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Notes on a Congregational Meeting

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21 September 1858

Holland, Michigan

A congregational meeting was held on this date which Elder Labots opened with prayer. The purpose of the meeting was "to discuss the salary of the pastor with the congregation." Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte had not even received \$100 of salary yet this year! The consistory shared the concern but the financial situation of the congregation was difficult. Consistory was at fault for letting this situation remained unsolved. Hoogsteger suggested that the congregation be canvassed and Kamper proposed each person should do what he can. That proposal was approved or both were. The minutes are unclear on this point. In an insertion between pages 69 and 70, a minute reported that since children of non-church members were baptized Elder Wilterdink resigned from the church fellowship but "does desire to retain brotherly relationships."

In Dutch; translation by Rev. William and Althea Buursma, 2000.

Original in the records of the Pillar Christian Reformed Church at the Joint Archives of Holland, vol. II, pp. 69-70.

The president, in this context, asks whether it is correct in the case of forsaking the office of elder and resigning as a member to handle the matter in this way. Some of the members of the consistory share this point of view. However, the consistory judges that in the current circumstances, Wilterdink's age and time of service can be taken into consideration. The matter was left at this stage.

ARTICLE 7 – Brother Broek, having noticed that the catechumens, especially the older classes in the absence of the pastor, do not faithfully attend the classes. He suggests speedy action before this abuse continues. The president takes upon himself the charge that at the first opportunity he will use appropriate methods to prevent this problem.

ARTICLE 8 – Because of the late hour, the review of the books were postponed to the next meeting.

ARTICLE 9 – The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Hekhuis.

A. C. van Raalte
G. Wakker

Congregational Meeting of September 21, 1858

After Brother Labots had opened the meeting with prayer, and the singing of Psalm 119: 17, the pastor informed the assembly that the purpose of the present meeting was to discuss the salary of the pastor with the congregation. To this point, not even \$100.00 has been received, even though eight months of this year have already passed by. The consistory shares this concern for the pastor's needs, knowing full well that the arrears in the payment are brought about, not because of unwillingness but because of the pressure and financial situation we find ourselves in. The question is asked as to how we can now make the best arrangement for the pastor's salary.

Brother Keppel strongly urged that this matter must be addressed and pointed out the general lack of the requisite concern for the support of the pastor. He feared unholy consequences. Brother Schelman urged a monthly, or quarterly, payment, and that everyone, without delay, should fulfill his obligation, since as long as this situation continues, no blessing will rest upon us. He adds that the consistory has delayed too long already.

Brother Kamper proposes that each person should do what he can. Hoogesteeger suggests that the salary should be gathered through a canvas of the congregation,

Insert between Page 69 and 70:

Brother Wilterdink declares that he no longer can maintain fellowship with this congregation, because children have been baptized whose parents are not members of the church. His protest to classis has not been heard. He judges that this is a denial of Christ, and, therefore, he resigns from the church fellowship but does desire to retain brotherly relationships. He says that it is openly preached here that infants (of non-member parents) are viewed as covenant children.

adding that this method will be helpful in visiting members.

Brother Wakker supports the motion of Kamper as closest to the information requested. He is convinced that the majority are unable to do more and that some of the speakers have not sufficiently taken this into account. Now that this procedure has been adopted, one ought not to come with accusations. He mentions a comment used by Schelman as one not carefully thought through. However, he believes that we should investigate whether some people of good will are able to do something, since not all are able to comply. The majority of the consistory judges that this proposal is unhelpful and is vigorously rejected. Kamper's proposal was accepted with only one vote opposed.

Schraader made an admonitory comment, which was replied to by both Wakker and Broek and slightly altered. Brother Hijn urged immediate action. Brother Labots made a conciliatory speech, upon which the meeting was closed by Kamper, with an appropriate prayer. The last verse of the Ten Commandments was sung.

Addition: Because the following meeting of the classis is scheduled for September 29, the delegates for our church will be the Brothers Labots and Wakker, who, on the basis of Article 2 of the June 4, 1858 meeting, must present the case concerning J. Witte.

A. C. van Raalte, president
G. Wakker, clerk