

There was still a desire among the family to have a Reformed Church and some of the other folk, newly arrived and some who had been there a while indicated an interest also. In order to get a church going it was necessary to petition the Classis and to indicate a willingness to contribute a stated sum of money to cover the costs of the mission. This was the hardest part and it took the community five years to find enough people willing to sign that they would support a church if one were organized.

Moddersville was a barter economy at that time operating on traded work and traded produce for sugar and flour and necessities. There was little, if any money in the community. They told time by the sun. Billie Ferwerda had the only time piece. They were paid by the lumber company about sixteen dollars a month. They all had large families and many mouths to feed.

However, they were able to get fifteen signatures to send to Classis in time for the April, 1891 meeting. Nine of the signatures were Tibbe men and women. Six others also signed - probably John Jenema, Eelke and Sauke Talsma, Billie Ferwerda and Evert VanderWal. The petition was sent in and the church investigated and organized by October, 1891 when the new consistory was ordained. The petition was developed under the direction of Henry DeBree of Vogel Center who had been guided by the Lucas church as to how to go about it.

In 1899 Albert J. Tibbe bought half a section from George Wyma, which he sold to his son Ralph who with his brother Gerrit built and somehow furnished a store where the Moddersville store now stands.

It was not unusual for the Dutch people to think that God was Dutch, and the story is told that Gerrit Tibbe once "quipped" that he did not believe that the Lord could understand English - only Dutch. Martin Modders commented that the Lord might have a hard time understanding Gerrit's method of bookkeeping, too. Then they both laughed. How would one keep track of a product traded for a store bought item, or a charge on your bill when you didn't have something of equal value to exchange?

Even with all their enthusiasm the Tibbe's were unable to support themselves in Moddersville and one by one the families moved back to Graafschap or Holland. John and his family moved back in Nov. 1896. They left their daughter Mary in Moddersville, the wife of George Wyma in 1895. Henderkien and the children left in Oct. of 1895. Ralph sold the store to Billie Ferwerda in 1902, Gerrit joined his family. The senior Albert J. died in 1903. Harm and his wife took their mother back to Allegan shortly after. The following information was provided for me from Graafschap: