

ACTS OF SYNOD 2008



***Free Reformed Churches
of North America***

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**ACTS OF SYNOD
of the
FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
In Session at Brantford, Ontario
June 2-6, 2008**

SESSION I: MONDAY JUNE 2, 2008

ARTICLE 1 - OPENING

Synod is opened with a worship service commencing at 7:30 p.m. Rev. L.W. Bilkes, pastor of the convening church of Grand Rapids, leads the service. He preaches from Revelation 3:8: "Behold I have set before thee an open door." His theme is: *Christ's Gift to a church of Little Strength.*

1. A Suitable Gift.
2. A Sovereign Gift.
3. A Stimulating Gift.

After the service and a recess for coffee, Rev. Bilkes calls the delegates to order at 9:20 p.m. We sing Psalter 427:3-4. He reads Revelation 3:7-13 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 2 – PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

The credentials are presented and found to be in good order. The roll call indicates that the following delegates have been sent by the churches:

Abbotsford	Rev. E. Moerdyk	Elder Bert Klein*
Bellevue	Rev. K. Gangar	Elder J. Ming
Bornholm	Rev. D. H. Kranendonk	Elder A. Pol
Brantford	Rev. C.A. Schouls	Elder R. Wikkerink
Calgary	Elder R. Pennings	Elder H. Slingerland*
Chatham	Elder P. Luth	Elder H. Zuidema
Chilliwack	Rev. H. Overduin	Elder J. VanMuyen
Dundas	Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Elder N. Koppelaar
Fenwick	Elder J. Coolen	Elder A. Groen
Grand Rapids	Dr. L.W. Bilkes	Elder H. Kleyn
Hamilton	Rev. G.R. Procee	Elder S. Kranendonk
Lacombe	Rev. J. Lewis	Elder H. Hopkins
Langley	Elder J. VanderZwan	Elder J. denDekker

London	Rev. H.A. Bergsma	Elder G. Flanigan
Mitchell	Rev. J. Overduin	Elder S. VanderHeide
Monarch	Rev. J. Schoeman	Elder E. Sluijmers
Pompton Plains	Elder D. Densel	Elder J. VanWyk Jr.
St. George	Rev. C. Pronk	Elder W. Droogendyk
St. Thomas	Rev. J. Koopman	Elder A. Pennings
Vineland	Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Elder M. Grin.

*Elders Klein and Slingerland are not present at the opening session of Synod but expect to arrive later in the week.

ARTICLE 3 – ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Synod being legally constituted, the officers of Synod are elected by open ballot.

The following brothers are elected as officers of synod:

President	Rev. J. Schoeman
Vice-President	Rev. J. Koopman
First Clerk	Rev. G.R. Procee
Second Clerk	Rev. D.H. Kranendonk.

The executive is seated and Rev. Schoeman thanks the delegates on behalf of the executive for the confidence expressed through the voting. He thanks Rev. Bilkes for leading the worship service and the Brantford consistory for the hosting arrangements.

ARTICLE 4 - AGREEMENT WITH THREE FORMS OF UNITY

Rev. Schoeman reads the Public Declaration of Agreement while the delegates stand to express their agreement.

After the brothers sing Psalter 371, he leads in a closing prayer. At 10:20 p.m., the meeting stands adjourned until 8:30 a.m..

SESSION II: TUESDAY JUNE 3, 2007

At 8:30 a.m., Rev. Schoeman calls the meeting to order. We sing Psalter 421:5. He reads II Corinthians 12:11-21. After prayer, he makes a few opening comments focused on II Corinthians 12:15, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." Paul was willing to expend great effort, spending whatever it takes even to the point of exhaustion, for the cause of the gospel. He did this gladly, even though he was not always appreciated and his ministry was challenged.

Pastor Schoeman welcomes all present, noting the presence of emeritus pastors Hamstra and VanEssen.

ARTICLE 5 – ROLL CALL

The roll is called with all present as the previous session, except for Elder A. Pennings from St. Thomas who is replaced by Elder A. Westerveld. Elder Westerveld stands to indicate his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 6 – APPOINTMENTS

The executive recommends the following appointments:

- a. As Assistant Clerk – Elder Ray Pennings

To appoint Elder Ray Pennings as assistant clerk to this synod.

Moved/seconded/carried

- b. As Advisors to Synod – Rev. G. Hamstra, Rev. H. VanEssen, Rev. L. Roth, Dr. G. M. Bilkes, Mr. J.D. Tamminga

To accept these brothers as advisors.

Moved/seconded/carried

- c. As Treasurer of Synod – Brother J.D. Tamminga

- d. To prepare the Press Release – Rev. L.J. Bilkes

- e. To prepare a report for the Messenger- Rev. E. Moerdyk

moved/seconded/carried

The following schedule is recommended for meeting times:

- i. 8:30 a.m. Opening
- ii. 10:30 coffee
- iii. 12:30 lunch
- iv. 1:30 afternoon
- v. 3:00 coffee
- vi. 5:30 dinner
- vii. 6:30 evening
- viii. 9:00 adjourn

ARTICLE 7 – ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion is made to adopt the agenda as presented.

The motion is amended to include an Overture from Vineland which has been submitted past the deadline.

Moved/seconded/carried

The agenda as amended is carried.

ARTICLE 8 – ADOPTION OF PUBLIC ACTS

A motion is made to adopt the 2008 Acts of Synod as published.

Notice is taken of errors on page 43 (Kim Hamstra is from St. George, not Brantford) and on page 121 (reference should be Synod 2007 instead of 2006).

Moved/seconded/carried

Various Business Arising from the Minutes items which otherwise are not covered on the agenda are followed up on.

p. 10 – The recommendation regarding publishing the Christian education paper in the Messenger has not yet been followed up on: the Youth and Education Committee undertakes to follow up.

p. 14 – Article 18 and p. 37 Article 53 – The matter of delegation to Synod and report templates have been dealt with informally on a “by request” basis but no formal report has been prepared. The Church Order subcommittee is assigned to follow up on these matters.

ARTICLE 9 – TORONTO APPEAL

Rev. Kranendonk as counsellor for Toronto provides an update on the situation in Toronto as background to consideration of this appeal. A discussion follows in which various questions for clarification and the merits of the appeal are considered.

Adjourn for coffee

A motion is made:

Synod, having heard the appeal from the Toronto congregation and having discussed this at its meeting, decides not to sustain the appeal for the following reasons:

1. According to the Acts of Synod of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken of 1893 and 1901, Article 38 of the Church Order applies to both existing and soon to be established congregations. The Free Reformed Churches have never altered this precedent and therefore it still holds.
2. Synod acknowledges “home mission situation” is unclear language and that it has not specified exactly what the procedure of becoming a

preaching station involves; however, this is a matter of the ways and means to be worked out between Hamilton and Toronto consistories and does not concern the essence of the decision.

3. The acts of the executive session of Synod 2007, during which the decision was made, reveal that there was an original motion to have the Toronto congregation continue as an independent congregation; however, this motion was amended, thus causing two printed motions to be circulated, to recognize the Toronto congregation as a preaching station.

Synod encourages the Toronto congregation to become a preaching station of the Hamilton congregation and requests the Hamilton consistory together with Rev. Kranendonk to provide pastoral assistance in facilitating this transition, with the hope that God's word may continue to be ministered in the Toronto congregation, sinners saved, and God's people there edified.

Synod instructs the executive of the Synod to meet with the brothers of the Toronto consistory during the week of its synodical meetings.

Moved/seconded/carried

Pastor Koopman leads in prayer for the Toronto church.

ARTICLE 10 – HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Pastor Lewis introduces the report. The proposals in the committee's report regarding ministry among the South Asians in the lower mainland of British Columbia and in Toronto provide an open door of opportunity for our denomination. Various items of clarification on the report are provided. The committee is urged to be proactive in recommending these causes to the churches for collections and prayer.

Rev. Gangar addresses the meeting and outlines the work he has been involved with. Given that he left India when he was nine years old, providing a radio broadcast in the Punjabi language is a real challenge for him. He is in the process of preparing a series of 18 messages focused on the creation, the fall, the Godhead, the person and work of Christ, and the application of redemption. There is additional promotional work being done, also in cooperation with other Reformed churches in the Fraser Valley. The resources, both print and audio, are being posted on the internet.

Rev. L.J. Bilkes, as convenor of sub-committee for Toronto outreach, reports on those aspects of the committee's work. There have been good discussions held with the St. George consistory, Rev. Zekveld, and the United Reformed Church of Wyoming, ON regarding the work. The work is slow but there is a clear vision and progress.

The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

1. To approve sending Candidate Keuning to Toronto on a part time basis, with the understanding that this will become full time starting July 2009,

and to cover the expenses associated with this as outlined in the attached financial report.

Moved/seconded/carried

2. To approve the work proposal for Candidate Keuning as appended to this report

Moved/seconded/carried

3. To approve the continued funding of the Asian ministry of Rev. K. Gangar with its corresponding financial requirements.

Moved/seconded/carried

4. To approve the proposal regarding the Asian Ministry as appended to this report

Moved/seconded/carried

5. To approve the appointment of Rev. L.J. Bilkes for another 3 year term, Rev. E. Moerdyk, for a 3 year term, Mr. Bert Marskamp Dundas (replacing Treasurer Jack Hoek) for a 3 year term and Mr. Bill Droogendyk St. George from PFRC as an adhoc member for a three year term with Mr. Carl Vandermaarl as alternate.

Moved/seconded/carried

6. To maintain a quota of \$12 per member while also encouraging congregations to hold collections for the two projects outlined in this report.

Moved/seconded/carried

7. To approve the actions of this committee.

Moved/seconded/carried

The requests of Rev. Gangar regarding a streamlined reporting structure and being relieved of his committee work on page 65 are considered. The committees on which Rev. Gangar serves are asked to take note and accommodate this request.

Vice-Chair Koopman takes the chair.

ARTICLE 11– PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. Kranendonk introduces the work of the committee by presenting the various new publications. These include Frans Bakker's *The Everlasting Word* (translated by Pastor Procee), *Church and Caesar: A Legal Primer for Officebearers* by Ray Pennings; *Obadiah and Micah* by Rev. J. Westerink (translated by Rev. and Mrs. Kranendonk); and the *Open Windows* magazine for younger children. The Sunday School Teacher's Commentary prepared by Mrs. Pronk and co-published by RHB is also presented.

A discussion is held in which various matters of clarification are provided. There are some concerns regarding the website and email communication system which are not fully up to date and functional. There are also

suggestions that the committee consider the publication of an official Catechism and Confession of Faith curriculum. The committee is commended for the work that it has undertaken.

The Publications Committee presents the following recommendations to Synod 2008:

1. To approve the proposal to publish a Children's Magazine with Rev. J. Lewis as General Editor and Mrs. D. Tamminga as Managing Editor.
Moved/seconded/carried
2. To ratify the appointment of Rev. C. Pronk as Editor of The Messenger.
Moved/seconded/carried
3. To approve the appointment of Mrs. Marianne Overduin as Treasurer/
Administrator and Mr. Rae VanderSleen as Book Distributor.
Moved/seconded/carried
4. To maintain the current subscription price of the Messenger (\$25.00/yr for
Canada & U.S.A.);
Moved/seconded/carried
5. To increase the quota of the Publications Committee from \$6.00 to \$8.00
for 2009;
Moved/seconded/carried
6. To approve the financial report for 2007 and budget for 2009 of the
Publications committee;
Moved/seconded/carried
7. To appoint Mr. Harry VanderMaarl (St. George) to succeed Mr. J.
Tamminga as a committee member for a three year term ending in 2011;
Moved/seconded/carried
8. To reappoint Rev. L. W. Bilkes and Rev. G. R. Procee for a three year
term as committee members ending 2011;
Moved/seconded/carried
9. To approve of the actions of your deputies.
Moved/seconded/carried

We adjourn for lunch with Elder Henry Zuidema leading in prayer. After lunch, Elder Westerveld reads from Job 28. We sing Psalter 304 after which he leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 12 – EXECUTIVE SESSION I

Article 41 reports for St. George and London and Article 44 reports for St. Thomas, Pompton Plains, Monarch, Langley, and Abbotsford are read. The appeal from various members of the Abbotsford congregation regarding Synod 2007's handling of Rev. Greendyk's application is also considered.

ARTICLE 13 – TREASURER OF SYNOD

Brother J.D. Tamminga presents his report. The recommendations are considered in turn.

1. To maintain the annual quota for 2008 at \$12.00 per member.
Moved/seconded/carried
2. To continue to pay 85% of the car allowance as reported by the Treasury Board of Canada for the Province of Ontario (as of April 1, 2008: 85% of \$.0525 = \$.044625; This allowance is for Committee Meetings, Church Visitation and for Ministers who at times teach at the Seminary in Grand Rapids.)
Moved/seconded/carried
3. To approve the attached Financial Statements and the actions of The Treasurer of Synod.
Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 14 – THEOLOGICAL STUDENT SUPPORT FUND

Brother Tamminga presents his report. The recommendations are considered in turn.

- a.) To reduce the assessment for the Theological Student Support Fund from \$10.00 to \$7.00 per member for the year 2009
Moved/seconded/carried
- b.) To approve the financial statement for the year 2007 as presented.
Moved/seconded/carried
- c.) To approve the proposed budget for the year 2009 as presented.
Moved/seconded/carried
- d.) To re-appoint brother Ryk Naves for another term, and brother John Wilbrink as a new member.
Moved/seconded/carried
- e.) To approve the actions of this committee.
Moved/seconded/carried

Elder A. Pol leads in prayer for the meal. After dinner, we reconvene with the singing of Psalter 382. Rev. Van Essen reads Jeremiah 12 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 15 – EXECUTIVE SESSION II

The Classis Contracta report is considered. The Article 44 reports for Bellevue, Lacombe, Grand Rapids and Dundas and the Article 41 reports for Hamilton, Fenwick, Bornholm and Brantford are considered.

At 9:15 the meeting adjourns with Rev. Procee leading in closing prayer.

SESSION III: WEDNESDAY JUNE 4, 2008

We open with the singing of Psalter 391. Rev. M. Roberts from the Free Church of Scotland Continuing is invited to lead in the opening devotions. After an opening prayer, Rev. Roberts reads Matthew 4:17-22 and focuses his remarks on verse 19, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." The work of the ministry can be compared to the work of a shepherd and a fisherman. As fishermen, we seek to bring sinners from the state of sin to a state of grace and as shepherds we seek to lead these sinners to a state of glory.

ARTICLE 16 – ROLL CALL

The roll is called with all present as the previous day except for Elder C. Vlietstra (replacing Rev. Pronk) for St. George and Elder H. VanDoodewaard (replacing Elder A. Veenstra) for Fenwick. The brothers rise to indicate their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

Rev. Schoeman acknowledges the presence of the students of Rehoboth Christian School, Copetown, who have joined the assembly.

ARTICLE 17 – INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

Brother Connor Keuning, secretary of the committee, is invited to introduce the report. A discussion is followed in which a few points of clarification are provided. The major discussion surrounds some concerns regarding developments in the CGK and the appropriate manner in which the FRC ought to deal with these concerns.

After discussion, the recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

1. To approve the list of non-FRC ministers granted permission to preach on our pulpits for one year;

Moved/seconded/carried

2. To approve the attached amended sections of the Church Order dealing with the admittance of non-FRC ministers, candidates and students, as well as definitions of ecclesiastical relationships;

This matter is tabled until after the Calgary overture has been considered.

3. To offer the *Limited Contact* level relationship to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland;

Moved/seconded/carried

4. To approve the sending of the Revs. H. Bergsma and L.J. Bilkes as delegates to the November 2008 NAPARC meeting in Philadelphia, with Ed Laman as alternate;

Moved/seconded/carried

5. To endorse the CanRC application of membership in NAPARC;

Moved/seconded/carried

6. To endorse the PRC application of membership in NAPARC;

Moved/seconded/carried

7. To approve the re-appointment of Connor J. Keuning and Rev. L. Roth as primary members for a three year term;

Moved/seconded/carried

(Note: this motion was reconsidered in Article 20)

8. To approve the appointment of Rev. J. Lewis and David Tamminga as primary members and Henry Vanderveen as an alternate member, all for a three year term;

A discussion is held which results in this matter being tabled to a later session of this synod.

9. To approve the above proposals designed to improve the reception and treatment of invited delegates from other churches to Synod, and blend its contents into Supplement C-2 of the Church Order.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 18 – INTERCHURCH RELATIONS - ADDRESSES

The chair recognizes Rev. D. Overbeek from the Heritage Reformed Churches and Rev. D. Gebbie from the Presbyterian Reformed Churches who have joined the meeting.

Rev. M. Roberts from the Free Church of Scotland Continuing addresses the meeting. The Free Church has 24 congregations in Scotland and six in North America, including one in Smiths Falls, Ontario. They also have a congregation in Seoul, South Korea and in Adelaide, Australia. Their distinctives include an experiential Puritan history, psalm singing, and an adherence to the Westminster standards. Rev. Roberts notes with appreciation the warm relations between our denominations and extends appreciation for our church's support for membership application of the Free Church of Scotland Continuing in the ICRC as well as some financial support that was provided to help purchase a church building in Inverness.

Rev. Lewis responds on behalf of synod. He notes the shared secession history of our two denominations and the common passions in both. He expresses the hope that an increased relationship between our federations will be the start of something that in God's mercy will result in something far greater.

Rev. D. Overbeek from the Heritage Reformed Churches addresses the meeting. He notes with appreciation the good working relationship that exists among the HRC and FRC, not only in the seminary work, but also among local congregations working in close proximity. He expresses thanks on behalf of the HRC for the support of the work of PRTS by the FRC as well as appreciation for the joint office-bearers conferences and the cooperative work

in publications. While we remain imperfect churches, we can be thankful for the experiential Christ-centered preaching we have.

Rev. J. Overduin responds on behalf of synod. He notes how our relationship with the HRC is growing over the years and continues to increase. We are meeting and helping each other and we pray that the Lord will bless it.

Rev. D. Gebbie from the Presbyterian Reformed Churches addresses the meeting. The PRC has six congregations: one in Canada (Chesley ON), one in England, and four in the United States. He notes the distinctives of his denomination to include exclusive psalmody with no instruments, adherence to the original Westminster standards, and a non-hypercovenantalist approach. Their denomination faces some challenges including their scatteredness and the lack of formal structure for ecumenical relations. The relationship with the FRC is the first formal relationship for their denomination and the support of the FRC for their application for NAPARC is greatly appreciated.

Rev. Moerdyk responds on behalf of Synod. He notes our common concerns about the dangers of both hyper-covenantalism and hyper-Calvinism and our attempt to maintain a Christ-centered balance. He expresses the desire for our denominations to learn more about each other.

ARTICLE 19 – CALGARY OVERTURE RE PULPIT ACCESS

A discussion is held regarding the orderliness of this overture given that the Interchurch Relations report contains some recommendations that may be overlapping. The Chair rules that the Calgary overture is lawfully on the table.

We adjourn for lunch. We sing Psalter 187. Elder Koppelaar opens the meal in prayer. Elder VanderHeide closes the meal in prayer. We sing Psalter 417. Elder VanderHeide reads Psalm 43. The chair recognizes Dr. G.M. Bilkes who has joined the meeting.

A discussion is held regarding the Calgary motion in which the following major points are made:

- Concerns are expressed that the phrase “confessionally reformed church” is too broad and should be more narrowly defined.
- The suggestion is made that congregations could become more familiar with a minister through mid-week meetings.
- Concerns are expressed about the danger of incrementally moving toward an independentism that would question the right of the Interchurch committee to make a judgment whether a non FRC minister may preach on our pulpits.
- Note is taken that safeguards remain in place within this overture and that the consistory is required to do a considerable amount of work before asking a visiting minister to preach.
- Questions are asked about the role and content of the Interchurch Colloquium Doctum.
- Desire is expressed to seek to be flexible in having ways to fill our pulpits with sound Reformed preaching, especially in home mission contexts.

The delegate from Calgary expresses willingness to refer this matter to a study committee.

ARTICLE 20 – INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The previously tabled recommendation of the committee is considered.

#2 To approve of the attached amended sections of the Church Order dealing with the admittance of non-FRC ministers, candidates and students, as well as definitions of ecclesiastical relationships;

Moved/seconded

A discussion follows in which the concern is expressed about various details in the committee's recommendations as well as whether the committee had gone beyond the mandate given to it in Synod 2007.

The committee withdraws its recommendation.

A motion is made:

Synod, having heard the discussion regarding Calgary's overture and the discussion regarding the Interchurch relations committee's proposal to amend certain sections of the Church order,

1. recognizing that there are needs of vacant congregations to have the lively preaching of the Word on their pulpits,
2. recognizing that there are circumstances in local congregations resulting in a desire to have a particular man on their pulpit for an occasional supply, and
3. being concerned that access to our pulpit be regulated in such a way that preserves our distinctive of orthodox, experiential Reformed preaching,

Instructs the Interchurch relations committee to:

1. Study the issues relating to pulpit access in our federation by:
 - a. Considering the various comments that were presented on the floor of synod;
 - b. Soliciting further input from the congregations on this issue;
2. Report to Synod 2009 proposing specific church order changes as a result of these proposals. The report should:
 - a. Consider church orderly principles regarding the authority of the local consistory;
 - b. Define the role of the Interchurch relations committee in evaluating candidates for pulpits;
 - c. Report on the practice of other reformed denominations;
 - d. Keep in mind the concerns of Calgary's overture.

That this be synod's answer to Calgary's overture.

Moved/seconded/carried

The matter of the concerns raised in the earlier discussion (Article 14) is considered.

A motion is made:

1. That Synod receives the Report of the Interchurch Relations as presented but that the last two sentences regarding the CGK not be published in the Acts of Synod;
2. That Synod instructs the committee to meet with their counterparts at the CGK regarding our concerns as soon as feasible;
3. That the Interchurch Committee include in their 2009 report to Synod an educational component which outlines the history and value of the Full Correspondence relationship between the FRC and CGK.

Moved/seconded/carried

The committee presents additional recommendations for synod which arise out of issues that have arisen since the submission of their report to Synod. The first is:

To approve the sending of two delegates to the PRC Synod meeting in Chesley in 2010.

Moved/seconded/carried

The committee's recommendation #8 is amended to read:

To approve the appointment of Rev. J. Lewis and David Tamminga as primary members and Rev. VanderMeyden as an alternate member, all for a three year term;

Moved/seconded/carried

A motion is made to reconsider the approval of Recommendation #7.

Moved/seconded/carried

A revised motion is proposed:

To approve the re-appointment of Connor J. Keuning and appointment of Rev. J. Koopman as primary members for a three year term;

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 21 – EXECUTIVE SESSION III

A matter regarding the process of granting preaching licenses is considered.

A motion is made:

That synod have taken notice of the committee's allowing Rev. Bout to preach in Vineland very occasionally for one year without a preaching license (notwithstanding the rules governing this process) for reasons related to his work with the migrant ministry, approve the actions of the committee in this matter.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 22 – INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

The final recommendation of the committee is considered:
To approve the actions of the committee.

Moved/seconded/carried

Elder Sluijmers prayed for the meal. After dinner, Pastor Koopman takes the chair. Elder Hopkins leads in devotions. We sing Psalter 64. He reads Psalm 25 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 23 – THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Dr. G.M. Bilkes is invited to address the assembly. He reports with joy and gratitude, acknowledging publicly the health and strength provided to the instructors and students of PRTS. There is a positive mood in the seminary, also in regards to Dr. Murray's arrival and teaching. The student body has grown significantly, especially with foreign students, which shows hunger for Reformed confessional experiential theology. He thanks synod and the congregations for their faithful prayer and financial support.

Dr. Bilkes reflects on the importance of the fifth commandment, especially in our days when the principle of authority is fading away. The authority of the Word of God as well as authority in the basic institutions and frameworks of society is being questioned. These matters affect theological education. There is a challenge for PRTS to address these concerns in a way that ensures we are able to speak gospel in way that does the hard work of interfacing with where society is at. There is a reason why the Scriptures include not just John 3:16 but begins with Genesis 1:1. In our age especially, we need to remain faithful, fully subscribing to the authority of Scripture and the confessions.

The chairman thanks Dr. Bilkes for his presentation and Rev. Kranendonk leads in prayer for the work of Dr. Bilkes and theological education.

ARTICLE 24 – FRCMI

John Brink and Peter Luth present on behalf of the committee.
A membership meeting sign-up sheet is distributed and the annual membership meeting for FRCMI is commenced.

The mission report is reviewed and various matters for clarification and update are raised in the discussion. There are some difficult issues being dealt with in the churches on the mission field which have necessitated three visits from our delegates during the past year. Like our North American churches, missionary churches are confronted with the full range of issues as the devil seeks to discourage and destroy the work. In spite of the challenges, however, there are also positive signs. The church in Guatamela needs our prayers.

A lengthy discussion follows in which various matters are clarified and expanded upon. The VanMinnens will be going to Cubulco in September.

There are some questions regarding the proportion of time that Rev. Herfst is spending on relief work and whether it is detracting from his theological education assignments. The committee representatives note that the devastation of Hurricane Stan necessitated significant efforts and prevented much “ordinary work” from continuing. However, during the past year, help has been organized and Rev. Herfst now has an overseeing function and is not so much involved in the day-to-day relief work. Whereas this may have been a concern (although an unavoidable one) a couple of years ago, it has been resolved.

Through the discussion, various observations are made regarding our comparative ineffectiveness in communicating the extensive work that goes on in missions to our members. Tours, such as that recently held in support of the establishment of the Christian Ministry to Israel organization, are helpful but there is a need to keep the work and need for missions consistently in front of our people. Suggestions are made that we ought to consider a mission magazine, of the sort published by other denominations.

The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn:

1. That the re-appointments of Rev. J. Koopman , P. Luth, Rev. H. Bergsma and J. Westerink, A. DeVries and appointment of M. Laman (Pompton Plains) as directors for a three-year term be approved
Moved/seconded/carried
2. That the 2007 Financial Statement be approved
Moved/seconded/carried
3. That the budget for the year 2008 be approved
Moved/seconded/carried
4. That the appointments of Mr. Jim Koopman and Mr. Nick Zuidema as reviewers for the year 2008 be approved
Moved/seconded/carried
5. That the employment of Mr. Wilfred Bout in the role of evangelist be approved
Moved/seconded/carried
6. That the actions of the Mission Board be approved
Moved/seconded/carried

A motion is made to adjourn the annual meeting of FRCMI.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 25 – FOREIGN MISSIONS

A matter remains from the Foreign Mission report that properly belongs to the churches (as donors of the fund) and not to FRCMI (the legal entity established to carry out mission work on behalf of our denomination).

A motion is made:

That the transfer of the funds to the Education Project from the radio ministry be approved.

Moved/seconded/carried

In follow up to matters raised during the discussion of the report, a motion is made:

That the Publications Committee be instructed during this year to publish a pilot issue of a mission magazine and to incorporate in their 2009 report to Synod, plans for an ongoing Missions magazine. It is understood that the committee will connect with the Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Evangelism and Christian Ministry to Israel committees. This magazine should be a serious, full-colour 16 page magazine with spiritual content that reports on the Lord's work in a missionary setting.

Moved/seconded/carried

Pastor Schoeman assumes the chair. He thanks the mission representatives for their work and commends them to the Lord. At 9:00, we sing Psalter 408 and Rev. Moerdyk leads in closing prayer.

SESSION IV: THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2008

The Vice-Chairman opens the meeting at 9:00 a.m. We sing Psalter 317. Rev. Koopman reads from James 1 and leads in prayer. He focuses his mediation on James 1:1, "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." He notes the gospel character of this introduction. He notes that although the author had a physical connection with Jesus as his brother, he highlights the spiritual relationship that existed to his Saviour. James does not mention his prominent role in the early church but focuses his work as that of a servant. At our best we should be humble servants in the kingdom of God.

The chairman notes the presence of Elder Slingerland and takes note of the fact that this is the first synod at which Calgary is officially seated.

ARTICLE 26 – ROLL CALL

The secretary reads the roll with all present as the previous day as well as Elders B. Klein (Abbotsford) and Elder H. Slingerland (Calgary) who have joined the meeting. Elder J. Coolen is present replacing Elder Groen (Fenwick); Elder J. Pennings replacing Elder Pol (Bornholm); Elder C. Vandermaarl replacing Elder Droogendyk (St. George); and Elder R. Slingerland replacing Elder Grin (Vineland). Those present for the first time stand to express their agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 27 – THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Rev. Procee highlights various aspect of the committee's report. Henk Kleyn, attending Synod as a delegate from Grand Rapids but who also serves as the Registrar at PRTS, is given the floor to provide more information on PRTS. He notes that the influx of international students has come to the seminary from word-of-mouth advertising as well as through the website. He urges the delegates to view the seminary not only as a means for theological education for our own students, but also as a means of outreach by which men are being trained to minister and in turn train others in experiential Reformed doctrine in all parts of the globe. A significant discussion takes place regarding the relationship between the FRC and HRC as it involves various aspects of PRTS.

The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

1. Renew the preaching license to Student Derek Baars.
Moved/seconded/carried
2. Grant a preaching license to Student Timothy Bergsma for the Summer 2008.
Moved/seconded/carried
3. Approve the re-worded procedure for declaring men candidates for the ministry.
Moved/seconded/carried

-
4. Approve the annual donation of \$20,000 US towards the Operating Fund of PRTS.

Moved/seconded/carried
 5. Approve the recommendation to finance half the annual salary of Dr. David Murray, being \$45,000 US.

An alternative motion is made and seconded:

Considering that

1. Currently the FRC contribute about three times as much to the PRTS as the HRC (before even including this additional gift),
2. Our input in the classroom has exceeded that of the HRC virtually every year since Dr. G.M. Bilkes joined the seminary faculty,
3. The Limited Correspondence relationship between our federations calls for cooperation in theological training,
4. The input by our appointed advisor at the PRTS Board of Trustees meetings has been welcomed and is much appreciated,
5. A growing number of our people have become enthusiastic supporters of the seminary,
6. Initial readiness to operate the seminary on a 50/50 basis was expressed by representatives of the HRC, but that such plan was rejected since the HRC was in its formative years and quite unprepared to launch into such a joint venture,
7. A relationship of mutual respect and trust has developed over the years, of which the seminary has been its principal driving force,

And therefore being convinced it is only reasonable and equitable, in view of this large, and likely annual, financial contribution, that our involvement in the management of the PRTS be no longer restricted to one non-voting official representative at its board meetings,

Synod agrees to contribute 50% towards the annual remuneration (salary and benefits) of Dr. David P. Murray up to a maximum of US \$45,000 for the school year 2008/09, and furthermore requests the HRC Classis to consider a more equitable and formal FRC participation in the management of PRTS, and instruct the Theological Education Committee to report to Synod 2009 with a recommendation that balances the financial, teaching, and management contributions to PRTS.

Carried.

6. Approve the recommendations for the Minister's Retreat 2008 as outlined in the report.

In discussion, it is suggested that the committee consider what an appropriate forum might be (possibly a future ministers retreat) in which various dimensions of the transition from an immigrant church to a North American church (some of which arose in our discussion regarding the CGK) are considered, with a view to better understanding some of the opportunities and challenges that are likely to face our denomination in the decades to come.

Recommendation #6 is moved/seconded/carried

Brother Tamminga presents financial statements for the Seminary Fund.

7. Approve Report Treasurer Free Reformed Seminary Fund for 2007.
Moved/seconded/carried.
8. Encourage the churches to continue to support the matter of theological education by means of prayer and offerings. These offerings are free will offerings, but the individual congregations are requested to contribute \$38 annually per member to the Free Reformed Seminary Fund.
Moved/seconded/carried
9. Approve the recommendations for Church Day 2008.
Moved/seconded/carried
10. Appoint Rev. D.H. Kranendonk and Rev. J. Schoeman both as primary members of the committee for a three year term, expiring in 2011
Moved/seconded/carried
11. Re-appoint Rev. L.W. Bilkes, Rev. C.A. Schouls, Rev. P. VanderMeyden and Elder C.J. Keuning as primary members for a three year term, expiring in 2011.
Moved/seconded/carried
12. Re-appoint brother M.T.H. Laman as primary member for a one year term, expiring in 2009.
Moved/seconded/carried

Rev. Schouls addresses the meeting as chairman of the Theological Education committee. After serving for 39 years, Rev. Pronk has had to retire from the committee due to the policy regarding not appointing men over the age of 70 to committees. Appreciation is expressed for Rev. Pronk noting that the fruits of his work would be revealed in eternity.

The chairman takes note of the fact that two of our ministers have recently completed their Th. M. degrees. Each is asked to provide a brief summary of their thesis. Rev. VanderMeyden outlines his thesis "To be a confessional church: the role of the creeds in Hendrik de Cock's view of the church." Rev. Kranendonk outlines his thesis "Elnathan Parr as Pastoral Teacher of Predestination in Early Stuart England"

The recommendations of the supplementary report are considered.

1. To accept this report as a statement of policy thus answering the questions related to the process by which men can apply to the TEC
Moved/seconded/carried
 2. To approve the reworded Messenger announcement soliciting applications for students for the ministry.
Moved/seconded/carried
13. Approve the actions of the committee.
Moved/seconded/carried

At 12:30 we adjourn for lunch. Elder W. Droogendyk prays before the meal. Elder Densel closes the meal. We sing Psalter 311. Elder Densel reads Psalm 116 and leads in prayer.

Elder G. Kroesbergen replaces Rev. L.J. Bilkes. He stands to express his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 28 – EXECUTIVE SESSION IV

The matter of Rev. Roth’s credentials are considered.

A proposal is made that Rev. Roth’s ministerial credentials be under synod from an official church orderly perspective, and that synod request the Hamilton consistory to have some conversations with Rev. Roth during the upcoming year, with a view that both the Hamilton consistory and Rev. Roth would come to Synod 2009 with reasons as to why Rev. Roth’s ministerial credentials should remain in place.

Moved/seconded/carried

Article 41 reports for Calgary, Mitchell and Vineland and Article 44 reports for Chatham and Chilliwack are read.

The minutes of the executive sessions I-IV are approved.

ARTICLE 29 – ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Rev. Procee reads the concept minutes of Articles 1-20 which are approved.

ARTICLE 30 – ETHICS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Bilkes reports on behalf of the Ethical – Public Affairs committee. The discussion reveals that the committee is still working on plans to organize a conference for office bearers and medical field practitioners on the subject of reproductive technology. Various delegates raise questions regarding the practical resources that the committee has prepared. The committee is requested to make more resources available given the urgency of the various issues that consistories are facing.

