

Overture 5 Subordinate Standards

At St Peter's Church, Mt Wellington, Auckland, on the 11th July 2006, the Presbytery of Auckland met and was constituted.

Among other things:

The Presbytery agreed to adopt and transmit the following overture to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand appointed to meet in Auckland on the 28th September 2006.

Whereas:

1. The Westminster confessional standards are documents of profound doctrinal and theological substance, remain instructive on many aspects of the faith, have served and united the reformed family of churches for over three and a half centuries, and are the basis of faith to which ministers and elders of this church have in good conscience subscribed at the time of ordination
2. The Focal Identity Statement as revised is a good short statement, but can scarcely bear the weight of being a sole Subordinate Standard
3. There is a long-established precedent for having both shorter and longer confessional documents, as in the Confession and Larger Catechism being complemented by the Shorter Catechism
4. It is important for the unity and constitutional integrity of the church that the process for a change of Subordinate Standards be managed with great sensitivity and care

It is overtured:

That, as an alternative way forward to that proposed by the Focal Identity Statement Task Group, Assembly instead

- (a) adopt the Focal Identity Statement together with the Explanatory Notes as a new and additional Subordinate Standard, and retain the existing Subordinate Standards for the time being and
- (b) commission the Task Group to prepare a more substantial contemporary statement of reformed faith, suitable for study and instruction in the life of the church, with a view to it replacing the Westminster Confession and Larger and Shorter Catechisms once approved by Assembly;

Or that the General Assembly determine otherwise as in its wisdom it shall consider best.

The Presbytery appointed Rev Stuart Lange and Rev Colin Marshall to support the overture before the Assembly.

Extracted from the records of the Presbytery by Alex Robinson, Acting Clerk.

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