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Meeting Minutes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

G. Wakker

William Buursma

Althea Buursma

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2 August 1861

Holland, Michigan

At a meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church at which Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte presided, the pastor noted that he again dealt with H. Slag and his wife who are under censure. They apparently have a view of infant baptism that is not in line with the Reformed Christian doctrine and they oppose both the pastor and the consistory. The pastor explained the doctrine of baptism and a committee was appointed to deal with the Slags. Other discipline cases were discussed. It was noted that the pastor's salary was not "paid on a timely basis and is incomplete,..." Definite steps needed to be taken "so that this miserable practice for once and for all should come to an end."

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. 161-162.

Consistory Meeting of August 2, 1861

Absent: Brothers Broek, Labots, and van de Luyster.

ARTICLE 1 - The meeting was opened with prayer by the president, Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 2 – Present were Hendrika van Aarendonk, nee Riemersma; Marienes Nagelkerke, and Pieterella de Jong, nee Hekstra; all of whom desired to be received as members of the congregation by profession of faith and to be permitted access to the table of the Lord. All were received unanimously.

ARTICLE 3 – The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

ARTICLE 4 – The president informed the assembly that he once again has dealt with H. Slag and wife. They are again complaining that they have been unfairly placed under censure, because of his views concerning the baptism of infants, etc. However, according to the testimony of the brothers, he has been barred from the table of the Lord, not only because of his erroneous views but because of his opposition to both pastor and consistory, etc.

The president proposes that a committee be sent to explain to him that he has not, as he claims, been barred from the communion table because of his opinions concerning the doctrine of infant baptism, and he also will not be barred for this cause. If he, acquiescing in the desire of his wife, permits his children to be baptized, then, at his request, the formula for baptism will include the words ...sanctified in Christ, which do not mean an internal sanctification or renewal of the heart. That takes place in the elect only when they are born again. The covenantal sanctifying, as it has always been understood in the Reformed and Christian church, is embraced and taught here. Because the situation did not permit longer discussion at this time, the majority judged that this proposed clarification should be approved, without making it a new rule.

ARTICLE 4 (sic) – The wife of Havekate is present at the meeting. She once again requested to be received as a member of the congregation. It was decided to appoint a committee, consisting of Kamper and Broek, to inquire from her husband what her behavior and attitude in the domestic life at home are.

ARTICLE 5 – Because some complaints have been heard concerning the wife of Johannes Mulder, Keppel and Wakker were appointed, with a mandate to talk to her about attendance at worship services.

ARTICLE 6 – Because the salary of the pastor is still is not paid on a timely basis and is incomplete, the decision was made to take definitive steps so that this miserable practice for once and for all should come to an end. The deacons will visit the homes of

the members, supported by the elders, in order to address this matter seriously. It is a sin that cannot be tolerated and to maintain a decent reputation for us. The members of the consistory will have a special meeting, in the absence of the pastor, in order to arrange for appropriate regulations. This will take place on Monday, August 11, at 6 P.M. at the home of Brother Geerlings.

ARTICLE 7 – All of the brothers declare that they are able to celebrate communion next Sunday in love and unity, as they proclaim the death of the Lord.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Kamper.

A. C. van Raalte
G. Wakker, clerk

Consistory Meeting of October 11, 1861

Absent: Brothers Keppel and Wakker, because of a conflict with the school board meeting.

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened with prayer by the president, Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 2 – The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

ARTICLE 3 – The committee mentioned in Article 4 of the previous meeting reports that they have not been able to discern improvement in the domestic conduct of Mrs. Havekate. Therefore, they propose that her request to be received as a member of the congregation be postponed for a period of probation. This proposal was accepted by the consistory.

ARTICLE 4 – Delegates to the coming classical meeting were appointed. Wakker and Broek are delegated, with Kamper serving as alternate for Wakker, and Wilterdink as alternate for Broek.

ARTICLE 5 – Membership transfers received of Aaron Cornelis Bouman, from Kalamazoo, dated September 24, 1861, and Johanna Maria van Esp, from Grand Haven, dated August 5, 1861.

ARTICLE 6 – Received information containing resignation from the membership of Fokke Bakker.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Wilterdink.

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