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

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[no day given] January 1856

Holland, Michigan

Although no day was given on which this meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church was held, it was an important meeting. Revs. H. G. Klein and Cornelius Vander Meulen were present as well as Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte who presided. Pastor Van Raalte announced that the congregation received a gift of \$1,000.00 from the Collegiate Church of New York City for the completion of the building. A member protested the nomination of Ploeg for elder but the consistory refused to accept the objection. Abraham Krabshuis and his wife notified the consistory that they were rejecting all ecclesiastical fellowship. Krabshuis charged the consistory as being indifferent to doctrinal truths such as justification by faith. The pastor's sermons always lacked something. In addition, Krabshuis felt he was being persecuted at consistory meetings. His resignation was accepted after considerable discussion.

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. 19-21.

ARTICLE 8 – The building committee was urged to continue the work on the church building.

ARTICLE 9 – The brethren Labots and Keppel were mandated to review the books of the deacons.

ARTICLE 10 – The bell ringer asks for a \$5.00 increase in salary for this year and last year. Request granted.

ARTICLE 11 – On behalf of the first contractors for the church, a \$75.00 advance is requested, since they consider themselves unable to purchase the steel for the windows. This request was granted.

ARTICLE 12 – The meeting was closed with prayer by Brother Krabshuis.

A. C. van Raalte, clerk

Meeting Held on - January, 1856

Present were Elders Labots, Keppel, Apeldoorn, Hekhuis, Wilterdink, and Broek; Deacons de Vries, te Roller, Wilterdink, and Plugger; Preachers H. G. Klein, C. van der Meulen, and A. C. van Raalte.

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

ARTICLE 2 – The memberships of Pieter de <sup>Koeijer</sup>Rouzer and Cornelia Glerum were requested for transfer to Zeeland. Approved.

ARTICLE 3 – Arent Smeelink presents his membership papers from Kalamazoo. They are approved. However, there was an inquiry concerning his behavior in dealing with a certain Brother de Schotsen. According to rumors, he is supposed to have conducted himself in a loveless fashion. A committee was appointed, consisting of Brothers Keppel, Apeldoorn, and Hekhuis. This committee is also assigned the task to speak with his wife, since he has many complaints concerning her.

ARTICLE 4 – The minutes were read and approved.

ARTICLE 5 – Brother Hekhuis informs the gathering that he has informed Hofman of the decision that he must clean up the staves from Boeve's land within three months. It appears that for the sake of peace he is willing to submit to this decision.

ARTICLE 6 – C. Vorst requests release from the decision to loan money. This was granted to him, because Pastor van Raalte informs the gathering that, by God's goodness, the congregation of Holland was presented the sum of \$1,000.00 by the

Collegiate Church of New York for the completion of the building.

ARTICLE 7 – Zwaluwenberg presents a statement of membership from the consistory of Kalamazoo, which mentions that he has not been permitted to come to communion, even though he has made profession of faith. It was decided to request of the brethren in Kalamazoo further information, especially since giving membership transfers of this nature brings about confusion.

ARTICLE 8 – A member brings protest against the appointment of Brother Ploeg, charging that he is lacking the marks of (Christian) zeal in his secular calling. Already in the Netherlands, unpleasantness occurred in connection with Rev. Meerburg. After some discussion concerning various characters and their inclinations, it was decided that the objections are not of such a nature to refuse to accept the membership, especially as earlier testimonials indicate no objections to him. It was decided to present both Brother Ploeg and van de Luyster as a duo from which one is to be selected.

ARTICLE 9 – A letter from Krabshuis and wife, rejecting all ecclesiastical fellowship, was read. They also request no efforts on the part of the pastor or others to discuss the matter, since nothing will satisfy them other than a return to the old paths of the fathers, in which one heard of soul-searching, conviction, confirmation, and growth in spiritual life.

Rev. van Raalte indicates that he has spoken with Krabshuis and understands that this matter has been presented because he (Krabshuis) believes that the consistory has revealed itself as being indifferent concerning the doctrine of truth, especially justification by faith. In addition, the pastor's sermons always lack something. In further conversation with Mrs. Krabshuis, she indicated that her husband consistently returned home (from consistory meetings) with complaints that he was being persecuted, that he had heard too much about the spirit of criticism, and that he had not been given opportunity to discuss the profession of faith, etc. The brethren engaged in a lengthy discussion and reflected on their experiences with Krabshuis. The judgment is regretfully made

that his convictions are ungrounded and that he has slandered the ministry behind their backs, has been disloyal concerning those who needed to be rebuked, and that he has been overly sensitive. The gathering comes to the conclusion that, since the matter has been dragging on for such a long time, he is not suitable for service as elder. As a result, his resignation can be unanimously accepted, although his error in this schismatic activity must be brought to his attention, even though we do not deny him the right of conscience if he wishes to separate himself. He will stand or fall in this in the presence of his God. It was decided to inform the congregation on the day of the election of this letter and the consistory's response.

ARTICLE 10 – The meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Klein.

A. C. van Raalte, clerk

Meeting Held on February 15, 1856

Present were Elders Broek, Ploeg, Keppel; Deacons Plugger, te Roller, Wilterdink; and Rev. A. C. van Raalte.

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

ARTICLE 2 – The minutes were read and approved.

ARTICLE 3 – Brother Ploeg was welcomed to his first session in the consistory. He has been chosen by a majority of votes and installed by the pastor in his office.

ARTICLE 4 – A request from the first contractor for an additional \$30.00 for the purchase of steel for the windows was approved.

ARTICLE 5 – The consistory was informed that a contract has been signed for a furnace for the warming of the church in the sum of \$250.00.

ARTICLE 6 – It was decided to take a collection for the needy widows and orphans of preachers next Sunday, and thereafter for the Board of Education. From now on, there will be a yearly collection on the first Sunday in June for the Board of Education.

ARTICLE 7 – Brother Keppel reports on the matter between A. Smeding and de Schotsen. He reports that his rights in connection with the purchase of the church building cannot be denied. Smeding, however, has not handled this correctly, which has led to a rebuke from the consistory of the Scottish congregation, requiring his confession. It is for this reason that Smeding desires to have his membership returned, so