

Clarion

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Illness, Normal, or Sin?

Much has been written about homosexuality, its character, its causes, its phenomena, and its treatment. It appears that there is no consensus even among those "of Reformed persuasion". It seems to us that the unbelieving and apostate approach to things and questions has made inroads into the community of those who declare that they wish to base themselves on the inerrant Scriptures.

The general trend of the thinking in this world is that sin and crime are an illness. Since this world denies the reality of sin as *sin*, it, nevertheless, has to look for an explanation of the reality of sin as a fact, as an existing reality.

Thus one's behaviour is explained from the environment in which he grew up, from the parents of whom he was born, from the conditions in which he spent his early years, from a chemical or other imbalance in his whole system. Crime is more an illness than a sin: it is an abnormality in an otherwise normal person, it is a behavioural aberration, caused by frustration, want, maltreatment, rejection, and other mistakes which society has made.

The "Age of Psychology and Psychiatry" came upon us and everything could be explained. Once it was explained, the way to a cure was found and now it was only a matter of time: the process of healing could begin with the proper diagnosis; the person should be helped to understand his problem and once he understood his problem he would be able to overcome it, to outgrow it, and so to become a healthy and normal person again.

Governments were therefore urged to remove those provisions from the Criminal Code which dealt with homosexual acts, since the "government has no business in the bedrooms of the nation". The phenomenon should not be dealt with as if it were a crime: it was rather an illness, a condition, given with birth, to which also later factors contributed. Homosexual acts between consenting adults should therefore no longer be declared punishable; in extreme cases a psychiatrist might be

the proper person whom they were to see to be re-adjusted and to overcome their problems and guilt-feelings. But they should never be dealt with as if they were guilty of a crime. In Canada consenting adults indeed no longer face the threat of the Criminal Code if they commit homosexual acts in private.

We cannot say with certainty why the explanation that homosexuality is an illness, an abnormality which must be treated by a psychiatrist, found so many adherents. One reason is, no doubt, that in this manner the seriousness and the guilt of such behaviour is removed. Who can be justly blamed for an illness? Who can be fairly accused of being guilty of something which has been with him from birth?

To such a conclusion contribute, be it unintentionally, all who state that homosexuality is a condition which results from the milieu in which one was born, or the inheritance he brought with him in a certain weakness or disposition or genetic deviation from the normal pattern.

The tide begins to turn.

But not for the better.

On June 15 my daily newspaper contained an article by a professor of psychiatry at the University of Southern California, entitled, "Let's stop calling homosexuals mental cases".

The writer stated that there are mainly three ideas which can be mentioned as having brought people to the verdict that homosexuality is an illness. These ideas are: that such people are either the product of "disordered sexual development", that they are deviates from the biological norm, or that they are deeply disturbed - and thus ill - individuals.

As for the first idea, psychiatrists usually pointed to a disturbed parent-child relationship in the background.

Our professor asked on what the diagnosis of homosexuality as an illness is based. His conclusion was that it was based chiefly on the fact that our society disapproves of this behaviour. Psychiatrists, he stated, are merely acting as agents of our culture.

That is a revealing statement. With the Apostle Paul I would say, "Beware of the science falsely so called!" Psychiatry is a cultural thing. Thank you, Sir!

Our readers have guessed it already: our professor is convinced that we have no right to label as deviant and behaviour that differs from the currently favoured by the majority! The fact that a certain life-style happens to be out of favour must not be the basis for such diagnosis. It is the task of the psychiatrists to be healers of the distressed, not watchdogs of social mores.

There you have another stand. Homosexuality in itself is no illness. It is a pattern of life which may be followed by a minority, but which may not for that reason be called abnormal. There are many practices in other fields which are followed by a minority. Yet we do not call those people ill or abnormal. They are simply different and that's all we can and should say about them. If - thus the argument runs - you call homosexuals ill or abnormal, you should do the same with the minority groups which, for instance, adhere to rigidly held religious convictions. We don't do the latter; then we should not do the former either.

From an illness, homosexuality has thus progressed to a normality, be it different from the normality found with others.

The question is whether it is progress.

It is not.

It is rather a degeneration and a step back, farther away from the truth.

Homosexual conduct is sin. Plain sin.

The Word of our God is clear in this respect - as in every respect.

It is because of such sins that fire came down from heaven and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. And what about what the Lord says in Romans 1?

It is neither an illness, nor a normality found only with a minority. It is the degeneration of the human race that has eliminated the will and Word of the Lord from their life and behaviour, that has exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.

That sin upsets the whole "balance of nature" is a fact. But that

does not make it an illness instead of a sin. That a certain sinful practice is found with an increasing number of people does not cause it to become normal, for normal is only that which the Lord wishes to see.

Let's stop calling it an illness. Indeed.

But let's not call it normal either. It is and remains sin.

That also determines the manner in which it is to be dealt with by office-bearers if they should find in the Church such who are guilty of homosexual acts and practices.

The Synod 1973 of the Christian Reformed Church had to deal with a report of the Committee on Homosexuality. By the time these lines appear in print the Synod will be over. Maybe we'll say something about it when the Acts have appeared.

The proposals of the Committee do not enjoy our admiration. We see

too much psychology and psychiatry in it and too little prophecy. Besides, we do not see why a Synod has to deal with such things. Are the Consistories not capable of dealing with members who sin? Is it necessary to give Synodical instructions and directives to Consistories and pastors on how to deal with members with whom the sin of homosexual practices is found?

We hope that we shall never have to deal with such matters on the synodical level, but that our office-bearers, if they encounter such sins, will speak the Word of God with respect to such disobedience, for which many explanatory reasons may be quoted, but which remains sin.

When one steals, there may be many reasons for it. But it is neither an illness nor a normal thing. The Lord forbids it.

That applies to any sin. vO

are spoiled, we take it lightly to go to church and not to go to church. We would not do so if we really realized what it is to "attend the Church of God". He takes the trouble to go there, with His Word and Spirit, His promises and grace. Once we have "seen" that again, we can sing Psalm 42 and all the other Psalms: "As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God." If this longing is lacking, we need repentance and conversion.

"THE SERMONS ARE SO POOR"

Let us start with one "excuse" for "oncing" which we deem illegitimate. We heard it recently when exhorting a member to stop being a "oncer". The answer was, "The sermons are of such poor quality that it is not worth my while to take the trouble to go twice" (the wording is ours).

We had to think, right away of those deaf-mute members in Enschede who were always in Church twice. Asked why, the answer was, because the Lord is there and because we want to be among His people.

Next, is going to Church only for hearing a sermon? What about the other elements of the liturgy? Isn't singing together a wonderful thing? And praying together? Just being there? (Psalm 1, 42, 84, 122, etc.)

Is not such an answer also proof that for some going to Church is not so much "sitting down *under* the pulpit" but taking our position *above* it?

We do not defend preaching and preachers. There will be poor, even bad sermons. Preachers will be the first to admit that: poor in contents, in set-up, in delivery.

But, apart from the fact that others are richly blessed by sermons which you might call poor, we should consider the following:

1. A sermon, even a "poor" one, must be taken home, digested, meditated on, discussed with the family. To "hear a sermon" may be as difficult as to deliver one. If the hearer is faithful on his part, the sermon might prove to be not that poor after all.

2. Preaching is not a one-sided, but a *two-sided* business. In Homiletics (the study of preaching) great attention is given to the "spark" that bridges the gap between pulpit and pew. There is a saying, "every nation

Continued on next page.

Aspects of "Oncing"

You know what "oncing" is: going to Church only once a Sunday, although the Church of God meets with Him twice on His Day. If you do this, you are a "oncer".

We are not going to discuss the childish question, "Where does the Bible say that I have to go to Church twice a Sunday?" If you are a person who goes to church only because you "have to", you might in the long run become a hopeless case. At any rate, then there are several Psalms which you simply cannot and should not sing (Psalm 1, 27, 84, 122, etc.). You should, then, also reconsider your allegiance to the Confession, which says, or rather in which you say, ". . . that I diligently attend the Church of God . . ." (Cat. L.D. 38) because God says in His Word, "Do not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb. 10:25).

Because that Day is drawing near and because some have the habit of neglecting the worship meetings, we are going to consider some aspects of "oncing".

