

21.8 DEPUTIES TRANSLATION OF DOCTRINAL CREEDS, FORMULARIES AND PRAYER (Artt 96, 181, 326)

- A. The Report is regarded as stated.
- B. **Decision:** The Report is referred to Commission Doctrinal 2.
- C. Rev L du P van der Vyver reports on behalf of Commission Doctrinal 2.
- D. **Decision:** Approved. The Formularies for Signature for Ministers of the Word and Proponents will also be formulated in the singular like those for professors, elders and deacons, since this better suits the content.
- E. The Synod also decides: The to-be-appointed Deputies receive the assignment to translate all the formularies into all the languages that are spoken in the GKSA.

F. REPORT

SIGNINGS FORMULARIES

(Revised translations - forwarded to churches for evaluation)

❖ SIGNINGS FORMULARY FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD

We, the undersigned ministers of the Word of God, that resort under the classis *NN*, state sincerely and in clear conscience before the Lord by strength of these signings of ours, that we whole-heartedly believe and are convinced that all the articles of doctrine contained in the Formularies of **Unity**, *i.e.* the Belgian Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt or the Five Articles against Remonstrants as determined during Synod Dordrecht 1618-19, do in all respects comply with the Word of God. We, therefore, promise that we shall diligently teach and faithfully defend the above-mentioned doctrine, without openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, teaching or writing anything that would be in contradiction of the doctrine.

Not only shall we reject all heresies that go against this doctrine, including those that had been condemned by Synod referred to above, but also shall we be prepared to contradict and refute such heresies and to do what we can to prevent them from penetrating the church.

In the event of our ever coming to a point of objection, or of opposing convictions with regard to this doctrine, we promise not to make it known openly or in secret in our preaching or in writing or our teachings and neither to defend our differing views likewise. We shall first make our relevant views known to the church council, classis or synod to be heard and questioned and we are prepared to submit ourselves always to the judgement of the church council, classis or synod. We state that we do understand that we are liable to **immediate** expulsion from our ministry if we act in an opposing manner or take steps of action against them.

If at any time the church council, classis or synod for important reasons and for the sake of unity and purity of the doctrine would request further explanation of our points of view concerning any article of the Reformed confession, we shall respond accordingly and we do herewith also promise to accept willingly such penalty as determined above. We do, however, reserve the right to lodge an appeal if we feel or experience that an injustice had occurred on the part of the church council, classis or synod. In the time of the appeal pending its hearing we shall comply with such ruling as had been passed by the particular synod.

❖ SIGNINGS FORMULARY FOR PROBATIONERS

We, the undersigned probationers, state sincerely and in clear conscience before the Lord by strength of these signings of ours, that we whole-heartedly believe and are convinced that

all the articles of doctrine contained in the Doctrinal Creed of the Reformed Churches of South Africa, are in all respects true to the Word of God.

We solemnly commit ourselves to teach this doctrine diligently and to defend it loyally, whether we be called to present it to congregations or in any other way, and without openly or in secret or directly or indirectly, teaching or writing something that would deviate from this doctrine and to disapprove of and counteract all heresies that are contradictory to this doctrine.

We furthermore promise to approach the Particular Synod/ Regional Synod or church council or classis if we should have any objection to this doctrine or any point of it so that we may be judged, while we shall be prepared and willing to submit ourselves to such ruling as would be passed by the honourable Particular Synod or furthermore to the ruling of church council or classis involved.

We do, however, reserve the right to lodge an appeal if we feel or experience that an injustice had occurred on the part of the church council, classis or synod. In the time of the appeal pending its hearing we shall submit ourselves to such ruling as had been passed by the Particular Synod/Regional Synod or church council or classis.

We do furthermore state that we shall be willing to respond if at any time the Particular Synod/Regional Synod or the mentioned church meetings would, for important reasons and for the retainment of unity and purity of the doctrine, request or demand further explanation of our points of view concerning any article of the Reformed confession.

We do state that we understand that the honourable Particular Synod/Regional Synod may recall and invalidate our right to address a congregation if we take action against the above.

❖ **SIGNINGS FORMULARY FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS**

I, the undersigned elder/deacon of the Reformed Church *NN*, state sincerely and in clear conscience before the Lord by strength of this signing of mine, that I whole-heartedly believe and am convinced that all the articles and teachings of doctrine contained in the Three Formularies of Unity, *i.e.* the Belgian Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt, as accepted by the Reformed Churches of South Africa, do in all respects correspond with the Word of God.

I, therefore promise, according to the demands of my office, to be faithful at upholding, defending and advancing the mentioned doctrine, without openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, doing or teaching or writing anything to its contrary, and to combat and refute and eradicate from church all heresies that are not in line with it. I furthermore promise to share any doubts or uncertainties that I might experience with regard to the doctrine or certain points of it, with the church council to be questioned accordingly, while I also promise to submit myself willingly to judgements made by church council in accordance with relevant stipulations provided in the Church Order.

I do, furthermore, state that I shall be willing to respond if at any time the church council, for important reasons and for the retainment of unity and purity of the doctrine, would deem it necessary to request or demand further explanation of my point of view concerning any article of the mentioned doctrine.

I do, however, reserve the right to lodge an appeal if I feel or experience that an injustice had occurred on the part of the church council on condition that I, in the time pending the hearing of the appeal, shall submit myself to such ruling as had been passed by the mentioned meeting.

Decision: Approved. The Formularies for Signature for Ministers of the Word and Proponents will be formulated in the singular like those for professors, elders and deacons, since this better suits the content.

The revision of the use of the Afrikaans words “Enigheid” and “metterdaad” is referred to the to-be-appointed Deputies for final confirmation.

The Synod also decides: The to-be-mentioned Deputies receive the assignment to translate all the formularies into all the languages spoken in the GKSA.