
MORNING SESSION
Monday, 21 June 2021

Article 73 - Reopening

Br B Veenendaal reads Ephesians 2:11-22 and leads in prayer. He invites all present to stand and sing Psalm 103:4 & 9. The chairman reopens the meeting with all delegates present.

Article 74 - Alternate

Br W Visser takes the place of Br H Ballast as alternate. The chairman asks Br W Visser to rise to indicate his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity. Br W Visser rises.

He is appointed to Committee 4.

Article 75 - Synod Administrative Assistant

Due to unforeseen circumstances Sr K van Duyn was unable to arrive at Synod. By way of special resolution Br B de Vos, is appointed to fill in until she returns. She arrives at 10.00am.

Article 76 - Study of Material

Opportunity is given for delegates to study committee proposals.

Article 77- Proposal regarding the format of the Acts of Synod

Several rounds of discussion are held regarding whether or not all proposals and amendments are included in the Acts.

It is agreed that synod will take the approach used in the Acts from 2018, and so will only include all final proposals, whether adopted or defeated.

Article 78 - Appeals of Synod Bunbury 2018 Articles 76, 77 and 78

A number of rounds of discussion are held on the Advisory Committee's proposals in relation to the appeals against Synod 2018 decisions in Articles 76, 77 and 78.

Article 79 - Committee work

Synod breaks for committee work.

AFTERNOON SESSION**Monday, 21 June 2021**

Article 80 - Appeals of Synod Bunbury 2018 Articles 76, 77 and 78

A number of rounds of discussion are held on the Advisory Committee's proposals in relation to the Appeals of Synod Bunbury 2018 Articles 76, 77 and 78.

Article 81 - Overture on Additional Hymns**I. Material**

Item 8.c.2 – Letter from FRC Darling Downs – FRC Darling Downs requests synod to judge that Synod Bunbury 2018 erred in approving additional hymns without interacting with their concerns about increasing the number of hymns.

II. Admissibility

The letter is deemed admissible.

III. Decision

1. To judge that Synod Bunbury 2018 did not err in approving additional hymns without expressly interacting with the overture of FRC Darling Downs.
2. To note the concerns of FRC Darling Downs with reference to increasing the number of hymns, and to affirm the importance of the singing of Psalms in the worship services.

Grounds

1. The overture of Darling Downs to Synod Bunbury 2018 was listed in the Material of Article 60 (Acts of Synod, 2018). Synod Bunbury 2018 Article 16 decided that, 'under the heading Material, the Acts shall also summarise the material considered'. By recording a summary of the overtures from the churches, Synod asserts that any concerns raised, or feedback provided, by the churches was considered in its overall decision-making process.
2. FRC Darling Downs does not substantiate their claim with any new grounds (Art 33 CO).

ADOPTED**Article 82 - Committee work**

Synod breaks for committee work.

EVENING SESSION**Monday, 21 June 2021**

Article 83 - Reopening

The chairman invites all present to stand and sing Psalm 92:1. For the benefit of the audience, he explains what has been achieved during the sessions today.

Article 84 - Acts of Synod

Articles 39-52 of the Acts are adopted with minor changes.

Articles 53-72 of the Acts are adopted with minor changes.

Article 85 - Appeals of Synod Bunbury 2018 Articles 76, 77 and 78**I. Material**

Item 8.b.1 – Appeal from FRC Mt Nasura – FRC Mt Nasura appeals articles 76-78 of Synod Bunbury 2018. Mt Nasura argues that Synod Bunbury 2018 erred in declaring inadmissible three individual appeals regarding our sister-church relationship with the RCNZ.

Item 8.c.1 – Appeal from FRC Darling Downs – FRC Darling Downs appeals articles 76-78 of Synod Bunbury 2018. Darling Downs argues that Synod Bunbury 2018 erred in declaring inadmissible three individual appeals regarding our sister-church relationship with the RCNZ.

Item 8.d.1 – Appeal from FRC Armadale – FRC Armadale appeals articles 76-78 of Synod Bunbury 2018. Armadale argues that Synod Bunbury 2018 erred in declaring inadmissible three individual appeals regarding our sister-church relationship with the RCNZ.

Item 10.a.2 – Letter from Classis Central May 8 and 14 2020. This classis informs Synod Albany 2021 of a decision made to grant the appeal of br and sr W Amoraal against a decision of the consistory of FRC Armadale to accept articles 76-78 of Synod Bunbury 2018.

II. Admissibility

All the items are declared admissible.

III. Decision

1. To take note of the letter from Classis Central May 8 and 14 2020.
2. To deny the appeals of FRC Mt Nasura, FRC Darling Downs, and FRC Armadale.
3. To acknowledge that varying interpretations of our Church Order regarding the individual's right to appeal to synods exist in our churches. Synod thus decides to ask the churches to bring a proposal to change the Church Order to the next synod in the church orderly way if they hold that an individual should have the right to appeal to synod directly regarding matters of the churches in common.

Grounds

1. A synod is not a permanent legal body, but rather a deliberative assembly which only exists when it is meeting. Therefore, while precedent may have some value, it is not binding upon synods. Synod Bunbury 2018 was thus correct to state that "admissibility must be governed by reference to the Church Order, not historical precedent."
2. Our Church Order does not grant the right of appeal to any and every member of an FRCA congregation with respect to any and every synod decision, nor does it grant a right to request revision of such decisions.

3. Individuals are not members of the FRCA federation, but rather members of local FRCA congregations. An individual's right to appeal (Article 31, Church Order) exists first within that local context.
4. Article 31, Church Order not only grants a right of appeal to individuals who have "been wronged by the decision of a minor assembly," it also describes the general process individuals are to follow, which is appealing from minor assembly to major assembly. For an individual the minor assembly is his consistory – this is where the individual must begin the appeal process. Therefore, Synod Bunbury 2018 was correct to judge that "individuals who wish to interact with decisions of Synod should begin by addressing their consistories. The local consistory, if they concur with the concerns may direct an appeal to synod. If the local consistory does not take over the individual's appeal, he can appeal the local consistory's decision to classis and thus begin the appeal process in accordance with article 31 of the Church Order."
5. Contrary to Mt Nasura's statement, minor assemblies do at times deal with inter-church relationships, particularly as these matters proceed to discussion at synod via the church orderly way.
6. Contrary to Armadale's assertion, the procedure stated by Synod 2018 does not unjustifiably complicate or deny efforts of individuals to interact gainfully with synod decisions. Rather it serves both individuals and the churches by allowing such interactions to be scrutinised by consistories and classes before being submitted to a synod. This procedure can serve to highlight poorly formulated submissions so they can be rectified.
7. Historically, there have been varying interpretations regarding article 31, with Church Order commentators differing on whether an individual member has the right to appeal directly to a synod. While the position that was adopted by Synod Bunbury 2018 is not the only approach to the question, its decision was helpful in providing some clarity to the churches about the process of appealing. However, more clarity may be beneficial and that can only be provided by a well-considered proposal to change the Church Order.

ADOPTED**Article 86 - Adjournment**

Rev W Bredenhof reads 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 and leads in prayer. He invites all present to stand and sing Hymn 81:1, 2 and 7 and synod is adjourned.