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acts

of the TENTH SYNOD of
The Free Reformed Churches of Australia

held in the Church building of the Church at Albany, Western
Australia, from November 1st to November 7th, 1975

Evening session on Saturday, November 1, 1975.

Article 1

OPENING

The meeting is opened (in English) by the Rev. J. D. Wielenga on behalf of the convening Church of Albany. At his request the meeting, consisting of delegates and visitors from the various Churches, sings Ps. 99:1,2. The chairman then leads in prayer, followed by the reading of Isaiah 9:1-7 and 40:1-11.

Then he speaks the following opening words:

"Brothers and Sisters, brothers delegates to synod,

I welcome you here tonight at the opening of the tenth synod of the Free Reformed Churches, and I do this on behalf of the Church of Albany whose turn it was to convene this synod, and accordingly was appointed as such by our previous synod. We are thankful that all delegates have safely arrived, especially the delegates that had to come from as far as distant Launceston. For br. VanderRos it is the first time in his life that he visits Albany. We hope, that you will have a good time in the midst of the congregation and in our town with surroundings, although there is a good chance, we fear, that you will not see much else than the inside of this church building and your fellow-delegates. Rev. Dekker is not for the first time here, (I believe) but indeed for the first time as a minister of one of our churches and as a delegate to synod. We are very glad to have you here; and of course, this applies to the delegates from Armadale as well. In them we welcome veteran-delegates, minister Bruning and elder Terpstra, who was a member of the previous synod of Albany in 1968, also, and even of the last held synod in Armadale in 1972. That synod was held a good three years ago, which synod decided to have the next one convened in March 1975.

It is now November, the 1st, seven months later. I can assure you, if necessary: reassure you, that the convening church of Albany has never suspected tendencies of independentism behind the requests to postpone synod to a later date - neither when Armadale opened the attack on the set date of March, as being too close upon the summer-holidays, nor behind Launceston's request to postpone synod, for the good reason that they wished to give their new minister ample opportunity to prepare for synod. We hope, Rev. Dekker, that the postponement has been sufficient

to serve the purpose, and that the churches may benefit from this.

Otherwise, if one refers to history, one will find that even the Independentists never denied the necessity of holding synods in order to maintain truth and order in their churches. Such synods, as they declared in the Savoy Platform of 1658, were in accordance with the mind of Christ. The necessity of holding synods simply obtruded itself even on such staunch champions of the independence of the local church, as our Independents were. Even though the Bible does not give us a Church Order, and does not 'black on white' prescribe synods- the very fact that Christ gathers one Church and gathers her as a communion of saints, carries with it the need of holding synods by churches-who-hold-communication; this is simply a demand of the communion of saints. Christians are given to one another for mutual help and upbuilding, - so then our churches likewise.

And one glance at the agenda of our synod suffices to convince that we do need one another to maintain truth and order in the church, to mention only the appeals, and the churchbook, and the Bible version.

In the meantime, the postponement of the synod has brought us to an openings date, which has, apart from the mentioned practical advantages, also this symbolical advantage over any other date, that it almost falls together with the date on which every year the Great Reformation of the Church in the 16th century is commemorated. Yesterday was the 31st of October, on which date, in 1517, Luther published the famous 95 theses in Wittenberg. This is generally considered as the beginning of the Reformation of the Church, that glorious liberation of the Church of Christ from the yoke of the people, their teachings and their authority and rules, and the return of God's people under the light and easy yoke of the only Bishop of the Church Jesus Christ, and his glorious gospel of grace and freedom.

Our Free Reformed Churches derive their Name from this great event in the history of the church. We desire to be Reformed Churches, churches of the Reformation. And the addition 'Free' in 'Free Reformed' only underlines the desire to be churches in the tradition of the Reformation. For this addition 'Free' also witnesses to the historical necessity of the permanent struggle of the Church to defend its freedom under Christ and His Word alone, against all usurpation by men and their teachings. In our Name, then, we also express our determined intention to thankfully safeguard- also for the future- all that God has given his Church through the Reformation of the 16th century.

Brothers delegates, the churches who sent us, found one another and united with one another on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity and the Church order.

These documents reproduce the Truth of the Gospel of Christ and acknowledge the exclusive rights of Christ alone in his Church. On the basis

of this Confession and Church order we are called to do our work. If we do our work true to these, peace and freedom in the churches will be maintained by the rule of justice and truth.

Our Name is great. Our number is small. Our strength is not in our number. Our strength is in the Lord, who graciously gave us as churches a place in the church of all ages, whom He gathers, defends and preserves.

Our number is small, yet we do not feel ourselves lost in the vast expanses of space and time, as we know ourselves united together with innumerable churches of the past and the present, -with the holy catholic church of our Confession. As delegates to synod we feel small and privileged to be called to serve Christ- also through this minor work, in his church and kingdom, of holding synods- nevertheless by this to serve Him in His work of keeping our churches on the road of the 'Church of all ages', which road will lead to the age to come, to the fulfilment of peace and freedom, in the Kingdom of glory, by his truth and justice.-

With these words I declare the tenth synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia opened".

which is followed by the singing of Hymn 51:1,2.

