

REFORMED CONTINUA

Magazine of The Reformed Churches (restored) of The Netherlands

Proverbs 8:32

- Volume 10 - March 2013 -

From the editor

March 2013

This 10th issue of the magazine Reformed Continue comes to you, in thankfulness to the Lord, in March, as planned.

In a very short time there was a lot of news about the ecclesiastical union between Dalfsen and our churches.

The church magazine 'De Bazuin' of 30 January 2013, was devoted to this topic and, with joy to the Lord who made this union possible, we have taken all those articles from it for this edition of Reformed Continua.

This is another chapter added to the history of the church. We hope that you all will realize that it was the Lord only, Who worked all this.

This union, humanly speaking, seemed impossible,

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but the Lord goes His own way with His church. Our gratitude to the almighty God, who brought this about, is great.

In this edition you will find:

- Editorial: Ecclesiastical union: a gift and a task.
- Report of the extraordinary meeting of classis South-West.
- Declaration of Ecclesiastical union.
- The congregation of Mariënberg introduces itself to you.
- Then also: From the Churches.

Thus far the articles for this Magazine.

In all this we may know and experience that it is the Lord Himself Who preserves His church to the

end. It is His work that the church still exists and that there are still many opportunities for us. Through this union, our federation has also received another minister. We have been richly blessed!

Finally, we hope and pray that this issue will also be well-received and that world-wide eyes will be opened to the proper view on the church, as we confess every Sunday in our worship services, and so may contribute to God's church-gathering work and to the honour of His holy Name.

In the next issue of the Magazine we hope to publish the letter that our Deputies Contact Churches Abroad sent to the synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches, to be held in Carman in May, 2013.

Joh. Houweling, Bleiswijk

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REFORMED CONTINUA

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Ecclesiastical Union: A Gift and a Task

Romans 12:1-5:

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. 3. For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. 4. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5. so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. NKJV

Romans 15:5-7:5.

Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6. that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. NKJV

Esteemed delegates, honourable brothers of the consistory of the Reformed Church (dissenting) at Dalfsen, brothers and sisters in the Lord,

This day the Lord has brought about something which most of us, most likely all of us, have, for a long time, yes even for years, been praying for. Something that we thought was not possible anymore, namely unity with another congregation that had liberated itself. Unity in the Truth with those that come from the same house. After the liberation of Dalfsen in the beginning of 2010 there was a common desire to come together. Today, at the beginning of 2013, the Lord has fulfilled that desire.

We have persevered in prayer, praying, since 2003, for ministers to come over from the Reformed Churches (liberated). More than 9 years! Today the Lord has answered our prayers!

There is much reason for joy and thankfulness. Shared joy and thankfulness, for the churches in our federation as well as for Dalfsen. Joy in the

Lord and thankfulness to the Lord. It is His gift of unity.

Dealing with God's good gifts

Along with the gifts that the Lord gives, He also gives a task. A divine task - namely to deal with this God-given unity in a good manner. Unity in Truth, unity based on the one foundation of God's Word, unity within God's Family. It is a unity desired by God, that He has made possible. It is a unity that Christ has prayed for to His Father in His high-priestly prayer. As the great Shepherd of the sheep He wants one herd. He brought us together as sheep that the Father has given to Him to become a herd that will listen to His voice. Therefore, this unity is a very valuable something, yes, a divine gift. We must now deal with this gift with great care. What therefore God has put together, let not man separate.

This unity, made possible by God and given to us by God must be maintained and upheld as a unity in the Truth. That is what we must work on. That is what Christ our Lord, as our Shepherd will do, that is what He has promised. But He also asks of us to work on that unity along with Him. Working with Him on His church-gathering work. Not only the coming to this union, but maintaining and strengthening this given unity at the same time contributes to that glorious, on-going, church-gathering work of Christ.

We have this task now that the Lord has given us to each other. Gods unexpected and merciful gift of uniting is realized today. The task that He gives also begins today. A task to maintain and build. Christ will give us the gifts and the strength that we need, when we ask it of Him in our prayers.

We must therefore experience it as a joyful privilege to be able to continue to work on that unity. Not only to attract others to that unity but to give purpose to that unity according to God's Word.

Unity within the framework of our reasonable service

It is important to pause and consider what is so special about this unity that the Lord gives. Romans 12 and 15 teach us a few things concerning this. Romans 12 speaks about our reasonable service. Our

service to God with our whole life must be a living sacrifice of thankfulness, to the glory of God. Every day God shows us His never-ending mercy through His Son, so now He asks us to give ourselves to Him. Paul makes an appeal upon these mercies of God to make clear to us how obvious, how reasonable our genuine service to God must be.

We must not be conformed to this world, we must put away all worldly thoughts, says Paul. No longer acting or thinking in a worldly manner by being proud and self-willed with regards to our God. No longer thinking and acting in a worldly manner towards others by being arrogant, self-willed, greedy, egocentric, and pursuing ones' own right. We may and shall be renewed by the Spirit of Christ, to be pleasing to the Lord.

Paul explains this in verse 4. We must be involved with each other in the one body of Christ. The unity and the harmony that comes with this body of Christ reveals itself in the framework of our reasonable service to the Lord. Everything depends upon the grace of God in Christ; Christ who gathers a people in His one body. He wants us to live by His grace and peace, in brotherly love, in harmony, where we do not set our mind on high things, but associate with the humble. (verse 16).

We will then accept that among us there is a difference in talents, in offices and in tasks. We shall be satisfied with the place that the Lord gives us in the fellowship of the church. Therefore each shall be bent on the salvation of others. We will empathize with each other in times of joy and in times of sorrow. Then the congregation of Christ will blossom and grow in Christ.

Scriptural Tolerance

The congregation of Rome had its specific problems. Romans 14 and 15 deal with an issue that brings the unity in the Truth in danger. The reason for this was that they didn't know how to deal with the issue of eating meat sacrificed to idols. Some people thought that eating idolatrous sacrificial meat would again lead them close to the heathen idolatry. They were the weak ones. Others simply wanted to eat the sacrificial meat and didn't feel that it brought them closer to the heathen idolatry. These people were the strong ones. Paul now encourages the strong ones to help the weaker ones by not being a stumbling block by eating the sacrificial meat, whereby the weaker ones are brought into difficulty.