LEGITIMATE "ONCING"

First, there is legitimate "oncing" We think of a family with young children, where either of the parents

has to stay home with the baby. Or one has just recovered from illness or has some other physical weakness which makes it necessary to take a rest in the afternoon.

But even if it is legitimate, we should limit this kind of "oncing" to the utmost.

If a part of the family (father or mother plus baby and toddler) has to stay home, let that part be as small as possible. Children in the school age can easily go to church twice! One should not underestimate the value of this, nor the danger if parents all too easily allow some of their children to stay home. Then the others start saying, why do I have to go? And, when older, they might "automatically" become "oncers" for good (do not ask where their grandchildren will be . . .).

In addition, we should consider extending the services of the nursery to the afternoon services. Every means available (including car-pools and the like) should be used to promote and improve church attendance.

Perhaps we are spoiled. We do not have to walk for hours anymore, to hear God's Word preached, nor do we have to meet in secret because of the hatred of the world (though such days must be expected to return). We

Hoek van Holland

DE SYNODE 1973 VAN DE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Het is niet wel doenlijk de onderwerpen voor de Hoek van Holland en North American Nook geheel gescheiden te houden. Ook onze uitsluitend Nederlandstalige lezers willen graag een beetje op de hoogte blijven van de kerkelijke ontwikkelingen op ons Amerikaanse continent.

Van bijzonder belang blijft voor ons de ontwikkeling in de Christian Reformed Church. Op Dinsday 12 Juni j.l. begon de generale synode 1973 haar arbeid. Het Juni-nummer van *The Outlook* was geheel aan het agendum van deze synode gewijd. De gedrukte Agenda tellen niet minder

Aspect of "Oncing" (continued).

receives the government it deserves". If people are not interested, do not take part in the nation's business, they will have a socialist, communist or other totalitarian government before they know it. This is, in a way, true for the Church too. If there is no hunger for the Word, if the congregation is not busy and active in searching the Scriptures; if the hearts are not open and no claims are being made on the preacher, the preacher may become "paralyzed". Even of our Lord Jesus Christ we read (Matthew 13:58), "He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

3. What about our prayers for the pulpit? No, not only our Sunday-morning prayers, that we may receive a blessing in Church. That's a bit late! Do we pray for the preacher during the week, while he is searching the Scriptures and preparing himself for the Sunday. He needs the Holy Spirit. Do we "pray down" the Holy Spirit to the minister's study? You will see what may happen to you when your prayers pull out of the pastor's study "the living preaching of God's Word", Cat. L.D. 35.

In one word, if and when you have thus been praying, you long to go to Church not once but twice, to find out what answer God has given to your prayers.

(to be continued)

G. VANDOOREN

dan 608 bladzijden, maar zij worden door Ds. Peter de Jong in een tiental "pressure points" samengevat.

Allereerst noemt hij de zaak van het *kerkelijk onderricht* in de Christelijke religie. Er is in de Christian Reformed Church een streven het onderwijs op de Zondagschool en dat op de catechisaties te integreren in een doorlopend curriculum.

Volgens het ter Synode ingediende rapport vormen de Heidelbergse Catechismus en het Kort Begrip niet meer in formele zin de basis van het onderwijs. Ook de tijd die aan de eigenlijke bestudering van de Catechismus in dit curriculum ingeruimd is, werd aanzienlijk bekort en teruggebracht tot twee jaar. Hiertegen wordt nu bezwaar ingebracht door de classis Zeeland, o.a. op grond van een bepaling van de kerkorde.

'k Combineer met deze zaak een rapport van de commissie voor liturgische zaken over de *tweede kerkdienst*. Het rapport voert een pleidooi voor een verscheidenheid van experimentele diensten. Vrije samenkomsten, waarin gelegenheid is voor het getuigenis van gemeenteleden, voor discussies, voor oecumenische manifestaties, zouden in de plaats kunnen komen van de als ouderwets ervaren duplicatie van de morgen-dienst.

Voor iemand die nog pas uit Nederland komt, is hier niets nieuws onder de zon. De Christian Reformed commissie volgt de trend in de Nederlandse synodale kerken, zonder helaas haar winst te doen met de daar reeds opgedane ervaring dat al het ge-experimenteer met de tweede dienst de lege kerkgebouwen niet doet gevuld worden.

Bovendien is het naar mijn oordeel duidelijk dat een ontwikkeling in de zin van dit rapport wel eens de doodssteek zou kunnen betekenen voor de geregelde Catechismus-prediking. Er is hier een samenhang met de ondernomen vernieuwing in het kerkelijk onderricht: in beide gevallen zal het aan deugdelijke kennis van de belijdenisgeschriften der Gereformeerde reformatie steeds meer gaan schorten.

Een veel besproken zaak is de verhouding tot de *Reformed Church* in America. Ook hier ziet men een parallel met de Nederlandse ontwikkeling. Heeft het proces van samenwerking - gestimuleerd door de beweging van de achttien predikanten, "Samen op weg", enz. - daar reeds geleid tot een gecombineerde synode van de Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk en de Gereformeerde Kerken (syn.), sinds het najaar van 1972 zijn hier de contacten tussen de Reformed Church en de Christian Reformed Church aanmerkelijk versterkt. Van 31 October tot 2 November is in Holland, Michigan, een conferentie gehouden van afgevaardigden van beide kerken-groepen. Men zou deze conferentie haast kunnen karakteriseren met de oude negentiende eeuwse leus: niet de leer, maar het leven. De slotverklaring drong aan op praktische samenwerking, waar dat maar enigszins mogelijk was: liturgie, kerkuitbreiding, kanselruil, zending. De eenheidpogingen dienen uit te gaan van een erkenning van de vrijheid van elk der beide denominaties om eigen betrekkingen aan te gaan en te onderhouden met andere kerken en oecumenische lichamen. Dit onderdeel van de "Conference Statement" dunkt me belangrijk, gezien het lidmaatschap van de Reformed Church in de Wereldraad en de Nationale Raad van Kerken in Amerika. Terwijl er nota bene in de Reformed Church zelf enkele stemmen opgaan om dit lidmaatschap te beëindigen, hebben de Christian Reformed afgevaardigden nu reeds dit lidmaatschap in de vrijheid van de Reformed Church gelaten en het dus niet als een onoverkomelijk struikelblok op de weg naar nadere eenheid aangemerkt.

Er waren twee voorstellen op het agendum van de Christian Reformed Church, die er op aandrongen om eerst de principiële verschillen tussen de beide denominaties te onderzoeken, alvorens zich te storten in allerlei vormen van samenwerking.

Inmiddels meldde *The Banner* van 29 Juni dat de synode thans heeft verklaard dat er onderscheid is tussen organische eenheid en samenwerking. De Christian Reformed Church, zo heet het, heeft niet een koers gekozen die direct naar organische eenheid leidt maar veeleer gekozen voor een aanmoediging van nauwer gemeenschap (fellowship). De

synode is van oordeel dat bespreking van fundamentele zaken en verschillen erg moeilijk is zonder bepaalde vormen van samenwerking. De aanbevelingen, door de Commissie voor interkerkelijke betrekkingen gedaan, zijn te beschouwen als adviezen. De commissie en de andere leden en organisaties van de CRC worden door de synode opgewekt om bij gemeenschappelijke activiteiten, wanneer het te pas komt, de verschillen te bespreken welke de twee denominaties gescheiden houden.

Het is voor mij de vraag of de verontrusten in de CRC met de besluiten der synode op dit punt erg gelukkig zullen zijn. Het blijft mogelijk kanselruil toe te passen; kanselruil behoorde immers tot de aanbevelingen van de conferentie? Het is m.i. niet goed in te zien, waarom discussies erg moeilijk worden zonder bepaalde vormen van samenwerking. Kan men niet discussieren over de noodzaak van Verbondsmatige opvoeding van de kinderen ook in het schoolonderwijs, over de onschrijfbaarheid van het lidmaatschap van Wereldraad en Nationale Raad van Kerken, over de onmogelijkheid van samengang van lidmaatschap van de kerk van Christus en van een vrijmetselaarsloge, over de aanranding van de betrouwbaarheid en het gezag van de Heilige Schrift door eigenmachtige uitleg van Gen. 1-3 - zaken die door de bezwaarden in de CRC naar voren zijn gebracht in verband met de toenadering tot de RCA -, zonder eerst zich te wikkelen in allerlei praktische samenwerking? Mijn vergelijking bedoelt niet kwetsend doch zuiver zakelijk te zijn: de thans gevolgde methode doet denken aan een jongen en een meisje die eerst gaan samenleven om daarna gedurende die samenleving te discussieren over de mogelijkheid van een huwelijk. Wat betekent het onderscheid tussen "organische eenheid" en "closer fellowship"? In kerkelijk spraakgebruik kan "fellowship" niet worden gebruikt zonder te denken aan de gemeenschap des Geestes, maar is er een andere organische eenheid dan deze "fellowship"? Leidt samenwerking, "closer fellowship", etc., niet onherroepelijk tot organische eenheid? Men vraagt zich af of achter het spraakgebruik van de synode 1973 niet een oecumenistisch gedachtenpatroon schuil gaat. Vermengen zich motieven van Kuypers leer van de pluriformiteit

der kerk zich hier niet met ideeën uit de Wereldraad van Kerken?