The recommendations to the Synod are considered in turn:

- a) to reappoint Dr. Joel Hamstra for a term of 3 years;

Moved/seconded/carried

- b) to reappoint Dr. Greg Kenyon for a term of 3 years;

Moved/seconded/carried

- c) to approve the actions of the EPA Committee.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 31 – EVANGELISM RADIO REPORT

Rev Overduin introduces the report. A discussion follows. There is an informal understanding in place regarding the Punjabi radio ministry of Rev. Gangar that the radio and advertising costs will be borne by the Evangelism

Committee whereas the Home Missions committee will cover the cost for Rev. Gangar's time. A combined meeting of these two committees is recommended for the fall, given the overlap of their responsibilities.

The delay in broadcasting Rev. Gangar's messages in India has been due to concerns about his language facility. Thought is being given to expand the length of the radio program from its current 15 minute to a 30 minute format. Various suggestions are made regarding relying more on collections for this work and considering means to turn future legacy gifts into endowments. The need for a professional website for the Punjabi ministry is emphasized.

The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

- (a) To retain the Quota level of \$10.00 per year for 2009.

Moved/seconded/carried

- (b) To reappoint Br. Rein DeVries for another 3 year term to 2011 since he has presently served two terms and to appoint Rev. E. Moerdyk for a 3 year term to 2011 in place of Rev. L. Roth who has now served four terms.

Moved/seconded/carried

The chair acknowledges the extensive contribution of Rev. Roth to this committee.

- (c) To approve the actions of the committee.

Moved/seconded/carried

Elder VanderZwan opens the meal with prayer. We sing Psalter 203. Elder Coolen reads Ephesians 4:1-7.

Following supper, Rev. L.J. Bilkes returns replacing Elder Kroesbergen. Elder M. Laman replaces Rev. Pronk. Elder Laman stands to indicate his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 32 – AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT MINISTERS RETIREMENT FUND

Synod is in receipt of both a majority and minority report from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Retirement Fund. A review of the circumstances that led to this is presented to the body by Rev. Schouls as convener of this committee. At the request of the convener Brother Keuning presents and explains the majority report.

The orderliness of these reports is considered. The ad hoc committee was formed by Synod 2006 to provide advice on the Finance Committee's proposal to overhaul the Retirement Fund. The issues to be studied were the two options: 1. Maintain the current Emeritus Fund or 2. Migrate towards a personal retirement plan in combination with the existing Emeritus Fund. (cf. art. 33 page 33 Acts 2006). Besides this the committee also studied the adequacy of the fund; whether there should be entitlement to the fund; a fair way to deal with ministers who have 'partial service' for reasons of

incompatibility resulting in release from the ministry; and the issue whether ministers who have other sources of employment income after retirement should receive less benefits. A comprehensive report was presented to Synod 2007. The committee's main recommendation for "unconditional entitlement" was rejected in favour of "a policy of entitlement of Retirement Fund benefits by all FRC ministers." The Ad-hoc committee reported to Synod 2007 that upon adoption of its recommendations it planned to study the fair pro-ration of benefits for ministers serving less than a full-term in the FRCNA, and to deal with the issue of the fairness and feasibility of downward adjustments to benefits in situations where emeritus pastors have other sources of income.

During the past year, the committee did not actually meet in person but communicated by email. The committee did not achieve a consensus and consequently, Synod is in receipt of both a majority and minority report presenting differing perspectives on the issues. There is question as to whether these reports should be received by Synod.

After some debate, the chair rules that these reports are lawfully on the table.

A motion is made to challenge the chair.

Moved/seconded/carried

Given that the motion to challenge the chair has effectively ruled both reports out of order, a discussion follows in which various options for proceeding are considered. After a short adjournment is held while the Executive meets with the representatives present from the Ad-Hoc Committee.

After further discussion, a motion is made:

To seek legal advice to determine the legality of entitlement as decided by Synod 2007 with a budget of up to \$50K to be paid from the Emeritus Fund. The overseeing committee for this work is to be composed of Connor Keuning, Mike Laman (St. George), and Ray Pennings. The committee is asked to report to Synod 2009.

Moved/seconded/carried

The chair acknowledges the significant contribution made by Rev. Schouls on this issue.

Rev. Koopman assumes the chair.

ARTICLE 33 – FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Jim Koopman reports on behalf of the committee. A discussion is held on the committee's report on which clarification is sought on numerous items. The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

1. Ministers' Emeritus Fund:

The committee submits for your approval:

(a) The Canadian Consumer Price Index is 2.4% for the year 2007. We propose to increase emeritus payments for the calendar year 2009 by 2.4% from \$24,989 to \$25,589 for emeritus ministers and from \$19,993 to \$20,473 for ministers' widows. All payments are to be made in Canadian dollars.

Moved/seconded/carried

(b) To increase the assessment for 2009 from \$20.00 per member to \$20.50.

Moved/seconded/carried

(c) To approve the attached financial statements for the year 2007.

Moved/seconded/carried

2. **Ministers' Salary Guidelines:**

The committee submits for your approval:

(a) The Canadian Consumer Price Index for the year 2007 is 2.4% and the American Consumer Price Index is 4.1%. We recommend that the salaries increase by 2.4% for Canadian ministers and by 4.1% for American ministers for the calendar year 2008. We therefore request approval to increase the minimum salaries for ministers effective January 1, 2009 as follows:

- Canadian ministers from CDN \$37,485 to CDN \$38,385
- American ministers from US \$36,253 to US \$37,921

Moved/seconded/carried

(b) To increase the years of service allowance from \$400 to \$450 for up to 10 years of service.

Moved/seconded/carried

(c) To increase the years of service allowance each year by the CPI

Moved/seconded/carried

(d) That the churches contribute to their pastor's personal retirement plan an amount equal to 3% of his gross salary which includes his housing allowance.

Moved/seconded/Defeated

(e) That the churches be encouraged to contribute to their pastor's personal retirement plan on a matching basis an amount equal to 2% of his gross salary which includes his housing allowance.

Moved/seconded/Defeated

3. Pulpit Supply and Catechism Supply:

The committee submits for your approval:

- (a) To increase the pulpit supply rate by 10% from \$125 per service to \$137 per service effective January 1, 2009.

Moved/seconded/Defeated

- (b) To increase the Catechism supply by 10% from \$75 per hour to \$82 per hour effective January 1, 2009.

Moved/seconded/Defeated

4. Needy Churches Fund:

The committee submits for your approval:

- (a) To decrease the assessment from \$8 per member to \$5 for the 2009.

Moved/seconded/carried

- (b) To approve the financial statements for the year 2007.

Moved/seconded/carried

- (c) To approve the recommended changes to Section K of Supplement 23

A amendment is moved to delete Recommended Change #3 (having the church visitors make a recommendation to the Finance Committee) from the proposed changes.

Moved/Seconded/carried

The motion as amended is carried.

5. Miscellaneous:

The committee submits for your approval:

- (a) To re-appoint for a three year term of Henry Berger (Hamilton) and Steve Otten (Mitchell).

Moved/seconded/carried

- (b) That Synod approves the actions of the committee.

Moved/seconded/carried

The Vice-chairman acknowledges the considerable work done each year by the Finance Committee and expresses appreciation for the manner in which it has dealt with various opinions expressed on the floor of Synod.

Elder Kranendonk closes in prayer. The meeting adjourns at 10:20 p.m.

SESSION V: Friday, June 6, 2008

We open with the singing of Psalter 32. Rev. Kranendonk reads from Philippians 1:12-26. He leads in prayer. Often we feel competing pressures – “on the one hand” and “on the other hand.” Paul in prison realizes “on the one hand” that he may die and go to the Lord while “on the other hand” he may be released and be able to minister to the churches. Self-knowledge of our sin can create a desire to depart from the battle against sin and to be with Christ and know Him more fully. A view of the need in the church may give a desire to be a means in God’s hand for good to others. Resignation to God’s will gives relief in this blessed tension.

ARTICLE 34 – ROLL CALL

The roll is called in which all are present as the previous session with the exceptions of Elder Kroesbergen who is present in the place of Elder Koppelaar (Dundas); Elder F. Fousert in the place of Elder Veenstra (Fenwick); and Rev. Pronk in place of Elder M. Laman (St. George). Elder Fousert rises to express his agreement with the Three Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 35 - REFUGEE COMMITTEE

Rev. Moerdyk presents the report of the Refugee committee. There are over 20 million refugees in the world today making the work of this committee an urgent and importance ministry of the church. The current system of free will offerings has not been sufficient to meet the committee’s needs and were it not for the generosity of certain individuals, the committee would not be able to continue. A discussion takes place which highlights the challenges of this ministry, especially with the cultural adjustments that refugees coming to Canada must make. The committee is encouraged to approach other denominations for support in order to broaden the support for this ministry.

The recommendations of this committee are considered in turn.

- 1) To approve the proposed budget.
Moved/seconded/carried
- 2) To approve a quota of \$6 per member,
Moved/seconded/defeated
- 3) or to adopt a motion urging each congregation to schedule collections for this work.
Moved/seconded/carried
- 4) To appoint Rev. E. Moerdyk of the Abbotsford congregation to succeed Dr. L.W. Bilkes, and to appoint James VanderZwan of the Langley congregation as a new member.
Moved/seconded/carried
- 5) To approve the actions of the committee
Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 36 – YOUTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Rev. J. Overduin introduces the report. A discussion follows in which appreciation is expressed for the content of the Youth Messenger while concerns regarding its visual layouts are also expressed. The committee is encouraged to present a magazine that remains contemporary but not in a way that might be interpreted to condone worldliness. There are also concerns regarding the selection of speakers.

The recommendations of the committee are considered in turn.

1. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Kim Hamstra as camp director (East) for one year.
Moved/seconded/carried
2. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Marvin Van Maanen as camp director (West) for one year.
Moved/seconded/carried
3. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Herman denHollander as editor of the Youth Messenger, as well as to appoint him an *ex officio* member of our committee so long as he serves as editor of the Youth Messenger.
Moved/seconded/carried
4. To appoint Student Tim Bergsma and Mr. Eugene Gritter to three year terms, expiring 2011, and to appoint Mr. Raymond Roth to finish Mr. Benjamins's term, expiring 2009, and to reappoint Rev. Joel Overduin to a second three year term, expiring 2011.

An amendment is made to delete the appointment of Student Bergsma and to make the appointment of Raymond Roth for a three year term.

Moved/seconded/carried

The motion as amended is carried.

5. To approve a quota of \$3 per member (same as last year).
Moved/seconded/carried
6. To approve the actions of the committee

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 37 – ABBOTSFORD APPEAL

An appeal submitted by 15 members of the Abbotsford congregation had been tabled in Executive Session I in the context of the Abbotsford Article 44 report. Following that discussion, the Executive was tasked with drafting a response for Synod's consideration.

This response is tabled as follows:

Synod,
Having heard

- the appeal by various concerned members of the Abbotsford congregation regarding the examination of Rev. Greendyk at Synod 2007, which appeal desired Rev. Greendyk have an opportunity to have his ministerial credentials within the Free Reformed Churches of North America,
- the explanation of the current condition of the Abbotsford congregation as reported by church visitors and the Abbotsford pastor;

Recognizing

- that this appeal was not submitted within the time frame stipulated by our Church Order,
- that this appeal is irregular in that it is not from the person involved himself;
- that synod nevertheless allowed this appeal to be tabled at our meeting;

and furthermore being of the opinion that

- Synod 2007 conducted a clear, fair, and church-orderly examination,
- the decision made at that time was clear to the delegates,
- the issues involved were not merely academic as was explained to him by the Executive of Synod 2007, meaning they could be simply listed in a response to him;

Recognizing that church orderly procedures for admitting men to the office of minister of the Gospel in the FRCNA remain open to Rev. Greendyk;

Decides, after extended deliberation,

- not to sustain this appeal;
- to encourage the signatories of this appeal to do all they can to foster the unity and edification of the congregation of Abbotsford, including the prayerful participation in the scheduled solemn assembly;
- to convey to these signatories that there are ecclesiastical procedures for applying for ministerial status in the FRCNA available to Rev. Greendyk
- to ask the Abbotsford consistory to convey the contents of this motion to Rev. Greendyk.

Synod wishes the signatories God's blessing and expresses the sincere hope that the Abbotsford congregation would be edified. Synod also wishes that Rev. Greendyk may be blessed in his labours.

A motion is made that this response be adopted.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 38 – VINELAND OVERTURE

Rev. VanderMeyden introduces the Vineland overture seeking advice regarding the appropriate church orderly and legal manner of dealing with members who withdraw during the discipline process.

A motion is made:

To appoint an ad hoc study committee to research this matter, provide advice, and possibly expand our church order to better cover questions such as those identified in the Vineland overture.

The motion is amended to give this task to the Church Order Subcommittee and to ask them to report to Synod 2009.

Moved/seconded/carried

Motion as amended is carried.

Rev. Koopman assumes the chair

ARTICLE 39 – MONARCH OVERTURE

Rev. Schoeman introduces the Monarch overture requesting that the mandate of the Theological Education committee be broadened. A discussion takes place in which it becomes clear that the overture raises a range of issues. These include mentoring men who may be pursuing theological education but have not applied for the ministry; our system of supervising those who have a license to exhort; clarification of the role of the combined consistories and of Synod regarding these matters as well as the role of the local consistory and of the Theological Education Committee. It is also clear that some perceptions regarding the Theological Education Committee being welcoming for students have been addressed through other means.

The matter is deferred for action until later in the meeting to allow the Monarch delegates to consider the input received in the discussion.

ARTICLE 40 – FENWICK – DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Elder Frank Fousert introduces the Fenwick overture asking Synod to study the matter of allowing a “guilty party” of a biblical divorce to remarry. A discussion takes place in which the context of previous synodical reports and advice given in specific cases are considered. The observation is made that as churches we must be very careful not to go beyond “minimalist regulation” in matters where the Scriptures remain silent.

A motion is made to adopt the overture:

That synod create an ad-hoc committee to study this matter expediently and diligently looking at the historical, doctrinal, and theological aspects of this question.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 41 – LONDON OVERTURE

Elder G. Flanagan introduces the London overture requesting that a two-tiered quota system be considered. A discussion takes place in which the suggestion is made that the Needy Churches Fund might be better renamed more positively (Church Assistance Fund).

A motion is made:

To ask the Finance Committee to consider the impact of quotas on smaller churches and to report Synod 2009 and that this be considered Synod's answer to London's overture.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 42 – ST. GEORGE OVERTURE

Elder W. Droogendyk introduces St. George's overture. After a short discussion, a motion is made.

To appoint a Study Committee to investigate the desirability and advisability of adopting the Westminster Standards (i.e. the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms) as doctrinal standards for the FRCNA, in addition to the doctrinal standards we already hold to, namely the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt.

Moved/seconded/carried

Elder Wikkerink leads in prayer for the meal. After lunch, we sing Psalter 150. Elder Luth closes the meal by reading Psalm 91 and leading in prayer.

ARTICLE 43 – MONARCH OVERTURE

Rev. Schoeman reports that in view of the discussion, the Monarch delegates have decided to withdraw their overture regarding expanding the mandate of the Theological Education Committee.

A motion is made.

To refer the issues raised in the Monarch overture to the Theological Education Committee for their consideration and ask that they include their response to this in their report to Synod 2009.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 44– CALGARY OVERTURE

Elder Pennings introduces the overture regarding the need for clarification of Article 67 of the Church Order regarding Feast Days.

A motion is made:

To establish a Study Committee with a mandate to report to Synod 2009. This report should contain either:

- A. An updated version of the Report on Feast Days originally received by Synod 1989. This update should effectively communicate the grounds for the FRC practice of holding worship service on recognized feast days and effectively answer the concerns regarding this practice. The report should be available in a form that can be used by the churches to deal with those who hold differing perspectives on the issue; or,
- B. To present a report providing grounds on which Article 67 of the church order might be amended in a manner that would allow the conduct of feast day worship services to be a matter of local consistorial discretion.

Moved/seconded/carried

ARTICLE 45 – APPOINTMENTS

The executive proposes a series of appointments in order to carry out the various decisions and assignments made.

That the Church Order Subcommittee, presently consisting of Rev. P. VanderMeyden, Rev. L.W. Bilkes, and Rev. G.R. Procee be expanded to include Rev. J. Koopman and Elder Ray Pennings.

Moved/seconded/carried

That the studies regarding Divorce and Remarriage (Fenwick – Article 40); Feast Days (Calgary - Article 44); and Withdrawal of Membership (Vineland- Article 38) be assigned to the Church Order subcommittee.

Moved/seconded/carried

That the study regarding the Westminster standards (St. George – Article 37) be assigned to an Adhoc Committee comprised of Rev. C. Pronk, Rev. J. Lewis, Rev. L.W. Bilkes, and Rev. G.R. Procee.

Moved/seconded/carried

The following Church Counsellors and Church Visitor list is proposed.

Congregation Church Visitors

Counsellor

Abbotsford	Rev. J. Schoeman	Rev. J. Lewis	Rev. H. Overduin
Bellevue	Rev. H. Overduin	Rev. J. Schoeman	Rev. E. Moerdyk
Bornholm	Rev. L. Roth	Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Rev. C. A. Schouls
Brantford	Rev. J. Overduin	Rev. J.R. Koopman	Rev. H.A. Bergsma
Calgary	Rev. E. Moerdyk	Rev. J. Lewis	Rev. J. Schoeman
Chatham	Rev. J. Overduin	Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Rev. J. Koopman
Chilliwack	Rev. E. Moerdyk	Rev. J. Lewis	Rev. K. Gangar
Dundas	Rev. J. R. Koopman	Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Rev. G. R. Procee
Fenwick	Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Rev. J.R. Koopman	Rev. P. VanderMeyden
Grand Rapids	Rev. G. R. Procee	Rev. C. A. Schouls	Rev. G.R. Procee
Hamilton	Rev. L. W. Bilkes	Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Rev. D. Kranendonk
Lacombe	Rev. H. Overduin	Rev. E. Moerdyk	Rev. J. Schoeman
Langley	Rev. J. Schoeman	Rev. K. Gangar	Rev. H. Overduin
London	Rev. D. Kranendonk	Rev. C. A. Schouls	Rev. L. W. Bilkes
Mitchell	Rev. J.R. Koopman	Rev. H.A. Bergsma	Rev. H.A. Bergsma
Monarch	Rev. K. Gangar	Rev. J. Lewis	Rev. E. Moerdyk
Prompton Plains	Rev. L.W. Bilkes	Rev. H.A. Bergsma	Rev. L. W. Bilkes
St. George	Rev. D. Kranendonk	Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Rev. P. VanderMeyden
St. Thomas	Rev. H.A. Bergsma	Rev. J. Overduin	Rev. L. J. Bilkes
Vineland	Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Rev. G.R. Procee	Rev. C. A. Schouls

Moved/seconded/carried

It is noted that the first Church Visitor named is appointed as the convenor.

ARTICLE 46 – PRESS RELEASE

The news release for synod is presented, amended, and adopted.

ARTICLE 47 – SYNOD 2009

Synod 2009 will meet from June 1-5, 2009. The calling church is Hamilton and the hosting church is Dundas.

ARTICLE 48 – ARTICLE 43

The chairman inquires whether anyone needs to be admonished according to Article 43 of the Church Order. No one needs to be admonished.

ARTICLE 49 – ADJOURNMENT

Rev. Schoeman makes some closing remarks in which he expresses appreciation for the confidence and patience expressed throughout this synod by all of the delegates. He expresses the hope that this synod may have contributed to the bonds of unity and brotherly love between our churches.

The Vice-Chairman, Rev J. Koopman, addresses Rev. Schoeman and on behalf of Synod, expresses appreciation for the manner in which he led Synod through its agenda. Rev. Koopman reads Psalm 133 and leads in a closing prayer. The delegates sing Psalter 370 and Synod adjourns at 2:20 p.m.

PRESS RELEASE

Free Reformed Synod 2008

Meeting in Brantford June 2-6, 2008

On the evening of June 2, Rev. L. W. Bilkes led the pre-synodical prayer service, preaching on Christ's Gift to a Church of Little Strength from Revelation 3:8 "behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." After this service, the executive was elected: Rev. J. Schoeman (Chair); Rev. J. Koopman (Vice-chair), Rev. G. R. Procee (1st Clerk), and Rev. D. H. Kranendonk (2nd Clerk).

The next day the work began with the Home Missions Report in which we heard of a work being organized among the Hindu / Sikh in Toronto involving Candidate Jason Keuning. Rev. Gangar has also begun to bring the gospel by way of radio broadcasts in Punjabi in the Lower Mainland, B.C.

The Publications Committee has published several books in this past year. *Open Windows* is a new children's magazine, edited by Rev. J. Lewis. To pass on news in our denomination our churches are encouraged to send an e-mail to news@frcna.org.

On the second day we had the great privilege of having Rev. M. Roberts (Free Church of Scotland Continuing) lead the morning devotions, directing us to the importance of spreading the gospel. This was thoroughly enjoyed and it was felt that it enhanced spiritual unity. It was also the first time that a representative was present from the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in the person of Rev. D. Gebbie. Rev. D. Overbeek from the Heritage Reformed Congregations also addressed Synod.

The Foreign Missions has faced various difficulties and discouragements in the past year but also many reasons for thanksgiving. Synod expressed continued support for the mission work. We await a pilot-issue of our own mission magazine.

Concerning Theological Education, Synod was encouraged to hear from Dr. G. M. Bilkes about the expansion of the program at PRTS, the progress of our students, Derek Baars and Tim Bergsma, and the recent addition of Dr. David Murray. Synod also expressed gratitude for the work of Rev. Pronk who retires from this committee after having served this committee for 40 years.

We heard from the Refugee Committee that there are 20 million refugees world-wide, but that our committee desires to sponsor refugees who have made a credible profession of faith. Our churches are asked to remember this work also with financial support.

Several overtures were adopted for further study: 1) to investigate the processes of discipline when a member withdraws from the church; 2) to investigate the influence of quotas on smaller congregations; 3) to investigate the desirability of adopting the Westminster Standards; 4) to investigate whether a repentant guilty party to a divorce is permitted to remarry; 5) to update the synodical report on feast days so that the report more accurately defends our practice.

The individual congregational reports noted reasons for thanksgiving and concern. In His mercy, the Lord continues to bless His Word. At the same time, various reports expressed concern about members neglecting worship services, an increase of worldliness, and censurable sin. The prayer rose from the synod for a renewed work of the Spirit in our midst.

Synod 2009 will meet from June 1-5, 2009. The calling church is Hamilton and the hosting church is Dundas.

SYNODICAL COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS

2008 - 2009

Ethical – Public Affairs

Dr. L.W. Bilkes, Chairman	Grand Rapids	2009
Mr. T. Postma, Secretary	Brantford	2010
Dr. J. Hamstra	Dundas	2011
Mr. J. Keuning	Hamilton	2009
Dr. G. Kenyon	Mitchell	2011

Evangelism

Rev. H. Overduin, Chairman	Chilliwack	ex officio
Rev. E. Moerdyk	Abbotsford	2011
Mr. R. DeVries, Treasurer	Brantford	2011
Rev. K. Gangar	Bellevue	2010
Mr. J. Koopman	Brantford	2009

Finance

Mr. J. Koopman, Chairman	Brantford	2010
Mr. H. Berger	Hamilton	2011
Mr. G. Brink	Chatham	2009
Mr. W. F. Laman	Hamilton	2009
Mr. S. Otten	Fenwick	2011
Mr J. Prol	Pompton Plains	2009
Mr. A. Sloomaker	Pompton Plains	2010

Foreign Mission

Mr. G. Postma, Chairman	Vineland	2009
Rev. J. Koopman, Vice Chair	St. Thomas	2011
Mr. J.J. Brink, Secretary	Hamilton	2010
Mr. P. Luth, Treasurer	Chatham	2011
Rev. H. Bergsma	London	2011
Mr. A. DeVries	Mitchell	2011
Rev. H. Overduin	Chilliwack	2009
Mr. P. VanderSloot	Grand Rapids	2009
Mr. R. Postma	Brantford	ex officio
Mr. J. Westerink	Hamilton	2011
Mr. M. H. T. Laman	Pompton Plains	2011

Alternate

Mr. E. DeKorte	Fenwick	2010
Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Vineland	2010

Home Missions

Rev. J. Schoeman, Chairman	Monarch	2009
Rev. K. Gangar, Vice Chairman	Bellevue	2009
Rev. J. Lewis, Secretary	Lacombe	2010
Mr. B. Marskamp	Dundas	2011
Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Dundas	2011
Mr. B. Droogendyk	St. George	2011
Mr. B. Moerdyk	Grand Rapids	2010
Rev. E. Moerdyk	Abbotsford	2011
Rev. J. Overduin	Mitchell	2009

Mr. R. Pennings	Calgary	2009
Rev. H. VanEssen	Mitchell	ex officio
<i>Alternate for Mr. B. Droogendyk</i>		
Mr. C. Vandermaarl	St. George	2011

Interchurch Relations

Rev. C. Pronk, Vice Chairman	St. George	2010
Mr. C. Keuning, Secretary	Hamilton	2011
Rev. H. Bergsma	London	2009
Rev. L. J. Bilkes	Dundas	2010
Dr. L.W. Bilkes	Grand Rapids	2010
Rev. J. Koopman	St. Thomas	2011
Mr. E Laman	Brantford	2009
Rev. J. Lewis	Lacombe	2011
Rev. E. Moerdyk	Fenwick	2009
Rev. G.R. Procee	Hamilton	2009
Rev. C.A. Schouls	Chatham	2010
Mr. David Tamminga	Vineland	2011
<i>Alternate:</i> Rev. P. VanderMeyden	Vineland	2011

Publications

Rev. D. Kranendonk, Secretary	Bornholm	2010
Rev. G.R. Procee	Hamilton	2011
Rev. J. Koopman	St. Thomas	2010
Dr. L.W. Bilkes	Grand Rapids	2011
Rev. J. Lewis	Lacombe	2010
Rev. J. Overduin	Mitchell	2009
Rev. C. Pronk	Brantford	2009
Mr. H. VanderMaarl	St. George	2011
Mr. H. VanDoodewaard	Fenwick	2009
Mr. H. Kleyen	Grand Rapids	ex officio

Messenger Editor: Rev. C. Pronk

Open Windows Editor: Rev. J. Lewis

Church Order Subcommittee

Rev. P. Vandermeyden (Convenor)	Vineland
Rev. L.W. Bilkes	Grand Rapids
Rev. J. Koopman	St. Thomas
Mr. R. Pennings	Calgary
Rev. G.R. Procee	Hamilton

Refugee Committee

Rev. E. Moerdyk, Chairman	Abbotsford	2011
Dr. R. Barendregt	Monarch	2009
Mr. H. Koetsier	Abbotsford	2009
Mr. B. Bos	Chilliwack	2009
Mr. J. VanderZwan	Langley	2011

Theological Education

Rev. VanderMeyden, Chairman	Vineland	2011
Rev. G.R. Procee, Secretary	Hamilton	2009
Dr. L. W. Bilkes	Grand Rapids	2011

Rev. K. Gangar	Bellevue	2010
Mr. C. Keuning	Hamilton	2011
Rev. D. H. Kranendonk	Bornholm	2011
Mr. M.H.T. Laman	Pompton Plains	2009
Mr. T. Moerdyk	Grand Rapids	2010
Rev. H. Overduin	Chilliwack	2009
Rev. J. Schoeman	Monarch	2011
Rev. C.A. Schouls	Chatham	2011

Alternates

Mr. J. Benjamins	Brantford	2010
Mr. C. Jonkman	Dundas	2010

Theological Student Support

Mr. J. Brink, Chairman	Hamilton	2009
Mr. R. Naves, Treasurer	Hamilton	2011
Mr. J. Wilbrink	Dundas	2011
Mr. B. Brunsveld	St. George	2010

Alternate: Mr. J.D. Tamminga Hamilton 2009

Youth & Education

Rev. J. Schoeman, Chairman	Monarch	2010
Rev. J. Overduin, Vice Chair	Mitchell	2011
Mr. E. DeKorte, Treasurer	Fenwick	2009
Mr. W. Bouma	St. George	2010
Mr. E. Gritter	Vineland	2011
Mr. B. Moerdyk	Grand Rapids	2010
Mr. R. Roth	Hamilton	2011
Mr. H. DenHollander	Dundas	ex officio

Youth Messenger Editor: Mr. H. DenHollander

Youth Camp Directors: East: Mr. Kim Hamstra, (Brantford)
West: Mr. Marvin VanMaanen (Monarch)

Ad Hoc Emeritus Fund Committee

Mr. Connor Keuning	Hamilton
Mr. Mike Laman	St. George
Mr. Ray Pennings	Calgary

Ad Hoc Study Committee re Westminster Standards

Rev. L.W. Bilkes	Grand Rapids
Rev. J. Lewis	Lacombe
Rev. C. Pronk	St. George
Rev. G.R. Procee	Hamilton

Classis Contracta: Dundas and Hamilton consistories

Coordinator Synodical Committee meetings: H. VanDoodewaard (Fenwick)
236 Lane Rd, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1
Tel: 905-701-5275 E-Mail: vandoo@allstream.net

Denominational Archives: Held in Grand Rapids under supervision of the consistory. Archivist: Mr. Robert Nordyke,
7200 Knapp St. N.E. Ada, MI 49301
Tel: 616-676-2396; E-Mail: rjn17@juno.com

Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of North America

to be held at

Grace Free Reformed Church

17 Patterson Ave., Brantford, Ontario, N3S 6W8

June 2-6, 2008

PROPOSED AGENDA

The Opening Session will commence following the Prayer Service which begins at 7:30 pm Monday June 2, 2008. At that time items 1 – 4 of the agenda will be completed under the auspices of the Convening Church. The exact times and schedules for the balance of Synod 2008 will be established by the Executive.

1. **Opening: Pastor L.W. Bilkes**
2. **Presentation of Credentials**
3. **Election of Executive, Synod 2008**
4. **Public Declaration of Agreement with the Three Forms of Unity**
5. **Order of Business**
 - a. Adoption of Public Acts of Synod 2007
 - b. Adoption of Agenda for Synod 2008
 - c. Appointment of Advisors, Advisory Committees, Assistant Clerk, Treasurer
 - d. Assignment of Press Release and Messenger reporting responsibilities
 - e. Schedule for Synod 2008
6. **Visitors Representing other Denominations**
 - a. Free Church of Scotland Continuing
 - b. Heritage Reformed Churches
 - c. Presbyterian Reformed Church
 - d. Visitors from other Denominations
7. **Standing Committee Reports:**
 - a. Ethics Committee
 - b. Evangelism/Radio Mission
 - c. Inter-Church Relations
 - d. Finance
 - e. Foreign Missions
 - f. Home Missions
 - g. Publications
 - h. Refugee Committee Report
 - i. Theological Education
 - j. Theological Student Support Fund
 - k. Youth and Education

8. **Adhoc Committee Reports**
 - a. Ministers Retirement Fund

9. **Other Reports**
 - a. Church Reports (Article 41 / Church Visitors)
 - b. Treasurer of Synod

10. **Appeals / Overtures**
 - a. Abbotsford/Zion – Pastor Greendyk
 - b. Calgary – Pulpit Access
 - c. Calgary – Feast Days
 - d. Fenwick - Divorce & Re-marriage
 - e. London – Denominational Quotas & congregation size
 - f. Monarch – Amend Theological Ed. Com. Mandate
 - g. St. George – West Minster Doctrinal Standards
 - h. Toronto – Synod 2007 Decision

11. **Correspondence**

12. **Appointments**
 - a. Church Counselors
 - b. Church Visitors
 - c. Church Day Speakers
 - d. Synod 2009
 - date
 - calling Church
 - hosting Church

13. **Closing of Synod**
 - a. Adoption of Executive Minutes 2008
 - b. Adoption of Concept Minutes 2008
 - c. Adoption of News Releases
 - d. Mutual Censure
 - e. Closing and Adjournment

ETHICAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT
TO SYNOD 2008 OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH
AMERICA

Esteemed brothers:

The Ethical Public Affairs Committee (EPA) reports the following:

1.0 The committee met once during the past year on April 19, 2008. This meeting included a review of the following:

- a) the EPA mandate (see Acts of Synod, June 2006);
- b) the status of the annotated bibliography (see Acts of Synod, June 2007);
- c) the survey (see Acts of Synod, June 2007).

2.0 A significant portion of the meeting dealt with a comprehensive paper on Word based ethics written by Dr. L.W Bilkes and Dr. A.G Miskin. The title of the paper is "The Renewing of the Mind: Word Based Ethics for Office Bearers." This paper particularly stresses the basis of Christian ethics, which is the Word of God, and how it is relevant to moral dilemmas of our day. It further discusses the importance of the Decalogue in Scriptures and the implications of the Decalogue's validation and fulfillment by Christ. The Decalogue must be seen as an essential and binding component of any proper discussion and understanding of Christian ethics. The paper was presented as an internal paper; however, the EPA Committee felt that the paper represented a good beginning of an eventual document that would meet the following objectives:

- a) provide a fundamental framework of principles in Christian ethics for the for the benefit of officebearers;
- b) be used as an important resource for determining various applications or positions.

3.0 In order to further meet its mandate, the EPA Committee is committed to the following plan:

- a) complete the document on principles in Christian ethics;
- b) facilitate growth in understanding Christian ethics by providing articles on related topics and books, and by organizing conferences hosted by professionals for the benefit of officebearers and perhaps laypeople.

4.0 Immediate committee action includes reviewing 3 books dealing with the topic of Christian ethics with the intent of providing an evaluation of these resources. This will be included as part of an annotated bibliography which we are currently developing. We intend to have the first book reviewed by this summer.

5.0 Two members of the EPA Committee are scheduled to retire: Dr. Joel Hamstra and Dr. Greg Kenyon. Both brothers have agreed to continue for a term of 3 years.

6.0 Recommendations to the Synod:

- a) to reappoint Dr. Joel Hamstra for a term of 3 years;
- b) to reappoint Dr. Greg Kenyon for a term of 3 years;
- c) to approve the actions of the EPA Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Ted J. Postma, Secretary
Ethical Public Affairs Committee

EVANGELISM / RADIO MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE F. R. C. N. A. TO THE F.R.C. SYNOD 2008

Esteemed Delegates,

The Evangelism / Radio Mission Committee met once during the past year since our last report to Synod 2007, namely, on March 26, 2008. From our meeting, we would like to report the following matters.

