23.12 ADVIESVRAAG – STREEKSINODE PRETORIA OOR UITSAAI-EREDIENSTE (Art 153)

23.12 QUESTION OF ADVICE – REGIONAL SYNOD PRETORIA ABOUT BROADCASTING OF PUBLIC WORSHIP (Art 153)

A. Ds JAG Henning stel die Adviesvraag.
Rev. JAG Henning tables the Advisory question.
B. Dr D Lartz neem as voorsitter waar.
Dr D Lartz officiates as chairman.
C. Die Adviesvraag word staande die Sinode afgehandel.
The Advisory question is concluded while the Synod is in session.
D. **Besluit:** Versoek tot advies word verwys na Studiedeputate om die Sinode in die lig van die probleemstelling in die Adviesvraag, te adviseer.
Decision: Request for advice is referred to Study Deputies to advise the Synod in light of the problem statement in the Advisory question.

E. **ADVIESVRAAG / ADVISORY QUESTION**

Agtergrond Klassis Pretoria Moot het 'n adviesvraag rakende die uitsaai van eredienste vanaf GK Oos-Moot ontvang (kyk Bylae A). Hierdie vraag is na Studiedeputate verwys, wat met 'n Meerderheids- en Minderheidsrapport na die Klassis teruggekom het. Klassis Pretoria Moot het hierdie Rapporte na die Streeksinode verwys vir advies, waarna die Streeksinode die volgende besluit neem: *"Die Rapport word verwys na die Algemene Sinode vir advies aangesien dit moontlik alle kerke betrek."* Hiermee dan die Meerderheids- en Minderheidsrapporte vir advies aan die Algemene Sinode.	**Background** Classis Pretoria Moot received a question of advice regarding the broadcasting of worship services from GK Oos-Moot. This question was referred to Study Deputies, who came back to the Classis with a Majority and Minority Report. Classis Pretoria Moot referred these Reports to the Regional Synod for advice, after which the Regional Synod made the following decision: *"The Report from the Classis is to be sent to the General Synod for advice seeing as it likely has bearing on all churches in our fellowship*." Herewith then the Majority and Minority Reports for advice to the General Synod.
Rapport Studiedeputate oor Adviesvraag GK Oos-Moot oor uitsaai-eredienste	**Report Study Deputies re advice needed by GK Oos-Moot about broadcasting of public worship**
1. Opdrag Die opdrag volgens die Notule van Klassis Die Moot 12 Oktober 2021 is soos volg: *"Die voorsitter stel die punt aan die Klassis vir bespreking en na bespreking is besluit dat Studiedeputate aangewys word om 'n in diepte studie van die Besprekingspunt te doen en terug te rapporteer aan die volgende Klassis, wat DV te GK Pretoria sal plaasvind."* *Die Studiedeputate wat aangewys is, is*	**1. Mandate** According to Acts of Classis Die Moot 12 October 2021 the mandate is: "*The chairman tabled the point of advice and after discussion deputies for study were appointed to do an in-depth study on the subject and report back to the next classis, which will take place God willing at the Reformed Church Pretoria*." *Study deputies appointed by the Classis*

Ds JAG Henning (s), dr C Botha, oudl MA Buys, oudl JJ le Roux, ds BC Smit, ds AJ Dednam, oudl J Meijer, oudl SKB Godschalk en broeders van die VGK" (laasgenoemde in 'n advies-hoedanigheid.)	*are: Rev JAG Henning (c), dr C Botha, elders MA Buys, JJ le Roux, Rev BC Smit, Rev AJ Dednam, elders J Meijer, SKB Godschalk and brothers from Free Reformed Churches in advisory capacity*.
2. Uitvoering	**2. Execution**
2.1 Na bespreking tydens die eerste vergadering van die Deputate op 13 Januarie 2022, is besluit om die Deputate in twee subgroepe te verdeel om die studie te vergemaklik, naamlik Subkommissie A wat studie sou doen oor die wese van die erediens en Subkommissie B wat sou studie doen oor die beginsels vir hantering van God se gebod in buitengewone omstandighede.	2.1 After discussion at the first meeting of the Deputies on 13 January 2022, it was decided to split the Deputies in two groups to facilitate the work, namely sub-commission A to study the nature of public worship and sub-commission B to do study on the principles for using God Law in unusual circumstances.
2.2 Hierdie Kommissies het afsonderlik en gesamentlik vergader en gerapporteer by verskillende geleenthede. Daar is eksegeties en deur bronnestudie deeglike navorsing gedoen oor verskillende aspekte aangaande die erediens en oor kompromie as antwoord op 'n botsing van pligte.	2.2 The sub-commissions held both separate and joint meetings and reported on their findings. Exegetical and reliable source studies were done on different aspects of public worship and on compromise as an answer to a conflict of interest.
2.3 Oor baie sake kon die Deputate met mekaar saamstem, maar oor die wesentlike vraag of 'n uitsaaidiens 'n erediens is, kon geen ooreenstemming bereik word nie en daarom hou die Deputate hierin 'n Meerderheids- en Minderheidsrapport aan die vergadering voor.	2.3 The Deputies could agree with each other on nearly every point, but on the fundamental question namely if a broadcasted service qualify as worship, we could not agree and thus the Deputies present a Majority and Minority Report to the Classis.
3. Rapport 1 – Meerderheidsrapport Di JAG Henning, AJ Dednam, BC Smit, Oudle MA Buys en JJ le Roux	**3. Report 1 – Majority Report** Revs JAG Henning, AJ Dednam, BC Smit and elders MA Buys and JJ le Roux
3.1 *Die wese van erediens* God se Woord maak duidelik dat samekomste van gelowiges om God aan te roep plaasvind sedert Genesis 4:26.	3.1 *The essence of worship* It is evident from the Bible that the meeting of believers to call on God's name happened since Gen. 4:26.
3.1.1 <u>Die Ou Bedeling</u> Hierdie samekomste het aanvanklik plaasgevind rondom 'n altaar (Abraham wat van plek tot plek deur Kanaän trek en telkens altare oprig waar God verbondsmatig aanbid is). Die aanbidding word in die Pentateug geformaliseer met voorskrifte vir offerdiens in die tabernakel en dit word later voortgesit in die tempel. Die moontlikheid vir deelname aan	3.1.1 <u>The Old Covenant</u> Meetings initially took place round an altar. (ex. Abraham moving from one place to the next in Canaan and erecting altars where they worshipped God covenantaly.) This worship is formalized in die Pentateuch with laws about the sacrifices in the tabernacle. These laws continued in the service in temple. Participating in the sacrificial

hierdie gesamentlike aanbidding is soms verhinder weens onreinheid, siekte en oordele uit die hand van die HERE, (dink maar aan die sewentig jaar van ballingskap), maar selfs in tyd van aanvegting bly die opdrag van die HERE aan die volk om saam te kom en 'n vasdag te vier (Joël 1:14).

