

24. Theological Seminary

24.1 REPORT OF THE CURATORS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY POTCHEFSTROOM (Artt 104, 105, 149, 179, 188, 213, 239)

- A. Mrs A Moerdyk, Registrar of the TSP, gives the Report. Stemming forth from the Report TSP enlightenment is provided about it by way of an audiovisual presentation.
- B. Prof A le R du Plooy, dean of the Faculty, provides further information about the presentation. Subsequently he introduces prof A Combrink, rector of the Potchefstroom campus of the NWU to the meeting.
- C. Prof A Combrink presents a message of greetings on behalf of the NWU to Synod.
- D. Prof BJ de Klerk, rector of the TSP, presents a few words of gratitude for the support that the School has received internally and from outside over the past three years. Subsequently prof De Klerk presents a certain amount as part of a previous agreement by the TSP to the Rektor of the NWU.
- E. Dr WC Vergeer presents a word of gratitude on behalf of the meeting to the TSP, the Faculty of Theology, and the rector of the NWU, prof A Combrink. Synod sing Ps 128:4 as a prayer of blessing.
- F. **Decision:** The Report is referred to the Commission of the School of Theology. Financial matters are referred to the Commission of Finances.
- G. Dr PH Heystek reports on behalf of the the Commission of the School of Theology.
- H. Ds J of Schaik reports on behalf of the Commission of Finances.

I. REPORT

1. Commission

The Board of Curators of the Theological Seminary Potchefstroom attends to the management and supervision of the service of training and education as presented by the professors of the Theological Seminary Potchefstroom. This includes taking care of the students. (*Prospectus of the Theological Seminary of the GKSA 1997: Chapter 3*), (*compare Acta 1988:400-403.*)

Decision: Noted.

2. Synod takes cognisance of the following matters

2.1 *The Board of Curators*

2.1.1 Broad Curators

In June 2005 the Curators decided to call Dr RS Letsosa on probational basis with regard to the capacity-building posts according to the earlier agreement between the Board of Curators and the University. The vacancy in Practical Theology resulted from Professor CJH Venter's retirement. The Broad Curators held a calling meeting on 3 January 2006 and called Prof RS Letsosa as professor in Practical Theology.

The Board of Curators constituted on 11 January 2006.

The Broad Curators were called on 20 June 2007 to convene a calling meeting to call a professor in History of Church and Dogma. Professor PH Fick was called.

2.1.2 Election of Chairman of Curators 2006

Rev PJ van der Walt was elected as Chairman of the Curators and Dr DG Breed as vice-chairman. Dr G Breed was elected as member of the Broad Executive Management. Dr HG Stoker was elected as Scribe and financing management was assigned to Rev EJ Tiemensma.

2.1.3 Election of representative on the Board of the NWU

The original founders of the University had representation on the Board of the former PU for CHE. The new Board of the NWU decided that community leaders must have

representation on the Board and that each campus could nominate a representative. The unanimous recommendation of the executive management committee of the Potchefstroom Campus was that such a nominated person be from among the ranks of the original bodies. Professor AL Combrink requested that the person be nominated from the November 2007 Curator meeting. Dr DG Breed was appointed by election as representative on the Board of the NWU.

2.2 *The Senate TSP*

2.2.1 Rectorate

Prof JM Vorster stepped down as Rector of the Theological Seminary on 31 December 2006. The Board of Curators expressed its gratitude to Professor Vorster, thanking him for the way in which he had served as Rector of the Theological Seminary. Prof BJ de Klerk was appointed as Rector from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2009. Prof GJC Jordaan was appointed as vice-rector for the same term.

2.2.2 Lecturing staff

2.2.2.1 Publications, conferences and seminars

Compare Supplementary Report

2.2.2.2 Vacancies

There are no vacancies at the Theological Seminary

2.2.2.3 Retirement

No professor retired for the period of time 2006–2008.

2.3 *Administrative staff*

The following are members of the administrative staff of the Faculty of Theology and the TSP (where indicated):

Registrar: Ms A Moerdyk (50% TSP)

Administrative Assistant: Ms A van der Walt (50% TSP)

Secretary to Dean and Rector: Ms E Brazer (50% TSP)

Secretary to School Director Church Sciences: Ms N Bothma (100% TSP)

Secretary to School Director Scriptural Sciences and Ancient Languages: Ms HP Buys

Secretary to Research Director: Ms A Liebenberg

Administrative Assistant Office for Extended Learning: Ms T Erwee

2.4 *Other staff at TSP*

Librarian Jan Lion-Cachet Library: Ms G van Rooyen (member of staff Ferdinand Postma Library, NWU)

Archival material: Ms C Huisman (member of staff Administrative Bureau)

2.5 *Overseas guests received by Senate*

Compare Supplementary Report

2.6 *Students*

2.6.1 Post-study students

The following students have completed the Candidate Studies since Synod 2006:

November 2006: TM Budeli, P Cilliers, PJ Grobler, RS Hobyane, C Jooste, S le Cornu.

November 2007: LP Baloyi, RP Buys, TP Diphoko, PT Masase, MG Mdluli, JC van Dyk, LP van Jaarsveld, DG Zwemstra.

The following students are final-year Candidate Study students: DJ Dykstra, GJ Erasmus, RB Fourie, RP Gouws, R Jansen van Vuuren, AJ Rossouw, DJJ Strydom, WM van der Waal and LJE Venter.

The Curators allowed the following brothers to continue with full-time studies prior to presenting for examining by a Particular Synod: brothers P Cilliers (for MTh), H Goede (for PhD) and JS Swanepoel (for PhD), DJJ Strydom (for MTh).

2.6.2 Candidates 1 tot 6 students

The number of Candidate Students for 2008

Candidates 1: 8

Candidates 2: 11

Candidates 3: 13

Candidates 4: 8

Candidates 5: 8

Candidates 6: 9

2.6.3 Disciplinary matters

The Candidate studies of three brothers were terminated in 2006 as recommended by TSP Senate because of poor academic achievement.

The Candidate studies of eight brothers were terminated in 2007 as recommended by TSP Senate because of poor academic achievement.

2.7 General matters dealt with by Board of Curators

2.7.1 Composition of Committee for Financial Support (CFS)

The proposal was approved at Curator meeting 2006. In future the CFS will be composed as follows: The committee consists of ministers of the Reformed Churches of Potchefstroom who take theological students into their care, and if necessary ministers that have been co-opted by the Grants Committee, as well as two professors of theology who have been appointed by the Board of Curators, office-wise Rector of the Theological Seminary, Curators (financial committee) appointed by Board of Curators, the Registrar of the Theological Seminary, and as invited the following two officials: one for bursaries and loans attached to NWU and the Director of Administrative Bureau. Executive committee is composed as follows: Rector (office-wise as chairperson), one professor of theology, two Curators, one minister and the Registrar of the Theological Seminary.

