

REPORT OF THE SUPPORT MINISTRY FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (SMFA) TO THE 8TH MEETING OF THE CAPE REGIONAL SYNOD HELD AT GOUDINI SPA ON THE 25 – 29 OF SEPTEMBER 2023

Dear Members of Synod.

Composition of the SMFA:

Your Support Ministry for Finances and Administration would like to report as follows:

1. OFFICE MATTERS

1.1 Painting of Office

The office building was painted externally at the cost of R 348 642.71.

Recommendation 1

Noted

1.2 Installation of solar panels

The SMFA approved the installation of sun panels in December 2022 to alleviate the disruption of the office during loadshedding. The cost of installation is R 12 000 per month over a period of 72 months. However, 50% of the costs will be paid by the tenants, since we have raised their payments for electricity from R 100 to R 500 per office used with a 10% escalation annually.

Recommendation 2

Noted

1.3 Salary Cuts

Due to the negative impact of Covid 19 on the economics of South Africa, the Church in general and the office particularly are also negatively impacted. About 90% of our congregations, which is 280, stopped paying their Synodical offerings. As result our Primary source of income dropped with 60% on a year-to-year basis from R 2 161 243.00 for 2020 to R 884 567.00 for 2021.

As such we had to re-evaluate the expenses of the Synod to cut costs. We had two options for cost savings measures, namely: retrenchments or salary cuts. The SMFA decided not to implement option 1, which is retrenchments as this would have added to the increasing numbers of the unemployment rate, and secondly it would have led to an increase in work output expected from the remainder of the staff. The SMFA tasked the CEO to consult with the staff explaining to them the options available and as well as the SMFA preferences. The CEO had a meeting with the Staff on the 21 July 2020, where this issue was discussed. Staff present at the meeting unanimously agreed that they will take a 20% salary cut from 01 August 2020 until such time that the financial situation of the office improved. All fringe benefits, office loans, motor loans etc. would also be frozen.

To adhere to the principle of fairness, the working week was reduced by one day to four days to further justify the reduction in salary.

The salary cut to staff saved the office of synod about R 1 200 000 for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 as reflected in the financial statements.

Recommendation 3

Synod express its gratitude towards the SMFA and staff for implementing cost saving measures during the Covid 19 pandemic.

1.4 Staff Matters

- 1.4.1 During the past recess, Mrs. E. Parker (Secretary of the Moderamen) and Mrs. M. Daniels (Senior bookkeeper) resigned from their positions. Mr G. Galant (general worker) retired.

Recommendation 4

Noted

- 1.4.2 Mrs. D. Chaka (Receptionist) passed away in December 2022.

Recommendation 5

Synod expresses its deepest condolences with Mrs. Chaka's family.

- 1.4.3 Mrs. R. Willemse was retrenched from the CWM, and was re-appointed as the secretary to the Moderamen in 2022.

Recommendation 6

Noted

- 1.4.4. Prop. Dewald Jacobs was appointed on a temporary basis as a bookkeeper in 2022, but he resigned to further his studies in 2023.

On 1 April 2023, we appointed Ms L. Kota as receptionist and Ms S. Parker as bookkeeper.

Recommendation 7

Noted.

2 PROPERTY MATTERS

2.4 Bet-El Farm (Kuijs River)

2.4.1 Sale

During the past recess, the SMFA had offers from various interested developers and buyers for the property, who at the last minute withdrew due to various reasons.

However, the Church's law firm. MHI Inc, introduced the SMFA to Mr Sal Qureshi, a developer of the property immediately next to the Bet-El farm, who made an offer of R 17 000 0000 for the land.

The SMFA approved the selling of the land to Mr Qureshi, and the sales contract was concluded and signed on the 29th of June 2023.

Recommendation 8

Synod approves the sale of the land to Mr Qureshi for R 17 million. Synod decides that the SMFA must use a portion of the profit to settle inter-accounts loans, but the bulk of the profit must be used for re-investment opportunities.

2.4.2 Vandalism of house

One of the tenants Mr. AEC Langenhoven owed the church R 184 063.50 on rental arrears. He was taken to court, but he moved out of the house without notice. During the day of 01 August 2018, the building was vandalized to such an extent that we had to demolish it. The insurance company paid out a claim to the amount of R 141 573.30 for the loss of the house.

Recommendation 9

Noted

2.4.3 Land Invasions

In August of 2022, Bet-El farm was unlawful invaded by about 300 illegal invaders. The CEO had to get an urgent Court interdict against the invaders. The CEO also had to employ as a matter of urgency a private security firm to execute part of the interdict of a cost of R 510 000.00. Legal costs to the matter amounts to R 150 000.

