

**21.7 BESKRYWINGSPUNT STREEKSINODE RANDVAAL – VROU IN BESONDERE DIENSTE AS ‘N NIE-WESENTLIKE SAAK (Artt 117, 297)**

**21.7 POINT OF DESCRIPTION REGIONAL SYNOD RANDVAAL – ABOUT WOMEN IN THE PARTICULAR OFFICES AS A NON-ESSENTIAL MATTER (Arts 117, 297)**

- A. Die Beskrywingspunt is gestel.  
The Point of description is tabled.
- B. **Besluit:** Word verwys na Kommissie Leerstellig.  
**Decision:** Referred to Commission Doctrinal.
- C. Ds PJ Jansen van Nieuwenhuizen rapporteer namens Kommissie Leerstellig.  
Rev PJ Jansen van Nieuwenhuizen reports on behalf of Commission Doctrinal.

**D. BESKRYWINGSPUNT / POINT OF DESCRIPTION**

<p><b>1. Inleiding</b></p> <p>1.1 Die saak word as ‘n Beskrywingspunt ter tafel gebring en nie as ‘n Beswaarskrif nie. <u>Motivering</u></p> <p>1.1.1 Daar is geen besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 wat bepaal dat die vrou in die besondere dienste ‘n wesentlike saak, of ‘n nie-wesentlike saak is nie. Daar kan nie in die lig van KO, artt 31 en 46 teen ‘n besluit in die verband, beswaar gemaak word nie;</p> <p>1.1.2 Daar is weinig verskil tussen ‘n Beskrywingspunt en ‘n Beswaarskrif. Beide bring sake onder KO, art 46 ter tafel. ‘n Beskrywingspunt kan in die lig van sy inhoud ook as ‘n Beswaarskrif behandel word (Spoelstra 1988:235, 3). ‘n Beswaarskrif behoort soos ‘n saak (Beskrywingspunt) hanteer te word (Acta 1991:526-528).</p> <p>1.2 Die Beskrywingspunt is in die lig van die kerklike weg (KO, art 33) en Sinodebesluite in die verband (Acta 2012:23, 5.2.2), deurgegee vir behandeling deur Streeksinode Randvaal.</p> <p>1.3 Streeksinode Randvaal het die Beskrywingspunt op sy vergadering van 19 Mei 2015 beoordeel (Acta 2015:26-35, art 10) en besluit om:</p> <p>1.3.1 hulle te vereenselwig met die Beskrywingspunt en sy motivering en om gevolg te gee daaraan;</p> <p>1.3.2 die Beskrywingspunt deur te gee vir behandeling en besluitneming deur</p>	<p><b>1. Introduction</b></p> <p>1.1 This matter is tabled as a Point of Description and not as a Petition of Protest. <u>Motivation</u></p> <p>1.1.1 There is no decision taken by the 2015 General Synod determining that the matter of women in particular offices is an essential or non-essential matter. A Petition of Protest cannot in the light of CO, arts 31 and 46 be tabled against a decision in this regard.</p> <p>1.1.2 There is little difference between a Point of Description and a Petition of Protest. Both bring matters to the table under CO, art 46. A Point of Description, in the light of its contents, can be dealt with as a Petition of Protest (Spoelstra 1988:235, 3). A Petition of Protest should be dealt with as a matter (Point of Description), (Acta 1991:511-528).</p> <p>1.2 The Point of Description was submitted to Regional Synod Randvaal in accordance with the ecclesiastical way (CO, art 33) and particular Synod decisions (Acta 2012:23, 5.2.2).</p> <p>1.3 Regional Synod Randvaal judged the Point of Description in their meeting on 19 May 2015 (Acta 2015:26-35, art 10) and decided to:</p> <p>1.3.1 approve and accept the Point of Description and the motivation for their own account; and</p> <p>1.3.2 to send it through as a matter to dealt with by the next General Synod.</p>
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<p>die volgende Algemene Sinode of deur 'n moontlike Buitengewone Algemene Sinode;</p> <p>1.3.3 kennis te neem van die implikasie in punt 6.</p> <p><b>2. Beskrywingspunt (KO, art 46)</b> Die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste is 'n nie-wesentlike saak.</p> <p><b>3. Motivering: Beskrywingspunt</b></p> <p>3.1 <i>Motivering 1</i> Geen besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike of 'n nie-wesentlike saak is nie.</p> <p>3.1.1 <u>Bewysvoering: Motivering 1</u></p> <p>3.1.1.1 Die Notule/Handelinge gee geen <b>direkte besluit</b> deur die Algemene Sinode 2015 wat bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, 'n wesentlike saak is nie.</p> <p>3.1.1.2 Sinode 2015 besluit “<i>Dat verwysde Beswaarskrifte wesentlik is</i>” (Acta 2015:320, 7.3.2, a).</p> <p>3.1.1.3 Beswaarskrifte is nie sonder meer 'n wesentlike saak nie. Beswaarskrifte kan wesentlike sake ter tafel bring.