

## Dirk Johannes Smith an apologist for confessions<sup>1</sup>

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During the past 28 years Dirkie Smit has played a pivotal role in the advocacy in many forums, explaining of the decision to declare a *status confessionis* and promoting the reception of the Belhar Confession. Smit knew first and foremost that the term *status confessionis* calls for explication (*explicatio*) which he very eloquently gave. Smit has not only repeatedly emphasized the need for the church should stand where God stands in all situations of injustice – that is, in solidarity with the wronged, against injustice – but also that the Belhar has clear implications for church unity. The article therefore addresses the following: Smit's role in the birth of a confession, Smit's ongoing involvement with the Belhar Confession, The Belhar Confession and church unity,

### Introduction

Dirk Johannes Smith, affectionately known as Dirkie, is one of the most respected theologians of the United Reformed Church in Southern Africa's (URCSA). The URCSA was formed on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 1994 with the unification of the former Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) and the former Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA). Dirkie Smith, (MA, DTh) is an alumnus of Stellenbosch University and a former member of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). In the beginning of 1981 he started his teaching career in the Faculty of Theology at the University of the Western Cape in Systematic Theology, at the time the institution where prospective ministers of the DRMC received their training. He subsequently became a full-fledged member of the DRMC. In the DRMC circles Dirkie is first and foremost known for his exposition on concept of the *status confessionis*.

The term *status confessionis* was introduced into the vocabulary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches at the Ottawa meeting of its General Council in August 1982. This Latin term refers to that which is foundational for belief and behaviour and which must be affirmed by professing members of the church. The specific case (*casus confessionis*) in 1982 was the issue of apartheid in South Africa. After many years of dialogue with the churches in South Africa, a broad conviction developed that the Alliance needed to act decisively with regard to the political situation in South Africa. Most South Africans had been oppressed on racial grounds by the former National Party's legally mandated system of apartheid, which entailed strict segregation between people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This

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political system was also theological justified by the white Reformed Churches in the country. In Ottawa, the General Council declared apartheid a sin and its theological justification heretical. The latter means that the theological justification of apartheid amounted to a pertinacious denial of some truth. The Alliance also declared a *status confessionis* within the Reformed tradition, because the integrity of the proclamation of the gospel was at stake. The full decision of the WARC reads as follows:

The churches which have accepted Reformed confessions of faith have therefore committed themselves to live as the people of God and to show in their daily life and service what this means. This commitment requires concrete manifestation of community among races, of common witness to justice and equality in society and of unity at the table of the Lord. The Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk and the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk in not only accepting, but actively justifying the apartheid system by misusing the gospel and the Reformed confession, contradict in doctrine and in action the promise which they profess to believe. Therefore the general council declares that this situation constitutes a status confessionis for our churches, which means that we regard this as an issue on which it is not possible to differ without seriously jeopardizing the integrity of our common confession as Reformed churches. We declare with black Reformed Christians of South Africa that apartheid (separate development) is a sin, and that the moral and theological justification of it is a travesty of the gospel and, in its persistent disobedience to the word of God, a theological heresy (*Seoul* 1989/1990:173-75, 279-81, cf. *Ottawa* 1982:177f).<sup>i</sup>

The WARC consequently also suspended the membership of the DRC as well as the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk in South Africa.

### **Dirkie Smit and the birth of a confession**

Shortly after this decision of WARC, during September 1982, Dirkie Smith attended the Synod of the DRMC in advisory capacity as one of the DRMC's lectures at the Faculty of Theology at UWC and in so doing became involved in the dismantling of Apartheid. At this synod a hefty report on the *Program to combat racism* compiled by Rev. Dr, Allan Boesak, Rev. Dr. Henry Beets, Dr Dirkie Smit and Prof. Daan Cloete was also tabled (*Skema NGSK* 1982:443-469).<sup>ii</sup> This report set the pace of the decisions on racism, apartheid, and a *status confessionis* taken at the Synod. After many deliberations the DRMC Synod 1982 declared that because the secular gospel of apartheid fundamentally threatens the

reconciliation in Jesus Christ and every essence of unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, it constitutes a *status confessionis* for the Church of Jesus Christ (*Acta NGSK 1982:717-720*).<sup>iii</sup> The Synod unequivocally rejected apartheid in all its ideological politico-economic and religious manifestations as essentially and fundamentally sinful, and the theological justification of apartheid is heretical, since apartheid is contrary to and irreconcilable with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Synod appointed a task team, consisting of five members from different racial backgrounds, to draft a confession. The task team, consisted of Rev. Isak Mentor, Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak (who at point time was also the president of the WARC) and three members of the UWC Theological Faculty, Proff. Gustav Bam and Jaap Durand and the young Dr. Dirkie Smit. They succeeded superbly in their assignment to draft a confession during the course of the 1982 Synod.

