

THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL (NAPARC)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

October 27-28, 1978

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council was called to order by William P. Brink, Chairman of the Council, at 2:00 p.m., on October 27, 1978, at the Airport Inn, Philadelphia International Airport, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Brink led the Council in devotions based on Ephesians 4:1-16, after which he led the Council in prayer.

2. ROLL CALL

The roll was taken. The following were present as delegates and observers:

DELEGATES:

Christian Reformed Church (CRC)

Mr. Albert A. Bel, Rev. John H. Bratt, Rev. William P. Brink, Rev. John H. Kromminga

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)

Rev. John P. Galbraith, Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver, Rev. James R. Payton, Jr.,
Rev. Wendell L. Rockey, Jr.

Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

Mr. Frank C. Horton, Mr. Walter Lastovica, Rev. Thomas Llewelyn, Rev. Morton H. Smith

Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES)

Rev. John P. Clark, Sr., Rev. Paul R. Gilchrist, Rev. Donald J. MacNair

Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA)

Rev. Lester E. Kilpatrick, Rev. Charles Storratt, Mr. Donald B. Willson

OBSERVER:

Mr. Gordon Parkinson (ARP)

VISITORS:

Rev. G. Aiken Taylor (PCA), Rev. John C. Neville (PCUS)

ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET

The Agenda as indicated by these Minutes was adopted as the Docket.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following officers were elected:

Rev. Donald J. MacNair (RPCES), Chairman
Rev. Morton H. Smith (PCA), Secretary
Mr. Albert A. Bel, (CRC), Treasurer

Interim Committee:

Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver (OPC)
Rev. Bruce Stewart (RPCNA)

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes were approved as mailed out, with the corrections noted by the Secretary, and with the provision that further editorial corrections will be made by the Secretary after consultation with any who have suggestions in this area. The corrected form of the Minutes is to be supplied to each Church for their permanent records.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

The Secretary presented the communications that had been sent out with the proposed Docket for the Fourth Meeting of NAPARC. (See Appendices A-H.)

7. INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT

The Secretary presented the Report of the Interim Committee. (See Appendix I.)

Secretary's note: Since the Recommendations of the Interim Committee involved a number of different areas, the actions taken by the Council regarding them are listed as separate items in the Agenda for easier reference to these items in the future.

8. BYLAW AMENDMENTS

The following amendments to the Bylaws were adopted:

Amend III, 2, b:

Change "Standing" to "Committees of the Council"

Add ", Conferences" after Study Committees

Add at end: Reports of Committees or Conferences are to be sent to the Secretary, who shall distribute them to the Interchurch Committees, when the agenda is sent out.

Amend III, 2, c, by adding the following sentence at the end of the paragraph:
"The Treasurer may consult with the Chairman or Secretary on any questions that he may have on bills submitted to him."

Amend III, 3, by adding a new paragraph 3:

"3. Travel, housing and meal expenses shall be borne by the sending churches."

Amend V:

V. Committees and Conferences

1. Committees of the Council

The Council may establish and appoint as many such Committees as needed. These Committees shall continue until the matters assigned to them have been completed. However, if such Committees are to represent all member Churches, the delegates of each Church to the current meeting of the Council shall designate its representative.

2. NAPARC Study Committees

The Council may establish NAPARC Study Committees to study matters of mutual concern to the NAPARC Churches. In erecting such a Study Committee the Council shall indicate the number of representatives each church may appoint to the Committee; equal representation from each church shall be authorized. It shall also designate one of the churches, which is to convene the Committee. The option of participating and the manner of selecting representatives shall be left to each church.

3. Conferences

- a. The Council may call Conferences on subjects of mutual concern to which all member churches are urged to send representatives.
- b. Annual consultations between the agencies of the various NAPARC churches may be held as desirable with each member church being urged to participate.

4. Materials and Conclusions

Materials and conclusions of NAPARC Study Committees and Conferences shall be sent to the Interchurch Committees of all the member churches, and to the NAPARC Interim Committee.

