

A BRIEF HISTORY

*of*

CLASSIS

HACKENSACK

*of the*

CHRISTIAN

REFORMED

CHURCH

by: *Henry Spoelhof*

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MARK W. WAIN

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HISTORY OF CLASSIS HACKENSACK  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

Sesquicentennial Date of Organization

Saturday August 17, 1974

Classis Hackensack through the course of the past 150 years had times of spiritual and material prosperity and poverty. The foundation that Classis Hackensack has built upon is: Jesus Christ our Lord who is the chief cornerstone. "And upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it". Matthew 16 verse 18-b.

With the above thought from the Scripture we will write a brief history of Classis Hackensack of the Christian Reformed Church who commemorates their sesquicentennial on Sunday August 18, 1974 in the churches and on Tuesday evening 8:00 p.m. Sept. 24, 1974 at the oldest organized Christian Reformed Church in Classis Hackensack and in the Christian Reformed denomination, namely: the Richfield Christian Reformed Church of Clifton, New Jersey.

Classis Hackensack was organized on Tuesday August 17, 1824 at Hackensack, N.J.. It was a classis formed by the authorization of the Synod of the True Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America. This denomination was organized on October 24, 1822 in Schraalenburgh, N.J. by churches who had seceded from the Dutch Reformed Church of America. The Classis, as it stands today, has twenty church of which only three are of the original group of the True Reformed Dutch Church when they affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church in the year 1890. They are the Richfield Christian Reformed Church in Clifton, N.J., the Trinity Christian Reformed Church in North Haledon, N.J. and the Monsey Christian Reformed Church in Monsey, N.Y. In order to obtain a picture of the background history of Classis Hackensack of The True Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America and later of the Christian Reformed Church, the following chapters will be discussed.

Chapter One - Historical Background of the 1822 Secession

Chapter Two - The Reasons for the Secession as Revealed in the Secession Document

Chapter Three - The True Reformed Dutch Church as a Denomination and Organization of Classis Hackensack

Chapter Four - Contacts that Led to Classis Hackensack's Affiliation with the Christian Reformed Church

Chapter Five - Secession of Churches from Classis Hackensack

Chapter Six - The Seceded Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church and It's Dissolvment

Chapter Seven - Classis Hackensack - Christian Reformed Church During the years 1908 to 1974

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Background of the 1822 Secession From the Dutch Reformed Church in America

When the Holland people began to settle in North America under the supervision and guidance of the Dutch East Indies Co. they established colonies along the Hudson River from New Amsterdam to Albany and also at Bergen New Jersey and on Long Island, N.Y. They organized at New Amsterdam, which today is a group of churches known as the Collegiate Reformed Church, in 1628.

In 1664 the British came and demanded the surrender of the colonies at which time eleven churches had been established. Holland immigration then became dormant for almost 200 years. After the English took over the colonies they began to immigrate and establish their Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches. The major language which was Holland now became English and though the Hollanders were handicapped by the English language their churches flourished, and they became a powerful factor in the religious life of the colonies. Churches were organized at Hackensack, Acquackanonk, N.J. and Tappan, N.Y. Between the years 1664 and 1737 the Dutch Reformed Churches increased to sixty-five churches.

At this time there were only six ministers who served these churches and many of these churches had the service of a minister about two or three times a year. The churches when they had no service of a pastor an elder would lead the worship service and a voorleezer, who could be the same elder, would read a printed sermon, for the spiritual edification of the people. The Schraalenburgh church was one that was organized during this period in 1723. Because of the great risk and expense, very few men would go to the Netherlands to study and prepare for the ministry and be ordained and return to America to serve their church and only a few ministers were persuaded to come from the Netherlands. So earnest and progressive men took measures to form an organization, called the Coetus, which took measures for educating and ordaining ministers among themselves. Conventions were held in 1737 and 1738 in New York at which a plan was perfected and sent to the Netherlands.

It took Classis of Amsterdam nine years to decide what to do because of influences by the opposition which had arisen in the colonies. In 1747 the Classis of Amsterdam gave their approval, but the concession given was not adequate to give relief to the churches in the colonies.

In 1753 the Coetus assumed full power of a classis. This was approved by the churches at a session held May 30, 1755. So the Coetus then ordained several men into the ministry without the consent of Classis Amsterdam. This was opposed by a minority group who became very bitter in their opposition and organized under the name of Conferentie.

The two churches of Hackensack and Schraalenburgh were under one ministry who pastor was Rev. Antonius Curtenius. He had come from the Netherlands and was the sole pastor of this church until 1748. On the 13th of August 1748 the Rev. John H. Goetschius was called as a colleague of Rev. Curtenius to serve these churches. This call was approved by the Coetus. Rev. Goetschius was installed and ordained on October 16, 1748.

Rev. Curtenius was one of the number who formed the Conferentie party recognized by Classis Amsterdam. Two opposing party pastors indicated that a terrible division existed in this church. The controversy became so bitter that the different parties would not speak nor greet each other, nor worship together. When the Coetus group were worshipping at Schraalenburgh the Conferentie group would worship at Hackensack. The groups would alternate between these churches every Lord's Day.

In 1772 a reconciliation took place under which the churches seemingly prospered working under independent church constitutions, and church governments which in all its features were the same as the Reformed Church was working under in 1900. Dr. John Livingston who was born in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and had his theological training in the Netherlands returned to the colonies and brought back a plan of union approved by the church authorities in the Netherlands. This plan was for independence from Classis

Amsterdam. There was to be one general body called a Synod with five divisions which are called Classis. Full power of self government, discipline, and above all, the right to examine and ordain candidates for the ministry. The delegates who were a fair representation of the Coetus, Conferentie, and Neutrals subscribed to this Plan of Union and sought for the subscription of those who were not present. In 1772 the Article of Union was confirmed by the Classis of Amsterdam. The organization of the Reformed Church in accordance with this plan was effected and five Classis were formed namely: New York, Kingston, Albany, New Brunswick and Hackensack. The Classis Hackensack of the Dutch Reformed Church was established in 1772.

In 1768 or 1769 the Rev. Warmoldus Kuyper became pastor of the Hackensack Schraalenburgh church. He represented the Conferentie group of the church at the 1771 convention in New York. In 1775 Rev. Dirk Romeijn became pastor of the Coetus group of the same church. Rev. Romeijn took a prominent part in the activities of Classis Hackensack (D.R.C.A.) but on the part of Rev. W. Kuyper and his consistory there was an unwillingness to attend sessions of Classis.

The strife was also aggravated by the Revolutionary War and proved to be increased trouble in the congregations of Hackensack and Schraalenburgh. A group of Dutch Tories of the Conferentie group with the British raided the parsonage at Schraalenburgh where Pastor Romeijn resided; but had fled. The Tories broke the doors and windows, ravaged the house and barn and left the place an empty shell.

In 1785 Rev. Dirk Romeijn left the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh church leaving Rev. W. Kuyper of the Conferentie group as the only minister there. In May 1786 Rev. W. Kuyper and his elder Jan Romeijn took their seats in Classis Hackensack (D.R.C.A.) for the first time in the fourteen years existence of the Classis. At this Classis the call extended by the Coetus group to Rev. Solomon Froeligh was approved. In 1786 Rev. Froeligh became the last minister of the churches of Hackensack-Schraalenburgh while they were in the Dutch Reformed Church.

Rev. Froeligh at first cooperated with the desire of Classis Hackensack (D.R.C.A.) During this period of harmony and peace the congregation built a new church building on the Green in Hackensack in 1791, across the street and on the northside of the Bergen County Courthouse. After five years of peace the congregation of Rev. S. Froeligh presented a petition to Classis Hackensack (D.R.C.A.) requesting a dissolution of the union agreed to in 1790 and the congregations of Rev. Solomon Froeligh and of Rev. W. Kuyper be declared separate churches.

Rev. Froeligh came into the church as a stranger and assumed as many outsiders did, that the quarrels were nothing more than a clash of stubborn men and that with some good will the difficulty could easily be settled. He found this to be much different. On a Sabbath Day sermon he preached from Jeremiah 15 vs. 19-21, a text that impressed him: "Therefore saith the Lord, if thou return, then I will bring thee again and thou shalt stand before me, and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth, let them return unto thee, but return thou not unto them." It was clearly revealed unto Jeremiah, and by the same word made known to his faithful servant (Rev. Froeligh) who after this in all his preachings kept close to that line which the Lord stretched over those congregations. For interpretation of this sermon was that Rev. Froeligh's congregation was the precious and the congregation of Rev. W. Kuipers was the vile. Rev. Kuipers who was now in the mid sicties became infirm and asked Classis Hackensack (Dutch Reformed) for emeritation which was granted to him at the next session. Five days later Rev. Kuyper died.

Rev. Froeligh then sought to unite the congregations but since in 1795 he had sought the dissolution of the congregations that he had helped to unite it was now impossible to expect the congregations to become one again.

At the May 1799 session of Classis Hackensack (D.R.C.A.) a call was approved that was extended by the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh Church to the Rev. Jacobus V. C. Romeijn. He was one who promoted the Conferentie principles. The Classis approved the call, but Rev. S. Froeligh and his friends cast negative votes because: 1) an elder was seated in Classis as a representative from the other group of the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh church, 2) the call was approved while an appeal from the decision of the Particular Synod had not yet been tried, and 3) the corporate seal had been affixed to said call by those consistories without the authority from the body corporate. Under all these differences, appeals and protests to Classis, Particular Synods and General Synod, the session of the General Synod of 1800 approved the call of the Conferentie group in the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh churches.

The General Synod of 1800 also decided to dissolve Classis Hackensack in the Dutch Reformed Church and organize two classes. The one classis to be known as Classis Bergen with Rev. Jacobus V.C. Romeijn's Conferentie Church assigned to it. The other Classis to be known as Classis Paramis with Rev. S. Froeligh's church assigned to it. The controversy between the two churches remained. It took, according to church order, a more circuitous route to come to an agreement.

Rev. Froeligh's congregation decided to build a new church edifice on the Schraalenburgh church property. An attempt by the other group to share in the building of this church was denied by Rev. Froeligh's group. Instead they sent a mile further north on the Schraalenburgh Road, which today is Dumont N.J., and built their church on a new site during 1801. Both churches are beautiful early American architecture. Rev. Froeligh's church was built in 1799 and Rev. J.C. Romeijn's church in 1801, the only difference being that the steeple of Rev. Romeijn's church was made twenty feet higher than the steeple on Rev. Froeligh's church.

In 1792 the Provisional Synod chose Dr. Solomon Froeligh as its lecturer in theology and five years later he was made a local professor without a salary. A number of students were prepared for the ministry under his instruction at home. In 1799 the Particular Synod appointed him as a teacher in Hebrew. At the General Synod of 1803 it was seen that the system of having local professors serving without salary stood in the way of accomplishing the purpose of establishing a central theological school with an endowment for the support of its professors. It was therefore decided that these professors should continue the honors of their offices during their lives, or good behaviour, but should have no successors.

Dr. Livingston, who had been a professor under the Provisional Synod since 1784 was now elected as the one permanent professor by the General Synod of 1803. At the same time the election of the previous year, by the Particular Synod, of Dr. S. Froeligh, Basset and Kiupers as teachers in Hebrew was set aside as unauthorized. The General Synod of 1803 proceeded to elect two professors from a nomination of Dr. S. Froeligh, Baset and Jeremiah Romeijn. Dr. Froeligh failed to be elected, while Drs. Basset and Jeremiah Romeijn succeeded.

About 1810 an endowment was obtained for a theological chair and Dr. Livingston was called to occupy it with a regular salary. He was elected president of Queens College, now Rutgers, therefore he left his pastoral charge at the Collegiate Church in New York, and resided in New Brunswick. After this, Synod requested all students of

in theology to pursue their studies at New Brunswick under the care of the church. These happenings caused great disappointment to Dr. Solomon Froeligh.

Shortly hereafter there was a great conflict between the North and the South Church. The North Church in Dumont belonged to the Conferentie Group and the South Church in Bergenfield belonged to the Coetus Group. It concerned the transfer of membership papers between the two groups. One example was that of a young couple whose membership was in the North Church of Rev. Jacobus V.C. Romeyn. The couple was under suspension but was admitted to the South Church of Rev. S. Froeligh upon confession of faith. The reasoning was that their request of transfer from the North Church to the South Church would have been refused anyway; so this other method was used. This brought a charge against Rev. Froeligh by Rev. Romeyn at Classis Bergen, then on to the Particular Synod and then to Classis Paramus which was Rev. Froeligh's classis. Rev. Froeligh answered the charge with a statement from his consistory that they accepted the responsibility for their action and pledged their honor to stand by their pastor to the last extremity in administering to said members the ordinances of God's house. This case was shuttled back and forth between the classes and the particular synod until it finally reached the General Synod of 1822. The synod sustained the particular synod for a retrial of Dr. Solomon Froeligh. Classis Paramus had previously acquitted him, so now by order of the General Synod Classis Paramus reluctantly set a date for the trial in 1823. This date was after the Secession of October 1822 and therefore Dr. Froeligh did not appear. During all these proceedings between the South and the North Church other troubles were brewing in the Dutch Reformed Church.