Article 2.

CREDENTIALS

The roll is signed by the delegates of the three Churches and the delegates of Armadale examine the credentials which are found in order. All churches are duly represented by their primary delegates:

from the Church of Albany : Rev. J. D. Wielenga
Elder J. Plug

from the Church of Armadale : Rev. K. Bruning
Elder H. Terpstra

from the Church of Launceston : Rev. A. H. Dekker
Elder J. VanderRos

The Church of Launceston has an instruction.

Article 3.

MODERAMEN

The following officers are chosen :

president : Rev. K. Bruning
assessor : Rev. J. D. Wielenga
first clerk : Rev. A. H. Dekker
second clerk : Elder H. Terpstra

The voting for the second clerk resulted twice in a tie and Synod decided that, contrary to the rules (Acts 1956, Art. 7-6-b), the eldest in years would be chosen.

Article 4.

CONSTITUTION OF SYNOD

Rev. K. Bruning takes the chair and thanks the Rev. J. D. Wielenga and the Church of Albany for the welcome and the preparatory work.

Article 5.

FORM OF SUBSCRIPTION

Rev. J. D. Wielenga, on behalf of the Church of Albany, reports orally that all documents in connection with the call of Rev. A. H. Dekker of Launceston have been found in order. (cf. Acts 1962, Art. 28-2).

Synod decides to ask the Church of Albany for a written report.

Rev. K. Bruning reads the Form of Subscription (in Dutch) after which Rev. A. H. Dekker signs the same.

The president asks the delegates to rise, in order to testify their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. This takes place.

Article 6.

WORKING METHOD

The hours of session are fixed. The meetings will be held from :

10.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Article 7.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

1. Appeal of D. B. against decision of Synod 1964.
2. Letter from Rev. G. VanRongen concerning this appeal.
3. Letter from Rev. G. VanRongen with a request from the Librarian of Calvin Seminary.
4. Letter of good wishes from Rev. G. VanRongen, which is read by the president.
5. Letter from the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
This is read by the president.

Article 8.

WORKING METHOD

It is decided to deal in the evening session with matters of special interest for visiting Church members.

On Monday morning the proposals 7-a-b of the Church of Launceston will be dealt with first. On Monday evening the matter of attestations will be discussed.

The agenda is adopted as proposed, with the insertion of the incoming correspondence and a change in the wording of the proposal of Armadale re attestations.

It is as follows :

7. Incoming correspondence and overtures:

From the Church of Armadale :

- (a) Proposal in connection with the acceptance of attestations from churches with whom we do not maintain correspondence as sister churches.
- (b) Proposal regarding the baptism of adopted children. The church council asks the Synod to decide that children adopted by church members should be baptised.
- (c) Report concerning the departure of Rev.G.VanRongen.

From the Church of Launceston :

- (a) Proposal to add to the Rules of Synod under 4c the following : "Ambtsdragers die niet afgevaardigd zijn zullen toegang tot alle zittingen hebben - tenzij de Synode in incidentele gevallen anders beslist. Zij kunnen worden uitgenodigd om de Synode van advies te dienen".
- (b) Proposal that every endeavour be made to use the English language as much as possible for all official business.
- (c) Proposal to increase the number of delegates of each Church from two to three.

Letter d.d. 5-6-1975 from the Canadian Reformed Churches' committee for correspondence with Churches abroad. (See Art.7-5).

From br. G.W. of A. objections to a decision of the Church of Armadale regarding the baptism of adopted children.

From sr. C.L. of A. as above.

Appeal of D.B. against decision of Synod 1964.

Letter from Rev.G.VanRongen concerning this appeal.

Letter from Rev.G.VanRongen with a request from the Librarian of Calvin Seminary.

Letter of good wishes from Rev.G.VanRongen. (See Art. 7-4).

8. Discussion of instructions.

9. Reports :

- (a) on Church visitations.
- (b) from the Church of Armadale concerning the archives of Synod ; with proposed instructions for the keeper of the Synod Archives.
- (c) from the Church of Albany concerning the examination of the archives of Synod.
- (d) from the Churches concerning the work among the "scattered" brothers and sisters.
- (e) from the Churches of Albany and Armadale concerning the mission work in W.A.
- (f) from the Church of Launceston regarding the spiritual support of church members in military service.
- (g) from deputies for correspondence with foreign sister churches.
- (h) regarding correspondence derived from art.45 Acts Synod 1972 (South Africa).
- (i) from deputies for correspondence with the government.
- (j) from the Church of Armadale concerning correspondence with the Presbyterian Reformed Churches.
- (k) from deputies for an English version of the Bible.
- (l) from deputies for a Church Book in the English language.
- (m) from deputies for the Training for the Ministry of the Word.
- (n) from the Quaestor of Synod regarding income and expenditure.
- (o) from deputies Art.49 Church Order.

