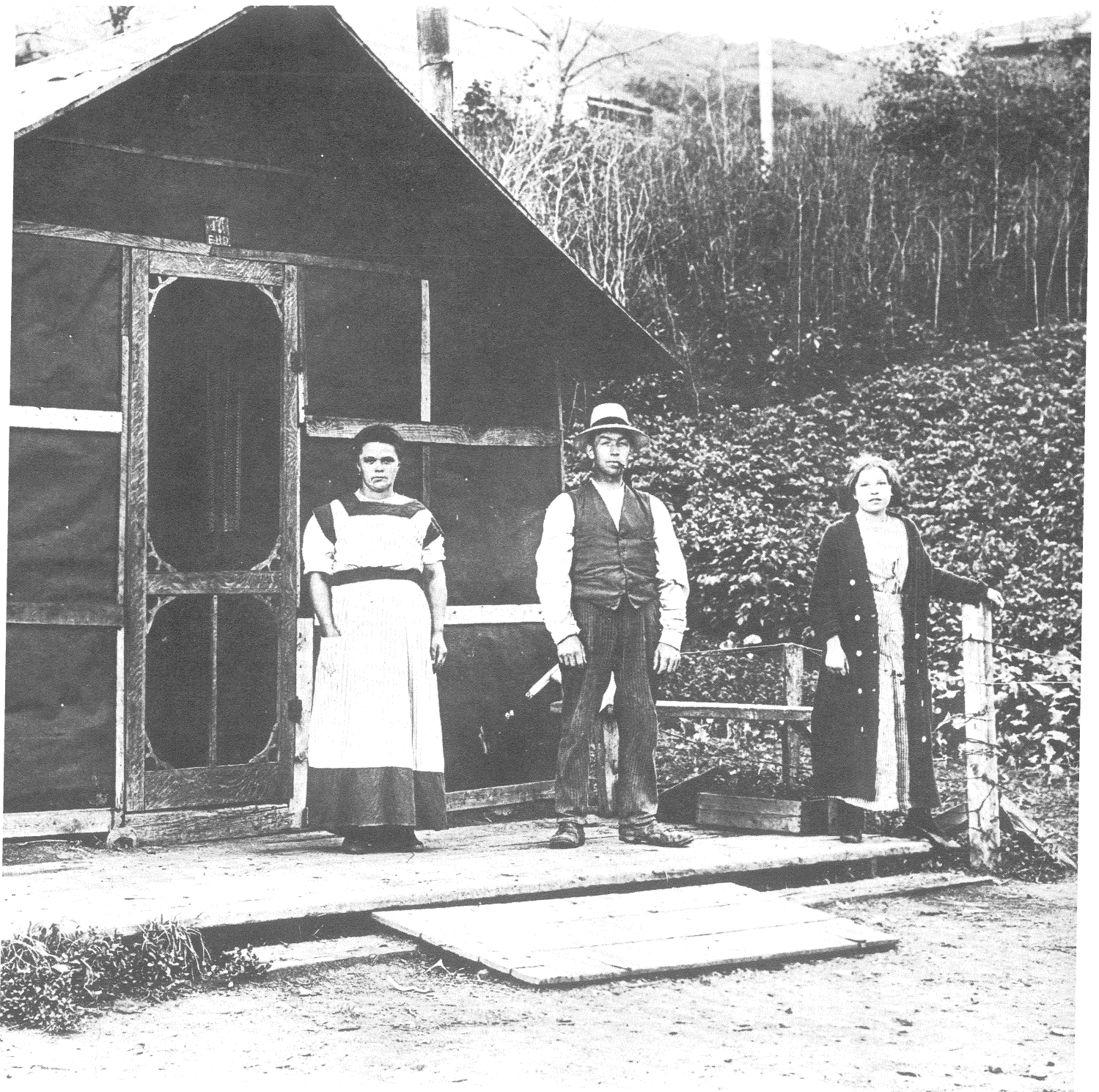


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Questions About Seperate Services

From a brother "somewhere in Canada" I received a letter with questions regarding separate "Dutch Services". No, the letter was not anonymous. The brother even informed me that his minister was aware of his letter to me and was very much interested in learning my opinion on his questions. That I mention neither the name nor the place, is done in order to avoid any impression as if I wish to interfere in local affairs. Besides, the questions seem to be found in more than one congregation; and certainly the line of reasoning is not confined to one place.

Let me first tell you what the situation is.

The Consistory of this Church decided to organize a Dutch service for those who have difficulty with the English language. Twice a month such a service is held in the basement of the Churchbuilding simultaneously with the service in English, which is conducted in the auditorium upstairs.

Now our brother has some questions about this. I quote them here.

1. Has a consistory the right to conduct two services at the same time in two different locations?
2. Where am I called? Upstairs? Downstairs? Or am I left with a choice?
3. May I expect to see the whole consistory in the worship service, or is it possible that a part may be called for duties elsewhere?
4. When the congregation is addressed, does it include upstairs and downstairs?
5. Is it fair to the congregation to have reading services, so a small group can have the preaching of the gospel in their native tongue?

Those are the questions. Our brother writes that he is not against Dutch services as such ("I speak it better than English") but he writes that now the language splits the congregation and families in two. "But many other reasons may be found in the future to do the same."

There we are. What to say about all this?

Let me begin with saying that I do not like the argumentation as such. To me it seems to be too much in the line of "Konsequenzmacherei" as the Germans put it. Let us approach the whole thing from a practical standpoint.

In the first place: Has a Consistory the right to conduct two services at the same time in two different locations? Why would a Consistory *not* have that right? It all depends on the reasons which a Consistory has for such a decision.

In 1953 it became evident that the members of the New Westminster Church who were living in the Abbotsford/Aldergrove area would soon be able to form a separate Church. As a preparation for such a move, the Consistory of the New Westminster Church decided to organize separate services in Aldergrove, and these services were scheduled for exactly the same hours as those of the part of the Congregation which met in "Dreamland" instead of in the shack on the Otter Road in Aldergrove.

Someone may say, "But that is a different story!" Not quite, for we are trying to answer the question whether a Consistory has the right to call the Congregation together at two different places at the same hours! In 1953 the

reason was: the distances. I still believe that this was a valid reason. In 1969 the members of the Fergus/Guelph Church who were living in the Guelph area were given the opportunity to come together in Guelph instead of in Fergus; and the morning service was at such a time that it coincided partly with the hours during which the morning service in Fergus was held. I am still convinced that this was correct, and that the Consistory had the right to do that.

The answer to the first question is, therefore, not an answer to the question whether a Consistory has the right to do this, but to the other question: Whether the Consistory has a right to do this for the reason of language-difficulties. We come to that later.

When the question is asked where one is called or whether one has a free choice, this is not hard to answer. That all depends on what the Consistory has decided.

If, as may be the case with preparations for the institution of a separate Church, the Consistory decides that those who have made a choice either for the one or for the other, shall attend the services in the (future) Church of their choice, then there is no choice: the choice was there when the Consistory gave the opportunity to express one's preference. But if a Consistory has not made any such decision, why should I not have the right to attend the service in that location which is more convenient for me on that particular Sunday? Maybe I wish to visit some people who attend there; maybe I have visitors who would like to meet brother and sister so-and-so; there may be scores of reasons. Since the Consistory did not tell me where to go, I am free to go.

When a Consistory organizes two separate services, one upstairs, one downstairs, and leaves the choice up to the members, I am free to go where I want to go. I DO have to come to Church, but I do not necessarily HAVE to attend the services upstairs.

For some time we did have a Dutch service here in Fergus in the basement of the parsonage at the same hour an English service was conducted in the auditorium. The Consistory never told any member where to go. The Consistory never forbade any member to go either here or there. And when one of the children, attending the Dutch service in the basement of the parsonage, replied to the question why they went to the basement, "It is too hot in the Church; the basement is much cooler", the result was not that this family was told from now on to attend the English service. No, everyone was free to go where he wished to go for whatever reason he may have had.

Now we come to the question whether we may expect the whole Consistory to be at both locations at the same time. Apart from the practical impossibility, I cannot see why this is necessary. Why should it not be allowed to appoint some of the office-bearers to attend a particular service, while the rest are present at the other location? When two families of the New Westminster Church were living 500 miles away, an Elder and I were appointed to go there three times a year. We celebrated the Holy Supper together, and baptism was administered; these are cere-

Continued on page 17

Neerlandia: 25 years

It is the year 1912. A family is unloading their wagon filled with belongings. The oxen are having a well-deserved rest; but everyone is busy, for they have finally reached their destination, their very own homestead. If you listen closely, you would hear that they are not speaking English, but Dutch; for this is to be a Dutch colony, soon to receive the name Neerlandia.

They had a long trip behind them. First they had to cross the ocean; that had been none too pleasant. But they had all been excited and eager, especially the father. A friend had written that in North America there was a future. He had even sent a picture of wheat fields and written, "Het land wacht op de ploeg" (The land is waiting for the plow). Oh, he could hardly wait to set up his very own farm. In Holland he had never had any land of his own; he had been a hired hand and had seen little chance to improve himself. Little did he realize what work would have to be done before the first seed could be planted, for the picture was not of North Alberta, but of the southern part!

