

The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

Acts of the 35th Synod held at Cape Town May 12 – 15, 2008



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10. Report Deputies ad article 49 CO.
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12. Report Synod Treasurer.
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14. Report Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.
15. Report Church for the Inspection of the Archive.
16. Report Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.

Members and Advisors of Synod Cape Town 2008



From left to right: Rev. P.G. Boon (advisor), rev. H.H. van Alten, G.B. Veenendaal (FRCA), elder B. van Dalen, elder T. de Wit, rev. J. Mhlanga (advisor), elder F.J. van Dijk, elder L.D. Mogotsi, elder H. Snijder, rev. C. Kleijn, rev. M.P. Magagula, elder B.J. Meijering, rev. C.F. Nicholson (advisor), rev. K.T. Mogale, A.W. Herder (stated clerk), dr. J.A. Breytenbach, rev. E. Viljoen, rev. P. Nel (advisor).

List of Abbreviations used in these Acts

BoP	Book of Praise (CanRC)
CanRC	Canadian Reformed Churches
CO	Church Order
DCCSA	Deputies for the contact with Churches in South Africa
DC	Deputies Curators
DRCA	Deputies for the Relations with Churches abroad
FCSA	Free Church in South Africa
FRCA	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRCSA	Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
GKNh	Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (hersteld)
GKNv	Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt)
GKSA	Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika
ICRC	International Conference of Reformed Churches
JKC	Johannesburg Korean Church
KA	Kerklike Advieskommittee (Bible Society of South Africa)
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika
NHK	Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika
NIV	Bible in New International Version
NKPC.K	Namchum Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea
MDSA	Mission Deputies of South Africa
MTS	Ministerial Training Structure
NC	National Coordinator (MTS)
PCEA	Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia
PD	Parliamentary Desk
RCNZ	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
TKR	Tussenkerklike Raad (GKSA, NGK, NHK)

Acts synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

Held at Cape Town from May 12 – 15, 2008

Article 1 Opening

After a prayer service led by rev. C. Kleijn, rev. E. Viljoen on behalf of the convening church of Cape Town called the meeting to order. He requested all who were present to sing Psalm 40:1 and 2 (BoP). He then led in prayer, after which he read Galatians 1:1-11 (NIV). He addressed the meeting with the following words.

On behalf of the consistory and congregation of the Free Reformed Church of Cape Town and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I would like to extend to all the delegates and advisors and especially delegates from our sister churches abroad a warm welcome in our midst and humble facilities. It is truly a great pleasure and honour to be hosts to this special **triennial event** in the life of our churches. We truly hope that you will enjoy our hospitality and the beautiful surroundings of this part of our country we are privileged to live in.

But brothers, you have not come here to enjoy the scenery and our good wines in the first place; though we hope you will find some time to indulge in that too! Our good God truly richly provides us with so many things also for our enjoyment (1 Tim. 6:17). It is your first privilege and duty to indulge in some hard work this week. You were busy these past few weeks already in preparation for what you have to do this week. Lots of inputs were given by deputies in their reports. For that we are thankful.

What is the purpose of us meeting like this as churches in one bond of faith? The answer to that was given in the sermon of rev. C. Kleijn this evening. We celebrated this past Sunday the feast of Pentecost. What is our main focus when celebrating Pentecost? For sure we are reminded of Jesus Christ who fulfilled the promise of John the Baptist that He who comes after him is greater and will therefore baptize with more than just water. Jesus, because He is from above, baptizes also with his Spirit. Christ showers his Spirit down upon his church in abundance.

This Christ did in a true dramatic and divine way. It can be compared with the coming of the Lord upon Mount Sinai. There came the sound of a violent wind and tongues of fire that did not light the mountain, but came down upon each and everyone present in the house. They began speaking in tongues making it possible for everyone present in Jerusalem to hear about God's mighty deeds done in and through Christ in their own tongue. Peter addressed the crowd witnessing about the work of God through Christ in his death, resurrection and ascension to the throne of God.

But what remained when the dust settled at the end of that feast of Pentecost? There was no continuing sound of a strong wind and no more tongues of fire. What remained at the end of that day was a congregation of believers. Apparently that was what it was all about. Christ living through his Spirit in his congregation. All that happened on that day stood in service of this simple result. A congregation persevering in the teaching of the apostles and living in true unity.

Brothers, may our good Lord and God give that our work of this week will serve the same purpose. When the dust of this synod-meeting has settled, we hope that the result will be churches continuing with new strength in the teaching of the apostles, the fellowship, the breaking of the bread and prayer. May all your work stand in service of helping the local congregations to sing the praises of our Lord and God. For that we have prayed and we may work in the expectancy that our Lord will give it to us.

With these words I declare the 35th synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa officially open.

Article 2 Credentials

The credentials were examined and all brothers were properly delegated.

Classis North delegated:

Primary:

Rev. M.P. Magagula, Soshanguve-North
Rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi
Rev. H.H. van Alten, Pretoria-Maranata
Elder H. de Jager, Pretoria
Elder M.D. Makinta, Soshanguve-North
Elder L.D. Mogotsi, Mamelodi

Alternates:

Rev. P. Nel, Pretoria
Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata
Rev. J. Mhlanga, Pretoria-Maranata
Elder G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata
Elder C. Roose, Pretoria
Elder F.J. van Dijk, Pretoria-Maranata
Elder H. Kampman, Pretoria-Maranata
Elder T. de Wit, Pretoria

Classis South delegated:

Primary:

Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Cape Town
Rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg
Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town
Elder K. Haak, Cape Town
Elder H. Snijder, Johannesburg
Elder B. van Dalen, Cape Town

Alternates:

Rev. C.F. Nicholson, Cape Town
Elder J.N.D. Coetzee, Bethal
Elder A. Kuyvenhoven, Johannesburg
Elder B.J. Meijering, Cape Town

All primary delegates were in attendance, except for the elders Makinta and De Jager, who were replaced for the duration of synod by elders Van Dijk and De Wit and elder Haak, who was replaced for the duration of synod by elder Meijering.

Article 3 Election of Officers and Constitution of Synod

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

Chairman:	Rev. E. Viljoen
Vice-chairman:	Rev. H.H. van Alten
Clerk:	Elder F.J. van Dijk

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

Article 4 Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity

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

Article 5 Welcome to Advisors

The convening church of Cape Town invited the following ministers to attend synod as advisors: Revs. P. Nel, P.G. Boon, J. Mhlanga and C.F. Nicholson, all of them present. The chairman specially welcomes them.

Article 6 Fraternal delegates

The following delegates were present from the churches abroad:
FRCA: br. G.B. Veenendaal for the duration of the synod.
GKNv: Dr. R.D. Anderson on May 14th, 2008.

Article 7 Observers

Prof. C.F.C. Coetzee, Potchefstroom, represents the GKSA on the afternoon session of May 14th, 2008. He is welcomed as observer.

Article 8 Housekeeping matters

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

Privileges of the floor: All ministers of the federation not delegated are invited to serve synod as advisors. Synod will give the floor to all representatives of the churches in ecclesiastical fellowship. Synod will give the floor to non-delegated deputies during the deliberations of their reports.

Language: The meeting language will be English, but those delegates not fluent in English will be allowed to speak in their native tongue. As translators will act revs. P.G. Boon and C. Kleijn. The acts will be published in English with an Afrikaans translation.

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

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

Committees: Advisory committees shall provide each delegate with a copy of their reports before they are dealt with in plenary sessions. The following two committees were appointed:

1. Liturgical Music: Rev. J. Mhlanga, elders T. de Wit and B. van Dalen.
Instruction: To serve synod with a proposal on the best way forward with the report Liturgical Music seeking maximum progress in this matter.
2. GKSA: Dr. J.A. Breytenbach and rev. P. Nel.
Instruction: To serve synod with clarifications on the proposals as found in the report DCCSA.

Article 9 Agenda of synod

The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening by the convening church.
2. Examination of credentials.
3. Constitution of synod and election of officers.
4. Agreement with Three Forms of Unity by delegates and advisors.
5. Welcome to advisors.
6. Greeting addresses.
 - 6.1. Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
 - 6.2. Canadian Reformed Churches.
 - 6.3. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt).
 - 6.4. Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika.
7. Adoption of agenda.
8. Adoption of meeting procedure.
9. Overtures from classes.
 - 9.1. Overture from Classis North regarding Internet Communication.
 - 9.2. Overture from Classis South regarding regulation of support for ministers dismissed ad article 14 CO.
 - 9.3. Overture from Classis South regarding publishing of synod acts.
 - 9.4. Overture from Classis South regarding advisors at broader assemblies.
10. Appeals.
 - 10.1. Appeal from Pretoria-Maranata regarding article 22, point 8, acts 2005.
11. Deputies' reports.
 - 11.1. Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.
 - 11.2. Deputies contact with churches in South Africa.
 - 11.3. Deputies Revision Church Order, Rules for Synod and Liturgical Forms.
 - 11.4. Mission Deputies.
 - 11.5. Deputies Liturgical Music.
 - 11.6. Deputies Bible Translation.
 - 11.7. Deputies ad article 19 CO.
 - 11.8. Deputies ad article 11 CO.
 - 11.9. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.
 - 11.10. Deputies ad article 49 CO.
 - 11.11. Deputies Curators.
 - 11.12. Synod Treasurer.
 - 11.13. Stated Clerk and archive.
 - 11.14. Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.
 - 11.15. Church for the Inspection of the Archive.
 - 11.16. Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.
12. Appointment of deputies.
13. Letter to the President.
14. Personal question period.
15. Appointment of convening church, and place and time of the next synod.
16. Adoption of acts and approval of press release.
17. Censure ad article 48 CO.
18. Closing of synod.