10. Auditing of the Books of the Treasurer of Synod.

11. Determination of the percentages in the apportionment of Synod costs between the Churches.

12. Appointment of deputies.

13. Appointment of the convening Church; place and date of the next Synod.

14. Business concerning Art.41 C.O.

15. Personal business.

16. Adoption of the Acts of Synod.

17. Adoption of the press report.

18. Discipline after Art.43 C.O.

19. Closing.

Article 9.

ADJOURNMENT

Psalm 111:2 is sung and the president leads in prayer and adjourns Synod till Monday, November 3rd, the Lord willing.

Morning session on Monday, November 3, 1975.

Article 10.

OPENING

The Synod is reopened in Dutch. Psalm 25:2 is sung and the president leads in prayer, after which he reads I Timothy 1:1-20.

Article 11.

CORRESPONDENCE

The letter from Rev.G.VanRongen (cf. Art.7-4) will be answered.

Article 12.

REPORT ALBANY (cf. Art.5)

The Church of Albany will be requested to submit the written report during the Synod.

Article 13.

PRESS RELEASE

The Press Release will be adopted at the end of each session.

Article 14.

ACTS

The Acts will be adopted at the beginning of the morning session.

Article 15.

LETTER CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

The letter from the Committee for correspondence with Churches abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches will be answered by our deputies for correspondence.

Article 16.

LANGUAGE OF SYNOD

The proposal of Launceston re language is amended and adopted as follows :

"Synod decides to use in its meetings as much as possible the English language".

Article 17.

ADMISSION NON-DELEGATED ELDERS

Synod decides to add to the Rules for Synod meetings (1956, Art. 7-4) the following :

c. "Synod also has the right to admit elders, on their request , to its closed sessions".

Article 18.

LANGUAGE OF ACTS

The Proposal,

"The Acts will be adopted in the English language, while an unauthorized Dutch translation will also be published" is adopted.

Article 19.

NUMBER OF DELEGATES

The proposal of Launceston is amended and adopted and reads,

"The number of delegates will be increased from two to three until such time as the number of congregations exceeds four".

Article 20.

ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 1-9 are adopted.

Article 21.

WORKING METHOD

It is decided that the delegates will study the appeals re baptism of adopted children before a decision, concerning the working method of the proposal of Armadale re baptism adopted children, will be adopted.

Article 22.

LETTER REV.G.VANRONGEN RE LIBRARIAN CALVIN SEMINARY

The proposal of the Librarian of Calvin Seminary to exchange Acts of Synod with the Acts of the Synods of the Christian Reformed Church is adopted. The keeper of the archives is instructed to send all copies of previous Acts which are available and to attempt to receive copies of previous Acts of the Christian Reformed Church.

Rev.G.VanRongen will be answered concerning this matter in the letter which will be sent to him (cf. Art.11).

Article 23.

DEPARTURE REV.G.VANRONGEN

Rev.J.D.Wielenga reports orally that Rev.G.VanRongen has been properly released by our Churches according to Art.10 C.O. The Church of Albany will be asked for a written report.

Afternoon session on Monday, November 3, 1975.

Article 24. TRANSLATION OF THE RULES FOR CHURCH VISITATION

At the request of Launceston, in their instruction, it is decided to appoint deputies with the instruction to translate and revise (if and where necessary) the "Regeling voor de Kerkvisitatie" and to report to the next Synod.

Article 25. CHURCH ORDER, RULES FOR SYNOD MEETINGS

It is decided to grant the request of Launceston, in their instruction, which reads :

"To request Synod to appoint deputies with the instruction to revise the Church Order and to propose a definite text in English to the next Synod".

Instructions will be given to the deputies.

Synod decides to appoint deputies to translate and revise (where necessary) the "Huishoudelijke regeling voor de Synodes".
(cf. Acts 1956, Art.7).

Article 26. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for the reports of Church visitation.

Article 27. PRESS RELEASE

After reopening the Press release, Artt. 1-16, is adopted.

Article 28. BOOKS OF TREASURER

The report of the Church of Launceston, stating that the books of the Treasurer are found in order, is accepted.

Article 29. TREASURER

The report of the Synodical Treasurer and an additional letter are accepted and the Deputies are discharged.

Evening session on Monday, November 3, 1975.

Article 30. REOPENING

The president reopens the meeting and requests the singing of Psalm 84 : 3, which takes place.

Article 31. PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE ATTESTATIONS

Synod decides that the proposal of Armadale re attestations is admissible.

Article 32. ATTESTATIONS

The proposal of Armadale is discussed.

Article 33. WORKING METHOD

It is decided to deal on Tuesday evening with the items on the agenda :

- 9 k. Report from the deputies for an English version of the Bible.

- 9 l. Report from the deputies for a Church Book in the English language.

Article 34. CLOSING OF MEETING

Rev. A. H. Dekker reads John 16:12-16 and leads in prayer, after which the president closes the meeting.

Morning session on Tuesday, November 4, 1975.

Article 35. REOPENING

Synod is reopened, Psalm 86:6 is sung. The president leads in prayer, reads I Timothy 4:1-16 and welcomes the delegates.

Article 36. ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 10-34, are adopted.

Article 37. PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE ATTESTATIONS

The discussions on this matter is continued.

