

Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford

C/O 2043 Jordan Place, Abbotsford, B.C., V3G 2C3

October 15, 2020

The Consistory
Canadian Reformed Church at Anytown
P.O. Box # or Street Address
Anytown, Anyprovince
Postal Code

Dear members of the Consistory:

In a recent *Clarion*, Rev. C. Bouwman brought attention to a “*shift in CanRC circles of understanding what the church is and hence why we are Canadian Reformed*” (see his article in the June 12, 2020 issue entitled, “*Why are we Canadian Reformed?*” volume 69, number 12). While Rev. Bouwman points back to the historical roots of the CanRCs in the Liberation of 1944, he does not appear to identify either the nature or the cause of this “*shift in understanding.*”

We therefore write to you out of our very serious concern that the Canadian Reformed Churches have indeed shifted away from the Reformed understanding of what the church is. We send you this correspondence out of our fear of the Lord and our love and care for the sheep of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may be sanctified by the truth of God’s Word (John 17:17). It is our heart-felt desire to restore the broken unity which we believe has come between us as a result of the above “*shift in understanding.*”

While this “*shift*” has become increasingly apparent in the Canadian Reformed Churches since 1977, we focus on a particular ecclesiastical decision taken by General Synod Edmonton 2019 with respect to material this Synod received from the Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford.

The material sent to Synod Edmonton 2019

In the correspondence that is contained in the *Attachment* to this letter, we addressed Synods 2013, 2016 and 2019 regarding a number of matters which we believe have contributed to this “*shift in understanding*” as referred to by Rev. Bouwman. We describe below what we believe to be the cause of this “*shift*” in the CanRCs. We also pay attention to the decisions to accept inadequate fencing of the Lord’s Supper and non-confessional membership as two immediate consequences of this “*shift.*” Further, we will consider the effect of these decisions in promoting an unscriptural “*pluriformity of the church.*”

As indicated in the *Attachment*, we addressed Synod 2019 regarding correspondence we had sent to Synod 2013 (*Acts*, Article 62) and to Synod 2016 (*Acts*, Article 53), but which were declared inadmissible by these ecclesiastical assemblies. Even though Synod 2019 was provided with extensive considerations to take this letter seriously, this Synod persisted in declaring this letter inadmissible (*Acts*, Article 76).

By using the peremptory excuse that the Liberated Reformed Church is not in the federation, Synod 2019 continues on the same path as the previous Synods, contrary to Article 31 of the Church Order. Synod does not consider the fact that while we all have the same Father, as did Judah and Israel at the time of the prophets, and that also Israel rejected the words of the prophet Amos, who came from Judah (see Amos 7:12).

Therefore we earnestly beseech you to give serious consideration to the supporting material and to the requests we make at the conclusion of this letter.

The “*shift in understanding*” in the CanRCs

The repeated decisions of the CanRC general synods not to follow up major confessional divergencies at their major assemblies before entering into sister church relationships with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA), the Reformed Church of the United States (RCUS) and the l'Eglise Reformee du Quebec (ERQ), provide evidence of the “*shift in understanding*” which we referred to at the beginning of our letter. We believe that, as a result of this shift, the CanRCs have deviated from their own confession.

We ask that you give consideration to the following history:

- a) Synod 1965 considered that, “*Correspondence with Churches abroad should not be entered into, until upon a conscientious and serious investigation, it has become apparent that these Churches not only officially embrace the Reformed confession and church polity but also in fact maintain them*” (*Acts*, Article 141, II);
- b) Despite the above decision Synod 1977 declared the OPC to be a true church. This declaration was made even though the investigation that was ongoing had not been completed;
- c) Synod 1986 considered that, “*the matter of fencing the Lord's Supper is, indeed, a serious confessional divergency, which is a major issue of mutual concern*” (*Acts*, Article 132, Considerations E (b));
- d) Despite the above Consideration Synod 1992 changed the rules for sister church relationships and declared that the method of supervising the Lord's Supper could not, in the end, be made a condition for ecclesiastical fellowship;
- e) However this same Synod 1992 made the statement that, “*It should be agreed, however, that a general verbal warning alone is insufficient and that a profession of the reformed faith is required in the presence of the supervising elders from the guests wishing to attend the Lord's Supper*” (*Acts*, Article 72, Consideration A.1.e.i).