At the General Synod of 1817 a pastoral letter was authorized to be circulated among all the churches warning against all the false doctrine which as a dark gloomy cloud of error was advancing from the East. This referred to New England where Universalism was spreading over the church. Early in the year 1818 a book was introduced in the area of Classis Montgomery in central New York by the Rev. Conrad Ten Eyck entitled: "Selections On The Atonement" which advocated unlimited atonement and other errors. Thus his teachings were not in accord with the Canons of Dordt, one of the standards adopted by the Reformed Church. The friends of sound Calvinistic theology were alarmed and opposed Ten Eyck. A meeting of the consistory at Owasco N.Y. was called. Rev. Ten Eyck was pastor there. Instead of retracting the errors he had begun to disseminate, he openly avowed his sentiments on indefinite atonement. Rev. Ten Eyck was asked to appear before the Classis Montgomery at Owasco N.Y. in 1819 as a consequence of certain reports. His written defense was: "I confess that I do believe in the doctrine of unlimited atonement and therefore have preached it. I do believe it agrees with the standard of our church and therefore I have made the affirmation." Classis Montgomery made the following decision: "The opinion of Classis is that the sentiments of Rev. Ten Eyck as expressed in his defense are not inconsistent with or contrary to the Word of God and the standards of our church. The different views on the subject under consideration are not of such a nature as ought to destroy the peace and harmony of churches and the fellowship of Christian brethren." The matter was taken by protest and appeal to the Particular Synod. Its decision was that Classis Montgomery should rescind their resolution and it instructed Classis to labor with Rev. Ten Eyck so as to reclaim him from his errors and to deal with him according to the article of the church relative to false doctrines. At the General Synod of 1820 the Particular Synod reported the following in the Ten Eyck case: "In conformity with an injunction by the Particular Synod making it the duty of Classis Montgomery to labor with Rev. C. Ten Eyck and endeavor to convince him of his errors, he has been written unto by some of the ministers of Classis to whom he returned an answer". It could clearly be seen that the Classis did not at all labor with Rev. Ten Eyck. There was no recantation or an examination of Rev. Ten Eyck.

On the 18th of Oct. 1820 in a debate at the General Synod held at Albany, Rev. Mr. Palmer lost his seat as a delegate because of a breach of order in speaking out with a remark that "he hoped to see the day when the authors referred to together with our standards should be considered subserviant to the Word of God". Because he refused to apologize he was unseated for that Synod. A breach of order was more severely dealt with than proclaiming a heresy.

After the meeting of June 1821 four ministers finding that a division of Classis Montgomery promised by the Particular Synod was declared inexpedient, and seeing no hope of purity or peace, withdrew their connection and wrote a letter stating their reasons for doing so. They were deposed as ministers of the gospel. They were the Rev.'s H. V. Wyckoff, Sylvan Palmer, John C. Tol and Albert Ammerman.

When the General Synod of 1822 was in session in New York, the prevalence of heresy, the neglect of discipline, profanation of the sacraments and the hopelessness of a reformation was discussed by friends of the Dutch Reformed Church. Dr. Solomon Froeligh who was at this session, had no hope for a change for the better for all his attempts had now failed. As a last resort he intended to move on the next mornings session that a convention be called to settle the present dispute about the meaning of these three standards of the Dutch Reformed Church and what in fact was the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church. This motion of Dr. Froeligh was contemptuously rejected and left unrecorded in the minutes.

On the return of Dr. Froeligh from the Synod of Aug. 19, 1822 he called his congregation together advising them to withdraw from the Dutch Reformed Church, so that purity of doctrine might be maintained and discipline for false doctrine he made effectual. The congregation voted 37 for and 37 against. Rev. Froeligh called for a day of fasting and prayer and labored anew with his congregation. The reason for the opposition to secession was that they did not think it quite the time for it as yet.

Dr. S. Froeligh travelled north to Central New York State to confer with the group of deposed ministers in connection with opposing the Synod in deliberating the Ten Eyck case. They agreed to join in with him in a secession from the Dutch Reformed Church.

On Oct. 22, 23, and 24, 1822 a secession gathering took place at the South Church in Schraalenburgh, N.J.. Dr. Froeligh who led this secession was now seventy-two years of age.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REASONS FOR SECESSION IN THE SECESSION DOCUMENT

The secession document being rather lengthy we will omit in this brief history. We will point out the reasons for the secession.

Since the seceded churches have identified themselves as the True Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America, the initial subject of this document would be on the true church. It begins in the manner: "If a church that once was noted for its soundness, in faith and later becomes corrupt in principle and practices, the faithful members should not precipitate in meditating secession, but with patience and zeal should strive with every effective measure to effect reformation. But if the floodgates of error and practices are



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opened wide so that they can not be closed again by ordinary means, the peace of the church is no longer to be maintained at the expense of truth and good government, it then becomes the duty of the faithful to avail themselves of the last resort which is to retrograde and assume their original character. In other words the final act is secession from the former church. Then the document refers to the definition of a true church as stated in the 29th Article of the Belgic Confession. The definition is as follows:

1. A true church is where the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached and maintained.
2. Where the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ is maintained.
3. Where true Christian discipline is exercised.

Summarizing this: "Where all things in the church are managed according to the pure word of God. All things contrary thereto rejected and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only head of the church."

Then the document gives the definition of the Holy Catholic Church according to the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 21. The answer is: "That the Son of God from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves to himself by his spirit and word out of the whole human race, a Church chosen to everlasting life agreeing in faith".

The true church therefore is the church where it must be found that they maintain purity of doctrine and agree in true faith. For the church is built upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles that is the doctrine of truth as taught by them "Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone."

#### The Sacraments:

Baptism belongs to believers and their children and the sacraments to be administered to adults who believe and manifest true faith and to the children of such and none others. The Lord's Supper belongs only to believers as question 81 of the 30th Lord's Day of the Heidelberg Catechism indicates. The following according to the above catechism question are not admitted: Hypocrites, ungodly and infidels. Also those that teach false doctrines.

Christian Discipline = As taught in the 31st Lord's Day and Art. 33 of the Belgic Confession of Faith. Christian discipline is exercised for those in the church who proclaim false doctrines, lead offensive lives by administering reproofs and if they are obstinate then further reproof by excommunication.

#### GRIEVANCES

A serious attention to the state of that church called the Dutch Reformed Church as it now exists (that is in 1822) and comparing it with the aforesaid marks, will discover a departure of that church from its adopted standards.

1. Of the marks of a true church - God's Word and Gospel.
  - a. Members everywhere in the congregation of that body (D. Ref. Church) living in utter ignorance even of the first principles of all true religion and so without love and fear of the true God.
  - b. These members also live profane and ungodly lives having no respect for God's holy name, his laws, word and worship and under these circumstances, without the exercise of discipline admitted to the use of sealing ordinances.
2. Of the marks of a True Church - Sacraments
  - a. Indiscriminate administration of the sacraments without any regard to qualifications. Parents are admitted to present their children for baptism without the manifestation of any true knowledge of the nature of that ordinance.

b. In regards to the administration of the Lord's Supper they find churches that are composed of members that are far from manifesting evidences of true faith and piety, that when fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion as taught in the standards of their church are brought in question, they appear not only ignorant of but even become avowed enemies thereto.

### 3. Of the marks of a true church - Discipline

a. It is truly awful to behold, with but a few exceptions whole churches composed of ignorant, prayerless, wicked baptized members and also of this character recognized as members in full communion.

b. The treatment of those ministers and elders that have endeavored to be faithful in reforming the church from this evil.

1. They have been hated, derided, persecuted, been named troublers of Israel, inventors of new things. All manner of evil spoken of them falsely.

2. Those ministers and elders who please the vulgar and the wicked are held in high esteem and are well provided for in their physical needs.

Out of these members the consistories of the churches are composed.

The Classis and Synods are consisted of this type of delegates and thus the judicatories of the church are made up of ignorant and impious men who have not the fear of God before their eyes. What can be expected of such men having a seat in the counsels of the church? Out of the congregations thus situated originates many of the ministers. Thus many young men destitute of the renewing grace of God betake themselves to the study of divinity and obtain admittance to the office of sacred ministry. Therefore many of this character are licensed for the sacred ministry and when the real interests of the church, the maintenance of purity of doctrine and the discipline of the church are brought into question declare themselves on the side of error.

### OTHER FRIEVANCES

1. Rev. Conrad Ten Eyck was left to preach without a disavowal or recantation of his error in doctrine which was revealed in a book he had printed and distributed entitled "Selections on the Atonement".

2. A minister who for a breach of order, spoke out of turn at the General Synod of 1820, which met at Albany, N.Y., was unseated as a delegate and publicly degraded, after refusing to apologize. Making a breach of order at the General Synod dealt with more seriously than to preach and propogate a heresy.

3. A call was approved subscribed by the minority of a consistory with a seal of a corporation affixed to it without an order from the body politic. This refers to the call from the Conferentie group of the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh church that extended a call to the Rev. Jacobus V.C. Romeijn.

4. Admission of an elder to a seat and voice in Particular Synod, who was not delegated by any Classis from the sake of gaining a majority on an appeal relative to the above call.

5. They have formed a congregation within a congregation at Hackensack-Schraalenburgh.

6. They have declared a minister as an individual responsible for acts done by the consistory.

7. They have refused when earnestly solicited to call to account ministers who under their signature declared their approbation of the publication of Rev. C. Ten Eyck.

8. They have restored to office a minister who had been suspended for intemperance upon his presenting in writing not mentioning the crime he was suspended for.

9. They have suffered the church to be overrun with Hopkinsianism (a form of Armenian doctrine from Rhode Island).

10. They have rejected a motion for calling a general convention for the purpose of defining and explaining the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church relative to

atonement and concealed it from the public by not having the motion recorded.

11. They have deposed ministers for no other crime but that they could not in conscience associate with men who advocate Hopkinsian errors.

12. They allowed Methodist ministers to preach in a Reformed Church. Persons of the Methodist faith are invited by Reformed ministers to the Communion table and the ordinance of the Lords Supper actually administered to them. (Probably should not be admitted to the Lords Supper because of Armenianism)

The document then declares them to be the True Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America. After a few closing remarks the final appeal is to the Great Head of the Church and Searchers of all hearts to invoke his divine blessing.

The document was signed by five ministers:

1. Rev. Abraham Brokaw, church at Ovid, N.Y.
2. Rev. Sylvanus Palmer, church at Union, N.Y.
3. Rev. John C. Tol, church at Middletown, N.Y. in the Canajohane Section of N.Y.
4. Rev. Henry V. Wyckoff, 2nd church at Charleston, N.Y.
5. Rev. Dr. Solomon Froeligh, church at Hackensack-Schraalenburgh, N.J.

Eleven Elders:

1. Mr. Abraham Wartman, Ovid N.Y.
2. Mr. Hugh Mitchell, Waterloo, N.Y.
3. Mr. Henry Fresco, 2nd Church in Charleston, N.Y.
4. Mr. Simon Demarest, Hackensack, Schraalenburgh, N.J.
5. Mr. Peter De. Demarest, " " "
6. Mr. Albert Brinkerhoff, " " "
7. Mr. William Christie, " " "
8. Mr. Henry N. VanVoorhies " " "
9. Mr. Benjamin Westervelt " " "
10. Mr. John Terhune, " " "
11. Mr. Cornelius Terhune, " " "

Nine Deacons:

1. Peter Vosburgh, Union, N.Y.
2. Mr. Henry W. Banta, Hackensack - Schraalenburgh, N.J.
3. Mr. David B. Demarest " "
4. Mr. Richard Scott, " "
5. Mr. Casperus T. Zabriskie " "
6. Mr. John T. Van Buskirk " "
7. Mr. David Kipp " "
8. Mr. Samuel L. Demarest " "
9. Mr. Richard Berdan " "

### CHAPTER THREE

#### The True Reformed Dutch Church As A Denomination And Organization of Classis Hackensack

On October 22, 23 and 24, 1822 ten seceder delegates met at the church in Schraalenburgh, N.J. to form a document which gave the grounds and reasons for the intended organization. The delegates listed in Chapter Two elected officers, of whom Rev. Henry Wyckoff was President, Rev. John C. Tol was Secretary. The committee appointed to form the document were Dr. Solomon Froeligh, Rev. Sylvanus Palmer, Rev. John C. Tol, Elder Henry Fresco and Elder Henry Wortman. When the committee completed the Secession Document after two days of session the ten delegates and the consistory of the Hackensack-Schraalenburgh church subscribed to it.