Tenslotte een historische herinnering. Toen op 8 April 1857 de afscheiding in de classis Holland een feit werd - de afscheiding van de Dutch Reformed Church welke leidde tot de vorming van de Christian Reformed Church - was een van de redenen voor de Kerkeraad van Graafschap: de verwaarlozing van de regelmatige Catechismusprediking en de catechisaties. Wanneer uit het vorenstaande gebleken is dat in de CRC de zelfde klachten momenteel opgang gaan doen of kunnen gaan doen, toont zulks dan niet dat de samengang in praktisch opzicht van CRC en RCA niet bewerkt wordt door een reformatie in de laatste doch door een deformatie in de eerste?

Soortgelijke opmerking zou men kunnen maken in verband met andere, thans aan de orde zijnde zaken. De studiec commissie inzake "*de vrouw in het kerkelijke ambt*" geeft als conclusie dat de praktijk van uitsluiting van de vrouw uit het kerkelijke ambt niet voldoende kan worden verdedigd op bijbelse gronden. Ook in dit opzicht volgt men de ontwikkeling in de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (syn.) en in de Reformed Church of America. Vermeld dient te worden dat Ds. P.M. Jonker een minderheidsrapport indiende.

De beslissing van vorig jaar inzake het befaamde rapport 44 inzake *het gezag van de Heilige Schrift* werd aangevochten in een tweetal voorstellen. Er werd bezwaar ingebracht tegen de omschrijving van het gezag als "de reddende openbaring van God in Jezus Christus". Men zag een verwarring tussen gezag en uitleg van de Heilige Schrift en was van oordeel dat opening werd gegeven aan kritiek op de historische mededelingen van de Bijbel. Ook noteerde men een gelijkwaardig verklaren van de zgn. algemene openbaring en de Heilige Schrift.

Inmiddels heeft de synode alle verzoeken om veranderingen aan te brengen in het pastorale advies met betrekking tot de aard en de omvang van het gezag van de Bijbel, afgewezen.

De verwarring die in het afgelopen jaar openbaar werd - o.a. in een discussie tussen de opstellers van het rapport 44 en Dr. J. Daane - zal ongetwijfeld voortduren. De invloed van theologen als Kuitert, Augustijn,

en Baarda zal, op gelijke wijze als in Nederland geschiedde, o.a. de "closer fellowship" tussen CRC en RCA gaan beheersen en funderen.

Het *ondertekeningsformulier* is scherp aangevallen door Dr. H.R. Boer, een aanval die ondersteund werd door een artikel van Ds. J. Vriend (overgenomen in het Pinksternummer van *Calvinist-Contact* van 4 Juni j.l.). Dr. Boer is van oordeel dat geen enkele ambtsdrager het huidige ondertekeningsformulier kan ondertekenen zonder in verscheidene opzichten een geestelijk voorbehoud te maken. Deze zaak verdient breder bespreking, omdat ieder gevoelt dat bezwaren tegen het ondertekeningsformulier voortkomen uit bezwaren tegen de belijdenisgeschriften zelf. Goud wordt geen goud omdat het een keurstempel heeft gekregen, maar het krijgt een keurstempel omdat het goud is. De belijdenis wordt geen waarheid omdat wij haar onderschrijven, maar wij onderschrijven haar omdat zij de waarheid is. Wie moeite heeft met de onderschrijving, toont dat hij niet van de waarheid der belijdenisgeschriften in alle punten of artikelen der leer overtuigd is.

Ook in dit opzicht is de parallel in de ontwikkeling met de Nederlandse synodale kerken en met de Reformed Church in America opmerkelijk. In de eerste heeft men het oude ondertekeningsformulier reeds fundamenteel gewijzigd, in de tweede is men bezig met een wijziging van het daar thans vigerende formulier, een wijziging die een verzwakking betekent.

Ook in verband met deze belangrijke aangelegenheid wachten wij met belangstelling het besluit van de synode 1973 van de CRC af.

Omdat ik niet eindigen wil met louter en alleen zaken uit het agendum te melden ten aanzien waarvan wij afkerig zijn en ernstige bezwaren koesteren, vermeld ik dat ten aanzien van zending en evangelisatie naar mijn oordeel de Chr. Reformed Church een ijver en offervaardigheid aan de dag legt, die ons ten voorbeeld kunnen strekken. Wat zou het prachtig zijn, indien we, na een aantal jaren, een vermeerdering van het studentental van ons College gepaard zouden zien gaan met een versterkte zendings-activiteit van alle plaatselijke Canadian Reformed kerken! Maar wie de vermeerdering van de Kerk begeert, moet voor haar bewaring waken!

J. FABER

school X crossing

First mention, this time around, goes to the American Reformed School Association of GRAND RAPIDS which recently began to publish a monthly bulletin. If we interpret the contents of the first few newsletters correctly, this Society is trying to shake off a somewhat lethargic past. The 1972 Financial Statement shows that heavy financial sacrifices were neither asked nor made. Frequently the quickest and best way to rejuvenate a small and apparently defeated Society is to first impose hefty dues increases and then propose outrageously hurried plans to build our own school. The Grand Rapids Society has done the first. Dues were raised from \$0.50 to \$5.00 weekly. But if the second step is to be taken, this increase in dues will not be the last. The smaller School Societies (those with about 50 members) require as much as \$12.50 per member each week to support a school employing two or three teachers.

In EDMONTON the School Society purchased 29.9 acres of land located 5 miles south of Winterburn Corner. The purchase price of this very large parcel of land was \$53,500 with the Society making a down-

payment of \$34,000. A courageous decision when we consider that this Society numbers less than 20 members. Some might be of the opinion that this is an excessively large property for a private school, when only three or four acres are usually sufficient. Yet all that extra land may one day (very soon we hope) help the Society to obtain a loan to finance the construction of a school, or else be sold and the proceeds used for that purpose. The next step for Edmonton's Society is to come to a decision to build a school by a certain date, not too distant in the future.

The Can. Ref. School Society of COALDALE faces a situation quite typical of that in congregations which are, as yet, without a Can. Ref. School. Some children attend local, joint Christian School, others receive their education in the Public School system. The Society's Financial Statements clearly indicate that few, if any, are making financial sacrifices for an own, congregational school. Apparently a sizeable group of brothers and sisters supports neither the Reformed nor Christian School Society. This situation is deplored by a writer in Coaldale's School Bulletin, who points out that the children of the congregation should receive their education together, as covenant seed in a covenantal school. Fortunately also Coaldale's Society appears to have plans for the future. These plans, inevitably, will have to include drastic increases in dues. The road to an own Reformed School is never paved with the rhetoric of recriminations but with the sacrifices of time and money. In one sense the Coaldale Society is unique, I believe. One of the offices of the Society is occupied by a sister. Privately I've always felt that in our *parentally* controlled schools the mothers should be given more responsibility than that of being glorified beggars in their Ladies Committees and P.T.A.'s.