In the church there must be tolerance, a Scriptural tolerance that is bent on the salvation of the other. This correct tolerance is that we do not deviate from the foundation of the Church. This tolerance does not allow fallacy, no sinful behaviour and also no disturbing the peace and order within the churches. In other words, this Scriptural tolerance means completely accepting each other with all the human shortcomings that we may have and without focusing on these shortcomings. This Scriptural tolerance was lacking in the congregation of Rome. The one considered himself better than the other. The one considered himself more important than the other instead of considering the other more important than himself.

So in Rome there was one congregation, there was one body but there was no true harmony within that body. When there is true harmony, you accept one another, even though you may find the other more conservative regarding certain customs, or you find that some are much too anxious about life in this world or you find that the other has such a difficult character. When there is true unity you want to please the other and not yourself. When there is true unity you comply to the decisions made if they do not go against God's Word and do not harm the other.

Following Christ

Paul says that when there are issues that can be defended with Scripture then we must be tolerant. If someone does not want to eat meat for the sake of God, then that is fine. If another person does want to eat meat for the sake of God, then that is fine as well. Only do not be a stumbling block in such situations. If there is a danger of that happening, then stop that eating, drinking or whatever. We must not tempt the other to sinful use of meat or wine. Therefore in such cases, do not be haughty or selfish, but receive each other as children of God - as is stated in Romans 15 verse 7 - just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

In order to maintain this God-given unity, in order to persevere in harmony and oneness, we must follow Christ. We must concentrate on Him. His commandments and His example must determine our behaviour. In that way His peace will rule in the hearts of the church members and therefore in the communion of the saints. That must also count for us. Those who belong to Christ will also heartily accept all those who belong to Christ, those who

stand and live on the same Foundation. Then there will be unity with harmony and unanimity in mutual brotherly love; within the congregation and within the church federation.

Glorifying God in harmony

Lastly, Romans 15 points out the wonderful purpose of that unity. If that unity evolves in being like-minded toward one another according to the example of Jesus Christ, then the purpose will be, according to verse 6:

that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is the glorious purpose, also of our union, for now and for the future. Paul makes intercession for this here. True unity must be given to us from God. Yet maintaining and persevering this unity we cannot do out of ourselves. Paul pleads for

the grace of God, the God of perseverance and consolation.

Let us in that manner, behold the union, that by the grace of God, has become a reality today. May He give us in this union that we truly accept each other just as He accepts each one of us. May He give us that we please each other and not ourselves, just as He did not please Himself. Let this also be part of our reasonable service towards God. That we may, in harmony, with one mouth, honour and praise God our Father through Christ.

Rev. S. de Marie

Speech given by at the re-opening of the extraordinary meeting of Classis South-West on 12 January 2013 in Zwolle.



De Hoeksteen, Zwolle

Report of the extraordinary meeting of Classis South-West of the De Gereformeerde Kerken (RCNr) on Friday 28 December 2012 in Ermelo and 12 January 2013 in Zwolle

Convening Church:

DGK Zwolle and environs (and env.)

Present on 28 December 2012 are:

the brs. A. van Egmond and J. Houweling, on behalf of De Gereformeerde Kerk (RCNr) Berkel and Rodenrijs/Bergschenhoek (B&R/B); brs. T.M. de Marie and A. van der Net, on behalf of De Gereformeerde Kerk (RCNr) Hasselt and env.; brs. J. Horst and Rev. S. de Marie, on behalf of De Gereformeerde Kerk (RNR)Zwolle and env.

Present on behalf of the bond of churches various deputies ad Article 49 CO (Art. 48 Book of Praise):

the brs. J.A. Bazuin, G.H. Plaggemars, H. Oosterhuis, W.J. Sikkens and C.A. Teunis.

1. Opening on behalf of the convening church and constitution of the meeting.

On behalf of the convening church, Rev. de Marie opens the meeting with the reading of Ef. 3:8-21 and inviting all present to sing together Ps 111:1 and 5, after which he leads in prayer. In his opening speech Rev. de Marie goes into the chosen passage of Scripture where, among other things, he speaks of the fact that through faith Christ will live in us, and that, out of that love of Christ in us, we may also grow in love towards each other and towards Christ. If we are well founded and rooted and stay in the love of Christ, then we ourselves receive strength to grow in love. Then we may also, together with all the saints that the Lord gives us, gain more knowledge of the love of God. The manner and strength with which the Lord brings this about is beyond our understanding.

A hearty welcome is extended to the brothers deputies. Also the brothers and sisters in the audience are welcomed. There are also a number of brothers and a sister present from the classis North-East who are welcomed.

The delegates of the convening church examine the

submitted credentials and report that these are in order. All primary delegates are in attendance. The consistory of RCNr Zwolle (and env.) have presented a letter of instruction in relation to dealing with the letter received from the Reformed Church Dalfsen (dissenting) and for which purpose this extraordinary meeting is convened.

The board is formed by the following brothers:

Chairman: Rev. de Marie

Clerk: Br. A. van Egmond

Vice Chairman: Br. A. van der Net

2. Welcoming deputies and adoption of agenda

The brothers deputies ad Art. 49 CO are heartily welcomed in this extraordinary meeting in which they, on behalf of the church federation, will report and give their advice regarding the decision of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) to unite with the RCNr. The chairman indicates that it is the intention that classis will first deliberate. Then the meeting will temporarily be suspended for internal consultation of the deputies, after which the deputies will be given the opportunity to report on their advice to the meeting. Only then will the meeting proceed to making a decision.

In adopting the agenda, it is decided that when discussing the letter from the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.), to also include the letter of instruction from the consistory of RCNr Zolle (and env.). This instruction contains considerations and suggestions concerning the decision of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) to unite with the RCNr.

3. Incoming items

A letter from the Reformed church Dalfsen (diss.) has been received, via the RCNr Zwolle (and env.), in which the following decision is worded:

'the consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) has decided, conform the Scriptural command to ecclesiastical unity, together with the congregation, to come to unity with the church federation of RCNr.'

Because not all of the brothers and sisters in the audience are aware of the exact contents of the letter, it is decided to read out the letter to the audience during the meeting.

Following the reading out of the letter, the chairman suggests that all delegates, on behalf of their respective consistories, be given the opportunity to respond to the letter and the decision. From this round it shows that all consistories, with great thankfulness to the Lord, have taken note of the decisions of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.).

In addition, with some disappointment, note is taken of the fact that the letter also contains some less fine passages, namely where, in the eyes of the consistory of Dalfsen, it speaks of the reprehensible behavior of the General Synod Hasselt 2012, concerning their request to first start a sister-church relationship by analogy with sister-church relationships with churches abroad. All delegates however, agree that one should not put too much emphasis on that, as it clearly shows in the letter that the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) has desired to make its decision in obedience to the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ. That is decisive. The Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) made clear that they envisage an ecclesiastical unity which is based on Scripture, the Scriptural confession and the Reformed Church Order. This is the foundation on which we may find each other.

