

## **Overture from the Reformed Church of Hastings**

### **Re: Images of Christ in Worship in the CRCA Synod**

The Session of the Reformed Church of Hastings respectfully overtures Synod with the following:

#### **Overture**

1. That Synod express its grave concern that one of the delegates called the CRCA Synod 2006 to reflect on the sufferings of Christ through the use of images of Christ clipped from the movie “The Passion of the Christ” and that no action was taken by the CRCA Synod 2006 as a body to express its disapproval.
2. That Synod urge the CRCA to re-affirm their commitment to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment and its implication for worship stated in the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 35, which forbids making any images (even of creatures) “if one’s intention is to worship them or to serve God through them” because God does not want his people instructed “by idols that cannot even talk”.
3. That Synod urge the CRCA to ensure that all office-bearers uphold Scripture and Confession in the prohibition of images used for purposes of worship and to affirm that “different views on this issue” are not to be allowed on a confessional matter.
4. That Synod urge Presbyteries and Synodical examiners to ensure that CRCA ministers who seek to enter the ministry in the RCNZ can affirm without hesitation that Scripture and Confession prohibit using images for the purpose of worship.

#### **Grounds**

1. It is a fact that an ordained minister called the CRCA Synod 2006 to reflect on the sufferings of Christ using images. This indicates that some office-bearers in the CRCA have neglected Scripture’s teaching regarding worship: namely, that we are not to “worship [God] in any other way than He has commanded in his Word”. Although the report of our Interchurch Relations Committee on its meeting with the CER suggests that some CRCA “sessions would probably be bringing it to their next Synod”, this matter in which the confessional fidelity of the CRCA is at stake should have been a matter of the strongest protest by the delegates to the CRCA Synod 2006. To the contrary an attempt at protest by one of the faculty of the RTC (an observer at the Synod) was not allowed by the Moderator of the Synod.
2. In view of this serious lapse it is important that the CRCA re-affirm their confessional fidelity to Lord’s Day 35.
3. All office-bearers are duty bound to militate against doctrinal error in confessional matters. This at the very least requires that different views on confessional matters are not to be allowed lest our confessional subscription amount to nothing.
4. Because ministers of sister-churches are available for call in the RCNZ, it is important that ministers of the CRCA be questioned to ascertain their confessional fidelity regarding the regulation of worship and that they fully support Scripture’s prohibition against the use of images for purposes of worship.

On behalf of Session,



Rev. Bruce Hoyt