Two prominent features of the Belhar Confession, the only confession in the history of the global Reformed community that was not written during the sixty-year period from 1561 to 1619, are the fact that it is grounded in Scripturally and its resemblance to the Three Formulas of Unity (the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, and Canons of Dordt). In structure the Belhar Confession is similar to the Canons of Dordt. Articles 2-4 of Belhar begin by affirming biblical doctrines and then reject teachings that are contrary to Scripture. Correlations between the Belhar Confession and most of the Constantinopolitan-Nicene Creed from 381 A.D can also easily be discerned (cf. Naudé 2004:35-53).<sup>iv</sup> Belhar was born in “a moment of truth”, as were the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Genevan Confession, Canons of Dordt, Scottish Confession, Westminster Confession, Genevan Confession and the Theological Declaration of Barmen. The Belhar Confession echoes much of the latter in particular. Belhar deals with three main issues, namely the unity of the church, reconciliation in Christ, and the justice of God. There is little mention in the three historic Reformed confessions (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort) of unity, reconciliation, and justice.

The DRMC Synod 1982 also adopted an official accompanying letter to explain the decision to compile the Confession. The first paragraph states clearly the seriousness of the situation in which the gospel itself was at stake:

We are deeply conscious that moments of such seriousness can arise in the life of the Church that it may feel the need to confess its faith anew in the light of a specific situation. We are aware that such an act of confession is not lightly undertaken, but only if it is considered that the heart of the gospel is so threatened as to be at stake. In our judgment, the present church and political situation in our country and particularly within the Dutch Reformed church family calls for such a decision. Accordingly, we make this confession not as a contribution to a theological

debate nor as a new summary of our beliefs, but as a cry from the heart, as something we are obliged to do for the sake of the gospel in view of the times in which we stand.<sup>v</sup>

The next paragraph affirms the authority, motive as well as the subject of the Confession: “We are aware that the only authority for such a confession and the only grounds on which it may be made are the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God.”

The DRMC states in the Confession the theological grounds on which they judge that the Christian confession itself was threatened in South Africa by the theological justification of apartheid. The Belhar Confession calls attention to the fact that God is active in bringing justice and true peace in the world and has a providential option for the oppressed, the poor, the orphans and widows, the stranger and the prisoner. The Confession challenges the church to take that stand with God:

We believe...that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others. (Belhar Confession Art, 4).<sup>vi</sup>

The decision of the DRMC to adopt a *status confessionis* drew much public attention to this important subject (Smit 2011:1).<sup>vii</sup>

However, despite the above – and Smit highlights this, too – all Reformed confessions are deeply historical and contextual; they do not claim to offer timeless formulations and eternal truths. Instead, they but attempt to be historical responses to particular circumstances and threats. This inevitably raises many difficulties concerning the status and authority of these claims, about the nature of their truth claims, and about their applicability in different contexts and historical moments. Although most Reformed confessions were responses to specific historical circumstances, these documents typically do not mention the historical causes at all, precisely because their truth claims were claims about the gospel and, therefore, claims with catholic appeal, relevant not only for the specific situation and not dependent upon the situation. True to this, Belhar contains no direct reference to apartheid. The third paragraph of the Confession states clearly that the confession is not aimed at specific people or groups of people or a

church or churches, but is directed against a false doctrine. The Confession is indeed (in the words of the Accompanying Letter), “ a cry from the heart.”

This draft Confession was unanimously accepted at the 1982 synod. However, the DRMC needed a two-thirds majority of the DRMC's congregations to officially adopt of the confession. After the Synod, every DRMC congregation engaged in conversation and discernment regarding this issue - which would also requires changes to the Church Order. Four years later on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1986, after minor editorial adjustments the Belhar Confession was accepted as a confession of the DRMC. At the 1986 Synod, 399 delegates voted in favor of adoption of the Confession and 71 opposed the move. In future it was expected from every candidate for ordination in the DRMC to answer affirmative on being asked whether she or he accepted the three Forms of Unity as well as the Belhar Confession.