- f) In accordance with point (e) above Synod 1998 amended a proposed agreement with the OPC to include the above statement from Synod 1992 and to require “*confirmation of a godly life*” (Acts, Article 130, Considerations C.3 and 4).
- g) Despite the above decisions Synod 2001 abandoned the amendment of Synod 1998 and went back to the original proposed agreement, and thereby entered into ecclesiastical fellowship with the OPC. At the same time Synod stated that, “*there is reason to continue to discuss these practices, but they cannot in the end be made a condition for ecclesiastical fellowship.*” Synod also stated that, “*According to our respective confessions, the implication of the principle is that supervision of the Lord’s table involves more than a verbal warning for unrepentant sinners to abstain from the table (see Westminster Confession, Chapter 29, section 8; Larger Catechism q & a 173 and Heidelberg Catechism q & a 82)*” (Acts, Article 45, Considerations 4.11 and 4.12).
- h) Synod 2004 stated that, “*The important point is that we continue to engage in a brotherly and forthright discussion with the OPC concerning how the Lord’s Table ought to be supervised, along with the matter of confessional membership*” (Acts, Article 86, Consideration 4.7).
- i) Despite the above decision Synod 2007 considered that the above mandate “*cannot be repeated because it does not take into account the decision of Synod Neerlandia to establish ecclesiastical fellowship with the OPC.*” Instead “*the outstanding matters of confessional membership and supervision of the Lord’s table are to be raised where appropriate*” (Acts, Article 131, Consideration 3.5 and Recommendation 4.3).
- j) Synod 2010 considered that it would “*not be proper to belabor these issues in discussions with the OPC.*” At the same time Synod considered that “*working toward a more unified position on these significant matters ought to be one of the goals of being churches in EF*” (Acts, Article 34, Consideration 3.4).
- k) Despite the above decisions Synod 2016 considered that “*When we enter EF we accept each other as faithful churches without qualifications. Differences that were noted and discussed prior to EF, but which did not hinder entering EF, do not require resolution. It is incorrect to speak of “outstanding differences.” The word “outstanding” implies a need for resolution. Bringing up these issues repeatedly, without proper proof of necessity, is potentially damaging to sister-church relationships. Discussion of these issues may take place naturally in the course of EF, but a specific mandate, identifying particular issues, need not be given*” (Acts, Article 61, Consideration 3.5).

As can be seen from the above historical summary it was not the OPC that changed, but the CanRCs. Over a span of 30 years the CanRCs’ evaluation of the open communion in the OPC went from “a serious confessional divergency, which is a major issue of mutual concern” to no issue at all – hence the “*shift in understanding what the church is!*”

Decisions to accept inadequate fencing of the Lord's Supper

The method of celebrating the Lord's Supper in the OPC is described in the "*Report of the Committee to Study the Method of Admission to the Lord's Supper*" as found on the official website of the OPC and published in the Minutes of the Sixtieth General Assembly (1993) of the OPC, pp. 293-296. Careful examination of the practices of the URC, RCUS, and the ERQ on this matter will determine that these practices do not substantially differ from that of the OPC.

We assert that it is Scriptural and necessary to guard the holiness of the Lord's Supper. The biblical principles that require the use of some form of independent attestation for the admission of guests to the Lord's Supper can be found in Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 18:16, John 17:17-23, Acts 18:27, Romans 16:1-2, 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, 16:3, 2 Corinthians 13:1 and Philippians 2:2. These biblical principles must be respected so that only those are admitted to the Lord's Supper who have made profession of the Reformed faith and lead a godly life. The content of this Scriptural requirement is found in Article 61 of the Church Order. Prior to 1992 the CanRCs had consistently maintained these principles.

However at the same time we assert that the method of celebration of the Lord's Supper in the OPC, as described in the above referenced "*Report*," does not guard the holiness of the Lord's Supper. What it describes is indeed "open communion," and is therefore in conflict with Scripture and the Reformed confessions.