After about ten days on the boat they arrived in Halifax, where they boarded the train. The trip seemed endless. They saw what a vast country Canada is. Finally they arrived in Edmonton, already then a booming city, filled with immigrants. They set up their tent in the Norwood district of the city, where other Dutch immigrants had gathered. There they shared their experiences and heard the latest news.

Before 1896 there had been few Dutch immigrants. But the twenty-five years after 1896 were years of economic expansion and hence the population also increased. Though certainly not nearly as many as after World War II, there were a number of Dutch immigrants at the beginning of the century. The prairies attracted most Dutch immigrants. Many settled in South Alberta. When the Athabasca and Peace River areas opened up, many Dutch people settled in central and north Alberta. In 1900 some came to Edmonton where the Dutch segment of the population grew slowly but surely. But not all were content to stay in the city. There was farmer's blood in their veins and the pioneer spirit was strong. They would set up a Dutch colony, far from the city. But, I wonder if they realized how far they would have to go. Full of enthusiasm several men set out for the north. On and on they went, passing one ethnic settlement after another, until they had gone about 90 miles and found an area suitable for a Dutch settlement, far from the city and from worldly influences. For, not only was it to be a settlement of Dutch immigrants, but it was also to be a settlement of believers from the Gereformeerde Kerken (Reformed Churches of the Netherlands) who in this strange land sought each other and who desired that a Church and church life be established in this way.

The area to be named Neerlandia had no settlers except for three hunters and trappers, who were very helpful to the newcomers. They opened their shanties to them while they looked around and helped them to choose the best spots for a homestead.

Happy to have found such a good area for their colony, they returned to Edmonton and filed on land. For ten dollars a homestead could be bought. A person then had rights to a piece of land, a part of which had to be cleared in a few years; when that had been done, you became the owner. A number of other families also bought a homestead. Then one after another left Edmonton behind and set out northward to Neerlandia, the free frontier country.

They followed what was known as the Klondike trail, used in gold rush times. As far as St. Albert there was a good graded road and it wound past a number of snug-looking farms. But gradually good-looking farms were left behind and so was the good road. How some of them must have thought, Where are we going? Was it really the right thing to do? The trail wound this way and that and the further north they went, the more closely the forest hemmed the road in. The road, if it could be called that, became worse and progress slower. As one of the first settlers recounted it, time and again the wagon with belongings would be mired to the axles and the animals to the bellies in mud holes. The wagon would have to be unloaded (and often when reloading, a bigger item would have to be left on the side of the trail.) They would have to go to nearby woods to gather brush and poles to lay across the trail in front of them to corduroy it and hope it would support the wagon and the animals. This happened often and the odds against reaching their goal seemed insurmountable at times like this. But, straining every muscle, the animals managed to move forward. The trip was on again and spirits rose once more. Finally, after some days of travelling, they caught sight of the surveyor's stake marking their own homestead. They pitched their tent and, after watching a colourful sunset, they fell fast asleep with thankful hearts, content to be "at home."

Early morning saw all up and busy at the work that had to be done. For Neerlandia, the settlement of God's people, had to be built.

The first thing that had to be done was to clear a small piece of land by hand and then to build a log house on it. Then the work of clearing land began, first for a garden and then for field crops.

In this and other things everyone helped each other. There were men of various skills and trades as well as farmers, and each complemented the other, though being Dutchmen they must have had their disagreements too!

Six days of the week they worked hard but they could

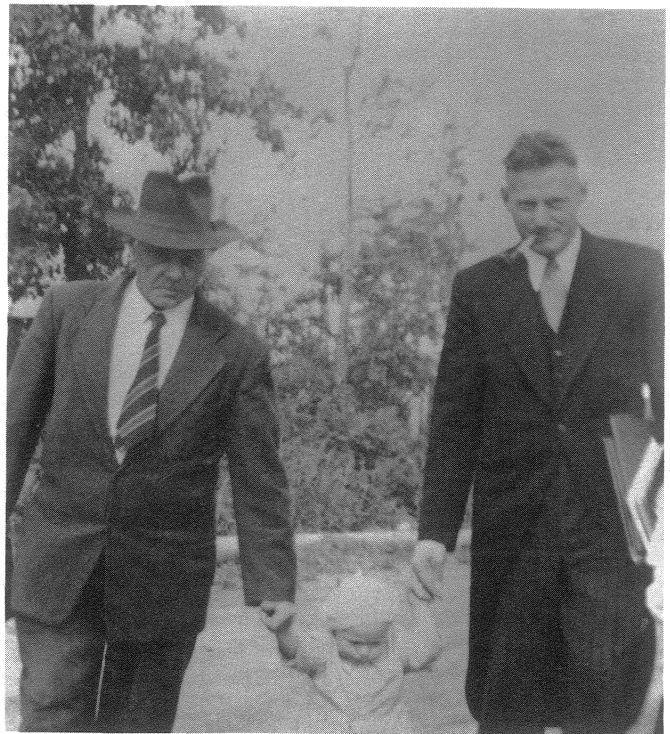
start each week with a day of rest, a day of worship.

For some time church services were held in a home, but about 1915 it was decided to build a church building. The people wanted a meeting place in Canada where they could serve the Lord. And soon after each family had a roof above their heads, they began with enthusiasm to build a house of worship. Also, of course, by this time there were really too many to be accommodated in a home. They chose a central location, where the hamlet is now, and erected a fine log church, behind which were the stalls for the horses, with which the members went to church. This church building served Neerlandia for at least fifteen years. A new frame church was then built and in 1948 that was replaced by a modern structure.

In the summer of 1915 the church was officially instituted. The Rev. T. Jongbloed and deacon Quist arrived from Edmonton, representing classis for the occasion. It was quite some time before Neerlandia had their own minister, but church services were held faithfully. Most spoke only a few words of English, as could be expected; hence for a long time church services were held in Dutch.

The church building was also used as a school until 1917, when a school house was built (as directed by the government) near the church. For many it was a long walk to school and during the winter months when it was already getting dark at 3:30 it was scary. Some would take shortcuts through the fields, but you could never be sure that you would not meet a bear or a moose!

Meanwhile the work of clearing land continued, until eventually more and more land came under cultivation. No one could possibly buy all the necessary farming imple-



Rev. H. Stel, Henry and Mr. A. Wierenga on their way to church.



Mr. and Mrs. Albert John Oldegbers with their only son John. This couple was very much appreciated in Neerlandia. Mr. Oldegbers helped out the early pioneers with any problems or with their livestock. Mrs. Oldegbers was a midwife, and if it wouldn't have been for her the women would have had to go all the way to Morinville, 65 miles away, to the doctor when their babies were born. With the roads in the conditions they were in those days, and on a high-wheeled ox cart, that would have been a terrible ride in those conditions.

ments, so that farm machinery was shared. From the earliest days people here concentrated on raising cattle, hogs, and poultry.

Where did they get their groceries? In many ways the people were self-sufficient, but there was a store in the area where the necessary groceries could be bought. It had been started by a well-to-do farmer from Wisconsin but his prices were not reasonable. Consequently the Dutchmen started the Neerlandia Co-op store in a small log building in the early 1920's. Each family had a share in it and the profits were shared by all. A few years later a new frame store was built "downtown" opposite the church. Over the years the store has become a very prosperous business and also a busy meeting place to exchange the latest news.

The year 1927 saw an important improvement for the area with the coming of the railway to Barrhead, the closest town. Around the following year a number of new immigrants arrived in Neerlandia to make a new start in a new country. The year 1929 saw a big event when Neerlandia finally received their own minister, the Rev. H. Vander-Woude, who stayed for twelve years. He was the minister but also a farmer among farmers! For he had bought a piece of land, and if he was not in his study, you could find him busy at work on his land.

The following years were the hungry 30's, but as elsewhere in Canada, they persevered, clearing more land and making do with little as they were used to doing.

After the war things greatly improved. And today we can see that a struggling settlement has become a very prosperous community.

The year 1948 saw the beginning of a new stream of immigrants to Neerlandia and also to the neighbouring town of Barrhead. Amongst these people were also members of the Liberated Churches in the Netherlands; in



At the official welcome evening for Rev. and Mrs. VanDam. Mr. J. Werkman talking to Rev. DeJong and the VanDam's.

Neerlandia they joined the Christian Reformed Church but that was not to last too long.

The Christian Reformed Church had correspondence with the "Gereformeerde Kerken" in the Netherlands, and did not want to hear about the trouble in Holland. But they were not neutral, for they would not accept faithful ministers from the Liberated churches on their pulpits. In Neerlandia there were a number who were worried about developments in their church.

On the whole, the people are well-read and up-to-date in church matters, for it means so much to them and they use their long winter evenings to read the latest books and papers. Hence many were well aware of recent developments in Holland and, after talking to the new immigrants, some became very dissatisfied with the attitude of the Christian Reformed Church.