After discussing the letter and the decision, the considerations, given by the consistory of Zwolle (and env.) in a letter of instruction, are read out. These are summarized as follows:

- Concerning the union of the congregation of Dalfsen with the RCNr nothing but positive matters can be mentioned. There was already mutual acknowledgement of the right Scriptural foundation, and a mutual hearty desire to come to full ecclesiastical unity was recently expressed. The decision announced by Dalfsen confirms this. All this justifies an ecclesiastical unity in the opinion of the consistory RCNr Zwolle (and env.).
- Likewise, regarding the coming over of Rev. E.Heres, a number of positive matters are summed up and reference is made to the existing jurisprudence concerning Art.9 CO (Art. 7, Book of Praise) In the opinion of the consistory of RCNr Zwolle (and env.), this should be sufficient for classis South-West to accept Rev E.Heres without further examination, as minister in full rights into the church federation of the RCNr.

These considerations are then discussed. All delegates are able to agree with the read out considerations. One delegate asks, with reference to the considerations, about what will still follow. He finds lacking a suggestion on how to proceed further. By this he means that, in his opinion, there must be further discussion with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) e.g. on how to deal with the church boundaries.

However, other delegates do not find this necessary for a union. Dealing with church boundaries is then a next step to be made, but that does not have to be arranged prior to the ecclesiastical union. The initiative for that can, in the first instance, also be left to the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) and the adjoining sister-churches. We may also expect that now the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) wishes to unite with us, these matters will also be attended to spiritually and according to the Church Order and existing Church polity.

The same delegate responds by referring to the 'Union of 1892' where, regarding the church boundaries, proper agreements were made beforehand. He refers to the problems about church boundaries that had taken place in the classis earlier, and warns for a repetition, if proper agreements are not made first. He is also of the opinion that it is very logical that we first go into discussion with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) to streamline matters. For we do not as yet know how the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) views the decisions of various RCNr- synods. It would be good if we are well informed on these matters from both sides.

Other delegates do see that obstacles can arise but according to them this concern may not hinder giving shape to the ecclesiastical unity. The Lord asks of us to now continue together. That should be our motivation. Then we may also expect and trust that the Lord will lead us further. As far as the synod decisions are concerned, mention is made that the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) can follow the agreed upon ecclesiastical way in the event of possible objections against synod decisions. It also has the right, given to them by the synod, to still request revision of older decisions made in the earlier years. Dalfsen can determine for itself whether they wish to make use of this.

Finally br. Horst reads out an advice from Rev. P. van Gulp. In Rev. van Gulp's opinion, classis should not occupy itself with the church boundaries, but

in the first instance leave this to the churches that neighbour the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.).

After this discussion the chairman suspends the meeting so that the deputies ad Art. 49 CO can withdraw for deliberation.

After re-opening of the meeting by the chairman, the considerations, the advice and the exhortation of the deputies are read out. These are as follows:

ADVICE OF DEPUTIES AD ARTICLE 49 CO

1. Considerations

The foundation

The foundation of The Reformed Churches (RCNr) is: the whole Scripture, as we confess in the confessions: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicean Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt, and the living together according to the Church Order of Dordt as laid down by the synods of Mariënberg and Hasselt. This foundation is stated on the website of the churches where mention is also made that the churches seek unity with all those who endorse this foundation in word and deed.

The letter from Dalfsen endorses this foundation and this rule of living together. (letter from the consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) of 18 December 2012 to RCNr Zwolle and env.).

Decision of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.)

The decision of the consistory, in accordance with the Scriptural order, is to together with the congregation, come to ecclesiastical unity with the church federation of RCNr (letter 18 December).

Request of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.)

The request of the consistory is that classis South-West will deal with this further so that the decision to come to full ecclesiastical unity can be realized (letter 18 December).

Congregation and minister

The consistory of the congregation at Dalfsen declares that it stands on the same foundation as the RCNr. And our synods of Emmen and Hasselt have acknowledged that the congregation at Dalfsen stands on the same foundation.

It must be clear that a minister teaches according

to the foundation, and there is no known deviation in doctrine or life of Rev. Heres.

2. Advice

Uniting with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.), by cordial acceptance, with all rights and obligations, of this congregation and its minister into our church federation, in the classis South-West of The Reformed Churches (restored) in the Netherlands.

3. Exhortation

Together with this advice we give a word of exhortation that you, together with the congregation at Dalfsen, will be careful to observe all that the Lord has commanded you, and that you shall not add to or take from it. (Deut. 12: 32).

We pray that the Lord will give faithful shepherds who will lead and feed the flock so that they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking, because the shepherds will deal wisely and practice righteousness and justice in the churches so that the sheep may be saved and live safely. (Jer. 23: 4-6). That all God's children may be one as the Father and the Son are one (John 17: 21).

Then the church shall be as a city which is compact together, to which the tribes go up, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. (Ps. 122: 3, 4). A city built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, into which God's children are also being built for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Eph. 2: 20-22).

Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God (Rom. 15: 7).

Here we also note that the church federation is the the designated place for the congregations to keep each other by the Word of God and to discuss the procedure of ecclesiastical meetings, including the synod, if the procedure is considered to be reprehensible. The ecclesiastical path is the correct place to correct each other where necessary and to pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness

springing up cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled (Hebr. 12: 14-15).

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. (1 Cor. 14: 33).

That asks of you in all actions to love the truth, speak and confess it honestly, and defend and promote your neighbour's honour and reputation. (H.C., Lord's Day 43).

Brothers, guard what has been committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (1 Tim. 6: 20). Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! For there the Lord commanded the blessing, life for evermore. (Ps 133: 1, 3).

Then the congregation no longer needs to be a dissenting, that is, a complaining congregation anymore because it is part of the church federation that is faithful to the Word of God, does not deviate from it to the left or to the right and is fully reformed.

Brothers, despite differences in insight and experience, greet one another with a holy kiss (2 Cor. 13: 12), as the apostle Paul prescribed for the congregation of Corinth after having again written a letter with various incitements to live by that splendid Word of God in word and deed, looking upon the Christ Who has fully paid for all our short-comings, and asks from us to strive after heavenly peace here on earth.