We base this assertion on the following evidence:

A) Evidence from the "*Report*" itself

- 1) At the end of paragraph 1.5 there is a reference to Section A-5 of the Directory for Public Worship, which states that the minister "*is not required to use the exact language of the indented forms, which are suggested as appropriate. He may use these or similar forms, using his own liberty and godly wisdom as the edification of the people shall require.*"
- 2) The OPC admits (see 2.4.1) that, "*In fact there is no uniform procedure for fencing the Supper in the OPC.*" This admission indicates the presence of a double standard or measure in the OPC, which is not pleasing in the eyes of the Lord (see Deuteronomy 25:13-16, Proverbs 20:23 and James 2:1-10).
- 3) In this same paragraph the OPC outlines a "typical" practice where the minister first invites to the Lord's Supper "*those who (a) have been baptized, (b) have publicly professed their faith before the church, and (c) are currently members in good standing of an 'evangelical' church,*" and secondly "*by warning those who do not meet these requirements not to participate.*" The OPC itself admits that its use of the term 'evangelical' is

"less and less useful" as it has knowingly admitted baptists to the Lord's Supper, as members in the church, and even permitted them to preach on the pulpit (see evidence provided in Appendix A of our submission to the CanRC General synod 2019). The "warning" referred to in this paragraph shifts responsibility for the decision on whether to admit a guest to the Lord's Supper from the eldership to the guest. This practice is what we define as "open communion," which is contrary to what we believe and confess in Lord's Day 30.

- 4) The OPC gives reasons for this practice in this "Report" by setting forth its own vision of catholicity in paragraph 2.5.2. As you can see, the OPC starts from the "conviction" that members in non-reformed churches can make a "credible profession of faith in Christ." This is expressed in the statement, "There is, after all, only one Christian church, and to that one church, by implication, comes the command to partake of the Lord's Supper." It is clear from this statement that the OPC views the catholic church as pluriform, for there is no testing of the spirits to see whether they are of God (1 John 4). In this regard it is instructive to note that the Westminster Confession does not define the marks of the false church.
- 5) The OPC's vision on catholicity is further explained by Section 4.4 of its Form of Government which reads, "*The visible unity of the Body of Christ, though not altogether destroyed, is greatly obscured by the division of the Christian church into different groups or denominations. In such denominations Christians exercise a fellowship toward each other in doctrine, worship, and order, that they do not exercise toward other Christians. The purest churches under heaven are subject to both mixture and error, and some have gravely departed from apostolic purity; yet all of these which maintain through a sufficient discipline the Word and sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true manifestations of the church of Jesus Christ. All such churches should seek a closer fellowship, in accordance with the principles set forth above.*"
- 6) The OPC's Lord's Supper practice at the time of secession by Rev. B.R. Hofford and those with him in 1983 has been maintained by this 1993 "Report."
- 7) Paragraph 2.4.1 states, "A very few congregations may practice a form of 'closed communion,' requiring visitors to be examined by the session in advance." However it must be emphasized that this practice of "closed communion" is not closed at all since this examination is insufficient to verify a godly walk of life and no attestation is required. A personal testimony alone is not acceptable - see John 5:31. It logically follows that if the OPC, in general, does not practice closed communion, then what it does practice must necessarily be considered to be open communion.

B. Evidence provided from CanRC major assemblies

- 1) The text of the "Complaint" by Rev. B.R. Hofford to the 50th General Assembly of the OPC in 1983 is available from the Synod archive on the website of the CanRCs - see Appendix IIE on pages 160 to 172 of the Acts of CanRC Synod 1986.
- 2) Synod 1986 set forth the following consideration which states that *"Although 'the committee considers that the GA has not allowed deviation from their standards, nor has it sanctioned heresy such as would require us to break off our relations with the OPC,' its recommendation that 'the Canadian Reformed Churches should use their ecclesiastical contact to address the OPC on this issue of fencing the Lord's table' indicates that the matter of fencing of the Lord's Supper is, indeed, a serious confessional divergency, which is a major issue of mutual concern" (see Acts, Article 132, consideration b - emphasis added).*
- 3) The statement of the Committee for Contact with the OPC to Synod 1986 (see Acts, Article 132, Observation 5) that *"concerning our own practice of admission to the Lord's Supper, the committee concludes 'that our churches never adopted a general rule (in the Church Order) for admission of guests to the Lord's Supper, and that we therefore cannot ask this from the OPC either'" was not accepted by Synod 1986.*
- 4) For after detailing the practice in the CanRCs with respect to the admission to the Lord's Supper as regulated in Article 61 of the Church Order, Synod 1986 also considered that, *"Although guests are not specifically mentioned in Article 61, C.O., the conclusion of the committee, Observation 5, cannot mean that Article 61, C.O. has no bearing on the admission of guests to the Lord's Supper. Synod considers that Article 61, C.O., is the rule which governs the admission of all those who seek to partake in the Lord's Supper"* (see Article 132, consideration d). Synod stated further that, *"The Canadian Reformed Churches have from the beginning of contact with the OPC considered the admission to the Lord's Supper as an essential matter of discipline"* (see Article 132, consideration e).
- 5) Classis Ontario South judged that Rev. B.R. Hofford and those with him had *"rightfully separated"* from the OPC (see press release of Classis Ontario-South of December 9, 1987 at Attercliffe, Ontario, published in the March 18, 1988 issue of Clarion [Volume 37, No. 6]). This Classis decision has never been appealed in the CanRCs.