A number of times Mr. L. Wierenga wrote in *De Wachter*, pointing to the struggle in the Netherlands against synodical hierarchy. Then protests went to the consistory and to classis but to no avail. Eventually, in March, Mr. L. Wierenga, Mr. I. Wierenga, and Mr. J. Rowaan sent a letter to the General Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of 1950 requesting them to ask both church groups in the Netherlands to "present their views as to the reason for separate church existence, and to ask the one group why it has suspended, and deposed, and the other why they liberated themselves." In the meantime, two members of the consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church in Lethbridge had visited them, strengthening the bond which correspondence had already begun. When the Rev. J. Hettinga instituted the church in Edmonton, Neerlandia was also represented. A number became members, others wanted to wait for the answer of Synod. A few days later the answer came. A disappointing one, as had

been feared. Synod had decided not to accede to their request:

"Grounds:

- A. It is not in our province to sit in judgment over these churches.
- B. It is not our Christian duty to invite delegations from these churches for the purpose of settling these issues.
- C. The 'Gereformeerde Kerken onderhoudende Art. 31 K.O.' is in no way prevented from directing an invitation for correspondence to us."

On August 1, 1950, they sent a letter and an Act of Liberation to all the members of the Christian Reformed Church, stating their reasons for liberating themselves. In summary form, these reasons were (following the order of the grounds Synod gave):

A. The Christian Reformed Church, while saying that it does not want to judge events in Holland, by their decision in fact implicitly condemns the Liberated Churches.

B. The Christian Reformed Church, while claiming to be neutral, has already judged (as seen by its accepting Synodical ministers but denying Liberated ones the right to speak) and has done so without hearing the arguments of the Liberated Churches.

C. The one-sided attitude of the Christian Reformed Church has prevented correspondence with the Liberated Churches.

A Canadian Reformed Church was instituted in Neerlandia on August 6, 1950, under the leadership of elder A.W. DeLeeuw of Edmonton. A. Mulder, H. Peters, and E. Wierenga were installed as elders and G. Dam and A.L. Hamoen as deacons. At that time there were about 40 members. A year later the membership had risen to 68.

After two ministers had declined, the congregation of Neerlandia joyfully received word that Rev. H. Stel had accepted the call. He was installed by Rev. J. VanPopta on November 25, 1951. At this time worship services were held in the school; in the hamlet of Neerlandia a piece of property had been bought on which the first parsonage was situated. An old school building was bought in December of 1954 and moved to the church property in 1955. The following year Rev. Stel accepted a call to Houston, and Neerlandia was once again without a minister.

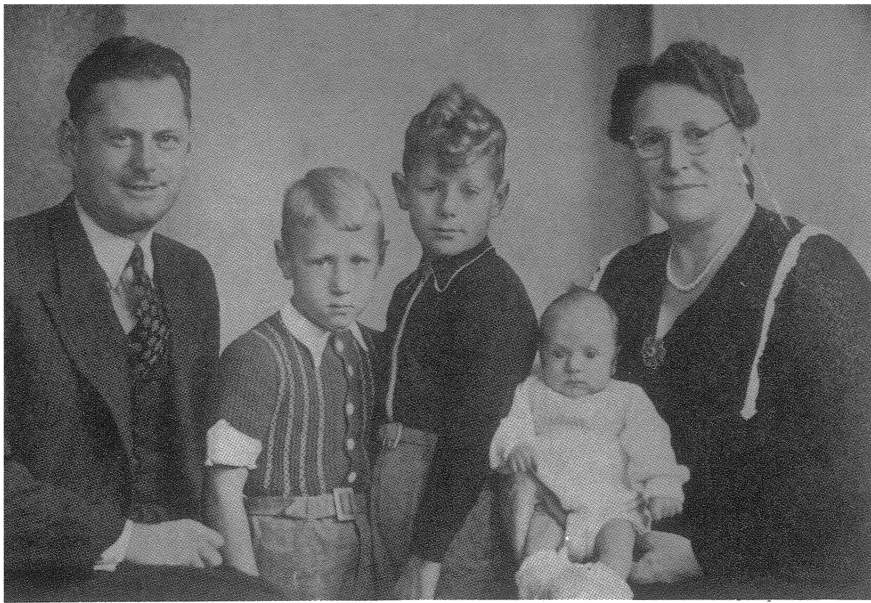
On January 1, 1961, the church of Barrhead was instituted and an agreement was made to call a minister together.

In March of 1966 the Rev. and Mrs. Pieffers came to Neerlandia; as emeritus minister of Coaldale he was able to serve Neerlandia for two years, until the Lord called him home in March of 1968.

Early in 1968, the congregation decided to build a new church building and on December 5, 1969 the official opening was celebrated. However, there was no minister. But in 1971 the first students of the Theological College in Hamilton received their degree and Neerlandia called Cand. C. VanDam who accepted and was ordained by the Rev. D. DeJong on October 10, 1971. In 1973 Rev. VanDam accepted a call to Brampton and moved there the following year.

This year Neerlandia celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of its institution and therefore also of its liberation from the Christian Reformed Church - the only Canadian Reformed Church which was formed in that way. May the Lord further bless the work of our brothers and sisters there.

J. VANDAM



Rev. and Mrs. H.A. Stel and family in 1951.



Snapshots of July 1 picnics. This is still an annual event. The first picnics were held on the fields of various members of the congregation; in recent years Clear Lake has been the spot for the picnics.





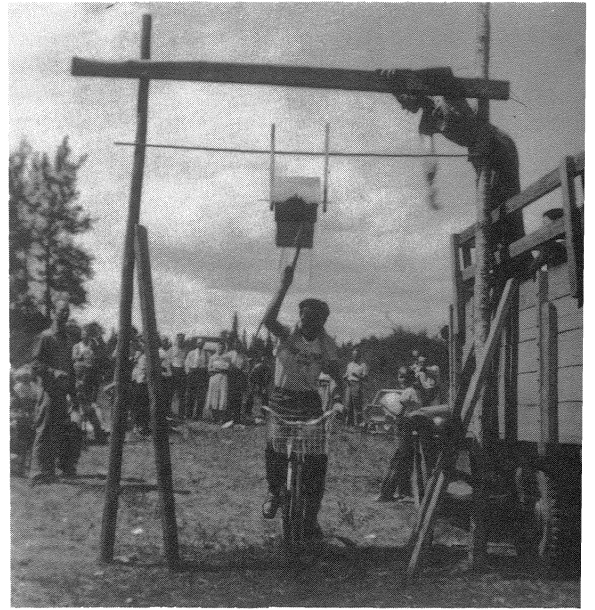
Residence of Mrs. J. Holwerda [now of J. Rowaan], where the first church service was held on August 6, 1950.



Moving the school house which was converted to a church building.



The fam. J. Werkman's mode of transportation to church, 1954.



July 1st picnic.



A few members of the Werkman family.



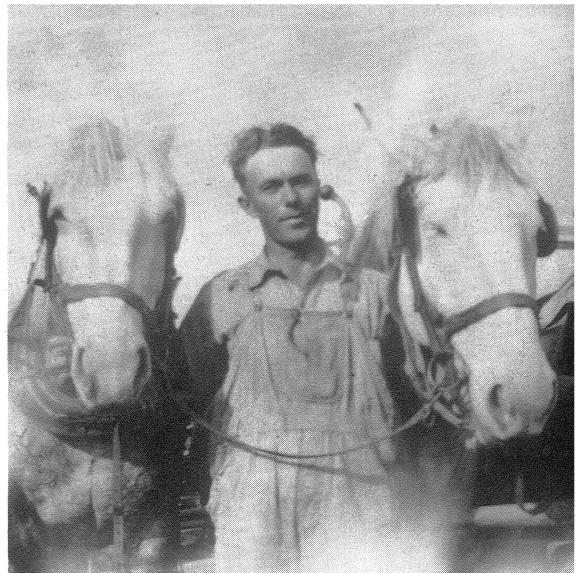
That's how the school building looked after it was remodelled.



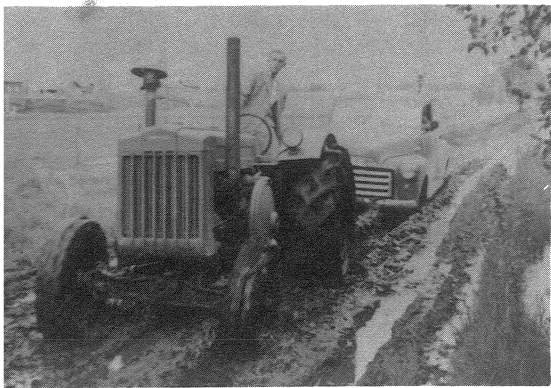
Cutting logs for the winter fuel supply.



Rev. and Mrs. G. Ph. Pieffers, March 1966.