Article 10 Address by the Fraternal Delegate of the FRCA

In the afternoon session of May 13th, 2008 the chairman introduced br. G.B. Veenendaal to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the FRCA with the following words.

Esteemed brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

It is indeed a privilege to once again be here in your midst in response to the invitation to your synod. What a rich opportunity to be able to share in the meeting of your churches where together you speak about God's church-gathering work in this part of the world. It is beautiful to be here in the Cape, a gem in South Africa, and a wonderful part of God's creation.

I bring along the greetings of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to your synod and churches. Three years ago I had the privilege of attending your synod of Pretoria-Maranata and almost two years ago rev. Retief could attend our synod West Kelmscott. Both of our synods in their respective decisions recognised the fact that God continues his church-gathering work through us, His covenant people, and that we can support each other, learn from each other and encourage each other. For that we may be thankful to our Heavenly Father, that He continues His work, including here in South Africa.

In preparing to come here, I did a Google search of "Cape Town, South Africa" and the first two items appearing at the top of the page were of keen interest! The second item was to do with my interests for my daily work - a Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium to be held in Cape Town in 2009. This is to do with using imagery from satellites, airplanes and on the ground to map and manage places like Cape Town – and you certainly have much to be proud of here from Table Mountain to the beautiful white sandy coastline along the Cape. Cape Town is well and truly on the map! That was the *second* item.

Now would you believe, the *first* item was labelled "Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk.. - Reformed Churches in South Africa.. " and linked to the brief report of your synod Bethal in the year 2000! So now, I'm really impressed with Google! They know what is important! Mapping the Cape and Free Reformed Synods! When Google gets its search engine updated, I expect to see synods Johannesburg, Pretoria-Maranata, and eventually Cape Town up there.

The third link from my Google search gave much information about Cape Town, its history, culture, etc. It referred to Cape Town as the *mother city* of Africa. The term is also used in 2 Sam 20:19 where Joab assembled against the city of Abel in Beth Maachah in pursuing Sheba who rebelled against David. A woman, on behalf of the citizens, defended the city and referred to it as a "**mother** in Israel". That city was famous for its wisdom. It had a good reputation and it was a guide and nurse to the towns and region around it. That is what Cape Town purports to be, according to this website.

But Cape Town has more than the tall expanse of Table Mountain and the glistening sandy beaches of the Cape; it has God's church gathering work in progress and that is evident here at your synod. The Lord uses you as churches and covenant people to be a lamp stand in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation to spread His light, His Word. You have the mission posts here at your doorstep – Belhar, Wesbank and Leiden – and also at the doorstep of the churches in Pretoria, namely in Soshanguve, Mamelodi, etc. Your churches also continue to reach out to those in other federations, people who recognise the voice of the Good Shepherd in your churches. And of course, every week from the pulpits, the sheep may hear the rich gospel message of God and His work through Christ Jesus and His Holy Spirit. That is truly what makes a mother city, the city of the church being a guide and nurse to the towns, and townships, and region around it.

And the mother city does not stop with Cape Town, or Pretoria, or Johannesburg or Bethal, but continues to the final coming of the new city, the New Jerusalem. In Revelation 21:10 an angel "showed me [John] the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." How awesome that light will be, exceeding even that of the Cape!

As sister churches of yours in Australia, we do recognise the opportunities that you have here, but also the difficulties that you face. It is not easy to live and work in a country which economically, socially

and politically is deteriorating and where a lack of security and dangers surround you constantly. We may not understand fully the situation that you encounter, for in Australia we live in relative freedom and safety, and our economy, particularly in Western Australia is booming. We do, however, recognise that God has indeed richly blessed us, materially and spiritually, and that we also have the duty, yes even the privilege, to share with our brothers and sisters overseas. We have done so in various ways, through the support of the National Reformation work (the verontrusten), although that is in abeyance at present, through support of the school at Bethal, and of course also through our prayers in the worship services and individually. Where we are able to be of assistance and support in these and other endeavours, we would like to do so and we openly welcome opportunities for us to share in your work here, spiritually, materially and prayerfully.

At the same time, we recognise also where we have been able to learn and benefit from you as our sisters. We have been blessed with rev. M Retief who has come from your midst and now serves the church at Kelmscott. We also receive a large number of migrants from your churches and other churches here in South Africa who have since joined our churches forming quite a large South African-become-Australian community in our midst. We are seeking ways of making our churches better known among the migrants from South Africa, and so we welcome any suggestions for opportunities to make our light shine. The influx of South African migrants is also a blessing for our churches since we gain first-hand knowledge of the joys and struggles faced by our sisters across the Indian Ocean. Through the families and close contacts between South Africa and Australia, we too have shared in sorrow of the recent murder of a member of your church in Pretoria.

As we continue to learn more about you and understand the joys and struggles you face, we are humbled before God and realise that it is God who is at work in our lives and in leading us in His Grace – all these things that you face have a rich purpose, the foremost of which is God's greater Glory and Honour. We too must be constantly reminded of that fact that all that we have is by Grace alone. The struggle against the attacks of our sinful flesh, the world and Satan are as strong in our post-modern world in Australia as in South Africa.

In Australia, we are now some 13 churches of 4000 persons with the latest addition being Baldvis instituted in July 2007. As of last month, Baldvis now too has a minister of the Word, leaving us with only one vacancy – that of West Albany – for which we can truly be thankful indeed. Among our churches, we continue to support mission work in Lae in Papua New Guinea, Sumba in Indonesia, and in China where we work together with our Canadian brothers and sisters.

Brothers, your synod has a full program and you have much to be busy with. At the same time you have much to be thankful for. May our Heavenly Father give you His guidance and blessings in your deliberations. May God bless your endeavours here and among your churches and may you continue to be a light in this world, being a guide and nurse to your cities, towns and surrounding regions, that together we may look forward to the true mother city, the coming of the New Jerusalem and our Lord Jesus Christ. As we read in Rev. 22 (v 14, 20, 21) "*Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ...He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*"

Rev. Van Alten responded shortly to br. Veenendaal.

Article 11 Address by the fraternal Delegate of the GKNv

In the morning session of May 14th, 2008 the chairman introduced Dr. R.D. Anderson to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the GKNv with the following words.

Esteemed moderator and delegates of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

It is with pleasure that I accept your offer of addressing this assembly on behalf of the churches I represent - the Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt) in Nederland [the Reformed churches Liberated]. Now years ago, when attending a synod of the Free Church in Scotland as delegate of the Liberated churches, I learned much about good fraternal speech making from the delegate of the OPC in the

States. He held forth that an address from a fraternal delegate was akin to telling a good bedtime story. When you see the delegates nodding off, you know that you have succeeded. I've always taken his words to heart and will consider it a complement if by the end of my address you can no longer keep your eyes open. Now I realize that I am perhaps putting a few of you here at a distinct disadvantage. Although I am not a prophet, I can see that although the legal language of this synod is English, a few of you in your heart of hearts will have been hoping for a Dutch delegate whose English is so bad that he would be forced to deliver his speech, if not in Afrikaans, at least in Dutch. I must most sincerely apologize for being a native English speaker. In fact, though representing the Dutch churches, I am not even a Dutch citizen and my allegiance is to the queen of a country traditionally at war with Holland. I am a New Zealander and thus swear allegiance to the queen of Great Britain. You must forgive me for that too, for the Afrikaners among you will by now have their hands on their revolvers. Is it not a sign of the healing and uniting effect of the blood of Christ that I can stand here as your brother? And is it not a sign of the healing and uniting effect of the blood of Christ that *you* are together as a synod using English to bridge the gap between different cultures and languages represented in your churches to show the true meaning of Pentecost celebrated only last Sunday.

To matters ecclesiastical: You will be aware that our churches were unfortunately not able to send a delegate to your last synod. Our BBK (committee for inter-church relations), of which I am by the way not a member, regrets that this was not possible because your synod sat during the "international week" of our own churches at that time. Due to the fact that your invitation to attend this year's synod only reached BBK on the 6th of May (why so late, I have no idea) we were very nearly unable to send a delegate this year. There is, however, as we confess in Lord's Day 10, no coincidence in the hands of our Lord and He had ensured that a minister of our churches would be in your beautiful country during the time of the synod. In this way I have been asked to represent the Liberated churches of Holland on behalf of BBK.

Now you will of course realize that not being a member of BBK, my representation has its limitations. I have, for example, not been a party to the discussions between our respective churches on the question of relations with the GKSA (the "Dopper" churches) and am therefore unable to comment on this. However, I will be reporting back to BBK on any and all matters which you may wish to take up with me, and in addition your own delegate to our synod this year will be able to take that and other matters up with BBK when he is in the Netherlands later this year.

Despite the limitations, representation from the Lib. churches at this synod certainly has its value. Not in the least to give a token of our brotherly love, commitment and desire for mutual edification in a very personal manner. Let us not take an empty pride in the fact that we have this beautiful thing on paper called a "sister-church relationship". A sister-church relationship is worthless if no practical content is given to it. Let us, in a spirit of brotherly love, be open and honest with each other and thereby strive towards a genuine form of edification. On a personal note I have been able to see the fruits of some of the possibilities of a working sister-church relationship in my teaching of the black theological students in Pretoria. I am thankful for the invitation to partake in this work, and I am thankful for the Lord's blessings on the missionary work in Soshanguve and other places, a work sponsored by many of the brothers and sisters in the Netherlands.