- a. The chief use of the materials and conclusions of the NAPARC Study Committees or Conferences is (1) for the information and instruction of member churches, and (2) the conveying of possible responses - approval, disagreement, or further study - by each member church to the other.
- b. The materials and conclusions are to be considered the property of the several member churches, and may be used and publicized by them only in their own name unless approved by other member churches also; joint publicity of the results of the NAPARC Study Committees or Conferences shall be by the churches themselves as distinguished from publicity by NAPARC which is consultative rather

than policy making. Neither NAPARC nor NAPARC Study Committees or Conferences may speak for the member churches.

- c. The ultimate purpose of the NAPARC Study Committees and Conferences is to search the Scriptures for the enrichment of our understanding of God's truth, to discuss the application of God's Word in the life of the churches and to seek unity through the development of a common commitment and cooperation.

5. Expenses

The expenses for NAPARC Conferences and Study Committees are to be borne by the member churches (including such items as: meals, travel, lodging, etc.). The cost for such items as duplication and secretarial aids is to be borne by the NAPARC treasury.

Amend VI:

In the first sentence replace "previous meeting ... by the meeting" with "Council together with such others elected by the Council as will provide a representative from each member church.

Add "5. The participating churches shall bear the expenses of their members to Interim Committee meetings.

(See Appendix for the Bylaws as amended.)

9. STUDY COMMITTEE ON HERMENEUTICS

The Council by common consent reviewed its past action regarding the call for a Study Committee on Hermeneutics (See Article 17B in the 1977 Minutes, and the CRC response in Appendix D), in order to clarify in the light of the new Bylaws whether there should be a Conference or NAPARC Study Committee erected.

It was moved and seconded to erect a NAPARC Study Committee to determine whether a study of Hermeneutics would be feasible and profitable, and if so, to make appropriate recommendations to the Council in 1979 as to the composition of such a Study Committee and its precise mandate. Adopted.

It was moved and seconded that the Committee be composed of two members from each church, and that the RPCNA be asked to convene the Committee. Adopted.

10. REFORMED EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

The recommendation of the Interim Committee that the subject of the Reformed Evangelism Conference asked for by Article 28 of the October 1977 Minutes be referred to the consultation of the agencies on Home Missions was adopted.

11. CONCURRENT MEETING OF ASSEMBLIES AND SYNODS

The Council adopted the recommendation of the Interim Committee that the Council consider the possibility of recommending another concurrent meeting of the Assemblies

and Synods of NAPARC Churches to take place in four or five years, with some time allotted for joint interaction of the member churches.

It was moved and seconded that the Council recommend to the member churches of NAPARC that plans be made to have a concurrent meeting of Assemblies and Synods in 1982, and that if arrangements can be made, it be held at Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Adopted.

12. TERMS OF OFFICE

The Council adopted the recommendation of the Interim Committee, after amending it, regarding terms of office as follows: that a Committee of the Council of two members to consider the length of the terms of office of the Council and to report to the next meeting with recommendations and the question of the feasibility of adding a fourth office, that of Vice Chairman. The Chairman of the Council is to appoint the Committee. Adopted.

13. GRATUITY TO THE SECRETARY

The recommendation of the Interim Committee that a gratuity of \$150.00 per year be paid to the Secretary was adopted.

14. 1978 CONCURRENT ASSEMBLIES AND SYNODS

The Rev. John Bratt reported on the meeting of the concurrent Assemblies and Synods held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June 1978. He indicated that there was generally a good response to the meetings.

The Rev. John Galbraith was appointed to frame a Resolution of Thanks on behalf of the Council (See Article 24).

15. ARP MEMBERSHIP

The Rev. Le Roy Oliver, Chairman of the Special Committee dealing with ARP membership, presented the report as follows: that the ARP Synod suspend its application for membership in the NAPARC until the matter of difference regarding inerrancy of Scripture be first resolved. Adopted.

Dr. Parkinson of the ARP Church was recognized and granted the privilege of the floor to speak to the Council about this matter.