Article 38. ADJOURNMENT

Synod adjourns.

Afternoon session on Tuesday, November 4, 1975.

Article 39. WORKING METHOD

Synod is reopened and it is decided that 3 proposals re attestations will be multiplied for study by the delegates.

Article 40. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for discussion of Church visitation reports.

Article 41. WORKING METHOD

Synod goes into open session and it is decided to deal with the proposal of Armadale re baptism of adopted children on Wednesday evening.

Article 42. ADJOURNMENT
Synod adjourns.

Evening session on Tuesday, November 4, 1975.

Article 43. REOPENING

The president reopens Synod and Psalm 97:6 is sung.

Article 44. CHURCH BOOK IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

After discussion it is decided,

- a. "to counsel the Churches to be alert in evaluation of the Psalms in the Book of Praise and in limitation of the use of its Hymns in the light of the decisions taken by Synod 1972.
- b. to encourage production, assesment and publication of Bible songs, suitable for use in Reformed worship.
- c. to discharge deputies appointed by Synod 1972.
- d. to appoint new deputies with the mandate to continue efforts aimed at achieving a Scripturally based Church Book and at re-assessment of the 62 Hymns incorporated in the Book of Praise 1971.
- e. to request the Churches to examine and try out the 6 BibleSongs, which have been published by the deputies in Una Sancta, Vol. XXII, 11-12".

Article 45. ENGLISH BIBLE

The report re English Bible is discussed.

Article 46. WORKING METHOD

The president announces that on Wednesday evening the matter of baptism adopted children will be dealt with.

Article 47. PRESS RELEASE

The Press Release, Artt. 17-21, is accepted.

Article 48. CLOSING

Psalm 89.1 is sung, Rev. J.D. Wielenga leads in prayer and the president closes the meeting.

Morning session on Wednesday, November 5, 1975

Article 49. REOPENING

The president reopens the meeting, requests the singing of Psalm 119:53 and leads in prayer. He then reads I Timothy 5:17 - 6:2 and welcomes the delegates.

Article 50. ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 35-48, are adopted.

Article 51. REPORTS OF ALBANY

The president announces that the reports of Albany re Rev. A.H. Dekker (Art. 12) and Rev. G. VanRongen (Art. 23) have been received.

Article 52. ENGLISH BIBLE

After discussion the following proposal is adopted :

"Synod, having discussed the Report re English Bible, decides :

1. To reject the New International Version (N.I.V.) on the ground that the dynamic equivalent method of translation does not do full justice to the inscripturated, inspired Word of God.
2. To reject the K.J.V. II on the ground of several weaknesses, indicated in the report.
3. To discharge the deputies.
4. To counsel the Churches to be alert as regards the possible use of new translations by members of the congregations.
5. To appoint new deputies with the following mandate,
 - a. To study fully the New American Standard Bible (N.A.S.B.) and the Revised Standard Version (R.S.V.), taking into account the many objections expressed against the R.S.V. over the last years.
 - b. To compare them with each other and with the Authorized Version (A.V. or K.J.V.) in order to find which translation is to be preferred.
 - c. To report to the next Synod".

Article 53. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CHURCH KEEPING THE ARCHIVES

The proposal of Armadale is amended and adopted and reads :

1. "The Church Council of the Church, keeping the Archives, is in charge of the Archives of Synod.
2. The Church Council will appoint an archivist.
3. The archivist reports to the Church Council concerning the condition of the Archives, contents, who has received or seen items and which items have been involved.

4. The Church Council reports to Synod.
5. The archivist will carefully record everything, using files which will be placed in the filing cabinet, taking care that everything is clearly catalogued.
6. Only with permission of the Church Council is he authorized to lend or to give for perusal items from the general Archives.
7. Items from the secret Archives can only be lend or given for perusal, after 2 Churches, or Synod, have given permission.
8. The borrowing time is limited to 3 months. The receiver will sign a document which contains :
 - a. name of the item or items received,
 - b. date of borrowing,
 - c. signature,
 - d. date of return.

This signed document will take the place of the borrowed item until it is returned and will further be used by the archivist for his report".

Article 54. REPORT RE ARCHIVES

The report of the Church of Albany re Archives is read.

Article 55. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session.

Article 56. LIBRARY

Synod goes into open session and the president announces that the copies of Una Sancta, which are in the Archives, will be transferred to a Library in which also the Acts of the Christian Reformed Church will be kept.

Article 57. SPIRITUAL SUPPORT OF CHURCH MEMBERS IN MILITARY SERVICE

The report of the Church of Launceston is accepted.

Article 58. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session in order to deal with the reports concerning the work among the "scattered" brothers and sisters.

Article 59. ADJOURNMENT

After Synod has gone into open session the meeting is adjourned.
 Afternoon session on Wednesday, November 5, 1975.

Article 60. "SCATTERED MEMBERS"

Synod goes into open session after having dealt with the report re "scattered members".

Article 61. ATTESTATIONS

The three proposals (cf. Art.39) are discussed and voting takes place. Two proposals are rejected, while the third, reading,

"Synod rescinds the decision re the churches outside the Confederation in the Netherlands-Acts 1972, art.42, 3rd paragraph."