2.7.2 Exceptional admission to ministry

Br LP Ndou (previously from the Uniting Presbyterian Church), drr BA De Vries and AG Miskin (both from America), and br SP Mentjies (between 2000 and 2005 a student of theology, University of the Free State) completed successful colloquia and passed prescribed sermons, on the strength of which it was decided to issue them with Candidate Certificates.

Additional applications have been received from candidates who are currently, in accordance with TSP Senate's requirements, in the process of furthering academic and practical studies and experience in order to be awarded the Candidate Certificate.

2.7.3 New Bible Translation

In June 2004 the Curator took cognisance of Bible Society's decision to continue with a new source language orientated translation of the Bible into Afrikaans. In the wake of this will follow that some of the professors of TSP may probably be involved for the following ten years. This decision was met with great appreciation, especially as the GKSA had already filed such a request via the Synodal Deputies with BSSA ten years ago. In principle the Board of Curators has expressed willingness to allow for the TSP professors to be available as part of such a project of translation within the framework suggested by the BSSA.

The following professors will be involved: Proff JJ Janse van Rensburg, GJC Jordaan, PP Krüger, HF van Rooy and FP Viljoen.

It is expected that the above-mentioned professors will be actively busy with translations from 2009 to 2015 at intervals according to a programme presented by the Bible Society.

The Curators would like to place the expertise of these bibliologists and source language experts at the disposal of the Bible Society (and therefore the churches also). It would be necessary to ease the burden of workload by means of *locum tenentes*. It would be necessary for such *locum tenentes* to be budgeted for by Deputies Bible Translation, especially as the honoraria paid by the Bible Society should be considered as honoraria paid to those involved for personal time being consumed by the project.

For the sake of having the books of the Bible translated the Curators request of Synod to commission Deputies Bible Translation to budget for *locum tenentes* for the years 2009 to 2011. The amount must be made payable annually in February to TSP and amounts to the following (compare Curator minutes of 18 June 2008 in Unpublished Appendix):

- 2009: R63 560
- 2010: R49 450 (plus inflation rate)

- 2011: R23 000 (plus inflation rate)
- 2.7.4 Revising of Regulations of the Jubilee Funds Bursary (JFB) and Trust for Theological Students
The Curators have decided that the JFB be made available to reinforce the Trust for Theological Students or in order to assist those who have registered for post-graduate theological studies, and that the regulations be adapted to this end. The regulations for the Trust for Theological students have been altered likewise. The Regulations are included in the Unpublished Appendix.
- 2.7.5 Theological Training: Symposium learning material: June 2007
The meeting took place at the TSP buildings on 19 June 2007. A large number of Curators were present as well as different ministers. In the discussions, assessments and events of advice much attention was, *inter alia*, paid to ways and means of approaching the following decisions/guidelines of Synods Potchefstroom and Midlands:
- 2.7.5.1 Practical issues inherent to Africa and South Africa for the sake of context-sensitive ministry training (from the report TSP Synod 2006).
- 2.7.5.2 The missionary calling of our churches. It is important to attach a more missionary-focused approach to all aspects of the theological curriculum so that a missionary-orientated theology (and therefore also ministers and churches) can be developed (from report TSP Synod 2006).
- 2.7.5.3 The reinforcement of the spiritual relationship between students and lecturers (from report TSP Synod 2006).
- 2.7.6 Theological Training in Africa
Synod 2003 decided as follows (Acta:730, 24.3):
It was decided that it was urgently necessary to seriously reconsider the training of ministers in the GKSA, especially if taken into account the critical ministry-related needs in black, "township" and rural congregations. It was decided that the Curators in co-operation with the training centres launch an investigation into how training should proceed, with the assistance and guidance of majority meetings in the areas where candidates reside, inter alia, by means of and extension of the Faculty of Theology's Telematic Learning Systems.
- With regard to alternative ways of training the Curators have taken cognisance of the problems attached to training of ministers and the need of ministers in Southern Africa and Africa, as well as of the accompanying opportunities. The Curators also took note of discussions on international level with regard to training of ministers, of the different models that can be followed as well as of the specific models that have been suggested to assuage the dilemma of the shortage and make better use of opportunities. The Curators appointed a committee for the purpose of investigating and evaluating the models that have been suggested and the possibility of alternative training for ministers alongside the present training in order to address the problems and use the opportunities. At the same time the committee would consider the influence that such models would have on candidate training and would advise the Curators with a view to further decision making.
- The Committee for Theological Training in Africa undertook such investigation. The Curators will continue to report about this matter and the progress in the Supplementary Report.
- 2.7.7 Supervision of in-service-training centres
Members of the Committee have been appointed from within the ranks of the Curators with the commission constantly to take care of the in-service centres of training, and they are still continuing with their activities. The Curators receive annual reporting on these matters from the Committee. With regard to the training of ministers the Board of Curators maintains the commissions and direction contained in decisions of National Synod 1994 (compare Acta 1994:699, 5.2).
- 2.7.8 Finances
- 2.7.8.1 Financial records and budgeting detail will be provided by Administrative Bureau.

- 2.7.8.2 Transfer of thanks-giving monies to the Theological Student Trust must occur on a regular basis and the Curators request that Church Councils kindly adhere to this arrangement.
- 2.7.9 Superannuation
The Curators of the Particular Synods where the reverend emeritus or his widow is presently residing are requested to pay him/her a visit annually and to report accordingly in writing to the June Meeting of Curators on his/her well-being and care. Should a need for care become evident relevant budgeting decisions will be taken during the meeting.
- 2.7.10 Prospective Candidate Students - Midlands
In the light of the shortage of theological students specifically also from the cadre of the previous Synod Midlands, the Curators decided to request of the Committee for Theological Training in Africa to investigate the possibility of pre-theological bridging courses to include prospective candidates who still fail to meet requirements for admission to university; and should this investigation prove to be positive, arrangements for necessary and supporting funding resources will be attended to (founding of a fund to this end) so that such selected candidates can proceed with studies to obtain admission by improved academic achievements.
- 2.7.11 Prospectus
The Prospectus is in the process of being revised.
- 2.7.12 Alterations in composition of Candidate Studies
A new degree structure, as will be suggested nationally by FUTE, in accordance with Department of Education's *Higher Education Qualifications Framework/Requirements* (HEQF/R) (Government Gazette, 5 October 2007, 30353:3-29), will pose implications for the Candidates I-IV of the TSP. Suggestions in this regard will be included in the Supplementary Agenda.

Decision: Points 2.1 to 2.7.12 noted.

