

# **The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa**

**Acts of the 39<sup>th</sup> Synod of the  
Free Reformed Churches in South Africa  
convened by the FRC Soshanguve North  
7<sup>th</sup> August – 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2017**



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**Members and foreign delegates of Synod Soshanguve-North, 2017.**



Top row from left to right: Br. C. Roose, Br. O. Bouwman (CanRC), Rev. S. 't Hart (FRCA), Br. C. Willemse, Rev. D.M. Boersma, Rev. A. Hagg (FRCA), Rev. C.A. van Wyk, Rev. G.F. Mnisi, Prof. A.J. de Visser (CanRC), Rev. J.A. Breytenbach, Rev. J. Bruintjes, Rev. P.G. Boon, Br. E. Byker.  
Bottom row from left to right: Br. H. Pouwels, Br. R. Meeske, Br. T.W. Tamane, Rev. E.L. van 't Foort, Br. G. Hagg, Br. A. Pedro (RCNL), Rev. J.J. Schreuder (RCNL).

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- Doc. 1: [Opening address on behalf of FRC Soshanguve North](#) by **Br. T. W. Tamane**
- Doc. 2: **Report of** [Deputies for Revision of Synod Rules](#)
- Doc. 3: [Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad - Report](#)
- Doc. 4: [Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad - Addendum report](#)
- Doc. 5: [Greeting message CanRC](#) by **Br. O. Bouwman**
- Doc. 6: [Greeting message from the FRCA](#) by **Rev. A. Hagg**
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- Doc. 9: [Greeting message from the RCSA](#) by **Rev. Kurpershoek**
- Doc. 10: [Classis North - Proposal Lord's Supper at home](#)
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- Doc. 12: [Mission Deputies South Africa - Report](#)
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- Doc. 14: [Mission Deputies South Africa - Presentation](#)
- Doc. 15: **Report of** [Deputies for Revision of Liturgical Forms and Form Prayers](#)
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- Doc. 17: [Verslag Deputate vir Liturgiese Musiek](#)
- Doc. 18: **Report of** [Deputies Art. 11 CO \(Needy churches\)](#)
- Doc. 19: [Classis South - Proposal tentmakers ministry](#)
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- Doc. 22: **Report of** [Deputies for Theological Training and Art. 19 CO \(Deputies Curators\)](#).
- Doc. 23: [Greeting message from the DRCAfr](#) by **Dr. Hofmann**
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- Doc. 28: **Report of** [Deputies for Internet Communication](#)
- Doc. 29: [Stated Clerk - Report](#)
- Doc. 30: [Stated Clerk - Additional report](#)

**Documents available with the Stated Clerk, to be obtained on request:**

- Report of Deputies Article 49 CO – Classis North.**
- Report of Deputies Article 49 CO – Classis South.**
- Report of the Treasurer.**
- Deputies for Inspection of the Treasurers books.**
- Report of Deputies for Inspection of the Archive.**

## List of abbreviations and acronyms as used in these Acts.

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BBK	Deputaten Betrekkingen Buitenlandse Kerken van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) = Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands Liberated)
BDV	Bybel Direkte Vertaling
BOP	Book of Praise
CanRC	Canadian Reformed Churches
CJF	Calvyn Jubileum Fonds
CO	Church Order
CRTS	Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
DC	Deputies Curators
DCCSA	Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa
DGK	De Gereformeerde Kerken
DRCA	Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad
DRCAfr	Dutch Reformed Church in Africa
DVN	De Verre Naaste (RCNL organisation)
FCSA	Free Church in South Africa
FRC	Free Reformed Church
FRCA	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRCSA	Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
GKN	Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland
ICO	Instituut vir Christelike Onderwys
ICRC	International Conference of Reformed Churches
KA	Kerklike Advieskomitee
LS	The Lord's Supper
MDiv	Master of Divinity
MDSA	Mission Deputies South Africa
NGK	Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken
NGKA	Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika
RCNL	Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated)
RCNZ	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
RCSA	Reformed Churches in South Africa
ZAM	Zuid-Afrika Mission (RCNL organisation)



**Acts of the 39<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa  
convened by the FRC Soshanguve North from 7<sup>th</sup> August – 11<sup>th</sup> August,  
2017**

**Article 1      Prayer service**

A prayer service was held in the church building of the Free Reformed Church in Soshanguve North on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August. The service was led by Prof. A. J. de Visser of the Canadian Reformed Churches, assisted by Rev. P. Magagula, missionary in Soshanguve F4, Rev. S. 't Hart of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and br. A. Pedro of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated).

**Day 1: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

**Article 2      Opening**

On behalf of the convening church, the FRC of Soshanguve North, br. T. W. Tamane called the meeting to order and delivered an opening address based on Ps 133 (Doc. 1). He welcomed all the delegates, led in prayer and after singing Song 142 from Lifela tsa Sione, he declared Synod 2017 to be opened.

**Article 3      Credentials**

The credentials of the delegates were examined and both classes were found to be properly represented according to the letters of both classes regarding the appointments of delegates, as sent to the Stated Clerk.

Classis North appointed the following delegates, according to their letter, dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017:

Primary:

Rev. J.A. Breytenbach  
Rev. P. G. Boon  
Rev. G.F. Mnisi  
Elder G. Hagg  
Elder H. Pouwels  
Elder T. W. Tamane  
-----

Alternates:

Rev. S. Matlhokoane (1)  
Rev. D. M. Boersma (2)  
Rev. M. P. Magagula (3)  
Elder D. Drijfhout (1)  
Elder D. van Renssen (2)  
Elder L. Hordijk (3)  
Elder T. Bosker (4)

The following delegates from Classis North were present during the constitution of Synod 2017: Revs. Breytenbach, Boon and Mnisi and Elders Hagg, Pouwels and Tamane.

Classis South appointed the following delegates, according to their letter, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017:

Primary:

Rev. J. Bruintjes  
Rev. E.L. van 't Foort  
Rev. C.A. van Wyk  
Elder E. Byker  
Elder R. Meeske  
Elder C. Willemse

Alternates:

Elder C. Bron  
Elder G. Klapwijk

The following delegates from Classis South were present during the constitution of Synod 2017: Revs. Bruintjes, Van 't Foort and Van Wyk and Elders Byker, Meeske and Willemse.

The delegations of both classes were found to comply with Art. 2 of the Rules of Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA), as adopted by Synod 2008.

#### **Article 4 Election of officers and Constitution of Synod**

The following brothers were elected to be the officers of Synod 2017:

Chairman: Rev. P. G. Boon  
Vice-chair: Br. H. Pouwels  
Scribe: Br. E. Byker

The newly elected officers of synod took their seats. The chairman thanked the convening church and their assistants for the preparation of synod.

#### **Article 5 Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity**

At the request by the chairman, all the delegates from the FRCSA expressed their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity by standing up from their seats.

The delegates from sister churches were then requested to provide their credentials. Letters of credentials were received from the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC), the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) (RCNL) which indicated that the delegates as listed below, who were present during the constitution of synod, were all legally representing their churches:

Canadian Reformed Churches	Prof. A.J. de Visser and br. O. Bouwman
Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated)	Br. A. Pedro and Rev. J.J. Schreuder
Free Reformed Churches of Australia	Rev. A. Hagg and Rev. S. 't Hart

At the request of the chairman the delegates from the three sister churches also expressed their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity by rising from their seats.

The chairman then welcomed the brothers from the sister churches and requested them to act as advisors for the duration of the synod meetings.

#### **Article 6 Adjournment**

In order to allow the newly elected officers of synod to prepare for their task as moderamen and to allow the members of synod to enjoy dinner, synod adjourned for a short while.

#### **Article 7 Re-opening**

The chairman re-opened the meeting and explained the arrangements for the evening session.

## **Article 8 Adoption of meeting procedures**

The chairman explained that every member of synod was allowed to speak in his mother language if required (after which translation into English would be provided), but otherwise the discussions would be in English.

Arrangements for devotions during opening and closing of sessions and some arrangements about rounds of discussions regarding synodical issues, were explained and adopted by synod. When an officer of synod is a member of a deputyship, he will cease to be an officer of synod and a delegate during the discussion of the report of that specific deputies' report and for the duration of the discussion of this report, he will act as a deputy only.

Appointment of advisors and arrangements regarding observers were also explained and adopted by synod.

## **Article 9 Correspondence received and adoption of agenda**

**Material 1: Request for a short presentation by the "Instituut vir Christelike Onderwys" (ICO).**

### **Synod decided:**

1. To decline the request by the ICO.  
Ground:
  - 1.1. The FRCSA Synod meeting is not a suitable platform for presentations by organisations such as the ICO.
  - 1.2. There are better ways of presenting the work of ICO to the members of the FRCSA.
2. To send a reply to the ICO in which the decision by synod is explained.  
Ground:  
Synod would not like to create an impression that the work of the ICO is not appreciated.

**Material 2: Proposals on cut-off dates**

The chairman pointed out that many deputies' reports were submitted long after the cut-off date of 7<sup>th</sup> April, which could mean that the time for the delegates to study the reports might not have been sufficient to allow responsible synod decisions.

### **Synod decided:**

3. That all documents received before the commencement of synod, were admissible.  
Grounds:  
All the delegates declared that they had sufficient time to study all the documents.
4. To adopt the remainder of the proposed agenda with the provision that the order of agenda points could be changed.

The final order is reflected in the order of the articles in these Acts.

## **Article 10 Deputies for Revision of Rules of Synod**

Material: Deputies Report (Doc. 2).

### **Synod decided regarding the contents of the newly proposed Rules of Synod:**

1. To replace the word "*minister*" with "*ministers and missionaries*" wherever applicable.  
Ground:  
Rules of Synod should be clear and consistent in terminology.
2. To fix the cut-off date for submission of deputies report on 3 months before commencement of synod in article 2.1.1.4 and article 10.  
Ground:  
Three months were considered to be sufficient for the proper study of reports.

3. To add a point “2.1.1.5: *Supplementary reports on significant issues may be submitted up to 1 month before synod commences*”.  
Ground:  
In order to enable deputies to report on important or urgent issues arising from events which take place after the 3-months cut-off date, deputies should be enabled to report on such issues.
4. To clarify the meaning of “... *members of synod* ...” in article 7 by replacing that term by: “... *delegates from the FRCSA* .....”.  
Ground:  
Rules of Synod should be clear in their meaning.
5. To change “... *officially appointed delegates* ...” to “... *officially appointed attendees*.....” in article 2.1.2.2.  
Ground:  
The phrase: “*officially appointed attendees*” leaves less room for misunderstandings than the original phrase.
6. To rephrase article 11.5.2 as follows: “*shall assist the deputyship, mandated by synod, to organise an Indaba and the convening church to prepare the next synod.*”  
Ground:  
The Stated Clerk is in the best position to support deputyships or convening churches to organise Indabas and synods.
7. To replace the phrase: “... *who deal with mainly Afrikaans issues. Those deputies, who report in Afrikaans, are requested* ....” with the phrase: “*who deal with mainly non-English language issues. Those deputies, who report in other languages, are requested* ....”.  
Ground:  
Apart from English and Afrikaans, other languages are also used in the FRCSA federation of churches.
8. To include rules for Indabas in the Rules of Synod.  
Grounds:
  - 8.1. The purpose of Indabas should be defined in an official church document.
  - 8.2. The Rules for Synod would be the most suitable document for that purpose.
9. To correct numbering in article 2.1.3. and to renumber the present articles 2.4. and 2.5 as 2.2 and 2.3.  
Grounds:
  - 9.1. The numbers as shown in the proposed Rules of Synod are erroneous.
  - 9.2. The presently numbered articles 2.4 and 2.5 do not belong under article 2.1.3. and should be listed as separate entities.

**Synod decided regarding the Deputies Report:**

10. To adopt the newly proposed Rules of Synod with amendments as described above.  
Grounds:
  - 10.1. The current Rules of Synod document do not reflect the amendments made to it since the synod of 2005.
  - 10.2. An up to date version of approved Rules of Synod is necessary as a guide for the churches.
  - 10.3. The newly proposed Rules of Synod provide more detailed and clear description of certain items.
11. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 11.1. To finalise the text of the new Rules of Synod in English and other languages according to the decisions by Synod 2017 as specified in points 1 – 9 above.

- Ground:  
Minor changes to the text of the proposed Rules of Synod should not prevent a speedy publishing of the Rules of Synod.
- 11.2. To serve the next synod with a proposal regarding blessing addresses to government officials.  
Ground:  
The effectivity of the present practice of sending a blessing address to the State President is questionable and should be improved if possible.
- 11.3. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held halfway between Synods 2017 and 2020.  
Ground:  
Synod 2014 decided that Indaba's should be held, halfway between synods (Acts 2014, Art. 28).
- 11.4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.  
Ground:  
To report to synods is standard procedure for deputies.
12. To mandate the Stated Clerk to merge the newly adopted Rules of Synod with the revised version of the Church Order, as adopted by Synod 2008, and the final version of the Rules for Relations with Sister churches as adopted by Synod 2014, and eventually newly adopted liturgical forms and form prayers and to publish it in a suitable form.  
Ground:  
The FRCSA needs an updated version of the indicated documents for use by the churches.
13. To send a message to the classes in which they are encouraged to strive towards representation of all the churches when appointing synod delegates.  
Ground:  
For a small church federation like the FRCSA it is a good idea to have all churches involved in federational activities.

## **Article 11 Adjournment**

Rev. P.G. Boon led the closing devotion based on John 21 : 15-25 and after singing Hymn 52 from the Book of Praise (BOP), synod adjourned for the night.

### **Day 2: Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

## **Article 12 Opening devotions**

Br. Pouwels led an opening devotion with a short meditation after reading Phil. 1: 1-8. He requested the meeting to sing Ps. 111: 1 and 5 from the BOP and led in prayer.

## **Article 13 Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad (DRCA)**

Material: Deputies Report (Doc. 3).  
Deputies Addendum Report (Doc. 4).

Br. H. Moes and Rev. D.M. Boersma were present to represent deputies.  
Dr. G.J. Meijer of the RCSA was welcomed as observer during the second morning session.  
Before attending to the reports by deputies DRCA, the chairman requested the delegates from the sister churches to deliver their greeting messages.

Br. O. Bouwman delivered a greeting message from the CanRC (Doc. 5).

Rev. A. Hagg delivered a greeting message from the FRCA (Doc. 6).

Br. A. Pedro delivered a greeting message from the RCNL (Doc. 7).

## **Article 14 Adjournment**

Rev Breytenbach led in a closing devotion after reading Luke 1: 8-19 and 68 – 79. He led in prayer in preparation of lunch.

## **Article 15 Re-opening**

Visiting Rev. H. H. van Alten, presently serving in Ukraine, was welcomed as an observer. The discussion of the Report of DRCA was postponed and replaced by the Report of Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa (DCCSA), due to the arrival of Rev. P. Kurpershoek of the RCSA who attended synod as a deputy of Ecumenical Relations of the RCSA. Synod decided to deal first with the report of DCCSA.

## **Article 16 Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa (DCCSA)**

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 8).

Deputies were represented by Revs. Boon and Breytenbach and br. Roose.

