

recurring presence of racialized violence, systemic racism, and ethnic strife throughout the world.

—*Adopted*

The following negative votes are registered: John R. De Vries (Holland) and Kraig R. Van Houten (Northern Michigan).

8. That this be synod's response to Overture 13.

—*Adopted*

ARTICLE 62

The afternoon session adjourns at 5:15 p.m. Mr. Lawrence J. Birchler (Central Plains) leads in closing prayer.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, June 15, 2016 **Eleventh Session**

ARTICLE 63

The evening session convenes at 7:01 p.m. Rev. Derek Buikema (Chicago South) leads in opening prayer.

ARTICLE 64

Dr. Steven R. Timmermans, executive director, introduces a video, *Our Journey: Identity* for viewing by the delegates.

ARTICLE 65

Advisory Committee 9, Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage, Rev. Peter A. Hoytema reporting, according to the Rules for Synodical Procedure, reads the report of Advisory Committee 9.

Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports)

A. Materials

1. Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports), including Appendices A-D, pp. 361-443
2. Overtures 15-37 (pp. 587-658), Overture 38 (Supplement)
3. Communications 3-4 (pp. 662-68)

B. Privilege of the floor

1. Majority Report: Rev. Rolf T. Bouma, chair; Ms. Julia Smith, reporter
2. Minority Report: Ms. Jessica Driesenga; Rev. Dr. John M. Rottman

C. Recommendations

1. That synod receive the majority and minority reports as information and recommend to the churches the pastoral guidance of the minority report (*Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 436-43) in conversation and in keeping with the synodical decisions of 1973, 1999, and 2002.

Grounds:

- a. The minority report, in its provision of greater clarity (particularly prohibiting the solemnization of same-sex marriages and stronger cautions about involvement of officebearers in such ceremonies as well as helpful distinctions between participation in the life of the church and participation in its leadership) reflects greater fidelity to the mandate of Synod 2013 as well as to our collective understanding of the proper expression of same-sex attraction as articulated by Synods 1973 and 2002.
 - b. The clarified guidelines articulated in the minority report provide a needed balance of freedom of individual conscience (championed by the majority report) with sensitivity to the consciences of others (cf. 1 Cor. 8:9-13) and exhibit greater fidelity to the integrity of church leaders' life and doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16) while supporting the witness of the church as a family of holy love and loving holiness (1 John 5:2-3).
 - c. While the majority report correctly calls the church to repentance for our sin against same-sex attracted brothers and sisters, it does not go on to adequately present the inclusion of repentance (turning away from sin and running to new life in Christ) as part of the gospel for those of us who sin by engaging in same-sex sexual behavior. This universal call to repentance is central to Christ and the ministry of his church (2 Peter 3:9).
 - d. The minority report's added engagement with the positive view of marriage articulated in the 1980 statement on Marriage Guidelines provides helpful resources for churches to thoughtfully respond to the reality of same-sex marriage in our time and in our church communities.
2. That synod decide to place a reference to the pastoral guidance of the minority report as a new Supplement to Church Order Article 69-c. It is intended that the Supplement to Article 69-c will refer to pages 436-43 in the *Agenda for Synod 2016* and will indicate that the decision of Synod 2016 represents one example of how synod has determined that a marriage is considered to be in conflict with the Word of God.
 3. That synod dismiss the study committee with thanks.
 4. That synod appoint a new study committee to articulate a foundation-laying biblical theology of human sexuality that pays particular attention to biblical conceptions of gender and sexuality. The central aim of this theological task will be to provide concise yet clear ethical guidance for what constitutes a holy and healthy Christian sexual life, and in light of this to serve the church with pastoral, ecclesial, and missional guidance that explains how the gospel provides redemptive affirmation and hope for those experiencing sexual questioning, temptation, and sin.
 - a. In addition to these broad outlines, the study will include the following three components:
 - 1) Discussion outlining how a Reformed hermeneutic does or does not comport with readings of Scripture being employed to endorse what

are, for the historic church, groundbreaking conclusions regarding human sexual behavior and identification.