Synod does not deem it desirable or necessary to give a general decision regulating exceptional cases in which a church council, not without the advice of the neighbouring church, considers that it is proper before the Lord and His congregation to deviate from the general rule that only the members of the congregation or members of the sisterchurches with a valid attestation will be admitted to the Lord's Supper.

Synod decides that in those situations in which applications to partake of the Lord's Supper are received from members of churches, which in their own countries in confession, church polity and practice take position opposite to churches corresponding with The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, such applications will not be accepted".

Is adopted.

Article 62. REPORT OF DEPUTIES FOR CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT

It is orally reported that no written report was tabled because no correspondence took place.

Article 63. REPORT FROM DEPUTIES FOR THE TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

The proposal for the Rules re eligibility and examination of candidates is adopted without discussion of the contents, on the ground that the three churches have already agreed to it.

Rev.A.H.Dekker requests to have it recorded in the Acts that he voted against this decision on the following grounds,

1. He believes that it is not in accordance with the Church Order that proposals made by deputies, appointed by a Synod, should be accepted by Synod on the sole ground that the Church Councils have agreed to these proposals.
2. He has objections against parts of the contents of the proposal because he believes that they conflict with the Church Order.

This request is granted.

Article 64. FINANCIAL REPORT RE TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

The report is accepted. Synod decides to set the quota for 1975-1976 on \$ 1500 with the same percentages for the Churches as will apply for the cost of Synod.

Synod does not see the need to accept the suggestion of deputies to approach the Synods of sisterchurches in connection with the examination of candidates.

Article 65. REPORT OF DEPUTIES AD ART. 49 C.O.

There is no report tabled.

Article 66. REPORT OF ALBANY CONCERNING THE MISSION

After discussion the following proposal,

"Synod accepts the Mission Report of Albany, expresses its appreciation and thankfulness for the work done by the Workgroup and encourages the brothers and sisters to go on with this work in the strength of the Lord".

Is adopted.

Article 67. REPORT OF ARMADALE CONCERNING THE MISSION

After discussion, Synod decides to appoint Deputies with the following mandate,

1. "To compile a study course for the full-time mission worker.
2. To make a regulation for the guidance of the study of the mission worker and a regulation for the examination of the mission worker.
3. To propose the course and the regulations to the Church Councils before July 1, 1976".

Article 68. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for discussion of some aspects of the Mission work.

Article 69. MISSION ARMADALE

After having gone into open session the following proposal is adopted :

"Synod accepts the Mission Report of Armadale, discharges the Church for the Mission, expresses its appreciation and thankfulness for the work done by the Workgroup and encourages the brothers and sisters to go on with this work in the strength of the Lord".

Article 70. ADJOURNMENT

Synod adjourns.

Evening session on Wednesday, November 5, 1975

Article 71.

REOPENING

The session is opened by the president and Psalm 89:7 is sung.

Article 72. PROPOSAL ARMADALE RE BAPTISM ADOPTED CHILDREN

The proposal of Armadale, with the report of the Church Council and two appeals against it, is discussed. Synod decides to appoint a committee, consisting of Rev. J.D. Wielenga and Elder H. Terpstra, which will formulate the decisions and propose an answer to the appellants.

Article 73. REPORT RE CORRESPONDENCE WITH FOREIGN SISTER CHURCHES

The report is discussed and a letter, dated October 20, 1975, from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, in which they respond favourably to our previous attempts to seek correspondence, is tabled.

The discussion continues.

Article 74. CLOSING

Psalm 105:1 is sung, Rev. A.H. Dekker leads in prayer and the president closes the meeting.

Morning session on Thursday, November 6, 1975.

Article 75. REOPENING

The president opens the meeting, Psalm 139:14 is sung and the president leads in prayer. Afterwards he reads Titus 1:1-16 and welcomes the delegates.

Article 76. ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 49-74, are adopted.

Article 77. PRESS RELEASE

The Press Release, Artt. 22-34, is adopted.

Article 78. FOREIGN SISTER CHURCHES

After discussion it is decided to accept the correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Korea in principle. A draft of a decision will be prepared.

The following proposal,

"Synod accepts the Report re Correspondence with Foreign Sister Churches, discharges the deputies and decides to appoint new deputies".
Is adopted.

Article 79. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session.

Afternoon session on Thursday, November 6, 1975.

Article 80. REOPENING

Synod goes into open session after having rejected the appeal of D.B.

Article 81. REPORT OF DEPUTIES RE "PRETORIA"

The report is discussed and the proposal,

"Synod confirms the decision of Synod 1972 that the Vrije Gereformeerde Kerk of Pretoria (chairman Dr.C.VanderWaal) cannot be recognized as sister-church, because the condition "as long as named divorce theories are not rejected as unscriptural by the church council" has not been met".

Is adopted.

Synod decides to discharge the Committee "Pretoria".

