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

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5 December 1859

Holland, Michigan

At a meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church at which Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte was not present due to his fund-raising trip out East, Elder Teunis Keppel again presided. More time was spent on the alleged theft of a church member. Some witnesses were also present. The issue was settled with a decision by the consistory.

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. 117-118.

This task is assigned to Wakker and Keppel.

ARTICLE 7 – Gerritje van der Kam requested transfer of membership to Overijssel. It was decided to do so.

The meeting was closed by Brother te Roller.

T. Keppel  
G. Wakker, clerk

Consistory Meeting of December 5, 1859

Absent were Brothers Ploeg, and Labots (the latter entered the meeting later).

Brother Keppel opened the meeting with prayer.

ARTICLE 1 – Brother Keppel was chosen by an unanimous vote to serve as president.

The three previous minutes were read and approved, with some erasures and alterations of the last minutes.

ARTICLE 2 – Brothers Paulus, Pleij, H. de Vries, Everhard, and H. Vissers were once again present. L. Vissers was not present, because of ill health. Also present was N. Fijn and his two sons, who were present on behalf of their father, so he declared, in order for them to contradict the testimony made by H. de Vries at the previous meeting.

ARTICLE 3 – The chairman asked if these two persons should be permitted to remain in the meeting. The consistory judged that because the matter in question is only in the stage of investigation, no additional individuals should be present than those who are immediately involved in the case. Whereupon, the two sons of Fijn left the meeting, and Fijn was rebuked for his injudicious behavior in not keeping his promises.

ARTICLE 4 – Fijn requested that Matthew 18 be read from the Scriptures. A few verses were read aloud.

ARTICLE 5 – Fijn asserts that the accusations made against him are partially lies and are in contradiction with what Matthew 18 outlines for procedure. People should have spoken to him if they had observed any wrong in his behavior and warned him. A. Vissers was requested to retract his previous statements, which he does. The clerk points out that he expresses himself in a much softer and less

accusatory way than at the previous meeting. He inquires whether he had not expressed himself clearly, or if further consideration had brought him to the conviction that it would be beneficial to withdraw statements made. Vissers asserts that he has remained consistent. H. de Vries maintains the position expressed earlier, and Fijn replies that it is not true.

J. Paulus indicates that he is dissatisfied with what has been said, and, although he names no names, it appears that he has reference to Vissers. Wakker says that the observation made by Paulus is well grounded. After discussion back and forth, Fijn declares that he no longer knows what he himself thinks about the matter, but that he did suspect that his boys had done things that were not right, but that he (Fijn) was innocent, and that people were making a mountain out of a molehill and acting as if he had taken 50 bags of cattle feed and no one was able to prove this. He declared that he was satisfied and could acquiesce in the procedure of the consistory and thought that his wife would also agree. He believed that, although one could keep on talking about the matter, Labots had done what they had requested by naming the persons involved and that the bitterness against him was now history.

After more discussion, Fijn requests a judgment of the consistory concerning the differences between him and Plugger. In recent days there have been many unpleasant incidents, brought about quite likely because an accounting is made only once a year, and he thought it would be better to do so on a monthly basis.

The chairman says that the consistory cannot enter into this matter, and asks if anyone has a proposal concerning the question under discussion, which will bring closure.

Wakker proposes that since Fijn has declared himself satisfied and acquiesces in the decision, the entire question should now be dropped, without saying who was the accuser and who was correct. Because nothing which the witnesses had testified to was challenged by Fijn, and, because of many uncertainties, no conclusive decision could be made. It was decided to let the matter rest, and the passage of time may shed more light than is presently available. This was unanimously accepted, and the meeting was closed by Brother Broek

T. Keppel  
G. Wakker