### **Dirkie Smit's ongoing involvement with the Belhar Confession**

The adoption of the Confession of Belhar was a watershed moment in the DRMC. Shortly after the Synod Smit became one of the Confession's primary champions. This was in accordance with his conviction that the declaration of a *status confessionis* means that a Christian, group of Christians, a church, or a group of churches are of the opinion that a situation has developed in which nothing less than the gospel itself is at stake, so that they feel compelled to witness and act against this treat. (cf. Cloete and Smit 1985; Smit 1992; Smit 1996).<sup>viii</sup> For this reason, Smit, in a prophetic way, challenged and still challenges the Dutch Reformed family and even URCSA to be faithful to the gospel by recognizing and acting on matters that are decisive for life in faith.

During the 1980s and 1990s, students at the Faculty of Theology at UWC, of which I was one, were immensely impressed by Smit's logic, level-headedness, prudence, reasonableness, wisdom and judiciousness on the issue of confessions and the *status confessionis*. As early as 1984 Smit's famous essay *Wat beteken "status confessionis"* (*What does "Status Confessionis" mean?*) was published. This article immediately catapulted Smit into the international scene. It was published in 'n *Oomblik van Waarheid*, a collection of essays originating from the Faculty of Theology of the UWC.<sup>2ix</sup> This article was discussed extensively during the 1980s by the theological students at the Faculty of Theology and in incalculable ways it influenced their theological development. Smit knew first and foremost that the

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<sup>2</sup> This book was published by Eerdmans in English during 1985 as *A Moment of Truth: The Confession of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church*. The English version of Smit contribution was also published in the *Journal of Theology* Vol 47, 1985. p 21-46.

term *status confessionis* calls for explication (*explicatio*) which he very eloquently gave. Smit maintains that the expression *status confessionis* is not listed as a separate item in textbooks in Systematic Theology, dictionaries, encyclopedias. Amongst other things, Smit indicates that the term became extremely relevant in the so called German Church struggle (*Kirchenkampf*), the ecumenical rejection of racism in 1977 at the Lutheran World Federation in Dar es Salaam, and in the Reformierter Bund. Like the Barmen Declaration, the *status confessionis* echoing the Heidelberg Catechism Q. and A. 54 (Lord's Day 21) first confesses faith in the Triune God.

During the past 28 years Dirkie Smit has played a pivotal role in the advocacy in many forums, explaining of the decision to declare a *status confessionis* and promoting the reception of the Belhar Confession. Dirkie Smith was more than willing to assist the executive of the Synod of the DRMC and later URCSA in advisory capacity with the interpretation of the Belhar Confession and in so doing influenced many decisions on confessional basis of the church as well church reunification. He has untiringly highlighted the fact that Belhar is a gift of God to the church and usually speaks with such clarity, coherency and eloquence on the issue of confessions and *status confessionis* that on many occasions he received standing ovations after delivering his speeches as again shown at the Cape Regional Synod 2011. He also emphasizes that confession is

a commentary on scripture, representing insight given to the church and presupposing risk and danger. It is born out of compulsion. It is geographically, temporally and materially limited. It always arises in a definite antithesis and conflict. "It says a definite Yes only because a definite No is implied, otherwise it is no confession. It is public speech, on the basis of solid theological preparation and is intended to be heard, tested, and evaluated by others.

Since there is a "notorious connection, even a unity, between the heresies of every age and place," it can be confidently expected that confessions written for another time and place, if they really express the Word of God, can again reveal and address conflicts at other times and in other places." <sup>x</sup> In his presentation to the 2006 Cape Convention, Smit again affirms, that confessions, Belhar included, have only relative authority. According to Smith confessional statements are subjected to the one and final authority - the Word of God. In the years following the adoption of the Confession, Smit has not only repeatedly emphasized the need for the church should stand where God stands in all situations of injustice – that is, in solidarity with the wronged, against injustice – but also that the Belhar has clear implications for church unity

## **The Belhar Confession and church unity**

The Belhar Confession affirms that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church. Therefore, it rejects any doctrine

which absolutizes either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutization hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation; which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace while believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation; which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unity as a priceless gift is sin; which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent or any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the church (Belhar Confession, Art.2).<sup>xi</sup>