In BURLINGTON School enrolment is expected to increase to 280 when classes resume in September. There are other increases also. The Board of Directors has recommended a doubling of all membership fees, a decision no doubt necessitated by

their burgeoning Budget which has grown to \$106,000 for the 1973-74 school year. Membership fees in the Niagara Peninsula and vicinity are now more uniform than before, varying only a few dollars from congregation to congregation. But by increasing the non-member enrolment fee to \$800, Burlington's Society has taken a step which other neighbouring schools will now be forced to consider also. The reasoning behind this decision is clear: Young couples should be supporting the school long before their oldest child is of school age. When this is not done, the equivalent of two year's dues are levied against that family upon enrolling their child. The same problem exists in other congregations and various "penalties" are in use. Whether the problem of *apathy* can be solved by increasing non-member enrolment fees, is doubtful. Increasing these fees could also act as a dilemma to enrolment by previously apathetic couples. The dilemma for many Boards is: How to encourage enrolment while discouraging the parasite and still distribute the burden of financial support equally and fairly. No simple and painless answer to that has yet been found.

The FERGUS School is in need of some minor repairs and the Property Committee is planning a number of work parties consisting of volunteers. A novel idea is to have these volunteers indicate their preference for a particular job. Painters, for instance, are asked to mark their choice between "high on ladder" and "low to the ground". Gardeners have the opportunity to choose between "flower beds" and "mowing grass". With such a well organized clean-up the school should be in beautiful shape before the return of the rascals in September. Hopefully someone will find a long ladder to help the Principal do some low to the ground work.

A second Eben-Ezer School is nearing completion. The CHATHAM building has been moved and now occupies a spot designated as 485 McNaughton Avenue East, R.R. 7, Chatham, N7M 5J7. An interesting activity of the Ladies Auxiliary in this Society is their house-cleaning business. So far they have cleaned 6 houses and made a profit of \$300. There appears to be no end to the imaginative ways in which our sisters are able to raise money for our schools.



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C. Van Spronsen, J. Visscher.

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The first Eben-Ezer School is still without a Grade I and II teacher. By now the SMITHERS School Board must have spent a small fortune on advertising in various periodicals. It would be most regrettable if teachers among us who are in a position to help the school there, make no effort to apply for this position.

In HAMILTON a Building Fund Drive will, according to the Society's Bulletin, achieve a total of \$8,500 while the target had been \$12,000. Even so, the Board appears quite satisfied, not in the last place because membership and enrolment are on the increase and the new school building is very nearly finished.

The CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE for a Can. Ref. Highschool Association in Ontario has completed its assignment and drafted a short-form Constitution and Bylaws. These will shortly be submitted to a meeting of congregational delegates. If no serious objections are brought forward at that time it should be possible to come to the formal constitution of the Association, although it might be necessary to elect an interim Board until such time that a sufficient number of congregational Chapters are formed. In any event, a serious beginning can now be made with exploring the opportunities and generating support for a Can. Ref. Highschool.

Two other organizations in the field of Reformed Education have, in my estimation, shown remarkably little initiative during the past school year. The League of Can. Ref. School Societies and the Can. Ref. Teachers Association have done little more than go through the motions. A meeting here, a convention there, the passing of a few motions, the taking on of a few responsibilities, but very little was produced of a tangible, lasting nature. Two remedies should be administered to the League: Fill the offices with men who no longer hold office in their local Societies, and limit its objectives to a few carefully chosen ones (e.g. supplementary training of our teachers, providing Reformed textbooks, and possibly salary negotiations). The C.R.T.A. is less than effective because it is unable to generate enthusiasm for its programmes and ideas among a large group of teachers. As is the case with Boardmembers, also some teachers consider Reformed Education to be something which begins and ends in their school. There is an amazing

John M. Boersema Doctor of Philosophy

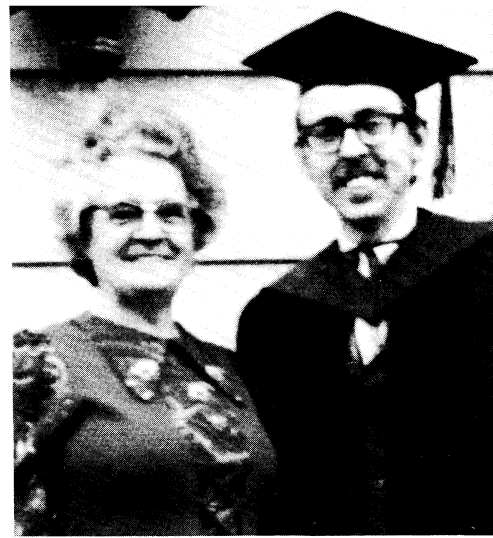
At a convocation held on May 21 in Philadelphia, Mr. John M. Boersema received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation, dealing with the field of Business and Applied Economics, is entitled "Accounting for Inflation: The Techniques Re-visited".

Mr. Boersema is Assistant Professor at the School of Business Administration, University of Western Ontario. He is a familiar figure in the Ontario Canadian Reformed community due to his years of involvement in the executive of the League of Young People's Societies and in related activities (e.g. Camp CRYPS and the Inter-League Publication Board). With his wife Jenny and their family he now lives in London, Ontario, where he is in the board of the local Canadian Reformed School Society.

butors, John has provided our readers with a number of articles on the subject of economics and for quite some time he has looked after a regular column, "Business & Economics", in an effort to provide a Reformed perspective on current developments.

Under the heading "Acknowledgements" at the beginning of the above-mentioned dissertation we

lack of interest and curiosity about other Reformed Schools, about someone else's approach and the failures and successes obtained elsewhere. Often Boardmembers and teachers are encapsulated in their local problems and search for solutions. As a result the larger, more embracing attempt to define Reformed Education and make it available in every school, the search for more Scriptural education material, the harnessing of talents which could, in time, provide us with our own selection of textbooks and teaching aids, has come full stop. Parents should put pressure on Board and Staff to get this movement going again. Our Societies should not rest on their laurels of schools and teachers, buses, P.T.A. and Family Night, walkathon and graduation ceremony. All of this is vanity, expensive vanity, if we do



Dr. John M. Boersema, with his mother, Mrs. E. Boersema, on the day of the Convocation.

read: "Above all, I thank God, the Lord of all, also of accounting, for strength to complete this task. May this study contribute in a small way to the following of His Law, also in accounting, by making accounting reports more truthful" (p. v). As for the highly technical contents of the thesis itself, perhaps our readers will be enabled to benefit from them indirectly in due time.

Now that he has completed his doctoral studies, it is our brother's intention to resume his work for our magazine and, also in this way, to serve the Reformed community. We are looking forward to the prompt and energetic cooperation which we have learned to expect from him.

Congratulations, Dr. Boersema, from us all! WH

not further develop our school as educational institutions based on God's Word. For the truth is that many parents are (remain) content with our schools provided that their children pass or graduate and the dues are not increased. For the rest: indifference. If that attitude is a reflection of the atmosphere in Board and Staff rooms, our schools are in trouble. It's a long way from Budgets, Transportation, Salaries and Janitorial Services to Reformed Education. Do our Boardmembers know that way? Are our teachers properly equipped to take our children along it? The League and the C.R.T.A., rather than to hassle about salaries, should hurry to develop the road of Reformed Education. Indeed, we're small. But we don't have to think and act small.

J.J. KUNTZ

news medley

There may not be a News Medley next time. We are now in the holiday season, and since also the writer of these Medleys will be away from home, his mail may not reach him, at least not the printed matter part. You will understand that. We shall do our best to keep you informed as much as possible.

For that reason we may also have to wait a little longer for the explanation of a "riddle" which I mentioned some weeks ago, the one about the consequences of marriages solemnized in Church services. In Family Post we find a statement which clarifies some aspects. But (evidently due to lack of room in the bulletin) the last sentence is: "This, however, is not the last word about it!" We therefore refrain from saying anything about it and shall inform you further when the whole story has unfolded. I am thankful for the concern of the brethren not to confuse me any further.

What I am confused about, however, is the question how there could be a point "Approbation Call Rev. G. Van Rongen" on the agenda of the latest Classis South when the Rev. G. Van Rongen is not here and when he has not yet been able to submit to a colloquium. I have not heard what this Classis decided, and that makes it easier to say this. It is a complete impossibility to approve a call when for the approval the result of a colloquium has to be known. When a call has been approved, the minister concerned can be installed. But the Churches have provided that such can be done only upon favourable result of a colloquium. I do not have the slightest doubt that there will be any trouble at all when the Rev. G. Van Rongen comes here; but when a minister of a foreign sister-church is called the possibility is there that he will be refused. What a strange situation we would have then if a classis would have "approved" the call first, but, upon colloquium, is compelled to state, "Sorry, but we can not approve it." Let's keep things simple. And in good order.