RADIO PASTOR'S REPORT:

We are thankful that the Lord has enabled our radio pastors, Rev. Overduin and Rev. Gangar to broadcast messages of a merciful and all-sufficient Saviour to a poor dying world over the airwaves.

Since last year, three new broadcasting stations have been added, one in each of the following countries: Australia, Panama, and the Philippines. As a result, we now broadcast the Banner of Truth program on 21 stations, 14 of them being Am/Fm stations and 7 over short wave radio which is used regularly in many foreign lands. We stopped airing our program on the Beacon of Hope in India since it will take a little longer than anticipated for Rev. Gangar to produce regular messages in the Punjabi language.

Most of the response to our broadcast continues to come from African countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana who often request study materials. Consequently, our bulk mailings, which go out three times per year, is as follows: 425 International addresses, 277 American and 88 Canadian. We encourage our listeners to contact us by email if they have access to a computer to save themselves mailing costs. Also, in this way we can also recommend our broadcasts and material in a more efficient and stewardly manner. Twelve requests were made for Bibles from Nigeria through the Blytheswood Care Center. About 200 printed copies of selected radio messages were distributed by the Langley FRC at the annual Mission Fest.

A highlight for us this year is the beginning of broadcasting the Gospel in the Punjabi language in Vancouver and the Fraser Valley of B.C. This broadcast will air for a ½ hour time slot on Saturday evenings beginning in April. We are advertising this broadcast daily in local Punjabi newspapers for one month and then hope to do so once per week thereafter for six months. We are also in contact with local Sikhs to provide some Christian music to supplement the program. Rev. Moerdyk will facilitate getting Bibles to listeners of this program who request one. We ask that you remember this new outreach in your prayers which will cost about \$10,000 for advertising and broadcasting. In connection with this new ministry we are hoping to set up a website on which to file the Punjabi messages with the title "truepathtogod". This will be much cheaper and efficient than putting them on sermon audio since these messages only benefit Punjabi speaking people.

Sermon audio continues to be used regularly having received a record 1,747 'hits' for the month of January. Typically our messages receive between 400 to 500 hits per month. Presently we have about 420 different messages filed and our site has been 'visited' a total of 32,000 times over the past eight years. The Lord alone knows the fruit resulting from the sowing of His infallible Word in this manner..

FINANCES:

As indicated in the financial statements we have received a \$30,000 legacy this past year which has resulted in surplus of about \$14,000 in 2007. However, as we have indicated during the last five Synods we are operating at a deficit between \$10,000 and \$15,000 per year. Consequently, in our recommendations to Synod, we would like to retain the \$10.00 quota per member also in view of the costly Punjabi outreach which is just beginning. At our last meeting however, we have discussed the possibility of dropping the quota altogether since radio evangelism is a 'ministry'. Then we would have to rely on free will offerings from churches for this work and that the Lord incline individuals to give generously to this worthy cause as was the case last year. We again thank our treasurer, Rein DeVries, for his meticulous work.

We are grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to proclaim the Word of God which is "the sword of the Spirit" and pray that the "incorruptible seed of the Gospel" by which sinners are regenerated and God's people are instructed may continually be sown. May the name of the Lord Jesus be lifted up in this way as the only Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. We pray that God bless this radio ministry with His almighty power and marvelous grace.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SYNOD:

- (a) To retain the Quota level of \$10.00 per year for 2009.
- (b) To reappoint Br. Rein DeVries for another 3 year term to 2011 since he has presently served two terms and to appoint Rev. E. Moerdyk for a 3 year term to 2011 in place of Rev. L. Roth who has now served four terms.
- (c) To approve the actions of the committee.

May the Lord richly bless all your deliberations and decisions at Synod 2008.

On behalf of the Evangelism / Radio Mission Committee,
L. Roth, Secretary

Free Reformed Churches of America
Banner of Truth - Radio Evangelism Fund
Balance sheet as at December 31,2007

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
ASSETS			
Cash & Short Term Deposits	3	\$104,746	\$91,336
Accounts Receivable	5	502	678
Securities	4	15,480	15,000
Total Assets		\$120,728	\$107,014
LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable		0	240
Other			
Total Liabilities		0	240
		\$120,728	\$106,774
EQUITY			
Opening Balance		\$106,774	\$115,940
Operating Surplus (Deficit)		13,954	-9,166
		\$120,728	\$106,774

Free Reformed Churches of North America
Banner of Truth, Radio Evangelism Fund
INCOME STATEMENT
with comparison of 2006 results
For the year ending Dec. 31 ,2007

	2007	2006	Variances	F(U)	Notes	2007	2008
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	\$	%		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Projection</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>							
Assessments	35,000	43,120	-8120	-19%		34,560	43,500
Interest	2,602	2,770	-168	-6%		2,000	2,000
Foreign Exchange - Gain (Loss)	0	73	-73			0	0
Collections	18,924	15,589	3,335	21%	6	20,000	20,000
Donations - Individuals	33,502	2,970	30,532	1028%	7	5000	5,000
	<u>\$90,028</u>	<u>\$64,522</u>	<u>\$25,506</u>	<u>40%</u>		<u>\$61,560</u>	<u>\$70,500</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>							
Web Broadcasting	460	488	-28			600	800
Radio Stations	63,921	62,406	1,515	2%		75,000	75,000
	<u>64,381</u>	<u>62,894</u>	<u>1,487</u>	<u>2%</u>		<u>75,600</u>	<u>75,800</u>
Administration:							
Tape/mailings	4,954	3,318	1636	49%		6,500	7,000
Bank Charges	470	196	~	~		350	500
Other	6,269	7,280	-1,011	-14%		7,000	7,200
	<u>11,693</u>	<u>10,794</u>	<u>899</u>	<u>8%</u>		<u>13,850</u>	<u>14,700</u>
<u>Total</u>							
<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>\$76,074</u>	<u>\$73,688</u>	<u>2,386</u>	<u>3%</u>		<u>\$89,450</u>	<u>\$90,500</u>
OPER. SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	<u>\$13,954</u>	<u>-\$9,166</u>	<u>\$23,120</u>	<u>-252%</u>		<u>-\$27,890</u>	<u>-\$20,000</u>

Free Reformed Churches of America
Banner of Truth, Radio Evangelism Fund.
INCOME STATEMENT - with budget comparison
For the year ending Dec. 31, 2007

	2007	2007	Variances	F(U)	Notes	2008	2009
	Actual	Budget	\$	%		<u>Budget</u>	Projection
<u>REVENUES</u>							
Assessments	35,000	34,560	440	1%	5	43,500	45,000
Interest	2,602	2,000	602	30%		2,000	2,000
Foreign Exchange - Gain (Loss)	0	0		-			100%
Collections	18,924	20,000	-1,076	-5%		20,000	20,000
Donations - Individuals	33,502	5,000	28,502	570%	7	5,000	5,000
	<u>\$90,028</u>	<u>\$61,560</u>	<u>\$28,468</u>	<u>46%</u>		<u>70,500</u>	<u>72,000</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>							
Web Broadcasting	460	600	-140	-23%		800	700
Radio Stations	63,921	75,000	-11,079	-15%		75,000	80,000
	<u>64,381</u>	<u>75,600</u>	<u>-11,219</u>			<u>75,800</u>	<u>80,700</u>
Administration							
Tape/mailings	4954	6500	-1546	-24%		7000	7000
Bank Charges	470	350	120	34%		500	600
Other	6,269	7,000	-731	-10%		7,200	12,500
	<u>11693</u>	<u>13850</u>	<u>-2157</u>	<u>-16%</u>		<u>14700</u>	<u>20100</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>76074</u>	<u>89450</u>	<u>-13376</u>	<u>-15%</u>		<u>90500</u>	<u>100800</u>
OPER.SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	<u>13954</u>	<u>-27890</u>	<u>41844</u>			<u>-20000</u>	<u>-28800</u>

Free Reformed Churches of North America
Notes to Financial Statements
 Banner of Truth-Radio Evangelism Fund
 For the year ended December 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Radio Missions fund are prepared using the Accrual basis of accounting. All representations are in Canadian dollars. The exchange rates used for the financial statements are as follows:

	Avg.	Closing
2007	1.093	1.028
2008	1.03	1.04
2009	1.05	1.06

2. Review of the statements:

The Financial Statements of the Radio Mission Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 audit program by Jack Hoek and Matt Hirst (both from Brantford). They were found to accurately represent the financial transactions and current position of the fund.

3. Cash:

Cash and short Term deposits consist of the following:

	2007	2006
Cnd chequing:		
Bank Balances	34,689	
Deposits held over year end	<u>4,236</u>	
	38,934	16,144
Investment account (3.00%)	<u>63,271</u>	<u>74,150</u>
	102,205	90,294
US chequing	<u>2,541</u>	<u>1,042</u>
	<u>\$105,746</u>	<u>\$91,336</u>

4. Securities:

Securities held are Guaranteed investment certificates.

Identification #	Interest%	Face Value		Maturity Date	Accrued Interest	
		2007	2006		2007	2006
BNS924521842665	3.20%		15,000	June9/07		271
100000004SXSXW	3.10%	<u>15,480</u>	~	June9/08	<u>271</u>	
					<u>271</u>	<u>271</u>

5. Accounts Receivable

	2007	2006
Interest from Securities	271	271
GST refund	464	445

Assessments:

Congregation	Opening Balance	Current yr assessment	Amount Paid	Closing Balance
Abbotsford	0	1,192	1,192	0
Bellevue	0	152	152	0
Bornholm	0	656	656	0
Brantford	0	2,784	2,784	0
Chatham	0	1,896	1,896	0
Chilliwack	0	2,528	2,528	0
Pompton				
Plains	0	1,416	1,416	0
Dundas	0	3,632	3,632	0
Grand Rapids	0	2,504	2,504	0
Hamilton	0	2,688	2,688	0
Lacombe	0	584	584	0
Langley	0	496	496	0
London	0	792	792	0
Mitchell	0	1,720	1,720	0
Monarch	0	2,200	2,200	0
Fenwick	-233	1,992	1,992	-233
St George	0	1,744	1,744	0
St Thomas	0	2,432	2,432	0
Toronto	0	104	104	0
Vineland	0	3,488	3,488	0
	-233	35,000	35,000	-233

-233 20

TOTAL Accounts Receivable

502 736

6. Collections by various CONGREGATIONS:

Brantford	3335
Chatham	940
Hamilton	7,318
Langley	4,395
Mitchell	1,670
St George	1,266
	<u>18,924</u>

7. Donations - Individuals.

A one time donation of \$30,000. was received during the current year.

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT TO SYNOD 2008 OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA

Esteemed brothers:

The Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC) reports the following:

INTRODUCTION

As a committee of 14 members we were enabled to meet twice since Synod 2007. Rev. C. Pronk who has served our committee for 34 years is our chairman. We met with delegates of other churches; this year primarily in Newark, New Jersey at the meeting of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council. All these activities were carried out with the hope and prayer that the Lord, the Head of the Church would bring together those who truly belong together.

In accordance with our mandate we seek contact with churches that, to the best of our knowledge, are churches that maintain an unreserved commitment to and agreement with the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures as the Word of God, and the validity and relevance of our Reformed confessions. In our meetings with other churches we attempt to seek confirmation of this commitment, develop an appreciation of their history, discuss what we have in common, where we differ, and gauge the degree of doctrinal and spiritual unity, that forms the essential basis for all formal unity. Most of this work takes place prior to or during a *Limited Contact* relationship. While the goal of eventual union with churches with whom we have developed an ecclesiastical relationship may seem unattainable in most cases, we do not wish to preclude this ideal in our dialogue with other denominations.

Once a formal, corresponding relationship has been established, we attempt to pursue ways and means to increase interactions at all levels in our churches in order to deepen a sense of spiritual unity. This brotherly, spiritual unity will hopefully lead to eventual union, with the Lord's indispensable blessing.

While cherishing our distinctives and history, let us resist any complacency in our separateness. Any pride or smugness about having arrived at some sort of balanced view of the Reformed doctrines, is grievous in God's sight. Also in the work of reaching out to other church federations we ought to be clothed in humility, pained by the brokenness of the Body of Christ. As Dr. John MacLeod, the one-time Principal of the Free Church College, so aptly noted in this regard: "... what does not justify the making of a separation does not justify the maintaining of it." Let us personally and corporately beseech the Head of the Church to open the way to genuine spiritual and formal unity amongst those who are now separated.

NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL (NAPARC)

We delegated two members, Rev. G.R. Procee and Rev. L.J. Bilkes of our committee to attend the annual meeting of NAPARC last November in Newark, NJ. At that meeting the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Presbyterian Reformed Church applied for membership and asked for our endorsement, which we propose to offer.

CONTACT WITH CORRESPONDING CHURCHES

Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken (CGK)

Rev. G.R. Procee represented our churches at the Fall 2007 meetings of the CGK's tri-annual General Synod. We refer you to his report in the December 2007 issue of *The Messenger*. We have had full correspondence with the CGK since the 1950's. We regularly have ministers from our sister churches preach on our pulpits, with much appreciation. It concerns us, however, that the CGK have pursued a questionable policy in recent years of establishing and even accelerating ecclesiastical relations with the *Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt* and the *Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*, both heavily influenced by neo-Calvinism and modern evangelicalism. While at the Synodical level little progress is currently being made towards federative unity (because of the incessant and assertive opposition by a conservative minority, as well as the fear of a break-up) Synod 2007 continued to encourage cooperation at the local level. We are also concerned about the space given to experimentations in worship practices.

Free Church of Scotland - Continuing (FCSC)

The FCSC has accepted our offer to enter into a *Limited Correspondence* relationship. We expect to have one of their men, Rev. Maurice Roberts, attend our 2008 Synod meetings, the Lord willing. Our relationship with this Scottish denomination has an interesting dimension in that this federation enjoys a growing number of congregations and pastors in North America. Dr. David P. Murray, the new third professor at the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (PRTS), belongs to this denomination and frequently preaches in our pulpits.

Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC)

The HRC has also accepted our offer to enter into a *Limited Correspondence* relationship. Cooperation with these churches is increasing, also at the local level. We look forward to the second combined Elders and Deacons Conference this Fall, as well as a Preaching Conference at PRTS organized by our Theological Education Committee to which the HRC men and others are invited. We have a standing invitation to attend their Fall Classis meeting, but were unable to attend this meeting in October 2007 because it took place in B.C.

CONTACT WITH LIMITED CONTACT CHURCHES

Hersteld Hervormde Kerk (HHK)

Rev. G.R. Procee met with some leaders of this new denomination in The Netherlands in the Fall of 2007. We refer you to a report in March 2008 issue of *The Messenger*. We hope to attend one of their Synod meetings in the near future.

Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches (OCRC)

No meetings were held with this denomination this past year.

Presbyterian Reformed Church (PRC)

We had a profitable meeting with two brothers at the November 2007 NAPARC meeting. The desire on both sides to build a stronger relationship remains largely unfulfilled up to now, but this may change as they hope to send their first delegate to our 2008 Synod.

United Reformed Churches (URC)

A meeting was held at which a paper prepared by Rev. E. Moerdyk on preaching was discussed. Rev. H. Bergsma attended their 2007 Synod meeting in Chicago, where he was cordially received. We wish to remind the URC brothers of our common roots in the Secession movement which emphasized Biblical experiential piety.

CONTACT WITH OTHER CHURCHES

Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)

The CanRC at their 2007 Synod meeting ended our *Limited Contact* relationship. As a committee we have accepted this decision. Their Sub-Committee East for Contact with Churches in North America has approached us about re-establishing some form of contact. We propose to meet with them at the November 2008 NAPARC meeting.

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (FPC)

As early as 1959 our churches have pondered the establishment of an ecclesiastical relationship with the FPC, a church that in the opinion of “our fathers” shared the same precious faith with us. It wasn’t until 1982 that an official letter of invitation was sent to Scotland; which, regrettably, was declined. But seeing that the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is an experiential Reformed denomination that shares with us an appreciation of orthodox and experimental Calvinism, adhering to the old paths of the First and Second Reformations, and ardent proponents of the free Gospel offer, our committee wishes to renew our attempts to seek contact. It is proposed that we offer a *Limited Contact* fellowship.

Reformed Church of America (RCA) congregations

We refer you to a report in March 2008 issue of *The Messenger*. The Providence Reformed Church in Grand Rapids hopes to receive a new minister soon in the person of Rev. Dick Budding from the *Protestantse Kerk in Nederland* (PKN). In February 2007 this congregation wrote to us that “we have agreed, in principle, last December to establish this relationship with the

FRC. We appreciate very much the contacts we have with the FRC and your interest in seeking this contact with us.” The only thing still needed before we can propose a special relationship to Synod is a joint doctrinal statement.

Reformed Church of Quebec / Farel Reformed Theological Seminary (FRTS)

No meetings were held with this denomination this past year. We laud their efforts to raise awareness of the Huguenot history in the Province of Quebec at the 400th year celebration of Quebec City this year.

POLICY CHANGES and CHURCH ORDER REVISIONS

As instructed by Synod 2007 (see Acts article 27) we have reviewed our policies regarding admittance of non-FRC ministers and candidates to our pulpits. We have conducted a comprehensive review of all sections in the Church Order pertaining to this issue, as well as the policy adopted by Synod 2005 regarding senior PRTS students, which was to be revisited in 2008. As a result your Committee proposes to change our current practice to reflect the concerns expressed at Synod 2007’s lest access to our pulpits by non-FRC ministers and candidate get out of control. See appendix.

These changes are as follows:

1. All non-FRC ministers and candidates applying to join our churches must undergo a full candidacy examination;
2. The approval for non-FRC ministers and candidates to join our churches is raised from a simple majority to 70% (the same 70% approval needed for FRC men to enter the theological training program);
3. Restrict access by senior PRTS students (who have a licence to preach) to men who are member of a corresponding (*Limited* or *Complete*) church federation;
4. PRTS trained ministerial candidates may have access to our pulpits, provided this is endorsed by one or more full-time Free Reformed professors at PRTS, and a colloquium doctum is sustained;
5. The preaching of our ministers in non-corresponding churches requires him to only inform his own consistory and the nearest Free Reformed congregation; and
6. Definitions of the three levels of ecclesiastical fellowship are fine-tuned and expanded.

In addition numerous minor editorial changes have been made to reflect current practice and to improve clarity and consistency.

PULPIT SUPPLY

In accordance with previously Synod-adopted policy, the following ministers from other denominations were granted approval to preach in our churches for another year, provided they remain in good standing in the church they serve: The Revs. T. Aicken, T. Atkinson, P. de Vries, J. Gangar, C. Heiberg, M. Ives, D. Jussely, R. Lanning, J. Muller, J. Pipa, D. Silversides, D. Thomas, M.Vandenberg, D. Zadok as well as senior PRTS student Martin Kuivenhoven. Ministers from corresponding churches (CGK, FCSC and HRC) may also be invited to our pulpits.

INVITED DELEGATES TO SYNOD

Our committee wishes to make the following proposals designed to improve the reception and treatment of invited delegates from other churches to Synod:

1. Include in the adopting process of Synod's agenda (usually on the first morning) the setting of specific times when invited delegates from other churches are to address Synod. The business on hand would be suspended to allow the invited delegate to address the meeting. *RATIONALE: Besides being respectful and kind it allows the invited delegate to plan his time, and avoid having to possibly wait for hours. With executive sessions this annoyance is only increased. By sprinkling these addresses throughout the meeting, one avoids potential weariness from setting in.*

2. Instruct the hosting congregation to exert every effort to provide comfortable accommodations for invited delegates (and we suggest consistory delegates as well!) in private homes, and to duly inform our guests of arrangements made. Consideration should be given to appoint a Hospitality Committee at the local level to solicit help and coordinate travel (e.g. airport pickup/return, driving to and from Synod). Such a committee needs to remind hosts to provide private sleeping and bathroom facilities, and to respect the delegates' need for rest. This provision would mainly apply to overseas' delegates. *RATIONALE: The major benefit is cost reduction. Many empty-nesters and others with guest facilities are able and willing to accommodate one or more guests/delegates.*

3. Invite one visiting delegate from a church with whom we have a Complete or Limited Correspondence relationship to lead a morning devotion (say for 30 minutes, including prayer and singing). *RATIONALE: It provides Synod delegates with an opportunity to hear one of our "befriended brothers" deliver a message, with the hope that it would enhance our spiritual unity.*

APPOINTMENTS AND RE-APPOINTMENTS

Rev. K. Gangar and John Wilbrink have served on our committee for 12 years, and must now retire. We express our appreciation to these brothers for the many years of valuable service. The terms of Connor J. Keuning and Rev. L. Roth are up. We propose to reduce the size of our committee from 14 to 13. We recommend the following brothers for (re)appointment:

Reappoint: Connor J. Keuning and Rev. L. Roth as primary members for a three year term.

Appoint: Rev. J. Lewis and David Tamminga (now alternate members) as primary members and Henry Vanderveen as an alternate member, all for a three year term.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SYNOD 2008:

1. To approve the list of non-FRC ministers granted permission to preach on our pulpits for one year;
2. To approve of the attached amended sections of the Church Order dealing with the admittance of non-FRC ministers, candidates and students, as well as definitions of ecclesiastical relationships;
3. To offer the *Limited Contact* level relationship to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland;
4. To approve the sending of the Revs. H. Bergsma and L.J. Bilkes as delegates to the November 2008 NAPARC meeting in Philadelphia, with Ed Laman as alternate;
5. To endorse the CanRC application of membership in NAPARC;
6. To endorse the PRC application of membership in NAPARC;
7. To approve the re-appointment of Connor J. Keuning and Rev. L. Roth as primary members for a three year term;
8. To approve the appointment of Rev. J. Lewis and David Tamminga as primary members and Henry Vanderveen as an alternate member, all for a three year term;
9. To approve the above proposals designed to improve the reception and treatment of invited delegates from other churches to Synod, and blend its contents into Supplement C-2 of the Church Order.
10. To approve the actions of this committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Connor J. Keuning, Secretary
Interchurch Relations Committee

Free Reformed Churches of North America
 Proposed Changes to Church Order
 March 2008

CALLING OF MINISTERS TO ANOTHER CONGREGATION

Article 5

G. Calling ministers from other denominations:

1. A consistory considering calling a minister or a candidate from another denomination, shall seek for the advice of the Synodical deputies for Interchurch Relations. Before giving their advice, these deputies shall make thorough inquiry (including a colloquium doctum) with respect to both the denomination and the person of the minister or candidate. When their advice is negative, the consistory shall not pursue the matter. Should the consistory not desire to abide by the negative advice, it ought to present this case before Synod.
2. In case the minister, who is being considered for a call, does not belong to a denomination with which we have Complete Correspondence relationship (see Art. 51), the Consistory must inform the deputies of the reasons for considering such a minister and whether the needs of the local church justify his nomination.
3. With respect to the calling of ministers belonging to a denomination with which we have no Complete Correspondence relationship, deputies cannot make a final decision. They must report to Synod, which decides whether or not the minister may be called. With respect to calling ministers belonging to a denomination with which we do have Complete Correspondence relationship, deputies may make a decision.
4. When the minister has accepted the call to the congregation, he shall not be admitted to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments nor be installed in the congregation which has called him until he has sustained an examination similar to a candidacy examination at Synod. Before such an examination can take place, the minister is to present good evidence of his call to the ministry as well as good testimonies with regard to his confession and walk of life.

A **candidate** is to show that he has successfully completed the required studies at a reputable seminary or university in preparation for the ministry, as well as good testimonies concerning his confession and walk of life. A candidate must sustain a full examination at Synod similar to that of a candidate in the Free Reformed Churches.

When it concerns a minister who has previously been a minister in the Free Reformed Churches, the same rules shall be observed, with the understanding that the colloquium doctum shall consist of an examination as to whether this minister, as far as doctrine is concerned, agrees with the doctrines of the Free Reformed Churches.

At every colloquium doctum or examination, Synod shall be assisted by deputies Interchurch Relations.

5. Decisions to admit a minister or candidate either by deputies or Synod require a 70% majority.

H. When a minister of our churches accepts a call to a denomination with which our churches maintain an ecclesiastical relationship (see Art. 51), the following rules shall apply:

1. The Consistory shall as soon as possible determine the date upon which the minister shall terminate his service. This date is the same date on which the minister shall officially preach his farewell sermon.
2. The Consistory is obligated to pay the stipulated salary to the minister and provide him with housing up to the date set according to '1'. After this date the Consistory is discharged of any obligations undertaken in the call letter or during the tenure of the minister. This implies that a minister has no claim to any emeritus funds whatsoever, nor his widow to any financial assistance. It is considered that the minister is, from the date mentioned in '1', the entire and sole responsibility of the church whose call he has accepted.
3. The Consistory shall give the minister an official release which is also a testimonial of his doctrine and life (see Article 10 and Article 5-C).

I. Admission of ministers from other denominations:

1. When a minister of another denomination desires to be admitted to the office of minister in the Free Reformed Churches, the following rules are to be observed:
 - a. He calls on the consistory of the Free Reformed Church closest to his residence.
 - b. The consistory presents him to the deputies Interchurch Relations.
 - c. He must present good testimonies with regard to his confession and walk of life, if possible from his own denomination.
 - d. After this, deputies Interchurch Relations shall closely examine him with regard to the motives for his request, his relationship to the Lord and his calling to the office of minister, as well as the quality of his ministerial training.
 - e. Deputies Interchurch Relations shall examine him as to his convictions regarding the doctrines of his church with which the Free Reformed Churches possibly disagree.
 - f. When deputies Interchurch Relations judge the application for admission to be church orderly and the applicant's confession and walk of life commendable, they present the request to Synod which with the assistance of the deputies of Interchurch Relations, conducts a candidacy examination. This procedure is to be followed only when it concerns ministers who have successfully completed their studies at a reputable theological seminary or university in preparation for the ministry. When it concerns **candidates**, they shall, in addition to meeting the foregoing requirements, present their degrees.
 - g. Upon acceptance of the application, which shall require 70% majority, Synod shall make the minister or candidate eligible for call in the Free Reformed Churches for a two year period. If after two years no congregation has issued a call, the eligibility for a call in the Free Reformed Churches (of the minister applicant) shall expire.
 - h. Upon accepting a call from a congregation of the Free Reformed Churches he shall, at his installation and/or ordination sign the Form of Subscription for ministers of the Word. (Supplement No. 10)

2. When a minister who has **not** pursued a course of study at a theological seminary or university in preparation for the ministry, desires to be admitted to the office of minister in the Free Reformed Churches, the following rules are to be observed:
 - a. He contacts the Consistory of the Free Reformed Church closest to his residence.
 - b. The Consistory presents him to the deputies Interchurch Relations.
 - c. He must present a good attestation regarding his confession and walk of life, if possible, from his own denomination.
 - d. Deputies Interchurch Relations make inquiries as to the manner in which he has been ordained to the ministry.
 - e. Deputies Interchurch Relations closely examine him with regard to the motives for his request, as also to his calling and his relationship to the Lord.
 - f. Upon favourable result, Synod, with the assistance of deputies of Interchurch Relations, shall examine him by having him deliver a sermon on a text selected by deputies Interchurch Relations, in order to ascertain whether or not he has exceptional gifts.
 - g. If the preliminary judgement of Synod is favourable, it will conduct a peremptory examination of the particular person with regard to his general knowledge, orthodoxy, and his basic knowledge of practical homiletics and pastoral work in the congregation.
 - h. Upon favourable result, Synod shall designate several congregations where he shall, under the supervision of the pastors and consistories of these congregations, preach until the next meeting of Synod is convened. The consistories of these congregations shall report on his preaching to Synod.
 - i. After receiving favourable reports from the consistories, Synod shall proceed to examine him according to Article 8, sub B-9, and upon favourable results (requiring a 70% majority) shall declare him eligible for call for a two year period. If after two years no congregation has issued a call, the eligibility for a call in the Free Reformed Churches shall expire.
 - j. If, along with his minister, either the entire or part of the congregation (which he served) also joins the Free Reformed Churches, and his labours are required there, the following rules are to be observed:
 - After the rules mention in a - g have been observed with favourable results, Synod may permit him to speak a word of exhortation in his congregation and continue his work there, as he did before, until the next meeting of Synod is convened
 - During the same time the procedure mentioned in h – i is to be carried out.
 - k. After he has been declared eligible for call and upon accepting a call from a congregation of the Free Reformed Churches he shall subscribe to the Form of Subscription for ministers of the Word at his installation.

J. Visiting Ministers:

1. A visiting minister, candidate or seminary student from another church federation ordinarily may not preach in a Free Reformed Church. Exceptions to this general rule are provided for in points 2 through 5 below.

2. A visiting minister from a church with which the Free Reformed Churches have a Complete or Limited Corresponding relationship (see Art. 51), ordinarily may preach in the Free Reformed Churches.
3. A visiting minister from a church with which the Free Reformed Churches have only a Limited Contact or no formal relationship at all may be granted a one-year licence to preach in the Free Reformed Churches if he has received permission according to the following rules:
 - a. The inviting consistory sends a request for the visiting minister to preach in the Free Reformed Churches to deputies Interchurch Relations, after coming to a positive evaluation of their research regarding the minister's orthodoxy. The consistory is to contact the minister and ask pertinent questions of a doctrinal nature. The consistory is expected to have audited several sermons as to their doctrinal soundness.
 - b. These deputies shall make a decision as soon as possible, after conducting a Colloquium Doctum with the visiting minister and evaluating the consistory's report on its findings.
 - c. Upon favourable decision, deputies shall grant a one year preaching licence and shall make a formal announcement concerning this in the official magazine of the Free Reformed Churches. Preaching licenses shall ordinarily be renewed annually by Synod upon the recommendation of the deputies Interchurch Relations. If a "licensed" visiting minister does not preach for three years in the churches his name shall be removed from the approved list. Re-instatement shall take place only with the unanimous approval of the Executive of the deputies Interchurch Relations.
 - d. Deputies Interchurch Relations at all times have a right to withdraw the permission but shall do so (unless there are exceptional circumstances) only after a meeting with the minister concerned.
 - e. The granted permission shall be reviewed by the deputies Interchurch Relations when the minister concerned has accepted a call to a church from another denomination in Canada or the U.S.A.
 - f. One-time requests (by one or two congregations in any given year) for only one Lord's Day may be approved by a 75% majority of the Executive of the deputies Interchurch Relations. This provision typically applies to cases where the minister in question is not normally available because of the long distance or is available on short notice. Such approvals do not constitute the granting of a license to preach in our churches, nor shall it be published in the official magazine of the Free Reformed Churches.
4. Senior **students** studying at the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (PRTS) who have permission to preach in their denomination, with which we have a Limited or Complete Correspondence relationship, may be invited to preach in our churches provided the request of the Free Reformed consistory is accompanied by a recommendation of one or more of the full-time Free Reformed professors at PRTS. If the consistory's invitation concerns the leading of worship services in a preaching station the request would also need the concurrence of the local board or committee of such a preaching station. The procedures under 3 above must be followed.
5. Recent PRTS trained ministerial **candidates** may be invited to preach in our churches provided the request by the Free Reformed consistory is accompanied by a recommendation of one or more of the full-time Free

Reformed professors at PRTS. The procedures under 3 above must be followed.

PREACHING ELSEWHERE

Article 15

No minister may preach the Word or administer the Sacraments in places where there is no Free Reformed church without informing his own consistory and the nearest congregation before accepting such preaching engagements. This does not apply to churches with whom we have a *Limited* or *Complete Corresponding* relationship.

OTHER CHURCHES

Article 51

The relationship of our churches to other denominations is regulated by Synod.

Our churches, in order to manifest the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, seek contact with other Reformed churches, which to the best of our knowledge, are churches that maintain an unreserved commitment to and agreement with (1) the infallibility and inerrancy of Scriptures as the Word of God and (2) the validity and relevance of our confessions. In order to facilitate this process our churches have adopted three levels of ecclesiastical fellowship: *Limited Contact*, *Limited Correspondence* and *Complete Correspondence*. With regard to *Limited Contact*, it is our understanding that establishing a *Limited Contact* form of ecclesiastical fellowship with another federation in no way implies that moving towards a corresponding level is binding or expected or necessary, while it does open the door for such development under God's blessing. A *Limited Contact* relationship ought primarily to function as an exploratory, communicatory level in an official and brotherly manner.

Limited Contact including:

1. the occasional attendance and addressing of each other's broadest assembly;
2. sending each other copies the Acts or Minutes of the broadest assemblies;
3. meeting of each other's interchurch relations committees or other delegates to:
 - a) seek confirmation of the unreserved commitment to and agreement with (1) the infallibility and inerrancy of Scriptures as the Word of God and (2) the validity and relevance of our Confessions.
 - b) develop an appreciation of each other's history;
 - c) discuss what we have in common, and where we differ;
 - d) gauge the degree of doctrinal and spiritual unity; and
4. cooperation in areas such as: para-church mission and world relief organizations, and Christian education.

Limited Correspondence including:

1. opening the Lord's Table to each other;
2. opening the pulpit to each other's visiting ministers;
3. the frequent attendance and addressing of each other's broadest assembly (visiting delegates attending our Synod may be asked for advice if so permitted by the chairman);
4. sending each other copies of the Acts or Minutes of the broadest assemblies;
5. offering spiritual support consisting of:
 - a) calling attention to each other's spiritual and ecclesiastical problems with mutual efforts toward scriptural solutions;
 - b) warning each other of spiritual dangers which arise and which spread and begin to dominate the church of Christ;
 - c) correcting each other in love regarding any slackening in connection with the confession or practice of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3);
6. cooperation in areas of common responsibility, for example: offering material support and cooperation or consultation with regard to mission work, theological training and such like; and
7. developing a joint statement particularly on those doctrines on which there are divergent views in the Reformed church community for the purpose of gauging the extent of doctrinal unity.

Complete Correspondence including:

1. the mutual acceptance of each other's (membership) attestations;
2. opening the Lord's Table to each other;
3. opening the pulpit to each other's visiting ministers;
4. mutually considering each other's ministers eligible for call;
5. within the North American context only, mutual consultation with each other regarding significant actions such as, for example, the revision of the confession or of the Church Order, the creation, revision or cancellation of a relationship of correspondence. etc.;
6. the regular attendance and addressing of each other's broadest assembly (visiting delegates attending our Synod may be asked for advice if so permitted by the chairman);
7. sending each other copies of Acts or Minutes of the broadest assemblies;
8. offering spiritual support consisting of:
 - a) calling attention to each other's spiritual and ecclesiastical problems with mutual efforts toward Scriptural solutions;
 - b) warning each other of spiritual dangers which arise and which spread and begin to dominate the Church of Christ;
 - c) correcting each other in love regarding any slackening in connection with the confession or practice of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3); and
9. cooperation in areas of common responsibility, for example: offering material support and cooperation or consultation with regard to mission work, theological training, and such like.

