



# Lost to the Reformed Faith

The year 1975 is an important year for the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Twenty-five years ago the first Canadian Reformed Church was instituted. It happened in Lethbridge, Alberta, and the date was April 16, 1950. Edmonton followed on July 9, of the same year; Neerlandia was next on August 6, Georgetown came on August 13, and New Westminster was instituted on December 17.

Institution of those Churches was *not* the result of hasty action or premeditated schismatic behaviour. In order to preserve the inheritance which they brought with them, the brethren and sisters could follow no different course. They were to submit to further instruction in "the Protestant Reformed Truth" if they wished to join the Protestant Reformed Churches, and they were to keep silent about the covenant of God and the meaning of baptism, the riches of which they had recently re-discovered during the struggle in the Netherlands, if they wished to become members of the Christian Reformed Church. In the latter case they also had to bear in mind that one who joined the Christian Reformed Church was expected to agree with doctrinal deliverances which - to say the least - were dubious.

A brother who visited Canada and the United States in 1946 and who travelled extensively for business purposes told me after his return that he had heard about "informative trips" made by representatives of the Synodical Churches in the Netherlands and he told me some samples of this "information" which they had spread about the Liberation and about the liberated Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

That, someone may say, was not official. It may even be labelled as hearsay. You are right. We therefore turn to the official documents and decisions of the Christian Reformed Church, which reflect the same attitude.

More than once it has been mentioned that the Synodical Committee of the Christian Reformed Church disallowed the request of the convening Church for the 1946 General Synod of the liberated Reformed Churches in the Netherlands to send delegates to that Synod, because "the Christian Reformed Church does not at the present time maintain Church Correspondence with the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands maintaining Art. 31 of the Church Order" and that the 1946 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church approved of this action while, at the same time, appointing delegates to the 1946 Synod of Utrecht of the Synodical Churches. In their report to the 1947 Synod, these delegates referred to the "schism, which has so sadly disrupted the Gereformeerde Kerken recently." Besides, the Christian Reformed Church was brought face to face with the above "schism" also during the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, held in Grand Rapids in August 1946.

The arrival of immigrants from the liberated Churches resulted in more action. The 1949 Synod not only had to deal with the well-known appeal by Mr. J. DeHaas but it also received a report of the General Committee for Home Missions, which Committee had drawn up a statement concerning "those immigrants who come to us from the Gereformeerde Kerken (Artikel 31)." It was a "problem"

which was "not limited to the Canadian field, but is also being faced by our ministers in the U.S.A.", the Committee stated. Apart from being told that "all who enter our denomination ought to agree with those articles" (of 1908), "assurance should be given by those immigrants that as members of our denomination they will not agitate the differences which existed among the Gereformeerden in the Netherlands."

The 1951 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church "gratefully" acknowledged a letter from "the Immigration Committee of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands concerning the shortage of ministers in Canada" and decided to "take notice of the facts it calls to the attention of our Church."

What were those facts?

"In a communication signed by the Secretary of the Immigration Committee, Mr. G.M. Laernoës of Utrecht, our sister Church mentions certain facts about the situation in Canada, e.g. the increase in immigration under the new regulations, the discouragingly lengthy vacancies of such congregations as Neerlandia, the coming of ministers from the "Gereformeerde Kerken onderhoudende Art. 31 D.K.O." Alarmed lest their members emigrating to Canada be neglected for lack of ministers, and be lost to the Reformed faith and our Christian Reformed Church as a result of the efforts of competing groups, especially the Article 31 group, the Churches suggest earnest consideration of the advisability and even necessity of calling ministers from the Netherlands."

According to Mr. Laernoës, as quoted with obvious agreement by the Christian Reformed Immigration Committee, "efforts of competing groups, especially the Article 31 group" (by which the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands are meant which returned to the freedom in Christ), if successful, would result in members of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands becoming lost to the Reformed faith.

That is clear language, not liable to be misunderstood.

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On April 16, 1975, it will be twenty-five years ago that the first Canadian Reformed Church was instituted. This institution was *not* the result of "efforts of the Article 31 group" but of the preservation of their inheritance by people who refused to be brought under a new yoke by the Protestant Reformed Churches and who refused to be bound by extra-Scriptural deliverances and by a command to keep silent about the riches of Christ as re-discovered in their recent struggle, as the Christian Reformed Church wished to impose upon them.

The question *has* to be asked, "Have those who instituted the first and the following Canadian Reformed Churches become lost to the Reformed faith?"

We are not to gloat - it would not be becoming. What have you that you have not received? Besides, there are dangers for which we should have an open eye, for the most dangerous situation for the Church is not caused by her being threatened by dangers, but by her not recog-

nizing the dangers by which she is surrounded, which even exist in her own midst.

But we are allowed to state that the Canadian Reformed Churches have contended to keep and have kept the faith, as the Lord has commanded us, Jude: 3.

The Synodical Churches in the Netherlands, whose Immigration Committee felt it necessary to state that people who would follow "the Article 31 group" would become lost to the Reformed faith have themselves become lost to that *Reformed* faith. And the Christian Reformed Church, which suffered itself to be led by information, suggestions, and guidance received for the

Netherlands, is in grave danger, a fact which is noted and pointed out by those in her own midst who are concerned about it.

In these days of grateful celebration, we praise the faithfulness of our Lord and King Who has prevented us from becoming lost to the Reformed faith. That is no reason for pride - there are many dangers to which we are subject - it is only a reason for humble gratitude and for an earnest desire and pledge to hold on to the faith which has been delivered to us by the fathers, to pass it on till the Day is there. vO

## Soli Deo Gloria

*A review of the events that led to the institution of the First Canadian Reformed Church on Sunday, April 16, 1950, in Coaldale, Alberta.*

The morning worship service on Sunday, April 16, 1950, was held in the Crystal Lake school, close to Lethbridge.

The sermon, in the Dutch language, had as theme: "De roep, dat een iegelijk schuldig is zich bij de ware kerk te voegen" ("The call that every one is bound to join the true church"). The sermon was written by Rev. I. DeWolff, Enschede, The Netherlands, and was read by br. N. VanDooyeweerd. The text was Acts 2:40b.

After the worship service the brothers arranged a congregational meeting. Br. D.M. Barendregt Sr. occupied the chair. There were ten male confessing members eligible for voting. After a few voting rounds the brothers D.M. Barendregt Sr. and C.A. VanderGugten were elected as elders and brother G. VanderVegte as deacon. Br. VanderVegte announced that he could not accept his office because in the near future he would be able to attend the worship services only once every six weeks. In his place br. Joh. DeHaas was chosen.

In the afternoon service a sermon on Lord's Day 31 was read by br. D.M. Barendregt Sr. After reading the sermon, br. D.M. Barendregt Sr. installed the brothers C.A. VanderGugten and Joh. DeHaas respectively in their offices of elder and deacon, according to the form for ordination of elders and deacons. Br. D.M. Barendregt Sr. did this as he was the oldest one. After that, br. C.A. VanderGugten installed br. D.M. Barendregt Sr. in the office of elder. After these ordinations br. L. Geusebroek suggested that all the brothers should perform their offices for one year, and that for one time only the brothers would be eligible for re-election. This proposal was adopted by the consistory.

The above-mentioned act was the institution of the Church of Jesus Christ in Coaldale.

Twenty-five years: what is a quarter of a century within the many centuries which have passed? What is a quarter of a century of church history within the church of all centuries? Is it important enough to draw our attention?

In the eyes of Christian Reformed people, a few recalcitrant persons were "playing church". In the eyes of the world, and also of official Christianity we are unknown. A periodical such as *Christianity Today* does not know very much about our existence.

But we have not "to despise the day of small things"

(Zech. 4:10). And we have to meditate about these words: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

The institution of the Church of Coaldale did not unexpectedly fall from the sky on a certain day in April 1950. As will appear from the history that preceded it, the Christian Reformed said that some opinionated Liberated people from the Netherlands, without any scruples, imported into Canada and the U.S.A. their ecclesiastical troubles and controversies.

Let us take a closer look at the historical background, as we find it in the archives of the Church of Coaldale.

### *1. The relations between the first immigrants in South Alberta and the Christian Reformed Church.*

In the spring of 1948 the first immigrants arrived in the vicinity of Lethbridge, Alberta, namely the families J. Boonstra, S. VanderVeen, and Joh. DeHaas. The families Boonstra and VanderVeen carried with them an attestation from one of the Reformed Churches (Synodical), and the family DeHaas carried an attestation from the Reformed Church (Liberated) in The Hague-East.

They handed in their attestations at the Chr. Ref. Church in Nobleford, 25 miles north of Lethbridge, which accepted them all without any restriction. The three above-mentioned families could not, because of lack of transportation, attend the worship services regularly. They decided to organize home worship services. Alternately DeHaas and VanderVeen read a sermon.

But already on the first Sunday a controversy arose; VanderVeen belonged in the old country to the Synodical churches and DeHaas to the Reformed churches (Liberated). DeHaas read a sermon by Rev. J. Meyer in the series "Waarheid en Recht" (Truth and Justice). After the service the controversy showed up. VanderVeen stated that he agreed 100% with the doctrinal statements of the synods 1942/1946, and that he would rather not hear the sermons of Liberated-Reformed preachers. He added that nobody could expect from him any co-operation in calling a minister who adhered to the doctrinal statements of the Liberated churches, and that he would raise objections for sure if for the office of elder and deacon brothers were nominated who would oppose the synodical decisions of 1942/1946.

This shows the mentality of some people. They regarded the Christian Reformed Church as an extension of the synodical churches in the Netherlands. Alas, history proved that this Church just wanted to be that.

