

C. *Recommendation:*

That the potential service book content be extended to include also:

1. Model services
2. Liturgical prayers
3. Decalogue variations
4. The form of subscription

Grounds:

- a. This is the joint recommendation of the Liturgical Committee and the Board of Publications.
- b. This action does not require the addition of such items, but only makes possible the inclusion of such items should feasibility testing indicate that such inclusion is advisable.

— *Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 6 is continued in Article 72.)

ARTICLE 43

After announcements the afternoon session of synod is adjourned and Elder Ralph Pypker leads the delegates in closing prayer.

THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 12, 1980

Eighth Session

ARTICLE 44

Synod reconvenes in evening session and Elder Louis Visser leads in devotions.

The Rev. Allan Jongsma has replaced the Rev. Louis Kerkstra as delegate for Classis Grand Rapids South. The brother stands indicating his agreement with the Forms of Unity.

ARTICLE 45

Advisory Committee 5, *Ethical Matters*, the Rev. Jack Stulp reporting, presents the following:

STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT: MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

A. *Materials:*

1. Report 29
2. Overture 21

B. *History:*

This report is the outgrowth of work by several synods since 1971. Study committees presented reports in 1973, 1975, and 1977.

The synod of 1977 referred the study committee report of that year and its advisory committee report to a newly appointed study committee with the following mandate (*Acts of Synod, 1977, Art. 76, C, 2*):

"a. to reexamine and set forth the biblical teachings on divorce and remarriage, evaluating critically the traditional exegesis of the relevant passages.

"b. to formulate pastoral guidelines with respect to the problems of divorce and remarriage as they appear in our society, specifically taking into account the tension which appears to exist between Christ's teaching and situations of clearly destructive marital disruption."

C. *Recommendations:*

1. That synod recognize the Rev. Wilbert Van Dyk (chairman) and Dr. David Holwerda (secretary) as representatives of the committee at synod and that they be given the privilege to speak when this report is under consideration. — *Adopted*

2. That synod accept Sections I and II of this report as being basically in accord with the biblical teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. — *Adopted*

3. That synod adopt Section III, "Guidelines for the Ministry of the Church," and refer the same to pastors, consistories, and the church for guidance in handling the important matters of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Grounds:

- a. The guidelines reflect the demonstrable teaching of Scripture on marriage, divorce, remarriage, repentance, and forgiveness.
- b. The guidelines, in harmony with the general provisions of the Church Order, recognize that pastors and consistories, using the gift of wisdom as led by the Spirit, must apply the teaching of Scripture to the specific situations and concrete cases of marital difficulty.

— *Adopted*

4. That synod urge appropriate agencies within the denomination (such as the Education Committee) to give serious consideration to developing means of disseminating the principles and concepts contained in this report to the general membership of the denomination in ways that may promote the meaning of marriage.

Grounds:

- a. The deterioration of the marriage relationship in our society requires a strong positive approach.
- b. The practicality and pastoral nature of the material presented makes it appropriate to this situation.
- c. This is consistent with recommendation 3, above.

— *Adopted*

5. That synod declare the committee's mandate fulfilled and, therefore, discharge the committee with thanks. — *Adopted*

6. That synod declare that the decisions above constitute synod's answer to Overture 21. — *Adopted*

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Article 50.)