

PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH IN BULACAN
PHILIPPINES

16 May 2021

TO: The Classis of the Federation
of the Protestant Reformed Churches
in the Philippines

SUBJECT: Withdrawal of Membership

c/o Brother Eric Mescallado
Stated Clerk

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the King of the Church.

We, the Council (elders and deacons) together with the entire congregation of the Protestant Reformed Church in Bulacan, met on this day to discuss the present controversy in the Protestant Reformed Churches in America. These matters have been carefully deliberated and evaluated during our meeting. We realized and acknowledged that these controversies pertain to very important matters of doctrine and practice, and not merely the involvement of personalities (i.e. our esteemed brothers in our sister churches in the PRCA). After devoting much study on these matters the past weeks, together with the careful listening and evaluating the preaching in both sides the past months, we have come to this inevitable and painful decision to withdraw membership from the Federation of the Protestant Reformed churches in the Philippines based on the following grounds:

1. The doctrine of good works is a vital aspect in the life of a redeemed child of God as a manifestations and fruits of faith and gratitude for such great gift of salvation wrought through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ (Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 24). However, good works must have its proper place in doctrine. Otherwise, it militates against the pure teachings of the gospel of God (Justification by faith alone). Heidelberg Catechism (Lord's Day 32) teaches the necessity of good works in the life of the redeemed people of God. A saved, justified sinner must perform good works. That is, in the newness of life, a believer lives, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit of Christ, sincerely willing and ready unto Jehovah (Heidelberg Catechism, LD 1, Q&A 1). But the controversy is this: "The doctrinal error is that the believer's good works are given a place and function that is out of harmony with the Reformed confessions" (Acts of Synod 2018, 61, art. 62 B.1.). We strongly reject, according to Scripture and the Reformed creeds that, good works are given a place and function in such a way that those works serve as necessary conditions in prayer-filled life, assurance of salvation, and experiencing the fellowship with God in the covenant.
2. Our pastor, Rev. John Flores, repeatedly requested and pleaded to Classis last April 25, 2021 to form a special committee to study and report to the next Classis what the real issue is behind the current controversy in the PRCA to answer the growing number of questions from our congregation as well as from other members of the PRCP. We believe that there are two sides in every issue. We just cannot accept any information (i.e. bait, hook line and sinker) from one side without getting the other side. That would be biblically unwise. Instead of understanding and acknowledging the urgency of this concern raised pertaining to the real issue at hand, this legitimate request has been outrightly ignored by the Chairman. The rest of the delegation of Classis remained silent on this request in spite of Rev. Flores' earnest plea for urgency, considering the growing concerns in the members. He even cautioned that these members can no longer wait for the next Classis meetings (June 12 and October 31). It is not normal nor appropriate for a chairman in a broader assembly to decide for the delegates. He should have asked the pleasure and decision of the delegates on the matter raised at that particular meeting. No one dared to

question the impropriety and lack of order in that meeting. This is a sad reality of the utter lack of order in our broader assembly.

3. Oftentimes, meetings of Classis are tainted with politicking and hierarchical tendencies. For instance, instead of allowing the official members of the PRCP to deliberate what is to the best interest of the denomination, the advisors are often the ones aggressively involved by influencing and dominating the deliberations of vital issues the denomination are faced with. While it is a reality that we are still a young federation, we acknowledge the need occasionally to seek the advice of the PRCA missionaries. But it would be out of order for advisors to dominate the discussion. It is a reality that we do not have the freedom to decide on our own because most delegates give greater weight to the advisor's opinions over against the wisdom of the local delegates. We do not see anything wrong in making our own decisions not necessarily in conformity with practice or tradition of the PRCA as long as we do not violate the Church Order. Classis have always depended and looked up to the precedents of decisions made in the PRCA even if they are not applicable nor practical to implement here.

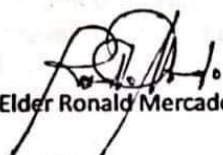
These are not mere criticisms against the PRCP, but we pray that this will serve as eye-opening realities in our denomination. These are things that we can no longer tolerate. And because of these, rather than become stumbling blocks to other member congregations who are convicted otherwise, our consistory made this painful decision to withdraw our membership from this denomination.

Nevertheless, we cannot deny that our federation has been used by God to be tremendous blessings to us. The Lord has used the PRCP as a vital means in our spiritual growth as Reformed believers for over seven years.


The fellowship we experienced in this denomination will remain precious in our hearts as the redeemed in Jesus Christ. We will continue to cherish the pleasant memories we had together.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Your co-laborer in Christ,


Elder Ronald Mercado

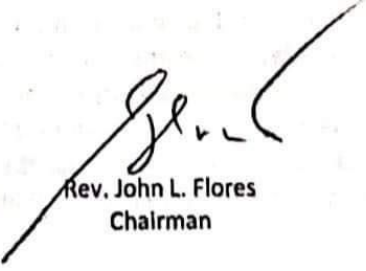

Elder Jorge Baguhin


Elder John Reuben Catalan


Elder Eric Castano


Deacon Raphael Josiah Mercado


Deacon John Matt Raguirag


Rev. John L. Flores
Chairman