Before the discussion of the report was opened, Rev. Kurpershoek was first given the opportunity to address the synod (Doc. 9).

### **Synod decided:**

1. To thank the deputies for their work.  
Ground:  
Deputies have fulfilled their mandate.
2. To reject the report and recommendations regarding the RCSA.  
Ground:  
The proposed recommendations did not allow continuing discussions between the RCSA and the FRCSA on a national level on unfinished issues.
3. To appoint a committee, consisting of Rev. van 't Foort and brs. Hagg and Roose, to rephrase the recommendations regarding the RCSA.  
Ground:  
Recommendations to the new deputies should be aimed at clarifying issues which separate the RCSA and the FRCSA.
4. To decide on the remaining recommendations in the report after the appointed committee (see point 3 above) have submitted their proposals.  
Ground:  
Possible confusion about the new recommendations should be avoided by grouping all of them together.

The discussion of the DCCSA report was postponed until the recommendations of the appointed committee, indicated above, were available.

**Article 17 Proposal by Classis North regarding administering the Lord's Supper at the homes of those who cannot attend the church services anymore due to terminal illness.**

Material: Proposal by Classis North (Doc. 10).

**Synod decided:**

1. That there are no Scriptural arguments pleading against the administration of the Lord's Supper (LS) at the homes of the target group.  
Ground:  
Acts 8 and 1 Corinthians 11 seem to indicate that administering sacraments outside official worship places is acceptable.
2. That the celebration of the LS outside the official gathering of the congregation can only be allowed when the following conditions are met:
  - 2.1. The members of the target group should be encouraged to prepare themselves for the celebration of the LS (including self-examination) in exactly the same way as the other members of the congregation.  
Grounds:
    - 2.1.1. The preparation for the LS is a vital part of celebrating the LS.
    - 2.1.2. There is a risk that congregation members who are unable to attend normal worship services, will neglect the need for e.g. self-examination.
  - 2.2. There should be a direct connection (e.g. by means of direct communication facilities) to the worship service during the administration of the LS to members of the target group and the administering of the LS should happen in conjunction with the administering in the worship service.  
Grounds:
    - 2.2.1. The celebration of the LS should be a communal happening.
    - 2.2.2. The celebration of the LS can only happen in the context of the preaching of the Gospel.
  - 2.3. The members of the target group should take part in the complete service.  
Ground:  
The members of the target group might be tempted to only take part in some of the activities regarding the LS, but the actual administering of the bread and wine has no meaning without the other parts of the LS celebration.
  - 2.4. It should only happen under supervision of an office bearer.  
Ground:  
This is a general rule for celebration of the LS for all the members of congregations.
3. To adopt the proposal of Classis North to allow administering of the LS to members who are unable to attend the worship services due to terminal illness or exceptional circumstances.  
Ground:  
Although the celebration of the LS is not a precondition for salvation, the members of the target group need the encouragement of the LS just as well as other members of the congregation.

## **Article 18 Proposal by Classis North regarding relations with the Reformed Churches in New Zealand (RCNZ).**

Material: Proposal by Classis North (Doc. 11).

Br. H. Moes was present to explain the view of DRCA regarding relations with the RCNZ.

Br. Moes reported that the RCNZ are certainly faithful Reformed churches, but to start sister church relations will mean an additional work load for deputies, while the benefits will be minimal. The present direct contacts and contacts through the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC), are deemed to be sufficient to handle matters between the two church federations. He therefore proposes not to adopt the proposal from Classis North.

### **Synod decided:**

1. To reject the proposal by Classis North.

Ground:

The available manpower in our church federation is too limited to handle the additional workload of maintaining official sister church relations with the RCNZ.

2. To task the scribe to write a letter to the RCNZ in which our situation, regarding relations with them, is explained and in which they are invited to attend our next synod if they would be in a position to do so.

Ground:

Although an official sister church relationship with the RCNZ is beyond the FRCSA's capability, good relations should be maintained as far as possible.

## **Article 19 Adjournment**

Rev A. Hagg led in closing devotion based on Ps 104: 1-4, 14-15 and 33-36. He requested the meeting to sing Ps 104: 1, 4, 8 and led in prayer. Synod adjourned for dinner.

## **Article 20 Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad (continued)**

The discussion of the report of DRCA was continued with deputies brs. Moes and Boersma present.

During the discussion several amendments were proposed.

### **Synod decided:**

1. To appoint new deputies for the period 2017 to 2020.

2. To honourably discharge Rev DM Boersma as a deputy after his service of three times three years from 2008 – 2017.

Ground:

According to Art. 9 of the Rules of Synod, as adopted by the FRCSA Synod 2005 (Art. 25), deputies should not serve for more than three consecutive terms.

3. To honourably discharge Rev F.J. Bijzet as a deputy.

Ground:

Rev. Bijzet went into retirement as a minister and relocated to the Netherlands.

4. To re-appoint some of the previous deputies and also some new members as deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad for the period 2017 to 2020.

Grounds:

4.1. Continuity within the DRCA is important to maintain good sister church relationships and stay aware of each other's ecclesiastical developments.

4.2. New members are required to replace the outgoing deputies.

4.3. Additionally appointed deputies could help to prevent a reduced functioning of deputies in cases where some deputies are no longer available.



- 4.4. The work of the DRCA is only useful for the churches (who carry the costs) if regular information and feed-back is given to the churches. This requires a properly functioning deputyship.
  - 4.5. A deputy with the specific task of maintaining contacts with the ICRC (region Africa and globally) is necessary.
5. To instruct the newly to be appointed convening church to convene Synod 2020 during September or October of that year.
- Ground:
- The presently used time schedule for FRCSA synods of August or September makes it difficult to report back in time on the RCNL synods, which are held in the same year as the FRCSA synods, and may have an impact on receiving delegates from the RCNL and the CanRC.

**Synod decided regarding relations with sister churches:**

6. To continue the sister church relation with the FRCA according to the adopted rules.
- Grounds:
- 6.1. The FRCA give evidence of continued faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order.
  - 6.2. Both the FRCA and the FRCSA are small church federations with similar backgrounds 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.
7. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Bunbury mid-2018 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.
- Ground:
- Personal visits are an effective means of developing, maintaining and building good sister church relations.
8. To maintain sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules.
- Grounds:
- 8.1. The CanRC give evidence of continued faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order.
  - 8.2. Both the CanRC and the FRCSA are small church federations with similar backgrounds 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.
9. To authorise deputies to send a delegate to Synod Edmonton 2019 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.
- Ground:
- Personal visits are an effective means of developing, maintaining and building good sister church relations.

**Synod decided regarding the ICRC:**

10. To continue ICRC membership.
- Grounds:
- 10.1. The ICRC is an organisation which adheres to its Reformed basis.
  - 10.2. The ICRC provides a platform to maintain contacts with Reformed churches all over the world.
  - 10.3. The ICRC offers opportunities to promote the proclamation of the gospel in our African continent.

11. To mandate new deputies to enhance the ICRC profile in the FRCSA.  
 Grounds:  
 11.1. The FRCSA do not fully utilise the opportunities provided by our ICRC contacts.  
 11.2. Delegates of the ICRC who have attended an ICRC conference, are involved in ICRC Regional meetings and are members of ICRC working groups, should provide regular feedback to the churches..
12. To authorise DRCA to send two delegates to the ICRC 2021 conference in Delhi, India (or in Australia) yet only to budget for one.  
 Grounds:  
 12.1. Representation at ICRC conferences is important in order to be aware of the opportunities the ICRC offers.  
 12.2. By sending a new delegate along with an experienced delegate the awareness in our churches of the benefits of the ICRC will increase.  
 12.3. Since two pastors of our churches serve as members in ICRC committees, and since these committees have budgets to pay their members' travelling costs to the conferences, we need to budget for only one delegate.  
 12.4. Although the next ICRC conference will take place after our next FRCSA Synod, the Lord willing in 2020, it will be good to already approve attendance now so that the necessary preparations can be made.
13. To authorise DRCA to maintain and improve contacts with African ICRC member churches through the appointment of a special ICRC-Africa deputy within the DRCA and to find ways to support the proclamation of the Word of God and leadership training by those churches in their home countries, in co-operation with other ICRC member churches.  
 Grounds:  
 13.1. The African member churches expressed their need for help to remain Reformed and to proclaim the Gospel in their home countries, as well as a need for leadership training in newly formed congregations.  
 13.2. The FRCSA and the RCSA, as African church federations, are in a better position to provide certain forms of support to those churches, than churches from other continents.  
 13.3. It is practically impossible for the FRCSA to work towards full ecclesiastical fellowship with all ICRC member churches. The FRCSA should focus on Reformed and Presbyterian churches in Africa, where by God's grace we are located.

**Synod decided regarding relations with the RCNL:**

14. To appoint a committee to rephrase the recommendations by deputies. As committee members were appointed: Rev. Breytenbach, Rev. Bruintjes and br. Moes.

Due to consideration regarding available time, synod decided to postpone further discussions on other Dutch church federations to Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> August, when br. Moes would DV be present again.

**Article 21 Adjournment**

Br. T.W. Tamane led in a closing devotion after reading 1 Cor. 1: 10-31. He requested the meeting to sing Ps 87: 1-5 and led in prayer. Synod adjourned for the night.

## Day 3: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2017

### Article 22 Opening devotions

Br. Byker led an opening devotion with a short meditation after reading Matt 26: 26 – 31a and Rom 5: 6-8 and led in prayer. The meeting then sang Hymn 54 and Hymn 72 from the BOP and synod was reconvened.

### Article 23 Observers

The following guests were welcomed as observers: Dr. C. Aucamp, member of Deputies for Ecumenical Affairs: Inland of the RCSA, Rev. P. Magagula, missionary in Soshaguve F4 and brother Rigardt Hoving, treasurer of Deputies Curators and Art. 19 CO.

### Article 24 Mission Deputies

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 12).  
including: Agreement of co-operation (Doc. 13).  
Request to sign Agreement.

Deputies were represented by brs. H. Pouwels and H. Snijder.

After a presentation of a summary of the deputies activities (Doc. 14) and a first round of discussions, the handling of the report was postponed due to other deputies arriving for discussion of their report.

### Article 25 Deputies for Revision of Liturgical Forms and Form Prayers

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 15).  
Including: Deputies interim report to Indaba 2016.  
New Forms and Prayers as adopted by Synod 2017.

Deputies were represented by br. D. Drijfhout.

#### Synod decided:

1. To extend the provisional approval status, granted by Synod 2014 (Art. 26, Acts of the FRCSA Synod, Bethal) of the new Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper as adopted by the RCSA, until synod 2020 for a final decision regarding its acceptability for use in our churches.  
Grounds:
  - 1.1. FRC congregations should be allowed to use the Form in their worship services and to comment on the suitability of it.
  - 1.2. No comment on the usability of the Form was received up to the date of Synod 2017.
2. To include Sotho – and English speaking persons in the newly to be appointed deputyship.  
Grounds:
  - 2.1. Liturgical Forms and Prayers should also be made available in English and Sotho to serve the non-Afrikaans speaking congregations in our church federation.
3. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 3.1. To obtain permission and arrange for translation in English and Sotho, and certain amendments, of the new RCSA Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper.
  - 3.2. To send all the newly proposed Forms and Form Prayers to the local FRC congregations with the request to send their comments on the usability of them to the deputies.
  - 3.3. To search for existing Forms and Form Prayers in English or Sotho before attempting to translate Afrikaans – or Dutch versions and to arrange for translation of them in English and/or Sotho when necessary.

- 3.4. To arrange printing of a preliminary edition of the Forms and Form Prayers as soon as sufficient comments are received from the churches.
- 3.5. To co-operate with Deputies for Revision of Rules of Synod and the Stated Clerk in order to combine all the newly approved forms and form prayers with other documents approved by synods as indicated in Article 10 point 12 above.
4. To decide on a budget for covering translation costs as soon as deputies have tabled a proposal regarding this issue.  
(Note: Deputies did not propose a budget during the course of the synod. Synod could therefore not decide on a specified budget).
5. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held halfway between Synods 2017 and 2020.
6. To Report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## **Article 26 Deputies for Liturgical music**

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 16).  
Verslag van deputate (Doc 17).

Deputies were represented by br. F. van der Meer.

### **Synod decided:**

1. To declare the report admissible in spite of it being written in Afrikaans.  
Ground:  
All delegates declared that they had no objection against admitting the report.
2. To adopt the deputies' recommendation that the churches should be requested to re-evaluate the criteria for extending the hymnal for the churches, as stipulated by Synod 2011, Article 23, with the aid of the following questions.
  - Was the model chosen in 2011 really understood by the churches?
  - Was the model adequately described in the Deputies report of 2011? The theological basis for the shortcomings at each theme was not described in the Deputies report.
  - Was the model an ideal too high to be reachable?
  - Is it because the matter does not live in the churches?
  - Do we have the WILLPOWER AND CAPACITY in the churches to execute this project according to the specific model?
  - Is it fair to continue this project if what is necessary to execute it is missing?
 Ground:  
Any changes of the hymnal for the churches should be within the framework of the guidelines as agreed by the churches and specified in the decisions of Synod 2017.
3. To reject the deputies' proposal to approve the new 'Skriberyings' 51-54, 59, 63-65, 68, 71, 73, 75, 77 and 78 for use in the church services.  
Grounds:
  - 3.1. Newly proposed songs for the hymnal of the churches should all be evaluated according to the same set of criteria as specified by Synod 2011.
  - 3.2. Although the newly proposed 'Skriberyings' were evaluated in some way, the evaluation was not conducted in terms of the criteria as set out by Synod 2011.
  - 3.3. The new 'Skriberyings' are not always real versifications of Scripture and deputies should spend more time on that aspect.
4. To adopt deputies proposal not to approve 'Skriberyings' 55-58, 60-62, 66, 67, 69, 70, 72, 74, 76 & 79 and Hymn 124 for use in the church services.  
Ground:  
The indicated songs did not comply with the criteria as specified by Synod 2011.

5. To approve the following 10 Hymns for use by the churches: Songs 239, 241, 244, 273, 290, 305, 430, 431, 435, 485 (App. 1).  
Ground:  
Deputies found that the indicated songs did comply with the agreed criteria.
6. To mandate newly to be appointed deputies to arrange the printing of the approved songs together with new liturgical forms and other newly approved documents in one booklet in co-operation with the Stated Clerk.  
Ground:  
The churches need proper documentation of all the latest approved songs and documents.
7. To mandate new deputies to pay special attention to the evaluation of the songs as used in our Sotho-speaking congregations and to assist those congregations to search for suitable Psalm versifications or other acceptable songs in SeSotho.  
Ground:  
The hymnal in the Sotho-speaking churches should in principle also comply with the criteria as specified by Synod 2011.
8. To honourably discharge Rev. J. van der Linden and br. F. van der Meer as deputies for Liturgical Music.  
Ground:  
Both brothers have served as deputies for Liturgical Music for three times three consecutive years, which is the maximum time period for serving as a deputy, according to Article 10 of the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.
9. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 9.1. To request comments from church councils on the deputies' proposals and to incorporate those comments in their report to the next Indaba and the next synod.
  - 9.2. To arrange for printing of the approved songs, in compliance with legal requirements, together with other newly approved documents in co-operation with the Stated Clerk.
  - 9.3. To systematize and test the songs used in the Sotho-speaking congregations according to the criteria approved by Synod 2011.
  - 9.4. To assist the Sotho-speaking churches to find Psalms for use in the worship service.
  - 9.5. To serve the churches with a substantiated recommendation with regards to the revised Totius versification.
  - 9.6. To contact the Calvyn Jubileum Fonds (CJF) deputies of the RCSA and to keep abreast of developments regarding the revised Totius versification, to promote the continued availability of the older Totius versions and to make contributions with regards to the 'Skrifberymings' in order to ensure that the high standards as set by the Totius versification - are also maintained with all new Skrifberymings.
  - 9.7. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held halfway between Synods 2017 and 2020.
  - 9.8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## **Article 27 Deputies ad Article 11 CO (Needy churches)**

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 18).  
including: Interim report to Indaba 2016.  
Minutes of Indaba 2016.