</p> <p>3.1.1.4 Die Beswaarskrifte wat Sinode 2012 na die Deputate Eenheid in Verskeidenheid verwys het (Acta 2012:353, 3.2) word nie inhoudelik beoordeel aan die hand van die riglyne oor wat wesentlik en wat nie-wesentlik is nie.</p> <p>3.1.1.5 'n Besluit van Sinode 2015 oor 'n Spesiale Sinode, in die lig van 'n Kommissierapport, aanvaar die volgende aanbeveling: “<i>Al die tersaaklike Beswaarskrifte handel oor die vrou in die besondere dienste. In die lig daarvan dat die Sinode besluit het dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike saak is, word aanbeveel dat al die Beswaarskrifte na die Spesiale Sinode verwys word</i>” (Acta 2015:323, 2.1). Die aanbeveling handel oor die hantering van Beswaarskrifte en verwys na 'n besluit waar die Algemene Sinode 2015 sou besluit</p>	<p>1.3.3 take note of the implications in point 6.</p> <p><b>2. Point of Description (CO, art 46)</b> The matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one.</p> <p><b>3. Motivation: Point of Description</b></p> <p>3.1 <i>Motivation 1</i> No decision by the 2015 General Synod stipulates that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential or a non-essential one.</p> <p>3.1.1 <u>Substantiation: Motivation 1</u></p> <p>3.1.1.1 The Minutes give no direct decision by the 2015 General Synod that stipulates that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one.</p> <p>3.1.1.2 The 2015 Synod decided “<i>that the referred Petitions of Protest are essential</i>” (Acta 2015:320, 7.3.2, a).</p> <p>3.1.1.3 Petitions of Protest are not automatically and in itself essential matters. Petitions of Protest can bring essential matters to the agenda.</p> <p>3.1.1.4 The Petitions of Protest that were referred to the Deputies Unity in Diversity by the 2012 Synod (Acta 2012:353, 3.2) were not, as far as their contents are concerned, judged according to guidelines about what is essential and what is non-essential.</p> <p>3.1.1.5 A resolution of the 2015 Synod about a Special Synod, on the basis of a Report by a Commission, approved the following recommendation: “<i>All the relevant Petitions of Protests deal with women in the particular offices. In view of the fact that the Synod has decided that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one, it is recommended that all the Petitions of Protest be referred to the Special Synod</i>” (Acta 2015:323, 2.1). This recommendation concerns the handling of the Petitions of Protest and refers to a decision where the 2015 General Synod had decided</p>
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<p>het dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike saak is. Geen verwysing word na die besluit gegee nie en so 'n besluit word nie in die Notule/Handelinge gevind nie.</p> <p>3.1.1.6 Geen motivering word gegee waarom die Beswaarskrifte en die saak in die verwysde Beswaarskrifte, dié van die vrou in die besondere dienste, 'n wesentlike saak is nie.</p> <p>3.1.2 <u>Bevinding: Motivering 1</u> Geen besluit in die Notule/Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode 2015 bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike saak is nie. <b>Besluit:</b> Streeksinode Randvaal vereenselwig hulle met hierdie punt.</p> <p>3.2 <i>Motivering 2</i> In die lig van die besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 (Acta 2015:321-323, O, 3) oor die onderskeid tussen wesentlike en nie-wesentlike sake, is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, 'n nie-wesentlike saak.</p> <p>3.2.1 <u>Bewysvoering: Motivering 2</u></p> <p>3.2.1.1 Die Algemene Sinode 2015 gee riglyne vir die onderskeid tussen wesentlike en nie-wesentlike sake. Die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste word nie deur die Algemene Sinode 2015 aan die hand van die riglyne beoordeel nie.</p> <p>3.2.1.2 Beoordeel aan die <u>riglyne vir wesentlike sake</u> is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n nie-wesentlike saak omdat:</p> <p>3.2.1.2.1 geen direkte teks uit die Skrif voorskryf dat die vrou in die besondere dienste mag dien of nie (Acta 1997:580, 2.2.3; Acta 2003:557, 3.3.5);</p> <p>3.2.1.2.2 geen besluit van die Sinodes van die GKSA met Skrifberoep aandui dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike saak is nie;</p> <p>3.2.1.2.3 geen besluit van die Sinodes van die GKSA aandui dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste,</p>	<p>that the matter of women in the particular offices, is an essential one. No reference to this decision is given and such a decision cannot be found in the Minutes.