10. adoption of a joint statement particularly on those doctrines on which there are divergent views in the Reformed church community for the purpose of gauging the extent of doctrinal unity. Such adoption does not constitute the acceptance of an extra credal or otherwise binding statement.

Other churches whose usages regarding non-essentials differ from ours shall not be rejected. (*Comment: this is transferred from art. 86 and now included in art. 51*)

2007 Finance Committee Report

Esteemed Brothers,

Based on our discussions and our meeting on February 8, 2008 and April 11, 2008 the Finance Committee would like to make the following recommendations and report on the various matters for your approval.

We are now required to file a Charities Form annually with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. In connection with this, we remind all the committees to forward their financial statements and a signed copy of the Review Program (as approved by Synod 1997) to the finance committee by March 31 of each year.

We expect that the process of having a USA Charity registered will be completed by the end of the year.

We recommend that all of our Canadian churches join the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, as this organization has proven to be a very valuable resource for us. You can find them on the internet at www.cccc.org.

We also provide for your information, a requirement for the deacons to issue T5007 slips for benevolent payments made to individuals. All churches are required to issue a T5007 slip when a series of payments are made which total more than \$500. For example, a single payment of \$1,000 would not have to be reported, but five payments of \$200 each to one individual would. Churches are required to file the slips and a summary with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. The churches located in the US should evaluate filing requirements in their jurisdictions.

We also want to inform the churches that if they pay their members interest for loans, Canada Revenue Agency requires that a T5 slip be issued.

We have reviewed the prior years of the Acts of Synod and have included in our report all finance committee policies.

1. Ministers' Emeritus Fund:

The minister's emeritus fund was designed to assist the congregations in meeting the financial needs of their emeritus pastors. This amount is in addition to the various government programs (i.e. CPP, OAS and Social Security) and personal savings that a retired minister has accumulated.

In addition to the work of the finance committee, the Synodical appointed adhoc committee is working on additional recommendations for the Emeritus Fund.

As approved at Synod 2007, the assessment for the Emeritus Fund will also be increasing each year with the CPI.

The Minister's Emeritus Fund financial statements have been reviewed by Jeff Haalstra (Brantford) and by Jack Hoek (Brantford) and where found to be in good order.

The committee submits for your approval:

- a. The Canadian Consumer Price Index is 2.4% for the year 2006. We propose to increase emeritus payments for the calendar year 2009 by 2.4% from \$24,989 to \$25,589 for emeritus ministers and from \$19,993 to \$20,473 for ministers' widows. All payments are to be made in Canadian dollars.
- b. To increase the assessment for 2009 from \$20.00 per member to \$20.50.
- c. To approve the attached financial statements for the year 2007.

2. Ministers' Salary Guidelines:

We advise congregations that it is the local congregation's responsibility to adequately provide for their ministers as per our church order Article 11. We ask that you prayerfully consider this matter in your congregation and that your pastor is paid based on his financial needs and not based on what your congregation can afford. Members of our finance committee are available to meet with your congregation and/or consistory to discuss these matters. With this regard we, as a finance committee, feel that we can not adequately recommend a minimum salary guideline to suit the needs of every pastor since the needs of a pastor vary based on:

1. Their stage in life
2. The area they live in.

We remind the deacons that Synod requires that they meet with their pastor on an annual basis to discuss his financial needs.

Synod has also previously approved that in addition to the basic salary each pastor receives \$400 for every year in the ministry, up to a maximum of \$4,000, paid in Canadian dollars in Canada and US dollars in the USA. This part of a pastors' income has not increased with the CPI each year and therefore the committee recommends increasing it to \$450 per year effective January 1, 2009. We will also be recommending that this be increased each year after that by the CPI.

We also advise the Canadian churches that they may be allowed to split the pastors' income with his wife. If income is split with the pastors' wife, there is an expectation of her to participate in the ministry. This could result in income tax savings. Should a church want to setup this type of arrangement, the call letter to the pastor needs to reflect this arrangement.

We remind the churches that any car allowance paid to their pastor that is not paid strictly on a per kilometer/mile basis is a taxable benefit to the pastor.

The treasurer should then provide the pastor with the proper tax form. Reports need to be submitted to the church treasurer to show that the car allowance is paid on a per kilometer/mile basis.

Synod has adopted the per kilometer/mileage allowance set each year by the Canadian and American governments. Current guidelines for the calendar year 2008 are \$0.46 per kilometer in Canada and \$0.505 per mile in the USA.

At Synod 2007, a motion was approved to encourage congregations to contribute a small percentage of their pastor's earnings to a "locked-in" RSP. We are recommending that these contributions be made mandatory in the amount of 3% on a non-matching basis and an additional 2% on a matching basis. It is the opinion of the committee that these contributions are necessary for a pastor to retire when comparing his retirement income to another individual with a company pension plan.

The committee submits for your approval:

- a. The Canadian Consumer Price Index for the year 2007 is 2.4% and the American Consumer Price Index is 4.1%. We recommend that the salaries increase by 2.4% for Canadian ministers and by 4.1% for American ministers for the calendar year 2008. We therefore request approval to increase the minimum salaries for ministers effective January 1, 2009 as follows:
 - Canadian ministers from CDN \$37,485 to CDN \$38,385
 - American ministers from US \$36,253 to US \$37,921
- b. To increase the years of service allowance from \$400 to \$450 for up to 10 years of service.
- c. To increase the years of service allowance each year by the CPI
- d. That the churches contribute to their pastor's personal retirement plan an amount equal to 3% of his gross salary which includes his housing allowance.
- e. That the churches contribute to their pastor's personal retirement plan on a matching basis an amount equal to 2% of his gross salary which includes his housing allowance.

3. Pulpit Supply and Catechism Supply:

The remuneration for pulpit supply effective January 1, 2006 is \$125 per service plus synodically approved travel allowance.

The remuneration for Catechism supply effective January 1, 2006 is \$75 per hour plus synodically approved travel allowance.

Since there have not be any CPI increase to these amounts, the committee recommends to get caught up on the increase.

The committee submits for your approval:

- a. To increase the pulpit supply rate by 10% from \$125 per service to \$137 per service effective January 1, 2009.
- b. To increase the Catechism supply by 10% from \$75 per hour to \$82 per hour effective January 1, 2009.

4. Needy Churches Fund:

At Synod 2006, it was approved that a church, which receives financial assistance from the Needy Churches Fund, is not required to pay the Needy Churches assessment.

Synod 2006 asked this committee to formulate guidelines as to how churches should be approved for funding. Because current guidelines (see Supplement 23, Regulations for Finance Committee, adopted by Synod 1985, K. Fund for Needy Churches) do not allow support to churches with assets, the Finance committee has not approved such requests. But, subsequently, they have been approved by the following synod. Therefore, to give liberty to the Finance Committee to decide whether such funding be approved, the following amendments are recommended for Section K of Supplement 23 for C.O. Article 11:

Amendment #1: K. 4. Current: *Congregations building or remodeling church or parsonage property are not to be considered eligible for financial assistance.*

Recommended Change: *The Finance Committee shall use careful discretion when considering financial assistance for congregations who are building or remodeling church or parsonage property, or have considerable bank assets.*

Amendment #2: K. 5. Current: *Congregations who have need for assistance shall make an application in writing to the committee including:*

- a. *a copy of the congregation's annual current financial statements;*
- b. *a statement of assets and liabilities;*
- c. *a budget for the current year, approved by the congregation;*
- d. *an estimate of the amount of financial assistance which the Consistory considers to be necessary.*

Recommended Change: *Congregations who have need for assistance shall make application to the committee submitting information as requested by the Finance committee. Included in this request shall be financial and other pertinent information as outlined in Finance Committee Form A (available from the Finance Committee)*

Amendment #3: K. 6. Current: *The Consistory of the supported congregation is committed to submit any information to the Finance Committee in relation to the financial assistance.*

Recommended Change: *Congregations requesting assistance shall submit to church visitation and a report from the visitors shall be*

submitted to the Finance Committee. This report shall contain information as outlined in Finance Committee Form B (available from the Finance Committee) along with their advice regarding whether support should be granted.

Due to the fact that we have sufficient funds on hand, we are recommending a decrease in the assessment of \$8 to \$5 per member.

The Needy Churches Fund financial statements have been reviewed by Jeff Haalstra (Brantford), and by Jack Hoek (Brantford) and were found in good order.

The committee submits for your approval:

- a. To decrease the assessment from \$8 per member to \$5 for the 2009.
- b. To approve the financial statements for the year 2007.
- c. To approve the recommended changes to Section K of Supplement 23

5. Widows of Pastors and Orphans of Pastors

There are no recommendations for changes to the Widows of Pastors and Orphans of Pastors payments.

The following has been approved at Synod 2001:

(a) In addition to the spouse receiving the emeritus payments for widows, the family shall also receive 45% of the widows emeritus payments for the first child, 35% for the second child, and the balance for the other children. The total remuneration provided to the family of a deceased pastor shall not exceed the minimum salary guidelines, as set by Synod each year.

(b) In the event that both parents were deceased, it is the committee's view that the children should be provided for until each child reaches the age of eighteen or age twenty-one if he/she is a full-time student.

The family shall receive 45% of the minimum salary guidelines for the first child, 35% for the second child and the balance for the other children. The total remuneration to the family of the deceased pastor and his wife shall not exceed the total minimum salary guidelines, as set by Synod each year.

(c) That all orphaned disabled children over the age of eighteen receive an amount not greater than the minister's widows emeritus payment. The total payment will be reduced by other disability payments or subsidies that may be received by the disabled person. Payment will be made on a need basis and requires recommendation by the local consistory.

- (d) That all spousal and children payments cease if the spouse of a deceased pastor is remarried.

6. Investment and lending guidelines

The current lending guidelines are as follows:

- (a) No more than 20% of the emeritus fund may be lent out to any one Free Reformed Church.
- (b) Qualifying applicants are members' churches, and / or mission posts. Lending committee to be comprised of a quorum of the finance committee.
- (c) Rates to be set based on Bank prime lending rates
- (d) Mortgage security to be comprised of land and/or buildings owned by the borrower.

The current investing guidelines are as follows:

- (a) Investments with banks with guaranteed rates of return.
- (b) Investments with Christian organizations such as Christian Stewardship Services or Christian Retirement Homes with guaranteed rates of return.
- (c) For the emeritus fund ONLY - Investments in Mutual funds in consultation with a Professional Financial Planner for up to 25% of the fund balance.

There are no recommendations for changes.

7. Miscellaneous:

The committee submits for your approval:

- a. To re-appoint for a three year term of Henry Berger (Hamilton) and Steve Otten (Mitchell).
- b. That Synod approves the actions of the committee.

May the Lord bless your meeting,
Respectfully submitted,
The Finance Committee

FORM A

THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA

The following items will be considered when a church applies for financial assistance through **Needy Churches**:

- Name & address of church requesting financial assistance
- How long has the church been established?
- What is the trend in membership over the past 5 years?
- Amount of funds being requested
- Purpose or use of funds being requested
- Please outline details of repayment (i.e. annual, monthly, no repayment expected, etc.)
- Indicate whether this is a “one-time request”. If not, please provide details as to expectation for future years.
- Please provide the full financial statements for the past 3 fiscal years (including balance sheet, profit/loss statement and budget for each year). While the statements will be reviewed in their entirety, special attention will be given to the following items:
 - Cash balances
 - Investments (including those reserved for capital purposes – i.e. building)
 - Debt levels
 - Tithing/Donation amounts
 - Expenses
- Please provide a copy of the Budget for the current and projection for next two fiscal years.

FORM B

THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA

Church Visitors/Counselor Needy Churches Questionnaire

(To Be Completed by Church Visitors/Counselor)

- Name and address of the church requesting financial assistance.
- What is the physical and the spiritual state of the congregation requesting assistance?
- Please state the amount and purpose of assistance being requested?
- How will the assistance be used for the promotion of the Lord's Kingdom?
- What other efforts have been made by this congregation to secure financial assistance prior to requesting assistance from the Needy Churches Fund?
- Does the congregation requesting assistance anticipate this will be a one time or an on-going request?
- What is the plan are made for further development of this congregation, and what steps will be taken to implement this plan?
- Do you recommend this congregation for financial assistance? Why or why not?

Minister's Emeritus Fund
Statement of Operations
For the year ended December 31, 2007

	<u>2007</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	Variance F/(U)		<u>2006</u>
			%	\$	
Revenue:					
Assessments	52,814	51,789	2%	1,025	51,744
Interest					
From Bank Bal.	-	5	-100%	-5	1
From Securities	62,350	57,500	8%	4,850	54,024
Total Revenue	<u>\$115,164</u>	<u>\$109,294</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>\$5,870</u>	<u>\$105,769</u>
Expenditures:					
Emeritus Payments	48,998	31,978	-53%	-17,020	24,971
Administration				-	
Bank Charges	94	25	-276%	-69	-
Other				-	
Miscellaneous	275	350	21%	75	260
Total Expenditures	<u>\$49,367</u>	<u>\$32,353</u>	<u>-53%</u>	<u>-\$17,014</u>	<u>\$25,231</u>
Operating Surplus	<u>\$65,797</u>	<u>\$76,941</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>\$22,884</u>	<u>\$80,538</u>

6c

Minister's Emeritus Fund
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2007

Assets:	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	
Cash	322,309	67,013	6a
Accounts Receivable	30,801	21,338	
Investments	828,226	1,027,188	6b
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total Assets	<u><u>1,181,336</u></u>	<u><u>1,115,539</u></u>	
 Equity:			
Beginning Balance	1,115,539	1,035,001	
Operating Surplus	65,797	80,538	6b
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total Equity	<u><u>1,181,336</u></u>	<u><u>1,115,539</u></u>	

Minister's Emeritus Fund
Budget
For the years ended December 31, 2008 & 2009

	Actual <u>2007</u>	Budgeted <u>2008</u>	Variance F/(U)		Projected <u>2009</u>
			%	\$	
Revenue:					
Assessments	52,814	102,174	48%	49,360	92,434
Interest					
From Bank Bal.	-	-	-	-	-
From Securities	62,350	61,138	-2%	-1,212	64,195
Total Revenue	<u>\$115,164</u>	<u>\$163,312</u>	<u>29%</u>	<u>\$48,148</u>	<u>\$156,629</u>
Expenditures:					
Pension Payments	48,998	50,223	-2%	-1,225	51,798
Administration				-	
Bank Charges	94	25	276%	69	100
Other				-	
Miscellaneous	275	350	-21%	-75	350
Total Expenditures	<u>\$49,367</u>	<u>\$50,598</u>	<u>-2%</u>	<u>-\$1,231</u>	<u>\$52,248</u>
Operating Surplus	<u>\$65,797</u>	<u>\$112,714</u>	<u>42%</u>	<u>\$46,917</u>	<u>\$104,381</u>

Emeritus Fund of the Free Reformed Church of North America

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Emeritus Fund are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting.

All representations are made in Canadian dollars.

2. Review of the Books:

The financial statements of the Emeritus Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard review program, by Jeff Haalstra (Brantford) and Jack Hoek (St. Thomas). Taking into consideration item 6b, the records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash

Cash and Term deposits consist of the following:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
TDCT Chequing	13,192	10,016
TD Investment Account	309,117	56,997
	<u>322,309</u>	<u>67,013</u>

4. Account Receivable:

Accounts Receivable consists of the following:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Interest from Securities	<u>29,613</u>	<u>20,420</u>

Assessments:

Congregation	Opening Balance	Curr.Yr. Assess.	Amount Paid	Ending Balance
Abbotsford	-	1,788	1,788	-
Bellevue	-42	274	232	-
Bornholm	-	984	984	-
Brantford	-	4,176	4,176	-
Chatham	-	2,844	2,844	-
Chilliwack	-	3,792	3,792	-
Dundas	-	5,448	5,448	-
Fenwick	-252	3,240	2,988	-
Grand Rapids	-	3,756	3,756	-
Hamilton	-	4,032	4,032	-
Lancombe	-	876	876	-
Langely	-	744	744	-
London	1,272	1,188	1,272	1,188

Mitchell	-12	2,592	2,580	-
Monarch	-	3,300	3,300	-
Pompton				
Plains	115	1,964	2,079	-
St. George	-	2,616	2,616	-
St. Thomas	-68	3,716	3,648	-
Toronto	-	156	156	-
Vineland	-96	5,328	5,232	-
	917	52,814	52,543	1,188

Total Receivables: 30,801

5. Investments:

The committee maintains the following investments, in accordance with the prescribed guidelines:

	<u>Face Value</u>	<u>Amortized Value</u>
Nfld. & Lab. Hydro	25,000	25,000
Gov't of Canada Bonds	95,000	95,000
Ontario Hydro	80,000	79,018
Prov. of Saskatchewan	85,000	85,000
Prov. of Ontario	222,404	222,404
Prov. of Manitoba	113,000	116,238
GIC's	162,000	162,000
Province of PEI	9,000	9,566
Province of Nova Scotia	34,000	34,000
	<u>825,404</u>	<u>828,226</u>

6. Variance Explanations:

- a. The excess cash is primarily the result of investments maturing in December, which \$300,000 was invested in 2008.

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
NEEDY CHURCHES FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - BALANCE SHEET
As at December 31, 2007

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
Cash & Short-Term Invst.	\$78,354	\$73,059
Accounts Receivable	-2,992	-2,825
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>\$75,362</u></u>	<u><u>\$70,234</u></u>
 <u>EQUITY</u>		
Opening Balance	\$70,234	57,163
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	5,128	13,071
Total Equity	<u><u>\$75,362</u></u>	<u><u>\$70,234</u></u>

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
NEEDY CHURCHES FUND
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS - Income Statement
For the Year Ended December 31, 2007

	2007	2007	Variances F/(U)		2006
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	\$	%	<u>Actual</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>					
Assessments	76,679	52,779	23,900	31%	51,744
Interest					
Bank	3	-	3	100%	5
GIC	1,469	2,040	(571)	-39%	324
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 78,151</u>	<u>\$ 54,819</u>	<u>\$ 23,332</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>52,073</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>					
Payments to Churches	73,000	40,000	(33,000)	-45%	39,000
Administration					
Bank Charges	23	-	(23)	-100%	2
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 73,023</u>	<u>\$ 40,000</u>	<u>\$(33,023)</u>	<u>-45%</u>	<u>\$ 39,002</u>
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	<u>\$ 5,128</u>	<u>\$ 14,819</u>	<u>\$ (9,691)</u>	<u>-189%</u>	<u>\$ 13,071</u>

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
NEEDY CHURCHES FUND

BUDGET

For the Years ended December 31, 2008 & 2009

	2007	2008	<u>Variances</u>		2009
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Projected</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>					
Assessments	76,679	36,064	-40,615	100%	36,966
Interest					
Bank	3	-	-3	-100%	-
GIC	1,469	2,040	571	39%	2,040
Total Revenues	<u>\$78,151</u>	<u>\$38,104</u>	<u>-\$40,047</u>	<u>-51%</u>	<u>\$39,006</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>					
Payments to Churches	73,000	30,000	-43,000	-59%	5c 30,000
Administration					
Bank Charges	23	-	-23	-100%	-
Total Expenditures	<u>\$73,023</u>	<u>\$30,000</u>	<u>-\$43,023</u>	<u>-59%</u>	<u>\$30,000</u>
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	<u>\$5,128</u>	<u>\$8,104</u>	<u>-\$83,070</u>	<u>-1620%</u>	<u>\$9,006</u>

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Needy Churches Fund are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are in Canadian dollars.

2. Review of the Statements:

The financial statements of the Needy Churches Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard audit program, by Jeff Haalstra (Brantford) and Jack Hoek (Brantford). The records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash:

Cash and Short Term Deposits consist of the following:

	2007	2006
Chequeing	\$8,354	\$13,059
Short Term Deposits (GIC)	70,000	60,000
	\$78,354	\$73,059

4. Accounts Receivable:

	2007	2006
Assessments Receivable	\$(2,992)	\$(3,150)
GIC Interest Receivable	-	\$324
	\$(2,992)	\$(2,824)

Assessments:

	Beg. Bal.	C/Y Assess.	Amt. Paid	O/S Balance
Abbotsford	-	2,682	2,682	-
Bellevue	235	-235	-	-
Bornholm	-	1,476	1,476	-
Brantford	-	6,264	6,264	-
Chatham	-	4,266	4,266	-
Chilliwack	-	5,688	5,688	-
Dundas	-	8,172	8,172	-
Fenwick	-	4,482	4,482	-
Grand Rapids	-	5,634	5,634	-
Hamilton	-	6,048	6,048	-

Lancombe	-	-	-	-
Langely	-	1,116	1,116	-
London	1,272	1,782	1,272	1,782
Mitchell	-6	3,876	3,870	-
Monarch	-	4,950	4,950	-
Pompton				
Plains	123	3,000	3,123	-
St. George	-	3,924	3,924	-
St. Thomas	-	5,472	5,472	-
Toronto	-	234	234	-
Vineland	-4,774	7,848	7,848	-4,774
	<u>-3,150</u>	<u>76,679</u>	<u>76,521</u>	<u>-2,992</u>

5. Variance Explanations:

Payments to Bellevue for 2006 were not paid until 2007

FOREIGN MISSION REPORT

To: The Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of North America
In Session June 02-06, 2008

Esteemed Brothers,

The Deputies for Free Reformed Missions International are pleased to submit the following report of our work since Synod 2007

1. COMMITTEE WORK

Since Synod 2007, the board of FRMI has met 3 times (June 19/07, November 08/07, February 13/08, with a meeting planned for May 14/08). In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings, communication with the mission field is maintained through the regular reports, teleconferences by the executive director, through various sub-committees and through personal contacts with board members. In July/07 one delegate (Br. J. Westerink) of the mission board visited Cubulco, Guatemala to accompany Ken and Jennifer VanMinnen in order for them to become familiar with the people of Cubulco and the education system. Additionally, two delegates (G. Postma and Rev. J. Koopman) attended the field in September/07 to assess (with the assistance of Rev. K. Kerfst) the difficulties within the Consistory of the Cubulco church and to work towards reconciliation. Finally, two delegates (R. Postma and Rev. H. Overduin, also with the assistance of Rev. K. Herfst) visited the field in January/08. The main objectives of the visit were to continue the reconciliation process, develop the education plan in consultation with AMG, communicate and discuss the arrival of the Van Minnens and the Bouts, and review the translation, radio and other projects.

The Regional committee continues to function and holds regular meetings with representatives from the churches. The executive consists of Felipe (president), Santiago (vice), Celestino Alonzo (secretary), Jose Maria Rosales (Chema) (treasurer), Santos Sunun (co-secretary), Domingo Alvarez (co-treasurer) and Abelino (General Deputy). Rev. Everts and Nico participate in the role of advisors and mentors. The obreros are beginning to see the importance of the Regional committee, which has resulted in improved commitment.

The focus for the past year included making preparations for changes in the mission personnel in the field. The Everts family is scheduled to leave in April 2008 with the Kattenbergs leaving the following year. Due to some difficult situations in the family, the Ottens have returned from the field in May/07 (see below). In connection with the departure of Rev. Everts, the Cubulco Consistory and the Regional Committee have indicated to us that they believe that two people should replace Rev. Everts – one from North America and one from Guatemala. The Mission Board is open to this suggestion though it would also be grateful just for one Pastor to replace Rev. Everts. Ideally this should be a Guatemalan Pastor who is fluent in Spanish, understands the culture and most importantly is Biblically grounded and reformed. The Mission Board continues to actively publicize the need for such a person. In the meantime,

the Mission Board is very grateful that Wilfred Bout has applied and been accepted as an evangelist for Cubulco. Wilfred is well known to many of us in the Vineland area and along with his father has led the local migrant workers ministry already for several years. Wilfred will be doing much of the same work as he currently does with the migrant workers which includes discipling, ministering to the families, preparing & delivering messages, and conducting Bible studies. Wilfred, who is married to Sharon and has five children, also has extensive missionary experience in Mexico and is fluent in Spanish. He has committed himself to at least one year in Cubulco. We look forward to having Wilfred as part of the mission team and pray that the Lord will bless his work. The board has also continued to provide bulletin updates and information via the Mission Inserts in the Messenger.

The balance of the report seeks to provide you with a summary and update of the work as it is at present.

2. IGLESIA REFORMADA OF CUBULCO

Regrettably the church in Cubulco has during the past year suffered through a difficult time. For various reasons including participation in illegal activities, a consistory member was let go as an obrero. With deep sadness we must note that this has, subsequently, resulted in attempts to undermine the mission and the church. This is especially sad considering that this person was one of the first converts under the ministry of our brother Pastor Herfst and has been well regarded as a leading figure in the church. The process towards repentance and reconciliation has been attempted numerous times and is still ongoing. At the same time it is correct to note that as mission board and mission personnel we have also made mistakes. We have apologized for anything that we may have done that may have caused offense. It remains our prayer that this brother will do the same.

Services continue to be held Saturday evenings, Sunday mornings and afternoons, and on Wednesdays with Sunday school being held on Sunday mornings. Special services during the week also continue to be held. We pray that the Lord will bring repentance and restoration to this church.

3. CHURCHES IN THE ALDEAS

a. Patuy

This church has a functioning consistory and is served by the obrero, Felipe. During the past year, the consistory has been faced with a disciplinary case involving a consistory member. Regrettably after attempts to restore the brother to a right relationship to God, he and his family have left the church. Sunday school classes for the adults and children continue. In these classes and the services, approx. 80% of the members attend regularly.

b. Chirramos

The church continues to hold regular services and Sunday school classes for adults and children, which is regularly attended by 85% of the members. Confession of faith classes are also being held. This church has, however, been faced with a few small problems with a family, which have since been resolved.

c. Xinacati II

Since this group consists of one family, services are not held every week. The mission however, visits them every week.

d. Pichal

The church has grown somewhat due to a group of brothers living in nearby Guaiynep. Services are attended regularly and there is a new family attending on occasion. We are thankful that the membership is quite stable here.

e. Xeul

The church has been experiencing some problems. They have been caused by a member of the church who wanted to be the obrero, but because of his conduct in the church he was not chosen. However, thanks be to God the rest of the members who stayed have chosen Abelino to become their obrero. A new family has also started attending services, which are held Thursdays and Sundays. The mission continues to visit this aldea each week.

f. Los Pajales

We are thankful that this church has not been faced with significant problems. However, it does experience pressure from other churches, which has resulted in several families leaving. Lately a new family has been attending the services, which are held three times a week. Presently, the church is considering upgrades to their church building, which includes putting in a cement floor and stucco on the walls.

g. Chiwiwesa

This church has basically ended due to pressure from the Pentecostal movement. There is only one family left which are often not available for a visit.

h. Portezuelo Hondo

The mission visits this group every week. However, because of pressure from another church, we fear that the family will join them. We pray that this will not happen.

i. Zalamcho

This group has been constant, i.e., it hasn't grown nor decreased in members. Services are held in their homes on Fridays. Since they do not have an obrero or their own church building, most of them attend Sunday services in the Cubulco church.

j. Pa'oj

This group also experiences pressure from another group. A brother from the Cubulco church visits this group every two weeks. Some of the group members also attend the Cubulco church when they are in the area.

k. El Rodeo de las Vegas

This group consists of one family who receives visits every week.

Most of these churches are also working on getting legal title to the property of their churches. This was encouraged due to past issues with certain church

members attempting to claim title of the church in the event of disagreement and dissent in the church. As gathered from above, some of the aldean churches are quite stable, however, there are also those that struggle due to various issues and in need of much prayer. It is our desire that the churches in the aldeas would grow and that the glorious gospel would flourish among the Achi people.

4. BIBLE INSTITUTE (Centro Teologico de Cubulco)

Due to some misunderstandings between the mission and SEP concerning the requirements of the curriculum and teachers, this BI has been on hold this past year. A formal agreement has since been formulated between SEP/FRMI. Classes are expected to resume this summer. The courses will be taught by teachers from SEP and our mission personnel.

5. EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

To address the need for improved education, particularly Christian education, in the Cubulco area and the aldeas, the mission has been active this year in assessing the needs and employing suitable teachers. There are presently three teachers serving the needs of the aldeas providing academic as well as Biblically focussed studies. Ever Moises teaches in Patuy, where he has been met with challenges. He has been able to overcome them, which has resulted in greater commitment from the children. Miguel teaches at Los Pajales. Considering that the schools in aldeas are secular, we are thankful that he receives much support from the other teachers in teaching the Bible classes and in teaching the children to pray. Since two of the teachers have left the school, the mission is looking into providing another Christian teacher for Los Pajales. In Chirramos there is quite a large school (110 students) where Gabino teaches. The mission is also looking into an opportunity to establish a junior high school in this area, an idea originated by one of the obreros (Chema) and his brother. One of the main reasons for poor attendance and lack of commitment in these areas is that during certain times of the year, families go to the coast to work, resulting in the children being pulled out from school to work for their parents.

Upon completion of his studies, the initial task of Ken VanMinnen (and to some extent Wilfred Bout) is to conduct a thorough investigation of the educational needs of Cubulco and the surrounding areas.

Since AMG has extensive experience in education projects in Guatemala, there have been ongoing discussions with them with the aim of co-operating and working together with them in this endeavor.

As mentioned in the previous report, included in the education project is the deaconal component, which is taken care of by the Regional Committee.

6. TRANSLATION WORK

Since the translation work has been receiving greater focus during the past few years we are quite pleased with the team and their progress. The Translation team works very well together and consists of Jorge, Leonardo, Celestino, Lucia and Petronila. A consultant (Samuel Berberian) is also often

utilized as required to review the final revision. The printing of the Cubulco Achi (K'ub'ultzi) grammar book, Genesis and Mark are completed. The gospel of John and the book of Ruth will be printed in March and the books of Acts and Exodus will be printed in June. The challenge is to teach the Achi people to read K'ub'ultzi in order to promote the distribution of the printed Achi Bible. In addition to holding regular workshops, the mission is also considering a proposal to employ a promoter to do this work. Leonardo has begun taking up this challenge by teaching a class of teachers at Patuy to read and write in K'ub'ultzi.

As the draft translation of many of the books are ahead of schedule, this will be put on hold for the time being until the remaining steps have caught up. These steps are content revision, readability review, back translation, Hebrew revision, consultant review, and orthography revision. The Mission Board is grateful that Pastor Everts is able to continue to do the Hebrew revision in Holland.

7. OTHER PROJECTS

Celestino continues to prepare programs for the radio ministry every Monday to Friday. We continue to hear positive feedback from the program. There are many people who listen, send letters and make phone calls. Since we now have Achi publications available (Bible books, Bible stories), the goal is to focus on the reading and teaching of the Word of God, particularly in K'ub'ultzi. We are thankful that the program has been a blessing to the churches in the aldeas and also for other groups. Since it will no longer be feasible to have our own radio station and frequency, the board recommends that the funds collected for this endeavor be put towards the education program. Since the funding was provided from the congregations, the transfer of funds would need to be approved by the representatives of the churches, outside of the official annual FRMI meeting held during Synod.

The bookstore is taken care of by Santos and is now being operated out of the church building. It is open on Thursdays and Saturdays. Q45,000 worth of books were sold this past year. The goal for the coming year is to sell the Achi publications, which have so far been printed by the translation team.

8. MISSION WORKERS

a. Rev. Evert and Rina Everts

After six years of faithful service of ministering to the Achi people of Cubulco and the aldean areas, the Everts plan to repatriate and return home to the Netherlands. The board expresses, on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches, their sincere appreciation for steadfastly preaching and teaching the Word to the people of the churches in Cubulco and neighbouring areas. Although it must be acknowledged that we have been faced with discouragement at times, we may also say that there is evidence of much fruit among the people there. We have much reason to be thankful to the Lord. In spite of us, the Lord is Faithful. The re-integration in the Dutch society will no doubt bring many challenges, especially for the children as they have spent most of their lives away from their home country. We trust and pray that

the Lord will provide much grace as they re-adjust and that He will also provide another field of labour to serve. May the Lord richly bless Rev. Evert and Rina and their children as they continue to labour in His Kingdom for the Glory of His name.

b. Nico and Lia Kattenberg

Nico and Lia have been blessed with the arrival of a healthy baby boy, Michael Jesse, born August 15th, 2007, a brother for Nico jr. and Ellen, who have just turned five. All are in good health. As mentioned in the previous report, Nico is very involved in the mission work. His work includes teaching, conducting services, visits in the aldeas, overseeing the translation work, and taking care of the administrative tasks, to name a few. His responsibilities will increase with the departure of the Everts and as we go through another transition period in Cubulco with the arrival of new personnel. The Kattenbergs also plan to leave Cubulco sometime in 2009. The plan is to relocate to Guatemala City and work with AMG on project related activities. Nico will, however, still carry out the administrative and legal responsibilities for FRMI. All this the Lord willing. See the "Update from the Kattenbergs" in the October 2007 issue of the Mission News.

c. John and Connie Otten

After serving the Lord for 18 years in Cubulco, John and Connie Otten and their five children have repatriated to Canada and have taken up residence in the St. Thomas area. We are grateful for their many years of faithful service as hospital administrator and wish them the Lord's blessing as they adjust to Canada. This is no doubt, a challenge for them and requires a major adjustment, especially for their children who have been born and raised in Guatemala. After enduring some family difficulties and challenges they, by God's grace, are doing well and have integrated into their new surroundings. John is presently employed with Word and Deed Canada. He has however, suffered from thyroid cancer and though he has recovered well from surgery we understand that further treatments are needed. May the Lord bless these treatments and sustain John and the family through this trial. The Ottens are thankful that God has so marvelously provided for them as they have gone through many trials this past year.

AMG, meanwhile, has been able to find a replacement administrator for the hospital, the Christian Medical Center in Cubulco

d. Rev. Ken and Jackie Herfst

Rev. Herfst continues to function as director of the mission department at Seminario Evangelico Presbiteriano (SEP) in San Felipe and also teaches at the seminary in Quetzaltenango. The seminary students are mostly pastors who desire to strengthen their knowledge of the reformed faith. Pastor Herfst has a class of 12 students and holds tutorials for 4 students and still preaches once a month in the local church. During this past year he has given courses on Hermeneutics and Pluralism, Eschatology, Ministry in a Multi-cultural context, Expository preaching, OT Exegesis, and Hebrew. He is also

coordinator of the Emergency Relief Committee of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Quetzaltenango. This includes his involvement in the reconstruction activities in the aftermath of Hurricane Stan, particularly in the community of Xe Abaj. The people here required immediate attention in the area of nutrition and agriculture. With funding through Word and Deed, the villagers are being taught improved farming techniques, including animal husbandry, vegetable and fruit tree planting. As mentioned above, Rev. Herfst has also assisted the Mission Board with regard to the Cubulco church and has been appointed by FRMI to be church counselor for that church.