Now as you may be aware our tri-annual synod in the Netherlands has also begun its work. A synod in the Netherlands lasts, unfortunately, a rather long time. At least 6 months. This has partially to do with the size of our church federation which caters to some 150,000 members with over 300 ministers in active service. It also has to do with the amount of work which the churches in the last number of years have seen fit to take upon themselves at the synodical level. Part of my remit from BBK is to inform you of and provide elucidation for synodical decisions taken in 2005. You will understand that in the nature of the case, I can only pick a few items and that my choice is inherently personal and in no way reflects any formal considerations from BBK itself. I should also add that rather unfortunately, although I should have all the Acts of Synod in my laptop, those for 2005 seem to be missing! I did however locate a report on these Acts for my own consistory dated to 2006 and this has jogged my memory a little. As such you receive a little insight into how one village church reacted to these acts. Remember that a consistory tends to dwell on difficult or controversial decisions and that many other positive decisions and reasons for thankfulness are hereby simply glossed over.

As I look over this report I see a concern for the multiplicity of committees and commissions, most specifically concerning two commissions related to charges of sexual infidelity against office bearers.

These synodical commissions bring together experts in various fields to render advice in respect of charges of such sexual misconduct. On a personal note I can say that unfortunately such expertise is needed. In the last two years I have sat on two classical committees concerning the suspension of ministers which were eventually deposed for sin against the seventh commandment. Nevertheless, the concern of Katwijk was and is that such synodical commissions deliver a verdict over a charge of sexual misconduct which is binding upon the consistory (I should add that I do not believe many or even any other churches feel the same problem). Looking further in that report I come across a matter that has received much more attention in both the Netherlands and outside, namely the synodical decisions regarding marriage and divorce, a difficult and complex issue with so many practical ramifications. In the final analysis, although the consistory could not agree with all the grounds or points of departure, it felt it could live with the decision itself. After all, one does not ratify grounds, only decisions, and synodical departure points for decisions on marriage and divorce are certainly not a confession of faith requiring subscription. A final sticky wicket, as we say in cricket playing countries, was and is a point which will also return to this year's synod, namely our relationship with the Nederlandse Gereformeerde kerken, the so-called buiten verbanders. Already by 2005 this church federation decided to open all church offices to women. This decision is painful and the synod reflected something of this pain in its pronouncements. This, however, did not lead to a cessation of contact. The consistory at Katwijk – and I cannot speak of other churches – has made clear to their own congregation and to that of the local NGK that this is for them an issue that requires a parting of the ways. The question of the relation between men and women in the church will also come to the table of this year's synod which will speak on their own committee report on this subject. Another issue, which was dealt with in 2005 and will return this year, is the division of the church in Kampen Noord into two distinct congregations, each claiming legitimacy. This is a matter interweaved with fundamental questions of church order.

All these issues give but a small inkling of the various forces pulling at the churches. But Christ's church has never been a stranger to problems or to wrestling as to how to apply the truth of God's Word in concrete situations. Let us then not be blinded to the many positive things that can be said of a church federation that struggles to preach and apply Christ in hundreds of churches throughout the land. As fraternal delegate I would ask your prayer for your sister churches in the Netherlands, prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings which they receive from our Lord and prayer for the many issues and difficulties with which they wrestle. I will be more than willing to do my best to answer any questions which you may have, although you must of course realise that you will then be receiving the personal perspective of a village minister.

If you have a word of encouragement, or even of concern, for us, let us treat each other in a brotherly and mature way and not couch our language in vague expressions, but be specific and so helpful and edifying to each other.

I thank you for your indulgence. May our God and saviour receive all glory also in our ecclesiastical relationship with each other.

Rev. Boon responded shortly to Dr. Anderson.

Article 12 Greetings from the CanRC

On behalf of the CanRC rev. R. Schouten has sent the following letter:

To the General Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa

May 8th, 2008

Esteemed brothers in Christ:

We thank you for the invitation to send a delegation to your General Synod 2008. Regretfully, due to the great distances that separate us, we are not able this time to accede to your invitation. By way of this letter, then, we wish to extend our greetings to your Synod and to all our sister churches in South Africa. We have asked our churches in Canada to remember your Synod in their prayers. May the Lord Jesus Christ, through His Word and Spirit, so guide your deliberations and decisions that they may

build up the churches in your country and thus bring honour and glory to our God and Father in heaven.

We are thankful for your faithful witness and work in South Africa and grateful for the bond which we may have with you. In January of this year, our Committee sent a letter to all the Canadian and American Reformed Churches in which we outlined the many opportunities for them to extend help to their South African brothers and sisters. We thank rev. Kleijn for his help in compiling this information and we hope that it may lead to much support from our churches for the work which you are doing in the areas of mission and education and the like.

May the Lord of the church grant preservation and increase to the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Robert A. Schouten, Secretary

Article 13 Address by the Observer of the GKSA

In the afternoon session of May 14th, 2008 the chairman introduced prof. C.F.C. Coetzee to the meeting who addressed synod on behalf of the GKSA with the following words.

Eerwaarde Voorsitter en broeders,

Wanneer twee Gereformeerde Kerkgemeenskappe mekaar groet, is dit allesbehalwe 'n formele saak. Ons mag mekaar groet in die Bybelse sin van die woord. Ons mag mekaar groet in die Naam van ons Koning en Here, ons Hoof van Wie ons die liggaam is. Ons mag mekaar groet op grond van ons gemeenskaplike fondament, die heilige Woord van God en die skat van ons Gereformeerde belydenis.

As ons mekaar groet, is dit dus aan die een kant uitdrukking van ons eenheid in die geloof en ons deelgenootskap aan die ontsaglike rykdom van God se genade.

Aan die ander kant is dit bevestiging van die werklikheid dat ons nie in die volle sin van die woord een kerkgemeenskap is soos ons behoort te wees nie. Dit is dus ook 'n beklemtoning van ons dure roeping om steeds meer te word wat ons in die geloof bely: Ek glo aan een, heilige, algemene en apostoliese kerk.

Ons het as kerke van Gereformeerde belydenis mekaar meer as ooit nodig. Behalwe die toenemende verwêreldliking en bedreiging van die kant van die valse godsdienste, neem die aanslag in felheid toe op die ware kerk, op die Woord van God en op die Gereformeerde leer. Ons leef in 'n tyd van baie godsdienstigheid en die opkoms van talle godsdienstgemeenskappe, maar terselfdertyd al hoe minder begrip en uitlewing van ware kerkwees. In hierdie tyd moet ons mekaar bystaan en bemoedig om steeds meer die merktekens van die ware kerk in die wêreld te vertoon, steeds meer die kruisbanier van Jesus Christus seëvierend te dra, vir die eer van sy Naam te getuig en te ly as dit moet, sy kinders toe te rus en op te bou in die ware geloof, sy Koningskap te proklameer teenoor owerhede en samelewing en ongelowiges te roep tot geloof en bekering in die enigste Verlosser.

Ons het as twee kerkgemeenskappe oor die laaste jare deur God se genade gegroei in ons verhouding. Ons het al hoe meer met mekaar begin praat en nie oor mekaar nie. Sinodebesluite getuig van die wedersydse begeerte om te groei na die vergestaltung van ware eenheid. Die sake wat steeds ware eenwording verhinder moet biddend in die geloof en met dringendheid deurgepraat word. Mag God in sy genade ons daartoe help, tot die eer van sy Naam.

En mag al die besprekings en besluite tydens hierdie sinode daarvan getuig dat u deur die Pinkstergees gelei word om u roeping as kerk in hierdie besondere tydsgewrig te verstaan en in dinamiese geloofsgehoorsaamheid uit te leef, getrou aan God se Woord en ons kosbare belydenis.

Ek groet u in die Naam van die Koning van die Kerk, Jesus Christus ons Here, wat nooit sonder onderdane kan wees nie.

After his address synod invited prof. Coetzee to respond to questions from the floor as well as to respond to the report DCCSA.

Article 14 Classis North Overture re Internet Communication

Material:

Overture from Classis North February 2008 regarding appointment of deputies for Internet Communication

Classis proposes:

That synod appoints deputies for Internet Communication with the instruction to accept responsibility for the Internet presence of the FRCSA. These deputies should be given the mandate and funding for all (Internet) communication of the federation of churches, and thus present the FRCSA in a consistent and responsible manner.

Grounds:

Currently the Internet presence of the FRCSA is not officially mandated by synod, but is a more or less individual initiative and lacks support from and accessibility by the churches it represents.

Synod decides:

To accept the proposal and appoint deputies to present the churches and the federation on the Internet and to propose to the next synod a detailed instruction, for which they are recommended to use the instructions already in use by our sister churches.

Article 15 Classis South Overture re guidelines for support of ministers released ad Article 14 CO

Material:

Overture from Classis South March 2007 regarding guidelines for support of ministers released according to article 14 CO.

Classis proposes:

Classis accepted the following as guideline for ministers as well as missionaries released according to article 14 CO:

1. Allowances and fringe benefits are cancelled;
2. Salary and medical allowances remain the same;
3. The use of a parsonage stops and is replaced by a housing allowance;
4. Income derived from 3rd parties during the period of support is deducted from his salary;
5. The period of support as well as the period for eligibility for call is set for a year;
6. Classis may extend this period for a maximum of a year after solid consideration and because of extraordinary circumstances.

Grounds:

- a. The financial capacity of the church federation is small;
- b. More stress is added to work towards entering another vocation.

Synod decides:

To accept the following as guideline for ministers as well as missionaries released according to article 14 CO:

1. Allowances and fringe benefits are cancelled;
2. Salary and medical allowances remain the same;
3. The use of a parsonage stops and is replaced by a housing allowance;
4. Income derived from 3rd parties during the period of support is deducted from his salary;
5. The period of support as well as the period for eligibility for call is set for one year;
6. Classis may extend this period for a maximum of another year after careful consideration and because of extraordinary circumstances.

Grounds:

- a. The financial capacity of the church federation is limited;
- b. To work towards entering another vocation is emphasised.