Deputies are represented by brs. M. Bijker and W. Miske.

Before dealing with the report, the chairman referred to their mandate given by Synod 2014 to organise an Indaba. On behalf of Synod 2017, the chairman thanked deputies for a well organised Indaba during February 2016, and reminded synod that another deputyship should be appointed to organise an Indaba during 2019.

Deputies started the discussion by showing a PowerPoint presentation in which more detailed information was provided regarding the topic of needy churches in the federation of the FRCSA.

**Synod considered:**

1. That the financial support from the FRCA, initially used for supporting the needy church of Bethal, is now used for supporting training of ministers and elders.
2. That the FRCA is still willing to provide financial support, even if it is not directly aimed at needy churches, provided that the aim of that financial support is clearly defined.
3. That the delegates from the FRCA indicated that they prefer to channel their financial support for the FRCSA through Deputies Article 11 CO, even if the support is not directly aimed at needy churches.
4. That deputies Curators (DC) also prefer to make use of deputies Article 11 CO as the liaison channel between the FRCA and the FRCSA.

**Synod decided:**

1. To appoint a new deputyship with five members.  
Ground:  
Deputies indicated that more members were required to handle the issues of Deputies Article 11 CO in a responsible way.
2. To decrease the local FRCSA allocation to Deputies Art. 11 CO to at least R 100 000 per year. This equates to about 25-30% of the current allocation.  
Grounds:
  - 2.1. The current needy church requires between R 150 000 – 180 000 per year which can be financed from local funds plus reserves should that be required.
  - 2.2. This can also assist in financing other (currently more important) functions like Deputies Curators.
3. To terminate foreign contributions from Canada to Deputies Article 11 CO.  
Grounds:
  - 3.1. The remaining support sources are deemed to be sufficient for the presently calculated needs.
  - 3.2. This is in line with the previous Synod's decision to be less dependent on foreign funds.
4. That Deputies Article 11 CO should continue to act as the liaison organisation between the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and the FRCSA, regarding the handling of financial support from the FRCA for our churches.  
Ground:  
The FRCA and DC prefer to maintain the existing liaison channels.
5. That Deputies Art. 11 CO should inform the FRCA regarding the change of the purpose of the financial support which they provide, before their next synod.  
Grounds:
  - 5.1. There should be no uncertainty for the Australian sister churches regarding the purpose of the financial support from their side.
  - 5.2. Financial support should be used for the purpose for which it was collected from the churches.

6. To mandate new deputies as follows:
  - 6.1. To decrease the local FRCSA allocation to Deputies Art. 11 CO to at least R 100 000 per year. This equates to about 25-30% of the current allocation.
  - 6.2. To arrange termination of the foreign contributions from the CanRC to deputies Article 11 CO.
  - 6.3. To continue acting as the liaison organisation between the FRCA and the FRCSA, regarding support from the Australian sister churches.
  - 6.4. To send a letter to the FRCA before their next synod in which the changed situation in terms of the target of the financial support from them is explained.
  - 6.5. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held halfway between Synods 2017 and 2020.
  - 6.6. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## **Article 28 Proposal from Classis South regarding tentmaker ministries**

Material: Proposal by Classis South (Doc. 19).  
 Voorstel van Klassis Suid (Doc. 20).  
 Proposal tentmaker ministries – appendices (Doc. 21).

The delegates from Classis South explained that the request to synod was as follows:

- To adopt the principle that church members, with special pastoral gifts, but without full theological training, should be allowed to preach the Gospel as part-time mission worker, in cases where fully trained ministers/missionaries were not, or only partly, available.
- Furthermore that such church members should be properly remunerated as part-time workers.
- Basic theological training should be made available for such church members.

### **Synod decided:**

1. To thank Classis South for requesting attention to this issue.  
 Ground:  
 The issue needed attention and clarification.
2. That there was no need for synod to make any decisions regarding the contents of the proposal from Classis South.  
 Grounds:
  - 2.1. The Church Order (CO) provides sufficient options to appoint a person who can serve as a part-time mission worker.
  - 2.2. The CO provides sufficient guidelines regarding the description and limitations of the task of such a mission worker, in relation to the task of a minister/missionary.
  - 2.3. The CO does not prevent remuneration -, nor does it prevent a basic theological training of part-time mission workers.

## **Article 29 Adjournment for dinner**

Br. R. Meeske led in a closing devotion after reading Ps. 65. He led in prayer and requested the meeting to sing Ps. 85 and led in prayer. Synod adjourned for dinner. After dinner synod resumed its meeting.

### **Article 30 Deputies for Theological Training and Article 19 CO (Deputies Curators)**

Material: Deputies Report (Doc. 22).  
including: Interim report to Indaba 2016).

Delegates Rev. P.G. Boon, brs. G. Hagg, R. Meeske and R. Hoving represented deputies.

Synod considered whether some proposals were contrary to decisions by Synod 2014.

#### **Synod decided:**

1. That the report was admissible.

Ground:

Although the challenges this deputyship faced were dynamic, curators worked in line with the mandates given by previous synods.

As synod was not able to finish the discussion of the deputies' report, the discussion was postponed.

### **Article 31 Adjournment**

Prof. A. de Visser led in a closing devotion from Romans 16: 3 – 16. He led in prayer and requested the meeting to sing Hymn 84 of the BOP, after which synod adjourned for the night.

## **Day 4: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

### **Article 32 Re-opening**

Synod was reconvened and an opening devotion was led by br. G. Hagg from Rev. 1: 1-8. He led in prayer and requested the meeting to sing Ps 110.

### **Article 33 Observers**

A visitor, representing the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCAfr), Dr. A. Hofmann, was welcomed as observer, as well as the theological student Jacob Mnisi.

### **Article 34 Greeting message from the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa**

Dr. Hofmann delivered a greeting message from the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa. In his address he provided some information about the DRCAfr (Doc. 23). Dr Hofmann was thanked for his message and requested to be present during the discussion on the report of DCCSA regarding the DRCAfr.

### **Article 35 Adjournment**

Rev. Mnisi led in prayer and synod adjourned for lunch.

### **Article 36 Deputies for Contact with Churches in South Africa (continued)**

The chairman welcomed Prof. J. Smit from the RCSA as observer.

A proposal from the committee, tasked with rephrasing the recommendations by DCCSA, was tabled for discussion. After a few amendments the proposal was adopted by synod.



**Synod decided:**

1. To take note of the report of DCCSA and to adopt in general the approach of DCCSA towards their mandate.

Ground:

Deputies have fulfilled their mandate.

2. To express its concern about section 3 regarding the agreements between the FRCSA and the RCSA deputies in respect of the Cloete versifications.

Ground:

An agreement had been made between deputies DCCSA and Deputies for Ecumenicity of the RCSA to engage with theologians who were involved in the versification process. DCCSA however proposed to terminate the discussion about the Cloete versification despite the fact that this engagement has not taken place.

3. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:

- 3.1 To continue contact with the RCSA on a national level in view of strengthening the bond in the unity of the Reformed faith. Focus should be given, but not limited to:

- i. the nature of a church federation;
- ii. how deviance from Scripture and Confession should be dealt with in a Reformed church federation;
- iii. how local churches should uphold federational decisions;
- iv. to continue the discussion on the Cloete versification;
- v. to discuss the issue whether women in office (elders and/or deacons) is a confessional or an essential matter.

Grounds:

3.1.1. To strive towards unification implies agreement on the nature of a church federation.

3.1.2. Synod noticed that there is a growing tendency within the RCSA of local congregations not upholding federational decisions.

3.1.3. Deputies have indicated that some RCSA synod decisions are in conflict with Scripture, Confession and Reformed hermeneutics.

- 3.2. To actively assist congregations in their local contacts with RCSA congregations, advising them on all relevant matters.

Ground:

Conclusions reached during the deliberations of deputies on the national level also have an impact on the local level. Local and national deliberations should remain on par. In local contacts, deliberations should take place about the question how local RCSA congregations continue to function in a federation where deviance from the Reformed doctrine has become endemic with regards to certain matters, after repeated appeals to synod have been turned down. Local churches are not forced to comply with decisions, e.g. with regards to women in (diaconal) office, cooperation with the DRC, and using the Cloete-versifications. On the other hand, these things will continue unchallenged in future and so negatively influence the health of the federation.

- 3.3. To submit a study document to the next synod on what the impact will be of:

- i. the Memorandum of Understanding between the RCSA and the DRC;
- ii. the decision by the RCSA synod about women in the office of deacons;
- iii. the decision by the RCSA synod to accept the Cloete versification.  
on the local contacts between the FRCSA and RCSA congregations.

Ground:

The local engagement between congregations, currently in different federations, cannot continue indefinitely without also striving to become one on a federational level.

- 3.4. To continue contacts with the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa – DRCAfr (NG Kerk in Afrika – NGKA) in order to get to know them better and to support each other to maintain the true faith. Contacts should at this stage not directly be aimed at unification, but to support the DRCAfr in their search for a real Reformed church policy.  
Grounds:
  - 3.4.1. DRCAfr is a federation that wants to be a Church of Christ, but need support to pursue on a Scriptural route.
  - 3.4.2. We may be able to help each other regarding theological training and training of elders.
  - 3.4.3. To be able to help them we should be more informed and know them better.
  - 3.4.4. They may be invited to attend our synod.
- 3.5. To encourage contacts between local FRCSA congregations and DRCAfr congregations where possible and to report back on such activities to deputies.  
Ground:  
Local contacts may help to get a clearer idea of how DRCAfr churches function.
- 3.6. To encourage Church Councils to identify Reformed and Presbyterian churches in their area, and make contact with them and have discussions to know each other better, to be able to support each other, if needed also theologically.  
Ground:  
We need to support churches in our areas with whom we are one in faith, even if the language differs.
- 3.7. To re-establish contacts with the Free Church of South Africa (FCSA) and to attend their synods (General Assemblies), and to invite their representatives to attend FRCSA synods, with the aim to investigate if we can support each other theologically, and to report on their activities.  
Ground:  
Through their connections with the Free Church of Scotland, the FCSA is linked to the ICRC. As the FRCSA is also a member of the ICRC, this means that both church denominations share the same basis of the Reformed faith, which is a good reason to investigate possibilities to support each other.
- 3.8. To organise an Indaba according to Article 28 of the Acts of the FRCSA Synod 2014, during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019.
- 3.9. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held more or less halfway between Synod 2017 and Synod 2020.
- 3.10. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.
4. To approve a budget of R8000 for activities by DCCSA.  
Ground:  
Contacts with churches indicated above requires a fair amount of travelling.

### **Article 37 Deputies for Afrikaans Bible translation**

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 24).

Including: “Notas op die proefvertaling van Judas” (Doc. 25).

Delegate Rev. C. van Wyk represented the deputies.

Rev. van Wyk explained that good work was done by individual member deputies, but that the overall functioning of the deputyship was hampered by long distances between members. Members should be enabled to meet and a budget should be allocated for travelling costs.

**Synod decided:**

1. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 1.1. To monitor and be involved with new developments, regarding the new translation of the Bible into Afrikaans (Bybel Direkte Vertaling – BDV).
  - 1.2. To take part in the proceedings of the KA (Kerklike Advieskomitee), and if necessary with reference to our confession regarding the written Word of God and the distinction between canonical and apocryphal books.
  - 1.3. To inform the churches of progress and developments with the Afrikaans translation and to request feedback.
  - 1.4. To appoint readers to work with deputies.
  - 1.5. To keep the appointed readers up to date with the progress of the Afrikaans translation, and involve them as needed.  
Ground:  
Above mandate points 1.1. – 1.5. were repeated from Synod 2014, as the translation work is still in progress and needs continuing attention.
  - 1.6. To propose an English Bible translation for use in the FRCSA.  
Ground:  
English Bible translations are used regularly by members of the FRCSA, but guidance regarding the acceptability of certain translations was never provided.
  - 1.7. To approve a budget of R 6000.  
Ground:  
A budget is required for deputies to enable them to function properly.
  - 1.8. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held more or less halfway between Synod 2017 and Synod 2020.
  - 1.9. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

**Article 38 Deputies Article 49 CO**

Material: Deputies report Classis North.  
Deputies report Classis South.

**Synod decided:**

1. To adopt the report from both classes.
2. To appoint deputies with the following mandate:
  - 2.1. To render services to the classes in accordance with Article 49 CO.
  - 2.2. To submit a report regarding their activities to the next meeting of the classis involved on each activity.
  - 2.3. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

**Article 39 Deputies for Correspondence with the Government**

Material: Deputies report (Doc. 26).

Delegates brs. Hagg and Tamane represented deputies.

Br. Hagg explained that the deputyship did not function, due to many other commitments of deputies and health problems of the members.

**Synod decided:**

1. To discontinue this deputyship.

Grounds:

- 1.1. Manpower in the FRCSA federation is currently limited.
- 1.2. Discontinuing this deputyship does not mean that the churches and their members cannot be active in this field.

**Article 40 Treasurer**

Material: Treasurers Report.

**Synod decided:**

1. To adopt the report with great appreciation.
2. To discharge br. Van Vondel with thanks for his meticulous work and thanks to the Lord for persons with such outstanding talents.
3. To task the scribe, br. Byker to write a letter expressing our appreciation.
4. To appoint a new treasurer and an alternate with the following mandate:
  - 4.1. To handle financial matters on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.
  - 4.2. To issue semi-annual statements at the end of May and September to the churches.
  - 4.3. To request the churches to settle their accounts within 30 days.
  - 4.4. To assess the churches according to the differentiated contribution model as adopted by Synods 2012 (ad-hoc – Art. 11 point 3) and 2014 (Art. 28) with the aim to collect the below indicated funds.

FRCSA contributions budget – synodical deputies.

