To our louing bretherne & Countremen at Strasburg¹

Grace, mercy & peace. As it is² ever most true, so at this present we feel most sensibly that wheresoeuer god laithe the foundation to buylde his glorie, thor he continueth till he bring the same to a perfect work.³ All praise & thankes be to him⁴ tharefore, that hath so moved yo[u]r hartes, that in no point you seme⁵ to forslow yo[u]r diligence to the fortherance of the same. And as this worke⁶ is of most excellencie, so thadversiarie

¹ Not in Troubles which begins with 'Grace mercy and peace, &c'. This letter was carried to Strasbourg by Edmund Grindal and Richard Chambers, Troubles xxiii. It has a distinctly sharper tone than the previous letters from the Frankfurt congregation which might have been linked to the arrival of John Knox who was the first to sign.

² Troubles has 'was'.
³ Troubles has 'present worke'.
⁴ Troubles has 'All thanks and praise be vnto him'.
⁵ Troubles has 'so as in no point ye seeme'.
⁶ Troubles has 'the worke'.

ceaseth not\textsuperscript{7} most crafelye tundermyne it, or at lest throghe false reportes & defacing of
the worke begon[n]e to staye the labourers whiche sholde travell in the finishing therof.
But truthe euer cleaveth it self: & as the son[n]e consumeth the clowdes, so misreports by
triall ar confounded. Our bretherne sent from you can certefie you at lenghe[sic]
touchinge the particulars of yo[u]r letters\textsuperscript{8}, to whom we have in all things agreed which
semed expedient for the state of this congregation. As for certeyne ceremonies which
thorder of the contrie will not beare necessarelie we omit\textsuperscript{9} with as littell alteration as is
possible (which in yo[u]r letters you require\textsuperscript{10}) so that no adversarie is so impudent, that
dare either blame our doctrine of imperfection, or els us of mutabilitie\textsuperscript{11}, except he be
altogether willfull ignorant, rather sekeing how to finde fault then to amende.\textsuperscript{12} Neither
do we dissent from them which lie at the raunson of their bloud\textsuperscript{13} for the doctrine, wherof
they have made a most worthie confesssion. And yet we think not that any godly man
will stand to the death in the defence of indifferent ceremonies (which as the book
specifieth)\textsuperscript{14} upon iust cawses may be altered & changed. And if the not full using of the
book cause the godly to dowte in that trueth wherin before they were persuaded, & to
staie their com[m]ing hither according as thei purposed: either it signifieth that they were

\textsuperscript{7} Troubles has 'the aduersaries cease not'
\textsuperscript{8} Troubles has 'letter'. A reference to the Strasbourg letter of 23 Nov. 1554, Troubles xxii-iii, brought by
Grindal and Chambers.
\textsuperscript{9} Troubles has 'we necessarily omit'. At this stage the Frankfurt congregation were employing the excuse
that some 'ceremonies' from the Book of Common Prayer were omitted because they were not acceptable to
their host city.
\textsuperscript{10} Troubles has 'ye require''.
\textsuperscript{11} Troubles has 'or vs of mutabilitie'. One of the reasons for not making any changes to the Book of
Common Prayer given by Strassburg in their letter of 23 Nov 1554.
\textsuperscript{12} Troubles has 'finde faultes, then to amend them'.
\textsuperscript{13} Troubles has 'raunsome of their blouds'. One of the reasons for not making any changes to the Book of
Common Prayer given by Strasbourg in their letter of 23 Nov 1554.
\textsuperscript{14} Troubles has 'in the defence of ceremonies, whiche (as the booke specifieth)'. The description of
ceremonies as 'indifferent' and the assertion that, if necessary, they could be altered, marked a shift in tone.
slenderly taught, which for breche of a ceremonie will refuse such a singular benefitt: or els that you haue heard them misreported by some false bretherne, who to hinder this worthie enterprise spare not to sowe in every place store of such poor reasons. Last of all it remayneth, that you writ, that ther first of Februaire next ye will come to help to set in ordre & establishe this churche accordingly. Which thing as we most wishe for yo[u]r companies sake & for that ye might see our godly ordre here observed; so we put you out of doubt, that for to appoint a iorney for theestablishing of any ceremonies shulde be more to your charges & pains than any generall profett, except ye were determyned to remayne with us lenger then tow[sic] monthes, as you writ to our countrimen of Disborogh & Emden. Which letters notwithstanding ar now staied, & as appeareth, we never the nere.

We referr the rest to oure bretherne Mr Chambers and Mr Grindall, who by their diligent inquisition have learned so farr of our state, as we writt to you in our former letters. That is that we haue a churche freely graunted, to preache godes worde purely, to minister the sacramentes sincerely, & to execute discipline truelie. And as touchinge our booke we will practise it so farr as Godes worde doth assure it & the state of this

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15 Troubles has 'very slenderly taught'. A further tonal shift was made here when objections were dismissed as arising from ignorance or misrepresentation.
16 Troubles has 'ye write'. At this point the Frankfurt congregation moved onto the offensive regarding the offer that the Strasbourg exiles would come to Frankfurt on 1 Feb 1555.
17 Troubles has 'yow will come'.
18 Troubles has 'oure godly orders alreadie here observed'.
19 Troubles has 'off Ceremonies'.
20 Troubles has 'your charges then anie generall profit'. This was a stark warning that the Frankfurt congregation would not accept the imposition of 'ceremonies' by the other exiles.
21 Troubles has 'Densborow'. Duisburg. These letters from Strasbourg to Duisburg and Emden are not extant. The suggestion that the other exiles should stay two months, long enough to establish the 'ceremonies', and then leave, offended the Frankfurt congregation.
22 Troubles has 'Maister Chambers and maister Grindall'.
23 Troubles has 'wrote vnto yow'
24 Discipline was explicitly included as a third mark by which a true church could be recognised, compared to the two marks in John Scory's letter, 3 Sept 1554, DD/PP/839 31-2.
countrey permitt.25 Fare ye well. From thenglishe congregation at Franckford26 this 3o
Decemb. (1554)
Your loving brethrne27
[1st column] John Knoxe
John Foxe
John Mackebray
John Bale
Tho(mas) Wood
Will. Williams
[2nd column] John Stanton
John Hollingam
Tho(mas) Kent
Geo(rge) Whetenhall
Tho(mas) Whetenhall
[3rd column] Michael Gill
William Walton
John Sanford
Edmund Sutton
William Whittingham

25 This formulation turns round the more conciliatory phrasing at the start of the letter by saying that the
Book of Common Prayer will be followed where it has the assurance of God's Word and the permission of
the host city.
26 Troubles only has 'At Franckf.'
27 Troubles has 'louinge frinds' and the list in a different order which also includes William Kethe.