worship would sometimes be impossible because of impurity, illness, and judgements by the Lord (ex. the seventy years of exile). Even in times of affliction the command of the Lord still was to gather and sanctify a fast. (Joel 1:14)

3.1.2 Die Nuwe Bedeling

Samekomste van gelowiges o.a. ter wille van aanbidding is na die uitstorting van die Heilige Gees op Pinkster onderhou. (Hand 2:42)

Reeds voor Pinkster gee Jesus in Matt 18:20, binne die konteks van onderlinge toesig en verbondenheid van gelowiges aan mekaar, die versekering van sy teenwoordigheid waar twee of drie gelowiges in sy Naam vergader is. Die konteks maak duidelik dat vergader in sy Naam hier gaan oor:

(1) gesamentlike optrede
(2) beoordeling van die naaste sy dade en
(3) die aanbidding van gelowiges.

Die kernteks oor die vraagstuk is egter Hebreërs 10:25.

Hebreërs 10 staan binne die konteks van Heb 8-10 wat handel oor die voortreflikheid van die Nuwe Verbond teenoor die Oue. In die perikoop Heb 10:19–25 word die bloed van Jesus aangewys as die nuwe en lewende weg waardeur gelowiges in die heilige teenwoordigheid van God kom. Op grond van hierdie nuwe lewende weg word daar dan in vers 22-24 drie opdragte gegee, naamlik

- om toe te tree op hierdie weg (vers 22)
- om die belydenis onwankelbaar vas te hou (vers 23)
- en om op mekaar ag te gee, deur nie die onderlinge samekomste te versuim nie (vers 24).

Hierdie opdragte geskied op grond van die offer en die bloed van die Hoëpriester, Jesus Christus. Ons moet ons aan God verbind (in gebed) en aan die belydenis vashou; en ons moet mekaar aanspoor en mekaar vermaan tot die onderlinge

3.1.2 The New Covenant

The assembling of believers for worship is continued after Pentecost. (Acts 2:42).

Even before Pentecost (Matt 18:20) the Lord Jesus gave the assurance of His presence where two or three are gathered in his name. The context shows that gathering in his name generally implies:

(1) Joint action
(2) Judging each other's deeds
(3) And the communal worship of believers.

The most important verse on worship however we find in Hebrews 10:25.

Hebrews 10 stand in the context of Hebrews 8-10 about the excellence of the New Covenant surpassing that of the Old. In the pericope Heb 10:19-25 the blood of Jesus is confirmed as the new and living way whereby believers enter the presence of God. On the foundation of this new and living way into the holiest, three commands are given in verse 22-24:

- To draw near to God by this new way; (verse 22)
- To hold fast the profession of our faith (verse 23) and
- To consider one another, not forsaking the assembling together. (Verse 24)

These commands can be fulfilled only because of the blood of the High priest, Jesus Christ. Believers must unite themselves to God (by faithful prayer) and keep the profession of faith; we must consider one another to provoke unto love and to keep

samekomste.
Christus se offerbloed is daarom die grond vir die opdrag om saam te kom en mekaar te bemoedig en te vermaan.

3.1.3 Samevattend
Die Wese van die erediens vind ons dus in Christus. Hy is die Hoëpriester wat ons met sy bloed toegang gee tot God en ons versterk deur vashou aan die waarheid en wat ons as gelowiges aan mekaar verbind en op mekaar rig.

3.2 *Gevolgtrekking*
Erediens, of ontmoeting met God, vind plaas op grond van die offerbloed van Jesus Christus. Dis sy bloed wat ons tydens die ontmoeting

- bind aan God
- bind as gelowiges aan die gemeenskaplike belydenis,
- en ons ook as gelowiges aan mekaar bind in die onderlinge bemoediging en vermaning.

Daarom is dit die oortuiging van ondergetekendes dat

(1) enige ontmoeting van gelowiges in erediens, alleen moontlik is waar hulle liggaamlik teenwoordig is, om hierdie drie opdragte te kan nakom.
(2) die opdrag vir erediens nagekom word volgens ons belydenis in Sondag 38 Heidelbergse Kategismus, naamlik:
"*Eerstelik, dat die kerkdiens of die predikamp en die skole onderhou moet word en dat ek, veral op die sabbat, dit is op die rusdag, met die gemeente van God ywerig moet opkom om die Woord van God te hoor, die sakramente te gebruik, God die Here openlik aan te roep en aan die armes Christelike liefdegawes te bring; ten tweede, dat ek al die dae van my lewe van my bose werke moet rus, die Here deur sy Gees in my moet laat werk en so die ewige sabbat in hierdie lewe moet begin*."

assembling together.
Christ's blood therefore is the ground and foundation for this charge to gather and to encourage and admonish each other.

3.1.3 Summarised
The essence of worship is found only in Christ. He is our High priest giving access to God and strengthening us by keeping the truth and joining us as believers to one another.

3.2 *Conclusion*
Worship, or meeting with God, happens by the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ. His blood, during the worship

- Binds us to God
- Binds us to our common profession

- And binds us as believers in a unity by comforting and exhorting each other.

It is therefore the certitude of the undersigned that:

(1) The gathering of believers in worship service is possible only where they are corporally or bodily present to perform the three functions of Heb. 10: 22-24.
(2) The command to worship is executed according to our profession in Lords Day 38 of the Heidelberg Catechism:
"*First, that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained; and that I, especially on the Sabbath, that is, on the day of rest, diligently frequent the church of God to hear His word, to use the sacraments and publicly to call upon the Lord, and contribute to the relief of the poor, as becomes a Christian. Secondly, that all the days of my life I cease from my evil works and yield myself to the Lord. To work by His Holy Spirit in me; and thus, begin in this life the eternal Sabbath*."

