

*Grounds:*

- a. This explains the expectations of the relationship between our churches.
- b. Memorandums of Understanding have become the preferred way for denominations to formalize their relationships.

—Adopted

5. That synod approve the “Common Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Baptism” (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 354-55). (Appendix B will reflect the changed signatory as Rev. Joel R. Boot, Interim Executive Director.)

*Grounds:*

- a. The “Common Agreement” officially affirms a longstanding CRC practice of recognizing the validity of Roman Catholic baptisms (see Church Order Article 58; *Acts of Synod 1944*, p. 351).
- b. The CRC, by entering into this “Common Agreement,” would help testify to and remind us that we are baptized members not first of all of the CRC but of the “one holy catholic church.”

—Adopted

The following negative vote is registered: Doug Shank (Lake Superior).

6. That synod encourage CRC congregations to use the language of the common “Certificate of Baptism” (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, p. 356) in the issue of all future baptismal certificates.

*Grounds:*

- a. “Compatibility in the form and content of these [certificates] would be a sign of ecumenical cooperation and a safeguard of the validity of what we celebrate together as Christians” (“These Living Waters”).
- b. Use of this common certificate would remove unnecessary obstacles when Roman Catholics join the Christian Reformed Church or vice-versa.

—Adopted

7. That synod receive “These Living Waters” (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 357-440) as an ecumenical document on baptism and recommend it to the churches for further study and reflection.

*Grounds:*

- a. These documents have been prepared through extensive dialogue between representatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and representatives of the CRC and other Reformed churches.
- b. These documents offer detailed study of convergences and divergences between Roman Catholic and Reformed views of baptism.

—Adopted

8. That synod receive “This Bread of Life” (*Agenda for Synod 2011*, pp. 440-510) as an ecumenical document on the Lord’s Supper and recommend it to the churches for further study and reflection.

*Grounds:*

- a. These documents have been prepared through extensive dialogue between representatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and representatives of the CRC and other Reformed churches.
- b. These documents offer detailed study of convergences and divergences between Roman Catholic and Reformed views of the Lord's Supper.

—*Adopted*

9. That synod request the BOT to ask Faith Alive Christian Resources to explore with the educational and publishing agencies of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the United Church of Christ the possibility of jointly preparing educational materials on the documents produced by the U.S. Roman Catholic-Reformed dialogue on the sacraments.

*Grounds:*

- a. Such an effort would help broaden the impact of this round of ecumenical dialogue by making the results more accessible to leaders and congregations in our denominations.
- b. Working collaboratively on such a project would save time and money for all the denominations involved.

—*Adopted*

10. That synod adopt the following resolution of appreciation:

For their outstanding work as CRC representatives to the Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue sessions regarding the sacraments, synod expresses enthusiastic thanks to Dr. Lyle Bierma, Dr. Ronald Feenstra, Dr. Sue Rozeboom, and, posthumously, to Dr. David Engelhard and Dr. George Vandervelde. The documents they helped to produce, which appear as appendices to the EIRC report in the *Agenda for Synod 2011*, breathe the Spirit of Jesus' prayer for the church in John 17. In these documents, our scholars' diligent devotion to accuracy regarding both convergences and divergences in official church teachings, reflects Jesus' prayer, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17). At the same time, their generous quest for mutual understanding reflects Jesus' prayer "that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:22). The combination of depth and clarity in these documents will lead to a combination of learning and inspiration as churches respond to them with the further study and reflection to which synod calls us. We thank God for the Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue and for the role of the CRC delegation in it. And we pray that the study of these documents may serve as a response to Jesus' prayer that "they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:23).

—*Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 7 is continued in Article 31.)