The family is doing well, in good health and has been able to enjoy some time with their family and friends during their time of furlough this past year. Jackie continues to be involved in the local church and community activities.

e. Ken and Jennifer Van Minnen

As mentioned in the previous report to synod, Ken and Jennifer have joined the mission team in the position of Education director and administrator to support the education projects and the mission work in Cubulco and the aldeas. They, together with their three children have now settled in Costa Rica for language studies and cultural adaptation. They find their language studies quite challenging, but are doing very well and are enjoying it. They have been gladdened with the birth of their third child, Julia, born October 17, 2007. They were very impressed with the professional medical care they have received during the birth of their child, which we are thankful for. The Van Minnens plan to complete their studies this fall and relocate to Cubulco to take up their assignment. We pray the Lord will bless them further and equip them for the tasks that have been entrusted to them. See the "Update from the VanMinnens" in the October 2007 issue of the Mission News.

f. Alejandro and Kathryn Ortiz

Alejandro and Kathryn Ortiz and family are doing well. Last December Alejandro graduated in Pastoral Theology, but plans to take a few more courses. As mentioned in the bulletin inserts, the Lord has made it clear to Alejandro and Kathryn that they should remain in Quetzaltenango and not return to Cubulco as originally planned. This has been a very difficult decision for them as it was our brother's desire to return to his people and bring the Word of the Lord to them. With regret and with understanding the mission board accepts their decision and is very grateful for the faithful service of Alejandro in ministering to the church of Cubulco and the surrounding areas. Alejandro has been appointed as teacher in one of the Presbyterian schools in Xela. We commend Alejandro, Kathryn and their two children to our faithful Lord and Saviour.

9. ISAAC Da COSTA FUND

The Isaac da Costa Fund (ICF), an interdenominational foundation that supports the work among the Jews around the world, is establishing an

organization in Canada. To that end a sub-committee, under the oversight of FRMI, has been formed to facilitate this process. Rev. H. Bergsma represents FRMI on this committee and serves as the secretary. The Canadian organization will be called Christian Ministry to Israel (CMI) and hope to have charitable status in March. To assist the organization in getting started, FRMI has provided \$5000 as seed funding. In the near future, Mr. David Zadok, who works with the churches in Israel as field leader for Christian Witness to Israel is scheduled for some speaking engagements in NA at which time he will also address some of the FRC congregations. We heartily recommend supporting this organization and pray that it will be a means to proclaim the gospel of the Messiah to the Jews. See also the article by Rev. D. H. Kranendonk (chairman of CMI) in the March issue of the Messenger.

10. FINANCIAL AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

a. 2007 Financial Statement

The 2007 Financial Statement is attached.

b. 2008 Proposed Budget

The proposed budget for the year 2008 is attached for your consideration and approval.

c. Appointment of Auditors

The Mission Board recommends the appointments of Mr. Jim Koopman and Mr. Nick Zuidema as auditors for the year 2008

d. Appointment of Directors

The terms of Rev. J. Koopman , P. Luth, Rev. H. Bergsma and J. Westerink have been completed. Therefore, the Board recommends their re-appointments as directors for a three-year term.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mission Board makes the following recommendations to Synod:

- a. That the re-appointments of Rev. J. Koopman , P. Luth, Rev. H. Bergsma and J. Westerink as directors for a three-year term be approved
- b. That the 2007 Financial Statement be approved
- c. That the budget for the year 2008 be approved
- d. That the appointments of Mr. Jim Koopman and Mr. Nick Zuidema as auditors for the year 2008 be approved
- e. That the employment of Mr. Wilfred Bout in the role of evangelist be approved
- f. That the transfer of the funds to the Education Project from the radio ministry be approved. Note: Approval to be done by the donors (representatives of the churches)
- g. That the actions of the Mission Board be approved

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Mission Board and wishing you the Lord's Blessing

John J. Brink, Secretary

FREE REFORMED MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2007

	2,007	Notes	2,006
Assets:			
Cash	173,068	3	188,631
Term Deposits	191,000	4	191,440
Receivables	12,165		8,401
Capital Assets	0	5	89,617
Other	<u>61,675</u>		<u>61,675</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>437,908</u></u>		<u><u>539,764</u></u>
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	10,434	6	10,309
Auto Reserve Fund	<u>40,000</u>	7	<u>40,000</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>50,434</u>		<u>50,309</u>
Equity			
Beginning Balance	395,194	8	445,938
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>-7,720</u>		<u>43,517</u>
Total Equity	<u>387,474</u>		<u>489,455</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	<u><u>437,908</u></u>		<u><u>539,764</u></u>

FREE REFORMED MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

	2007 Actual	2007 Budget	%	Notes	2006 Actual
Receipts					
Free Reformed Churches	282,441	345,500	82%	9a	335,762
Gifts	57,046	27,500	207%	9b	20,990
Interest Income	12,654	10,000	127%		11,843
Word & Deed Support	59,106	57,620	103%		48,381
Other Churches	27,820	20,000	139%	9c	19,242
	<u>439,066</u>	<u>460,620</u>	95%		<u>436,218</u>
Disbursements					
Exchange Gain/Loss	693	2,500	28%		-4,342
Cubulco Mission Post	129,778	129,615	100%	9d	132,366
Mailbox	258	750	34%		190
Salary and Benefits	242,760	262,505	92%		237,987
Travel/Accommodation	62,320	68,200	91%		24,617
Education/Training	7,194	8,000	90%	9e	0
Miscellaneous	1,246			9f	356
Legal Fees	639	1,500	43%		0
Office /Bank	1,483	1,300	114%		1,138
Telephone	414	1,250	33%		1,292
	<u>446,786</u>	<u>475,620</u>	94%		<u>393,604</u>
Surplus (Shortage)	<u>-7,720</u>	<u>-15,000</u>	51%		<u>42,614</u>

FREE REFORMED MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

BUDGET

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008 & 2009

	2007 Actual	2008 Budget	%	Notes	2009 Projected
Receipts					
Free Reformed Churches	282,441	345,500	122%	10a	355,000
Gifts	57,046	23,000	40%	10b	23,000
Interest Income	12,654	10,000	79%		7,500
Word & Deed Support	59,106	0		10c	0
Other Churches	27,820	25,000	90%		25,000
	<u>439,066</u>	<u>403,500</u>	92%		<u>410,500</u>
Disbursements					
Exchange Gain/Loss	693	1,000	144%		1,000
Cubulco Mission Post	129,778	135,000	104%		165,000
Mailbox	258	750	290%		750
Salary and Benefits	242,760	235,460	97%		200,000
Travel/Accommodation	62,320	66,500	107%	10d	32,150
Education/Training	7,194	9,300	129%	10e	7,500
Miscellaneous	1,246				0
Legal Fees	639	1,250	196%		1,250
Office /Bank	1,483	1,600	108%		1,600
Telephone	414	750	181%		750
	<u>446,786</u>	<u>451,610</u>	101%		<u>410,000</u>
Surplus (Shortage)	<u>-7,720</u>	<u>-48,110</u>	623%	10f	<u>500</u>

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2007**

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Foreign Mission Committee are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are made in Canadian dollars.

2. Audit of the Books:

The financial statements of the Foreign Mission Committee were reviewed and found to be accurate on March 25, 2008 by Mr. Jim Koopman of Brantford and Mr. Nick Zuidema of Chatham.

Review Committee Report

To Free Reformed Missions International


We have conducted the following review procedures on the books and records of the Foreign Mission Fund:

1. Reviewed the year-end bank reconciliation(s)
2. Reviewed the payroll records
3. Reviewed the cash disbursements journal and examined supplier invoices on a test basis
4. Reviewed the cash receipts journal

Based on the above procedures, we have found the financial statements accurately reflect the operations of the committee for the year ended December 31, 2007.

Date: Mar 25/08


Jim Koopman


Nick Zuidema

3. Cash

Cash and Term Deposits consist of the following:

TD Chequing & Savings	\$ 102,806
Radio Project Account	55,000
India Missions	14,375
TD Chequing US Account	<u>887</u>
	<u>\$ 173,068</u>

After reserves and liabilities are taken into account the mission has \$256,000 as available cash.

Cubulco received a cash boost of \$40,000 early in 2008 so that leaves \$216,000 ready cash in Canada. The mission requires \$100,000 available

cash to handle a possible emergency situation, and \$48,000 of savings is needed for the deficit budget. The remaining funds are available for the anticipated growth of education in Cubulco.

4. Term Deposits

TD GICs	41,000
Christian Stewardship Services	150,000

5. Capital Assets:

All capital assets are removed from the balance sheet. After formal registration the mission post in Cubulco is now reporting to the Guatemala government and the assets have been transferred to the books in Cubulco.

6. Accounts payable:

Payroll Liabilities	2,385
Directors' Insurance	1,903
Unclaimed book allowance	<u>6,146</u>
	\$10,434

7. Auto Reserve Fund:

This fund is capped at \$40,000. It is anticipated that this fund will be used to finance a replacement vehicle this year.

8. Beginning Balance

The Mission in Cubulco is required to report directly to the Guatemala government with financial statements. To prevent duplication and overlap the Cubulco portion of the finances has been removed from the reports made in Canada. Since the capital assets, which are all in Cubulco, have been removed from the balance sheet, the Beginning Balance for 2007 has been reduced by the amount of Capital Assets reported at the end of 2006.

9. Income Breakdown:

9 a From Free Reformed Churches:

Abbotsford	2,742.00
Bornholm	3,741.27
Brantford	12,777.00
Calgary	750.00
Chatham	21,667.81
Chilliwack	40,000.68
Dundas	16,544.94
Fenwick	12,986.90
Grand Rapids	13,002.03
Hamilton	37,422.00
Lacombe	881.09
Langley	2,923.84
London	2,500.00
Mitchell	8,975.63
Monarch	3,713.50
Prompton Plains	30,112.58
St George	7,515.00
St Thomas	40,633.20
Toronto	465.00
Vineland	23,086.98
TOTAL	<u>282,441.45</u>

9 b Other Income:

Ladies League	3,000
Gifts, Donations	<u>54,046</u>
	\$58,046

9 c Income from Other Churches

Edmonton	\$25,845
New Westminster	678
Thunder Bay	<u>1,297</u>
TOTAL	\$27,820

9d Now that there is official accounting in Cubulco, support for the mission post will be just a one line notation. This prevents a lot of duplication of book work. The Mission still gets monthly financial reports from Cubulco and is able to monitor the activities there the same as in the past.

9e The VanMinnen family are currently in Costa Rica getting their training to be able to work effectively in Cubulco.

10. Budget Notes

- 10a** Income from FR Churches is set at \$345,500. This is the same as last year.
- 10b** Other income is support from various donors and the ladies league. The mission gets an annual donation of \$15,000 from a foundation in Alberta to support the work of pastor Herfst in his teaching ministry.
- 10c** Now that brother John Otten has returned to Canada he has been employed by Word and Deed directly so support as in past years is no longer applicable.
- 10d** Travel/Accommodation for this year will move the Everts family back to Holland and two other families into Cubulco, plus airfare is needed for furlough and delegate travels.
- 10e** Education costs are Spanish training for the Education Director.
- 10f** The Mission is planning a deficit budget this year. We will be having a lot of one time expenses this year with three families being relocated so our savings will be used to fund those costs.

HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE REPORT
TO SYNOD 2008 OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF
NORTH AMERICA

Esteemed brothers:

With the help of the Lord, our committee was able to meet twice since Synod 2007. We are pleased to submit the following report:

Toronto Outreach to the Hindu / Muslim / Sikh Communities.

In response to a report received from the consistory of the Providence Free Reformed Church (PFRC) of St. George, Synod 2007 instructed the HMC “to investigate the possibility of teaming up with a reformed entity to help with a work as outlined in Appendix A” (referring to Appendix A of the St. George proposal – see Acts, 2007, pp. 33, 197ff). In compliance with these instructions, our committee reports the following:

1. A subcommittee consisting of Rev. L.J. Bilkes (Convenor), Rev. J. Overduin and Rev. H. Van Essen made plans in August 2007 to meet with Rev. Tony Zekveld (URC missionary pastor to the Sikh-Hindu communities in Toronto). The thought was that Rev. Zekveld could direct us with regard to our mandate. In the meantime, however, the URC of Wyoming, Ontario, the calling church for Rev. Zekveld, had become aware of Candidate Jason Keuning and even met with him to consider the possibility of his working with Rev. Zekveld. This led to a formal visit with Rev. Zekveld by the sub-committee and now also several members of the PFRC consistory (Candidate Keuning’s home congregation). This visit included a tour of the Hope Center (the headquarters of the Toronto outreach) as well as a Sikh and Hindu temple. The subcommittee reported that there is obviously a real need to help spread the gospel among the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim people. At the same time, this need could begin to be met by Candidate Keuning. This was left in the hands of the St. George FRC (PFRC).

2. At our regular fall meeting, the consistory of the PFRC submitted a proposal for our consideration, the thrust of which was to underwrite the costs of PFRC supporting a part-time work for Candidate Keuning in conjunction with Rev. Zekveld (20 hours per week spread over three days per week). Duties for Keuning would include handing out tracts, supervising the homework club, attending evangelistic events, frequenting local Sikh temples, conducting the occasional service at the Hope Center, following up on contacts, studying Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam, and learning Punjabi – all under the supervision of Rev. Zekveld. The consistory of the PFRC also proposed that it exercise spiritual supervision over Jason and his work. The HMC agreed to the proposals of PFRC.

3. Since this time, the sub committee met with Candidate Keuning on Dec 10, 2007 and again on Feb 4, 2008, as well as with Rev. Zekveld and representatives of the consistory of PFRC. Our committee has also requested and received regular updates from Candidate Keuning. To give a bit of a taste

of the work in which Candidate Keuning is involved we include some information from the Dec. 10 subcommittee report: *In general Jason is enjoying the work in Toronto. He has sometimes supplied preaching for Rev. Zekveld at the Hope Centre and for a Chinese group that meets elsewhere. In addition Jason devotes time to reading and general study of the Sick-Hindu-Muslim religions and culture. He attended a Christian-Muslim Forum. He has written an article for a Muslim newspaper on the subject of "What are the psalms?" He helps run the 'Homework Club' - this he does with Padre Peter, Rev. Zekveld's assistant. They help Hindu and Sikh children with their homework and at the end of the session Jason tells a Bible story. Sometimes they make contact with parents through these groups. They are also on the street handing out tracts. Jason has also experienced opposition in the work. There have been attempts by four Sikh men to undermine the work of the Hope Centre and the URC mission. Nevertheless it is Jason's position that confrontation also has a place in this work. We have to be on guard that we do not fall into the pluralistic mind set that so prevails in our culture. Meanwhile Jason has written a tract that with help has been translated and printed in Punjabi.*

4. Recently, at our spring meeting, the committee met with Candidate Keuning with a view to ascertaining his interest in the work and how he sees things unfolding in the future. We may report that our brother is enjoying the work that he is doing and feels a burden for the people there. He would like to be more involved in this work in the future as the Lord leads. After meeting with Candidate Keuning we met with representatives of the consistory of the PFRC. The consistory presented to us the following proposal, contingent on denominational funding. They would like:

- a. Beginning Sept. 2008, to commit to up to one more year of part time labour for Candidate Keuning;
- b. A further commitment to a full time one year probationary period, with Keuning and family residing in Toronto, beginning no later than July 2009;
- c. Upon successful completion of a one year probationary period, a further commitment to full time ministry beginning no later than July 2010.

5. The consistory of PFRC made several other recommendations:

- a. That HMC accept and recommend the work proposal and budget (for the September 2008 to June 2011 period) as contained in this report to Synod 2008.
- b. That PFRC carry out the accounting and auditing of the expenses incurred in this ministry to be reported to HMC.
- c. That HMC reimburse PFRC for the expenses incurred and submitted for this ministry.
- d. That PFRC consistory continue to have pastoral oversight for Candidate Keuning in this outreach.
- e. That Rev. T. Zekveld supervise the day to day work of Candidate Keuning.
- f. That HMC will continue to have the Home Missions Sub Committee functioning on behalf of the body with an ad hoc member from PFRC.
- g. That the HMC agree to add a liaison member from PFRC to HMC (Bill Droogendyk as primary, and Carl Vandermaarl as alternate).

These recommendations (4a-c and 5a-g) were all adopted by our committee.

Asian Ministry

Synod 2006 instructed our committee to develop, in conjunction with Rev. K. Gangar, an outreach work among the Asian (Sikh, Punjabi-speaking) population in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. We may report the following:

1. Rev. Gangar continues to develop his fluency in Punjabi. He spends several hours each week reading and speaking Punjabi partly with the aid of some computer software which he has purchased.
2. Rev. Gangar has assembled a small collection of tracts written in Punjabi which can be distributed to interested persons. He hopes to be able to write his own tracts in the future.
3. Since the beginning of April, Rev. Gangar has been doing a weekly radio broadcast (1/2 hour) in the Punjabi language. The signal covers the entire Fraser Valley and northwestern Washington state.
4. Rev. Gangar hopes to speak at an evangelistic outreach in Toronto together with Rev. Tony Zekveld June 7 and 8.
5. Rev. Gangar continues to pursue his D.Min degree at Westminster Theological Seminary.
6. Efforts are being made to advertise the radio program in various newspapers and by means of cards and signs posted on church lawns.

To better oversee this work, the HMC has decided to establish a sub committee to oversee the work of the Asian Ministry consisting of Rev. Moerdyk and Rev. Schoeman.

In response to concerns expressed at Synod 2006 regarding the specific objectives of this ministry, the committee has asked Rev. Moerdyk to put together an addendum to this report.

Other Opportunities

The HMC has no other opportunities to report at this time but notes the potential establishment of a preaching station in Edmonton, Alberta.

Financial Report.

Our committee would like remind Synod that the assessment number per member has increased from \$1/member to \$12/member.

We further point out that we are projecting a deficit of \$54,000 if Calgary receives a minister and Synod approves the actions of the committee re: Asian Ministry & the Toronto outreach (see the attached financial reports).

Recommendations

1. To approve sending Candidate Keuning to Toronto on a part time basis with the understanding that this will become full time starting July, 2009 and to cover the expenses associated with this as outlined in the attached financial report.
2. To approve the work proposal for Candidate Keuning as appended to this report
3. To approve the continued funding of the Asian ministry of Rev. K. Gangar with its corresponding financial requirements.
4. To approve the proposal regarding the Asian Ministry as appended to this report
5. To approve the appointment of Rev. L.J. Bikes for another 3 year term, Rev. E. Moerdyk, for a 3 year term, Mr. Bert Marskamp (replacing Treasurer Jack Hoek) for a 3 year term and Mr. Bill Droogendyk from PFRC as an adhoc member for a three year term with Mr. Carl Vandermaarl as alternate.
6. To maintain a quota of \$12 per member while also encouraging congregations to hold collections for the two projects outlined in this report.
7. To approve the actions of this committee.

May the Lord richly bless the labours of this Synod.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. J. Lewis,
Secretary

Appendix: Report on Punjabi Outreach

In consultation with Rev. Gangar, the following report has been prepared as an internal memo for the home missions committee.

Investigation:

At this point, the groundwork of the ministry itself is still being formed and its basic principles still being discovered. What we have done is follow the indications of God's providence. We have in Rev. Gangar, someone uniquely qualified by God to reach out to Punjabi people. Not only is Rev. Gangar a former Sikh, but he is working on improving his grasp of the Punjabi language, in order to be able to communicate more effectively about the gospel of Christ. From the various conferences at which Rev. Gangar has spoken, it is apparent that there is hunger for knowing what the word of God says, or at the least, curiosity about the gospel. At times when Rev. Gangar suggests a pause in the message, the people insist that he continue and teach them more. Since the largest Sikh temple in North America is next door to one of our congregations, should we not be stirred to take on this mission field God has put in our laps?

Rev. Gangar has also consulted with the advisor of his D.Min program at Westminster, and this man has given some excellent suggestions for getting the gospel to Sikh people. Rev. Gangar has also discussed this outreach with others who have tried to reach Sikh people, and has gleaned some helpful pointers about what to do and what to avoid. As such we can strategize on how to be most effective in spreading the good news.

Radio broadcasts:

The combined consistory meeting of the west has urged Rev. Gangar to try to get on the radio with Punjabi messages. Initially, attempts to find a radio station and air time were unsuccessful. The Punjabi radio stations in the valley were asking for \$1200 per half hour, which basically means they were telling us they were not interested in such messages. However, we have now found an English speaking station in Washington that will reach the whole Lower Mainland. We have scheduled a half hour time slot on Saturday evenings from 9:00-9:30. The cost is only \$100 for that half hour.

The first week of April, Rev. Gangar recorded the first of a series of ½ hour radio broadcasts. He has selected basic apologetics topics. Without directly attacking Sikhism, these topics do get to the heart of the gospel and answer the most pressing questions Sikh people have about the gospel. The topics include why Jesus is the only way to salvation, why the Bible is trustworthy, what the doctrine of the Trinity means, what sin is, and who God is. Once 12 of these broadcasts have been recorded, they will be packaged on a CD that can then be distributed by individuals or congregations. At some point, the broadcast will also include testimonies from converted Sikhs.

Rev. Gangar has obtained CD's with Christian Punjabi music and lyrics to use during the radio broadcasts. We will also be giving out the address of the Abbotsford FRC if people want to ask for Bibles. The Abbotsford congregation has purchased a number of these Bibles. They are more expensive at \$18 apiece, and we are looking at ways to acquire them for a better price through a member in Abbotsford who is involved with the Gideons.

Getting the word out:

There are also several other ways in which we are seeking to maximize the reach of the gospel. Signs are being printed the Punjabi language that can be put up on the property of various local reformed churches. We are also printing business cards with Punjabi on one side, and English on the other side. These cards can be distributed to the Sikhs our people meet. We are also seriously considering distributing the cards and audio CD's in the neighborhood around the Abbotsford church.

Before we do this, we have invited Rev. Gangar to address the Abbotsford congregation as well as those who are interested from other local reformed churches. The speech will focus on understanding and reaching out to Sikhs with the gospel of Christ. We are also planning to advertise in the local Punjabi newspapers, in order to raise awareness in the Punjabi speaking community about these broadcasts. Realistically, we have been told it takes 6-8 months to get the word out there about these broadcasts.

We are also working on getting a website up and running with the broadcasts available as a download. This way any Punjabi speaking people in India, Dubai, and in other communities around the world can also access these broadcasts and the resources that will be made available there. We are also in the process of gathering tracts in the Punjabi language.

Accountability:

Rev. Gangar has indicated that it is important to him for local churches to be involved. He does not want this to become a one man ministry. It is therefore imperative that local churches be involved. At this time, Rev. Gangar does not want to be called as a home missionary to the Punjabi speaking Sikhs. He feels that his primary calling is to be a minister of the word in the Bellevue congregation. However, he is willing to devote up to half of his time to spreading the gospel to Seikhs. This includes the work in India from time to time, as well as speaking at conferences in Alberta, Ontario, and BC. It also includes the radio broadcasts.

Part of the difficulty is that he is being asked to report to 3 different committee: the foreign missions committee, the radio evangelism committee, and the home missions committee. This is a somewhat cumbersome and time consuming responsibility. It is believed that it might be better for a local congregation such as Abbotsford, to take responsibility for reporting to the committees.

D.Min studies:

Rev. Gangar has completed 2 out of 6 modules in a Doctor of Ministry program at Westminster Theological Seminary. The radio broadcast will probably serve as the project for these studies. The reason these studies are necessary is that Asians are very conscious of titles and degrees. It helps tremendously to have a degree like this.

Finances:

The home missions committee provides half of Rev. Gangar's remuneration, since he is spending about ½ of his time in this work. Our goal is to have the various congregations in the denomination hold specifically designated collections for this work. At one point there was a public meeting in the Fraser Valley to notify and involve other local reformed churches. We will work on reestablishing these contacts, and hopefully can ask for collections to be taken in these churches as well.

Recommendations:

1. Cut down on the number of committees Rev. Gangar is reporting to, or at least, streamline the process. If Abbotsford has oversight over the outreach, we could take this work of reporting upon us.
2. Rev. Gangar has asked to be relieved of all his committee work, in order to be able to focus on Bellevue and evangelism to the Sikhs. This needs to be considered as well by the various committees.

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
HOME MISSIONS FUND

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS - Income Statement

For the Year Ended December 31, 2007

	2007 <u>Actual</u>	2007 <u>Budgeted</u>	Variances F(U)		2006 <u>Actual</u>
			\$	%	
<u>REVENUES</u>					
Assessments	4,375	4,300	75	2%	4,312
Collections	15,332	20,000	-4,668	-30%	11,554
Interest	1,078	750	328	30%	1,244
Other	-9	-	-9		-711
Total Revenues	\$20,776	\$25,050	-\$4,274	-21%	\$16,399
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>					
<u>Support- Mission Stations</u>					
Asian (BC) Mission	41,331	-	-41,331	-100%	-
Toronto Mission	9,944	-	-9,944		
Calgary HM Station		24,000	24,000	100%	
Calgary Radio Mission	3,900	4,000	100	3%	
	55,175	28,000	-27,175	-49%	-
Other: Administration					80
Bank Charges	28	25	-3	-11%	28
	108	25	-3	-11%	108
Total Expenditures	\$55,203	\$28,025	\$27,178	-49%	\$108
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	-\$34,426	-\$2,975	-\$31,451		\$16,291

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
HOME MISSIONS FUND
INCOME STATEMENT WITH BUDGET
For the Year Ended December 31, 2007

	2007 <u>Actual</u>	2008 <u>Budget</u>	Variances <u>\$</u>	F(U) <u>%</u>	Note	2009 <u>Projection</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>						
Assessments	4,375	51,600	47,225	1079%		52,200
Collections	15,332	15,000	-5,332	73%	5	20,000
Interest	1,078	750	-328	-30%		
Other	-9	-	9			-
Total Revenues	<u>\$20,776</u>	<u>\$67,350</u>	<u>\$41,574</u>	<u>224%</u>		<u>\$72,200</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>						
<u>Support</u>						
Punjabi (BC) Home Ministry Toronto Mission (J.Keuning)	41,331	35,416	5,915	14%		36,302
Calgary Home Miss. Station	9,944	11,000	9,944	-11%		52,538
Calgary Radio Mission	-	64,000	-64,000			51,200
	3,900	4,000	-100	-3%		4,000
	55,175	114,416	-46,742	107%		144,040
<u>Other:</u>						
Administration		-				-
Bank Charges	28	30	-2	-7%		30
	28	30	78	-7%		30
Total Expenditures	<u>\$55,203</u>	<u>\$114,446</u>	<u>-\$59,242</u>			<u>\$144,070</u>
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	<u>-\$34,426</u>	<u>-\$47,096</u>	<u>-\$12,670</u>			<u>-\$71,870</u>

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
HOME MISSIONS FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - BALANCE SHEET
As at December 31, 2007

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>			
Cash/Short Term Deposits	3	\$ 19,151	\$ 54,906
Assessments Receivable	4	99	
GIC		49,372	48,143
TOTAL ASSETS		\$ 68,623	\$ 103,049
 <u>LIABILITIES</u>			
Accounts Payable			
Other			
Total Liabilities		\$ -	\$ -
 <u>EQUITY</u>			
Opening Balance		\$ 103,049	86,758
Operating Surplus(Deficit)		(34,426)	16,291
Other			
Closing Balance		\$ 68,623	\$ 103,049
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY		\$ 68,623	\$ 103,049

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
HOME MISSIONS FUND
PROJECTED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (D.V.)
{Check discrepancies}

	Note	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<u>REVENUES</u>						
Assessments		51,600	52,200	52,800	53,400	54,000
Collections		15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Interest		750	-	-		
Total Revenues		\$67,350	\$72,200	\$72,800	\$73,400	\$74,000
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>						
<u>Support</u>						
Asian (BC) Mission	6	35,416	36,302	37,209	38,140	39,093
Toronto Mission	7	11,000	52,538	72,076	35,645	-
Calgary HM Station	8	64,000	51,200	38,400	25,600	12,800
Calgary Radio Mission		4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
		\$114,416	\$144,040	\$151,685	\$103,384	\$55,893
<u>Other:</u>						
Administration						
Bank Charges		30	30	30	30	30
		30	30	30	30	30
Total Expenditures		\$114,446	\$144,070	\$151,715	\$103,414	\$55,923
Operating Surplus(Deficit)		-\$47,096	-\$71,870	-\$78,715	-\$30,014	\$18,077
Cash						
Opening		68,623	21,256	-50,344	-129,259	-159,273
Closing		21,526	-50,344	-129,259	-159,273	-141,196

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
HOME MISSIONS FUND

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Home Missions Fund are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are in Canadian dollars.

2. Review of the Statements:

The financial statements of the Home Missions Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard audit program, by brothers Greg Neven and Matt Hirst of Brantford. The records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Cash and Short Term Deposits consist of the following:		
BMO Savings	\$19,151	\$54,906
BMO Short Term Deposit	49,372	48,142
	\$68,523	\$103,049

Funds designated for Punjabi mission of Western Canada: \$10,951

4. Accounts Receivable:

Accounts Receivable consist of the following:
Assessments

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>Current Yr. Assessment.</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Closing Balance</u>
Abbotsford	-	\$149	149	-
Bellevue	-	19	19	-
Bornholm	-	82	82	-
Brantford	-	348	348	-
Chatham	-	237	237	-
Chilliwack	-	316	316	-
Dundas	-	454	454	-
Grand Rapids	-	313	313	-
Hamilton	-	336	336	-
Lacombe	-	73	73	-
Langley	-	62	62	-
London	-	99	-	99
Mitchell	-	215	215	-
Monarch	-	275	275	-

Pompton Plains	-	177	177	-
St. George	-	218	218	-
St. Thomas	-	304	304	-
Toronto	-	13	13	-
Vineland	-	436	436	-
Fenwick	-	249	249	-
	-	<u>\$4,375</u>	<u>\$4,375</u>	<u>\$99</u>

Total Accounts Receivable

\$99

5. Extra Collections

Several congregations, primarily from Western Canada, contributed to the Punjabi Mission effort in 2007.

Abbotsford	\$ 10,297
Chilliwack	2,105
Lacombe	907
Other	<u>2,023</u>
	\$ 15,332

- Asian Ministry expenses are set at 50% of Pastor Ganger's compensation.
- Estimates for the Toronto Mission expenses are based on Providence FRC calculations.
- Calgary Home Mission support is dependent on whether they receive an evangelist and is on a declining formula over five years. (year 1 - 100%, year 2 - 80%, year 3 - 60%, year 4 - 40% and year 5 - 20%).

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

to Synod 2008 of the Free Reformed Churches of North America

Esteemed Delegates,

To facilitate their ongoing activities, your Publications Committee has been enabled to meet twice since Synod 2007, namely, 23 October 2007 and 25 March 2008. We may report the following concerning our activities.

The Messenger

The Messenger could be published on a regular basis. We are grateful for the prompt and careful work of our editor and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. Pronk, as well as for the articles of our contributors. We hope this publication may be of a blessing for the denomination and all who read it.

Due to advancements in technology, we have been able to make the Messenger full color throughout and reduce our printing costs for 2008. Even with the last several issues being larger than normal, the costs have remained below what they were previously.

Children's Magazine

Recognizing the importance of good reading materials for children as well as the lack of sound periodicals for them, your committee proposes to begin publishing a children's magazine. This 16 page magazine would come out six times per year and focus on children ages 6-12. A subscription cost of \$15.00 per year should cover the cost of publishing and distributing this magazine. Mrs. Doreen Tamminga, who is well known in our denomination through her stories in the Messenger Youth Page, has volunteered to be involved in this project, together with Mrs. Elly Kranendonk and Mrs. Susan Schoeman. Rev. J. Lewis is willing to be the general editor. Your committee submits this magazine to your approval.

Yearbook

Both the 2007 and the 2008 Yearbooks were published in 2007. The 2008 Yearbook could be printed by the end of 2007 thanks to the diligent work of Mr. David Tamminga in collecting the information and formatting the booklet. He is not responsible for the formatting misalignments in the 2008 yearbook.

Reading Sermons

A total of 39 reading sermons were published by the Reading Sermons subcommittee in 2007, including the well-known 21 sermon series by Rev. P. den Butter on the "Doctrines of Grace" or Five Points of Calvinism. We thank the four ministers who submitted sermons, those who transcribed sermons, as well as Mr. J. D. Tamminga for administering this work. We would like to remind all the pastors of the standing commitment to submit at least two (2) sermons per year to Mr. J. D. Tamminga for publication. In 2009 your committee plans to issue a series of catechism sermons.

Publishing Arrangements

On specific projects, Free Reformed Publications has begun working with Reformation Heritage Books (RHB) of Grand Rapids

(www.heritagebooks.org). While we retain our separate identity and will continue to publish certain materials independent of RHB, we have agreed to publish several specific books that would appeal to a broader audience together with RHB to reduce costs and increase publicity. So far this arrangement has worked very well with the devotional by Rev. Frans Bakker as well as the series by Andrew van der Veer.

