

## 23.2 REPORT OF THE DEPUTIES FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE *ALMANAK* (Artt 119, 277)

- A. Rev W Vogel delivers the Report.
- B. **Decision:** The Report is referred to the Commission for Publications and Media.
- C. Rev AP Kruger reports on behalf of the Commission for Publications and Media.

### D. REPORT

#### 1. Assignment

See Acta 2006:754

- 1.1 The *Almanak* will be published again and an editorial board has to be appointed (*If possible, the Editor should be one of the Potchefstroom ministers*) with the assignment to:
  - 1.1.1 Publish the *Almanak* with daily devotions
  - 1.1.2 The details of the Chairperson of the deaconate of every church will also be published. The names of elder and deacons are retained.
  - 1.1.3 To look at possibilities of more intensive marketing of the *Almanak* in order to make the publication available in as many homes as possible and to investigate a possible English market.
  - 1.1.4 Investigate the possibility to also publish the *Almanak* in English and to make it available on the Website of the Churches. This request is not only aimed at the needs of the Internet user, but also at the needs of English speaking members of the Reformed Churches.
  - 1.1.5 Consider the possibility to compile an over-arching Deputy group for Publications so that mutual matters such as for instance Finances can be dealt with more conveniently.
  - 1.1.6 Change statistical tables to present a more statistically variable, call responsible (for instance progress in the fulfilment of the missionary calling of the church) as well as a user friendly profile of the numbers in the Reformed Churches. For this purpose it has been requested that Prof Faans Steyn of the Statistical Consultation Service of the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University be named as member of the Editorial Board of the *Almanak*.
  - 1.1.7 Make administrative information more streamlined.
  - 1.1.8 It is recommended that the category “admitted” be divided into “admitted from another church” and “admitted after evangelisation” in future.
  - 1.1.9 The Deputies are investigation the possibility of publishing daily devotions for the teenager, student and working youth market.

**Decision: Points 1.1 to 1.1.9 noted.**

#### 2. Matters of which Synod should take note

- 2.1 The *Almanak* appeared annually (see Assignment 1.1).
  - 2.1.1 The *Almanak* appeared annually with daily devotions. The Deputies want to report to Synod that the *Almanak* with daily devotions was received very well in the church denomination and outside of it based on the correspondence received and in the humble opinion of the Deputies. The Deputies also want to give a word of special thanks to all the ministers that worked together in a special way to make a success of this publication (see Assignment 1.1.1).
  - 2.1.2 The details of the Chairperson of the deaconate of every church are published. Elders’ and deacons’ names are not placed. There was a request that the lettertype of the daily devotions be larger and that the daily devotions be placed each on its own page. As a result of this the printing cost has increased and consequently a correspondence was sent to each Church Council for an opinion poll as to whether the names of the elders and deacons should be published. From the opinion poll it

