

## Finance and Administration

Chair: Rev. Paul VanderKlay  
Reporter: Mr. Craig Lubben

### **I. Response to Overture 5 and Overture 6: Amend the Synodical Mandate and Guidelines of *The Banner***

#### **A. Materials**

1. Overture 5, pp. 342-346
2. Overture 6, pp. 346-352
3. Council of Delegates Supplement III A, including Appendix D

#### **B. Recommendations**

1. That synod amend the synodical mandate and guidelines for *The Banner* as follows (with underline indicating additions, ~~striketrough~~ indicating deletions).

#### **The Mandate of *The Banner***

Adopted by Synod 2015 (*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 641)

*The Banner* is a publication of the Christian Reformed Church in North America rather than an independent magazine. Accordingly, the editorial staff, led by the synodically appointed editor in chief, is accountable to the church for the style and content of this magazine. This accountability to the church is realized in a number of diverse, sometimes overlapping, and at times conflicting responsibilities to various groups and structures within the denomination.

All these responsibilities are governed by *The Banner's* synodical mandate to

- (1) inform readers about what is happening in the CRC as well as the church at large,
- (2) provide articles that edify and encourage Christian living,
- (3) stimulate critical thinking about issues related to the Christian faith and the culture of which we are a part in a way that encourages biblical thinking about these issues, in line with our confessional heritage; and
- (4) offer tools to help readers find fresh awareness to seek, learn, worship, and serve as Reformed Christians in contemporary society.
- (5) represent the denomination publicly to the broader Christian church and to the world at large by speaking from a distinctly Reformed perspective in line with our confessions and synodical decisions, representing the CRCNA as its official position.

#### **Guidelines for *The Banner's* Accountability and Freedom**

[section I. unchanged]

#### **II. General responsibilities**

In addition to this direct accountability, the editorial staff carries general responsibilities inherent in the nature of a denominational magazine:

- A. To its subscribers and readers in the Christian Reformed Church for:

1. Reporting in an honest and unbiased manner information about activities affecting the church.
2. Presenting to the readers the issues pertinent to the life of the church in a way that shows the ~~diverse~~ positions held ~~within by~~ the church and encourages biblical and Reformed thinking ~~about of~~ these issues.
3. Edifying readers so as to encourage them to grow in Christian maturity and faith and to live out their faith in daily life.
4. Providing a vehicle through which church members can express their views and opinions on pertinent issues.

*[section II. B, C unchanged]*

### **III. Freedom of editorial staff**

In order that it may carry on these diverse responsibilities, the editorial staff must be granted the freedom to do the following:

- A. Inform its readers and subscribers about what is occurring in the church (including relevant problems, needs, and concerns) even though some persons, congregations, or agencies may prefer that such information not be disseminated.
- B. Investigate and determine the facts regarding any occurrence in the church that appears to merit reporting to readers.
- ~~C. Lead and encourage a responsible discussion of the issues important to the life of the church through editorial comment and publication of articles that represent the various views held within the church.~~
- ~~D. Permit people of the church to voice their views and reactions even though some of these views may be unacceptable to others in the church.~~
- E. C. Provide a biblically prophetic and responsible criticism and evaluation of trends within the church and society and of actions, decisions, policies, programs, etc., being considered by or already approved by ecclesiastical assemblies and agencies with proper acknowledgement and respect for the official positions of the CRCNA and within the confines of our confessional covenant commitments.

*[section IV. unchanged]*

#### **Grounds:**

- a. While it is necessary for any publication to consider and allow for diverse viewpoints, as the magazine of the CRCNA it should represent our denomination's official confessional and biblical positions faithfully and acknowledge any articles which are in conflict with them clearly so as to avoid the current confusion within and outside the denomination.
- b. Since *The Banner* does represent the CRC, the publication should do so in a way that accurately fulfills the synodical mandate to think critically on various issues and are in line with the existing regulations under "Editorial Integrity," point A: "A. *The Banner* materials should be faithful to Scripture and the confessions."

2. That synod declare this to be its response to Overtures 5 and 6.