R 18 000	R 12 000	R 8 000
Total	R 706 440	R 990 000	R 939 400
Expenditure	2009	2010	2011
Pension Jhb	R 120 840	R 142 924	R 157 216
Soshanguve North FRC	R 93 001	R 171 756	R 170 000
Mamelodi FRC	R 126 031	R 150 000	R 135 000
Belhar FRC ²	R 23 900	R 297 600	R 297 600
Johannesburg	R 60 000	R 144 000	R 158 000
Bethal	R 0	R 184 000	R 202 400
Total	R 423 772	R 1 090 280	R 1 120 216
Shortfall/Surplus	R 457 816	R 357 536	R 176 720
Income for projects			
Manse - Bethal			
Australia	R 253 418		
SA Disenchanted Fund		R 110 000	
Total (accumulated)	R 253 418	R 363 418	R 363 418

Request

Can you help us in South Africa? We, as deputies needy churches, are more than willing to supply more information if needed. Our questor Br Ernst van Vondel (evvondel@powergrp.co.za) is responsible for the financial side and our chairperson Harry Pouwels (wilmap@lantic.net) are more than willing to supply more information

Trust

History has it that the Lord always provides sufficiently. And although this may be a request that you cannot adhere to, we ask you to pray for the churches in South Africa. As we read in Proverbs 3:5 and 6, if we fully trust in the Lord and not on our own understandings, if we acknowledge Him, He will make our paths straight. Our prayers are that the church in this world be provided with the necessary financial means so that the Word of Salvation can be spread to those outside. We pray for you in Australia and Canada that the Lord may also provide in your needs.

On behalf of the deputy needy churches - Dec 2009



Synopsis

Our Lord has planted churches in South Africa through the emigrants that came from Europe. The federation of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) is small and counts eight churches, of which three came as a result of the mission work. These three churches are situated in the less affluent areas and are not self-sufficient in supporting their ministers. Of the other five churches, another two are also relying on support via 'deputies needy churches'. This has the result that the federation is not able to support the needy churches from funds within South Africa. The shortfall will be more than R500 000 for the next two years.

Background

As from 1652 reformed church members from Holland emigrated to the southern tip of Africa. The churches, especially where Dutch and later Afrikaans was spoken, adhered to the reformed doctrine. But after it became the state church, politics and other influences resulted that it became a traditional church for the Afrikaner, called the "NG kerk" or "Dutch Reformed church" (DRC).

The "Gereformeerde Kerk" - also called the "Doppers" - or in English the "Reformed Church of SA" (RCSA) was instituted 150 years ago when they broke away from the DRC over doctrinal issues. The RCSA kept correspondence with the Dutch Reformed Churches in the Netherlands,

also after the Synod of 1944, from which the Reformed Churches (liberated) originated.

The reformed emigrants that settled in South Africa after World War II had to make a choice to either join the RCSA (who still kept correspondence with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) or to institute a Free Reformed Church. After the RCSA neglected a call to break up the relation with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, the first Free Reformed Church in South Africa was instituted in 1950.

Although the RCSA broke their correspondence ties with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in 1976, no unity could be reached between the RCSA (± 120 churches) and the small FRCSA (8 churches), mainly due to the issues of life and discipline.

Mission

Since the 1960's members of the FRCSA started mission work under the black population. Sent by Drachten in the Netherlands, rev. Agema was the first missionary in SA starting in Mamelodi in 1964. In 1991 the mission work was taken over by the churches in South Africa with three missionaries. In the year 2000 we had five missionaries. April 2009 we have six, and Lord willing at the end of 2009 we can have nine missionaries (of which five are black) each with his own mission point from where, over time, a church can be instituted. Up to this time three

churches have been instituted as a result of the mission work and a fourth congregation is likely to get instituted in 2011. Although the FRCSA contribute substantially, the majority of the money comes from our supporting churches in the Netherlands.

Should we not reduce the mission efforts in South Africa since we cannot support the new instituted churches?

Financial situation of young instituted churches

Due to the cultural differences (African beliefs), but also due to the political philosophies governments adopted and implemented in South Africa (colonialism and apartheid), the black people of South Africa have had less exposure to education, skills and business opportunities. As a result of the above, the average member in the black churches have lower skill levels, less education and therefore a lower income than the average white church member.

Although the political situation changed in 1994, it is a fact that it will take more than one generation to get the skill levels up to the average of the more blessed church members of the older churches in SA. Another trend is that those who have been uplifted and are getting better income, often move to more affluent areas and leave the church.

The above-mentioned trends have a direct impact on the black congregations of the FRCSA which are located in the poorer black areas. Poverty, unemployment and low wages have the result that the churches are relying on support from the federation to support their ministers. One can assume that Christianity based on the reformed doctrine will result in church members to do their work to the glory of our Creator and

that He will bless them in terms of income. Over the last five years there has been growth in the income levels but unfortunately also a decline in the membership of the recent instituted churches.

Two of the needy congregations' own contributions have increased from 8% to ± 25% of their full annual budget. It is therefore reality that it will take years and could take even generations before they can fully support their own minister. Therefore the FRCSA has to be realistic and plan to help our brothers and sisters in these congregations for the next 10 or even 20 years.

Income levels in South Africa

Income levels differ vastly in South Africa. Area, educational levels and age are factors but the main factor is that there is an oversupply of unskilled/semiskilled labour which results that low wages are paid for this type of work.

Income per person per month	SA Province	
	Gauteng	Western Cape
Average	R 21 000	R 18 000
Aus.\$	\$3 281	\$2 813
Can.\$	\$2 800	\$2 400
Low (25%)	R 2 000	R 1 800
Aus.\$	\$313	\$281
Can.\$	\$267	\$240
High (75%)	R 45 000	R 40 000
Aus.\$	\$7 031	\$6 250
Can.\$	\$6 000	\$5 333

Based on 2005 Unisa report. - Figures are adjusted to 2008

Social up-liftment responsibility

Over and above the financial support, a number of initiatives are being run by the more blessed FRC members in order to help our black

brothers and sisters. This has been going on for years with the support of donors from within South Africa, but also from overseas. Some of the initiatives are:

- Transferring of financial skills
- Church administrative support
- Support for reformed schooling
- AIDS patients support and awareness
- Thusano fund supporting ±40 students in obtaining skills and tertiary education

The aim is to teach our brothers and sisters skills and knowledge in order to obtain better jobs with a higher income to be able to support their families and to be responsible in their tithing to the church.

Financial situation of the older FR churches in SA

The average income of members of the three older and bigger churches is above the South African average income. However, it is still lower than the average income of the Netherlands. Due to the fact that we run two reformed schools which are only subsidized for ±10% by the state, as well as other synodical obligations like mission, needy students, needy churches and theological training, we can candidly state that the majority of church members have reached a ceiling in tithing and donating for church related initiatives.

Overview of FR churches in SA

Church	Instituted	Members	Comm.	Baptised	Self-support
1 Pretoria	1950	434	293	141	Yes
2 Belville	1952	409	262	147	Yes
3 Johannesburg	1957	100	70	30	Mainly
4 Bethal	1996	55	37	18	No
5 Pretoria-Maranata	1997	332	202	130	Yes
6 Mamelodi	2002	168	115	53	No
7 Soshanguve North	2003	182	114	68	No
8 Belhar	2008	103	63	40	No

Support

Over the past years, deputies/needy churches (but also the mission deputies) have received donations from a number of churches in Australia and Canada. This has really helped art. 11 to plug some holes in our budget and enabled us to support the young instituted churches.

With the institution of Belhar (Nov 2008), and with the Mission Deputies of SA (MDSA) that are reducing the support with the agreement of the Dutch sponsors, we are now facing a new challenge in providing for the ministers. As can be seen from the budget below, the need is increasing from R423 000 per year to R1 100 000 in two years from now. We took the liberty to put an amount on the budget from our overseas corresponding churches i.e. Australia for R184 000 (Aus \$30 000) which is in essence what Bethal requires and an amount of R300 000 (Can \$42 000) for Canada which is the amount received in form of donations from Canada for 2009. The ideal situation would be if a church or a group of churches could adopt a young instituted church and are able and willing to assist in the finances required to support their minister for the next few years. For control and equality between the different needy churches it is advisable that these funds are channeled via deputies needy churches.

Appendix 8: Report Deputies for the correspondence with the Government

REPORT OF DEPUTIES FOR CORRESPONDENCE WITH GOVERNMENT.

1. The deputation appointed by the synod of 2008 is as follows:

Br J.A. Smit (Convener)
Br W. Spies
Br G.R. Stolper

Substitute: br. G. Hagg,

The deputation executes its task with the primi members.

2. Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. In matters pertaining to the interest of the country, in happiness or in sorrow, depending on the circumstances, to condole with or congratulate the government;
2. To react appropriately on government measures that compromises the protection of the preaching of the gospel;
3. To testify to government in cases where the government transgresses the universal law of God and to reflect on the specific nature and function of this mandate to the next synod;
4. To receive requests from government and to make such requests known to the churches;
5. To investigate the possibility to cooperate with other reformed churches as regards Parliamentary desk (PD);
6. To determine the advantages and disadvantages of this PD, the required manpower and possible costs;
7. To make use of the PD if the deputies conclude that it is possible and responsible;
8. To communicate the gathered information from this PD to the churches and encourage and advice them on the most appropriate actions to take;
9. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

3. Meetings.

The following meetings were held:-

- Official deputy meetings.
- Deputy meeting with the Parliamentary Desk (PD). (Telephone conference.) PD office is situated in Cape Town.
- Deputy meeting with the deputies for the Government from the Reformed Churches of South Africa.
- Deputy meeting with committee members from individual Free Reformed Churches who were appointed by their church councils on request.

4. Report on activities.

1. *In matters pertaining to the interest of the country, in happiness or in sorrow, depending on the circumstances, to condole with or congratulate the government;*

A felicitation letter was sent to President Zuma on his election and inauguration as president of the Republic of South Africa. (See annex A.)

2. *To react appropriately on government measures that compromises the protection of the preaching of the gospel;*

The deputies are grateful that the preaching of the gospel could take place without interference.

3. *To testify to government in cases where the government transgresses the universal law of God and to reflect on the specific nature and function of this mandate to the next synod;*

A letter was sent to the minister of health to express our concern on the effect of strikes on the health system. (See annex B)

Note:-

The deputies were of the opinion that this task “*To testify to government*” should also be the task of each congregation in our bond of churches. (See art 27 of the Church Order.)

4. *To receive requests from government and to make such requests known to the churches;*

No information or requests were received from government.

5. *To investigate the possibility to cooperate with other reformed churches as regards Parliamentary desk (PD);*

6. *To determine the advantages and disadvantages of this PD, the required manpower and possible costs;*

7. *To make use of the PD if the deputies conclude that it is possible and responsible;*

8. *To communicate the gathered information from this PD to the churches and encourage and advice them on the most appropriate actions to take;*

To react on activities 5-8 it is important to do so against the background from where it originated.

For many years the deputies wrote letters to government mentioning matters that needed attention. There was hardly any reaction from government which raised the question by deputies if this is the correct way to react. How can we improve on this?

To expect that our comments been taken seriously we have to react within the structures laid down by government. This country is governed by approved laws on various levels of government and to enforce the laws we have independent courts to assist us. This means that the government does not have a free hand to govern outside the law.

To carry out our God given instruction we have to concentrate on existing laws, new and revised laws and the application of the law. We can't expect the government to rule against their own laws. Therefore we need to address the applicable law to be revised.

When new laws are made or existing laws are revised there is a prescribed procedure that has to be adhered to which includes an open invitation to the public (us) to participate in this process. All comments that they receive before closing date will be taken into account. It is also possible that a second or third draft will be published for comments.

This is where the Parliamentary desk (PD) concentrates mainly on. This is not an easy task and requires skilled people (not only religious) in the addressed field. Therefore manpower from several religious churches are working together. This has the advantage that ample expertise is probably available but it has also the disadvantage of differences in religious background which can be unacceptable for us.

The PD is an initiative from the Dutch Reformed Church. Other churches are invited to participate. It is not an institution to become an official member of. Participation allows us to differ from opinion and present our own comments, independent from the PD, to the government. Due to the fact that we differ in principles when communicating with the SA government we as deputies are of the opinion, to restrain the PD of negotiating with the government on behalf of the FRCSA.

A meeting was also held with the deputies for the government from the Reformed Churches in South Africa. In our discussion it was clear that we have brothers in them who think alike and they have the same hesitation against the PD. Future co-operation with the deputies of the Reformed Churches in South Africa is advised.

To test ourselves in working together with the PD the PD invited us as deputies to participate in the revision of the law on "prostitution." This was a fruitful experience but unfortunately we were unable to react within the time limit. The documentation on a draft law could easily be a few hundred pages which needs attention before any comment could be made. It became clear that a few deputies with a full time job will hardly be able to fulfill this task.

To solve the manpower problem in general, deputy invited all church councils within the FRCSA to participate. According to art 27 of the Church Order each church should be involved with the government. Four of the churches thus far responded positive and appointed a commission. These commissions assist their congregation and report to their own church council. Simultaneously they can assist the deputies and expand the manpower available. It must be made clear that these commissions are not under the supervision of the deputies. The commissions are also free to respond directly to government on behalf of their own congregation. This could be useful especially on provincial level where different provincial parties are ruling. As the commissions were only elected recently the full effect, to stimulate and support each other, will only be possible to observe on a later stage.

5. Conclusions and recommendations.

- To comment on new and revised laws applicable to us, is a huge task and it is unknown if we as FRCSA will be able to comment on our own, even with the support of the individual committees from the churches. This must be investigated in future.
- To join forces with others (PD) is an option. To interact in a constructed manner it is still necessary for us to study all the documentation provided by government as well as the comments from the PD. If we differ from the PD comments we have to discuss this with them trying to get consensus on the matter. If not possible we still have to present our own comments. This is not a pro-active or the ideal situation keeping in mind that this has all to be done within a set time limit. To be pro-active we should start immediately after receiving the information from government, independent from the PD. After completing our comments we could compare it with the PD comments. The benefit of this pro-active approach is that views can be discussed during the study phase.
- Due to the fact that the PD has members from extreme denominations we could expect to differ from opinion from them on a more frequent base than, for instance, from the Reformed Churches of South Africa. Therefore it is advised to form a closer work relation with them than the PD.
- In the above comments we concentrated mainly on the approval of new and revised laws. Application of the law is as important as writing a law. To enforce this, when government is violating the law, a partnership with the PD can be effective. When all denominations stand together it will be a stronger appeal on government. On the other hand we also have to encourage our citizens (church members) to obey the laws. This could better be done by each church individually.

6. Instructions to new deputies

1. In matters pertaining to the interest of the country, in happiness or in sorrow, depending on the circumstances, to condole with or congratulate the government;
2. To react appropriately on government measures that compromises the protection of the preaching of the gospel;
3. To testify to government in cases where the government transgresses the universal law of God and to reflect on the specific nature and function of this mandate to the next synod;
4. To receive correspondence from government and to make such correspondence known to the churches;
5. To stimulate the congregations within the FRCSA for an active approach to government and investigate the possibility to react to the invitation from government on new and revised laws.
6. To stay in contact with the deputies of the Reformed Church of South Africa and the PD to investigate the most appropriate way of co-operation.

(J. Smit is not available as deputy again. Suggest G. Hagg.)
 May God grant you wisdom and bless the work of the synod.

J. Smit.
 W. Spies
 G. R. Stolper.

Annex A:-

Free Reformed Churches in South Africa. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.

PO Box 31141,
 Totiusdal, 0134.
 South Africa.



President Jacob Zuma

17th June 2009.

Private Bag X1000

Pretoria

0001

Most honorable President Zuma,

The Free Reformed Churches of South-Africa would like to forward you and your newly constituted government a hearty word of felicitation on your election and inauguration as our new president. In taking up this high position you have put yourself under the powerful hand of the Almighty God, to be used as his instrument and servant. It is therefore that you used the words "so help me God" at the end of your oath. This gesture, that you as government shares the desire with us to serve the Almighty in this our dear land, brings great comfort in our hearts. May you desire and pray for his great wisdom in the responsible tasks you undertake and may you pray for his enlightening insights in all matters of importance. In doing this we may then expect his blessings on our precious land.

As members of the Church and as citizens of our country we would like to submit ourselves to you as we are taught in Romans 13:1-2. "Let every man subject himself to the authorities put over him, for there is no authority but from God, and those who do exist only exist because God has instituted them, so that he who resists these powers resists the institution of God; and those who resist this will receive their judgment.

The Free Reformed Churches of South-Africa came to South-Africa in 1950 from the Netherlands. They have since expanded over the country. By God's grace we are active in missionary work under many different ethnic groups in our land, primarily Tswana and Cape Town. From this a few churches emanated of which a few have already grown to instituted churches. To be able to sustain this we enjoy the great support of our sister churches overseas. We are not only doing missionary work. A lot of our efforts also go into social support to those less fortunate, like the poor, those suffering from HIV Aids, education to pre primary and primary school learners, financial support for books, school funds, after school care, bursaries for students, etc. It is still our joy to be able to support this important work.

As churches we belong to the ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches), an organization that promotes the reformed faith internationally.

Dear mister President, may our beloved country prosper under your leadership because you bow low before his holy throne, the throne of grace, of our Lord and King, Jesus the Christ.

With great respect and loyalty to you as servant of the coming King.

Jaap Smit.

For the Free Reformed Churches of South-Africa.

Annex B:-

Free Reformed Churches in South Africa. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.

PO Box 31141,
Totiusdal, 0134.
South Africa.

The Minister of Health

Dr Aaron Motsoaledi

Private Bag X399

Pretoria.

0001.

8th December 2010

Esteemed and Honourable Minister

EFFECT OF STRIKES ON HEALTH



As federation of Christian churches of people in all social layers of our country, the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa have been concerned about the impacts of the recent strike of government employees, especially on the health care of the people of South Africa. If health care professionals go on strike, lives of people are at stake, while apparently some people have died as a result of the recent strike. We understand that it is also a concern of the government and yourselves when lives and the health of people are under threat during strikes.

As Christian churches we value the lives of people, since God gives life and we are responsible to maintain human life wherever and whenever possible. Also professional health workers are supposed to maintain their Hippocratic Oath, which requires them to maintain and promote human life under all circumstances. Every professional health worker promises: *To practice and prescribe to the best of my ability for the good of my patients, to try to avoid harming them and to keep the good of the patient as the highest priority.*

Whatever the grievances of professional health workers may be, either by their religious principles or by their oath or promise, they are therefore bound to promote the health of patients to the best of their ability. We understand that this is also the aim of the Department of Health and we would fully support this. However, personal gain sometimes regrettably negates this commitment to promote and protect human health and life at all times. In this case, the people of South Africa, through the Government, should protect themselves against selfish behaviour of professional health workers.

As Christian churches we would therefore encourage and support you in preventing strikes by professional health workers in the future, even by law. As it would be unacceptable for a country to allow the military and the police to strike since the primary aim of government is to maintain law and order, this should be extended to include the professional health sector. This would also lead to a more equal health justice in our country, since poor people are almost fully dependent on government health services, while the more wealthy people could afford to make use of private health care services which usually remains functioning during strikes of government employees.

As churches, we cannot provide you with detailed advice on how to formulate and implement a law to forbid strike actions by professional health workers, but be assured of our full support in your actions to achieve this, for the well-being of all people of our country, especially the poor.

On behalf of the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

Deputies for Contact with the Government

J Smit, Convenor.

Appendix 9: Report Deputies ad article 49 CO

Rev. P.G. Boon
Dunwoodie Ave 1201
Waverley, 0186
Pretoria
Tel: 012 332 1028 / 083 2642186
E-mail: pgboon@vgkmaranata.org.za

Pretoria, May 12th 2011

To: Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
To be convened in June 2011

Esteemed brothers in Christ,

Synod of Cape Town 2008 appointed rev. P.G. Boon and rev. K.T. Mogale as deputies according to art. 49 of the Church Order:

*“The synod, in addition, shall appoint deputies who are to assist the classes in all matters comprised in the Church Order, and – upon the request of the classes – in cases of special difficulties. They, or some of them, shall also oversee the peremptory examination of prospective ministers.
The deputies shall keep an accurate record of their work and submit a written report.
They shall, if so required, justify their actions.”*

The custom is that usually the *Deputies according to art. 49* who form part of Classis South, assist Classis North if there is a need, and vice versa.

Deputies can report that since the last synod (Cape Town 2008) there was only one instance where Classis South needed the help of *Deputies art. 49*. On October 18th 2008 the reexamination of theological student br. P. Abrahams took place in the church building of Belhar. Rev. P.G. Boon attended this meeting of Classis South, and he could testify that the examinations happened in a well ordered and constructive way, and that he was in agreement with the decision taken by the classis after the examination.

Wishing you God’s blessing and wisdom on your proceedings.

With brotherly greetings,
Rev. P.G. Boon

Report from Deputies article 49 from classis South

To: Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa 2011

C/o Free Reformed Church of Pretoria

Johannesburg, 12 May 2011

Esteemed brothers,

Synod Cape Town 2008 appointed Rev. E. Viljoen en Rev. C. Kleijn as deputies ad article 49 CO and Rev. J.A. Breytenbach as substitute from Classis South to assist Classis North where necessary according to the church order.

Deputies can report that they attended the meetings of Classis North on the following occasions:

7 November 2008 for the examination of student George Mnisi. Rev. J.A. Breytenbach was present.

December 12, 2008 for the examination of student Thabo Matlaela. Rev. J.A. Breytenbach and Rev. C. Kleijn were present.

June 5, 2009 in connection with the deposition of Rev. P. Nel from Pretoria. Rev. C. Kleijn and Rev. E. Viljoen were present.

June 27, 2009 for the examination of student Sam Matlhokoane. Rev C. Kleijn was present.

March 6, 2010 for the re-examination of student Sam Matlhokoane. Rev. J.A. Breytenbach and Rev. C. Kleijn were present. Rev. E. Viljoen served as examiner.

April 16, 2011 for the re-examination of student Sam Matlhokoane. Rev. J.A. Breytenbach and Rev. C. Kleijn were present.

During all those occasions the deputies could agree with the decisions made by the Classis and could attest that things were done in good order and in a responsible way according to our ecclesiastical standards and rules.

May the Lord guide and bless you in all your deliberations.

With brotherly greetings,

Rev. J.A. Breytenbach

Rev. C. Kleijn

Rev. E. Viljoen

Appendix 10: Report Deputies Curators



DEPUTIES CURATORS OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."

Psalm 119:105

REPORT OF THE DEPUTIES CURATORS OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR THE 36TH SYNOD, JUNE 2011

Contents:

Introduction

A. Decisions of Synod Cape Town 2008 icw Deputies Curators

B. Reports from Regional Coordinators

C. Finances

D. Reformed Theological Training Institute (RTTI) / Gereformeerde Teologiese Opleidings Inisiatief (GTOI)

E. Theological training in the coming years

F. Budget for 2012-2014

G. Appendices

Introduction

The synod of Cape Town 2008 appointed the following Curators:

Br. T. Bosker (secretary)

Rev. C.J. Kleijn

Rev. J. Mhlanga

Rev. K.T. Mogale

Rev. P. Nel (convener)

Br. A. Smit (treasurer)

Br. A. van der Lugt

Rev. E. Viljoen

Synod appointed as National Coordinator: Rev. J.A. Breytenbach

Synod appointed as Regional Coordinators: Rev. J.A. Breytenbach (Classis South), rev. P.G. Boon (Classis North)

Furthermore Synod appointed sr. G. de Wet as Administrative Assistant.

During the past years the following brothers left Deputies Curators: rev. P.Nel, br. T. Bosker.

Rev. K.T. Mogale requested to be relieved because of circumstances, for that reason he did not attend the meetings.

Also – to fill the vacancy of administrative assistant – Deputies appointed sr. T. van Alten.

Also rev. J.A. Breytenbach resigned as National Coordinator. Curators decided – after consulting with the regional coordinators – not to appoint a new national coordinator. The national coordinator’s duties were subdivided between the regional coordinators (*see appendix 1*).

Deputies met on the following dates:

24 July 2008 (in Pretoria)
4 March 2009 (in Pretoria)
22 October 2009 (in Pretoria)
18 & 25 March 2010 (telephonic meeting)
5 August 2010 (telephonic meeting)
4 November 2010 (telephonic meeting)
27 Januarie 2011 (telephonic meeting)

A. Decisions of Synod Cape Town 2008 icw Deputies Curators

Synod decides that Deputies appoint a National Coordinator (NC) on a loan base from the consistory involved until the next synod.

1. Synod decides to appoint Deputies Curators with the following mandate, which will be implemented and executed by the NC:

1.1 To complete and round of the statutes and the regulation for the MTS

1.2 To, by working with the module structuring and outcome of the Synod Cape Town 2006, facilitate, write and develop a training program for the churches. The following must be done:

1. Profiles, outcomes and learning goals have to be written in theological training format and context;
2. Instruments to evaluate academic standards of modules and institution have to be developed;
3. Internal assessing instruments to evaluate teaching as well as course content have to be described;
4. A system of evaluating students’ learning and reaching the outcomes has to be described;
5. A format for designing and writing study guides has to be described.

What happened: The activities towards the implementation of the Ministerial Training Structure (MTS) were cut short because of the resignation of the National Coordinator.

Moreover, in the light of the Reformed Theological Training Initiative (see below), Curators decided it wise not to continue at this stage with practical steps towards the implementation of the MTS.

1.3 To publish a prospectus concerning the theological training facilitated by the MTS for use by the churches, students, etc.

What happened: Due to the resignation of the National Coordinator as well as the focus on the Reformed Theological Training Initiative, a prospectus was not published.

1.4 To investigate and research possible bridging programs and preparation courses (short courses) for the route of applicants from grade 12 to BTh1.

What happened: the MTC has bridging programs between grade 12 and BTh1 that are well in place:

Certificate: a one year course for students who do not even have grade 12 / matric.

Diploma: a two year course for students who have grade 12, but not university exemption.

In Classis North students are making use of these bridging programs.

From experience Deputies Curators have to comment that bridging programs are not the answer to all students.

Some students can successfully complete the bridging programs, but that does not always guarantee that they will be successful when studying on the academic level of BTh. It is important to realise that not all students can enter the ministry by making use of bridging programs. In addition the Government does not allow bridging from certificate to a B-degree anymore.

1.5 To investigate and research the possibility of developing a postgraduate, multi-disciplinary and accredited diploma in Theology

What happened: In this regard the regional coordinators were involved in the process of the Reformed Theological Training Initiative (RTTI). See the Vision Document attached.