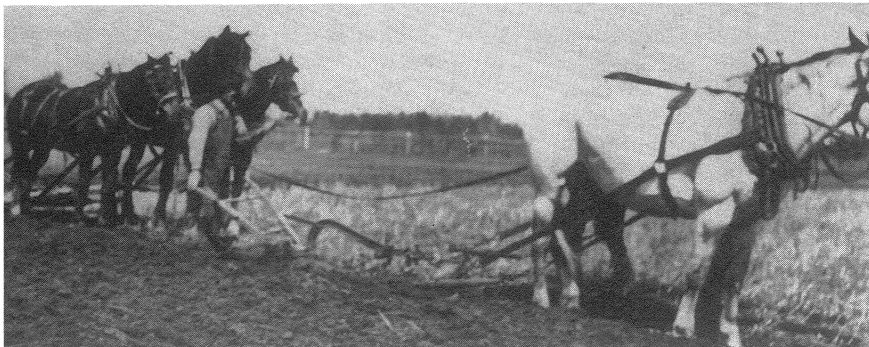
Doing field work with horse power.



Getting to church was not always easy, especially if it had just rained.



A group picture of all the immigrants in Neerlandia who arrived in 1948.



Ploughing with horses and pulling plough.



Log house built on the Terpsma homestead in 1917.



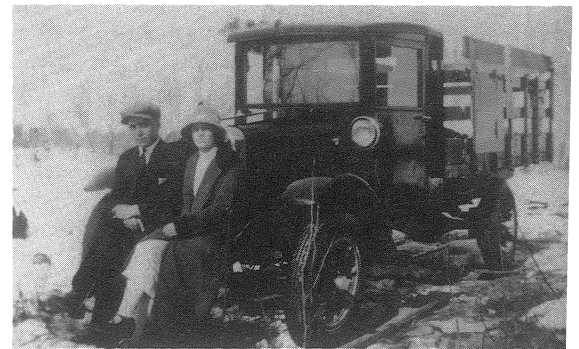
First log shack on the Terpsma homestead, built 1911.



The second parsonage in Neerlandia - sold to the county of Barrhead [for a teacherage] in 1968.



Even though it was only a 1927 Oldsmobile, an immigrant family is still proud of their first car. A.L. Hamoen family and Mr. A. Mast.



One of the first freight trucks in Neerlandia, 1927.

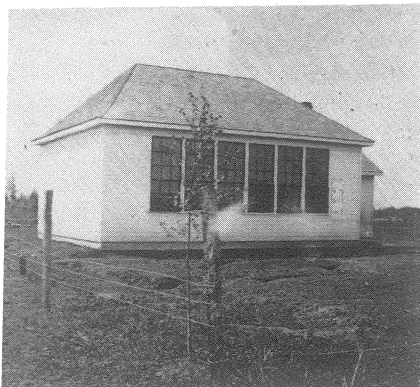
In the foreground the parsonage and Christian Reformed Church in 1948 [the church later burned down]. In the background the school in which the services of the Canadian Reformed Church were held the first years.



Building and clearing for the first church in 1915 [Christian Reformed] in Neerlandia.



School children taught in the log church building in Neerlandia 1916. Three of the children in this picture are present-day members of the Canadian Reformed Churches. Top row, first one on the left: H. Kippers, Edmonton. Second row from top and second from left: Mr. J. Kippers, Neerlandia. Second row from bottom, boy with tie: Mr. N. Terpsma, Neerlandia.



First frame school building in Neerlandia was built in 1919.

W I L F

EEN NIEUW CHRISTELIJK LIED

gemaakt ter ere van de Doorluchtigste Heer, Heer Willem, Prins van Oranje, Graaf van Nassau, Patris Patriae, mijn G. Vorst en Heer. [A.D. 1569, spelling modernized.]

Wilhelmus van Nassouwe
Ben ik van Duitsen bloed.
Den vaderland getrouwe
Blijf ik tot in den doet.
Een prinse van Oranje
Ben ik vrij onverveerd.
De koning van Hispanje
Heb ik altijd geeerd.

In Godes vrees te leven
Heb ik altijd betracht.
Daarom ben ik verdreven,
Om land, om luid gebracht.
Maar God zal mij regeren
Als een goed instrument,
Dat ik zal wederkeren
In mijnen regiment.

Lijdt u, mijn onderzaten,
Die oprecht zijn van aard.
God zal u niet verlaten,
Al zijt gij nu bezwaard.
Die vroom begeert te leven,
Bidt God nacht ende dag,
Dat hij mij kracht wil geven,
Dat ik u helpen mag.

Lijf en goed altesamen
Heb ik u niet verschoond.
Mijn broeders, hoog van namen,
Hebben 't u ook vertoon:
Graaf Adolf is gebleven
In Friesland, in de slag.
Zijn ziel in 't eeuwig leven
Verwacht de jongste dag.

Edel en hooggeboren
Van keizerlijke stam,
Een vorst des rijks verkoren,
Als een vroom christen-man,
Voor Godes woord geprezen
Heb ik vrij onversaagd,
Als een held zonder vrezin,
Mijn edel bloed gewaagd.

Mijn schild ende betrouwen
Zijt gij, o God, mijn Heer.
Op u zo wil ik bouwen.
Verlaat mij nimmermeer:
Dat ik doch vroom mag blijven,
Uw dienaar t'aller stond,
De tirannie verdrijven,
Die mij mijn hert doorwondt.

Van al die mij bezwaren
En mijn vervolgers zijn,
Mijn God, wil doch bewaren
De trouwe dienaar dijn:
Dat zij mij niet verrassen
In hare boze moed,
Haar handen niet en wassen
In mijn onschuldig bloed.

Als David moeste vluchten
Voor Saul, de tiran,
Zo heb ik moeten zuchten
Met menig eldelman.
Maar God heeft hem verheven,
Verlost uit alle nood,
Een koninkrijk gegeven
In Israel zeer groot.

Na 't zuur zal ik ontvangen
Van God mijn Heer dat zoet.
Daarnaar zo doet verlangen
Mijn vorstelijk gemoed,
Dat is, dat ik mag sterven
Met ere in het veld,
Een eeuwig rijk verwerven
Als een getrouwe held.

Niets doet mij meer erbarmen
In mijne wederspoed,
Dan dat men ziet verarmen
Des konings landen goed.
Dat u de Spanjaards krenken,
O edel Neerland zoet,
Als ik daaraan gedenke,
Mijn edel hert dat bloedt.

Als een prins opgezeten
Met mijner heires kracht,
Van de tiran vermeten
Heb ik de slag verwacht.
Die bij Maastricht begraven,
Bevreesde mijn geweld.
Mijn ruiters zag men draven
Zeer moedig door dat veld.

[S]o het de wil des Heren
Op die tijd was geweest,
Had ik geern willen keren
Van u dit zwaar tempeest:
Maar de Heer van hierboven,
Die alle ding regeert,
Die men altijd moet loven,
En heeft het niet begeerd.

[S]zeer christ'lijk was gedreven
Mijn prinselijk gemoed.
Standvastig is gebleven
Mijn hert in tegenspoed.
De Heer heb ik gebeden
Van mijnes herten grond,
Dat hij mijn zaak wil reden,
Mijn onschuld doen bekond.

Oorlof, mijn arme schapen,
Die zijt in grote nood,
Uw Herder zal niet slapen,
Al zijt gij nu verstroot:
Tot God wilt u begeven,
Zijn heilzaam woord neemt aan.
Als vrome Christ'nen leven;
't Zal hier haast zijn gedaan.

Voor God wil ik belijden
En zijner groten macht,
Dat ik tot genen tijden
De koning heb veracht:
Maar dat ik God de Here,
Der hoogster majesteit,
Heb moeten obedieren
In der gerechtigheid.

ILLUMUS

A NEW CHRISTIAN LAY

composed in honour of the Most Illustrious Lord, William, Prince of Orange, Count of Nassau, Patris Patriae, my Gracious Prince and Lord. [Translation by A.J. Barnouw, revised. Note the name formed by the first letters of each stanza, as in the original version.]

William of Nassau, scion
Sprung of an ancient line,
I dedicate undying
Faith to this land of mine.
A prince I am, undaunted,
Of Orange, ever free.
The king of Spain I've granted
My lifelong loyalty.

I've ever tried to live in
The fear of God's command,
And therefore I've been driven
From people, home, and land.
But God, I trust, will rate me
His willing instrument
And one day reinstate me
Into my government.

Let no despair betray you,
My subjects true and good.
The Lord will surely stay you
Though now you are pursued.
He who would live devoutly
Must pray God day and night
To throw his power about me
As champion of your right.

Life and my all for others
I sacrificed, for you!
And my illustrious brothers
Proved their devotion too.
Count Adolf, more's the pity,
Fell in the Frisian fray,
And in the eternal city
Awaits the judgment day.

I, nobly born, descended
From an imperial stock,
An Empire's prince, defended
(Braving the battle's shock
Heroically and fearless
As pious Christians ought)
With my life's blood the peerless
Gospel of God our Lord.

A shield and my reliance,
O God, thou ever wert.
I'll trust unto thy guidance.
O leave me not ungirt,
That I may stay a pious
Servant of thine for aye,
And drive the plagues that try us
And tyranny away.

My God, I pray thee, save me
For all who do pursue
And threaten to enslave me,
Thy trusted servant true.
O Father, do not sanction
Their wicked, foul design;
Let them not wash their hands in
This guiltless blood of mine.

