

**Resolution on the Relationship
between the
Reformed Church in America
and the
Christian Reformed Church in North America:**

The Past

Recognizing that the history of our two denominations since 1857 has been marked by division and often accompanied by mutual mistrust, judgmental attitudes toward one another, and an unholy distance in our fellowship; and

Acknowledging that our dispositions and actions toward one another often have been marred by sin and fallen short of the mutual love and bonds of unity desired by God for the church of Jesus Christ; and

Realizing that the history of our broken relationship has caused pain and suffering throughout generations within families and between others divided by this separation, and has presented a distorted witness within society;

Therefore, we encourage our churches to reflect on the costs of the lack of faithfulness that have marked the history of separation between our two denominations, and to prayerfully ask for the healing of memories and wounds endured by many over the past 157 years.

The Present

Noting the significant growth in partnership and programmatic cooperation between our denominations especially in the past two decades, encompassing a wide range of activities from starting new churches to combining health insurance programs; and

Affirming our relationship of full communion, the exchangeability of ministers of Word and sacrament between our congregations, and examples of new congregations belonging jointly to both our denominations; and

Welcoming the growth of trust and the greater effectiveness of ministry that has been the frequent result of our growing cooperation together,

Therefore, we celebrate the new realities being created through expanding initiatives of partnership between the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and we give thanks to God for all those occasions where we are now working together for the sake of God's kingdom.

The Future

Believing that participation in God's mission calls all followers of Christ to deepen bonds of unity and strengthen our common witness; and

Desiring to obey the persistent biblical call to seek the unity of Christ's body and the reconciliation of relationships with one another, even while we acknowledge long-standing differences remaining between us; and

Understanding that this particular relationship is part of the broader ecumenical journey that beckons us to make more manifest our unity in Christ, which is both God's gift and our obligation;

Therefore, as the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America and the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, we declare that the principle that guides us, and the intention that motivates us, is to "act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel us to act separately"; and further,

We jointly instruct the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the General Synod Council of the Reformed Church in America, in looking to the future relationship between our two denominations, to be guided by this principle.