

THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL (NAPARC)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
October 26-27, 1979

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Fifth Meeting of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council was called to order by Donald J. MacNair, Chairman of the Council, at 2:00 p.m., on October 26, 1979, at the Best Western Airport Motel, Philadelphia International Airport, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Rev. Donald MacNair read Ephesians 1:15-23, and led in a brief devotional on the passage. The Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver led the Council in the opening 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. Stek

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)

Rev. Edmund P. Clowney, Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver, Rev. James Payton, Rev. James Petty

Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

Rev. Thomas L. Llewelyn, Mr. C. Frederick Muhl, Rev. Morton H. Smith, Rev. G. Aiken Taylor

Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES)

Mr. Joël Belz, Rev. Nelson K. Malkus, Rev. Donald J. MacNair, Rev. George W. Smith

Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA)

Rev. H. B. Harrington, Rev. Charles Sterrett, Rev. John H. White, Mr. Donald B. Willson

OBSERVER:

Rev. Howard E. Hart (RCUS)

VISITOR:

Dr. Marion D. Barnes (RPCES)

3. ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET

The agenda as indicated by these minutes was adopted as the docket.

4. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TERM OF OFFICE

The Rev. William Brink presented the report of the Committee on Term of Office. (See Appendix B.) The Council adopted the following motion from the Interim Committee regarding this report:

"That since the report of the Special Committee of the Council appointed to study the term of office (See Minutes of Fourth Meeting of the Council, 1978, Item 12, pg. 5) calls for or implies an amendment to the Bylaws, a committee of the Council be appointed to prepare suitable language for such a bylaw change, to be reported back prior to the end of this meeting of the Council."

The following were named to serve on this Committee:

William Brink (CRC), John H. White (RPCNA), Joel Belz (RPCES) (See Item 16 for the report of this Committee back to the Council). Adopted.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following officers were elected:

Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver (OPC), Chairman
Rev. Morton H. Smith (PCA), Secretary
Mr. Albert A. Bel (CRC), Treasurer

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes were approved as mailed out, with the correction that the name of Mr. Donald B. Wilson of the RPCNA should read "Mr." instead of "Rev."

Also, Item 9, pg. 4, the last line of the second paragraph should begin with the word "and" instead of "as". Adopted.

7. COMMUNICATION FROM RPCES REGARDING A CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IN KENYA

A communication from the RPCES requested that the matter of the possibility of a Christian college in Kenya be presented was brought to the attention of the Council by the Secretary. The following recommendation of the Interim Committee was moved:

"That the Council hear Dr. Marion Barnes in connection with the request of the RPCES regarding the possibility of a Christian college in Kenya." Adopted.

Dr. Barnes was granted the floor, and made a presentation to the Council regarding this matter. (See Appendix K for information on the matter.)

After discussion on the matter, the following motion was made and seconded:

"As Reformed Christians and as a Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, we support the idea of a Christian college established in Kenya to serve the emerging leadership in Africa. We suggest that a specific prospectus be developed by the agency of the RPCES, which initiated the idea, and that this agency take initiative in presenting specific proposals to the member Churches of NAPARC." Adopted.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Albert Bel, Treasurer of the Council, presented a report of the treasurer. It was moved and seconded that the same budget of \$500.00 be approved, with the same assessments made to the Churches. (See Appendix C for report.) Adopted.

The Secretary's inquiry about whether he should continue to prepare sufficient copies of all of the Minutes and the Appendices for all of the Interchurch Relations Committee members at the expense of NAPARC was answered in the affirmative. Note that the question of the Secretary's gratuity is to be reviewed by the Interim Committee prior to the next meeting of the Council. Adopted.

9. REPORTS FROM THE VARIOUS CHURCHES

Representatives from each of the Churches reported as follows:

Rev. John H. Bratt - CRC
Rev. Le Roy B. Oliver - OPC
Rev. Thomas L. Llewelyn - PCA
Rev. Donald J. MacNair - RPCES
Rev. H. B. Harrington - RPCNA
Rev. Howard Hart - RCUS

(See Appendices D - H)

10. RECESS

The Council took recess at 5:45 p.m. for the evening meal. The Rev. George Smith led in prayer, including the blessing upon the food.

11. COUNCIL RECONVENED

The Council was reconvened at 7:15 p.m. The Rev. Charles Sterrett led in prayer.

12. HERMENEUTICS REPORT

The Rev. John Stek presented the report of the Committee to study the feasibility of having a study committee on hermeneutics (See Minutes of Fourth Meeting of the Council, Item 9 , pg. 4) (See Appendix J). The following motions of recommendations of the Committee were moved and seconded:

1. That it would be feasible and proper to appoint a NAPARC study committee on hermeneutics with the following assignments:
 - a. To analyze and identify the primary hermeneutical approaches to the Scripture existing within the NAPARC Churches (special consideration shall be given to hermeneutical approaches to biblical teaching on contemporary moral and ecclesiastical problems);
 - b. To seek to summarize those hermeneutical principles on which there appear to be agreement;
 - c. To seek to present its findings for information at a public meeting or conference in conjunction with the concurrent Synod - General Assembly meetings in 1982;
 - d. To present progress reports to the 1980 and 1981 NAPARC annual meetings, and to submit its official report to the annual meeting in 1982;
 - e. To make recommendations to the annual NAPARC meeting in 1982 concerning committees continuance - or further study.