Once David searched for shelter
From King Saul's tyranny.
E'en so I fled this welter
And many a lord with me.
But God the Lord did save him
From exile and its hell
And, in his mercy, gave him
A realm in Israel.

Fear not 't will rain sans ceasing;
The clouds are bound to part.
I bide the sight so pleasing
Unto my princely heart:
That when I death encounter
I honour find therein
And as a faithful warrior
The eternal realm may win.

No thing so moves my pity
As seeing through these lands
Field, village, town, and city
Pillaged by roving bands.
O that the Spaniards rape thee,
My Netherlands so sweet -
The thought of that does grip me,
Causing my heart to bleed.

Astride on steed of mettle
I've waited with my host
The tyrant's call to battle,
Who durst not do his boast.
For, near Maastricht, in hiding,
He feared the force I wield:
My horsemen were seen riding
Bravely across the field.

Surely, if God had willed it,
When that fierce tempest blew,
My power would have stilled it,
Or turned its blast from you.
But he who dwells in heaven,
Whence all our blessings flow,
For which aye praise be given,
Did not desire it so.

Steadfast my heart remaineth
In my adversity.
My princely courage straineth
All nerves to live and be.
I've prayed the Lord my Master
With fervid heart and tense
To save me from disaster
And prove my innocence.

Alas, my flock! To sever
Is hard on us. Farewell.
Your Shepherd wakes, wherever
Dispersed you may dwell.
Pray God that he may ease you;
His Gospel be your cure.
Walk in the steps of Jesu.
This life will not endure.

Unto God and his power
I do confession make
That ne'er at any hour
Ill of the king I spake.
But to the Lord, the greatest
Of majesties, I owe
Obedience first and latest,
For Justice wills it so.

Israel - Its Past, Present, And Future

14. THE O.T. APOCALYPSE: DANIEL (II)

Daniel 9:24-27, the passage under consideration, tells us that Daniel's prayer, recorded in the first nineteen verses of the chapter, was heard. And in what a way! Seldom, as far as we know, has a prayer met with a favourable response so soon! Gabriel, the Angel well-known from the gospel of the birth of our LORD, comes to make this word known and he reaches Daniel about the time of the evening oblation. There are two significant features here: We see Gabriel now already engaged in the preparation of the coming of the MESSIAH. So we have a prelude here to what it reads in Luke 1 and 2. The indication of time is meaningful as well for this beloved man, dedicated to the temple and its worship. Besides let us not overlook that his prayer came up to the requirements as mentioned in Lord's Day 45 of the Catechism. As for that, it is especially the third reason that matters: It was for the sake of Christ our LORD that his prayer was heard and that the LORD God proceeded to action the way He did.

Before going further into detail I would like to say that in verse 24 we find the answer summarized. Taking it all in all, that is the object which the LORD GOD has in view and which He'll certainly achieve. We read of six results, and these six results comprise two groups of three members each:

Negative

1. to finish the transgression
2. to make an end of sins
3. to make reconciliation for iniquity*

Positive

4. to bring in everlasting righteousness
5. to seal vision and prophet
6. to anoint a most holy (one or thing)

Furthermore Gabriel tells Daniel that seventy "sevens" are decreed for the purpose of accomplishing these six results. "Sevens" I translate. Neither "weeks" (A.V.) nor "weeks of years" (R.S.V.) works out well if applied to and spread over the span of time to be covered. I am not going to calculate such a "seven". In Daniel the language of Apocalypse is spoken, as

in the N.T. Book of Revelation. Rendering the word by "seven" I admit the mystery, but this I prefer to a wriggling of the data into a preconceived scheme that never fits when you take the figures "literally"; this in spite of the many and various attempts made.

The seventy sevens are subdivided into three periods: One of seven, one of sixty-two, and one of just one such "seven". They were decreed by judicial decision. It was God who had decreed this period (these periods) of time for the accomplishment of His redemptive purposes and that's why they are so enlightening with a view to the future of His people Israel. We shall now consider the three periods successively.

* * * * *

First that of the seven sevens. By the number seventy in the beginning of verse 24 we are reminded of the end of verse 2 of this chapter, where we come across the same number: "the number of years which must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem". Reference is made there to Jeremiah 29:10. This very verse is the point of departure of all that is to follow in this chapter; of prayer and answer both. Of the answer as well! "The going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" is related to the prophecy of Jeremiah and not to the edict of king Cyrus, as exegetes like Young and Keil state it. For by the aforementioned edict the restoration is carried into effect, which is to take place, however, during the sixty-two sevens which are to be distinguished carefully from the preceding seven sevens. According to Prof. Young the starting point of the 7 and that of the 62 sevens is the same, one would conclude. On page 205 of his book on Daniel he writes: "The violent separation of the two periods is out of harmony with the context". On the other hand we read: "It is best therefore to understand (although I am painfully aware of the difficulties) the text as stating that between the *terminus a quo* (= point of departure, H.M.O.) and the appearance of an anointed one, a prince, is a period of 69 sevens, which is divided into two periods of unequal length, 7 sevens

and 62 sevens. To what then do these two subdivisions have reference? The 7 sevens apparently has reference to the time which should elapse between the issuance of the word and the completion of the city and temple; roughly the end of the period of Ezra and Nehemia. The 62 sevens follows this period. In vs. 25 these 62 sevens are not characterized, but in vs. 26 we are told what will happen after the expiry of the 62 sevens. The 62 sevens therefore have reference to the period which follows the age of Ezra and Nehemia to the time of Christ."

So far Prof. Young. I for one should like to emphasize that the pointing in the Hebrew text clearly separates the two periods of the 7 and the 62. Moreover, it would be strange that the very period the prophecy of Jeremiah is pointing at, namely, the seventy years of the Babylonian exile, would have been disregarded in this revelation. With Prof. G.C. Aalders I think that the first period of seven "sevens" equals those seventy years. It was those seventy years which had set a Daniel thinking. That term would have expired now, Daniel had figured out. That's why he turned his face to the LORD GOD in prayer and supplications. When his prayer was heard, Daniel was not only permitted to hear about the LORD's decree regarding a distant future, but also to see this decree partially come true, since the anointed one, the prince of verse 25, is his contemporary king Cyrus of Persia. Daniel had lived to see his day and his capture of the Babylonian kingdom.

Prof. Young on his side takes - and has to take - a different view. Once the statement is made that "the going forth of a word" refers to Cyrus' decree; consequently the anointed one cannot be Cyrus again. He writes: "In the O.T. kings and priests were anointed, and hence we are to think of one who is, not only a priest (anointed one) but also a king (prince) . . . The fact is that there is only One in history who fully satisfies the two essential requisites of the theocratic king, Jesus, who is the Messiah. He was anointed and appointed a Prince as was required and this in a most perfect manner."

I freely admit that Jesus Christ is

THE ANOINTED ONE, in accordance with L.D. 12 of the Catechism. The point at stake, however, is: *Is it HE who is meant by "the anointed one" in verse 25?* I do not think so. When we take the subdivision of the 70 sevens into *three* periods and what it says about these periods in full earnest, at the end of the seven sevens the time has not come yet for Christ to appear on earth. Beforehand 62 sevens are still to expire.

The reference therefore is to king Cyrus. He is the anointed one, the prince of vs. 25, although he is a heathen. It is a remarkable fact that there is only one heathen king in all the Bible to whom the expression is applied and that is he (Is. 45:1). This on account of the remarkable relation which he sustained to the church, a relation unparalleled in history. King Cyrus, an anointed one, mentioned by his very name a century and a half in advance. A thing never heard of in history. Imagine that we were to hear today the name of the queen (king) of England or the president of the U.S.A. in the year 2100 A.D.! But Cyrus' name, since he was an anointed one, took a key position in the LORD's plan because of the decree he was to issue.

I go on and cast a glance back to vs. 24 and say that during these first seven sevens something of what it says there must have come true. Something of it; so, not the prophecy in its full extent. This anointed one (vs. 25) and THE ANOINTED ONE (vs. 26) - that makes all the difference. Yet, the former has been instrumental in the achievement of Israel's salvation. When he issued his decree, transgression was put away; sin done away; iniquity reconciled. If you ask me whether I can substantiate my statement, I refer to Isaiah 40:2ff. So are the positive results: The blessed condition of being restored to righteousness before God was enjoyed by the returned exiles. Prophecies and visions pertaining to a future restoration of the people were sealed, that is to say, confirmed, accredited: they came true. And as for the anointing of a most holy (one? thing? place?), are we not allowed to think of the altar of burnt offering built by the exiles after their return (Ezra 3:2)?

* * * * *

So during his life Daniel's prayer was heard in that he saw part of the Lord's decree come true. A part! For I

must also say: his prayer was not heard yet, or I better say, God's plan was not fulfilled totally. Not seven sevens, however significant a start, but 70 sevens had been determined upon the people and the holy city. So, after the first seven, sixty-three other sevens lay ahead and during sixty-two of them the people had to wait for the second Anointed One of our text, in whom we may see THE MESSIAH.