- became evident that the names could be omitted. The Deputies decided that the names be requested and that the statistics forms go to the archive for conservation if persons want to do research in this regard (see Assignment 1.1.2).
- 2.1.3 Intensive marketing was done by sending posters to Church Councils and several institutions. Entering an English market seems to be a very expensive process. The information of Synod Midlands is placed in the back of the *Almanak* in English (see Assignment 1.1.3).
  - 2.1.4 The possibility of printing the *Almanak* in English and making it available on the Reformed Churches' Web page was investigated. This request was not only motivated in the light of the needs of Internet users, but also of member of the Reformed Churches who speak languages other than Afrikaans (see 2.1.3)
  - 2.1.5 A member of the Deputies Almanak frequently attended the meetings of the Deputies Publications. The Deputies Almanak also made financial contributions to *Die Kerkblad* and *Slingervel* (see Assignment 1.1.5).
  - 2.1.6 Statistical tables was changed in cooperation with prof Faan Steyn to create a more statistically verifiable, a call responsible as well as a user friendly profile of numbers in the Gereformeerde Kerke (see Assignment 1.1.6).
  - 2.1.7 Administrative information has been streamlined (see Assignment 1.1.7).
  - 2.1.8 The category "admitted" has been divided into "admitted from other churches" and "admitted after evangelisation" (see Assignment 1.1.8).
  - 2.1.9 The publication of daily devotions for the teenager, student and working youth market has been investigated. The book market is currently flooded with publications aimed at teenagers and working youth. The Deputies decided to pay attention to the matter by asking theological students to write a number of daily devotions for young people. In the *Almanak* 2008 a month was dedicated to the youth (see Assignment 1.1.9).
- 2.2 *Take a decision regarding the heaped up funds with consideration of the following recommendation from the Deputies:*
- 2.2.1 Synod considers making a buffer amount of approximately R80 000 available to the new deputies to absorb further price increases and to keep the price of sale of the *Almanak* as low as possible while improving the quality.
  - 2.2.2 The numbers of the *Almanak* was for 2007: 16 000 copies, for 2008 it was 15 000 and for 2009 a number of 18 000 is planned. Because the project is so blessed, the Deputies made a number of copies available to Reformed institutions such as homes for the elderly and children's homes. The impression that the Deputies have is that the Church Councils increasingly distribute the copies instead of the copies remaining undistributed.
  - 2.2.3 The Deputies are grateful to report that a good profit can be shown after the three years as becomes clear from the Financial reports that have been made available to Synod. In the light of the financial situation the Deputies were able to keep the price of the *Almanak* low for the last two publications, something we are thankful for.
  - 2.2.4 An amount of R500 000 was transferred to the Gratitude Fund after consultation with the Management of the Administrative Buro.
- 2.3 The Deputies' policy is to make all the information that is available from all three Synods of the Gereformeerde Kerke available in the *Almanak*. Unfortunately we have to report that the information is not complete.
  - 2.4 It is the policy of the Deputies to place tributes to all of the ministers who have died each year.
  - 2.5 The Deputies from time to time places a complete list of "Churches and their ministers". Such a list has been placed in the 2008 edition of the *Almanak*.
  - 2.6 The Deputies aims to improve the standard of the *Almanak* each year so that it can be an edition of which all members are proud. We want to thank several members and ministers for input and advice that they give to us after each publication in order to assist us.

- 2.7 *Die Ruit* is a column in each edition of the *Almanak* in which a great number of members participate. The Deputies thank Rev. Hennie van Wyk, who handles this column.
- 2.8 The *Almanak* was delivered to the Particular Synods every year for further distribution by the different churches. The Deputies also make use of mail for distant destinations that can not be reached by road easily.
- 2.9 The Deputies want to thank the advertisers who advertise in the *Almanak* to reduce the cost.
- 2.10 The Deputies want to thank the staff of the Administrative Buro and especially srs Wymie du Plessis, Petro Kroeze and Joey Fourie, as well as brother Hannes Vorster for their input every year to make the *Almanak* possible.
- 2.11 We also want to thank Angie Mphata and Anna Leeuw for their help with the distribution of the *Almanak*.

**Decision: Points 2.1 to 2.11 noted. Synod thanks the Deputies for the Publication of the Almanak, the staff of the Administrative Buro (as mentioned in 2.10 and 2.11) as well as all other co-workers of the Almanak for an excellent publication.**

### **3. Matters for decision by Synod**

- 3.1 The *Almanak* will be published again and an editorial board has to be appointed (*If possible, the Editor should be one of the ministers from Potchefstroom*) with the assignment to:
  - 3.1.1 Publish the *Almanak* with daily devotions.

**Decision: Approved.**

### **4. Assignments from Synod to the Deputies**

- 4.1 The font size used for the Daily Devotions should in future be large enough to be read comfortably by older readers (the font size of the 2007 Almanak can be used as guideline).
- 4.2 The deputies should pay attention to devotions for teenagers and after school youth.
- 4.3 The deputies should attempt to provide the GPS coordinates of the street addresses of every church building.
- 4.4 The deputies should go to great lengths to update the statistical information of all churches annually in cooperation with the Deputies Correspondence of each Classis.
- 4.5 A representative from the churches of the previous Synod Midlands and Classis Capricorn should be added to the Deputies for the Publication of the Almanak in order to consider how the Almanak can be made available to church members in those churches.

**Decision: Approved.**