



First Christian Reformed Church

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December 9, 2010

Overture to Classis Huron

Re: Executive Directors Memorandum Oct 29, 2010

Refs:

1. Faith Formation Committee Report
2. Form of Subscription Revision Committee Report
3. Three Reformed Standards Committee Report

We are responding to the Executive Directors request concerning the three references. We find them lacking in certain respects as detailed below.

1. Faith Formation

We believe that Proposed Supplement Article 59C (PSA59C) should not be adopted, instead it should be deleted from the report, the grounds for this are as follows:

- a. It is misleading, PSA59C is written in such vague language that it can be misinterpreted to be seen as putting an age requirement upon profession of faith;
- b. contradictory, ie. PSA59 mentions A4(age-and-ability-appropriate) twice, PSA59C introduces a fixed age. The A4 “rule” should also apply to the “privileges and responsibilities;” and
- c. divisive, PSA59C promotes congregationalism, i.e. it establishes a firm “rule” of age requirement that can lead to disputes within the Classis and the denomination.

2. Form of Subscription

We believe that this committee report does not address the original overture (Agenda for Synod 2004, p. 435) and is divisive, the grounds for this are as follows:

- a. The Three Confessions, the proposed “Covenant” although written in much more “positive” language than the “Form” remains committed to the three confessions as being the basis of our faith after the Bible. The grounds of the original overture point directly to the theology and language of those confessions. We ask the rhetorical question of why would someone who did not want to sign the old “Form” want to sign the new “Covenant” given that the content is almost identical except for the tone? Our God is not very tolerant (Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 11: 13-21, and Mathew 22:37),
- b. Divisive; the addition of the “Our World” promotes a response of not wanting to sign the new “Covenant” due to ambiguity, i.e. the “Our World” was revised in 2008 and no doubt will again as it is a contemporary testimony, therefore there would be reluctance to sign an ever-changing document until the changes could be reviewed by each prospective council member in every church. “Our World” also

already has its detractors who will not support its inclusion in the "Covenant" causing needless disagreement exacerbating the problem listed in (2a) above.

3. Three Confessions Revisions

We do not object to the revisions themselves, Biblical accuracy is integral to being "reformed," however, we do not support the original basis for the revision. Specifically we do not support the joint RCA/CRC hymnal on the following grounds:

- a. Difference, despite Synod's mandate to find ways to cooperate with the RCA (Acts of Synod 2010, 809) there remain substantial differences between the denominations, e.g. see RCA website, Position Papers, "Marriage and Cohabitation" and "Women in Ministry;"
- b. Divisive, given the differences between the denominations, a joint hymnal will create animosity within Classis and churches concerning the adoption of a new hymnal; and
- c. Monetary, the desire to save money or increase profits by Faith Alive through a joint hymnal should not control the creation of a new hymnal for the CRC.

In His service,

Bruce DeBoer
Chairman
Council First CRC Owen Sound