Year	Federalional expenes	Needy churches (Art. 11 CO)	Needy Students	Curators	Mission	<b>Total FRCSA contributions</b>
2018	R 35 000	R 100 000	R 202 000	R 650 000	R 263 000	<b>R 1 250 000</b>
2019	R 37 000	R 106 000	R 224 000	R 680 000	R 278 000	<b>R 1 325 000</b>
2020	R 39 000	R 112 000	R 278 000	R 680 500	R 295 000	<b>R 1 404 500</b>

- 4.5. To pay the deputies the assigned budgets at their request.
- 4.6. To reimburse travel expenses and other expenses made by deputies at their request.
- 4.7. To reimburse the air travel expenses of classes at their request.
- 4.8. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held more or less halfway between Synod 2017 and Synod 2020.
- 4.9. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## **Article 41 Deputies for Inspection of Treasurers books**

Material: Deputies report.

### **Synod decided:**

1. To adopt the report.
2. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 2.1. To audit the books of the synod treasurer annually.
  - 2.2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## **Article 42 Adjournment**

Rev. Brintjes led a closing devotion starting from a few verses from 1 Chronicles 1. After the meeting sang Hymn 81 of the BOP, Rev Brintjes led in prayer and synod adjourned for lunch.

## **Article 43 Re-opening**

Synod reconvened and continued to discuss the DCRA report.

## **Article 44 Deputies for Relation with Churches Abroad (continued)**

Br. H. Moes was present to represent deputies.

The discussion on relations with the RCNL was continued after the appointed committee proposed amended recommendations for a mandate for new deputies. Br. Moes explained the proposed amendments.

### **Synod decided regarding the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands – liberated (RCNL):**

15. To express thanks for the support of and faithfulness in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCNL).

Grounds:

  - 15.1. The RCNL support the FRCSA through the mission work, by providing ministers to serve our vacant churches, by producing reformed journals and by personal contacts.
  - 15.2. The RCNL proclaim that they accept the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, accept the reformed confessions as standards and have a reformed Church Order.
16. To express sadness and alarm concerning developments in the RCNL, i.e.:
  - the acceptance of a new hermeneutics, also by lecturers at the Theologische Universiteit (TU) Kampen, which has serious consequences for Reformed church life;
  - the decisions taken by Synod Meppel with regard to women in office;
  - the intended unification with the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK);
  - independentistic tendencies among certain ministers and consistories.

Grounds:

  - 16.1. Publications and developments in certain congregations and at the TU Kampen, as well as reports of deputies to Synod Meppel 2017, give rise to concern about adherence to the Reformed confessions, e.g. concerning the perspicuity and authority of Scripture.
  - 16.2. Synod Meppel 2017 has decided to aim for unification with the NGK, who have implemented new hermeneutics which cannot be called Reformed anymore, despite expressions of concern and admonitions by most of their sister churches.

17. To continue the sister church relationship with RCNL, but with the temporary suspension of Rules 5 and 6 of the sister church relationship (p. 118 of the Acts of Synod Bethal 2014), i.e.
  5. *The churches will allow each other's members to the use of the sacraments.*
  6. *The churches will give each other's ministers permission to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments.*

Ground:

The FRCSA should protect themselves from teachings and influences that undermine the authority of Scripture, as we hold it, and the well-being of our own congregations.

**Important note:** The suspension of Rules 5 and 6 does not mean that the sister church relationship is at an end, but it does mean that it is under severe pressure. If no changes will occur, the sister church relationship will become untenable. This suspension is a temporary measure, in the hope that, with God's grace, it may be lifted, if there is evidence of change within the RCNL.

18. To leave it up to the local consistory whether to admit individuals to the Lord's Supper, or to allow ministers on their pulpits, after having deliberated with the individuals on the matters of concern.

Grounds:

- 18.1. The local consistory should protect the church members from teachings and influences that are undermining the authority of Scripture, as we hold it, and the well-being of our own congregations.

- 18.2. This is in line with decisions by the CanRC Synod Dunnville 2016.

19. That a call to a minister from the RCNL can only be extended after first gaining concurring advice from a classis within the FRCSA. This should not be confused with the *colloquium doctum*, which should take place after a call has been extended and accepted.

Grounds:

- 19.1. The FRCSA should protect themselves from teachings and influences that are undermining the authority of Scripture, as we hold it, and the well-being of our own congregations.

- 19.2. This is in line with decisions by the CanRC Synod Dunnville 2016.

20. To send a letter to the next RCNL synod expressing their concerns and requesting an explanation of what was done with the arguments that were submitted by the FRCSA and other sister churches to the RCNL concerning women in office.

Grounds:

- 20.1. A letter from Synod to Synod should carry more weight in requesting a clarification on this important matter than when it is sent by deputies.

- 20.2. This letter should be sent to the next RCNL Synod of 2020, since it will not be acceptable anymore to the present Synod Meppel 2017.

21. To mandate deputies to continue monitoring the developments in the RCNL, especially in the areas of concern, and to participate in further direct dialogue with the RCNL and other sister churches on these matters, if such opportunities arise (e.g. under the auspices of the ICRC or as part of the ICRC 2021 conference) and to search actively for opportunities to address the concerns and debate the underlying hermeneutics with the RCNL.

Grounds:

- 21.1. Personal contacts and discussions at conferences and meetings provide an opportunity to debate common issues and work towards keeping each other as churches close to the Word of God. The RCNL should be convinced by using their own proclaimed basis: the authority of Scripture.

- 21.2. As sister churches, we have the responsibility to care for and admonish each other to stay on the Reformed path.

- 21.3. Since other sister churches have similar concerns with respect to the RCNL, we should co-operate with them to convey our concerns effectively to the RCNL.

22. To mandate deputies to send two delegates to the next synod of the RCNL in 2020.  
Grounds:
- 22.1. Personal visits are an effective means of maintaining brotherly relations and conveying our concerns and opinions.
  - 22.2. Two delegates will be able to support each other in a serious debate and will result in more on-the-spot wisdom.
23. To mandate deputies to report to the next FRCSA synod 2020 with recommendations on the future of the sister church relationship with the RCNL.  
Grounds:
- 23.1. Local congregations within the RCNL should be allowed the opportunity to react on the decisions by Synod Meppel.
  - 23.2. The nature of such reactions by church councils within the RCNL should provide guidance about how to handle our future relations with the RCNL.
24. To mandate deputies to send a copy of these synod decisions to deputies BBK of the RCNL and to our sister churches.  
Ground:  
Sister church relations imply informing each other about important issues.

**Synod decided regarding the De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK):**

25. To mandate DRCA to maintain contact and to continue discussions with De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK) in the Netherlands, but not to progress towards ecclesiastical fellowship with this church federation.
26. To advise consistories, in case of members from this federation coming to South Africa, to decide on the acceptability of them as members or as guests at the Lord's Supper – should they make this request – only after a conversation with them.
27. To instruct DRCA to inform the DGK in writing on the decisions concerning them.  
Grounds:
- 27.1. At this time the FRCSA have a responsibility towards the RCNL.
  - 27.2. The FRCSA denounce the precipitate "liberation" in 2003 and detect a repeat of this in the secession from the CanRC by the church of Abbotsford, while the DGK see this secession as the work of God.
  - 27.3. The FRCSA wish to observe the developments in the discussions between the DGK and the GKN.
  - 27.4. The fact that members of the DGK were in a sister church relation with us not long ago and since they did not leave the RCNL because they wished to leave the reformed line – rather, they wished to preserve it -- necessitates us to continue to strive for restoring unity.

**Synod decided regarding the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN):**

28. To mandate DRCA to maintain contact and to continue the discussions with the Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN), but not, as yet, to establish ecclesiastical fellowship with this church federation.
29. To advise consistories, in case of members from this federation coming to South Africa, to decide on the acceptability of them as members or as guests at the Lord's Supper – should they make this request – only after a conversation with them.

30. To instruct DRCA to inform the GKN in writing on the decisions concerning them.  
Grounds:
- 30.1. At this time the FRCSA have a responsibility towards the RCNL.
  - 30.2. The FRCSA wish to observe any developments in the discussions between the GKN and the DGK and whether a change for the good within the RCNL will make a return to these churches possible.
  - 30.3. The fact that members of the GKN were in a sister church relation with us not long ago and since they did not leave the RCNL because they wished to leave the reformed line – rather, they wished to preserve it -- necessitates us to continue to strive for restoring unity.

**Synod decided regarding Churches in North America:**

31. To mandate deputies to remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in North America, mainly via the CanRC.  
Ground:  
According to the policy adopted by Synod Bethal 2000, the FRCSA should focus on our own region. It is better to leave more intensive contacts related to reformed churches in North America to the CanRC.

**Synod decided regarding Churches in Africa:**

32. To instruct DRCA to remain in contact with the ICRC and churches in Africa regarding future regional conferences.
33. To instruct DRCA to co-ordinate the delegation to the next Africa regional conference preferably by sending their own deputy as well as another delegate from the churches.
34. To share the cost for attending this conference with the appropriate mission board or church.  
Grounds:
- 34.1. Since the missionaries / mission boards / churches profit from sending a delegate, it is reasonable to share the cost.
  - 34.2. The FRCSA and its members have a responsibility to promote the proclamation of the Gospel wherever reasonably possible.

Synod was informed that the following Regional ICRC Africa meeting will most probably be held in Namibia in 2020.

**Synod decided regarding the FRCSA Information Booklet:**

35. To mandate deputies 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:
- 35.1. Since the booklet contains details on local churches as well as on the FRCSA church federation, it should be kept up-to-date for easy and reliable information to interested persons.
  - 35.2. Several churches use the information contained in the booklet in their own publications. It is therefore not necessary to provide printed copies.

(Br. Moes reported that they were not able to include the booklet on the website as it was not properly functioning yet, but it was indicated that the website was supposed to start functioning properly as from September/October 2017).

**Synod decided regarding liaison for the churches:**

36. To provide the church councils with appropriate information regarding churches abroad.
37. 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 decided regarding the proposed budget:**

38. To approve the budget of R84 000.

Ground:

Deputies proved that the amount of money is required to enable them to fulfil their mandate.

**Synod decided regarding a new mandate for deputies:**

39. To mandate new deputies as follows:

- 39.1. To maintain sister church relations with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) according to the adopted rules.
- 39.2. To send a delegate to Synod Bunbury during mid-2018 and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.
- 39.3. To maintain sister church relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) according to the adopted rules.
- 39.4. To send a delegate to Synod Edmonton 2019 during and to instruct the delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA.
- 39.5. To maintain sister church relations with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated) (RCNL) according to the adopted rules, but with limitations on rules 5 and 6 (refer to "Synod decided 17" above).
- 39.6. To continue monitoring the developments in the RCNL, especially in the areas of concern, and to participate in further direct dialogue with the RCNL and other churches on these matters, if such opportunities arise (e.g. under the auspices of the ICRC or as part of the ICRC 2021 conference) and to search actively for opportunities to address the concerns and debate the underlying hermeneutics with the RCNL.
- 39.7. To send two delegates to the next Synod of the RCNL in 2020.
- 39.8. To report to the next FRCSA synod 2020 with recommendations on the future of sister church relationship with the RCNL.
- 39.9. To send a copy of the synod decisions of the FRCSA Synod 2017, regarding the RCNL, to deputies BBK of the RCNL and to other sister churches.
- 39.10. To maintain contact and continue discussions with De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK) in the Netherlands, but not to progress to ecclesiastical fellowship with this church federation.
- 39.11. To inform the DGK in writing about the decisions concerning them.
- 39.12. To maintain contact and continue discussions with the Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN), but not, as yet, to establish ecclesiastical fellowship with this church federation.
- 39.13. To inform the GKN in writing about the decisions concerning them.
- 39.14. To maintain contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about developments in their churches.
- 39.15. To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in Northern America through the CanRC.
- 39.16. To continue membership of the ICRC.
- 39.17. To send two delegates to the next ICRC meeting.
- 39.18. To uplift the ICRC profile in the FRCSA.
- 39.19. To remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future African regional ICRC conferences.
- 39.20. To co-ordinate the delegation of the FRCSA to the next Africa regional conference (refer to "Synod decided 35" above).
- 39.21. 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, in co-operation with the webmaster.
- 39.22. To provide the church councils with appropriate information regarding churches abroad.
- 39.23. To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.

- 39.24. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held more or less halfway between Synod 2017 and Synod 2020.
- 39.25. To report to the next Synod and propose recommendations according to the Synod Rules as adopted by Synod 2017.

#### **Article 45 Report from Classis South on days of prayer ad Article 69 CO**

Material: Report by Classis South (Doc. 27).

As part of the report was written in Afrikaans, a representative of Classis South was requested to translate the contents of the report in English for the benefit of the non-Afrikaans speaking delegates.

The South African delegates were all asked to report what the reaction on this request in their congregation had been. It was revealed that not all the congregations had handled according to the request. It was suggested that a request in Afrikaans could have caused confusion. All the congregations are however encouraged to react to such requests in a proper way.

#### **Synod decided:**

1. To appoint Classis North as the Classis responsible for calling days of prayer according to Art. 69 CO for the time period up to the next synod.  
Ground:  
The responsibility for implementing Art. 69 CO is as a rule alternated between classes.

#### **Article 46 Blessing address to Government officials**

Synod discussed the wisdom of sending a letter to the State president as such letters usually do not reach the intended destination.

Synod decided:

1. To continue sending a blessing address to the State President.  
Ground:  
This reflects our approach as Reformed people towards the authorities installed by God over us.
2. To also send blessing letters to the mayor of the town/city where the synod is held.  
Ground:  
This reflects acknowledgement of God-given authority also on municipal level.

#### **Article 47 Deputies for Internet Communication**

Material: Deputies Report (Doc. 28).

None of the deputies were present.

Synod decided:

1. That the web site should at least be able to provide information regarding Acts of Synods and sermons by FRCSA ministers or missionaries.
2. That the English name of the website should be, or should include, the abbreviation frcsa.
3. That the website should preferably be up and running by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017.
4. To approve an annual budget of R 5000/year for Web, email and streaming hosting.
5. Approve the minor changes to the policy, and the way the policy was implemented.
6. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 6.1. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held more or less halfway between Synod 2017 and Synod 2020.
  - 6.2. To report to the next synod and to the Indaba and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

## Article 48 Deputies Stated Clerk and Archive

Material: Deputy report (Doc. 29).  
Additional deputy report (Doc. 30).

Br. Roose was present as deputy.

Synod decided:

1. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 1.1. To arrange the printing of the Acts of Synod 2017.
  - 1.2. To request appointed deputies to provide information regarding the progress of their mandate on a regular basis.
  - 1.3. To conduct upon instruction from the synod or the convening church the administration of the synod.
  - 1.4. To act as the archivist in collaboration with the archive church and to implement an archiving system.

Ground:  
Mandate points 1.1. – 1.4. are considered to be standard functions of a Stated Clerk.
  - 1.5. To eventually merge and publish the revised Church Order and Rules of Synod in the main three languages used in our churches, as well as the order of the service, as established by Synod 1990 (Artikel 14, Handeling van die Sinode van ... Kaapstad, 1990), Rules for church relations as adopted by Synod 2014 and other documents as adopted by Synod 2017 (Refer to Articles 10, 25 and 26 of these Acts).