</p> <p>3.1.1.6 No motivation is given why the Petitions of Protest and the matter dealt with by the referred Petitions, namely that of women in the particular offices, are essential matters.</p> <p>3.1.2 <u>Conclusion: Motivation 1</u> No decision in the minutes of the 2015 General Synod stipulates that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one.  <b>Decision:</b> The Regional Synod Randvaal accepted this point for their account.</p> <p>3.2 <i>Motivation 2</i> In view of the decision of the 2015 General Synod (Acta 2015:321-323, O, 3) about the distinction between essential and non-essential matters, the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one.</p> <p>3.2.1 <u>Substantiation: Motivation 2</u></p> <p>3.2.1.1 The 2015 General Synod gives guidelines to distinguish between essential and non-essential matters. The 2015 General Synod have not judged the matter of women in the particular offices according to these guidelines.</p> <p>3.2.1.2 Judged according to the <u>guidelines for essential matters</u>, the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one because:</p> <p>3.2.1.2.1 no direct text in the Scriptures stipulates that women may serve in the particular offices or not (Acta 1997:580, 2.2.3; Acta 2003:557, 3.3.5);</p> <p>3.2.1.2.2 no decision of the GKSA Synods indicates, on the basis of the Scriptures, that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one;</p> <p>3.2.1.2.3 no decision of the GKSA Synods indicates, on the basis of direct Scriptural principles derived from</p>
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<p>op grond van direkte Skrifbeginsels wat uit die Skrif afgelei is, 'n wesentlike saak is nie;</p> <p>3.2.1.2.4 geen besluit van die Sinodes van die GKSA, met die nodige motivering, bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in besondere dienste 'n belydenis- saak is nie.</p> <p>3.2.1.3 Beoordeel aan die <b>riglyne vir nie-wesentlike sake</b>, is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n nie-wesentlike saak omdat die saak:</p> <p>3.2.1.3.1 nie direk/uitdruklik in die Skrif voorgeskryf word nie;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.2 nie direk/uitdruklik uit die Skrif afgelei word nie – daarom die verskil oor die saak;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.3 nie uitdruklik in die Belydenisskrifte vermeld of uit die Belydenisskrifte afgelei kan word nie. Sinode 1988 het al tot die bevindings gekom: <i>“Die Belydenisskrifte gebruik die taal van die Skrif sonder om hulle eksplisiet vir of teen die vrou in die amp uit te spreek”</i> (Acta 1988:516, 3.3.2). <i>“Wanneer kerke na langdurige en biddende bestudering van die Skrif onder leiding van die Heilige Gees tot die slotsom kom dat vrouens wel in 'n besonder amp mag dien, sal moeilik beweer kan word dat so 'n besluit strydig is met Reformatoriese Belydenisskrifte – hoogstens dat dit in spanning is met Gereformeerde tradisie”</i> (Acta 1988:516, 3.3.3; Acta 2009:664, 10.16.2).</p>	<p>the Scriptures, that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one;</p> <p>3.2.1.2.4 no decision of the GKSA Synods stipulates, with the required motivation, that the matter of women in the particular offices is a confessional matter.</p> <p>3.2.1.3 Judged according to the <b>guidelines for non-essential matters</b>, the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one because this matter:</p> <p>3.2.1.3.1 it is not directly/implicitly stipulated in the Scriptures;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.2 it is not directly/implicitly derived from the Scriptures – thus the differences about the matter;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.3 it is not mentioned explicitly in the Confessions or cannot be derived from those. The 1988 Synod already came to the conclusions: <i>“The Confessions use the language of the Scriptures without explicitly pronouncing for or against women in the offices”</i> (Acta 1988:516, 3.3.2). <i>“When churches, after prolonged and prayerful study of the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit comes to the conclusion that women may indeed serve in the particular offices, it will be difficult to claim that such a decision is in conflict with the Reformed Confessions – at best that it is in tension with the Reformed tradition”</i> (Acta 1988:516, 3.3.3; Acta 2009:664, 10.16.2).</p>