Article 16 Classis South Overture re publication of Acts

Material:

Overture from Classis South September 2006 regarding publication of acts.

Classis proposes:

Classis South, at its meeting of 15 September 2006, decided to pass on the following proposal:

1. The complete acts with appendices will be printed in limited numbers for distribution to consistories, office bearers and future office bearers;
2. The complete acts with appendices will be distributed electronically by CD for those who are interested;
3. A summary of the acts (similar to the "Acta Actueel" from our sister churches in The Netherlands) will be printed and distributed to all church members.

Ground:

It is important that church members take note of the decisions of synod.

Synod decides:

1. The complete acts with appendices will be printed in limited numbers for distribution to consistories, archives, libraries and deputies;
2. The complete acts with appendices will be distributed electronically by CD for those who are interested.

Ground:

It is important that church members take note of the decisions of synod.

Article 17 Revision request from Classis South re the presence of advisors at the Synod

Material:

Revision request from Classis South February 2008 regarding advisors at the synod.

Classis proposes:

Classis South, at its meeting of 21 February 2008 decided to ask for the revision of the following decision by synod 2002:

Article 17.10 Acts of Synod Johannesburg 2002

That all ministers not delegated to the synod are to be invited by the convening church as advisors.

Ground:

It will be good to listen to the advice of others, also on synodical level, for as long as the federation is still small.

Classis proposes to amend the decision of Johannesburg 2002 as follows:

That all ministers and missionaries not delegated to synod, may be present at synod, where they can act as advisors only upon invitation.

Grounds:

- a. The Johannesburg 2002 decision implies all ministers and missionaries are to be invited. This goes further than article 42 CO that states that non-delegate ministers may be present at the classis;
- b. At present in our small federation we are moving towards a situation where we could have more missionaries than ministers. This implies that besides the 6 ministers delegated by the two classes, we could have 6 or more missionaries taking part as advisors during the deliberations at the synod;
- c. A major assembly according to the CO is made up of brothers officially delegated by consistory or classis. Mandate is limited to them only to discuss and decide on matters of that assembly;
- d. A major assembly always has the right to request advice. For a small federation this is even recommended according to Scripture which states that many advisors make victory sure. (Proverbs 11:14, 15:22; 24:6). This however should only happen upon invitation by the assembly itself. It should not be forced upon them by a synod decision;
- e. It is one-sided to limit the advisory role to non-delegate ministers and missionaries only. It is important that synod invites expert advisors. These can be ministers, but also elders or for that matter an ordinary member;
- f. In the event all ministers and missionaries are delegated or invited as advisors, it may happen that all synods are influenced for approximately two thirds by the same people. This situation would be unhealthy and may undermine the credibility of synod. Is synod still capable of dealing with appeals in an independent and objective way?
- g. The current text of article 42 CO has been formulated at the Synod Utrecht 1905. It was mainly formulated to prevent that two ministers could cast a vote on behalf of one congregation (as was the custom before that time) and therefore to prevent a hierarchical relationship of one larger congregation over smaller congregations. This

is in line with the regulation of article 83 CO where it is stated that no congregation shall lord over other congregations. We believe we act in line with this regulation when we guard against possible excessive influence of certain congregations having more than one minister or missionary;

- h. Missionaries are supposed to guide mission churches to become part of the federation that places the Gospel first. Missionaries also have a task to prepare the established congregations for the coming and involvement of new congregations from the mission. It is for the sake of this mutual involvement that it can be good for missionaries to be regularly present at the major assemblies where they can give advice on occasion.

Synod decides:

That all ministers not delegated to synod, may be present at synod, where they can act as advisors only upon invitation.

Grounds:

- a. The Johannesburg 2002 decision implies all ministers are to be invited. This goes further than article 42 CO that states that non-delegate ministers may be present at the classis;
- b. At present in our small federation we are moving towards a situation where we could have more missionaries than ministers. This implies that besides the 6 ministers delegated by the two classes, we could have 6 or more missionaries taking part as advisors during the deliberations at the synod;
- c. A major assembly according to the CO is made up of brothers officially delegated by consistory or classis. Mandate is limited to them only to discuss and decide on matters of that assembly;
- d. A major assembly always has the right to request advice. For a small federation this is even recommended according to Scripture which states that many advisors make victory sure (Proverbs 11:14, 15:22; 24:6). This however should only happen upon invitation by the assembly itself. It should not be forced upon them by a synod decision;
- e. It is one-sided to limit the advisory role to non-delegate ministers only. It is important that synod invites expert advisors. These can be ministers, but also elders or for that matter an ordinary member;
- f. In the event all ministers and missionaries are delegated or invited as advisors, it may happen that all synods are influenced for approximately two thirds by the same people. This situation would be unhealthy and may undermine the credibility of synod.
- g. The current text of article 42 CO has been formulated at the Synod Utrecht 1905. It was mainly formulated to prevent that two ministers could cast a vote on behalf of one congregation (as was the custom before that time) and therefore to prevent a hierarchical relationship of one larger congregation over smaller congregations. This is in line with the regulation of article 83 CO where it is stated that no congregation shall lord over other congregations. We believe we act in line with this regulation when we guard against possible excessive influence of certain congregations having more than one minister or missionary;
- h. Missionaries are supposed to guide mission churches to become part of the federation that places the Gospel first. Missionaries also have a task to prepare the established congregations for the coming and involvement of new congregations from the mission. It is for the sake of this mutual involvement that it can be good for

missionaries who are not delegated to synod to be regularly present at the major assemblies where they can give advice on occasion.

Note. In this decision with its grounds the distinction is made between ministers and missionaries purely for practical reasons, for the sake of clarity, even though it is clear that missionaries are indeed ministers.

Article 18 Revision request from Pretoria-Maranata re article 22, point 8 Acts 2005

Material:

Revision request from the church of Pretoria-Maranata regarding Acts 2005, article 22, point 8.

The church proposes:

That the synod of the FRCSA 2008 reconsider the following decision of synod 2005, article 22, point 8:

To call on the GKNh to reconsider their withdrawal from the GKNv and to follow the ecclesiastical way to the end.

Ground:

The request of the GKNh is based on an incorrect portrayal of the situation and of synod decisions.

Grounds

- a. Two synods of the GKNv (Leusden 1999 and Zuidhorn 2002) upheld synod decisions concerning the fourth commandment and the seventh commandment, and rejected letters of appeal in which the unbiblical grounds for these decisions were argued. This means that the GKNh can not appeal against the synod decisions again, simply because all biblical arguments have been given;
- b. Thus the GKNh followed the ecclesiastical way to the end;
- c. From the developments in the GKNv it is increasingly clear that many of the objections of the GKNh were justified, and that the portrayal of the situation by the GKNh was not as incorrect as thought by deputies.

Recommendations

That the synod of the FRCSA 2008 instructs DRCA to:

1. Make contact with the GKNh in order to evaluate their decision for a 'new liberation' so that a responsible report can be brought to the table of the next FRCSA synod;
2. Thoroughly study the different reports of the GKNv on divorce and the Sunday, as well as other developments, for example the new hermeneutics that can lead to the acceptance of Scriptural criticism, and to take into consideration the decisions of synod Amersfoort 2005 and the subsequent discussions in the Netherlands;
3. Call on and warn the GKNv Synod Zwolle-South 2008 to stay true to Scripture and our confession regarding decisions on divorce, Sunday, new hermeneutics, the role of women in the church, the matter of prof. Harinck etc.;

4. Offer to the synod of the GKNv 2008 our participation in the considerations and discussions on serious matters that are of concern and influence to the churches abroad, in order to come to joint decisions;
5. Present to the next synod of the FRCSA an evaluation of the tendencies in the GKNv.

Synod decides:

Not to accept the revision request to recall decision of synod 2005, article 22, point 8 with regard to the GKNh.

Grounds:

- a. The revision request is not substantiated by legitimate grounds;
- b. It is not shown that the decision of synod 2005 rests on inadequate work of deputies;
- c. Ground b is the necessary conclusion of a and does not prove that all ecclesiastical routes of appeal were pursued;
- d. Grounds mentioned in the revision request rest on conclusions made on facts after synod 2005;
- e. It is not possible to appeal against grounds of a decision.

Article 19 Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.

Material:

Report deputies for Relations with Churches Abroad, see appendix 1.

Synod decides:

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

Grounds

- a. The FRCA give evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order;
- b. Personal visits are a good means of building relationships and maintaining them;
- c. We are two small church federations with a similar background, which makes it easier for us to support each other and to learn from each other.

Synod decides:

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

Grounds:

- a. The CanRC gives evidence of continuing faithfulness to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order;
- b. Personal visits to synods are a good means of maintaining and building relationships;
- c. Our two federations, with similar backgrounds, can support each other and learn from each other.

Synod decides:

1. To express its thankfulness to the LORD for the diverse contacts with the GKNv, varying

from the exchange of attestations, assistance with Theological training, cooperation in mission, mutual use of publications, etc;

2. To continue the sister church relationship with the GKNv;
3. To call on the FRCSA to frequently remember the GKNv in their prayers, in view of the continuing tensions within these churches;
4. To beseech the LORD that the ecclesiastical divisions, that occurred until the recent past, will be healed through his grace and blessing;
5. To send one delegate to the synod of the GKNv in 2011.

Grounds:

- a. The contacts between the FRCSA and the GKNv have always been intensive;
- b. Although there are worrying tendencies, it appears evident from the synod decisions, that the GKNv remains faithful the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order. The worrying tendencies are evident in the press, as well as in some local congregations in the Netherlands, which tolerate practices which are not in accord with Scripture as confessed in the reformed forms of unity;
- c. The FRCSA acknowledges the brotherhood of those who separated from the GKNv to form the GKNh, but is of the opinion that this separation was unlawful;
- d. In view of the intensive nature of contacts, it is important that the sister church relationship is supported by attending each other's synod. We have the mutual task to encourage, comfort, and guard each other by the truth of his Word.