16. HOME MISSIONS CONSULTATION

The report of the meeting of the joint Home Missions agencies held April 12-13, 1978, was received, and it was noted that another Conference was scheduled in November (See Appendix N & O for these reports).

17. CONFERENCE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Rev. Le Roy Oliver reported on the Conference on Theological Education sponsored by NAPARC, and held on October 13-14, 1978, at Westminster Theological Seminary. The report was received as information. (See Appendix Q.)

18. COST OF EVENING MEAL

A motion was made and seconded that the Treasurer be authorized to pay the cost of the evening meal. Adopted.

19. RECESS

The meeting was recessed at 6:00 p.m. to reconvene at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. John Clark led in prayer.

20. MEETING RECONVENED

The Council was reconvened at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. Charles Sterrett opened this session with prayer.

21. REPORTS FROM CHURCHES

Representatives from each of the Churches reported as follows:

Rev. John H. Bratt - CRC
Rev. Le Roy Oliver - OPC
Rev. Thomas Llewelyn - PCA
Rev. Paul R. Gilchrist - RPCES
Rev. Lester E. Kilpatrick - RPCNA

(See Appendices D-H.)

22. REPORTS ON THE DIVORCE STUDY

The 1977 meeting of the Council recommended to the major Assemblies and Synods of the constituent churches "that they engage in a joint study of the current pressing question of divorce, especially as it relates to: (1) 'divorce and remarriage', and (2) 'divorce and the church officer'." (See Article 10, Item 5.)

The representatives of each church were asked how their respective churches responded to this recommendation. The responses were as follows:

CRC - Not presented
OPC - Yes
PCA - Not presented
RPCES - Not presented
RPCNA - Not presented

23. ECCLESIASTICAL FELLOWSHIP

The 1977 meeting of the Council adopted the position statement on ecclesiastical fellowship recommended to each of the constituent churches. The representatives of the churches were requested to respond as to the actions of their respective Assemblies or Synods on this matter. Their response was as follows:

CRC - Yes
OPC - Yes
PCA - Yes
RPCES - Yes
RPCNA - Yes, with exception

24. RESOLUTION OF THANKS

Resolved that this meeting of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council, on behalf of our respective Churches - the OPC, the PCA, the RPCES, and the RPCNA - whose Assemblies and Synods met concurrently at your gracious invitation on the beautiful campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, in June 1978, hereby expresses to the CRC our deep appreciation and our great thankfulness to God for the Christian hospitality expressed to our Churches in many personal ways and in your gracious provision of the needs and comforts of our delegates and commissioners, and for the opportunity that you provided for us to enjoy an unprecedented fellowship among all our Churches. May there be everlasting praise to God.

And that the Secretary be requested to forward this action to the Synod of the CRC.
Adopted.

25. TREASURERS REPORT

Mr. Albert Bel, Treasurer of the Council, presented the report of the Treasurer. (See Appendix M). It was moved that the same budget of \$500.00 for the coming year be approved.
Adopted.

26. NPRF CONGRESS

The Rev. Donald MacNair spoke regarding the forthcoming NPRF Congress to be held in 1979.

27. QUESTION OF PCA ORDER

The matter contained in the communication of the CRC regarding the reception of a member of one of the Christian Reformed Churches by a PCA congregation without receiving proper certification of transfer was raised. The representative of the PCA indicated that this was not their normal procedure. It was requested that this matter be communicated - that clarification of the circumstances about this action be obtained by the Stated Clerk of the PCA.

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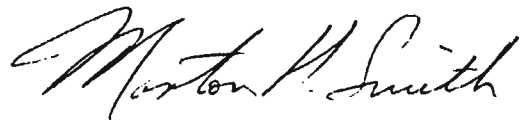
28. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

It was determined that the next meeting of the Council would be held on October 26-27, 1979. The place is to be determined by the Interim Committee.

29. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Council was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. with a season of prayer with several members participating. . .

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Morton H. Smith".

Morton H. Smith, Secretary