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Meeting Minutes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

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24 February 1854

Holland, Michigan

Several matters came before the members of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church. The members were Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, elders Broek, Appeldoorn, Hekhuis, Labots, and Jonker and deacons Keppel and Plugger. One decision was to buy communion wine from another place rather than in the store of Mr. Post. Keppel reported that \$1,600.00 was pledged toward the new church building. Schrader will serve as the architect. Much of the meeting was spent on a complaint that involved members of the Consistory and the pastor. Deacon de Weerd and his son-in-law, W. van der Haar had bitter differences. Broek, son-in-law of de Weerd, regretted that the pastor involved himself in the matter. It was considered interference. A committee of Jonker, Plugger, and Keppel were appointed to resolving the offense. Van Raalte again served as clerk of 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, the Minutes of the Consistory, volume I, pp. 82-86.

Meeting of February 13, 1854

Present were Elders Broek, Jonker, Wilterdink and Labots; Deacons Plugger, Keppel, Wilterdink and de Weerd; and Rev. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. van Raalte. The minutes were read and approved, although it was the consensus that the first article should be declared illegible, since it did not involve an ecclesiastical concern but was a report of a fraternal conversation.

ARTICLE 2 – Much of the time of the evening was taken up with a discussion about the church building. Pro and con positions were developed. It was decided to have a list available for signing for gifts and loans. Brother Keppel was assigned the task to implement this and granted the necessary daily wage for this task.

To cover the costs of interest and principal, the seating places were assessed and distributed by lot, with the understanding that the families may choose to sit close to one another and may make such arrangements after the lot has been cast.

The meeting was ended with prayer.

A. C. van Raalte

Meeting Held on February 24, 1854

Present were Elders Broek, Appeldoorn, Hekhuis;

Labots, and Jonker; as well as Deacons Keppel and Plugger; and Rev. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 1 – Rev. van Raalte led in prayer. The minutes were read and approved.

ARTICLE 2 – Rev. van Raalte informs the gathering that Mr. Post has refused to make communion wine available, asserting that the alcohol law forbids this. He has informed the governor of this. Rev. van Raalte disapproves of this action. He has come to the conviction that such interference only occurs when it concerns religious freedom. He believes that this is done to create aversion against the law so that it would be easier to sell alcoholic beverages. This has resulted in deep-seated indignation. Therefore, he deems it to be wiser to purchase communion wine in another community.

ARTICLE 3 – Brother Keppel informs the meeting that subscribers have voluntarily pledged the sum of \$1,600.00 for the church building. The total very likely will reach \$1,800.00. The amount of the loan reached \$180. In addition, five lots for homes in the village of Holland were given, if the building project will begin this summer in earnest.

After mutual consultation, it was judged that it was not necessary to negotiate for capital, but after the plan has been completed, and made available for a period of fourteen days for public solicitation, with the understanding

that the contractors will divide the work into two portions: A. the church completed in its entirety; B. the benches. After the bids have been submitted, the consistory will have several days to reflect on them. Mr. Schrader is assigned the task of making the plans. Since he is not a contractor, he will function as an architect.

ARTICLE 3 – It was decided to encourage Brother Bos to make profession of faith, so that his children may be baptized.

ARTICLE 4 – Brothers Keppel and Plugger desire to speak with the consistory about the bitterness and differences which exist between Deacon de Weerd and a church member, his son-in-law, W. van der Haar. The president indicates that he had had the hope that this situation could be settled outside of the consistory, but he acknowledges that the conscientious objections of the brothers must now be heard.

The matter, however, cannot be handled, due to the absence of the parties concerned. However, Rev. van Raalte desires that this problem can first be investigated within the consistory itself. He asks if it is proper for the consistory to involve itself in this matter.

In the subsequent discussions, it becomes clear that Brother Broek, son-in-law of de Weerd, had made known his regret that the brethren, and particularly Rev. van Raalte, had involved themselves in the matter, and that they harassed the mother in the home, according to the testimony

of the family members.

After the brothers had called attention to the task of the pastor to maintain peace and unity in the flock, and after Brother Plugger, who had been present, had shown the accusation to be unseemly, Brother Broek buttressed his unhappiness about the pastor's interference. He indicated that he had been told by Brother de Weerd that the pastor, when approached by de Weerd about the matter, had said that he would gladly devote half a day to the matter. The pastor testifies that he did say this out of a sincere desire to avoid a further outbreak of disturbances. He was also of the opinion that it was his calling to demonstrate such a hearty concern and feels insulted that the brothers behind his back have in a slanderous way twisted his words to suit their own positions. De Weerd himself has indicated that it pains him that the minister must be involved with this matter. The brothers issue an admonition concerning this to Brother Broek and unanimously judge that it is the consistory's duty to guard against such scandalous situations. This is particularly true since these provocations are found within the bosom of the consistory. Brother Broek is urgently requested to work with all his power towards solving this conflict. At the same time, in the name of the consistory, Brothers Jonker, Plugger,

and Keppel were delegated to labor in earnest in resolving this offense.

The meeting was closed in prayer by Brother Appeldoorn.

A. C. van Raalte

Meeting Held on April 11, 1854

Present were Elders Broek, Jonker, and Wilterdink; Deacons Wilterdink and de Weerd; as well as Rev. van Raalte.

ARTICLE 1 – A membership was received for Janna Geertirui Wilterdink.

ARTICLE 2 – James Veneklaassen, having stolen an otter captured in an Indian trap, has caused much offense, although the Indian has been mollified by the father. The consistory has judged that he must confess his sin; otherwise the sin will be punished publicly.

ARTICLE 3 – Mr. Hudson declares that young fruit trees have been stolen by Brink and D. Hekhuis, as well as boards and hay. Rev. van Raalte remarks that for nearly three years, these people have received permission from van Raalte's servant that they were allowed to take with them the cullings. He adds that Mr. Hudson, who was aware of this arrangement, must be told that it is unfair of him to injure the good name of these men. Elder Wilterdink

MINUTES OF THE NINTH STREET CRC.,

OF

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

November 5, 1850 – May 24. 1855

Volume I

*Rev. William Beersma,
Translating*