- 2) Dialogue with, and potential critique of, untraditional conclusions arising from arguments about a new movement of the Spirit (e.g., Acts 15), as well as conclusions arising from scientific and social scientific studies.
- 3) Reflection and evaluation of whether or not, with respect to same-sex behavior and other issues identified in the study, it will be advisable for future synods to consider
 - changing the main text of Church Order Article 69 (see Overtures 18, 19, 20, 21, 31, 38).
 - declaring a *status confessionis* (see Overture 16).
 - appointing a team of individuals to draft a new confession, in the style of the Contemporary Testimony, on human embodiment and sexuality that reflects and secures the teachings and conclusions of the report (see Overture 28).

b. The committee will be constituted of twelve individuals, CRC members who adhere to the CRC's biblical view on marriage and same-sex relationships. These individuals will be gifted and suited for this task. Ideally the committee will include

- at least three ethnic minority pastors and/or theologians
- at least three faculty members from Calvin Theological Seminary: one Old Testament; one New Testament; one philosophical, ethical, or historical theology
- a same-sex attracted and a gender dysphoric person
- two pastors
- a philosopher
- a scientist

Grounds:

- 1) A diverse makeup of study committee members will serve well to ensure a variety of perspectives and expertise.
 - 2) Overtures 15, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, and Communication 4 all identify a too narrow focus and/or gaps in the CRC's theological, pastoral, ecclesial, and/or missional reflection on these critical and urgent matters.
 - 3) A study which promotes a positive and expansive vision of human sexuality and gender, as well as identifying areas of brokenness and sin, will enable the church to be a beacon of hope, empowered to speak prophetically, with clarity and wisdom, to the culture in which we live.
5. That synod declare this to be its response to Overtures 15-37 (pp. 587-658), Overture 38 (Supplement), and Communications 3 and 4 (pp. 662-68).

According to the Rules of Synodical Procedure, Rev. Rolf Bouma, chair of the study committee, presents the following recommendations of the majority report of the Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage:

Recommendations (majority report of the study committee)

- A. That synod receive the accompanying report for information and recommend it for consideration to churches, pastors, and church leaders and members for background understanding and to promote informed discussion on the matter of civil same-sex marriage.
- B. That synod adopt the pastoral guidance contained in section VI of this report as its counsel to churches, pastors, church leaders, and members for addressing the ramifications of civil same-sex marriage as it affects the church and its members.
- C. That synod accept this report as fulfilling the mandate of the Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage.
- D. That synod dismiss the committee.

According to the Rules of Synodical Procedure, Ms. Jessica Driesenga, signatory of the minority report of the study committee, speaks to the purpose and content of the minority report of the Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage.

Following the rules of procedure, synod returns to consideration of the recommendations of the majority report of the study committee. After a time of deliberation regarding the majority report, delegates table the recommendations of the majority report of the Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage to consider the recommendations of Advisory Committee 9.

The following negative vote to table the report is registered: Rev. Chelsey L. Harmon (B.C. North-West).

Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports)

Recommendations

1. That synod receive the majority and minority reports as information and recommend to the churches the pastoral guidance of the minority report (*Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 436-43) in conversation and in keeping with the synodical decisions of 1973, 1999, and 2002.

Grounds:

- a. The minority report, in its provision of greater clarity (particularly prohibiting the solemnization of same-sex marriages and stronger cautions about involvement of officebearers in such ceremonies as well as helpful distinctions between participation in the life of the church and participation in its leadership) reflects greater fidelity to the mandate of Synod 2013 as well as to our collective understanding of the proper expression of same-sex attraction as articulated by Synods 1973 and 2002.
- b. The clarified guidelines articulated in the minority report provide a needed balance of freedom of individual conscience (championed by the majority report) with sensitivity to the consciences of others (cf. 1 Cor. 8:9-13) and exhibit greater fidelity to the integrity of church leaders' life and doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16) while supporting the

witness of the church as a family of holy love and loving holiness (1 John 5:2-3).

- c. While the majority report correctly calls the church to repentance for our sin against same-sex attracted brothers and sisters, it does not go on to adequately present the inclusion of repentance (turning away from sin and running to new life in Christ) as part of the gospel for those of us who sin by engaging in same-sex sexual behavior. This universal call to repentance is central to Christ and the ministry of his church (2 Peter 3:9).
- d. The minority report's added engagement with the positive view of marriage articulated in the 1980 statement on Marriage Guidelines provides helpful resources for churches to thoughtfully respond to the reality of same-sex marriage in our time and in our church communities.