Recommendation 10

Noted

2.4.4 Mr. J. Van Der Heever

Mr. Van Der Heever approached the SMFA commission on various occasions. He felt that he should be the legal owner of the house he lived in, since it was promised to him by Rev. SG. Malherbe and Dr. H. Beets. Since no documentation exist to prove such an agreement it is the SMFA point of view that Mr. Van Der Heever has no legal claim on the property. As a sign of goodwill, and because of Mr. Van Der Heever and his wife high age, and health conditions the SMFA offered them *usufruct* of the property until both dies.

The SMFA cancelled the rental agreement with them. Subsequently Mr. Van Der Heever made an offer to purchase the property for R 10 000.00 which the SMFA rejected.

Mr Van Den Heever sadly passed away in April 2023.

Recommendation 11

Noted

2.5 David Lewis Campsite

Dawid Lewis Campsite was traditionally the property used by the Brigade. Due to lack of maintenance by the Brigade the property over the years fell into a state of being dilapidated. Through a series of events the Brigade ultimately transferred the responsibility of maintenance and occupation to a NGO called Family Life Resource Centre. Family Life Resource Centre sub-rented the property for R 35 000 pm and operated the property as a personal fiefdom complete with security guards and gate control. Through communication with local municipal councilor, it was brought to the attention of the office that Family Life

Resource Centre was not a legally registered organization and that many complaints by neighboring residents were laid against them. At a subsequent meeting between the CEO and the local councilor, it was revealed that the campsite legally belongs to the City Council which opted to cancel the lease contract with the church.

Recommendation 12

Noted

2.3 Decoligny

2.3.1 Court Case

On Thursday 30 August 2018 the court made a ruling that the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) Municipality must provide the court within 30 days with a written report, on the impact assessment of the proposed eviction process on all the illegal land invaders, with specific assessment to women, children and well as those effected with HIV/Aids, and where they will be able to relocate the affected invaders.

This court order was served on the office of the municipal manager, the lawyers of the municipality, Mr. Mgxaji Attorneys, as well as the WT. Mnxandi Attorneys on the 07 September 2018.

On the 18 September 2018 our Attorney, Mr. Le Roux, sent a letter to WT. Mnxandi Attorneys to remind them of the court order, which was due within 30 days, expiring on the 30 September 2018.

The municipality did not comply with this court decision. On 07 February 2019 the CEO, Rev. GD. Baartman send an affidavit to Mr. Le Roux, to apply for a contempt of court order.

On the 01 March the notice of application for contempt was filed at the Mthatha court and the date was set for the 19 March 2019.

The notice of contempt was sent out to the municipality as well its attorneys. The municipality through its municipal manager responded through an affidavit, asking for extension of time. The court heard the application on the 19 March and extended the time frame for the municipality to the 07 May 2019.

The situation about the land invasion has not changed. Communication with our lawyer Mr. Le Roux has become non-existent since we cannot get hold of him since April 2021.

Recommendation 13

Noted

2.3.2 Rev. Thaane

After being threatened by a group of invaders, Rev. Thaane, the manager at Decoligny, left the premises of Decoligny in October 2017. Due to the severity of the situation at that time, the SMFA gave Rev. E. Thaane permission to vacate the premises until the situation normalized.

On 02 October 2018, the SMFA came to an agreement to cancel his contract and appointment as Manager of Decoligny.

In the meantime, an elder Sam Dandala offered to monitor the developments on Decoligny and the SMFA appointed him on an acting basis since September 2018.

Recommendation 14

Synod approve the actions taken by the SMFA.

2.3.3 Development

2.3.3.1 Rev. D. Kuys letter to the newspaper.

After Synod an article about Decoligny was published in the Sunday Newspaper “Die Rapport”, in which Rev. Kuys attacked the church about its role in the development of Decoligny. The Moderator, Dr. L.L.M. MacMaster was offered the opportunity to respond to Rev. Kuys allegations.

Recommendation 15

Noted

2.3.3.2 STAG AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

A meeting was held with STAG AFRICAN Development on 13 August 2018. The discussion mostly concentrated on the expropriation without compensation policy of government and how it would affect the Decoligny development. It was STAG’s opinion to collaborate with both provincial and local government to safeguard our property. They proposed that we should consider keeping only 25% of the land, selling the rest of the property, and use some of the profit to develop the remaining portion. In this way we would mitigate the uncertainty around expropriation through transferring the risk to another party.