Article 82. FOREIGN SISTER CHURCHES - KOREA

The following proposal is adopted :

"Synod, observing that

1. a letter from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, dated October 20, 1975, responding to our previous requests for correspondence was received in gratitude ;
2. the investigations into the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Acts 1968, Art.19) by deputies appointed in 1968 could not be finalized;
3. meanwhile, informal contacts with the Presbyterian church of Korea have fruitfully developed;
4. the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland have decided (Amersfoort - West, 1967) to enter into full correspondence with these churches and that such correspondence has developed strongly ;

decides,

1. to enter in principle into full correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Korea as sister churches;
2. to charge deputies for correspondence with foreign sister churches with the drafting of rules for such correspondence on the basis of rules applying for correspondence with the Dutch churches; and
3. to submit the draft rules to the churches for their consideration six months prior to the convening of next Synod".

Article 83. ADJOURNMENT

Synod adjourns.

Evening session on Thursday, November 6, 1975.

Article 84. OPENING

Psalms 122:1 is sung and the president opens the meeting.

Article 85. REPORT RE PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCH

The proposal of the Church Council of Armadale,
 "to arrange a meeting with representatives from both Church groups, and to appoint a special committee to prepare such a meeting"

is adopted.

It is also decided that Synod will write a letter to these Churches concerning this meeting.

Article 86. COSTS OF SYNOD

The costs of Synod are divided as follows :

The Church of Albany	20%
The Church of Armadale	60%
The Church of Launceston	20%

Article 87. PRESS RELEASE

The Press Release, Artt. 35-39, is adopted.

Article 88. NEXT SYNOD

It is decided that the church of launceston will convene the next Synod, and the last week of October 1977 is established as the date.

Article 89. CLOSING

Psalms 122:3 is sung, Elder H. Terpstra leads in prayer and the president closes the session.

Morning session on Friday, November 7, 1975.

Article 90. REOPENING

Psalm 138:3 is sung. The president leads in prayer, reads Titus 3 : 1-15 and welcomes the delegates.

Article 91. ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 75-89, are adopted.

Article 92. BAPTISM OF ADOPTED CHILDREN

After discussion the following proposal is adopted :

"Synod,

having read the proposal of the Church of Armadale, regarding the baptism of adopted children;

having discussed the paper, which accompanied this proposal and the objections, which were tabled against the decision and proposal of Armadale;

considering, that Holy Scripture

1. in Genesis 17, the institution of the sign and seal of the covenant, clearly teaches that circumcision was not only for Abraham and his children (in verse 12 are especially mentioned those "which are not of thy seed");
2. that this institution of the circumcision was to be kept throughout their generations;
3. that all those, who belonged to the household of Abraham, were partakers of the promises and demands of the covenant (Genesis 17:14 ; 18:19 ; 35:2 ; Exodus 12:44).
4. that in the Old Testament Abraham and his household were separated from the world, as a circumcised community, as was later on the Old Testament Church, Israel ;
5. that in the New Testament the believing parents with all, who belong to them, (with their children) are in connection with the Church, separated from the world as a baptized community , because baptism came in the place of circumcision;

decides

that children, adopted by believing parents, on the ground of Genesis 17, should be baptised.

The answers to the appeals of Sr. C.L. of A. and Br.G.W. of A. are adopted.

Article 93. PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCH

The draft of the letter to the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Reformed Church is amended and adopted.

Synod decides that it will be included in the printed Acts as an Appendix.

Article 94. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session.

Article 95. ART. 41 C.O.

After having been in closed session for discussion of matters ad Art.41 C.O., it is established that there is nothing for this item of the agenda for the open session.

Article 96. ADJOURNMENT

Synod adjourns.

Afternoon session of Friday, November 7, 1975.

Article 97. APPOINTMENTS DEPUTIES AND FORMULATION OF INSTRUCTIONS

The following deputies are appointed :

1. For keeping the Archives of Synod: the Church of Armadale.
Instructions : As in Acts, Art.53.
2. For supervision of the Archives of Synod : the Church of Albany.
Instructions : To report to next Synod.
3. Synod Treasurer : Br.J.Kroeze, 22 Pomona Road, Riverside, Launceston, Tas. 7250.
Secundus : Br.F.Streefland of Launceston.
Instructions :
 1. to table a written report at the next Synod .
 2. to provide the Churches with an outline of receipts and expenditures, as soon as possible.
 3. to have his books and documents audited by the Church of Launceston, which shall report to the next Synod.
4. Deputies ad Artt. 49 and 79 C.O. : the ministers and the Brs.
J.A.Diek of Albany.
H.Terpstra of Armadale.
J.Hamelink of Launceston.
5. Deputies for Correspondence with Foreign Sister Churches :
Rev.K.Bruning, Br.H.Terpstra, Br.J.Zuidema of Armadale. (Convener : Rev.K.Bruning).
Instructions :
 1. to bring to the attention of the Churches those items from the correspondence with the foreign sister Churches which are of importance to the Churches of Australia;
 2. to forward copies of the Acts of this Synod to the foreign sister Churches;
 3. to inform the foreign sister-churches of the place and the time of the next Synod, and to

send the preliminary agenda to them at least six weeks prior to the commencement of that Synod;