Ground:  
The Stated Clerk was not able to act on this point as not all the required documents were available yet. This point is therefore still outstanding and should be completed before the next synod.
  - 1.6. To handle administrative matters during the period between synod meetings on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

Grounds:
    - 1.6.1. Handling of administrative matters during inter-synodical periods is sometimes required.
    - 1.6.2. Handling of administrative matters on behalf of the FRCSA should be conducted by a person who is officially authorised by a synod of the FRCSA to take care of such matters.
  - 1.7. To submit an interim report to an Indaba to be organised during 2019.
  - 1.8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.
2. To reject the proposal by the Stated Clerk regarding instructions to classes but to task the scribe to send a letter to the classes in which they are requested to make sure that appointments of delegates should be done timely in relation to the commencement date of synods.

Ground:  
To decide on dates of appointments of delegates is not a synodical matter but should be decided by the classes.
3. To instruct the relevant person(s) or deputies or convening churches to include the following phrase: *“Decision on cut-off date for admissibility of documents received after due date”*, as a standard agenda-item in proposed synod agenda’s and to actually decide on a cut-off date which allows the minimum required time for a proper preparation by delegates for each synod.

Grounds:

- 3.1. Insufficient preparation leads to a waste of meeting time and may result in poor decisions.
- 3.2. Poor decisions have a way of re-appearing in following synod meetings and cause even more waste of meeting time.
4. To instruct the relevant person(s)/deputies to add the following sentence in Article 3 of the adopted Rules of Synod: "Classes and deputies are entitled to propose certain ministers to the convening church to serve as synod advisors".

Ground:

Changing Article 3 in this way may help to prevent confusion on this issue.

## **Article 49 Mission deputies (continued)**

Brs. Pouwels and Snijder were present to represent deputies.

Synod decided:

1. To appoint new deputies.
2. To approve the following MDSA mandate:
  - 2.1. To sustain and enhance the contacts between the mission churches of the FRCSA, the supporting churches abroad and the local supporting churches.
  - 2.2. To send a letter to ZAM/DVN in which a clearer and more transparent definition of mission in the new Agreement of Co-operation is requested.
  - 2.3. To act in accordance with the "Agreement of Co-operation between MDSA and ZAM/DVN<sup>1</sup>", and the "Agreement of Cooperation regarding the mission between the FRCSA churches<sup>2</sup>".
  - 2.4. To execute the "**FRCSA policy for supported mission projects**" for all supporting projects.
  - 2.5. To approve or reject proposals for possible new mission projects. Approved projects have to be related to the spreading of the gospel, have to have as ultimate goal the conversion of sinners and the gathering of Christ's church and must be proven to be sustainable and executable.
  - 2.6. To assess the different congregations according to the newly adopted differentiated contribution model.
  - 2.7. To submit an interim report to the Indaba to be organised in 2019.
  - 2.8. To report to the next synod according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.
3. To Approve proposed "FRCSA policy for supported mission projects" (Appendix 1)
4. To Approve AND SIGN the new "Akkoord van Samenwerking" with ZAM (Appendix 4), but the one to be signed will be sent separately.
5. For any new project, funding should first be sought from the FRCA and/or CanCR.
6. To update the "Agreement of co-operation between local churches", according to the new situation. (Appendix 2)

## **Article 50 Adjournment**

Rev. 't Hart led in a closing devotion from Ps. 122, led in prayer and requested the meeting to sing Ps. 122. Synod then adjourned for dinner and for the night.

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<sup>1</sup> Akkoord van samenwerking van Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, verteenwoordigdig deur de Sendings Deputate Suid-Afrika en Zuid-Afrika Mission / Verre Naasten in Nederland.

<sup>2</sup> Agreement of cooperation between the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa regarding mission work

## Day 5: Friday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017

### Article 51 Re-opening

Rev. Schreuder led the opening devotion based on 2 Chronicles 16: 7-10. He asked the meeting to sing Ps. 147: 1-3 then led in prayer.

### Article 52 Deputies for Theological Training and article 19 CO (Deputies Curators)(continued)

Revs. P.G. Boon and J.A. Breytenbach and brs. G. Hagg and R. Meeske represented deputies.

Synod decided:

1. To appoint Deputies for Theological Training and article 19 CO to execute the decisions listed below.
2. To set an APS of 25 as the admission requirement for theological studies in the FRCSA.  
Ground:  
To ensure that students have the academic competence to follow the theological studies according to requirements, outcomes and curriculum adopted at previous synods.
3. Prospective students for theological studies must apply for access through admission procedures set by curators.  
Ground:  
Prospective students must be assessed by curators to ensure that only persons with adequate aptitudes and competencies are admitted to the studies.
4. In cases where deputies curators and mentor(s) conclude that the applicant for theological studies lacks basic competencies for theological studies, the student will follow a foundation course that is determined by the curators, and pass this course successfully.  
Ground:  
Many prospective students, particularly from disadvantaged communities, lack basic knowledge, skills and understanding with regard to study methods, tuition language, Reformed doctrines and church order. The normal academic study trajectory will be too difficult and the study outcomes inadequate for the outcomes and profiles set by synod 2006. The foundation course will cover these basic elements of theological studies.
5. Theological students are to follow one of the trajectories mentioned below:
  - 5.1. Trajectory A: Three years BA language studies (Hebrew III, Greek III mandatory and English and Latin advised) at an accredited tertiary education institution (university) close to a FRCSA congregation.  
This will be followed by dedicated language tuition (Hebrew and Greek) for six months, since the SA academic year ends in November and the Canadian academic year starts in August.  
Deputies should ensure that the student's language proficiency is sufficient for entrance in Hamilton.  
This will be followed by a four year MDiv course at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton. This will include practical work in South Africa during the CRTS summer recess.
  - 5.2. Trajectory B: A BTh study at either George Whitfield Theological College or Mukhanyo Theological College (3 or 4 years).  
This will be followed by dedicated language tuition (Hebrew and Greek) for a minimum of one year.  
This will be followed by facilitating the content of the MDiv CRTS (Hamilton), possibly to be followed by a physical conclusion in Hamilton itself.  
Deputies should ensure that the duration of trajectory B should not be much longer than trajectory A (7,5 years) by preventing duplications in trajectory B.

6. To mandate Deputies Curators to work towards the appointment of an *anchor theologian* in cooperation with a local congregation of the FRCSA, who will ordain him as their pastor with a special task (by making use of either Trajectory A or B). The task of the anchor theologian will be to maintain the proper functioning of study trajectories A and B as listed above. The *anchor theologian* will report to Deputies Curators on his work on a bi-annual basis in writing and by attending all meetings of Deputies Curators. The local congregation will be responsible for his pastoral care and all practical matters re stipend, transport and housing. Deputies Curators are responsible to ensure the local congregation receive the funds needed for this.
7. To mandate Deputies Curators to continue with the current *Mentorship program* during the period 2018-2020, in which Rev. J. van der Linden is made available for one day per week. Deputies Curators have to report to the next synod as for the need for the continuation of the mentorship program in its current form.
8. To mandate Deputies Curators to continue with the Project Curators Support to Churches during the period 2018-2020, in which the churches contribute to pay as per agreement of the costs related to this project. Deputies Curators, after timely consultation with the other role players, will report to the next synod as for the need for the continuation of this project.
9. To present on an annual basis a training opportunity for office bearers, a men's conference, and a pastors' seminar.
10. To financially support approved students according to the parameters set by synod for the study towards the ministry of the Word, in accordance with Article 19 CO and the synodical regulations.
11. To partly approve the budgets for the period 2018 – 2020 as proposed in the report of Deputies for Theological Training:
  - 11.1. For Article 19 CO (needy theological students): Annexure C on page 26 of the Report of Deputies Curators.
  - 11.2. For Deputies Curators: Annexure D on page 27 of the Report of Deputies Curators. Synod however decided not to approve the budget for an anchor theologian, but to increase the contributions of the churches for Deputies Curators as far as possible according to the sustainability model. (See Art. 40 for detailed amounts).

Important note: The budget, as approved by synod, is not sufficient to cover the cost of an anchor theologian. In order to make decision 6 (above) possible, deputies should search for other financial support sources.

Ground:  
Synod decided that, by approving the proposed budget for an anchor theologian, the required financial congregational contributions would exceed the financial capabilities of the congregations.
12. To assess the churches as follows for Deputies Curators: for 2018: R 650,000, for 2019: R680,000 and for 2020: R680,000 to be collected according to the differentiated contribution model.
13. To assess the churches for the calendar years 2018-2020 for CO art. 19 (needy theological students) with the equivalent of an amount per member of R 140 for 2018; R 220 for 2019 and R 240 for 2020 (according to the old system, to be calculated for the various congregations according to the differentiated contribution model).
14. To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2018 or beginning 2019.

15. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to the Rules of Synod as adopted by Synod 2017.

Ground:

Synod considered the importance of curators' task in the coming years, due to the number of vacancies in the church federation. There is a great need for training for the ministry in the coming years.

Br Meeske thanked the synod members for their valuable contribution and the vice-chairman thanked deputies curators for their work.

### **Article 53 Deputies for Inspection of the Archive**

Material: Deputies Report.

Synod decided:

1. To adopt the report.
2. To discharge deputies with thanks.
3. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate:
  - 3.1. To examine the synodical archive in accordance with the rules of synod.
  - 3.2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to The Rules of Synod.

### **Article 54 Personal question period**

Rev. Mnisi pointed out that we should pray more for each other.

Other brothers expressed their appreciation for the way synod was organised and functioned.

Blessing wishes were expressed for the FRCSA by the brothers from the sister churches.

The chairman thanked all South African – and foreign delegates for their contributions towards a well functioning synod.

### **Article 55 Approval of Press Release**

Synod Accepted a proposal from the chairman, Rev. Boon, to allow the vice-chairman, br. Pouwels, to compile a press release after closure of Synod 2017 (App. 3 and 4).

### **Article 56 Adoption of Acts of Synod 2017**

The chairman proposed that the members of the moderamen would be allowed to finalise the Acts of Synod 2017 after the closure of the synod and the delegates granted their approval.

### **Article 57 Censure according to Article 48 CO**

The chairman noted with gratitude that censure was not necessary.

### **Article 58 Appointment of convening church, and place and time of the next Synod (closed session)**

The FRC Belhar (Classis South) was appointed to convene the next synod. Synod proposed to convene Synod 2020 from 21<sup>st</sup> until 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The FRC Johannesburg (Classis South) was appointed as the alternate.

### **Article 59 Appointments of Deputies, Archive Church and Classis for days of prayer ad Article 69 CO (closed session)**

Synod decided:

- 1 To refer in appointment letters to the possibility to co-opt members and to indicate deadlines for synod reports etc.

- 2 To appoint as:
- 2.1. **Deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad.**  
Br. H. Moes (convener), Cape Town, sr. G. van den Berg, Cape Town, Rev. J. Bruintjes, Cape Town, br. J.F. Raimond, Cape Town,  
Contact person for ICRC: Rev. P. Kgatle, Soshanguve-UU/Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.2. **Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa.**  
Br. W. Bijker (convener), Johannesburg; Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. J.A. Breytenbach, Pretoria; Rev. S. Mathokoane, Mamelodi; Rev. G.F. Mnisi, Nellmapius / Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.3. **Deputies Revision Liturgical Forms and Form Prayers.**  
Br. D. Drijfhout, Pretoria (convener); Sr. Ingrid Hagg, Pretoria; Sr. M. Boon, Pretoria; Sr. R. de Jong, Pretoria-Maranata..
  - 2.4. **Mission Deputies.**  
Br. Harry Pouwels (convener), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. T. de Wit, Pretoria; Sr. T. Bijker, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. A. Bijker, Cape Town; Br L. Ijlst, Pretoria; Br. M. Boersema, Pretoria; Br. H. Snijder (treasurer), Pretoria.
  - 2.5. **Deputies Liturgical Music.**  
Br. A. de Vente (convenor), Pretoria-Maranata, Sr. M.M. Breytenbach, Pretoria-Maranata; Sr. A. Kamphuis, Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. B.A. Matlaela, Soshanguve-XX / Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. G.F. Mnisi, Nellmapius / Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.6. **Deputies Afrikaans Bible Translation.**  
Rev. J. van der Linden (convener), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. H. Schuring, Pretoria, Rev. C. van Wyk, Cape Town.
  - 2.7. **Deputies ad Article 11 CO (Needy Churches).**  
Br. W. Hofsink (convenor), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. M. Bijker, Pretoria-Maranata, Br. W. Miske, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. J. Maila, Mamelodi; Sr. T. Maite, Soshanguve-GG.
  - 2.8. **Deputies ad Article 49 CO.**  
Classis North: Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata (convenor); Rev. J.A. Breytenbach, Pretoria.  
Substitutes: Rev. B.A. Matlaela, Soshanguve-XX / Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. D.M. Boersma, Living Hope / Pretoria-Maranata;  
Classis South: Rev. L. van 't Foort, Cape Town (convenor); Rev. c. van Wyk, Wesbank.  
Substitutes: Rev. P. Abrahams, Belhar; Rev. J. Bruintjes, Cape Town.
  - 2.9. **Deputies Curators.**  
Br. R. Meeske (convenor), Johannesburg, Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. A. de Lange, Pretoria; Sr. C. Hagg (secretary), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. H. Schuring, Pretoria; Br. T.W. Tamane, Soshanguve-GG; Br. W. R. Hoving (treasurer), Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.10. **Synod Treasurer.**  
Br. W. R. Hoving, Pretoria-Maranata.  
Substitute: Br. P. Bouwman, Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.11. **Stated clerk and archive.**  
Br. C. Roose (convenor), Pretoria; Sr. C. Agema, Pretoria.  
Substitute: Sr. T. Bijker, Pretoria-Maranata.
  - 2.12. **Deputies for Revision of Synod rules.**  
Br. C. Roose (convenor), Pretoria; Br. E. Byker, Cape Town.



- 2.13. Archive Church.**  
Church of Pretoria.
- 2.14. Deputies for Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.**  
Br. A. van der Linden (convenor), Cape Town;  
Substitute: Br. B. Kooiman, Cape Town.
- 2.15. Deputies for Inspection of the Archive.**  
Br. D. Drijfhout (convenor), Pretoria; Sr. A. Venter, Pretoria.
- 2.16. Deputies for Internet Communication.**  
Br. T. de Wit (convenor), Pretoria; Br. G.D. Bijker, Pretoria; Sr. Renette Ros, Pretoria.
- 2.17. Classis for days of prayer ad Article 69 CO.**  
Classis North.
- 2.18. Deputies to organise an Indaba.**  
Deputies to convene an Indaba between Synods 2017 and 2020: Deputies for Contacts with Churches in South Africa.

### **Article 60 Closure devotion**

Rev. van 't Foort led a closing devotion from James 5: 7-20 and led in prayer. He requested the meeting to sing Hymn 68: 1, 3, 4 and 8.

### **Article 61 Closing of synod**

The chairman, Rev. Boon explained that all synod work was now completed. He thanked the convening church and assistants for the excellent way in which the synod was prepared.

Rev. Brintjes expressed appreciation on behalf of the synod attendants for the capable manner in which the chairman and the other members of the moderamen had led the sessions of synod.

Synod 2017 closed at 12:25.