3. Commission

The following amounts are added to the budget of the Deputies Bible Translation and Distribution to provide for *locum tenentis* to enable the professors involved to function in the present process of Bible translation:

- a. 2009: R63 560
- b. 2010: R49 450 (plus inflation rate)
- c. 2011: R23 000 (plus inflation rate)

Decision: Approved.

J. SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

1. Matters for consideration by Synod

Synod can consider the following matters:

- 1.1 *The Curatorium*
The term of the current Curators expires and the Regional-(Particular) Synods were requested to appoint new Curators and Broad Curators. The Curatorium will be constituted in 2009.
- 1.2 *Centres for in service training*
The Curators received a report of all the activities at the centres for in service training and conveys with huge gratitude the good work that is being done at these centres in terms of the Student Candidates to Synod 2009.
- 1.3 *The Senate TSP*
 - 1.3.1 Lecturing staff
Publications, conferences and seminars – Addendum A.
 - 1.3.2 International visitors received by the Senate – Addendum B.
 - 1.3.3 Disciplinary matters
The candidate studies of 2 Brothers were terminated in 2008 upon recommendation of the TSP Senate due to weak performance.

1.3.4 Extension of sermon concert

The Curators gave permission in 2008 to the following brothers to study full time first before they come forward for examination by a Regional Synod: DJJ Strydom and R J of Vuuren, both for MTh Studies.

1.4 *Progress with new building*

With gratitude it is reported that all the aforementioned matters have been finalized, and that the negotiations by the NWU with GK Potchefstroom-Noord and the Administrative Bureau were successful. It came to light that a servitude exists on a portion of the ground on which the newly planned building is to be erected. The positioning of the new building will have to consider the servitude. The GK Potchefstroom-Noord and the Administrative Bureau has been notified of this. The final building plans were presented to staff on 16 September 2008 at a staff meeting.

Decision: Noted 1.1 to 1.4.

1.5 *Theological Training for Africa*

1. Assignment

Synod 2003:728, 1:1

1. That it is undertaken that there will be urgent and serious consideration of the training of reverends in the GKSA, seen in light of the critical need for ministry especially in black rural areas and “township” congregations.
2. That the Curators are requested to conduct an investigation in collaboration with the training centres about the manner in which candidates can be trained with the assistance and supervision of [meerdere] meetings in the area where the candidates live, among others by using and extending the Telematic Learning Systems of the Faculty of Theology.

Synod 2006:806, 2.3.7.12:

Synod

- 2.3.7.12 requests the Curatorium to monitor the matters specified in this Report, and to manage matters that emanate in this instance, and to report to the next Synod about them.

Further account was taken as well about the decision of Synod 2006 (809, 23.4) in terms of the Descriptive Point of Particular Synod Pretoria about multi entry - and exit levels in theological training.

Decision: Noted.

2. **Implementation**

2.1 *Introduction*

2.1.1 Churches from the former Synod Middellande Training for missionary churches

The decision of Synod 2003 refers to the “critical need for ministry especially in black, rural and “township” congregations” (Acta 2003:728). Synod 2006 (Acta 2006:797) noted that the problem is in particular the reality that a large part of the pastoral work in churches emanating from a missionary background (therefore especially churches from the former Synod Middellande) are taken care of by persons who have not been trained, called, or inducted as reverends.

Many of these congregations, which form a full part of the community of churches within the affiliation of the GKSA, do not have access to full time, well trained, called upon and inducted reverends, mainly as a result of structural poverty in the communities in which they have been called to be the church of the Lord. Yet we look forward with wonder and gratitude to the fact that churches – also Gereformeerde Churches – will grow fast in these communities in a context of enormous spiritual need. Believing children of the Lord live and work in these communities in situations in which poverty and AIDS especially have their destructive impact as well as other socio-economical problems which give people a hunger for the Word of the Lord. For this reason believers gather in smaller and larger congregations with a living and dynamic church life, to learn from the Word, and to be comforted, strengthened and

admonished by it, and to be moulded as people who belong to Christ and who are actively present in their communities. The Lord is adding new believers to these churches weekly in many places (cf. Acta 2:47; 9:31).

Ministry as it is known in churches from the former Synod Potchefstroom, is unthinkable for many of our churches in communities as described above – especially the ideal of enjoying a permanent reverend in each congregation. Some congregations manage this by the grace of the Lord, amongst others with the help of international churches and sustenance from the GKSA. To provide for the need for ministry in the least, the majority of our churches from the former Synod Middellande were however divided into various “sermon points” – actually small congregations, much larger and autonomous than the familiar wards of Afrikaans churches, but still not large enough to exist as autonomous congregations. As a result congregations frequently cover expansive geographical areas, and numberless services are held on Sundays at which children of the Lord gather in his presence and around his Word. Reverends minister within individual congregations to as much as 12 of these “sermon points” which further function in all respects as own little congregations. It speaks for itself that it is impossible for these reverends to preach at all these little congregations on Sundays. In reality it can happen that a reverend will not reach all the points more than four or five times per annum, and then it is mostly to serve sacraments. On week days and on most Sundays the little communities of believers of believers have to take care of funerals themselves, often on a weekly basis, as well as church services, prayer meetings, Bible study, catechism, and other church activities.

In church services in many places brother conduct matters while they have not been called or inducted in terms of the KO, art 3, and while they are not properly trained or equipped either. Yet they are frequently gifted men who have received various spiritual gifts and who do their work for the children of the Lord with great commitment – permanently or on a temporary basis, paid or unpaid: they conduct house visits, lead gatherings, take care of catechism and Bible studies, are intensively involved in evangelization and take the lead in weekly church services. We experience the miracle that the Holy Ghost uses the service of these brothers to convince people on all sides of the truth of the gospel Jesus Christ making them hungry for his Word – more so than there are reverends to minister them.

What should our churches within the community of the GKSA do in this regard? Can we assist these brothers who continue to lead in this manner with an accessible and affordable form of training? Or should we suppress this brittle new growth in our churches excluding believers in the Word of the Lord by instructing these leaders to be quiet because their behaviour does not comply with the Church Order? Are there other ways to give shape to the principle that churches should guard over the spreading of the Word? Should we insist that everyone should complete the full candidate study in order to become a reverend – even if most of these brothers cannot be provided for by their congregations? Should we insist that all these brothers as well as their extended families should leave their congregations for a number of years to be trained at School of Theology? In the meantime, what becomes of the congregations? Can we take it for granted that all of these brothers have the necessary gifts to complete academic study up to the post-graduate level at a university? And if they do not have these – does it disqualify them in advance to be employed by the Lord in his church? Can we even take it for granted that all these brothers were called to become reverends?

In addition it should also be mentioned here that only a small number of students from black churches are currently training at the TSP to be reverends. Many potential candidates for reverend training do not comply with the admission requirements of the NWU and the Faculty of Theology, mainly due to a poor education at school. The Curatorium is very concerned about this, and will eagerly make proposals to address these problems in this Report.