4. to carry out the decisions regarding the Presbyterian Church of Korea. (Acts, Art. 82);
 5. to be diligent in seeking contact with those churches which are faithful to the Scriptures, and to see if we can enter into correspondence with them;
 6. to inform the Churches as soon as an invitation or announcement of a coming Synod of one of the sister Churches comes in, so that the Churches may determine if one of the office bearers is able to represent our Churches there;
 7. to report to the Churches three months before next Synod and also to the Synod itself.
6. Deputies for correspondence with the government :
The chairman and secretary of every congregation.
(Convener : Rev. A. H. Dekker).
7. Deputies for a Church Book in the English language :
Rev. A. H. Dekker, Br. G. Groenewold, Br. J. VanderRos of Launceston.
(Convener : Br. J. VanderRos).
Instructions : 1. As stated in Art. 44d;
2. to serve the Churches in the publication of the 6 Bible songs.
8. Deputies for the English Bible translation : the ministers.
(Convener : Rev. J. D. Wielenga).
Instructions : As stated in Art. 52-5.
9. Deputies for the training for the Ministry of the Word :
Rev. A. H. Dekker, Br. G. Numan, Br. K. Salomons of Launceston.
(Convener : Rev. A. H. Dekker).
Instructions : 1. to continue the fund for support to students after the rules of Art. 19 C.O.
2. to execute the decision of Synod, Art. 64.
3. to have the books and documents audited by the Church of Launceston which shall report to the next Synod.
10. Deputies for correspondence with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia : the ministers.
(Convener : Rev. A. H. Dekker).
Instructions : 1. to execute the decision of Art. 85;
2. to continue the contact with this Church and to report to the Churches.
11. Church for the Mission : the Church of Armadale.
Instructions : 1. to act as address Church;
2. to carry out the mission mandate in accordance with the Accord of Co-operation.

12. Deputies re study Mission worker :
Rev.K.Bruning and Rev.J.D.Wielenga.
(Convener : Rev.K.Bruning).
Instructions : As stated in Art.67.
13. Deputies for Church visitation : the ministers.
For each oral visitation the Church Council appoints one elder,
who will be regarded as having been appointed by Synod.
14. Deputies for Translation and Revision of the Church Order, the
Rules for Church visitation and the Rules for Synod meetings :
Rev.A.H.Dekker and Br.S.Reitsema of Launceston.
Rev.J.D.Wielenga and Br.J.Plug of Albany.
(Convener : Rev.A.H.Dekker).
Instructions : to execute the decisions of Artt.24-25.
15. Church for the Library : the Church of Armadale.
Librarian : Br.H.Terpstra (cf. Art.56).

Article 98. PERSONAL BUSINESS

A question is asked re format and quantity of the Acts.

Article 99. INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEPUTIES

Multiple copies of all reports are to be made and sent to the Churches in English (if possible also in Dutch), at least three months before the start of the next Synod, unless otherwise stipulated in the instructions to the deputies.

Article 100. CHURCH VISITATION REPORTS

Church visitation reports have to be sent first to the Church involved, and after agreement with the contents by this Church, to the other Churches.

Article 101. CREDENTIALS

A question concerning the examination of the credentials is asked and answered.

Article 102. ART. 43 C.O.

There is no business ad Art. 43 C.O.

Article 103. CLOSED SESSION

Synod goes into closed session for the adoption of the minutes.

Evening session on Friday, November 7, 1975.

Article 104. REOPENING

Psalm 138:4 is sung and the president opens the meeting.

Article 105. MINUTES OF CLOSED SESSION

The minutes of the closed session are signed.

Article 106. ACTS

The Acts, Artt. 90-106, are adopted.

Article 107. PRESS RELEASE

The Press Release, Artt. 40-50, is adopted.

It is decided to send the Press Release to the following publications:

Una Sancta (Australia).

Clarion (Canada).

Shield and Sword (Canada).

Nederlands Dagblad (The Netherlands).

Article 108. INTERVAL

Synod takes an interval in order that the delegates and the visitors can drink their coffee.

Article 109. WORD OF APPRECIATION

The assessor takes the chair and thanks the president for the patient way in which he has led the Synod. He remarks that the president, in the beginning of Synod, stated his intention to bring this Synod as quickly as possible to a good conclusion and that he indeed has succeeded in this. He then gives the president the opportunity to give his final address.

Article 110. FINAL ADDRESS

The president addresses the meeting as follows :

"Brothers and Sisters,

At the closing hour of the tenth Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, we have strong reasons to express our thankfulness to the Lord, our God.

The delegates of the congregations have been able to deal with the whole agenda and to finish all the items.

It must be said that some items did not receive the amount of attention and discussion, which they deserved. However, we remember the Word of the Lord that says that there is no end of making books; and that much study is a weariness of the flesh.

The delegates have experienced this in more than one session.

Yet, we should be thankful that the task given by the churches could be performed.

