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Meeting Notes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

William Buursma

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8 May 1852

Holland, Michigan

The Consistory of the First Reformed Church met with consistory representatives of other congregations in the Classis of Holland concerning the problems that Editor Doesburg and his paper, *De Hollander*, were causing in the Holland Colony. Other communities represented were Graafschap, Drenthe, and Overisel. The group came to the decision that Doesburg needed to be rebuked. If he did not repent of his actions, he would be disciplined and refused the Lord's Supper. "Brother" [Jan?] Binnekant was also to be rebuked for publicly insulting Rev. Van Raalte. If he did not publish an apology, he, too, would be disciplined. Doesburg was commanded to make known the names of all persons who published items in *De Hollander* and they would also be disciplined.

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, Minutes of the Consistory, volume I, pp. 37-40.

Special Church Assembly, May 8, 1852

The meeting was called by the consistory of Holland in order to meet with various consistories of neighboring congregations, seeking advice concerning certain weighty subjects.

ARTICLE 1 – After the singing of Psalm 86: 6, the meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Ypma.

ARTICLE 2 – A president and clerk were elected.

ARTICLE 3 - Present, in addition to the two mentioned ministers: From the Holland congregation – Elders J. Labots, H. Broek, J. Broersma, J. A. Wilterdink, and A. de Weerd; Graafschaap – Elders J. Rutgers, A. S. Grootenboer, A. Strabbing, P. Boven, A. J. Neerken, Deacons F. W. van Anrooi and M. Naaije; Drenthe – Elders J. Wiggers, A. Schepers; Overijssel – Elder M. Kok.

ARTICLE 4 – The president requests the consistory of Holland to give information concerning the purpose of the meeting. They declare that certain writings in the newspaper have hindered them in the execution of their calling and service in their office. Evidence for their concern can be found in

numbers 76 and 80 of the aforementioned journal.

The question is asked whether the consistory has dealt in this matter officially as consistory. The brethren from Holland give an extensive report of the happenings in that city. It appears that they functioned exclusively as citizens (not as consistory members).

The question is asked whether a member of the congregation may place in his newspaper anything which has been sent in. This refers to Mr. Doesburg.

After extensive remarks made about the subject, it is the unanimous judgment that by placing in his paper items which slander those who serve as officebearers in God's house bring sorrow to God's children and dishonor to the name of the Lord.

After taking into serious consideration the aforementioned matters, it was decided to rebuke him (Doesburg), and to require him to confess his sin before God and his people, by a statement in his (Doesburg) paper. Should he refuse to do this, it is the judgment of the assembly that he may not be permitted to come to the table of the Lord. Brothers Broek and Labots were chosen to inform him of the judgment of the assembly.

Later the Rev. S. Bolks was added to the committee.

ARTICLE 5 – The question was asked how to proceed with Brother Binnenkant, who had placed an item in the paper, found in No. 76. After having read the article and discussing it extensively, it is the judgment of the assembly that the aforementioned brother is guilty of publicly insulting the minister (Rev. van Raalte).

The consequences of such behavior make the pastor's labors fruitless. It was decided to admonish the brother, requiring him to confess his sin before God and in the newspaper. If he refuses to do this, he may no longer share in the privilege of the Lord's table. The same above-mentioned committee will inform him.

It was further decided that everyone who is a member of this congregation and who has made him/herself guilty of public slander in the paper are also admonished and called to confession before God and his congregation. If they are not willing to do so, they, too, will be disciplined.

Mr. Doesburg, by the authority of the assembly, is required to make their names public.

No more business requiring attention, the meeting was closed with the singing of Psalm 134: 3, and a prayer of thanksgiving by Rev. Bolks.

Holland, May 8, 1852, in the name of the assembly (classis)
Rev. S. Bolks

Consistory Meeting of May 21, 1852

ARTICLE 1 – Present are A. C. van Raalte, president; Elders H. Broek, G. J. Hekhuis, J. A. Wilterdink; J. Broersma; J. Labots; Deacons A. de Weerd, G. W. Wilterdink, A. Plugger, P. van den Berg, Keppel.

ARTICLE 2 – The meeting was opened with prayer by the president.

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

ARTICLE 4 – Rev. van Raalte states that he feels the necessity to inform the brethren about the recent significant meeting of the churches, at which the congregational misery was discussed by the various consistories. He wishes to share his deep conviction of duty that we as a consistory are called upon to strongly admonish, in public, the irregularities which have taken place within our congregation,

MINUTES OF THE NINTH STREET CRC.,

OF

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

November 5, 1850 – May 24. 1855

Volume I

*Rev. William Beursma,
Translating*