Rev. Paul R. De Vries, president of synod, offers prayer prior to the vote.

—*Adopted*

The following negative votes are registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie), Robert A. Arbogast (Lake Erie), James M. Boer (Grandville), LuAnne England (Lake Erie), Chelsey L. Harmon (B.C. North-West), Jennie Hengeveld-Misner (Northern Illinois), John Meiboom (Toronto), Leonard T. Riemersma (Quinte), Sharon L. Wildeboer (Quinte), and Daniel C. Zylstra (Eastern Canada).

2. That synod decide to place a reference to the pastoral guidance of the minority report as a new Supplement to Church Order Article 69-c. It is intended that the Supplement to Article 69-c will refer to pages 436-43 in the *Agenda for Synod 2016* (in Recommendation 1 above) and will indicate that the decision of Synod 2016 represents one example of how synod has determined that a marriage is considered to be in conflict with the Word of God.

—*Adopted*

The following negative vote is registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie).

3. That synod dismiss the study committee with thanks.

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 68.)

ARTICLE 66

The evening session adjourns at 9:35 p.m. Rev. Jonathan L. Spronk leads in closing prayer.

THURSDAY MORNING, June 16, 2016
Twelfth Session

ARTICLE 67

Rev. Sam Lee, liturgist, gives thanks to God for another day to work and worship. He shares that we celebrate the beauty of creation, celebrate our belonging, and long for the fullness of life in Jesus.

Delegates spend time in silence. The praise team (Ms. Diane Dykgraaf, Ms. Nalini Van Den Bosch, Rev. Vern Swieringa, and Rev. Sam Lee) leads delegates in singing “Alleluia” and “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.”

Delegates read Psalm 148 responsively and sing “All Creatures of Our God and King.” Rev. Lee offers prayer followed by the singing of “Oh, How Good Is Christ the Lord.”

Rev. Christian R. Pedersen reads John 10:10 and speaks to delegates about “Longing for God’s Abundant Life,” sharing that this is the heart of the gospel—it is not a fringe benefit. Delegates respond by singing “Spirit of the Living God.”

Rev. Pedersen offers the benediction, and the service concludes with the passing of the peace.

Roll call indicates that the following delegate is absent: Rev. Gideon E. Wamala (Iakota).

ARTICLE 68

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 65.)

Advisory Committee 9, Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage, Rev. Peter A. Hoytema reporting, presents the following:

Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports)

A. Materials

1. Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports), including Appendices A-D, pp. 361-443
2. Overtures 15-37 (pp. 587-658), Overture 38 (Supplement)
3. Communications 3-4 (pp. 662-68)

B. Privilege of the floor

1. Majority Report: Rev. Rolf T. Bouma, chair; Ms. Julia Smith, reporter
2. Minority Report: Ms. Jessica Driesenga; Rev. Dr. John M. Rottman

C. Recommendation

The advisory committee continues to present its recommendations. (Advisory Committee 9, Recommendations 1-3 were considered in Article 67.)

4. That synod appoint a new study committee to articulate a foundation-laying biblical theology of human sexuality that pays particular attention to biblical conceptions of gender and sexuality. The central aim of this theological task will be to provide concise yet clear ethical guidance for

what constitutes a holy and healthy Christian sexual life, and in light of this to serve the church with pastoral, ecclesial, and missional guidance that explains how the gospel provides redemptive affirmation and hope for those experiencing sexual questioning, temptation, and sin.

a. In addition to these broad outlines, the study will include the following three components:

- 1) Discussion outlining how a Reformed hermeneutic does or does not comport with readings of Scripture being employed to endorse what are, for the historic church, ground breaking conclusions regarding human sexual behavior and identification.
- 2) Dialogue with, and potential critique of, untraditional conclusions arising from arguments about a new movement of the Spirit (e.g., Acts 15), as well as conclusions arising from scientific and social scientific studies.
- 3) Reflection and evaluation of whether or not, with respect to same-sex behavior and other issues identified in the study, it will be advisable for future synods to consider
 - changing the main text of Church Order Article 69 (see Overtures 18, 19, 20, 21, 31, 38).
 - declaring a *status confessionis* (see Overture 16).
 - appointing a team of individuals to draft a statement of faith, perhaps in the style of the Contemporary Testimony, on human embodiment and sexuality that reflects and secures the teachings and conclusions of the report (see Overture 28).