In October 2021 the SMFA received notice from Mr. John. Schooling CEO of STAG that the National Department of Human Settlements sent out an RFP (Request for proposal) for the development of Human Settlements villages across the country. Mr. Schooling suggested that STAG and the Cape Regional Synod should respond to this RFP by sending them the previously approved development plans.

The SMFA approved this, and STAG applied for funding for the development of Decoligny. National Human Settlements had approved funding for the development of Decoligny in October 2022 after which they send the matter for approval to National Treasury. We are still waiting the outcome from Treasury.

Recommendation 16

Noted

2.3.4 KSD Municipality

In February 2022 the SMFA received urgent communication from the KSD municipality about them spending money received from the National Department Human Settlements on informal settlement in its geographical area.

Subsequently an urgent meeting was arranged and held in Mthatha on the 14 February 2022 between members of the SMFA and the delegation of KSD led by the Executive Mayor and the Director of Human Settlements of KSD.

During the meeting it was recognized that the municipality was not allowed to spend money on properties that does not belong to the state. Their proposal was to buy the invaded part of Decoligny from the Church. An offer of 40 million rand was put on the table. The CEO had sent all the necessary documentation to the Director of Human Settlements of KSD for them to evaluate the property.

The Municipality subsequently stopped communicating with us, and upon enquiries, they said that the Municipality is broke and does not have the asking price.

The Synod was in the meantime served with a water account from KSD to the amount of R 960 000.00, as well as an electricity bill that currently stands at R 130 000. This matter is very perplexing since all the houses were installed with pre-paid electricity boxes before the land invasion.

Recommendation 17

Noted

2.3.5 Mr. Carl Laing

It was brought to the attention of the SMFA that Mr. Laing was one of the instigators behind the land invasion. Mr. Laing is also occupying one of the houses at Endulini illegally since 2018 and has not paid for any rental. In 2021 SMFA applied for an eviction order against him, and the process is still ongoing. In the meantime, we also applied for a judgment summary on his outstanding rental fees and the sheriff confiscated one of his vehicles to be auctioned.

Recommendation 18

Noted

2.3.6 Theft of Vehicle

It was reported to the SMFA in January 2022 that the congregation of Decoligny appointed a security guard to patrol their property. The manager of Decoligny made the vehicle of the Synod available to this security guard without the consent of the SMFA. The security guard then disappeared with the vehicle in December 2021. A case of theft was reported to the police after which the insurance paid out the value of R 42 000.00.

Recommendation 19

Noted

2.3.7 Audited Statements

Due to the situation in Decoligny, there are no longer any activities. As such, the office is unable to make any financial books available for auditing. The last audit was done in 2018-2019.

However, Decoligny estate owes Head Office the amount of R 3 470 270.50.

Recommendation 20

Noted

2.4 Minnie Hofmeyr

2.4.1 Western Cape Education Department

A new 5-year contract with WCLC was concluded and signed in November 2021. The Department of Education is renting the school at R 33 502,40 per month plus water and electricity.

Recommendation 21

Noted

2.4.2 Development

Synod 2018 approved the development of Minnie Hofmeyr. Through our partnership with Thycoloton, the SMFA appointed Mr Abel Jordaan as the builder and project manager to renovate the hostel into 19 rental apartments, approved by SC in 2019. The cost for the project was agreed at R 3 600 000 and would take 5 months to complete. Mr Jordaan was instructed to draw up the building plans, get the approval from the municipality and all the relevant engineers, re-zoning of the land as well as the management of all professional services as concluded in the contract. Mr Jordaan started with the project in October 2019, but because of the outbreak of Covid 19 in March 2020, the work on the project was negatively influenced and the contract date was extended. Payment was done periodically upon receipt of invoices and reports.

Upon site inspection in October 2020, it was established that Mr Jordaan had not submitted any building plans, re-zone applications or engineering reports to the Municipality as he had promised the SMFA. In March 2021 the CEO addressed a letter to Mr Jordaan expressing the SMFA disappointment with his work and attitude and demanding the handover of at least four units. Numerous other attempts were made to obtain the co-operation of Mr Jordaan, but he failed to return to the site upon which it became clear that he has abandoned his obligation in terms of our agreement.

Legal advice was obtained from the Church's attorneys, MHI Incorporated, upon which a letter was sent to Mr Jordaan on 2 August 2022 placing him under breach of contract.