## Appendices

App. 1: Hymns preliminary adopted by Synod 2017 for use in worship services<sup>3</sup>. / Gesange deur Sinode 2017 voorlopig goedgekeur vir gebruik in eredienste<sup>3</sup>.

SKULDBELYDENIS EN GENADE

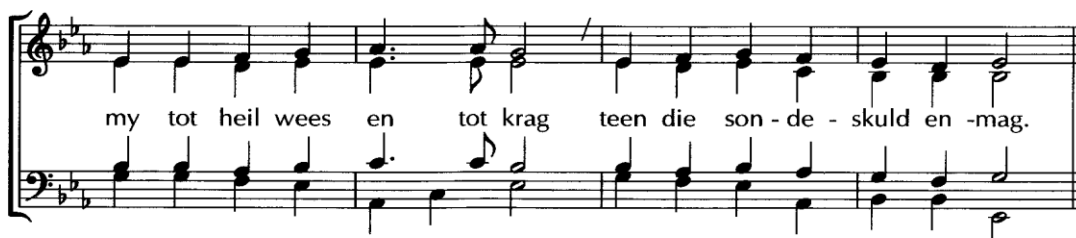
# 239 Jesus, Rots vir my geslaan



Je - sus, Rots vir my geslaan, laat my nie ver - lo - re gaan!



U was self van God ver - laat. Laat u ly - ding, son - der maat,



my tot heil wees en tot krag teen die son - de - skuld en - mag.

2  
En ek self – wat kan ek doen  
om my sonde te versoen?  
Sou my hart met ywer gloei,  
sou my tranes ewig vloei –  
nòg gebede, nòg geweene  
kan my red, Heer; U alleen.

3  
Leeg, net met my sondelas,  
hou ek u verdienste vas.  
Ek kom om vergewing vra;  
U het ook my skuld gedra!  
U, geslaan tot heilsfontein,  
wás my, Heiland, maak my rein!

4  
Heer, my Rots, bo almal groot  
staan U vas in elke nood.  
Trou van mense kom en gaan,  
maar U bly onwrikbaar staan.  
Eew'ge Rots, U laat ook my  
veilig, ewig in U bly!

Teks: *Rock of ages cleft for me* - Augustus Toplady 1776; GBA Gerdener 1931; gewysig Attie van der Colf 1978  
Musiek: PETRA - Richard Redhead 1853

<sup>3</sup> Liedboek van die Kerk, Begeleiersboek, NG Kerk-Uitgewers

# 241 Troue Here van my lewe

Trou - e He - re van my le - we, God by wie ek vre - de vind;

Va - der wat my skuld ver - ge - we, dank - baar leef ek as u kind.

Vrees vir straf laat my nie wei - fel, want u lief - de laat geen twy - fel;

ja, ek weet in son - de - smart: U is troos - ter van my hart.

2  
 U die kenner van ons harte,  
 sien my skuld en ken my nood.  
 Ek treur, vol berou en smarte,  
 want my sonde bring die dood.  
 Ja, U sien my hart se wonde,  
 sien my ly oor al my sonde.  
 Christus laat my voor U staan,  
 deur sy bloed neem U my aan.

3  
 Deur u Seun skenk U genade,  
 in geloof neem ek Hom aan.  
 Hy verlos my van die kwade;  
 Hy sal altyd met my gaan.  
 Al is ek in skuld gebore,  
 is ek in Hom uitverkore  
 vóór u Woord in skeppingsmag  
 nag geskei het van die dag.

Teks: *Schweiget, bange Zweifel! Schweiget!* - Johann Schlegel 1769; Ahasverus van den Berg 1806; GBA Gerdener 1931; AGB 1944;  
 gewysig Gerjo van der Merwe 1978; gewysig Reneé Marais 2001  
 Melodie: *Alle Menschen müssen sterben* - Duits E16; C Anton ca 1640; geestelik Darmstadt 1687; aangepas 1806  
 Harmonisasie: Werkgroep Kerkmusiek UOVS 1978. Alternatiewe harmonisasie: Lied 573

# 244 Alles, alles is genade

Al - les, al - les is ge - na - de, on - ver - dien - de guns al - leen.  
Die ver - los - sing uit die kwa - de kan net U, o God, ver - leen.

U het ons reeds lank te - vo - re as u ei - en - dom be - skou;

ons in Chris - tus vas - ge - hou. In Hom is ons uit - ver - ko - re.

Ons sal oor u lief - de juig, dank - baar van u guns ge - tuig.

Teks: *Alle roem is uitgesloten* - Jan Scharp 1806; GBA Gerdener 1931; AGB 1944; Gerjo van der Merwe 1978; gewysig Andries Breytenbach 2001

Melodie: *Sollt ich meinem Gott nicht singen* - Johann Schop 1641; aangepas Christian Witt 1715

Harmonisasie: Werkgroep Kerkmusiek UOVS 1978

2  
Christus kom deur u ontferming,  
deur Hom reik U ons die hand.  
U neem sondaars in beskerming –  
liefde ver bo ons verstand!  
Christus red ons deur sy dade;  
Hy laat ons u liefde sien –  
liefde wat ons nooit verdien.  
Hy herskep ons uit genade.  
**Ons sal oor u liefde juig,  
dankbaar van u guns getuig.**

3  
Ons ontvang u Gees as gawe.  
Wie kan ooit dié wonder peil?  
Skuldiges en sondeslawe  
word verseker van u heil.  
Heer, u Gees besêël die waarheid  
dat ons nou u kinders is –  
ons verlossing is gewis.  
Deur u Gees borg U ons vryheid.  
**Ons sal oor u liefde juig,  
dankbaar van u guns getuig.**

4  
Aan die einde van my lewe  
sal u liefde my omvou.  
Waar my moed my wil begewe,  
dra U my steeds in u trou.  
In my doodsangs en beklemming  
sien ek Christus aan die kruis,  
reik ek na die vaderhuis –  
dis ons ewige bestemming.  
**Ons sal oor u liefde juig,  
dankbaar van u guns getuig.**

# 273 Laat my met U verenig lewe

Laat my met U ver-e-nig le-we, U wat die wa-re wyn-stok is;

u krag gee my voortdu-rend le-we; bewaar my van ver-der-fe-nis.

Deurstream, be-siel en se-ën my so-dat ek al-tyd vrug-baar bly.

2  
 Word elke loot nie reg gesnoei nie,  
 sal daar net wilde lote skiet.  
 Die druiwestok sal nie kan bloei nie,  
 die rank en loot geen vrugte bied.  
 Die wyse wynboer ken sy snoei  
 sodat die druif al voller groei.

3  
 Geen groeikrag kom deur eie strewes,  
 niks kan ek sonder U, o Heer;  
 in u gemeenskap bloei my lewe  
 en word die lewensvolheid meer.  
 Ek wil aan U verbonde bly –  
 bly U, o Here, steeds in my.

4  
 Nee, Heer, van U wil ek nie skei nie,  
 U wat die ware wynstok is.  
 As ek nie in u liefde bly nie,  
 is ek 'n loot wat vrugloos is.  
 Gee dat ek altyd vrugbaar bly  
 en U verheerlik word in my.

JOHANNES 15

DOOP

# Dit is my troos dat ek gedoop is 290

Dit is my troos dat ek ge - doop is, dat ek ge-doop is in u Naam,

want deur die doop is ek ver - se - ker dat U in guns U nooit nie skaam

as Va - der, Seun en Heil'-ge Gees om ook my God ge - noem te wees.

2  
Dit is my troos dat U as Vader  
Usel in trou aan my verbind  
en dat U in u milde liefde  
my neem as erfgenaam en kind;  
dat U die kwaad van my wil weer  
of anders tot my beswil keer.

3  
Dit is my troos dat U, Heer Jesus,  
as Seun my deur u bloed wil was;  
dat U my inlyf in u sterwe  
en vrymaak van my sondelas;  
dat U my met U óp laat staan  
en op 'n nuwe weg laat gaan.

4  
Dit is my troos dat U vir ewig,  
o Heil'ge Gees, in my wil woon.  
U wil my heilig en steeds voller  
die beeld van Christus laat vertoon.  
So maak U tot my eiendom  
als wat ek reeds besit in Hom.

# Aanbiddelike God, drie-enig 305

Aan - bidde - li - ke God, drie - e - nig, neem aan die dank wat ons U bring.

In lief - de is ons hier ver - e - nig - u lief - de bou ons onder - ling.

Deur die verbond van u ge - na - de het U ons aan U self ver - bind -

só kan u kinders, trou - e Va - der, die vast - heid van vertrou - e vind.

2

Deur één Verlosser is ons harte  
in doop en om die tafel één;  
één Gees wil ons in vreug en smarte  
sy blydschap skenk en hulp verleen.  
Dis één geloof waardeur ons lewe;  
één hoop wat ons versterk in stryd;  
één liefde wat ons nooit begewe,  
wat bly vir tyd en ewigheid.

Woorde: Zie ons tesaam uw' naam belijden - Abraham Rutgers 1806; GBA Gerdener 1931; AGB 1944; gewysig Attie van der Colf 1978 / 2001

Melodie: Psalm 118 - Straatsburg 1545 / Genève 1551

Armonisasie: HPA Coetzee 1976

•tematiewe harmonisasie: Psalm 66



# 305

3. Gee krag, o Heer, aan hierdie le - de      waar hul - le nou u Naam be - ly.

Mag hul ge-loof en hoop en lief - de      hul le-we lank di-na-mies bly.

Laat doen hul, Heer, die goeie wer - ke      deur Christus reeds vir ons be - rei;

bly in-spi-reer hul met u sterk - te      dat hul die lewenskroon ver-kry.

4  
 Heer, heilig ons steeds in u waarheid;  
 dié waarheid maak ons waarlik vry.  
 U Woord, in sy volkome klaarheid,  
 gee lig wat op die pad ons lei.  
 Deur duister nagte, helder dae,  
 is U die gids van ons geloof;  
 U rig ons na u welbehae  
 dat ons beleef wat U belooft.

PINKSTER

# 430 Kom, Skepper-Gees

Kom, Skep-per-Gees, be-soek u kerk, U wat ver - nu - we, ons ver - sterk.  
Vul self u skepping, Heil'ge Gees, met krag op hier-die Pinkster-fees.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Kom, Skepper-Gees'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, and the second system covers the next two lines.

2  
U is die trooster wat ons lei,  
geskenk van God wat by ons bly!  
U, Lewensbron, van bo gestuur,  
deurgloei ons met u liefdevuur!

4  
Gee helder lig aan ons verstand  
en laat u liefde in ons brand.  
Ons self is nog so swak, ons wag  
dat U ons sterk met Pinksterkrag.

6  
Gee dat ons geest'lik helder sien,  
die Vader, Seun in waarheid dien.  
O Gees, van albei uitgegaan,  
U't ons kom troos, by ons kom staan.

3  
Bestraal ons, Bron van alle lig,  
en toon ons God se aangesig.  
Deur U geheilig, spreek ons mond,  
eer ons u dade oral rond.

5  
Help ons die vyand teen te staan,  
in vrede op ons pad te gaan.  
Trek U as leidsman voor ons uit,  
word alle bose mag gestuit.

7  
**Kom, Skepper-Gees, besoek u kerk,  
U wat vernuwe, ons versterk.  
Vul self u skepping, Heil'ge Gees,  
met krag op hierdie Pinksterfees.**

# O Gees van Vader en van Seun 431

O Gees van Vader en van Seun, ons voerspraak, leidsman, krag en steun,

U, vul ons diepste hartsverlan - ge, U kom ons in die waarheid lei,

U leer ons bid, kom by ons bly - U loof ons met ons lof-ge-san - ge!

Wil steeds die goei - e in ons werk, be-waar, vermeerder en ver - sterk.

2

U maak die Skrifte vir ons oop;  
 bekeerdes, deur die Gees gedoop,  
 ontvang met blydschap skuldvergewing.  
 Verlos, na liggaam en na gees,  
 deel hul vol vreugde in die fees.  
 God gee 'n nuwe heilsbedeling!  
 Saam breek ons brood, één in gebed,  
 saam loof ons God wat ons kom red.

PINKSTER

# 435 Heil'ge Gees, U bou 'n tempel

Heil' - ge Gees, U bou 'n tem - pel deur die Woord wat krag-tig werk.  
U lei men - se tot be - ke - ring, bou so, wê - reldwyd, u kerk.

U kom lei ons in die waarheid; men-se vind hul Va - der weer.

O - ral sing hul lof en eer. Hul loof U in al - le ta - le:

Hal - le - lu - ja! Loof die Heer! Loof die Heer! Hal - le - lu - ja!

2  
Heil'ge Gees, ons gids tot lewe,  
bring ons in u waarheid saam –  
dan vereer ons, God se kinders,  
hartlik saam die Vadernaam.  
Maak ons vry van elke dwaling,

vry van alle valse leer,  
een in Christus, in ons Heer.  
Ons sing saam ons lofgesange.  
God drie-enig, U die eer.  
Halleluja! Loof die Heer!

Teks: *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*: voor-reformatories; Martin Luther 1524; Jan Jacob ten Kate 1868; AGB 1944; gewysig Attie van der Colf 1978 / 2001  
Melodie: *Sollt ich meinem Gott nicht singen* - Johann Schop 1641; Christian Witt 1715 (aangepas)  
Harmonisasie: Werkgroep Kerkmusiek UOVS 1978

# O Heer, u laaste woorde 485

O Heer, u laas - te woor - de dig - by Je - ru - sa - lem,

kom deur die loop van eeu - e soos met u ei - e stem:

"Aan My, wat dood oor - win het, is al - le mag ge - gee;

die heil wat Ek ge - bring het - gaan deel dit ver - der mee!"

2  
O Heer, u laaste woorde  
as eerste sendeling,  
het oor die hele wêreld  
bevrydend uitgekring:  
"Gaan oral en verkondig,  
deur lewe, woord en doop,  
vergifnis van die sonde,  
verlossing uit die dood."

3  
Maak deur u laaste opdrag  
wat soveel vreugde bring,  
ons arbeid tot 'n seën;  
laat liefde ons ook dring.  
Bring mense tot bekering,  
wil u gemeente bou.  
En laat ons, Heer, u lering  
van harte onderhou.

## **App. 2:           Persverslag van Sinode 2017.**

### **PERSVERSLAG VAN DIE SOSHANGUVE-NOORD SINODE VAN DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE, GEHOU VAN 7 TOT 11 AUGUSTUS 2017**

#### **Opening en Konstituering**

Die bidstond vir die sinode is op Sondagmiddag 6 Augustus in die VGK Soshanguve-Noord se kerkgebou gehou. Omdat die gemeente vakant is, het ds Arjan de Visser die diens geleï.

Op Maandag 16:00 het almal by die Pure Joy Lodge in Kameeldrift bymekaar gekom. Br Tokelo Tamane van Soshanguve-Noord het die sinode geopen met 'n Skrifoordenking oor Ps 133. Die geloofsbriewe is nagegaan om te verseker dat alle afgevaardigdes wettig deur hul klassis afgevaardig is.