2.1.2 Broader training for believers who participate in ministerial work

Also in congregations in which the difficult circumstances mentioned above do not play such a major role a growing need occurs for broader training and equipping in theology, in order to give believers the opportunity to participate with proper moulding in the ministerial work of their congregations. Some have received gifts from the Lord to get involved on a limited scale in specialized jobs such as children's- and youth ministry, evangelization, pastorate, and social projects as part of the work of charity in congregations. These persons are often established already in their vocations and dispose of other qualifications. Others never studied but dearly want to receive theological training. Some wonder whether they perhaps want to become reverends but are jittery about the big step, and want to obtain a qualification in theology first before they commit themselves to the full path of becoming a reverend. These persons could be of incalculable value in big city congregations where even [meerdere] reverends cannot carry the full load of the ministerial work alone, and also in smaller congregations that are no longer able to provide for a permanent reverend.

2.1.3 Churches and church leaders in Africa

Also outside of the community of churches of the GKSA these same matters play a considerable role. In Africa there is currently an enormous mushrooming of Christian churches, but because ministry in these churches is frequently poor and handled by untrained church leaders, spiritual depth in many of these churches is very thin. The Curatorium acknowledged in this situation a calling to do everything possible in the GKSA about training and the development of materials, and to make these available also outside the GKSA for church leaders in Africa. This calling is carried by a strong vision for the expansion of the kingdom of God, and a missionary vision to transmit the wonderful Biblical belief that we confess, also by means of the training of church leaders to other persons and churches. In this way the GKSA can play a considerable role in the African context when it comes to the propagation of the Gereformeerde confession and theology.

2.1.4 Training for missionary churches

In this manner came into focus the question as to the role of theological training in the moulding of a missionary vision among reverends and churches, as well as the need for concrete training for missionary work in and by congregations and individual believers. The Curatorium paid intensive attention to these matters, and want to make one or two recommendations in this regard as well in this Report.

2.2 *Essential definitions*

In order to come to an understanding of the proposals that will be made later in the Report it is necessary to define one or two matters clearly.

2.2.1 Contextual relevance

The duty before which our churches come is partly expressed in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. Next to the ministry of the reconciliation and the call to repentance, this also indicates the manner in which the duty can be performed: by destroying citadels with the powerful weapons of God: "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." Which particular arguments should be destroyed? What does the attack against the knowledge of God look like in the context in which every specific church is established and does her work – and what should the necessary weapons therefore look like? Are they universal things or is it necessary in particular environments to focus especially on particular arguments and attacks against the knowledge of God, and are particular weapons therefore also required?

Although the Lord is very clear that there is no distinction in a community of believers in Christ between Jew or Greek, slave or free person, man or woman, and that we are all one in Christ (Gal 3:26-28; Eph 2:13-18; 4:4-6), He nonetheless teaches us how we should go about to reach *all* humans in this world of diversity with the freeing and reconciliatory power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our churches of today must still be in service to win as many people as possible for Christ. To this end we must also

learn to be “for the Jews as a Jew and for the weak as weak”, in order for us to save some in any event with the ministry of the reconciliation (1 Cor 9:19-23; 2 Cor 5:18-21).

Not one of these scriptural pericopes should be understood exclusively in the missionary sense: they also include the focus on the “ordinary” congregational ministry. To stay with the Bible metaphor: the kind of arguments and attacks against the knowledge of God which occur in an Afrikaans speaking, suburban congregation in Pretoria have long since not been the same as the arguments and attacks that occur against it in a rural Sotho- or Zulu speaking congregation (thus to mention only two extremes – this is not the only possible or necessary distinction). Therefore the particular nuances in the total ministry of the reconciliation in these congregations are not necessarily the same. The argument here therefore does not focus purely on the distinction between congregational ministry and missionary work, but on the question: What is necessary in order for the people of this world/ these worlds in which we find our churches effectively with the gospel of Christ – inside *and* outside our churches?

2.2.2 Church ministry and missionary work

2.2.2.1 “Church” and “missionary work”

When congregations are served in such a manner that they are empowered to start tackling the fight against each argument and each attack against the knowledge of God that occur in among themselves and in their own environment, thus to capture every thought for Christ – *then* they are also equipped to be missionary congregations in their own environment. Neither in training nor in congregation work in general (or in the style and culture that go along with being a congregation) should there be a distinction that is too watertight between church ministry and a missionary work situation (or church and missionary work): the two are in their very nature one.

Churches from the former Synod Middellande, with their strong and weak points, needs and problems, are often brought under the rubric of “missionary work” or “missionary work churches”, amongst others to suggest in this manner that the church practices, habits, and style of ministry of these churches are only *temporarily* different from the Afrikaans speaking congregations of the GKSA. The expectation is then that these churches will one day develop in such a manner that they will adopt the church practices, habits, and style of ministry of Afrikaans congregations.

This approach cannot be sustained, amongst others because it speaks of the utmost patronization. The large majority of these churches are autonomous congregations, fully-fledged churches of the Lord in which in some aspects ministerial help is provided by missionaries, but enjoy their own Church Councils, in many cases their own reverends, and they also do their own work independent from “missionary churches”. Some are funded internationally at most or receive other forms of sustenance. The unique style of ministry, forms of being a church and church practices, as well as the problems with which these churches struggle, are *church* problems of black churches, and not *missionary work* problems.

For this reason the training needs of our black churches within the GKSA are not missionary work needs: the important things are the unique character, style, and ministerial contexts of fully-fledged churches within the church community of the GKSA.

2.2.2.2 Training **for** missionary work

As a subset of the total church ministry it is important for *all* churches (regardless of their heritage) within the church community of the GKSA also to (re)discover their fundamental missionary character, and to develop and express it in their environment. For this particular attention is necessary in training. Three further aspects need to be distinguished here:

- (i) The subject area of missiology is in some respects a inter-disciplinary aspect of all other theological disciplines, because it continues to ask the critical

question of each subject area: What are the implications of what is being done here for the missionary heart of the church? This already makes of missiology a complex and expansive subject area.

- (ii) Over and above this missiology has also developed a number of unique specialist focus areas. Just as the New Testament subject group gives attention to canonical studies, the history of revelation, hermeneutics, exegesis, and Greek as language, in missiology the following focus areas developed: the theology of missiology (which finds close connection with dogmatics, ecclesiology, church history and Bible sciences), elentics/apologetics, urban missionary work, church planting, and missionary charity- and developmental work. These specialist focus areas have already developed to the extent that it is difficult to offer them merely as as semester modules or the subject of missiology. Where it is in place, it can lead to superficial training in missiology (for instance at the TSP and NWU), with resultant damage to the missionary consciousness of reverends and the missionary character of churches.
- (iii) Next to missiology as a scientific theological discipline, a need also exists for practical missionary work training. In many congregations many members would dearly like to be involved with missionary work initiatives in thier own environment or in faraway places, but frequently they don't know how. Goal-oriented training can help to change the often latent diligence for the propagation of the gospel into active collaboration.