The business of organization now began. It was unanimously decided to have the judicatories of the new church organization consist of only a classis and consistories and the classis shall be known and distinguished by the name of The Classis of The True Reformed Dutch Church in the U.S.A. The Classis shall consist of every minister who has a charge, elder, delegated by the consistory, every minister in good standing, who has no charge, and two elders delegated by a consistory of a vacant congregation. The ministers of this body together with an elder are hereby severally authorized to organize congregations in connection with this Classis when duly applied for.

The next official gathering of the Classis of the True Reformed Dutch Church was scheduled for Tuesday June 3, 1823 at Watervliet, N.Y. The main activity of this session was to receive reports of churches organized and to obtain and establish a means of preparing students of theology. This session at Watervliet, N.Y. was for two days of business. It was reported that two congregations were organized, consistories elected and delegates for these churches were present at this session. They were Owasco, N.Y. and Paramus, N.J. The delegates were acknowledged and seated. Mr. Archibald Mac Neil a licentiate from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was granted one year permission to preach at Owasco, N.Y. Due to the next session of Classis being scheduled for June 1, 1824 two other special sessions were held under special circumstances. The first meeting was held July 11 and 12, 1823 at the home of William Ostreder at Danube, N.Y. Two applications for organization of churches at Danube, N.Y. and Osquack, N.Y. were received and acted upon favorably. The two churches had also extended a call to Candidate Stephen Z. Goetschius and he had accepted the call. This session having four ministers and four elders present proceeded to examine Candidate Goetschuis. He was accepted and ordained on Sunday July 13, 1823. The next special session was held on March 23, 1824 at the home of James Lansing at Johnstown, N.Y. with 4 ministers and 5 elders. Student John V.S. Lansing made application for candidate to the ministry, was examined and accepted.

The next scheduled session of the Classis of the True Reformed Dutch Church was held on June 1 through June 4, 1824 at Hackensack. Six ministers and seven elders constituted the delegates for this session. The following churches were received under the care of the Classis and their delegates were received and given a seat upon signing the Formula and Declaration: New York City organized Sept. 1823, Ramapo, N.J., organized May 1824, Rev. James D. Demarest pastor, English Neighborhood, pastor Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest, Montville organized in 1824, Rev. James G. Brinkerhoff pastor, Wyanants, N.Y. and Poesten Kell, N.Y. . A call was extended by Owasco, N.Y. to candidate Archibald Mac Neil. Candidate John V.S. Lansing received a call from Wyanants and Poesten Kell, N.Y. Rev. John Demarest who had no charge was admitted upon his expressing a desire to come under the care of Classis. Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest of English Neighborhood accepted a call from New York City and Rev. James G. Brinkerhoff of Montville, N.J. accepted the call from English Neighborhood. Rev. John C. Tol was appointed with his consistory to organize a church at Bethlehem, N.Y. Candidates T. Mac Neil and John V.S. Lansing accepted their calls to Owasco, N.Y. and Wyanants-Poesten Kell, N.Y.. The two candidates were examined for the ministry and accepted. Rev. A. Brokaw and Rev. S. Z. Goetschius were appointed to ordain and install Candidate Archibald Mac Neil as pastor at Owasco, N.Y. and Rev. Palmer and Tol were appointed to ordain Candidate John V. S. Lansing as pastor at Wyanants-Poesten Kell, N.Y. After all the above business was completed the classis reorganized and became known as The Synod of The True Reformed Dutch Church of the United States of America. The Synod was to be composed of two Classis: Hackensack and Union. Classis Hackensack consisted of the following congregations: Hackensack-Schraalenburgh, N.J., New York City, N.Y., English Neighborhood, N.J., Montville, N.J., Ramapo, N.J. and Paramus, N.J. Classis Hackensack to be organized on the 3rd Tuesday in Aug. 1824 (Aug. 17) Classis Union consisted of the following congregations: Ovid, N.Y., Owasco, N.Y., Danube-Osquack, N.Y. Charleston, N.Y., Union, N.Y.,

Middletown-Westerlo in the Canajoharies, N.Y., Wyants-PrestinKell, N.Y. Classis Union was organized at Owasco, N.Y. on the last Monday in September of 1824.

On Tuesday August 17, 1824 Classis Hackensack was organized. Six churches were represented with 5 ministers and 6 elders. Arrangements were made to organize a church at Clarkstown, N.Y., which later became known as Nanuet. Rev. John Demarest was sent to organize this group on Oct. 11, 1824. A petition was received by the April 26, 1825 session of Classis Hackensack from a group at West New Hempstead, which later became the Monsey, N.Y. group. The petition was dated April 25, 1825. The group was taken under the care of Classis Hackensack, but no date of exact organization was given since this group was a joint congregation with Ramapo, N.J.. Also at this session of Classis arrangements were made to fill a request for organization at Acquackanonk. Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest of the New York City church was appointed to organize them. He and an elder presided at a meeting on Saturday, May 7, 1825 at which a consistory was elected. On Sunday May 8, 1825 the consistory was installed by Rev. C.T. Demarest and so our oldest organized church in the denomination was established.

The following is a comparative list of churches between 1825 and 1830:

General Synod of June 7, 1825		CLASSIS HACKENSACK		General Synod of June 3, 1830	
<u>Congregations</u>	<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Organized</u>	<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Congregations</u>	
Hackensack-		1686	none	Hackensack	
Schraalenburgh	S. Froeligh	1723	C. Blauvelt	Schraalenburgh	
New York City	C.T. Demarest	1823	C.T. Demarest	New York City	
Paramus, N.J.	none	1824	J.G. Brinkerhoff	Paramus, N.J.	
English Neighborhood	J.G. Brinerhoff	1824	none	Eng. Neighborhood	
Ramapo, N.J.	none	1824	J.D. Demarest	Ramapo, N.J.	
Montville, N.J.	J.G. Brinkerhoff	1824	J.G. Brinkerhoff	Montville, N.J.	
Clarkstown, N.Y.	none	1824	none	Clarkstown, N.Y.	
Tappan, N.Y.	none	1825	none	Tappan, N.Y.	
W. New Hemstead	J.D. Demarest	1825	J.D. Demarest	W. New Hemstead	
Acquackanonk	P.D. Froeligh	1825	none	Acquackanonk	
* . . . . .	. . . . .	1827	none	Paterson	
A total of 11 congregations			A total of 12	congregations	
		CLASSIS UNION			
Ovid, N.Y.	A. Brokaw	1822	A. Brokaw	Ovid, N.Y.	
Owasco, N.Y.	A. MacNiel	1823	A. MacNiel	Owasco, N.Y.	
Danube-Osquack, NY	none	1823		not listed	
Charleston, N.Y.	H. Wyckoff	1822		not listed	
Union, N.Y.	S. Palmer	1822		not listed	
Canajoharie, N.Y.	J.C. Tol	1822	J.C. Tol	Canajoharie, N.Y.	
Wynants-Poestenkill	J.V.S. Lansing	1823		not listed	
Bethlehem, N.Y.	none	1825		not listed	
. . . . .	. . . . .		none	Mt. Morris, N.Y.	
Sharon, N.Y.	none	1827		not listed	
Gato-Walcott, NY	none	1827		not listed	
A total of 10 congregations			A total of 4	congregations	

\* In 1833 the Parerson Church was dissolved

The following facts led to the results as seen on the above list. Rev. S.Z. Goetschius had a decision rendered against him by Classis Union. The Synod of 1825 sustained Classis Union and Rev. Goetschius never appeared at the synod again and his church gradually dissolved. The church at Danube and Osquack N.Y. thus removed off of the list. At the Synod of 1827 Rev. H. Billinger was (according to the minutes of Classis Union) admitted as a minister without examination or ordination. Rev. Albert Ammomar of a church in Johnstown N.Y. was admitted as an advisory member of the General Synod. He represented no denomination. He was an independent minister who rejected the Constitution of the True Reformed Dutch Church. Rev. S. Palmer and Rev. H. Wyckoff considered the church constitution a dead letter. Rev. John V. S. Lansing was delegated by Classis Union as a minister without a charge. He was engaged for one year by the Tappan, N.Y. church without the approval of Classis. Rev. Lansing had recently written a pamphlet entitled "An Address To Friends Of Sound Doctrine, Experimental Piety and Ministerial Faithfulness" which was circulated in the churches of Classis Hackensack. Rev. Lansing was also a member of the committee appointed at the Synod of 1827 to write a pastoral letter to the churches. This letter received severe criticism in Classis Hackensack. Rev. Lansing made a request of Classis to be received by them. He presented his credentials and dismissal from Classis Union but was denied admission into Classis Hackensack. The Classis appointed a committee to investigate Rev. Lansing's pamphlet. The committee's report disapproved the pamphlet as being slanderous, manifesting falsehood and filled with errors. Therefore Classis refused him in, the churches. At the General Synod of 1828 in New York City Rev. Lansing was instructed to bring his grievances to Classis Hackensack before appealing to Synod and Classis Hackensack's refusal to admit him, even though he had all the necessary credentials, was sustained by Synod.

The Synod of 1828 passed an effective resolution that was thoroughly followed at every session of Classis Hackensack until late in the century. The resolution was known as LEMMA 17 and the preamble states "After this day, no minister, nor elder shall be permitted to take a seat in the General Synod nor in the meetings of Classis under the care of the Synod who shall not first, at the opening of such meetings, have purged himself from all errors or heresies of the following description: (lack of space prohibits the listing of these errors and heresies). This was all caused by the admission of independent ministers as advisory delegates at the Synod of 1827.

Dr. Solomon Froeligh, the leader of the 1822 secession, was ill and could not attend the Classical or Synodical meetings. He passed away on Oct. 8, 1827 at the age of 78. At the Oct. 1828 session of Classis Hackensack the Schraalenburgh church asked Classis to dissolve the combined congregations of Hackensack-Schraalenburgh. The Hackensack church reluctantly yielded to this request. Upon this the Shraalenburg Church extended a call to Candidate Cornelius Blauvelt. He accepted, was examined and ordained as pastor of the Schraalenburgh Church on Nov. 23, 1828. It is evident that at the Synod of 1829 held at Schraalenburgh the following churches were not represented: of Classis Hackensack, Tappan N.Y. where Rev. Lansing had served one year as stated supply; and of Classis Union (all in N.Y.) Charleston, Union, Wynants-Poesten Kill, Bethlehem, Sharon, Danube-Osquack, Gato-Walcott and Mt. Morris. Classis Union had only 3 Ministers and 2 elders at this 1829 Synod. The Committee on Church Government, Doctrines and Morals gave a lengthy report but it was not approved for publication. Suggestions and revisions were to be returned to the Committee before Apr. 1, 1830 so that the amended rules could be presented at the 1830 General Synod. The Synod also decided that the name of Rev. Lansing be erased from the Committee and that Rev. Demarest and Rev. Brinkerhoff be added to it. The Synod also cut off the majority of the members of the True Reformed Dutch Church in Classis Union by the following decision: Be it resolved that those who voted to admit said independent minister as an advisory member and who refused to comply with LEMMA 17 of the last Synod cannot be admitted

to a seat or voice in this Synod, nor in the Classis of Union, nor any longer be considered as ministers or elders of The True Reformed Dutch Church. The Synod went on to decide that those who protested the acts of the majority (the ministers and elders from Canajoharie, Ovid and Owasco) and who had not participated in said acts and had complied with the requisitions of LEMMA 17 at the opening of the Synod be recognized as the Classis Union under the care of the Synod of the True Reformed Dutch Church and that Classis Union be directed to hold their next meeting at Ovid, N.Y.. After 1830 the meetings of the General Synod became pessimistic and discouraging. Classis Union held no meetings between sessions of Synod mainly due to the lengthy illness of Rev. C. Tol. He preached seldom leaving the church of Canajoharie and Danube without pastoral services. After 1835 we find no more synodical records that give information about Classis Union. There is a record of a synodical gathering of 1866 where one elder from Ovid, N.Y. represented Classis Union.

We mention a few incidents concerning the history of the Christian Reformed Church in Classis Hackensack between 1830 and 1890. At the General Synod of 1830 held at Hackensack a committee appointed the year before reported on the investigation of Free Masonry and the Masonic Fraternity. After a thorough description of this organization they came to the following conclusion: 1) that no one be received into the communion of any of our churches who may have belonged to the Masonic Fraternity unless he examines and renounces all further connections therewith. 2) that any member, deacon, elder, student, candidate or minister of the True Reformed Dutch Church known to belong to the above fraternity be immediately dealt with as proper subjects of discipline and unless they fully and heartily renounce all fellowship with the Masonic Society be forthwith suspended from all fellowship with the True Reformed Dutch Church. This was adopted by Synod while a second report of John Demarest and Isaac J. Van Saun was not accepted nor recorded.

