

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Tuesday 3 September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches met pursuant to the decision of a Constituent Conference held in Groningen in 1982, and was constituted with devotional exercises conducted by Rev. Professor A.C. Boyd representing the Free Church of Scotland as calling Church.

1. After constituting the Conference Professor Boyd proposed that the credentials of those attending should be scrutinised by Rev. J. Visscher, Rev. J. Klammer and Rev. A. Veldman.

This was agreed to, the credentials examined and reported on - those of the Free Church of Scotland to be produced later.

The following is therefore the list of participating Churches arranged according to the categories listed in the Constitution.

CHURCHES IN MEMBERSHIP OF CONFERENCE (Delegates and Advisers)

PARTICIPATING CHURCHES	REPRESENTATIVES	STATUS
Canadian Reformed Churches	M. Van Beveren J. Visscher Dr. J. Faber	Delegate Delegate Adviser
Anglican Presbyterian Church of Ireland	D. Thomas	Delegate
Free Church of Scotland	J.N. Macleod D. Lamont Professor D. Macleod Professor C. Graham H.M. Ferrier	Delegate Delegate Adviser Adviser (Alternate)
Free Reformed Churches of Australia	G. Van Rongen A. Veldman Dr. S.G. Hur	Delegate Delegate Alternate
Gereja Gereja Reformasi In Indonesia	J. Klammer	Delegate
Reformeerde Kerken in Nederland	O.J. Douma Professor H.M. Ohmann S.S. Gossen	Delegate Delegate Alternate
Presbyterian Church in Korea	Professor Pyeng Seh Oh	Delegate

II. CHURCHES APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP (Observer Delegates)

PARTICIPATING CHURCHES	REPRESENTATIVES	STATUS
Free Church in South Africa	N.P. Mpayipeli H. Sliep Professor A.C. Boyd J. MacPherson D.N. MacLeod I. Glover	Observer Delegate Observer Delegate Adviser Adviser (Alternates (for (Advisers)
Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia	W.P. Gadsby J.D. Heenan	Observer Delegate Observer Delegate
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland	T.C. Donachie C.K. Hyndman	Observer Delegate Observer Delegate

II. OTHER CHURCHES ATTENDING (Visiting Observers)

PARTICIPATING CHURCHES	REPRESENTATIVES	STATUS
Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Christchurch, New Zealand	A. Young	Visiting Observer
Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore	C. Kwee Lau	Visiting Observer
The Reformed Churches of North America	C. Schouls C. Pronk	Visiting Observer Visiting Observer
Free Reformed Churches in South Africa	F.J. van Hulst J. Moes	Visiting Observer Visiting Observer
Iglesia Evangelica Presbyteriana del Peru	A. Tuesta	Visiting Observer
Iglesia Reformada Presbyteriana (Spain)	R. Cerni	Visiting Observer
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (South Africa)	Dr. P. Rossouw J.E. Potgieter	Visiting Observer Visiting Observer
Orthodox Presbyterian Church - U.S.A.	John P. Galbraith J.J. Peterson Dr. F. Kingsley Elder	Visiting Observer Visiting Observer Visiting Observer
Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan	Suzume Marimaga	Visiting Observer

2. The Convener then proposed that Executive Officers be appointed and the following list was duly approved:

Chairman:	Rev. D. Lamont
Vice-chairman:	Rev. G. van Rongen
Recording Secretary:	Professor C. Graham
Corresponding Secretary:	Rev. M. van Beveren.

Those appointed were duly welcomed and the Chairman proceeded to introduce the business of the session.

3. There was submitted an outline agenda for this and the ensuing sessions of Conference and in adopting this, Conference agreed to hear visiting observers introduce their Churches at evening sessions.
4. The Provisional Committee were asked to report and the Report was submitted by Professor Graham. It was noted that the Committee had exhausted its remit and should now stand dismissed but Conference agreed that it should be authorised to submit data and proposals to such Committees as Conference would appoint to review material and financial arrangements for this and any subsequent Conference.
5. It was noted that applications for membership of Conference were forward from three Churches, viz.

The Free Church in Southern Africa; The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia; the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

- 5.1 The following were appointed to examine and report on the documents of these Churches:
Professor H.M. Ohmann, Convener, Rev. J. Visscher, Rev. A. Veldman and Rev. J.N. Macleod.

6. Conference appointed a Committee to examine and report on correspondence, proposals from member Churches and financial arrangements for this and future Conferences consisting of: Rev. O.J. Douma, Rev. J. Klammer, Professor P. Seh C and Rev. D. Lamont.