Recently I criticized a few things I found in Chatham's Church News. I am happy that I found things I can heartily agree with and may pass on to you this time. The brethren there also deem it necessary that the Rev. M.C. Werkman writes about the rules for election, in which I found some elements which I deem wrong. We shall gladly print Rev. Werkman's remarks. No objection if he makes it a whole article: the main thing is that we find the best way together.

Chatham's Church News contained also the information that Mr. and Mrs. Solomon VanderVeen celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary on June 1st. We did not know about it any earlier, but wish as yet to join our congratulations to those of many others which they undoubtedly received on that occasion. Forty-five years is a long time. It is not only a reason for gratitude that the Lord has spared two people for one another that long, but also that He has enabled them to remain faithful to each other. That is a miracle in a world which considers it perfectly normal when partners to a marriage leave each

other when difficulties and disagreements come up.

Chatham's building projects proceed steadily. As far as the price for the Church building is concerned, there were some difficulties. The company whose price the Church decided to accept, increased it by no less than 6%, even though the expiration date of the offer was still several days away. We are wondering how this will work out.

Meanwhile the ladies in Chatham increase their revenue by all sorts of ingenious means. I am amazed every time when I discover what "schemes" are being thought up to gather money. The "bake sales" are well-known by now. They appear to be very fruitful and to remain so. The Chatham ladies also set up a "House Cleaning Business". That is really something. A group of five ladies sets out, armed with vacuum cleaner, pails, "ouwe lappen", and scrapers. That last-mentioned weapon is something which - I hope - is not needed in most cases! Having cleaned six houses together, the ladies collected a profit of \$300.00. Any volunteers anywhere?

There is one more point gleaned from the last few Church Newses of Chatham. Let no one think that I am trying to make up for something! In the first place that is not necessary and in the second place it would not help. There is one more point of general interest which should be mentioned. It concerns the manner in which it is made known to the Congregation when one has broken with the Church.

We do say in Article 28 of the Belgic Confession that "no person of whatever state of condition he may be, ought to withdraw from" the Church. Yet, in more than one Church another formulation is used. Sometimes it is said that so and so "has broken with the Church"; sometimes it reads "has broken with the Church of Christ", or "with the Church of the Lord".

Personally, I prefer the last. What should be made clear is the sin which one commits when he leaves the Church of the Lord.

Frequently objections are raised to such expressions. How do we dare to declare of someone who leaves the Canadian Reformed Church at . . . that he has broken with the Church of the **Lord**? Is that not a pretention which goes too far? More than once it is then pointed out that the person involved has not become a heathen but simply has joined another church, one very close to us and (it is sometimes added in a sneering manner) maybe much more pious than we are. Do we then still dare to maintain that he has broken with the Church of the Lord?

In defense of the above manner of announcing such a deed, some follow a wrong course. They endeavour to prove that the communion to which the person concerned now belongs does not have a right to the title "the Church of the Lord". In other words, in order to defend the above expression some try to prove something about **others**! And that is completely wrong.

We have not been called to decide about the question whether this or that group or church still deserves the name "Church of the Lord". And it is not the obligation of a Consistory to differentiate and to devise different formulas, to be used in different cases: If a person goes there, he cannot be said to have broken with the Church of the Lord, but if he goes there, or does not go anywhere, then we can use that expression. Not at all!

All we have to judge is: What does he leave, with what does he break?

The question we have to answer is **not**: "What are others?" but: "Who are **we**?"

When we make profession of faith, the minister says: "You have appeared here to profess your faith before God and His holy Church"!

When one is excommunicated, we declare, "Therefore we, ministers and rulers of the Church of God at this place . . ."

Office-bearers who are ordained say "I do" to the question whether they feel in their heart that they "are lawfully called of God's Church, and therefore of God Himself".

That's what we confess and declare.

That is not a judgment about others; it is only a confession which regards our own position.

Someone who leaves the Church, breaks with God's holy Church, the Church of God at this place, as we quoted from our Forms.

That's all we declare about him.

It is not our obligation to pass judgment on the communion he is going to join (assuming that we know where he is going and that we would be able to gather sufficient information about it) and to differentiate between the one and the other; we only judge his act of breaking with what we confess to be the Church of the Lord. And there is no excuse whatsoever for breaking with the Church of the Lord.

Maybe someone remarks: That is a topic for an article and not for a News Medley. All right, I'll continue with some other news.

We stay in Ontario for a while, and visit the Churches at Burlington.

Burlington West informed us in the bulletin of June 10, that they had "only 97% to go" of their set goal for building purposes. One week later it was 95%. There was one bit of information which deserves to be passed on. The reporter mentioned that there was a young member who was contributing towards the drive from his earnings as a paper boy. It certainly was good that it was mentioned expressly. Such a young member puts many older ones to shame, not only when there is an extra "drive" but also as far as regular contributions are concerned!

Burlington East had an afternoon out with the elderly brothers and sisters. It was greatly enjoyed, according to the reporter, and it reminds us of the special trips which were and are made in the Netherlands for the benefit of elderly members and shut-ins.

The parking lot very likely will be paved after all (with a full guarantee), and the organ will have to be overhauled. Besides, Burlington East will have to "buy out" Burlington West at the end of this year. All this means extra burdens.

East is also active in the cause of bringing the Gospel to the neighbours. There was a booth at the Town and Country Fair, celebrating Burlington's Centennial. Bibles were distributed and also our booklet which contains the Three Forms of Unity. Fifty-five people declared that they wished to take the Bible course offered. A particular difficulty was the question whether the young people should attend Church or stay in the booth on the Sunday involved.

Now that we mentioned the booklet with the Three Forms of Unity: it appears that there is interest in such a handy, pocket-size booklet. It is not too expensive to give away (50 cents) and will enable people to read for themselves what we believe. To give a complete Book of

Praise which costs three dollars, may be a little too expensive. I know of several Church members who bought a few "Three Forms" to give to their neighbours or acquaintances.

Let's go to "the West" which, for Ontario people, is already found in Manitoba.

We mention in the first place the illness of Rev. J. Geertsema. We have no official information, but he seems to have been operated on and to be making progress. It was possible to find other solutions for young people who wish to get married during the summer. These other solutions are: ministers from other places and even provinces. We wish Rev. Geertsema a speedy recovery. About Rev. Stel we have no news.

There is news about a League Day for the ladies in Manitoba. June 28 was the date for that day. There Professor F. Oosterhoff introduced a "Comparison between Luther's and Calvin's Teaching, Why we are Calvinists". Mrs. J. De Ruitter introduced "Christian Women in Israel, Christian Women Today". We expect that a report on that meeting will be sent to us. And, maybe Prof. Oosterhoff can find the time to publish her introduction . . .

Edmonton's City Guide tells us that the Rev. J. Visscher (who introduced a topic at the League Day in Calgary) spoke on the theme "From Adam's Rib to Women's Lib". I certainly join my colleague De Jong in unqualified admiration for the ability of our brother Visscher to find such a title. Rev. De Jong writes, "How does a man figure out such a title (or would his wife have given him the idea, as his help-meet?)." I know a few more such virtuosi and reverently dip my hat.

A word of appreciation for all the clerks and others who so faithfully send the bulletins. Repeated request: send them as soon as they are issued. (This applies only to a few).

Sincerely, vO

VACATIONING MINISTERS

The Church at Winnipeg, Man., welcomes you to administer the Word of God in Winnipeg, if you can (re-)arrange your vacation or travel plans to include a Lord's Day spent in Southern Manitoba.

Please contact the clerk:

Mr. E. Bruinsma

41 Cranbrook Bay, Winnipeg, Man. R2C 0N8

Phone: 204 - 222-0762 or 222-9519

Due to the many request received by the Mission Board of New Westminster for copies of the "Mission News", the Board has decided to make this magazine available to anyone who may be interested. The "Mission News" is published every six weeks and carries articles about the mission work done in Brazil by the Churches of Western Canada.

The subscription fee will be \$2.00 a year and more information may be obtained by writing to:

The Mission Board

Box 70, New Westminster, B.C.

Not Key 73 but the Keys of the Kingdom!

Address by the Rev. M.C. Werkman of Chatham, Ontario, delivered in the American Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Tuesday, May 22, 1973. First of two parts.

Not Key 73 but the Keys of the Kingdom!