During the past decades Smit also serve in advisory capacity on the bilateral or multilateral discussions with the DRC and the DRCA as well as the RCA on church unity and the confessional basis of the united church. Smit emphasize that it was impossible to strive for living unity in the Dutch Reformed Family without also pursuing reconciliation and justice. Within the one visible people of God the alienation and division, guilt and pain of the past as well as the legacy of inequality and injustice from the past must also be faced. This conviction is clearly in accordance with Belhar, which states:

We believe ... that unity is, therefore, both a gift and a obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain; ... that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God; that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church (Belhar Confession, Art.2).<sup>xii</sup>

Smit called attention to the deceiving nature of false doctrines and pleas for reconciliation and also humility – in particular in those people who utter the Confession. At the 2010 Regional (Cape) Synod

Smit maintained that the DRMC confessed that the gospel was at stake that a moment of truth had arrived; that the church could no longer contradict the gospel with its order, its life and its witness. Smit is of the opinion that in the Belhar Confession the church confessed that there is only one church, the church of the triune God who, through Word and Spirit assembles, protects and nurtures this church from the beginning unto the end of time. In Christ the church is reconciled with God and with one another. Therefore this unity is a gift, Smit emphasized. It is not something URCSA found or created, but something that has already been granted.<sup>xiii</sup> He gifted unity of the church, Smit maintained, should be pursued in reality. The people of God must constantly be built up in true unity and everything that threatens the living unity of the church - division, enmity and hate amongst individuals and groups - is sinful and should therefore, be resisted. He further maintained that the unity which already exists as a reality should become visible, so that the world may believe. Smit wish is that the world may see that the unity in the church transcends and overcomes all personal, natural and cultural differences and divisions. He reminded the church that visible unity is still wanting. According to Smit the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the diversity of languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God. The unity of the church is not uniformity or merely structural and organizational unity. On the contrary: "Our diversity and freedom may not divide the church, it is meant to enrich and serve the one visible people of God."<sup>xiv</sup> This is just one of the ways in which the Belhar Confession should be embodied, something which remains of utmost importance to Smit. In his lectures, presentations at different gatherings around the world, he pleads for the life of the church – whether in its ministry, its liturgy, the training of ministers, in mission or in everyday conduct of its members – to be permeated with the themes of Belhar. Those who accepted and confessed Belhar are obliged to embody it. At the Regional Cape Synod 2010 he challenged URCSA as follows:

For a confessing church this is ultimately the only question. Not whether we have a confession and formally support it and even glory in it, but whether the world can see that we live what we confess. Do we experience this visible unity in our congregations and amongst our congregations? Do members of the URCSA experience in our midst that unity in Christ is stronger than our natural, social, cultural and other differences? Were we in the past 28 years witnesses of this invisible unity in our community and society, so that the world could look at the URCSA in surprise – and believe? Were we a clear witness that unity, reconciliation and justice belong together? Did we tirelessly attempt to convince others of this gospel through word and deed? Could people see in our lives and



actions how committed we are to the healing of wounds and compassion for those who suffer? In short, were and are we ourselves still on this our own road? If we later discuss this theme together, these would be the kind of questions to ponder.<sup>xv</sup>

In 2008, the General Synod affirmed it that a confession is a compelling and transformative statement of truth, intended to direct and guide the lives of church members in a fundamental way and should therefore find its echoes in the preaching, teaching, pastoral care, public witness, ministerial formation, etc. of the whole church,

### **Reception of the Belhar Confession**

Although the Belhar Confession originated in a specific South African context of racial discrimination, racial segregation the themes of the Belhar Confession are biblical and universal.