Brothers, we urge you to continue to work under the device of our church federation, as is mentioned on our website: Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him, and he will bring it to pass (Ps. 37: 5).

We ask you, on behalf of the deputies, to pass on the greetings from the federation of The Reformed Churches (restored) in the Netherlands to the congregation at Dalfsen.

The chairman thanks the deputies for the advice given by them and asks if there are any further questions in reference to this advice. There are no urgent questions. The delegates can in general well agree with the given advice and are thankful that the delegates spoke in full trust in the Lord.

The deputies further advised to let the congregation of Dalfsen fall under classis South-West. Dalfsen is located in the territory of classis South-West and it is also favourable for a more proportional division of both classis. All deputies agree with this advice.

The chairman then tables for discussion the concrete suggestions for the decision texts which the consistory of RCN_r Zwolle (and env.) have given as instruction to their delegates. After discussion and a few amendments of the suggested decisions, the following considerations are formulated and the associated decisions are made:

DECISIONS

1. Considerations regarding the union of the congregation at Dalfsen with The Reformed Churches (restored) (RCN_r):

1. This congregation liberated itself in 2010 from the Reformed Churches (liberated) (RCN) on valid grounds and with proper justification.

2. (*This consideration was re-formulated during the follow-up session on 12 January 2013 as follows, see point 9 of the report*):

GS Emmen 2009-2010 has declared that both the liberation of 2003-2004 and the liberation of 2010 were the work of the Lord, while the consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.), in its letter of 10 November 2011, declared that:

'We have no difficulty in also seeing the hand of the Lord in the liberation of 2003, as you similarly have declared in seeing the hand of the Lord in the liberation of 2010.'

3. GS Emmen 2009-2010 and - after advice from Deputies for General Contact Address, Contact Government and Contact Churches at home (DACOBB) - GS Hasselt 2011-2012 on the one hand and the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) on the other, have mutually declared that the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) and the RCN_r both stand on the same foundation of Scripture and Confession.

4. GS Hasselt 2011-2012 declared in the decisions of 17 and 31 March 2012 the heartfelt desire to come to a complete union with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.). That was also worded recently in the letter of 13 October 2012 where it says:

'Brothers, it would be such a blessing of the Lord, if you, with your whole congregation, would come to unity with our churches. It is our prayer, our hope and desire that you will accept our request to come to ecclesiastical unity as soon as possible.'

5. Classis takes note of the decision of consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.), after dialogue between it and its congregation, as worded in its letter of 18 December 2012, to come to complete union with the RCN_r with immediate effect and based on Scripture, the Scriptural confession and the Reformed Church Order.
6. The motivation and the contents of the decision of Dalfsen are in complete accordance with what we believe and confess in Art. 28 BC, where Christ commands the ecclesiastical union of all true believers.
7. The abovementioned is a source of great thankfulness to the Lord and joy in Him Who has answered the prayers that were sent up to Him for many years.

Decision 1

Classis South-West of the RCN_r, convened in an extraordinary session on 28 December 2012, after positive advice from Deputies ad Art. 49 Church Order (Art. 48, Book of Praise), decides with great thankfulness to the Lord, that the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.), with immediate effect, is part of the church federation of the RCN_r.

2. Considerations regarding the coming over of Rev. E. Heres, minister of the Word of the Reformed Church (dissenting) at Dalfsen.

1. Rev. E. Heres is the only minister of the Word from the RCN who, together with his congregation, has liberated himself, from these churches on valid grounds and with proper justification, and who has led the decision to ecclesiastical unity.
2. Rev. E. Heres has recently given a good testimony of the doctrine of the church, such as was published on the website of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) on 9 February 2012.
3. There is no indication at all that Rev. E. Heres deviates from the sound doctrine of the Scripture
4. The statements regarding the foundation of faith and the invitations of synods Emmen and Hasselt for ecclesiastical unity were directed at the congregation of Dalfsen and its minister.

5. In the first 7 years after the Liberation of 1944, ministers and their congregations were admitted to the church federation of the Reformed Churches without further examination.

6. Art. 9, C.O. (Art. 7, C.O., Book of Praise), concerning ministers not originally from churches with which ecclesiastical communion is practiced, determines the eligibility to the Ministry with utmost care. However, it does not speak of a minister who comes over with his congregation. There is a decision concerning such cases from the General Synod Zwolle 1911.

This synod declared that, where it concerns ministers with their congregations who wish to join the federation, no general rule can be established.

This synod also determined that in a particular case of a minister coming over with his congregation, the classis concerned, subject to the approval of the regional synod, had the liberty to accept into the church federation without any further examination, the minister of the Word, whose congregation, under the leadership of its consistory, wished to join the federation of the Reformed Churches.

This was decided because a favourable testimony of this minister was available at the time (see H. Bouma, Kerkorde concerning Art. 9).

7. Since the positive statements concerning standing on the foundation of Scripture and Confession are also valid for Rev. E. Heres, his situation being comparable with the Liberation after 1944 and the invitations from the synods which were also directed towards him, classis does not consider further examination necessary to accept Rev. E. Heres as minister of the Word in full rights in the federation of The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN_r).

Decision 2

Classis South-West of the RCN_r, convened in an extraordinary session on 28 December 2012, after positive advice from Deputies ad Art. 49 C.O., decides, with great thankfulness to the Lord, that Rev. E Heres, without further examination is accepted, with immediate effect, as minister of the Word in full rights in the federation of The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN_r).

Decision 3

Classis further decides to immediately inform the consistory of Dalfsen of both decisions and to invite

the consistory to its follow-up session on 12 January 2013, to thank the Lord together for this union that was brought about by Him.

Decision 4

Finally, classis South-West decides to inform all the churches in the bond of churches of the decisions that were taken.

All 4 decisions were made with six of the six votes in favour.

It is decided that before this coming Sunday all the consistories of the church federation will be informed of the decisions taken and will receive an example of a pulpit announcement.

During the meeting contact by phone is sought with Rev. E. Heres to inform him of the decisions. Because Rev. Heres cannot be reached, the Secretary, brother B.Lourens, of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) is contacted and informed of the decisions. With thankfulness he takes cognizance of these decisions. Rev. de Marie will contact Rev. Heres tomorrow morning.

4. Personal questions

One of the deputies asks to speak because he would like to give some explanation of his final voting behavior, given his earlier skepticism about the speed with which the unity of the churches has been established. He explains that he is wholeheartedly in favour of the union with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) and therefore did not want to vote against. He had only rather seen that further closer discussions had taken place first. Because the other delegates thought differently, he could acquiesce in this. The chairman thanks him for his explanation.