Publication Projects

Roughly ordered by stage of development, our existing publishing projects are as follows:

1. *Bible Lessons for Juniors* by VanderVeer. This series of four workbooks for children was our first joint publication with RHB. It was published in the summer of 2007. Very few copies have sold so far. Churches are encouraged to consider using it in the educational programs.
2. *The Everlasting Word* by Frans Bakker. This daily devotional, collated and translated by Rev. G. R. Procee, was printed in December 2007 as a joint project with RHB. Numerous congregations have ordered a copy for each family. It has sold very well.
3. *Vacation Bible School* curriculum. The seven year cycle of VBS materials has been formatted and is now available on a CD, so that congregations may simply print the material off from a CD as they need it.
4. *God and Caesar: A legal primer for Office-bearers* by Ray Pennings et al. Synod 2006 instructed the publications committee to print the Legal Affairs Ad Hoc committee handbook for office-bearers prepared by Mr. Ray Pennings. This book is to be published as a joint project with RHB in April 2008.
5. *Sunday School Teachers' Manual*. The earlier produced manual was distributed in a large black binder. Now this valuable material has been re-edited and is to be published as a joint project with RHB in May 2008.
6. *Introducing the FRC Brochure*. In consultation with the Interchurch Relations Committee, a brief brochure has been developed. This brochure will be printed as soon as Synod 2008 has decided on several Interchurch Relations proposals which affect the text of this brochure.
7. *Bible Studies* by Rev. C. Pronk. A series of Radio Broadcasts on the Apostle's Creed, Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer has been edited and had questions added to it. This is a suitable series of studies especially for adult "inquirers," outreach, Bible studies, etc. This should be published in 2008.
8. *Holy Baptism* by Rev. G. R. Procee. A new edition of this book published around a decade ago is being edited for publication. The stock of the original publication has been depleted and requests continue to come in for this book.
9. *Sunday School Activities*: Together with the Sunday School Association, a subcommittee is developing activity sheets for three age groups. The intention is that teachers photocopy these sheets and use them for their classes. These materials are still being developed.
10. *What is Free Reformed?* by J. H. Velema, C. A. Schouls et al. This book is still in its initial stages.
11. *The Earnest Communicant* by Ashton Oxenden. This is a small booklet written by an 19th century clergyman in Montreal intended to guide

communicants in preparation for the Lord's Supper. There is a meditation, questions, and a prayer for each day of the week of preparation. This publication should be printed in 2008.

Consistories are encouraged to purchase materials in order to make them available to their congregations for their edification. People are much more inclined to purchase books when they hold them in their hands than when they see them advertised in *The Messenger*. Bulk orders receive a discount. Orders placed before Synod 2008 can be picked up at Synod 2008 to save on shipping costs.

Website

Concerning the website, the following may be of interest:

- A webstore page for Free Reformed Publications is being developed.
- Standardized frcna.org email addresses have been developed for all the congregations, and have been published in the 2008 Yearbook. Each congregations clerk, treasurer and bulletin editor has a standardized email address (e.g. clerk@abbotsford.frcna.org, treasurer@abbotsford.frcna.org, bulletin@abbotsford.frcna.org). The local congregation is responsible to ensure its email addresses are up to date.
- The local congregations and denominational committees are reminded to use the news@frcna.org email account, which has been set up to keep the denomination up to date about any events or news.
- Congregational subdomains are available (e.g. www.abbotsford.frcna.org), enabling each congregation to develop their own website. For further information contact the webmaster (webmaster@frcna.org).

Mr. Mark Koopman, the webmaster, and those involved with the website are thanked for their work.

Church Order

The Church Order Supplements are being reviewed to ensure that they are up-to-date. Once this process is finished they will be republished. The Church Orderly implications of the Legal Affairs ad hoc committee report submitted to Synod 2007 (cf. Article 50) are also being examined.

Financial Report

The 2007 financial report and 2009 budget are attached. The books for 2007 were audited by brothers Mike Laman and Peter Maljaars according to the Synodical finance procedures guidelines. The Committee appoints brothers Jeff Haalstra and Mike Laman as Auditors for 2008.

Due to the need to subsidize the cost of *The Messenger* and the sizeable number of planned publications, the committee recommends that the quota be raised from \$6.00 to \$8.00 for 2009.

Administrator/Treasurer Position

Mr. Dennis DeVries has requested to resign as Administrator/Treasurer of the Publications Committee. We are thankful for his years of faithful, diligent, and punctual work most willingly performed.

Your committee proposes to divide the work currently performed by Mr. DeVries over two positions: the Publications Treasurer/Administrator and the

Publications Distributor. The Distributor will manage the stock of publications, receive book orders from the Treasurer/Administrator, fill them, and send them out. The Treasurer/Administrator will perform the rest of the tasks. The committee proposes to appoint Mrs. Marianne Overduin (Mitchell) as Treasurer/Administrator and Mr. Rae VanderSleen (Bornholm) as Publications Distributor.

Appointments

The terms of Rev. L. W. Bilkes, Rev. G. R. Procee, and Mr. J. Tamminga expire this year. Your committee proposes that Rev. L. W. Bilkes and Rev. G. R. Procee be reappointed as committee members for another three year term. Your committee also proposes that Mr. Harry VanderMaarl (St. George) be appointed to succeed Mr. Jack Tamminga, who is also thanked for his service to the committee.

Appointment of Assistant Clerk to Synod

As has been the practice for the last number of years, the Committee again recommends that Elder Ray Pennings of Calgary be appointed as Assistant Clerk to Synod 2008.

Recommendations:

The Publications Committee presents the following recommendations to Synod 2008:

1. To appoint Mr. Ray Pennings as assistant to the first and second clerks of Synod 2008;
2. To approve the proposal to publish a Children's Magazine with Rev. J. Lewis as General Editor and Mrs. D. Tamminga as Managing Editor.
3. To ratify the appointment of Rev. C. Pronk as Editor of The Messenger.
4. To approve the appointment of Mrs. Marianne Overduin as Treasurer/Administrator and Mr. Rae VanderSleen as Book Distributor.
5. To maintain the current subscription price of the Messenger (\$25.00/yr for Canada & U.S.A.);
6. To increase the quota of the Publications Committee from \$6.00 to \$8.00 for 2009;
7. To approve the financial report for 2007 and budget for 2009 of the Publications committee;
8. To appoint Mr. Harry vanderMaarl (St. George) to succeed Mr. J. Tamminga as a committee member for a three year term ending in 2011;
9. To reappoint Rev. L. W. Bilkes and Rev. G. R. Procee for a three year term as committee members ending 2011;
10. To approve of the actions of your deputies.

With brotherly greetings on behalf of the Committee,

Rev. D. H. Kranendonk,
Secretary

Financial Reports

Publications Committee of the Free Reformed Church of North America
Balance Sheet
As at December 31, 2007

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
<u>Assets</u>		
Chequing	7,334	2,925
CIBC term deposit	0	0
Accounts receivable	4,121	0
Equipment	1,041	1,041
Homestead Christian	0	15,000
Inventory	32,000	30,000
Total assets	<u>\$ 44,496</u>	<u>\$ 48,966</u>
 <u>Liabilities and equity</u>		
Accounts payable	0	377
Opening equity	48,589	53,361
Net surplus for year	(4,093)	(4,772)
Total	<u>\$ 44,496</u>	<u>\$ 48,966</u>

Publications Committee of the Free Reformed Church of North America
Statement of Operations (Income Statement)
For the year ended December 31, 2007

	2007 <u>Actual</u>	2007 <u>Budget</u>	\$Variance <u>F/(U)</u>	% Variance <u>F/(U)</u>	2008 <u>Budget</u>
<u>Revenues</u>					
Assessment	21,875	26,000	(4,125)	(15.8%)	26,250
Publications	24,592	12,000	12,592	104.9%	12,000
Interest	620	1,000	(380)	(38.0%)	1,000
The Messenger					
Subscriptions	38,213	35,000	3,213	9.2%	35,000
Announcements	2,160	1,000	1,160	116.0%	1,000
Miscellaneous	62	0	62	0.0%	
<i>Total Revenues</i>	<u>87,522</u>	<u>75,000</u>	<u>12,522</u>	<u>16.7%</u>	<u>75,250</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>					
Publications	17,410	15,000	(2,410)	(16.0%)	15,000
Website	214	1,000	786	78.6%	200
Messenger costs	70,633	58,000	(12,633)	(21.8%)	58,000
Office supplies	1,658	1,000	(658)	(65.8%)	1,000
Honorarium	1,700	1,200	(500)	(41.7%)	1,200
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	<u>91,615</u>	<u>76,200</u>	<u>(15,415)</u>	<u>(20.2%)</u>	<u>75,400</u>
Surplus/(deficit)	<u>(4,093)</u>	<u>(1,200)</u>	<u>(2,893)</u>	<u>(241.1%)</u>	<u>(150)</u>

Publications Committee of the Free Reformed Church of North America

Budget

For the year ending December 31, 2008 & 2009

	2007 <u>Actual</u>	2008 <u>Budget</u>	\$ Variance <u>F/(U)</u>	% Variance <u>F/(U)</u>	2009 <u>Budget</u>
<u>Revenues</u>					
Assessment	21,875	26,250	(4,375)	(16.7%)	34,000
Publications	24,592	12,000	12,592	104.9%	15,000
Children's magazine					12,000
Interest	620	1,000	(380)	(38.0%)	0
<u>The Messenger</u>					
Subscriptions	38,213	35,000	3,213	9.2%	35,000
Announcements	2,160	1,000	1,160	116.0%	1,000
Miscellaneous	62	0	62	0.0%	
Total Revenues	<u>87,522</u>	<u>75,250</u>	<u>12,272</u>	<u>16.3%</u>	<u>97,000</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>					
Publications	17,410	15,000	3,590	23.9%	15,000
Children's magazine					12,000
Website	214	200	(14)	(7.0%)	300
Messenger costs	70,633	58,000	(12,633)	(21.8%)	70,000
Office supplies	1,658	1,000	(658)	(65.8%)	500
Honorarium	1,700	1,200	(500)	(41.7%)	1,200
Total expenditures	<u>91,615</u>	<u>75,400</u>	<u>(16,215)</u>	<u>(21.5%)</u>	<u>99,000</u>
Surplus/(deficit)	<u>(4,093)</u>	<u>(150)</u>	<u>(3,943)</u>	<u>(2,628.7%)</u>	<u>(2,000)</u>

Publications Committee of the Free Reformed Church of North America

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Publications Committee are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are made in Canadian dollars. Due to the fact that previous statements were not prepared on an accrual basis all equipment purchases made in prior years and inventory are disclosed in the notes.

2. Review of the Books:

The financial statements of the Publications Committee were reviewed by Mike Laman (St George) and Peter Maljaars, (Brantford).

3. Cash:

Cash consists of \$7,334 in a Your Neighbourhood chequing account.

4. Accounts receivable and accounts payable:

The total accounts receivable is \$4,121. The total accounts payable is zero.

5. Inventories:

Total inventory has an estimated value of \$32,000.

Our current inventory of books consists as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
1. Bible Lessons for Juniors	
• Creation to Moses	238
• Kings and Prophets	244
• The Life of Christ	237
• The Early Church	244
2. Signs of the Times	327
3. The Heidelberg Catechism in Simplified Questions & Answers	159
4. Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism	166
5. Explanatory Notes on the Heidelberg Catechism (Kremer)	132
6. Learning Bible Truths (Workbook)	39
7. 1892-1992: Lessons for Today	116
8. The Secession of 1834 (by Rev. A. Baars)	3
9. Selected Sermons of Early Free Reformed Ministers	715
10. Psalmody Through the Ages	507
11. The New Age Movement (by Rev. P. VanderMeyden)	37
12. Introducing the Free Reformed Churches	0
13. Covenant and Election (by Dr. J. Van Genderen)	3
14. Godly Sorrow	1,767
15. Canons of Dort	102
16. Faith of Our Fathers	811
17. Thy Only Comfort in Life and in Death (Sermons on the HC)	26
18. Study Report: Public Confession of Faith	287
19. Infant Baptism & The Scriptures (by Dr. A. Baars)	18
20. The Everlasting Word – A Daily Devotional	40
21. Revised Church Order (Nov 2004)	68
22. 2008 Yearbook	88
23. CD-ROM Database FRC Resources	9
24. Bible Translation Report	43

6. Capital Assets

2000	Intel PII 450 MMX Computer	\$1,724
2005	Computer	\$1,041

Refugee Committee Report for Synod 2008

Dear brothers,
Your deputies have the following to report.

Introduction

Our committee meets every 6 to 8 weeks to discuss and oversee the work of sponsorship. This is a work dear to our hearts, especially when we read the horrific stories of those who appeal to us for sponsorship. It is also quite touching to read of the Lord's sustaining grace in the lives of those who suffer for the sake of the gospel. Even when their applications are rejected by the government, we still take the opportunity to encourage them in the Lord.

Update on the sponsorship situation

The UN estimates the number of refugees in the world at \$20 million. For decades, Canada has been quite unique in the world in allowing private groups to sponsor those refugees who are eligible (as refugees under UN definitions) and admissible for resettlement (under Canadian law). However recently this has been changing, resulting in disheartening developments in the government approach to private sponsorship. The current government has suddenly become quite restrictive, resulting in a very high rejection rate to our applications. For example, when it comes to applications from Sudan, a couple of years ago we had a 90% acceptance rate for our applications, but in the last year we have had almost 100% rejection (and the quality of our paperwork has not changed). Our office is appealing these rejections. Mainly this rejection rate is because our focus has been on the Sudan. We sponsored primarily from Sudan because we had some contacts and a list of applicants built up there. However, our government now claims it is safe in Sudan. Reports by those living in Sudan tell a much different story. Our office is now actively building up contacts and preparing a list of applicants from other countries. At this time, we also have about 200 applications awaiting government approval, from 10 different countries.

The government has changed its approach from an open door policy to a much more restrictive policy, without really being public about it. This has led to a frustrating situation for sponsors, and a sometimes inhumane approach to the refugees themselves. Added to this, there is a significant backlog in the applications waiting government approval. It would be helpful if the government would hire efficiency experts to streamline the process, since it now takes up to 3 years from the time the initial application is made until those refugees who are approved arrive in Canada.

Refugee Administrator:

Mr. Ben VanDerWoerd has been the driving force behind getting this committee established. He has had a heart for this work for many years, and donates his time. However, due to his age, we have found a successor to be the administrator. This has been reported to Synod the last couple of years. We have now officially hired the successor, Mrs. Heddie Driegen. The reason for the delay has been waiting until the proper level of financial support has been reached in order to employ Heddie Driegen. The administrator is an ex officio advisory member of the committee. Heddie is becoming increasingly

knowledgeable on the subject, and is a real asset to the work. The administrator travels to various conferences to keep up to date on government changes, as well as to exchange ideas with other private sponsorship holders. Our committee is becoming known across Canada, especially among Reformed churches, for its work in this field. Even those churches and organisation who do not sponsor through us still consult us as a resource on sponsorship and resettlement issues. Given the change in perspective from the government, it would be almost impossible at this time to obtain a SAH license, making the work of this committee all the more important.

Financial support:

We would like to express our gratitude to those churches that have sent in donations for this work. We also would like to warmly thank those churches who have sponsored refugees. On behalf of the refugees helped in this way, you have been a real blessing to many.

Financial support continues to be a burden to this committee. Several times, we have asked the Synod to approve a quota so we can fund our work of setting up an office to assist churches in sponsoring refugees. Each time the Synod has told us that in this kind of work, our churches rely on freewill offerings. Unfortunately, this is not working. This past year, less than ½ of our churches made any financial contribution to this committee at all. This leaves us in an awkward position when it comes to employing our new administrator. We have just recently given her an employment contract, when a couple of collections made us sufficiently confident that we would meet our budget. An attempt has been made via a letter to the churches, as well as follow up calls, to obtain the necessary financial support. As of the writing of this report, a couple of congregations have communicated to us that they have scheduled a collection. We have done our utmost through articles in the messenger to alert our churches to our work. If there are any obstacles in our approach to this work that keep us from receiving either financial support or requests to help sponsor refugees, please inform us!

Promotion:

Our committee actively seeks to promote our work in various ways. We have published a series of articles in the Messenger. We also have published an article in the Christian Renewal, soliciting applications and financial support from other reformed churches. Our committee sends out 4 newsletters each year that go to consistories of the Canadian Reformed, United Reformed, Heritage Reformed, and FRC churches. We have promoted this work at a local Bible conference in the Fraser Valley. Our chairman Rev. Moerdyk is available to give presentations about the work to those congregations interested. Dr. L.W. Bilkes has also done several presentations in the east.

Recommendations:

- 1) To approve the proposed budget
- 2) To approve a quote of \$6 per member, or to adopt a motion urging each congregation to schedule collections for this work.
- 3) To appoint Rev. E. Moerdyk of the Abbotsford congregation to succeed Dr. L.W. Bilkes, and to appoint (*****) of the Langley congregation as a new member.
- 4) To approve the actions of the committee

CHRISTIAN REFUGEE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 ADMINISTERED BY BEN VAN DER WOERD
 YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007.

	<u>Synodical Committee</u>	<u>Emmanuel FRC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
January 1, 2007, Bank Balance	10,000.00	1,401.14	11,401.14
Add: Contributions	16,464.50	13,273.74	29,738.24
	-----	-----	-----
	\$26,464.50	14,674.88	41,139.38
Deduct:			
Refugee Support		11,830.24	11,830.24
Expenses:			
Salaries	5,137.50		5,137.50
Conventions	1,540.80		1,540.80
Office Cost	193.64	436.1	629.74
	-----	-----	-----
	6,871.94	436.1	7,308.04
Dec. 31, 2007, Bank Balance	-----	-----	-----
	\$19,592.56	\$2,408.54	\$22,001.10

Christian Refugee Committee Budget 2008

Salary	\$ 24,000	
Office costs	3,000	
Travel, Conventions, Automotive	2,000	
Emergency Refugee Income Support	4,000	(3,000+ available)

Total	\$ 33,000	

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT FOR SYNOD 2008

Esteemed Brothers,

Your Deputies for Theological Education are pleased to provide you with the following account of their actions since we reported to Synod 2007. We met two times: October 22, 2007 and March 27, 2008. At these meetings the following matters were discussed and/or implemented.

Executive

The present executive of the committee consists of Rev. C.A. Schouls as chairman, Rev. L.W. Bilkes as vice-chairman, and Rev. G.R. Procee as secretary.

Theological Education at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

Deputies are pleased to report to you that the work of theological education at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids is progressing well. An important development was the addition to the faculty of a full time professor, Dr. David Murray, coming from the Stornaway Free Church of Scotland, Continuing. Dr. Murray was engaged in teaching Hebrew, Old Testament, and homiletics at the FCC seminary.

His work at PRTS is greatly appreciated. He interacts well with the students and his presence has led to a major step forward for PRTS. The seminary is now able to broaden its scope and to focus more attention upon the long distance education through the internet. The other two professors, Dr. J.R. Beeke and Dr. G.M. Bilkes are grateful for this expansion in the faculty. These changes have had no impact upon our FRC input in teaching. Our ministers continue to supply much of the total teaching. Rev. Pronk and Rev. L.W. Bilkes have taught some new courses, such as on modern theology, Second Reformation theology and pastoral and practical ethics, etc.

Your deputies are aware that increasingly the work at PRTS is becoming a mission towards students in theology from all over the world, who at PRTS receive theological instruction according to the principles of the Reformation, Second Reformation and Puritan theology. The student body is increasing quickly. Currently 60 students are enrolled at PRTS. The interaction between the students is excellent. They all enjoy their studies greatly. An increasing number of students at PRTS come from foreign countries such as China, Brazil, Syria and the Philippines.

Your deputies are grateful for the acceleration of student enrolment and feel that an open door has been offered to us to promote Reformed and Puritan theology in churches throughout the world.

Your deputies wish to point out, that when local congregations contribute to the financing of PRTS, let it be with the awareness that this work is not only providing solid teaching to our own students from the FRCNA, but also making this same instruction available to others from all over the world, who have no opportunity to receive such instruction in their native lands. Some of the foreign students have been sent to PRTS to gain sufficient knowledge to start

up Reformed seminaries in their own native lands. Through all this Reformed Puritan theology will be promoted in various countries around the world.

It is the wish of your deputies that we would all be increasingly aware of the importance of this work, support it, and remember the work at PRTS in our congregational prayers.

During the academic year Dr. G.M. Bilkes taught various courses in the M.Div program as well as two Th.M. courses: 'Parables of Jesus', and 'Conversion in the OT and NT.' Besides this Dr. G.M. Bilkes is also involved in the weekly practice preaching class for the students at PRTS.

Dr. G. M. Bilkes is busy also due to the administration responsibilities of the seminary and to the fact that Th.M. courses are now in progress at PRTS.

In the fall of 2008 Dr. A. Baars is scheduled to teach at PRTS for a number of weeks. As mentioned earlier, various ministers from our denomination continue to teach individual courses at PRTS.

Your committee has deemed it to be prudent to send Rev. H. Overduin and Rev. K. Gangar to attend some of the lectures at PRTS in 2008, to assess the quality of education offered.

Rev. Dr. L.W. Bilkes and Dr. G.M. Bilkes are both advisory members of the Board of Trustees of PRTS and feel welcomed and their input is much appreciated. There is a growing level of communication between your deputies and the Board of Trustees of PRTS also due to the fact that pertinent decisions are communicated to us.

Students Baars and Bergsma

Student Derek Baars is progressing well with his studies. He has completed his third year of studies. His blindness hardly forms any impediment for the furtherance of his studies. He received license to speak an edifying word in the congregations, which was well received. He again preached a sermon before the committee and your committee wishes to extend his license to speak an edifying word in the congregations. Student Baars will be asked to perform an internship in the Chilliwack congregation and in the greater Fraser Valley. With an eye to the future, this will be a tailored internship which will possibly include prison ministry and radio evangelism work. An ad-hoc committee has been appointed to investigate possible avenues of ministry he could do in God's Kingdom upon his graduation.

Student Timothy Bergsma has completed his second year at PRTS. His studies are progressing well. He also preached a sermon before your committee and the outcome is that your deputies wish to propose to Synod that he would also receive license to speak an edifying word in the congregations.

The churches have already been informed that brother Greg Slingerland, who was accepted in 2007 as a student for the ministry, has felt compelled to terminate his status as student for the ministry in the FRCNA, due to his lack of sense of call to the ministry. Your deputies regret this decision and wish our brother well in his future.

This year there were no applicants for the ministry. Your deputies wish to bring the need for students for the ministry to the attention of the churches and

request that this need would also be remembered in prayer during the weekly worship services. Matthew 9:38 “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Report Treasurer Seminary Fund

Brother John D. Tamminga, Treasurer of the Seminary Fund, provided your committee with a report of the finances of the Free Reformed Seminary Fund, which shall be also forwarded to Synod 2008. The salary of the Theological Instructor has been adjusted according to the salary grid adopted at Synod 2005.

The Treasurer expressed gratefulness for the funds which have been collected for the Free Reformed Seminary Fund. The year 2007 shows again an increase in support from the churches. In 2005 there was a deficit of \$34,512, in 2006 there was a surplus of \$9,963, in 2007 there was again a surplus, now of \$25,316 giving a total equity per December 2007 of \$157,366 over against \$132,050 being the total equity per December 31, 2006. In 2007 the total income for the Free Reformed Seminary Fund was \$159,620, while in 2006 this was still \$144,287 and in 2005 \$102,109.

There is much appreciation for this increased support for the work of theological training.

For proper understanding, all the funds allocated to the Free Reformed Seminary Fund are used for the financing of the Free Reformed instruction given at PRTS together with other synodical approved disbursements. In order to cover the proposed annual budget, the request is that the churches would contribute an amount of around \$38 per member.

Synod will again be requested to approve a contribution of \$20,000 US to the operating fund of the PRTS.

Besides this, seeing the great value of having proper instruction made available at PRTS to students in theology from all over the world and the advantage of having such instruction available to our own FRC students, Synod will be requested to give approval to the FRCNA Seminary Fund to finance 50% of the salary of Dr. David Murray, being \$45,000 in US dollars. Your committee originally proposed this to PRTS some 5 or more years ago, and now with the hiring of Dr. Murray, we have an opportunity to act on it. We believe this will help demonstrate a sustained commitment to PRTS commensurate with its growth.

Ministerial Retreat

The minister's retreat held in October 2007 was well received by all the participants. Dr. Derek Thomas and Dr. G. M. Bilkes were the lecturers. The total expense for the 2007 Retreat was \$5,527.17. There is much appreciation from the ministers for this annual conference. The financial reports drafted by brother J.D. Tamminga are found to be in good order.

For 2008 the committee proposes a different type of conference. The retreat 2008 is D.V. to be held in Grand Rapids from October 14-17 2008 with Dr. A. Baars and Maurice Roberts as speakers. Besides this the three instructors at PRTS Beeke, Bilkes, and Murray will also speak. The evening session will be open to outsiders. Ministers from HRC will also be invited. The costs will be

shared between HRC and FRC, and should not pose any undue burden upon the churches. The costs of the retreat are to be paid out of the Synodical Fund as decided by Synod 2005. Thereto the synodical quota was raised by an amount of \$1.00 per year.

Procedure of declaration of candidacy

Your deputies wish to bring to your attention and submit to your approval the following procedural change in the manner in which candidates for the ministry receive their credentials.

“A theological student, having successfully completed the required course of study and having *passed the usual synodical examination*, shall be presented to the churches of our federation as being eligible for call. Upon receipt *and acceptance* of such a call, Synod will charge the Classis within which he hopes to function (or, if there be no Classis system in place, that Consistory designated to act as “Classis Contracta”) to furnish him with the customary Letter of Credentials.

In the event that no such call should be received and accepted within two years from the date of Synod having presented him to the churches, this period of candidacy will lapse without further action on the part of Synod. If he should desire to see this period extended, he should show cause for this at Synod and Synod may extend this twice for one year, provided he again present himself to Synod to request each such extension.”

Theological Journal Committee

Although PRTS is planning to develop its own theological journal focused on Puritanism, your deputies still feel the need for an annual FRC Theological Journal, but then focused more upon the needs of and instruction towards FRC office bearers and the journal will be less academic.

Publication of Theses of Ministers of FRCNA

Your deputies feel the need to publish certain theses of ministers of the FRCNA but do not feel obliged to publish every Master’s thesis written by our men and will therefore exercise discretion as to which of such theses shall be published.

Free Reformed Historical Centre

The sub-committee Free Reformed Historical Centre consisting of Rev. L.W. Bilkes, Rev. D. H. Kranendonk, R. Maartense, and J.D. Tamminga, with advisors Rev. C. Pronk, and Dr. G.M. Bilkes, is continuing its work. The aim of this sub-committee is to preserve historical documents from the Free Reformed Churches. Individual congregations and ministers are urged to request older members to submit historical materials to this sub-committee. Material from Canada should be sent to brother J. D. Tamminga. The managing of this centre shall be assigned to R. Maartense. A database is being compiled of vital information.

Appointments

The terms of various members of the committee are expiring in this present year. Rev. C. Pronk has reached the age of 70 and according to the stipulation found in Acts 2001, page 23, he can no longer serve on this committee. Your

deputies wish to go on record declaring great appreciation for the work done by our brother for many years on this committee. Seeing there are two alternate ministers on the committee, Rev. Kranendonk and Rev. Schoeman, your deputies request Synod to approve that both these ministers be made primary delegates. That still leaves the committee with two alternate members. The number of primary members will then change from 10 to 11 and seeing that the 70% ratio needed to accept students, is only marginally affected by this, the committee recommends this extension of the committee.

Brother M.H.T. Laman is currently not serving in the consistory, and as his term is up for re-appointment, the committee requests that he be re-appointed for a one year term.

The other brothers whose terms are up for re-appointment are: L.W. Bilkes, C.J. Keuning, C.A. Schouls, and P. VanderMeyden. Your committee requests that these brothers be re-appointed for a 3 year term.

Procedure of acceptance of students for the ministry

Your deputies are re-iterating and reviewing the current procedures regarding the acceptance of students for the ministry. Work has especially been done to gauge the possibilities for men to achieve sufficient pre-seminary training. Your deputies may choose to convey this to synod in a separate report.

Church Day 2008

Church Day 2008 is scheduled to be in Dundas on September 1. Brantford is hosting church. Speakers: Rev. D.H. Kranendonk in the morning session and Dr. David Murray in the afternoon session. Rev. J. Overduin is the alternate speaker. The committee wishes to encourage the congregations including the young people to attend this annual church day. The committee has therefore requested the hosting church to organize activities for the youth in the afternoon.

Recommendations

Your deputies submit the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. Renew the preaching license to Student Derek Baars.
2. Grant a preaching license to Student Timothy Bergsma for the Summer 2008.
3. Approve the re-worded procedure for declaring men candidates for the ministry.
4. Approve the annual donation of \$20,000 US towards the Operating Fund of PRTS.
5. Approve the recommendation to finance half the annual salary of Dr. David Murray, being \$45,000 US.
6. Approve the recommendations for the Minister's Retreat 2008 as outlined in the report.
7. Approve Report Treasurer Free Reformed Seminary Fund for 2007.
8. Encourage the churches to continue to support the matter of theological education by means of prayer and offerings. These offerings are free will offerings, but the individual congregations are requested to contribute \$38 annually per member to the Free Reformed Seminary Fund.
9. Approve the recommendations for Church Day 2008.

10. Appoint Rev. D.H. Kranendonk and Rev. J. Schoeman both as primary members of the committee for a three year term, expiring in 2011
11. Re-appoint Rev. L.W. Bilkes, Rev. C.A. Schouls, Rev. P. VanderMeyden and Elder C.J. Keuning as primary members for a three year term, expiring in 2011.
12. Re-appoint brother M.T.H. Laman as primary member for a one year term, expiring in 2009.
13. Approve the actions of your deputies.

May the Lord Himself guide and lead you as you deliberate these matters placed before you. Respectfully submitted, on behalf of your deputies,
G.R. Procee, secretary.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
FOR SYNOD 2008

Esteemed Brothers,
Your Deputies for Theological Education are hereby providing you with the following supplementary report based on the proceedings of our June 2, 2008 meeting.

Your deputies have been considering the issue which pre-seminary standards can we as a committee in all sincerity and in all due reason require from applicants to be students for the ministry. Various discussions have taken place within your committee and several papers have been written. This lengthy process was finalized at our meeting held on June 2 with the adoption of the report, which is hereby submitted to your body for approval.

The report is as follows:

Pre-Seminary Requirements

Background

For some years your Theological Education Committee (TEC) has struggled with several questions related to the process by which men can apply to the TEC and by which they can be properly trained for the task of ministering the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only have concerns been expressed about the actual training program but also about the manner in which both the need for ministers and the requirements for aspirants have been published to the churches.

In struggling with these matters, various things have come into focus and we suggest some of them as being:

1. a sincere desire to be more active in fostering an atmosphere conducive to challenging men to consider whether the Lord is calling them to such a task (see Church Order Art. 19);
2. an equally sincere desire to recognize that this task, in order to be fulfilled to the best of any applicant's God given ability, requires rigorous academic training in the various theological disciplines;
3. the realization that, although there are other schools in North America in which such training is available from a Reformed and Presbyterian perspective, our denominational commitment is to PRTS and men aspiring to the ministry in the FRCNA are to make use of this school;
4. the realization that, although a Bachelor of Arts degree (with a seminary focus) is the ideal preparatory course, there may be suitable applicants who have a degree in another field;
5. the realization that there may also be applicants who do not have a BA, of any kind, and who yet display that the Lord has gifted them with the spiritual and intellectual requirement for the task of gospel ministry;

6. the recognition that the notice in *The Messenger*, invited only men in possession of the ideal academic requirements;

The executive of your committee met with representatives of PRTS on January 16, 2008 and discussed these matters, particularly points 4 and 5. They assured us that various ways are available to meet the requirements for a full theological course of studies. There are schools in Grand Rapids which provide Greek language courses in condensed modules. PRTS itself is offering first year Greek this summer in a 6 week module. There are courses available via Internet which enable the student to fill his pre-seminary requirements before physically attending PRTS. Such courses can also be taken while at PRTS.

Issue

We recognize that the Lord is free in calling to the ministry whom and when He pleases – the “when” referring especially to the age and status in life of the one being called. The churches of the Reformation have also recognized this; in fact, provision has been made to allow into this sacred task men who, although devoid of the requisite formal education, do display the possession of “exceptional gifts” (Art. 8 COD). Notwithstanding the provisions of this Article, we believe that such cases are truly “exceptional” and that this article and practice should never be considered as a possible avenue to avoid the heavy road to a proper education. Nevertheless, at the same time, we recognize that to insist unyieldingly on a BA with all the pre-sem pieces in place, may be putting undue obstacles on the paths of men truly called.

Recommendations

With this in mind, we recommend the following:

1. That the *Messenger* Ad be formulated so as not to absolutize the pre-seminary requirements.

In this light we suggest the following:

“Is the Lord calling you to the ministry in the Free Reformed Churches of North America? If you believe He is, the committee wishes to hear from you by March 1. Please contact the secretary of the committee for more information. Prospective students are asked to consult the Handbook for Theological Education prior to contacting the secretary of the committee.”

2. That the committee revise the theological handbook for consideration at synod 2009 so as to include more information pertinent to the calling to the ministry, preparing for seminary studies, applying to the committee, internships, and other policies governing students for the ministry. This revised handbook could include a few scenarios for an otherwise suitable applicant who does not possess the normal pre-seminary requirements, such as (but not limited to) the following:

For men who have an Undergraduate degree (or equivalent) in the liberal arts or in a subject other than the liberal arts (B.Comm. BSc, BSW, BEng, etc.) we suggest the following procedure:

1. Apply to the TEC

2. Take additional pre sem courses in areas where they are deficient (as determined by the committee)
3. Enrol at PRTS*
4. Graduate with MDiv

For men who do not have an Undergraduate degree:

1. Consult with the TEC for guidance
2. Complete pre sem requirements – either at home, by distance ed or in GR; no financial support
3. Apply to the TEC
4. Enrol at PRTS*
5. Graduate with diploma given upon completion of all MDiv courses.

* Enrolling at PRTS implies:

- a. completion of the outstanding requirements,
- b. acceptance by the TEC/Synod of the FRCNA
- c. eligibility for financial support from the FRCNA

Conclusion

Let it be clear to all that the TEC strongly recommends earning a BA (preferably in the liberal arts) before commencing seminary studies. It further recommends courses in Greek (4 semesters), a modern language (preferably Dutch) (2 semesters), European, Canadian and American history (4 semesters), philosophy (2 semesters), and English (including composition and speech) (4 semesters). Men who do not meet all of these recommended requirements may be invited to apply to the committee, but may be required to take additional courses prior to commencing their seminary training. In exceptional cases, at the discretion of the committee, “mature students” may be admitted into the program without a university degree. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the secretary of the Theological Education Committee for more information about the various options that are available to them.

Recommendations:

1. To accept this report as statement of policy thus answering the questions related to the process by which men can apply to the TEC.
2. To approve the reworded Messenger announcement soliciting applicants for students for the ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
 Gerald R. Procee
 Secretary Theological Education Committee

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.

