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Meeting Minutes of the Consistory of the First Reformed Church

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12 April 1867

Holland, Michigan

At a meeting of the consistory of the First Reformed Church at which Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte presided, new members were received. A member again requested to be reinstated and censure lifted. A copy of the letter refusing him his request is given fully in the minutes. Article 6 reads as follows: "The president reports that an answer to the protest sent to the Second Church about membership in the Masonic order has been received. In a very irenic manner they have given their reasons why they are of a different opinion than we. It was decided to bring the matter to classis and afterwards to synod."

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

Original in the records of the Pillar Christian Reformed Church at the Joint Archives of Holland, vol. II, pp. 288-289.

Consistory Meeting of April 12, 1867

Absent: Brothers de Bruin, Labots, Naber, and Vork.

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

ARTICLE 2 – Jan Schouten entered the meeting, requesting to be admitted to the Lord's table. After an interview, he was accepted as a member.

ARTICLE 3 – Membership transfers received for Gerrit Rooks, from Overijssel, dated February 25, 1867; for Cornelis Koetzier and Petertje Rijkers, from Drenthe, dated April 5, 1867; for Hermanis Koning and wife, from Vriesland, dated February 4, 1867. Membership transfer granted to the widow Wever to Milwaukee. Resignation of membership received for Johannes Hogesteger and wife, Jan M. te Slechter and wife, and Jan Steketee.

ARTICLE 4 – A letter was received from Jacob Reidsema containing a request to have his censure lifted and to be granted a statement of membership. He included reasons why he believed he had the right to receive a good testimonial.

ARTICLE 5 – It was decided that, taking into consideration his behavior during his time here, up to his departure, his desire cannot be fulfilled. He will be informed that there are inadequate reasons existing for the consistory to send the kind of statement of membership he requested. The consistory is, however, prepared to send to the congregation he wishes to join, the items which have taken place here. That consistory then can deal with him as circumstances require.

ARTICLE 6 – The president reports that an answer to the protest sent to the Second Church about membership in the Masonic order has been received. In a very irenic manner they have given their reasons why they are of a different opinion than we. It was decided to bring the matter to classis and afterwards to synod.

ARTICLE 7 – Delegates to classis will be Wakker and Kamper, with Keppel and Broek as alternates.

ARTICLE 8 – It was decided that from now on monies that have been given for mission work will be divided: 1/3rd to be sent for domestic missions, 2/3rds for foreign mission work. The congregation will be informed of this.

ARTICLE 9 – It was decided to send a request to the local city authorities for a general collection or contribution, because of the famine in the southern states.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Kieft.

G. Wakker, clerk

The letter sent to J. Reidsema was as follows:

(Copy)

Holland, April 17, 1867

Mr. J. Reidsema

Your letter has been received in good health by Rev. van Raalte. The manifold labors that have been placed upon our shoulders have slowed the process of dealing with your case.

We hope that you will not take this ill of us. Most of us are not masters of our own time. We would very much have desired to acquiesce in your request, but the unfinished business and the dealings concerning your person during your departure, your current absence; all make it impossible for us to acquiesce in the request expressed in your letter. We cannot, we may not, go further, in giving a testimonial for any period beyond the time of your departure. Further dealings in the matter belong where you are living, or with the congregation you join.

Although such a consistory would be unaware of what has happened in the past, a confession of guilt is always the only way for restoration before God and his church. We did not find adequate reasons in your letter for giving a testimonial such as you desire. If you wish, we will send to the consistory of Kalamazoo the record of our dealings with what has happened. We cannot go beyond this.

The almighty and gracious God grant you child-like submission in honoring his law. May you in humble awareness of your guilt find forgiveness in the blood of Christ, so that from now on you may live to his honor and to the edification of your neighbor in your Christian walk.

In the name of the consistory of the First Holland Reformed Church.
At Holland

G. Wakker, clerk

Consistory Meeting, with the building committee
For the building of the new church locally
Held on April 12, 1867

ARTICLE 1 – The meeting was opened with prayer by Wakker.

ARTICLE 2 – Due to the absence of the chairman, the Rev. A. C. van Raalte, Capon was chosen as temporary chairman.

ARTICLE 3 – The plans, with the necessary changes, were approved.

ARTICLE 4 – It was decided to proceed to the opening of the bids. At the opening, it appeared that the bidders were as follows: Hetebrij for \$5,958.00
Slenk for \$5,745.00
J. Klein for \$5,867.00
H. Toren for \$5,300.00

For painting of the church twice, good coat, white in color, and for the doors a metal color, the bidders were as follows: G. I. Dinkeloo for \$248.00
Streng and Hogesteger for \$241.00

ARTICLE 5 – It was decided to accept the bid on the church from H. Toren for \$5,300.00 and the painting from Streng and Hogesteger for \$241.00.

ARTICLE 6 – It was decided that observers for the choice of paint will be a committee, consisting of Trimpe and Pauls.

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

G. Wakker, clerk