5. Determining follow-up session and brief report.

The follow-up session is determined for 12 January 2013, at 13.30 in the church building, 'De Hoeksteen' in Zwolle. The synod board of this extraordinary classis receives the mandate to prepare one and other in consultation with the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.).

It was a public meeting, so all matters may be mentioned in the report.

6. Censor according to Art. 48. CO (Art. 44 CO, Book of Praise)

None of the delegates ask to speak, which is noted with thankfulness.

7. Thanksgiving and suspension of the meeting

The vice-chairman invites all to sing Psalm 100:1 and 4 and leads in thanksgiving.

The chairman suspends the meeting until 12 January 2013.

On 12 January 2012 the extraordinary meeting of classis South-West is continued

The same delegates are present, this means that the board remains unaltered.

As guests present at the meeting table are the members of the consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen(diss.). These are brs. G.Brinkman, Rev. E. Heres, B.Lourens, D.van Pijkeren and H. Visscher.

8. Re-opening by the chairman of the classis.

The chairman, Rev. De Marie, re-opens the meeting and invites all present to sing Psalm 147:1, 5 and 7 and after the reading of Romans 12:1-16 and 15:1-7 he leads in prayer.

He then speaks an opening word, referring to the Scripture passage just read. This opening word will appear as editorial in 'De Bazuin' of 30 January 2013.

The brothers delegates are heartily welcomed. It is very gratifying to see the large attendance of brothers and sisters from all the congregations of the RCN^r and from the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.) at this special and memorable meeting. They are all heartily welcomed.

The chairman expresses his thankfulness that he may also heartily welcome the brother office bearers of the consistory of Dalfsen as guests to this meeting. To all appearances, it will be the last time they shall attend as guest because during the following meeting of classis, the consistory of Dalfsen will be officially represented by their delegates to the meeting.

9. Adoption of agenda, round of suggestions and adoption of minutes of the meeting of 28 December 2012

The agenda is adopted and the chairman suggests that all delegates, and members of the consistory of Dalfsen introduce themselves and mention the office they fulfill and in which congregation.

The minutes of the meeting of 28 December 2012 are adopted and signed. In response to a remark from the consistory of Dalfsen, received via an e-mail, the chairman suggests to adjust

consideration 2 of decision 1, that was taken at the previous meeting. The meeting agrees.

(Remark: this adjustment has already been made in consideration 2 of the earlier in this report mentioned decision 1).

10. Incoming and outgoing items

No incoming items were received.

Outgoing items are the following:

- Press release dated 29 December 2012 on the matter of the union of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (dis.) with the RCN_r to 'De Bazuin', the Reformatorisch Dagblad and the Nederlands Dagblad.
- Suggestions for pulpit announcement dated 29 December 2012 on the matter of the union to all churches of the federation.
- Letter dated 31 December 2012 with supplement including the considerations and decisions of classis South-West concerning the decision of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (diss.).

11. Response of the consistory of Dalfsen on the decisions of classis regarding the union

Rev. Heres is given the opportunity to respond with the words:

Mr. Chairman, brothers,

The consistory the church of Dalfsen received your letter with the decisions taken by your classis on 28 December 2012 in good order, and has discussed this at the consistory meeting on Monday 7 January. The consistory has taken note of the decisions taken by this classis.

The consistory determines with thankfulness that this classis of RCN_r has been able to come to the decision of ecclesiastical union after the consistory of the church of Dalfsen could also come to the decision of full ecclesiastical union.

The consistory also thankfully took note of the decision regarding the position of the minister of the church of Dalfsen (Rev. E.Heres), within the federation of the RCN_r.

As you can see, the consistory and part of the congregation, those who were able to come, have responded to your invitation, to be present at this follow-up session of classis, this meeting in which the union between RCN_r and the Reformed Church Dalfsen may be sealed.

It is our hearty wish and our prayer to God that He will bless this union.

May the Name of God be glorified through this union.

The chairman of the classis thanks Rev. Heres, and through him, the entire consistory and the congregation of Dalfsen for this reaction to the decision of the classis.

12. Reading and signing of the declaration of the Ecclesiastical Union.

The chairman hands over the chair to the vice-chairman, brother A. van der Net for this and the following point on the agenda. The vice-chairman then reads the Declaration of Ecclesiastical Union. This is as follows:

On the grounds of the decision taken by the consistory of the Reformed Church Dalfsen (dissenting) on 18 December 2012,

to, together with the congregation, unite with the bond of churches of RCN_r, according to the Scriptural command for ecclesiastical unity

and the decision of classis South-West of The Reformed Churches (r) in the Netherlands, convened in an extraordinary session on 28 December 2012,

that, after positive advice of deputies ad article 49 C.O., with great thankfulness to the Lord, the Reformed Church Dalfsen (dissenting), with immediate effect, are part of the bond of churches of The Reformed Churches (r) in the Netherlands,

classis South-West of The Reformed Churches (r) in the Netherlands and the Reformed Church Dalfsen (dissenting), with great thankfulness to the Lord, declare in an ongoing session of the extraordinary meeting of classis South-West at Zwolle, that their ecclesiastical union herewith has been established on the basis of the Holy Scripture, the Three Forms of Unity and the Reformed Church Order.

The congregation at Dalfsen will come under classis South-West.

The declaration is then signed by the chairman and the secretary of the classis, and by the chairman and the secretary of the consistory of Dalfsen.

13. Words of thanks by the chairman of the classis and the chairman of the consistory of Dalfsen.

The assessor gives Rev. de Marie the opportunity to express words of thanks. These are as follows:

WORD OF THANKS REV. S. DE MARIE

Thankfulness for the gift

Beloved brothers and sisters,

There is every reason to express our thankfulness to the Lord with the declaration of unity that has just been signed . He has given us, as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ, a most precious gift, namely the gift that together we, in one bond of churches, may know that we, under the blessing of the Lord, are led by the one Jesus Christ as the one great Shepherd. He wants to bring His Church as the only catholic Church to complete salvation.

This gift is so precious because we, as churches, may now serve the Lord together in unity in the peace of His government, in which we now may unanimously bow down together under His yoke.

It is a precious gift because together we may now also fight the battle of the Lord against temptation and apostasy. We have also been given to each other to serve the edification of the communion of saints. Not only locally but nationwide.

Above all, it is so precious because from now on, we may together, thank the Lord in harmony and give Him the praise to which He is entitled.