The SMFA obtained the services of Niro INC Quantity Surveyors in November 2022 to assess the value of the work done by Mr Jordaan to obtain a fair value of the building works and to determine whether payments made represented the value of the work executed, as contemplated in the agreement. According to the report from Niro, the completed work was valued at R 1 768 547 and that Mr Jordaan had failed to deliver the agreed professional services to the value of R 1 852 954, for which he was paid.

A civil case to recover the last amount was instituted against Mt Jordaan, and summons was sent to him in May 2023. We are waiting for the confirmation of the court date.

In the meantime, the SMFA had also appointed Mr Tertius Smit, an architect and town planner from Worcester to submit the building plans and re-zoning application to the municipality. The submission was done September 2022.

Ten units are completed and ready for occupation, while 9 units still must be completed. As a result of non-application for the building plans the municipality is not able to provide us with certificates for occupancy, and the ten units are still vacant.

Applications was made for the approval of the building plans as well for the rezoning of the land in September 2022, and we are still waiting for the response of the Municipality.

Recommendation 22

Synod approves the action of the SMFA and agrees that the professional expenditure fees paid to Mr. Jordaan should be reclaimed.

2.5 Steinthal

2.5.1 Eskom Servitude

In 2012 the SMFA entered into an agreement with Eskom for the electricity poles over the Estate. The servitude was registered on the property for which Eskom would pay the Church 1.5 million rand. In February 2020 Eskom eventually paid the agreed amount plus 1.1 million interests.

Recommendation 23

Noted

2.5.1.1 The SMFA donated R 200 000 to Steinthal Estate from the money received from the Eskom payment.

Recommendation 24

Noted

2.5.1.2 As stated in 1.1, the Covid 19 effected the Congregations ability to pay their offerings to Synod. The SMFA decided to utilize the Eskom payment to cover the expenses of the office as well as to subsidized salaries of staff.

Recommendation 25

Approved

2.5.2 Steinthal Development

The SMFA has been engaged with Thycolaton since 2018 about the development of the Steinthal Estate. Upon advice from the Church's legal practitioner, Mr Fourie of MHI Inc, the

SMFA decided not to enter a special purpose vehicle (spv) with Thycolaton to reduce any and all business risks associated with the development. Mr Fourie then proposed that the Church should established its own property company to which all the properties of the Synod will be transferred. This would allow the Church to lease Steinthal to Thycolaton for development without any risk of alienating the land.

During the course of our interactions, we could not come to an agreement about the amount of land to be used, or what the exact nature of the development would be. In December 2022 we had a last meeting with Thycolaton who introduced a mediator, Mr Tim Scholts. Mr Scholts suggested that the Church register its own property company, which would in turn register a sub-company or special purpose vehicle that would be able to form a partnership with Thycolaton without any risk of alienating the land. We asked the lawyers of MHI inc to set up such a company.

The SMFA and Thycolaton signed the “HEADS OF AGREEMENT” on 29 June 2023, thereby finally establishing the framework and terms of the partnership.

Recommendation 26

Synod approves the actions taken by the SMFA to safeguard the property against any business risks associated with the development.

2.6 Eastern Cape Properties

Most of the Eastern Cape congregations’ properties are still registered in the name of the DRC. Various efforts were made to assist congregations to transfer the properties to their names. The congregation of Bizana ceased to exist, and the SMFA assisted the Presbytery of Rietvlei with regards to past and current property taxes by the congregation. To mitigate the risk of losing or alienating the Bizana property, the SMFA and the presbytery are of the opinion that we should transfer the property to Synod for safe keeping. The SMFA assist a few other congregations in transferring the property to its name.

Recommendation 27

Noted

2.7. Properties Registered in the name of Synod.

During the 2021 audit, the auditors brought it to attention of the SMFA that there is about 40 properties that reflect being registered in the name of the Cape Regional Synod. After investigation, it seems that the properties belonged to various congregations in the Western Cape. The congregations registered their properties as “Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk”, without mentioning their names. The CEO contacted these congregations, but only three responded to the communication sent.

Recommendation 28

Synod urges congregations to re-register their title deeds to reflect their names there-on.

3.1 Loan

The Moderamen of General Synod approached the Cape Regional Synod with a request to borrow 1.5 million rand to buy property for General Synod in Pretoria in 2019.

The loan amount of R 550 000 was approved by the SMFA. General synod is repaying the loan over a period of 5 years at R 7 300 per month. The balance of the loan on 31 May 2023 was R 343 279.

Recommendation 29

Approved.

3.2 Emoluments

Since 2020, it is the function of General Synod to provide the salary scale of Ministers.