The historical context, one of political and economic oppression, deep enmity and immeasurable suffering, however compelling, nonetheless did not dictate the reaction of the church. Instead the Holy Spirit enabled us to rise above political realities, economic hardship, social injustices and the denial of our very humanity, to rise above ourselves and affirm first and foremost, God as God of justice and reconciliation. In the Confession of Belhar, the first word is not to the desires of our own hearts, or the urgent voices of revenge and retribution, but to the reconciling Christ, who calls us to be agents of reconciliation and out of that reconciliation calls us to unity and justice. Hence the unity we seek is both demand and gift, which because of the Giver, though fraught with danger and pitfalls, becomes a burden that is light and a yoke that is easy. That in itself is a miracle of God's love, too precious to lose or give up or to subject to the casual carelessness of irreverent debate.<sup>xvi</sup>

The global picture reflects that racial divisions are a reality in many cultures. More and more churches worldwide affirm that the Belhar Confession is fundamental to their faith. Belhar has reached far beyond URCSA's boundaries and South Africa's contexts and constantly inspire the churches of our Reformed family and the broader ecumenical movement. The Belhar Confession addresses key issues of concern to all churches for example; racism and other forms of exclusion. The Belhar Confession is currently being studied by a number of Reformed and Presbyterian churches worldwide. It has expanded the confessional basis of the Reformed churches. What is particularly significant is that the Belhar

Confession is the first and only confessional contribution received from the Reformed community in the southern hemisphere. During 18 -20 October 2004, at an international conference on the Confession of Belhar 1986 and the Barmen Declaration held both in Belhar and Stellenbosch, “Confessing and Embodying Belhar and Barmen Today” Smit address the question on Belhar and Barmen in conversation – A South African perspective. In-depth theological discussions took place on what the confessing and embodying of Barmen and Belhar entails. URCSA has given the Belhar Confession as a gift to the worldwide Reformed community, because as Smit suggested as early as 1984, the applicability of this confession in the life of the church, is far wider than its original context. URCSA has requested the Reformed churches around the world to consider adopting the Belhar Confession.<sup>xvii</sup> This confession has been granted confessional status by some Reformed churches in Africa, Europe, Caribbean, United States of America e.g. Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA), Evangelies Gereformeerde Kerk in Africa (Namibia), Protestant United Church (Belgium), Evangelical Reformed Church (Germany), Reformed Church (Iglesia Reformada Dominicana (Dominican Republic), Reformed Church in America (RCA). Two of the Reformed churches in North America are in the process of adopting the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA). The 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2010) of the PCUSA approved the inclusion of the Confession of Belhar in *The Book of Confessions*, and that the amendment is sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes by June 2011.

The URCSA believes it is necessary that the Belhar Confession be accepted as part of the confessional basis of a new, unified church in South Africa. In their response to the DRCA's criticism of Belhar the URCSA again repeatedly state that they have no desire to "force" any church to accept the Confession of Belhar. To the URCSA this is a non-negotiable condition<sup>xviii</sup>

In various ways over the years, the URCSA has affirmed the utter importance and cardinal place of the Confession of Belhar for and in the life of our church. We have repeatedly stated in our discussions about church unity with the DRC, that the Confession is non-negotiable, (e.g. Agenda, p. 533); we have asked for the "unconditional acceptance of the Confession of Belhar as requirement for the continuation of discussions on church unity" (Agenda, p. 533). Acceptance of Belhar by the DRC is an act we anticipate "with deep longing" and we pray for the day when the DRC will walk the road of church union with us "in obedience to the Lord of the church" by accepting this Confession which we regard as founded in Scripture. (Agenda, p. 534).<sup>xix</sup>

Thanks to Smit's unflagging effort to assist the executive on interpretation of the Belhar Confession, the RCA accepted the Belhar Confession joined during June 2010 as a standard of unity.

During 2004 the WARC accepted the Accra Declaration. This declaration was strongly influence by Belhar. In his article *Covenanting for justice? On the Accra document, reformed theology and reformed ecclesiology*, published in the *Hervormde Teologiese Studie*, Smit point out that the General Council of WARC at Debrecen, "... wisely decided not to declare a *status confessionis* on the global economic justice, since, for a variety of reasons, the most common criteria for such a declaration are not present in the contemporary process." <sup>xx</sup>

At Debrecen, the WARC decided to call for a *processus confessionis*, a process of self-critical study, inquiry and discussion within the member churches in order to determine if their faith, the integrity of their own life and witness, is at stake in the way they respond to the challenges of their time, in the form of economic injustice and ecological destruction. Referring to the Accra Declaration Smit maintained that the WARC chose a confessional expression, although 'not meaning a classical doctrinal confession'. Regarding to the confessional nature of the Accra Document Smit rightly prefers to speak of the Accra Document rather than the Accra Confession. He admits that the confessional part of the document has a very clear and deliberate orthodox Trinitarian structure (par. 17–27; 28–31; 32), concluding with a complex human response (we commit ourselves; we humbly confess; we believe; we join in praise, par. 32–36). In the Trinitarian part, classical convictions about God, about Jesus Christ and about the Holy Spirit are expressed (each time, 'we believe'), followed by rejections flowing from the respective faith claims ('therefore we reject'). However, despite this – according to Smit - it cannot fulfill some of the common criteria for Reformed confessions – as for example summed up in Karl Barth's famous description for the WARC assembly in Cardiff almost a century ago. Smit also clearly states that the WARC cannot and should not attempt to draw up a common Reformed confession for Reformed churches and congregations, since that would be a denial of the very nature of Reformed confessions.