Therefore great thanks to the Lord Who gives us this gift on this memorable day.

For our salvation and to His honor.

Let us bear in mind that we are not worthy of it, that this is purely a gift of grace from God.

Humbleness about the way

Our great thanks to the Lord also applies to the way He has gone with us. That makes us even more humble, for we have to admit that, despite ourselves, the Lord has led us to church union.

It proves that His ways are unfathomable. They are higher than our ways.

In February 2010, we as church federation, with thanks to the Lord, concluded that Dalfsen liberated itself on valid grounds from an unfaithful church federation.

At the time we wrote an article about this liberation in the "Bazuin" and I quote the concluding sentence:

In The Reformed Churches (restored) we have frequently and for many years prayed for this and we still eagerly long for it. Let us all do everything we can to come to union and reunification. Above all let us especially continue to implore Gods indispensable help and blessing .

After February 2010 there have been mutual contacts. First during the General Synod of Emmen 2009-2010, then via Deputies Inland Church Relations and recently during the General Synod of Hasselt 2011-2012. Where there was mutual hope for, and mutual working towards further conciliation, it did not occur.

At the final meeting of the Synod, the hope and desire for complete ecclesiastical unity was again reaffirmed. It is fair to say that in many hearts there was a feeling that in the last year we had possibly drifted further apart instead of coming closer to each other, with the great danger of embitterment.

That is why, in the joy and thankfulness to Him, our humbleness towards the Lord is even more befitting now. What we, humanly speaking, thought would not soon be accomplished, He achieved in His time and in His manner.

We must refrain from human considerations and only look to the commandment of our Lord Christ, Who wants to gather His own; as an unconditional union on the true foundation of Scripture, Confession and Church Order.

Rich and unthought-of grace!

Wonderment about Gods policy

This brings us to wonderment about the policy of the Lord. Wonderment that must keep us from pessimism and gloom in the future, where it concerns the prospects of the church.

Also this must encourage us all the more to continually pray and work for the unity of other true believers, who remained behind, have scattered or have left.

In dependence on the Lord, in confidence in Him, but also in obedience to Him, Who wants to gather all those who belong together on the same foundation.

In our wonderment to the Lord today, we again have new reason to rejoice and be thankful to Him. But we must not see to ourselves in this, to what we have accomplished, no matter how small we are in number or difficult it was. For, and we do agree on that, the Lord has, in this regard, shamed us in our negative expectations.

Therefore I do not wish to mention any church meetings, deputies, committees, individual church members or ministers, who have been heartily willing to contribute to this union. It is clear that these efforts were present and it is sure that there were many sincere prayers.

Let us, however, solely praise Gods work, even though He has made use of people and has answered prayers.

Trust for the Future

It is my hope that our thankfulness in dependence has its effect also after this day. For, as I indicated in my opening speech, with this gift the Lord also gives us a task. Let the thankfulness for what the Lord has given today, therefore show in our attitude towards each other, receive each other in love, accept each other, be a help and a support for each other.

You may now think: That is nice for today, but we will just have to see what comes of it.

We are, after all, human beings with our human nature. Before you know it, discontent and rebellion returns. Look at what happened in Dalfsen: a split so soon after their liberation. Look at the church federation with its many schisms. However, we must not think this way. Indeed, the Lord will continue to test us, especially in ecclesiastical aspects. He will also do this in the future.

But we may always expect it from Him, if we will continue to be faithful and take refuge in Him.

Has not the Lord promised to keep His faithful church through the greatest danger?

Therefore also in our thankfulness, we may trust that the Lord will keep us if we continue to obey Him. He will not forsake the work of His hands.

That has also become apparent in this union.

Blessing and intercession

Having almost come to the end of my speech, I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of the church federation, to welcome you, Rev. Heres as a servant of the Word of The Reformed Churches (restored).

I would like to wish you God's lasting blessing for your pastoral ministry within the congregation at Dalfsen. May God continue to grant you the necessary gifts and strength for that.

I would also like to warmly wish you God's blessing to also use your gifts and strength in the church federation.

Although we only have a small church federation, 7 of the 9 churches still have a vacancy for a minister. That will, for the time being, ask a lot from the 2 ministers with a congregation and from our minister emeritus Rev. van Gurp, insofar it is given to him. There is also the necessary work for the different deputies, for the training for the Ministry and for the

church bulletin. For all this work we are dependent on the gifts of grace of the Lord.

We hope and pray that the Lord will give you everything that is necessary for this.

I wish to close my word of thanks with the words from Hebrews 13:20,21.

It concerns an intercession from the author of the Hebrew letter to the church, in which all our dependence and thankfulness, with respect to the Lord, are implied. An intercession to be able to keep the promise that comes with the signed declaration.

An intercession for the church for all times, one that we must send up time and again, not only for ourselves but also for each other:

'Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.' (NKJV)

I thank you.

The vice-chairman then gives Rev. Heres the opportunity to express words of thanks. These are as follows:

WORD OF THANKS REV. REV. E. HERES

Mr. Chairman, brothers, brothers and sisters.

Item no. 8 on the agenda announces a 'word of thanks from the chairman of the Reformed Church Dalfsen'.

I would gladly like to comply to this agenda item, for it is good to express words of thankfulness today. Thankfulness of course for the good reception here in your midst. Thankfulness, but then especially to the Lord Who gives the ecclesiastical union, which may become effective today.

It is nearly 3 years ago that Dalfsen came to a separation, the liberation from the bond of the Reformed Churches Liberated (RCN).

The course of the RCN, the tampering with God's Word, the decisions of the synods and consistories, had impaired the foundation of the ecclesiastical unity. Because we wish to remain on the path of the catholic Christian church, we saw our calling to break with the federation of the RCN.

It has never been the intention to remain an isolated

local church in Dalfsen after the liberation. For we believe and confess that Christ's church-gathering work is not bound to one certain place. He gathers His church world-wide.

There were brothers and sisters who, also out of necessity, had had to make the ecclesiastical move earlier.

From the beginning we have, with conviction, intended to follow the calling of Christ, by striving for unity with all those who may and are willing to build on that same foundation that the Lord Himself has laid.

It gave great sorrow that those, who out of necessity had to leave the RCN to remain the church of Christ, were not able to hold fast to each other or were not or are not able to agree with each other.

It also gave great sorrow, that especially in our striving for unity with all who may stand on the same foundation, it also gave a separation in Dalfsen at the beginning of 2011.