Sixty-two sevens, that is quite a time. And taking it all in all, nothing very particular happened; I mean, in comparison with the previous 7 and the final one. "The city shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time." And that is all there is. It does not mean that the restoration of the holy city was to take all that time. Yet it did take many many years before this matter was settled. The exiles returned and started building; that is to say, they started building their own panelled houses that they dwelt in themselves, whereas the house of the LORD lay in ruins. So the LORD had His prophets Haggai and Zechariah appear and speak on his behalf against such a mentality. So people came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts their God. So much as far as the temple was concerned.

However, our text speaks of the city, Jerusalem. In Nehemiah 1:3 it reads: "The survivors there in the province, who escaped exile, are in great trouble and shame; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire." So, in the days of Nehemiah the restoration of the city was accomplished. "But in a troubled time," as it says here. Israel had gone already through troublesome times in the days of the last prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, and with the latter the time had come that vision and prophet were sealed up in such a way, that they did not appear anymore. The period of prophecy had come to an end. Not until the revelation of the LORD Jesus Christ, the Chief Prophet, the voice of a prophet would be heard.

But what had been foretold here regarding a troubled time was to continue after the sealing up of the prophecy, in the span of time between Malachi and Christ. I point especially to the period of the Maccabees. As history it is not mentioned in the Canonical books of the O.T. but O.T. prophecy does make a great

many references to it. In the very book of Daniel we find them. In such a way that modernist scholars are of the opinion that the man Daniel is supposed to have lived in that time and witnessed all those troubles instead of in the sixth century B.C., as we believe. Of course we do not share that opinion. Yet the care God bestows upon his people Israel, the then church in the time the prophecy was sealed up and had come to an end so far, is striking. He is the LORD their God unfailing, his judgment everywhere prevailing. The Covenant God did not withdraw from his obligations. The city was built again with squares and moat, notwithstanding the troubled time. Also during the 62 sevens, transgressions were finished, iniquity atoned for, everlasting righteousness brought in and a most holy thing, that is to say to the measure of those times, so the temple or the altar, after having been defiled by the godless Syrians, anointed and dedicated again. So a disconsolate period in several respects. The more so since the living voice (Lat. *viva vox*) of the prophet was not heard anymore. No fear. Vision and prophecy were sealed. And a future spoken of in prophecy, a future that looked promising, was drawing nigh more and more.

* * * * *

That is the future of the last "seven".

The decisive period, the crucial era in Israel's life. For now THE ANOINTED ONE has come. Not he who was meant by the words "an anointed one" in vs. 25, that is, king Cyrus, nor any other anointed one of a later time, e.g. a highpriest, like the pious Onias who fell victim to assassination if the history reported in the second book of the Maccabees is trustworthy (2 Macc. 4:23-34). Flavius Josephus tells us otherwise. To such a solution comes he who sees the Jewish history as portrayed in the visions of Daniel wind up in the Maccabean era. And there are a great many exegetes reasoning that way.

However it is very unlikely that, though the Maccabean era is often in the focus in the second half of this book, a figure as insignificant as the highpriests were in those times, would take a key-position in this encompassing vision regarding Israel's future. Therefore I frankly say that the Highpriest of our confession must have been meant here.

Not his coming as such, however, is mentioned now. Apparently there was a more important fact of his life to be recorded. So it reads: "And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off." To understand this sentence in the proper way, namely, in its being intelligible to Daniel, I refer to the prophecy of the servant of the LORD in Is. 53, where it reads in vs. 8: "He was cut off from the land of the living." It was Jesus Christ who was cut off in the most literal sense, being sentenced to die on Calvary's cross in the prime of life.

And then two words follow that are extremely hard to explain. Two words in Hebrew: "*we'en lo*"; translated: A.V. "but not for himself"; N.A.S.B. and R.S.V. "and shall have nothing"; New English Bible "With no one to take his part." I quote Prof. Young's commentary, page 207: "'And he has naught' - lit., and there is not to him. These words are exceedingly difficult, but they seem to indicate that all which should properly belong to the Messiah, He does not have when He dies. This is a very forceful way of setting forth His utter rejection, both by God and man. 'We have no king but Caesar,' cried the Jews. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' were the words from the cross. In that hour of blackness He had nothing, nothing but the guilt of sin of all those for whom He died. Utterly forsaken, He was cut off."

His vicarious satisfaction is meant. It was in behalf of the people He died. Not in His own behalf. And that's how we see God's plan come true thoroughly: By his death transgression was finished, sins put to an end, iniquity atoned for, everlasting righteousness brought in.

The angel does not stop, however. He hurries on to a still farther point in the future: "And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." It is in consequence of the cutting off of the Messiah that the people of a coming prince will do so. The prince is not Antiochus Epiphanes and cannot be, on our standpoint. Nor is it the Antichrist. It seems most likely that the people are the Romans and the prince who is to come is the later emperor Titus Vespasian.

"Its end shall come with a flood." Whose end? Of the enemy, the invader, so of the Roman army and its emperor? Not likely. It rather refers to

Jerusalem, the holy city: the city and sanctuary Daniel prayed for every day on set times, in the upper chamber with the window open toward Jerusalem! The name of the city is not mentioned here. But from the context it easily could be gathered by him. And it is to be supposed that it was a very hard thing to this man to learn that the city he loved, the city he set above his highest joy, was to end up in such a way in a distant future. So, in the ultimate analysis a difficult time lies ahead for his people, for Israel. For him who has set all his hopes on city and sanctuary, those visible, perceptible things every rightminded Jew was attached to, there is hardly any consolation. "And to the end there shall be war, desolations are determined." Israel has not to do with an enemy of flesh and blood; it is not only a passing hostile invasion that is referred to; no, desolations are irrevocably determined by GOD! It is God who is found to fight against His people in that distant future. Knowing this God, we gather that Jerusalem has fully deserved so. That is why the words of vs. 25, "It shall be built again," are not added. A sad development, you say when you look at the outward appearance. That's a view many people take. First of all the Jews themselves.

However, everything has not been said yet. One more verse follows, pertaining at the same time to the very period of the 70th "seven". Though it is mentioned by name only here, it was meant already in verse 26. In the previous article I wrote something about the "Parenthesis Interpretation," which states that an obviously indeterminate period lies between the 69th and 70th seven, the former being named "the Church-age". "When the Church-age will end, and the seventieth week begin is nowhere revealed." Needless to say, we totally disagree with such a view making allowance for such an interruption in what is presented in the vision as a closed unity. So, in vs. 27 it is again the 70th seven that is in the focus.

As for the translation of A.V. and R.S.V., "And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week", Prof. G.C. Aalders prefers to take the word "covenant" as subject of the sentence rather than as an object, as is done by almost all the translations. So we get: "The covenant is to prevail for many for one week". Prof.

Aalders is right in suggesting this translation, but the idea is grasped by Prof. Young as well, though he makes the Messiah, the anointed One of vs. 26, the subject. For the Messiah is the logical subject of the passage: "The Messiah will cause to prevail . . . The entire passage is Messianic in nature, and the Messiah is the leading character . . . The writer does *not* mean that he will make a covenant. The ordinary idiom to express such a thought is 'to cut a covenant', and this idiom is not used here . . . In what sense may it be said that the Messiah causes a covenant to prevail for many? The answer to this question is to be found in the fact that the Messiah during His earthly ministry and by means of His active and passive obedience to the Law of God, did fulfill the terms of that covenant which was made in olden times with Abraham and his seed."

Now we understand that it is the Anointed One, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and not e.g. Antiochus Epiphanes or the Roman emperor or even the Antichrist who for half of the week shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease. The latter opinions are held by many scholars having a completely different approach to this part of the Bible. Instead of a confirming of the covenant made in days of old, they think of a pact, a covenant made by some worldly potentate, with actions underhand, he being intended to break it at his earliest convenience. It was because of that breach of the pact concluded, when the enemy showed himself in his true character, that sacrifice and offering was to cease. The reader sees that there is all the difference between this and what Christ has done. When He causes sacrifice and oblation to cease, He himself had to suffer and die for it. The epistle to the Hebrews offers ample elucidation (7:11; 8:13; 9:25, 26; 10:8, 9). "It is true that immediately after Christ's death the sacrifices did not cease. Nevertheless, at his death, the veil of the temple was rent in twain; the way into the Holy of holies was opened, the Gospel was preached, and the sacrifices of the Jews could not longer be regarded as legitimate" (Young).

"And upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate." The one who makes desolate must be the Roman army; as for "wing", I prefer the solution of Prof. Aalders, who has it refer to the hurry,

Fraser Valley Women's League Day

On June 25, 1975 about 125 ladies of the Fraser Valley, B.C., Women's Societies came together in the Cloverdale church building for their Annual League Day.

It was a little after 10:00 a.m. when the ladies, after having enjoyed coffee and cake in the basement, had taken their seats upstairs in the church.

This 12th League Day was opened by Mrs. E. VanWoudenberg of New Westminster Women's Society "Thy Kingdom Come". She asked us to sing Hymn 57, led in prayer and read Matthew 6:5-18. She welcomed everyone and expressed the hope that we would have a good day and a fruitful discussion.