<p>Geen besluit van die Sinodes van die GKSA het tot 'n ander slotsom gekom nie. Daarom is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, nie 'n belydenis saak nie;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.4 geen besluit van die Sinodes van die GKSA noodsaaklike of onvermydelike redes aanvoer waarom die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n saak is wat deur almal oral en altyd gehandhaaf hoef te word nie. Verdere bewysvoering in die lig van KO, art 85 sal dit bevestig.</p> <p>3.2.1.3.5 geen motivering word in die</p>	<p>No decision of the GKSA Synods has come to a different conclusion. Thus the matter of women in the particular offices is not a confessional one;</p> <p>3.2.1.3.4 no decision of the GKSA Synods cites imperative or inevitable reasons why the matter of women in the particular offices is one that has to be maintained by everyone at all times and places. Further substantiation in the light of CO, art 85 will confirm this.</p> <p>3.2.1.3.5 no motivation is given in the</p>

<p>besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 gegee om aan te dui dat die Skrif en apostoliese gewoonte die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste nie aan die kerke self oorlaat, of nie.</p> <p>3.2.1.4 Ander Sinodebesluite bevestig dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n nie-wesentlike saak is.</p> <p>3.2.1.4.1 Deur te besluit dat vroue ook as diakens mag dien (Acta 2009:668) het 'n vorige Sinode aangedui dat die geslag van die persoon in die kerklike dienste "<i>in die lig van die Skrif</i>" 'n nie-wesentlike saak is.</p> <p>3.2.1.4.2 Die reëling van die Kerkorde dat diakens in uitsonderlike gevalle ook tot die Kerkraad gereken kan word (KO, art 38), tesame met die feit dat 'n Sinode besluit het dat vroue "<i>in die lig van die Skrif</i>" diakens mag wees, impliseer dat ook die Kerkorde die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste as 'n nie-wesentlike saak hanteer.</p> <p>3.2.2 <u>Bevinding: Motivering 2</u> Bogenoemde motivering toon dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, beoordeel in die lig van die riglyne vir wesentlike en nie-wesentlike sake, 'n nie-wesentlike saak is. <b>Besluit:</b> Streeksinode Randvaal vereenselwig hulle met hierdie punt.</p> <p>3.3 <i>Motivering 3</i> In die lig van besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, in die lig van KO, art 85, 'n nie-wesentlike saak.</p> <p>3.3.1 <u>Bewysvoering: Motivering 3</u></p> <p>3.3.1.1 In KO, art 85 het ons as kerke in die GKSA ooreengekom om buitelandse kerke, by wie ander gebruike as by ons in swang is, nie in middelmatige sake te veroordeel nie.</p> <p>3.3.1.2 Die Algemene Sinode 2015 maak in die lig van die verslag van die Deputate Eenheid en Verskei-</p>	<p>decisions of the 2015 General Synod to indicate that the Scriptures and apostolic convention do not leave the matter of women in the particular offices to the churches themselves.</p> <p>3.2.1.4 Other decisions of the GKSA Synods confirm that the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential matter</p> <p>3.2.1.4.1 In deciding that women may also serve as deacons (Acta, 2009:668) a previous Synod indicated that the gender of a person in the ecclesiastical offices is a non-essential matter "<i>in the light of the Scriptures</i>".</p> <p>3.2.1.4.2 The arrangement of the Church Order that deacons can, in exceptional circumstances, also be regarded as members of the Church Council (CO, art 38), together with the fact that a Synod decided that women may, "<i>in the light of the Scriptures</i>", be deacons, imply that the Church Order also handles the matter of women in the particular offices as a non-essential one.</p> <p>3.2.2 <u>Conclusion: Motivation 2</u> The above motivation indicates that the matter of women in the particular offices, judged according to the guidelines for essential and non-essential matters, is a non-essential one. <b>Decision:</b> The Regional Synod Randvaal accepted this point for their account.</p> <p>3.3 <i>Motivation 3</i> In view of the decisions of the 2015 General Synod, the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one in the light of CO, art 85.</p> <p>3.3.1 <u>Substantiation: Motivation 3</u></p> <p>3.3.1.1 In CO, art 85 we as churches have agreed not to denounce foreign churches, which have other customs than we do, in non-essential matters.</p> <p>3.3.1.2 The Report of the Deputies Unity in Diversity (Acta 2015:312-320) makes a distinction between non-</p>