In this connection the doctrinal statements of 1942/



Beet workers in Coaldale in 1952.

1946, and the assertions from Chr. Ref. side (also of the church of Nobleford) that they took a neutral position in these matters, must draw our attention.

On June 27, 1948, br. Joh. DeHaas wrote a detailed letter of objection to the consistory of the church of Nobleford. He sketched the situation before the war, when a very agreeable and pleasant correspondence was carried on between the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Christian Reformed Church in America. This correspondence was discontinued on account of war circumstances. Br. DeHaas was very concerned about the fact that this correspondence was not resumed after the cease-fire of 1945. He proved that the Reformed churches (Liberated) were the lawful continuation of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, and asked that everything be done to resume the correspondence again.

We may remark here that br. DeHaas wrote very modestly and very magnanimously. There was not a demand to quit the correspondence with the Synodical churches.

Remark: More recently the committee for contact with the Chr. Ref. church asked synod whether, if there is to be real contact between the Can. Ref. Churches and the Chr. Ref. Church, the relationship between the Chr. Ref. church and de Geref. Kerken (Synodical) must be broken. Synod Orangeville 1968 answered this question in the *affirmative* (Acts art. 134). This shows the development of history. I cannot elaborate on it because it is not within the scope of this article.

But had the Chr. Ref. church bound itself to the assertion of neutrality, she would have said: brothers, we don't make any statements about these doctrinal controversies; we only state that at present there are two groups of Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Well then, we desire to live with both of them in a fraternal relation; we carry on correspondence with both, and acknowledge the office-bearers of both groups, or: no correspondence at all.

But instead of neutrality there was a very high degree of partiality. When office-bearers of the Synodical churches arrived, they were received as being servants of Christ (for instance: Prof. Dr. J.H. Bavinck, Prof. Brillenburg Wirth, Rev. F.C. Meyster, Rev. G.A. Barkey Wolf, etc.). But when Prof. K. Schilder arrived, a declaration from the synodical committee, (headed by Rev. R.J. Danhof, Ph. D., stated clerk, HvB.) was published in *The Banner*, (official church paper of the Chr. Ref. Church), stating that Prof. K. Schilder was not allowed to preach, not even to speak, in any Chr. Ref. church building. Never before was anyone coming from the old country prevented from *speaking* in any Chr. Ref. building. But Prof. K. Schilder was regarded

as a rotting member and a pestilence, and also Rev. D. VanDijk, who was to come with him.

This publication was rightly called very impertinent, and as far as I am informed, there has never been any official apology about this rude impertinence. This notorious publication caused much indignation among many Christian Reformed and Reformed people, in Canada and the U.S.A. as well in the Netherlands.

The synodical committee played a very bold game; humanly speaking, they had the game in their own hand, and so they won. They saved what they called the unity of the church, and the principle of hearing both sides was sacrificed on the "altar of unity at any price". All churches obeyed in a slavish obedience ("cadaver gehoorzaamheid"). That was the neutrality of the Chr. Ref. church.

In the Reformed Churches (Liberated in the Netherlands, and in *De Reformatie*, Schilder's weekly, it was advised from that time not to hand over any attestation to any Chr. Ref. Church, but to approach the Protestant Reformed Church of America. (More about the Protestant Reformed Church in the third part of this article.)

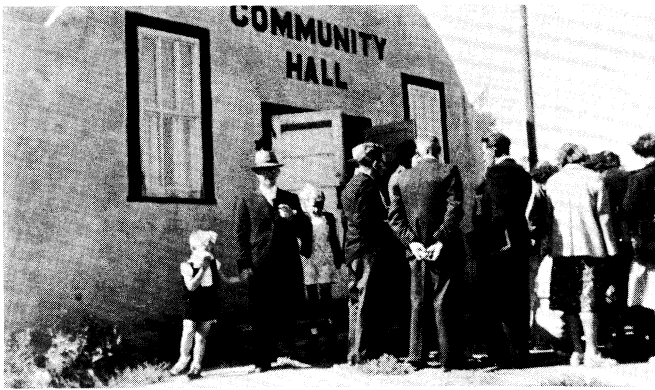
The main issue of the DeHaas action was the correspondence between the Chr. Ref. Church and the Reformed Churches. The whole tendency of his letter, and all the following letters of objection and appeal, was to urge the consistory of Nobleford and, through this local church, the whole confederation of Chr. Ref. Churches, to investigate independently which of the two groups was the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches with which the Chr. Ref. Church had carried on correspondence in the years prior to 1939.

For this reason br. DeHaas approached the consistory in the following manner, requesting that

1. The consistory of the Chr. Ref. Church of Nobleford condemn the above-mentioned publication in *The Banner* severely, and request the synodical committee to hold back in the future suchlike publications, because they are a danger to the unity of the church.
2. It declare the desirability of resuming without delay the correspondence with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and, with respect to that, to overture classis Pacific; to forward this overture to the meeting of the general Synod, which will be held June 1949. If the classis and Synod do not adopt these proposals, the consistory of Nobleford forward the following proposals: That Synod appoint a committee to investigate which



Arrival of the Pieffers family in Lethbridge on Aug. 30, 1952 at 8:30 a.m. At 10:00 a.m. Rev. Pieffers conducted his first service in Coaldale. Mrs. Pieffers is seen at far right.



August 30, 1952: in front of the Coaldale Community Hall. Rev. G. Ph. Pieffers holds his son's hand.

one of the two groups carrying the name Reformed Churches must be regarded as the lawful continuation of the Reformed Churches with which the Chr. Ref. Church carried on correspondence prior to the year 1939."

The answer of the consistory was disappointing, and absolutely not to the point. The consistory answered that a request from the Liberated churches for correspondence had to be received, before they could go into the matter.

This was a foolish answer, since the Reformed Churches (Liberated) regarded themselves as being still in correspondence with the Chr. Ref. Church. It appeared that the consistory neglected all the arguments in the letter of objection. Br. Joh. DeHaas reproached them with being poor readers, and that they absolutely were not inclined to investigate independently but were leaning on rumours, etc. There also arose a more local matter, but in connection with the assertion of a neutrality. The brothers VanderVeen et. al. asked consent from the consistory for their home worship services, or as some mockers called them, home-made worship services.

Br. VanderVeen asked the consistory for some "leesstof" (sermons to read). Br. DeHaas informed the consistory that he was not in want of "leesstof" because he had more than a hundred sermons of the series "Waarheid en Recht", and enclosed ten of them so that the consistory could see whether these sermons contained anything in contradiction with Scripture and Confession. Br. VanderVeen preferred the sermons of the series "Menigerlei Genade" (a name derived from 1 Peter 4:10). The consistory replied that in the past it had been decided that in the Dutch reading services only sermons of "Menigerlei Genade" were allowed to be read, and that self-evidently all other sermons were prohibited. In reply to the question when this decision was taken, Rev. Hoekstra answered: "Long before the schism in the Netherlands". Responding to the argument of br. DeHaas that in this way the consistory made the doctrinal statements of the Dutch Synods of binding force, because the authors of the sermons in "Menigerlei Genade" were bound to these statements, the consistory answered that it stuck to its decision. The consistory was adamant just like Pontius Pilate: What I have written I have written. Br. DeHaas answered: This implies that at the moment your council will only allow sermons bound to the doctrinal statements of the Synods in the Netherlands, and all the other sermons ("Waarheid and Recht") are disqualified as being not Reformed.

On February 2, 1949, br. DeHaas sent a long letter of

appeal to the classis Pacific of the Chr. Ref. Church.

I will quote this literally because it is written in the English language, that is, the points listed by DeHaas and the answers of the classis. The letter contended four points, and I put in italics the points which DeHaas presented, while after every point the answer of the classis follows.

Classis Pacific wrote to br. DeHaas:

"The following are the decisions Classis Pacific has taken regarding your appeal from the decision of the consistory of Nobleford:"

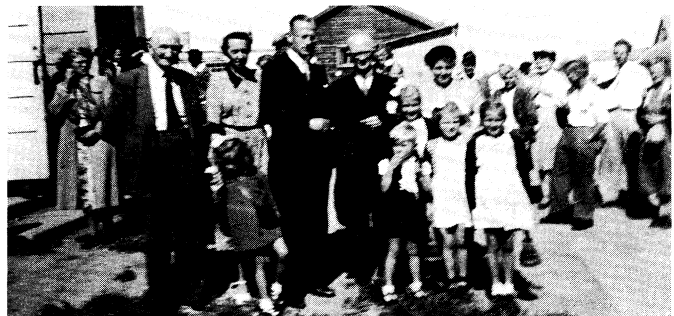
1. *"That Classis express the desirability to resume without delay correspondence with the 'Geref. Kerken in Nederland onderhoudende art. 31 K.O.' and overture synod accordingly."*

"In respect to this request 1. Classis states that the brother errs when he assumes that correspondence was carried on between the Chr. Ref. Church and 'de Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31'. Notwithstanding the fact that the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31' claim to be the continuation of the 'Geref. Kerken', yet they are a new denominational organization with which we had no correspondence in the past. The relationship as sister churches has essentially been continued during the war with the 'Geref. Kerken' all the practical expression of it was impossible during the war."

2. *"That in case classis does not accede to this request, that it then overture Synod to appoint a committee that shall investigate which of the two groups carrying the name of 'Geref Kerken' must be considered to be the continuance of the 'Geref. Kerken' with whom the Chr. Ref. Church carried on correspondence prior to 1941"*.