Mrs. J. Wendt of New Westminster Women's Society "Credo" then got the floor to introduce the topic "Prayer". She stressed that God requires prayer, why He does this and how we have to pray. Prayer is an essential part of the relationship

between God and men. It is trusting Him in faith. He Himself taught the Church of all ages how to pray: the prayer we find in His Word.

After we sang Hymn 43:1, 8 and 10 discussion followed. Discussed were - among others - the questions: how is it possible to open our hearts for the Lord; whether we should pray Him to take away our cross or ask for strength to bear whatever He sends us; what about fasting; also was discussed the necessity of prayer and thanksgiving at meal-times.

After the discussion was closed we sang our League Song and then listened to Mrs. Oostenbrug of Chilliwack Women's Society "The Lord is Our Refuge" who read a poem to us entitled "We are not alone".

While we were singing two stanzas of Psalm 66 a collection was held for the expenses of this day.

Lunch followed. Downstairs the tables were neatly set by our hostesses, the ladies of the two New Westminster Societies, and we all enjoyed a delicious cold plate and each other's company.

Mrs. C. Petter of Abbotsford Women's Society "Faith and Knowledge" presided the afternoon meeting.

Our opening song was Hymn 40:1, 2, 3 and 7, whereafter all, especially a sister from Smithers and a few Dutch guests, were welcomed again.

Mrs. B.H. Janzen of Abbotsford Women's Society "Faith, Hope and Charity" then got the opportunity to read part of the articles about "The coming of the Lord according to the book of Revelation", written in "Pro Ecclesia" by the Rev. G. Van Rongen, minister of the American Reformed Church at Grand Rapids. Rev. Van Rongen writes about the coming of Christ which will be in the last days, but also in the present days. The book of Revelation is full of warning: "I come". Christ knew the works of the seven Churches and He knows our works. He came and comes with His judgments and rewards.

We used our Book of Praise again for the singing of Hymn 41:1, 2 and 3 and after that Cloverdale Women's Society "Sola Fide" took care of the entertaining part of the afternoon which was quite amusing. Besides listening to the reading of a comical piece of prose, we were shown that in "the olden days" the ladies really knew how to hold their meetings!

Question period was held; a few questions were asked and decisions

taken. A card from all of us will be sent to the ladies C. VanSpronsen and J. Kuik in Brazil.

Our final song was Psalm 84:1 and 6, whereafter Mrs. C. Petter closed the meeting with thanksgiving to the Lord.

Coffee, tea and cake were served again, which was the end of a nice and instructive league day.

MRS. A. HUISMAN

ISRAEL - Continued

the haste with which the Roman army is marching on, like birds on the wing or birds in flight, to the one of Prof. Young, who thinks of the pinnacle of the temple. What about the last words of the text: A.V. "And that determined shall be poured upon the desolate"; R.S.V. "until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator"? The point at issue is: Who or what is meant? The desolator, the Roman general Titus. Those who are in favour say: That is to be expected. The destroyer ought to be destroyed; so the prophecy has a happy end. Justice must take its course! The desolator, however, is in this verse indicated by a different term, so I'm inclined to take sides with those who translate the last word by desolate, having it refer to the ruins of temple and city.

"A happy end?" a reader wonders. For him who has set his heart upon these "outward" things, definitely not. And that is what the majority of the Jewish people has done. But for him who embraces in sincere belief THE ANOINTED ONE, the fulfilment of all the promises made of old, for whose sake Israel was called into existence, there is gladness. The covenant is safeguarded for ever, the new and eternal covenant, the covenant of grace and reconciliation, confirmed with his death and the shedding of his blood. The God of Israel, the LORD of His Church has achieved His goal.

H.M. OHMANN

*Remarks: "1. to finish the transgression" is not to make it reach its full measure as in Dan. 8:26 but: to make an end of it. No. 5 may mean either: to accredit prophecy, or: to seal it up so that it will no longer appear. No. 6 can refer to Christ (acc. to YOUNG) or the New Testament liturgy which comes instead of the Old Testament one (AALDERS). It is hard to make a decision here. (H.M.O.)



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CLARION

P.O. Box 54, Fergus
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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: W.W.J. VanOene
Co-Editors: W. Helder, D. VanderBoom

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"Let Thy Light Shine"



Being kept informed about the life of the Canadian Reformed Churches at a distance, one cannot help being impressed by the great prosperity displayed on the homefront and how this reflects itself in all Church-activities.

Many congregations are celebrating their 25th anniversary and remembering how the Lord has blessed us exceedingly through these years. And it is amazing what has been accomplished with the help of the Lord. Even a list of the last few years is impressive: there is a flux of new churchbuildings, equipped with expensive, beautiful organs; elementary schools in small congregations where ten years ago this was considered impossible; a secondary school in the process of being established; homes for our senior members in the planning-stage, and there may be more yet. It is wonderful that the Lord enables us to fulfil our duties.

Yet, I can not escape that a concern, which I have felt for some time, is only accentuated by these developments. It is not a new concern, nor only mine. Others are drawing attention to this matter as well, in Canada but also amongst our sister-Churches in the Netherlands.

In *Calvinist-Contact*, under "Pastoral Pondering" 1) the writer states: "The Christian Reformed Churches in North-America, are, by and large, no longer growing." Then he proceeds to give some statistics, showing the decline in membership, and how more members have left for other churches than were received from them; how only 122 members were received through evangelism, over against 2,067 baptisms. He concludes: "These are more than statistics. They are alarm signals for a denomination which has been richly blessed, yet which seems unable to share those blessings with others."

My concern is that the latter may apply even to a greater degree to our Churches: we seem to be unable to

share those blessings with others. The statistics of our 1975 Yearbook show an increase of 179 members over a total number of 7,892, of which increase only 41 are communicant members. This means that the total increase is only 2.2% and that of communicant members even less: 1.1%. (In comparison: the general Canadian population increase, 1970 figures, stands at 1.5%.) In 1962 there were 24 congregations and now there are 28, of which three were "split-offs" of bigger congregations. The Churches have not gone beyond the regions where the immigrants settled 25 to 30 years ago, restricted mainly to four areas: Southern Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, and Southern Manitoba. Whole provinces and huge territories remained unreached.

Of course, one can advance many reasons, explanations, and realize that statistics never give the whole story. Yet, these facts warrant a closer examination of the matter of Church growth through evangelism, or home-mission. On purpose I leave the matter of foreign-mission out of this present discussion since I feel there is a traditional consensus and awareness amongst our people of the need and duty of this Kingdom-work.

Notes:

1. One can hardly maintain a principle difference between Mission and Evangelization. (Dutch: Zending en Evangelisatie.) "In Mission as well as in Evangelization the aim is to bring the Gospel to those in the world who do not belong to the concrete Church of Jesus". 2) "The mission, the 'general evangelization' (witnessing in word and deed of all believers - C.V.) and the 'special evangelistic duties' direct themselves to those who since birth are stranger to the Gospel as well as to those who estranged themselves from the Gospel". 3)
2. Traditionally Mission (Zending) in common usage refers to work abroad and Evangelization (Evan-

gelisatie) to work at home. Yet the geographic location is irrelevant to this calling. Mission is mission, being sent to reach the unreached with the Gospel, whether at home or abroad. The English usage of Foreign and Home Mission is therefore most appropriate.

3. One may not neglect his duties at home by pointing to our activities abroad. It would not take into account the purpose God has in placing us in a specific country with specific "neighbours". The Bible prefers to speak about our fellowman as "neighbour", thereby implying that our duties toward our fellowmen begin very close to home.

HOME-MISSION: A CALLING!

That Home-Mission is our calling hardly needs to be argued but that the awareness of this calling needs to be aroused, or, to say the least, be nurtured, few will deny.

Numerous are the places where the Scriptures refer to the fact that the Gospel is entrusted to Israel/the Church not only for preservation but also for propagation. The Church is the lightbearer which does not only beam its light out "automatically" but received a definite charge from the Head of the Church to send it out: "GO ye therefore" and "LET your light shine"! Again, that there is a mandate, few will deny. (See: Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, 16, Luke 24:46-48, and John 20:21-23).

Our confessions also reflect this calling. Art. 30 of the Belgic Confession, when speaking about the government and the office-bearers of the Church, declares "that by these means the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated". The Catechism several times speaks about confessing the name of the Lord and to pray for the increase of the Church.

God is concerned, "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4, see also 2 Pet. 3:9); neither does He leave any doubt how we may be His fellow-labourers: "But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14).

That the Reformed Churches

have not always been equally aware of this calling is evident from history. Lately there appears to be a revival in the Netherlands, as publications from there seem to indicate. Dr. C. Trimp recently wrote a series of articles in *De Reformatie* on the subject of Evangelization, and commenced his articles by saying: "The last years a surprising increase in evangelization-activities can be noted in the circle of the Reformed Churches". 4) Apparently this did not always receive equal attention. During the first years after the Liberation "it was clear that many gaps were created or ascertained but little positive insight was substituted for it." 5) The writer also reviews the various decisions of Synods that dealt with Home Mission, which speak a very clear language: the Synod of Amsterdam, 1908, stated "that the ecclesiastical work among those who in our home-country are estranged from the Gospel, or who live outside the confederation of Churches, is necessary and commanded by the Word of God". Utrecht, 1923, confirms this statement: "This work among those who have strayed, belongs, according to the Word of God, to the calling of the Church of Christ".