3.3 *In praktyk*	3.3 *In Practice*
3.3.1 Kan buitengewone omstandighede van oorlog, ramp en pes (Openb 6: 8) dit vir gelowiges onmoontlik maak om saam te kom in erediens? Ja, dit kan gebeur dat God dit vir 'n tyd beskik dat samekomste van sy volk onmoontlik is. Dit is egter altyd tydelik (selfs al is dit 'n oordeelstyd van 70 jaar in ballingskap) en word deur sy beskikking weer opgehef. Selfs in daardie tye moet dit gelowiges se begeerte en onblusbare ywer bly om so spoedig moontlik weer met die liggaam van Christus te vergader.	3.3.1 Can the unusual circumstance of war, calamity, and pest (Rev 6:8) make it impossible for believers to gather in a worship service? Yes, God may will lit for some time that no worship services by his people is possible. This will however always be only temporary (The 70 years of exile) and in His time He will restore the worship. Even in times like these, it must be believers desire en fervour to again gather with the body of Christ as soon as possible.
3.3.2 Kan uitsaaidienste in sulke tye erediens vervang? Nee, uitsaaidienste is 'n kompromis wat soos baie ander kompromieë wel kan dien as hulpmiddel om die Woord uit te dra en gelowiges op so wyse te bemoedig en te ondersteun, maar sonder fisiese samekomste is uitsaaidienste (deur middel van klank of deur beeld en klank) steeds geen erediens nie. Enige kompromie is tydelik van aard en kan nie die wese van die erediens verander nie.	3.3.2 Can broadcast services (ex. via internet) replace public worship services in times like these? No, services that are broadcasted is a compromise and like all compromises it may serve as an aid in the encouraging and admonishing of believers by the Scriptures. Without physical presence broadcasted services (weather in sound or image) is not public worship. Any compromise must always be temporary and it may never change the essence of worship.
3.3.3 Wat van gelowiges wat hulleself in verstrooiing bevind, sommiges te midde van die heidendom en ander ingeperk vanweë siekte of ouderdom? Het hulle deel aan die erediens deur middel van inskakeldienste? Nee, omdat daar geen fisiese teenwoordigheid is, kan dit geen erediens wees nie en die afwesige luisteraar kan nie aanspraak maak op daadwerklike deelname aan die erediens nie. Gelowiges in verstrooiing moet daarom opgeroep word om, soos dit deur die eeue die geval was met die kerk, hulle waar enigsins moontlik, kragtens NGB, art 28 te voeg by medegelowiges in hulle omgewing en so te kom tot kerkstigting in hierdie wêreld en nie te steun op enige kompromie soos inskakel by 'n uitsaaidiens nie.	3.3.3 What about believers in exile living among a heathen society, or confined by illness or old age? Can they be part of public worship by joining on an internet broadcast? No, because there is no physical presence, they cannot be part of worship and believers that are absent cannot claim to have been part of the worship because they joined by internet. Believers in exile must therefore be called upon to join and unite themselves with the true church and seek out other believers where no church is yet instituted, according to Article 28 of the Belgic Confession. Believers may not rely on the compromise of services that are broadcasted.
3.3.4 Hoe moet uitsaaidienste beoordeel word in die lig van die wese van	3.3.4 How must we evaluate broadcast services considering the essence of

erediens volgens die Skrif?
Belangrike elemente van die erediens bly onvermydelik in die slag met enige kompromie. Liturgiese momente soos eredienssang, die onderlinge toesig en vermaning, gee van liefdegawes en veral die bediening van sakramente, word wesentlik beïnvloed en verdwyn selfs met ‘n kompromie.

Gelowiges wat weens siekte en ouderdom verhinder is om fisies mee te doen aan eredienste, kan steeds vertroos en versterk word deur die Woord wat op baie wyses na hulle kom, ook al moet hulle die oorvloedige rykdom van aanbidding van God in die midde van sy gemeente ontbeer. Dit is immers God se beskikking oor hulle lewe.

Advies
Hierdie Deputate adviseur GK Oos-Moot daarom soos volg:
Deelname deur inskakeling op ‘n elektroniese uitsending van ‘n erediens, is nie daadwerklike deelname aan ‘n erediens nie.

Minderheidsrapport
Die beginsels vir die hantering van die gebod van die Here onder buitengewone omstandighede

1. Inleiding
Uitvoering en historiese verloop: Die Kommissie kon oor hierdie onderwerp, na vele vergaderings, nie eensgesindheid bereik nie. Hierdie verslag dien dan as ‘n Minderheidsverslag en sal slegs opsommend, en nie beredeneerd, die Kommissie se gevolgtrekkings deurgee.
Die Kommissie bestaande uit Dr C Botha, dr E van Alten, oudl S Godschalk en oudl J Meijer stel dus die volgende punte aan die orde:
- Wese van die erediens
- Beginsels vir die hantering van die gebooie onder buitengewone omstandighede

worship according to Scriptures?
Important elements of the public worship service are unavoidably missed when any compromise is made. Liturgical elements like the singing of the congregation, the considering of brothers and sisters and admonishment, the contributions to the relief of the poor, and especially partaking in the sacraments are influenced and even completely disappear with a compromise.

Believers unable to participate because of illness or old age, can and must still be comforted by the Word of God reaching them in multiple ways. This must be the mission of the church even if these souls cannot enjoy the riches of worship in the presence of God and the community of believers. This is Gods decree for their lives.

Advice
These Deputies advise the Reformed Church Oos-Moot as follow:
Joining a broadcast of a worship service on electronic media is not actual participating in worship.

Minority Report
The principles for upholding the Commandments of the Lord in extraordinary circumstances

1. Introduction
Execution and historical course: The Commission could not reach consensus after many meetings on this subject. In this Minority Report, the Commission's conclusions are merely summarized and not explained.

The Commission consisting of Dr C Botha, dr E van Alten, elders S Godschalk and J Meijer therefore raises the following points:
- Essence of the worship service
- Guidelines for dealing with the commandments under extraordinary

- Gevolgtrekking
- Aanbevelings

2. Wese van die erediens

Ons wil dit uit die staanspoor onomwonde stel dat ons geensins afbreuk wil doen aan die wese van die erediens, soos wat dit vanuit die Skrif en ons Belydenisskrifte vir ons aangereik word nie. Tussen diegene wat die Meerderheidsrapport geskryf het én onsself is daar op hierdie punt geen verskil van mening nie. Ons wil daarom ook maan om dít, wat in die res van hierdie Rapport oor buitengewone omstandighede gesê word, nie in ons verstaan van die erediens in te lees nie.

Ons wil in hierdie paragraaf eenvoudig naspreek wat die Skrif en ons belydenis oor die erediens sê. Omdat daar al soveel waardevolle dinge hieroor gesê is – in Sinodehandelinge, in die Adviesvraag van die GK Oos-Moot, asook in die verslag van Subkommissie A van hierdie Deputate – is ons van mening dat ‘n herhaling hiervan nie nodig is nie. Ons beperk onsself daarom tot twee eenvoudige gedeeltes – een uit die Skrif en een uit die Heidelbergse Kategismus – om daarmee ons visie op die erediens te begrond en weer te gee.