At the April 19, 1853 meeting of Classis Hackensack held in New York City Mr. John Y. De Baun presented himself as a student of theology and was examined. He was 25 on August 22, 1852, married and one child, and was a deacon at Hempstead N.Y. (which is our present Monsey CRC). Rev. Demarest, his pastor attested to his good standing and that he had during the past winter been engaged in preparatory studies of Latin and Greek and that he had made good progress. It was decided that he be received as a student of theology under the care of Revs. J.D. Demarest and A. Van Houten. At the April 17, 1855 session he was examined as a candidate and unanimously accepted. At the October session he was examined for the ministry having accepted a call to serve Ramapo N.J. and Hempstead N.Y. The following report of the ordination was given at the April 15, 1856 session of Classis. "Candidate John Y. De baun was Ordained at Hempstead N.Y. (Monsey) as a minister of the gospel and installed as pastor of the churches at Hempstead N.Y. and Ramapo N.J. at the morning service The Rev. C.T. Demarest reported that he preached to a very large audience then and there assembled and that with the laying on of hands at the ordination there were the Revs. J.D. Demarest, C. Blauvelt, J. Berdan, A. Van Houten and C.T. Demarest. The Rev. John Y. De Baun preached in the afternoon, there being a short intermission to a full church from Luke 24 vs.29: "But they constrained Him saying "Abide With us." It was a very mild clear and pleasant day and the friends of truth and godliness were much edified. "To the Lord be all the glory."

Rev. John Y. De Baun was also the first editor of The Banner of Truth. At the Synod of the True Reformed Dutch Church in June 1866 held at New York City, Rev. De Baun asked the Synod for consent to publish a monthly periodical at his own responsibility with regards to expense. This was granted to him unanimously. This monthly church publication was published in Hackensack, N.J. Later it became ~~our~~ denominational weekly publication in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Banner. Rev. J. Y. De Baun also served as pastor of the La Grave Ave. Christian

Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At classical sessions in 1881 and 1882 it was reported by a committee on mission work that they were active in Paterson. The committee reported at the April 17, 1883 session that they had assembled the congregation on Thursday evening Dec. 7, 1882 at the Swedenburgh Church in Paterson. Rev. John Cooper of Monsey opened the meeting by reading a portion of scripture, singing a psalm, offering prayer and then stated the purpose of the meeting. After the close of the address it was decided that Rev. John R. Cooper be chairman and Rev. J.C.Voorhis be clerk. The resolution of the Classis appointing the committee was read and those having certificate of membership presented them. Election of a consistory took place. One elder and one deacon for two year terms and one elder and one deacon for one year terms. Mr. Amos La Guire was elected elder for 2 yrs. and Mr. Henry Van Saun was elected elder for one year. Mr. Edgar E. Vreeland was elected deacon for two years, Mr. James Vanderbeek was elected Chorister and Mr. Levi Van Houten was chosen sexton for one year. The name of the one year deacon is not mentioned. The following is a report of the church to the same clasis session at Ramsey.

The friends of truth of the City of Paterson present the following report. We continue our meetings on alternate Sabbaths in the chapel on Division St. with an average attendance of about fifty. The attendance is not as large as when we had service in the evening. We have been looking about for a place of worship of our own, but are as yet undecided where to locate or how to proceed. We have held two meetings of the newly elected and ordained consistory and appointed Elder Amos La Guire to represent our church in the approaching classical session.

Many more similar incidents of organization, ordination are recorded with this type of description in the minutes that are interesting but for lack of space we will proceed to the next chapter in this history.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

##### Contacts With Classis Hackensack That Led To Affiliation With The Christian Reformed Church

Rev. John Berdan, pastor of the Acquackanonk True Reformed Dutch Church received the first correspondence from Hollanders in the West. The correspondence was reported in the minutes of the 1860 Synod of the True Reformed Dutch Church but no action was taken. At the April 19, 1864 session of Classis Hackensack it was reported by Rev. John Berdan that correspondence had been received from Hollanders in Grand Rapids, Mich, by their minister Rev. W. H. Van Leeuwen, requesting correspondce in order to unite with us if agreeable. They were invited to attend the General Synod to be held at Owasco, N.Y. in 1864 but no one ever appeared on the floor of the Synod.

Rev. John Y. De Baun stated that as he had been appointed to carry on the correspondence with the True Reformed Holland Church in the West in order to better carry out the wishes of the Classis, himself and Elder David R. Doremus had visited and had received with great friendliness by members and ministers in Grand Rapids and were welcomed at their Classical meeting. So far as we have discovered we are one in all fundamental things.

Classis decided that whereas we have by letters and the report found that a church organization exists essentially the same in faith an practice as our own as far as now known, therefore resolve that we tender them our Christian salutation of respect and affection for Christ and his truths sake and that correspondence be continued. Also that we would be pleased to have some of them meet with us at



our next Classical meeting that we may become better acquainted so as to further the bond of fellowship.

At the Oct. 1870 session of Classis at Ramapo, N.J. (Ramsey) Rev. John Y. De Baun stated that a delegation from the True Reformed Holland Church was present. The delegates presented the greeting of their church by Rev. D. J. Van Der Werp in the Holland language and Rev. L. Rietdyke in the English language. They desired to exchange views that both may know how far we agree. It was resolved unanimously that the ministers and friends meet at the house of Rev. John Y. De Baun in Hackensack to confer with them on Oct. 25, 1870 at 10 a.m.

The following were present at the meeting from Classis Hackensack: Revs. A. Van Houten, John Y. De Baun, Garret A. Hasing, Isaac J. De Baun, John R. Cooper, John G. Brinkerhoof and Elders: A. Storms, D. Van Horn, A. Banta, Christie, Foots, Sickles, and Van Orden. Rev. A. Van Houten was chosen president and Rev. Garret Haring Clerk. A question and answer period followed. It was decided that the minutes be signed by the officers and a copy given to the committee from the West. On May 9, 1871 a special session of Classis was held concerning this matter and it was decided as per letter to The True Reformed Holland Church as follows:

We the Classis of Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church having met and consulted upon the matters pertaining to our beloved zion, declare that the confession of Faith, Articles against the Remonstrants, Heidelberg Catechism and rules of Church Government, etc. as held by our fathers of the Synod of Dort 1618-1619 we fully believe to be according to the Scripture and we have no other wish than to practice accordingly. We believe that all who profess the true object of faith, whose life and walk agree, to be received as members of the church and to be baptized and their children; but as to the right of our baptized children who have not made confession to have their children baptized, while we do not say it is wrong, yet as a matter of importance we desire to take it in further consideration. Rev. John Berdan, John R. Cooper were appointed a committee to meet the General Assembly of the True Reformed Holland Church at Chicago on June 7, 1871. The committee attended the convention and reported at the Oct. 17, 1871 session of Classis held at Acquackonk.

Having visited their convention in Chicago there appears to be an agreement to our standards. They passed a resolution to be published in our churches. The resolution declared that they believed our doctrine, discipline and practice and agreed in all essential things and do resolve that as far as we know, we constitute one church according to the rules of our father in the Synod of Dort agreeing with the Scriptures. They also resolved to send one or more delegates to our regular meeting in order to increase the harmony in all respects and further the interest of our union. This was signed by R. Duiker, Praesis, F. Hulst Scriba, and John Berdan, John R. Cooper Committee from Classis Hackensack.

Reports came to the Classis of Oct. 17, 1871 about the great forest fire in New Holland, Michigan, in which farmers had lost all they had. The Classis passed a resolution that upon hearing, with deep sorrow about the wide spread loss by fire to our friends of the True Reformed Holland Church they deeply sympathised with them in their sufferings and loss. This resolution was reinforced by an offering Classis Hackensack took in their churches amounting to \$1908.51. plus clothing, etc. handled by Elder David R. Doremus who attended a session in Chicago with Rev. DeBaun.

At the Oct. 21, 1873 session of Classis the Holland group sent two local delegates. They were Rev. F. Rederus and Elder M. Prol who were evidently connected with the First Christian Reformed Church in Paterson. They sent the churches greeting and pressed for an organic union. Classis was hesitant and had their congregations give their opinions. The outcome was: "They expressed their Christian affection and regard for that church, yet thought it more satisfactory and that the union would tend more to the edification and profit of both branches if we could speak or better understand the same language, that correspondence be continued and that our ministry have more liberty to perform any service that may be helpful to them."

Classis Hackensack saw that standing by itself it would not flourish, so efforts were made to investigate the United Presb. Church. At the Apr. 20, 1875 session of Classis at Paramus the committee on correspondence with the United Presb. Church reported they had met, interchanged views, found them sound in their confessions, but objectional in some of their practices. The matter was indefinitely postponed.

At the April 18, 1876 session of Classis Rev. L. Rietdyke delegate from the True Reformed Holland Church informed Classis that Rev. D. J. VanDerWerp departed this life stating, that he had expressed a desire to thank friends here for the kindness shown to him when among them. A letter of deepest sympathy was sent to the widow and family by the Classis and a duly authenticated copy published in The Banner and De Wachter and a copy sent to the widow.

Rev. John Y. De Baun who was delegated by Classis Hackensack to the General Assembly of the True Reformed Holland Church in June 1878 reported the following at the Oct. 1878 session of Classis Hackensack held at Nanuet, N.Y. There were about forty delegates present. Those churches not represented sent a letter. Delegates were received by certificate and a public declaration of their adherence to the catechism, Confession of Faith, Canons, etc. and that they act in all matters according to the rules of the church government adopted in 1618-1619. They have at present 18 ministers under the care of Docent Rev. G.E. Boer at Grand Rapids, Mich. The knowledge of the English language has rapidly increased among them since our visit about ten years ago. Harmony prevails among them. Rev. De Baun continues on with his report, but the final remark was "We would not but remark with pleasure, the respect shown to the president and the quiet acceptance by the minority of the decisions of the majority which put an end to all strife so that not a word of complaint was hears."

Rev. De Baun also reported that at this General Assembly they also formed a new classis for the east called Classis Hudson and they now have a total of four classes. It was decided at the April 1879 meeting of Classis that whereas by previous resolution the church in the West and in the East mutually agreed to send delegates to their respective gatherings and there being no special necessity at this time for sending a delegate to the meeting of their general assembly to convene in Chicago June 1879 therefore be it resolved that to carry out the spirit and intent of the former resolutions, the Rev. De Baun be delegated to attend the meeting of Classis Hudson.

Rev. L. Rietdyke delegate from Classis Hudson reported at the Oct. 1879 meeting of Classis Hackensack that the former name General Assembly of The True Reformed Holland Church was changed to Synod. A letter from the stated clerk of Synod read at the Oct. 1880 meeting of Classis submitted the change of name from The True Reformed Holland Church to Holland Christian Reformed Church. The reasons were as follows: 1) While the word "TRUE" is adopted by us as a name of distinction we are accused thereby of expressing that we are the only infallible church and that we declare everything false outside of us. 2) We are Hollanders in America and we desire not to be ashamed of our origin. The word Dutch is doubtful and can be made applicable to Germans as well as Hollanders. 3) The majority of the immigrants coming from Holland joining

our churches are from 'De Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk' (Christian Reformed Church) in Holland and it appears desire to hold fast to the old name. 4) the majority of us are born and instructed in the above named church. These are the reasons why the Synod has resolved that the name of our church for the future shall be known as the Hollandsche Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Amerika (Holland Christian Reformed Church in America. The letter was signed by Rev. R.F. Kuipers as President and Rev. G. Hemkes as Clerk. The H.C.R.C. long desired an organic union between the churches of the east and the west. In the 1880's they saw the need for English preaching and teaching and in the following years, through their fraternal delegates, constantly sought for help in this respect. This was expressed by letter from their Stated Clerk, by their fraternal delegates, and by Classis Hackensack's delegates to the Synods. The matter therefore was brought up to each congregation of Classis Hackensack whether to unite with the Christian Reformed Church or not. Two congregations voted in favor and nine voted to defer the complete Union.