"In regard to this request classis states that the Chr. Ref. Church has not officially expressed itself in regard to the issues between the 'Geref. Kerken' (Synodical, HvB) and the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31' (i.e. Liberated). Nor has there been an official overture from the 'Geref. Kerken' (Synodical) and the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art 31' which will make it necessary to express ourselves in regard to the issues that led to the schism. Further classis states that this is not the opportune time to appoint such a committee, inasmuch as there is a group within the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31' that seeks reconciliation with the 'Geref. Kerken' (Synodical). Rather would we maintain a hopeful and prayerful attitude that reconciliation may be effected and that the prayer of our Saviour may be realized that those who are spiritually one may be one ecclesiastically. To appoint such a committee would likely harm the attempted reconciliation."

Remark: The reconciliation attempts here referred



After the installation of Rev. Pieffers in Coaldale. Opa Pieffers, Rev. and Mrs. VanPopta, Rev. and Mrs. Pieffers with their children.

to are the notorious Oosterbeek action and the even worse action of the Rev. B.A. Bos and the Synod of the Synodical churches, The Hague 1949. But apart from that, who does not think here of the ostrich which hides its head in the sand?

3. "That classis advise the consistory of Nobleford to rescind or change its decision pertaining to the reading of sermons from 'Menigerlei Genade'."

"With regard to this point, Classis states that it only is the part of wisdom to adhere to the decision taken by the consistory of Nobleford some years ago to have sermons read exclusively from 'Menigerlei Genade' only in the Holland services, since these sermons are written by ministers from churches with which our church has correspondence. However, it is **ADVISABLE TO AVOID SERMONS OR ELIMINATE PASSAGES FROM SERMONS WHICH DRAW ATTENTION TO THE CONTROVERSY THAT LED TO THE SCHISM.**" (Emphasis mine, HvB. Here we meet the ostrich again.)

4. "Classis express the desirability that Synod publish sermons in the Holland language and overture Synod accordingly."

In regard to this point classis decided to overture Synod to provide sermons for the Holland-language reading services in view of the present need among the immigrants.

Furthermore: br. DeHaas stated in his letter that, seeing and knowing by experience the attitude of the Chr. Ref. Church, it would be very difficult, if not impossible for one coming from the Reformed Churches (Liberated) in The Netherlands, to remain member of the Chr. Ref. Church if these requests are not granted.

Classis answered: "Regarding your statement that it will be made very difficult if not impossible for those who come from the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31' to remain members of the Chr. Ref. Church, if this request is not granted, Classis states that since our Church adheres to the 'Conclusions of Utrecht (1905)' the present approach of the Chr. Ref. Church does not make membership in the Chr. Ref. Church impossible for those who come from the 'Geref. Kerken onderhoudende art. 31'."

A remarkable thing in this respect was the proposal of br. DeHaas, to the classis to overture the Synod to provide sermons in the Dutch language. Br. DeHaas tried to accommodate the consistory in the matter of reading material for Dutch reading services. Classis approached this proposal as flies approach a dish of sugar. However, in my opinion there is here a hierarchical snake in the grass. It is not the task of the Synod to provide sermons or to publish magazines such as *The Banner* and *De Wachter*.

It will be clear that br. Joh. DeHaas was not satisfied with these answers. He made a last appeal to the consistory. He reproached the consistory with ambiguity, with trying to stop him from talking about the schism in the Netherlands. Br. DeHaas retorted: I will speak to whom I want, and about the subjects which I want. Consistory tried to muzzle him and other Liberated people so that they would hold their peace about the works of the Lord done in the Netherlands. It is clear from the whole story that there was the sin of divers weight, and divers measure, both an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 20:10, 20). On March 20, 1949, another letter of appeal was sent to the General Synod with the points mentioned already, except for the matter of the Dutch sermons for reading services, because



Rev. Pieffers and his children plus a friend.

classis would overture Synod in this respect. This letter also contained an elaboration on the arguments of Classis Pacific regarding the reconciliation attempts in the Netherlands.

We quote the answer of the Synod literally, as we found it in the archives of the Church of Coaldale. It is dated July 13, 1949:

"The Synod of 1949 in the forthcoming acts of Synod, Art 114, XIII, has taken the following decision on your letter of appeal which was forwarded to Synod for consideration:

1. "To declare that it sees no valid reason for discontinuing correspondence with the 'Geref. Kerken' (meant are the Synodical churches) in the Netherlands.

"Grounds: There has been *no change in the doctrinal position and ecclesiastical conduct in the 'Geref. Kerken'*, which would warrant a change in our relations.

2. "To state further that for the present Synod takes a watchful waiting attitude toward the 'Geref. Kerken art 31 K.O.'"

"Grounds: a. We do not know as yet what the ecclesiastical status of this group of Reformed churches is. It is still in its *infancy*, and even now efforts are being made to bring reunion. b. This was our attitude in the case of the 'Chr. Geref. Kerk', which in 1892 refused to join with the union effected between those of the Doleantie and a large part of the 'Chr. Ref. Kerken'." (Emphasis mine, HvB.)

This answer of the Synod has one merit: it is not ambiguous. The so-called reconciliation attempts are used as a fig leaf. And it made clear the attitude of the Chr. Ref. Church regarding the situation in the Netherlands.

Well, with this the ecclesiastical road was finished. Neither minor assembly (consistory) nor major assemblies (Classis, Synod) have seriously taken into consideration the points and the arguments which were presented to them.

The Chr. Ref. Church stated:

1. That she refused to resume correspondence with the "Geref. Kerken" in the Netherlands (Liberated).
2. That she refused to investigate which one of these two groups was the lawful continuation of the "Geref. Kerken". Neglecting the rules for correspondence, she refused categorically to hear both sides. Therefore br. Joh. DeHaas wrote: My family and I withdraw ourselves from your supervision and discipline. Furthermore, in his last letter br. DeHaas complained about the indifference and the poor pastoral care of the consistory of Nobleford in his case. Two times it had been impossible for br. DeHaas to participate in the Lord's Supper on account of the troubles, but consistory never admonished him.

No, instead of that, an irritated consistory reproached him by letter. This matter (the correspondence) will be discussed on home visitation, and we are not planning to write an elaborate letter about it, nor do we want to get into a lengthy discussion. And at the home visit concerned, the elder reproached him: You are only a short time in Canada yet, and you start agitation already?

## II. INTERMEZZO

After the break with the Chr. Ref. Church the brothers and sisters stood more or less as sheep without shepherd, in a vacuum, no ecclesiastical roof over their head. What to do? They decided in July 1949 to organize worship services, by virtue of the office of all believers, twice every Sunday, and for the time being in the house of br. Joh. DeHaas.

It appears from the mutual discussions that the brothers and sisters could not find the philosophers' stone (steen der wijzen) in this respect. They decided to ask advice from Rev. F. DeVries, minister of The Hague-East. Br. Barendregt and br. DeHaas had served as elder and deacon respectively with Rev. DeVries.

The questions were:

1. Is it possible to institute the church without someone already being in the special office?
2. Can the chosen office-bearers be put into their offices without installation?

And from the answer of Rev. DeVries it appeared that there was also a third question: Is it possible for an elder to be appointed to administer the Sacraments and the official ministry of the Word?

The answer of Rev. DeVries: The brothers and sisters in Coaldale (Lethbridge) have of course to institute the church if there is no local church. But that local must not be taken too narrowly. If there is, for instance, a true church at a distance of 30 miles, then put yourselves under supervision and discipline of that church and perform the act of institution with the help of that church (30 miles is a ridiculously small distance by Canadian standards).

With the help of the confederation of churches? All right; but it doesn't depend on that help. Every local church is a complete church. The church depended only on Christ her head. Furthermore, Rev. DeVries pointed to the Protestant Reformed Church, which he regarded as being a true church. Prof. Schilder had pointed to those churches also, and the Synod of Amersfoort was dealing with these churches too, but at the Synod there was no consensus. Five members of the Synod, four of them, members of the

moderamen, stated: The decisions in favour of these churches are not to be considered as settled and binding, with a view to the doctrinal position of Rev. Hoeksema in connection with the covenant. Rev. DeVries considered them as being churches of Jesus Christ.

With regard to the administering of the Sacraments Rev. DeVries was reluctant to give advice in the affirmative, on account of *practical* objections. In principle, he had no objection to granting such an authority to an elder, because every church is a complete church.

Remark: It is fortunate that it never happened. It became a fountain of misery in the church of Pretoria.

Rev. DeVries ended his letter with the prayer: May the LORD grant wisdom to all of you.

## III. CONTACT WITH THE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH.

After the intermezzo that ended with the advice of Rev. DeVries the brothers decided to try to come in contact with the Protestant Reformed Church. The nearest local church of this confederation of churches was Manhattan, Montana, U.S.A., about 360 miles from Lethbridge-Coaldale. The brothers sent a letter to this church (September 4, 1949). They informed the church in Manhattan that from the Netherlands the advice had come to join the Prot. Ref. Churches. They asked three questions.

1. Did the Prot. Ref. Churches make doctrinal statements with binding force, other than the three forms of unity?
2. Does the possibility exist that a major assembly would raise objections if a congregation of the Prot. Ref. Churches were to call minister belonging to the "Geref. Kerken, art. 31" in the Netherlands?
3. An invitation to the minister of the church of Manhattan to spend a weekend in Lethbridge-Coaldale. The consistory of Manhattan (Prot. Ref.) replied right away.

Re. Question 1: There were not any statements with binding force other than the three forms of unity.