In this word of thanks, on this day of thankfulness, I will not elaborate on all the sorrowful events of the past.

But I do wish to emphasize again how the Lord in His Word shows us the way of **the unity of the brothers and sisters** who are of the same house.

I myself have, in recent times, been touched by the penetrating prophecy of Ezekiel, in Ez. 37.

Ezekiel 37:15-28, you know, the prophecy of *the two sticks*. Those two sticks, that refers to Israel, the Ten tribes and to Judah, the Two tribes. What a discord with Gods people. What a brokenness in the history of Israel. It was a consequence of sin, but the Lord did not leave it at that!

It is preached to the exiles:

'I will make them one nation; they shall be no longer two nations'.

Of course we also think here of the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, in the prayer that He prays as our only High priest, John 17.

And He has once and for all brought the great sacrifice in the service of reconciliation. He paid for the debt of the sins of all His people.

And in that way He can also pray for their unity.

In that way He can also pray to the Father, "That they may all be one!"

And when the Lord prays, then it is more than for 'a bit of spiritual bonding!' Nowadays one likes to speak of being bonded with Christ, even beyond the walls of the church (with other denominations). And then the differences in dealing with the truth of God's Word will just have to go, to disappear.

But the Lord Jesus says in John 17: *'Sanctify them in the truth!'*

'Thy Word', Father, 'is truth!'

'I pray for them, that they all may be *one in truth*'.

That gives true brotherhood, if together, you truly want to stand for the truth of God's Word!

The congregation, that is gathered in the unity of the true faith.

And then of course also Psalm 133!

The psalm that we may sing today, as Christians of the New Testament.

The psalm that shows that the true brotherhood in the church is a gift from above, from God.

Psalm 133 compares it with the dew of Herman, the dew of which the favourable effect even extends over Jerusalem, the city of the church.

Ecclesiastical unity of the church, it is not the work of man. If it was the work of man then all attempts would very soon burst.

If something has become clear lately, then it would have been that. People can destroy, but restoring is a gift of God.

But if the Lord does give it, then it is a miracle of His grace.

It is He Who gives strength to observe the calling of Christ, and also to give ear to it, even sometimes against certain feelings.

In the past it was often thought that a union between the RCN and the Reformed Church Dalfsen was coming out of reach more and more.

I will not tell a story of disappointing experiences here.

Also today it will be good to be aware that there is no perfect unity in our thoughts on certain matters. Our recent church history is different.

And with all that has happened it will be necessary to grow towards each other again.

But we were allowed to find each other as churches of Christ, and the union is based on the Word of God, the Scriptural Confession and the Reformed Church Order.

And if the Word of God has the ability to impress, then the growing towards each other will also come from two sides, then the bond between brothers and sisters can also become strong. There where the ministry of reconciliation is present, there where the true preaching of the Word is present, there the Lord will give His blessing.

Through the preaching of the Word of reconciliation, the true communion of saints will also come about. There you may together share in the fruits of the fulfilled work of Christ.

Then it shall be a joy to celebrate the Holy Supper together!

Then all who desire to stand on the firm ground of that one foundation shall also truly find each other. We cannot oversee in advance how it will all go (in the future).

But he who builds up his faith and trust in the LORD shall not be put to shame. (1 Peter 2:6). I will close with a heartfelt desire and prayer that a good testimony may emanate from the union that has taken place today. May it be an encouraging signal for concerned brothers in the Reformed Churches Liberated. And let us continually see the calling of Christ to strive after the unity of all who may stand on the same foundation and desire to serve the Lord in truth. Thankfulness for this union cannot be a resting point!

May the LORD give us sincere willingness to continue to serve the church-gathering work of Christ, to the honour of Him who is the King of the Church!

Thank you.

The vice-chairman thanks both speakers for their fine and encouraging words, and requests the chairman of the classis to take over chairing the meeting.

The chairman proposes, as crowning of this memorable occasion, to thank the Lord together by singing Psalm 133 and Psalm 122. This was done accordingly.

14. Adoption of points for the brief report.

It is decided to make one report of both sessions of this extraordinary classis meeting which will also include the text of the final considerations and decisions of classis. All matters discussed can be included in the report.

15. Personal questions

No one has any questions.

16. Censure according to Art.48 CO. (Art. 44, CO, Book of Praise)

None of the delegates and the brothers of the consistory of Dalfsen ask to speak, which is noted with thankfulness.

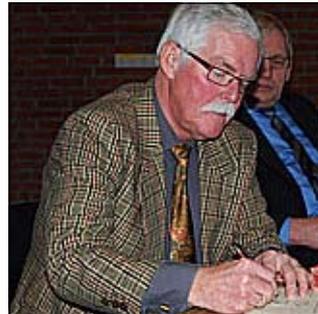
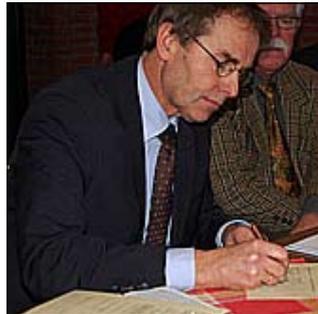
17. Thanksgiving and closing of the meeting

The vice-chairman invites all present to sing Psalm 118:8,9 and 10 and leads in heartfelt thanksgiving to the Lord for His rich grace and makes intercession.

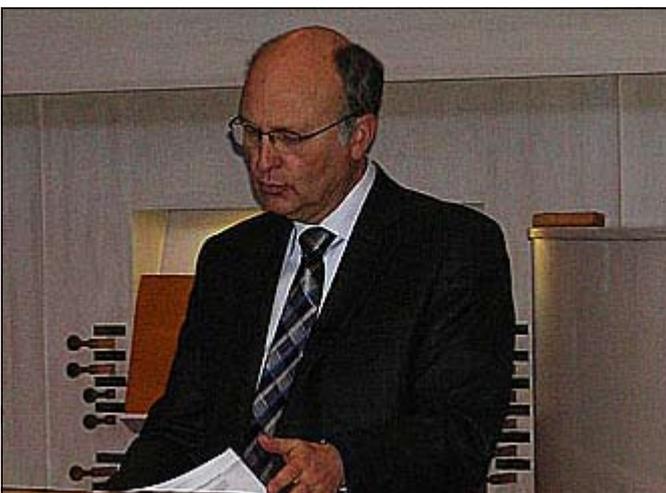
The chairman closes the meeting.



The vice-chairman, brother A. van der Net, reads the Declaration of Ecclesiastical Union.