There appeared to be no question whether the Churches did have a calling to approach those among their fellow-citizens who either by birth or by later deviation were estranged from the Gospel. Apparently they did not reason, as some still do, that they COULD have known, that the Gospel once WAS preached to them, or that

the doors of the Church are wide open and that therefore there would be no task for the Churches anymore. Or worse yet, as sometimes is heard: "God is already pouring out His judgment over them and therefore they have become unreachables."

HOME-MISSION: A STEPCHILD?

The Churches simply and clearly stated their calling, yet it appears that this calling often was, and is, a stepchild of the Church. If we are honest to ourselves, we must admit that Home-Mission often is the last on the list, as well as on the budget. Why is this so? Why is Home-Mission generally held in much lower esteem than Foreign-Mission?

Some reasons are obvious but nevertheless do not justify our lack of activity and enthusiasm for this task in the Kingdom. For one thing, "Home-Mission" has many connotations which do not agree with our Reformed, Calvinistic concepts. The many malpractices, secular methods and sectarian excesses in this field discourage us and even make us fearful. But did we not agree that it is our calling and do we not agree that, for this very reason, there are Biblical, Reformed ways of fulfilling this calling?

Further, it undoubtedly is a most difficult task: we do not see clear ways. Home-Mission Committees all over continually struggle with this question: HOW must we do WHAT? Yet the difficulty of a task should not discourage us. Is it really more difficult than any other task in the King-

dom: the ministry of the Gospel to the congregation, in the Foreign-Mission; the ministry of mercy, Christian education, etc.?

Another, often adduced reason is: It is a hopeless work, these people don't even want to hear it anymore, there will be no results anyway. First of all: would that diminish our calling? Is the force of a calling ever determined by the results? Secondly: How do we know if there will be results or not? Have we, as Churches in Canada, actually and sincerely tried? We may be surprised what God will do by means of a clear, Reformed presentation of the full Gospel to the unreached in Canada! (That there ARE many unreached I hope to point out later.) [to be continued]

C. VAN SPRONSEN

- 1) *Calvinist Contact*, "Pastoral Pondering", March 24, 1975.
- 2) *De Reformatie* (22-3-1975), "Motivering van Zending en Evangelisatie", J. Klamer.
- 3) *Ibid.*
- 4) *De Reformatie* (4-1-1975), "De Opzet van de Evangelisatie", Dr. C. Trimp.
- 5) *Ibid.*, (8-2-1975).

OUR COVER

Mr. and Mrs. D. Terpsma and daughter standing in front of their first dwelling-place after having arrived in Edmonton in 1911 from the Netherlands. The Terpsma's were one of the first three families to settle in the Neerlandia district.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SEPERATE SERVICES – continued

monies which should not take place where there is no supervision of elders, as we state in our Church Order. Yet we came together in Slocan City at the same time at which the New Westminster Church met, where the rest of the office-bearers were. I cannot see anything wrong in that arrangement. It is logical that a Consistory "splits up" when different services are held at the same time in different locations. Besides, when does it happen that the *whole* Consistory is present during a service? It happens more often that one or two of the brethren are absent (baby-sitting etcetera) than that they all are there.

Think of those Churches which are so large that they meet at two or three different places, section-wise. They may have their section-councils, yet the office-bearers together form one Consistory. Such was the case in Burlington, for instance, before that one Church became two Churches.

This also answers the question whether the one part or the other part is meant, or both parts together, when the

minister says, "Beloved Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ." Once more I must say: I see no difficulty here. What do I mean when I say that and address the men and women, the boys and girls in the news in that manner? Do I then mean that they are all there who belong to the Church in that place? If that were the case, then I would never be able to say that, for it never happens that the *whole* Congregation is there.

No, when I address them in that manner, I give thereby a qualification. Those who are sitting there in front of me, facing the pulpit, are not a group of like-minded souls who have come to be strengthened in their ideology and ideals. The people who are sitting there and are eagerly looking towards the pulpit, expecting to be fed and nourished with the bread of life are the sheep of Christ's pasture, they are the Congregation of the Saviour. That's why I address them as such. That's what they are. Oh, let's quit seeing difficulties where there are none at all!!

Continued in next issue

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Are you enjoying the last weeks of your holidays? Didn't the summer go fast?

Have you entered the Quiz Contest? or the Poetry Contest? or both? Be sure to do it right away! You don't want to miss out on the fun. And you may win ONE OF THE PRIZES! Send your entries to me before the end of August at this address:

Aunt Betty
Box 54, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Let's wish all the Busy Beavers with September birthdays their happiest birthday ever, and many happy returns of the day! Also this year we hope the Lord will guide and keep you.

Lynn Metzlar	Sept. 2	Greta Bosscher	Sept. 14
Ronald VandenBos	2	Marilyn Boes	17
Eleanor Smouter	3	Alice VanEerden	17
Debbie Krikke	7	Martha DeBoer	19
Catherine Wendt	7	Floris Wiersema	19
Dianne Bosscher	8	Richard Woelders	20
Grace Jongs	8	Rolean Hulleman	21
Emmy Flokstra	9	Henry Jans	21
Belinda VanGrootheest	9	Irene Hordyk	22
Joanne Koning	10	Patricia Barendregt	24
Henrietta Stieva	10	Elaine Schoon	24
Annette Hoeksema	11	Frederika Snippe	24
Marianne Tenhage	11	Frank Meliefste	26
Mary VandeBurgt	11	Carrie Nieuwenhuis	26
Karl DeBoer	12	Beverly Schouten	26
Andrew Vink	13	Stephanie Berends	28
Caroline Barendregt	14	Jenette Knol	29

The Lion Hunt

Wanna go on a lion hunt? . . . Yeah. Better get a pair of boots on! Get a gun! And better get a rope. Let's go!

Do you see what I see? I see some grass. Can't go over it. Can't walk around it. Gotta walk through it. Sha, sha, sha.

Do you see what I see? I see a tree. Can't walk around it! Can't jump over it. Gotta climb up it . . . Go that way.

Do you see what I see? I see a bridge. Can't jump over it. Can't walk around it. Gotta walk on it.

Do you see what I see? I see a river. Can't jump over it. Can't walk around it. Gotta swim through it. Splash, splash, splash.

Do you see what I see? I see a cave! I feel a furry tail, and some eyes. It's a lion! Run! Sha, sha, sha. Splash, splash, splash. Go that way!

Were you scared? Nooo, oh, nooo . . .

by Busy Beaver Joanne Kuipers

BOOK NOOK

The Bobbsey Twins: Doctor Funnybone's Secret

Bert and Nan are twins, and Flossie and Freddie are twins. They were going on a trip to Florida. They were on their way there when Danny pops a balloon with a pin. They all jump and the driver swerves to the side of the road. Then a car stops on the side. Finally they get to Dr. Funnybone's place. Dr. Funnybone has a secret he will not tell. Then they get mixed up with a mystery and solve it. They find out the secret. If you want to know what it is I'll tell you. Dr. Funnybone had a machine that could make animals colourful and everyone tries to find out the secret and they find out.

by Busy Beaver Hetty Witteveen



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, Sheila VanSydenborgh. We are happy to have you join us. Are you having lots of fun in the summer holidays? Write again soon, Sheila.

And a big welcome to you too, Evelyn Hamoen. Did you pass your swimming test? Are you looking forward to going to school? Bye for now.

Hello Elaine Schoon. Are you enjoying your holidays? And have you entered the Quiz Contest? I hope you get a penpal soon!

Busy Beavers, someone would like a penpal? Would you like to exchange letters with someone? Elaine Schoon would like you to write her at:

8 Gretna Drive, Brampton, Ontario

QUIZ TIME

Who Am I?

1. I was the first man on earth. I am _____.
2. I lived the longest in the Bible. I am _____.
3. I am the mother of John the Baptist. I am _____.
4. I was taken up to heaven by a flaming chariot. I am _____.
5. King Saul wanted to kill me. I am _____.
6. I became king when I was 7 years old. I am _____.

A quiz from Busy Beaver Marjorie Smouter

Answers next time!

And here are some riddles for you from Busy Beaver Michael Wildeboer.

1. I can run but can't walk.
2. What does a dog have nothing else has?
3. What moves faster, heat or cold?
4. Why are cooks cruel?
5. What's grey and lumpy and comes in a can?
6. What is always coming but never arrives?

Answers: 1. water 2. puppies 3. Heat, you can always catch a cold. 4. They beat eggs and whip the cream. 5. elephant soup 6. tomorrow

That's it for today, Busy Beavers.

School is just around the corner. I think some of you will be happy to go back, some not so happy. But for everyone of you, best wishes for a happy, fun-and-learning school year! Don't forget to send in your Contest entries!

Your Aunt Betty