SEMINARY FUND

Statement of Revenues and Expenses (In Canadian \$)

For the year ended December 31, 2007

	Note	2007	2006	Change
REVENUES				
From the churches:				
Abbotsford		3,587	1,685	1,902
Bellevue		533		533
Bornholm		3,755	4,180	(425)
Brantford	a	0	5,333	(5,333)
Calgary		750	420	330
Chatham		4,874	7,423	(2,549)
Chilliwack		9,480	6,200	3,280
Dundas		27,910	29,245	(1,335)
Fenwick		5,418	5,638	(220)
Grand Rapids		8,655	7,102	1,553
Hamilton		23,014	28,121	(5,107)
Lacombe		1,477	1,772	(295)
Langley		1,860	740	1,120
London		1,293	2,692	(1,399)
Mitchell		4,981	1,855	3,126
Monarch		10,785	3,155	7,630
Pompton Plains		22,768	16,332	6,436
St George		3,020	705	2,315
St. Thomas		1,234	910	324
Toronto		400	676	(276)
Vineland		13,080	11,986	1,094
		148,874	136,170	12,704
Other income:				
Churchday		5,228	3,409	1,819
Sales - Theological Journal		3,199	3,105	94
Sales FRC Studies		135	5,583	(5,448)
Prayer Service- Synod		1,946	1,451	495
Interest		1,384	1,078	306
F/X Translation Gain/(Loss)		(1,146)	(6,509)	5,363
Total Revenues		159,620	144,287	15,333

EXPENSES				
Salaries & Benefits	<i>b</i>	108,159	104,729	3,430
Theological Journal		1,339	1,826	(487)
FRC Studies		363	4,357	(3,994)
PRT Seminary – Donation		21,334	22,608	(1,274)
Books Theological Library			313	(313)
Present Candidate J. Keuning			199	(199)
Other General Exp./Teaching Pastors	<i>c</i>	3,109	562	2,547
Total Expenses		134,304	134,594	(290)
EXCESS (SHORTAGE)		25,316	9,693	15,623

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.
SEMINARY FUND
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2007
(In Canadian \$)

	2007	2006
ASSETS		
Cash & Term Deposits	156,592	131,302
Accrued Interest	774	748
Total Assets	157,366	132,050
EQUITY		
Beginning Balance	132,050	122,357
Excess (shortage)	25,316	9,693
Ending Balance	157,366	132,050

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.
SEMINARY FUND
Budget and Projection
For the years ending December 31, 2008 and 2009
(In Canadian \$)

	note	Actual	Budget	Increase (decrease)		2009
		2007	2008	\$	%	Projection
REVENUES						
Church Gifts		148,874	168,000	19,126	13%	170,000
Churchday		5,228	4,500	(728)	(0.14)	4,600
Prayer Service - Synod		1,946	1,500	(446)	(0.23)	1,800
Sales - Theological Journal		3,199	3,200	1	0.00	3,200
Sales- FRC studies		135	0	(135)	(1.00)	0
Interest		1,384	1,000	(384)	(0.28)	500
F/X Translation Gain/(Loss)		-1,146	0	1146	(1.00)	0
Total Revenues		159,620	178,200	18,580	12%	180,100
EXPENSES						
Salaries & Benefits		108,159	108,400	241	0%	110,400
Theological Journal		1,339	1,600	261	19%	1,600
FRC studies		363	0	(363)	(1)	0
PRT Seminary - Donation	d	21,334	65,700	44366	2	66,100
Other General Exp./ Teaching Pastors		3,109	2,500	(609)	(0)	2,000
Total Expenses		134,304	178,200	43,896	33%	180,100
EXCESS (SHORTAGE)		25,316	0	-25,316		0

Free Reformed Church of N.A.
 SEMINARY FUND
Notes to the Financial Reports
For the year ended December 31, 2007
 (In Canadian \$)

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Seminary Fund are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting.

2. Review of the Books:

The financial statements of the Seminary Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard review program, by Rev. G.R. Procee (Hamilton) and Mr. M. Sommer (Hamilton).

The records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash:

Cash and Term deposits consist of the following

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Chequeing Account	115,864	91,933
GIC's	<u>40,728</u>	<u>39,369</u>
	<u>156,592</u>	<u>131,302</u>

3. Account Receivable:

Accrued Interest from GIC's	<u>774</u>	<u>748</u>
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- 4.**
- a. Brantford has sent \$4,900. directly to Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary.
 - b. More teaching from our own pastors than the previous year.
 - c. As a result of b. above, the expenses increased.
 - d. See proposal of the Theological Education Committee (US\$20,000 + US\$45,000)

Average per member for the year 2007

\$30.00 and above.

Bornholm	\$46.
Chilliwack	\$30.
Dundas	\$61.
Hamilton	\$68.
Langley	\$30.
Monarch	\$39.
Pompton Plains	\$129.
Toronto	\$31.
Vineland	\$30.

Between \$20. - \$30.

Abbotsford	\$24.
Bellevue	\$28.
Calgary	\$21.
Chatham	\$21.
Fenwick	\$22.
Grand Rapids	\$28.
Lacombe	\$20.
Mitchell	\$23.

Between \$10. - \$20.

Brantford*	[\$14].
London	\$13.
St. George	\$14.

Below \$10.

St. Thomas	\$4.
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* Brantford sent funds directly to PRTS

FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA
THEOLOGICAL STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Dundas, Ontario
April 9, 2008

Synod of the Free Reformed Churches,
In Session June 2-6, 2008
Brantford, Ontario

Esteemed Brethren,
The Theological Student Support Committee submits the following report.

We are thankful to report that all congregations have paid the required assessment to the Theological Student Support Fund for the year 2007. We acknowledge also, with appreciation, extra donations received from various congregations.

The books of the Theological Student Support Fund were audited by Mr. Leo vanderMaarel and Mr. Brian Bruinsma, of the Hamilton congregation. The financial records were found to be in good order.

A copy of the financial statement for the year ending December 31, 2007 and a proposed budget for the year 2009 are included with this report.

We propose that the assessment for the year 2009 be reduced from \$10.00 to \$7.00 per member, due to a favourable balance in our account at the end of 2007.

The term of brother Ryk Naves expires this year. We propose that this brother be re-appointed for another term. Brother Jerry Hamstra has served four terms on this committee and his term expires this year. We propose that brother John Wilbrink, of the Dundas congregation, be appointed to this committee to replace brother Jerry Hamstra.

PROPOSALS TO SYNOD

- a.) To reduce the assessment for the Theological Student Support Fund from \$10.00 to \$7.00 per member for the year 2009
- b.) To approve the financial statement for the year 2007 as presented.
- c.) To approve the proposed budget for the year 2009 as presented.
- d.) To re-appoint brother Ryk Naves for another term, and brother John Wilbrink as a new member.
- e.) To approve the actions of this committee.

May the Lord richly bless your meetings.
Respectfully submitted,
J. Hamstra, Secretary

Theological Student Support Fund

Statement of Operations

December 31, 2007

	2007	2007	Variance F/(U)		2006
	Actual	Budget	%	\$	Actual
Revenue:					
Assessments	43,750	43,750	0%	-	43,084
Collections/Donations:					
Abbotsford				-	
Bellevue				-	
Bornholm				-	158
Brantford				-	
Calgary				-	
Chatham	2,668			2,668	1,759
Chilliwack				-	3,000
Dundas				-	
Fenwick				-	
Grand Rapids	5,691			5,691	-
Hamilton				-	
Lacombe				-	
Langley				-	
London	-			-	-
Mitchell	-			-	-
Monarch				-	3,648
Prompton Plains	-			-	-
St. George				-	
St. Thomas				-	
Toronto				-	
Vineland	-			-	-
Elders & Deacons Conf.	392			392	1,078
Interest	2,327	2,250	3%	77	2,193
Student Repayment	900	900	0%	-	900
Total Revenue	55,728	46,900	19%	8,828	55,820
Expenditures:					
Personnel:					
Students - Payments	43,762	51,300	15%	7,538	5a 40,383
Total Expenditures	43,762	51,300	15%	7,538	40,383
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	11,966	(4,400)	100+%	16,366	15,437

Theological Student Support Fund
Budget

December 31, 2007

	2007	2008	Variance F/(U)		2009	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Projected</u>	
Revenue:						
Assessments	43,750	44,610	2%	860	31,227	5b
Collections/Donations:						
Abbotsford	-			-		
Bellevue		-		-	-	
Bornholm						
Brantford	-			-		
Calgary						
Chatham	2,668			(2,668)	-	
Chilliwack	-			-	-	
Dundas	-			-	-	
Fenwick						
Grand Rapids	5,691			(5,691)	-	
Hamilton	-			-	-	
Lacombe						
Langley	-			-	-	
London	-			-	-	
Mitchell	-			-	-	
Monarch	-			-	-	
Pompton Plains						
St. George						
St. Thomas						
Toronto	-			-	-	
Vineland	-			-	-	
Elders & Deacons Conf.	392	500	27%	108	500	
Interest	2,327	2,000	-14%	(327)	1,500	
Other: Student Repayment	900	5,900	556%	5,000	2,900	
Total Revenue	55,728	53,010	-5%	(2,718)	36,127	
Expenditures:						
Personnel: Student - Payments	43,762	40,000	9%	3,762	50,000	
Total Expenditures	43,762	40,000	9%	3,762	50,000	
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	11,966	13,010	-8%	1,044	(13,873)	

Theological Student Support Fund
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2007

Assets:	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Cash & Term Deposits	119,820	107,854
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Assets	<u><u>119,820</u></u>	<u><u>107,854</u></u>
Equity:		
Beginning Balance	107,854	92,417
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	11,966	15,437
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Equity	<u><u>119,820</u></u>	<u><u>107,854</u></u>

Theological Student Support Fund
of the Free Reformed Church of North America
Notes to the Financial Statements
December 31, 2007

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Theological Student Support Committee are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are made in Canadian dollars.

2. Audit of the Books:

The financial statements of the Theological Student Support Committee have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard audit program, by Brian Bruinsma (Hamilton) and Leo vanderMaarel (Hamilton). The records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash:

Cash and Term deposits consist of the following

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
CIBC Chequeing	40,316	30,667
CIBC GIC	<u>79,504</u>	<u>77,187</u>
	<u><u>119,820</u></u>	<u><u>107,854</u></u>

4. Assessments:

Congregation	Opening Balance	2007. Assess.	Amount Paid	Ending Balance
Abbotsford	-	1,490	1,490	-
Bellevue	-	190	190	-
Bornholm	-	820	820	-
Brantford	-	3,480	3,480	-
Chatham	-	2,370	2,370	-
Chilliwack	-	3,160	3,160	-
Dundas	-	4,540	4,540	-
Fenwick	-	2,490	2,490	-
Grand Rapids	-	3,130	3,130	-
Hamilton	-	3,360	3,360	-
Lacombe	-	730	730	-
Langley	-	620	620	-
London	-	990	990	-
Mitchell	-	2,150	2,150	-
Monarch	-	2,750	2,750	-
Pompton Plains	-	1,770	1,770	-
St. George	-	2,180	2,180	-
St. Thomas	-	3,040	3,040	-
Toronto	-	130	130	-
Vineland	-	<u>4,360</u>	<u>4,360</u>	-
	-	<u><u>43,750</u></u>	<u><u>43,750</u></u>	-

5. Variance Explanations:**a. Students**

- Payments	42,100
- Tuition Fees	0
-Study Books	<u>1,662</u>
	<u><u>43,762</u></u>

b. based on 4461 members at \$7.00 per member

YOUTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR SYNOD 2008

Esteemed Brothers,

The Youth and Education Committee met twice since Synod 2007. Our executive consists of Rev. Jack Schoeman as chairman, Rev. Joel Overduin as vice-all, Mr. Derek Naves as secretary, and Mr. Eric deKorte as treasurer. It is a privilege for us to serve our denomination and especially the youth of our churches.

Below is a summary of our actions since we reported to Synod 2007.

Camps

The annual youth camp (East) continues to function under the direct supervision of the Youth and Education Committee. This camp is ably directed under the leadership of Mr. Kim Hamstra, member of the St. George FRC. Camp this year is planned for the weekend of August 1-4, and will be held again at Pearce Williams Christian Centre near St. Thomas, Ontario. A local retired pastor and previous speaker at camp (2005), Rev. Frank Beerman is the scheduled speaker. Rev. Koopman will be camp pastor.

The annual youth camp (West) also functions under the direct supervision of the Youth and Education Committee. This camp is ably directed under the leadership of Mr. Marvin Van Maanen, a member of Monarch FRC. Our committee corresponded with Marvin at our spring meeting via conference call, during which Marvin updated us on the plans for camp. This year's camp is planned for July 22-25, and will again be held at Blue Bronna Wilderness Camp in Alberta. Pastors Eric Moerdyk and Jack Schoeman will be speaking.

The feedback we receive is that both our FRCNA camps are very much enjoyed by our youth, both spiritually and socially. We are grateful for all who help to make these camps a success, especially our directors, as well as counsellors, and we heartily encourage all our young people to make these camps a priority to attend.

One issue we are investigating for our camps is the idea of implementing an 'abuse prevention policy.' This has been done by some of our churches, and in view of the times in which we live, may even be a necessary thing for us to cover ourselves legally. We are in correspondence with lawyer Mr. Herman Faber about this and will do more work with it in the next year, D.V.

Publications

Late last year saw the publication and distribution of a much anticipated devotional *Their Lives and Your Life*. The committee thanks Mr. Herman denHollander for spearheading this project as well as Mrs. Anne Roth and Mrs. Petra Roth for translating this devotional from Dutch. The meditations were originally prepared by ministers of various conservative Reformed churches (Reformed Alliance, Free Reformed, "evangelical" Netherlands

Reformed). So far sales have gone well and our committee has already recouped its costs. We trust this publication is being well used and enjoyed by our youth.

At our Spring meeting, our committee adopted a proposal by Herman to begin work on another devotional in the same series but dedicated to ages 12-15. Its title in Dutch is *Zoekend Leven* and means (roughly translated) "Searching or Exploring Life." Both Mrs. Anne Roth and Mrs. Petra Roth are in process of translating this work and it is hoped this publication will be ready for distribution October 2009. Our intention is, as with our first book, to work together with Reformation Heritage Books and to make it a joint venture.

Another Y&E publication late last year was a booklet entitled *Family Worship* written by Mr. Jerry Benjamins. This booklet makes a biblical case for family worship, giving directions on how to conduct it, and including a list of resources families might use. Our committee printed 5000 copies of this booklet. Several of our churches have distributed it to all their families, and our committee highly recommends this booklet to all the churches. It is a valuable read and give guidance to our families in regard to this highly important subject.

Because we see the great value of these two publications, we are looking for ways and means to advertise and distribute them outside our churches as well.

Youth Messenger

The Youth and Education Committee continues to produce the Youth Messenger as an official publication of the Free Reformed Churches. We are very satisfied with the editorship of Mr. Herman denHollander and wish to appoint him to that position for another year. With our recent Spring issue we have moved to a full colour publication throughout. In addition, we are working with a new and cheaper printing company. The last issue of the YM was approximately \$2000 less than the 2007 spring issue. We are very excited and pleased with this publication and trust that it will benefit especially our youth and help to lead them in God's ways. The Youth Messenger committee is looking to increase the circulation of this magazine through distribution amongst other Reformed churches.

Study guides

One of our members is in the process of contacting (through the consistories) all the youth groups of our denomination to ask for resources or study guides each has used with profit in their societies. The idea is to compile a master list which can be circulated through the denomination and hopefully be helpful to our Young Peoples' Societies when they look for material to help them in their study and discussions.

Ex Officio Member

Mr. Herman denHollander has served three terms with our committee and cannot be reappointed. Seeing, however, that he serves as editor of the Youth Messenger, our committee feels he should be appointed to our

committee as an *ex officio* member (with the understanding that this appointment lasts as long as he serves as editor of the YM).

Appointments

Mr. Derek Naves has finished his first term but in view of his living out of province asks not to be reappointed. Mr. Dick Naves has served three terms with our committee and cannot be reappointed. Mr. Jerry Benjamins has asked to be released from the committee due to his appointment to the Theological Education committee. Therefore we make the following nominations

- a. Student Tim Bergsma (Grand Rapids) to be appointed for a three year term, expiring in 2011.
- b. Mr. Eugene Gritter (Fenwick) to be appointed for a three year term, expiring in 2011.
- c. Mr. Raymond Roth to finish out Mr. Benjamins' term, expiring 2009.

Recommendations

1. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Kim Hamstra as camp director (East) for one year.
2. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Marvin Van Maanen as camp director (West) for one year.
3. To approve the reappointment of Mr. Herman denHollander as editor of the Youth Messenger, as well as to appoint him an *ex officio* member of our committee so long as he serves as editor of the Youth Messenger.
4. To appoint Student Tim Bergsma and Mr. Eugene Gritter to three year terms, expiring 2011, and to appoint Mr. Raymond Roth to finish Mr. Benjamins's term, expiring 2009, and to reappoint Rev. Joel Overduin to a second three year term, expiring 2011.
5. To approve a quota of \$3 per member (same as last year).
6. To approve the actions of the committee

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Youth and Education Committee,

Rev. Joel Overduin
Vice-all

YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 2007

<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
Quotas	14,446.86	16,656.42	18,679.66
Collections	578.00	831.41	337.03
Sale of Books	534.25	387.00	501.68
Interest Income	0.00	1.22	1.45
Other	0.00	0.00	1,830.00
Total	15,559.91	17,876.06	19,519.82
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>			
Purchase of Books	0.00	120.16	393.95
Seminar Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
Office Expense	13.04	214.94	71.00
Committee Expenses	49.88	0.00	0.00
Magazine Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Camps Expenses	6,210.00	5,855.00	3,935.00
Bank Charges	10.64	2.07	29.00
Publication Expenses	17,446.71	13,587.78	8,745.11
Conference Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	23,730.27	19,779.95	13,174.06
<hr/>			
Net Surplus(-/+)	\$ -8,170.36	\$-1,903.89	\$ 6,345.76

YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE
BALANCE SHEET
DECEMBER 31, 2007

ASSETS	2007	2006	2005
Cash & Terms Deposits	6,362.63	14,532.63	16,436.52
Total Assets	6,362.63	14,532.63	16,436.52
 LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	0.00	0.00	0.00
Loans Payable	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
 EQUITY			
Beginning Balance	14,532.63	16,436.52	10,090.76
Operating Surplus(+/-)	- 8,170.36	- 1,903.89	6,345.76
Ending Balance	6,362.27	14,532.63	16,436.52
<hr/>			
Total Liabilities and Equity	6362.27	14,532.63	16,436.52

Youth & Education Committee of the Free Reformed Churches
of North America

Notes to Financial Statements.

For the year ended December 2007.

1. Significant Accounting Policies: The financial statements of the Youth & Education are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are made in Canadian dollars.

2. Review of Books: The financial statements of the Youth & Education have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard review program by The records were found in good order.

3. Budget and Variance analysis: As a result of the immaterial cash flows within this fund, a variance analysis and budget have not been prepared.

FRCNA Retirement Fund
Adhoc Committee
Final (majority) Report to Synod 2008

Esteemed brothers:

SYNOD 2007 DECISION

At last year's Synod all proposals by this committee other than the "entitlement" proposal were adopted as presented. The "entitlement" proposal read as follows:

Adopt a policy of unconditional entitlement to RF benefits by all FRC ministers effective immediately. This implies entitlement of benefits to ministers who are released, deposed, resign, or transfer to another denomination.

Synod removed the key word "**unconditional**" as well its interpretation in the second sentence, leaving the following:

Adopt a policy of entitlement to RF benefits by all FRC ministers.

In our opinion it is crystal clear that Synod did **not** want to extend RF benefits **unconditionally**. Consequently additional work regarding pro-rating (see 2007 Acts of Synod, page 262) has become redundant.

Synod in essence confirmed its long-standing policy to look after its ministers (and their families) financially, whether working, sick, disabled or retired, so they can concentrate on their primary task at hand, and that **entitlement to retirement income is attained by receiving an honorary emeritus status at Synod in case of retirement after age 65, or in case of prolonged sickness, disability or death, before such retirement.**

We concur with the fairness of this policy. Synod has repeatedly expressed its conviction that the RF is not a pension plan, but a hybrid fund to assist our pastors in their needs, such as occurs at the time of retirement.

EXCEPTIONS

We do however suggest that in some situations where there is no entitlement to RF benefits, one-time payments of an amount suitable in each case, should be considered. The amount of such a payment would depend on various factors such as: years of service in the FRCNA, years of service in the ministry (for ministers who joined the FRCNA later in life), age, reasons for the "departure" from either the denomination or the office, entitlement to employer financed pension income, and prospects of employment. To anticipate all the possible scenarios and to propose pre-defined formulas would be extremely cumbersome and likely unfair. There are precedents in our churches: there have been two payouts to ministers who resigned from the ministry. In making decisions in this area a pre-advice committee should be formed, to hopefully provide Synod with an equitable solution. We suggest that eligibility for consideration of any benefits seems to point to a minimum of ten years in full-time ministry. Basis: (1) the fact that the requirement to repay student loans

received from the Theological Student Support Fund expires after 10 years, and (2) the fact that ministers over 55 years of age when transferring to us from another denomination are not entitled to any benefits from the RF.

EXCESSIVE BENEFITS

Synod 2001 approved a recommendation to eliminate the downward adjustments in pensions, in the event a minister receives significant employment income after his retirement: a policy adopted in 1977. No rationale was offered for the removal of this policy by either the Finance Committee or Synod. Re-instatement of this policy, but then improved, should be considered, as nobody would sanction unrestricted “double-dipping”. Under current policy a minister retiring at 65 could, for example, accept a full-time teaching position at a seminary earning a significant salary and be in receipt of full RF benefits and government pensions. In this case entitlement has completely submersed the consideration of needs.

We suggest the following simple formula to determine any undue overpayments of RF benefits:

Excess of the basic minister’s salary as approved annually by Synod times 1.5 plus RF benefits less employment income (including free housing or allowances) from all sources equals an overpayment of RF benefits.

The rationale for the 50% gross-up of the basic salary is to cover the cost of housing which a retired minister typically faces. Income from government pensions, personal retirement plans and savings are ignored, since the key concern is the “double dipping” from employment after retirement. For 2008 the effect of this policy in Canada would be as follows;

RF benefits		\$ 24,989
\$24,989		
All employment income (incl. housing)	<u>40,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
	64,989	54,989
Basic minister’s salary (\$36,750 x 1.5)	<u>55,125</u>	<u>55,125</u>
Excess to be repaid	<u>\$ 9,864</u>	<u>\$ nil</u>

As you can see a retired minister could earn as much as \$30,136 (\$55,125 - \$24,989) before having to repay the excess. By basing the threshold on Synod’s annual minimum salary, all ministers will receive equal treatment. Keep in mind that in Canada a minister will normally receive \$6,000 in Old Age Security (OAS) plus as much as \$11,000 in Canada Pension Plan benefits. His wife should be entitled to full OAS benefits as well, but her CPP benefits (as a stay-at-home mother) are likely to be much less. We remind you that Synod last year adopted our committee’s recommendation that “congregations should be encouraged to contribute a small percentage of their pastor’s earnings to a “locked-in” RSP to be matched by the minister.” This source can augment a retired minister’s income, while it is excluded from this repayment formula.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Despite warnings from our Adhoc Committee to refrain from investing in the stock market through mutual funds, Synod 2007 has approved the Finance Committee's (FC) recommendations to invest as much as 25% of the RF in mutual funds. The sole rationale reported by the FC was that "we know that by investing in mutual funds long term the yield will be better than those of guaranteed instruments". While we acknowledge that studies of past stock market performance have proved this, we would state that Synod was not sufficiently informed of the equally proven fact that risk increases when returns or yields rise, in other words the higher the return the greater the risk. Since Synod 2007 we have seen large swings in the stock market to validate this point. In addition the timing of getting into the market is also quite important. If one gets into the stock market when it is high it may take years before there is any return on investments. Our question is: was Synod sufficiently aware of these risks? And should Synod be taking such risks? Seeing it was the RF's long held policy to stick to interest yielding instruments, far more reasons should have been presented to make an informed decision before rushing ahead into the stock market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** On grounds of compassion and in consideration of services rendered, and despite lack of any entitlement, a one-time payout be considered to a "departing" minister (whether from the FRCNA or office) who has served our churches for more than 10 years. A positive evaluation as well as the size of such a payout should be considered on a case by case basis. Factors to be considered should be: years of service in the FRCNA beyond the minimum of 10 years, years of service in the ministry (for ministers that joined the FRCNA later in life), age, health, reasons for the "departure" from either the denomination or the office. Such payments may be delayed, where applicable, until age 65 is reached. No further RF benefits are to be paid after such a one-time payment.
- 2.** Overpayments of RF benefits are to repaid or deducted from current RF benefits if the retired minister's income from all sources of employment plus RF benefits exceeds 150% of the annual basic minister's salary as set by Synod each year.
- 3.** Revisit the policy of investing in the stock market after due consideration of all factors involved in making such a decision.

We are aware that the Convenor of this subcommittee is presenting a minority report, which we have received and studied. Our disagreement with its contents prompted us to submit a majority report for your consideration and hopefully, your approval.

This ends the work of the Adhoc Committee.

Respectfully submitted

Karl Noordam
Connor J. Keuning

Synod of the FRCNA
In Session June 2 – 6, 2008
At Brantford FRC

Esteemed Brothers,

Before you come to the reading of this report, it is necessary to explain why this is a minority report. On March 25, I sent this report in final draft form to the brothers C. Keuning and K. Noordam, the other members of this Ad Hoc committee, with the wish expressed that they would be in agreement and we would be able to submit it to you as an unanimous report. As I had received no response from them I asked for an answer on Friday, April 4. In reply to this I received an e mail from them on that same day, stating, in part:

Seeing that our position differs significantly from yours, it is clear that attempting to reach a compromise is futile. Instead we went ahead and prepared our own report, and called it the majority report.

Because of the action of these brothers, I have now been forced to submit a minority report. I kindly ask the Executive of Synod to use this opportunity to explain to the churches when and how the majority/minority report option should be used.

The Minority Report

The Ad Hoc Committee charged with reviewing the emeritus policies of our denomination provided Synod 2007 with an extensive report (cf. Acts 2007, pp. 253 – 264). Synod 2007's response to this report can be found in these same Acts, p. 15, Article 21. The closing paragraph of this report (cf. p. 262) referred to work still to be done by your Ad Hoc Committee: pro-rationing of benefits for ministers who have served less than a full term and the fairness and feasibility of introducing downward adjustments to pensions to avoid "double dipping". With this report, we trust this work can now considered to have been completed and your Ad Hoc Committee be discharged.

Before we come to finishing these items, we do wish to point out that, in our opinion, Synod 2007 left itself open to possible future misunderstanding and confusion by adopting, as it did, the general "policy of entitlement to RF benefits by all FRC ministers". Taken at face value, this would mean that not just only, but also, all FR ministers who are in service and good standing in a FRC church at the time of their emeritation will be eligible for such benefits, regardless of length of service. The adoption of this policy, *as it stands*, will allow a congregation to call a minister of advanced age and, rightfully, to claim full emeritus benefits for him from the denominational fund. Synod will recall how just such a possibility arose some years ago when our London church wished to extend a call to Rev. T. Atkinson. At that time, because there were no rules in place, an ad hoc ruling was devised by which the London church would have had to provide a large sum of money up front to cover the potential liability for our Emeritus Fund. It is just such a scenario which we have tried to prevent by providing a system of pro-ration for ministers who have served less than a full term.

We surmise that had this work been completed, Synod might not have adopted such an imprecise policy. We apologize for not having completed our

work in time and we suggest that Synod's adoption of our current proposal will be recognized as adjusting last year's decision. For the sake of clarity and to remove any possible ambiguity, we urge Synod to make a point of rescinding last year's decision on this matter and replacing it by a clear statement reflecting its mind.

Pro-Ration

This is one of the more difficult aspects of our suggested improvements to be made in the current plan. If the plan is both *de jure* and *de facto* on a benevolence basis, the matter of pro-ration should not even be discussed. Then, no matter what the length of service may be, benevolence is administered according to need. Our deacons do not apply a measure of length of membership in the church before extending help to the needy and neither should this be done by the administrators of the RF for truly benevolence based emeritus payments.

However, we have established that emeritus payments are based on entitlement. This has, in fact, been the case for many years as witnessed by the various instructions regarding this in our letters of call and our regulations governing all this. Synod 2007 has even adopted a statement that emeritus payments are matters of entitlement (although this needs to be further clarified, as described above). Now the question arises, "Since this is entitlement, are all ministers entitled to exactly the same amount?" In principle, the answer must be "Yes". There can be no evaluation based on "success": whether one served various large churches, published a plethora of books and articles, represented the churches at various forums or spoke to large extra church gatherings or whether one served for his entire ministry in a small congregation and never published anything should make no difference in determinations regarding emeritus payments.

There is, however, one factor (and in our opinion, one factor only) which must be taken into consideration in determining the amounts of emeritus payments and that is the length of time a man has served within the denomination. (We believe that it is incorrect to infer "equal pay no matter the length of service" from the parable in Matthew 20:1-16 regarding the labourers in the vineyard who were hired at different times during the day and who all received the same amount of wages at the end of the day. The point of that parable is in the verses 15 and 16. If this had been provided as a lesson in proper Christian labour practices, we would find other references to such in the Scriptures.) It is obvious that in providing a framework of reference in this matter we can only go by objective standards. These are the number of years a man has served and the length of service that may be considered a life time commitment. The first is beyond discussion; the second needs some thought.

Although there may be discussions ongoing about the fairness of setting an arbitrary retirement age, our government and most of society still recognizes 65 as an appropriate age to step out of the daily work force. Although, as far as is known, our churches have never settled on a "proper" retirement age, the following cases may shed some light on our practice:

- *Hamstra, Rev. J.* Teaching elder 1950-1954; Pastor 1954-1972. Retired age 72. Total years of service 22

- *Tamminga, Rev. J.* Pastor (Netherlands 1931-51; N.A. 1951-72) Retired age 65. Total years of service 41
- *Overduin, Rev. J.* Pastor (Netherlands 1940-55; N.A. 1955-82) Retired age 69. Total years of service 42
- *Pronk, Rev. C.* Pastor (N.A) 1968- 2006. Retired age 69. Total years of service 38
- *Noordegraaf, Rev. C.* was granted emeritus status for health reasons by Synod 1968 but passed away in December of that year at age 52, before the status could go into effect as per January 1, 1969.

Our limited experience puts the average age at retirement at 69 while the average length of time served is just over 34 years. "Time served" does not include the duration of preparation for the ministry and, as this usually takes a considerable portion out of the working (and earning) life, we think it is fair to include some of this in calculating the years of service. We suggest the addition of four years in each case.

Considering then that the only factor that matters for this purpose is the years of service, we ask your attention for the following possible scenarios:

- A. If **30 years** of ministry is counted as a full term of service, each year merits 3.3% of the full amount.

30 years at 3.3%/p.y.	= 100%
25 years at 3.3%/p.y.	= 82.5%
10 years at 3.3%/p.y.	= 33%

- B. If **35 years** of ministry is counted as a full term of service, each year merits 2.85 % of the full amount.

35 years at 2.85%/p .y.	= 100%
30 years at 2.85%/p.y.	= 85.5%
25 years at 2.85%/p.y.	= 70.25%
10 years at 2.85%/p.y.	= 28.5%

- C. If **40 years** of ministry is counted as a full term of service, each year merits 2.5% of the full amount.

40 years at 2.5%	= 100%
35 years at 2.5%	= 87.5%
30 years at 2.5%	= 75%
25 years at 2.5%	= 62.5%
10 years at 2.5%	= 25%

As stated above, considering the years of preparatory study, we suggest that for the purposes of pension calculations, the years of service be increased by 4 for all cases of more than 10 years of service. We further suggest that 35 years be chosen as a lifetime of ministry. It is understood that in each case above, 100% is the maximum pension payable, regardless the number of years served above the maximum in the suggested category.

Further, should a man enter the ministry at a young age, (e.g. 25) reach the upper limit of full time service duration (as used in this proposal) which in such case would be after 31 years of full time service (i.e. 35 – 4), this would ostensibly make him eligible for full pension at age 56. Of course, that is not the intention of this proposal and would not be sought by any minister who is

in good standing and good health. However, to prevent any loopholes, we recommend the policy that no minister be eligible for emeritus payments until he has reached the minimum age of 65, unless it is necessary to provide this earlier for medical or other compelling reasons which are to be considered by the Synod. In such an event full emeritus payment would be applicable regardless of his years of service, even as is the policy under the current system.

In addition, we propose that the current rules in effect for widows and orphans of ministers as well as those applicable in case of disability, be continued regardless of length of service of the pertinent minister.

Rationale:

- a. the introduction of payment schedules linked to years of service is meant, in part, to provide some form of equity for the ministers and the churches;
- b. calamities, such as early death or disability, provide opportunity to the churches to show the mercies of Christ to those in need and incidental circumstances, such as length of service should, not enter into consideration.

It is understood that, since emeritus payments are a matter of entitlement, these payments are to be made to any and all ministers who have served the FRCNA, in accordance with the length of time of their service. This length of service time for such cases will be the considered to be the span between their ordination and the date of their last official service conducted in their last congregation. They who leave the ministry in the FRCNA before they are pension eligible by reason of age, may make application for such via the consistory under whose supervision they last labored in the FRC. Such application must be made within the year following the applicant's 65th birthday. In case of death prior to this date, application may be made by the executors of his estate, but also within one year of what would have been the 65th birthday. That consistory will contact the appropriate bodies within the FRCNA and facilitate payments. The amount of monies paid will be based on the amount of pension which would have been paid had the recipient been eligible at the time when he left the FRC ministry plus interest for the period which would have accrued from then to the applicant's 65th birthday. The interest rate is to be equivalent to the rate paid on Guaranteed Investment Certificates during the same intervening period.

Ministers coming from other denominations may present various scenarios with respect to pension or emeritus provisions and we cannot at this time make provisions for all kinds of contingencies. In general, we suggest the following principles:

1. Men coming from churches with which we have a full correspondence relationship (such as currently the CGKN) will receive full credit for the years served in their original churches. Rationale: till now those men who have transferred between the FRCNA and the CGKN (in either direction) have been mutually accepted with the understanding that they would have benefits from the respective emeritus funds.
2. Men coming from other churches will receive credit based on the number of years served in the FRCNA.

Rationale: a) it is well possible that they have some form of pension benefits administered by their former church(es) and as these may vary widely from body to body, it is not feasible for us to lay down rules and regulations which cover all possible cases; b) if such benefits are non-existent or insufficient, arrangements can still be made through the proper channels of the FRCNA.