The AIM of Key 73 is: winning this continent to Christ! You will find that on page 12 of the Congregational Resource Book.

The PLANS of Key 73 are to challenge every person in North America with the claims of Jesus Christ. As the Rev. W. Smedes of the Christian Reformed Church says on page 198, "With all the groups and denominations doing their thing at the same time, more levels or strata of American society may be confronted with the gospel."

And on page 199 the same minister writes: "The rules of the game are indeed simple, and yet there is something profound about them. They are profound because embodied in the rules is a recognition of the unity and yet the variety within the body of Christ . . ."

"These rules are enabling over 100 denominations and groups to covenant themselves to a year of gospelizing in 1973. These groups range from the Missouri Synod Lutheran to the Assemblies of God, from the Christian Reformed to the Salvation Army, from the United Methodist to Campus Crusade for Christ. These groups have been able to meet together, to talk together, to plan together, to pray together, to fellowship together, to keep their cool together in Christian love through the power of the Holy Spirit".

So it is very clear that the aim of Key 73 is: winning the continent to Christ by challenging every person in North America with the claims of Christ. And by doing this all together with all kinds of churches and groups and denominations (or whatever you want to call them), we can do so much more. More strata of American society will be confronted with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are able to do this in a united way.

But we ask how is this possible? How is it possible that we as churches can do this cooperatively with others in a united effort, with groups or denominations that do NOT adhere to the full doctrine of the Word of God?

One of those churches mentioned in that whole list in the Congregational Resource Book, with which I am more familiar, being from Canada, is the United Church of Canada. The United Church of Canada is also included in this list, is also cooperating in the united effort to bring Christ to this continent and to win this continent to Christ. The United Church of Canada does NOT believe that the Bible is the Word of God! In their Catechism books they officially teach their children: God's Word is in the Bible! Not: the Bible IS God's Word, but God's Word is in the Bible. When they explain that, they say the Bible was written by holy men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. And to that of course we agree. The Bible was written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit! But the next sentence reads: but we do not equate the finite words of men with the truth of God! In that second sentence they officially DENY that this book, written by these men - even though they were inspired by the Holy Spirit! - they deny that this book, which they call the Bible, is the same as the Truth of God. The United Church officially denies the Bible as God's Infallible Word!

Are we to unite also with these kind of churches in a united effort to bring the gospel of Christ to this continent?

Well, says Key 73, that is no problem. For, as Rev.

Smedes says: in the rules for the game, in the rules of Key 73 (this evangelism program which he calls a game!) lies embodied a recognition of the unity and yet the variety of the body of Christ. In other words: we recognize each other, we recognize all these groups and churches and denominations as churches of Christ. We are one with them because embodied in these rules lies the recognition of the unity. We all together form the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, although within the body of Christ there are different groups and churches that even oppose each other. But that does not really matter, for we all are that one Body of Christ. And therefore of course we can pray together, of course we can fellowship together, we can work together and bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to this continent together!

But the question we have to face and that we have to answer, that these churches all will have to answer, is: is that true? Are all those churches or denominations, are they all the Body of Christ? And: what is the GOSPEL that Key 73 brings to this continent? Or, even more important, Who is Christ? WHO is the Christ that they want to confront North America with in 1973? Is that the Christ of the SCRIPTURES? Is that the Christ of the Old Testament? Is that the Christ of the New Testament? Is that the Christ Whom we confess in our Reformed Confessions?

Tonight I'd like to check just a few places, a few parts of our beautiful confessions. And when I say beautiful I mean beautiful because they are so Scriptural. Because these three forms of unity (the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort) confess the truth of the Word of God. And because they are so Scriptural, they are so Beautiful!

Tonight I'd like to check a few places in our beautiful Reformed Confession to hopefully show you that Key 73 is against our Reformed Confession and is against the Word of God.

The question is: how is the Church of Christ gathered in this world? Key 73 does not ask that question. It asks: how do we win the continent to Christ? Not: how do we gather the Church of Christ according to the Scriptures?

Key 73 answers: we can do it in a united effort to win the continent to Christ by confronting everyone unitedly with the gospel.

But the question is: is that also according to our Reformed Confession? And I assume that most of you here are of Reformed backgrounds. I assume that most, if not all, of you are familiar with the Reformed Confession, and that you professed your faith in the Lord before God and His holy congregation. And that you said "amen" to those confessions; also that you personally have made these creeds your personal confession of faith! So I assume that most of you are in complete agreement with these confessions, and that you firmly believe that these creeds are in complete agreement with the Scriptures themselves.

Is Key 73 according to the Reformed Confession? The answer is: NO!

For our Reformed Confessions speak an entirely different language. I'd like to turn to Lord's Day 21, that beautiful Lord's Day of the Heidelberg Catechism. It speaks about the Church of Christ. There the question reads: What do you believe concerning the holy catholic Church? And then that beautiful answer: That the Son of God (that is Jesus Christ) out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a Church chosen to everlasting life; and that I am, and forever shall remain, a living member thereof. It is very clear: Christ is the only one who gathers His Church. Out of the whole human race. And He does so from the beginning of the world. We all believe that Christ gathered His Church in the Old Testament: Abraham and the nation of Israel. We also believe that Christ gathered His Church in the New Testament, at Pentecost and after that through the whole world again!

CHRIST gathers His Church from the beginning to the end of the world. But most people today do not concretely believe and concretely confess this, that Christ gathers His Church, ALSO to the end of the world. Oh, we'll easily say: yes, that's true. Christ will keep His Church till the end of the world. But it means that we are somewhere in between the beginning and the end! That means: Christ is also gathering His Church TODAY!

And so the question is: where does Christ gather His Church today? In 1973? On this continent?

And: Christ gathers His Church by His Spirit and His Word. And therefore the question is: what do you confess about the Holy Spirit of God, and what do you confess about the Word of God? Is this Bible God's Word, from the beginning to the end? And do we submit as churches to the infallible authority of that Word of God?

Christ gathers His Church in the unity of the true faith! And that unity of the true faith is not found in Key 73. Perhaps some kind of unity of faith, but our Catechism says, and you've all said that when you made confession of faith, that Christ gathers His Church in the unity of the TRUE FAITH! That is that faith which has as its contents the Holy Scriptures. That faith which believes everything that God has revealed to us in the Bible. THAT is the true faith! And therefore we cannot be one with those who do not believe that whole Bible of God. For then we do not have the unity of the true faith. And that is at stake in Key 73.

Now to this Church, the Church which He gathers from the beginning to the end of the world, also today in the time in which we live, to this Church Christ has given the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, as you have confessed it in Lord's Day 31 of our Catechism.

What are the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven? First, the preaching of the Holy Gospel, and church discipline or excommunication out of the Christian Church. By these two the Kingdom of Heaven is opened and shut: opened to believers, and shut against unbelievers.

How is the Kingdom of Heaven opened and shut by the preaching of the Holy Gospel? By proclaiming and openly witnessing, according to the command of Christ, to believers, one and all, that, whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgiven them of God for the sake of Christ's merits; and on the contrary, by proclaiming and witnessing to all

unbelievers and such as do not sincerely repent, that the wrath of God and eternal condemnation abide on them so long as they are not converted. According to this witness of the gospel God will judge, both in this life and in that which is to come.

And how is the Kingdom of Heaven shut and opened by church discipline? By forbidding, according to the command of Christ, the use of the sacraments by those who under the Christian name maintain unchristian doctrines or practices; who will not, after repeated brotherly admonitions, renounce their errors and wicked course of life; and who, having been complained of to the church, or to those who are thereunto appointed by the church, despise their admonitions - by which censure they are excluded from the Christian Church, and by God Himself from the kingdom of Christ; and by again receiving such as members of Christ and His Church when they promise and show real amendment.

This is YOUR confession! These are the two keys of the kingdom of God. The preaching of the gospel and church discipline. Both of these, as our Belgic Confession says in art. 29, are marks of the true church of Christ. By those two you may also know which church is the church of Christ. In our Belgic Confession of Faith we also confess the Word of God concerning the church of Christ (art. 27). There we also confess that this Church has been from the beginning of the world and will be to the end of it. In art. 28 we confess that everyone (mind you: everyone! not one is excluded) is bound to join himself to the true church. And it says in the same article that everyone who does not join himself to the Church of Christ acts contrary to the ordinance of God. It says that we, even if we should suffer death or any corporal punishment, must join the Church of Christ, no matter where God has placed it. In art. 29 we confess what are the marks of the Church of Christ and wherein it differs from the false church. We believe that we ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true church, since all sects which are in the world assume to themselves the name of the Church.