1.6 To visit institutions with reformed convictions to evaluate the suitability of their curricula for the training of the students of the churches

What happened: After a visit of prof RM Britz and rev Breytenbach to George Whitefield College (GWC) of the Church of England in South Africa (CESA) with whom discussions were held, the results were reported to the Deputies Curators. Deputies decided to make use of the program of GWC for the training of students in the Cape for the BTh degree. CESA originated in the nineteenth century when Bishop Colenso of the Anglican Church in Natal propagated liberal viewpoints of Bible criticism and members seceded from the Anglican Church. GWC is accredited with the University of North West in Potchefstroom. They also have their own program accredited by the National Qualification Authorities.

The advantage of the training with GWC is that CESA takes responsibility for the training and we can hold them to the agreement with them. Other advantages are that GWC is willing to have Symbolics, Church Polity and the Preaching of the Heidelberg Catechism (that are at the moment not part of their program) as elective modules of their program, lectured by lecturers from our bond of churches. An agreement had been formalized with GWC. See the Agreement between the Curators of the FRCSA and GWC (Appendix 3). See Report of Breytenbach and Britz attached concerning the evaluation of other Institutions and also suggestions. A detailed motivation for suggestions was not compiled with the NC's resignation as well as because of the new focus on the Reformed Theological Training Institute (See Appendix 4).

1.7 To make an agreement with Professor R.M. Britz, Director of Programs, Faculty of Theology, University of the Free State, to facilitate, initiate and assume the function for the technical standard of recommendations 1.2 to 1.6.

What happened: An agreement was made with prof Britz. See the Agreement attached (Appendix 5). Prof Britz is helping us with 1.2 regarding the modules that we will lecture at GWC. Because of the focus on the RTTI 1.3 was postponed. Regarding 1.4 Prof Britz evaluated with us the program of Potchefstroom and of MTC. A certificate gives no entrance to a degree program. Because of the focus on the RTTI 1.5 was postponed. Regarding 1.6 the instruction was executed. See the Report.

2. To instruct Deputies to establish a library and a place for storing, archiving and managing documents (study guides and lecturing material as well as confidential records and correspondence), providing material by editing work, printing and copying work for the programs of the MTS.

What happened: At this stage the Administrative Assistant, is keeping and maintaining the Archive. With regard to a library an agreement was made with rev. Jopie van der Linden and his Preacher's Library. A selection of the theological books that was stored at the church in Cape Town, has been brought to rev. Van der Linden's place.

3. To take note of the appointment of sr. G.I. de Wet as administrative person in accordance with the mandate of the Deputies.

What happened: After the resignation of sr. De Wet, sr. T. van Alten was appointed as Administrative Assistant.

4. To accept the draft budget and raise the contribution per member to R 110-00 per annum with an annual increase according to the inflation rate.

What happened: The following churches paid their quota for the years 2008, 2009, 2010: Bethal, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Pretoria-Maranata.

5. That in future an attempt will be made to refer to this deputyship as “Deputy Curators” or only as “Curators”.

What happened: Is being done.

6. To approve the job descriptions for the NC, Regional coordinators and Lecturers as formulated by Dr. Breytenbach and included in appendix B of Deputies’ report.

7. That Deputies do not only guide and take responsibility for the developing of the MTS, but also accept and retain their responsibility for the training of the present and future theological students.

What happened: See in this regard the reports of the Regional Coordinators below.

8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

B. Reports from Regional Coordinators

B.1 Regional Coordinator Classis North

The synod of Cape Town 2008 appointed rev. P.G. Boon as regional coordinator of Classis North.

Theological Students

George Mnisi

George completed BTh at MTC as well as the Plus program under responsibility of the Curators and constructed by rev. Boon. The Plus program was presented by several ministers from the federation as well as two lecturers from overseas.

On November 7th, 2008 George successfully completed his examination before Classis North. In 2009 he was called as a missionary by the FRC Pretoria-Maranata. He accepted this call. According to the policy of Classis North, a mentor was appointed to assist him during his first two years of ministry.

Thabo Matlaela

Thabo completed BTh at MTC as well as the Plus program under responsibility of the Curators and constructed by rev. Boon. The Plus program was presented by several ministers from the federation as well as two lecturers from overseas.

On December 12th, 2008 Thabo successfully completed his examination before Classis North. In 2009 he was called as a minister by the FRC Soshanguve-North (GG). He accepted this call. According to the policy of Classis North, a mentor was appointed to assist him during his first two years of ministry.

Sam Matlhokoane

Sam completed BTh at MTC as well as the Plus program under responsibility of the Curators and constructed by rev. Boon. The Plus program was presented by several ministers from the federation as well as two lecturers from overseas.

In 2010 Sam twice failed his examination before Classis North. By way of exception this Classis granted him 3rd change, scheduled for April 16th 2011.

Phineas Kgatle

Phineas completed BTh degree at MTC with a distinction. He also completed the Plus program under responsibility of the Curators and constructed by rev. Boon. Since he was the only student to follow the Plus Program in 2009, only part of this program was given to him in South Africa. For the other part rev. Boon arranged with the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton that Phineas could follow an adapted study program there. For the first half of 2010 Phineas studied in Canada. The feedback received was that it was a very valuable time for Phineas. Phineas is an academical strong student, and also in Canada he received rather good marks. The Seminary of our sister churches also appreciated having him there, and expressed the wish that in future more South African students should come and study the way it was arranged with Phineas – for about

half a year for the completion of their studies. The Seminary also contributed financially to a large extent to make Phineas' studies in Canada possible.

During the second half of 2010 Phineas still had to complete some practical duties on the mission field.

Furthermore he expressed the wish that during 2011 he wishes to save some money doing other work, in order to get married. Since there are no vacancies in the federation at the moment, we supported his wish. His plans are to apply for classis examination towards the end of 2011, or beginning of 2012.

John Mahlangu

John is member of the Free Reformed Mission Church Soshanguve-F4 / Nuwe Eersterus. After following the bridging courses of Certificate and Diploma at MTC, he then started with BTh. However it soon became clear that academically he would not make it. Then the Mission Board of Pretoria-Maranata offered to sponsor him for two years of adapted studies at MTC. The Mission Board is planning to use him in future as a special worker on the mission field. In 2011 he is busy with the second year of adapted studies.

From this it is clear that John is not studying under the responsibility of the Curators.

Bongani Ndhlovu

Bongani is member of the Free Reformed Mission Church Soshanguve CC. In 2010 Bongani completed his Diploma bridging course at MTC. In 2011 he is studying BTh 1. Curators appointed a mentor for him in the person of rev. T. de Boer.

Jacob Mnisi

Jacob Mnisi is member of the Free Reformed Church Soshanguve-North (GG). In 2010 he completed Diploma 1 at MTC. Since he received distinctions for most of his subjects, MTC allowed him to start in 2011 with BTh 1 (jumping Diploma 2). The Curators appointed a mentor for him in the person of rev. B.A. Matlaela.

Oscar Makobe

Oscar Makobe is member of the Free Reformed Mission Church Soshanguve-Southeast (XX). In 2010 he completed Diploma 1 at MTC. Since he received distinctions for all his subjects, MTC allowed him to start in 2011 with BTh 1 (jumping Diploma 2). The Curators appointed a mentor for him in the person of rev. P.G. Boon

Solomon Makwakwa

Solomon is member of the Free Reformed Mission Church Soshanguve-South (WW). Beginning of 2011 he applied with Curators to study theology. Curators gave the green light for one year, and will reconsider after having received his results at the end of 2011. In 2011 he is studying Diploma 1 at MTC. The Curators appointed a mentor for him in the person of rev. J. Mhlanga.

Ruard Stolper

Although Ruard is studying in Kampen, Netherlands, and is a member of the GKv Kampen-Zuid, he grew up in the FRC Pretoria. He visited South Africa in 2009 and was involved in some practicals on the mission field. In this period he made contact with Deputies Curators with regard to the planning of his future studies. In consultation with him Deputies appointed then a mentor for him in the person of rev. T. de Boer, both for the period he was in South Africa and for after his return to the Netherlands. It became clear however this mentorship was not functioning, so Curators terminated rev. De Boer's mentorship on the latter's request.

B. 2Regional Coordinator Classis South Theological Students

The synod of Cape Town 2008 appointed rev. J.A. Breytenbach as regional coordinator of Classis South.

In the time since the synod of Cape Town 2008, the brothers Carl van Wyk and Peter Abrahams completed their theological training in Belhar. They were trained by the ministers of the FRCSA as well as contracted guest lecturers of Reformed confession. Carl van Wyk successfully completed his examination by Classis South. He

accepted a call as missionary of the FRC of Cape Town to Wesbank. After re-examination Peter Abrahams received and accepted a call as minister to the FRC of Belhar. Christian Willemse is at the moment studying at GWC. He is busy with the third year of study. He is working hard and hopefully he will complete his BTh degree at the end of next year. After which he will do a Plus program.

C. Finances

Theological Training School of the VGKSA

Income and expenses incurred for the period 01.01.2008 to 31.12.2010

Balance Nedbank Interest Bearing Account 01.01.2008		R 137,274.19
Balance Nedbank Bank Cheque Account 01.01.2008		R 103,937.84
Income		R 510,969.54
Contributions Received from Churches	R 457,954.38	
Interest Received on Nedbank Fixed Deposit	R 53,015.16	
Expenses Incurred		R -283,755.60
Tuition fees Paid to lectures	R 15,300.00	
Secretarial fees	R 15,585.16	
Travelling costs	R 43,420.73	
Student Training costs Incurred Pta / Cpt	R 29,413.37	
Training books purchased Pta / Cpt	R 17,143.36	
Pasters seminar 2008	R 1,739.68	
Pasters seminar 2009	R 11,644.35	
Pasters Seminar 2010	R 7,754.03	
Mens Conferences 2009	R 3,459.85	
Mens Conferences 2010	R 5,083.27	
Overseas Study costs incurred	R 32,760.00	
National / Regional Coordinator's	R 100,000.00	
Bank Charges	R 451.80	
Balance		468425.97
Balance Nedbank Cheque Account 31.12.2010		R 1,919.56
Balance Nedbank Interest Bearing account 31.12.2010		R 466,506.41
Total Cash reserves Held with Nedbank		468425.97

Notes to the income and expenditure Statement

The last 3 years has seen a large volatility in terms of Interest rates and this can be seen in the interest we have earned on our creditor funds held with Nedbank. We made it a point to keep the balance

in the cheque account as low as possible in order to attract maximum interest on our investments

The churches did contribute as per the Sinod's decisions

Over the last three years we did had 2 secretaries consecutively namely Mrs G De Wet and Mrs Van Alten who were paid R50.00 per hour

Travelling costs of R43 420.73 was incurred which mostly consisted of flights being undertaken by the various lecturers between Cape Town and Johannesburg. Also to attend Theological training meetings as well as various meetings held with the GKSA. We have now for the 3rd time held meetings by telephone conference in order to reduce travelling costs

Student training costs includes visiting costs incurred by local / overseas lecturers such as D van den Hout, P P Kruger, Dr Brits, Prof Els, Prof P J van Rensburg, and Ds Anderson

Training books were purchased for the students to learn from.

Pastor seminars were held during 2008, 2009 and 2010 and costs were kept to a minimum

Office bearers / Mens conferences were held and costs incurred were kept to a minimum

Student Phineas Kgatle had the opportunity to visit Canada for further studies in Theological Training

We had an agreement with the VGK Cape Town for Ds Breytenbach to assist Theological Training as the National Co-Ordinator. For this service VGK Cape Town was reimbursed for the time that Ds Breytenbach put in with Theological Training

Ad Smit
Bookkeeper

D. Reformed Theological Training Institute (RTTI) / Gereformeerde Teologiese Opleidings Inisiatief (GTOI)

In November 2009 rev. H.H. van Alten was involved in a first meeting of brothers from the RCSA to investigate the possibility of starting a *Reformed Theological Training* in the Pretoria area. He informed the Curators about it, and the regional coordinators became involved. In 2010 there were a number of meetings resulting in a public conference which was held in November 2010. Important spear points of this initiatives are:

A Reformed Theological Training should be:

- based on the Word of God and the Forms of Unity
- based on sound Reformed hermeneutics
- local congregations should be the owners and should be intensively involved
- although SAQA accreditation should be in place, accreditation should in the first place be secured by the churches, in order to maintain a solid Reformed and high quality training standards
- the training should be free from state financing and interference
- it should be an in service training, necessitating close cooperation with the churches
- it should serve not only the training of pastors, but also of elders, deacons, missionaries, catechetes, Bible teachers, and other ministries in the churches
- the training should therefore have multiple entry and exit levels

Attached is the vision document of the RTTI ([see Appendix 2](#)). At this stage the Reformed Church of Rietvallei Pretoria is acting as the address of the RTTI.

Although the regional coordinators realise that there are still many hurdles in the process of the RTTI, they do experience a calling to be involved, especially in view of the following two principles driving this process:

- sound Biblical (= Reformed) hermeneutics
- the conviction that a Theological training should belong to the churches, and that there should not be state intervention.

As was mentioned earlier in this report, Curators decided to halt the practical implementation of the MTS, stating as reasons:

- the resignation of the national coordinator, and added to this the advice of regional coordinators not to appoint for the time being a new national coordinator
- the involvement in the RTTI.

E. Theological training in the coming years

The previous synods explicated the following routes for theological students in the federation:

- students from the older churches in the federation have to make use of theological institutions of sister churches abroad, in Kampen (Netherlands) and Hamilton (Canada).
- students from the mission churches and ex-mission churches in classis North have to make use of the Mukhanyo Theological College, followed by a Plus Program presented under the responsibility of Deputies Curators.
- students from the mission churches in classis South have to follow the Program for theological studies presented under the responsibility of the consistory of Cape Town.

As for future Theological training Deputies Curators suggest:

- Theological students from the older churches in the federation we recommend to make use of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton of the sister churches in Canada, after attaining their BA degree (with the languages Hebrew, Greek and preferably also Latin) at a university in their neighbourhood. As for the future Deputies Curators discourage students to make use any longer of the theological university in Kampen (Netherlands) for pre graduate studies. Experience during the last years has taught that it is difficult for South African students to adapt in Kampen, especially because of a different academic organisation of the Theological program of studies. In South Africa students are used to the Anglo Saxon system, comprising a BA degree of 3 years and a BTh degree of 3-4 years. The system in the Netherlands is different, and South African students with a BA degree are not credited for this in the Netherlands. Students are forced to study a couple of years longer, causing unnecessary duplication.

From the feedback we received it also became clear that the cultural adaptation in the Netherlands is a huge challenge for South African students. And last but not least, although Deputies Curators did not investigate the matter, they deduct from the report of *Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad* that there are serious concerns with regard to the allegiance of some Kampen lecturers to Scripture and confession, and that this situation is not addressed adequately by the churches.

- theological students from the mission churches and ex-mission churches in Classis North we recommend to make use of the Mukhanyo Theological College, followed with a Plus Program presented under the responsibility of Deputies Curators.

- theological students from the mission churches and ex-mission churches in Classis South we recommend to make use of the George Whitefield Theological College, followed with a Plus Program presented under the responsibility of Deputies Curators.

- As for the Plus Programs in both Classes to call on Deputies Curators to cooperate as much as possible with the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton.

- to officially participate in the *Reformed Theological Training Initiative (RTTI)*, initiated by the Reformed Church of Rietvallei, Pretoria. This participation should have the objective of working towards a single and local training institution suitable for all the theological students from the FRCSA.

- to mandate Deputies Curators to interact and cooperate with the local churches in the FRCSA in the process of the *Reformed Theological Training Initiative (RTTI)*.

- to mandate Deputies Curators to request the next convening church for an ad hoc synod, if need be, for the formal implementation of the *Reformed Theological Training Initiative*.

- to mandate Deputies Curators, would the RTTI not be implemented in the coming years, to look for alternative institutions for students from the older churches to study theology in South Africa, combined with a Plus Program under responsibility of Deputies Curators, and to report on their findings to the coming synod.

Deputies Curators also suggest the following for the proper continuation of their work:

Synod decides:

- to appoint as regional coordinator for classis North: rev. P.G. Boon
- to appoint as regional coordinator for classis South: rev. J.A. Breytenbach
- since there is no direct need at the moment, not to appoint at this stage a national coordinator
- to mandate Deputies Curators to appoint a national coordinator according to the rules laid down by the previous synod, would they deem it necessary, for a term that will last until the next synod.
- to approve the budget proposed by Deputies Curators and to set the contribution per member to R90.00 per annum with an annual increase according to the inflation rate.

F. Budget for 2012-2014

Item	Description	Amount (ZAR)
1	Administration, archiving	8,000.00
2	Administrative assistant	50,000.00
3	Lecturing costs for Plus Program	50,000.00
4	Conferences (office bearers / men)	25,000.00
5	Pastors Seminars	30,000.00
6	Expences for Regional Coordinators & National Coordinator (if appointed)	150,000.00
7	Costs Deputies Curators	30,000.00
	Total:	343,000.00
	Total expected income: ca. 1300members x R 90 x 3 years = R 351,000.00	

G. Appendices:

Appendix 1: Regarding the distribution of the tasks of the National Coordinator over the Regional Coordinators and Administrative Assistant

1. After ending my job as National Coordinator, I went on with different tasks regarding the work of NC. One of these is the reaching of an agreement with GWC. It looks possible to sign the agreement in the near future.
2. In agreement with rev Boon I make some suggestions to the chairman (rev Viljoen) on how the work of the MTS can go ahead until the next Synod. In short: rev Boon and me will share most of the tasks, while I suggests a more comprehensive job description for an administrative assistant who should do all archiving and filing.

Proposals for continuation of the work of the MTS, after the resignation of the National Coordinator, rev. Breytenbach

Points of departure:

- A. The Regional Coordinators (RC's) supply, in accordance with their task description, continuous supervision, guidance and maintenance on ground level to maintain the training in their region. They do this independently, but with co-operation of the Deputies and reporting to the Deputies. This can continue, even without a NC.
- B. The archiving, filing and data storage is a task that can be delegated to the administrative assistant, who could work independently, but with the guidance and help of the RC's, also reporting to the RC's and the Deputies.
- C. In the GKSA there is a growing initiative for an alternative theological training, next to Potchefstroom. This initiative is being driven within the boundaries of synod instructions. With the eye on cooperation and sustainability, the MTS should not only take note of this alternative training, but should participate in the conversations and planning with a serving attitude, and report to the Deputies. Both RC's should be part of this.
- D. An arrangement is suggested until the next synod. There is no immediate need to appoint a new NC. Most of the work can be done by the RC's together with the support of prof. Britz and an the Administrative Assistant.

Practical arrangements for the continuation of the work of the NC:

1. Rev. Breytenbach continues with his task as RC South.
2. Rev. Breytenbach focuses specifically on an agreement with George Whitefield College.
3. FRC Cape Town is asked by the Deputies for a room to be used to store the archive and lecturing material from the MTS.

4. Sr. Elsbeth vd Linden (or any other suitable person) must be appointed on contract basis as Administrative Assistant to do translations, grammar improvement, filing of documentation, course material, and to store it in the appointed room, as well as keeping up any correspondence. Rev. Breytenbach will assist where needed.
5. Letters from the MTS could be signed by any of the RC's (dependent on the issue) but with notification to the other RC and to the Deputies. All letters should be stored electronically as well as on hard copy in the archive.
6. Rev Breytenbach continues to receive the finished work from prof Britz according to their contract.
7. Rev Boon manages correspondence and matters regarding the library.
8. Revs. Boon and Breytenbach arrange reporting in the church bulletins, and this can be done alternately.
9. Revs. Boon and Breytenbach give their inputs in projects and institutions as often as possible, with an eye on cooperation with other Reformed people.
10. Revs. Boon and Breytenbach annually organises a joint seminar for all the students, two officebearers' conferences and the pastors' seminar.
11. Remaining tasks of the NC will, where possible, be distributed between the RC's

Hannes Breytenbach

26 January 2010

Appendix 2: Vision Document RTTI

**GEREFORMEERDE TEOLOGIESE OPLEIDING VIR
AFRIKA
'N KONINKRYKSVISIE EN
VERANTWOORDELIKHEID VIR ELKE PLAASLIKE
KERK**

**REFORMED THEOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR
AFRICA
A KINGDOM VISION AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR
EVERY LOCAL CHURCH
(A thetical reflection at the hand of Biblical,**

⁵ Vasstelling van kursusse, vlakke en kurrikula vind plaas met inagneming van die nodige vereistes vir kerklike sowel as wetlike akkreditasie van kursusse.

⁶ D.w.s. die hooftokus in terme van vlak (graad, diploma en/ of sertifikaat) asook rigting (bv. teologie, apologetiek ens.). Die veronderstelling is dat die kern van sodanige kursusse gestruktureer is om voorsiening te maak vir die nodige kerklike en (waar van toepassing) wetlike akkreditasie, terwyl voldoende buigbaarheid in fokus behou word deur middel van keusevakke.

¹ Determination of courses, levels and curricula takes into consideration the necessary requirements for ecclesiastic as well as legal accreditation of courses.

² That is, the main focus in terms of level (i.e. degree, diploma and / or certificate) as well as the direction (e.g. theology, apologetics etc.). The assumption is that the core of such courses will be structured to provide for the necessary ecclesiastical and (where appropriate) legal accreditation, whilst providing adequate flexibility in focus by means of electives.

**(’n Tetiese besinning aan die hand van enkele
Bybelse, kerkregtelike en praktiese riglyne)
Maart 2011**

1. Agtergrond

Die afgelope dekade het die aantal (nominale) Christene in Suid-Afrika afgeneem, van 79% in 2001 tot 73% in 2007. Daarenteen het die aanhangers van byvoorbeeld Afrika tradisionele godsdienste gestyg met byna 15%. Hierdie syfers staan nie net op papier nie, ook in kerke van gereformeerde oorsprong is duidelik te sien dat die lidmategetalle jaar na jaar besig is om te daal.

Behalwe vir die kwantitatiewe kant, behoort daar ook kommer te wees oor die kwaliteit van die geestelike lewe van gereformeerdes in Suid-Afrika. Daar is ’n wydverbreide tendens van ’n oppervlakkige geestelike lewe, onbetrokkenheid by die Sondagse eredienste en verdere kerklike aktiwiteite, asook ’n verwêreldliking op etiese gebied. Kan gereformeerdes se betrokkenheid in die samelewing nog as ’n soutende sout beskryf word? Of moet ons dalk erken dat hulle besig is om ten gronde te gaan weens ’n gebrek aan kennis? (Hosea 4:6) Verder is daar ook in Suid-Afrika die onmiskenbare tendens dat die gereformeerde teologie in toenemende mate in die vaarwaters van die liberalisme tereg kom, en van dit wat as polities en maatskaplik korrek beskou word.

Terselfdertyd groei die kerk in Afrika teen ’n fenomenale pas. Hierdie groei in getalle hou egter nie tred met ’n groei in kennis en diepte nie. Na raming is daar meer as 200 miljoen mense in Afrika wat deel vorm van kerke, waar die voorgangers geen of minimale Bybelkennis het. Daar is dus ’n geweldige behoefte aan alle vorme van teologiese en Bybelse opleiding by kerke regdeur Afrika. Christene in gevestigde gereformeerde kerke in Suid Afrika kan nie langer hulle oë vir hierdie nood sluit nie.

2. Doelwit (Waarheen?)

Die ideaal is dat *gereformeerde teologiese opleiding* sal bydra tot die toerusting en opleiding van alle (voornemende) toerusters in plaaslike kerke in Suid-Afrika en verder in Afrika, om hulle in staat te stel om hulle taak uit te voer en so die ware Bybelse geloof en lewe te bevorder.

In hierdie verband bestaan daar ’n dringende behoefte aan meer toeganklike formele teologiese opleiding in diens van die kerke om aan hulle lidmate kwaliteit

**church orderly and practical guidelines)
March 2011**

1. Background

During the past decade the number of (nominal) Christians in South Africa declined from 79% in 2001 to 73% in 2007. The support for traditional African religions however increased by almost 15%. These figures are not only confined to paper, membership numbers of Christian churches are visibly declining annually, also in churches of Reformed origin.

In addition to this decline in numbers, there is also a real concern about the decline in the quality of religious life amongst Reformed communities in South Africa. There is a drift towards a superficial spiritual life, neglect of Sunday worship services and other church activities, as well as secularisation in the area of ethics and morality. The question can be asked if the involvement of Reformed communities in society can still be described as being salt in the world. Or do we have to acknowledge that the Reformed community is withering because of a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6)? In South Africa an unmistakable trend can also be noticed: Reformed theology is succumbing to liberalism and whatever is viewed as politically and socially correct.

At the same time, the church in Africa is growing at a phenomenal rate. This growth in numbers is however not matched by a corresponding growth in knowledge and depth. It is estimated that more than 200 million people in Africa form part of churches where the leaders have no or only a minimal knowledge of the Bible. Thus there is an enormous need for all forms of theological and Biblical training throughout Africa. Christians in established Reformed churches in South Africa can no longer close their eyes to this need.

2. Goal (Where to?)

The ideal is that Reformed theological training shall contribute to the equipment and training of all (prospective) *’equippers’* in local churches in South Africa and further in Africa, in order to enable them to perform their own task and in so doing to promote a true Biblical faith and lifestyle.

In this regard there is an urgent need for more accessible formal theological training in service of

Bybelse opleiding te verskaf tot:

- predikante & sendelinge
- ouderlinge
- diakens
- kategete
- Bybelonderwysers
- verdere bedieninge in kerk en samelewing.

In die lig van Christus se sendingopdrag en die uitdaging aan die gereformeerde kerke in Afrika om duisende onopgeleide "kerkleiers" in Afrika met Bybelse (Gereformeerde) teologie te bedien, is dit noodsaaklik om 'n doelbewuste Koninkryksfokus en missionêre gerigtheid binne sodanige teologiese opleiding te handhaaf. Die missionêre taak van gereformeerde kerke moet dus ook gestalte vind in die teologiese opleiding wat hulle aan Afrika bied.

3. Visie (Wat?)

Die daarstelling van *vrye* en *hoë gehalte Bybelgetroue* - teologiese opleiding, met die oog op *toerusting* vir *alle vorms van dienswerk* in die kerke ter bevordering van die koninkryk van God in *Afrika*.