#### **Aanwesiges:**

Van Klassis Noord was die predikante Pieter Boon, Hannes Breytenbach, George Mnisi en ouderinge Gerard Hagg, Harry Pouwels en Tokelo Tamane aanwesig. Klassis Suid is verteenwoordig deur die predikante Johan Bruintjes, Linus van't Foort en Carl van Wyk en as ouderlinge Bertus Byker, Ronald Meeske en Chris Willemse.

As moderamen is verkies: voorsitter ds Pieter Boon; ondervoorsitter br Harry Pouwels en skriba br Bertus Byker.

Br Kees Roose en sr Christien Agema het Soshanguve-Noord, wat as sameroepende kerk verantwoordelik was, met die reëlings ondersteun. Ook was br Roose aanwesig as kerkverbandelike administrateur om notule te maak met die oog op die amptelike Handeling van die Sinode.

Ons was baie dankbaar dat ons susterkerke elk twee afgevaardigdes gestuur het wat ook die volle sinode as adviseurs gedien het. Daar was twee predikante uit Australië (FRCA) naamlik di. Axel Hagg en Stephen 't Hart. Ook was dr Arjan de Visser en br Otto Bouwman aanwesig namens die Kanadese kerke (CanRC). Vanuit Nederland was ds Joop Schreuder en br Alexander Pedro afgevaardig namens die GKv. Ons het geprofiteer van die insette wat hulle op verskeie sake gemaak het, die susterkerkverhoudings is versterk en was sigbaar deur die advies wat gegee is. So help ons mekaar om getrou te bly aan Christus wat ons, as Hoof van sy kerk, oproep tot een algemene apostoliese kerk.

Die GKSA (Gereformeerde Kerke van SA) het vier waarnemers gestuur wat op verskillende dae en tye gedeeltelik die sinode bygewoon het: s Pieter Kurpershoek wat ook die groeteboodskappe van die GKSA aan die sinode oorgedra het, ds Gerard Meijer, ds Cassie Aucamp en prof. Johannes Smit.

#### **Kontakte met Binnelandse Kerke (KBK)**

Die sinode het die verhouding met die Gereformeerde Kerke van SA (GKSA) bespreek na aanleiding van die verslag van KBK. Die gesprekke tussen die GKSA en VGKSA was die laaste jare hoofsaaklik oor die GKSA se hermeneutiese benadering ten opsigte van die vrou in die kerklike ampte, die oopstel van die diakenamp vir vir vroue, die memorandum met die NG Kerk en die Cloete Psalmomdigtings. Ds Kurpershoek het van hulle kant 'n pleidooi gelewer dat ons verder moet praat in die eenheid in Christus en vir begrip gevra oor onder andere die sake waar daar tog verskille is.

Kan ons as sinode nou reeds die gevolgtrekking maak dat ons nie op nasionale vlak na eenheid kan kom nie? Nee, die gesprekke sal verder gevoer moet word met onder andere ook die bespreking oor die toepassing en siening van wat 'n kerkverband is, en hoe dit behoort te funksioneer, veral in die lig van groeiende verskille in dieselfde kerkverband. Opsommend kan gesê word dat aan die een kant

daar herkenning is in die Gereformeerde leer en lewe, aan die anderkant is daar ook elemente wat tog lyk asof daar afgewyk word van die Gereformeerde leer.

Met betrekking tot die NG Kerk in Afrika ('n kerkverband wat in 1994 nie met die samesmelting tot die Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk saamgegaan het nie) het die sinode besluit om kontakte met hulle voort te sit om mekaar beter te leer ken en om mekaar te ondersteun in die onderhouding van die ware geloof. Dr Andries Hoffman van Bloemfontein het aan ons die groeteboodskappe van hierdie kerkverband oorgedra. Veral in die opleiding kan daar geleenthede wees om saam te werk.

Die sinode het ook die besluit van die vorige sinode herhaal om deputate opdrag te gee om kontakte te onderhou met Engelssprekende kerke waarmee daar samewerking is inbv. die opleiding van teologiese studente. Ook het die sinode plaaslike kerke aangemoedig om kontak te lê met andertalige kerke in hulle direkte omgewing wat ook Skrifgetrou wil wees in leer en lewe.

### **Betrekings met Buitelandse Kerke (BBK)**

Op grond van die verslag van die deputate BBK het die sinode besluit om die susterkerkverhouding met die Canadian Reformed Churches en die Free Reformed Churches of Australia voort te sit. Ons as VGK is baie dankbaar dat ons so 'n sterk band met hierdie kerke ervaar. Ds 't Hart het die groete vanuit Australië se kerke oorgedra en ons verseker van verdere ondersteuning in 'n wêreld waar die Gereformeerde leer onder baie druk staan. Ook is daar die versekering van verdere finansiële steun. Br Bouwman van die CanRC het die groete van sy kerkverband oorgedra. Hulle is ook dankbaar ook die VGKSA te kan help, veral ten opsigte van die opleiding van predikante by hulle opleiding in Hamilton (CRTS). Die aanwesigheid van afgevaardigdes van daardie kerke by die sinode en hul insette tydens die besprekings is baie gewaardeer.

Br. Pedro het die groeteboodskap van die die Gereformeerde Kerken (vrijgemaakt) in Nederland oorgedra. Hy het vir begrip gevra en gemaan om nie oorhaastig te reageer op die onlangse sinodebesluit wat die ampte in die kerk oopgestel het vir vroue nie. Ook is die sinode gevra om in die eenheid in Christus tog begrip te hê vir die besluit in Nederland.

Hierdie sinodebesluit van ons susterkerke in Nederland het tot 'n lang bespreking gelei oor hoe om hierdie verhouding in die toekoms vorm te gee. Daar is aan die een kant dankbaarheid dat hierdie kerke Gereformeerde wil bly, ons as VGKSA ondersteun in gebede, toegang gee tot Gereformeerde lektuur en vir die groot ondersteuning in sending en ander projekte. Aan die anderkant is daar besorgdheid en kommer en verdriet oor die rigting wat die kerke ingeslaan het met die oopstel van die ampte. Dit blyk dat vorige oproepe om nie die nuwe hermeneutiese benadering ('n nuwe manier van Skrifuitleg wat die onfeilbaarheid en duidelikheid van die Skrif ondermyn) te volg nie, op dooie ore geval het. Ook is die Skriftuurlike argumente teen die oopstel van die ampte nie (ernstig) opgeneem nie. Op 'n vraag wat ons as VGKSA nog meer kon gedoen het om die GK(v) in Nederland te waarsku en op te roep teen die besluit van oopstel van ampte, het die deputate BBK Nederland wat hierdie sinode bygewoon het, bevestig dat ons alles gedoen het wat moontlik was.

Daar is besluit dat ons sinode aan die komende sinode van die GKv in 2020 'n brief sal skryf en om te vra wat die sinode (en deputate BBK NL) met ons argumente gedoen het. 'n Gevolg van hierdie verandering in die GK(v) is dat die kerklike korrespondensie met hierdie kerke gedeeltelik beperk word: lidmate wat vanaf hierdie kerke GKv met attestate by ons die sakrament van die heilige nagmaal wil vier, sal eers na 'n gesprek oor hierdie sake waarvoor ons bekommerd is, toegelaat kan word. Ook predikante van hierdie kerke sal eers na 'n gesprek oor hulle standpunt rakende die sake van o.a. vroue en ampte toegelaat word op die preekstoel van die VGKSA. 'n Plaaslike kerk kan verder slegs oorgaan tot die beroeping van 'n predikant uit die GKv, nadat instemming van die klassis verkry is. Sodoende

word die nagmaalstafel en die preekstoel beskerm teen 'n leer wat strydig is met die Skrif en belydenis. Die sinode het die vurige hoop uitgespreek dat die GKv sal terugkom op hulle besluite t.a.v. die vrou en die ampte, en die samesmelting met die Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken, aangesien 'n susterkerkverhouding anders onhoudbaar gaan word.

Aangaande De Gereformeerde Kerken (hersteld) (DGK) handhaaf die sinode die vorige besluit om nie voort te gaan met voorbereidings om 'n susterkerkverhouding met hulle aan te gaan nie. Ten opsigte van die Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN) is besluit dat ons deputate daardie groep kerke moet bly ondersoek. Sou lidmate uit die DGK of GKN Suid-Afrika besoek dan word aanbeveel dat die kerkrade hulle as lidmate of as gaste aan die nagmaal toelaat, net na 'n amptelike gesprek met hulle.

Betreffende die Reformed Churches of New Zealand en die kerke in Noord Amerika het die sinode die deputate opgedra om via ons susterkerke op hoogte te bly van ontwikkelings en nie 'n direkte susterkerkverhouding aan te gaan nie bloot vanweë ons beperkte mannekrag.

Lidmaatskap van die International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) word voortgesit. Daar word ook waardering uitgespreek hoe hierdie konferensie die Gereformeerde leer wil beskerm. Die praktyk is bewys in die opskorting van die GKv Nederland se lidmaatskap agv die oopstel van die ampte. Die BBK word opgedra om twee afgevaardigdes na die ICRC 2021 te stuur en ook aktief in die streekskonferensies (Afrika) te wees.

### **Bybelvertaling, liturgiese musiek, formuliere en gebede**

Die sinode het met dank kennis geneem dat die nuwe Afrikaanse bron-georiënteerde vertaling moontlik in 2020 beskikbaar sal wees. Die insette wat gemaak is na proeflees is vir 'n groot gedeelte aanvaar deur die vertalers. Deputate word weer aangestel met die mandaat om as lede van die Kerklike Advieskomitee by die voortgang van hierdie vertaling betrokke te wees. Hulle word aangemoedig om die kerke op hoogte te hou en ook terugvoer vanuit die gemeentes aan die Kerklike Advieskomitee te gee.

Die Deputate Liturgiese Musiek het in die afgelope jare 11 gesange en die nuwe Skrifberymings van die GKSA aan die kerke gestuur om te toets volgens die kriteria wat deur die sinode 2011 aanvaar is. 10 van die voorgestelde gesange is finaal deur die sinode goedgekeur vir gebruik in die eredienste. Die 29 addisionele Skrifberymings is nagegaan ten opsigte van die Skrifgetrouheid en duplikasie maar is nog nie teen die tema's wat geïdentifiseer is deur vorige sinodes om tot 'n afgeronde liedboek te kom, getoets nie. Daarom is die nuwe Skrifberymings nie vrygegeë vir gebruik in die eredienste nie en het deputate nog werk wat dit betref. Deputate het verder die opdrag ontvang om die hersiene Totiusberyming te ondersoek of ons dit in ons eredienste kan gebruik.

Die sinode het ook Sotho-sprekendes in die deputaatskap herbenoem, aangesien hulle die opdrag gekry het om die gesangebundel te toets wat tans in die Sotho-sprekende kerke gebruik word. Hierdie werk is nog nie klaar nie en moet voortgaan.

Die Deputate Hersiening Formuliere het die huidige formuliere taalkundig hersien. Wat die formuliergebede betref, het die deputate in die rykdom van ons Nederlandse kerke gaan graawe en verskeie gebede vir gebruik in eredienste en vir huislike gebruik voorgelê aan die sinode. Hierdie gebede sal aan die kerke gegee word vir kommentaar op taalkundige gebied en inhoud.

### **Behoeftige kerke (art 11)**

Daar word met dank kennis geneem dat hierdie deputate hulle werk met genoegsame finansies kon uitvoer. Daar is tans net een hulpbehoewende kerk en die aanvraag vir ondersteuning sal tot 'n kwart



verminder word vir die volgende jare. Ook sal ons Kanada bedank vir hulle ondersteuning van meer as 6 jaar, ons kan nie bly vra vir ondersteuning as daar nie nood is nie. Die sinode het sy dank aan ons hemelse Vader uitgespreek oor hierdie mooi verwickeling in ons versorging, want in 2011 het dit gelyk asof die probleem onoorkomlik was.

### **Sending**

Met dankbaarheid het die sinode kennis geneem van die sendingswerk wat deur die kerke verrig is en die beskikbaarheid van fondse vir die volgende jare vanuit die kerke in Nederland (deur die kanaal van ZAM/VN). Daar is twee addisionele projekte befonds naamlik opleiding en bekwaammaking van toekomstige ampsdraers in sendingskerke en om die Johannesburg kerkraad by te staan in die onderhouding van ds J van der Linden wat as sendeling met 'n spesiale opdrag bevestig is.

Die ondersteuningsbasis vanuit Nederland het ook verander: daar is geen deputate vanuit die (partikuliere) sinode GKv meer nie maar 'n regionale samewerkingsverband (RSV) tussen kerke wat met fondse vanuit die Verre Naasten (VN) die sendingswerk in SA ondersteun. Hierdie RSV het 'n bestuur verkies wat die naam "Zuid-Afrika Mission" (ZAM) dra en met sendingsdeputate in SA (SDSA) werk vir die ondersteuning. Die nuwe akkoord van samewerking is onderteken nadat die strukture en verantwoordelikhede uitgeklaar is. 'n Hoofpunt van hierdie bespreking was wie die beleid van die sendingwerk bepaal: dit is steeds die kerkrade van die sendende kerke. SDSA stel slegs sekere vereistes in terme van rapportering en finansiële beheermaatreëls.

Australië en Kanada het ook aangedui dat hulle bereid sal wees om te ondersteun indien nodig. Die sinode besluit om geen nuwe projekte op die ZAM begroting te plaas nie maar om die bogenoemde aanbod te oorweeg.

### **Teologiese Opleiding**

Alreeds in 2014 is daar besluit dat die teologiese studente een van die volgende studietrajekte moet volg:

- A. 'n Driejarige BA studie in Hebreeus en Grieks in Suid-Afrika en daarna 'n vierjarige MDiv studie in Hamilton (CRTS), Kanada
- B. 'n BTh in Suid Afrika (aan die Mukhanyo Theological College of aan die George Whitfield Theological College), met daarna ten minste twee jare universitêre talestudie en een jaar studie in Hamilton.

Omdat die kuratore toegang verkry het tot die vakinhoude en lesmateriaal via video opnames, kan die inhoud van CRTS nou ook lokaal aangebied word. Daarom word die "B" trajek gedeeltelik aangepas sodat tale en die inhoud van die MDiv studie (na afloop van MTC/GWC) plaaslik aangebied kan word. Dit is net van toepassing op die "B" trajek en is afhanklik van 'n 'anker-teoloog' wat die programme kan aanbied en fasiliteer. Kuratore het die opdrag om so 'n teoloog te identifiseer en 'n VGKSA gemeente te oortuig om die predikant te beroep. Die ideaal is dat die drie studente wat tans besig is met tale of in hul laaste jaar MTC volg, hierdie opleiding kan volg.

Die nuwe (aanpasbare) trajek lyk dan soos volg:

- B. 'n BTh in Suid-Afrika (aan die Mukhanyo Theological College of aan die George Whitfield Theological College), met daarna ten minste een jaar talestudie, met daarna fasilitering van die inhoud van MDiv CRTS (Hamilton), afgesluit met 'n moontlike afronding in Hamilton self.

Die sinode het uitgespreek dat dit nie goed sal wees as trajek B langer gaan duur as trajek A (7,5 jaar) nie. Kuratore moet seker maak dat daar in trajek B geen duplisering plaasvind nie.