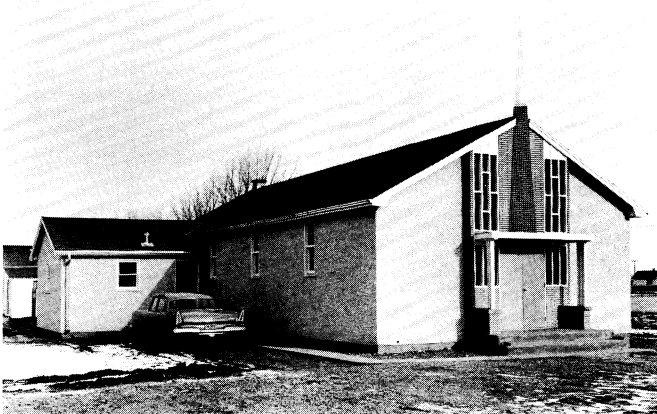
Re. Question 2: calling a minister: They did not feel free to answer this question in the affirmative, but they would send it for advice to the home mission committee of their churches.

Re. Question 3: The invitation could not be accepted right away, but there was hope that soon there would be an occasion to visit the brothers in Lethbridge.

In the meantime the brothers in Lethbridge wrote a letter to all the known addresses of Liberated-Reformed people in Alberta and B.C. wherein were stated the experiences which br. Joh. DeHaas had with the Chr. Ref. Church, and they urged all the brothers and sisters to take up contact with the brothers and sisters in Lethbridge-Coaldale.

At the beginning of November a letter from Manhattan arrived wherein the consistory of Manhattan wrote that they were not able to come a Sunday, but they proposed to come over from Monday Nov. 7 to Nov. 9.

The brothers accepted this offer enthusiastically. So on Nov. 7 the first conversation was held between the brothers from Manhattan (Rev. P. Vis, elder M. Flikkema, and deacon H. Visser) and the brothers and sisters in Lethbridge-Coaldale. The dialogue was very pleasant, but there were differences. The brothers from Manhattan approached the matters of covenant, baptism, election from eternity, and all that is connected with it, from a very strongly supralapsaristic viewpoint, while the brothers from Lethbridge approached them more from an infralapsaristic



*The old Coaldale Church building completed in the summer of 1958.*

viewpoint. This was very interesting, because supra and infra are still fully alive. Think for instance of Prof. K. Schilder's *Catechism* and his published lectures on the Belgic Confession, and also Prof. J. Douma's *Algemene Genade*. But we cannot elaborate about this; it is not within the scope of this already quite long article.

The brothers, rightly, considered this as a dogmatic or theological difference and not as a confessional difference. In the whole discussion both parties fell back on Scripture and confession. The brothers were soon convinced that they belonged together. Tuesday night Rev. Vis preached and after that still more discussion followed.

The result was that the brothers and sisters in a letter (Nov. 1949) requested membership of the church in Manhattan. They were thirty-four persons in total, thirteen confessing members and twenty-one baptized members. The consistory of Manhattan was a little confused. The distance of 360 miles was one of the considerations. It even drew the attention in The Netherlands. Rev Doornbos wrote in the *Noordhollandse Kerkbode*, that he was glad that there was in Manhattan a consistory which considered it strange to have members at a distance of 600 K.M. just as it would be strange if the church of Wormer (Rev. Doornbos' church) had members south of Paris.

But that was not the intention of the brothers in Lethbridge. They were intelligent enough to see the impossibility of such a membership in the long run. Their intention was, once they were accepted as members, to request the consistory and classis for help in instituting the church in Lethbridge-Coaldale.

But in Manhattan the consistory forwarded this request to the classis. In the meantime Rev. A. Cammenga accepted the call to become home missionary of the Prot. Ref. Church, and Manhattan would send him, if possible, to institute the church in Lethbridge-Coaldale. Furthermore, Rev. Vis informed the brothers that he with elder VanDijken would visit Lethbridge January 13-16 during a weekend and Rev. Vis offered to preach. He wrote also that the consistory had asked the classis whether the brothers and sisters in Lethbridge could be accepted as members. The brothers read this letter with mixed feelings. Obviously the brothers in Lethbridge were a little suspicious: Why the advice of the classis? A consistory could judge for itself whether to accept or to reject members. The other information they accepted with both hands. January 15, 1950, Rev. Vis preached. On this visit the brothers asked about the meaning of asking advice from the classis.

The reasons given were: (a) the distance between Lethbridge and Manhattan; (b) there was also a financial problem. In other words, only technical reasons. The brothers were ashamed; their suspicion was apparently misplaced, and they were thankful to the Lord for this second meeting.

In the meantime the brothers in Lethbridge received a letter on behalf of the classis Hardenberg of the "Geref. Kerken" (Liberated), which classis was concerned about the spiritual distress among the immigrants of the Liberated churches in Canada. They stated: Joining the Chr. Ref. church is a denial of the Liberation, but the advice to approach and to join the Prot. Ref. Churches is also very difficult, on account of the conception of the covenant in those churches. The classis was of the opinion that a minister should be sent from the Netherlands to Canada to help institute churches and build up an own ecclesiastical confederation.

The brothers answered that they very much appreciated the sympathetic attitude toward them: We endorse your statement about the Chr. Ref. Church completely, but we do not endorse your statement about the Prot. Ref. Church. We have contact with the consistory of the nearest church, and we hope to come to a definite result in the near future. That was in February 1950. Still optimistic about the results.

On Friday, March 10, 1950, the Rev. P. Vis and elder H. VanDijken arrived in Lethbridge. They brought with them the advice of the classis, not to admit the Lethbridge brothers and sisters to the community of the church, but to wait until Rev. A. Cammenga would arrive in Lethbridge. He probably could judge whether or not the church in Lethbridge could be instituted.

That Sunday (March 10) the brothers asked admission again, but elder VanDijken said: "Then we have to talk first about your viewpoint of the covenant." Was it a matter of technical but of confessional difference after all?

It appeared from this contact that we were mission objects. Later on Rev. A. Cammenga stated that we had to repent from false doctrines. The conception of the covenant held by the Liberated people must irrevocably lead to the Arminian heresy of the free will.

It was a source of grievance for the brothers and sisters in Lethbridge to be classified as people who, as *The Standard Bearer* (official magazine of the Prot. Ref. church) stated it, must be instructed in the "Protestant Reformed truth". It was a grievous insult to our Dutch past, a grievous insult to our professors, ministers, consistories teachers, press, and societies, who had instructed us, in the eyes of such people as Rev. Cammenga, in *pernicious heresies*.

On Tuesday, April 11, 1950 during a meeting at br. DeHaas' place, br. D.M. Barendregt proposed that offices be established coming Sunday, April 16, 1950.

Grounds:

1. The consistory of Manhattan, on the advice of the classis denies us admission to the church of Manhattan.
2. It could take quite some time before Rev. Cammenga will be able to visit us.
3. It is not justified to wait any longer, with a view to the expected immigrants.

All the male confessing members except two were present, and this proposal was adopted.

We are very grateful to our faithful God of the covenant, who leads history, that we did not become affiliated with the Prot. Ref. Church.

Only a few weeks after the institution of the church in Lethbridge-Coaldale, the synod of the Prot. Ref. Church adopted the notorious "Declaration of Principles", which expressed a conception of covenant and election from which we had liberated ourselves in the old country. This "Declaration" had no binding force for people who were already members of these churches, who were already indoctrinated in it, but it had binding force for the new comers.

The whole review of the historical background shows that the liberated people did not in a frivolous way institute the Church of Jesus Christ, in passing by both the Chr. Ref. Church the Prot. Ref. Church. However insignificant this history may be in the eyes of men, we, by faith, regard it as the church-gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*SOLI DEO GLORIA*

H. VANBOSTELEN



# Reflections of a Church Member

The history of the Canadian Reformed Church of Coaldale, Alberta, is only a small phase in the great church-gathering work of Christ, unlimited in time and space, the greatness of which cannot be fathomed by sinful human minds. But in this small part can already be seen the power of that mighty wind which started blowing on the first Pentecost.

Spring 1950 marks the beginning of the Can. Ref. Churches. By the almighty power of His reawakening Spirit, God called a handful of people in Canada to serve Him in the institution of what was at first called the Free Reformed Church. The zephyrs of dawn stirred their breasts, and made the sap of hope and faith run through their veins. Full of zeal they put ads in the papers in Holland which drew brothers and sisters to Southern Alberta. A family, ready to leave for Ontario, changed plans after the reading of the institution of the Free Ref. Church and came to Lethbridge despite considerable trouble and cost.

Beside directing future immigrants to Lethbridge, those already in Canada, as many as were known, were contacted and advised to meet together on Sundays in their homes and to read sermons. Especially Rev. Hettinga from Harlingen, who visited Alberta, has done considerable work in this respect by visiting brothers as far as New Westminster and Houston. Those who were living closer to "home" were asked to come to the services with the promise of help with transportation. This was a great problem, however, because at first only one member of the congregation had a car, which was used by the passengers inside and outside (by hanging onto it), so that sometimes the driver could hardly find a place to sit. Also a tractor with haywagon was used. Older people climbed onto this with the help of a small stepladder. Yes, to keep up the western reputation, even a horse could sometimes be seen, which was hitched to a telephone post in front of the church on Sunday morning. Transportation costs money, however, and this was scarce among the members. A boost to the transportation fund was given when a brother, moving in from Ontario, handed over some \$80.00,

this being the result of church collections held in a house congregation in that province.

Just as spring on the prairies comes suddenly and with full force, so suddenly many immigrants came from Holland in spring 1951. Because of the increase in number the church outgrew the school, where services were held, and moved to the Community Hall in Coaldale, first in the basement, later in the Hall upstairs. Due to poor weather conditions in sunny South Alberta (the banana belt!) that year, many considered their stay transitional and moved on to such places as New Westminster and Houston, where in the meantime a church was instituted.