Begripsoms krywing:

Vrye:

- Die opleiding is vry van owerheids subsidie en inmenging. Die kerke se eienaarskap, aktiewe betrokkenheid, effektiewe toesig houing en reg tot inspraak ten opsigte van alle aspekte (o.a. instansies, dosente, inhoud en studente) van teologiese opleiding word gehandhaaf. Dit kan kortliks saamgevat word in die uitdrukking "*van die kerke, deur die kerke, vir die kerke.*"

Hoë Gehalte

- Daarstel van 'n breë, geïntegreerde teologiese basis by studente.
- Kerklike akkreditasie van die gereformeerde teologiese opleiding, insluitend die daarstel van uitkomste en

the churches that will provide quality Biblical training to their members towards:

- pastors and missionaries
- elders
- deacons
- catechetical teachers
- Bible teachers
- Other ministries in church and society

In the light of Christ's great commission and the challenges for the Reformed churches to equip thousands of untrained "church leaders" in Africa with Biblical (Reformed) theology, it is necessary for such theological training to be purposefully Kingdom focused and missionary orientated. The missionary task of Reformed churches must therefore also find expression in the theological training which they offer to Africa.

3. Vision (What?)

The establishment of *free* and *high quality Biblical* training, in order to *equip all forms of ministry* in the churches, *through the fraternal cooperation of local churches*, in the interest of the Kingdom of God in *Africa*.

Definition of Terminology:

Free:

- Theological training is free from government subsidies and interference. The ownership, active involvement, effective oversight and right of the churches to direct all aspects (including: institutions, content, faculty and students) of theological education are upheld. This can be summarized in the expression, "*from the churches, by the churches, for the churches.*"

High Quality:

- Providing students with a broad and integrated theological foundation.
- Accreditation of the Reformed theological training by the churches. This would include the setting of

standaarde deur die kerke.

- Ouditering en akkreditasie deur oorsese gereformeerde teologiese instansies word verder as ideaal gestel. Dit is 'n wyse om 'n onafhanklike evalueringmeganisme van opleidingstandaarde daar te stel en ook om deurlopend insette tot verryking van die opleiding te verseker.
- Owerheidsakkreditasie sal ook gesoek word, alhoewel dit nie voldoende is om die standaard te bepaal nie.

Bybelgetroue:

- Die fondament van die Woord van God, uitgelê volgens klassiek reformatoriese hermeneutiese beginsels (sien Bylae A), soos dit nagespreek word in die gereformeerde belydenisskrifte (Apostoliese Geloofsbelydenis, Geloofsbelydenis van Nicea, Geloofsbelydenis van Athanasius, Nederlandse Geloofsbelydenis, Heidelbergse Kategismus, Dordtse Leerreëls en die Westminster Belydenis).

Toerusting:

- Omvattend
 - Akademiese grondslag (insluitend grondtale en primêre bronne)
 - Geestelike karakter vorming
 - Praktiese en kontekstueel relevante in-diens opleiding
- In diens opleiding pas die norme van die Skrif toe in verskillende kontekste gefokus op die Koninkryk (Heidelbergse Kategismus Sondag 48)
- Missioneel
- Fokus beide op aanvanklike sowel as voortgesette opleiding

Alle vorms van dienswerk:

- Die fokus is op alle vorms van dienswerk binne plaaslike kerke.
- Dienswerk sluit in: predikante; sendelinge; ouderlinge; diakens; kategete; Bybelonderwysers; apologete en verdere

outcomes and standards by the churches.

- Auditing and accreditation by overseas Reformed theological institutions are seen as an ideal which can provide an independent evaluation mechanism for training standards, whilst also ensuring continuous input towards the enrichment of the training programs.
- Whereas government accreditation will also be sought, this in itself is not considered adequate for the setting of standards.

Biblical:

- The foundation of Scripture, expounded according to the classical Reformed hermeneutical principles (see Appendix A), as expressed in the Reformed creeds and confessions (Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, Belgic confession, Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession).

Equipping:

- Comprehensive
 - Academic foundation (including original languages and primary sources)
 - Spiritual character formation
- In service training applying the norms of Scripture to varied contexts in a Kingdom focused way (Heidelberg catechism, Lord's Day 48).
- Missional
- Focus both on initial as well as continued education

All forms of ministry:

- *The focus* is on all forms of ministry within local churches.
- Ministries includes: pastors; missionaries; elders; deacons; catechetical teachers; Bible teachers; apologists and other ministries in church and society.

bediening in kerk en samelewing.

- Opleidingsprioriteite word deur plaaslike kerke bepaal na gelang van hulle besondere behoeftes.
- Opleiding word ter ondersteuning van plaaslike kerke se behoeftes op verskillende akademiese vlakke aangebied (d.w.s. sertifikaat, diploma, voorgraadse - en nagraadse vlakke).
- Voorsiening word derhalwe gemaak vir soomloos geïntegreerde multi in- en uitreevlakke.

Afrika:

- Terwyl daar 'n groot en dringende behoefte is aan teologiese opleiding in eie kring in Suid-Afrika en omliggende buurlande, word sodanige opleiding ook gesien as 'n strategiese geleentheid om plaaslike kerke reg oor Afrika op 'n praktiese, realistiese en volhoubare wyse te ondersteun en toe te rus vir hulle eie dienswerk.
- Die vorm van teologiese opleiding moet dus sodanig wees dat dit ook op 'n relevante en bekostigbare wyse beskikbaar gestel kan word aan kerke regdeur Afrika.

Samewerking van plaaslike kerke

Hierdie samewerking moet die band van die Gees (Ef. 4:3-4) reflekteer wat kerke saambring en bind rondom 'n gemeenskaplike teologiese opleidingsinisiatief.

4. Kerkregtelike Vertrekpunte

Binne bogenoemde visie sal teologiese opleiding en opleidingsinstansies:

1. behoort aan die *deelnemende* plaaslike kerke;
2. vry wees van enige beïnvloeding deur die regering of ander eksterne belange;
3. op die basis van gereformeerde kerkregtelike beginsels, volledig onder die toesig, administrasie en beheer staan van

- Training priorities are determined by local churches based on their particular needs.
- In support of the needs of local churches, training is offered at different academic levels (i.e. certificate, diploma, undergraduate- and post graduate levels).
- Provision is therefore made for seamlessly integrated multi entry and exit levels.

Africa:

- Whilst there is a great and urgent need for theological training in South Africa and neighbouring countries, such training should also be seen as a strategic opportunity to support and equip local churches across Africa in a practical, realistic and sustainable manner for their own ministry.
- Theological training must therefore be provided in such a form that it could be made available in a relevant and affordable way to churches across Africa.

Cooperation of local churches

This cooperation is meant to express the bond of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3-4) which binds and brings churches together around a joint theological training initiative.

4. Points of Departure with regard to Reformed Church polity

Within the above vision, theological training and training institutions will:

1. belong to the *participating* local churches;
2. be free from any influence from government or other external interests;
3. function fully under the oversight, administration and control of the participating church councils, on the basis of sound Reformed church polity, and not under the control of a

die deelnemende kerkrade en nie 'n hiërargiese of kollegialistiese raad nie;

4. 'n raad van toesig hê wat aangestel word deur die plaaslike kerke en nie deur klassisse of sinodes van die onderskeie denominasies nie;
5. volledig deur hierdie plaaslike kerkegefinansier en onderhou word om sodanige onafhanklikheid op 'n volhoubare basis te vestig en te handhaaf;
6. in 'n broederlike verhouding tot soortgelyke opleidingsinstansies kan staan.

Verder:

7. Dosente en studente bly deurlopend onder toesig van 'n plaaslike kerkraad en so ver moontlik word studente ingeskakel by by die bediening van daardie gemeente (in diens opleiding).
8. Daar sal van deelnemende plaaslike kerke, opleidings instellings en dosente verwag word om aangehegte konfessionele en hermeneutiese basis formeel te onderskryf met sodanige tussenposes soos vereis deur die konstitusie van die betrokke opleidingsinstelling.

5. Strategiese Implementeringsraamwerk (hoe?)

5.1. Strategiese Oorwegings

1. Gegewe die behoefte aan missioneel gerigte opleiding vir alle vorms van dienswerk in die kerke in Afrika, blyk 'n tegnologie gesteunde afstandsonderrigprogram die mees voor die hand liggende afleweringmodel te wees. Sodanige model moet verder gesteun word deur gedentraliseerde 'afleweringpunte (plaaslike leergesentra) waar persoonlike kontakssessies tussen dosente en studente kan plaasvind. Die

hierarchical or collegiate board;

4. have a board of oversight appointed by the local churches and not by the major assemblies of their respective denomination;
5. be fully financed and supported by these local churches in order to establish and maintain such independence on a sustainable basis;
6. be able to stand in fraternal relationships with similar training institutions.

Further:

7. Teaching staff and students remain under the ongoing oversight of a local church council and as far as possible students are involved in the ministry of that congregation (in service training).
8. It will be expected from participating local churches, training institutions and teaching staff to formally subscribe to the attached confessional and hermeneutical basis at such intervals as required by the constitution of the particular training institution.

5. Strategic Implementation Framework (how?)

5.1. Strategic considerations

1. Given the need for missionally focused training for all forms of service in the churches in Africa, a technology supported distance learning program is viewed as the most appropriate delivery model. It should furthermore be supported by decentralised delivery points (local learning centres) where personal contact sessions between lecturers and students can take place. The challenge is to bring as far as possible the training to students in an affordable and accessible manner, rather than bringing students to the

uitdaging is om sover moontlik die opleiding op 'n bekostigbare en toeganklike wyse na studente te neem eerder as om studente na die opleiding te bring (tradisionele model).

2. Verder moet daar binne hierdie opleidingsmodel voorsiening gemaak word vir die aktiewe betrokkenheid van plaaslike kerke by sodanige opleiding (bv. voorsiening van geskikte dosente en fasiliteerders, toesighouding, finansiële, administratiewe en ander vorms van praktiese ondersteuning, ens). So word ook verseker dat plaaslike kerke en ampsdraers op hulle beurt opgebou en verryk word deur hierdie betrokkenheid.
3. Die finansiële haalbaarheid en volhoubaarheid van die gereformeerde teologiese opleidingsvisie bly 'n belangrike faktor in die keuse van die uiteindelijke opleidings- en organisatoriese model. Op die oog af blyk 'n gedentraliseerde afstandsonderrig model wat direk deur plaaslike kerke gesteun word, die mees bekostigbare en volhoubare benadering te wees.
4. Die sukses van sodanige gedentraliseerde onderrigmodel bly terselfdertyd ook afhanklik van een of meer sentrale kampusse waar die opleiding aanvanklik fisies aangebied en opgeneem word vir produksie van die afstandsonderrigmateriaal. Om hierdie rede moet die daarstelling en ondersteuning van sodanige kampusse prioriteit geniet. Vanweë praktiese oorwegings (beskikbaarheid van fondse, dosente, studente ens.) word dit voorsien dat hierdie kampusse waarskynlik in 'n stedelike konteks geleë sal wees.
5. Die ontwikkeling van afstandsonderrigkurse en aanvanklike aanbieding daarvan vir produksiedoeleinde by bogenoemde sentrale kampusse word gedoen deur geskikte opleidingsinstellings waarvan die betrokke kurse beide kerklik sowel as wetlik geakkrediteer is.
6. As voorwaarde vir kerklike akkreditasie,

training (traditional model).

2. Provision must also be made within this model for the active involvement of local churches in such training (e.g. provision of appropriate lecturers and facilitators, supervision, financial, administration and other forms of practical support). This will ensure that local churches, office bearers and believers are in turn also built up and enriched through their involvement.
3. The financial viability and sustainability of the Reformed theological training vision remains a determining factor in the choice of the final training model and structure. At face value, a decentralized distance learning model that is directly supported by local churches appears to be the most affordable and sustainable approach.
4. At the same time the success of a decentralized training model remains dependent on the existence of one or more central place of delivery where training is initially physically presented and recorded for production of the distance learning material. For this reason the establishment and support of such campuses must be a priority. Because of practical considerations (availability of funds, lecturers, students, etc.) it is envisaged that such places of delivery will most probably be located in urban settings.
5. The development of distance learning courses and initial presentation thereof for production purposes at the above central places of delivery will be done by appropriate training institutions whose courses are accredited both by the churches as well as the state.
6. As a precondition for accreditation by the churches, such institutions will be required to function within the framework of the hermeneutical (see Appendix A) and principles of church polity (see par. 4 above). This

word verwag dat sodanige opleidingsinstellings binne die raamwerk van die hermeneutiese beginsels (sien Bylae 1) en kerkregtelike vertrekpunte (sien par. 4 hierbo) sal funksioneer. Dit sluit 'n formele ooreenkoms in tussen die meewerkende plaaslike kerke, wat die mandaat gee vir sodanige opleidingsinstellings en wat hulleself verbind tot die ondersteuning daarvan.

5.2 Opleidingsmodel en Strukturele Verwantskappe

1. Gegewe bogenoemde doelwitte, visie, grondbeginsels en strategiese oorwegings, word die volgende opleidingsmodel as die mees haalbare en volhoubare ideaal gesien:

- a. Tegnologiegesteunde ontwikkeling, aanbieding en produksie van geïntegreerde, multivlak afstandsonderrig programme met die nodige kerklike en wetlike akkreditasie;
- b. wat deurplaaslike kerke aangebied en bestuur word (dws. op 'n gedesentraliseerde basis);
- c. en by plaaslike opleidingsentra deur die nodige dosent-student kontakssessies ondersteun word;
- d. in vennootskap met geskikte bestaande teologiese opleidingsinstellings.

Sien *Bylae B* vir 'n skematiese voorstelling van bogenoemde opleidingsmodel.

2. Om prakties struktuur aan hierdie model te gee, word die volgende oorwegings voorgedra:

- a. *Geografies nabygeleë plaaslike kerke* wat deelneem aan die *gedesentraliseerde aflewering* van teologiese opleiding via bogenoemde *afstandsonderrigprogram*, werk met mekaar saam met die oog op die *plaaslike aanbieding* van opleiding in hulle betrokke streek.
- b. Sodanige plaaslike samewerking en ondersteuning op streeksvlak kan ook

includes the establishment of a formal agreement between the cooperating churches, which provide the mandate to such training institution(s) and which commit themselves to the support thereof.

5.2. Training Model and Structural Relationships

1. Within the context of the above goals, vision, principles and strategic considerations, the following training model is seen as the most viable and sustainable ideal:

- a. Technologically supported development, presentation and production of integrated, multilevel distance learning programs with the necessary ecclesiastical and legal accreditation;
- b. that is presented and managed by local churches (i.e. on a decentralized basis);
- c. and supported at local training centres by the necessary lecturer-student contact sessions;
- d. in partnership with appropriate theological training institutions.

See *Appendix B* for a schematic presentation of the above training model.

2. In order to give practical structure to this model, the following considerations are put forward:

- a. *Geographically co-located churches* participating in the *decentralized delivery* of theological training via above *distance learning program* cooperate with the view of the local presentation of training in their particular region.
- b. Such local cooperation and support at regional level can also be expanded to include contact and correspondence with other churches in other geographical regions. In time such cooperation

verder uitgebrei word tot skakeling en korrespondensie met ander kerke in ander geografiese streke. Oor tyd kan sodanige skakeling lei tot die vorming van 'n gereformeerde teologiese opleidingsnetwerk tussen plaaslike kerke in verskillende streke.

- c. Plaaslike kerke behou hulle eie sfeer van inisiatief en kan self ook bydra tot die ontwikkeling en verspreiding van opleidingsmateriaal deur middel van die gereformeerde teologiese opleidingsnetwerk. Hierdeur word erkenning gegee aan die feit dat die Here sy kerk toerus met gawes op elke plaaslike vlak.
- d. Nie alleen sal geografies nabygeleë kerke mekaar dus bystaan en ondersteun in die aflewering van opleiding in hulle eie streek nie, maar sal hulle ook, deur middel van die teologiese opleidingsnetwerk, op 'n organiese wyse 'n bydrae lewer tot die gemeenskaplike ontwikkeling, toesighouding en verbetering van teologiese opleidingsprogramme en materiaal as geheel.
- e. Daar sal van plaaslike kerke wat wil meewerk binne hierdie teologiese opleidingsnetwerk verwag word om die belydenis, hermeneutiese en kerkregtelike beginsels te onderskryf soos in hierdie dokument verwoord.
- f. Ter wille van goeie orde, onderlinge diens en verryking, sowel as gemeenskaplike toesighouding in 'n broederlike gesindheid, sal ooreenkoms bereik moet word rondom die praktiese prosesse en werkswyses wat binne hierdie netwerk gevolg word vir die hersiening, bespreking en aanvaarding van opleidingsmateriaal deur deelnemende kerke. Samewerking moet reg laat geskied aan die Bybelse beginsel van die band van die Gees (Efe 4:3,4) wat vergestaltung vind in 'n ware geestelike band van gemeenskap tussen susterkerke.

In die lig van bogenoemde oorwegings kan die oorhoofse struktuur van die opleidingsmodel grafies

may lead to the development of a reformed theological training network between local churches across different regions.

- c. Local churches retain their own sphere of initiative and can themselves also contribute to the development and distribution of training material through the Reformed theological training network: this in recognition of the fact that the Lord endows his church with gifts at every local level.
- d. Geographically co-located churches will therefore not only assist and support each other in the delivery of training in their particular region, but they will, also, through the theological training network, contribute in an organic way to the mutual development, oversight and improvement of theological training programs and material as a whole.
- e. Local churches seeking to participate in this theological training network will be expected to subscribe to the confessional and hermeneutical principles as well as those regarding church polity as set out in this document.
- f. For the sake of good order, mutual service and enrichment, as well for the sake of mutual oversight in a brotherly spirit, agreement will have to be reached on the practical processes and ways of working within this network for the review, discussion and acceptance of training material by the participating churches.

In view of the above points, the proposed operational model would be represented by the structure shown in *Appendix C*.

- g. Within the framework of this structure, the aim is to stay away from central ownership or control over the delivery of theological training and over training

voorgestel word soos in *Bylae C*.

- g. Binne die raamwerk van hierdie struktuur word daar dus gestrewe om weg te bly van sentrale eienaarskap of beheer oor die aflewering van teologiese opleiding en opleidingsinstellings. Die uitgangspunt is om hierdeur die verantwoordelikheid van plaaslike kerke by teologiese opleiding te beklemtoon en hulle organiese betrokkenheid daarby te bevorder terwyl die gevare van 'n institusionele paradigma doelbewus vermy word.

5.3 Riglyne vir teologiese opleidings instansie(s).

Hierdie afdeling poog om enkele prinsipiële riglyne neer te lê vir teologiese opleidingsinstellings wat binne die raamwerk van bogenoemde visie, opleidingsmodel en oorhoofse struktuur wil funksioneer.

5.3.1 Organisatories

Om uiting te gee aan die beginsel dat teologiese opleiding (en dus ook die instellings wat spesifiek daarmee getaak is) vanuit die kerke moet kom, dat dit deur die kerke gedoen moet word en dat dit vir die kerke gedoen moet word, word die volgende organisatoriese benadering as die mees verantwoordbare voorgedra:

Plaaslike meewerkende kerke wys in oorleg met mekaar Kuratore en 'n Bestuursraad vir die betrokke opleidingsinstelling aan. Hierdie liggame is onderskeidelik verantwoordelik vir:

- i. Die vasstelling van *kursusse, vlakke van opleiding en meegaande inhoud (kurrikula)*⁵, asook die identifisering, aanstelling en toesighouding oor *Dosente korps (Senaat) Personeel* en die
- ii. Die rigting, bestuur en administrasie van die betrokke opleidings instelling(s).

Sien bylae D vir 'n grafiese voorstelling van sodanige struktuur en verdere omskrywing van die tipiese rolle en funksies van die onderskeie liggame.

institutions. The underpinning principle is to stress the responsibility and to promote the organic involvement of the local churches in theological training, whilst purposefully steering clear of the dangers associated with an institutional paradigm.

5.3. Guidelines for theological training institution(s)

This section aims to offer some basic guidelines for theological training institutions that seek to function within the framework of the vision, training model and overall structure presented above.

5.3.1. Organizational

In order to give practical form to the principle that theological training (and therefore also the institutions specifically tasked therewith) must come from the churches, must be performed by the churches and be done for the churches, the following is presented as the most justifiable organizational approach:

Local cooperating churches in consultation with each other appoint Curators and a Management Board for the particular training institution. These bodies respectively are responsible for:

- a. The establishment of *courses, levels of training and corresponding content (curricula)*¹, as well as the identification, appointment and oversight over *Lecturers (Faculty), Personnel and Students*.
- b. The direction, management and administration of the training institution.

See Appendix D for a graphical representation of such structure and further definition of the typical roles and function of the respective bodies.

5.3.2 Structural implications of fraternal cooperation

Theological training institutions established and supported by local churches cooperating together

5.3.2 Wat word verstaan onder 'fraternaal'?

Verder is teologiese opleidingsinstellings wat voortvloei vanuit en ondersteun word deur samewerkende plaaslike kerke :

- a. *Selfstandig*; in die sin dat dit geen vertakking of onderdeel van 'n groter (sambreel) organisasie is nie. Hierdie opleidingsinstellings verbind hulleself nie sodanig aan ander bestaande organisasies dat hulle daardeur hulle selfstandigheid inboet nie.
- b. *Verbonde*; in die sin dat noue bande gesoek en gehandhaaf word met opleidingsentra met dieselfde belydenis grondslag. Daar word sover moontlik op die basis van hulle konstitusie saamgewerk, en nie teen mekaar in gewerk nie.
- c. *ontvanklik vir samewerking*; in die sin dat, daar waar raakvlakke met teologiese opleiding bestaan (bv. Bybelkunde, aanleer van grondtale ens.), met vennote en instansies saamgewerk word wat op ander terreine op dieselfde kofessionele basis dieselfde doel nastreef.

5.3.3 Watter opleidingsprogramme word aangebied?

- a. Die hoofokus is op toeganklike multivlak teologiese opleiding wat op 'n indiens basis aangebied word met die oog op toerusting vir verskillende vorms van dienswerk in die kerke, soos hierbo uiteengesit
- b. Die spesifieke ankerprogramme (kursusse)⁶ wat by die onderskeie opleidingsentra aangebied word, word bepaal deur die prioriteite en behoeftes van die plaaslike kerke verantwoordelik vir die instansie.
- c. Hierdie kursusse dien terselfdertyd ook as basis vir die ontwikkeling van afstandonderrigprogramme wat tot beskikking van kerke in ander gebiede gestel word.
- d. Die taalmedium (insluitende akademiese taal) word bepaal deur

are furthermore:

- a. *Autonomous*; in the sense that they do not form a branch or part of a larger (umbrella) organisation. These training institutions do not commit themselves to other existing organizations in such a way that they will compromise their independence.
- b. *Connected*; in the sense that there are close ties with similar training centres with the same confessional basis. There is cooperation as far as possible on the basis of their constitutions without working against each other.
- c. *Open for cooperation*; theological education can cooperate with other non theological training institutions on the same confessional basis (eg Biblical Studies; learning of original languages – 'Literary Department').

5.3.3 Which programmes are being offered?

- a. The main focus is on the development of accessible, multi-level theological training, presented on an in-service basis, with the view of equipping different forms of service in the churches, as explained above
- b. Specific anchor programs (courses)² presented at the various training centre, are determined by the priorities and needs of the local churches responsible for the institution.
- c. At the same time these courses serve as basis for the development of distance learning programs that are made available to churches in other areas.
- d. The language medium (including academic language) is determined by the local churches responsible

die plaaslike kerke wat die
eindverantwoordelikheid dra in hulle
gebied.

for the training in their area.

BYLAE A: HERMENEUTIESE UITGANGSPUNT VIR DIE DAARSTELLING VAN SUIWER *GEREFORMEERDE* TEOLOGIESE OPLEIDING VIR AFRIKA

Gereformeerde teologiese opleiding staan voor die uitdaging om te voldoen aan die dringende behoefte aan toeganklike formele teologiese opleiding in diens van die kerke om aan hulle lidmate kwaliteit Bybelse opleiding te verskaf in onder andere die volgende bedieninge: predikante, sendelinge, ouderlinge, diakens, kategete, Bybelonderwysers en verdere bedieninge in kerk en samelewing. Die visie van vrye en hoë gehalte Bybelgetroue teologiese opleiding, in diens van die kerke in Suid- Afrika en Afrika word gesien as 'n praktiese en haalbare ideaal .

Onder *Bybelgetrou* word verstaan dat die opleiding gebaseer is op die Woord van God, soos dit nagespreek word in die Belydenisskrifte: *Apostoliese Geloofsbelydenis; Geloofsbelydenis van Nicea; Geloofsbelydenis van Athanasius; Nederlandse Geloofsbelydenis; Heidelbergse Kategismus; Dordtse Leerreëls; Westminster Belydenis*⁷

Die binding aan Woord en Belydenis is nie net 'n formele en tradisionele aangeleentheid nie, maar dit is 'n lewende binding wat koersbepalend is vir elke faset van die opleiding. Aangesien struktuur op sigself nie die regsinnigheid van opleiding kan waarborg nie, is dit noodsaaklik dat sodanige opleiding funksioneer op basis van Skriftuurlike hermeneutiese beginsels.

1. Hermeneutiek

in hierdie dokument word gepoog om enkele rigtinggewende hermeneutiese beginsels uit te lig met die erkenning dat dit slegs 'n bondige perspektief bied wat verdere aanvulling en verfyning mag vereis.

Die woord *hermeneuties* of *hermeneutiek* dui op die

⁷ Die *Westminster Belydenis / Westminster Confession* word gehandhaaf deur vele Presbiteriaanse kerke in die wêreld, en kan beskou word as die Engel-Saksiese weergawe van die Belydenisgeskrifte wat hulle ontstaan op die Europese vasteland gehad het (NGB, HK, DL). Verder word met instemming met die *Tweede Helvetiese Konfessie* ook vermeld

APPENDIX A: HERMENEUTICAL STANCE FOR THE REALISATION OF SOUND *REFORMED* THEOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR AFRICA

Reformed theological training faces the challenge to satisfy the demand for formal accessible theological training in service of the churches to offer members quality Biblical training in the following ministries: pastors, missionaries, elders, deacons, catechetical teachers, Bible teachers and other ministries in church and society. The vision of free and high quality Biblical theological training, in service of the churches in South-Africa and Africa is seen as a practical and achievable ideal.