—Adopted

The following negative vote is registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie).

b. The committee will be constituted of twelve individuals, CRC members who adhere to the CRC's biblical view on marriage and same-sex relationships. These individuals will be gifted and suited for this task. Ideally the committee will include

- at least three ethnic minority pastors and/or theologians
- at least three faculty members from Calvin Theological Seminary: one Old Testament; one New Testament; one philosophical, ethical, or historical theology
- a same-sex attracted and a gender dysphoric person
- two pastors
- a philosopher
- a scientist
- a *promotor fidei*

Grounds:

- 1) A diverse makeup of study committee members will serve well to ensure a variety of perspectives and expertise.
- 2) Overtures 15, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, and Communication 4 all identify a too narrow focus and/or gaps in the CRC's theological, pastoral, ecclesial, and/or missional reflection on these critical and urgent matters.

- 3) A study which promotes a positive and expansive vision of human sexuality and gender, as well as identifying areas of brokenness and sin, will enable the church to be a beacon of hope, empowered to speak prophetically, with clarity and wisdom, to the culture in which we live.

—*Recommitted*

The following negative vote is registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie).

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 73.)

ARTICLE 69

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued from Article 26.)

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services, Rev. Chelsey L. Harmon reporting, presents the following:

Response to Overture 3: Adopt the Practice of Appointing Same-sex Oriented Advisers to Synod

A. *Materials*: Overture 3, pp. 548-54

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod not accede to Overture 3, Recommendation A.

Grounds:

- a. The category of “same-sex oriented” (as well as the categories of “sexual minority person” and “LGBT+ person” as used in the overture) are broad and not well defined. (The overture does not define the qualifications and characteristics for members in this category of adviser, and neither do the rules of synodical procedure.)
- b. In addition, sexuality and sexual identities have moral dimensions that other categories of advisers to synod do not.
- c. Even within these gender- and sexuality-related categories, there are differences of opinion and disposition among people in those categories.
- d. Identifying suitable candidates will be problematic, since many faithful people in this category may not wish to be publicly identified (see Overture 31, *Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 628-29).
- e. The characterization of same-sex oriented people in the same manner as ethnic minorities is particularly offensive to many ethnic minorities.

—*Adopted*

The following negative votes are registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie), John G. Aukema (Zeeland), Jennie Hengeveld-Misner (Northern Illinois), Zachary J. Olson (Grand Rapids North), Christopher J. Schoon (Hamilton), and Daniel C. Zylstra (Eastern Canada).

(The report of Advisory Committee 1 is continued in Article 80.)

ARTICLE 70

The morning session adjourns at 12:10 p.m. Rev. William G. Vis (Pacific Northwest) leads in closing prayer.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, June 16, 2016
Thirteenth Session

ARTICLE 71

The afternoon session convenes at 1:20 p.m. Mr. Mark Charles (Doctrine of Discovery Task Force member) leads in opening prayer.

ARTICLE 72

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Article 19.)

Advisory Committee 4, Congregational Support Ministry I, Rev. Daniel Zylstra reporting, presents the following:

I. Doctrine of Discovery Task Force

A. Materials

1. Doctrine of Discovery Task Force Report (including Appendices A-B), pp. 475-543
2. Overture 14: Suspend Moving Forward with Adoption of the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force Report, pp. 579-87
3. Communications 1 and 2, pp. 659-62

B. Privilege of the floor: Mr. Mike Hogeterp, chair, and designated task force members when the report of the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force is addressed.

C. Recommendations

1. That synod acknowledge the need for great sensitivity, discernment, and long-term commitment in addressing the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, particularly in addressing CRCNA mission work among Indigenous peoples.

—*Adopted*

2. That synod acknowledge that the existing Doctrine of Discovery is a heresy and we reject and condemn it. It helped shape western culture and led to great injustices.