Recommendation 30

Noted

3.3 Car allowances

Every Regional Synod determines its own car allowances for minister's in their respective

Regions. Petrol and diesel rose by 23% on the year-to-year basis for 2022-2023. As a result, the SMFA proposed an increase in travel allowance from R 3.50 to R 4.20 per kilometer for Presbyterial and Synodical travels.

Recommendation 31

Synod approves the increase of travel allowances for Presbyterial and Synodical travelling to R 4.20 per kilometer.

4 CAPE EMPOWERMENT/MODERAMEN COVID-19 RELIEF FUND

During the Covid pandemic, the Cape Empowerment Trust (CET) made R 3 million available for the Moderamen to assist congregations. A committee was set up to deal with applications and a set of criteria was drawn up as a guideline for the committee. The CEO assists with administration of the fund, and since 2019, the amount of R 2 057 900 was paid out to 94 congregations.

Recommendation 32

Synod express its gratitude towards the Cape Empowerment Trust (CET) and the Moderamen for their assistance towards the congregations during this extremely difficult time of Covid 19.

5 Motor Loans

There are 8 ministers owing a total of R 28 000.00 towards their motor loans. One of them has passed away. The office has sent them letters urging them to repay their outstanding balances.

Recommendation 33

As a matter of ethics and responsible leadership, Synod urges the Ministers who owe outstanding balances on their motor loans, to repay it within the current financial year.

6 Study Loans

The outstanding amount owed by Ministers of the Word is R 783 776.37. Letters of demand have been sent out to these ministers with the hope that they will respond favorably. However, only a few have responded.

We are still in the process to find the contact details of students who never finished their theological training. Their outstanding debt is R 658 278.73.

A few ministers have reached the age of retirement and have up to now refused to pay their outstanding study loan.

Recommendation 34

Synod approves the measure taken by the office.

Synod decide that Church Councils must deduct the study loans from its minister's salary and pay it over to the Synod Office until the debt is paid in full. Synod decides that if ministers do not pay their debt that the SMFA and the CEO might institute legal procedures against the debtors for the recovery of the outstanding amount.

7 STIPULATION 29.6/ GENERAL SYNOD STIPULATION 10.6

It has come to the attention of the office of the CEO that some relieving ministers

("konsulente") ask charge their congregation to pay them more than the Synodical approved fees. This leads to a practice where *konsulente* are paid a second salary, resulting in a negative impact on the filling of the vacancy and the calling of a new minister.

This particular stipulation was included to ensure uniformity in fees for all relieving ministers and to avoid the very malpractice. It needs to be reiterated that any congregation which pays their *konsulente more than the prescribed amount is abusing the stated church order stipulation* and accounting policy, making them liable for wasteful expenditures.

Recommendation 35

Synod confirms the correct interpretation and application of Stipulation 29.6 and urges presbyteries to hold congregations and ministers accountable regarding the stated stipulation.

8 MARRIAGE OFFICER APPLICATIONS

During the recess, the Office of Synod experienced a lot of frustration with the Department of Home Affairs regarding the registration of our ministers as marriage officers. Communication with Home Affairs proved to be very difficult. The CEO eventually asked the General Secretary and Actuarius of General Synod to intervene and set up a meeting with Home Affairs, since this function of communicating with the National Government falls within their scope. However, no response has been forthcoming.

Recommendation 36

Noted

8.1 MARRIAGE APPLICATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS SINCE 2018

YEAR	NAME	DATE OF APPLICATION
2018	Dr S.S. Mahokoto	19-03-2018
	Rev. R. Jacobs	07-06-2018
	Rev. K. Muller	06-08-2018
	Rev. c. Terblanche	07-09-2018
2019	Rev. D. Matthys	01-02-2019
	Rev. B. Wanza	28-03-2019
	Rev. G. Saaiman	05-04-2019
	Rev. G. Jacobs	06-06-2019
	Rev. H.J Du Plessis	20-08-2019
	Rev. A. Nyondla	29-08-2019
	Rev. J.N. Snyders	30-10-2019
	Rev. J.H. Majiedt	30-10-2019
2020	Rev. A.M Cloete-Damons	30-0-2020
	Rev. A.J. Hendricks	04-02-2020
	Rev. B. Mbenenge	20-02-2020
	Rev. M.A. Soga	25-02-2020
	Rev. F.A Watt-Cloete	26-02-2020
	Rev V.D. Jansen	30-11-2020
2021	Rev. Z. Bloro	30-03-2021
	Rev. K. Albertus	29-06-2021
2022	Rev. A. Daniels	08-04-2022
	Rev. W. Hector	04-07-2022
	Rev. T. Mountain	13-10-2022
2023	Rev. D. Titus	07-03-2023
	Rev. S. Diljee	07-03-2023
	Rev. M.M. Deelman	07-03-2023
	Rev. C. Barnard	15-03-2023
	Rev. R. Jantjies	15-03-2023