2.2.2.3 Training **as** missionary work

A final important point here is the possibility to aim in a missionary manner from the church affiliation of the GKSA for communities (ook church communities) in South Africa and the remainder of the continent by means of reformed training materials made available to persons in churches other than the GKSA. In view of the critical need for trained church leaders in Africa, the GKSA can play an imperative role in the training of church leaders of this nature. An opportunity for work in the kingdom presents itself here that our churches should embrace fully. It does not ask for new work – instead, it asks for a broader availability of materials (in the form of distance education) that are being developed already within the GKSA.

2.2.3 The concept “ministry” and its implications for training

2.2.3.1 Expanded *ministry* concept

Within a broad variety of churches of the GKSA a need has arisen for a more expansive concept of *ministry*. Traditionally the word *ministry* is used solely for work done by reverends in congregations. This report employs the *ministry* to refer to the service that any member of a church does in his or her congregation (permanently or on a temporary basis, paid or as a volunteer) on the basis of the gifts that the Holy Spirit provide. The service of a reverend is a key ministry in the congregation, but it is not the only possible ministry.

This need for an expanded concept of *ministry* emanates from a couple of matters:

- (i) The conviction that the Lord equip a great variety of people with a great variety of gifst to serve in and from the congregation (cf. Eph 4:1 Cor 12; Rom 12).
- (ii) A growing number of our churches do not have the financial means to provide for a permanent reverend. The reasons for this could be shrinking member numbers or serious poverty of the communities in which the churches are established. In the latter case it is possible to call a premanent reverend and to provide for him.
- (iii) Similarly a growing number of churches have become so large that even a number of reverends together would not be able to do the ministerial work on their own.

Especially in situations where no permanent reverend is working in a congregation it is of the utmost importance that other persons in that congregation should be trained and equipped as thoroughly as possible to take care of its ministerial needs. This does not mean that other persons can readily conduct the service of a reverend without being called or confirmed. It does mean that a congregation does not have to come to a standstill or stop growing if a permanent reverend is not available. Especially persons that serve as elders have the calling to govern and care at the hand of the Word for the congregation as shepherds under the authority of the Supreme shepherd (1 Pet 5:1-4) based on their own examination of the Word and practice in the riches of the gospel. They have the clear assignment to admonish and comfort the congregation from the Word (cf. the Confirming formulary for elders). They are clearly distinguished from reverends, but their shepherd's role in the congregation is emphasized.

Similarly many poor communities have a great need for training for the efficient functioning of the diaconal service of congregations – not only in respect of care for the poor, but also for community development, effective AIDS ministry, etc. This service does not have to be limited to persons that are confirmed as deacons. In bigger congregations a need for such workers also exists, but bigger congregations have the further need for more specialization in aspects of ministry that members can and will adopt. In certain congregation there is amongst others a need for youth workers, missionary workers, church planters, charity workers, musicians, and councillors—people who would like to collaborate permanently or on a part-time basis (as paid helpers or as volunteers) with the total ministry of the congregation, but who do not necessarily want to become reverends. In Australia for example the *Christian Reformed Churches of Australia* acknowledged this need and developed training that can help in this respect (cf.

<http://internships.crca.org.au>).

2.2.3.2 An expanded concept of training

Against this background this Report pleads for the creation of room for [*meerdere*] training with a view to [*meerdere*] ministerial work in churches within the affiliation of the GKSA, supplementary to existing training of reverends and Word ministry by reverends. It should be said with great emphasis that a great need still exists for reverends, and that this is in no way meant to shift the accent from the training of reverends. In fact, the idea is to identify more persons by way of [*meerdere*] training who can be trained further as reverends.

Simultaneously it is important not to lose sight of the fact that this [*meerdere*] training should be differentiated on different academic levels. In some churches it is important to offer training on a relatively low academic standard, for example a certificate. In other churches there will be a need for higher levels of training, for example a diploma or a BTh degree. Especially in urban congregations with large numbers of professional people among members, short courses on the level of a B degree will probably fulfil the need.

2.2.3.3 An assignment for the church affiliation of the GKSA

In order to assure that work done on this basis in congregations is optimal in terms of dogmatic purity and expertise, and in order to insure unity in training while this is a matter that touches on a great many congregations in the affiliation of the GKSA, it is necessary to tackle this matter together, and not to refer it simply to local churches.

2.3 *Other matters emanating from the decisions of Synod 2006*

2.3.1 2006:805, 2.3.7.5

Synod 2006 decided that lecturing and/ or facilitating staff at institutions outside Potchefstroom that are concerned with candidates training (Candidates 1-3) should undergo assessment analogous to the process that currently runs for extraordinary appointments at the Faculty of Theology of the NWU, for the sake of controlling dogmatic purity, academic standards, and unity in training.

The Curatorium is able to report at the moment that such lecturers were indeed assessed by the Faculty, but not yet by the Senate of the TSP. About this reporting will be made to the Curatorium by June 2009.

2.3.2 2006:805, 2.3.7.7

Synod 2006 decided that:

- (i) the existing curricula of the theological training at the TSP and at the on the job training centres should be expanded, changed, and adjusted in such a manner that the needs for effective missionary work training will be fulfilled;
- (ii) it is important to give all aspects of the theological curriculum a more missionary purpose, so that a missionarily directed theology and churches can find manifestation;
- (iii) the prospect should be urgently investigated of making available a School for Missionary work sciences by the TSP in collaboration with the Faculty of theology (NWU);
- (iv) depending on the level of training, the TSP and other schools such as *Mukhanyo Theological College* should consult one another in light of the needs of churches that are involved with missionary work.

With regard to points (i), (ii) and (iv) above an ongoing discussion is taking place between the Department of Missiology of the Faculty of Theology of the NWU, the Senate of the TSP and the Curatorium.

With regard to (iii) above the Senate of the TSP and the Faculty of Theology have indicated that the establishment of a School for Missionary work sciences is not feasible, mainly because of limited capacity within the Faculty and the financial implications of the establishment of such a school.

It is possible that in future more expansive and practical missionary work training (which is not the same as Missiology) will be offered by means of an institution such as the *Center for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa (CRUMA)* which was started at the initiative of Geformeerde Churches in Pretoria, and which collaborate closely with *Mukhanyo Theological College*.

2.3.3 2006:806, 2.3.7.9

Synod 2006 requested the School for Church sciences of the Faculty of Theology of the NWU to establish a new project in order to conduct research about the possible inclusion of mentorship, spirituality, and spiritual (serving) leadership as part of the theological curriculum.