Decisions to accept non-confessional membership

There are some who have suggested that our original appeal to Synod 2004 was only about the admission of guests to the Lord's Supper. However a closer examination of the material explaining the basis for the secession in Abbotsford will show that there was much more at stake. The correspondence shows that the matter of confessional membership was also very much in focus. The evidence for this can be found in the original appeal of the CanRC at Abbotsford to Synod 2004.

It was stated in Consideration 4 of this original appeal that the *Acts of General Synod 1998*, Article 130, Considerations C.2 and C.3, outline a number of reasons for amending the proposed agreement with the OPC which had been presented by the CanRC committee to General Synod, namely:

- a) the agreement is too vague;
- b) the agreement does not sufficiently address the differences;
- c) the statement by Rev. J.J. Peterson to Synod 1998 that the OPC has the right to "admit to membership and to the Lord's table those who do not make profession of the Reformed faith," is a contradiction of the OPC standard as contained in the Westminster Larger Catechism (Q & A 173) and to our standard as contained in the Heidelberg Catechism (Q & A 82), and therefore requires clarification by the OPC; and
- d) the statement by the OPC Committee to the CCOPC that, "We (OPC) affirm what you (CanRC) reject – that the church is competent to judge as valid and credible a confession of the Christian faith for communicant membership that is not also in accord with the church's confession" is not consistent with the statements made by Synod 2001 (see Article 45, Consideration 4.12) and therefore requires clarification by the OPC.

The above reasons were not interacted with by either Synod 2001 or Synod 2004. In addition, Synod 1998 had one more reason (*Acts*, Article 130, Consideration C.2) which was that the CCOPC Proposed Agreement (which eventually was entered into by General Synod 2001) "will not help the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to function in a manner that is suitable to one of the churches of the Reformation."

The reason the above concerns were expressed by Synod 1998 is that the OPCs were admitting Baptists as members into the church and to the Lord's Supper, contrary to the Westminster Confession. As is stated in Consideration C.3 of this same Article, "Rev. G.I. Williamson [minister in the OPC] reflects also the concerns of the CanRC [at that time] when he says about this same point, 'In the OPC ... persons are commonly admitted of whom the session [= OPC consistory] know nothing. I have never been able to see how this common practice can be reconciled which the clearly stated requirement of our confession [referring to W.C. Chapter 29, Section 8].'"

Consequently it is evident that the admission to membership and to the Lord's Supper of those who do not make profession of the Reformed faith is nothing less than a return to a "*core-of-the-gospel*" thinking and a relativization of the Reformed doctrine. In connection with this we refer you to 2 Peter 1:20-21, 1 John 2:4, and Revelation 22:4.

As Rev. C. Bouwman wrote in December 1991 in his booklet, The Doctrine of the Church in Reformed/Presbyterian Contacts, "... *it seems safe to conclude that the practices of pulpit exchange and fencing of the Lord's Table as found in Presbyterian Churches ought not to be taken for granted quite to the extent they are. These practices allow for different understandings of the truth, understandings not within but outside the strictures of the adopted Confessions. More, these practices mislead both the guests (be they at the Lord's table or on the pulpit) as well as the congregation members themselves, with the message that the distinctive errors these guests embrace are in fact tolerable. As such, the door is open to a relativizing of the truth*" (pages 26 and 27).

