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Meeting Notes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

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22 April 1853

Holland, Michigan

Many items were discussed at the meeting of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church of Holland. The first item was a correction to the minutes of the previous meeting made by [Teunis] Keppel. He claimed that he did not assert that the preaching of the pastor, Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, had become powerless, "but that he had said that family visiting had received a higher priority than the preaching." As for the building program, "a judgment is made that the majority lack sacrificial involvement." The names of the consistory members present were again not given. Van Raalte served as the clerk at the meeting.

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. 61-63.

and those who have fallen into sin and disputations.

He is also convinced that if we look at all of the homes in the village, he has made frequent visits to nearly all of the homes within the last months. He is also fully aware that there will be many who dislike him, no matter what. He requests the brethren, in addition, for assistance, should they be aware of accusations against him by informing him of complaints and the persons making them, so that it will be possible for him to labor with a blessing.

ARTICLE 5 – Brother Rensink requests release from the responsibility of care for an orphan living with him. The brethren wish to discuss this with him personally.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Wilterdink.

A. C. van Raalte

Meeting Held April 22, 1853

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 2 – The minutes were read, and Brother Keppel makes the comment that he had not asserted that the preaching (of van Raalte) had become powerless, but that he had said that family visiting had received a higher priority than the preaching. With this correction, the minutes were approved.

ARTICLE 3 – Brother Binnenkant requests release from the responsibility for an orphan of

the congregation. This request was honored. Brother Labots was asked to consider taking in this young girl. However, having doubts about her character, he acquiesces under the condition that her clothing be provided for. At this point, Brother de Wren makes a suggestion that, after consultation with his immediate family, it might be possible for the child to be cared for by him at no cost to others.

ARTICLE 4 – One of the brethren brings up the question of how to deal with Brother Renskers who has become Baptist in his sentiments and makes libelous statements about the creeds of the church.

Concerning the membership statement of Brother Liesvelds, it is judged that this matter must be investigated. This is also true as far as other recently arrived families is concerned; for example, Brothers v.d.Werp, Blankenzeel, etc.

ARTICLE 5 – A request to be received as a member of the congregation by an individual named Streur results in a lengthy discussion concerning whether or not it is wise to accept membership statements granted by the Protestant churches. Many bring forward objections, based on the vast ignorance of members of those churches. At the same time, it is unheard of to reject the membership testimonials coming from European Reformed churches; thus establishing a different standard based on the more or less faithfulness (orthodoxy) of the local pastor. Consequently, it is the judgment of the majority not to reject the membership statements but to receive them, guarding our conscience by a

faithful procedure as we insist upon a worship proceeding from the heart, a worship in spirit and in truth. This gives greater freedom, so that in the worst cases such individuals must be looked upon as sheep without a shepherd. Even the best congregation will continually need to wrestle with the problem of ignorance and suspicion concerning their own spiritual state.

For this reason, we dare not exclude them from the congregation, also because sometimes it becomes evident that glorious fruits are found in the lives of such people, who are willing to become part of the congregation, eagerly accepting the truth. We know that not everything drawn up in the fisherman's net is suitable for consumption.

ARTICLE 6 – As far as the church building project is concerned, a judgment is made that the majority lack sacrificial involvement..

ARTICLE 7 – In addition to the pastor, the brethren Hekhuis and Jonkers are appointed as delegates to the classical session to be held on April 27 in Zeeland. All of the brethren, as far as circumstances permit, are encouraged to be present.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Keppel.

A. C. van Raalte

MINUTES OF THE NINTH STREET CRC.,

OF

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

November 5, 1850 – May 24. 1855

Volume I

*Rev. William Burisma,
Translating*