Then we confess what are the marks: the preaching of the pure doctrine of the gospel and the pure administration of the sacraments and the pure exercise of church discipline. Then it says again: these two Churches are easily known and distinguished from each other.

In art. 30 that same confession continues to confess the Word of God concerning the Church. Art. 30: the government of the Church and its offices. It speaks about the same Church as art. 29, 28, and 27. For there we say that this true church, that is the church of the previous articles, that this church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in His Word, namely that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who together with the pastors, form the council of the Church. By these means the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated, etc.

Then we continue in art. 31 about the ministers, elders and deacons. We confess that ministers, elders and deacons must be chosen by a lawful election in the Church of Christ. And art. 32 is about that order and discipline of the Church of Christ.

So we see: our confessions, our Catechism and our Belgic Confession, they are actually full of what we confess



40th Wedding Anniversary

On April 11, 1973, Brother and Sister P.J. Huttema celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary, as we have already mentioned in a previous issue. Since it was hard to get the whole family together at an earlier date, the above picture is published somewhat later. The Huttema family came to Canada in April, 1951. They went to Coaldale, Alta., as "beet workers". After the beets were done, they moved to British Columbia ["without regrets", as I was informed]. They lived in Cloverdale until 1958, when they moved to Chilliwack, to a dairy farm. They retired in 1970,

and now are living in the Abbotsford area. Their children wish them many more years with the blessing of the Lord. When I received the picture, I had a hard time to find the couple themselves. Finally, I located brother Huttema in the middle, top row. Sister Huttema is standing to the right of him, with some descendants dividing them [left of him on the picture].

Looking at the whole group, I was suddenly struck by the thought how great the blessing is when of such a large family all members belong to the Church and take an active part in the activities of the Church. That must have been the greatest joy during the celebrations.

[Thanks, Ben, for permission to keep the picture itself.]

to be the Word of God concerning Christ gathering His Church. And so we may conclude that according to our Reformed Confession it is Christ Who gathers His Church by His Spirit and Word in the unity of the true faith. And Christ does so by the office-bearers that He has given to His Church; by the preaching of the Word of God, which has to be done by the office-bearers of Christ; and by church discipline which has to be exercised by the office-bearers of Christ. That is very Scriptural. That is what Paul teaches us in Ephesians 4, which we read at the beginning of this evening. Paul speaks about the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then he says in verse 8: and Christ has given gifts unto men. And he does not leave us in the dark as to what these gifts are, but in verse 11 he says: and He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. When Christ ascended into heaven He did not leave His Church behind, but He gave to His Church gifts from heaven, as we confess in Lord's Day 19 that Christ, sitting at the right hand of God, sheds forth in us, His members, by His Holy Spirit, His gifts. One of the Scripture references given in Lord's Day 19 is Ephesians 4 and it points out to us that the office-bearers are ascension gifts of Christ Jesus to His Church. For Christ, as we confess in the same Lord's Day, ascended into heaven as the Head of His Church by whom

the Father governs all things.

And so the question is, also with regard to Key 73; what do we believe concerning Jesus Christ as the only Head of His Church? How does Christ gather His Church in 1973? The Lord Jesus Christ, sitting at this moment at the right hand of God, how is He gathering His Church here in Grand Rapids, Michigan? Today, in 1973? For we cannot separate Christ from His Church-gathering activity. We cannot separate Christ from His office-bearers here on earth. For we cannot separate Christ from His Bride, the Church. We cannot separate the Head from the Body. But that is exactly what Key 73 is doing. It is first removing Christ as the Head of His Church (and they have to do that or else they cannot cooperate with each other in this great evangelism project) and after Christ has been removed as the Head of His Church, they confront this continent with Christ. But that Christ that we then confront the American continent with is not the Christ of the Scriptures! There is no such Christ! For the Scriptures say in Ephesians 1 that God has given Christ as the Head over all things to His Church which is His Body. And Christ cannot be separated from His ascension gifts, the office-bearers.

M.C. WERKMAN

[Part two in next issue]

Church News

Classis Ontario-South, held June 20, 1973, has declared Mr. R.F. Boersema eligible for a call.

Mr. Boersema's Address:
P.O. Fenwick, Ont. L0S 1C0
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Official Announcement

The Classis Ontario North of June 20, 1973, received a letter from the Church at Toronto, informing it that Mr. J.A. Godschalk, declared eligible for call within the Churches, has broken with the Church.

By order of Classis
Wm. W.J. VanOene
h.t. Clerk

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Voting Privileges for Women

The Consistory of the Bethel Canadian Reformed Church at Toronto:

1. Has considered the matter of "voting privileges for women" and summarized the historic development on the discussion at previous General Synods of the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland":
 - (a) General Synod Utrecht, 1923, appointed a committee to examine the question.
 - (b) General Synod Groningen, 1927 - after having taken notice of the report of the Committee 1923 - expressed itself that it was "of the opinion that the time had not come yet to make . . . a definite decision on the matter" and appointed deputies with the mandate to report to the next General Synod.
 - (c) General Synod Arnhem, 1930, decided: "General Synod, of the opinion that the election of office bearers by the members of the congregation is not the giving of advice, but, rather, an exercising of the power of government in a general sense, to be distinguished from the special power of government which is assigned by Christ to the special office of overseer; that indeed the approbation, from which right the women are not excluded, belongs also to this general power of the government of the believers, but

then with this difference in character that in the election the congregation indicates whom it desires as office bearers, while in the approbation it states whether or not it approves of the persons chosen; belongs to the woman in the church as well as to the man it does not follow that she is also allowed to take part in the election unto office; that further no convincing proof has been given that Scripture demands women's suffrage, but that the data which it offers seem to plead much more against than in favour of it; decides not to grant the right of voting in the church to the female members of the congregation."

- (d) The issue was again discussed at General Synod Bunschoten/Spakenburg, 1958, which Synod dealt with proposals from two Churches which requested Synod to declare that the decision of Synod Arnhem, 1930, should no longer bind the Churches as to their policy regarding the election of office bearers. Synod decided not to grant the request made in these proposals.
 - (e) General Synod Rotterdam/Delfshaven, 1964/65, dealt with a request of a Regional Synod, namely "to declare as abrogated the decision of General Synod Arnhem, 1930, and to declare that it shall stand in the freedom of the Churches to let female confessing members take part in the election of office bearers." Synod decided not to grant the request because "the argumentation was so limited that it must be concluded that there has been insufficient preparation."
2. Considering the grounds adduced by these General Synods, the following was found:
 - (a) Arnhem, 1930, stated:
 1. that voting is exercising power of government in a general sense;
 2. that women are not excluded from the right of approbation;
 3. that from the fact that the office of all believers belongs to the women as well as to the men it does not follow that she is allowed to take

- part in the election;
4. that the Scriptural data seem to plead against voting privileges for women.

- (b) Bunschoten/Spakenburg, 1958, stated:
 1. that it does not follow as such from the office of believers that the women possess the right to vote;
 2. that the point (as adduced by the proposing Churches) has not been proven by Scripture.
- (c) The grounds of Rotterdam/Delfshaven, 1964/65, were:
 1. the argumentation is too limited;
 2. therefore there is no reason for revision.
3. Evaluating these grounds, the following conclusions can be drawn:

ad 2a1: The Scriptures do not teach a differentiation between general and special authority. The expression "general authority" has independent overtones. We quote a statement made by Rev. W.G. DeVries in *Petahjah*, Vol. 26, Nr. 1, Jan. 1972: "It is more in accordance with Scripture to speak of the maturity of the congregation, 1 John 2:20, Gal. 3:28."

ad 2a2: Approbation is not a form of general exercise of authority of government. Male AND female members are qualified as mature members of the Church.

ad 2a3: After evaluating grounds 1 and 2, ground 3 is not applicable.

ad 2a4: Is too vague in "seem to plead" to draw any conclusion from.

ad 2b1: Bunschoten/Spakenburg, 1958, has not discussed any argument and has followed the line of argument of Arnhem, 1930.

ad 2c: Rotterdam/Delfshaven, 1964/65, did not express in which respect the argumentation was too limited. Not the number of arguments but the validity of one or more arguments decides.
4. The Church at Toronto requests Classis:
 - (a) to express its agreement with the following proposal which will be presented to the forthcoming General Synod Toronto, 1974;
 - (b) to decide to prepare a proposal on the matter to the forthcoming Regional Synod, 1973.