With *Biblical* is meant a training that is founded on the Word of God, as it is professed in the following Creeds: *Apostolic Creed; Nicene Creed; Athanasian Creed; Belgic Confession; Heidelberg Catechism; Canons of Dordt; Westminster Confession*.¹

To be founded on Word and Confession is not merely a formal and traditional affair; it is a reality directing every facet of the training. Because structure in itself does not guarantee the soundness of training, such training should function on the basis of *Scriptural* hermeneutical principles.

1. Hermeneutics

This document aims to highlight some directional hermeneutical principles whilst acknowledging that it only offers a concise perspective that may require further amplification and refinement

The word *hermeneutics* denotes the way a text (like

¹ The *Westminster Confession* is upheld by many Presbyterian churches in the world, and can be viewed as the English version of the Creeds originating on the European continent (BC, HC, CoD). In addition the *Second Helvetic Confession* is also positively mentioned.

manier waarop 'n teks (soos die Bybel) uitgelê en toegepas word. Dit verwys na die benadering en algemene reëls wat as geldig aanvaar word vir die uitleg van die betekenis van 'n teks. Hulle behoort op samehangende wyse dit moontlik te maak om die verskillende gedeeltes van 'n teks te kan onderskei en peil, en elkeen te kan plaas binne sy onmiddellike konteks asook binne die groter konteks waar dit verskyn. So word dit vir die lesers moontlik om die teks te verstaan en dit op sinvolle wyse op hulleself te betrek.

2. Inspirasie en verligting van die Heilige Gees

Die Gereformeerde Belydenisgeskrifte lei gelowiges om die Bybel met die hoogste eerbied te gebruik, beseffende dat dit in sy geheel geïnspireer is deur die Heilige Gees om God se geopenbaarde Woord te wees vir mense van alle tye en plekke. Die Bybel is nie net 'n boek van lank gelede wat die godsdienstige ervarings van die volk Israel bevat, en waarvan dit nog maar die vraag is of dit navolgingswaardig is nie. Die Bybel bied 'n beskrywing van hoe die lewende God hom in die loop van die geskiedenis in besondere woorde en daede aan die mensdom geopenbaar het.

Hoewel nie elke hoofstuk in die Bybel eenvoudig is nie, is dit nie waar dat die Bybel so 'n ou en moeilike boek is dat dit slegs deur teoloë reg geïnterpreteer kan word nie. Die NGB bely die helderheid en doel van die Bybel as God se Woord soos volg: *“Ten tweede maak Hy [God] Hom deur sy heilige en Goddelike Woord nog duideliker en meer volkome aan ons bekend, en wel so veel as wat vir ons in hierdie lewe nodig is tot sy eer en tot die saligheid van hulle wat aan Hom behoort”* (art. 2). Dit word in art. 7 bevestig: *“Ons glo dat hierdie Heilige Skrif die wil van God volkome bevat en dat alles wat die mens vir sy saligheid moet glo, daarin voldoende geleer word (...)”*

Die Heilige Gees rig Hom in die Bybel tot die kerk van alle tye. Juis omdat God deur die Bybel Hom aan sy kinders wil openbaar, het Hy sy spreke in die Bybel so aangepas dat eenvoudige gelowiges die boodskap daarvan kan verstaan, soms nog helderder as geleerde teoloë. Die gelowige Bybelleser ontvang die verligting van die Heilige Gees, soos die Skrif dit op meerdere plekke aandui (1 Kor 2:12-14; Ef 1:17-21; Joh 14:15-17; 2 Kor 4:5-6). Dit word in die NGB (art. 5) soos volg opgesom: *“Ons glo ook sonder twyfel alles wat daarin vervat is, nie juis omdat die kerk hulle aanvaar en as sodanig beskou nie, maar veral omdat die Heilige Gees in ons hart getuig dat hulle van God is.”* En in art. 24: *“Ons glo dat hierdie ware geloof in die*

the Bible) is explained and applied. It refers to the approach and general rules being accepted as valid for the explanation of the meaning of a text. They ought to make it together possible to discern and understand different sections of a text, and give each a place within its immediate context as well as the larger context in which it appears. In such a way it becomes possible for the readers to understand the text and apply it to themselves in a meaningful way.

2. Inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit

The Reformed Forms of Unity lead believers in treating the Bible with the utmost respect, realizing that it is inspired entirely by the Holy Spirit to be God's revealed Word for people of all times and places. The Bible is not just a book of long ago containing religious experiences of the people of Israel, of which it is questionable whether they are binding to others. The Bible offers a description of how the living God revealed Himself to humanity in the course of history through his special words and deeds.

Although not every single chapter in the Bible is easy to understand, it is not true that the Bible is such an old and difficult book that it can only be interpreted correctly by theologians. The BC professes the clarity and purpose of the Bible being God's Word as follows: *“Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word as far as is necessary for us in this life, to His glory and our salvation.”* (art. 2) This is reiterated in art. 7: *“We believe that this Holy Scripture fully contains the will of God and that all that man must believe in order to be saved is sufficiently taught therein.”*

The Holy Spirit addresses in the Bible the church of all ages. It is exactly because God wants to reveal Himself to his children through the Bible that He has adapted his speech in such a way that simple believers are able to understand it, sometimes even more clearly than erudite theologians. The receptive reader of the Bible receives the illumination of the Holy Spirit, as Scripture states in many places (1 Cor 2:12-14; Eph 1:17-21; John 14:15-17; 2 Cor 4:5-6). This is summarized in the BC (art. 5) as follows: *“We believe without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they contain the evidence thereof in themselves.”* And in art. 24: *“We believe that this true faith, [is] worked in man by the hearing of God's Word*

mens voortgebring word deur die hoor van die Woord van God en deur die werking van die Heilige Gees." Die noodsaak om die Bybel wetenskaplik te bestudeer in sy oorspronklike tale, ondermyn nie die helderheid of Goddelike gesag en betroubaarheid van die Skrif nie. Die waarhede wat nodig is vir ons behoud word so duidelik in die Skrif verwoord dat sowel geleerde as nie-geleerde lesers dit kan en behoort te verstaan.

3. Kanon

Die Ou en Nuwe Testament vorm 'n onafskeibare geheel, wat met die term *Kanon* aangedui word. Dit dui nie net op die omvang van die Bybel (die 66 kanonieke boeke) nie, maar ook op die eenheid tussen hulle. Hierdie eenheid is te danke aan die inspirasie van die Heilige Gees. Hy is die Outeur van die Kanon, en het vir sy doel baie mense in verskillende tydperke ingespan. Hierdie eenheid is nie gebaseer op 'n uitspraak van die kerk of watter instansie ook nie, maar dit word *in die Skrif self* geopenbaar. In NGB art. 5 word daar bely "Ons glo ook sonder twyfel alles wat daarin vervat is, nie juis omdat die kerk hulle aanvaar en as sodanig beskou nie maar veral omdat die Heilige Gees in ons hart getuig dat hulle van God is."

Verskille in genres, style, redaksionele tydperke of kultuur-historiese kontekste doen geen afbreuk aan hierdie eenheid nie. Daar moet daarom by die hantering van afsonderlike Bybelgedeeltes altyd met die geheel van die Kanon gereken word. Want die Skrif is sy eie interpreteerder. Toe sy Woord op skrif gestel is, het God gesorg dat dit presies sou bevat wat Hy beoog het. Hy het mense vir hierdie taak in diens geneem met hulle menslike eienskappe en nie net as 'n blote spreekbuis sonder eie verantwoordelikheid nie. Daarom weerspieël die Skrif ook die persoonlike geskiedenis en literêre styl van elke outeur asook die eienaardighede van die periode waarin hy gelewe het, terwyl dit tegelyk in elke opsig die Woord van God self bly.

4. Die Skrif is sy eie verklaarder

Dit word bely dat die Skrif self die sleutel bied tot die verstaan van elke hoofstuk daarin. Daarom kan die heilige Goddelike Skrif nie anders as deur homself uitgelê en verklaar word nie. Geen outoriteit, van teenswoordig of lank gelede, of gewoonte, of meerderheidstandpunt, of menslike wysheid, of rade, of visioene, of professore, of wetenskaplike insigte of wat ook al mag voorskryflike wees hoe om die

and by the operation of the Holy Spirit". The need for scholarly study of the Bible in its original languages does not undermine the clarity or the divine authority and trustworthiness of Scripture. The truths necessary for salvation are so clearly expressed in Scripture that both learned and unlearned readers may and should understand them.

3. Canon

The Old and New Testament form an inseparable unity, which is denoted with the term *Canon*. It doesn't merely denote the scope of the Bible (the 66 canonical books), but also the unity amongst them. This unity is due to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He is the Author of the Canon, and involved for this enterprise many people from different ages. This unity is not based on a declaration of the church or whatever institution, but *it is revealed in Scripture itself*. BC art. 5 professes: "We believe without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God".

Differences in genre, style, redaction or cultural-historical contexts do not dissolve this unity. When dealing with separate Bible passages, one always have to take the Canon into account, because Scripture is its own interpreter (see par. 4 below). God superintended the work of writing the Scriptures so that they are precisely what He intended them to be. Having chosen to use human beings, God did not overrule their humanity or dictate the Scriptures to them. They therefore display the personal history and literary style of each author and the characteristics of the period in which they were written, while remaining in every respect the Word of God himself.

4. Scripture is its own interpreter

It is professed that Scripture itself offers the key to the understanding of each chapter of it. Therefore the holy and divine Scripture cannot be interpreted and explained but by itself. No authority, whether present or past, nor usage, nor majority standpoint, nor human wisdom, nor bodies, nor visions, nor professors, nor scientific insights nor whatever else may prescribe how the divine Word should be interpreted. To the contrary, all things should be

Goddelike Woord uit te lê nie. Inteendeel moet alle dinge ondersoek, gereguleer en hervorm word ooreenkomstig die Goddelike Woord. Dit sluit die beginsel in dat die metode van Skrifverklaring deur die Skrif self vasgelê is (sien par. 7 hieronder).

Aangesien die Skrif op Goddelike oorsprong en inspirasie aanspraak maak, kan slegs daardie verklaringsbeginsels en metodes wat hierdie aanspraak eerbiedig by die ware betekenis van die Woord uitkom. Daarom is die handhawing van 'n Bybelgetroue balans tussen Skrifgegewe beginsels en metodes vir Skrifverklaring van deurslaggewende belang. The hedendaagse foutiewe metodes kan genoem word as relevante voorbeelde om dit te illustreer:

Die sogenaamde sosio-historiese metode op grond hiervan afgewys aangesien dit 'n bepaalde metode uitlig tot alles oorheersende metodiek, eerder as dat dit gesien word as enkele aspek in die verklaringsproses. Dit maak buite-Bybelse materiaal bepalend vir die betekenis van die Skrif. Dit is onversoenbaar met die gereformeerde beginsel *Sola Scriptura (die Skrif alleen)*. Daarbenewens word sodanige sosio-historiese gegewens dikwels kunsmatig gerekonstrueer en aangewend met die oog op huidige problematieke, terwyl dit nie gegrond is op bronmateriaal nie, of hoogstens op 'n anachronistiese gebruik daarvan. Die Bybelteks hoef nie eers deur teoloë of wie ook al pasklaar vir ons tyd gemaak te word, voordat die gemiddelde Bybelleser dit kan gebruik nie.

Terselfdertyd word ook die sogenaamde regulerende beginsel afgewys wanneer dit poog om bepaalde beginsels buite hulle oorspronklike verband te handhaaf, ten koste van ander Skrifgegewe verklaringsmetodes. Dit streef ook daarna om gelowiges van alle tye te bind aan bepaalde kulturele verskynsels ten tye van die Bybel, terwyl hierdie inperkings nie deur die Skrif self geleer word nie. Ons sluit ons aan by wat die NGB bely aangaande die blywende waarde van die Oudtestamentiese voorskrifte deurdat hulle vervul is in Christus Jesus: "Ons glo dat die seremonies en sinnebeelde van die wet opgehou het met die koms van Christus..., sodat die gebruik daarvan onder die Christene afgeskaf moet word; nogtans bly die waarheid en wese daarvan vir ons bestaan in Christus Jesus in wie hulle

investigated, regulated and reformed according to the divine Word. This includes the principle that the method of interpreting Scripture is set forth by Scripture itself (See par. 7 below).

Since the Scriptures claim divine origin and inspiration, only those interpretative principles and methods that take such claims seriously can arrive at the true meaning of Scripture. Therefore it is essential to maintain a Biblical balance between the exegetical principles and methods indicated by Scripture. Two contemporary flawed methods can be named as relevant examples illustrating what is meant here:

The so called socio-historical method should be rejected on the basis that it elevates a particular approach as an exclusive methodology, rather to treat it as a particular element in the expository process. It holds extra-Biblical material as determinant for the meaning of Scripture. This is irreconcilable with the Reformed principle *Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone)*. In addition such socio-historical elements are often reconstructed artificially and applied in view of present day challenges, whilst they are not taken from source material, or at most in an anachronistic way. The text of the Bible needs not first be prepared for our present day circumstances by theologians or whoever, before the average Bible reader can use it.

At the same time the so called regulative principle can also be rejected on the basis that it attempts to maintain specific principles out of context and at the cost of other Biblical expository methods. It also strives to bind believers of all times to certain cultural usages during the period of the Bible, whereas Scripture itself does not contain these restrictions. We underscore what the BC professes with regard to the lasting relevance of the Old Testament prescriptions being fulfilled in Christ Jesus: "We believe that the ceremonies and symbols of the law have ceased with the coming of Christ..., so that the use of them ought to be abolished among Christians. Yet their truth and substance remain for us in Jesus Christ, in whom they have been fulfilled." (art. 25).

In addition all such viewpoints are rejected which derogate the Bible as the word of the living God by interpreting it out of context and from predetermined time bound human schools of thought. To mention but a few: Biblicism, confessionalism, historicism, traditionalism,

hul vervulling gevind het.” (art. 25)

In dieselfde lig word al sodanige denkrigtings afgewys wat die Bybel as die woord van die lewende God aantast deur dit uit verband en vanuit voorafgestelde tydgebonde menslike denkrigtings te interpreteer. Om maar enkele te noem: Biblisisme, konfessionalisme, tradisionalisme, moralisme, aktiwisme, modernisme, liberalisme, postmodernisme ens.

5. Bindende boodskap vir alle tye

Die manier van uitleg van 'n teks het alles met 'n mens se totale opvatting van die betrokke boek te make. Die Skrif is gerig op die verskillende periodes van sy redaksie, hoewel dit nie daarin vasgevang is nie.

As jou opvatting is dat die Bybel 'n sekere boodskap gehad het in die konteks van sy eie tyd, maar nie noodwendig dieselfde boodskap vir alle tye nie, sal mens die inhoud ook in die lyn verklaar. So sal dit wat in die Bybel staan oor homoseksualiteit slegs as riglyne vir die eerste hoorders beskou word. Die streng afkeuring van homoseksuele praktyke in die Ou en Nuwe Testament sal geïnterpreteer word asof dit in lyn was met die maatskaplike opset van daardie tye, maar nie noodwendig vir ander kultuur-historiese kontekste nie. As jou opvatting egter is dat die Bybel God se Woord vir alle tye is, beteken dit dat homoseksuele praktyke ook vandag nog 'n gruwel in God se oë is. Op dieselfde wyse kan gestel word dat die klassieke gereformeerde ampsleer nie gebaseer is op die mening van Paulus as teoloog nie, maar op die woorde wat hierdie apostel in opdrag van die Heilige Gees gespreek het, as openbaring vir Sy kerk van alle tye (Gal 1:8-9; 1 Tim 5:21). Die Skrif mag nie by elke situasie aangepas word nie, maar dit moet op elke situasie toegepas word, om sodoende die bevrydende lig van die Evangelie op elke afsonderlike situasie te laat skyn.

6. Historiese betroubaarheid van die Bybel

Die Skrif is volledig histories betroubaar. Dit bevat nie net 'n stigtelike boodskap sonder 'n soliede historiese basis nie. Die historiese betroubaarheid wortel in die feit dat die Outeur van die Bybel ook die Outeur van die geskiedenis is. Met *historiese betroubaarheid* word

moralism, activism, modernism, liberalism, postmodernism, etc.

5. Binding message for all times

The way of understanding a text has everything to do with one's conviction regarding the whole book. Scriptures is directed towards the various periods of its redaction, but it is not bound or confined to them.

If one's conviction is that the Bible had a message in the context of its own times, but not necessarily the same message for all times, he will explain the content of it likewise. For example what is found in the Bible with regard to homosexuality will be viewed merely as guidelines for the first receivers of the message. The stark denunciation of homosexual practices in the Old and New Testament will be interpreted as if they were in line with the societal structure of those times, but not necessarily binding for other cultural-historical contexts. If however one's conviction is that the Bible is God's Word for all times, it means that homosexual practices will still be today an abomination in God's eyes. Likewise it can be stated that the classical reformed doctrine on the offices of the church is not founded on the views of Paul as a theologian, but on the words this apostle spoke on demand of the Holy Spirit, being revelation for His church of all times (Gal 1:8-9, 1 Tim 5:21). *Scripture cannot be adapted to each situation, but it should be applied to each situation*, in that way shedding the light of the Gospel on each particular situation.

6. Historical reliability of the Bible

Scripture is fully historically reliable. It does not only contain a spiritual message without a solid historical basis. Its historical reliability is rooted in the fact that the Author of the Bible is also the Author of history. By *historical reliability* it is thus meant that in the Canon of His Revelation God reveals the meaning and course of human history, beyond and above human methods of historical research. When applied to the Holy Scriptures, such methods must therefore fully

bedoel dat God in die kanon van sy openbaring the betekenis en doel van die geskiedenis van die mensheid openbaar. Hierdie openbaring gaan verder as menselike metodes of historiese ondersoek in staat is. Wanneer menselike metodes dus aangewend word om die Heilige Skrif te verklaar, moet dit volledig met hierdie konnafeonele uitgangspunt rekening hou. God openbaar naamlik in sy Woord dinge oor die oorsprong, aard en uiteindelijke bestemming van die mensheid, wat geen menselike metode of historiese ondersoek op homself ooit sal kan openbaar of kontroleer nie.

7. Christus sentraal

God openbaar Homself op Trinitariese wyse aan die mens deur die volmaakte bemiddeling van Christus bekend. Die Skrif vind dus sy brandpunt in Jesus Christus, wat die Woord van God in eie Persoon is. Hy is die Alfa en die Omega, die Woord wat in die begin was en vanaf die ewigheid bestaan (Joh 1:1-3). Christus is beide die fundering en voltooiing van God se Openbaring. Daarom kan die Bybel in sy geheel slegs uitgelê word as dit Christologies gedoen word. Jesus Christus is die hermeneutiese sleutel tot die korrekte verstaan en uitleg van sowel die Nuwe as die Ou Testament (Luk 11:52; Joh 5:39,46).

Daarom moet teoloë en teologiese opleiding veral gekenmerk word deur 'n strewende na die kweek van 'n dienende houding in navolging van Christus. In die eerste plek teenoor God, die Outeur van die Bybel. In die tweede plek teenoor die kerke. Christus het die Woord aan sy kerk toevertrou om dit deur die eeue te dra. Die kerk moet God se Woord suiwer bewaar vir die volgende generasies, asook dit uitdra na die ongelowiges. Want die lig van God se Woord sal vir alle nasies genesing bring. Dit is die taak van teologiese opleiding om die kerke met die uitvoering van hierdie roeping in Suid-Afrika en Afrika by te staan.

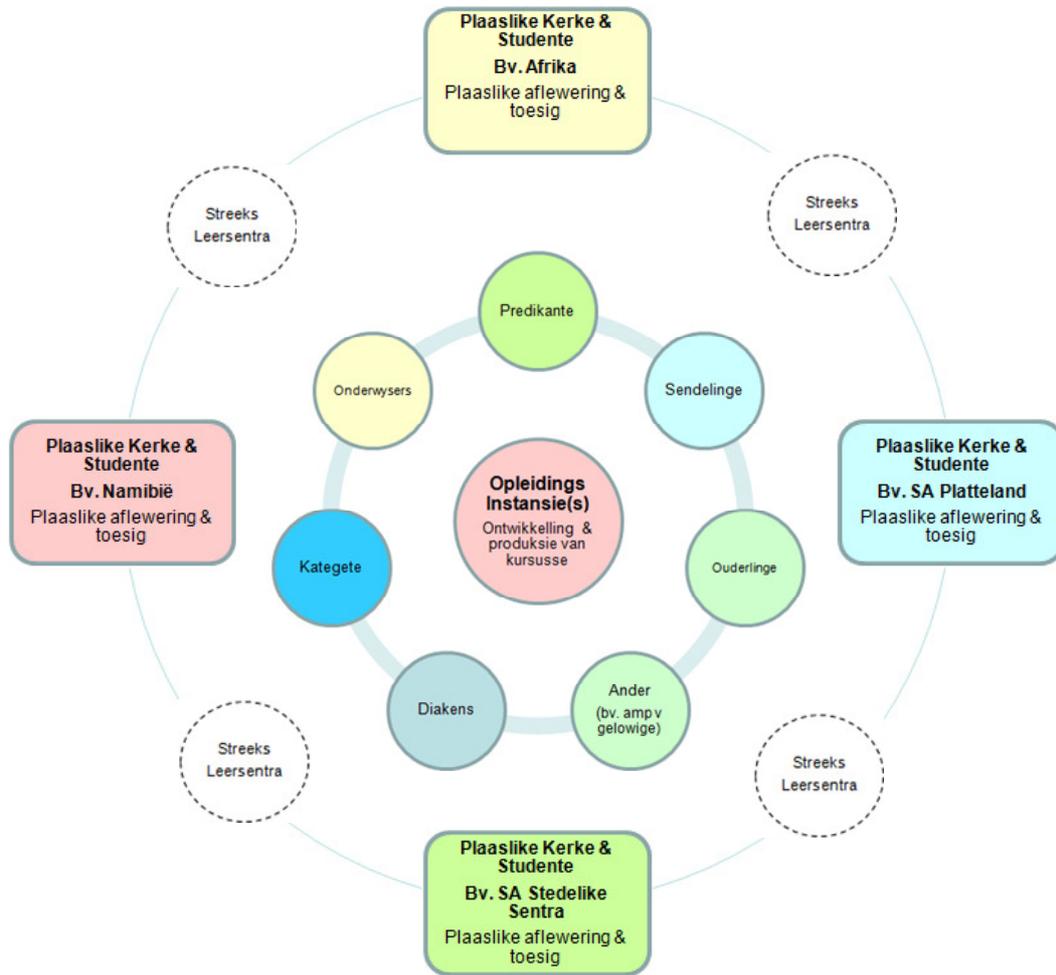
reckon with this confessional stance. For in His Word, God also reveals things about the origin, condition and final destination of mankind which no human method of historical inquiry naturally developed could ever disclose by itself, or scrutinize.

7. Christ centred

God reveals Himself in a Trinitarian way to man through the perfect mediation of Christ. Scripture therefore finds its focus in Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God in own Person. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Word that was in the beginning and existed since eternity (John 1:1-3). Christ is both the foundation and consummation of God's Revelation. Therefore each and every part of Scripture can only be understood if it is done Christologically. Jesus Christ is the hermeneutical key to the correct understanding and explanation of both the New and the Old Testament (Matt. 5:17-20; Luke 11:52; John 5:39,46; 19:30).

Theologians and theological training must therefore be characterised by an endeavour to cultivate a spirit of service in true discipleship of Jesus-Christ. In the first place, service towards God, the author of the Bible. In the second place, service towards the churches. Christ has entrusted his Word to his church to carry it through the ages. The church has to guard the Word of God, conveying it to next generations, as well as carry it to the unbelievers, for the light of God's Word will bring healing to the nations. It is the task of theological training to assist the churches in the execution of this calling in South-Africa and Africa.