Synod decides:

To mandate deputies to continue contacts with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches.

Grounds:

- a. Synod Bethal 2000 decided that we should focus on our own region;
- b. According to the policy adopted by Synod Bethal 2000, it is better to leave more intensive contacts to the FRCA;
- c. For the sake of emigrants from our churches who wish to settle in New Zealand, it would be wise to remain informed of developments in the RCNZ.

Synod decides:

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

Ground:

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

Synod decides:

Not to continue the mandate of previous deputies regarding the PCEA.

Grounds:

- a. To maintain contact with the PCEA does not serve many practical uses;
- b. The FRCA ceased contact with the PCEA;
- c. The ICRC should be sufficient for contact with the PCEA.

Synod decides:

1. To continue our contacts with the JKC and missionaries of NKPC.K on an informal level,

through our missionaries who are involved with Mukhanyo and the theological school in Cape Town;

2. Not to seek active contacts with the JKC.

Grounds:

- a. In agreement with the policy of the Synod Bethal 2000 to focus on our own region, it is good to maintain contacts with foreign churches who are actively involved with theological mission training in South Africa;
- b. The FRCSA missionaries have a good informal relationship with the missionaries of NKPC.K;
- c. It is difficult to pursue contacts with the JKC (and Cape Town) because they maintain the Korean language in their South African congregations.

Synod decides:

1. That DRCA remains in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences;
2. If the mission conference 2008 does realise, then its attendance will be left to the FRCSA mission.

Ground:

Because the attendance of an ICRC mission conferences, in particular benefits the South African mission, the attendance of mission conferences must be done in consultation with the FRCSA mission.

Synod decides:

1. That we strengthen our ties with the FCSA by attending, either each year or bi-annually, the annual assemblies of the FCSA;
2. To transfer this mandate to deputies DCCSA.

Grounds:

- a. Rev. Nicholson and Dr. Breytenbach (N&B) in their report recommend that we strengthen our ties with the FCSA. This may benefit both our and the FCSA development of mission work in the Cape amongst the Xhosa speaking people;
- b. Presently, within the FRCSA Cape Town mission area (Delft), there is no FCSA presence. N&B have agreed with the FCSA congregations in Gugulethu and Khayalitsha (currently there is no FCSA pastor working in the Western part of the Southern Cape) to develop contacts between us but this proves difficult to maintain;
- c. If the Lord calls believers from the Xhosa speaking people, from within the FRCSA mission field in the Cape, then Dumisani (the FCSA training institute) appears to be the best institute for the training of Xhosa missionary workers;
- d. The FCSA is not a church abroad, but a South African church.

Synod decides:

1. To continue membership of the ICRC;
2. To accept the proposed amendment to the ICRC constitution;
3. To authorise the deputies to send one delegate to the next conference to be held in New Zealand, 2009.

Grounds:

- a. The ICRC is an organisation with a reformed foundation and shows that it doesn't just allow any church to become member, but truly wishes to maintain its basis;

- b. The ICRC provides us with a platform to maintain contact with reformed churches all over the world;
- c. The ICRC assists us to reflect on and coordinate our missionary work which can only be to our benefit;
- d. The proposed amendment to the ICRC constitution is an improvement.

Synod decides:

- 1. To keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date and to adjust it periodically and when specific needs arise;
- 2. To provide the FRCSA consistories with appropriate information regarding churches abroad;
- 3. To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.

Grounds:

- a. Information on the FRCSA must be regularly updated to remain current;
- b. The web is the medium of choice to distribute information widely and effectively;
- c. The provision of information to consistories can be useful when FRCSA members emigrate.

Synod decides to approve the following budget for deputies:

Item	Rand
1 ICRC membership fee: 2008-2011	1 000
2 ICRC mission conference Kenya 2008 (which is unlikely to occur)	0
3 One delegate to the Netherlands: Synod GKNv, 2011	11 000
4 One delegate: combined visit to Australia/New Zealand Oct 2009 Visit & presentations to FRCA (after synod Jun 2009 Legana) ICRC conference Oct 15–22, 2009 Christchurch, New Zealand	25 000
5 One delegate to CanRC synod 2010	25 000
6 Other costs	1 000
Total 2008-2011	63 000
Total 2005-2008	43 500
One delegate to the Netherlands: Synod GKNv, 2008 Financed from budget 2005-2008	9 000

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

- 1. To continue sister church relations with the FRCA according to the adopted rules;
- 2. To send one delegate to the FRCA in 2009 (to coincide with the ICRC) and to instruct this delegate to give presentations on the FRCSA;
- 3. To continue sister church relations with the CanRC according to the adopted rules;
- 4. To send one delegate to attend the next synod of the CanRC and to instruct that the delegate also give presentations on the FRCSA;
- 5. To continue the sister church relationship with the GKNv;
- 6. To send one delegate to the synod of the GKNv in 2011;
- 7. To continue contact with the RCNZ at the present level of exchanging information, so that we may remain informed about the developments in their churches;
- 8. To remain informed about ecclesiastical developments in Northern America via the CanRC;
- 9. To remain in contact with the ICRC regarding future mission conferences;
- 10. To continue membership of the ICRC;
- 11. To send one delegate to the next conference to be held in New Zealand, 2009;

12. To keep the booklet *Introducing the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa* up to date and to adjust it periodically and when specific needs arise;
13. To provide the FRCSA consistories with appropriate information regarding churches abroad;
14. To coordinate the contacts and requests of the FRCSA with churches abroad.
15. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 20 Deputies contact with churches in South Africa.

Material:

Report deputies for contact with churches in South Africa, see appendix 2.

Synod decides:

1. That the document compiled by the deputies on contact with the GKSA will be distributed to the churches.

Grounds:

- a. This has been an instruction of the previous synod;
 - b. It contains useful information with regard to contact between the two federations of churches.
2. That the churches will take note of the FRCSA's desire to realize unity with the GKSA on the basis of Scripture and confession.

Ground:

This is and will remain the FRCSA's desire.

3. That we take note of the GKSA's view and use of the confession as well as relationships with the NGK and the NHK as conveyed in the meeting with their deputies in October 2006 and that they are reluctant to give a formal confessional evaluation of the matter.
4. That deputies are requested to pursue the possibility of attending the TKR as observers.

Ground:

To get a clearer view of the ecumenical relations between the GKSA and the NGK and NHK.

5. That deputies convey synod's concern about the differences in the GKSA with regards to women serving in an office and monitor and evaluate the development regarding the issue.

Grounds:

- a. This matter uncovers the fundamental hermeneutical differences in understanding and applying Scripture in the GKSA;
 - b. This is a contentious issue which affects a church's view on Scripture and influences the contacts between the churches.
6. That contact with the GKSA on national level is continued.

Ground:

Continued talks are essential in working towards ecclesiastical unity.

7. That these contacts are made on a bilateral basis.

Ground:

Specific stumbling blocks that exist between the two churches must be appropriately addressed.

8. That deputies cooperate with the GKNv in matters of mutual concern, such as the abovementioned and other issues.

Grounds:

- a. The FRCSA and GKNv have expressed the same concerns with regard to different aspects, such as women in the office of deacon, sosio-historic hermeneutics;
- b. Matters of mutual concern demand mutual deliberation.

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

Ground:

This method seems to be an unscriptural approach to Scripture.

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

Ground:

We need this information to know the realities they struggle with and to assist and pray for them where possible.

11. That the local contacts between the churches of the GKSA and FRCSA again be exploited as measure of the possibility of unification on the grounds of Scripture and confession.

Ground:

Local contacts provide tangible testing material of the professed unity by the GKSA.

12. That deputies take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts.

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

- a. a uniform declaration by the churches for the purpose and outcomes of the contact;
- b. topics for discussion and aspects to be surveyed;
- c. the forms and fields of cooperation;
- d. the role the federation of churches play;
- e. Mutual agreement.

Ground:

Clear direction and uniformity serves the correct purpose.

14. That deputies document our view on church and on the relationship between the local

church and the federation of churches.

Grounds:

- a. This proves to be one of the most strategic points of difference;
- b. A clear statement from our side clarifies our convictions to the GKSA;
- c. Such a document can serve the discussion with the GKSA.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To distribute the document compiled by the deputies on contact with the GKSA to the churches;
2. To pursue the possibility of attending the TKR as observers;
3. To convey synod's concern about the differences in the GKSA with regards to women serving in an office and monitor and evaluate the development regarding the issue;
4. To continue contact with the GKSA on national level;
5. To make these contacts on a bilateral basis;
6. To cooperate with the GKNv in matters of mutual concern, such as the abovementioned and other issues;
7. To request the GKSA deputies to supply the GKSA's official stance, in writing, on the basic principles of the socio-historical hermeneutic in response to the document deputies presented to them in collaboration with the GKNv in 2004;
8. To request the GKSA deputies to serve them with an assessment of the situation in the GKSA with regard to controversial issues they struggle with;
9. To take responsibility for stimulating, assisting and monitoring local contacts;
10. To design guidelines for local contacts and, within 6 months, supply them to the churches. These guidelines must contain, amongst others:
 - a. a uniform declaration by the churches for the purpose and outcomes of the contact;
 - b. topics for discussion and aspects to be surveyed;
 - c. the forms and fields of cooperation;
 - d. the role the federation of churches play;
 - e. Mutual agreement.
11. To document our view on church and on the relationship between the local church and the federation of churches;
12. To strengthen our ties with the FCSA by attending, either each year or bi-annually, the annual assemblies of the FCSA.
13. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 21 Deputies for the Revision of the Church Order, Rules for Synod and Liturgical Forms.