Handelinge 2:42: “En hulle het volhard in die leer van die apostels en in die gemeenskap en in die breking van die brood en in die gebede.” Vier elemente kom in hierdie Skrifgedeelte na vore, wat na ons mening konstituerend is vir die erediens:

1. die leer van die apostels, wat die sentrale belang van die prediking in die erediens beklemtoon
2. die gemeenskap (koinonia), wat die onderlinge samekoms en sorg tussen gelowiges vir ons uitwys
3. die breking van die brood, wat ‘n bevestiging is van die plek van die nagmaal (en per implikasie ook die doop) in die erediens en
4. die gebede.

Hierdie vier elemente word in breë trekke bevestig in Sondag 38 van die Heidelbergse Kategismus: “Ook moet ek veral op die rusdag ywerig met die

circumstances
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

2. The essence of the worship service

We want to state this unequivocally from the outset. This is because we will in no way detract from the essence of the worship service, as it is presented to us in the Scriptures and our Confessions. Among those who wrote most of the report, there is no difference of opinion on this point. We therefore also want to do this, which is referred to in the rest of this Report as exceptional circumstances. However, we intend to do this in the way we understand the worship service's reading.

In this paragraph, we simply want to repeat what the Scriptures and our confession say about the worship service. Because so many valuable things have already been said about this – in Synod proceedings, in the advisory question of the GK Oos-Moot, as well as in the Report of Sub-commission A of these Deputies – we are of the opinion that a repetition of this is not necessary. We therefore limit ourselves to two simple passages - one from Scripture and one from the Heidelberg Catechism - in order to ground and reflect our vision of the worship service.

Acts 2:42: "*And they persevered in the teaching of the apostles and in the fellowship and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers.*" Four elements emerge in this passage of Scripture, which in our opinion are constitutive of the worship service:

1. the teaching of the apostles, which emphasizes the central importance of preaching in the worship service;
2. the community (koinonia), which shows us the mutual gathering and care between believers;
3. the breaking of the bread, which is a confirmation of the place of the Lord's Supper (and by implication also baptism) in the worship service; and
4. prayers.

These four elements are broadly confirmed in Sunday 38 of the Heidelberg Catechism: "Also, especially on the day

gemeente van God saamkom (die ‘gemeenskap’ van Hand 2:42) om die Woord van God te hoor (‘die leer van die apostels’), die Sakramente te gebruik (‘die breking van die brood’), die Here openlik aan te roep (‘die gebede’) en die Christelike liefdegawes te gee (‘n konkretisering van ‘die gemeenskap’).

In hierdie twee gedeeltes, met die daarby behorende vier elemente, word die wese van die erediens beskryf. Ons wys hier egter nog op twee dinge:

2.1 Die HK se beskrywing van die erediens in Sondag 38 vorm ‘n onderdeel van die behandeling van die Vierde Gebod van die Here se wet. Dit is belangrik om dit in gedagte te hou, aangesien die hantering van die Here se gebooie later in hierdie Rapport weer aan die orde gestel sal word.

2.2 Die vier elemente van die erediens moet wys en oordeelkundig hanteer word. Die belang hiervan word duidelik wanneer in ag geneem word dat een van die elemente, nl. die Sakramente, nie in elke erediens aanwesig is nie. Niemand sal wil beweer dat ‘n erediens waarin geen Sakramente bedien word nie, nie meer ‘n erediens is nie. Dit wys op die noodsaak vir nuanse wanneer ons hierdie elemente gebruik.

3. Beginsels vir die hantering van die Gebooie onder buitengewone omstandighede

Die vraag ontstaan of bogenoemde perspektief op die wese van die erediens die enigste perspektief is op die hantering van die spesifieke Adviesvraag. Ons Kommissie is van mening dat daar ander bykomende perspektiewe ook oorweeg behoort te word, insluitende die botsing van pligte en ander omstandighede waarin dit onmoontlik is om – in hierdie geval – die Vierde Gebod volkome na te kom.

3.1 *Botsing van pligte*

Dit is in ‘n gebroke en gevalle wêreld onafwendbaar dat daar van tyd tot tyd situasies opduik wat buite die beheer van die mens is. Die beste, hoewel ook maar gebrekkige wyse waarop hierdie buitengewone omstandighede beantwoord kan word, is om vanuit die

of rest, I must gather diligently with the congregation of God (the 'community' of Acts 2:42) to hear the Word of God ('the teaching of the apostles'), to use the Sacraments ('the breaking of the bread'), to call upon the Lord openly ('the prayers') and to give the Christian gifts of love (a concretization of 'the community').

In these two sections, with the associated four elements, the essence of the worship service is described. However, we would like to point out two things here:

2.1 The HC's description of the worship service on Sunday 38 forms part of the treatment of the Fourth Commandment of the Lord's law. It is imperative to keep this in mind, as dealing with the Lord's Commandments will be brought up again later in this Report.

2.2 The four elements of the worship service must be handled wisely and judiciously. The importance of this becomes clear when considering that one of the elements, viz. the Sacraments, are not present in every worship service. No one would want to claim that a worship service in which no Sacraments are served is no longer a worship service. This points to the need for nuance when applying these elements

3. Principles for dealing with the Commandments in extraordinary circumstances

The question arises whether the above perspective on the essence of the worship service is the only perspective on handling the specific advice question. Our Commission is of the opinion that other additional perspectives should also be considered, including the conflict of duties and other circumstances in which it is impossible to – in this case - completely fulfil the fourth commandment.

3.1 *Conflict of duties*

It is inevitable in a broken and fallen world that situations arise from time to time that are beyond the control of man. The most practical, albeit flawed, way in which these extraordinary circumstances can be answered is to follow a biblical approach from an