—*Adopted*

3. That synod, nevertheless, recognize also the gospel motivation in response to the Great Commission, as well as the love and grace extended over many years by missionaries sent out by the CRCNA to the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the United States. For this we give God thanks, and honor their dedication.

—*Adopted*

4. That synod recognize the pain of those who suffered from their experiences in the residential schools of the United States and Canada, including Rehoboth Christian School, and lament any of our mistakes that caused pain.
—*Adopted*
5. That synod affirm the actions of Rehoboth Christian School in publishing its “Statement of Confession and Reconciliation” upon its 100th anniversary, and its promises and fulfillment of promises to serve well the diverse community in McKinley County, New Mexico.
—*Adopted*
6. That synod celebrate the current culture at the Rehoboth Christian School, the Zuni Christian Mission School, and our Urban Aboriginal Ministries along with the many stories of renewal, transformation, grace, and cultural exchange as together God’s people remain committed to mutual learning, encouragement, and healing.
—*Adopted*
7. That synod direct the executive director to work with the appropriate agencies and offices in committing the CRC to walk alongside affected parties, listen to their stories, lament, and weep with them until such time as we can “walk in beauty together.”
—*Adopted*
8. That synod affirm initial actions for justice and reconciliation of the CRC in Canada that are already in process:
 - the public acknowledgment of “systemic evils behind colonialism,” the confession of the CRC’s “sins of assimilation and paternalism,” and the commitment to live “into a sacred call of unity and reconciliation,” as expressed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada.
 - follow-up initiatives on the calls to action of the TRC.—*Adopted*
9. That synod direct the executive director, working in conjunction with denominational agencies to consider a denomination-wide annual Day of Justice for the purpose of coming together as a body of Christ to recognize the plight of those who are oppressed, marginalized, and suffer in a culture of discrimination. On this day, people of the Christian Reformed Church would come together to confess, lament, and listen to the stories of those who have experienced pain at the hands of others, read the Belhar Confession, and then open the doors to promoting just solutions to the problems created by the evils of racism. Through this Day of Justice, as the body of Christ, we would resolve to transform our world, seek to change hearts through Christ’s redeeming love, and promote the welfare of our brothers and sisters who cry out for justice.
—*Adopted*
10. That synod declare this to be its response to the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force report, Overture 14, and Communications 1 and 2.
—*Adopted*
11. That synod dismiss the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force with thanks.
—*Adopted*

Delegates, guests, and staff circle the CFAC auditorium, holding hands as Mr. Harold Roscher offers prayer for those who have experienced pain at the hands of others.

II. Response to Overture 8: Reaffirm the CRC's Commitment to Love All People

A. *Materials*: Overture 8, pp. 560-61

B. *Recommendations*

1. That synod reaffirm our commitment to love all people by standing and reciting together Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 40.

—*Granted*

Delegates rise and read the following from the Heidelberg Catechism:

Lord's Day 40

Question & Answer 105

Q. What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor—not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds—and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

Question & Answer 106

Q. Does this commandment refer only to murder?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness. In God's sight all such are disguised forms of murder.

Question & Answer 107

Q. Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way?

A. No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly toward them, to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.

2. That synod declare this to be its response to Overture 8.

—*Adopted*

III. Congregational Services of the Christian Reformed Church

A. *Committee for Contact with the Government*

1. *Materials*: Committee for Contact with the Government Report, pp. 203-204

2. *Recommendation*

That synod commend the work of the Centre for Public Dialogue, the public arm of the Committee for Contact with the Government.

—*Adopted*

B. Disability Concerns

1. Materials: Disability Concerns Report, pp. 205-208

2. Recommendation

That synod commend the work of the Office of Disability Concerns.

—Adopted

C. Race Relations

1. Materials: Race Relations Report, pp. 209-10

2. Recommendation

That synod commend the work of the Office of Race Relations.

—Adopted

D. Safe Church Ministry

1. Materials: Safe Church Ministry Report, pp. 211-12

2. Recommendations

a. That synod commend the work of the Office of Safe Church Ministry.

b. That synod highlight for the churches the availability of many helpful resources through the Safe Church Ministry website (www.crcna.org/SafeChurch).