Material:

Report deputies for the revision of the church order, rules for synod and liturgical forms, see appendix 3.

Synod decides:

To change the *Formulier vir die bediening van die heilige doop aan kinders* as follows:
(In Afrikaans as it concerns the Afrikaans form)

1. “Ten eerste”: verander dit na: “In die eerste plek” (ook so met die tweede en die derde punt).
2. Onder die eerste punt: “Dit word aan ons geleer deur die indompeling in **en** besprinkeling met die water...”: verander na: “Dit word aan ons geleer deur die indompeling in **of die** besprinkeling met die water...”.
3. Onder punt 2, die eerste 2 sinne, verander dit as volg: “Die heilige doop bevestig en verseël aan ons die afwassing van die sondes deur Jesus Christus, **omdat** ons volgende die bevel van Christus gedoop word in die Naam van God...”. Maak dit een sin, voeg **omdat** in en haal **mos** uit.
4. “**Want** as ons in die Naam van die Vader gedoop word...”: haal **Want** uit en begin ‘n nuwe paragraaf.
5. “**En** as ons in die Naam van die Seun gedoop word...”: haal **En** uit en begin ‘n nuwe paragraaf.
6. “Hy maak ons een met Homself in sy dood en opstanding, **sodat** ons van ons sondes bevry en voor God regverdig gereken word.” Verander dit na: “Hy maak ons een met Homself in sy dood en opstanding. **Sodoende** word ons van ons sondes bevry en voor God regverdig gereken.” Voeg ook ‘n teksverwysing by, nl. **Rom. 6:4**.
7. “**Net so ook**, as ons in die Naam van die Heilige Gees gedoop word...”: haal **ook** uit en voeg ‘n **komma** in en begin ‘n nuwe paragraaf, dus: “**Net so**, as ons in die Naam van die Heilige Gees gedoop word...”.
8. Bl. 3 bo-aan: “**Want** Hy maak tot ons eiendom wat ons in Christus het...” verander na: “Hy maak tot ons eiendom wat ons **reeds** in Christus het...”, dus: haal **Want** uit en voeg **reeds** in.
9. Die volgende sin: “Ons moet **naamlik** hierdie enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees, aanhang...” verander na: “**Uit dankbaarheid** moet ons hierdie enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees, aanhang...”, dus: **naamlik** word uitgehaal en **uit dankbaarheid** word ingevoeg.
10. Later in dieselfde sin: “...en met al ons **kragte; ons** moet van die wêreld afsien...”: vervang die **kommepunt** met ‘n **punt** en begin ‘n nuwe sin, dus: “...en met al ons **kragte. Ons** moet van die wêreld afsien...”.
11. Die teksverwysing by “...ons ou natuur **doodmaak**...”: word verander na: Ef. 4:22-24, Rom. 8:13 en Kol. 2:14.
12. Bl. 4, bo-aan: “...wat ‘n seël van die verbond en van die geregtigheid van die geloof **was; so** het Christus ook kinders omhels...”: vervang die **kommepunt** met ‘n **punt** en begin ‘n nuwe sin, dus: “...wat ‘n seël van die verbond en van die geregtigheid van die geloof **was. So** het Christus ook kinders omhels...”.
13. Volgende paragraaf: “Omdat, onder die nuwe verbond, die doop **nou** in die plek van die besnydenis gekom het, **daarom** moet die kinders as erfgename...”: haal **nou** en **daarom** uit; die sin lui dus as volg: “Omdat, onder die nuwe verbond, die doop in die plek van die besnydenis gekom het, moet die kinders as erfgename...”.
14. Volgende sin: “En die ouers is verplig om **vir** hulle **kinders** terwyl hulle opgroei, hulle doop te leer verstaan.”: haal **vir** uit en plaas ‘n **komma** na **kinders**, dus: “En die ouers is verplig om hulle kinders, terwyl hulle opgroei, hulle doop te leer verstaan.”
15. Die sin voor die gebed: verander die volgorde as volg: “Laat ons, om hierdie heilige instelling van God tot sy eer, tot ons troos en tot opbouing van die gemeente uit te voer, sy heilige Naam aanroep:”.
16. In die gebed, eerste sin: “...U het volgens u regverdige oordeel die ongelowige en onboetvaardige wêreld met die sondvloed **gestraf, maar** U het die gelowige Noag ... gered en **bewaar**. U het die hardnekkige Farao met al sy manne in die Rooisee laat

verdrink, maar u volk Israel op droë grond...”; dus: telkens ‘n komma voor **maar** en ‘n punt na die eerste **bewaar** en begin met ‘n nuwe sin.

17. Ongeveer in die middel van die gebed: “Laat hy (sy/hulle) deur die doop met Christus in sy dood begrawe **mag** word...” verander na: “Laat hy (sy/hulle) deur die doop met Christus in sy dood begrawe word...”; haal **mag** dus uit.
18. Amper aan die einde van die gebed: “Laat hy (sy/hulle) so hierdie lewe, wat tog niks anders as ‘n voortdurende sterwe is nie, deur U beloftes **getroos, mag verlaat** en op die laaste dag sonder verskrikking voor die regterstoel van Christus, u Seun, **mag verskyn.**” verander as volg: “Laat hy (sy/hulle) so hierdie lewe, wat tog niks anders as ‘n voortdurende sterwe is nie, deur U beloftes **getroos verlaat** en op die laaste dag sonder verskrikking voor die regterstoel van Christus, u Seun, **verskyn.**”; die woordjie **mag** word telkens uitgehaal en die **komma** na **getroos** word ook uitgehaal.
19. Vrae aan die doopouers: voeg Matt. 28:19 in as teksverwysing.
20. Dankgebed: voeg die volgende in voor die gebed: “Laat ons sy heilige Naam aanroep”.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To study the liturgical forms in order to identify unclear and poorly formulated articles and to provide the next synod with suggestions for improvement;
2. To be in contact with the deputies of Classis North, that deals with the Sotho translation of Church Order and liturgical forms;
3. To eventually merge and republish the revised Church Order, Synod Rules and Liturgical Forms, in all three languages used in our churches, as well as the order of the service, as established in 1990, article 14;
4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 22 Mission Deputies.

Br. K. Toebes, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report MDSA, see appendix 4.

Synod decides:

1. To assess the churches with a minimum amount of R100 per member for 2008, R110 for 2009 and R120 for 2010;
2. To continue the mandate given to deputies in 2005 with the exception of mandate line 1;
3. That deputies in coordination with the deputies ad article 11 CO implement the already agreed procedure that newly instituted congregations, established out of the mission work, that are financially needy, will approach the deputies ad article 11 CO with immediate effect and the MDSA will, if necessary temporarily assist financially the deputies ad article 11 CO for shortfalls accumulated by these newly instituted congregations, ensuring that the proper church channels be followed;
4. To request the deputies ad article 11 CO to convene a national conference on the growing financial support required in the short-, medium- and long term by our growing federation, with special reference to the newly instituted churches established as a result from the mission work;
5. To re-appoint a regional deputyship to deal with national mission issues.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To continue the contact between the mission churches of the FRCSA and the supporting churches abroad;
2. To act, within this contact, in accordance with the agreement of cooperation, which synod made with the supporting churches abroad and the agreement of cooperation regarding the mission between the FRCSA churches;
3. To consider more concrete results for the national mission vision for the next five to ten years and to engage in this process different role-players;
4. To receive annually the policies and work plans from the mission churches, the budget for the next year and the statements of the previous year;
5. To consolidate the various budgets and present it to the deputies of the supporting churches abroad;
6. To distribute, in accordance with the approved budgets of the mission churches, the incoming funds;
7. To ensure that the money is spent in accordance with the budget, policies and work plans;
8. To assess the churches with a minimum amount of R100 per member for 2008, R110 for 2009 and R120 for 2010;
9. To request from the mission churches the minutes and reports related to mission work;
10. To coordinate necessary mission affairs of mutual interest of the various mission fields;
11. To divide the different tasks amongst themselves;
12. To implement, in collaboration with the deputies ad article 11 CO, the already agreed procedure that newly instituted congregations, established out of the mission work and that are financially needy, will approach the deputies ad article 11 CO with immediate effect and that the MDSA will, if necessary, temporarily assist financially the deputies ad article 11 CO for shortfalls accumulated by these newly instituted congregations, ensuring that the proper church channels be followed;
13. To request the deputies ad article 11 CO to convene a national conference on the growing financial support required in the short-, medium- and long term by our growing federation, with special reference to the newly instituted churches established as a result from the mission work;
14. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 23 Deputies Liturgical Music.

Material:

Report deputies Liturgical Music, see appendix 5.

Synod decides:

1. To refer the selected 61 hymns plus the comments from Pretoria-Maranata back to deputies;
2. To accept recommendation 5.3 of the deputies report 2008;
3. Not to accept recommendation 5.1 and 5.2 of the deputies report.
4. Synod appoints deputies with the new mandate.