etiese ‘n Bybelse benadering te volg. Die vraag is: Hoe hanteer die Bybel buitengewone omstandig-hede en wat kan ons by ons Verlosser Jesus leer aangaande die hantering van sulke situasies?	ethical point of view. The question is: How does the Bible deal with extraordinary circumstances and what can we learn from our Saviour Jesus regarding dealing with such situations?
Een manier waarop die Bybel buitengewone omstandighede benader, is wat in die etiek bekend staan as ‘n “botsing van pligte”. Wat hieronder verstaan moet word, blyk uit De Bruyn (1998:10) se beskrywing: “onder ‘n botsing van pligte word verstaan dat ‘n mens, as gevolg van die gebrokenheid van die menslike lewe vanweë die sonde, in ‘n situasie kan beland waarin gehoorsaamheid aan die een gebod van God kan lei tot die ongehoorsaamheid of dan die oënskynlike oortreding van ‘n ander gebod.” Daar is heelwat voorbeelde in die Bybel hiervan soos byvoorbeeld die noodleuen. Selfs in die optrede van Jesus, wat nooit die gebooie oortree het nie, sien ons dat daar by sekere situasies ‘n uitsondering gemaak word. Dink hier aan die vierde gebod en die kalf in die put (vgl Luk 14: 5), of waar Hy en sy dissipels deur die Fariseërs veroordeel is omdat hulle op die Sabbat kos bymekaar gemaak en geëet het (Matt 12:1-8).	One way in which the Bible approaches extraordinary circumstances is what is known in ethics as a "conflict of duties". What must be understood below is evident from De Bruyn's (1998:10) description: "under a conflict of duties it is understood that a person, as a result of the brokenness of human life due to sin, can end up in a situation in which obedience to one commandment of God can lead to disobedience or the apparent violation of another commandment." There are many examples of this in the Bible, such as the emergency lie. Even in the actions of Jesus, who never broke the Commandments, we see that an exception is made in certain situations. Think here of the Fourth Commandment and the calf in the well (cf. Luk 14: 5), or where He and his disciples were condemned by the Pharisees because they gathered and ate food on the Sabbath (Matt 12:1-8).
Indien die mens dan in ‘n situasie beland waar daar ‘n oënskynlike botsing van pligte voorkom, moet, volgens Buys (1976a:8-10, 1989:44–45), sekere beginsels en oorwegings in gedagte gehou word, naamlik: die gewetensbeginsel, die onderskeid tussen beginsel en norm, die liefdesbeginsel, die gesindheid van die hart en die verlossing deur Jesus Christus. Indien die noodleuen hier van toepassing sou wees, is dit vanuit die bogenoemde duidelik dat as ‘n noodleuen vertel word volgens die riglyne soos genoem, dat in die sondige, gebroke wêreld waarin die mens woon dit soms gedoen kan word en ander kere gedoen moet word (de Bruyn).	Consequently, if the individual finds themselves in a situation where there is an apparent conflict of duties, Buys (1976a:8-10, 1989:44-45) identifies several principles and considerations that must be kept in mind, namely: the principle of conscience, the distinction between principle and norm, the principle of love, the attitude of the heart, and salvation through Jesus Christ. If the emergency lie were to apply here, it is clear from the above that if an emergency lie is told according to the guidelines as mentioned, that in the sinful, broken world in which man lives it can sometimes be done and other times it must be done (de Bruyn).
Met dit in gedagte het die Kommissie besin oor wat die regte optrede sou wees wanneer ons gekonfronteer word met ‘n oënskynlike “botsing van pligte”.	With this in mind, the Commission reflected on what the right course of action would be when faced with an apparent "conflict of duties". Within this,

Hierin hou Calvyn, wat oor die Christelike vryheid praat, sekere bepalings voor vir die regte optrede binne die konflik-situasie van ‘n oënskynlike botsing van pligte. Hier word drie oorwegings in kort voorgestel:

1. Die gewete van die gelowige wat regverdiging in God vind, is bo regverdiging deur die wet verhewe en soek daarom geen regverdiging in wetsonderhouding nie.
2. Die gewete van die gelowige is van die juk van die wet bevry en gehoorsaam aan God se hele geopenbaarde wil.
3. Dat middelmatige dinge wat nie deur God verbied is nie, gebruik en nagelaat mag word, in verantwoordelikheid.

Hier is dit duidelik: die wet is die normatiewe agenda van gelowiges en die innerlike beginsel van die wet is liefde waardeur die geloof werksaam is. Net soos Calvyn se drie oorwegings rakende die regte optrede by ‘n botsing van pligte, stel Geesink drie stappe voor wat inhou dat die mens uit liefde vir God bereid moet wees om, wanneer dit jou plig is, jouself vir jou naaste op te offer. Die gewete kan sekerlik dwaal, maar wie na sy beste wete gehandel het om die liefde tot God toe te pas, mag homself voor God reken as geregverdig.

Tweedens en in ag genome die hermeneutiese aspekte soos voorgehou het die Kommissie gefokus op Skrifgedeeltes waar dit sou blyk asof daar ‘n botsing van pligte voorkom. Levitikus 13 het eerste aan die orde gekom omrede dit teen die agtergrond van (1) isolasie en (2) siekte afspeel. Die Kommissie was deurentyd bewus daarvan dat die teksgedeelte nie presies dieselfde situasie voorhou as die uitdagings wat ons tydens die pandemie beleef het nie maar dat daar tog beginsels, norme en ooreenkomste is wat toonaangewend is. Vanuit hierdie Skrifgedeelte kon die volgende gevolgtrekkings gemaak word:

1. Die Vierde Gebod roep die volk op om saam met mekaar en in die

Calvin, who speaks of Christian freedom, provides a few guidelines for how to act in the conflict situation of an apparent conflict of duties. Here are three considerations in brief:

1. The conscience of the believer who finds justification in God is elevated above justification by the law and therefore seeks no justification in law-keeping.
2. The conscience of the believer is freed from the yoke of the law and obeys God's entire revealed will.
3. That mediocre things not forbidden by God may be used and neglected, in responsibility.

Here it is clear: the law is the normative agenda of believers and the inner principle of the law is love through which faith works. Just like Calvin's three considerations regarding the right course of action in the event of a conflict of duties, Geesink proposes three steps which mean that out of love for God, man must be prepared to, when it is his duty, sacrifice himself for his neighbour. The conscience can certainly err, but whoever has acted to the extent of his knowledge to apply the love of God, may count himself before God as justified.

Secondly and taking into account the hermeneutic aspects as presented, the Commission focused on passages of Scripture where it would appear as if there was a conflict of duties. Leviticus 13 came up first because it takes place against the background of (1) isolation and (2) illness. The commission was well aware that the text section does not present exactly the same situation as the challenges we experienced during the pandemic. However, there are a number of principles, norms and agreements that lead the way. From this scripture the following conclusions could be drawn:

1. The Fourth Commandment calls the people to take part in worship

teenwoordigheid van God deel te hê aan die erediens – Skrifbeginsel in Lev 23
2. Die Sesde Gebod eis van die mens om nie die lewe van ‘n ander in gevaar te stel nie.
3. Hier het die nakoming van een gebod (sesde) veroorsaak dat ‘n ander gebod (vierde) tydelik nie nagekom kon word nie – oënskynlike botsing van plig.

Die tweede gedeelte waaroor besin is, is die van Ragab in Josua 2. In hierdie gedeelte vind ons egter nie ‘n buitengewone omstandigheid soos in Levitikus 13 nie, maar eerder die “noodleuen” om die lewe van God se verkenners te beskerm. Deur hierdie handeling van Ragab wat ook strydig is met die wet word sy immers beloon. Die botsing van pligte word daarin gesien dat sy lieg en nie onderdanig aan die owerheid is nie, om sodoende uiting te gee aan die liefdesgebod.

