

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION
AS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL SYNOD
ASSOCIATE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
June 8, 1977**

In accordance with action of the General Synod of 1975 and by appointment of the Moderator, the Special Committee on Christian Higher Education submits the following report:

Creation of the Committee

The 1975 Session of the General Synod adopted a recommendation of the Moderator's Committee on Educational Institutions "that a special committee of five (5) be appointed by the Moderator to develop a Philosophy of Christian Higher Education for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, including goals and purposes of Erskine."

Membership of the Committee

Following the adjournment of the 1975 Session, the Moderator of Synod, Dr. Randall T. Ruble, appointed the following five persons to the committee:

1. Reverend Roy E. Beckham, D.D., pastor of the Greenville Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Greenville, South Carolina.
2. Miss Alice Love, Ph.D., professor of English, Winthrop College, and member of First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Rock Hill, South Carolina.
3. Mr. Hazel Long, elder in the Doraville Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Doraville, GA.
4. Reverend Lonnie L. Richardson, pastor of New Covenant Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina.
5. Mr. W. H. Stuart, elder in the Bartow Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Bartow, Florida.

The Moderator designated Mr. Stuart to serve as chairman. The Committee elected Dr. Love as vice-chairman and Mr. Long as secretary.

The Work of the Committee

Only as the members of the committee have worked together over a period of nearly two years has the committee come to a full understanding of its task.

Convening for the first time on October 11, 1975, the Committee has held eleven meetings, the majority of which required a full day.

Through the cooperation of Mr. E. D. Sloan, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Erskine College, and President M. Stanyarne Bell, conferences have been held with a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees, most of the members of the administration, a substantial number of faculty members, and representative members of the student body of Erskine College. Individual members of the committee have conferred with a number of the members of our church and persons experienced in the field of Christian higher education. The committee has had the advantage of a considerable body of bibliographic material which it has secured or has had referred to it. This report would not be complete without an expression of appreciation for the helpful spirit and full cooperation the committee has received from so many who have made our work easier.

The Committee's Understanding of Its Task

The appointment of the committee to develop a philosophy of Christian higher education is interpreted as the desire of the General Synod to initiate such development with a clear and easily understood statement of philosophy that shall define and guide the carrying out of the mission of the Church in Christian higher education.

For many years Erskine College has included in its catalogs a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose in the catalog is viewed by the committee as the expression of the Board of Trustees to students and others who use the catalog. The statement of philosophy to be presented in this report is viewed by the committee as the expression of the General Synod to the Board of Trustees. It is intended to inform, to guide, to direct the Board of Trustees, to whom the Church delegates the responsibility of carrying out its mission in Christian higher education.

The committee interprets its task not simply as preparing and recommending for adoption a written statement. The task is far greater than that. It is to develop a philosophy. It cannot be achieved by this committee. It cannot be completed by this Synod. It is a continuing task. Redeeming elements of such a philosophy have prevailed at Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary from their beginning. Today's action can be a new beginning —a reaffirmation of the Church's mission and the means of implementing it.

In presenting this report, the committee recognizes that the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, in its work as an institution of Christian higher education at Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary, delegates its authority and its mission to the members of the Board of Trustees of Erskine College, who are selected by the General Synod. To these servants of the Church, faithful to their trust, is given the

privilege, the honor and the responsibility of developing and maintaining the philosophy of Christian higher education as expressed by the General Synod. It is believed that the Board of Trustees will be aided and strengthened in its work by knowing the will of the General Synod regarding the kind of college community that it believes will best reflect its philosophy and the kind of environment favorable to the carrying out of its Christian mission.

With much assistance from others and in a spirit of prayer for guidance, the members, in a completely harmonious joint effort as a committee, have prepared a proposed statement as a first step in the development of a philosophy of Christian higher education in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church with goals and purposes of Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary. The proposed statement is attached and is made a part of this report.

Recommendations: The Committee recommends:

1. That, as an initial step in the development of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church with goals and purposes of Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary, this Report and the accompanying Statement be adopted by the General Synod.
2. That, as a part of the basic development of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education, this Report and the accompanying Statement, as adopted, constitute the governing philosophy for policies established and maintained by the Board of Trustees of Erskine College in the operation of Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary.
3. That, as a primary effort in developing the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education, the chairman of the Board of Trustees of Erskine College be directed to place in the hands of each member of the Board of Trustees a copy of this Report and the accompanying Statement, as adopted.
4. That, as a continuing effort in the development of a Philosophy of Christian Higher Education, the Nominating Committee of the General Synod be directed, beginning with nominations to be made following the 1977 meeting of the General Synod, to furnish each prospective nominee for election to the Board of Trustees of Erskine College with a copy of this Report and the accompanying Statement, as adopted, so that the prospective nominee may have the benefit of this document in making his or her decision.
5. That, in making its annual report to the General Synod, the Board of Trustees be asked to include a special section relating to the implementation of this Statement of Philosophy of Christian Higher Education.

Respectfully submitted,
Special Committee on Christian Higher Education