This first session was closed with the Benediction.

At Edinburgh and within St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Tuesday 3rd September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches did again convene and was constituted by devotional exercises.

SESSION II

1. Mr. F.J. van Hulst from the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa who had arrived in the afternoon, was duly welcomed.
2. REPORTS: Report of Committee on Applications: The Committee reported through the Convener, Professor H. Ohmann that all three applying Churches had satisfied the Committee and they recommended that these Churches be admitted as full members of Conference. It was noted that the Free Church in Southern Africa was in process of translating the Westminster Confession into the Xhosa language. Conference would on some future occasion therefore wish to be assured of the faithfulness of the translation.

RESOLUTION: Conference agreed therefore that the Free Church in Southern Africa; the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland be recognised as full members and their delegates be seated accordingly.
3. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: Two members gave brief introductory accounts of the Churches they represent.
 - 3.1 Professor Pyeng Seh Oh introduced the Presbyterian Church in Korea giving a brief outline of its history, creedal position and present numerical strength and institutions. He expressed the desire that Churches in membership of Conference would co-operate in theological education and that they would demonstrate some positive reaction to reviving influence of Shintoism in Korea and Japan.
 - 3.2 Rev. J. Klamer spoke of the origin and development of the Indonesian Reformed Churches which had grown up as the first of missionary outreach by the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Language difficulties had prevented members of these Churches from attending this Conference.
4. CONFERENCE ADDRESS: Dr. J. Faber addressed Conference on the subject of "The Doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions" and copies of the Address were subsequently made available to Conference.
5. It was agreed to take up consideration of the issues raised in the Address at the first session tomorrow.

This Session was closed with the Benediction.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church on Wednesday 4th September 1985, the International Conference of Reformed Churches did again convene and was constituted with devotional exercises.

SESSION 141

1. Minutes: The minutes of Tuesday's sessions were circulated, adjusted and approved.
2. The Doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions: Conference resumed consideration of the previous evening's address when several members of Conference took part and raised issues to which Dr. Faber again referred.
3. It was moved, seconded and agreed to that:

RESOLUTION:

In accordance with the suggestions made by Dr. Faber, Conference appoint a Committee to study the text of the three ecumenical creeds in order to come to a common text that can be recommended to the member Churches.

It was agreed to appoint the personnel of the Committee at the next Session.

4. Report of Committee on Correspondence etc. This report was submitted by Rev. D. Lamont, Rev. G van Rongen being in the Chair.

After some discussion it was agreed to hear the Committee's proposals regarding finances before dealing with matters of correspondence. Subsequently it was agreed to refer their remit back to the Committee for further consideration and report, Messrs. Visscher, Gadsby and Mpayipeli being added to the Committee.

This Session was closed with prayer.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church on Wednesday 4 September 1985, the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted.

SESSION IV

1. Revs. C. Schouls and C. Pronk visiting observers from the Free Reformed Churches of North America who had arrived during the day were welcomed by the Chairman as was also Murdo A. MacLeod a visiting observer from the Christian Witness to Israel.
2. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: The Churches introduced this evening were the Free Church in India represented by Rev. D. John and the Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore represented by Rev. C. Kwee Lau.
 - 2.1 Mr. John gave some account of the origin and present development of the Church and reported on present strength, organisation and ministry. He outlined the social and economic background of the people to whom the gospel was being ministered. Impact on the traditionally Hindu population was less than desired.
 - 2.2 Mr. Lau reported that his one-congregation Church is presently in its infancy having been instituted no more than four years ago. The congregation is surrounded by a population of 2½ million of multi-racial origins. There are many professedly Christian Churches in the area but most are hostile or indifferent to Reformed doctrines. But through a Bible Study group and the influence of books of a Reformed character and the teaching of visiting preachers from the U.S. the congregation came to be established. He anticipated encouragement from Churches associated with this Conference.
3. CONFERENCE ADDRESS: Professor H.M. Ohmann addressed Conference on the subject of "Piety in the Book of Psalms" copies of the Address being available to members of Conference.
4. It was agreed to postpone appointment of the personnel of the Committee on ecumenical creeds until a later Session.

This Session was closed with prayer.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church on Thursday 5 September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted with devotional exercises.