Springtime was always a busy time in Southern Alberta because many of the immigrants made a living hoeing beets. Spring 1952 was especially busy because it was decided that, since funds were low and the need for a minister pressing, the congregation would hoe some extra beets for the church and that the living quarters (provided for the workers) would be used as a parsonage for the coming minister and his family. It turned out, however, that a member of the congregation lived in the "beet-house" and that a new parsonage was being built. Although very thankful for the work (above all the home visitations) done by Rev. Hettinga in 1950 and Rev. VanPopta in 1951, the congregation was extremely happy when on a rainy Sunday morning in August 1952 Rev. Pieffers arrived. It was the Spirit who had moved hearts to call a minister; it was the Spirit who had moved a heart to comply with this call and to show a desire to preach the Gospel in Canada. Rev. Pieffers was not the first minister in Canada, for Edmonton had received the first one a little earlier that year. But if there is such a title as "immigrant-minister" or "minister-pioneer", Rev. Pieffers would certainly deserve this. He was not only a shepherd for the flock, but also a teacher at the Saturday school, a driver for the school, an interpreter when one had to go for a driver's test or when a sister had to go to the doctor, a chauffeur when one had to go to the hospital, yes, even when a



*During the official opening of the old Coaldale Churchbuilding.*

sister was in labour in the dead of night, he was ready to bring her away. It is excusable to make an exception in this article and to mention him by name. He will be remembered by many and in particular by that family of which he married eight children.

From the very beginning the church of Coaldale had two ideals. The first one, a minister, was fulfilled. It took eight years before the Lord provided the church with its own building. When in 1958 we left the Community Hall, where, after a Wedding celebration or Valentine party, we had been sitting under the decoration of glittering hearts and colourful streamers (which attracted the greatest interest of the children), it was not a sad farewell. Thankfully we moved into our first church building, through its simplicity a place worthy to be called a meeting place of God and His people.

For fourteen years the congregation came together in this building to listen to God's Word and to praise His name. Fluctuation in membership was small. Many children were born, but members also left. Looking back it almost seemed as if the church lay dormant, as if the mighty wind of the Spirit had stopped blowing, as if the vigour of spring was gone. But God was at work in a different way. In this time the congregation was tested in the adversity which befell the minister's family, particularly when Rev. Pieffers became ill. In Feb. 1966 he for the last time proclaimed the Word of the Lord in Coaldale, because God had called him to serve the last years of his life elsewhere.

With renewed faith we received  
continued on page 12

# news medley

On Sunday, March 16th, I had the privilege of conducting services in Winnipeg's new Churchbuilding, and I must say that it is a beautiful building, well suited for the Congregation. When I compare this new one with the old building, the difference does not have to be described. It reminds me of that member of the Congregation of New Westminster who had been living in a rather small house with her growing family. When they built a new house close to it and when we were standing in the kitchen of her new home, looking down upon the old "residence", she said, "Dominee, I can hardly believe that I lived there for so many years, and I can still not understand it how we fit everything in there!" However, it will be like that with almost everyone. When you move to a larger home and when you have placed all your furniture and everything you have collected in the course of the years in its proper place, you wonder how you ever managed to have it all in the old house or apartment and still were able to move around.

Anyway, I was in Winnipeg and saw it all. The Congregation is very happy with it. They did get rid of the old building, although the original purchaser "found a small legal loophole to cancel the deal. However, the same day a new buyer was found who wishes to tear the old building down." I am certain that he will get a lot of excellent lumber out of the old building.

That the churchbuilding is ready does not mean that everything is shipshape. The parking has to be done on the paved street that runs up to the property; no parking on the property is allowed until the parking lot is paved. Understandable, when you see the mud that is formed when the snow melts and the water tries to find a way towards the sea, to return again in the form of rain or snow some other day.

In the bulletin we are informed that several members wish to come with what is called "surprise gifts". They are advised to contact the chairman of the building committee, for "it would be a pity if two parties work on a similar project and the Church ends up with, for example, **two** pipe organs." I would not call that a pity: there are more Congregations who are looking for one. And as for another possibility which the bulletin mentions (What if someone comes with a barrel organ?), I see great possibilities there, especially for our Ladies Auxiliaries. I am sure then many young people would love to spend their holidays lugging it through the streets of Winnipeg and other major cities, collecting funds for building projects. Maybe there is someone here or there who has a pet monkey to go with it. Man, we haven't exhausted our possibilities by a long shot!

However, I should not talk about Winnipeg any more. The other time I heard the remark already that I said way too much about the Church there. I hope our readers will understand it that I have to do everything in my power to stay friends with Premier Printing, for if they would start meddling with my medley, I would hear even more criticism than I do already under the present conditions. But the strange (?) thing is that the criticism comes when

someone **thinks** that I have stepped on one of his little toes. Usually he is only bothered by one of his own corns.

Let's proceed. From the same bulletin (I won't mention the name anymore) I learned that apparently some spoons of the College are in the making, for the question was asked, "Did you all order your spoon from the Theological College?" I haven't, but then, maybe I'll get one to review for **Clarion**. Who knows!

We spoke about organs. Barrhead decided not to have any more collections for the organ fund, since the amount already collected practically covers the purchase price. And Smithville tells us that "The Organ Committee has been instructed to purchase the proposed organ." I hope that the rumour which I heard is correct, namely that it is a pipe organ. Smithville's Consistory also instructed the building committee to try to find out what the cost will be of increasing the seating capacity of the Churchbuilding with 25%. That will not be easy to do, I think, and I wish the brethren all the wisdom they need. I have always the impression that efforts to increase the seating capacity are only stopgap measures which are regretted later on. Time will tell.

The **Family Post** informs us that Rev. A.H. Dekker requested a leave of absence because of illness. We hope that it is not of a serious nature and that recovery will be speedy. Now that we are speaking of ministers anyway, Toronto sent word to the Ontario sister Churches that Candidate Oosterhuis, called for the mission, declined this call and accepted one to a Church in the Netherlands. That is a disappointment. The time that Rev. H. Knigge will leave the mission field is approaching fast and no one has been found as yet to replace him, let alone that there are two missionaries there to work as a team. As for the position of Rev. Knigge, we are told that he and his family will first go to the Netherlands and there apply for landed immigrant status. Only after word has been received that this has been granted to him and his family can he be declared eligible for call here in Canada.

From Toronto to Hamilton is not that big a step. We therefore mention something about the latter. An Easter celebration was planned for March 22nd, where the Choir was to perform, where the children's choir was to be heard, where the brass band from Orangeville was to let itself be heard, and where a paper money collection was to be held. I was prevented from going there, but I would have hesitated to go in any case, for the situation sometimes appears to be dangerous for people who, in the opinion of boards or committees, have not contributed enough. The Financial Committee of the school took stern measures (and, Oh, how contagious it is!) to reach their goal. "The Financial Committee is glad to announce that until the end of last year the money has come in fairly good. There is, however, a danger that, due to the fact that several members are getting behind in payments, while at the same time the expenditures are on the increase, our treasurer will run out of cash. It is for this reason that we besiege the members concerned to bring payments up to date and we request an **extra** donation from everyone." That's what I call a compulsory check-off!

For safety's sake we flee to the other end of the country. Although it does not help much. In Hamilton, at least, one could attend a Congregational Meeting without fear for one's health, for it was decided that there should be no smoking during a congregational meeting. Catechism students (poor souls!) are not allowed to smoke in

the building at all. But in Smithers the situation is different. "Since no agreement can be reached on the smoking matter no decision is made." They do, however, have one advantage over us here in Fergus. "The fly problem is handed over to the Administration Committee." I wish I could do that now that these sluggish beasts come out of their hiding places and seem to prefer buzzing around the pulpit. I really don't know why they do that. Anyone any idea? I'll ask our Committee of Administration; they might have a solution. And otherwise I like to hear from the far west.

Going down the Cariboo highway and joining the Trans Canada Highway in due time, we reach Abbotsford. There a "proposal to come to the purchase of a pipe organ is given into discussion." The Consistory appeared sympathetic to the idea but leaves the initiative up to the individual members. They will reconsider the matter when the budget for 1976 comes into discussion. Keep it warm!!

The Young People planned a League meeting on March 23, to be held in Cloverdale. Mr. R. Koat was to speak there on "Christian Identity".

New Westminster decided to have the ordination of office-bearers on the first Sunday of June instead of on the first Sunday of July as had been the custom. The reason is that with the new date a list of sections can be published before the holidays. There is much in favour of such a decision. There is also much in favour of another suggestion which reached the New Westminster Church from one of the cooperating Churches: purchase furniture in Brazil and let it be part of the housing of the missionary and his family. In this manner you save the moving costs. A missionary will, of course, wish to take along some personal things, and his library; likewise he and his wife will wish to have some of the items they are especially attached to and fond of; but as for the rest it is a suggestion worthy of serious consideration. Differences in climate may seriously affect the condition of furniture, so that it may be better to purchase it in the country itself. There will be no problem when a Candidate is called for the work. There will be more aspects to be considered when a minister is called and when he stays for more than one or two terms in the field: his own furniture will then have to be stored for so many years, and how will he find it back? However, I do not have to answer all questions. I just pass this suggestion received by New Westminster's Church on to our readers.

New Westminster's Congregational Meeting had to be postponed because information necessary to discuss the plans for a new Churchbuilding would not be available before the date set for this meeting.

Let us move on to Alberta.

