

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
INDEPENDENT REFORMED CHURCHES HELD NOVEMBER 15-16, 1995  
AT THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH (INDEPENDENT)  
LYNWOOD, ILLINOIS**

**ARTICLE 1**

This meeting was called by the consistories of the Trinity Reformed Church of Lethbridge, Alberta, of the Orthodox Reformed Church of Wellandport, Ontario and of the Beverly Christian Reformed Church Independent of Wyoming, Michigan.

**ARTICLE 2**

Rev. E. J. Knott called for the singing of Psalter Hymnal 398:1-4, read Ephesians 4:1-17 and lead in prayer.

**ARTICLE 3**

The following are appointed to serve as officers:

Chairman	— Rev. E. J. Knott
ViceChairman	— Rev. J. Tuininga
Clerk	— Rev. A. Besteman

**ARTICLE 4**

Roll call reveals the following churches represented

Agassiz, B.C.	— Evergreen Covenant Reformed Church
Alberton, ON	— Independent C.R.C. of Ancaster
Allendale, MI	— Independent Reformed Church
Alto, MI	— Kettle Lake I.R.C.
Aylmer, ON	—Aylmer Independent Christian Ref. Church
Balmoral, ON	— Covenant Reformed Church
Borculo, MI	— Faith Independent Reformed Church
Byron Center MI	— Trinity Reformed Bible Church
Calgary, AB	— Bethel Independent C.R.C.
Cape Coral, FL	— Trinity Ref. Church of Cape Coral
Clinton, ON	— Grace Orthodox Reformed Church
Delavan, WI	— Orthodox Reformed Church
Dunnville, ON	—Grace Reformed Church
Eastmanville, MI	— Eastmanville Reformed Bible Church
Edmonton, AB	— The Orthodox Reformed Church
Grand Rapids, MI	— Christian Reformation Church
Grand Rapids, MI	— Seventh Reformed Church
Guthrie, ON	— Grace Orthodox Reformed Church
Hamilton, ON	— Hamilton Ind. Christian Ref. Church
Hudsonville, MI	— Cornerstone
Jenison, MI	— Bethel Independent Reformed Church
Kalamazoo, MI	— Free Christian Reformed Church
Lansing, IL	— Oak Glen Covenant Community Ref. Church
Lethbridge, AB	— Trinity Reformed Church
London, ON	— Independent Christian Reformed Church
Lynwood, IL	—Lynwood Christian Ref. Church Independent
Neerlandia, AB	— Emmanuel Reformed Church
Orange City, IA	— Redeemer Alliance Reformed Church

Pompton Plains, NJ	— Pompton Plains Reformed Bible Church
Sanborn, IA	— Cornerstone Orthodox Reformed Church
Sheffield, ON	— Independent Reformed Church
Smithers, BC	— Bethel Reformed Church
St. Catharines, ON	— Immanuel Orthodox Reformed Church
St. Catharines, ON	— Trinity Orthodox Reformed Church
Telkwa, BC	— The Reformed Church
Toronto, ON	— Covenant Reformed Church
Toronto, ON	— Orthodox Christian Reformed Church
Wellandport, ON	— Orthodox Reformed Church
Winnipeg, MB	— Independent Reformed Church
Woodstock, ON	— Independent Reformed Church
Wyoming, MI	— Beverly Christian Ref. Church Independent
Wyoming, ON	— Covenant Christian Church

#### **ARTICLE 5**

The Chairman reads the five resolutions drawn up by the convening consistories and permits general discussion.

#### **ARTICLE 6**

The first resolution is moved:

That the undersigned, or otherwise designated congregations determine, on the basis of a majority vote of each consistory/council to form a provisional federation of churches.

Adopted Unanimously.

#### **ARTICLE 7**

The second resolution is moved:

That this federation be based on the Three Forms of Unity (Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort) and the proposed Church Order which is in the process of being revised and completed and a copy of which will be included in the agenda for the alliance meeting.

A. Motion is made and adopted to amend the second resolution by deleting all the words beginning with “and the proposed Church Order . . .” and replacing them with the words “and the Church Order of 1934 with the understanding that work will continue on a church order for the federation.”

B. Motion is made and adopted to amend the second resolution to read “That this federation be based on God’s Holy Word as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity.”

C. The second resolution is adopted as follows:

That this federation be based on God’s Holy Word as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity and the Church Order of 1934 with the understanding that work will continue on a church order for the federation.

#### **ARTICLE 8**

The third resolution is moved:

That until a permanent organization is effected, the Regional Fellowships continue to function as de facto classes.  
A. Motion is made to amend by dropping the words “continue to function as de facto classes” and substitute the words “continue to be used”.  
B. Motion is made and adopted to take no action on resolution 3.

#### **ARTICLE 9**

The fourth resolution is moved:

That Independent Reformed congregations not represented at this meeting and other congregations committed to the basis, be invited to join this provisional federation and the ultimate permanent organization.

*Adopted.*

#### **ARTICLE 10**

The fifth resolution is moved:

That the three consistories/councils (Lethbridge, Wellandport, Wyoming, MI) calling this meeting be commissioned to call a second meeting within six months for the purpose of effecting a permanent ecclesiastical organization (incorporated), the final adoption of a Church Order, and the determination of a structure according to which such a federation would conduct its mutual affairs.