Recommendation 37

Noted

8.2 RETAINED STATUS

YEAR	NAME	DATE OF APPLICATION
2018	Rev. S. Christians	20-02-2018
2019	Rev. B. Coraizin	16-07-2019
	Rev. J. De Wet	20-08-2019
	Rev. R.J. Rickers	29-08-2019
	Rev. W.J. Dreyer	27-09-2019
	Rev. J.M. Ontong	09-12-2019
2020	Rev. D. Scheepers	23-10-2020
	Rev. D.P. Carelse	30-01-2020
	Rev. A.D. Masent	06-10-2020
2021	Rev. J.T. Rogers	22-10-2021
	Rev. D.H. Gantana	27-09-2021
2022	Rev. M. Baartman	26-04-2022
2023	Rev. J.M. Louw	24-01-2023
	Rev. M.N. Petersen	05-06-2023

Recommendation 38

Noted

8.3 TRANSFER OF FILES

YEAR	NAME	DATE OF APPLICATION
2018	Rev. J.C. Goeiman	27-08-2019
	Rev. Q. Minnaar	11-09-2018
2019	Rev. R.E. Cloete	22-08-2019
2020	Rev. J. Beukes	14-02-2020
2022	Dr G.E. Dames	06-06-2022
	Rev. M. Baartman	26-04-2022

Recommendation 39

Noted

9. **SALARY SUBSIDY**

The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) Western Cape has formally given notice in February 2022 of their decision not to make funds available toward the Salary Subsidy Fund as from 01 April 2022. Our Moderamen has taken up this matter with the Moderamen of the DRC.

Subsequently the DRC has reversed their decision, but is on notice that they experience financial difficulties, and will soon stop allocating funds to this project.

We are currently supporting 21 Congregations and their Ministers, and without the Dutch Reformed Church financial support, we will either have to minimize the payments or close down the fund.

Recommendation 40

Noted

10 **FINANCES**

10.1 **Audited Statements (Form A)**

The Office finds it extremely frustrating in its efforts to receive the required audited statements from the congregations. For the last recess, the office only received statements from 30 congregations, on an irregular basis. Various communications and memos were sent out, but congregations do not have the common courtesy to respond to the communications. This makes it difficult for the office to verify the real outstanding amount owed by congregations, since most of the current amount is based on estimations. The outstanding amount at the end of March 2023 was a staggering R 12 310 994. (See annexure 1)

Recommendation 41

Synod expresses its disappointment towards congregations which do not fulfill its responsibilities toward the running and upkeep of the Cape Regional Synod, and thanks those congregations which are up to date with its synodical offerings.

Synod reminds all the congregations to oblige with Regulation 33 of the 2018 Cape Regional Synod Church Order and urges its congregations to send its audited statements as well as their payments to the Office as stated in the Church Order.

10.2 **Formula for Synodical Offerings**

The current formula for the calculations of the Synodical Offerings was approved in 2008. At that time, it was sufficient to cover the expenses of Synod, but due to inflation, weak economy, and the constant weakening of the Rand, the formula only covers about 40% of the current expenses. To cover the expenses of Synod, the SMFA proposed the following formula for the next recess:

Income per congregation	Per member
R 0 to R 200 000	R 12
R 200 001 to R 500 000	R 16

R 500 001 to R 1 000 000 and above	R 20
------------------------------------	------

Recommendation 42

Synod approves the new Formula for the calculation of Synodical Offering.

10.3 Synodical offering distributions schedule for 2019-2021

See annexure 2.

Recommendation 43

Noted

10.3.1 Changes on the distribution list

Due to the poor payment of the synodical offerings by congregations and the necessity of the day-to-day operations of the Synod's Office, the SMFA made the following adjustments to the distribution list:

- a) SCO was incorporated under Congregational Ministry
- b) Since the following organization's does not fall under the ministry of URCSA CAPE REGIONAL SYNOD anymore, Distributions to Bet-el School, Steinthal Childrens Home, Christine Revell Childrens Home, Toevlug Rehabilitation Centre, and Badisa Skiereiland Social Services was terminated and reassigned to the Administration Fund and Synodical Fund.