Ground:

The deputies presented their final report only a few days before the start of synod, giving the delegates insufficient time to prepare themselves.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To translate the document indicated as "Bylaag 1" into English and to make it available to all the churches in the federation;
2. To standardise criteria as defined by previous synods, making use of material from overseas sister churches, for example from the CanRC and "Bylaag 1" of the Deputy's 2008 report;
3. To define the term Hymn (gesang) as there is a difference in "Afrikaans" between the terms "Skryfberyming" and "Gesang" which is not there in English or Dutch
4. To produce a document as a result of (2) and (3) above in English and Afrikaans and supply it to all churches in the federation as a basis for selecting Hymns to be sung in Church services;
5. To make a selection of Hymns according the criteria of document mentioned in (4) above with consideration of comments from Pretoria-Maranata, and to give the full reason for each newly selected hymn on the basis of the standardized criteria;
6. To send the resulting report and the proposed selection of Hymns to all churches within eighteen months from date of synod 2008;
7. To invite the churches to give feedback on the report and the selection of Hymns within nine months;
8. To prepare a final report and to propose a final selection of maximum 50 Hymns for next synod;

Article 24 Deputies Bible Translation.

Br. K. Bijzet, deputy, was present during the discussion of this report.

Material:

Report Deputies Bible Translation, see appendix 6.

Synod decides:

1. To accept the invitation from the KA to nominate two deputies as full members of the KA;
2. To appoint deputies who reside in the north of the country;
3. To point out in connection with the wide constitution of the KA, articles 3 to 5 of the Belgic Confession, which describes what we as churches believe and confess of the written Word of God and to point out article 6 of the same confession, where the difference between canonical and apocryphal books is discussed.

Grounds:

- a. The invitation from the KA to nominate two deputies as full members of that committee gives us an opportunity to be properly involved in the process of Bible translation;
- b. Meetings of the KA are held in Kempton Park.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To appoint two deputies who will serve as full members of the KA;
2. To supervise and be involved with the new developments regarding the new translation of the Bible into Afrikaans;
3. To take part in the proceedings of the KA, and if necessary with reference to our confession regarding the written Word of God and the distinction between canonical and

- apocryphal books;
4. To inform the churches of progress and developments with translations;
 5. To identify potential readers in our churches to take part in the process of Bible translation. Available readers must be approached as soon as possible and must be requested to give periodically feedback to the deputies on their work;
 6. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 25 Deputies ad article 19 CO.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 19 CO, see appendix 7.

Synod decides:

1. To approve the bursary form as included in supplement 2 of the report;
2. To maintain the current contribution of R20 per member per annum;
3. To authorise deputies to increase the contribution with a maximum of R20 per member per annum for each new student.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To financially support students from within the MTS or those who are undergraduate students with a view to study for the ministry of the Word, in accordance with article 19 CO and the synodical regulations;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 26 Deputies ad article 11 CO.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 11 CO, see appendix 8.

Synod recommends:

That the needy churches in the federation conduct a special collections roster from February to November for the different purposes and that the proceeds of those collections be passed on over to the treasurer. The collection roster can be as follows:

February and August: Denominational expenses

April and October: Needy churches

June and November: Needy students.

Churches that wish to make extra contributions or to increase the proceeds of the collections can do so according to the circumstances and the available funds.

Grounds:

- a. The treasurer can monitor the process and can put the necessary checks in place;
- b. This way all churches will make a contribution towards the costs of the federation;
- c. The contribution is according to ability.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To consider any request for financial support coming from one of the churches and once

the merits of the request have been ascertained to send a proposal to the other churches to help the needy church according to ability;

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

Article 27 Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.

Br. W.D. Spies, deputy, was present during the discussions of this report.

Material:

Report deputies for the correspondence with the Government, see appendix 9.

Synod decides:

1. To investigate the possibility to cooperate with other reformed churches as regards Parliamentary desk (PD);
2. To determine the advantages and disadvantages of this PD, the required manpower and possible costs;
3. To authorise deputies to make use of the PD if the deputies conclude that it is possible and responsible;
4. To instruct deputies to communicate the gathered information from this PD to the churches and encourage and advice them on the most appropriate actions to take.

Ground:

The PD appears to be an appropriate way for members of the churches to give expressions of the calling of witness in the public environment.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. In matters pertaining to the interest of the country, in happiness or in sorrow, depending on the circumstances, to condole with or congratulate the government;
2. To react appropriately on government measures that compromises the protection of the preaching of the gospel;
3. To testify to government in cases where the government transgresses the universal law of God and to reflect on the specific nature and function of this mandate to the next synod;
4. To receive requests from government and to make such requests known to the churches;
5. To investigate the possibility to cooperate with other reformed churches as regards Parliamentary desk (PD);
6. To determine the advantages and disadvantages of this PD, the required manpower and possible costs;
7. To make use of the PD if the deputies conclude that it is possible and responsible;
8. To communicate the gathered information from this PD to the churches and encourage and advice them on the most appropriate actions to take;
9. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 28 Deputies ad article 49 CO.

Material:

Report deputies ad article 49 CO, see appendix 10.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To render services to the classes in accordance with article 49 CO;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 29 Deputies Curators.

Material:

Report deputies curators, see appendix 11.

Synod decides:

That deputies appoint a National Coordinator (NC) on a loan base from the consistory involved until the next synod.

Grounds:

- a. This appointment is the execution of the mandate given to deputies by synod 2006 (article 9, p. 5);
- b. The appointment is dependent on the authorisation of the responsible consistory.

Synod decides:

1. To appoint deputies curators with the following mandate, which will be implemented and executed by the NC:

- 1.1. To complete and round off the statutes and the regulations for the MTS.

Grounds:

- a. The deputies were instructed to write the statutes, in order to describe and finalise the theological training through the MTS;
- b. A draft concerning the responsibilities of the different role-players involved in the MTS, with both statutes and regulations, included in Appendix B of deputy's report, must be refined;
- c. The statutes and regulations have to be published in a theological training manual.

- 1.2. To, by working with the module structuring and outcomes of the Synod Cape Town 2006, facilitate, write and develop a training program for the churches. The following must be done:

1. Profiles, outcomes and learning goals have to be written in theological training format and context;
2. Instruments to evaluate academic standards of modules and institutions have to be developed;
3. Internal assessing instruments to evaluate teaching as well as course content have to be described;
4. A system of evaluating students' learning and reaching the outcomes has to be described;
5. A format for designing and writing study guides has to be described.

Grounds:

- a. Because of the technical difficulties of describing a training plan in educational

- terms, this essential work previously never got started;
- b. To find financial help, the MTS must be able to present itself in terms of a facilitating institution with a definite program;
 - c. To cooperate with other training institutions, we have to communicate on the level of higher theological education;
 - d. To register for postgraduate studies at any university a student of the MTS must have a described training program of his theological studies at hand to make it possible for him to be evaluated without delay.
- 1.3. To publish a prospectus concerning the theological training facilitated by the MTS for use by the churches, students, etc.

Ground:

A prospectus will enable the churches, students etc. to access important information.

- 1.4. To investigate and research possible bridging programs and preparation courses (short courses) for the route of applicants from grade 12 to BTh1.

Grounds:

- a. Applicants do not always have higher learning, reading and writing skills, general language skills and are not experienced in study methods for the level of BTh;
- b. Applicants can be helped by basic courses in study skills, the classical languages, basic knowledge of the confessions and the doctrine of the gospel, before they enrol for the BTh.

- 1.5. To investigate and research the possibility of developing a postgraduate, multi-disciplinary and accredited diploma in Theology.

Grounds:

- a. There is need for an advanced training program after the completion of the BTh courses of the different training institutes, to reach the outcomes stipulated for a minister;
- b. It should round off the professional preparation for the ministry;
- c. It should focus on and practice exegetical skills, personal functioning and advanced study skills, preparing the student for the examination of the classes and the ministry itself;
- d. It should satisfy the need for postgraduate study;
- e. It should preferably be in partnership with a training institution, but with the consent of the MTS.

- 1.6. To visit institutions with reformed convictions to evaluate the suitability of their curricula for the training of the students of the churches.

Grounds:

- a. The students should study at approved institutions;
- b. The academic standard as well as the curriculum should be reconcilable with the outcomes stipulated by the synod;
- c. To steer students along the best possible route of academic development, it has to be well formulated. Curricula of institutions must therefore be reconciled with the stipulated outcomes, and shortcomings identified and accounted for.

- 1.7. To make an agreement with Professor R.M. Britz, Director of Programs, Faculty of Theology, University of the Free State, to facilitate, initiate and assume the function for the technical standard of recommendations 1.2 to 1.6.

Grounds:

- a. Prof. Britz is one of South Africa's most experienced and competent compilers of theological curricula;
 - b. To get acquainted with the technical demands of compiling curricula, will be of great value to the coordinators;
 - c. It will assist the coordinators in fulfilling their responsibilities.
2. To instruct deputies to establish a library and a place for storing, archiving and managing documents (study guides and lecturing material as well as confidential records and correspondence), providing material by editing work, printing and copying work for the programs of the MTS.

Ground:

Without a document management facility, maintaining proper order and accountability will prove to be impossible.

3. To take note of the appointment of sr. G.I. de Wet as administrative person in accordance with the mandate of the deputies.

Ground:

The DC received a mandate for this, and wants to keep the churches informed.

4. To accept the draft budget and raise the contribution per member to R 110-00 per annum with an annual increase according to the inflation rate.

Ground:

To establish and sustain the MTS.

5. That in future an attempt will be made to refer to this deputyship as "Deputy Curators" or only as "Curators".

Grounds:

- a. To simplify matters;
 - b. There already is a training program in place, which necessitates the existence of curators;
 - c. It gives expression to the calling of the churches to form a single training for the churches by the churches.
6. To approve the job descriptions for the NC, Regional coordinators and Lecturers as formulated by Dr. Breytenbach and included in appendix B of deputies' report.

Grounds:

- a. It was instructed by the Synod Cape Town 2006;
- b. Updated job descriptions will consolidate previous attempts and prevent confusion.

7. That deputies do not only guide and take responsibility for the developing of the MTS, but also accept and retain their responsibility for the training of the present and future theological students.