BYLAE B: OPLEIDINGSMODEL



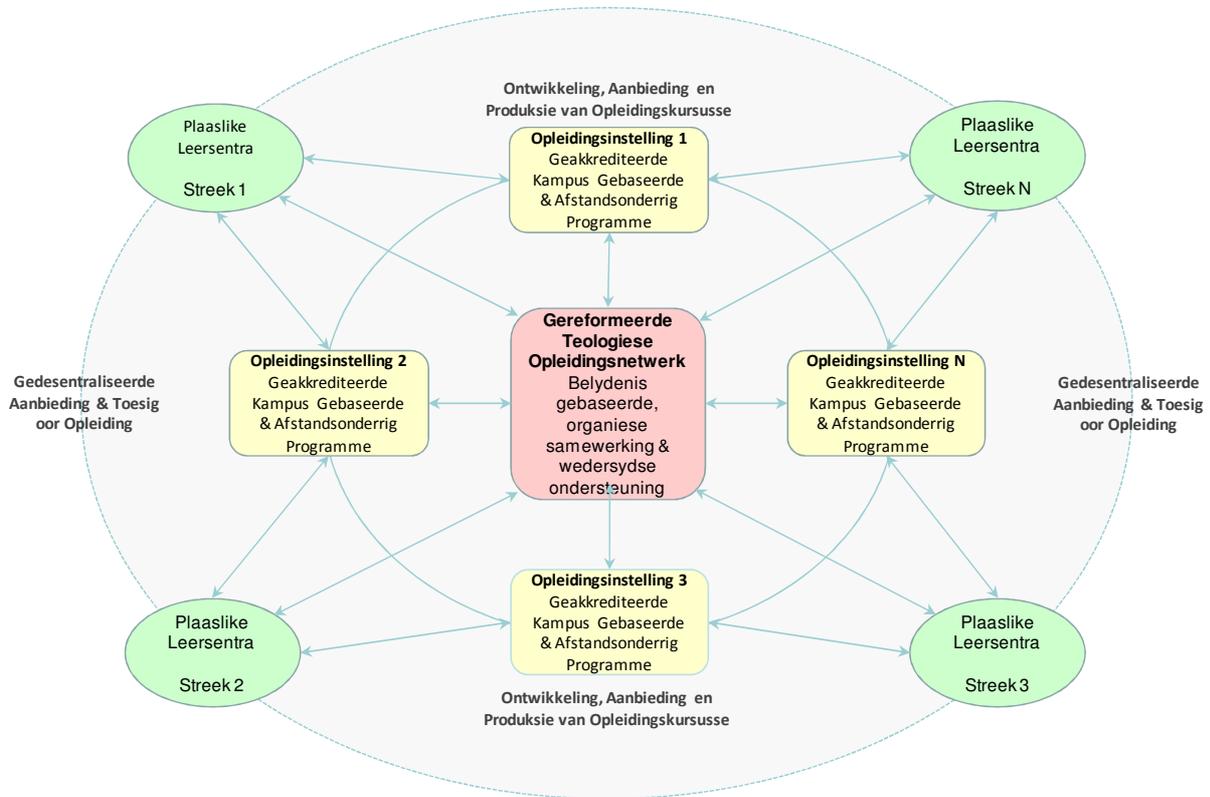
Kursus Ontwikkeling, Produksie en Steun	Plaaslike Aflewering, Toesig en Steun
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosente bied vakke aan tydens veeldoelige kontakssessies wat op video opgeneem word en vergesel word van 'n handleiding • Web, e-pos, pos en telematiese steun aan studente en kerke • Persoonlike kontakssessies by streeks leersentra • Waar moontlik in vennootskap met bestaande akademiese instansies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaaslike kerke bepaal behoeftes, identifiseer studente en verskaf kursus fasiliteerders • Plaaslike kerke hou toesig oor studente, kursus materiaal en besoekende dosente • Studente verrig praktiese diens in plaaslike kerke • Plaaslike kerke ondersteun studente • Plaaslike kerke voorsien administratiewe steun en fasiliteite

APPENDIX B: TRAINING MODEL

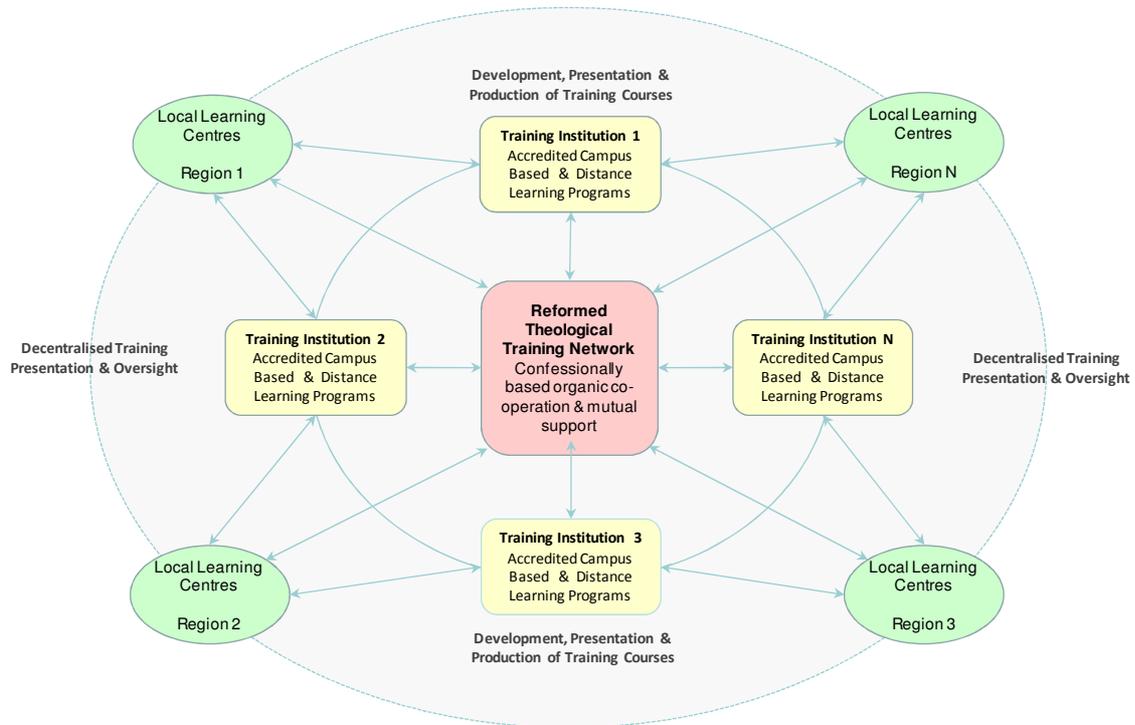


Course Development, Production & Support	Local Delivery, Oversight & Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecturers present subjects during contact sessions. Captured on video which is distributed with a study guide • Web, e-mail, post on telematic support of students & churches • Personal contact sessions at regional learning centres • Where possible in partnership with existing academic institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local churches determine specific needs, identify students and provide course facilitators • Local churches provide oversight over students, course material & visiting lecturers • Students complete practical in-service training in local churches • Local churches support students • Local churches provide administrative support & facilities

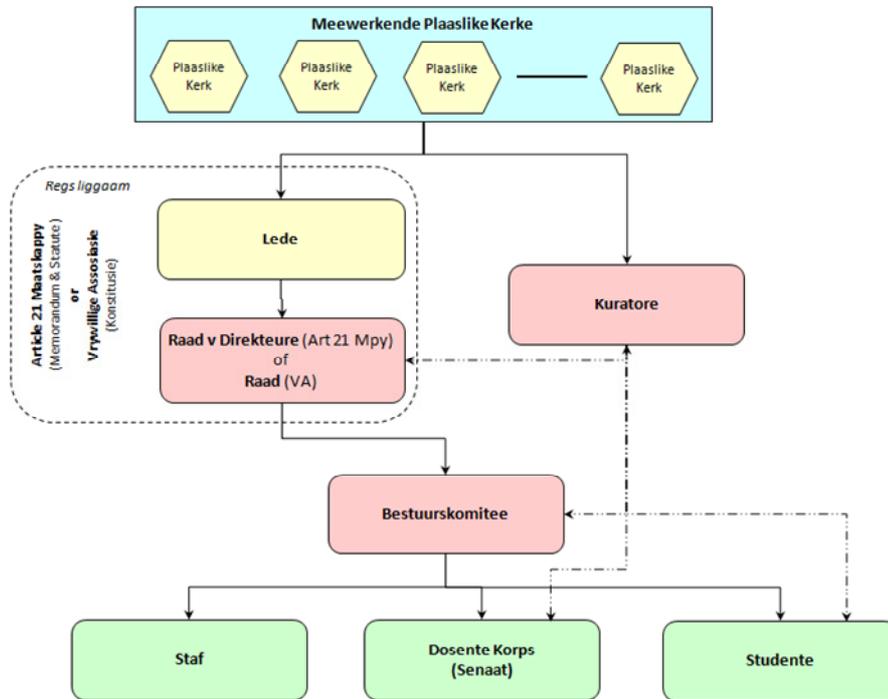
BYLAE C: STRUKTURELE VERWANTSKAPPE



APPENDIX C: STRUCTURAL RELATIONSHIPS



BYLAE D: OPLEIDINGS INSTELLINGS – STUKTURELE OORWEGINGS



Rolle en Verantwoordelikhede

Meewerkende Kerke

- Wys individueel deputate aan om elke betrokke kerk te verteenwoordig tydens ledevergaderings van die opleidingsinstelling
- Wys deputate kuratore aan

Lede

- Aangewese deputate benoem en verkies Raadslede tot Raad (van Direkteure)

Kuratore

- Hou toesig oor die handhawing en uitbou van die kofessionele karakter van beide die instelling en opleiding
- Benoeming van dosente en toesighouding oor die funksionering van dosente binne die raamwerk van die kofessionele karakter
- Toelating en toesighouding oor studente

Raad (van Direkteure)

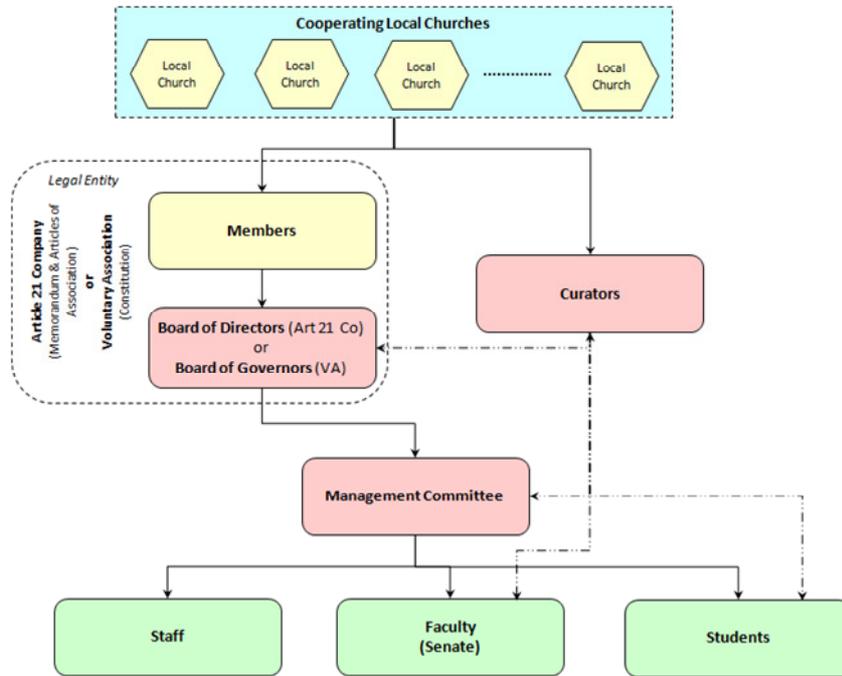
Verantwoordelik vir die versekering en handhawing van effektiewe organisatoriese kontinuiteit en bestuur, insluitend;

- strategiese beplanning;
- oorsig oor die aanstelling en funksionering van die bestuurskomitee;
- oorsig oor die regmatige werwing en toedeling van fondse en middele, asook die doelmatige aanwending daarvan;
- oorsig oor die nakoming van statutêre verantwoordelikhede en interne gedragskode;
- jaarlikse verslaggewing van die werksaamhede van die instelling

Bestuurskomitee

- Verantwoordelik vir die dag-tot-dag bestuur en administrasie van die instelling en opleiding

APPENDIX D: TRAINING INSTITUTIONS - STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATION



Roles and Responsibilities

Cooperating Churches

- Individually appoint deputies to represent reach respective church at the training institution's members' meetings
- Appoint deputies curators

Members

- Appointed deputies nominate and elect members to the Board (of Directors)

Curators

- Provide oversight over the upholding and further development of the confessional character of both the institution and the raining
- Nominate lecturers and provide oversight over the functioning of faculty within the framework of the institution's confessional character
- Admission and oversight over sight over students

Board (of Directors)

Responsible for ensuring and maintaining effective organisational continuity and management, including:

- strategic planning;
- oversight over the appointment and functioning of the management committee;
- oversight over the legitimate raising and allocation of funds and resources, as well as the effective application thereof;
- ensure compliance to statutory requirements and the institution's internal code of conduct
- Annual reporting on the activities of the institution

Management Committee

- Responsible for the day to day management and administration of the institution and training

APPENDIX 3: DISCUSSIONS WITH GEORGE WHITEFIELD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, MUIZENBERG

Your deputation wishes to report as follows:

1. Date of Visit

25 September 2008

2. Delegates

GWTC Delegation: Academic Registrar: Allen Beckman

Vice Principal: Mark Dickson

Delegation Free Reformed Churches: Dr JA Breytenbach

Prof RM Britz

3. Contents of discussion

The discussion focused on

- The GWTC view of Scripture
- The confessional premises underlying the theological teaching and training programs of GWTC
- The role of the Church of England and other churches in the College
- The academic programs and qualifications offered by the College
- The academic capacity of the College
- The infrastructure and administrative capacity of the College.

4. Particular matters

The following particular matters should be taken into consideration in determining the position of the Free Reformed Churches with regard to theological training:

- **Responsible Church:** The Church of England in South Africa takes institutional and official responsibility for the training.
- **Biblical and Confessional fiber of GWTC theology:** It is quite clear that the biblical and confessional character of the theological training offered by GWTC brings together a community of students and churches wherein the authority of the Christ of Scriptures is purposeful maintained.
- **Academic Programs:** The College offers a variety of academic programs. This includes a Certificate in Theology, BTh (3 years), BTh Hons and Masters Qualifications.

- Official recognition: All programs are officially registered by SAQA (NQF) and the HEQF and comply with the applicable academic, administrative and legal requirements.
- Accreditation by North West University, Potchefstroom Campus: In terms of an official agreement the GWTC is accredited by the NWU, which means that all the qualifications offered are *de jure* qualifications of that University. *De facto* the College determined the contents of the programs, to suit their aims, needs and particular circumstances and context.
- Accreditation by SAQA: Should above mentioned arrangement in the future terminate or change, the College is in fact officially recognized by SAQA as an accredited provider of tertiary theological training. This permission is based upon a thorough assessment by SAQA and is solid proof that the institution has the academic, administrative and structural capacity to offer qualifications in terms of the official requirements. This implies that the College can continue independent of any university to offer recognized qualifications, linked to the NQF, but fully autonomous in terms of content.
- The Certificate in Theology: The Certificate is situated on Level 5 (NQF and HEQF) and is developed to also serve the purposes of bridging students to tertiary education.
- BTh qualification: This program is excellently composed and balanced. As a whole qualification it provides for progression in the applicable fields of knowledge, skills and values. The program articulates to a BTh Hons or equivalent qualification.
- Contents of the BTh program: The curriculum is an open-ended structure and provides thus for church and confessional specific needs and inputs. Reformed symbolic, church polity, liturgy and preaching of the Heidelberg Catechism e.g. can without difficulty be accommodated as electives.
- Biblical Languages: Biblical Hebrew and Greek are part of the curriculum. It is taught in a structured way and integrated with the exegesis of both the Old and New Testaments. In terms of skills and knowledge students will be able to address the outcomes associated with two years university training. The only difference here is that both languages are taught specifically with the aim to equip students for the ministerial duties and practices.

5. GWTC Policies

The medium of instruction is English.

Afrikaans can be accommodated when necessary, e.g. in homiletics or other church specific needs.

Part time ecclesiastical lecturers: Part time ecclesiastical lecturers are welcome and can teach church specific requirements.

Admission is based upon selection. Students are compelled to have ecclesiastical approval and binding. Ecclesiastical guiding and accompanying is expected.

6. Accommodation

Accommodation is available on campus.

7. Costs

Costs are market related and fall within the parameters of normal tertiary education in South Africa.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Curators consider assigning GWTC in terms of a mutual agreement as the institution to provide for the theological training in the Cape region.

Motivation

- The qualifications (Certificate and BTh) service all the training needs and especially the profile of a minister of the Word (CO Article 16) of the FRCSA.
- The quality and academic standard of the training are beyond questioning. It meets the requirements of both SAQA and the HEQF and is therefore equal to any equivalent degree offered by a South African university.
- The GWTC is an accredited (officially) recognized and excellent organized, structured and sustainable training institute, offering the capacity and facilities to guarantee quality training.
- Students will be taken up into a larger group and community, which offer the opportunity to reflect within the group on learning content. This addresses the identified need for contact and interaction in our theological training.
- The instruction in Biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) is consistent with the standards required by the FRCSA, i.e. two year training.
- The FRCSA will have the opportunity to negotiate an agreement with GWTC which will, in terms of the policy of the College, provide for church specific inputs and contributions within and outside of the curriculum, e.g. reformed church polity, symbolic, liturgy, preaching from the Heidelberg Catechism, etc.
- GWTC offers a cost effective theological training.
- Involvement of the FRCSA in the GWTC offers the opportunity to be shareholder in their strategic position in Africa (against the background of the *Cafcon (Jerusalem Declaration)* and need for confessional training in Africa), to partake in their training program in terms of e.g. part time lecturers, comply with the request to extend the library with reformed literature from a reformed and Dutch background, etc.
- Further church specific needs and outcomes can be addressed in a fourth year multi-disciplinary vocational qualification, such as the Post-graduate Diploma in Theology and/or in a following Hons. or Masters program.

JA Breytenbach

RM Britz

Between the

Deputy Curators of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

and the

George Whitefield College

a College duly established under the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 herein represented by the signatories acting on its behalf in signing this agreement

Recognising the mutual benefits to be gained through a co-operative program promoting theological training, the Deputy Curators FRCSA and the GWC enter into this Agreement of Academic Co-operation and agree to the following:

1. OBJECTIVES

1.1 Activities which are carried out under this Agreement will focus on the area of teaching and research of Theology.

1.2 The objectives of this Agreement shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. the acceptance of FRCSA theological students at GWTC
- b. the admission and teaching of FRCSA students in the applicable qualifications and programmes
- c. development of collaborative research projects;
- d. the accommodation, in terms of the applicable NQF requirements, standards and levels of church specific modules as electives in the applicable programmes by GWC:
 - Reformed Symbolics
 - Reformed Liturgy
 - Reformed Church Governance
 - History of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and South Africa
 - Preaching of the Heidelberg Catechism and

- Applicable 'work integrated learning'.

e. the FRCSA will provide and recompense lecturers for facilitating the teaching and learning of the above mentioned elective modules

f. organisation of joint academic and scientific activities, such as courses, conferences, seminars, symposia or lectures; the exchange of students; and

g. the exchange of publications and other materials of common interest.

2. CONTENTS OF THE AGREEMENT

Both institutions agree to the following:

2.1 Educational cooperation shall take place between the Curators FRCSA and the GWC.

2.2 This cooperation shall not be exclusive, each partner being free to establish links with other institutions.

2.3 The selection and admission of FRCSA students will be determined in collaboration by both parties in terms of the applicable requirements and regulations.

2.4 FRCSA students will register and pay the normal (application and tuition) fees to the GWC.

2.5 GWC will report to the Curators FRCSA six monthly on the conduct, personal development and academic progress of FRCSA students

2.6 Both institutions proceed from the assumption that this agreement will be realized within the framework of their respective personal, legal, and financial possibilities.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 In order to carry out and fulfil the aims of this Agreement, the Curators FRCSA and the GWC shall each appoint a Co-ordinator who shall manage the development and conduct of joint activities.

3.2 Specific details of staff and/or students or any other activities undertaken in terms of this Agreement shall be mutually discussed and agreed upon.

3.3 Any complaints and/or problems concerning FRCSA students will be referred to the Coordinator FRCSA, with feed back to GWC in due time.

4. DURATION AND TERMINATION

4.1 This Agreement shall become effective on the date that it is signed by both Parties and shall be valid for a period of 4 (four) years, but may be renewed or extended by mutual consent.

4.2 Proposals to amend this Agreement may be made by either Party at any time. Amendments only take effect when mutual, written consent exists.

4.3 This Agreement may be terminated by either Party, at any time provided that the terminating Party gives written notice of its intention at least 6 (six) months prior to the termination date. The termination of this Agreement will however not affect the validity of any Implementation Agreements concluded between the Institutions in terms of this Agreement, and the Implementation Agreements shall remain to be in force for the duration stipulated in such Implementation Agreements.

5. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in this Agreement, no Party shall be entitled to institute any delictual, contractual or other claim against any of the other Parties for any indirect or consequential losses or damages (including without limitation, loss of profit, loss of use, loss of production, loss of business, or loss of business opportunity) due to any cause whatsoever.

6. STATUS OF INSTITUTIONS

It is recorded that, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary or any provision which could be construed to the contrary, the status of the Parties in relation to each other shall be that of independent parties, and neither of them shall under any circumstances and for any purposes whatsoever be deemed to be associates or partners of each other. The Parties hereby specifically record that they are contracting on an independent basis, and that neither of them has the authority to bind or act on behalf of the other, and that this Agreement shall not constitute a Partnership.

7. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

7.1 The Parties acknowledge that they may, in the course of this Agreement and during the negotiation of the Implementation Agreements, gain access to and become acquainted with the techniques, methods and processes, trade secrets, data, information technology, software, business associates, clients, and other private, sensitive and confidential information ("Confidential Information") of the other Party.

7.2 The Parties accordingly undertake, for the duration of this Agreement as well as after the termination thereof, not to directly or indirectly, utilize, disclose or make public to any third party any Confidential Information of the other Party and to keep any Confidential Information secret and confidential at all times, unless such disclosure takes place in the ordinary course of the carrying out by a Party of its obligations in terms of this Agreement.

7.3 The Confidential Information shall not include-

7.3.1 information which was known to a Party prior to its receipt from the other Party;

7.3.2 information which is or lawfully becomes generally available to the public;

7.3.3 information which is lawfully acquired from third parties who have a right to disclose such information;

7.3.4 information which by mutual agreement is released from confidential status; and

7.3.5 information which is required to be disclosed in response to a valid order of court or other governmental agency or if disclosure is otherwise required by law, and a Party will provide the other Party with

prompt written notice if such disclosure is required, and shall limit the disclosure to the minimum necessary to comply with the law.

8. MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Neither of the Parties to this Agreement shall use the name, symbols, branding or marks of the other Party in any publicity, advertising or announcement, without the other Parties' prior written approval.

9. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Agreement contains all the terms and conditions of the agreement between the Parties concerning the subject matter thereof and no terms, conditions, warranties or representations whatever apart from those contained in this Agreement have been made or agreed to by the Parties.

10. NON-VARIATION

No variation or consensual termination of this Agreement or any part thereof shall be of any force or effect unless in writing and signed by or on behalf of the Parties.

11. INDULGENCE

No relaxation or indulgence which a Party may grant to the other Party in regard to that Party's obligations in terms hereof shall constitute a waiver of or prejudice any of the first Party's rights in terms hereof.

12. APPLICABLE LAW

The interpretation of this Agreement and the adjudication of any claim or dispute arising there from, shall be solved with mutual discussion and agreement.

13. NOTICES

13.1 All notices given by a Party to the other in terms of this Agreement shall be given in writing by pre-paid registered post or telefax, or delivered by hand –

to the GWC at –

to the Curators FRCSA at –

or such other address as a Party may inform the other Party in writing, which address will not be a *poste restante*, and shall be deemed to have taken effect 14 (fourteen) days after posting of the required written notice.

13.2 A notice –

13.2.1 given by registered post, will be deemed to have been received 5 (five) days after the date of posting thereof;

13.2.2 sent by telefax, shall be deemed to have been received on the first working day following the date of transmission of such notice;

13.2.3 delivered by hand shall be deemed to have been received on the date of delivery thereof.

13.3 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained or implied in this Agreement, a written notice or communication actually received by a Party from another, including by way of facsimile transmission, shall be adequate written notice or communication to such Party.

13.4 The Parties choose as their *domicilium citandi et executandi* for all purposes under this Agreement at the addresses referred to in clause 13.1.

For the GWC:

.....

Date:

For the FRCSA

.....

Date:

For the FRCSA

.....

Date:

For the GWTC

.....

Date:

APPENDIX 4:

REPORT 2009 OF NATIONAL COORDINATOR
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1. VISIT TO INSTITUTIONS

1.1 THEOLOGICAL FACULTY, UNIVERSITY OF THE NORTH, POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Your Deputies (Dr JA Breytenbach & Prof RM Britz) met with the Dean (Prof A le R du Plooy) and representatives of the Programme Committee (Proff R Fick & F Viljoen) of the Faculty of Theology on March 23, 2009.

An in-depth and open discussion took place. The following aspects are of importance:

- As an official and recognized provider of theological training, the Faculty offers a full range of degree qualifications in terms of the requirements of the NQF. These are: BTh, BTh Hons, MDiv, MTh and DTh.
- The contents of the Theology taught in this Faculty are, according to the Yearbook, based upon the Three Formularies of Unity.
- The Free Reformed Churches in SA are welcome to enter into an agreement with the Faculty of Theology, which may be structured on the model of the Reformed Churches in South Africa. This

provides for a Theological School and Curatorium which can 'position' itself in terms of church specific requirements and an official agreement.

SUMMARY

- The Faculty of Theology offers comprehensive and quality theological training of unquestioned academic standards.
- The BTh curriculum (Biblical Languages) (Hebrew, Greek & Latin) addresses the requirements and profile of the FRCSA best.
- Curricula are to a certain extent open for church specific inputs and requirements.
- Church specific tutorial teaching and learning and guidance are possible.

1.2 MUKHANYO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Your Deputies (Dr. JA Breytenbach, Rev. PG Boon & Prof RM Britz) met with students, staff, the Principal and Vice-principal of Mukhanyo Theological College on April 29, 2009.

An in-depth discussion took place with dr Flip Buys (Principal) and dr Brian de Vries (Vice-principal). The following aspects are of importance:

- MTC is at present in the process to seek and eventually to receive official accreditation with the South African Qualifications Authority. The institution is therefore submitted to an external (Governmental) and extensive quality assurance assessment, which usually takes more than a year to complete. Prof Britz was approached by the principal to professionally assist MTC in this regard. On attaining official recognition as a registered provider of theological training, MTC will be in a position to offer its own academic qualifications, in terms of the standards set and described on the National Qualifications Framework.
- The academic programmes of MTC were assessed. This included a careful evaluation of the curriculum of the BTh degree, which is *de jure* the BTh degree offered by the NWU. At MTC it is offered as an Extended Programme, which means that the degree is completed in four years, and not three. The standard of the degree complies with the academic exit levels (level 7) of the NQF. Successful completion of the BTh degree articulates to the Honours qualification, also offered by MTC.
- A careful analysis of the BTh curriculum uncovered certain problematic areas in the composition and teaching of the programme at MTC. These areas mainly are connected with matters such as alignment and progression of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the teaching package. Prof Britz was asked to make available his expertise in curriculum design, in order to address these issues.
- Your Deputies did not evaluate the Certificate and Diploma qualifications in depth. We have though established that the Certificate operates also as a bridging programme, to give students access to tertiary study. We expressed our concern with the two year (240 Credit) Diploma, since the NQF-2007 only provides for 360 credit (3 years) Diplomas. For the time being, this may continue, but have to be addressed in the near future.

- Your Deputies did not evaluate the Honours programme offered at MTC. The NQF-2007 does not provide for multi-disciplinary Honours qualifications.

SUMMARY

- Your Deputies were impressed with the infrastructure and academic capabilities of MTC campus and organization.
- Your Deputies experienced the care for, and practice of true Christian piety and community at the College. The contents of courses taught at MTC are not based upon the critical post-enlightenment theological paradigms, but on a sound Biblical approach.
- The openness of MTC to address problems in the BTh curriculum is valued positively and should be seen as an important opportunity for the FRCSA to meaningfully get engaged at MTC.
- The FRCSA are more than welcome to further their partnership with MTC, by actively provide academic support, capacity and involvement.
- The curricula are open to church specific requirements and modules.

1.3 THEOLOGICAL FACULTY, UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE, BLOEMFONTEIN

Your Deputies (Dr JA Breytenbach & Prof RM Britz) met with the Dean of the Faculty of Theology (Prof F Tolmie) on April 30, 2009 in Bloemfontein.