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<p>denheid (Acta 2015:312-320) 'n onderskeid tussen middelmatige en wesentlike sake. Die besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 aanvaar die Deputate se aanbeveling om te onderskei tussen wesentlike sake en sake waarin mense se gewetens nie gebind mag word nie. In die lig van die uiteensetting en bevinding is dié sake, waarin gewetens nie gebind mag word nie, middelmatige sake. Later word 'n onderskeid gemaak tussen wesentlike en nie-wesentlike sake. Die Rapport van die Deputate en die besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 hanteer nie-wesentlike sake en middelmatige sake as sinonieme.</p> <p>3.3.1.3 Die besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 handhaaf ekumeniese eenheid met die Christian Reformed Churches in North America (CRCNA; Acta 2015:203, 4) en met die Reformed Churches in Japan (Acta 2015:193, 3). Ekumeniese eenheid beteken dat die kerke een is, in leer, diens en tug.</p> <p>3.3.1.4 Bogenoemde kerke het besluit dat die vrou in die besondere dienste mag dien. 'n Verklaring op die webblad van die CRCNA lui soos volg: <i>“All congregations in the Christian Reformed Church in North America may allow women to serve in the office of minister, elder, deacon, or commissioned pastor. The CRC recognizes that there are two different perspectives and convictions on this issue, both of which honor the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God”</i>.</p> <p>3.3.1.5 Ekumeniese eenheid met die kerke word nie verbreek nie omdat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n middelmatige saak is (KO, art 85). 'n Middelmatige saak is 'n nie-wesentlike saak en daarom 'n saak waaroor gelowiges, in die lig van die Skrif, van mekaar kan verskil.</p> <p>3.3.1.6 In die besluite van sinode 2015 oor ekumeniese eenheid word die saak van die vrou hanteer as 'n middelmatige saak (KO, art 85).</p>	<p>essential and essential matters. The decision of the 2015 General Synod approves the recommendation of the Deputies to distinguish between essential matters and matters in which people's conscience may not be bound. In view of the exposition and findings those matters in which consciences may not be bound, are non-essential ones. Later on a distinction is made between essential and non-essential matters. The Report of the Deputies and the 2015 General Synod treats 'non-essential matters' and 'indifferent matters' as synonyms.</p> <p>3.3.1.3 The decisions of the 2015 General Synod maintain ecumenical unity with the Christian Reformed Churches in North America (CRCNA; Acta 2015:203, 4) and with the Reformed Churches in Japan (Acta 2015:193, 3). Ecumenical unity signifies that the churches are one in doctrine, sacraments and ceremonies, and church discipline.</p> <p>3.3.1.4 The abovementioned churches have decided that women may serve in the particular offices. A statement on the website of the CRCNA reads as follows: <i>“All congregations in the Christian Reformed Church in North America may allow women to serve in the office of minister, elder, deacon, or commissioned pastor. The CRC recognizes that there are two different perspectives and convictions on this issue, both of which honour the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God”</i>.</p> <p>3.3.1.5 Ecumenical unity with the churches are not severed because the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential (indifferent) matter (CO, art 85). An indifferent matter is a non-essential matter and thus one about which believers can differ in the light of the Scriptures.</p> <p>3.3.1.6 In the decisions of the 2015 Synod about ecumenical unity the matter of women (in the particular offices) is treated as an indifferent/non-</p>