At this time it was decided to delegate Rev. J.C. Voorhis to the Synod in Grand Rapids, Michigan held June 1886. He came back with reports similar to those of pre-delegates. They were cordially received by the Synod and the friends in the west. The question of English preaching was considered in a friendly manner and they resolved that all means shall be used to further the union. But Classis Hackensack was short of preachers for their small vacant congregations. It decided to ask for help from Classis Hudson who had two ministers that were able to preach English. Even though they needed supplies themselves they decided to grant Classis Hackensack two Sabbath supplies, saying: "Classis Hudson manifests her love and gratitude for having so often been helped by your ministers and hope this may lead to further an organic union between the churches. Again in 1888 Classis Hackensack was invited to send delegates to the Synod of the C.R.C.. They were heartily received and greetings were exchanged. The synodical sermon was preached the evening before Synod by Prof. Boer. There were 100 delegates present throughout the sessions which lasted 10 days. Rev. Bos was chosen as president and he preserved perfect order. Great respect was shown to the president and the quiet acceptance of all decisions was to be admired. Since the previous Synod of 1886 10 ministers had been added and 18 new congregations formed. With respect to the Theological School it was decided that the Curators should see to it that in case English students came they would be instructed in the English language. Classis Hudson was appointed to confer with Classis Hackensack to endeavor to bring about a complete organic union. Both classes appointed committees to confer on the matter of union. At the April 1889 session of Classis Hackensack the Committee, Revs. J.C. Voorhis, J.A. Westervelt, S.I. Vanderbeek and 2 elders, reported as follows:

The Committee met at the home of Rev. J. C. Voorhis on Oct. 26, 1888 and all the members were present. Rev. Samuel I. Vanderbeek was chairman and Rev. J. Riemersma of Classis Hudson was clerk. It was resolved that whereas by previous deliberations of Classes and Synod we are one in doctrine and practice, therefore be it resolved that in order to arrive at some definite conclusion we consider the subject of differences that may still remain. The subject of baptism was then discussed and after an explanation the following conclusion was made: "That whereas it is the sense of the joint committee of both branches of the church of Christ that we agree in doctrine and practice we recommend an organic union upon the following conditions -Whereas a difference in the practice of baptism has always existed in the mother church ever since the Synod of Dordt 1618-1619 in the Netherlands which difference still exists in the Holland Christian Reformed Churches, therefore it was unanimously resolved that we do not interfere in the practice with one another but bear with each other in love and thus fulfill the injunction of the great Head of the Church: that they all may be one as we are."

In connection with a communique from Classis Hudson it was decided to refer this report to the congregations for deliberations and decision and report at the Classis to be held in October at Englewood.

At that session it was decided that the resolution of organic union and the report of the joint committee be referred to the congregations be reconsidered. A motion was then made that the word "decision", or final vote, be struck out and that there be added that the delegates refer it back to their consistories and if necessary to their congregations for instructions and that the delegates come prepared to cast the final vote at the next classis. The crucial session of Classis Hackensack came on April 15, 1890 at the church in New York City on the corner of Perry and Fourth Sts. Here the final vote would be taken, whether to remain isolated as the True Reformed Dutch Church or become affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Rev. J.C. Voorhis was president and J.A. Westervelt was clerk. There were 17 delegates present. Two churches had no delegates: Ramsey N.J. and Mariaville N.Y. . The latter church, as reported at the April 1889 session, was in a weak condition and at previous sessions had only one elder that ever attended and he had died. The matter of organic union was taken up. After reading the report and the subsequent resolutions Rev. Iserman moved that "Whereas the Holland Christian Reformed Church differs from us in a few minor points with respect to internal government, forms of worship, and our corporate name; be it resolved that in this organic union our internal government and form of worship, and the corporate name shall not be interfered with in any way by either church, further that we be entitled to representation and that this resolution be added to the report of the joint committee as the basis of the organic union."

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED, DEBATED, PUT TO A VOTE AND CARRIED. It was also moved and carried that we append to the report a request that the organic name be known as The Christian Reformed Church. After this it was resolved that the report of the joint committee with the appendages added by this classis be adopted. TEN voted in favor and SEVEN against it. By motion it was recorded that 2 congregations were not represented in the voting. A request was made by the Revs. A. Van Houten and G. Haring that their protest against the action of Classis with respect to the organic union be entered in the minutes. Rev. Van Houten was pastor of the Englewood congregation and Rev. Haring was pastor at Schraalenburgh. A letter from the Stated Clerk of the C.R.C. asked the classis to send one or more delegates to the Synod of June 1890. Rev. A. Van Houten was elected as primus and Rev. S.I. Vanderbeek as secundus. Thus we close this chapter on affiliation and already see forces and attitudes opposing this organic union of The True Reformed Dutch Church with The Holland Christian Reformed Church..

## CHAPTER 5

### SECESSION of CHURCHES from CLASSIS HACKENSACK

On October 21, 1890 Classis Hackensack met for the first time in plenary session as a classis in the Christian Reformed Church. There were 16 churches with 6 pastors:

Leonia, NJ. . . . .	H. Iserman
Hackensack NJ. . . . .	J.C. Voorhis
Schraalenburgh NJ. . . . .	G.A. Haring
New York City NY . . . . .	no pastor
Nanuet NY. . . . .	no pastor
Monsey NY. . . . .	no pastor
Ramsey NJ. . . . .	no pastor
Passaic NJ . . . . .	S.I. Vanderbeek
Paramus NJ . . . . .	J.A. Westervelt
Montville NJ . . . . .	no pastor
Englewood NJ . . . . .	A. Van Houten
Flat Creek NY. . . . .	no pastor
Mariaville NY. . . . .	no pastor

Rev. John R. Cooper of Monsey died in April 1877 and Rev. John Y. De Baum had become pastor of the La Grave Ave. C.R.C. in Grand Rapids. Rev. A. Van Houten the first elected as delegate to the CRC Synod was unable to attend and therefore Rev. S.I. Vanderbeek as alternate was the first from Classis Hackensack to attend the Synod of the CRC. This Synod permitted Classis Hackensack the use of 52 hymns in connection with the preaching of the Heidelberg Catechism but restricted their use to the churches of Classis Hackensack. On July 21, 1891 Classis Hackensack had two students to examine for the ministry. Since they were now in the CRC they inquired from the Board of Curators whether they were following the approved procedure. They were informed that the normal procedure for theological students ready to become candidates was for the Board to examine them but in this case they appointed Classes Hudson and Hackensack to proceed with the examination. The two candidates, Jacob M. Trompen who had accepted a call to Ramsey N.J. and C. De Mott who had accepted the call to Monsey were examined and ordained in their respective churches.

Since the union with the Holland Chr. Ref. Church West was accomplished the Synod decided to further establish a theological school at Grand Rapids, Mich. and in as much as there was a growing need for English instruction it appointed a special professor in the English branches. Several Classis had contributed toward the purchase of grounds and the erection of a suitable building for a theological seminary, therefore Classis Hackensack in Oct. 1891 appointed a committee to solicit subscriptions in the churches for this purpose and have the classical treasurer forward them to the Synodical Building Committee. Rev. H. Iserman and Peter De Baum serve as this committee. At this same session there was also disturbing differences in the certificates handed in by the delegates to Classis. The certificates of some of the churches would read: "This certifies that the consistory of The True Reformed Dutch Church of..... ecclesiastically known as the Christian Reformed Church, hereby appoints etc." An extra session was called on Dec. 15, 1891 on the request of two ministers and two elders because of the constant unrest which was detrimental to Zion's interest. It was decided to send a visitation committee to those congregations where there was unrest and see if it could be removed. Rev. A. Van Houten was chairman of this committee. At the April 1892 meeting of Classis in Schraalenbergh a letter of protest came from the Schraalenburgh church against the union with the Holland Christian Reformed Church, signed by the minister, two elders and four deacons. A committee of five were appointed to see if the matter could be reconciled and report to the next Classis. Thus resistance to the affiliation began. At the April 1895 session it was announced that Rev. J.Y. De Baum, the first editor of the "Banner of Truth" and also the first pastor of La Grave Ave. CRC died in March 1895. He was pastor of the Leonia church at the time. Rev. A. Van Houten who opposed the union of the two groups also passed away on Oct. 15, 1895. Rev. C. De Mott accepted a call from the Broadway CRC in Grand Rapids. Thus Classis Hackensack which had a shortage of ministers was in difficulty with so many small vacant churches that could not sustain a pastor.

Due to the conditions at the Acquackanonk Church a committee was appointed at the June 1887 session of Classis to assist the church. This committee because of the ill health of the pastor met with the consistory at the home of Rev. John Berdan. Since the congregation had only five members left and an attendance of 20 at the services it was decided to dissolve the Paterson church and have the memberships transferred to the Passaic church, since it was incorporated because of their properties and the Paterson church was not. The committee reported the following to the June 1887 Classis: "On May 25, 1887 your committee once again met with the consistory of Passaic at the residence of Rev. John Berdan where the certificates were presented for their action. All the members of the Paterson church, at their request, were dismissed from the Paterson church to become members of the Acquackanonk Church." The Paterson group, however, continued to hold services at Paterson. At the Classis session of April 1896 a petition from this Paterson group of the Acquackanonk Church asked to become two

distinct and separate corporations so that the properties of the Acquackanonk Church be respectively divided and the Paterson group again become a separate and distinct church. This was approved by Classis. At the October session of 1896 the division of the Acquackanonk Church at Passaic was accomplished. Both churches were at this time becoming active churches.

Rev. James Wyckoff pastor of the Leonia True Reformed Dutch Church (C.R.C.) preached a classical sermon at the Apr. 20, 1897 session on II Timothy 4:7 "Preach the Word". This sermon with other sermons were published in "The Banner of Truth" in the Sept.-Oct. 1897 issues. Rev. H. Iserman reported that Rev. J. Wyckoff was charged with certain statements and certain things which were drawn from his classical sermon, and moved that Classis sincerely regretted the publishing of the personal charges against Rev. Wyckoff which is contrary to church government. This led to charges on the part of Rev. John Calvin Voorhis and the discussion ensued on the proper procedure of church government that should have been followed. However Rev. J. Voorhis appealed his case to the Synod of 1898 and lost. He claimed that this decision was made on the wrong information given at the Synod by the delegates.

Classis then took up the Voorhis - Wyckoff case:

1. The first matter was that of closed communion rather than open communion and the restriction of the pulpit rather than an open pulpit. After Rev. Wyckoff was questioned about this he answered that he was willing to conform to our customs and usages in both cases as long as he was a member among us.
2. Rev. Wyckoff's language in this sermon had given ground to the grievances, but Rev. Wyckoff's explanation satisfied the Classis, but had to be reported in The Banner and De Wachter.
3. Erroneous views on atonement.

It was resolved that Rev. Wyckoff be told by the President of Classis that he should be more careful in the future conforming to the customs and teachings of our church.

On Dec. 13, 1898 a congregational meeting was called in Leonia and with only two opposing votes the congregation decided to withdraw from Classis Hackensack. A letter was sent to Classis giving their decision and reasons for withdrawal.

Classis was to investigate the letter of withdrawal on Jan. 5, 1899 at a special session, but Rev. Wyckoff and his elders did not appear. Rev. Wyckoff had, however, sent a letter informing that the congregation's withdrawal included himself. The pastor and his consistory were cited to appear at a Classical Session scheduled for Jan. 17, 1899. To this session Rev. Wyckoff sent another letter stating that his relationship with Classis Hackensack had ceased, and that the members of the church who withdrew by their own individual action at the Dec. 18, 1898 congregational meeting were responsible for their own acts and: "do not ask me to answer for the course they took". Since the group that withdrew did not wish to retain the church property Classis made efforts to reorganize the members who did not vote to withdraw and elected a new consistory.

At the special session of Classis on Oct. 16, 1898 in Paterson, the 3rd Christian Reformed Church of Paterson protested that a delegate from the Ridgewood Christian Reformed Church was an active member of the Masonic Fraternity; this was a direct violation of the rule of the church for the delegate had been allowed a seat in Classis. The delegate from Ridgewood was asked if this were so. He would neither deny nor affirm it. It was then by motion resolved that the member be asked if he had renounced the organization, if not would he be willing to renounce it. He answered that he would never renounce it. Once a Mason, always a Mason. Then he quietly withdrew from Classis. It was then on motion resolved that the alternate delegate take his seat, but a report was in circulation that

he was a member of the order of Odd Fellows. It was ordered that he be asked if it were true. He stated that he had not attended any of their meetings for a number of years, yet he still paid his dues. The motion was then placed before Classis about seating him and the vote was 4 to 4. The president then said that if we would be consistent he could not take his seat. This was agreed to. At the special session of Nov. 29, 1898 a letter was received from the consistory of the Ridgewood church. It insisted that the delegates be received having found no fault in their character either doctrinally or morally. We see no Scriptural grounds to suspend them. Rev. H. Iserman, pastor of the Ridgewood Church was president of this session of classis. It was resolved that this letter be placed in the hands of a committee. The president then stated that if Classis acted in this way contrary to all order and love he would resign as President and enter a protest since there was no representative from Ridgewood. The letter was referred back to the consistory. Rev. Iserman said he could not conscientiously continue as a member of Classis Hackensack, so he desired a letter of dismissal from the Classis. One objection led to another. Rev. Iserman resigned from all the committees. A committee was appointed to visit him and the committee returned reporting that Rev. H. Iserman and his consistory were determined to leave the Christian Reformed Church, which was finally done by letter from members and consistory at the special session of Jan. 5, 1899.