SESSION V

1. MINUTES: The minutes of Wednesday's sessions were circulated and approved.
2. "PIETY IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS": Conference referred again to Professor Ohmann's Address of last evening, inviting clarification of several points which Professor Ohmann expounded in greater detail.

3. COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL CREEDS: It was agreed:
That a Committee be appointed to prepare a list of grounds for the action proposed and to nominate personnel.

It was also agreed that this Committee consist of Mr. Van Rongen and Professor Oh with Professor Faber and Professor Macleod as advisers.

4. COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE, FINANCE, ETC.: Rev. J. Visscher reported for the Committee.

- 4.1 With reference to Section I of the Report - Conference Expenses: it was moved and seconded that it be decided:

First Motion

- (a) to establish a General Fund to cover the expenses incurred by the I.C.R.C.;
- (b) to bear the costs of the Conference as member Churches on the basis of the number of baptized members taking into account the estimated average per capita income of the baptized members in each member Church;
- (c) to have member Churches pay for the travelling expenses of their own delegates, and those member Churches unable to pay such expenses may request assistance from the General Fund;
- (d) to declare that Churches sending observers or Churches applying for membership will be expected to bear their own travel costs, as well as other costs which may be incurred, while attending the meeting of the Conference.

Second Motion:

It was also moved and seconded that paragraph (b) of the first motion be amended by the addition of the words "including travelling expenses" after the words "costs of Conference": and that paragraph (c) be deleted - (d) then becoming (c).

On a vote being taken the first was carried by a majority.

Wherefore:

It is decided:

- (a) to establish a General Fund to cover the expenses incurred by the I.C.R.C.;
- (b) to bear the costs of the Conference as member Churches on the basis of the number of baptized members taking into account the estimated average per capita income of the baptized members in each member Church;

- (c) to have member Churches pay for the travelling expenses of their own delegates, and those member Churches unable to pay such expenses may request assistance from the General Fund;
- (d) to declare that Churches sending observers or Churches applying for membership will be expected to bear their own travel costs, as well as other costs which may be incurred, while attending the meeting of the Conference.

4.2 With reference to Section II - Conference Expenses 1985 it was agreed as follows:

That unless a contrary undertaking has previously been given in the name of Conference it is decided:

- (a) to charge the delegates and advisers of the member Churches £135.60 per person;
- (b) to charge the observers £180.60 per person;
- (c) to acknowledge that the FCS will meet the travel costs and Conference expenses of the observers from the FC in Southern Africa, the FC in India, the Iglesia Evangelica Presbiteriana del Peru;
- (d) to thank the FCS for bearing the extra costs relating to venue, secretarial/office work and sundry matters;
- (e) to charge the Treasurer to bill the delegates and observers to collect the monies due and to reimburse the FCS;
- (f) to charge the Treasurer to take into account in the making of his budget that the GKN still needs to be reimbursed for expenses incurred by the Prov. Secretary and the Interim Committee for the period between the Constituent Assembly and the first meeting of the Conference (Edinburgh).

4.3 With reference to Section III - The Treasurer it was moved seconded and agreed

It is decided to appoint a Treasurer, who will be an ex officio member of the Interim Committee, with the following charge:

- (a) to draw up a budget for the Conference with the assistance of the Interim Committee;
- (b) to request each member Church to submit to him the number of its baptized members, as well as the estimated average per capita income of its members;
- (c) to assess each Church on this basis;
- (d) to collect the instalments needed on a yearly basis (June 1)
- (e) to reimburse all costs incurred by the Conference;
- (f) to submit his financial report to the next meeting of the Conference.

4.4 With regard to Section IV - Auditing, it was moved, seconded and agreed to

It is decided to charge the Treasurer's member Church to audit his books before he submits his financial report to the next meeting of the Conference.

4.5 With regard to Section V - Study Committees it was moved, seconded and agreed to:

- (a) that each committee appointed by the Conference is expected to expedite its dealings through correspondence;
- (b) that in such cases where these committees are of the opinion that an actual meeting is necessary, they shall approach the Interim Committee for approval regarding the reimbursement of their expenses.

4.6 With reference to Section VI - Amendments, it was agreed:

- (a) to inform those member Churches (CRC, FRCA, GKN) which have submitted amendments to the Constitution and Regulations that the matters raised by them could not be dealt with at this meeting of the Conference due to the fact that the establishment of the Conference made it impossible to meet the constitutional provisions regarding amendments to the Constitution and Regulations;
- (b) to place these amendments on the agenda of the next meeting of the Conference;
- (c) to request the member Churches to react to these amendments, if they deem this necessary 12 months before the next meeting of the Conference by sending their replies to the Corresponding Secretary.