The bulletins make mention of invitations received from the Coaldale Church to attend the official commemoration meeting, scheduled to recall the blessings bestowed by the Lord in the institution of the Lethbridge Church twenty-five years ago. Neerlandia also appointed a committee to prepare an evening to commemorate the institution of the Neerlandia Church on August 6, 1950.

Carman decided to introduce the use of the Revised Standard Version on the first Sunday of May. (Smithers decided to wait and use the King James Version for the time being.) The Young People's Societies plan a Study weekend from May 16-19, and the topic to be the theme of the weekend will be "Population and its Problems".

Carman also discussed the question whether they

## 40th Wedding Anniversary



*Mr. and Mrs. John Gansekoele will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary on Friday, April 11. They got married in Hardenberg in 1935 and lived in Rouveen until they departed for Canada in May 1951. After their arrival, they first lived in Drayton with Mr. Gansekoele working in a shoe factory in Elmira, Ont. Via various jobs he finally could put his knowledge to good use when he became an assistant lecturer at the University of Guelph. He retired - but only partly - in the summer of 1974, and still puts in about two and a half days per week in his old job.*

*Both Mr. and Mrs. Gansekoele enjoy good health and, with one exception, they have their children and grandchildren within a fifty mile radius. Their marriage was blessed with three sons and one daughter, and they have sixteen grandchildren.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Usually we pay attention to facts as mentioned above in our News Medley. But the News Medley had been sent away already when I saw the above information. We therefore gladly add our congratulations, on behalf of the large, country-wide Family, to those which will be spoken to them and mailed to them on this occasion. May the Lord in His mercy spare them still for many years. Time goes fast and it is hard to realize that it is already more than five years ago that our family found some shelter with the "Gansjes" [as Mrs. Gansekoele sometimes calls them on a birthday card] during the first weeks of our life in Fergus. We share in your gratitude.*

vO

should not have separate meetings of the Elders and also meetings with the Deacons. Apparently the Consistory meets always with the Deacons at present. It was decided that "Deacons in their capacity as assisting elders, meet with the Elders". There you have something I do not believe a word of, namely that the deacons are assisting elders. To my knowledge, we do not speak in that vein anywhere in our Church Order or in the Confessions. On the contrary, we state that the offices are always to be kept separate. When the deacons meet with the Consistory (that is the way in which our Church Order speaks) or when the deacons are "added to the Consistory" (art. 38) then they are not there in their capacity as "assistant-elders". I become more and more convinced that the deacons do belong to the Consistory because they are deacons and that the deacons together with the overseers are the

## REFLECTIONS OF A CHURCH MEMBER - cont. from page 9



*After the ordination of Rev. J. Visscher on October 15, 1972. We see here in front of the new Churchbuilding: Mr. and Mrs. W. Visscher, Rev. and Mrs. J. Visscher and Dr. J. Faber.*

that same spring Rev. J. Mulder. Once more hope aroused the people. The membership rose slightly. Children grew up and came to church; the building became too small. While Rev. Mulder was serving Coaldale, the foundation for another, bigger, church building was laid. Much of the preliminary work is due to him. However, the plans did not materialize before spring 1972 and it was Rev. M. VanBeveren who saw the completion of the present building.

In the following years many

young people left Southern Alberta to search for the fulfilment of their dreams elsewhere; Coaldale became too small for their developing wings and great ambitions. But - although it was a matter of concern - the fact that the membership receded, could not kill the faith, could not destroy the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the people. With great thankfulness we can report that as a result of the preaching, which since 1972 was done by Rev. J. Visscher, the members of the congregation showed a willing-

ness to obey God's commandments in every sphere of life. The only thing mentioned here is the opening of a school in 1974.

Once more we are at the beginning of a growing season, spring 1975, twenty-five years after that first Sunday when 48 people united themselves in faith, driven by the Holy Spirit. Partially through the work of this first church, many churches in other provinces were instituted. Locally there has not been too much growth in number since 1951 when the church of Coaldale consisted of 250 members. However, after several families have come over to us in the last year, there appears to be an upward trend. Once more there seems to wave through our midst the beginning of a surging swell, caused by the mighty wind of the Spirit.

The history of the church of Coaldale is marked by the theme of spring. Waves of revitalized hope and faith can be seen running through it. May the Spirit of God once more take hold of the church so that everyone of its members may speak His Word with boldness and great deeds may be reaped at harvest time!

MRS. C. MELIEFSTE

"elders", the "presbuteroi", not in their capacity as "assistant-overseers", but by virtue of their being deacons. However, that is a point of long-standing difference of opinion and I won't press it. But we should not invent new terms in order to render acceptable a situation which is perfectly normal.

I am very happy with the decision of Carman's Consistory not to support a suggestion received from the Calgary Consistory. The bulletin of Carman tells us that the "Consistory of Calgary believes that there is a real need for a better training of elders and deacons . . . Consistory of Calgary also believes that the classis has a responsibility for the training of office-bearers." What is needed there is a better training in Reformed Church Polity, for what we read in that proposal has definitely not been learned from Reformed books on Church Polity. How in the world should a classis have responsibility for the training of elders and deacons??? Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder.

The need that elders and deacons be trained is there, and we had better have our eyes open for it. Generally speaking, we are too little aware of the difficulties which have to be overcome by those who are called to these offices for the first time. For the future ministers we demand a certain level of education: they have to have a Bachelor of Arts degree before they can be admitted to the College for their Bachelor of Divinity degree, which it takes them four years to receive. And even then they experience every day how little they know of the practical aspects of being a minister of the Word. The work that is done at our

College is much more practically oriented than was the case when I attended Seminary. That is a great advantage. But when we elect elders and deacons, we do not set any such standards. Yes, the Consistories do their best and see to it that the standards are met which have been set in Holy Writ. And in the form for the ordination of elders and deacons we say that the elders are "in duty bound diligently to search the Word of God, and continually to meditate on the mysteries of faith". But in the first place, the brethren have very little time to do that, especially when the Consistory meetings are multiplied and, just like Paul's sermon in Troas, extend to well after midnight; and in the second place this is to be done **after** the brethren have become an office-bearer. In the third place it must be said that almost no help is offered them in this respect. Someone who becomes an elder for the first time may get as his partner an "old hand" (which has its disadvantages as well as its advantages), but that is about all. In the Netherlands the periodical **Dienst** still appears more or less regularly, but it is more a periodical for office-bearers than an instrument helpful in the training of office-bearers.

It would be a great help if we could have some courses or even a periodical. But: the faculty of the College is busy enough as is and they have more than their hands full. If anyone has any ideas as to how to provide what we all need so badly, let him say so.

Having given you some food for thought (with the help of various bulletins) I sign off.

vO

# mission news

## A HISTORIC EVENT

With deep gratitude to the Lord we may report that the first eleven members have been entered on the roll of membership of the "Igreja Reformada de São José da Coroa Grande": five communicant members and six of their children. In the evening-service of January 26th, 1975 the following sisters publicly professed their faith:

Maria Alves de Saluade,  
Noêmia Santana de Silva,  
Ester Tenório Ferreira,  
Maria Auxiliadora dos Santos,  
Albertina Maria da Silva.

All five received the sign and seal of the covenant already as infants.

Included with them, and recorded as non-communicant members were: Maria Aurilene Tenório Ferreira (11) daughter of Ester Tenório, Maria José dos Santos (10), Maria Teresa dos Santos (9), Ivanise Maria doe Santos (6), all three daughters of Maria Auxiliadora.

These four girls also received baptism in infancy and this was also announced.

Isaque Jose do Carmo (6),

Paulo Jose do Carmo (4), sons of Albertina.

Since these two boys did not receive baptism before, they were baptized in the same service of January 26th.

We thank the Lord that He, in His grace, has blessed the preaching of the Word and has begun to gather for Himself also here a congregation of elect, chosen unto eternal life. May He preserve and increase His Church.

### *Preparation Profession of Faith and Celebration Lord's Supper:*

For eight months these sisters have followed special instruction in the Christian Doctrine, Bible Knowledge and Church History. (This instruction will be continued!) The last classes dealt with the form used for the Public Profession of Faith. Each of the 21 questions to be answered by them, was discussed.

Two days before the public profession of faith we all met together at our home, including the four workers, to speak further about this event and

also about the celebration of the Lord's Supper. One could say that this was our first congregational meeting. Fraternal censure was held and each one was asked whether he perhaps had anything against one of the others that could be a hindrance to celebrate the Lord's Supper together or to accept each other as brothers and sisters.

Some other matters of general interest were discussed such as frequency of celebration of the Lord's Supper (decided: once in every two months) and destination of funds raised by the members once the present projects are paid for (set for Lord's Supper and baptism).

We intend to have such a congregational meeting before every celebration of the Lord's Supper for mutual Christian discipline and to deal with other church matters.

### *Profession of Faith:*

The service could only get started half an hour late because of some heavy showers that evening and we did not want to begin until at least all the candidates had arrived.

The text for the evening was Rev. 3:11: "I am coming soon; hold fast what you have so that no one may seize your crown."

After the sermon the five sisters arose and responded clearly and without hesitation to the 21 questions put before them. You may wonder why we have so many questions. As yet we don't have the Three Forms of Unity and we therefore cannot simply refer to them as is done in your Churches by asking: "Do you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and the New Testament and in the articles of the Christian faith and which is taught here in this christian church?" We therefore had to elaborate more, and all received a copy of this form as their "confession" to which they are bound. (All this was approved by the Consistory of the sending Church in 1973.) Remember also that this is an initial and transitional stage until in the future a Church may be instituted, the Lord willing.

