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Meeting Minutes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

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Recommended Citation

Van Raalte, A. C.; Buursma, William; and Buursma, Althea, "Meeting Minutes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church" (1855). *Van Raalte Papers: 1850-1859*. 299.
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27 August 1855

Holland, Michigan

Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte presided at the meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church. There was a discussion concerning standards of membership. Some felt that entrance of members into the congregation depended upon a commitment to the faith and to the canons of Dort in addition to papers if such were presented. Van Raalte is suffering from dyspepsia and asked for advice of the consistory. Should he refrain from pastoral work for six months? The consistory left it to him to decide.

In Dutch; translation by Rev. William and Althea Buursma, 2000.

Original in the papers of the Pillar Christian Reformed Church at the Joint Archives of Holland, vol. II, pp. 4-5.

ARTICLE 4 – Mr. Knol has declined the request to advance money and planks. He is, however, willing to deliver the wood upon payment.

ARTICLE 5 – Hoogesteger urgently requests payment for the painting work. His needs and justifiable claim are acknowledged, and it was decided to set the matter straight by paying him out of receipts as soon as possible.

ARTICLE 6 – Membership transfers were received for Benjamin Hermanus Ploeg and his wife, Huibertje Ploeg, nee Littooi, from Klundert, the Netherlands; Sijke Ploeg, Hendrika Ploeg, Pieter Boot, and Willemina Boot, nee Schaap, from Klundert, North Brabant, the Netherlands; Cornelies de Koster from Baarland, in Zeeland; Jacob Smits and wife, _____ van Rij, Zuid Beijerland; and Fokke Bakker and wife.

ARTICLE 7 – The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother P. de Vries.

A. C. van Raalte

Memberships received on August 5: Hendrikje Zwaluwenberg, Kalamazoo; Anthony van Duin and Cornelia de Koster (spouse) from Baarland, Netherlands; Fokke Bakker and wife, Zeeland, Michigan; Jacob Smits and wife, Zuid Beijerland, from the Netherlands; Cornelies de Koster from Baarland, Netherlands; Pieter Boot and Willemina Boot, nee Schaap, from Zevenbergen, Netherlands; Benjamin Heronimus Ploeg and his wife, Huibertje Littooi, from de Klundert, Netherlands; Hendrika Ploeg and Sijke Ploeg from de Klundert, Netherlands.

Marinus Hoogesteger and Dirk Broek were admitted to the table of the Lord by way of profession of faith.

Membership transfer to Grand Haven was given for Annigjen Sisling and to Jurjen Dijkhuis and wife.

Meeting held August 27, 1855 ✓

Present were Elders Broek, Jonker, Krabshuis, Keppel, and Labots; and Deacons P. de Vries, D. te Roller; and Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 11 – The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. van Raalte, and the minutes were read and approved.

ARTICLE 2 – Due to a misunderstanding, the matter of the sale of the grave plots was not brought up. It was decided to place this on the agenda of the next meeting.

ARTICLE 3 – The brothers Keppel and Labots were appointed to review the account books for benevolence (poor fund).

ARTICLE 4 – A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the acceptance of membership papers. Some do not wish to accept any papers, but desire that a new confession of faith be made. Others are willing to accept membership credentials from churches maintaining pure confessional commitments. The latter, however, do wish to inquire whether perspective members are in agreement with the Canons of Dordt.

ARTICLE 5 – A discussion was held upon a declaration of Rev. van Raalte that he feels himself weakened by dyspepsia. He asks for advice on what to do. The advice of the doctor that he should refrain from activities (ministerial) for a half-year is unpleasant and it is difficult to judge what ought to be done. The matter is left up to the pastor to judge what he should do in this case.

ARTICLE 6 – Delegates to the next classical meeting were appointed. They are elders Labots, Apeldoorn, and Keppel. It was proposed that the assembly request classis to inform synod that it is the judgment of classis that peace in the churches will be advanced if slave-holding congregations of South Carolina are not received into the denomination.

ARTICLE 7 – The meeting was closed with prayer and thanksgiving by Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

September 16, 1855

Membership papers were received for Hendrik Noul van Zeist, from Utrecht, the Netherlands. A statement of membership on behalf of P. S. Kuyper and spouse, Cornelia Kuyper, was sent to Grand Haven. A statement of membership on behalf of G. Verwij and spouse to Grand Haven was also granted.