—Adopted

E. Social Justice and Hunger Action

1. Materials: Social Justice and Hunger Action Report, pp. 213-16

2. Recommendations

a. That synod commend the work of Social Justice and Hunger Action (the Office of Social Justice).

b. That synod highlight for the churches the availability of the free resource Changed for Life, created to “provide short-term mission teams with quality materials that engage all participants and keep long-term goals in mind.” This resource is available through www.bechangedforlife.org.

—Adopted

F. Urban Aboriginal Ministries

1. Materials: Urban Aboriginal Ministries Report, pp. 217-18

2. Recommendation

That synod commend the work of Urban Aboriginal Ministries in Canada as they bring healing, reconciliation, and restored relationships between Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

—Adopted

IV. Friendship Ministries

A. *Materials*: Friendship Ministries Report, p. 354

B. *Recommendation*

That synod commend the work of Friendship Ministries.

—Adopted

ARTICLE 73

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued from Article 68.)

Advisory Committee 9, Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage, Rev. Peter A. Hoytema reporting, presents the following:

Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports)

A. *Materials*

1. Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage (majority and minority reports), including Appendices A-D, pp. 361-443
2. Overtures 15-37 (pp. 587-658), Overture 38 (Supplement)
3. Communications 3-4 (pp. 662-68)

B. *Privilege of the floor*

1. Majority Report: Rev. Rolf T. Bouma, chair; Ms. Julia Smith, reporter
2. Minority Report: Ms. Jessica Driesenga; Rev. Dr. John M. Rottman

C. *Recommendations*

The committee presents the following motion in response to synod's request to revise the original Advisory Committee 9, Recommendation 4, b:

- b. The committee will be constituted of up to twelve individuals, CRC members who represent diversity in gender, ethnicity, binationality, and ministry location, and who adhere to the CRC's biblical view on marriage and same-sex relationships. These individuals will be gifted and suited for this task. Ideally the committee will include
 - at least three ethnic minority pastors and/or theologians
 - at least three faculty members from Calvin Theological Seminary: one Old Testament; one New Testament; one philosophical, ethical, or historical theology
 - a same-sex attracted person
 - a gender dysphoric person
 - two pastors
 - a chaplain
 - a philosopher
 - a scientist
 - a *promotor fidei* (not necessarily to serve as a member of the committee)

Grounds:

- 1) A diverse makeup of study committee members will serve well to ensure a variety of perspectives and expertise.

- 2) Overtures 15, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, and Communication 4 all identify a too narrow focus and/or gaps in the CRC's theological, pastoral, ecclesial, and/or missional reflection on these critical and urgent matters.
- 3) A study which promotes a positive and expansive vision of human sexuality and gender, as well as identifying areas of brokenness and sin, will enable the church to be a beacon of hope, empowered to speak prophetically, with clarity and wisdom, to the culture in which we live.

—*Adopted*

- c. That synod provide the study committee with a five-year window to complete their task, such that the committee will present their final report to Synod 2021. In consideration of this extended time frame, a written summary of the committee's work will be provided by February 1, 2019, for inclusion in the *Agenda of Synod 2019* in order for Synod 2019 to dialogue with and provide feedback to the committee.

Grounds:

- 1) The scope of the task assigned to the committee needs more time to be completed than the typical three-year window allows.
- 2) The consideration of *status confessionis* is a weighty matter that requires extended and careful deliberation.

—*Adopted*

The following negative vote is registered: Matthew T. Ackerman (Lake Erie).

5. That synod declare this to be its response to Overtures 15-37 (pp. 587-658), Overture 38 (Supplement), and Communications 3 and 4 (pp. 662-68).

—*Adopted*

Rev. Peter A. Hoytema offers prayer for the matters discussed and adopted.

(The report of Advisory Committee 9 is continued in Article 84.)

ARTICLE 74

The afternoon session is adjourned at 5:45 p.m. Rev. Joseph M. Kamphuis (Red Mesa) leads in closing prayer.

THURSDAY EVENING, June 16, 2016 Fourteenth Session

ARTICLE 75

The evening session convenes at 7:00 p.m. Rev. Roger W. Sparks (Minnkota) and Mr. Aren T. Plante (young adult representative) lead in opening prayer.

ARTICLE 76

Synod enters into executive session.

(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 53.)