Hierdie benadering van lokale aanbieder van die CRTS inhoud gaan ekstra geld kos en die sinode het die 'n inkomste vanuit die VGKSA van R650 000 per jaar toegestaan. Dit is egter nog nie genoeg nie, die kuratore sal verdere fondse moet werf om hierdie metode te kan verwesenlik.

Die sinode neem met dank kennis van die werksaamhede van di Jopie van der Linden en Hannes Breytenbach as mentors van die studente. Die deputate kry ook as opdrag om geleenthede te skep vir voortgesette opleiding en toerusting van predikante en ander ampsdraers.

Deputate Kuratore is ook verantwoordelik vir die finansiële ondersteuning van hulpbehoewende studente. 'n Toesegging van R202 000 per jaar word aan hierdie fonds toegesê. Ook is met dank kennis geneem dat DVN hierdie fonds ook met R100 000 per jaar ondersteun het en verder sal ondersteun.

#### **Owerheid, Kwestor en Internet.**

Die deputate korrespondensie met die owerheid het nie die laaste jare gefunksioneer nie. Die sinode besluit om die deputaatskap op te skort. Ons het net nie die mannekrag om hierdie opdrag uit te voer nie. Daar sal egter elke sinode 'n brief met seënwense aan die President van SA asook aan die Burgemeester van die stad waar die sinode gehou word, gestuur word as teken van respek en onderdanigheid aan die owerheid as 'n God-gegewe instansie.

Met groot waardering neem die sinode kennis van die verslag van die kwestor. Ook blyk die jonger kerke nou by te dra aan kerkverbandelike onkoste, danksy die instelling van die nuwe gedifferensieerde bydraemodel. Die sinode besluit om die bydraes van die kerke met ongeveer 25% te verhoog hoofsaaklik agv die teologiese opleiding. Die bydraes per gemeente moet nog uitgewerk word volgens die nuwe bydraemodel.

Die sinode het die internet-deputate versoek om die nuwe interaktiewe webwerf van die VGKSA voor Oktober 2017 beskikbaar te maak. Na jare van werk deur die deputate en frustrasies met die verouderde webwerf, is die verwagting groot.

Die VGK Belhar word benoem om die volgende sinode saam te roep. As datum word voorgestel, DV, die vierde week van Sept 2020. Die VGK Johannesburg word as plaasvervanger benoem.

Die voorsitter bedank die sameroepende kerk en die susters en broeders van Soshanguve vir die uitstekende manier waarop hulle die sinode ontvang en versorg het. Na 'n meditasie oor Jakobus 5: 7-20 deur ds Linus van 't Foort sluit ds Pieter Boon as voorsitter die sinode.

Namens die sinode

Harry Pouwels

### **App. 3: Press Release of Synod 2017.**

#### **PRESS RELEASE OF SYNOD SOSHANGUVE NORTH OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA, AUGUST 7-11, 2017**

##### **Opening and constitution of meeting**

The prayer service for the synod was held on Sunday afternoon August 6 in the FRC Soshanguve North. Because this church is vacant, Rev. Arjan de Visser led the service.

On Monday 4pm everyone gathered at Pure Joy Lodge in Kameeldrift. Br. Tokelo Tamane of Soshanguve North opened synod with a meditation on Ps 133. The letters of credence were verified to ensure that the delegates were lawfully delegated by their classes.

##### **Attendance**

Classis North delegated the reverends Pieter Boon, Hannes Breytenbach, George Mnisi and elders Gerard Hagg, Harry Pouwels and Tokelo Tamane. Classis South delegated the reverends Johan Bruintjes, Linus van't Foort and Carl van Wyk and the elders Bertus Byker, Ronald Meeske and Chris Willemse.

As officers of synod were elected: chairman Rev. Pieter Boon, vice-chairman Br. Harry Pouwels and scribe Br. Bertus Byker.

Br. Kees Roose and Sr. Christien Agema assisted on behalf of the calling church of Soshanguve North. Br. Roose was also present as administrator of the federation to take minutes in view of the official acts of synod.

We were grateful that our sister churches sent two delegates, who also acted as advisors during the whole synod. There were two pastors from Australia (FRCA), Revs. Axel Hagg and Stephen 't Hart. Also Dr. Arjan de Visser and Br. Otto Bouwman were present on behalf of the Canadian churches (CanRC). From the Netherlands Rev. Joop Schreuder and br. Alexander Pedro were delegated on behalf of the RCN (GKv). We profited from their inputs on different matters, the sister church relationships were strengthened and became visible in the advice given. We helped one another to remain faithful to Christ, who calls us as Head of his church to be one apostolic church.

The RCSA (Reformed Churches in South Africa) send four observers who attended parts of the synod on different days: Rev. Pieter Kurpershoek gave the greetings on behalf of the RCSA to synod, Rev. Gerard Meijer, Rev. Cassie Aucamp and Prof. Johannes Smit.

##### **Contacts with Churches in South Africa (DCCSA)**

Synod dealt with the relationship with the RCSA, based on the report of Deputies CCSA. The deliberations between the RCSA and the FRCSA focused the last years mainly on the RCSA's approach to hermeneutics with regards to women in the ecclesiastical offices, the acceptance of women in the office of deacon, the memorandum with the Dutch Reformed Church and the Cloete Psalm versifications. Rev. Kurpershoek pleaded to continue to deliberate in the unity in Christ and asked for understanding for the differences that exist.

Can we as synod already conclude that we won't reach unity on a national level? No, the deliberations should continue, amongst others on how one understands a federation to be, and how it should function, especially in light of growing differences within the same federation. In summary it can be noted that at the one hand there is the recognition in Reformed doctrine and life, at the other hand there are elements where it seems that there is deviation from the Reformed doctrine.

With regards to the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (a federation that did not merge into the United Reformed Church in 1994) synod decided to continue contacts in order to become better acquainted with each other and to support each other in maintaining the true faith. Dr. Andries Hoffman of Bloemfontein delivered the official greetings to synod from this federation. Especially in training there may be opportunities to cooperate.

Synod also repeated the decision of the previous synod to mandate deputies to maintain contacts with English speaking churches with whom we cooperate for example in the training of theological students. Synod also encouraged local churches to make contact with churches using other languages in their vicinity, who want to remain faithful to Scripture in doctrine and life.

### **Relations with Churches Abroad (DRCA)**

Based on the report of Deputies RCA, synod decided to continue the ecclesiastical fellowship with the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. We as FRCSA are very thankful for the strong bond we experience with these churches. Rev. 't Hart conveyed the greetings from Australia and reassured us of ongoing support in a world where the Reformed doctrine is under huge pressure. There is also the reassurance of ongoing financial support. Br. Bouwman of the CanRC conveyed the greetings of his federation. They are thankful for being able to help the FRCSA, especially with regards to the training of pastors by making use of their seminary in Hamilton (CRTS). The presence of the delegates of these churches at synod and their inputs during the deliberations were valued greatly.

Br. Pedro conveyed the greetings of the Reformed Churches (liberated) in the Netherlands. He asked for understanding and not to react too hastily on the recent synod decision to allow women in the ecclesiastical offices. Synod was also asked to, in the unity in Christ, have understanding for the decision in the Netherlands.

This synod decision of our sister churches lead to long deliberations on how to proceed with the relationship in future. At the one hand there is gratitude that these churches want to remain Reformed, support us as FRCSA in prayers, access to Reformed literature and the huge support in mission and other projects. On the other hand there is concern and sadness about the direction these churches took with the allowance of women in office. It is evident that previous calls not to follow the new hermeneutic approach (a new way of using Scripture which undermines the infallibility and clarity of Scripture), were not listened to. Also the Scriptural arguments against opening the offices were not taken seriously.

To a question whether we as FRCSA could have done more to warn the RCN and call against opening the offices, the Dutch deputies BBK who attended our synod answered that we had done everything possible.

A decision was taken that our synod will write a letter to the next RCN synod in 2020, enquiring what synod (and deputies BBK) had done with our arguments.

A consequences of this change in the RCN is that the ecclesiastical fellowship will be partially limited: members from the RCN who want to partake in the Lord's Supper, will only be admitted after having talked about the issues that concern us with regards to the RCN. Also pastors of the RCN will only be allowed on a FRCSA pulpit, after having talked on their viewpoint regarding amongst others women and the ecclesiastical offices. Furthermore a local church can only proceed to call a pastor from the RCN, after concurring advice of classis. In this way the Lord's table and the pulpit will be guarded against what is in conflict with Scripture and confession. Synod expressed the ardent hope that the

RCN will come back from their decisions with regards to women in office, and the reunion with the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken, since a sister church relationship will otherwise become untenable.

With regards to De Gereformeerde Kerken (hersteld) (DGK) synod upheld the previous decision not to continue with preparations to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship. With regards to the Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN) it was decided that our deputies have to continue to investigate these churches. Would members of the DGK or GKN visit South Africa, it is advised that consistories allow them as members or guests to the Lord's Supper, only after an official talk.

With regards to the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and the churches in North America synod mandated deputies to stay informed about developments via our sister churches and not to enter into a direct ecclesiastical fellowship due to our limited manpower.

Membership of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) is to be continued. Appreciation was expressed for how this conference guarded at the Reformed doctrine, as proved by suspending the membership of the RCN due to their opening of the ecclesiastical offices for women. Our deputies RCA were mandated to send two delegates to the ICRC 2021 and to be also active in regional conferences (Africa).

#### **Bible translation, liturgical music, forms and prayers**

Synod took notices with gratitude of the new Afrikaans source-orientated translation, possibly being available in 2020. The inputs made, after the proof readings, were accepted to a large extent by the translators. Deputies were appointed again with the mandate to be involved as members of the 'Kerklike Advieskomitee' in the progress of this translation. Deputies are encouraged to keep the churches informed and also channel feedback from the congregations to the 'Kerklike Advieskomitee'.

Deputies Liturgical Music had sent the past years 11 hymns and the new Skrifberymings of the RCSA to the churches for testing according to the criteria accepted by synod 2011. 10 of the proposed hymns were finally approved by synod for use in the church service. The 29 additional Skrifberymings were tested on whether they are Scriptural and whether there is duplication, but not yet tested against the themes that were identified by previous synods to be used to compile a complete hymnal. Therefore these Skrifberymings were not approved for use in the church services and deputies still have work in this regard.

Deputies furthermore received the task to investigate the revised Totius versification to see if it can be used in our church services.

Synod also reappointed Sotho speaking brothers as deputies, since they have the task of testing the hymnal being used in the Sotho speaking churches. This work is unfinished and should continue.

The Deputies Revision of Liturgical Forms have revised the present forms linguistically. With regards to the form prayers, deputies delved into the wealth of our Dutch sister churches and presented several prayers for use at home and in the church services to synod. These prayers will be given to the churches for comments as for language and content.

#### **Needy churches (art. 11)**

It was noted with gratitude that these deputies could execute their work with sufficient finances. Currently there is only one needy church. The overall request for support will be decreased to a quarter of previous years. We will also extend our sincere thanks to Canada for their support over more than 6 years. We cannot continue to ask support when there is no need. Synod thanked our

heavenly Father for this miraculous development, because in 2011 it seemed as if the problem was insurmountable.

### **Mission**

With gratitude synod took notice of the mission work being done by the churches and the availability of funds for the coming years from the Dutch churches (via the channel of ZAM/VN). Two additional projects were funded, namely training of future office bearers in mission churches and also assisting Johannesburg consistory in supporting Rev. J. van der Linden as missionary with a special task.

The support base from the Netherlands has also changed: there are no deputies anymore from the (provincial) synod RCN, but a regional board of cooperation (RSV) between churches, which support the mission work in SA with funds from the Verre Naasten (VN). This RSV appointed a management called "Zuid-Afrika Mission" (ZAM), which cooperate with mission deputies in SA (MDSA) for the support. The new agreement of cooperation was signed after structures and responsibilities were clarified. An important point was the question who controls the policy of the mission work: this continues to be the consistories of the sending churches. MDSA only put forward certain parameters as for reporting and financial accountability.

Australia and Canada also indicated that they will be willing to support if necessary. Synod decided not to put any new projects on the ZAM budget, but to consider above mentioned offer.

### **Theological Training**

Already in 2014 it was decided that theological students should follow one of the following study trajectories:

- A. A 3 year BA study in Hebrew and Greek in SA and afterwards a 4 year MDIV study in Hamilton (CRTS), Canada.
- B. A BTh in SA (at Mukhanyo Theological College or George Whitfield Theological College), with afterwards at least 2 years language studies at a university and one year study in Hamilton.

Because curators received access to the lectures via video recordings, the content of CRTS can now also be presented locally. Therefore the B trajectory can be partially adapted to present the languages and the content of the MDIV (after MTC/GWC) locally. This is only applicable to the B trajectory and is dependent on an 'anchor theologian' who will present and facilitate the program. Curators were mandated to identify such a theologian and to convince a FRCSA congregation to call a pastor in this regard. The ideal is that the three students who are currently doing their languages or in their last year of MTC, will follow this adapted trajectory B.

The new (adapted) trajectory then looks as follows:

B. A BTh in SA (at MTC or GWC), afterwards at least one years of language studies, afterwards facilitating the content of the MDIV CRTS (Hamilton), afterwards a possible physical conclusion in Hamilton itself.

Synod expressed that the duration of trajectory B should not be much longer than trajectory A (7.5 years). Curators have to make sure that no duplication will happen in trajectory B.

This approach of local presentation of CRTS contents will require extra funds and synod allowed R650 000 per annum from the federation funds. However, this is not enough, and curators will have to raise funds in order to realise this method.

Synod expressed gratitude for the activities of Revs. Jopie van der Linden and Hannes Breytenbach as mentors of the students. Deputies were also mandated to continue to organised opportunities for continued learning and equipment of pastors and other office bearers.

Deputies Curators are also responsible for the financial support of needy students. An allocation of R 202 000 per annum was made for this fund. Notice was taken with thankfulness that VN supports this fund also with R 100 000 per annum and will continue to support.

### **Government, Treasurer and Internet**

The deputies “correspondence with the government” did not function the last years. Synod decided to suspend this deputyship. We do not have enough manpower to execute this mandate. Each synod will however send a letter of blessings to the president of SA and to the mayor where the synod is held, to show respect and obedience to the God given government.

With great appreciation synod took note of the report of the treasurer. Also the younger churches have started contributing to the federation costs, due to the new differentiated model. Synod decided to increase these contributions from the churches with about 25%, mainly because of theological training. The contributions per congregation still have to be finalised according to this new contribution model.

Synod requested internet deputies to make the new interactive website of the FRCSA available before October 2017. After years of work by deputies and frustrations with the aged website, the expectations are high.

The FRC Belhar was appointed as convening church for the next synod. As date is proposed, God willing, the fourth week of September 2020. The FRC Johannesburg was appointed as alternate.

The chairman thanked the convening church and sisters and brothers of Soshanguve for the excellent way in which they hosted the synod.

After a mediation on James 5:7-20 by Rev. Linus van 't Foort, the chairman Rev. Pieter Boon closed the synod.

On behalf of synod,

Harry Pouwels