Continued on Page 15.

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

How are you enjoying the summer and your school holidays? And how are you keeping busy? Do you help your father and mother? Or do you take swimming lessons? Maybe some of you are on a trip, or planning one! I wonder if I'll get any cards from far away places where Busy Beavers are visiting.

Have you thought about what you'll enter in our big triple-treat Summer Contest? Remember the contest rules from last time? In the Art Contest you may enter any kind of picture you like to make. But be sure to put your NAME and AGE on all your entries. Maybe you could even give your art work a title!

The contest also includes a Poetry Contest (the poems must be your own!) and the Quiz Contest that will be included in next time's issue.

Don't forget that all the Busy Beavers will be able to see the best entries published in Our Little Magazine. And of course the winners are to be awarded a prize!

Let's do some quizzes now to get you in shape for that big Quiz Contest!

IN HIS OR HER HANDS

1. She held in her hands the lad of whom God had promised to make a great nation.
2. He held in his hands the one who was to be the consolation of Israel.
3. This damsel held in her hands the head of John the Baptist.
4. In the hands of this man Paul's life was entrusted on his journey to Rome.
5. In his hands were all the possessions of his wealthy master.
6. In his hands he held the heel of his brother at birth.
7. In her hands she held the condemnation of the human race.
8. In his hands, he claimed, was the power to do Jacob hurt.
9. In his hands the kingdom of David was established.

Who said it?

1. "What is this that God hath done unto us?"
Clue: They had come from Egypt.
2. "Why askest thou thus after my name seeing it is secret?"
Clue: He was speaking to a man and his wife.
3. "I was in Shushan the palace."
Clue: An Old Testament writer.
4. "Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came . . ."
Clue: A queen who had traveled many miles.
5. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
Clue: At the end of a Bible book.
6. "We have found this man a pestilent fellow."
Clue: An orator.

7. "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit."
Clue: The first martyr.
8. "Where wilt thou that we prepare?"
Clue: They were getting ready for the Passover.
9. "How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people?"
Clue: She stood before the king.
10. "I will go and see him before I die."
Clue: Wonderful news of a son.

Would you like to try some riddles on your friends? Or you can enjoy them on your own, one lazy summer afternoon!

1. Why is a river rich?
2. What did the one wall say to the other wall?
3. What is the largest jewel in the world?
4. What has legs but cannot walk?
5. What is gray, has two ears, four legs, and a trunk?
6. What runs, but never walks?

* * * * *

I think some of the Busy Beavers like summer because it gives them extra time to read! Well, if you've read a really good book, with a fine story and good language, please share it with the other Busy Beavers and write a BOOK LOOK. Here's one from *Henrietta Veldkamp* for you.

The Secret of the Rocking Stones

by Dorothy O. Joy

The two children, Peter and Anne Graham, almost had to sell their ranch, their beloved horses because money was scarce and there was no other alternative. Their summer holidays are nearly spoiled and their cousin Beth can't even find anything to do.

But three things happened. They spend a wet day sorting out junk in the attic and find something very valuable. They catch glimpses of a mysterious chinaman who appears and disappears. They also have more trouble with Thomas, the mischievous little brother of Peter and Anne. All these things are the complete cure to all their gloom.

* * * * *

And now we come to one of my favourite parts of Our Little Magazine.



From the Mailbox

I really do enjoy your letter, Busy Beavers! I'm glad to hear if you've passed with good marks, or if you've had a good day on your birthday, or if you have exciting plans for your holidays. I like it too, if you don't have anything particularly exciting to tell about and you just drop a line about everyday things.

So let me hear from you. And if there are boys and girls reading Our Little Magazine who would like to write Aunt Betty and maybe join in our Big Summer Contest - just write me a little letter with your name, address, and birthday, and anything else you want to tell. You'll soon get your membership card and be a real member of the Busy Beaver Club! My address is: Box 54, Fergus, Ontario, N1M 2N7.

Now let's welcome our new members.

Hello, *Geraldine De Boer*. Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club. I hope you passed your year at school, and are now enjoying the summer. What are you entering in our Summer Contest, Geraldine?

Welcome to the Club, *Louis Dykstra*. How did you enjoy your holidays? Or haven't you gone yet? Be sure to let me know, and tell me too, when your birthday comes, all right?

It was nice to hear from you again, *Jane Kobes*. You sure have lots of plans for this summer! What did you think of the factory and monastery you visited with your class?

Now let's see how well we did on last time's quizzes.

Bible Reptiles [scrambled words]

- | | | |
|----------|--------------|------------|
| 1. frogs | 3. chameleon | 5. serpent |
| 2. adder | 4. leviathan | |

Bible Names

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Naaman | 4. Rahab |
| 2. Athaliah | 5. Ephraim, Manasseh |
| 3. Kish | 6. Samuel |
| 7. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. | |

Bible Numbers

- | | | |
|-----------|-------|-------|
| 1. 40 1/2 | 3. 70 | 5. 42 |
| 2. 70 | 4. 12 | |

Riddles

1. It has two banks. 2. Meet you at the corner. 3. A baseball diamond. 4. Table and chairs. 5. A mouse going on vacation. 6. Water.

Till next time, Busy Beavers.

Yours,
Aunt Betty.

Church News

Continued from page 13

5. The Church at Toronto proposes: to grant active voting privileges to the female confessing members of the Churches . . . as desirable in the present situation and conducive to the spiritual well-being of the Churches . . . on the following grounds:

- A. 1. The subordination of woman to man remains (1 Cor. 14:34, 1 Tim. 2:11-14, 1 Cor. 11:3-15);
 2. This subordination does not disappear when a woman votes as a mature member of the Church. Women partake in the office of believers as it is restored by Christ (Rom. 8:29, Col. 3:10, 1 John 2:20). The rights and duties of this office are hers by virtue of her maturity;
 3. Scripture emphasizes the congregation (Rom. 16:5, Acts 12:5, II Cor. 8:19, Acts 1:14). Women belong to the congregation.
- B. 1. The election of office bearers is not an act of government, which is a prerogative of the consistory given to it by Christ;
 2. Electing by voting is an act of being involved by mature members of the Church.
- C. 1. Woman was, like man, created after the image of God, not in a second(ary) degree;
 2. The fact that the apostles addressed the Church (congregation) as brethren is a strange argument and would lead to the conclusion that they were ad-

- addressing a meeting of the male members only;
 3. Female members who did not form a family are also mature members and have the above-mentioned rights and privileges. Apart from that, they cannot "ask their husbands";
 4. In cases where the father has died the mother acts as the head of the family; in the case of unmarried women, none denies that they also have a task to fulfill.



Hymn 8

Stanza 2.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
 Who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
 In ancient times didst give the law
 In cloud and majesty and awe.

Paraphrase.

O come, Lord of might, Ps. 68:28;
 Who gavest the Law to thy tribes in ancient times; Ex. 19:17; 20:1; in clouds and majesty, Ex. 20:18; Ps. 68:8, 17; Heb. 12:18-22.

OUR COVER

The Moricetown Canyon, through which the Bulkley River makes its way downstream from Houston and Smithers, B.C. [British Columbia Government Photograph].

Mr. and Mrs. John Veldman, 3132 Alm Road, Everson, Washington, U.S.A. are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter:

FLORENCE

to

EVERT DE HAAN, JR.

son of Mr. and Mrs. Evert de Haan of Surrey, B.C.

Grateful to the Lord, who made all things well, we announce the birth of our son:

JUSTIN HARRY

John and Grace Vanderwoude (nee Harsevoort)

A brother for:

Sidney, Bradley, Sonja, and Jason.

June 27th, 1973.
 6 Fairwood Place East
 Burlington, Ontario.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter F. Kooistra are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter:

ALICE

to

RUDMER K. MOLLEMA

on June 30, 1973.

1714 Madison S.E.
 Grand Rapids, U.S.A.
 Hootdweg 54, Slochteren
 Groningen, The Netherlands.