Adopted.

2. That each member Church be invited to appoint no more than two (2) members to the NAPARC study committee on hermeneutics.

Adopted.

3. The RPCES is designated as the convening Church.

Adopted.

13. CONCURRENT SYNODS

The following recommendation made by the Interim Committee was moved:

"That a committee be elected by the respective churches to begin to plan methods and procedures for joint consultation, worship and fellowship at the 1982 concurrent meetings of the Assemblies and Synods in Grand Rapids, and that one of the constituent denominations be designated by the Council to convene this committee."

Tabled. To be docketed at the 1980 meeting of the Council

14. CONFERENCES

The Secretary noted that he had received reports on Conferences of the representatives of the Foreign Mission agencies, Home Mission agencies, and Diaconal Ministries (See Appendices L-N). Dr. Clowney reported on the continuing results of the Theological Education Conference held a year ago. He indicated that a questionnaire has been developed, and is now in the process of being reported on to the Seminaries. The organization of the Seminary Presidents growing out of that meeting is continuing to be active.

15. CONFERENCE ON DIVORCE

The reports from the Churches regarding the status of studies on divorce were made:

CRC	-	Currently involved in their own study
OPC	-	Open to a study
PCA	-	Study has already taken place regarding divorce of officers
RPCES	-	Already studied
RPCNA	-	Open to a study

It was moved and seconded that the Council decide not to pursue this matter further at the present time.

Adopted.

16. TERM OF OFFICE

Dr. William Brink reported on the Term of Office Committee. The report was adopted as amended as follows:

We propose that for purposes of continuity NAPARC choose a fourth officer of the council; namely, that of vice-chairman.

We propose that the elected chairman shall serve for a one year term, such term beginning with the annual meeting at which he presides.

The vice-chairman shall assist the chairman when called upon to do so, and shall serve a one year term. The vice-chairman of NAPARC shall automatically succeed the chairman after the opening of the next annual meeting and the election of officers.

The secretary and treasurer of NAPARC shall be elected for one year terms and shall be eligible for re-election for not more than three terms.

Grounds:

- 1) The above proposal provides for a rotation of presiding officers giving opportunity for leadership from the several NAPARC member denominations.
- 2) The proposal provides a measure of continuity with respect to the chairmanship, since the vice-chairman will be better prepared for the meeting he is to chair.
- 3) The proposal provides for continuity in the important details of the offices of secretary and treasurer by giving opportunity for re-election.

The changes proposed will involve the following changes in the Bylaws of the Constitution:

Section III should be amended to read as follows:

1. Each meeting of the Council shall elect its own officers, as follows: chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer. The vice-chairman shall normally succeed to the office of chairman, and shall be declared elected by white ballot, unless the Council determines to conduct an election.
2. The responsibilities of the officers will be as follows:
 - a. Chairman - to preside at meetings of the Council, to make required appointments, to see that business is conducted in an orderly manner.
 - b. Vice-chairman - to assist the chairman upon his request, and to succeed to the chairmanship at the next annual meeting after the opening of the session.
 - c. Secretary - to keep a roll of delegates, to record and distribute the minutes of the Council, to carry on the correspondence in reference to Standing Committees, Study Committees and the next meeting of the Council, and to prepare the Agenda for the next meeting of the Council.
 - d. Treasurer - to receive bills for the expenses of the meeting of the Council, to receive funds to pay bills incurred by the Council, and to submit reports regularly to the Council.
3. Terms of office:
 - a. The chairman shall serve for a one year term, such term beginning with the annual meeting at which he presides, and concluding after the opening items of the next annual meeting.
 - b. The vice-chairman shall serve a one year term and shall normally succeed the chairman after the opening of the

- next annual meeting and the election of officers.
c. The secretary and treasurer shall serve for one year terms, and shall be eligible for reelection. Adopted.

17. NPRF

Dr. Clowney reported on NPRF in place of Dr. George Fuller, who was unable to attend. He reported on the NPRF Congresses held during the past summer. He spoke of the debt of gratitude that NPRF felt for the work of Dr. Fuller in conducting the Congresses. Dr. Fuller is now on a part-time basis. Future prospects include regional meetings on Reformed theology and the continued publication of the NPRF bulletin inserts.

18. POINT OF ORDER CLARIFIED

Dr. Smith reported on the point of order raised at the Fourth meeting of the Council (See Item 27). He indicated that the church in question was not a member of the PCA, but was apparently a congregation of the PCUS.

19. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Rev. John White (RPCNA) was elected as vice-chairman.

20. INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Rev. Donald MacNair (RPCES) was elected to serve as the RPCES member of the Interim Committee.

21. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is set for 2:00 p.m., October 24, 1980, through noon, October 25, 1980. The Interim Committee was authorized to determine the location.

22. MOTION OF THANKS

The Rev. Le Roy Oliver (OPC) was thanked for making the arrangements for this meeting of the Council.

23. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. to meet at 2:00 p.m., October 24, 1980, at a place to be determined by the Interim Committee, being led in prayer by the Rev. John Bratt, the Rev. James Petty, and the Rev. Le Roy Oliver, especially remembering the family of the late Barton Payne.