**Review of Mr. John M. Punt’s Church History Paper, “Pastoral Care in the Institutions of Geneva”**

Submitted to Great Lakes-Gulf Presbytery, RPCNA, in partial fulfillment of requirements for

Licensure to Preach

This paper has been submitted to Presbytery’s Candidates and Credentials Committee in partial fulfilment of Licensure to Preach examinations. That committee asked us to review it.

Mr. Punt has demonstrated the ability to do historical research and to reach useful conclusions from the historical data.

We find that he has consulted a fairly extensive bibliography, with a good mix of available primary sources, as well as useful secondary sources, some as recent as 2023, and as old as 1980; thus, he would potentially be exposed to different historiographies.

We find that he uses standard notation and bibliographical formats, generally in line with Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers*.

His thesis is stated clearly in the introductory paragraph with an engaging quote from a secondary source. Through the thirty page paper, he develops his thesis, providing many examples. That thesis is that, in Geneva of the Sixteenth Century, we find a model for comprehensive pastoral care. He interacts perceptively with his sources, drawing out applications from the historical data that are, or might well be, useful for Christ’s Church here and now. This, of course, is a big reason for the study of Church History. Not only do we marvel at the gracious working-out of Providence, but there are lessons to be learned from our brothers and sisters in the past, as they sought to apply God’s Word to the world and to the Church. His conclusion, entitled “A Modern Geneva”, sums things up cogently for the reader.

We find that Mr. Punt’s writing style could use a wee bit of improvement. He seems to desire to sound elegant and educated, but this makes his prose just a little turgid at a few points. As examples, on his first page he uses “sycophantic” to try to state the impression, that some have, that Calvin was perhaps a narcissistic cult leader, exactly the opposite of the meaning of “sycophantic”. Another example is on p. 7, where he makes the common mistake of using “equity” for “equality”. The word he should have used was “equality”. But this, overall, is a minor matter.

Overall, we believe that Mr. Punt did a fine job with this paper, and shows that, in Church History, he is a skilled laborer. We, as a review sub-committee of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, have but one recommendation:

1. That this paper be sustained as partial fulfillment of the requirements for licensure to preach.

Philip H. Pockras

Nathan Eshelman