4.7 With reference to Section VII - Missions it was decided:

to appoint a committee on Missions with the following mandate:

- (i) to gather information from the member Churches regarding their missionary activities and training programs;
- (ii) to study the possibilities of co-ordinating the missionary activities of the member Churches when it comes to training, mission fields and exchanging missionaries;
- (iii) to examine the need to produce listings of relevant missionary literature on an ongoing basis, and to promote the publication of an introduction to Reformed missions.
- (iv) to report to the next meeting of the Conference.

5. Conference directed the Executive Committee to reflect upon the possibility of devising ways and means whereby a later session could address itself to urgent and relevant issues facing the Churches to which no reference has been made in the agenda.

This Session was closed with prayer.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Thursday 5 September 1985, the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted with devotional exercises.

SESSION VI

1. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Christchurch, New Zealand were the Churches introduced this evening.
 - 1.1 The Rev. Susuma Morinaga recounted the story of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan with recollections of the hostile atmosphere in which the Christian Church had to exist. This had led to sad defections on the part of many professing Churches. Since the war some progress had been made in spreading the evangel and the Reformed Church had arisen under the leadership of 9 ministers. Now there are c120 congregations organised under 5 presbyteries. Much is due to the help of missionaries from Churches in the U.S.A.
 - 1.2 The Rev. A. Young introduced the New Zealand Churches, telling of its emergence as a result of the dissemination of reformed literature blessed by the Spirit of God. Due also to reaction to the failure of the Presbyterian Church to deal Biblically with heresy there was some access of strength to the Reformed cause. The Church though small shows some signs of growth, and the general situation in New Zealand makes aggressive evangelism a matter of great urgency. He viewed Conference as in a position to help their cause in New Zealand by way of counsel as to how efforts should be most profitably directed, in the provision of help in theological training and in the provision of opportunities for the New Zealand Church to give expression to its missionary interest.
2. CONFERENCE ADDRESS: Professor Macleod addressed Conference on the topic "The Relation of the Sacraments to New Life in the Spirit" an outline of his address being circulated to members.

This Session was closed with the Benediction.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Friday 6 September 198 the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted.

SESSION VII

1. MINUTES: The minutes of Thursday's sessions were circulated, adjusted and approved.
2. "The Relations of the Sacraments to New Life in the Spirit": Conference referred again to the Address delivered by Professor Macleod.
3. Letter from Caribbean Christian Ministries was circulated for the attention of Conference.

This Session was closed with prayer.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Friday 6 September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted with devotional exercises.

SESSION VIII

1. WELCOME: Notice was taken of the presence of Mr. Daniel Szabo from Hungary and he was warmly welcomed as a guest of the Conference as one who drew attention to and challenged to prayer for the Church behind the iron curtain.
2. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: The Church introduced this evening was the Iglesia Evangelica Presbiteriana del Peru represented by Rev. A. Tuesta. He told of the origins of his Church in missionary work of the Free Church of Scotland, and spoke much of his personal indebtedness to the missionaries. He spoke also of the liberty now enjoyed in Peru for preaching without hindrance in Church buildings, in the open air and by radio. His own work as pastor involved not only the care of a congregation but also religious education of boys in Colegio San Andres. Though the Church nationally still needed help there were some self-supporting congregations in the city of Lima.
3. CONFERENCE ADDRESS: This evening's study was on "The Doctrine of the Covenants and the Reformed Confessions" and a paper prepared by Rev. J.N. Macleod had been previously circulated. Mr. Macleod introduced the paper and highlighted some of the main issues developed in it and demonstrated their relevance to current evangelical thinking.

This Session was closed with prayer.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Monday 9 September 1985, the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted.

SESSION IX

1. MINUTES: The minutes of Friday's sessions (VII and VIII) were circulated, adjusted and approved.
2. "THE DOCTRINE OF THE COVENANTS AND THE REFORMED CONFESSIONS: Conference gave attention again to the topic expounded by Rev. J.N. Macleod in the previous session. Mr. Macleod responded to the discussion.

This Session was closed with the Benediction.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Monday 9 September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted.

