

Friday, June 13, 2019

Synod declared Mr. Henry DeJong's protest to be not legally before it because, according to Church Order Article 31, only the decisions of the immediately preceding synod may be protested, but Mr. H. DeJong was protesting decisions of 2016 and 2017.

Synod did not sustain Mr. Ken DeJong's protest against the decision of Synod 2018, Art. 60. Three grounds were given for this decision:

1. Mr. DeJong presents no grounds to support his protest against Art. 60 of 2018 but only concerns which are personal opinions, and he does not interact with the decision of 2018.
- 2.. Mr. DeJong wrongly asserts that the survey of the churches on Psalter revision has ecclesiastical force and therefore can be a recommendation. That the Synod 2018 did not ignore the survey is evident from the grounds it used for informing the Interdenominational Psalter Revision Committee "that it is unlikely that our denomination would adopt the revised Psalter in its entirety." "Grounds: a. A survey of our consistories has shown that more than half are not in favor of continuing the project. b. In the judgement of the majority of our consistories, too many changes have been made in the revision to be found acceptable by our congregations" (Acts 2018, Art. 60, pp. 55-56).
3. Mr. DeJong does not give any evidence that the two other denominations have had a negative influence on the revised Psalter. On the contrary, there is evidence that the recommendations of the Interdenominational Psalter Revision Committee are making the Psalter more faithful to the Psalms.

Synod approved the work of the special synodical committee to assist Hope PRC and had them continue their work for another year.

Delegates from our sister churches were given an opportunity to address synod on behalf of their churches. Deacon Lee Meng Hsien spoke on behalf of the CERCS, Rev. McGeown spoke on behalf of Covenant PRC in Northern Ireland. and Rev. John Flores spoke on behalf of the PRC in the Philippines. These delegates spoke of the work that God was doing in their churches and expressed thanks to God for our sister church relationship. The chairman of synod responded by express to these delegates our thanks to God for them and for the fellowship that we have them.

Synod expressed to the PRCP and CERCS that the PRCA has no objections to their entering into a sister-church relationship with each other, and expressed to our sister churches our joy and our thankfulness to God for opening the way for this manifestation of the unity and catholicity of the church and our prayer for God's richest blessings upon this relationship.

A motion was passed to accept NAPARC's invitation and send two observers to their November 2019 meeting. There were two grounds:

- a. Although NAPARC knew that our Synod in 2017 decided not to apply for membership, they have again invited us to send observers, which provides the opportunity to witness to the distinctive Reformed truths that have been graciously given to us.
- b. Sending observers to NAPARC is in line with the considerations adopted by Synod 2016 (Art. 26, pp. 28-33)

The Free Reformed Churches sent a letter to us informing us that they have appointed a committee and begun working on revision of the Reformed confessions and liturgical forms in the back of the Psalter. Synod 2018 did not treat this request because it came to the synod late. This year's synod decided to instruct the CC to respond to this letter as follows:

1. Express appreciation to the FRC for the offer to be involved in the work of translating the Reformed confessions and the liturgical forms.
2. Decline the offer to be involved in this project. Ground: The Psalter revision project is a

large endeavor for the denomination and we would like to see the results of those labors before considering an even more significant work of revising the confessions and liturgical forms.

Regarding psalter revision, synod declared the proposed revisions of Psalms 41-72 and 90-100 are in harmony with the principles of text, music and format approved at Synod 2016. This declaration of synod is not a final approval of the section and all of the details but a statement that the synod judges that the principles have been followed. The committee of pre-advice has gone over the changes in this section in light of the principles adopted in 2016 and are satisfied that the principles have been followed in these changes. Synod also instructed the CC to propose to Synod 2020 a committee made up of members from the PRCA to evaluate all the proposed revisions of the interdenominational Psalter Revision Committee, and that the CC include in this proposal a mandate for this committee. Ground: This is in line with the decisions of previous synods as presented by the CC in their report (II. A, 3, a-d, Agenda, pp. 32-33).

Regarding the work of the DMC, synod thanked our home missionary Rev. Spriensma, his wife, Alva, and Byron Center Church for their faithful work, and assured them of our prayers for God's blessing upon their labors. Synod expressed its gratitude also to Charles Terpstra, Alex Postma, Doner Bartolon for their work relating to the PRCA website.

Hull PRC overtured Synod 2019 to appoint a committee to recommend adding to the by-laws of the PRC a statement concerning our denomination's position on homosexuality and marriage, and to recommend policies that local Protestant Reformed Churches could adopt for greater legal protection in this matter. Synod mandated the BOT to consider Hull's overture, and:

- a. If they think a change to our by-laws is advisable, that they submit the proposed changes to Synod 2020.
- b. If they think it advisable to recommend policies that local Protestant Reformed Churches could adopt for greater legal protection in this matter, that they submit the recommended proposed policies to Synod 2020.

Regarding the work of the Board of Trustees, synod approved the work of the BOT during the past year including the work of the Investment Subcommittee concerning the synodical investments and express appreciation for the faithful labors of the committee members. Synod thanked the members of the Investment Subcommittee for their invaluable service on behalf of our churches. Synod also declared that the BOT has fulfilled the mandate to provide a five-year reevaluation of the Emeritus Fund.

Synod approved the treasurer's report and expressed gratitude to Mr. Don Offringa for his faithful labors. Synod also expressed gratitude to the synodical bookkeeper, Mrs. Pamela Bos, for her faithful labors this past year on behalf of our churches.

Synod approved the 17 emeritation requests for 2020.

Synod approved the work of the Stated Clerk, and thanked both Mr. Don Doezema and Rev. Van Overloop for their faithful labors on behalf of the churches.

Synod adopted the PRCA budget of \$2,144,151 adjusted to \$1,717,851 because of excess funds, and decided to assess each family \$775 for 2020, a decrease of \$25 from 2019.

Synod appointed Trinity PRC as the host of Synod 2020 to convene Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

Rev. Huizinga read his acknowledgement of the receipt of the call to be a professor of Dogmatics and Old Testament in our seminary. He has three weeks starting from the time he returns to Redlands to consider this call. Let us remember him in our prayers.

Synod is scheduled to reconvene on Monday at 10:00 a.m. to consider the protests of Mr. Wes Koops and Miss Sara Doezema and to vote for various positions.