Recommendation 44

Approved

10.4 Synopsis of Financial Statements 2018-2022

See annexure 3.

Recommendation 45

Noted

10.5 Audited statements for 2022-2023

See annexure 4.

Recommendation 46

Noted

11. CHURCH ORDER CHANGES

Please take note that the following terminology with regards to the Church Order needs to be implemented:

Bepaling 20 : - Lewensonderhoud

20.3.1.1 read : “die streeksinode van die ...”

This should be changes to :” **die algemene sinode** of the URCSA determines the remuneration....”

20.3.1.2 : also add – (f) “ **en n 13^{de} tjek gelykstaande aan een maand se salaris (1/12).**”

This is to make the thirteenth cheque mandatory as part of the emoluments and to minimize conflict between congregation and ministers. It will also be in line with the decision of General Synod.

Recommendation 47

Approved.

Bepaling 21- Emolumente gewaarborg voor beroep

Add “ in gevalle waar gratis huisvesting nie beskikbaar is nie, sal die gemeente aan die Leraar n huis n minimum toelaag voorsien soos bepaal deur die Algemene Sinode”

Recommendation 48

Approved

Bepaling 22

Change “ streeksinode” to “**algemene sinode**”

Recommendation 49

Approved

Bepaling 23.1

The following sentence of stipulation 23.1 was meant to be a transitional measure in the 2014 Church Order and should not have been part of the 2018 Church Order:

“ Leraars wat reeds opgehoopte verlof het, moet reëlings tref met hul kerkraad om dit te neem of Kerkrade kan dit ook uitbetaal tot hoogstens drie maande . Verlof val die predikant pro rata vanaf die bevestigings datums toe.”

As a result of this some ministers unfortunately take advantage of this stipulation to the detriment of their congregations.

Recommendation 50

Synod decides that the named sentence shall no longer be regarded as part of stipulation 23.1. As such no minister is allowed to claim unpaid, or un-used leave, under any circumstances, except when receiving demission from the congregation.

Bepaling 23.3 Langverlof

The following sentence must be changed to correspond with Genral Synod's stipulation

6.4.4.2.2 : " die waarde van die helfte regsgeldige langverlof... is by die beeindiging uitbetaalbaar" to "**die maksimum van drie maande lang verlof mag aan die leraar uitbetaa word.**"

Recommendation 51

Approved

Bepaling 25.3 AND Bepaling 26

Both stipulations deal with the death of the Minister of Word while in active ministry and is just a repeat of each other. To eliminate this duality, scrap Bepaling 25.3 in its totality and keep

Bepaling 26 to deal with the death of a Minister of the Word while in active ministry.

Recommendation 52

Approved

Bepaling 27 Hulp-predikers

27.1 read: "slegs n Bedienaar van die Woord of proponent kan n hulp prediker wees..."

Voeg by : , "**of Emeritus,**"

Add the following stipulations:

27.5 "in die geval van Bedienaars van die Woord of Emeriti, mag die Ring aan hulle die outoriteit gee om die voorsitter van die kerkraad te wees, met al die reg en verantwoordelikhede van n beroepe Leraar, om sodoende die werkslas van die konsulente te verlig"

(This would allow the assistant minister to serve the sacrements, ordain church council and new members without the expense of the consulent)

27.6 "die hulp prediker, in die geval van n Bedienaar van die Woord of Emeriti, sal deur die Ring as lid verklaar word vir die tydperk van sy/haar kontrak met die gemeente, waarna lidmaatskap terug getrek sal word."

27.7 "geen konsulentfooie sal tydens die kontrak periode betaalbaar wees nie."

(This would help ease the problem of vacant congregations and the workload of konsulente in our Regional Synod.)

Recommendation 53

Approved

Bepaling 29.6 Vergoeding van konsulent

29.6 Change “streek sinode” to “algemene sinode”

29.6. add the following : “

29.6. geen konsulent sal meer betaal word as die vasgestelde maandelikse honoraria om die volgende wanpraktyke te voorkom”

29.6.1 die praktyk waar konsulente n tweede salaris ontvang,

10.6.2 die praktyk om die beroeping van n leraar te vermy of uit te stel.

Recommendation 54

Approved

REGLIMENT 3

DIE TAAK EN BEVOEGDHEDE VAN DIE RING.