SESSION X

1. THANKS TO CONFERENCE: Mr. Daniel Szabo from Hungary, expressed his appreciation of the courtesies extended to him as a guest of Conference. He conveyed greetings from the congregations in Eastern Europe which he represented.
2. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: The Churches introduced this evening were the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, USA and the Free Church in Southern Africa.
 - 2.1 The Orthodox Presbyterian Church: Rev. J.J. Peterson introduced his Church - outlining its links with the earliest missionary and Presbyterian preachers who went from the British Isles to the USA. He referred to the halcyon days of Princeton Seminary and the subsequent deterioration of theological standards which led to the emergence of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Church now has about 190 "Churches and chapels" throughout the USA. There are 250 ministers (including retired ministers, missionaries and professors). Foreign missionary work has been to Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Cyprus and Kenya. Work in Ethiopia had to cease as a result of hostile action.

Presently though a Committee is studying the issue of women in office, there is no sign of a change: there is also a Committee studying the issue of child participation in Communion. The question of possible union with the Presbyterian Church in America is also receiving attention and will be reported on to the Assembly next June. With regard to the RES, being still in membership, they have argued forcibly against action and decisions of some of the Churches in membership. The desire not to abandon the leadership, especially of the Third World Churches in the RES, to those who would change its historic stand, is a strong consideration for remaining in the RES.
 - 2.2 The Free Church in Southern Africa was introduced by Rev. N. Mpayipeli. He spoke of the origin of his Church in missionary work of the Free Church of Scotland. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the accepted subordinate standard and the Church is organised in two Presbyteries. There are about 1700 communicant members cared for by three national pastors and four seconded missionaries. The Church has initiated a Bible School offering correspondence courses and it aims to be a centre for the training of ministers. The current unrest in Southern Africa occasioned difficulties for the ongoing work of the Church. Marxist and Communist influences were clearly discernible in fomenting this unrest.
3. CONFERENCE ADDRESS: The Address this evening was on "The Exercise of Inter-Church Relations" and was given by Rev. J. Visscher. The text of the Address was circulated.

At Edinburgh and in St. Columba's Free Church of Scotland on Tuesday 10 September 1985 the International Conference of Reformed Churches again convened and was constituted.

SESSION XI

1. MINUTES: The minutes of yesterday's sessions were circulated and approved.-
2. INTRODUCING THE CHURCHES: Conference recalled that as time did not permit Mr. Gadsby to introduce the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, a paper giving the text of his proposed address had been circulated. It was agreed that a summary should be engrossed in the minutes of this Session.
 - 2.1 The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia: This is one of the smaller Australian Churches: its origin dates back to the year 1846 with ecclesiastical repercussions to the Disruption in Scotland. Now there are fourteen congregations in the denomination served by eleven ministers and one home missionary. The communicant membership is in the region of 620. The creedal statement of the Church is the Westminster Confession, the polity is Presbyterian and close links involving inter-eligibility of ministers are maintained with the Free Church of Scotland. The Church has not lacked internal strife which has prejudiced its effectiveness: it has too, been somewhat slow to awaken to the need for evangelistic outreach. But now there are positive signs that those weaknesses are being averted and the outlook is quite encouraging. The prayers of members of Conference are coveted.
3. THE EXERCISE OF INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS: In referring again to this topic Conference noted a document entitled "Rules to enter into and maintain Relations with Churches abroad" which had been circulated. This presented the views of Deputies for relations with Churches abroad of the G.K.N. and was expounded by Prof. Ohman. Discussion also covered the data and arguments presented in Mr. Visscher's address of last evening and he responded to the discussion.
4. BUSINESS MATTERS:
 - 4.1 Committee on Ecumenical Creeds: Conference considered the grounds for appointing this Committee and agreed as follows:
 1. In the respective member Churches some various texts of these creeds are used.
 2. It is desirable that the International Consultation Text of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed be scrutinized to ascertain whether this text is faithful to the Received Text of the Creeds.

Church of Scotland on Tuesday 10 September
1985 the International Conference of
Reformed Churches again met and was
constituted.

SESSION XII

1. MINUTES: The minutes of Session XI were circulated and approved.
2. THANKS: Thanks of Conference were tendered to the Chairman and Vice-chairman for their excellent conduct of business and to the Free Church of Scotland for their work as calling Church. The thanks of Conference were also accorded to all who had helped in the preparation for and the conduct of Conference and to those who had contributed in any way to the comfort of those participating in Conference.
3. CLOSING ADDRESS: An appropriate closing Address was delivered by Prof. A.C. Boyd.
4. MINUTES: The minutes of this Session were submitted and approved.

This Session was closed with the Benediction.