The acceptance of an unscriptural "pluriformity of the church"

The acceptance of an unscriptural "pluriformity of the church," which is rooted in the teachings of Dr. Abraham Kuyper, forms the background to the acceptance of an open Lord's Supper table and non-confessional membership, and has a significant impact on the "*shift in understanding*" in the CanRCs as described below:

a) Biblical objections to this unscriptural "pluriformity of the church":

There are a number of passages from Scripture which emphasize the requirement for the elders of the church to maintain sound Biblical teaching in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ and thus prevent unbiblical doctrines and practices from taking root in the church. We ask your consideration for the following:

- 1) Leviticus 19:19 "*You shall not sow your field with mixed seed.*" See for reference a speech on Christian education by Prof. K. Schilder at <https://defenceofthetruth.com/en/2013/05/no-two-kinds-of-seed-by-k-schilder/>. If this speech applies to Christian education, how much more should it apply to the Christian church!
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:10 "*Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*"
- 3) 2 Peter 1:19-21 "*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no*

prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

- 4) Ephesians 4:1-6 *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*
- 5) Philippians 2:1-2 *"Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."*
- 6) In addition we refer you to Philippians 1:27-28, 1 Peter 3:8-9, Philippians 4:2-3, Romans 12:16, Romans 15:5-6, and 2 Corinthians 13:11.

b) The struggle against this unscriptural "pluriformity of the church":

This struggle began when Synod 1977 made the decision to call the OPC a true church without resolving outstanding divergencies in doctrine and practice. As stated earlier, Synod took this decision without interacting with the decision of Synod 1965 that, *"Correspondence with Churches abroad should not be entered into, until upon a conscientious and serious investigation, it has become apparent that these Churches not only officially embrace the Reformed confession and church polity but also in fact maintain them"* (Acts, Article 141, II). While the CanRCs did not at this time practice pluriformity, the decision to call the OPC a true church did result in a *"shift in understanding"* by acceptance of the principle. For how else can two true churches exist side by side and yet not be one in faith?

This decision paved the way for the CanRCs to be involved as a member of the ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches) in the 1980's. The resulting struggle over the meaning of "unity of faith" resulted in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia ending their membership in that organization.

The struggle deepened when the CanRCs entered into ecclesiastical fellowship (a looser form of sister church relationship) with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) and the Free Church of Scotland (FCS) at Synod 1992. These churches, which were sister churches of the OPC, have identical practices as the OPC regarding the open Lord's Supper table and confessional membership. The OPC complained about these decisions to the CanRCs at Synods 1995 and 1998, claiming that the CanRC was judging Presbyterian churches with a double

standard – one for churches in North American and another for churches elsewhere in the world. It was at this point that the general synod decisions resulted in a further “*shift in understanding*” by acceptance of the practice.

The entering into relationships of Ecclesiastical Fellowship with churches that live side by side without entering into full ecclesiastical unity, represents the official acceptance and practice of church pluriformity. The GKV did this with the Christelijk Gereformeerd Kerken (CGK) and the Netherlands Gereformeerde Kerken (buiten verband). Following the GKV, the CanRC has done this with the OPC, the URCNA, the RCUS and the ERQ.

- c) Unscriptural teachings on covenant and baptism legitimized by this unscriptural “pluriformity of the church”:

None of the above sister churches have acknowledged the legitimacy of the Liberation in 1944 from unscriptural decisions regarding covenant and baptism. While the fact that the 1944 history is relatively unknown in these churches should not prevent ecclesiastical unity, this history becomes important when evaluating the reactions of the OPC and the URCNA to the Federal Vision movement as typified by the pastoral advice given by the URCNA Synod Schererville 2007.

This URCNA Synod gave a “pastoral advice” to reject the “errors” of those (among others) “*who teach that all baptized persons are in the covenant of grace in precisely the same way such that there is no distinction between those who have only an outward relation to the covenant of grace by baptism and those who are united to Christ by grace alone through faith alone*” (HC Q&A21, 60; BC 29) (Acts, Article 72, Recommendations 1(f)). Not only does this statement from the URCNA Synod condemn sound doctrine as heresy, it also takes as starting point the same wrong distinction that was promoted by the General Synods in the Netherlands in 1942 and 1943.