An in-depth and friendly discussion took place. The following aspects are of importance:

- As an official and recognized provider of theological training, the Faculty offers a full range of diploma and degree qualifications in terms of the requirements of the NQF. These are: Certificate in Theology, University Diploma in Theology, Advanced University Diploma in Theology, BTh, BTh Hons, BDiv, Post Graduate Diploma in Theology, MDiv, MA(Theology), MTh, DTh and PhD.
- The contents of the Theology taught in this Faculty are in accordance to a broad reformed tradition. The Faculty sees itself as ecumenical evangelical and reformed and teaches a classical theological structure, including OT, NT, Ecclesiology, Systematic Theology and Ethics, Missiology, Practical Theology and Religion Studies.
- The Faculty just completed a comprehensive qualification and programme assessment and redevelopment to meet the requirements of the HEQF-2007.
- The Free Reformed Churches SA is welcome to enter into an agreement with the Faculty of Theology, which may be structured on the model of the other participating churches, eg. the DRC, the DRCA and the Reformed Church in Africa. This can provide for a Theological School and/or a Curatorium which can 'position' itself in terms of church specific requirements and an official agreement.

SUMMARY

- The Faculty of Theology offers comprehensive and quality theological training of unquestioned academic standards.

- Curricula are to a certain extent open for church specific inputs and requirements.
- Church specific tutorial teaching and learning and guidance are possible.
- The Post Graduate Diploma in Theology is structured as a multi-disciplinary programme, situated on Honours level and ideal to replace the Mukhanyo Plus Programme. The PDT can be offered off campus, as long as it meets all the academic and quality assurance requirements of the UFS. It can be taught church specific.

1.4 INSTITUTE FOR CLASSICAL AND REFORMATION STUDIES

The Institute of Classical and Reformation Studies is situated in Bloemfontein. Prof RM Britz and Dr VE d'Assonville act as directors. The Institute operates within an international network of scholars.

The purpose of the *Institute* is to cluster scholarship to enhance

- theological-historical research in
- as well as the communication of fundamental knowledge of

the classical, patristic and reformation eras, with emphasis on the primary sources.

The *Institute* aims to

- establish itself as a recognised research unit with regard to classical and reformation studies;
- develop research support structures, e.g. the expansion of library facilities and the availability and accessibility of primary sources;
- comply with international standards in the applicable fields of research, e.g. the ability to read translate and interpret ("deuten") primary sources;
- empower young and upcoming researchers;
- facilitate and co-ordinate international collaboration and support;
- co-ordinate and stimulate fundamental research, effective training and instruction;
- make available expertise to the African context;
- translate and publish applicable historical theological documents;
- develop and promote scientific excellence in the field of theological-historical research.

The *Institute* is excellently positioned to assist the FRCSA in the professional and academic development of its theological training. The *Institute* is linked to the University of the Free State, but cannot act as a recognised provider of tertiary theological training.

2. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

All the Qualifications and Programmes considered by your Deputies adhere to the HEQF and NQF. This means that students should be able to demonstrate that they have mastered the specific and exit level outcomes of the particular programme.

In general, your Deputies are satisfied that the academic and teaching capacity of all the institutions visited, create a meaningful platform for students to achieve the required standards.

Your Deputies also compared the Profile and Outcomes for the ministry in the FRCSA (Synod-2006) with the Outcomes of the different qualifications and programmes considered. It is clear that the standards set by Synod-2006 more or less pitches on the equivalent of HEQF-2007 levels 8-9. See Attachment A – Level descriptors NQF Levels 7, 8 and 9). These levels can be reached at the two universities considered within a time-span of 5-6 years. In practice this would mean the graduation with the following qualifications:

NWU: BTh (Biblical Languages) BTh Hons, MDiv, MTh (6 years)

UFS: BTh (4 years), MDiv (6 years, until 2010). From 2011: BDiv, PDT, MDiv/MTh. (6 years)

It should be noted that not all students comply with the entry requirements of masters studies. They have the option of enrolling for Short Learning Programmes or to be trained by churches to finish their studies.

MTC: The exit level outcome of the BTh degree offered at MTC is level 7 (3 years post matriculation study). As a matter of fact this falls short of the accepted outcomes of Synod-2006. To reach this, a considerable input must be made by the churches, or students must complete at least a Post Graduate Diploma or multi-disciplinary Honours degree. The strongpoint of the Mukhanyo package is the practical and work integrated learning, which introduces and challenges students with the practical situation and context of ministering and living the Gospel amidst and to the needs of the world. 'Work Integrated Learning' in terms of blended teaching can function as a cornerstone in theological training, provided that it serves (as an integrated part of) the formal academic programme, managed and developed responsible and linked to the demonstrated knowledge, skills and attitudes of students.

3. QUALIFICATIONS, PROGRAMMES AND MODULE STRUCTURES

3.1 NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY: FACULTY OF THEOLOGY, POTCHEFSTROOM

See Attachment B

3.2 UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE, FACULTY OF THEOLOGY, BLOEMFONTEIN

See Attachment C

3.3 MUKHANYO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

See Attachment D

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made:

- The FRCSA provide in partnership academic support, capacity and involvement to MTC, especially to develop and sustain the BTh programme (especially support with Hebrew and Greek – that students

reach the outcomes of Synod in the first years of their study at MTC and not after they have concluded their studies.

- Admission into degree programmes require an Admission Point of 28 (or 23 for Extended Programmes) (Cf HEQF/NQF) Bridging and preparing applicants who did not acquire the required standards, for tertiary study in Theology, should be done professionally. The possibility of AROS to act as a FET College in this regard, should be investigated.
- The FRCSA investigates the possibility to establish an agreement with the Faculty of Theology, North West University, based upon the model of the RCSA, in order to provide and accompany theological training for the churches. The learning programmes of the Faculty of Theology, NWU, addresses the SA context better, in comparison with those of Kampen and Hamilton.
- The FRCSA addresses the practical implications of a possible agreement with the NWU, e.g. the distance from the nearest FRC, practical work (Work Integrated Learning) will be difficult to execute, full time theological guidance, infra structure.
- The FRCSA investigates the possibilities of establishing a theological campus in Pretoria, to teach the Post Graduate Diploma in Theology (UFS) and applicable Short Learning Programmes in ministry and theology, replacing the Mukhanyo Plus Programme. To be admitted to the PDT students must be in possession of a Bachelors Degree or Advanced Diploma, or equivalent qualification.
- The FRCSA investigates the possibilities of an agreement with the Institute for Classical and Reformation Studies to provide academic excellence, knowledge and skills in the realization of its theological training programme.
- The FRCSA calls key role players in conference together in order to discuss the possibilities of the establishment of a reformed theological seminary in South Africa.
- The FRCSA prepares a strategic plan, outlining its vision as far as theological training in South Africa is concerned.
- The FRCSA investigates ways of meaningfully involve Hamilton Theological College and TU Kampen in its theological training programme.

Dr JA Breytenbach

Prof RM Britz

May 2009

APPENDIX 5:

Agreement between Deputies Curators of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa and prof RM Britz, Program Director of the Faculty of Theology, University of the Free State

Prof Britz will do the technical work of refining and writing the Training Program of the Ministerial Training Structure (MTS) in theological education terms.

The National Coordinator (NC) is responsible for the completion and implementation of the work according to the decision of Synod Cape Town, May 2008.

Prof Britz will, in cooperation with the NC:

- complete and refine the statutes and regulations of the MTS in the correct format
- write the profiles, outcomes and learning goals in the format which is being used by theological institutions
- compile and write internal assessment tools to evaluate both the teaching and the program content
- compile and write a system to evaluate the learning of students and to assess it in terms of outcomes that have to be reached
- compile a format for the writing of study guides
- compile and publish a prospectus/handbook for theological training facilitated by the MTS to be used by churches, students, lecturers and for discussions with other institutions
- investigate functional bridging programs and preparation courses for students from High School to be able to enroll for BTh
- investigate the possibility of a postgraduate, multidiscipline accredited qualification in Theology
- visit institutions of reformed confession to evaluate the efficiency of their programs as well as their training for our students.

The goal is to have the project completed by December 2009.

Prof Britz, will be, as was budgeted, paid for his professional services rendered. He will receive the amount of R 26000-00, which is R 1000-00 for eight hours per week, for 26 weeks. Travel and accommodation costs will also be paid.

Prof RM Britz

Chairman of Deputies

Date

Appendix 11: Report Synod Treasurer

Free Reformed Churches of South Africa Synod Treasurer Report to the 2011 Synod

To: The Scribe of the FRC of Pretoria: J.H. Ros

Sent by e-mail on 12 May 2011

1 Name and contact details of the Synod Treasurer

Ernst van Vondel
Springfontein Street 8, Stellenryk, 7550
Cell: 082 458 3148, Phone 021 910 4801, E-mail evvondel@powergrp.co.za

2 2008 Synod Decisions

2.1 Contributions to be paid

Denominational expenses: R20 per member
Needy churches: R200 per member
Needy students: R20 per member

2.2 Exception to contributions

To accept a collection schedule instead of the aforementioned assessment per member from the following churches: Bethal, Mamelodi and Soshanguve-North and possibly newly instituted churches that will fall within this schedule. Belhar was instituted since the previous Synod and should be treated likewise. No collections have been paid over by these churches into the account of the Treasurer.

2.3 To appoint two deputies as treasurers

Ground: It is common practise to have two persons overseeing the finances.
The second appointee, Annemarie Eefting, did not accept the nomination.
No other suitable candidate could be found to replace her.
Consequently, Ernst van Vondel, handled the tasks by himself.
To mitigate this loss in control, Herman van der Linden was asked by the Treasurer to audit the financial statements for 2009 and 2010. Due to reasons beyond our control, the audit has not yet been performed.

2.4 To issue semiannual statements at the end of May and September to the churches

This has not always been done. Payments were mostly made on time.

2.5 To request the churches to settle their accounts within 30 days

Refer to the list of debtors (note 1 to the financial statements) for outstanding contributions.

2.6 To effect the following payments:

- To pay the deputies the assigned budgets on their request
 - To reimburse travel expenses and other expenses made by deputies on their request;
 - To reimburse the air travel expenses of classes on their request;
- Payments are reflected in the Income Statement

3 Conclusions & Recommendations

3.1 Needy Churches

The attached financial statements shows the financial result and status at the end of 2010 and 2009. The report by the deputies outlines the financial requirements going forward. The Deputies A11 requested contribution per member of R250 per year for the next three years.

3.2 Needy Theological Students

The attached financial statements shows the financial result and status at the end of 2010 and 2009. At a contribution rate of R20 per member per year, the deputies ran a loss of R51,394 for 2010 and R32,049 for 2009. And these losses include a portion of interest income which will become close to RNUL in 2011 and forward. At 31/12/2010 the fund's cumulative balance stood at R84,320. At this rate the deputies' funds will be depleted by the end of 2011. The report by the deputies should outline the financial requirements going forward.

3.3 Inter-denominational costs

The attached financial statements shows the financial result and status at the end of 2010 and 2009. At a contribution rate of R20 per member per year, the surplus was R12,608 for 2010 and R12,058 for 2009. Recommendation: I recommend that the R20 per member contribution rate is maintained, if the costs anticipated by the deputies and classes are on par with the past two years.

3.4 Disenchanted fund

Per instruction from the Deputies for Needy Churches, the balance in this fund was transferred to the Bethal Manse Project during 2010. The Deputies have requested the Synod to ratify this decision.

Sinodale Kwestor van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika

Finansiële state vir die jaar geeindig 31 Desember 2010

Balansstaat

	<u>Notas</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
<u>BATES</u>		778,925	1,277,696
<u>Bedryfsbates</u>		778,925	1,277,696
Debiteure	1	160,360	14,820
Bank - Absa lopende rekening		85,131	58,985
Termyndeposito's	2	332,828	308,613
Geldmarkfonds	3	200,606	895,278
<u>OPGEHOOPTE FONDSE EN LASTE</u>		778,925	1,277,696
<u>Opgehoopte Fondse</u>		755,025	1,277,696
Opgehoopte Fondse	4	741,660	1,024,278
Bethal Pastorie Projekfonds	5	13,364	253,418
<u>Bedryfslaste</u>			
Krediteur - SK VGK Kaapstad		23,900	-

Sinodale Kwestor van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika

Finansiële state vir die jaar geëindig 31 Desember 2010

Inkomstestaat

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
Hulpbehoewende Kerke	(116,714)	356,445
<u>Inkomste</u>	908,592	722,086
Bydraes Ontvang	247,300	245,900
Johannesburg	9,500	11,100
Kaapstad	82,600	82,200
Maranatha	66,400	69,600
Pretoria	88,800	83,000
Skenkings Ontvang	619,355	449,440
SDSA	80,000	150,000
Australië	184,000	-
Kanada	355,355	299,440
Rente Inkomste	41,937	26,747
<u>Uitgawes</u>	1,025,306	365,641
Ondersteuning betaal	1,023,334	363,771
Johannesburg	231,735	120,840
Mamelodi	136,836	126,030
Soshanguve	168,630	93,001
Bethal	199,333	-
Belhar	286,800	23,900
Bankkoste	1,972	1,870
<u>Kerkverband</u>	12,608	12,058
<u>Inkomste</u>	45,625	52,447
Bydraes Ontvang	25,680	25,700
Johannesburg	1,900	2,220
Kaapstad	8,260	8,220
Maranatha	6,640	6,960
Pretoria	8,880	8,300
Rente inkomste	19,945	26,747
<u>Uitgawes</u>	33,018	40,389
Kostes aangeaan	32,080	38,518
Reiskoste Binneland	14,015	13,360
Reiskoste Buiteland	17,422	13,297
Skryfbehoeftes	643	10,541
Verversings	-	1,320
Bankkoste	938	1,870

<u>Hulpbehoewende Teologies Studente</u>	(51,394)	(32,049)
<u>Inkomste</u>	40,461	52,447
Bydraes Ontvang	25,680	25,700
Johannesburg	1,900	2,220
Kaapstad	8,260	8,220
Maranatha	6,640	6,960
Pretoria	8,880	8,300
Rente Inkomste	14,781	26,747
<u>Uitgawes</u>	91,855	84,495
Ondersteuning betaal	91,160	82,625
Andre de Vente	-	3,500
Chris Willemse	91,160	79,125
Bankkoste	695	1,870
 <u>Totale (tekort)/oorskot</u>	 <u>(155,500)</u>	 <u>336,454</u>

Sinodale Kwestor van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika

Finansiële state vir die jaar geëindig 31 Desember 2010

Notas tot die state

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
1 Debiteure		
Johannesburg	1,400	15,540
Kaapstad	-	-
Pretoria Maranatha	83,520	3,840
Pretoria	(4,560)	(4,560)
Sendingsdeputate SA - vir Belhar	80,000	-
	<u>160,360</u>	<u>14,820</u>

2 Termyndeposito's

Absa Termyndepositorekening x 2	332,828	308,613
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Hierdie beleggings word vir een jaar vas bele teen rentekoerse van 6.91% en 5.58%.

3 Geldmarkfonds

Absa Geldmarkfonds	200,606	895,278
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Hierdie belegging is onmiddellike beskikbaar. Die rentekoers wissel, maar is tans 5.55%. Koste van 0.4% word gehef op elke plasing van fondse.

4 Opgehoopte Fondse

<u>Hulpbehoewende Kerke</u>		
Openingsbalans	556,645	200,200
Oorskot/(tekort)	(116,714)	356,445
Sluitingsbalans	439,932	556,645
<u>Kerkverbandelike Koste</u>		
Openingsbalans	204,802	192,744
Oorskot	12,608	12,058
Sluitingsbalans	217,409	204,802
<u>Hulpbehoewende Teologiese Studente</u>		
Openingsbalans	135,713	167,762
Oorskot/(tekort)	(51,394)	(32,049)
Sluitingsbalans	84,320	135,713
<u>Verontrustes</u>		
Openingsbalans	127,118	127,118
Dra oor na Bethal Pastorie Projekfonds	(127,118)	-
Sluitingsbalans	-	127,118
Totale Opgehoopte Fondse	741,660	1,024,278

2010

2009

5 Bethal Pastorie Projekfonds

Openingsbalans	253,418	-
Skenkings ontvang van Australie	533,915	253,418
Dra oor van Verontrustes Opgehoopte Fonds	127,118	-
Aankoop van pastorie	(901,000)	
Sluitingsbalans	13,450	253,418

Die ooreenkoms met die gemeente van Bethal is dat indien hulle die pastorie sou verkoop, die fondse proporsioneel terug sal gaan na die Hulpbehoewende Kerke Fonds.

Appendix 12: Report Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books

H.H. (Herman) van der Linden
herman@van-der-linden.co.za

VERSLAG VAN DIE OUDITEUR

AAN DIE SINODE VAN DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Op grond van inligting wat deur die **Sinodale Kwestor (Ernst van Vondel)** verstrekk is, het ek die balansstaat van die **Sinodale Kwestor van die VGK van Suid-Afrika** soos op **31 Desember 2010**, en die verwante inkomstestaats, staats van verandering in ekwiteit en aantekeninge tot die finansiële state vir die twaalf maande wat op daardie datum geëindig het geouditeer. **Die Kwestor is vir hierdie finansiële state verantwoordelik.** My verantwoordelikheid is om oor hierdie finansiële state 'n mening uit te spreek, gebaseer op die oudit.

Omvang

Vanjaar se oudit is beplan en uitgevoer om redelike versekering te verkry dat die finansiële state vry van wesenlike wanvoorstellings is.

Die oudit het die volgende behels:

- 'n Evaluering van die rekeningkundige beleid en beginsels;
- Stawingstoetse op steekproefbasis van brondokumente na die rekeningkundige rekords;
- 'n Bespreking van 2010 se finansiële state;
- 'n Evaluering van die pligte van die boekhouer.

Ek is van standpunt dat my oudit 'n redelike grondslag bied vir my mening.

Ouditmening

Ek kan die versekering gee dat die rekeningkundige en administratiewe pligte nougeset en sorgvuldig deur die boekhouer uitgevoer is. Na my mening bied die finansiële state 'n redelike weergawe, in alle wesenlike opsigte, van die finansiële posisie en resultate van die **Kwestor** op **31 Desember 2010**.



H.H. (Herman) van der Linden

Datum: 01-06-2011

H.H. (Herman) van der Linden
herman@van-der-linden.co.za

VERSLAG VAN DIE OUDITEUR

AAN DIE SINODE VAN DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Op grond van inligting wat deur die **Sinodale Kwestor (Ernst van Vondel)** verstrek is, het ek die balansstaat van die **Sinodale Kwestor van die VGK van Suid-Afrika** soos op **31 Desember 2009**, en die verwante inkomstestaat, staat van verandering in ekwiteit en aantekeninge tot die finansiële state vir die twaalf maande wat op daardie datum geëindig het geouditeer. **Die Kwestor is vir hierdie finansiële state verantwoordelik.** My verantwoordelikheid is om oor hierdie finansiële state 'n mening uit te spreek, gebaseer op die audit.

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**Free Reformed Churches of South Africa
Synod Treasurer
Report to the 2011 Synod
To: The Scribe of the FRC of Pretoria: J.H. Ros
Sent by e-mail on 12 May 2011**

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Chris Willemsse	91,160	79,125
Bankkoste	695	1,870
Totale (tekort)/oorskot	(155,500)	336,454

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Sinodale Kwestor van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika
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	<u>160,360</u>	<u>14,820</u>
2 Termyndeposito's		
Absa Termyndepositorekeninge x 2	332,828 ^v	308,613
	Hierdie beleggings word vir een jaar vas bele teen rentekoerse van 6.91% en 5.58%.	
3 Geldmarkfonds		
Absa Geldmarkfonds	200,606 ^v	895,278
	Hierdie belegging is onmiddellike beskikbaar. Die rentekoers wissel, maar is tans 5.55%. Koste van 0.4% word gehef op elke plasing van fondse.	
4 Opgehoopte Fondse		
<u>Hulpbehoewende Kerke</u>		
Openingsbalans	556,645	200,200
Oorskot/(tekort)	<u>(116,714)</u>	<u>356,445</u>
Sluitingsbalans	439,932	556,645
<u>Kerkverbandelike Koste</u>		
Openingsbalans	204,802	192,744
Oorskot	<u>12,608</u>	<u>12,058</u>
Sluitingsbalans	217,409	204,802
<u>Hulpbehoewende Teologiese Studente</u>		
Openingsbalans	135,713	167,762
Oorskot/(tekort)	<u>(51,394)</u>	<u>(32,049)</u>
Sluitingsbalans	84,320	135,713
<u>Verontrustes</u>		
Openingsbalans	127,118	127,118
Dra oor na Bethal Pastorie Projekfonds	<u>(127,118)</u>	<u>-</u>
Sluitingsbalans	-	127,118
Totale Opgehoopte Fondse	<u>741,660</u>	<u>1,024,278</u>

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 01/02/11

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
5 Bethal Pastorie Projekfonds		
Openingsbalans	253,418	-
Skenkings ontvang van Australie	533,915	253,418
Dra oor van Verontrustes Opgehoopte Fonds	127,118	-
Aankoop van pastorie	<u>(901,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
Sluitingsbalans	<u>13,450</u>	<u>253,418</u>

Die ooreenkoms met die gemeente van Bethal is dat indien hulle die pastorie sou verkoop, die fondse proporsioneel terug sal gaan na die Hulpbehoewende Kerke Fonds.

dl
01/06/11

Appendix 13: Report Church for the Inspection of the Archive

From: Dirk Byker [mailto:direnlor@gmail.com]
Sent: 07 June 2011 21:41
To: Atze W. Herder
Cc: MA Bijker
Subject: archive control

In accordance with the wishes of the synod held in Cape Town 2008 to audit the synodal archives, we, the undersigned report as follows:

The archive file of 2008 Synod acts was presented to us, MA Bijker and DA Byker, by br AW Herder for inspection.

The records were found in good order. In this age of e-mail correspondence it appears that original documents are not on file. Only copies, of which some are not signed. If this should be considered a problem, then the brothers synod may wish to make a ruling to this effect.

With brotherly greetings:

DA Byker
MA Bijker

--

Dirk Byker
Cell: +27824710966

Appendix 14: Report Classis for Days of Prayer ad article 69 CO

Report Deputy Day of Prayer to Synod Pretoria June 2011

Introduction

The FRCSA Synod 2008 held in Cape-Town appointed classis North as deputy for proclaiming a day of prayer in time of war, general calamities and other great afflictions, the presence of which is felt throughout the churches. This appointment is in line with what article 69 CO stipulates regarding days of prayer:

*In times of war, general calamities and other great afflictions the presence of which is felt throughout the churches, the classis which has been appointed for this purpose by the last **synod**, shall nominate a day of prayer. (Edition 2005, Acts Synod 2005, article 25, page 36).*

Instruction

The instructions from synod 2008 were:

Synod decides to appoint classis North with the following mandate:

1. To nominate, in line with article 69 CO a day of prayer;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Activities

1. Classis North, at its meeting on 20 Feb 2010, decided to honour a request from Maranata by requesting all churches in the bond to hold a collection for Haiti after the devastating earth quake.

Proposal

Synod appoints, in line with article 69 CO, a classis that can nominate a day of prayer.

Accepted by Classis North at its meeting 21 May 2011

For Classis North

T de Wit

Scribe

14. Rules of Synod 2005.

SYNOD RULES OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Article 1 Synod schedule

1. Synod will be convened every three years by the church appointed at the last synod to organise the date and meeting place for such synod.
2. In the event of a pressing issue requiring immediate attention, for which reason at least one classis requests an extra-ordinary synod, the convening church shall, in consultation with the other churches, announce the date and venue.

Article 2 Delegates

The synod shall be comprised of legitimate delegates from the classes. They shall, according to article 32 of the Church Order, present their credentials which shall bind them to the Holy Gospel, the Three Forms of Unity and the Church Order.

Each classis shall be represented by three ministers and three elders. In case three ministers can not be delegated because of vacancies or legitimate hindrances, more elders can be delegated. Should a deacon take the place of an elder in the delegation the synod shall decide whether he has voting rights.

All ministers not delegated to the synod, will be invited by the convening church as advisors. Official delegates from churches with which the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa correspond, will also be admitted as advisors.

Article 3 Visitors to synod

1. Synod is open to all members of the churches that are meeting.
2. Synod shall decide on the admission of non-members.
3. Meetings held *in camera* are restricted to ministers and elders.

Article 4 Duties of the convening church

The convening church

1. Shall request the classes at least 6 months prior to commencement of synod to submit items to be placed on the provisional draft agenda. These items will reach the calling church no later than 1 month before start of synod. Synod may decide to accept in exceptional circumstances items not sent in time.
2. Shall provide a provisional draft agenda and forward one electronic and one hard copy to each church attending the synod, at least 3 months before synod commences, and one electronic and one hard copy to the secretary of the Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad. This agenda shall be accompanied by one electronic and one hard copy of any new items of business together with relevant information.
3. Shall place a notice of the forthcoming synod as well as the provisional agenda in a suitable church publication.

4. Shall, in accordance with article 3, request possible advisors to attend synod.
5. Shall give timeous notice to any deputies whose presence may be required at synod.
6. Shall report on the examination of delegates? credentials and oversee the signing of the attendance register prior to constitution of synod.
7. Appoint a competent minute maker to assist with the following: the preparation of synod, to record decisions and make minutes during the synod meetings, to assist the scribe in compilation of the Acts of synod. The minute maker may be present during closed sessions, the minutes of which he will deal with in a confidential manner.
8. Shall convene a prayer-meeting before the commencement of synod to ask for God's blessing on the work.

Article 5 Officers of Synod

The opening of synod will be conducted by an office bearer of the convening church. After a report on the credentials of the delegates synod shall be constituted and the election of the officers of synod take place.

The three officers of synod are: the chairman, the secretary and the vice chairman. Officers of synod are chosen by election. An outright majority of votes must be obtained. Should this not be the case following the first vote, a second vote shall be held between the two delegates that gained the most votes previously. Failing a result the eldest shall be elected. Blank votes are not valid and shall not be counted in determining a majority. This rule applies to the election of any person(s).

The secretary shall be responsible for the preparation of the Acts of Synod. These will as far as possible be finalised during the meeting. He shall also bear responsibility for any correspondence from the synod, and at the conclusion of synod arrange for all synod documents together with an index to be included in the Archives.

The assessor shall be responsible for a Press Release, which shall be approved by the Officers of Synod prior to its publication in a suitable vehicle.