After the closing the Synod will not exist anymore. What to say about the results and the decisions which were taken? It is certainly true that the deliberations and decisions will have a noticeable influence on the churches, if the churches and their councils recognize this Synodical work as done in the Name of God and for the sake of His coming kingdom. If we would say: it is only a Synod which was together and took decisions, then we have already abandoned to the waves the blessings and privileges of the bond of churches.

It is not my opinion that the churches should accept all the synodical words and works automatically and in an uncritical way. I do say that we must approach the results of this Synod in good earnest, considering that this Synod was an assembly to which the guidance of the Holy Spirit by the Word was promised; and also considering that our churches have been blessed by God in this way that they possess, and have in use, a confession and a church order, which in this broken world of disunity and confusion, have this single aim: the supremacy of the Word of God alone!

The Synod took decisions concerning the baptism of adopted children, attestations, mission work, relationship with foreign churches, contacts with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia, appeals, translation of the Bible, church visitation, etc. Some of them may ask of us strong study of the Word of God, others may ask of us self-denial and respect for the opinion of other people. Some items need our special prayers, others ask of us to be active and sacrifice our material prosperity. We must fervently hope that the churches and the brothers and sisters will take earnest notice of the Acts. The Synod will belong to the past, but we need the brothers and sisters of the congregations to act and react in such a manner that the fruits may come, the good decision will find their way into the churches, and that the work will be done as far as it is clearly wanted by the Lord. We also hope that the church councils will see their responsibility to bring the result of the Synod into the congregation. A simple step in this direction is already to promote the sale and study of the Acts.

We pray for the Lord's blessings on the work that was finished by this Synod.

At this point we fully realize the very restricted capacities, wisdom and influence we, human creatures, have.

It is therefore our hope, wish and prayer that the Lord may use for His cause all that was good in the task which has been completed. It is also our prayer and faith that He may forgive us all that was wrong and incomplete. When we consider these two points, we understand more and more that we need more grace than we deserve reward; yes, that we must seek our refuge in the words

of David in Psalm 138 :

"the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me:
thy mercy, o Lord, endureth forever;
forsake not the works of Thine own hands".

Really, this is our comfort, hope and confession: the Lord will not forsake His own work. The good results of this Synod have come from Him. Don't overlook or disdain them. The fruits of this Synod will grow and ripen by Him whose will it is not to forsake His own work. There is no room for glory. All that we need is grace and trust that God will perfect His cause. That is so because it is the Church of Jesus Christ, the Lord, who bought her by His own blood.

Let all of us be loyal and faithful and treat His gifts (also the bond of churches) carefully and in a pious way.

I am thankful for the co-operation between the delegates of the Synod. Debate and discussion were sometimes lively and heated. But the foundation was the same faith in Christ and the same love for His church. May the Lord guide you on the way home; and bless you in the responsible task, to be office-bearer in His congregation, that the gospel may be preached without hindrance; and the purity of doctrine may be preserved; that the sacraments may be properly used; and the church discipline may be maintained with a christian and Scriptural zeal.

And in all these blessings we pray and expect that Jesus Christ may come with haste".

Then he reads Psalm 138:1-8.

Article 111. CLOSING OF SYNOD

The assessor vacates the chair and hands the gavel back to the president. Elder J. VanderRos requests to sing from the same Psalm wherewith the first Synod was opened in 1954. Psalm 115:6,7 and 8 is sung. Br. J. VanderRos leads in prayer and the president, Rev. K. Bruning closes the Synod.

A. H. Dekker
First Clerk of Synod.

APPENDIX

To the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia.
c/o Rev.D.C.Shelton
Newley Street
Everton Park, 4053.

Esteemed Brethren,

Greetings in the Name of the Lord!

As Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, meeting in Albany, W.A., 1 to 7 November 1975, we discussed the report from the Church of Armadale concerning "contact with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia".

As it was apparent that the method followed in our correspondence was rather cumbersome and ineffective for the purpose of getting to know each other as truly Reformed Churches of our Lord, we have considered ways and means to improve the situation.

Our proposal is to try and arrange a meeting of representatives of our respective churches. The purpose of such a meeting should be to learn from each other where we stand in this country in the struggle for the faith once for all delivered to the saints; where mutual help may be given; and how future relations may be best expressed to the honour of the King of the Church.

We trust that you will view this proposal favourably during your next Presbytery meeting.

We have empowered a small committee to make arrangements for a meeting should you concur with our proposal. It consists of Rev.K.Bruning of Armadale, W.A.; Rev.J.D.Wielenga of Albany, W.A. and Rev.A.H.Dekker of Launceston, Tas., (Convener).

Correspondence is to be addressed to Rev.A.H.Dekker, 1 Robin Street, Launceston, Tas., 7250.

Our three Church Councils are being asked to submit agenda items for the proposed meeting to the committee.

We suggest that your Presbytery may take similar action.

Brethren, it is our prayer that God will bless this new initiative and that He make it subservient to the gathering and preservation of His Church.

Yours in the grace of the Lord,

On behalf of Synod Albany 1975:
Chairman : Rev.K.Bruning.
2nd Clerk : H.Terpstra.

c.c. to Rev.R.Kennely
Wagga Wagga, N.S.W.