Adjustments

We remind Synod 2008 of the statements made in our report to Synod 2007 that the labourer is worthy of his hire, regardless of his personal wealth. This is a principle that has long been held in honour in the Reformed churches. It is also true that the wages paid by the churches, both current and deferred (which is what pension payments really are) ought to be reasonable and not excessive. Retired ministers who are blessed with good health are often able to help the churches in various capacities: some do this by preaching in vacant churches on various Lord's Days; others, by filling an empty pulpit on a more regular basis. Either case means work that should be rewarded. The possibility is there, however, that a retired minister may be able to do work of such a nature and degree that a fair remuneration amount, when added to the entitled emeritus amount, could exceed that of a regular and generous salary. This, in the vernacular, is referred to as "double dipping" and should not take place.

To remind the brothers that various past Synods have dealt with this issue, we refer you to Acts 2006, Art. 20, I, c (p. 20):

"to have Emeritus payments reduced to emeritus pastors who enter into an employment relationship by an amount equal to their employment income.

A motion is made to delete this recommendation. Synod 2001 consciously dealt with this matter (cf. Acts 2001 p. 27, Article 33) and overturned a decision of Synod 1977, and the proposal to reintroduce the matter without new grounds being raised is not in order.

Moved/seconded/carried"

From the discussion and from the comments made by emeritus pastors, it was made clear that no one wishes to "double dip"; on the other hand, neither is it fair that emeritus ministers should work at "bargain prices". How to resolve this issue? We recommend a simple formula to be used in determining the level of income: *Let the total income from regular church sources (by this we mean from a specific, defined or contractual arrangement with a particular congregation but excluding occasional preaching, etc. in vacant churches) not exceed the average salary (including housing allowance) which the minister was paid over the 5 years immediately preceding his emeritation.* Consider the following example:

Year 1

Basic salary	48,000	
Service increment	4,000	
Housing allowance	18,000	(included as retired ministers may still have sizeable mortgages)
Total	68,000	

Assuming a 2% inflation increase each year, the following total remuneration figures emerge:

Year 2	69,360
Year 3	70,747
Year 4	72,162
Year 5	73,605
Average;	70,770

Assuming that the Emeritus payment for that year is \$25,000, the maximum he should accept from other church sources, as described above, is **\$45,770**.

Recommendations:

1. Re: Entitlement

A. that Synod rescind the decision of last year (“adopt a policy of entitlement to RF benefits by all FRC ministers”) and in its place adopt the following, suggested in our report to Synod 2007:

“Adopt a policy of unconditional entitlement to RF benefits by all FRC ministers effective immediately. This implies entitlement of benefits to ministers who are released, deposed, resign or transfer to another denomination.”

B. that Synod determine that a period of 35 years of service, as outlined in the body of this report, entitles a man to full emeritus benefits.

C. that Synod determine that the provisions for those who shall leave the ministry in the FRC prior to retirement age, as outlined in the body of this report, be accepted as policy.

D. that Synod determine that the other provisions (regarding ministers from other denominations; widows and orphans; long term disability) be accepted as policy.

2. Re: Adjustment

That Synod declare that for the purposes of calculating supplementary income of emeritus ministers the total income from regular church sources (i.e. from a specific, defined or contractual arrangements with a particular congregation but excluding occasional preaching, etc. in vacant churches) is not to exceed the average salary (including housing allowance) – adjusted in keeping with the annual C.O.L.A. - which the minister was paid over the 5 years immediately preceding his emeritation.

3. Re: Supplementary RRSP

That Synod remind the Finance Committee and the churches that its recommendation 6 of Article 21 (Acts 2007, p. 16) which was accepted last year, be part of the annual recommendations for ministers’ remuneration.

4. Re: Ad Hoc Committee

That Synod, after accepting these recommendations, discharge the Ad Hoc Committee and thus close the discussion on this subject which has been ongoing since 1984.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl A. Schouls

Synodical Fund Report

Burlington, Ontario April 9, 2008

To the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of North America.

Esteemed Brethren,

Attached are the Financial Statements of the Synodical Fund for the year ending December 31, 2007.

During the course of the year, the annual assessments have been received from all the congregations.

In addition, the 2007 Acts of Synod were mailed to all the consistories as well as the External Relations Committee of the Chr. Geref. Kerken, The Netherlands; The Theologische Universiteit of the Chr. Geref. Kerken, Apeldoorn, The Netherlands; Documentatiecenter of the Chr. Geref. Kerken, The Netherlands, The Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Mich. U.S.A.; The Mid- American Reformed Seminary, Dyer, IN U.S.A. and The Canadian Reformed Seminary, Hamilton, Ontario.

We would like to make the following proposals:

1. To maintain the annual quota for 2008 at \$12.00 per member.
2. To continue to pay 85% of the car allowance as reported by the Treasury Board of Canada for the Province of Ontario.
(as of April 1, 2008 85% of \$.0525 = \$.044625; This allowance is for Committee Meetings, Church Visitation and for Ministers who at times teach at the Seminary in Grand Rapids)
3. To approve the attached Financial Statements and the actions of The Treasurer of Synod.

May the Lord bless your meeting,

J.D. Tamminga, Treasurer Synod.

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.

SYNODICAL FUND

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2007

ASSETS	2007	2006
Cash & Term Deposits	14,500	14,868
Total Assets	14,500	14,868
EQUITY		
Beginning Balance	14,868	17,776
Excess (shortage)	-368	-2,908
Ending Balance	14,500	14,868

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.
 SYNODICAL FUND
Statement of Receipts and Disbursements
 For the year ended December 31, 2007

	Note	Actual	Budget	Variance F/(U)		Actual
		2007	2007	\$	%	2006
RECEIPTS						
Assessments		52,500	52,500	0	0	51,744
Publication of Acts of Synod		3,310	0	3,310		3,322
Total Receipts		55,810	52,500	3,310	6%	55,066
DISBURSEMENTS						
Meetings & Travel:						
Delegates		18,258	17,000	-1,258	-7%	15,653
Committee Meetings		13,528	16,000	2,472	15%	15,837
Meals - Synod		1,886	2,100	214	10%	2,088
Delegate - Chr. Geref. Kerken		742	1,300	558	43%	0
Delegate -Calgary, AB		587	0	-587		123
Delegation -Free Church of Scotland (Cont.)		1,159	1,500	341	23%	0
Delegate Retirement Rev. C. Pronk						196
Delegation - NAPARC		1,263	1,300	37	3%	1,867
Delegation - United Reformed Church		0	1,000	1,000	100%	
Delegation - Can. Ref. Churches		0	1,000	1,000	100%	
Delegation - Greenville						2,428
ICRC Int'l. Membership		324	350	26	7%	327
NAPARC membership		495	0	-495		0
Church Visitation		1,329	3,500	2,171	62%	2,750
Minister's Retreat		5,527	6,400	873	14%	6,362
Administration:						
Telephone & Postage		683	1,200	517	43%	1,013
Stationary		17	300	283	94%	40
Remuneration --Synod Recording Assist.		400	400	0	0%	400
Publications: Reimburse to Pub. Comm.		3,310	0	-3,310		3,322
Other:						
Legal & Ethics Committee		2,950	3,000	50	2%	5,000
Donation: Crieff Hills						500
Donation: Farel Ref. Seminary	4a	3,000	0	-3,000		0
Donation: John D. Tamminga	4b	500	0	-500		0
Miscellaneous		220	300	80	27%	68
Total Disbursements		56,178	56,650	472	1%	57,974
Excess (Shortage)		-368	-4,150	3,782		-2,908

Free Reformed Churches of N.A.
SYNODICAL FUND
Budget & Projection
For the years ending December 31, 2008 & 2009

	Note	Actual 2007	Budget 2008	Variance		Projection 2009
				\$	%	
RECEIPTS						
Assessments	4c	52,500	53,532	1,032	2%	54,000
Publication of Acts of Synod		3,310		-3,310	-100%	
Total Receipts		55,810	53,532	-2,278	-4%	54,000
DISBURSEMENTS						
Meetings & Travel:						
Delegates		18,258	18,500	242	1%	18,750
Committee Meetings		13,528	16,000	2,472	18%	16,000
Meals - Synod		1,886	2,100	214	11%	2,200
Delegate - Chr. Geref. Kerken		742		-742	-100%	
Delegation -Free Church of Scotland (Cont.)		1,159		-1,159	-100%	
Delegate Calgary		587		-587	-100%	
Delegation - NAPARC		1,263	1,500	237	19%	1,500
ICRC Int'l. Membership		324	350	26	8%	350
NAPARC Membership		495	500	5	1%	500
Church Visitation		1,329	3,500	2,171	163%	3,500
Minister's Retreat	4d	5,527	7,500	1,973	36%	6,000
Administration:						
Telephone & Postage		683	1,000	317	46%	1,000
Stationary		17	200	183	1076%	300
Remuneration - Synod Recording Assist.		400	400	0	0%	400
Publications: Reimbursement to Publ. Comm.		3,310		-3,310	-100%	
Other						
Legal & Ethics Committee		2,950		-2,950	-100%	
Donation: Farel Ref. Seminary		3,000		-3,000	-100%	
Donation: John D. Tamminga		500		-500	-100%	
Miscellaneous		220	200	-20	-9%	300
Total Disbursements		56,178	51,750	-4,428	-8%	50,800
EXCESS (SURPLUS)		-368	1,782	2,150		3,200

**Free Reformed Churches of N.A.
Synodical Fund
Notes to the Financial Reports
Notes For the year ended December 31, 2007**

1. Significant Accounting Policies:

The financial statements of the Synodical Fund are prepared utilizing the accrual basis of accounting. All representations are made in Canadian dollars.

2. Audit of the Books:

The financial statements of the Synodical Fund have been reviewed, utilizing the 1996 standard audit program, by Rev. G.R. Procee (Hamilton) and Mr. Murray Sommer (Hamilton)

The records were found to be accurate and in good order.

3. Cash:

Cash and Term deposits consist of the following:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
CIBC Chequeing	14,500	14,868
	<u>14,500</u>	<u>14,868</u>

4. Variance Explanations:

- a. See Acts of Synod 2007 - Art. 31, proposal No.13 on page 24
- b. See Acts of Synod 2007 - Art. 48 - Presentations
- c. Assessments for 2008 are based on 4,461 members @ \$12.00; 2009 assessments based on 4,500 members @ \$12.00.
- d. Minister's Retreat will be one day longer than the previous years.

APPEAL: TORONTO – RE. CONGREGATIONAL STATUS

ELIJAH FREE REFORMED CHURCH OF TORONTO
1130 Finch Avenue West
North York, Ontario
M3J 2E2

July 9, 2007

To the Consistory of the Free Reformed
Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan
Calling church of Synod of 2008 of the Free Reformed Churches of North
America
c/o Mr. Henk Kleyn, Clerk
1230 Divot Drive NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Esteemed Brothers:

In our previous correspondence, we already informed you concerning our intention to appeal the decision of Synod 2007 regarding our congregational status and that we needed some more time to formulate the reasons for our appeal. However, before we do so, we desire to make it plain that our deepest confidence is neither in our own efforts nor in the help of other human beings, but it primarily rests in the infinite mercy and the precious sympathy of Christ the faithful King of His Church.

As already stated, the unanimous reaction of our congregation to the Synod's decision regarding the congregational status of our congregation is that this decision deeply hurts and grieves us. Besides, we are puzzled and bewildered.

Our appeal to the Synod's decision regarding the ecclesiastical status of the Toronto congregation is based on various serious objections.

The first objection concerns the basis of the decision.

The second objection regards the motion in relation to the decision. This motion has a serious deficiency.

The third objection has to do with the fact that two different motions were handed out before the vote was taken.

1. The Basis of the Decision.

The particular basis on which this decision of the Synod is founded is Article 38 of the Church Order. This article, however, refers to the initial constitution of a consistory and not to the termination of a congregation. The context of the Church Order makes this plain. The next article, that is Article 39, is still dealing with the inceptive establishment of a consistory.

Well known conservative and respectable Reformed and Presbyterian denominations follow the same line of thought. For instance, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church allows, in case of necessity, a session (consistory) to function with two office bearers. (See *The Standards of Government Discipline and Worship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, page 8). Of course, we all realize that this is not the ideal number. If possible, there should always be at least three office bearers, two elders and a deacon. However, a congregation and its consistory are not always in control of these matters. Our consistory formerly always consisted of three or more members, but when a few years ago one of our elders, to our deep regret, resigned and left our church for another denomination, we suddenly were faced with this our present situation. We indeed also are concerned about the fact that we are but few in number, however, we as a congregation and as a consistory feel that we must move on, for it is not our cause, but the cause of Christ. We love the precious truths of the Word of God and are ready as the Lord enables us, and as we have done in the past, to make the necessary sacrifices.

2. The Deficiency of the Motion in Relation to the Decision.

The second concern we wish to bring to your attention is the wording of the motion that was accepted. We particularly refer to the following crucial statement:

(Synod) Decides:

1. *That Synod, on the basis of article 38 of the church order, recognize the Toronto congregation as a home mission situation under the oversight of the Hamilton consistory.*

This statement that is of such vital concern in this matter is marked by a grave deficiency. Here is an inexcusable and serious lack of clarity. On the one hand, the little that is stated is not clear at all and on the other hand, what should have been stated is wanting. First of all, what is meant by the phrase “a home mission situation”? Secondly, what does it mean when the Synod recognizes a congregation as a home mission situation? Thirdly, we wonder about the exact relationship between us, and the Hamilton consistory. In this regard, nothing was specified in the discussions, or in the motion that was accepted. Fourthly, it is rather disturbing to us that nothing is stated in the motion regarding the legal implications of Synod’s decision.

To say the least, we find the lack of clarity confusing and the silence is unjust. Together they cause needless uncertainties for our congregation and consistory.

3. Two Different Motions were handed out before the vote was taken.

When the motion that was handed out before the decision regarding the ecclesiastical status of the Toronto congregation was taken, it appeared that two different motions were handed out. Elder Noordegraaf received a different copy than Deacon Fintelman. At first, not suspecting anything, they were not aware of this fact. However, when later on they compared notes, it became

evident that they had received two entirely different motions. We find this very disturbing and disorderly. We attach copies of the two different motions.

Esteemed brothers, we certainly trust that the above appeal meets with your sympathy and approval and that you will sustain our appeal. Although we feel rather deeply hurt and grieved, we do not cease to pray for you and our denomination. May the Lord have mercy on all our congregations and may the Lord revive His own cause amongst us. Please consider our appeal prayerfully. It is written out of love for the cause of Christ and with the prayer that the King of the Church may remember our little congregation in this great metropolitan area of Toronto. We hope that in some way we may still be a true light in this dark city. Purposely we have been brief, for we trust. We are awaiting your favourable response.

Respectfully submitted by the Consistory of
The Free Reformed Church of Toronto

L. Noordegraaf – Chairman

R Fintelman - Secretary

APPEAL: ABBOTSFORD MEMBERS – RE. GREENDYK

August 12th 2007

To: Zion Free Reformed Church
1075 Boyle Road P.O. Box 383
Fenwick, Ontario L0S 1C0

Re: Synod 2007 Thursday June 7th.

Dear Brothers in Christ:

First of all we want to thank you that the Lord has laid it upon your hearts to assist us in a possible appeal of Synod 2007's handling of Pastor Greendyk. Also we want to thank you for the reply we received to our letter via Pastor Moerdyk which laid out what had to happen to make this appeal a reality.

As you are aware a number of items have changed since we started this process. We are not expecting to continue this appeal as originally set out in our letter but wish to continue to assist Pastor Greendyk. We ask for your assistance in this. Now that Pastor Moerdyk has accepted the call of the Emmanuel Free Reformed Church of Abbotsford, things have changed somewhat. That is not to say that we do not want to continue this process. Part of the appeal was to have Emmanuel Free Reformed Church hire Pastor Greendyk for another year.

We are still in contact with Pastor Greendyk on a regular basis. He states that it is still his calling to be a Pastor and teacher foremost and therefore is still interested in becoming a Pastor in the Free Reformed Churches. To that end we remind you that Pastor Greendyk was examined for a Colloquium Docqum by our denomination in 2001. He has been a tremendous help to our Pastors and denomination for all that time. He was asked to spend time at the now defunct preaching station on Vancouver Island by Pastor Schoeman. He served the Emmanuel Free Church of Abbotsford for 20 months and than on a technicality was asked to leave by a minority of the congregation of Abbotsford.

We think that this denomination owes Pastor Greendyk another chance at his request to become a Pastor in our federation if he so desires. The officers of Synod 2007 should still communicate clearly to Pastor Greendyk what it is that he lacks in their opinion as far as training is concerned for this to happen. After he completes this training he should be encouraged to reapply to either Synod 2008 or 2009, if that is what it takes to have him complete his studies and satisfy the officers of the upcoming Synod. Apart from his training, Pastor Greendyk has demonstrated that he has the gift to be a teacher and Pastor, that our denomination could certainly use in the future.

Please give this letter your prayerful consideration and we await your answer. May the Lord bless these endeavors to the benefit of His church.

Yours sincerely:

CC: Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, 3300 Mt Lehman Road, Abbotsford, BC. V4X 2N1

OVERTURE: CALGARY – RE. PULPIT ACCESS

CALGARY FREE REFORMED CHURCH
6167 6TH STREET SE, CALGARY AB
WWW.CALGARY.FRCNA.ORG
(403)259-6591

April 7, 2008

Synod of the Free Reformed Churches
c/o Grand Rapids FRC, Convening church
950 Ball Avenue
Grand Rapids, MI 12345

RE: Overture to Further Study Church Order Article 67

Esteemed Brethren:

The consistory of the Calgary Free Reformed Church overtures Synod:

To amend the decision of Synod 2007 (Article 31-2) regarding allowing non FRC-ministers access to our pulpits in such a way that a local consistory has the freedom to invite a man (minister, candidate, or student) with preaching credentials in a confessionally Reformed church to serve a local church for one Sunday. It is understood that the local consistory will ensure that the same level of investigation and interview as presently required will take place with this candidate before he is given access to the pulpit and that the Interchurch Relations Committee will be provided a full report on this for their information.

We write this proposal without the benefit of having the proposed amendments to the Church Order that we understand will be before this body. We respect and appreciate the concern that exists within the Free Reformed Churches to limit access to our pulpits. However, we would plead that our rules be adapted in such a way that would allow a vacant congregation such as ourselves to invite a brother to preach for us with a view to “investigating further” as to whether there might be a fit and whether there is merit in investing further energy and resources in getting to know each other better. We do not believe that having a man on our pulpit for one Sunday in a situation which is understood by the congregation to compromise the integrity of our pulpit. Our situation as a cosmopolitan church plant in a large urban center is somewhat unique and as we seek the Lord’s leading as to who we should call, we would like to see the rules interpreted and applied with a spirit of understanding.

We also believe that this amendment will serve the denomination well in dealing with the various situations that have and continue to occur in which a one-time request for preaching on our pulpits comes from a local consistory. Often these requests deal with weddings or baptisms in which family members

of our congregants are ministers in a confessionally Reformed church but do not have access to our pulpits. This would simplify the procedure that would be required to deal with such one-time requests.

Background:

We raised our concerns regarding this matter and the manner in which Synods 2007 decision was being interpreted in our Article 41 report to the Combined Consistories on January 27, 2008. It was their advice for us to overture Synod on this matter. We informed the Interchurch Relations Committee of our concerns in a letter of February 24 and on April 4, 2008, were informed that the Committee had received our letter, that they would be submitting “numerous amendments” to the Church Order to Synod (on which we were not copied), and that these amendments could be summarized as “a tightening up of access to our pulpits.”

Grounds:

1. The current shortage of ministers and students requires vacant churches to look further afield in search for pastoral candidates.
2. The current level of denominational involvement at the “investigative level” results in an duplication of efforts and ends up “elevating” the status of a potential candidate within the federation by virtue of the required approval of the Interchurch Committee. To illustrate with a practical example from our own setting, if Calgary identifies a potential candidate for an evangelist, under the current rules we would listen to several sermons, consult with independent references, and conduct our own *colloquium doctum* with the man. If all of this is positive and we would like to proceed further, we must presently sponsor the man for a second *colloquium doctum* with the committee (which is almost always done by conference call for logistical reasons which most would agree results in less than satisfactory interaction) and if the committee concurs, we can invite the man to our pulpit. However, the man is given a license to preach in all of our churches. We would argue that (a) the second *colloquium* by the committee is redundant and (b) it results in a status for the man that goes beyond what is warranted at this stage, as it may be that none of us have actually met the man in person at this stage. We would argue that it would be more appropriate for us to invite the man to visit us for one Lord’s Day, meet with him in person, and if after this meeting there remains a desire to pursue the matter further, at that stage to involve the Interchurch Relations Committee.
3. This process would be much more consistent with the Church Order provisions. It belongs to the office of the elder to see that the pulpit is appropriately filled and that everything is done decently and in good order” (CO Article 16). Our present process requires a duplication of process at a synodical level at an early investigative stage. If the Committee (which is relying on the information provided by the

consistory and a usual one-hour teleconference interview) and the local consistory have the same judgment of the matter, this is unnecessary duplication. If the Interchurch Committee and local consistory would come to a different judgment, it is arguable that for the Synodical Committee (usually a relatively small subset of the Committee conducting the interview) to impose its judgment over the consistory's would be an inappropriate "lording" of the sort condemned by Article 85 of the Church Order.

4. Anticipating the argument that our present practice is required to protect the integrity of the pulpit, we would argue that our proposed alternative does this more effectively than our present practice. If in the scenario described above the Committee agrees with the local consistory in the *colloquium doctum*, we grant a license to preach throughout our federation to a man none of us may have ever met or heard in person, and we are obliged to advertise his license to preach in our denominational magazine. Under our proposed amendment, this man is preaching for one Sunday in one congregation which is fully aware as to the nature of his invitation. If matters would go any further, there is a "next step" involving the denomination and the protection that concurrence of a synodical committee affords. If the decision was made not to pursue the matter for whatever reason, we have not as a denomination identified with this man in an official capacity.

We wish you the Lord's blessing as you consider the matters before you.

With brotherly greetings,

Ray Pennings
Chair

Harold Slingerland
Clerk

OVERTURE: CALGARY – RE. FEAST DAYS

CALGARY FREE REFORMED CHURCH
6167 6TH STREET SE, CALGARY AB
WWW.CALGARY.FRCNA.ORG
(403)259-6591

April 7, 2008

Synod of the Free Reformed Churches
c/o Grand Rapids FRC, Convening church
950 Ball Avenue
Grand Rapids, MI 12345

RE: Overture to Further Study Church Order Article 67

Esteemed Brethren,

The consistory of the Calgary Free Reformed Church overtures Synod:

To establish a Study Committee with a mandate to report to Synod 2009. This report should contain either:

- B. An updated version of the Report on Feast Days originally received by Synod 1989. This update should effectively communicate the grounds for the FRC practice of holding worship service on recognized feast days and effectively answer the concerns regarding this practice. The report should be available in a form that can be used by the churches to deal with those who hold differing perspectives on the issue; or,*
- C. To present a report providing grounds on which Article 67 of the church order might be amended in a manner that would allow the conduct of feast day worship services to be a matter of local consistorial discretion.*

Background:

This overture arises from encountering several who are not familiar with the Reformed practice of holding worship services on feast days. Some, from their own Presbyterian convictions, have conscientious objections to participating in such worship services. We understand that the matter originally was studied by Synod in the 1980s as a result of a similar experience in the context of establishing the Bellevue congregation and a report was received by Synod 1989..

The inadequacy of this 1989 Synodical report has been previously been acknowledged by Synod. In response to correspondence received by Synod

1991 regarding the matter, an ad-hoc committee was established which met with the correspondent and reported to Synod 1992:

“It was conceded that the report to which he referred may indeed have contained some weaknesses and in some statements may even be open to correction. However, as we reminded the brother, the report was not adopted as an official synodical statement on the issue. We also stated that the essential issue was whether the Church Order Article 67 in itself was a legitimate exercise of the authority of the church or was a violation of the liberty of conscience. Synod's purpose in not making any change to the Church Order and simply sending the report on to the consistories for their consideration was above all to confirm that Article 67 was not judged to be a conscience-binding policy (thus not in violation of Belgic Confession, Article 32), and that there was thus no basis for changing this Church Order article. We stated that each consistory had the responsibility to supervise church attendance in a pastoral manner, taking into consideration any objections of conscience which may exist. (Supplement 3).”

We have sought to use this report in working with members and visitors who object to our practice of holding worship services on feast days (and hence, do not attend these services.) However, the report adopted by Synod 1989 has proven to be an inadequate tool and sometimes even a complicating factor in this matter. Several have raised objections (summarized below) to this report that, at least on their face, appear valid and convincing. As our churches deal with an increasing number of enquirers who do not share a continental Reformed heritage, it is important that we have a clear and effective tool to defend our convictions. The report received by Synod 1989 does not fulfill this mandate.

We also recognize that this is a matter of import for our Interchurch Relations Committee as the matter of feast days is an issue for some with whom we are having ecclesiastical correspondence and some who are being given access to our pulpits.

Arguments Encountered:

In addition to some of the detailed objections which can be found in the correspondence received by Synod in 1991, there are three main lines of argument that we have encountered which need to be addressed.

- That the New Testament continuance of Old Testament feast days are, in their etymology, God ordained. Some of our own feast days, etymologically, are not God ordained.
- There is an apparent inconsistency in the report between its body and conclusion. In the conclusion, the report states that those who would *conscientiously object* to Feast Days are “expected to share with us in the celebration of Christian feast days, at least to the extent of not neglecting to attend those worship services which are instituted in

connection with such Christian feast days.” Yet in the body of the work (p. 8) the authors site Romans 14:5, 6 (“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regareth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doeth not regard it. He that eateth eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.”) as a *positive* demonstration of the *elasticity* of certain Old Testament observations in the New Testament Church, as the administrations of the two dispensations overlapped. It would appear from the text that the argument is leading to the conclusion of *not observing* a particular feast day. By the logical rule of excluded middle, the text removes any objection to a *conscientious objection* to a mandated rule outside the Sabbath or other *lawfully* called services (Prayer Days, Solemn Assemblies, etc). This is the maxim that the Puritan doctrine of Christian Liberty stands upon.

- There is a perceived inconsistency between our insistence on an inflexible application of the church order regarding feast day worship services, and our continued dialogue and closer ties with churches, especially from the Scottish tradition, who are known to have a different view point on this matter. The argument is raised as to whether we are creating a false line of demarcation where the Bible places no church line. The insistence and conclusion found in the 1989 decision could unnecessarily hinder proper biblical progress in federative unity and even deprive our FRC congregations of suitable office bearers. If the principle of Reformed *toleration* were adopted, we could remove a needless offense and leave the issue of conscience to the member, on an issue that is well grounded in exegetical proof, not to mention a long Reformed and Puritan established principle.

Having encountered numerous variations on these arguments in our own congregation and knowing them to exist elsewhere in our federation as well, we believe it would be prudent for Synod to rework the report in question which in its present form contributes to confusion rather than clarity on this matter.

We wish you the Lord’s blessing in your meeting as you deliberate on these and the other important matters on your agenda.

With Christian greetings,

Ray Pennings
Chair

Harold Slingerland
Clerk

OVERTURE: FENWICK – RE. DIVORCE

ZION
Free Reformed Church
Box 383, Fenwick, Ontario, Canada - L0S 1C0

April 3, 2008

Esteemed Brethren;

We, the consistory of Zion Free Reformed Church of Fenwick Ontario, by way of this overture, request that the following matter be considered:

Does Scripture permit a repentant “guilty party” of a biblical divorce to remarry in the Lord and that this is confirmed in the church?

Background:

a) We requested advice on this matter at Synod 2007 and received a brief summary, which we felt did not do adequate justice to importance of the matter at hand.

b) Church Order Article 70, Subsection D, point 2 states, “Divorce on the ground of adultery is allowable. A second marriage by the innocent party is allowable and may be confirmed in the church.” The question is how this Article relates to the matter, as it does not explicitly speak about the guilty party.

c) Our consistory has made the decision that Scripture does allow for this possibility, and limited this decision to one particular case until Synod, should it decide to accept this overture, has given its report on this weighty matter.

We therefore respectfully request that Synod create an Ad-hoc Committee to study this matter expediently and diligently looking at the historical, doctrinal, and theological aspects of this question. This report would be useful for all the congregations in our denomination as some are dealing with similar spiritual concerns.

In Christ’s service,

The consistory of Fenwick Free Reformed Church

They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed but abideth forever.

OVERTURE: LONDON - RE. SYNODICAL QUOTAS

London Free Reformed Church
1274 Tote Rd.
London Ont.

c/o Richard Haklander
25490 Poplar Hill Rd
RR#3 Denfield
Ont. N0M 1P0

Overture to Synod 2008

April 7 2008

Esteemed Brethren,

The consistory of London has observed that synod's quota levels have been increasing over the past few years. While to larger churches the increase is not noticeably felt, for a smaller church these quotas are becoming difficult to meet. Smaller churches such as ourselves spend a larger percentage of our donations on maintaining a parsonage, a church building and the pastor's salary.

We would request that the possibility of a two-tier quota system be studied. Such a system could allow a church with a larger membership (which has a smaller percentage of their donations geared towards their local church finances) to offset the burden placed on smaller congregations.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
For the consistory of the Free Reformed Church of London

Richard Haklander, Clerk
Pastor Bergsma, Chairman

OVERTURE: MONARCH – RE. THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Consistory
Bethel Free Reformed Church
Monarch, Alberta

April 11, 2008

H. Kleyn, Clerk
Consistory of the Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church
Calling church for Synod 2008

Esteemed brethren:

Greetings in Christ.

At present, the mandate of the Theological Education committee limits the committee to overseeing the theological education of students for the ministry in our churches. We hereby overture synod to broaden the mandate of the Theological Education Committee such that it will be able to invite men who are studying or who plan to study theology at PRTS and elsewhere, but who are not necessarily intending to prepare for the ministry in our churches, to come under the care and supervision of the committee should they desire to do so. This would mean the committee would:

1. Maintain contact with such men by means of the occasional telephone call or email or, if feasible, a personal appearance at the fall and/or spring meetings of the committee
2. Monitor their studies by asking for a biannual report
3. Provide a critique of their sermons on an ongoing basis should they apply for and receive permission to speak an edifying word in the churches
4. Give advice and encouragement and any other assistance deemed appropriate by the committee

Grounds

1. There are a growing number of men in our denomination (two in our congregation alone) who are pursuing or who plan to pursue the study of theology at PRTS or at other Reformed seminaries without necessarily intending to apply for the ministry. We feel it would be beneficial if these men came under the supervision of the committee as pursuing a theological education (even apart from preparing for the ministry of the Word) is of great benefit to the churches.
2. One of these men, brother Ray Pennings (Calgary) is licensed to exhort in our western churches. However, he does not receive any advice or mentoring regarding his sermons other than that which he receives from PRTS (where he

is enrolled) and that which he solicits on his own. He as well as the churches where he exhorts could benefit from closer contact with the committee.

3. We have had men in the past who have studied on their own at other Reformed seminaries who have not had any direct contact with the committee during their years of study. Many of these men are now no longer members of our churches. Some have gone on to become ministers in other Reformed and Presbyterian churches. This is still the case today. It is hoped that by maintaining some form of contact with such men, we can keep some of them in our federation. Under the blessing of the Lord, some may even be led to apply for the ministry in our churches and thus fill some of our many vacancies.

In submitting this overture, it is understood that:

1. applicants will not receive any financial assistance from the Study Fund
2. applicants will not receive any special status in our federation
3. the normal route to entering into the ministry in our churches is by applying to the committee before one begins seminary training and enrolling at PRTS.

May the Lord guide your deliberations.

Respectfully,

The consistory of Bethel Free Reformed Church of Monarch, Alberta

OVERTURE: ST. GEORGE – RE. WESTMINSTER STANDARDS

Providence
Free Reformed Church of St. George
P. O. Box 534, St. George, Ontario, N0E 1N0

10 April 2008

Overture to Synod 2008

Proposal to adopt the Westminster Standards by the FRCNA

Esteemed Brethren:

The Consistory of the Free Reformed Church of St. George, considering that:

1. Synod 2007 decided to offer a Limited Correspondence relationship status to the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) [which church holds to the Westminster Standards];
2. The FRCNA are (to all intents and purposes) in agreement with these same Confessional Standards;

Overtures Synod 2008 to appoint a study committee to investigate the desirability and advisability of adopting the Westminster Standards (i.e. the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms) as doctrinal standards for the FRCNA, in addition to the doctrinal standards we already hold to, namely, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt.

Grounds:

Such adoption would

- 1 give public expression to our desire to pursue true Biblical ecumenicity with those with whom we share a common heritage rooted in the Reformation of the sixteenth century and the Second Reformation of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,
- 2 foster a better understanding of and better appreciation for each other's ecclesiastical history and theological traditions which under God's blessing may lead to our mutual spiritual enrichment.

May the Holy Spirit guide you in all your deliberations and decisions.

For the consistory,

W. Droogendyk
Recording Secretary

OVERTURE: VINELAND – RE. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

To Synod of the Free Reformed Churches 2008

Dear Brothers,

The Consistory of the Vineland Free Reformed Church has recently been faced with two situations regarding confessing members who, while under the process of discipline, withdrew their memberships from our church. Their action and our subsequent and reluctant agreement to their requests have given rise to some discussion as to whether our response was proper, both Biblical and church orderly. Accordingly, the Vineland Consistory has found it desirable to seek further guidance and advice.

Considering that:

1. there is no clearly defined response process outlined in our church order regarding matters such as this;
2. there is a spiritual dimension to church membership and that the church is a theocracy in submission to Christ her head;
3. we recognize generally accepted institutional practices such as the right to apply, transfer and withdraw memberships in any organization or institution;
4. we respect the courts of the land, who have in the past protected requests (disputed and otherwise) to withdraw one's membership from an institution or organization and have penalized those who have for various reasons refused to grant such requests;
5. it is quite possible that our denomination will see an increase in issues like this in years to come;
6. this is a complex issue and that when it was brought to the 2007 Combined Consistory meeting it generated much discussion;
7. the Vineland Consistory was advised by the 2007 Combined Consistory meeting to bring this to the floor of Synod 2008 by means of an overture

The Consistory of the Vineland Free Reformed Church overtures Synod 2008

to appoint an ad hoc study committee or to increase the mandate of the existing ad hoc Legal Affairs Committee to research this matter; provide advice; and to possibly expand our church order to better cover questions such as this giving special attention to points two and four above

On behalf of the Vineland Free Reformed Church with Christian Greetings

President

Secretary

Garry Postma

Martin Grin