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<p>3.3.1.7 As 'n middelmatige en nie-wesentlike saak is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, in die lig van die Skrif, 'n saak wat aan die vryheid van die kerke oorgelaat behoort te word.</p> <p>3.3.2 <u>Bevinding: Motivering 3</u> In die lig van besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 oor ekumeniese eenheid, is die saak van die vrou in besondere dienste, 'n middelmatige en 'n nie-wesentlike saak. <b>Besluit:</b> Streeksinode Randvaal vereenselwig hulle met hierdie punt.</p> <p><b>4. Gevolgtrekking: Motiveringsgrond 1, 2 en 3</b></p> <p>4.1 Geen besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 – soos weergegee in die Notule/Acta en in e-pos navrae daaroor – bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n wesentlike saak is nie;</p> <p>4.2 Geen motivering – in enige van die besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 – word gegee om aan te dui waarom die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, 'n wesentlike saak sou wees nie;</p> <p>4.3 Die besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 wat ekumeniese eenheid te handhaaf met kerke waar die vrou toegelaat is om in al die besondere dienste te dien, wys dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, 'n middelmatige saak (KO, art 85), 'n nie-wesentlike saak is. <b>Besluit:</b> Streeksinode Randvaal vereenselwig hulle met hierdie punt.</p> <p><b>5. Versoek: Beskrywingspunt</b> Die Algemene Sinode word versoek om gevolg te gee aan die Beskrywingspunt en te besluit dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste 'n nie-wesentlike saak is.</p> <p><b>6. Implikasies: Besluit</b></p> <p>6.1 In nie-wesentlike sake kan kerke van mekaar verskil. Daarom is dit nie nodig dat kerke wat in die Algemene Sinode</p>	<p>essential matter (CO, art 85).</p> <p>3.3.1.7 As an indifferent and non-essential matter, the matter of women in the particular offices is one that, in the light of the Scriptures, must be left to the freedom of the churches.</p> <p>3.3.2 <u>Conclusion: Motivation 3</u> In view of the decisions of the 2015 General Synod about ecumenical unity, the matter of women in the particular offices is an indifferent and non-essential one.  <b>Decision:</b> The Regional Synod Randvaal accepted this point for their account.</p> <p><b>4. Final conclusion: Motivations 1, 2 and 3</b></p> <p>4.1 No decision of the 2015 General Synod – as expressed in the Minutes/Acta and e-mail enquiries on those – stipulates that the matter of women in the particular offices is an essential one;</p> <p>4.2 No motivation is given in any of the decisions of the 2015 General Synod to indicate why the matter of women in the particular offices should be an essential one;</p> <p>4.3 The decisions of the 2015 General Synod to maintain ecumenical unity with churches where women are allowed to serve in the particular offices, indicates that the matter of women in the particular offices is an indifferent one (CO, art 85) and non-essential. <b>Decision:</b> The Regional Synod Randvaal accepted this point for their account.</p> <p><b>5. Request: Proposal</b> The General Synod is requested to approve the proposal and to decide that the matter of women in the particular offices is a non-essential one.</p> <p><b>6. Implications: Decision</b></p> <p>6.1 In non-essential matters churches can differ. Therefore it is not necessary for churches meeting in a Synod, to take a</p>
