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

William Buursma

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9 October 1851

Holland, Michigan

At a meeting of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church, Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, presided. Members present were elders H. Broek and J. Labots and deacons, A. de Weerd, Wilterdink, A. Plugger, P. van den Berg, and T[eunis] Keppel. The M. Mulder family wished to join the congregation but questioned the liturgy on the matter of infant baptism. Mulder understood "sanctified in Christ" to mean baptismal regeneration. Van Raalte explained that neither circumcision in the Old Testament nor baptism in the New Testament seals regeneration. Mulder accepted this understanding of the sacrament. In a dispute between Mulder and Schrader, Consistory asked the gentlemen to reflect on the matter for eight days and hopefully come to a peaceful settlement. Consistory approved Van Raalte being present next Sunday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, at the installation service of Rev. Smit in Drenthe.

In Dutch; translation by Rev. William Buursma.

Original in the collection of the Pillar Christian Reformed Church at the Joint Archives of Holland, Hope College, volume I, pp. 14-18.

Consistory Meeting held in the Church in the Village of Holland,  
On October 9, 1851

Present were A. C. van Raalte, President; Elders H. Broek and J. Labots; Deacons A. de Weerd, Wilterdink, A. Plugger, P. van den Berg, T. Keppel.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the president.

ARTICLE 1 – W. Mulder indicates his desire to join with his family the congregation, and to have his children baptized. His reason is that one ought not to live in isolation from others. However, he has objection to a question appearing in the formula for baptism; namely, the one which asks whether he acknowledges that our children are sanctified in Christ. Mulder is of the opinion that this sentence must be understood to say that the believer acknowledges that his child is regenerated in the act of baptism.

Rev. van Raalte asks if any of the brethren can provide an answer to this objection. The brethren return the question to Rev. van Raalte. He develops, on the basis of God's Word, the position that neither circumcision in the Old Testament nor baptism in the New seals regeneration, but proclaim the objective grace in Christ. This has always been the opinion of the

The above receives unanimous and strong agreement.

ARTICLE 4 – Rev. van Raalte comments to the brethren that it is his desire next Sunday, October 12, to welcome Rev. Smit at his installation service that afternoon in Drenthe. He intends to demonstrate to his colleague his affection and joy that the Lord has gifted that congregation with a pastor. Rev. van Raalte, at the same time, offers his counsel and advice if that should be necessary. His request is granted by the gathering.

ARTICLE 5 – Brother van den Berg asks the gathering what he can do since, in God's providence, he is currently living in circumstances of need. Should he leave the colony to better provide for the needs of his family, or should he remain? The reason he comes to the consistory with this request is that he places much weight on their judgment and advice. This, he believes, will give him liberty of spirit, whether he goes or stays. The consistory judges that he should stay.

Schrader is to give 300 acres to Mulder, not including the trees, which he can keep for himself as evidence that Mulder does not intend to renovate the windmill as he had been accused by Schrader. Schrader will be permitted to make use of the swamp adjacent to the windmill. If, in the course of this year, he can raise the money, he will be allowed to purchase it for the same price that had been paid for it. If Schrader does not meet these conditions in the time stipulated, they intend to close the swamp area.

ARTICLE 3 -- Rev. van Raalte asks of the brethren which of them will be attending the classical meeting to be held on October 14, 1851 in Zeeland. Rev. van Raalte earnestly points out the necessity of steadfastness and unity and order in these extremely weighty matters. He calls them to stand together in fellowship on the firm foundation of divine revelation and the confessions of the Reformed Church. This will make it possible for us as officebearers to have an influence on the congregation and, at the same time, in the society where we live.

Reformed Church. This explanation is accepted and confirmed by the entire consistory. Mulder indicates that if this is the intention of the formula for infant baptism, he can agree with it.

ARTICLE 2 – Mulder now brings up a dispute involving Schrader. He claims that Schrader promised him that if he discontinued involvement with the windmill that he would receive 2/3rds of the land as compensation for the expenses he had incurred in the making of the mill. Now, Schrader denies having done so. Schrader declares that there had been some conversation about trees standing in a lower elevation where logging would be too expensive. He declares that he had been willing to give these for shingle wood, and that Mulder would receive 2/3rds of this. He declares that he had not spoken about the land.

The consistory declares that it is very difficult for them to make a definitive judgment in this case. Furthermore, Mulder and Schrader, in an effort to solve the dispute, are asked to reflect on the following questions for eight days; namely,

He requests temporary assistance in his need. Some of the brethren have objections, but submit to the judgment of the others that Brother van den Berg should stay for the benefit of his family and the people with whom he lives. It was also decided, for the time being, to assist him in his need.

Since there is nothing more for the agenda, the meeting was closed with prayer and thanksgiving by Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

Consistory Meeting of November 24, 1851

Present were Rev. A. C. van Raalte; Broek and Hekhuis, elders; de Weerd, Wilterdink, Plugger and Keppel, deacons.

ARTICLE 1 – A discussion was held concerning the retirement of elders and deacons. The assembly judged that it was neither good nor necessary that they should retire. However, (should the congregation decide it to be necessary) that this

MINUTES OF THE NINTH STREET CRC.,

OF

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

November 5, 1850 – May 24. 1855

Volume I

*Rev. William Burgma,  
Translating*