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### Notes on the Meeting of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

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18 February 1859

Holland, Michigan

At a meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church, Elder J. Labots again presided because it was mentioned that the pastor, Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, had departed for Pella, Iowa. G. Wakker served as the clerk. The case of a fraudulent land deal was brought to the consistory for judgment. The consistory delivered its opinion and told the gentlemen involved to settle their differences. The hour was late and time to end the meeting.

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. 92-94.

Consistory Meeting of February 18, 1859

Absent: Brothers Ploeg and te Roller, and, because of his departure to Pella, the Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened by Brother Labots, as president of the previous meeting.

ARTICLE 2 – Brother Keppel was chosen by an unanimous vote to be the chairman.

ARTICLE 3 – Present at the meeting are Kamper, as the accused, with his two witnesses, and Kroon, as accuser, with de Frel. After the chairman asked Kroon for the reason for his appearance, Kroon declares that he accuses Kamper of godless and unrighteous dealings, in connection with the purchase of 36 acres of land from Brother Plugger, knowing full that Plugger was not the owner of the property but de Frel. Plugger had obtained the land through deceitful means, knowing full well that this brought harm to the above-mentioned de Frel. De Frel indicates that for a long time he has owned this property by virtue of a certain contract with the seller, Plugger.

After a lengthy exchange of views, and posing of questions, and giving of advice, a decision was made. It was very clear that in case injustice has been done here, it is in no way the fault of the purchaser. He had made the purchase after the seller had offered to sell it to him. He was informed of the problem by others, not by the seller. Consequently, Plugger would be the responsible individual.

Kroon, however, was not satisfied, although he admitted that, in wrath, he had expressed himself inappropriately. After many more efforts to solve the problem, he declared that if the consistory judged that he had unjustly accused Kamper, and that Kamper had not dealt wrongly in this, he (Kroon) would submit himself to the judgment of the consistory. The consistory declared that, without entering into the matter further, it was clear that Kamper had not done anything wrong, but that he might have been more careful and given more evidence of love, but he could not be accused of unrighteous dealings. Ultimately, Kroon declared that he would accept this judgment, and he withdrew his accusations against Kamper. Both individuals stated that they were willing to give the hand of brotherhood to settle the matter. The matter at hand was now directed to Plugger, which, in the previous

discussions, had been extensively handled. Kroon asserted that the land, sold by Plugger, was actually the property of de Frel, by virtue of the contract. De Frel did not emphasize (the contract) so much but asserted that Plugger had dealt in an unchristian fashion by not offering him the opportunity to obtain credit which had been given to Kamper, and, as a consequence, had favored Kamper over against Kroon. Brother Plugger repeated, once again, that his own act of sale had given him no choice, and that he had in every way dealt honestly in the disposition of the land they still had. He said that Kroon had himself indicated that he would not be able to purchase the 36 acres and lacked the financial means to do so. This left (Plugger) with no alternative and he did not deserve the charges made against him.

The consistory, noting the great distance and viewpoint between these new parties, Kamper vs. Plugger, and since it was already late, proposed to the parties that the consistory wished to distance themselves from any further judgment. The contending parties were encouraged to settle the question among themselves, and, if at all possible, to settle the accusation of fairness, which had been made. This was, after much further discussion, concluded with the approbation of all of the parties. Monday evening they will meet together in the presence of a committee of the consistory; a committee chosen by the individual who felt aggrieved by what Plugger had done. The committee consists of Brothers Hekhuis and Broek. In case the matter is not solved, they are permitted to return to the consistory.

The president led in prayer concerning this controversy.

ARTICLE 4 – The clerk informed the meeting that he had received a letter from the Rev. Oggel, concerning a preaching assignment in the absence of Rev. van Raalte. He requests the privilege of fulfilling this obligation a week later. Received for information.

ARTICLE 5 – The matter of the synodically appointed prayer day on February 24 was discussed, since we do not have a pastor. It was decided

to appoint Brothers Wakker and Labots as a committee to request the Rev. van der Wall to preach for the congregation that day. In case of a negative response, a second committee will be sent, consisting of Brothers Broek and Keppel.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Hekhuis.

G. Wakker, clerk

#### Consistory Meeting of April 4, 1859

Absent: Brothers Labots, Ploeg, and Plugger.

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened by the president of the previous meeting, Brother Keppel.

ARTICLE 2 – The minutes of the two previous meetings were read and approved. Brother Hekhuis made a comment on the accuracy of the minutes, but the other brethren did not agree.

ARTICLE 3 – The committee (see Article 7 of the February 15 meeting) reports that they have been unable to gather \$100.00 as a loan. Only \$25.00 can be paid on the bill of G. Wakker, who requests that it be paid as soon as possible. Through the mediation of Mr. Doesburg, he has accepted responsibility for the bill. The money is given to Mr. G. van Putten as a payment of his bill of April, 1859. Van Putten was, in his present situation, satisfied.

ARTICLE 4 – Report of the committee (see Article 5 of February 15, 1859, meeting) was given by Brother te Roller, who informs the assembly that he has found that the situation of the cousin of Boonstra's child is not what was reported by Brother Broek. The man requested at least 10 (illegible) each week, and could not do it for less.

The consistory judges that the deacons should inquire about this situation and were given power to act.

ARTICLE 5 – Report of the committee (see Article 3 of the meeting of February 15). The committee reports that Kamper was not present at the meeting, but that it had been decided to divide the 36 acres of land between de Frel and Kamper. De Frel was satisfied with this, but at a later meeting at Kamper's home, Kamper rejected the agreement. He did, however, offer to dispose of eight acres, at which point his wife spoke up, and this offer was withdrawn. With this information, and taking into consideration some other