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<p>vergader, 'n 'eenstemmige' besluit daaroor moet neem nie.  <b>Besluit:</b> Kennis geneem.</p> <p>6.2 Nie-wesentlike sake waarin gelowiges – en kerke – van mekaar kan verskil, is sake wat tuishoort by die plaaslike kerk. In die lig van die Skrif en Kerkorde is die verkiesing van die besondere dienste 'n saak vir die plaaslike kerk. In die plaaslike kerk word gawes aan gelowiges gegee. Hulle word as gawes in die gemeente gegee om die gemeente as liggaam van Christus op te bou. In die plaaslike kerk word hulle wettig geroep en bevestig.  <b>Besluit:</b> Kennis geneem.</p> <p>6.3 As volledige en selfstandige kerk, waarin die Here gawes gee om in die besondere dienste te dien, besluit die Kerkraad in samewerking met die gemeente oor wie die gawes ontvang, en tot die dienste geroep word. Die beginsels van die Presbiteriale kerkregering, waardeur die selfstandigheid van die plaaslike kerk as volledige kerk van Christus gehandhaaf word, laat nie toe dat 'n meerdere vergadering kan besluit wie in 'n gemeente in die besondere dienste kan dien of nie.  <b>Besluit:</b> Kennis geneem.</p> <p>6.4 Omdat gelowiges – en kerke – in nie-wesentlike sake van mekaar mag verskil, word gelowiges – en kerke versoek om in liefde aan mekaar die ruimte te gee om oor die saak te verskil.  <b>Besluit:</b> Kennis geneem.</p> <p><b>Besluit:</b> Streeksinode Randvaal vereenselwig hulle met die Beskrywingspunt en stuur die Beskrywingspunt deur aan die Algemene Sinode.</p>	<p>'unanimous' decision on those.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Take note.</p> <p>6.2 Non-essential matters on which believers – and churches - can differ, are matters that belong with the local church. In the light of the Scriptures and Church Order the election to the particular offices is a matter for the local church. In the local church gifts are bestowed on believers. They are given as gifts within the congregation to build the congregation as the body of Christ. In the local church they are lawfully called and ordained.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Take note.</p> <p>6.3 As complete and autonomous church, in which the Lord bestows gifts to serve in the particular offices, the Church Council in cooperation with the congregation decide on whom gifts have been bestowed and who are called to the offices. The principles of Presbyterian church polity, through which the autonomy of the local church of Christ is maintained, do not allow for a major assembly to decide which members of a congregation can serve or not serve in the particular offices.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Take note.</p> <p>6.4 Because believers – and churches – may differ in non-essential matters, believers – and churches – are requested to grant, in love, each other the space to differ about the matter.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Take note.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Regional Synod associates itself with the Point of Description and decides to send this Point of Description through to the General Synod.</p>
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#### E. RAPPORT VAN DIE KOMMISSIE / REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

<p><b>1. Sake waarvan die Sinode kennis neem</b></p> <p>1.1 Die Sinode neem kennis van 1.1.</p> <p>1.2 Die Kommissie het ook oor die ontvanklikheid van hierdie Beskrywingspunt handel (KO, art 46) en besluit om weens die sensitiwiteit van die saak oor die vrou in die besondere dienste tog die Beskrywingspunt te</p>	<p><b>1. Matters that the Synod take note of</b></p> <p>1.1 That the Synod take note of 1.1.</p> <p>1.2 The Commission also deliberated on the receptivity of the Point of description CO, art 46) and decided, in light of the sensitivity of the matter of women in the particular offices, to handle the Point of description.</p>
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<p>hanteer.</p> <p><b>Besluit: Punte 1.1 en 1.2 kennis geneem.</b></p> <p><b>2. Sake waaroor die Sinode besluit</b></p> <p>2.1 Die Kommissie beveel aan dat daar nie gevolg gegee word aan die Beskrywingspunt nie.</p> <p><b>Besluit: Goedgekeur.</b></p> <p><u>Motivering</u></p> <p>2.1.1 <u>Motivering 1:</u> “Die Beskrywingspunt voer aan dat geen besluit van die Algemene Sinode 2015 bepaal dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste ‘n wesentlike of ‘n nie-wesentlike saak is nie”.</p> <p>2.1.1.1 Die Sinode het twee besluite geneem dat die saak oor die vrou in die besondere dienste (VIDA) ‘n wesentlike saak is. Dit kom na vore in die volgende besluite:</p> <p>a) “Besluit:</p> <p>a. <i>Dat verwysde Beswaarskrifte wesentlik is</i>” (Acta 2015:320, 7. a.).