After the time of the Voorhis - Wyckoff controversy at Leonia there was a report at the March 14, 1899 session of Classis concerning the strange and mysterious action of Rev. Jacob N. Trompen, pastor of Ramsey church and member of the Classical Committee with respect to the loyal group of the Leonia Church which had not gone along with Rev. James Wyckoff when he split the congregation. The delegates were notified by the Stated Clerk, Rev. J. A. Westervelt, that the Classis would meet on March 14, 1899 at the church in Ramsey. Rev. J.N. Trompen was also notified to prepare himself to answer questions concerning his actions and the position he took concerning the congregation of Leonia.

After being locked out and refused entrance into the church at Ramsey the delegates proceeded to Daters Journal Hall and Classis convened in extra session. Rev. E. Vanden Berg was asked about the situation. He answered as follows:

"Rev. J. Trompen both as a member of the Christian Reformed Church of America and as a member of the Classical Committee of Classis Hackensack in his position taken with respect to our sister church at Leonia has made himself guilty of:

1. Disloyalty to the Christian Reformed Church of America.
2. Contumacious and rebellious conduct against church authority and that of Classis."

In order to substantiate his protest, Rev. E. Vanden Berg read two letters which were exact copies sent to Rev. J. Trompen. They referred to the following information he had received from friends at Leonia when he was there for a Classical Committee meeting; namely, that Rev. J. N. Trompen after the committee meeting informed these friends:

1. That he refused to come and preach for them though it had previously been arranged.
2. That he would not preach where there was no harmony.
3. That in a conversation with the friends before or after said meeting he said that they all should have gone or all should have remained with the church.

A committee was sent during the session to inquire what his reasons were for his action. Rev. J. N. Trompen answered that:

1. The procedure was contrary to the Bible and Synod.
2. No one has been to see him. The extra session of Classis was too close to the scheduled regular session. Classis decided that on account of the contumacious attitude of Rev. Trompen that his position on all committees were annulled. Rev. Trompen and consistory appealed to the Synod. The Ramsey consistory decided that

no delegate be sent to Classis and no financial support be given, whereupon Classis cited Rev. J. Trompen and consistory to appear at the Jan. 9, 1900 session of Classis at Hackensack. The reply of Rev. J. Trompen and his consistory was by letter and there were no personal appearances. The Classis again scheduled another session on Jan. 30, 1900 and again cited Rev. J. Trompen and his consistory. The Ramsey consistory still abided by their original decision. It was decided to cite Rev. Trompen and his consistory a third time on Rev. 13, 1900. Classis decided to protest against an appeal of Rev. J. Trompen and consistory at the Synod of June 1900. Classis again decided to give a final citation to appear before Classis at Paterson on Wed., Feb. 28, 1900 informing Rev. Trompen that if he failed to appear he would be immediately deposed. Rev. Trompen passed a series of resolutions reflecting and criticizing the action of Classis Hackensack. A grievance occurred against this action because Classis Hudson was interfering with Classis Hackensack's internal form of government which was contrary to the affiliation agreement of Apr. 15, 1890. A series of nine reasons for complaint were listed and the grievance was signed by all the delegates and officers of the Classis and presented to the Synod. The Synod's action did not satisfy Classis Hackensack and a special session on July 17, 1900 was held at Englewood where Classis made a protest which contained the following points:

1. The Synod contrary to all rules rebuked the Classis for disciplining the continuous brethren, thereby encouraging open rebellion.
  2. Where there is a refusal to submit to a regular trial there is no claim to an appeal.
  3. Classis Hudson was permitted to evade their unchurchly conduct of intermeddling with the affairs of another Classis.
  4. A reasonable request was denied to have a committee appointed who could deal with the case in the English language.
- Synod therefore, we believe, obtained an incorrect view of the case.

On June 22, 1905 the Schraalenburgh church asked the church visiting committee to release the Rev. Garret A. Haring as pastor of the church who on account of the infirmities of age felt it his duty to resign. The consistory of Schraalenburgh requested also that Garret A. Haring be pastor emeritus during his natural life. Rev. Haring a faithful Christian Reformed minister passed away on June 24, 1906.

The matter of engaging Rev. Charles N. Van Houten, a son of Rev. Abraham Van Houten, and who had studied under the ministers of Classis Hackensack and was their Candidate for a while and who for the past twenty years had been a minister of a Presbyterian church was then considered. Upon an interview with him on the matter of Masonry, he declared his unwillingness to comply with the rules made with our fathers to renounce all connections with this organization. But if he should unite with this Classis he would conform to the rules. Since the meeting of the Schraalenburgh consistory, the church visitation committee had received a copy of Rev. C. N. Van Houten's withdrawal from the lodge in Virginia and also a letter from him in which he stated "I have now no active participation in the order and by withdrawing, I am known as non-affiliated.

At the April 17, 1906 session of Classis at the Hackensack church, Rev. C. N. Van Houten, who had accepted the call from the Schraalenburgh Church, was to be examined in the afternoon session. Classis Hudson had two advisory delegates at this session, namely, Rev. S. Bouma and Rev. Vander Ploeg. After the examination an executive session was held at which a letter from the Stated Clerk of Classis Hudson was read. It stated that Rev. C. N. Van Houten only exchanged the break with the Order of Free Masonry for membership in the True Church of the body of



Jesus Christ. The Classis voted 14 in favor and 3 against admitting Rev. C.N. Van Houten as minister in the Christian Reformed Church. Rev. D. Vander Ploeg Deputy ad Exam of Classis Hudson expressed his intention of entering a protest against the decision of Classis and to appeal to the Synod in the name of Classis Hudson. The Synods action was to refer it back to the two Classes according to the report of Rev. J.N. Trompen. A letter from the Stated Clerk of Classis Hudson concerning Rev. C. N. Van Houten's installation as minister of the gospel in Classis Hackensack, states that it was not possible for Classis Hudson to acknowledge him as a minister in our Christian Reformed Church.

On Aug. 15, 1907 Rev. J. N. Trompen accepted a call as home missionary. The calling church was Hope Ave. Passaic, a Classis Hudson congregation. His ministerial credentials were transferred to Classis Hudson. Rev. N.J. Trompen received a leave of absence until Dec. 31, 1907. He was requested to return to the field on or before this time and if this were not possible a resignation from his side would be acceptable. Rev. N. J. Trompen sent in his resignation. He was therefore left a minister in Classis Hudson without a charge.

On Monday May 4, 1908 a letter was received from the Ramsey church and signed Nicholas J. Trompen, Clerk. It informed Classis that on the evening before a congregational meeting was held at which a resolution was passed by a unanimous vote of 34 members. The resolution was that they would apply to the Jersey City Presbytery to come under their care and into their church and that this resolution be placed before the Jersey City Presbytery to make this congregation a constituent part of their Presbytery. The resolution also stated that this congregation withdrew all connections and association with Classis Hackensack and the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The Classis received the information and decided that it be recorded in the minutes and the name of the congregation be erased, also to notify them that they are in arrears with respect to respecting classical assignments.

At the session of Classis on May 4, 1908 a typewritten letter was received. The letter was cut into paragraph strips and placed into open spaces in the record book, but it was anonymous because the signature had been cut off. Nevertheless Classis Hackensack acknowledged it. It was a resolution, with a preamble, that concerned the withdrawal of Classis Hackensack from the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The reasons given were the present and past unrest in the classical meetings owing to the continues agitation of the question of minor secret organizations and other matters which prove to be an injury to the churches. A resolution was passed to bring it before each congregation.

On a special session of Classis on May 19, 1908 a letter signed by Revs. John A. Westervelt, John Dolfin and Elders Peter Stam, John S. Westervelt asked Classis to reconsider the resolution on the question of withdrawal from the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. A motion was made to rescind the article. It was debated and after both sides were heard and communications read, it was lost. Five in favor of rescinding and nine to approve the resolution.

On June 2, 1908 Classis met to receive the reports from the congregations on their membership vote cast on the resolution for withdrawal from the Christian Reformed Church. There were ten congregations having delegates at this session. The Ridgewood church already left in 1899 and Ramsey at the May 1908 session. There were 4 congregations of fair strength, namely, Paterson, Hackensack, Bergen Fields, and Passaic, the other congregations were small, some on the verge of dissolution. The purpose of this session was stated by the president of Classis, Rev. John Dolfin, and the result was as follows: Not to withdraw: Passaic, Paterson and

Englewood. To withdraw: Hackensack, Bergen Fields, Leonia, Montville, Monsey, New York City, and the Ridgewood Committee (which was called a congregation to obtain the property of the seceded Ridgewood church). The president John Dolfin declared the motion out of order. Rev. J. C. Voorhis appealed the decision of the chair and his appeal was sustained. Rev. John Dolfin appealed to Synod. Rev. C. N. Van Houten then offered a resolution, that in obedience to the action of the majority of the congregations, this Classis do now discontinue its relations with the Christian Reformed Church Synod and resume or continue its Corporate name to wit - True Reformed Dutch Church and continue its work under said name. This resolution was passed 9 in favor, 6 against. Friday July 17, 1908 was the last session of Classis held at which the ten churches were represented. Two of the smallest churches were not represented, namely Flat Creek and Mariaville, N.Y. The following churches were represented, their pastor, and elders voted on the resolution;

Church	Pastor	Elder	Vote on Resolution	Resolution
Passaic	J.F. Van Houten	none	Pastor	Yes
Englewood	J. Dolfin	J.S. Westervelt	Pastor & Elder	No
Flat Creek	none	none		no vote
Hackensack	none	Schor		Yes
Leonia	Samuel I. VanderBeek	none		Yes
Mariaville	none	none		none
Monsey	J. C. Voorhis	none		Yes
Montville	none	H. Van Duyne		Yes
New York City	none	H.P. Demarest		Yes
Paterson	J. A. Westervelt	L. Beukes		No
Ridgewood Comm Church	none	W.P. Polis		Yes
Bergen Fields	G.N. Van Houten	H. Bogert		Yes

A communication was received from Rev. H. Beets, Stated Clerk of the Christian Reformed Church Synod stating that if the churches had any grievances they should have brought the matter to the Synod. The Synod therefore asks the Classis to rescind the action. The communication was received. A motion was made and seconded to adopt this communication but Rev. C. N. Van Houten offered a substitute resolution, similar to the one passed at the June 2, 1908 session. Only this was added: that though an appeal to Synod had been made yet irrespective of said appeal or action of Synod thereon, this Classis declares its rights of independent action of the Synod and denies the right of Synod to control its action. All were in favor of this resolution except those who refused to vote, namely: Rev. John Dolfin, Rev. J.A. Westervelt, Elders J.S. Westervelt and L. Beukes. Immediately upon the adoption of this motion the delegates left the Classis after President Dolfin had laid down the gavel.

#### CHAPTER SIX

The Seceded Classis Hackensack - True Reformed Dutch Church And Its Dissolvement.

After President John Dolfin had laid down the gavel as chairman and had left the session of Classis Hackensack with other dissenting members on July 17, 1908, the new Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church reorganized, elected new officers and appointed new committees. Rev. John A. Westervelt, a dissenting member having left the session was nevertheless appointed to serve on the pulpit supply committee. A committee of two ministers and two elders was appointed to work with the dissenting members. It was also resolved to supply the three main funds of Classis by taking up three special offerings in the churches every six months for the Sustenation-Emeritus Fund, The Classical Fund and the Mission Fund. Then this eventful sorely depleted session adjourned.

The first session of the new organization was held Oct. 20, 1908. There were four ministers and six elder delegates present, Rev. S. J. Vanderbeek was Clerk. No minutes were available and Rev. J. C. Voorhis was elected President. The president reported that on July 20, 1908 he, as Stated Clerk called on Rev. James Van Houten of the Passaic Church and inquired about the minutes of Classis Hackensack. Rev. Van Houten had taken them from the safe and had them in his possession. Rev. Voorhis ordered him to keep them until called for. Elder Cornelius D. Schor was elected treasurer in place of J. C. Van Saun who refused to accept. A committee was appointed to visit the declining loyal Ridgewood Church which was organized mainly to compete against the Ridgewood Church that left in 1899. They met in homes and the size of the audience made it more convincing to dissolve the church. This was done; so one of the seven churches that left the Christian Reformed Church was dissolved at the first Classical Session on Oct. 1908.

The committee was appointed to visit the dissenting brethren, namely: Rev. S. I. Vanderbeek, chairman and Rev. J. C. Voorhis and Elder Horace N. Van Duyn. Rev. Vanderbeek sent a letter to them asking for a meeting on Wed. July 29, 1908. Rev. Westervelt replied that he and his elder had no time that week but would consider another appointment. Rev. John Dolfin answered in cutting and piercing words as follows: Rev. S. J. Vanderbeek, Dear Sir: Your communication of last week at hand. This request is more than strange. You are well aware of the fact that we do not belong to your Classis. We remain and continue to be what we were, have the recognition of Synod, and since you have withdrawn from us and constitute a new Classis, please do not presume to rule us and compel us to do your bidding, we ask only for a verification of your own words of July 17, 1908. "A separation in peace as Abram and Lord." We fail to see that this action of yours is in accordance with that "your hearts desire", Sincerely yours, John Dolfin. No action was taken on the letters.