Change the following heading “ AFSTIGTING VAN GEMEENTES” to include the dissolvment of congregations to “ AFSTIGTING EN ONTBINDING VAN GEMEENTES”

Add a new point to the Regliment to deal with the dissolvment of congregations:

7 ONTBINDING VAN GEMEENTES

7.1 Wanneer gemeentes se getalle vir 3 agtereenvolgende jaar daal tot minder as 100 lede soos voorgeskryf in Regliment 2.2.2, moet die Ring toesien dat sodanige gemeente ontbind word en by die naaste selfstandige gemeente in die Ring ingelyf word as n wyk.

7.2 Wanneer gemeentes se met meer as 100 lidmate nie langer in staat is om 3.1.3 en 3.1.4 na te kom nie, word die Ring verplig om die gemeente met n naburige gemeente te groepeer volgens Regliment 6.

7.3 By van die die ontbinding van gemeentes moet die Ring daarvan kennis gee aan die Aktuaris en Hoof Uitvoerende Beamppte van die Streek sinode, sodat die ontbinde gemeentes afgehaal word van die gemeente register, en alle korrespondensie rondom sinodale aangeleenthede gestaak kan word.

7.4 By die ontbinding sal die Ring toesien dat die sinodale skuld sover moontlik aangesuiwer word uit die gemeentes kas en of beleggings van die ontbinde gemeente alvorens die bates aan die ander gemeente oorgedra word.

Recommendation 55

Approved

REGLIMENT 5

KERKLIKE VISITASIE

The SMFA has noted that many congregations are failing to comply with church order regulations on the payment of emoluments, pension fund premiums, SARS, and general good governance principles. The SMFA also realized that there is a lack of accountability in our congregations. The church order however clearly mandates that the presbyteries need to ensure that congregations, church councils and ministers are accountable and comply with the regulations of the church order. One of the instruments provided in the church to the presbytery is the visitation of the church councils and reports to the congregations. This aspect of oversight is neglected. Therefore the SMFA would like to propose as follows:

1. The Synod call on all presbyteries to properly oversee the congregations by adhering to Regliment 5.
2. That during the next recess all presbyteries do personal visitation by the visitation commission at least twice to all the congregations in its resort (once per congregation every two years).
3. That reports of the visitation commission be read to congregations during a worship service to enhance the principles of transparency and accountability.
4. To strengthen the regliment with the following changes:
 - a) At the end of point 2.3, add, "wat by openbare eredienste afgelees sal word"
 - b) At the end of point 3.1, add, "ten minste die helfte van die gemeentes in die ring sal ringsvisitasie gedurende n ringsjaar ontvang, met verslag aan die ring."
5. During the next recess all presbyteries will report on the implementation of this decision to the annual Synodical Commission meetings via Congregational Ministries.

Recommendation 56

Approved

Motion and Amendment

The following amendment and regulations is proposed for approval of Synod:

Stipulation 8 – Retirement and death

8.1.1 " ... may retire at age 65 or earlier,..."

8.1.2 " ... it is however compulsory ... to retire at the age of 70 years..."

Add the following:

8.1.2.1 " Ministers who wish to continue service after the age of 65 years, must apply to their presbytery, six months before the 65th birthdate to do so. Thereafter they have to apply annually to the presbytery for extended service. (this means that retirement age of 70 does not automatically become applicable to retirement extension when a minister reaches the age of 65, but has to be approved annually by the presbytery)

8.1.2.2 The presbytery may consider the extension of the retirement age based on the following:

- (i) the physical and mental health of the applicant;

- (ii) if the current value of the applicant's retirement benefit does not allow him/her to retire comfortably;
- (iii) if the applicant's retirement is not up to date;
- (iv) the financial viability of the congregation."

8.1.2.3 In applying for extended service, the applicant must provide the presbytery annually with a medical certificate, not older than one month, confirming or denying his/her good physical and mental health. In the case where it is determined that the applicant is no longer able to serve the congregation due to ill mental and or physical health, or due to the poor financial situation of the congregation, the presbytery must deny the application, and the applicant must retire within three months of the presbytery's decision.

If this amendment is approved, it should be stated clearly that is only applicable to Ministers who becomes 65 years of age after the adoption of this regulation, and exclude those who are already 65 and older to avoid abuse.

Recommendation 57

Approved

Members of the Ministry:

Rev. J.C. Goeiman (Chairperson)

Rev. G.D. Baartman (CEO and Scribe)

Dr. L.L.M. MacMaster

Rev. L.L. Plaatjie

Rev. B.H. Coraizin

Rev. M.P. Gciza (Moved to new Regional Synod)

Rev. B.S. Mbenenge (Moved to a new Regional Synod)

Rev. G. Shreiner (Retired)

Mrs. S. DeBruin

Mrs. P. Duna