</p> <p>b) “<i>Al die tersaaklike Beswaarskrifte handel oor die vrou in die besondere dienste. In die lig daarvan dat die Sinode besluit het dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste ‘n wesentlike saak is, word aanbeveel dat al die Beswaarskrifte na die Spesiale Sinode verwys word. Besluit: Goedgekeur</i>” (Acta 2015:323, 2.1).</p> <p>Hoewel die Sinode nie die besluit “direk” genotuleer het, soos die Beskrywingspunt beredeneer nie, maar tog duidelik in bogenoemde besluite bedoel, dat die saak oor VIDA wesentlik is.</p> <p>2.1.2 <u>Motivering 2:</u> “Die Beskrywingspunt voer aan dat die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, beoordeel in die lig van die riglyne vir wesentlike en nie-wesentlike sake, ‘n nie-wesentlike saak is”.</p> <p>2.1.2.1 Motivering 2 handel oor die wyse waarop die Sinode 2015 sy riglyne vir wesentlike sake hanteer het. Sinode 2015 het aan die hand van sy riglyne bepaal dat die saak van VIDA wesentlik is. Hierdie motivering is in wese ‘n beswaar wat langs die weg van KO, artt 31</p>	<p><b>Decision: Points 1.1 and 1.2 noted.</b></p> <p><b>2. Matters that the Synod decide on</b></p> <p>2.1 That the Point of description is not carried.</p> <p><b>Decision: Approved.</b></p> <p><u>Motivation</u></p> <p>2.1.1 <u>Motivation 1:</u> “<i>The Point of description argues that no decision of the General Synod 2015 determined that the woman in the particular offices is an essential or non-essential manner...</i>”</p> <p>2.1.1.1 The Synod took two decisions that the woman in office (WITO) is an essential matter. It emerges in the following decisions:</p> <p>a) “<i>Decision:</i></p> <p>a. <i>That the referred Petitions of Protest are essential</i> (Acta 2015:320, 7. a.).</p> <p>b) “<i>All the relevant Petitions of Protest deals with women in the particular offices. In light of the Synod’s decision that women in the particular offices is an essential matter, it is recommended that all of the Petitions of Protest are referred to the Special Synod. Decision: Approved</i>” (Acta 2015:323, 2.1).</p> <p>Although the Synod did not directly record the decision, as the Point of description argues, it is clear from abovementioned descisions that the matter regarding WITO is essential.</p> <p>2.1.2 <u>Motivation 2:</u> “<i>The Point of description argues that the woman in the particular offices, adjudicated in light of the guidelines of essential and non-essential matters, is a non-essential matter.</i>”</p> <p>2.1.2.1 Motivation 2 deals with the manner in which Synod 2015 handled its guidelines for essential matters. Synod 2015 concluded, on the basis of its guidelines that the matter of WITO is essential. This motivation constitutes a protest that must be dealt with according to CO, arts 31</p>
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<p>en 46 aan die orde behoort te kom.</p> <p>2.1.3 <u>Motivering 3</u>: “Die Beskrywingspunt voer aan dat in die lig van besluite van die Algemene Sinode 2015 is die saak van die vrou in die besondere dienste, in die lig van KO, art 85, ‘n nie-wesentlike saak”.</p> <p>2.1.3.1 KO, art 85 reël onder meer “eenheid en verskeidenheid in die ekumene” (Spoelstra 1989:466). Hierdie artikel handel oor die wyse tov ekumeniese verhoudings tussen kerke en buitelandse kerke. Die Beskrywingspunt lig tereg uit dat kerke nie vir ‘n onbepaalde tyd verdraagsaam kan wees aangaande verskille in wesentlike sake nie. Die bedoeling van KO, art 85 is egter nie om te bepaal of ‘n saak wesentlik of nie-wesentlik is nie.</p> <p><b>Besluit: Punte 2.1.1 tot 2.1.3.1 goedgekeur.</b></p>	<p>and 46.</p> <p>2.1.3 <u>Motivation 3</u>: “The Point of description argues that in light of the decisions of the General Synod 2015, the matter of women in the particular offices, in light of CO, art 85, is a non-essential matter”.</p> <p>2.1.3.1 CO, art 85 arranges inter alia “unity and diversity in ecumenics” (Spoelstra 1989:466). This article deals with the way of ecumenical relations between churches and international churches. The Point of description correctly points out that the churches cannot indefinitely tolerate differences in essential matters. The intention of CO, art 85 is, however not to determine whether a certain matter is essential or non-essential.</p> <p><b>Decision: Points 2.1.1 to 2.1.3.1 approved.</b></p>
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