Die laaste gedeelte waaroor die Kommissie besin het en wat veral toonaangewend is, is Jesus se handelinge met die Fariseërs in Matteus 12 ten opsigte van veral die Vierde Gebod. Vanuit hierdie veertien verse blyk dit duidelik die Here Jesus se siening te wees dat om op die Sabbat te eet en voedsel voor te berei noodsaaklike handelinge is. Daar hou Jesus Homself voor as die “Een wat groter is as die tempel” (:6) wat ‘n begeerte het na “barmhartigheid en nie offerande nie” (:7). In sy verdediging, naamlik om siek mense gesond te maak op die Sabbat, wat destyds as ‘n werk beskou is, bring Christus die norm van die Sesde Gebod aan die orde en verwys daarna as ‘n handeling van barmhartigheid wat veral gepas is op die Sabbatdag (:9-14). Hier moet die vraag gevra word: Het Jesus die Vierde Gebod oortree terwyl hy tog kontra die verordeninge opgetree het, soos wat tereg deur die Fariseërs uitgewys word? Nee, Hy het nie, trouens Hy het nooit enige vorm van sonde gedoen nie. Hierdie word verklaar vanuit ‘n oënskynlike botsing van pligte wat deur die kompromie vanuit Jesus se menslike en Goddelike

together with each other and in the presence of God – Scriptural principle in Lev 23
2. The Sixth commandment requires man not to endanger the life of another.
3. Here the fulfilment of one commandment (sixth) caused that another commandment (fourth) could not be fulfilled temporarily - apparent conflict of duty.

The second passage that was reflected on was that of Rahab in Joshua 2. In this passage, however, we do not find an extraordinary circumstance as in Leviticus 13, but rather the "emergency lie" to protect the life of God's scouts. Through this action of Rahab, which is also contrary to the law, she is rewarded after all. In order to express her love, she lies and refuses to submit to the authorities, showing a conflict of duties.

The last part that the commission reflected on and which is particularly prominent, is Jesus' dealings with the Pharisees in Matthew 12 regarding the fourth commandment in particular. From these fourteen verses it appears clearly to be the Lord Jesus' view that eating and preparing food on the Sabbath are necessary actions. There Jesus presents Himself as the "One who is greater than the temple" (:6) who has a desire for "mercy and not sacrifice" (:7). In his defence, namely healing sick people on the Sabbath, which at the time was considered a work, Christ brings up the norm of the Sixth Commandment and refers to it as an act of mercy that is especially appropriate on the Sabbath day (:9-14). Here the question must be asked: Did Jesus violate the Fourth Commandment while he acted contrary to the ordinances, as is rightly pointed out by the Pharisees? No, He did not, in fact He never committed any form of sin. The apparent conflict of duties was resolved through a compromise of Jesus' human and divine nature. This would be evident in Jesus, who did not disregard a command from God. He referred to the calf that must be taken

natuur benader was. Dit sou veral ook gesien word in Jesus wat nie ‘n opdrag van God verontagsaam deur te verwys na die kalf wat uit die put gehaal moet word as dit op die Sabbat daarin sou beland nie.	out of the well if it ends up in it on the Sabbath.
3.2 *Die kompromie* Dus blyk dit vir hierdie Kommissie dat ‘n oënskynlike botsing van pligte beantwoord moet word met ‘n ander etiese handeling naamlik ‘n kompromie. Volgens Ridderbos moet daar egter teen gewaak word dat die ongewone nie die gewone vervang nie. Die norm mag dus nie die beginsel word nie en sou altyd tydelik van aard wees. Ridderbos wys ons ook daarop dat ‘n kompromie dus te doen het met die botsing van pligte en alleen in die kompromie word die beste oplossing vir die betrokke situasie gevind (Ridderbos 1955:8-10). Douma se definisie van ‘n kompromie is hier ook van belang. In sy hantering van die kompromie, wat voorafgegaan word deur ‘n verduideliking van botsing van pligte, bespreek hy eers die vraag of daar werklik ’n botsing van pligte (collisio officiorum) bestaan. Hierop antwoord hy instemmend as dit slegs beteken eise/verpligtinge wat mense mekaar oplê (Douma 1983:127). God kan ’n mens nie teenstrydige pligte oplê nie omdat die uitlewing van elke gebod nooit ‘n absolute is nie, maar verskil van situasie tot situasie (Douma 1983:127). Vervolgens wys Douma (1983:136) daarop dat die mens nie altyd die gebod tot gelding kan bring nie. Dit gebeur nie omdat hy/sy ongehoorsaam is nie, maar omdat ander mense die realisering hiervan belemmer. Dit is wanneer die kompromie ter sprake kom (Douma 1983:136). In hierdie gebroke lewe is die kompromie onvermydelik. Vir Douma het die kompromie die volgende kenmerke: • Daar moet sprake van konflik wees. • ‘n Kompromie moet minder skade aanrig as wat andersins teweeggebring sou word. • ‘n Mens se houding moet die lankmoedigheid van God weerspieël.	3.2 *The compromise* So it appears to this Commission that an apparent conflict of duties must be answered with another ethical act, namely a compromise. According to Ridderbos, however, it must be ensured that the unusual does not replace the ordinary. This means the norm may not become the principle and is always temporary in nature. Furthermore, Ridderbos points out that a compromise has to do with the clash of duties, and that only a compromise can provide the best solution to the problem (Ridderbos 1955: 8-10). Douma's definition of compromise is also significant here. In his treatment of the compromise, which is preceded by an explanation of conflict of duties, he first discusses the question of whether there really is a conflict of duties (collisio officiorum). To this he answers in the affirmative if it only means demands/obligations that people impose on each other (Douma 1983:127). God cannot impose contradictory duties on a person because the fulfilment of each commandment is never absolute, but differs from situation to situation (Douma 1983:127). Next, Douma (1983:136) points out that man cannot always enforce the commandments. It is not a matter of disobedience, but of other people hindering that realization. This is when the compromise comes into play (Douma 1983:136). Compromise is inevitable in this broken world. For Douma, the compromise has the following characteristics: • There must be talk of conflict. • A compromise must cause less harm than would otherwise be caused. • One's attitude must reflect the long-suffering of God.