### **The way forward**

After 28 years of persistent effort one can only commend Dirkie Smit for his crusade to the explication and embodying of Belhar. With him we should dream of and pray for a church where visible unity can

be experience on all levels, where unity in Christ is stronger than natural, social, cultural and other differences, where confessions are embodied in lives and actions.

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<sup>i</sup> Text from Seoul 1989, Proceedings of the 22nd General Council, ed. Edmond Perret, Geneva: WARC, 1990, pp.279-281. Text from Seoul 1989, Proceedings of the 22nd General Council, ed. Edmond Perret, Geneva: WARC, 1990, pp.173-175. See Ottawa 1982, Proceedings of the 21st General Council, pp.177f.

<sup>ii</sup> *Skema van werksaamhede NGSK* 1982:443-469.

<sup>iii</sup> *Acta van werksaamhede NGSK* 1982:717-720.

<sup>iv</sup> Piet Naude, 2004. "Confessing the one faith: Theological resonance between the creed of Nicea (325 AD) and the Confession of Belhar (1982 AD)." *Scriptura* 85, 35-53.

<sup>v</sup> *Belhar Confession* 1986 .

<sup>vi</sup> *Belhar Confession* 1986 art 4.

<sup>vii</sup> Smit D.J . 2011. Covenanting for justice? On the Accra Document, reformed theology and reformed ecclesiology *HTS* Vol. 65 No. 1, p.1- 6.

<sup>viii</sup> Cloete, G.D. and Smit, D.J. 1985. *A Moment of Truth: The Confession of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church*. Michigan: Eerdmans. Smit, D.J. "Covenant and Ethics? Comments from a South African Perspective," *The Annual Society of Christian Ethics*, 266-282. Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1996. Smit, D.J. *Essays in Public Theology*. Sunmedia: Stellenbosch University Press, 2006. Smit, D.J. "Reformed Theology in South Africa," *Acta Theologica* 1: 88-110, 1992.p 28, Smit DJ 2008. *Geloof en openbare lewe* Versamelde Werke. Sun Press Stellenbosch.

<sup>ix</sup> Cloete,G.D. & Smit, D.J. 1984. *Oomblik van Waarheid Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika* W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

<sup>x</sup> Smit, D.J, "No other motives would give us the right" - Reflections on contextually from a Reformed perspective," *Studies in Reformed Theology* 8. *Christian Identity in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, eds. M.E. Brinkman & D. van Keulen, Zoetermeer: Meinema, 130-159.

<sup>xi</sup> *Belhar Confession* 1986.

<sup>xii</sup> *Belhar Confession* 1986.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Belhar Confession* 1986.

<sup>xiv</sup> Cape Regional Synod 27 September to 3 October 2010 *The Belhar Confession and Church Unity*, Dirkie Smit. Minutes Streeksinode 2010.

<sup>xv</sup> Cape Regional Synod 27 September to 3 October 2010 *The Belhar Confession and Church Unity*, Dirkie Smit. Minutes Streeksinode 2010.

<sup>xvi</sup> *Agenda for Synod URCSA* 2005 , p.531- 534).

<sup>xvii</sup> *Agenda for Synod URCSA* 1999, pp. 197-200; *Agenda for Synod URCSA* 2003, pp. 235, 246; *Acts of Synod URCSA* 2007, p. 592.

<sup>xviii</sup> *Agenda for Synod URCSA* 1999, pp. 197-200.

<sup>xix</sup> *Agenda for Synod URCSA* 2005 , p.531- 534).

<sup>xx</sup> Smit D.J. 2011. Covenanting for justice? On the Accra Document, reformed theology and reformed ecclesiology *HTS* Vol. 65 No. 1, p1-6.