It was decided that the funds in the hands of the Publication committee be divided as follows: Eleven congregations represent eleven parts. Seven parts be accepted by this Classis as a settlement in full and that this Classis relinquish all claims to the plates, and other publications upon the conditions that the Psalms and Hymn Books shall be sold to our churches in the future at cost. Rev. C. N. Van Houten was added to the publication committee. It was officially decided that the Bulletin be continued. The Bulletin was a local Classis Hackensack publication since "The Banner of Truth" was now owned by a stock company and probably at this time being published in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

At the Apr. 20, 1909 session at Bergenfield a letter was read from the Committee of Adjustment of Classis Hackensack, Christian Reformed Church. They asked the Classis (T.R.D.C.) to appoint a committee with power to act and have the matter of adjustment come to an early and peaceable conclusion at an early date. The report of the committee shows that this Classis was pleased with the report of a settlement in full, which amounted to \$284.54.

The Hackensack Church which was now vacant since Rev. John Van Tielen left for Sherman St., Grand Rapids, called Rev. D. Chambers Stewart, who came from the West Jersey Presbytery. Rev. John Voorhis requested release from his pastorate in Monsey, N.Y. This was granted him and he was appointed counselor for Monsey, N.Y.

The root of all the trouble in Classis Hackensack during the years 1899 and 1908 was quickly and easily settled with a short resolution: "Resolved that in the future we eliminate the inquiry respecting all secret societies according to Art. 32 of our confession". Rev. J. C. Voorhis however opposed it and had his name recorded against

this resolution. The Classis could not give the pulpit supplies to the vacant churches as they had in the past proving how much they needed the churches who remained faithful to the Christian Reformed Church. Monsey, New York City, Leonia, Montville were seriously effected by the shortage of ministers and during the cold winter months the churches would be closed. In the summertime Seminary students were obtained. Rev. D. Chambers Stewart was installed as pastor of the Hackensack Church on Tues. Oct. 20, 1909 at 8 p.m. The Hackensack Church through the leadership of their new pastor promoted the search for denominational affiliation by calling attention to:

1. The lack of an organization for the church for the supply of ministerial aid.
2. The lack of concerted effort as a Classis for the support and maintenance of any particular mission work, which was one of the chief duties developing upon them as an ecclesiastical body.

A committee of three were chosen by ballot to look into the above matter. Rev.s C. N. Van Houten, Samuel I. Vanderbeek and Mr. Bogart. At the special session of June 27, 1910, which was held to solve some other problem, the matter of the churches' desire to unite with some other ecclesiastical body was considered. But in answer to the request of Rev. C. N. Van Houten and the Bergen Fields consistory the Classis referred the matter of Federation with another denomination back to its churches, asking these questions:

1. Is it ~~advisable~~ advisable to do so?
2. What is the church's preference, if any.

At the session of Oct. 18, 1910 held at Bergen Fields the following report came in on the desire of the churches to affiliate with another denomination. Six churches gave a report on the results of voting on the union with another denomination. The churches of Monsey, Leonia, Montville, New York City reported NO on the question: Is it advisable to do so? The motions to seek affiliation was declared lost even though Hackensack and Bergen Fields were in favor of it. Rev. C. N. Van Houten hereupon offered the following that, inasmuch as there appears to be a desire on the part of a goodly number of our people to have a change in church relation, the consistories of those churches, which may desire it, be given authority to express their wish and also to effectuate the same as may be indicated by proper popular vote of the members. This motion was declared out of order as being contrary to Reformed Church Order. The chair was overruled on appeal from the floor. The clerk thereupon put the motion to a vote and it carried, but with the following protest: We the undersigned most solemnly protest against the classis entering the motion presented since it is contrary to the fundamental law of the True Reformed Dutch Church and a violation of our positive declaration in Lemma 17. Signed: S. I. Vanderbeek, J. C. Voorhis, Henry B. Ackerman, and Isaac Brinkerhoff. The above persons refused to vote. Rev. C.N. Van Houten then presented his resignation which was not accepted. Thereupon the following was presented: To the Classis of Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church, I hereby withdraw from Classis Hackensack. It was also not accepted. The session of Classis held on Apr. 18, 1911 at Leonia was not attended By Rev. C. N. Van Houten. It was resolved that the elder delegate from Bergen Fields officially inform Classis of the withdrawal of Rev. C. N. Van Houten and that he has united with the Presbytery of Jersey City and that his name be stricken from the roll of this Classis, and that the request for the services of Rev. C. N. Van Houten as stated supply be granted.

At the same session it was decided to have a new quorum. A new rule was adopted that one minister and two elders when regularly convened for transaction of Class-ical business be considered a quorum.

The resolution concerning popular membership vote on the question of denominational affiliation was repealed because the resolution was against or contrary to Reformed rules and in violation of Lemma 17, which denounces independency. At the Oct. 17, 1911 session Rev. J. C. Voorhis reported that Rev. Samuel I. Vanderbeek sought to be released from the Leonia charge. The Classis granted his request and he would give his services for pulpit supply.

At the Apr. 15, 1913 session of Classis held at Leonia, the delegate from Bergen Fields presented a letter of notification to the Classis, that it is the purpose of the consistory to affiliate with another body of Christians and therefore this will be the last classical meeting in which the consistory will have any representation. After due deliberation it was ordered that this paper be placed in the minutes with deepest regret. Thus the Bergen Fields church, in which the secession from the Dutch Reformed Church started 91 years ago under Rev. Solomon D. Foreligh was now seceding from the Church which their beloved pastor of generations ago had begun. They joined the Presbyterian Church.

At the Apr. 18, 1916 session of Classis a letter was received from Rev. E. O. Van Duyne, who had been emeritated at one of the troubled classical sessions in 1908. His letter revealed what was on his mind as he lay close to death. His last words were "Oh, that the church might be revived and the members sanctified more and more that we might be more in earnest in our prayers to God and may the Holy Spirit teach us to look to Jesus Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith and salvation" Rev. Van Duyne passed away on Oct. 11, 1916. His home was in Montville, N.J. where he had been an elder many years before studying for the ministry. His death now left only three pastors in Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church.

At the session of Apr. 21, 1918 at Hackensack, Rev. D. Chambers Stewart of the Hackensack church asked for dismissal as pastor of the church. It was decided to give him a full Classical Certificate of Dismissal on receipt of a call. This left only two ordained ministers and four churches in Classis Hackensack (T.R.D.C.)

At the fall session of Classis on Oct. 14, 1918 at New York, the Hackensack church sent a letter to the Classis stating, that because of the lack of denominational spirit and the loss of much power and influence while remaining members of a gradually diminishing body, and having determined to seek fellowship in another denomination, we hereby inform you of our withdrawal from Classis Hackensack. This left only two ministers and three churches in Classis Hackensack. Rev. S. I. Vanderbeek weakened by his recent illness asked Rev. J. C. Voorhis to be President and Mr. Nicholas A. Voorhis to be clerk at the session of Oct. 21, 1919.

The churches were gradually declining in membership and services were few in Monsey and Leonia. Rev. Samuel I. Vanderbeek was now emeritated and receiving \$15.00 per month from the Classical Fund. Leonia's consistory was reinforced by members of Classis according to Article 38 and 39 of the Constitution and their property turned over to the Corporation Fund of Classis. Rev. S. I. Vanderbeek turned over all books and papers belonging to the Leonia church to Dr. De Witt and C. Romaine Secretary and Treasurer of the Classical Corp. Monsey church only had six active members. At a congregational meeting, posted on the door of the church, in the Rockland County paper, held on May 3, 1921 it was decided to deed over said church property to the Classical Corp.

On Monday morning Oct. 23, 1922, Rev. John Calvin Voorhis passed away, 14 hours after he had preached a sermon on John 10:28,29 in the New York congregation.

The next Classical meeting was held on May 13, 1924 at Rev. S. I. Vanderbeek's home. The Christian Reformed Church offered preaching services at New York and Monsey, N.Y.. This led the remainings of the Seceded Classis Hackensack to affiliate again with the Christian Reformed Church. It finally dissolved and all funds, properties, and records were turned over to Classis Hackensack of the Christian Reformed Church at a final meeting at the Bank St. Church property on Feb. 19, 1925.

#### CHAPTER SEVEN

#### Classis Hackensack - Christian Reformed Church During the Years 1908 - 1974

The history of this part of Classis Hackensack began in this manner: At the session of July 17, 1908, when the president of Classis Hackensack, namely Rev. John Dolfin of Englewood laid down his gavel upon the passing of a substitute motion to secede from the Christian Reformed Church, he and Rev. J. A. Westervelt with the elders J. A. Westervelt of Englewood and elder L. Beukes of Paterson III left that meeting in the basement of the Hackensack church and resumed their own meeting in the name of the Christian Reformed Church, in the auditorium of the Hackensack church. There were no elder from Passaic present at either separated session. Rev. J. F. Van Houten who was listed as present at the beginning must have remained. Thus the congregation of Passaic must have been divided in this matter.

The Classis of Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church had gone clearly against their own rule under Lemma 17 of the General Synod of the True Reformed Dutch Church in 1923. Rev. J. Dolfin continued in the chair but since the clerk, Rev. C. N. Van Houten had gone with the seceded group, Rev. J. A. Westervelt was elected Clerk pro-Tem. It was resolved that a committee of two from each consistory be a committee to confer with the brethren that had withdrawn to make such adjustments of matters as may be necessary. It was also decided that the Rev. John Dolfin and Elder L. Beukes be a committee to visit the consistory of Acquackanonk (Prospect St., Passaic, now Richfield) and correspond with the church at Flat Creek, N.Y. in reference to their intentions on the question of secession. Thus the memorable session of Classis Hackensack on July 17, 1908 ended with two Classis Hackensack, one with 7 churches and ours with 4 churches.

At the special session of July 30, 1908 at Prospect St., Passaic, Rev. Dolfin was again elected president of Classis. The following churches and delegates answered the roll call:

Prospect St., Passaic	Rev. J. F. Van Houten,	Elder E. Vander Vliet
Englewood	Rev. John Dolfin,	Elder J. S. Westervelt
Flat Creek, N.Y.	No delegate, but a letter	
Paterson III	Rev. J. A. Westervelt,	Elder L. Beukes

No delegate answered for any of the other congregations. The following resolution was unanimously adopted: Whereas the following congregations: Hackensack, Leonia, Monsey, Montville, New York, Ridgewood and Schraalenburgh have by their own voluntary action withdrawn from the Christian Reformed Church and whereas the representatives of the above named congregations have twice shown their unwillingness to rescind or even reconsider their action of withdrawal which as requested by the Synod and whereas the above named congregations by their representatives did constitute themselves on July 17, 1908 as a new denomination and take another ecclesiastical name viz. The True Reformed Dutch Church, therefore be it resolved that the names of Hackensack, Leonia, Monsey, Montville, New York, Ridgewood and Schraalenburgh be dropped from the roll of churches of this Classis.

The committee to visit Passaic reported that they did so on the evening of July 20 and found that the consistory desired to abide with the Christian Reformed Church. The pastor, Rev. J. F. Van Houten, signified later that his was also his desire and

he was present at this meeting. Flat Creek notified the Classis by letter that they desired to remain with the Christian Reformed Church and they hoped that Classis would give them pulpit supply. Upon motion it was decided that Rev. Dolfin with Elders L. Beukes and E. Van Vliet be a committee with full power to make whatever adjustment to be necessary with the withdrawing party in reference to records, funds, etc. It was also decided that a letter be sent to the Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church stating that having heard that certain of our consistories have received a letter requesting them to come to Leonia for the purpose of being labored with, we do hereby express our desire to have such communications cease, since we have not withdrawn from them, but they from us.

On Oct. 26, 1908 Classis, meeting at the Prospect St., Passaic Church decided that the Classis require the elders and ministers attending Classis to sign the Formula's and then drop the 17th Lemma. Now that the Classis was well organized and small it could go about the business of expanding and working jointly with Classis Hudson. At this session it was also reported about a mission which had been opened by the 3rd Christian Reformed Church of Paterson at the eastside section of Paterson. This later on became the Madison Ave. Chr. Ref. Church.