After receiving the blessing of the

Lord it was announced that these sisters were baptized already and now are incorporated in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Following this I made the following announcement: "Since God makes his covenant with the believers and their children, and that for this reason the dependent children must be included in the people of God and incorporated as members of His Church as well, we announce that the following children will be registered as members of this Church. (Then follow the names.)" Then the wish was expressed that they, arriving at the age of discretion, would also confess their faith in Jesus Christ publicly even as their parents.

As a remembrance of this very important day in their lives, the adults received a personalized copy of the Form used and a wall-text.

### *Baptism:*

The previous part of the service being completed, the Form for Baptism of infants was read and Albertina answered the questions, after which her two sons Isaque and Paulo received baptism: the first ones to be baptized in the Igreja Reformada - a moving moment.

### *Lord's Supper:*

On the first Sunday of February the Lord's Supper was celebrated with all nine of us participating: 5 Brazilians and 4 Canadians. The communion ware, the covered bowl for baptism and white tablecloths were all purchased from the money collected by the people themselves. (In nearly a year's time approximately \$70.00 in offerings were received.) We could all sit around one table and used the regular symbols of bread and wine, the latter in small individual cups. Also the customary form was read, slightly simplified here and there.

### *Instructive:*

The majority of the people attending the service could of course not attend but I think it was most instructive for them to see it all once. They certainly paid close attention and listened intently.

### *Young People's Reaction:*

There certainly were some reactions. One I would like to pass on was from a group of young people also preparing themselves to do Profession of Faith. It made them think! From the questions they gathered

(correctly) that it does mean a full committal and a pledge of a life that will please the Lord. And here the doubts came up.

The next morning we had a casual conversation with some of them by the beach and they voiced their doubts: "We sure have to change yet and don't think that a young, unmarried fellow is able to keep all that." I pointed out that Jesus Christ has kept it all for us and that through His power the Lord enables us to lead a life of thankfulness. We don't have to become "saints" but must fight against sin and repent when we do fall.

But I felt more was at stake and this came in the open in the evening of that same day.

One of the young fellows came to visit me and confessed he had been living in sin with a girl from the same group. He realized it was sin and wanted to break away from it. He also confessed that all young fellows have premarital intercourse. This is so

commonly accepted, and so little resistance is offered, that "the people" simply say that it is impossible for a young, unmarried man to be a believer.

Of course I was disappointed hearing this but at the same time thankful that he now realized how sinful it was, that he came to confess his errors and that he understands that this cannot go together with preparing oneself for profession of faith. Undoubtedly all this is the work of the Holy Spirit. He was under no obligation at all to tell me, if he didn't take it all seriously. We together prayed the Lord for forgiveness and at the next class we had a good discussion about choosing the way of the Lord and the consequences thereof with the whole group. They are sincere but may need a bit more time. It will be hard for them and I can understand a bit better again why other protestant groups have a shortage of men and young people: the price of giving up "sexual freedom" is

considered too high!

The girl mentioned above as falling into sin again, has other problems as well. Although still young, she has led a worldly life already and at the age of 14 is an unwed mother with one child. She is definitely attracted by the Gospel but Satan is still pulling hard. Besides the illicit sexual relationship, some spiritists are doing their utmost to get her under their influence. Having an unstable character she almost succumbed and makes life at home very difficult. Twice she packed her bag, ready to leave for "the world", but changed her mind the last minute waiting for the bus. In such cases one feels powerless and realizes more clearly that the battle is not against flesh and blood only but that there is a good spiritual battle. The Lord is powerful and gracious. The accounts of the Lord Jesus expelling evil spirits become more meaningful: it is a reality, even to-day.

C. VANSPRONSEN

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## Is "Dominocracy According to the Church Order" Unbiblical?

ALL ARE "PRESBYTERS".

The Reformed and only-healthy way of reading the New Testament is to do so against the background of the Old Testament. That is especially true and helpful when thinking about the special offices. Many have said that a "theology of the offices" can not and therefore need not be derived from the New Testament. Every "tradition" has its own merits and demerits.

We would reject that, and state that, if only read against the O.T. background, the New Testament gives sufficient information about the organization of the N.T. church life.

A first fruit is that we recognize that "The Seven" appointed in Jerusalem are never called "deacons", but "The Seven". (Two of them were evangelists!) Moses had seventy assistants; the Lord Jesus sent out seventy to preach. Thus, because seventy were not needed for one city, "seven" were appointed, later called "the elders" (Acts 11:30; Paul writes to Titus to "ordain elders (presbyters)

in every congregation," thus following the Jerusalem example. The New Testament never speaks about "elders and deacons"; only (Philipp. 1:1) about "overseers (bishops) and deacons". The term "presbyters" seems to have been the general term for all offices including therefore preachers, overseers and deacons (1 Tim. 3 speaks about "elders who labour in preaching and teaching".) Peter calls himself a "sumpresbuteros", a fellow-elder: thus the concept of "presbyter" had even room for apostles!

Therefore, our terminology in Church Order and Forms is not fully biblical in its use of the term "presbyter" (elder) for "overseer". All overseers (in Greek: "episcopoi" or bishops) are presbyters but not all presbyters are overseers!

CONFUSION.

As a result of this lack of understanding of the term "presbyter" against the O.T. background (Numb. 7, etc.), the idea has emerged, but wrongly so, that, either all elders must be able to preach (in some Presby-

terian circles) or (among us) that "originally" all elders also preached (elders then, mistakenly, understood as overseers) but when they found out that this took too much time, they said to one among them: you do nothing but preaching and teaching, and we will give you a living. The confusion thus being, as though the office of preacher is *derived* from the office of "overseer". Thus I once heard the statement: "We pay you a salary and you study for us and in our place, and on Sunday we will find out whether you did a good job."

THE OFFICE OF PREACHER IS "PRIMARY", ALSO CHRONOLOGICALLY.

E.P. Clowney rightly stated in his *A Brief for Church Governors* that the office of preacher was a separate office *right from the start*. The Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry never appointed "overseers and deacons" but he certainly appointed preachers (Matth. 10, etc.). "I send unto you prophets, wise men, scribes . . ." (Matth. 23:24). "Therefore every scribe (meaning: one well-versed in the Scriptures) who has been trained for the Kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure . . ." (Matth. 13:52).

The synagogue knew three offices too. Acts 5:21 gives them the

collective name of "elders" (RSV: Senate; better: presbytery). They were the "scribes", priests and overseers. One among them, however, was the "first among equals", called the "ruler of the synagogue", a somewhat incorrect translation of the Hebrew "*sheliach tsibboer*". James had a similar position in the Jerusalem Church (Acts 12:17, 15:13, Gal. 2:19).

But, again, the office of preacher was *first*, also chronologically. "The Gospel must *first* be preached" (Mark 13:10); "go and preach" (16:15). Over-against "their scribes" (of the Jews) the Lord appointed "scribes of the kingdom".

Paul's letters go in the same direction. In I Cor. 12:27 the order (of priority?) is, "apostles, prophets, teachers"; in Ephesians 4:11ff. he mentions as gifts from the exalted Lord, "apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-and-teachers . . . for the equipping of the saints." This does not mean that overseers and deacons have no function in this "equipping" but they are not mentioned here. Some even suggest that all four terms Paul uses here, describe the one and same office of preacher.

#### "THE ANGEL OR STAR OF THE CHURCH AT . . ."

Now we come to Revelation 1:20 and 2:1 and following, the well-known "revealed mystery" of the "seven stars" in the hands of Jesus Christ, and the "Angels of the seven Churches". Prof. Dr. S. Greydanus states that not angels are meant here, as though every local church has a special guardian angel (though we believe on biblical ground that every church has several guardian angels!), but an office-bearer, "en wel zulk een die de volle leiding der gemeente had" (one to whom the full leadership of the Church was entrusted). "Angel" is the transliteration of "angellos", which means messenger or preacher. On Revel. 2:7 he writes (N.B. the *singular* twice), "deze was de voorganger en leidsman der gemeente, voor haar leven en doen verantwoordelijk, haar vertegenwoordigend" (shepherd and leader, responsible for the life and action of the congregation). In his Bottenburg commentary he even expresses it more strongly, "dat was in elk gemeente de 'episcopos' by uitnemendheid" (in every congregation the ruler 'par excellence'). Other commentators speak of "the presiding pres-

byter" (cf. our Church Order!); "the bishop in the primitive sense of the word, denoting one who has the spiritual charge of the congregation."

One additional remark. The Old Testament sometimes (Haggai 1:13, etc.) uses the word "angellos" (in its Greek translation), or messenger, for prophet as well as for priest. We suggest that the present-day "pastor and teacher" combines both O.T. offices. As priest he is not only leader of the worship or liturgy but also (as in the old dispensation) the teacher of the people, and as prophet he proclaims the Word of God.

Our conclusion, which we submit here for public discussion, is that according to the New Testament, read in the light of the Old Testament (a primary rule of Reformed hermeneutics) the office of preacher was not only chronologically first but also logically: the pastor as *leader of the local church*.

If one wants to call this a form of (legitimate) "dominocracy", we would not hesitate to join him, and advise any revisors of the Church Order to think twice (and again twice) before "removing" this aspect and element from our Church Order. This might be equal to removing biblical contents.

Do we have to remind each other that the same rule of the Kingdom of heaven also states that the first is the last, and the one who is leader among you is at the same time the servant of all? If this is kept in mind, no one needs to fear an undue measure of "-cracy" or lording it over the flock.

Nevertheless, that flock received from its Great Shepherd a local leader in the sense described by Greydanus and others.

JOHN CALVIN.