A. Motion is made and adopted to amend by deleting the words “the final adoption of a Church Order”.  
B. Motion is made and `adopted to amend by changing the words “within six months” to “within twelve months”.  
C. The fourth resolution is adopted as follows:

That the three consistories/councils (Lethbridge, Wellandport, Wyoming, MI) calling this meeting be commissioned to call a second meeting within twelve months for the purpose of effecting a permanent ecclesiastical organization (incorporated) and the determination of a structure according to which such a federation would conduct its mutual affairs.

#### **ARTICLE 11**

Recommendation is made that we adopt the name FEDERATION OF REFORMED CHURCHES. It is brought to the attention of the delegates that this name is already in use and is therefore not an option for use.

#### **ARTICLE 12**

Motion is made and defeated to adopt the name EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA.

#### **ARTICLE 13**

Motion is made and adopted to adjourn for the night.

#### **ARTICLE 14**

Rev. J. Tuininga closed with prayer.

#### **ARTICLE 15**

Thursday, November 16, 1995

Rev. J. Gangar reads Ezekiel 37:15-23, calls for the singing of Psalter Hymnal Number 479:1-5 and leads in

opening prayer.

#### **ARTICLE 16**

Motion is made and adopted to request the committee appointed by the Alliance to draw up a church order to continue to function on our behalf in the preparation of a church order.

#### **ARTICLE 17**

Motion is made and defeated that Mr. Fred Colenbrander be added to the committee.

#### **ARTICLE 18**

Motion is made and adopted that we request the organizing consistories in consultation with the church order committee to appoint the necessary committee personnel.

#### **ARTICLE 19**

Motion is made and adopted that those appointed to the church order committee be restricted to members of the Federation.

#### **ARTICLE 20**

Motion is made and adopted to authorize the three organizing consistories to function on behalf of the Federation until final organization is effected and that the address of Beverly Church be used for mailing purposes.

#### **ARTICLE 21**

Motion that we use the designation Orthodox Reformed Churches in North America until we reach the point of permanent organization. Motion made that we table the above motion indefinitely.

*Adopted.*

#### **ARTICLE 22**

Motion is made and adopted that a list of names be compiled from the churches and be checked out for legal usage and then presented to the member churches as soon as possible with each church having one vote in selecting the name.

Churches may submit names until Jan. 1 (address 2420 Avon Ave. SW — Wyoming, MI 49509)

#### **ARTICLE 23**

It is agreed that until the time a permanent name is adopted we shall be known as the “FELLOWSHIP OF UNITING REFORMED CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA.”

#### **ARTICLE 24**

The Chairman makes concluding remarks commenting upon the historical significance of the occasion and the fine spirit of cooperation and joy that has marked this meeting.

#### **ARTICLE 25**

The meeting is adjourned.

**ARTICLE 26**

Dr. P. Y. DeJong makes closing remarks thanking the chairman, the three convening consistories and commenting on the excellent order of the meeting. He calls for the singing of Psalter Hymnal Number 172:6 and leads in a closing prayer of Thanksgiving.

**ARTICLE 27**

The delegates sing the doxology.

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ Arthur Besteman, Acting Clerk

## **ENDNOTE**

At the conclusion of the meeting, twenty-seven churches signed the following statement:

“We, the undersigned congregations, on the basis of a majority vote of our council/consistory, do commit ourselves to join with other congregations to form a new (provisional) federation of churches on this date.

Cover Letter for Minutes of the November 1995 Meeting of the Independent Reformed Churches

## **FELLOWSHIP OF UNITING REFORMED CHURCHES**

December 15, 1995

Esteemed Brethren:

We are grateful for the interest in federation which was manifested at the recent meeting of independent churches held following the November meeting of the Alliance. The recommendation "to form a provisional federation of churches" was adopted unanimously. Before the meeting adjourned, twenty-seven churches signed a statement committing themselves to membership in the proposed federation. Since the adjournment of the November meeting, additional churches have informed us of their decision to join. We encourage other churches who are giving this matter consideration to contact us if we can be of any assistance. It has been decided that all churches which join by January 15 will be considered "charter members" of the federation. A list of the member churches of the federation will be published and distributed the week of January 15 D.V.

Several churches have indicated their difficulty in securing a copy of the 1934 Church Order. We are, therefore, enclosing a copy with the reminder that the Committee on Church Order is working on the preparation of a church order for the federation. Your input will be gratefully received by the committee, of which Rev. J. Gangar is the chairman.

There is still opportunity to submit your suggestions for a name for the federation. Please send your suggestions to the undersigned at 2420 Avon Avenue, S.W., Wyoming, MI 49509. The deadline for suggestions has been extended to January 15.

The three convening councils have divided the ongoing work of the federation among themselves and will be requesting churches in their areas to assist them in the various areas of investigation and study.

We hope to release a news bulletin every two months to inform the churches of developments and progress.

We wish each of you the Lord's blessing and grace to remain faithful as you continue your service to Him in the New Year.

Sincerely:

/s/ Arthur Besteman, Acting Clerk