At the Passaic congregation there was a division of membership evidently having its root in the secession. With the aid of Classis, which went into executive session several times the problem was solved by Rev. J. F. Van Houten resigning as pastor with the provision that he receive one year salary. Resignation would be effective one month after the decision of Classis. From later minutes of Classis it is conjectured that Rev. Van Houten died about a year later leaving a widow and children. In previous minutes he wrote about having menorages and must have died because of tuberculosis. The widow however received subsidy support from the Emeritus Fund of the Christian Reformed Church and the grandchildren and the great grandchildren are members today in the Christian Reformed Churches of both Classis in the East. Rev. Van Houten preached his farewell on Feb. 21, 1909.

Student Lee S. Huisenga preached at Flat Creek, N.Y. during the Christmas recess of the year 1908. On Aug. 24, 25, 1909 at the session of Classis Hackensack there were two candidates for the gospel ministry examined in order to fill two vacant churches. They were Rev. J. M. Ghysels and Rev. Lee S. Huisenga who became two well known active pastors and missionaries in the Christian Reformed Church. They passed the examination with unanimous approval and were installed in their churches in Spet. 1909. Rev. J. M. Ghysels became pastor of Passaic, Prospect St. and Rev. Lee S. Huisenga became pastor of Englewood, N.J., Rev. J. Dolfin having left Englewood for Bethany, Muskegon, Mich. At a special session of Classis on Dec. 15, 1909 the Eastside Mission in Paterson petitioned Classis to organize a congregation at that place. This was granted and on Jan. 21, 1910 they organized with the election of a consistory. The church is known as the Madison Ave. Chr. Ref. Church. A Sunday School was also organized. This is the first addition to the Classis since the secession. The Prospect St., Passaic church sent a communication to Classis to send an overture to Synod on the following items:

1. That the Synod order the translation into English of our Church Manual (Dutch Kerken Order) to be affected with all possible speed.
  2. That in the new English translation Dutch words or phrases be avoided as much as possible and good English expression be substituted for such words as "Deputaat ad Examina", "Consulent", "Censura Morum", "Curatorium", "Agendum", etc.
- The classis began to reorganize the Student Fund. Its purpose to supply subsidy to persons who desire to study at Calvin College and Seminary to prepare for the ministry and so supply the Church with ministers. An announcement placed in the Banner brought applicants from Michigan, East Palmyra, N.Y., Rochester, etc.

Rev. J. M. Ghysels and Rev. Lee S. Huisenga left their churches and Classis for other fields of labor. Rev. Dirk De Beer and Rev. Klaas Poppen were welcomed at the Oct. 28, 1913 Classis. Rev. Dirk De Beer became pastor of Prospect St., Passaic, and Rev. Klaas Poppen became pastor of the Madison Ave., Paterson Church. Rev. K. Poppen had been pastor of the Monsey, N.Y. church between July 1902 and Aug. 1904. People living in that area sent him a letter informing him of the conditions there. They desired the preaching of Christian Reformed ministers and had been without regular services for some time. The decision was made that ministers of Classis Hackensack, Christian Reformed Church go there to preach, as soon as possible. Chapter 6 indicates that Schraalenburgh left in 1913 for the Presbyterian Church leaving these smaller churches to themselves. It was the opportunity to do mission work there and probably reestablish this church. Peter Stam a prominent city missionary and an elder of the Paterson III Chr. Ref. Church gave an encouraging report at the Oct. 20, 1914 session of Classis. The committee called the joint mission committee of Classis Hudson and Hackensack was incorporated under the name of Eastern Home Mission Board, which was decided at the Classis session held on Apr. 13, 1915. The Board gave their reports at the Classical Sessions. Having given some of the interesting points of history that occurred between 1908 and 1920, we shall now endeavor to give one high point of the next decade, between 1920 and 1930. During this period a new church was established whose services were to be entirely in the English language, and they desired to become members of Classis Hackensack. It was Bethel, Paterson with Rev. Hessel Bouma and Elder J. Rienstra who were welcomed at the session of Classis held on Oct. 17, 1922 at Paterson III. It became a strong congregation and Classis Hackensack now had five congregations. At the April 1924 session of Classis, the Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church requested the Eastern Home Mission Board to give supplies to Leonia, Monsey, N.Y. and New York City.

After the Schraalenburgh and Hackensack churches left to join the Presbyterian Church, these three small churches were left by themselves with two ministers. In Oct. 1922 Rev. J. C. Voorhis died, leaving only Rev. Samuel Vanderbeek who was sick and emeritated for these three churches. On Aug. 11, 1924 Rev. Vanderbeek died. Finally a special session of the two Classis Hackensack churches was held on Dec. 10, 1924 at New York, Bank St. church. There agreement was made and questions satisfactorily answered between the two groups and the arrangements were made for a committee to transfer all properties to Classis Hackensack of the Christian Reformed Church thereby completing the organic union. Monsey church is now well established, but Leonia and New York, Bank St. congregations have been dissolved.

On Friday, Nov. 14, 1930 at the 3rd Chr. Ref. Church of Paterson, Rev. J. A. Westerveld commemorated his 50th anniversary as a minister. He was ordained and installed as pastor of the New York City congregation on Perry and Fourth Sts. New York.

The 3rd Christian Reformed Church of Paterson shortly thereafter also commemorated their Golden Anniversary on Dec. 7, 1932. Rev. Dirk De Beer was appointed by Classis Hackensack to represent it at their Golden Anniversary. The Preakness-Wayne, N.J. congregation was organized on March 30, 1933 having 84 souls, 32 members in full communion and 52 baptized members. The Madison Ave., Paterson church observed their 25th anniversary of organization on Jan. 21, 1935 with an appropriate commemoration. The New York, Bank St. Church which came back to Classis Hackensack, C.R.C. in 1924 was dissolved as reported at the Oct. 9, 1934 session of Classis. Terra Ceia, North Carolina group of approximately nine families was organized. The Classis and Eastern Home Mission Board had been laboring for several years at this location.



In realigning the two Classis in the East two churches from Classis Hudson were transferred to Classis Hackensack, they were Sumner St., Passaic and West Sayville, L.I.

The fiftieth anniversary of Classis Hackensack's affiliation with the Christian Reformed Church on April 15, 1890 was observed at the Third Christian Reformed Church in Paterson on April 16, 1940. Rev. John A. Westervelt who was 83 years old and emeritus pastor gave a few highlights of the history of Classis Hackensack. He was the only living link left between the present day Christian Reformed Church and The True Reformed Dutch Church of which Classis Hackensack was a member.

On April 28, 1943 a church was organized at Newton, N.J.. It consisted of 30 adults, 33 children, fourteen families and two individuals. A controversy in Newton was settled by organizing a church at Sussex, N.J. At the Sept 19, 1950 session of Classis it was reported that the congregation at Sussex, N.J. was organized having 25 families.

The Monsey group asked to be organized. This location had been a church in Classis Hackensack previous to the secession of 1908, but they left the Chr. Ref. Church in this secession and returned again to Classis Hackensack in a very weak condition and finally were dissolved. Since 1925 when they returned to Classis Hackensack preaching services were rendered there almost every Lord's Day. Now the group has become large enough to reorganize into a church. This was reported to the Sept. 16, 1952 session of Classis Hackensack and was accomplished 10 days later.

Wanamassa, N.J. in the central New Jersey area had been organized late in 1953. In 45 years the Classis Hackensack increased in number of churches from 3 in 1908 to 13 in 1953.

An inquiry came from a group in Miami, Florida seeking organization. The decision made by Classis at their Apr. 19, 1955 session was that Fort Worth, Fla. which is a branch of the Detroit church becomes member of the same Classis. At the session of Classis held at Monsey, N.Y. in Sept. 1955, Florida delegates were present, indicating that the Miami group had been organized. Lake Worth Fla. was organized as a congregation on Oct. 20, 1955.

In connection with the new Classis realignment between Classis Hudson and Classis Hackensack, the Northside, Passaic and the Lodi congregations were transferred from Classis Hudson to Classis Hackensack. They were represented by delegates at the Sept. 18, 1956 Classis. At this same session Rev. Willis De Boer reported that Bradenton, Florida presents a petition for organization with 21 families (41 communicants and 29 baptized members). There is no record in the minutes as to the exact date of organization, but it must have been shortly after the session of Classis held on Sept. 18, 1956.

The Trinity Chapel in Broomal, Pa. petitioned Classis for organization. The group consisted of 15 families and 5 individuals. The consistory of Northside, Clifton Church and Rev. G. Stob were appointed to effect the organization.

At the Jan. 15, 1957 session at Sumner St., Passaic, the Classis decided to send an overture to the General Committee for Home Missions and also to the Synod of 1957 to decide that the work among the Chinese in New York be considered as a permanent field and that Synod instruct the General Committee for Home Missions to assume responsibility for this work. Classis also decided to overture the Synod of 1957 to accede to the request of Mr. Paul Szto to be examined by the Synod of 1957 for candidacy for the gospel ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

The year 1958 was a banner year for organization of churches in Classis Hackensack and also of home mission work in former territory of Classis Union of the True Reformed Dutch Church. Rev. M. Baarman presents a petition signed by a group representing 25 families and five individuals - 190 souls from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., a request for organization. They were organized on Jan. 27, 1958. At this same session of Classis in Jan. 1958, Rev. E. Hooistra of Newton, N.J. reported on his visit to Cannajoharie, N.Y.. A document had been presented to the Eastern Home Mission Board by Rev. Hooistra and Mr. Calvin Jones of the 3rd Chr. Ref. Church of Paterson, urging that work be carried on here, since a number of Christian Reformed families reside there. Over one hundred years ago there was a True Reformed Dutch Church there which had Rev. John Tol as their pastor. He was also one of the original seceders in 1822 that attended the secession meeting in Schraalenburgh, N.J. At the May 21, 1958 session of Classis at Bethel, Paterson a request from a group at Franklin Lakes, N.J. was received to organize a congregation consisting of 18 families and one individual. The Bethel, Paterson congregation was appointed to effect the organization. Also a request from a group at Pompton Plains, N.J. composed of 16 families petitioned for organization which was granted by Classis. Paterson III was the congregation appointed to effect the organization.

On May 18, 1960 the session of Classis held at Sussex, N.J. received a petition from St. Petersburg, Fla. for organization from a group of 19 families (49 communicants and 16 baptized members). The petition was granted and the Bradenton Fla. church was appointed to effect the organization. The church would be known as Pinellas Park, St. Petersburg, Florida. East Islip, Long Island petitioned Classis Hackensack to organize. They had 15 families, 36 confessing members, 26 baptized members. The Classis granted them permission to organize and the West Sayville, Long Island consistory was designated to effect the organization of the church on March 25, 1964.

A Spanish speaking group at Miami, Florida requested to organize the Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church. The request was approved unanimously by Classis at their session on May 20, 1964. The Miami consistory was appointed to effect the organization. It was also granted to permit the group at Orlando, Florida to organize, responsibility for this given to the St. Petersburg, Fla. church.

The group at Indian Harbour Beach, Fla. presented a request for organization through Rev. R. Van Harn at the Jan. 28, 1965 session of Classis in Monsey, N.Y. They had 52 communicant and 42 baptized individuals. This was granted and the consistory at Orlando, Fla. was appointed to effect the organization.

The Sept. 15, 1965 session of Classis Hackensack at Bethel church in Paterson was the last session of Classis to be held containing the churches organized in Florida. The following churches left Classis Hackensack in order to organize Classis Florida: Bradenton, Fort Lauderdale, Indian Harbour Beach, Lake Worth, Miami, Miami-Good Samaritan, Orlando, Pinellas Park, all in Florida. Eight churches in all leaving the twenty church of Classis Hackensack.

At the Sept. 18, 1968 session of Classis in Newton, N.J. Rev. David Zandstra, denomination home missionary brought to Classis a petition from a group at Flanders Valley, N.J.. Classis approved the request and appointed the Preakness consistory to effect the organization.

At the Jan. 28, 1970 session of Classis, the consistory of the Englewood, N.J. Church requested dissolution of the church which was caused by a shift in the population. The Englewood church was organized in 1875 under the Classis Hackensack of the True Reformed Dutch Church. It's beautiful building was sold to another religious group.

At the Sept. 16, 1970 session of Classis at Broomal, Pa., it was reported that the Wannamassa, N.J. Church was dissolved and again become a Mission Station.

At the Sept. 27, 1972 session of Classis a group from the Northside Mission in Paterson applied for organization which was endorsed by the Bethel, Paterson congregation. There were 49 communicant members. The Classis granted this request. The Classis still has 20 churches.

And so we come to the close of the brief history of the past one hundred and fifty years. In this chapter, the last chapter we have only covered the organization and dissolution of churches during the years 1908 - 1974. There is much more that can be written for the whole history in general. And so we close, hoping and praying that the Lord will be with the churches who spread the gospel of the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord Jesus until He returns again to judge the living and the dead.

Henry Spoelhof  
Chairman of the Sesquicentennial Committee