Thankfully making use of a paper recently presented by one of our students, we quote, in conclusion, from John Calvin (*Institutes*, Part 4). Ministers are "the chief sinew by which believers are held together in one body" (4, III, 2). "As our teachers correspond to the ancient prophets, so do our pastors to the apostles" (4, III, 5). "He (Calvin) points out that right from the beginning the minister (bishop) (N.B. One sees that also Calvin mixed up the biblical terms, vD.) was considered to be first among equals . . . given the title of 'bishop' in order to preside over the others, as well as over their responsibilities." "Each college of presbyters had its

appointed bishop 'for the preservation of its organization and peace'."

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#### PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

It stands to reason that this biblical principle, which for that reason should be preserved in a revision of our Church Order, must become fruitful in the practice of the pastoral office. This article, however, cannot work it out in details.

Only one remark: if what this article presents, is really and fully biblical, one of the aspects of the office of pastor must, in a biblical sense, be: "*divide et impera*" (divide the tasks and give leadership). It is up to the pastor to go talent-hunting in his congregation and put the God-given talents (see I Cor. 12) to work for the upbuilding of the body of Christ. He should not become the errand-boy, running around at all times trying to do all things himself. He would be running in circles and his ministry would become fruitless. Anyway, he would accomplish little, and "die before his time" (Eccles.).

If he does it the proper way, his joy in the ministry will be enhanced, his congregation will highly respect his office, and the whole body of Christ will be equipped for service, a holy nation to proclaim the mighty acts of God.

G. VANDOOREN

P.S. For pastors especially we mention here a few titles. DEREK PRIME, *A Christian's Guide to Leadership*. J.A. KNEPPER and J. KAMPHUIS, *Gespreks- en Vergader-techniek*. JOHN R.W. STOTT, *The Preacher's Portrait*. KILLINSKI AND WOFFORD, *Organization and Leadership in the Local Church*. W.T. PURKISER, *The New Testament Image of the Ministry*. A.W. BLACKWOOD, *Pastoral Leadership*. The College Library has more of the same. vD

## Church News

### DECLINED:

Candidate M.H. Oosterhuis of Dokkum, The Netherlands, has declined the call extended to him by the Church of Toronto for the mission work in Irian Jaya. Mr. Oosterhuis also declined calls from two other missionary Churches, namely Groningen and Spakenburg, and has accepted a call to serve the congregation of Wageningen, The Netherlands.

# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

## Spring Poem

Birds are singing  
 Bells are ringing  
 Spring is here at last!  
 The grass grows fast  
 Now winter has passed  
 Spring is here at last!  
 The cows are grazing  
 The sun is blazing  
 Spring is here at last!  
 Birds build nests high up in the trees  
 Out of the hives come the busy bees  
 Spring is here at last!  
 Dogs are running  
 Woodchucks sunning  
 Spring is here at last!

by Busy Beaver  
 Mary VanWoudenberg

Doesn't that put you in a spring mood, Busy Beavers?  
 Or maybe you're already in a real spring mood - playing  
 baseball, going fishing, playing, skipping.

Anyway, we're sure happy spring is here again, right?

\*\*\*\*\*

## A quiz for Spring True or False?

- The Bible says that in Spring the face of the earth is renewed by the Holy Spirit. TRUE FALSE
- For us spring starts March 21. TRUE FALSE
- The earth travels around the sun. TRUE FALSE
- The earth makes a whole turn every day. TRUE FALSE
- It is hotter in the summer because the summer sun is higher in the sky. TRUE FALSE
- Balloons carrying telescopes are sent up far above the earth's surface so that scientists can study the sun. TRUE FALSE
- The Bible says that God "determines the number of the stars". TRUE FALSE

\*\*\*\*\*



## From The Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Heather Bergsma*. We are happy to have you join us. And we hope you will really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. You did well on the quiz, Heather. Keep it up!

And a big welcome to you too, *Carrie Nieuwenhuis*. I see you're a good quizzier already too! Are your parents back again, and were you as busy as you thought you'd be?

Hello *Betty Ann VanderMeulen*. Thanks for a nice chatty letter. It was nice to hear from you again. Have you started your piano lessons? I'm curious about your report card. I hope you'll write again soon, Betty Ann.

And thank you for a nice fat letter too, *Angela*

*Wiersema*. Did you have a nice birthday? I hope you're right about your getting a minister soon, Angela. Glad to hear you like your organ lessons. And thank you for the riddles!

Hello *Marianne Bergsma*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you for the BOOK LOOK (too bad you forgot the author's name!) and the story.

Good for you, *Joanne Koning*. You had your quiz all right! I can understand that you like the Laura books, Joanne. I like them too. Thanks for the riddles!

Is your class all ready for Talent Night, *Melanie DeGelder*? And will you help, Melanie, once the work in the greenhouse starts again? I haven't counted exactly, but there are some 275 of us Busy Beavers, Melanie!

You did very well on your quizzes, *Patricia VanRaalte*. How is your embroidery coming? I hope your poor uncle Harry is better again, Patricia.

Thanks for the story, *Lorraine Linde*. And you did very well on your quizzes too! I hope you had a nice birthday, Lorraine.

## BOOK NOOK

Title: *Betsy and Mr. Kilpatrick*  
 Author: *Carolyn Haywood*

Betsy is a girl in the 4th grade and is 9 years old. Mr. Kilpatrick is a kind policeman that helps the school children across the street. Mr. Kilpatrick has no children and Betsy is troubled by this. Soon the children find out that Mr. Kilpatrick is going to be replaced, so they want to give him a present. What a disaster this leads to. But it's your problem to find out what kind of disaster it was. So be sure that you read it!

by Busy Beaver, *Evelyn Geusebroek*

## RIDDLES FOR YOU

Thanks for sharing them Busy Beavers *Joanne Koning* and *Angela Wiersema*.

- There is a room, it has no walls, it has no doors, it has no floor. What kind of room is it?
- Sometimes it is short, sometimes it is tall, sometimes you cannot see it at all. What is it?
- What's black has a cherry on top and four doughnuts?
- Why is the river so rich?
- Why did the boy climb the maple leaf tree?
- What nation always wins at the end?

Answers:

1. a mushroom
2. your shadow
3. a police car
4. It has banks on both sides of it.
5. He wanted to join the maple leaves.
6. Determi - nation

## QUIZ TIME

### Who Said It?

- "For this thing was not done in a corner."  
 Clue: An apostle on trial. Name \_\_\_\_\_
- "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." Clue: Some men remembered something that was written concerning the one who said this.  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_
- "I will entice him."  
 Clue: Not a human being. Name \_\_\_\_\_



4. "Come near before the Lord."  
Clue: He asked his brother to tell the people this.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
5. "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord."  
Clue: His sister married a relative of Abraham.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
6. Then I was very sore afraid."  
Clue: A Jew in a foreign land.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
7. "At the same time my reason returned unto me."  
Clue: A king who acted like an animal.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
8. "Much learning doth make thee mad."  
Clue: He spake with a loud voice.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
9. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Clue: He had a raiment of camel's hair.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
10. "Let thy gifts be to thyself."  
Clue: He was asked to interpret a dream.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Here are the answers to the Easter quizzes. Check carefully! Remember I promised you an Easter bookmark if you had no more than one mistake in each!

CROSS QUIZ

1. followeth, worthy
2. God, down
3. bearing, place
4. title
5. mother, Mary Magdalene
6. foolishness, power
7. finishes, joy, shame

FOREVER FAITHFUL

1. Esther
2. Acts
3. Samuel
4. Timothy
5. Ephesians
6. Ruth

NAME THE DAY

- |                |                    |                         |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Pentecost   | 5. Christmas       | 9. the Lord's day       |
| 2. Good Friday | 6. seventh         | 10. the day of the Lord |
| 3. Easter      | 7. day of judgment |                         |
| 4. Sabbath     | 8. third           |                         |

Bye for now, Busy Beavers. Next time we'll announce a winner in our Finish-the-Story Contest! See you then!

Yours, Aunt Betty

## Press Release

PRESS RELEASE of the Classis Ontario-South held on March 12, 1975, at London, Ontario.

On behalf of the convening Church, the Church at Lincoln, the Rev. A.H. Dekker opened the meeting. Psalm 119:13, 14 was sung from "Book of Praise"; Scripture-reading was Proverbs 8:1-21. The LORD was prayed for His blessing upon this meeting and the Churches.

The credentials were checked by the delegates of the Church at London. All Churches were duly represented.

Classis was constituted. As chairman acted the Rev. W. Huizinga, as clerk the Rev. P. Kingma, as assessor the Rev. G. VanRongen.

The chairman extended congratulations to the Rev. A.H. Dekker, who received a call from The Free Reformed Church of Launceston, Australia, and to the Church at Chatham, which recently opened a new Church building.

The Church at Lincoln placed an instruction before Classis which was discussed.

The same Church reported on the commission given to this Church by the previous Classis regarding the assessing of the finances for the General Synod of Toronto 1974.

The Quaestor of Classis tabled a Statement of Income and Expenses regarding the year 1974. It was decided to assess the Churches an additional \$2.00 per confessing member for the year 1975 to be paid preferably before June 1, 1975. Classis discussed two appeals.

Question Period ad Article 41 Church Order was held. One Church asked for advice.

Personal Question Period was also held.

Convening Church for the next

Classis is the Church at London. The date will be June 11, 1975, D.V.

Moderamen will then be: the Rev. G. VanRongen, chairman; the Rev. W. Huizinga, clerk; the Rev. P. Kingma, assessor.

The Acts and the Press Release were read and adopted.

Exercise of Censure according to Article 43 Church Order was not necessary.

Classis was closed after the chairman led in thanksgiving and prayer.

On behalf of Classis,  
G. VANRONGEN, h.t. assessor.

Puzzle (7)



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