• ‘n Kompromie gaan met lyding gepaard. Die feit dat ‘n mens in ‘n kompromie met minder tevrede moet wees as wat op grond van God se gebod verwag kan word, beteken nie niks nie, maar iets. In die aangaan van die kompromie mag twee grense nie oortree word nie: 1) ’n mens se geloof mag nie bedreig word nie, en 2) daar mag nie ‘n ‘aanslag’ op die lewe van jou naaste wees nie. Douma sluit sy bespreking af deur daarop te wys dat ‘n mens nie sonder voorbehoud kan sê dat die kompromie iemand skuldig stel nie. Hy reken dat tussen dit wat nadelig is en dit wat sondig is, onderskei moet word. Natuurlik impliseer die kompromie nadeel. Die mens is immers met minder tevrede as wat die gebod van hom/haar eis. Die mens is mede-aandadig aan die toestand in die wêreld .	• A compromise comes with suffering. The fact that in a compromise one must be satisfied with less than what can be expected based on God's commandments does not mean nothing, but something. In entering into compromise, two boundaries must not be violated: 1) one's faith must not be threatened, and 2) there must not be an 'attack' on the life of your neighbour. Douma concludes his discussion by pointing out that one cannot say without reservation that the compromise incriminates someone. He argues that a distinction must be made between what is harmful and what is sinful. Of course, compromise implies disadvantage. After all, man is satisfied with less than what the commandment demands of him/her. Man is complicit in the state of the world.
3.3 *Onmoontlike nakoming van ‘n gebod (sonder die aanwesigheid van ‘n “botsing van pligte”)* Daar is ook ander situasies waar die nakoming van ‘n gebod nie moontlik is nie, hoewel dit nie aan ‘n botsing van pligte gekoppel kan word nie. Dis wanneer omstandighede dit eenvoudig onmoontlik maak om ‘n duidelike gebod of opdrag van die Here na te kom. Binne die konteks van die Adviesvraag met betrekking tot die erediens word daar besin oor situasies waar gelowiges deur omstandighede verhoed word om ‘n erediens fisies by te woon. Voorbeelde hiervan is siekte, ouderdom of fisiese afwesigheid (bv. Werk in ‘n omgewing waar daar geen erediens beskikbaar is nie). Met tegnologie wat ook onder die Here se bestiering ontwikkel is, is dit tans vir gelowiges wat onder sulke omstandighede verkeer wel moontlik om na ‘n uitsending van die erediens te luister/kyk. Ons praat hier van individuele gelowiges wat nie ‘n erediens fisies kan bywoon nie, terwyl die res van die gemeente dit wel kan bywoon. Die vraag moet dan gevra word of ‘n uitsaaidiens waarna so ‘n gelowige onder sulke omstandighede	3.3 *Impossible fulfilment of a Commandment (without the presence of a "conflict of duties")* There are also other situations where the fulfilment of a Commandment is not possible, although this cannot be linked to a conflict of duties. That's when circumstances make it nearly impossible to fulfil a clear Commandment or instruction from the Lord. Within the context of the advice question regarding the worship service, situations where believers are prevented by circumstances from physically attending a worship service are considered. Examples of this are illness, old age or physical absence (e.g. working in an environment where there is no worship service available). With technology that was also developed under the Lord's guidance, it is currently possible for believers who are in such circumstances to listen to/watch a broadcast of the worship service. We are talking here about individual believers who cannot physically attend a worship service, while the rest of the congregation can. The question must then be asked whether a broadcast service that such a believer listens to/watches under such

inluister/kyk vir daardie gelowige ‘n erediens is. Die Kommissie is van mening dat dit wel die geval is.

Mens kan die vraag vra of die erkenning van ‘n uitsaaidiens as erediens vir so ‘n gelowige onder sulke omstandighede die beskouing oor erediens dan nie subjektief maak nie. Dit is so, maar daar is goeie voorbeelde waar Jesus self die klem lê op die hartsgesindheid eerder as die letterlike nakoming van ‘n gebod (bv Matt 9:14-15; 12:2-8; ook Sag 7:3-6).

Waar ‘n gelowige dus deur omstandighede verhinder word om ‘n erediens fisies by te woon, geld sy/haar inluister/kyk na ‘n uitsaaidiens ook as bywoning van daardie erediens deur daardie gelowige – hoewel daardie gelowige noodwendig minder moet aanvaar as wat op grond van God se gebod nagestreef mag en moet word (Douma 1999:302 se definisie van ‘n kompromie).

By die toepassing van hierdie benadering word daar natuurlik groot staat gemaak op die gewete van die betrokke gelowige, maar ook op die oordeel van die kerkraad. Want elkeen van sulke situasies in ‘n gemeente sal ook deur die Kerkraad beoordeel moet word of dit werklik ‘n geldige rede is om nie die erediens fisies by te woon nie. Hierdie beoordeling is onderhewig aan ‘n suiwer gewete van die betrokke lidmaat.

4. Gevolgtrekking

Die mens kom in buitengewone situasies met die gepaardgaande oënskynlike botsing van pligte slegs vanweë die sonde en die gebrokenheid van die mens. God se wet bly volmaak maar vanweë die sonde en gebrokenheid moet daar soms en met uitsondering van ‘n kompromie-handeling gebruik maak om die beste van twee keuses uit te oefen. Met dit in ag genome moet in gedagte gehou word dat nie alle nood noodwendig ‘n kompromie regverdig nie, en dat ‘n kompromie nooit ‘n konteks daarstel waarin liefde en geregtigheid afwesig is nie. Derhalwe het ‘n kompromie altyd ‘n

circumstances is a worship service for that believer. The commission is of the opinion that this is indeed the case.

One can ask the question whether the recognition of a broadcasting service as a worship service for such a believer under such circumstances does not make the view on the worship service subjective. It is so, but there are good examples where Jesus himself emphasizes the attitude of the heart rather than the literal observance of a commandment (e.g. Matt 9: 14-15; 12: 2-8; also Zach 7: 3-6).

By definition, if circumstances prevent a person from attending a worship service physically, his or her listening to/watching a broadcast of that worship service counts as their attendance at that worship service - although that person must accept less than what is based on God's mandate and must be pursued (Duma 1999:302).

When applying this approach, significant reliance is naturally placed on the conscience of the believer concerned, but also on the judgment of the church council. Because each of these situations in a congregation will also have to be assessed by the church council. This is because it constitutes a valid reason not to physically attend the worship service. This assessment is subject to a clear conscience of the member concerned.