Article 6 The agenda

The following items of business shall appear on every agenda

1. Opening by the Convening Church
2. Signing of Attendance Register, Examination of Credentials and Report of Findings
3. Constitution of Synod and the Election of Officers
4. Delegates agreement with the Three Forms of Unity
5. Adoption of the Agenda
6. Adoption of Meeting Procedures
7. Correspondence received by the convening church
8. Instructions
9. Proposals

10. Reports by:

- (a) Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad
- (b) Deputies for Contact with Churches within South Africa (church groups)
- (c) Deputies for Mission
- (d) Deputies for Correspondence with the Government
- (e) Deputies Curators for Theological Training
- (f) Deputies Article 11 of the Church Order (Needy Churches)
- (g) Deputies Article 19 of the Church Order (Needy Students)
- (h) The Synod Treasury
- (i) Appointed Church to Control the Treasury
- (j) Church which Maintains the Archives
- (g) Deputies in Control of the Archives

11. Appointment of Deputies

12. Benedictory greetings to the President

13. Questions according to article 41, paragraph 2, of the Church Order

14. Personal questions

15. Appointment of the convening church, and place and time of the next synod

16. Calculation of the percentages of the churches' share of synod costs

17. Adoption of the Acts of Synod and the Press Release

18. Censure according to Article 48 of the Church Order

19. Closing of Synod

Proposals and amendments which were not delivered to the convening church in time (see article 4(1) and article 4(2)) shall not be taken in to consideration by the synod, except by special resolution.

Article 7 Correspondence from Synod

Correspondence from the Synod to persons within the bond of churches shall be handled by the first clerk.

Official correspondence to persons or institutions outside the bond of churches shall be signed by the Officers of Synod.

Copies of such correspondence shall be kept in the archive.

Article 8 Rules for Debate

Decisions will be formulated as follows: Documentation – decision – grounds.

Wherever possible decisions shall be made unanimously. Should a proposal, motion or amendment be put to the vote, a majority of votes shall be required before the proposal, motion or amendment is carried. In the final count no blank votes or abstentions shall be considered, they are invalid.

Should the voting result in a tie, the proposal, motion or amendment shall be rejected, and where this occurs when examining a candidate, he will fail.

Questions concerning persons shall be decided by secret ballot and other matters shall be decided by a show of hands or orally.

Synod may resolve to appoint persons that have been recommended by the Officers of Synod. Otherwise the voting will proceed as follows:

1. By casting a free ballot.
2. Should there be more than two candidates from which to choose and no majority vote is reached a second free ballot shall take place.
3. If there is no result after two free ballots, any subsequent choice shall be restricted to the candidates who received the most votes in the previous ballot, with this proviso, that there shall be twice the number of nominations as is required to fill the positions.
4. Should this ballot reveal no clear majority the oldest person or persons shall be appointed.

Article 9 Deputies

To assist synod in the execution of their decisions the officers of synod, in agreement with the major assembly shall appoint churches or persons in this capacity.

Duties shall be divided as equally as possible. Deputies shall preferably not be appointed for more than three subsequent periods in the same deputyship. Execution of decisions for which no deputies have been appointed shall be the responsibility of the Officers of Synod.

Deputies shall submit a written report of their activities at the following synod

The mandate to deputies shall be in effect from one synod to the next.

Article 10 Instructions to Deputies

Each synod shall determine its mandate for respective deputyships.

Apart from any specific instructions the following general instructions shall apply:

1. Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad:
 - (a) The deputyship shall consist of six members, from which a secretary and chairman shall be appointed.
 - (b) The Acts of Synod, the provisional agenda for the synod and the Report by Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad shall be sent to the deputies of churches with whom we correspond.
 - (c) To send letters of greetings on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, to the synods of churches with whom we correspond.
 - (d) To supply attestations for ministers of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa who wish to lead services in one of our corresponding churches.
 - (e) The exchange of letters with deputies from our corresponding churches in order to facilitate good relations, as often as is deemed necessary.
 - (f) To report on decisions taken by synods of our corresponding churches.
 - (g) The delivery of any correspondence with, and Acts of Synod from, the churches with whom we correspond to the church responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives.

2. Deputies for Contact with Churches within South Africa (church groups):
 - (a) The deputyship shall consist of five members and two alternative members, from which a secretary and a chairman shall be appointed.
 - (b) Formulation of proposals to synod with regard to exercising contact with church groups within South Africa.
 - (c) The delivery of finalised correspondence and documents to the church responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives.

3. Deputies for Correspondence with Government:
 - (a) The deputyship shall consist of three members and one alternative member, from which a secretary and chairman shall be appointed.
 - (b) By means of proposals and draft letters equip synod to fulfill her duty in co-operating with government, and in certain circumstances, to witness to them as the Church of Christ.
 - (c) The delivery of finalised correspondence and documents to the church responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archives.

4. Synod Treasurer:
 - (a) Is responsible for the control of synod income and expenses, and the collection of the share of synod costs from the churches as agreed upon by synod.
 - (b) Shall keep books of account where all income and expenses will be shown.
 - (c) Reimburse any expenses incurred in the execution of a synod mandate and for which a specified account has been rendered.
 - (d) Prepare a financial report documenting income and expenditure and a balance statement for scrutiny and audit by synod.
 - (e) Shall arrange that the appointed church annually audits the abovementioned financial statements and presents a report of their findings to the synod.
 - (f) The calculation, in November each year, of costs incurred by churches, on behalf of and in the execution of synod tasks, and the share of each church in synod costs.
 - (g) The control of finances of deputies according to article 19 of the Church Order.

5. Church in Charge of the Archives:
 - (a) Shall appoint an archivist to care for the Archives.
 - (b) Shall ensure that legal requirements are met with regard to the distribution of copies of the Acts of Synod to public institutions.
 - (c) Shall ensure that the appointed archivist maintains the Archives in such a way that they are complete and accessible.

The following documents shall be kept in the Archives:

The Acts of Synod

The Acts of Synod of churches with whom we correspond

Reports and letters of all deputyships

All incoming documents to have reached synod

Copies of letters that synod has sent

- (d) The Archive must be inspected prior to each synod by the Church responsible for the care and maintenance of the Archive.

Article 11 Method of reporting by Deputies

Deputies reports are to be sent to the convening church four months prior to the synod and shall, as far as possible, include the following information:

1. The name of the deputyship, names of members and alternative members appointed by synod.
2. The instructions synod gave the deputies.
3. Report on the work done and give the meeting dates.
4. A reference list.
5. Deputies conclusions and recommendations, formulated in such a way (documentation – decision – grounds) that synod may make use of this formulation when outlining its decisions and recording these decisions in the Acts of Synod.
6. Instructions for new deputies.

Article 12 Amendment of Synod Rules

Amendment of these rules may only take place if a proposal to this effect, is placed on the synod agenda by a classis, or if it is recommended by deputies appointed by synod for this purpose.

Authorized by the synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa at (Pretoria-Maranata) on (26 May 2005).

(rev. C. Kleijn)	chairman
(elder P. Bouwman)	secretary
(rev. P. Nel)	vice chairman

SINODEREËLS VAN DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE IN SUID-AFRIKA

Artikel 1 Vergaderskema van die sinode

- (1) Die sinode sal een keer in drie jaar saamgeroep word deur die kerk wat van die vorige sinode opdragte daarvoor ontvang het.
- (2) Indien daar 'n dringende rede is om vroeër byeen te kom en minstens een klassis om dieselfde rede dit versoek, sal die sameroepende kerk in oorleg met die ander kerke, die tyd en plek van so 'n vervroegde sinode vasstel.

Artikel 2 Samestelling van die sinode

Die sinode word saamgestel uit wettige afgevaardigdes van die klassisse. Hulle moet kragtens artikel 32 van die Kerkorde, geloofsbriewe van hul klassis saambring waarin die binding aan die Heilige Skrif, die drie Formuliere van Enigheid en die Kerkorde uitgedruk word.

Elke klassis vaardig drie predikante en drie ouderlinge af. Indien daar nie drie predikante afgevaardig kan word nie as gevolg van vakatures of wettige verhinderings, kan daar meer ouderlinge afgevaardig word. As 'n diaken in plaas van 'n ouderling afgevaardig word, besluit die sinode of hy stemreg sal hê.

Alle predikante wat nie na die sinode afgevaardig is nie, word deur die sameroepende kerk uitgenooi as adviseurs. Amptelike afgevaardigdes van die kerke wat met die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika korrespondeer, word ook as adviseurs toegelaat.

Artikel 3 Bywoning van die sinode

- (1) Die sinodevergaderings is toeganklik vir alle lidmate van die kerke wat byeenkom.
- (2) Die sinode besluit oor die toelating van nie-lidmate.
- (3) Vergaderings in camera is slegs vir predikante en ouderlinge toeganklik.

Artikel 4 Die take van die sameroepende kerk

Die sameroepende kerk

- (1) rig minstens 6 maande voor die aanvang van die sinode 'n versoek aan die kerke en klassisse om sake vir die agenda in te stuur. Hierdie sake moet uiterste 1 maand voor die aanvang van die sinode by die roepende kerk ingehandig word. Die sinode kan besluit om in uitsonderlike omstandighede later ingehandigde sake te aanvaar.
- (2) stel 'n voorlopige agenda vas en stuur dit ten minste 2 maande voor die aanvang van die sinode een keer elektronies en een harde kopie aan alle kerke en ook aan die sekretaris van die Deputate vir Korrespondensie met Buitelandse Kerke. Hierdie agenda moet vergesel wees van die voorstelle met inligting, ook een keer elektronies en een harde kopie.
- (3) plaas die oproep vir die sinode en die voorlopige agenda in 'n geskikte kerklike publikasie.
- (4) rig 'n versoek tot moontlike adviseurs om kragtens artikel 3 die sinode by te woon.
- (5) stel die deputate wie se teenwoordigheid by die sinode benodig word, betyds in kennis van die byeenkoms van die sinode.
- (6) rapporteer oor die ondersoek van die geloofsbriewe en sorg vir die ondertekening van die presensielys deur die afgevaardigdes voor die sinode gekonstitueer word.
- (7) wys 'n tersakekundige notularis aan wat behulpsaam sal wees met: die voorbereiding van die sinode, notulering tydens die vergaderings van die sinode, die skriba sal bystaan met die samestelling van die sinodale *Handelinge*. Die notularis mag ook tydens *in camera*-sittings aanwesig wees vir die neem van notules; uiteraard sal hy hierdie notules vertroulik behandel.
- (8) hou 'n bidstond voor die aanvang van die sinode om 'n seën oor die werk te vra.

Artikel 5 Die moderamen

Die sinode word geopen deur 'n ampsdraer wat deur die sameroepende kerk daartoe versoek is. Nadat daar oor die geloofsbriewe verslag gedoen is, word die vergadering gekonstitueer en 'n moderamen verkies.

Die moderamen bestaan uit 3 lede, naamlik die voorsitter, die skriba en die 2de voorsitter.

Die moderamen word deur stemming verkies. Hierby geld dat 'n volstreekte meerderheid van stemme behaal moet word. Indien na die eerste stemming hierdie meerderheid nie behaal word nie, moet 'n stemming tussen die twee afgevaardigdes wat die meeste stemme behaal het, gehou word. By staking van stemme word die oudste in jare verkies. Blanco stemme word nie as 'n geldige stem by die bepaling van die meerderheid gereken nie. Hierdie reëling geld vir enige stemming oor persone.

Die skriba is verantwoordelik vir die opstel van die *Handelinge* van die Sinode. Hierdie *Handelinge* word sover moontlik tydens die vergadering voltooi. Verder versorg die skriba die briefwisseling van die sinode. Hy dra ook die sinodedokumente, met 'n inhoudsopgawe, oor aan die argiefbewarende kerk.

Die 2de voorsitter is onder meer belas met die opstel van 'n kort verslag van die sinode, wat hy na goedkeuring deur die moderamen in 'n geskikte blad publiseer.

Artikel 6 Die agenda

Die volgende items moet op die agenda van elke sinode verskyn:

- (1) Opening namens die sameroepende kerk.
- (2) Ondersoek van en verslag oor die geloofsbriewe.
- (3) Konstituering van die sinode en verkiesing van 'n moderamen.
- (4) Betuiging van instemming met die Belydenis deur die afgevaardigdes.
- (5) Vastelling van die agenda.

- (6) Vasstelling van die werkwyse van die sinode.
- (7) Sake wat by die sameroepende kerk ingekom het.
- (8) Moontlike instruksies.
- (9) Moontlike voorstelle.
- (10) Verslae van:
 - (a) Deputate vir Korrespondensie met Buitelandse Kerke.
 - (b) Deputate vir Kontak met Binnelandse Kerke (Kerkgroepe).
 - (c) Sendingdeputate.
 - (d) Deputate vir Korrespondensie met die Owerheid.
 - (e) Deputate Kuratore vir Opleiding tot Woorddiens.
 - (f) Deputate Artikel 11 KO (Hulpbehoewende Kerke).
 - (g) Deputate Artikel 19 KO (Hulpbehoewende Teologiese Studente).
 - (h) Die Kwestor.
 - (i) Aangewese Kerk vir Kontrole van die Kwestor.
 - (j) Argiefbewarende Kerk.
 - (k) Deputate vir Kontrole van die Argief.
- (11) Benoeming van deputate.
- (12) Seënwense aan die staatspresident.
- (13) Rondvraag volgens artikel 41, paragraaf 2, van die Kerkorde.
- (14) Persoonlike rondvraag.
- (15) Aanwysing van die sameroepende kerk, en die vasstelling van die tyd en plek van die volgende sinode.
- (16) Vasstelling van kwotum vir onkoste van die kerkverband.
- (17) Vasstelling van die Handeling en die Kort Verslag.
- (18) Sensuur volgens artikel 48 van die Kerkorde.
- (19) Sluiting.

Voorstelle en besware wat nie betyds by die sameroepende kerk ingelewer is nie (sien artikel 4(1) en 4(2)) word nie behandel nie, tensy die sinode anders besluit.

Artikel 7 Sinodale briefwisseling

Briewe van die sinode aan persone binne die kerkverband word deur die skriba onderteken.

Amptelike briewe aan persone of instansies buite die kerkverband word deur die moderamen onderteken.

Afskrifte van korrespondensie moet in die argief bewaar word.

Artikel 8 Besluitneming

Besluite word as volg geformuleer: Dokumentasie – besluit – gronde.

Besluite sal verkieslik eenparig geneem word. By 'n moontlike stemming oor 'n saak word 'n meerderheid van stemme vereis vir aanvaarding. By die bepaling van die meerderheid van stemme word blanko stemme en onthoudings nie saamgetel nie.

By staking van stemme word 'n voorstel verwerp, en in die geval van 'n eksaminering word die kandidaat afgewys.

Oor persone word skriftelik gestem, en oor sake mondeling.

Die sinode kan na goëddunke persone benoem wat deur die moderamen aanbeveel is. Andersins vind die verkiesing soos volg plaas:

- (1) Deur middel van vrye stemming.
- (2) Waar daar uit meer as twee persone gekies moet word en geen meerderheid verkry word nie, vind 'n tweede vrye stemming plaas.
- (3) Indien daar na die tweede vrye stemming nog geen meerderheid verkry is nie, moet 'n herstemming gehou word tussen hulle wat die meeste stemme verkry het, met dien verstande dat daar dan gestem word uit twee keer die aantal benodigde persone.
- (4) As by daardie stemming geen meerderheid verkry word nie, word die oudste persoon of persone benoem.

Artikel 9 Deputate

Vir die uitvoering van besluite word kerke of persone benoem wat die moderamen, met instemming van die vergadering, aanwys.

Take moet soveel as moontlik eweredig verdeel word. Deputate sal verkieslik nie meer as drie keer na mekaar in dieselfde deputaatskap benoem word nie. Uitvoering van besluite waarvoor geen deputate benoem is nie, is die taak van diene wat die moderamen gevorm het.

Op die volgende sinode moet deputate skriftelik oor hul werksaamhede verslag doen.

Die opdragte aan deputate duur van sinode tot sinode.

Artikel 10 Instruksies aan deputate

Elke sinode sal die opdragte vir die onderskeie deputaatskappe vasstel.

Benewens hierdie spesifieke opdragte, sal die volgende algemene instruksies geld:

- (1) Deputate vir Korrespondensie met Buitelandse Kerke:
 - (a) Die aanwys van 'n sekretaris en 'n voorsitter uit die deputaatskap wat uit ses lede bestaan.
 - (b) Versending van die sinodehandelinge, die voorlopige agenda vir die sinode, en die verslag van die Deputate vir Korrespondensie met Buitelandse Kerke aan die deputate van kerke wat met ons korrespondeer.

- (c) Die stuur van briewe met seënwense namens die kerke, aan die sinodes van ons korresponderende kerke.
 - (d) Verskaffing van attestate aan predikante van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke wat wil voorgaan in eredienste van ons korresponderende kerke.
 - (e) Briefwisseling met deputate van ons korresponderende kerke soos hulle dit vir die algemene welsyn die beste ag.
 - (f) Rapportering oor besluite van sinodes van ons korresponderende kerke.
 - (g) Oorhandiging van korrespondensie met, en Handeling van, die kerke waarmee kontak onderhou word, aan die argiefbewarende kerk.
- (2) Deputate vir Kontak met Binnelandse Kerke (Kerkgroepe):
- (a) Die aanwys van 'n sekretaris en 'n voorsitter uit die deputaatskap, wat uit vyf lede en twee alternatiewe lede bestaan.
 - (b) Formulering van moontlike voorstelle aan die sinode in verband met die beoefening van kontak met binnelandse kerke (kerkgroepe).
 - (c) Oorhandiging van afgehandelde korrespondensie en dokumente aan die argiefbewarende kerk.
- (3) Deputate vir Korrespondensie met die Owerheid:
- (a) Die aanwys van 'n sekretaris en 'n voorsitter uit die deputaatskap wat uit drie lede en 'n alternatiewe lid bestaan.
 - (b) Om deur middel van voorstelle en konsepbriewe die sinode in staat te stel om sy taak na te kom om die nodige samewerking van die owerheid te verkry ten behoeve van die kerk, en om in bepaalde gevalle as kerk van Christus voor die owerheid te getuig.
 - (c) Oorhandiging van afgehandelde korrespondensie en dokumente aan die argiefbewarende kerk.
- (4) Sinodale kwesors:
- (a) Die beheer van sinodale inkomste en uitgawes, en toesig dat die kerke die kwotum soos deur die sinode vasgestel is, betyds betaal.
 - (b) Die byhou van 'n oorsigtelike boekhouding waarby alle bewyse van inkomste en uitgawes getoon kan word.
 - (c) Vergoeding van onkoste wat in die uitvoering van opdragte van die sinode gemaak is en waarvoor gespesifiseerde rekeninge ontvang is.
 - (d) Die opstel van 'n finansiële verslag wat bestaan uit 'n inkomste- en uitgawestaat en 'n balansstaat ter insae van die sinode.
 - (e) Die toesien dat 'n jaarlikse kontrole van bogenoemde finansiële state deur die benoemde kerk uitgevoer word, en 'n voorlegging van 'n verslag daarvan aan die sinode.
 - (f) Die verrekening, in November elke jaar, van onkoste wat die kerke ten behoeve van die sinode aangegaan het, en verskuldigde kwota.
 - (g) Die beheer van die finansies van deputate kragtens artikel 19 van die Kerkorde.

(5) Argiefbewarende kerk:

- (a) Die aanwys van 'n argivaris wat moet sorg vir die argief.
- (b) Sorg dat wetlike verpligtings aangaande die verskaffing van eksemplare van Handeling van Sinodes aan openbare instansies nagekom word.
- (c) Toesig dat die benoemde argivaris sorg dat die argief volledig en toeganklik is.

Die volgende dokumente moet in die argief wees:

Handelinge van die sinodes.
Handelinge van sinodes van korresponderende kerke.
Verslae en briewe van alle deputaatskappe.
Alle dokumente wat by sinodes ingekom het.
Afskrifte van briewe wat deur sinodes verstuur is.

- (d) Die argief moet van sinode tot sinode gekontroleer word deur die kerk wat daarvoor benoem is.

Artikel 11 Wyse van rapportering deur deputate

Die verslae van deputate word vier maande voor die sinode aan die sameroepende kerk gestuur en sal sover moontlik die volgende inligting bevat:

- (1) Die naam van die deputaatskap en die name van die lede en alternatiewe lede wat deur die sinode benoem is.
- (2) Die opdrag wat deur die sinode aan die deputate gegee is.
- (3) Verslag van werksaamhede van deputate en vergaderdatums.
- (4) 'n Lys van geraadpleegde bronne.
- (5) Gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings van die deputate, so geformuleer (dokumentasie – besluit – gronde) dat dit as besluit van die sinode kan dien, en in die Handelinge opgeneem kan word.
- (6) Opdragte vir moontlike nuwe deputate.

Artikel 12 Wysiging van die sinodereëls

Wysiging van hierdie reëls is slegs moontlik as 'n sodanige voorstel deur 'n klassis op die agenda van die sinode geplaas word, of deur 'n deputaatskap wat deur die sinode hiervoor benoem is, aanbeveel word.

Vasgestel deur die sinode van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika te (Pretoria-Maranata) op (26 Mei 2005).

(ds. C. Kleijn)	voorsitter
(oudl. P. Bouwman)	skriba
(ds. P. Nel)	2de voorsitter

15. Persverslag van die 36ste sinode van die VGKSA

36^e SINODE van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (VGKSA) Pretoria, 13-16 Junie 2011

Persverslag

“Ek dank my God elke keer as ek aan julle dink” – Filippense 1:3

Met hierdie woorde het die Sinode sy werk op Dinsdagoggend begin. Die apostel Paulus dank God elke keer as hy dink aan die kerk in Filippi. Met dieselfde instelling kon die afgevaardigdes hulle werk begin, gedagtig aan al die goeie werk wat God reeds in die verlede in die kerke verrig het. Terselfdertyd is hulle aangemoedig dat ten spyte van hulle eie swakhede God hierdie werk sal voortsit tot die dag van Christus Jesus – ook deur die werksaamhede van die 36^e Sinode van die VGKSA (Fil 1:6). Elke oggend het die voorsitter die afgevaardigdes aangemoedig uit die brief aan die Filippense om hulle werk in hierdie konteks te sien.

In hierdie **Persverslag** vind u ’n kort oorsig van die agenda en besluite van die Sinode. Op ’n later stadium sal die Akta van die Sinode gepubliseer word met al die besluite, gronde en bylaes.

Die Sinode het begin, na ’n bidstond gehou in die VGK Pretoria, op Maandagaand 13 Junie. Hoewel die vorige Sinode – Kaapstad 2008 – Mamelodi aangewys het as die kerk om die Sinode saam te roep, het die kerk van Pretoria hierdie taak oorgeneem op versoek van Mamelodi, as gevolg van sake in hierdie gemeente wat dit vir hulle moeilik gemaak het.

Kredensiebriewe en Moderamen

Op Maandagaand is die kredensiebriewe ondersoek. Dit het geblyk dat Klassis Noord ’n ekstra predikant gestuur het as gevolg van ’n gebrek aan ouderlinge. Al die afgevaardigdes is versoek om op te staan om hulle instemming met die drie formuliere van eenheid te betoon. Die volgende moderamen is toe verkies:

Voorsitter: Ds. C. Kleijn

Ondervoorsitter: Ds. P.G. Boon

Skriba: Br. T. de Wit

Buitelandse Afgevaardigdes

Namens die **Free Reformed Churches of Australia** is br. Bert Veenendaal verwelkom. In sy toespraak het hy daarop gewys dat hulle Sinode Legana wat in 2009 gehou is, besluit het om die susterkerkverhouding met die VGKSA voort te sit. Hy het ook sy waardering uitgespreek vir die groeiende kontakte aan weersyde van die Indiese oseaan, en die groeiende gewaarwording hoe God sy kerk op beide kontinente vergader, beskerm en onderhou. Die Sinode Pretoria 2011 het ook besluit – op grond van die voorstel soos dit onderbou is deur die deputate vir betrekkinge met buitelandse kerke – om die susterkerkverhouding voort te sit. Die Sinode het ook sy opregte dank uitgespreek teenoor die Australiese kerke vir die verskeie maniere waarop hulle die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke bystaan, veral ook wat betref finansiële steun aan hulpbehoewende kerke.

Die **Canadian Reformed Churches** was nie in staat om ’n afgevaardigde te stuur nie. Hulle het egter hulle groeteboodskap per brief oorgedra. Hulle Sinode Burlington (Ebenezer) wat in 2010 gehou is het besluit om die susterkerkverhouding met die VGKSA voort te sit. Die Sinode Pretoria 2011 het ook besluit – op grond van die voorstel soos dit onderbou is deur die deputate vir betrekkinge met buitelandse kerke – om die susterkerkverhouding voort te sit. Dankbaarheid is ook uitgespreek vir die verskeie maniere waarop die Canadese kerke tot ons hulp gekom het. Spesiale vermelding is gemaak van die kommissie ingestel deur die Canadese Kerk van Coaldale, om alle finansiële hulp uit Canada aan die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke te koördineer en te kanaliseer.

Die **Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt)** het besluit om twee afgevaardigdes te stuur, om daardeur uitdrukking te gee aan hoe belangrik hulle die wedersydse verhouding beskou. Die Sinode het sy dankbaarheid hieroor uitgespreek. Die afgevaardigdes was ds. J.M. van Leeuwen en sr. M. Blok, beide lede van die Nederlandse deputate vir betrekkinge met buitelandse kerke (bbk). Die Sinode was egter minder beïndruk met die feit dat die Nederlandse kerke een vroulike afgevaardigde gestuur het. Om susters te laat dien as deputate is nie die probleem nie, aangesien die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke ook susters het wat as deputate dien. Waar die skoen gewring het was egter die feit dat die VGKSA buitelandse afgevaardigdes as lede van die Sinode aanvaar met volledige stem van advies wat betref alle sake op die agenda. Die Sinode is een van die regeerliggame in die kerke. Hierdie gewoonte het ontstaan as gevolg van die feit dat die VGKSA 'n klein kerkverband is en altyd die bydrae van buitelandse afgevaardigdes hoog op prys gestel het. Hoewel dit nie onmoontlik is om hierdie tradisie te verander nie, kon dit nie op die laaste oomblik gedoen word, sonder dat die kerke eers daarin geken is nie. Ons deputate bbk het die Nederlandse deputate hieroor ingelig, en hulle vriendelik versoek om – as dit moontlik was – nie 'n vroulike afgevaardigde te stuur nie. Maar die Nederlandse deputate het voortgegaan om 'n vroulike afgevaardigde te stuur. Die Sinode het uitgespreek dat dit onsensitief was van die Nederlandse kerke, en noudat die Sinode geforseer was, besluit om aan ds. Van Leeuwen die volledige voorregte verbonde aan 'n buitelandse afgevaardigde te verleen, maar om die deelname van sr. Blok te beperk tot haar aandagsveld, naamlik die Nederlandse kerke.

