

ANCHOR POINT BIBLE CHURCH



January 24, 2021

MUSKEGON PASTOR DEFIES CLASSIS; TAKES HIS PULPIT

Rev. Harry Bultema Defeats
Attempt of Prof. Volbea
to Preach Sunday.

WOMEN WEEP IN CHURCH

Deposed Minister Fools Op-
ponents by Holding His
Services Early.

Muskegon, Dec. 22.—Rev. Harry Bultema, who was deposed from the pastorate of First Christian Reformed church by classis Muskegon some time ago on charges of making statements opposed to the doctrine of the church, occupied his pulpit Sunday morning and forestalled the attempt which was made to have Prof. Samuel Volbea, of Grand Rapids, preach there in his place.

Sunday morning services at First church usually are conducted at 10 o'clock. At 8:30 Mr. Bultema stepped into his pulpit and faced pews crowded with men, women and children who had come early to gain seats. The pastor immediately began his sermon.

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Deposed Pastor and Man Whom He Balked Sunday



Rev. Harry Bultema, deposed pastor of First Christian Reformed church, Muskegon, at left, and Prof. Samuel Volbea of Grand Rapids, who failed to gain the pulpit of Mr. Bultema's church Sunday when the Muskegon clergyman adroitly held services half an hour earlier than usual.

Sermon on Blind Man.

The sermon was based on John 9:34 and the text was "And they cast him out." The pastor told the Biblical story of the blind man who was healed and who later was cast out of the synagogue because he recognized Jesus as the Savior. The remainder of Mr. Bultema's sermon consisted mostly of denunciation of the action of Classis Muskegon in deposing him.

Mr. Bultema admonished the congregation to remain calm in face of any circumstances that might arise. "I stand here as one cast out," said he. "But I have been cast out because I would not sin against my conscience. And you, my congregation, must not be superficial in this superficial age. You must dare to stand alone. The words of our Master apply well to our case. Therefore, Blessed are you when they cast you out of the church. Blessed are you, my consistory and congregation, when men put you up as Bolsheviks, as heretics, as breach-makers, as robbers of church property. Blessed are you when you are persecuted for conscience's sake."

Services Will Be Held As Usual at the
**First Christian Reformed
CHURCH**

9:00 A. M., 2 P. M., 7 P. M.

Rev. Harry Bultema will have charge of the services.

A legal battle looms as to who shall possess the church. Mr. Bultema says the church property belongs to the majority and that since most of the members apparently side with him, it is just that they should continue in possession.

Prof. W. Heyns, head of the department of church government at Calvin college in Grand Rapids and recognized as a leading authority on Christian Reformed church government in the United States, points out that the state law regarding church property is such that the property belong to those who remain faithful to the confession of the church. Upon this law Prof. Heyns bases his belief that the outcome of the difficulty will be favorable to the denomination.

Prof. Heyns Explains.

In commenting on the case Prof. Heyns said: "The action of the church against Mr. Bultema is not on account of his views, but on account of his doctrines, which fundamentally oppose the confession of the church, which Mr. Bultema promised faithfully to support."

Prof. Heyns says also that any minister in the denomination can hold to his views on premillennialism and still be Christian Reformed. He says several pastors of the denomination are premillennialists. "The church cannot, however," said Prof. Heyns, "allow any pastor to remain in it who openly teaches doctrines that fundamentally conflict with Christian Reformed standards of faith."

The case of Mr. Bultema is unique in that he stands entirely alone, it is said, no other pastor of the denomination siding with him. His sympathizers are confined largely to his own congregation, it is reported, and even the majority of them have decided to stand by him only on condition that they may remain in the denomination.

Mr. Bultema defied the classis to remove him from his pulpit. He said he would not surrender his church unless it was decreed by the courts that he do so.

The classis had chosen Prof. Volbeda to occupy the pulpit of Mr. Bultema Sunday. Prof. Volbeda and a committee appeared at the church just before the time for the usual service. When they saw services were in progress they quietly left the church.

On Attorney's Advice.

Prof. Volbeda explained that he had been advised by an attorney not to press any attempt to occupy the pulpit in the event of opposition from Mr. Bultema. It developed also that Prof. Volbeda had hoped for a conference with Mr. Bultema at 8:45 Sunday morning, but the latter was preaching at that time.

The church was crowded to the doors and some persons were unable to find seats and left. Visitors had come many miles to see what would happen at First church Sun-

day. There were many visitors from Grand Rapids.

Some of the worshippers, apparently provoked at the words of the pastor, left the church during the sermon. Scores of women sobbed, among them being friends of the pastor and also those who differed with him.

The trouble between Mr. Bultema and the classis arose as the result of statements made by the pastor in his book, "Marantha," printed in the Holland language. The classis claims that in his book the pastor made expressions directly opposed to two fundamental doctrines of the church—the kingship of Christ and the unity of the church of all ages.