4. Conclusion

Only because of man's sin and brokenness does he find himself in extraordinary situations with the accompanying apparent conflict of duties. Although God's law remains flawless, due to sin and brokenness, a compromise act May occasionally and exceptionally be needed to achieve the best of two outcomes. With this in mind, it must be kept in mind that not every need necessarily justifies a compromise. This is because a compromise never establishes a context in which love and justice are absent. Therefore, a compromise always has a temporary character, which means that the context

tydelike karakter wat beteken dat die konteks die duur daarvan bepaal.	determines its duration.
Die Kommissie is ook terdeë bewus van konflik en spanning wat deur die hantering van ‘n botsing van pligte navore tree. Dus is die gesindheid en gees van Christus se lankmoedigheid van groot belang. Dwarsdeur die heilsgeskiedenis sien ons God se lankmoedigheid (geduld) aan die werk. So, byvoorbeeld, beantwoord God die hardheid van sy volk se harte met die lankmoedigheid van die skeibrief (Deut 24:1 en Matt 19:7-8).	The Commission is also well aware of the conflict and tension that arises when dealing with a conflict of duties. So the attitude and spirit of Christ's long-suffering is of the utmost importance. Throughout salvation history, we see God's patient longsuffering at work. So, for example, God answers the hardness of his people's hearts with the long-suffering of the divorce letter (Deut 24:1 and Matt 19:7-8).
In Christus sien ons die lankmoedigheid van God – en so kry die gebruik van die kompromie sy regmatige plek. Dit is óns sonde, óns gebrokenheid wat die gebruik van die kompromie in hierdie bedeling noodsaaklik maak. Maar dit is God se lankmoedigheid in Christus wat die gebruik van die kompromie moontlik maak. En wanneer ons (teen ons wil) tot ‘n kompromie gedwing word, word daar van ons gevra om dieselfde lankmoedigheid aan die dag te lê as wat ons by God in Christus teëkom – ‘n lankmoedigheid wat nie uit onsself kom nie, maar wat as ‘n vrug deur die Gees van Christus in ons gewerk word (sien Gal 5:22, Ef 4:2, Kol 3:12).	As a result of Christ's long-suffering, the use of compromise has its rightful place. It is our sin, our brokenness that makes the use of compromise in this dispensation necessary. But it is God's long-suffering in Christ that makes the use of compromise possible. And when we are forced (against our will) to compromise, we are asked to show the same long-suffering that we encounter with God in Christ - a long-suffering that does not come from ourselves, but that if a fruit is worked in us by the Spirit of Christ (see Gal 5:22, Eph 4:2, Col 3:12).
Dit beteken nooit dat ons met die kompromie vrede mag maak nie. Sodra ons nie meer aan die kompromie ly nie en met vergenoegdheid daarin berus, dan beantwoord ons nie meer aan die Skriftuurlike gebruik van die kompromie nie. Maar hierdie kwalifikasies hef nog nie die gebruik van die kompromie op nie.	It does not mean that we must ever be satisfied with compromise. As soon as compromise no longer bothers us and we are at peace with it, then we no longer follow the Scriptural intent of compromise. These qualifications, however, do not abolish the use of compromise.
Dus: In ‘n volmaakte wêreld sonder sonde met volmaakte mense en volmaakte menseverhoudings sou ‘n botsing van pligte onmoontlik wees. In ‘n gevalle wêreld met onvolmaakte mense en gebroke verhoudings is die afwesigheid van ‘n botsing van pligte ‘n onmoontlikheid. Gelowiges behoort, wanneer hulle met ‘n oënskynlike botsing van gebooie te make kry, mekaar nie in die eerste plek onder die gesag van die wet te ontmoet nie, maar by die voet van die kruis. Die wet – wat ons verplig is om te onderhou én waardeur ons skuldig voor God staan! –	Thus: In a perfect world, without sin, with perfect people and perfect human relationships a conflict of duties would not be possible, while in a broken world with imperfect people and relationships the absence of a conflict of duties is not possible. Believers should, when confronted with an apparent contradiction in commandments, not come together under the authority of the Law, but at the foot of the cross. The Law – we must keep and whereby we stand guilty before God! – guides us that way after all, since Paul calls the Law a disciplinarian toward Christ (Gal 3:24-

wys immers self daardie weg, want Paulus noem die wet ‘n tugmeester na Christus toe (Gal 3:24-25). Die wet – en ons worsteling om die wet na te kom wanneer meerdere gebooie oënskynlik met mekaar bots – dryf ons na Christus toe. Dit dryf die mens na ‘n Christosentriese handeling van verdraagsaamheid, van geduld soos ons dit van die Here self sien.

‘n Samekoms van die gemeente wat onder toesig van die Kerkraad staan en waarin die volle liturgie gevolg word, is ‘n erediens – ook as die gemeente nie fisies kan saamkom nie, maar deur middel van uitsending ingeskakel is mits:

- Dit deur buitengewone noodomstandighede genoodsaak word
- Dit die enigste of beste wyse is om onder sulke omstandighede erediens te hou

Sulke noodomstandighede mag bv. oorlog, rampe of peste wees. In hierdie gevalle oordeel die Kerkraad of dit noodsaaklik en die beste wyse is. Hierdie mag ook geld vir individuele gelowiges wanneer hulle onder omstandighede verkeer wanneer fisiese bywoning nie moontlik is nie maar hulle wel ‘n uitsaaidiens kan bywoon.

5. Aanbevelings

Die Kommissie beveel aan:

A. dat die Klassis die Skrif en belydenis rakende die wese van ‘n erediens herbevestig soos ons dit verstaan byv vanuit Handelinge 2:42 en HK Sondag 38

B. dat die Klassis aanvaar dat daar buitengewone omstandighede mag ontstaan waaronder ‘n uitsaaidiens as ‘n tydelike alternatief beskou word en dat so ‘n erediens as geldige erediens beskou word

C. dat hierdie kompromie mag geld vir ‘n gemeente in sy geheel of vir individuele lidmate wat tydelik in ‘n buitengewone situasie verkeer

D. dat die toepassing van bogenoemde aan die selfstandigheid en oordeel van die Kerkraad oorgelaat moet word om in diepe afhanklikheid voor die Here besluite te neem.

25). The Law – and our struggle to keep the Law when a number of commandments seemingly conflict with each other – drives us to Christ. It drives man to a Christocentric showing of tolerance, of patience, as we see from the Lord Himself.

A gathering of the church under the supervision of the Church Council and where the full liturgy is followed, is a worship service – also if the church does not physically gather, but by means of an electronic broadcast, as long as:

- extraordinary circumstances demand it; and
- it is the only or best way to conduct a service under such circumstances.

These extraordinary circumstances may include war, disasters or pestilences. In such cases, the church council judges whether it is the necessary or best way. This may also apply to individual believers who find themselves in circumstances where physical attendance is not possible, but attending an electronic broadcast is.

5. Recommendations

The Commission recommends:

A. that the Classis reconfirm the Scripture and confession related to the core meaning of a church service, as we understand it, from e.g. Acts 2:42 and HC Sunday 38

B. that the Classis accepts that extraordinary circumstances may arise in which the electronic broadcast of a service is deemed a temporary alternative and that such service is considered a legitimate service

C. that this compromise may apply to a church as a whole or to individual members living under extraordinary circumstances and

D. that it should be left to the church council to make independent, albeit in dependence on the Lord, decisions in this regard.

6. Bronne

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