The Declaration is signed by Rev. S. de Marie, Rev. E. Heres, br. B. Lourens and br. A. van Egmond.



Rev. S. de Marie



Rev. E. Heres

Verklaring van kerkelijke vereniging

Op grond van het besluit van de kerkenraad van de Gereformeerde Kerk Dalfsen (dolerend) genomen op 18 december 2012,

om overeenkomstig het Schriftuurlijke gebod tot kerkelijke eenheid, samen met de gemeente te komen tot vereniging met het kerkverband van DGK

en het besluit van de classis Zuid-West van De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, bijeen in buitengewone vergadering op 28 december 2012,

dat na positief advies van deputaten ad artikel 49 KO, met grote dankbaarheid aan de Here, de Gereformeerde Kerk Dalfsen (dolerend) met onmiddellijke ingang deel uitmaakt van het kerkverband van De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland,

verklaren de classis Zuid-West van De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland en de Gereformeerde Kerk Dalfsen (dolerend) in de voortgezette zitting van de buitengewone vergadering van de classis Zuid-West te Zwolle, met grote dankbaarheid aan de Here, dat hun kerkelijke vereniging hiermee tot stand is gebracht op de grondslag van de Heilige Schrift, de Drie Formulieren van Eenheid en de Gereformeerde Kerkorde.

De gemeente te Dalfsen zal ressorteren onder de classis Zuid-West.

Zwolle, 12 januari 2013

Namens de classis Zuid-West,

Namens de Gereformeerde Kerk Dalfsen (dolerend)

Preses: ds. S. de Marie



Preses: ds. E. Heres



Scriba: A. van Egmond



Scriba: B. Lourens





Introducing you to ...

the congregation of De Gereformeerde Kerk Mariënberg

The village

Mariënberg is a small village in the north-east of the Netherlands, in the province of Overijssel.

The origins of the village lie in the 14th century when monks from a nearby monastery built the "Hut Mariaborch". This hut formed the home-base for their work in the peat bogs.

The village has a population of 700 and has three churches. The churchgoers not only come from Mariënberg, but also from the neighbouring villages. There is a Reformed church (Protestant Church of the Netherlands), a Reformed Church (liberated) and since 10th June 2004 a Reformed Church (restored).

The congregation

In 2004 it became necessary to liberate from the Reformed Church (lib.) and to join with the RCNr. Through God's grace there was a possibility in which Christ wished to continue His church in Mariënberg. This situation arose because the Reformed Churches (lib.) strayed from God's Word and were unwilling to return. After numerous calls to reform, the decision was made to liberate from the unscriptural decisions. There was sadness because of the many that stayed behind, but thankfulness was predominant for the possibilities that the Lord had given.

The congregation began with just over 50 members and worship services were held in a hall that had

served as a canteen for a local business. This hall was no longer used for that purpose and in 2006 the congregation named it 'De Ark'. Worship services are still held here and the congregation has grown to 119 members. The consistory has 4 elders and 3 deacons. Young and old are well represented. There are 67 communicant members and 52 baptized members. Of all these 66 are male and 53 female. Most of the members live fairly close and come from Beerze, Beerzerveld, Mariënberg and Ommen. Every Sunday morning after the service there is opportunity to enjoy coffee together.

As congregation, we do not have a minister but we are thankful for availability of the many sermons that can be read. We are also thankful for the ministers in our federation who support us. In this way we have the administration of sacraments and the preaching of the Word within our congregation.

Local activities

The congregation has a church bulletin named 'Bouwen en Bewaren' (Build and Uphold), based on Psalm 124:8; Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

For the support and up-building of church life there are 5 catechism classes, one of which is a confession class.

There is also a men's society, a women's society, a youth club for the over-16's, which has been split into 2 groups, 2 youth clubs for the younger youth and for the primary school children we have a Bible school every 3 weeks.

This Bible school is held in combination with the congregations of Bergentheim/Bruchterveld and Emmen.

There is also an activities committee that organizes various activities such as a social afternoon for the congregation on the Monday after Pentecost (a public holiday in the Netherlands) and an annual evening for seniors. Also every winter an outing to the skating rink in Enschede for ice-skating together is organized .

This is all for the up-building of the mutual contacts within the congregation.

J.M. Teunis



From the Churches

1. Candidate br. C. Koster

Br. C. Koster, studying for the Ministry in the RCN_r, has successfully finished his studies and his graduation will be held DV on 16 March 2013 at Hasselt.

After this he will do his exams before the classis, and he will then be eligible for the ministry.

At present he still has classis permission to preach and speaks an edifying word in the worship services in the various churches.

2. The union with the church at Dalfsen was realized on 12 January 2013.

Last time (early December) we had to report that the request from the dissenting church at Dalfsen gave a lot of difficulties at the synod because a hearty YES could not be given as answer.

That the dissenting Church Dalfsen did request unity with our churches at the beginning of December, is a God-given miracle. More about this in this edition of the magazine.

3. Youth

On 5 January 2013 the youth held their national meeting "Good beginning", where a variety of topics were discussed. This was done in study groups.

There were 70 young people present including 9 from the church at Dalfsen. It was a very good meeting.

4. Berkel and Rodenrijs / Bergschenhoek

The RCN_r Berkel and Rodenrijs / Bergschenhoek have started preparation for building a church at Bleiswijk. The finances have been finalized and at present negotiations are still going on with the local council on obtaining land. (to be continued)

5. Bible study league

The Bible study league will hold its annual meeting on 25 May 2013 at Hasselt, the Lord willing.

6. The League Day

The League Day will be held on 25 May 2013, also at Hasselt.

7. Students Society

The Students Society 'Virtute Dei' will have its meeting in March.

8. Reformed Education Association

On 14 March 2013, DV, a meeting of the Reformed Education Association Zwolle and environs will be held.

9. Easter concert

The Reformed (mixed) Choir 'Zingt voor Hem' will give an Easter concert at Hardenberg on 30 March 2013, DV.

10. Anniversary concert

The Lord willing, the (10th) anniversary concert will be given by The Reformed Mens' Choir 'Looft de Heer'. This will be held in the Stephanus Church at Hasselt on 17 May 2013.

11. Training for the Ministry

At present the Training for the Ministry has 3 students. Student C. Koster has just completed his studies and student M. Dijkstra has just commenced catechetical work experience. Student M. Sneep will start full time studies on 1 April 2013. (Until now, he had been studying part-time, alongside his normal work as registered accountant.)

Joh. Houweling



Stephanus Church, Hasselt