The Curatorium has noted that such an area needs investigation and is and is currently being evaluated by the School for Church sciences.

2.3.4 2006:806, 2.3.7.10

Synod 2006 requested Senate to collaborate with the Curatorium to examine the manners in which spiritual relationships between lecturers at the TSP and independent schools as well as reverends and elders of local churches (on the one hand) and students (on the other) can be encouraged.

The Curatorium noted that students of the TSP have been allocated as guiding students at the called professors, and that the groups meet weekly to pay attention to this matter. Where necessary local reverends are involved. Students are also involved in their local congregations in a unique manner and they are taken care of actively by their reverends.

The Curatorium recommends that this system should also be implemented at the various other places of training if relevant.

2.3.5 2006:806, 2.3.7.11

Synod 2006 requested Senate to examine in collaboration with the Curatorium the possibility of a first or seventh year of internship in local churches for students who wish to follow the Candidate programme, or who have followed it.

The Curatorium examined the possibility of such an extra year, and came to the conclusion that it is not feasible, especially on financial grounds.

The Curatorium recommends instead examining the possibility of continuous practical work of students in congregations in particular minima or hours over the entire six year period of study.

2.4 *Additional relevant matters*

2.4.1 Accreditation

In the model that was accepted in principle by Synod 2006 (2006:799-803) it was assumed that the certificate or diploma qualifications would be developed and offered by the Faculty of Theology at the NWU. Since the aspiration from the beginning was to have properly accredited qualifications, in line with educational law in South Africa, this appeared to be the ideal solution.

Although the NWU is not opposed in principle to the offering of certificate and diploma qualifications, and encourage these in some cases, there are various complicating factors that make it impossible to follow this avenue at the moment:

- (i) The capacity of the Faculty of Theology is too limited to accept responsibility for these additional qualifications;
- (ii) The focus of the Faculty of Theology does not include qualifications below the level of BTh;
- (iii) Universities are awaiting indications as to how the *Higher Education Qualifications Framework* will be implemented. It is therefore impossible for universities to register new qualifications at this stage, and this will probably be the case until about 2015.

Other possibilities for the development and accreditation of the envisaged courses should therefore be investigated. Two possibilities exist:

- (i) the certificate- and diploma qualifications are developed and offered in collaboration with schools such as Mukhanyo Theological College, College ya Mojadi and Nqutu Reformed Seminary. Mukhanyo has already registered a certificate and diploma and are currently awaiting their application for accreditation – provisional accreditation has been granted already;
- (ii) should this avenue also appear to be feasible, it is still possible to develop programmes with some effort and to obtain accreditation through the *Health and Welfare SETA*.

2.4.2 Curriculum

The following are guidelines for the process of curricularization especially of certificate and diploma qualifications, and possibly also for some short courses. They are stipulated here merely as examples in order to concretize the recommendations that have been made up to this point:

- 2.4.2.1 The following ministries- and missionary work practices are identified as preferable, and also indicate to some extent the *aims* of the training process:
 - (i) the ideal is to activate as many believers as possible in various forms of ministry of the church – including women. This entails a great need for ongoing training and equipping for which traditionally highly trained reverends can be involved;
 - (ii) a great need especially for comprehensive Bible training and preparation for leadership service and mentorship;
 - (iii) a strong theology for and ministry in a context of AIDS and poverty is essential, with emphasis on a well developed charity ministry;
 - (iv) unwavering preparation with regard to a Biblical world view and the reformed identity of our churches are essential. In this manner it is hoped that among other things the phenomenon of “church hopping” will be stopped with the result that people will make a decision in principle for joining of and commitment to a Gereformeerde Church;
 - (v) there is an enormous need for a strong, structured youth and child ministry in our churches – especially in light of the social problems that arise as a result of urbanization and the consequences of poverty and AIDS;

- (vi) ministry in the churches – and therefore also training – must be contextually sensitive, aimed at unique problems and characteristics of rural, suburban, and urban ministry;
 - (vii) there is great need for fundamental thought about the nature and calling of the church in contemporary society – in other words: for a well founded and especially a practical ecclesiology;
 - (viii) a variety of skills must be activated in the churches – not everyone of them “theological” or “pastoral,” but also inclusive of aspects such as managerial, administrative, and financial skills. Matters such as the sustainability of ministry and (especially financial) independence of churches should also receive attention in training;
 - (ix) considerable attention is asked from missionary training – not missiology in the academic sense of the word, but practical training for concrete missionary work, such as evangelization, urban missionary work and church planting.
 - (x) the possibilities of multicultural ministry should be examined and activated, especially in the urban context. This matter includes a focus on the ministry of reconciliation of the church in a multicultural context.
- 2.4.2.2 With regard to the *nature* of courses to be developed, the following is envisaged as the ideal. Qualifications should:
- (i) be acknowledged and accredited in nature;
 - (ii) start at certificate level without strenuous admission requirements;
 - (iii) be aimed mainly at distance education with guidance of one sort or another in order to minimize geographical problems related to the accessibility of training;
 - (iv) focus on intellectual, knowledge-based moulding of students (the head), personal growth and spirituality (the heart) and on practical skills (the hands);
 - (v) therefore include a considerable degree of practical assignments as well as participation in real ministerial work (on the job training);
 - (vi) be set up on three levels, namely certificate-, diploma, and ultimately BTh;
 - (vii) be set up in such a manner that optimal entry into existing BTh courses and especially reverends’ training will be possible;
 - (viii) be put under the supervision of the Curatorium;
 - (ix) be evaluated continuously;
 - (x) be affordable and therefore accessible for persons with a low income.
- 2.4.2.3 With regard to the *development* of courses, the following guidelines have been provided:
- (i) Where possible extant materials should be used in order to limit the development of new materials to a minimum;
 - (ii) where adjustment to extant materials is necessary, new material should be developed, or new study guides have to be written, the available skills within the GKSA should be exploited maximally;
 - (iii) the professors of the TSP should be laden as little as possible (if at all);
 - (iv) possible ecumenical resources should be examined as far as possible and they should be implemented.
- 2.4.2.4 With regard to *identification* of possible study contents (of which the first three are viewed as compulsory for all students) an need exists for the following¹:
- (i) Knowledge of and manipulation of the Bible (overview of the Bible, basic revelatory history and hermeneutics, possibly also with inclusion of computer skills and the use of Bible software);
 - (ii) Personal spirituality;
 - (iii) Study skills;

¹ This list is compiled on the basis of broad consultation within the GKSA. However it is not clichéd, and supplements or deletions remain possible or even imperative.