Similar thinking can be found in the OPC. Answer 31 of the Westminster Larger Catechism states that “*The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.*” At the same time answer 166 of this same Catechism states that “*Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him, but infants descending from parents, either both, or but one of them, professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect within the covenant, and to be baptized.*”

The Westminster Standards make matters unclear by artificially distinguishing between a covenant of grace and a covenant of promise. They take their starting point in a covenant of grace established with the elect and thus obscure the fact

that the covenant of grace is established with believers and their seed (see Genesis 17:1-7, Acts 2:38-39, etc.).

- d) False teachings permitted on the pulpit as a result of this unscriptural “pluriformity of the church”:

The simple fact that ministers of these sister churches of the CanRCs are permitted on CanRC pulpits shows that the doctrines that are tolerated in these churches are permitted in the CanRCs as well. The presence of these ministers on CanRC pulpits, in the absence of full ecclesiastical unity, shows the acceptance of the notion of the pluriformity of the church in the CanRCs.

In discussions over unity with the URCNA, CanRC Synod 2007 also decided to relax the requirement for a seminary that is controlled by the churches (see *Acts*, Article 104). This step, together with the readiness of the CanRCs to call ministers from outside their federation has only accelerated the “*shift in understanding.*”

- e) Consequent lack of discipline in the life of the CanRC congregations:

Nowhere does this lack of discipline show itself more clearly than in the way the CanRC's have reacted to members' withdrawal from the church. Members who have left the church to join, for example, the Presbyterian Church of America, the Christian Reformed Church or churches upholding baptist doctrine are wished the Lord's blessing in their new church home. This practice began in the 1980's and has intensified in many CanRC churches in the 1990's and the 2000's.

The CanRC decision to become a member of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) has meant the acceptance, as true churches, of all the members of this organization without true ecclesiastical unity. These churches accept those who hold onto open communion, paedocommunion, believer baptism instead of infant baptism, women deacons, the framework hypothesis (non-literal interpretations of Genesis), etc. As a result, the withdrawal of members from the CanRC to join any NAPARC church is no longer seen as a concern.

Requests

Therefore in consideration of these urgent matters, and our common duty to preserve the truth and to maintain the integrity of the church of Christ in the fear of the Lord, we hope that you will take the time to interact with our overture. We ask that you analyze this overture in the light of the wisdom of our forefathers in 1944, not to discount it because of its source, but to give it serious consideration on account of its content. Please consider whether it will be that through this exercise, weak as it might seem to be, that Christ will preserve His church through a return to “*the old paths, where the good way is*” (Jeremiah 6:16).

Therefore we ask, on the basis of the Considerations we have included in the letters to General Synods 2013, 2016 and 2019 (see Attachment), that you:

- 1) consider and determine that General Synods Carman West 2013, Dunnville 2016 and Edmonton 2019 erred by inappropriately declaring our letters inadmissible;
- 2) acknowledge that the matters brought forward in the above letters have not been properly dealt with by the general synods;

Further, on the basis of the evidence provided above regarding the “*shift in understanding of the doctrine of the church*” as shown by the changes in evaluation by the general synods of the CanRCs, the acceptance of inadequate fencing of the Lord’s Supper, non-confessional membership, and an unscriptural “pluriformity of the church,” we further request that you:

- 3) determine that the general synod decisions establishing ecclesiastical fellowship with the OPC, URC, RCUS, and the ERQ are contrary to Scripture, the reformed confessions and the Church Order;
- 4) discontinue acceptance of general synod decisions entering into or maintaining the above relationships of ecclesiastical fellowship; and
- 5) as requested in our February 28, 2013 letter to General Synod 2013, join with us “*to return to obedience to God’s Word, to the confessional basis as summarized in the Three Forms of Unity,*” and “*to restore the unity which was broken*”

We would appreciate your response. In the event that you do not agree with the above considerations and requests, we would appreciate receiving a detailed interaction based on Scripture, Confession and the Church Order.

We wish you strength and wisdom from the Holy Spirit as you study this matter and we pray that together we may work for the reformation of His church in Canada, the United States, and throughout the world.

Yours in His service,



J. van Laar,
President
Email: vanlaarfarms@gmail.com



J. Vantil,
Clerk
Email: johnvantil@shaw.ca