Grounds:

- a. The present students' training must be completed while at the same time the MTS has to be established;
 - b. The budget has to be evaluated with both functions of the deputies in mind (see Appendix A of deputies' report).
8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 30 Synod Treasurer.

Material:

Report synod treasurer, see appendix 12.

Synod recommends:

That the convening church organises ad hoc synods in places nearest to where most delegates reside.

Ground:

This will save travelling expenses.

Synod decides:

1. To assess the churches with the following amounts:
Denominational expenses: R20 per member
Needy churches: R200 per member
Needy students: R20 per member
2. To accept a collection schedule instead of the aforementioned assessment per member from the following churches: Bethal, Mamelodi and Soshanguve-North.
3. To appoint two deputies as treasurers.

Ground:

It is common practise to have two persons overseeing the finances.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To issue semiannual statements at the end of May and September to the churches;
2. To request the churches to settle their accounts within 30 days;
3. To assess the churches with the following amounts:
Denominational expenses: R20 per member
Needy churches: R200 per member
Needy students: R20 per member
4. To accept a collection schedule instead of the aforementioned assessment per member from the following churches: Bethal, Mamelodi and Soshanguve-North and possibly newly instituted churches that will fall within this schedule;

5. To pay the deputies the assigned budgets on their request;
6. To reimburse travel expenses and other expenses made by deputies on their request;
7. To reimburse the air travel expenses of classes on their request;
8. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 31 Stated Clerk and archive.

Material:

Report Stated Clerk, see appendix 13.

Synod decides:

1. To request the classes to inform the stated clerk and the other classes when changes are made in deputies ad article 49 CO;
2. To request the deputies ad article 49 CO to submit their reports of a visit to a classis immediately after that visit;
3. Not to move the archive of the synod to another church;
4. To request the various deputies to submit their reports no later than 4 months before opening of synod;
5. To request the various deputies to submit their reports in English only, except those deputies who deal with mainly Afrikaans issues. They are requested to submit with their report an English summary.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To run upon instruction from the synod or the convening church the administration of the synod;
2. To act as the archivist in collaboration with the archive church;
3. To sell acts of the synods against costprice to those who are interested;
4. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 32 Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.

Material:

Report auditor of the treasurer's books, see appendix 14.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To audit the books of the synod treasurer annually;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 33 Church for the Inspection of the Archive.

Material:

Report from the church of Johannesburg, regarding the inspection of the archive, see appendix 15.

Synod decides:

Not to appoint a church but two deputies for the inspection of the archive. The mandate remains the same.

Synod decides to appoint deputies with the following mandate:

1. To examine the synodical archive in accordance with the rules of synod;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 34 Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.

Material:

Report from Classis South regarding days of prayer, see appendix 16.

Synod decides to appoint a classis with the following mandate:

1. To nominate, in line with article 69 CO a day of prayer;
2. To report to the next synod and formulate recommendations according to article 12 of the Rules of Synod.

Article 35 Appointments.

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

Synod appoints:

1. Deputies Relations with Churches Abroad.

Rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg, rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata, br. C. Roose, Pretoria (convener), rev. D.M. Boersma, Pretoria-Maranata
Substitute: br. L. IJlst, Pretoria

2. Deputies contact with churches (church-groups) in South Africa.

Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town, br. P. Bouwman, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Cape Town, rev. P. Nel, Pretoria, rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi.
Substitute: rev. M.P. Magagula, Soshanguve-North

3. Deputies Revision Church Order, Rules for Synod and Liturgical Forms.

Br. C.A. van Wyk, Belhar, sr. E.N. van der Linden, Cape Town (convener), sr. J. Meijering, Cape Town, br. A.W. Herder, Johannesburg
Substitute: sr. W. Byker, Cape Town

4. Mission Deputies.

Br. J.D. de Mooij, Pretoria-Maranata, br. R. Snijder, Johannesburg (convener), br. T. de Wit, Pretoria, sr. H.G. van Dijk, Pretoria-Maranata, sr. I. Hagg, Pretoria, br. H. Snijder, Pretoria.

5. Deputies Liturgical Music.

Br. F. van der Meer, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), rev. J. van der Linden, Johannesburg, sr. M. Bron, Pretoria

Substitutes: br. G. Klapwijk, Cape Town, rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town

6. Deputies Bible Translation.

Rev. H.H. van Alten, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), rev. P. Nel, Pretoria

7. Deputies ad article 19 CO.

Br. J.W. Roos, Cape Town, br. B.J. Meijering, Cape Town (convener)

Substitute: br. J.F. Raimond, Cape Town

8. Deputies ad article 11 CO.

Rev. H.H. van Alten, Pretoria-Maranata, br. F.J. van Dijk, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), rev. J. Mhlanga, Pretoria-Maranata

Substitutes: rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg, br. H. Pouwels, Pretoria-Maranata

9. Deputies for the correspondence with the Government.

Br. J.A. Smit, Pretoria (convener), br. W.D. Spies, Pretoria-Maranata, br. G.R. Stolper, Pretoria

Substitute: br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata

10. Deputies ad article 49 CO.

Classis North: rev. P.G. Boon Pretoria-Maranata, rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi

Substitutes: rev. M.P. Magagula, Soshanguve-North, rev. P. Nel, Pretoria

Classis South: rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg, rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town

Substitute: Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, Cape Town

11. Deputies Curators.

Rev. E. Viljoen, Cape Town, rev. C. Kleijn, Johannesburg, br. A.J. van der Lugt, Cape Town, rev. J. Mhlanga, Pretoria-Maranata, rev. K.T. Mogale, Mamelodi, rev. P. Nel, Pretoria, br. L.H.T. Bosker, Pretoria (convener), br. A. Smit, Pretoria-Maranata

Classes are requested to appoint substitutes.

12. Synod Treasurer.

Br. E.J. van Vondel, Cape Town, sr. A.M. Eefting, Cape Town

Substitute: br. F.J. van Dijk, Pretoria-Maranata

13. Stated clerk.

Br. A.W. Herder, Johannesburg

Substitute: br. J.A. Smit, Pretoria

14. Archive Church.

Church of Pretoria

15. Inspection of the Synod Treasurer's books.

Church of Cape Town

16. Inspection of the Archive.

Br. D.A. Byker, Johannesburg, sr. M.A. Bijker, Johannesburg (convener)

17. Internet Communication.

Br. J.D. de Mooij, Pretoria-Maranata (convener), sr. M.M. de Vente, Pretoria-Maranata
Substitute: br. G.D. Bijker, Pretoria

18. Classis for days of prayer ad article 69 CO.

Classis North

Article 36 Letter to the President

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

The President,
Mr. T.M. Mbeki
Private Bag X1000
Pretoria
0001

The synod of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa met from the 12th of May till the 15th of May 2008 in Cape Town. The delegates expressed the wish to assure you of their prayers for you in your responsible task as President of our country. We realise this is no easy task in a country with so many needs and challenges. We pray that the Lord our God may grant you the necessary wisdom, guidance and strength for that task.

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

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

Rev. E. Viljoen Chairman
Rev. H.H. van Alten Vice Chairman
Mr. F.J. van Dijk Clerk

Article 37 Personal question period

No questions are raised.

Article 38 Appointment of convening church of next synod

The church of Mamelodi was appointed to convene next synod, to be held in May 2011.

Article 39 Adoption of Acts and approval of press release

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

Article 40 Censure ad Article 48 CO

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

Article 41 Closing of Synod

On behalf of synod the vice-chairman expressed his appreciation for the capable manner in which rev. Viljoen had chaired the sessions and addressed synod with the following words.

“Dear Brothers,

We started this synod with Acts 2:42 - staying true to the apostolic teaching, having true fellowship, sharing the bread, and being united in prayer. Now we have come to the end, three full days have gone by, and it's time to consider how Acts 2:42 has realised. We can safely say that we had fellowship, we definitely shared our bread, and prayer was surely not lacking. But did we stay true to the apostolic teaching? That is probably the most important question... Because if that basis is lacking, the other aspects become irrelevant - our fellowship becomes empty, the breaking of bread becomes a curse and prayer becomes mere words.

However, with great thankfulness we can say that the Word of God was indeed the light on our path. It was not just the repeating of a 'shibboleth' - "Scripture and confession"... No, it worked through all our deliberations and decisions. And where we made mistakes - that can happen! - well, let the churches see their responsibility in correcting us.

We can close our synod with great thankfulness towards the Lord for his Fatherly care. We can truly say that the Lord has been good to us. Furthermore, I want to thank the congregation of Cape Town for their wonderful hospitality. We needed nourished bodies in order to think and take decisions. That we certainly got. Please convey our sincerest appreciation to the involved parties for all the delicious things to eat and drink.

Also for all the other logistical organisation and facilities we want to thank you - the church office, printing, copying, etc - all necessary ingredients to make things run smoothly. Here we can also think of the work of br Herder, not just during the synod, but also before it, and probably long after it. Thank you very much for that. We would also like to thank the different guest houses - yes, it probably felt like guest houses, and I'm sure you will thank them personally in an appropriate way. Then a special word of thanks to the chairman; we weren't a difficult meeting, I think, but nonetheless it's something to be thankful for when you get a chairman that leads proceedings in a structured and wise way. Rev Viljoen, thank you for that - I hope that you will enjoy your rest. Thank you to the advisors.... We can also thank each other in the Lord for a beautiful time together. It has been good!

Brothers, I hope you all have a safe journey home, and that we will see each other in good health somewhere in the near future. May the Lord bless all of us, and may He bring our deliberations and decisions to true fruition in the churches and in the country where the Lord placed us.”

The meeting sang Hymn 49 (BoP) after which the vice-chairman led in closing prayer. The chairman declared synod Cape Town 2008 closed.

Finis