- (iv) Christian counselling;
- (v) HIV/AIDS, poverty, social development and the ministry of charity;
- (vi) Christian apologetics (basic introduction, with specialization in one or more of the following: Islam, African traditional belief, Hinduism, the Zionist movement in SA, African independent churches, etc.);
- (vii) Christian world view (possibly in combination with the latter);
- (viii) Educational ministry in the church (basic introduction, with possible specialization in education in the church (catechism and teaching to adults) and Christian pedagogics (with emphasis on primary and secondary teaching);
- (ix) Church administration and finances;
- (x) Child and youth ministry (introduction with possible specialization in either of the two);
- (xi) Women's ministry (both by and for women)—an important matter in churches where the membership consists virtually solely of women;
- (xii) Multicultural life, multicultural ministry and reconciliation in a multicultural community;
- (xiii) Evangelization;
- (xiv) Missionary work and church planting (with urban missionary work as a possible specialization);
- (xv) Reformed confession and ethics;
- (xvi) Christian leadership;
- (xvii) Basic homelitics;
- (xviii) Introduction to ecclesiology (basic introduction and possible specialization in one or more of the following: church history, missionary work history, church law, church and society, etc.).

2.4.3 Bridging courses

2.4.3.1 Background

Many students who arrive at the Theological School and the Faculty of Theology of the NWU cannot be accepted because their matric results are too weak. Up to now such students have simply been denied with the advice that they should improve their matric first. It appears however that these persons (among whom can be found ones with great potential) do not return with damaging effects for the churches. Admission standards cannot be lowered, therefore the only alternative is to investigate ways to empower this category of prospective students optimally to meet the standards – and this brings us to bridging courses.

2.4.3.2 Contents of bridging course

Over the past period the possibility of a bridging course was examined. It should contain all the components that are necessary on the one hand for obtaining exemption, and, on the other, for admission to BTh and Candidates 1. The following could serve as possible contents of such a course (the subjects are offered already at the NWU):

- (i) Basic language skills in English and Afrikaans
- (ii) The Academic Literacy Module for risk students (AGLA111)
- (iii) Basic Mathematics
- (iv) Life skills
- (v) Management of culture

2.4.3.3 Anticipated process

For the registration of the bridging course documentation similar to that for the registration of any new programme must be completed by the co-ordinator of the Theological Bridging course. The documentation must be drawn up in tandem with the Academic Support Services of the NWU. The course should be approved by the Faculty Council as well as on the grounds of peer reports. Subsequently the documents will be processed in the IKAS course, and should then be approved by the Institutional Senate of the NWU and is to be registered at the Educational

bodies. If everything goes according to plan, the process may be complete by September 2009, with the result that the first students can enrol for the bridging course at the beginning of 2010.

2.4.3.4 Entry to bridging course

Candidates that possess a matric without full exemption or who do not comply with the entry requirements of the Faculty of Theology even though they qualify in other respects, are provisionally Admitted as NWU- and Student Candidates for the first semester, and are registered for the bridging course. They also undergo the usual selection process (psychometric and admission tests).

The bridging course runs over both semesters of the first year, and students follow it as permanent students of the campus in Potchefstroom. Students complete 70% of courses in the first semester and 30% in the second. If they pass the first semester, they are admitted provisionally for the second semester of the bridging course and they may also enrol for selected modules of the BTh (and Candidates 1).

Students who pass both semesters receive full matriculation exemption and if the selected modules are also passed they receive admission to the rest of the BTh and Candidates programme without any further requirements. The latter students complete the usual three year programme but then in four to four and a half years. This also has implications in terms of financial support for them, for they will therefore need a maximum of seven to seven and a half years of support.

The bridging course cannot be offered telematically but only with a view to permanent students on the said campus. Students who wish to study at institutions other than Potchefstroom or via telematic education can enrol via the FET colleges in their vicinity for a course that will improve their matric results in order to comply with the requirements for admission.

2.4.4 Sermon supporters

In 2.1 above the circumstances are mentioned in the case of churches from the former Synod Middellande, in particular with reference to those who lead church services on a Sunday.

It is clear that the conduct of the supporters in these services is problematic within the Reformed Church Law especially in terms of KO, art 3. Yet it should not go unnoticed that the conduct of these brothers forms an essential and imperative part of the church life especially in black churches.

The Curators would like to think more expansively about this matter before concrete recommendations are made. Consultation with Reformed Churches internationally can be of great value in this respect. *Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt)* in the Netherlands, for example, took a decision at their Synod gathering in Zwolle in September 2008 in accordance with which sermon consent can also be allocated to persons who are not students of theology (attached as Addendum 1). This decision, and possible further decisions of other Reformed church affiliates may possibly serve as guidelines for the discussion within the GKSA.

Decision: Noted 2.1 to 2.4.4.

3. Recommendations

3.1 1 (Assignment) noted as well as the decisions of Synods 2003 and 2006 which are related to this matter.

Decision: Approved.

3.2 noted 2.1 (Introduction)

3.3 noted 2.2 (Essential definitions)

3.4 appoint Deputies to assist churches in giving shape to the propagation of the Gospel in terms of 2.1 and 2.2, as well as the decisions of Synod 2003 and 2006 related to these, within the framework of Scripture, Confession, and Church Order, and against the backdrop of the research already conducted by the Curators and its Theological Training for Africa commission, after consultation with other relevant institutions.

Decision: Approved. It is recommended that the Deputies who should assist churches in the propagation of the Gospel should be appointed. Possible assignments for these Deputies:

- 1. To report matters in the Report (especially 2.1 and 2.2) as well as to develop and implement the concomitant decisions of Synod 2003 and 2006 within the framework of Scripture, Confession and the Church Order (cf. 3.4).**
 - 2. The development and implementation of help to churches in the propagation of the Gospel against the background of the research already done by the Curators and its Theological Training of Africa commission after consultation with other institutions as conveyed in 3.13 (cf. 3.4).**
 - 3. To request from Mukhanyo Theological College, College ya Mojadi, Nqutu Reformed Seminary, Dumisanie Theological Institute and the Center for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa (CRUMA) to collaborate in the development and offering of theological programmes and possible other courses (cf. 2.4.1, and decision of Synod 2006:809, 23.4 about levels of entry and exit) that are simultaneously acknowledged by other accredited and acknowledged academic institutions (cf. 3.13).**
 - 4. To assist in making available (with other collaborators) Reformed Theological Training and training materials for church leaders and congregations in Africa as part of the Kingdom duties of the GKSA (cf. 3.20).**
- 3.5 noted 2.3.1 (assessment of lecturing and/ or facilitating staff at institutions outside Potchefstroom that are involved in candidates training)
 - 3.6 request the professors in Missiology, the Senate of the TSP and the Curatorium to continue the discussion about missionary direction of the total theological curriculum (2.3.2 against the background of 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.)
 - 3.7 noted 2.3.3 (research about mentoring, spirituality and spiritual leadership)
 - 3.8 noted 2.3.4 (spiritual relationships and guardianship)
 - 3.9 recommends the guardian system for institutions other than Potchefstroom that are involved in candidates training 2.3.4.)
 - 3.10 noted 2.3.5 (first or seventh year of internship)
 - 3.11 accepts the proposal of 2.3.5 in matters practical hours and assessment of practical work, and requests the Curatorium, the Senate of the TSP and the Faculty of Theology (NWU) to implement this;
 - 3.12 noted 2.4.1 (accreditation)
 - 3.13 requests *Mukhanyo Theological College, College ya Mojadi, Nqutu Reformed Seminary* and the *Center for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa (CRUMA)* to collaborate with the Deputies for assistance to churches with the propagation of the Gospels and in the development and offering of theological programmes and possible further courses (2.4.1 and decision of Synod 2006 [809, 23.4] about levels of entry and exit) concomitantly acknowledged by other accredited, registered academic institutions e.g. in terms of awarding certificates, diplomas, or degrees.
 - 3.14 noted 2.4.2 (curriculum)
 - 3.15 accepts the implementation of a bridging course in theology (2.4.3). Synod requests the Executive Management of the Faculty to develop the course in consultation with the EC of the Senate.
 - 3.16 approves that bridging students can be supported financially for longer periods by the churches than students who enrol directly (without bridging) for the BTh, to a maximum of seven and a half years (2.4.3.4)
 - 3.17 requests help from Deputies to churches in propagating the Gospel to examine the matter of sermon helpers further and to make recommendations against the background of decisions from other Reformed church affiliates to Synod about ways in which this matter can be managed in such a way that (a) it does justice to the need of churches where these brothers perform and (b) it will comply with the principles of the Church order (2.4.4 against the background of 2.1.1). (The Deputies of Synod 2006

who investigated service of the elders mainly investigated whether elders may also serve the sacraments, while this is essentially different from what is proposed here).

Decision: Approved.

3.18 requests the Deputies for help to churches in propagating the Gospel in order to monitor the relevant matters mentioned in this Report, to manage matters emanating from this report and to report to the next Synod about them

Decision: Approved.

3.19 requests the Curators to see to it that the training of reverends by the GKSA will be continuously evaluated as a church matter in the strategic planning process of the TSP against the background of the change at tertiary educational level;

3.20 requests the Deputies to help churches in propagating the Gospel in collaboration with co-workers, and to the extent to which it is possible, and to help when it comes to making available Reformed theological training and training materials for church leaders and congregations in Africa, as part of the Kingdom duties of the GKSA (2.1.3).

Decision: Approved.

1.5.1 Report of the Sub-commission Theological Training in Africa: KO, art 19

1. Assignment

To investigate in light of KO, art 19 how obstacles can be removed and possible mistaken perceptions corrected in order to improve the number of enrolments especially from black churches.

Decision: Noted.

2. Implementation

The Commission met on 27 October 2008 and present their findings and recommendations in the following four groups.

2.1 *The image of the TSP*

A new generation of youth has grown up who do not really know Potchefstroom, the TSP and NWU. For many it is a faraway, unknown entity which can be an obstacle in the consideration of theological studies. A certain marketing programme should therefore be launched which will give attention to the following three matters among others:

2.1.1 That visits by the TSP to certain Classes will be planned in such a way in collaboration with the Curators that given regions should receive extraordinary attention to the introduction of the TSP and the recruitment of possible students. This means special focus on one or two churches or a gathering of a few congregations.

Recommendation: that the Senate gives attention to the implementation of this.

2.1.2 That a Sunday will be earmarked in 2009 and in each subsequent year, while this will encompass the entire affiliation, during which there will be particular focus on theological training. During this event information is given through to the churches and they are requested to think of the matter of training in prayer. Besides predetermined [kollekte] for the [Kas] for theological students on this Sunday an additional [killekte] is taken for them.

Recommendation: that this matter is presented at the next Synod and, if approved, that the implementation is assigned to the Selection commission.

Decision: Approved that an additional [kollekte] be taken for the [Kas] of Theological Students

2.1.3 That a DVD is compiled which focuses on calling, an exposition of the study, discussions with lecturers, confessions by students, student life, and the buildings of the typical Potch-environment. That this DVD be sent to churches.

Recommendation: that this matter be assigned to the Theological Student [vereniging] to implement this in consultation with the Senate

2.2 *Financial support*

That the prospect be investigated to change the financial support of the churches by means of love offerings by connecting churches with a given student (adopte a student). A certain number of churches therefore receive information that they must support this student with love offerings. Theyalso receive continuous feedback about the student's progress and he can also help over holidays within the period of his studies with certain ministerial aspects and later also with giving sermons.

Recommendation: implementation of this is assigned to the Bursary commission.

Decision: Approved.

2.3 Provision of information

2.3.1 In the black churches youth commissions and women's conferences play an important role. These should be used to provide information to motivate possible students to study theology.

2.3.2 At the annual open day of the NWU is should be considered to garrison a "stall" of the TSP and aslwo at the forthcoming 150 years' celebration of the GKSA.

Recommendation: The implementation of 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 is assigned to the executive of the TSP in consultation with the Senate.

2.4 Wrong circumstances

The Commission found that the following four circumstances are important obbstacles in the consideration of prospective students. Witnesses from various churches indicate this, although it has not been examined scientifically. Correcting these circumstances is difficult to determine and this also calls on long term programmes of sowing, disucssion, and real assistance. Reaction to these circumstances is mentioned as one of those normal human and sinful factors, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls and fills with enthusiasm despite physical circumstances.

2.4.1 The image of congregations: though many congregations are faring well, some show a lack of vitality and the image of poverty. The question arises whether such an image will influence a young man who has enthusiasm for theological studies?

2.4.2 The image of reverends: though it works well with many reverends, some suffer because of a lack of proper care. Young men may as a result avoid work such as this, while his friends with the greater salaries climb the ladder of promotion.

2.4.3 The image of youth acknowledgement: there are churches in which the youth are well integrated and participate actively in activities. However in others there is a clear distinction and uncertainty about the place of the youth, while there is an apparent lack of focus on the needs of youth. How can it be expected from a young man to become a reverend in cases in which he as a young person is not integrated into the church?

2.4.4 The image of the church affiliation: many youth are grateful to the Lord for the church affiliation of which they are allowed to be part. Unfortunately some youth have a negative image of the church affiliation – one of negativity, conflict, and lack of enthusiasm. A young man from this group will find difficulty in allowing himself as theological student to enter such as "war."

Recommendations: that the Curators begin to talk about these challenges in their Curators Report at the Regional Synd referring to the matters as possible inhibiting factors.

Decision: Approved.