Sinodereëls

Die Sinode het administrateurs aangestel om die sinodereëls vir die toekoms op datum te bring. Dit behels dus ook om na die kerke met 'n onderboude voorstel te kom wat betref die status van buitelandse afgevaardigdes. Die Sinode het hierdie deputate verder gevra om die sinodereëls op die volgende punte aan te pas:

- Om 'n duidelike afsnydatum vir deputaterapporte te stel, waarna die Sinode nie aan laat rapporte sal aandag skenk nie. Skynbaar is die feit dat die huidige reëls stel dat rapporte vier maande voor die begin van die sinode aan die kerke gestuur moet word, nie duidelik genoeg nie...
- Deputaterapporte moet in Engels geskryf wees. Dit geld ook vir lang bylaes. Hulle moet of in Engels vertaal word, of 'n Engelse samevatting moet voorsien word.
- Elke afgevaardigde op die Sinode het die reg om in sy moedertaal te praat, waarna dit in Engels getolk sal word.
- Die Sinodereëls moet as 'n bylae by die Akta gepubliseer word, sodat dit vir almal beskikbaar is.

Teologiese Opleiding

Die Sinode het ook die rapport van Deputate Kuratore behandel. Hierdie was die hoofsaak:

- Vanaf begin 2010 is die streekskoördineerders – ds. J.A. Breytenbach (Klassis Suid) en ds. P. G. Boon (Klassis Noord) – betrokke by 'n inisiatief wat die *Gereformeerde Teologiese Opleidingsinisiatief (GTOI)* genoem word. Dit is 'n samewerking tussen 'n aantal kerke uit die GKSA en die VGKSA. Die doel is om 'n Teologiese opleiding in Suid-Afrika daar te stel met die volgende kenmerke:

- ❖ Gebaseer op die Woord van God en die Belydenisse (HK, NGB, DL & Westminster Konfessie), sowel as 'n gesamenlike dokument wat die hermeneutiese uitgangspunte vaslê.
- ❖ 'n Groot fokus op die opleiding van predikante en sendelinge vir Afrika.
- ❖ 'n Gedesentraliseerde in diens opleiding, wat beteken dat studente betrokke moet wees in praktiese werksaamhede in die kerke gedurende die hele verloop van hulle studie, wat geëvalueer word deur mentore in die plaaslike gemeentes en waarvoor die studente krediete ontvang.
- ❖ Dit het multi in- en uitreevlakke, wat die opleiding geskik maak nie net vir predikante nie, maar ook vir ouderlinge, diakens, evangeliste, Sondagskoolonderwysers, en ander bedieninge in die kerke.
- ❖ Dit behoort aan die kerke, en is vry van staatsubsidie.

- Die Sinode het kennis geneem van die *Visiedokument* van hierdie inisiatief (GTOI), en het die kuratore aangemoedig om voort te gaan met hulle betrokkenheid hierby. Mog die GTOI suksesvol wees, kan dit beteken dat die uiteindelijke oogmerk wat die kerke in die verlede geformuleer het verwesenlik kan word: 'n enkele opleiding in Suid-Afrika vir alle verskillende Teologiese studente van die VGKSA, ongeag hulle afkoms.

- Die Sinode het besluit om in die tussentyd voort te gaan soos in die verlede. Teologiese studente vanaf die sendingvelde van Klassis Noord word aanbeveel om by die *Mukhanyo Theological College (MTC)* te studeer, met 'n plusprogram daarna. Studente vanaf die sendingvelde van Klassis Suid word aangemoedig om by die *George Whitefield College (GWC)* te studeer, met 'n toegevoegde plusprogram. Studente van die 'ouer' kerke word aangemoedig om 'n BA-graad te voltooi by 'n universiteit in hulle omgewing (met Hebreeus en Grieks en verkieslik ook Latyn), en vir hulle BTh-graad gebruik te maak van die *Theological Seminary* van ons susterkerke in Canada. Die Sinode het aanbeveel, op grond van praktiese en finansiële redes asook die Teologiese standpuntinname van sommige dosente, om nie langer gebruik te maak van die *Theologische Universiteit* in Kampen, Nederland, nie.
- Terselfdertyd het die Sinode benadruk dat die onderskeid tussen studente afkomstig uit die 'ouer' kerke en die sendingsvelde nie in sement gegiet is nie. In oorleg met die streekskoördineerders moet die mees geskikte studieroete vasgestel word vir elke individuele student.
- Die vorige Sinode het ds. J.A. Breytenbach as nasionale koördineerder benoem. Een en 'n half jaar gelede het hy egter bedank as gevolg van sy werkslas. Die kuratore het toe besluit dat die take oorgeneem sou word deur die streekskoördineerders en die administratiewe assistente. Die Sinode het ook besluit om nie 'n nuwe nasionale koördineerder op hierdie stadium te benoem nie, hoewel die kuratore die mandaat ontvang om dit te doen indien noodsaaklik.

Bevestiging van Huwelike

Twintig jaar gelede het die Sinode van 1990 besluit dat huwelike in privaat byeenkomste bevestig sal word. Klassis Noord het nou met nuwe argumentasie gekom dat – op basis van die situasie waarin die kerkverband inbeweeg het met die (ex) sendingkerke – hierdie besluit te smal is. In die Afrika-konteks is huweliksluitings baie verstrengel in die ou heidense geloof. Vir die (sending)kerke is dit baie belangrik om juis meer betrokke te wees. Daarom het die Sinode die volgende besluit:

“Die sinodebesluit van 1990 artikel 16(b) word soos volg verander: Die kerklike bevestiging van huwelike kan of gedoen word in 'n private byeenkoms of in 'n kerkdiens in terme van art. 68 van die Kerkorde. Dit kan deur die plaaslike kerk bepaal word. Die Sinode besluit om kerkrade op te roep om hulle betrokkeheid in die gee van leiding aan paartjies in die voorbereiding op 'n waarlik Christelike huwelik, te intensiveer. Dit behoort onderrig in te sluit en leiding met betrekking tot die Christelike karakter van die huweliksbevestiging.”

Werklas van Predikante

Klassis Noord het 'n versoek ingedien om in die toekoms versigtig te wees om predikante in verskillende deputaatskappe aan te stel. Die Sinode se antwoord was dat die kerkverband klein is, en dat die werklas op ander lede se skouers net so swaar is. In die Deputate art. 11 (hulpbehoewende kerke) het die Sinode egter nie 'n predikant weer benoem nie, vanweë 'n moontlike belangenkonflik.

Bybelvertaling

Die Sinode het weer deputate aangestel met die mandaat om lede te wees van die *Kerklike Advieskomitee* met betrekking tot die nuwe vertaling van die Bybel in Afrikaans. Aangesien hierdie proses vertraging opgeloop het, het die deputate nie baie werk te doen gehad nie. Wat betref die toekoms moet die deputate daarop toesien dat sover dit in hulle vermoë lê daar 'n betroubare Bybelvertaling tot stand kom. Die deputate sal bygestaan word deur lesers uit die kerke in die proses.

Deputate n.a.v. art. 49 van die Kerkorde

In die kerkverband is daar 'n aantal meganismes, bedoel om daarop toe te sien dat klassisse en kerkrade hulle werk doen volgens die Woord van God, die Belydenis en die Kerkorde. In art. 49 van die Kerkorde lees ons: “Die sinode... sal deputate benoem wat die klassisse moet bystaan in alle gevalle waar die Kerkorde dit voorskryf, en – op versoek van die klassisse – by spesiale probleme.” Hierdie deputate het aan die Sinode gerapporteer dat hulle die afgelope jare betrokke was by 'n aantal klassiseksamens van Teologiese studente, sowel as by een spesiale probleem – die skorsing en afsetting van 'n predikant.

Korrespondensie met die Owerhede

Die Sinode het kennis geneem van die aktiwiteite van hierdie deputate, onder andere:

- 'n Gelukwensingsbrief wat gestuur is aan president Zuma ter geleentheid van sy verkiesing en aanstelling as president van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika.
- 'n Brief wat gestuur is aan die minister van gesondheid om ons bekommernis uit te spreek oor die effek wat stakings op die gesondheidssektor het.

Vir die toekoms het hierdie deputate mandate soos die volgende ontvang:

- Om te reageer op maatreëls wat 'n impak het op die beskerming van die prediking van die Evangelie.
- Om na die regering getuieis af te lê in gevalle wat die regering die universele wet van God oortree, en om oor die spesifieke aard van hierdie spesifieke mandaat verder deur te dink en met voorstelle na die volgende Sinode te kom.
- Om die gemeentes in die VGKSA te stimuleer om 'n aktiewe benadering te hê teenoor die regering en om ondersoek in te stel na die moontlikheid om te reageer op nuwe en gewysigde wetsontwerpe, op uitnodiging van die regering.

Kontrole van die Argief

Een klein punt kan genoem word: die Sinode het besluit dat elektroniese handtekeninge (soos in pdf-dokumente) aanvaarbaar is. Dit sal baie tyd en energie in die toekoms spaar.

Sendingsdeputate Suid-Afrika

In hulle verslag het die sendingsdeputate aangedui dat hulle 'n aantal (finansiële) verantwoordelikhede die afgelope jare oorgedra het na ander deputaatskappe:

- Hulle betaal nie meer iets vir hulpbehoewende kerke nie, dit word nou deur deputate art. 11 KO gedoen.
- Hulle is nie meer betrokke en betaal ook nie meer iets vir Teologiese opleiding nie. Hulle het 'n kontrak gehad met Mukhanyo Theological College (MTC) vir 'n periode van vyf jare (waarvan 2011 die laaste is), op grond waarvan hulle elke jaar 'n bedrag van R 150,000 aan MTC betaal het. Deputate kuratore moet die verantwoordelikheid oorneem t.a.v. MTC, sowel as ander opleidingsinstansies.
- Die afgelope jare het die sendingsdeputate gelde gekanaliseer vanaf *De Verre Naasten (DVN)* na hulpbehoewende Teologiese studente. Aangesien DVN hulle steun met 75% terugskroef het, het die sendingsdeputate toegesê om in 2011 te help finansier, waarna hulle betrokkeheid met hulpbehoewende studente ook tot 'n einde sal kom.

In hulle verslag het sendingsdeputate daarvoor gewaarsku dat die wyse waarop die kerkverband en sy sendingswerk op die oomblik funksioneer, nie volhoubaar is nie, sowel wat betref finansies as mannekrag. Hulle het daarom voorgestel dat daar later hierdie jaar 'n *indaba* gehou behoort te word, met al die verskillende deputate en rolspelers aanwesig, om te besin oor die situasie en voorstelle te maak m.b.t. 'n volhoubare toekoms. Die sinode het met hierdie voorstel ingestem en 'n kommissie aangestel om hierdie *indaba* saam te roep, as die Here wil in Oktober hierdie jaar. Die Sinode het die wens uitgespreek dat deur hierdie *indaba* spesifieke voorstelle aan die kerke gemaak kan word, en dat 'n ad hoc Sinode saamgeroep kan word in Februarie 2012 om besluite te neem.

Web

Die Sinode van Kaapstad 2008 het deputate aangestel om 'n amptelike webwerf vir die VGKSA te lanseer. As gevolg van verskeie redes het dit nog nie gebeur nie. Die Sinode het nuwe deputate met hierdie taak aangestel.

Kontakte met Kerke in Afrika

Die deputate vir kontakte met buitelandse kerke het in die verlede heelwat pogings aangewend om kontak te lê met kerkverbande in Suidelike Afrika. Die resultate was oor die algemeen nie baie suksesvol nie, dikwels as gevolg van logistieke redes. Verder moet ook in ag geneem word dat die VGKSA 'n klein kerkverband is met beperkte mannekrag. Daar is daarom in die verlede deur die Sinode besluit om nie met hierdie proses voort te gaan nie. Kontakte met kerke in ander Afrikalande loop deur die Internasionale Konferensie vir Gereformeerde Kerke (ICRC) en sy regionale en sendingskonferensies. Desnieteenstaande is die deputate vir kontakte met buitelandse kerke nog steeds beskikbaar om hulp te verleen aan lede wat vir korter of langer periodes na ander Afrikalande reis of daar verbly.

Liturgiese Musiek

Die deputate vir liturgiese musiek het die Sinode in hulle verslag gedien met 'n begronde voorstel hoe die kerke in die komende jare 'n Afrikaanse Psalm- en Gesangeboek kan saamstel. Hulle vertrekpunt was dat so 'n bundel die kerke in staat moet stel om die volledige raad van God in die Nuwe Testamentiese tydperk te besing. Hulle het spesifiek die Heidelbergse Kategismus gebruik om 'n lys saam te stel van die mees basiese leerstellinge en gebeurtenisse uit die Woord van God.

Daarna het hulle begin om Psalms en Gesange te identifiseer wat oor hierdie onderwerpe handel. Hulle doel is om 'n bundel saam te stel wat naas die Psalms 'n seleksie van Gesange bied oor elke leerstelling en gebeurtenis, om so saam die volledige raad van God te reflekteer soos ons dit in die Bybel vind. Op hierdie stadium het hulle reeds 11 gesange goedgekeur wat afkomstig is uit die *Liedboek*. In die toekoms sal hulle

soek na uitbreiding van die leestellings en gebeurtenisse, en meer gesange uit die *Liedboek* en ander bundels.

Die Sinode het hierdie deputate ook gevra om die nuwe 'Skrifberymings' te toets volgens die vasgestelde kriteria. Hoewel hierdie 'Skrifberymings' reeds getoets is deur 'n kommissie in die Pretoria gemeente wat betref hulle inhoud, is hulle nog nie op hulle musikaliteit getoets nie. Die Sinode het die deputate gevra om vervolgens die 'Skrifberymings' wat deur hulle goedgekeur is, saam met die bogenoemde gesange aan die kerke beskikbaar te stel, sodat die kerke kennis kan maak met hierdie liedere en kommentaar lewer. 'n Toekomstige Sinode sal finaal die nuwe bundel goedkeur.

Verder het die Sinode amptelik die Engelse *Book of Praise* (wat die Psalms, 'n aantal Gesange, die Belydenisgeskrifte en die Liturgiese formuliere bevat) goed te keur vir gebruik in die kerke. Hierdie *Book of Praise* word ook gebruik deur ons Canadese en Australiese susterkerke.

Die Sinode het ook Sotho sprekendes in die deputaatskap benoem, aangesien hulle die opdrag gekry het om in die komende jare die gesangebundel te toets wat tans in die Sotho sprekende kerke gebruik word.

Kontakte met Kerke in Suid-Afrika

Die Sinode het gesukkel om die rapport van deputate vir kontakte met kerke in Suid-Afrika te behandel, aangesien dat slegs enkele ure voor die opening van die Sinode ingelewer is. As gevolg van verskillende redes het die gesprekke tussen hierdie deputate en hulle eweknieë in die GKSA die afgelope jare nie plaasgevind nie. Op Woensdag het ds. P. Kurpershoek die Sinode egter namens die GKSA toegesprek. Gedurende die afgelope jare was daar toenemende kontakte in Pretoria tussen sommige plaaslike GKSA en VGKSA gemeentes (VGK Pretoria, VGK Pretoria-Maranata, GK Oos-Moot, GK Totiusdal, GK Kandelaar). Ongelukkig het die kontakte wat daar in Kaapstad gelê is, nie verder ontwikkel nie.

Die Sinode het die deputate gevra om voort te gaan om kontakte te onderhou met die *Free Church of South Africa*. Die Sinode het ook besluit om deputate die mandaat te gee – op hulle versoek – om kontak te lê met die *Church of England in South Africa*. In die Kaap is daar alreeds bepaalde kontakte met hierdie kerkverband, veral wat betref hulle Teologiese opleiding – George Whitefield College.

Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) (GKv)

Namens die Nederlandse susterkerke het ds. Van Leeuwen die Sinode toegesprek. Hy het begin deur Josua 22:9-34 te lees. Met hierdie gedeelte wou hy aandui dat dit soms kan gebeur dat daar wantroue tussen susterkerke ontstaan. As gevolg van die geografiese afstand is dit nie altyd duidelik vir die een kant watter motiverings ten grondslag lê aan bepaalde ontwikkelinge aan die ander kant. Maar volgens ds. Van Leeuwen toon Josua 22 aan dat dit nie onmoontlik is om die Here op verskillende maniere te dien, en dan steeds die band van eenheid te bewaar nie.

Die Nederlandse afgevaardigdes het gekla dat die verslag wat deur die deputate vir kontakte met buitelandse kerke (deputate bbk) geskryf is volgens hulle 'n eensydige beeld van die Nederlandse kerke skets. Behalwe vir die sorgwekkende ontwikkelinge, is daar ook positiewe ontwikkelinge.

Deputate bbk het daarop gewys dat hulle verslag nie gelees moet word asof hulle druk om die susterkerkverhouding te beeindig nie. Maar om die verhouding gesond te hou, is ernstige gesprekke noodsaaklik, veral in die lig van sorgwekkende ontwikkelinge.

Deputate bbk het aangedui dat hulle ervaring is dat die Nederlanders die afgelope jare die SA kerke en hulle sorge t.a.v. die kerke in NL nie ernstig geneem het nie. Die huidige verslag is inderdaad meer konfronterend as in die verlede, met die hoop dat die Nederlandse kerke en hulle deputate gewillig sal wees om hierdie keer wel hulle te verbind tot inhoudelike gesprekke. Die Sinode het sy dankbaarheid uitgesprek vir die feit dat die Nederlandse afgevaardigdes hulle vir die komende periode bereid verklaar het tot opbouende gesprekke. Om hierdie rede het die Sinode besluit om nog nie die voorstelle van deputate bbk ten aansien van die susterkerkverhouding en moontlik beperkings daarop te behandel nie. Eers moet die gesprekke in die komende periode plaasvind, en die resultaat daarvan afgewag word. Die Sinode het ook die deputate bbk die mandaat gegee om te kontak met hulle Canadese en Australiese eweknieë in hierdie verband.

Kerke wat in die afgelope dekade afgeskei het van die GKv

Sowel die Sinode van Pretoria-Maranata (2005) as Kaapstad (2008) het die broederskap met die *De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK)* erken, wat in 2003 en verder van die GKv afgeskei het. Die Sinode Pretoria 2011 het die deputate die mandaat gegee om gesprekke met hierdie kerke voort te sit, en te ondersoek of hierdie kontakte voortgesit moet word.

Wat betref die *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN)* – voorheen bekend as *Voorlopig Kerkverband* het die Sinode besluit dat dit nog te vroeg is om met 'n amptelike proses te begin om te ondersoek of 'n

susterkerkverhouding met hulle aangeknop moet word. In die tussentyd moet die deputate egter op die hoogte bly van ontwikkelinge. Die *GKN* bestaan uit gemeentes wat aan die een kant van die *DGK* afgeskei het, en aan die ander kant van die *GKv*.

Deputate volgens art. 11 KO (Steun aan Hulpbehoewende Kerke)

Net soos die sendingsdeputate, het deputate art. 11 ook die Sinode se aandag daarop gevestig dat die huidige wyse waarop die kerkverband funksioneer, finansiële nie volhoubaar is nie. Van die agt kerke in die kerkverband is daar slegs drie selfonderhoudend. Dit beteken dat vyf hulpbehoewend is! As die huidige praktyk in die sending ook nog voortgaan om slegs kerke te institueer wat *hulpbehoewend* is, is die toekomsprospektief net nog donkerder uit 'n finansiële oogpunt.

Hieraan toegevoeg die feit dat die grootste deel van steun vir hierdie hulpbehoewende kerke van oorsee kom, word dit duidelik dat die kerkverband homself in 'n baie onstabiele en riskante finansiële posisie bevind. Deputate konkludeer daarom dat iets moet verander. In hulle verslag maak hulle alreeds sommige voorstelle in hierdie verband. Die verslag van hierdie deputate onderstreep weer eens die belang van 'n *indaba* later hierdie jaar, soos die Sinode besluit het.

Deputate volgens art. 19 KO (Steun aan Hulpbehoewende Teologiese Studente)

Die finansiële prentjie wat deputate art. 19 in hulle verslag skets is nie baie anders as bogenoemde nie. Hulle finansiële posisie is ook nie volhoubaar nie. Waar *De Verre Naasten* die meerderheid van Teologiese studente in die verlede ondersteun het, is hierdie steun vir 'n groot deel stopgesit. Om dit te vervang het *Zendingsdeputate Nederland (ZDNL)* belowe om gelde vir hierdie doel beskikbaar te maak uit 'n legaat. Tog dui deputate art. 19 aan, nadat dit reeds in ag geneem is, dat die bydraes uit die kerke ten minste moet verdriedubbel, as hulle hulle boeke wil laat klop in die toekoms. Hulle het die Sinode daarom versoek om – onder andere – 'n maksimum getal te stel vir hulpbehoewende studente. Die Sinode het nog nie hierop besluit nie, maar wel die komende *indaba* versoek om hierdie saak ook op die agenda te plaas.

Aangesien die huidige deputate art. 19 almal in die Kaap woon, het die Sinode via Skype met hulle gekommunikeer, sodat hulle die vrae wat die afgevaardigdes aan hulle gestel het, kon beantwoord.

Sinode Questor

Die Sinode het geprobeer om m.b.v. Skype verbinding te lê met die Questor, wat ook in die Kaap woon, maar hierdie keer het die tegnologie ons in die steek gelaat. Gelukkig was daar 'n afgevaardigde met 'n *smartphone* met luidspreker, wat die Questor in staat gestel het om tog te volg wat in Pretoria bespreek is! In sy verslag het die Questor gemeld dat sommige kerke hulle *quota* trou betaal. Die Sinode 2008 het besluit dat, hoewel hulpbehoewende kerke vrygestel word van die volledige *quota*, hulle tog kollekte moet hou vir die verskillende kerkverbandelike onkoste. Die Sinode was nogal omgekrap oor die feit dat sedert 2008 geen enkele hulpbehoewende kerk begin het om dit te doen nie. Die moderamen is versoek om dringend 'n brief aan die hulpbehoewende kerke te stuur, en hulle in te lig oor hulle plig in hierdie verband.

Toe die Sinode aan die einde van sy agenda al die verskillende deputate se versoeke tot toekomstige *quota* optel, het geblyk dat dit neerkom op 'n verhoging van 30% in 2012. Die Sinode het besluit dat dit nie van die kerke verwag kan word om so 'n skielike verhoging te betaal nie. Daar is daarom besluit om 'n 10% verhoging reeds te implementeer vir die oorblywende deel van 2011, en dan in 2012 'n verdere verhoging van 18%. Die nuwe syfers vir 2011 lyk soos volg:

Deputaatskap:	Ou bydrae per lid 2011	Nuwe bydrae per lid 2011
Kuratore	R 110	R 90
Art 11 (hulpbehoewende kerke)	R 200	R 220
Art 19(hulpbehoewende teologiese studente)	R 20	R 65
Sending	R 120	R 130
Boekhouer	R 20	R 20

Totaal	R 470	R 525
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Volgende Sameroepende Kerk

Die Sinode het Bethal (en Johannesburg as moontlike plaasvervanger) benoem as die sameroepende kerk vir die volgende reguliere Sinode, as die Here wil in Mei 2014.

So is die 36^e Sinode van die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika suksesvol afgesluit. Dit beteken egter nie dat daar nie swakhede was, wat in die toekoms verbeter moet word nie. Om enkeles te noem: - Klassis Noord het nogal gesukkel om sy afvaardiging na die Sinode in plek te kry. Die afspraak is dat elke klassis (Noord en Suid) drie predikante en drie ouderlinge afvaardig. Uit die ses ouderlinge (primi en secundi) wat deur klassis Noord afgevaardig is, was daar slegs twee beskikbaar. Pogings om op die laaste oomblik nuwe broeders af te vaardig, was onsuksesvol. Die feit dat die Sinode gehou is tydens 'n week waarin daar twee skoolvakansiedae was – iets wat oorspronklik beskou is as bevorderend vir die beskikbaarheid van broeders – het agteraf geblyk juis andersom te werk. Vir die toekoms is dit belangrik dat die kerke saam en elke lid persoonlik hulle weer van harte moet verbind tot die kerkverbandelike take. Persoonlike prioriteite behoort aan die kant gesit te word vir werk wat in die kerke moet gebeur, wat tog die bruid van Jesus Christus is!

- 'n Ander voorbeeld van slegte 'dienslewering' is die feit dat heelwat deputateverslae veels te laat ingehandig is. Die rapport van deputate vir betrekkings met kerke in Suid-Afrika was eers 'n paar ure voor die aanvang van die Sinode beskikbaar, terwyl die Sinodereëls vereis dat dit ten minste vier maande voor die tyd na die kerke gestuur moet word! Die kerke kon dus nie kennis neem van die inhoud van hierdie rapport nie. Kom ons kry ons prioriteite in orde!

Die Sinode is afgesluit deur saam te lees uit Openbaring 22. Vir 'n week lank het die afgevaardigdes en adviseurs, sowel van oorsee as plaaslik, saamgekom om te praat en te besluit oor sake van gemeenskaplike belang. Maar voordat elkeen weer vertrek het in verskillende windrigtings, het ons aan mekaar belowe dat elkeen van ons – waardie HERE ons ook al geroep het – sal voortgaan om te bou op dieselfde fondament, wat Jesus Christus is en sy betroubare Woord, in afwagting van sy spoedige wederoms:

“Kyk, Ek kom gou, en my loon is by My, om elkeen te vergeld soos sy werk sal wees. Ek is die Alfa en die Omega, die begin en die einde, die eerste en die laaste. Salig is die wat sy gebooie doen, sodat hulle reg kan hê op die boom van die lewe en ingaan deur die poorte in die stad... Want ek betuig aan elkeen wat die woorde van die profesie van hierdie boek hoor: As iemand by hierdie dinge byvoeg, dan sal God oor hom die plaë byvoeg waarvan in hierdie boek geskrywe is. En as iemand iets van die woorde van die boek van hierdie profesie wegneem, dan sal God sy deel wegneem uit die boek van die lewe en uit die heilige stad en uit die dinge waarvan in hierdie boek geskrywe is. Hy wat dit getuig, sê: Ja, Ek kom gou. Amen, ja kom, Here Jesus! Die genade van onse Here Jesus Christus sy met julle almal! Amen.”

Voorsitter: ds. C. Kleijn Ondervoorsitter: ds. P.G. Boon Skriba: br. T. de Wit