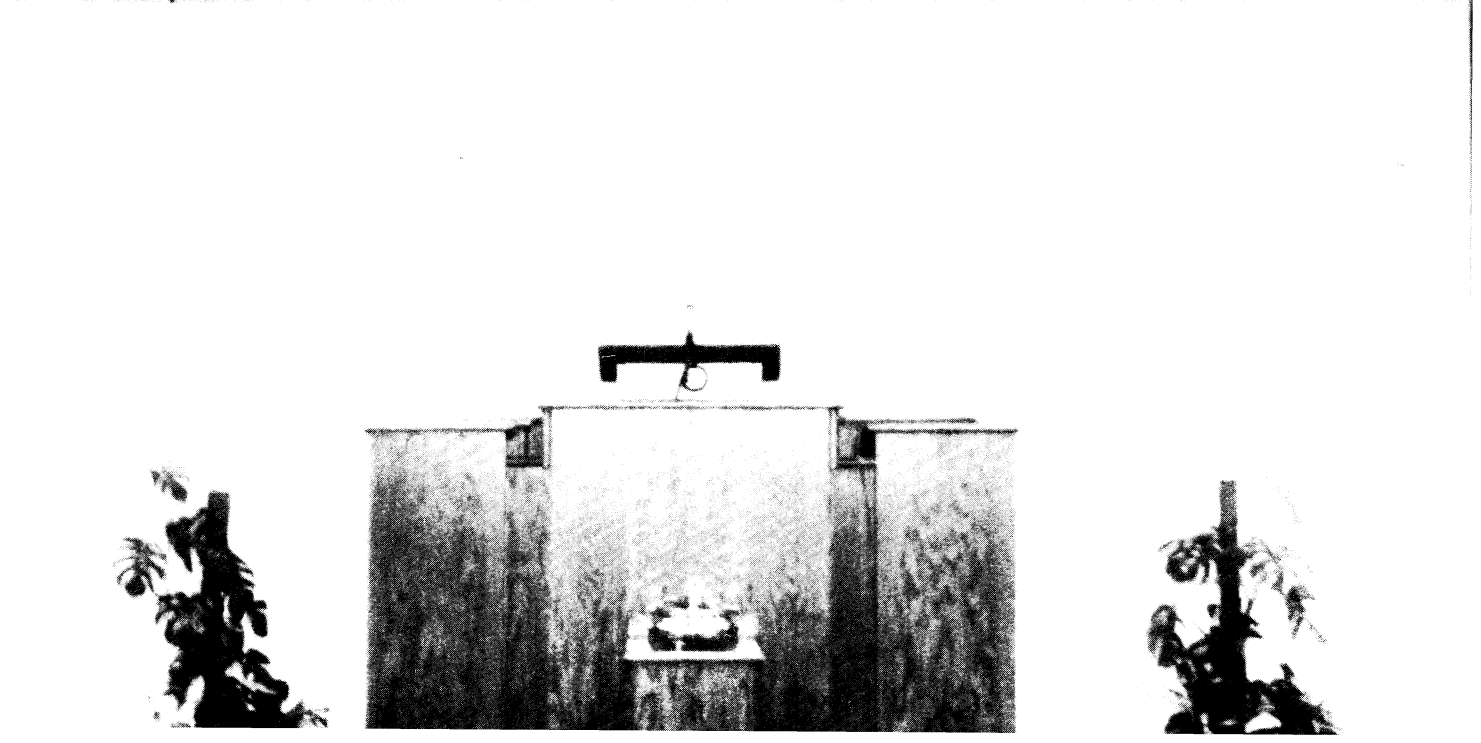
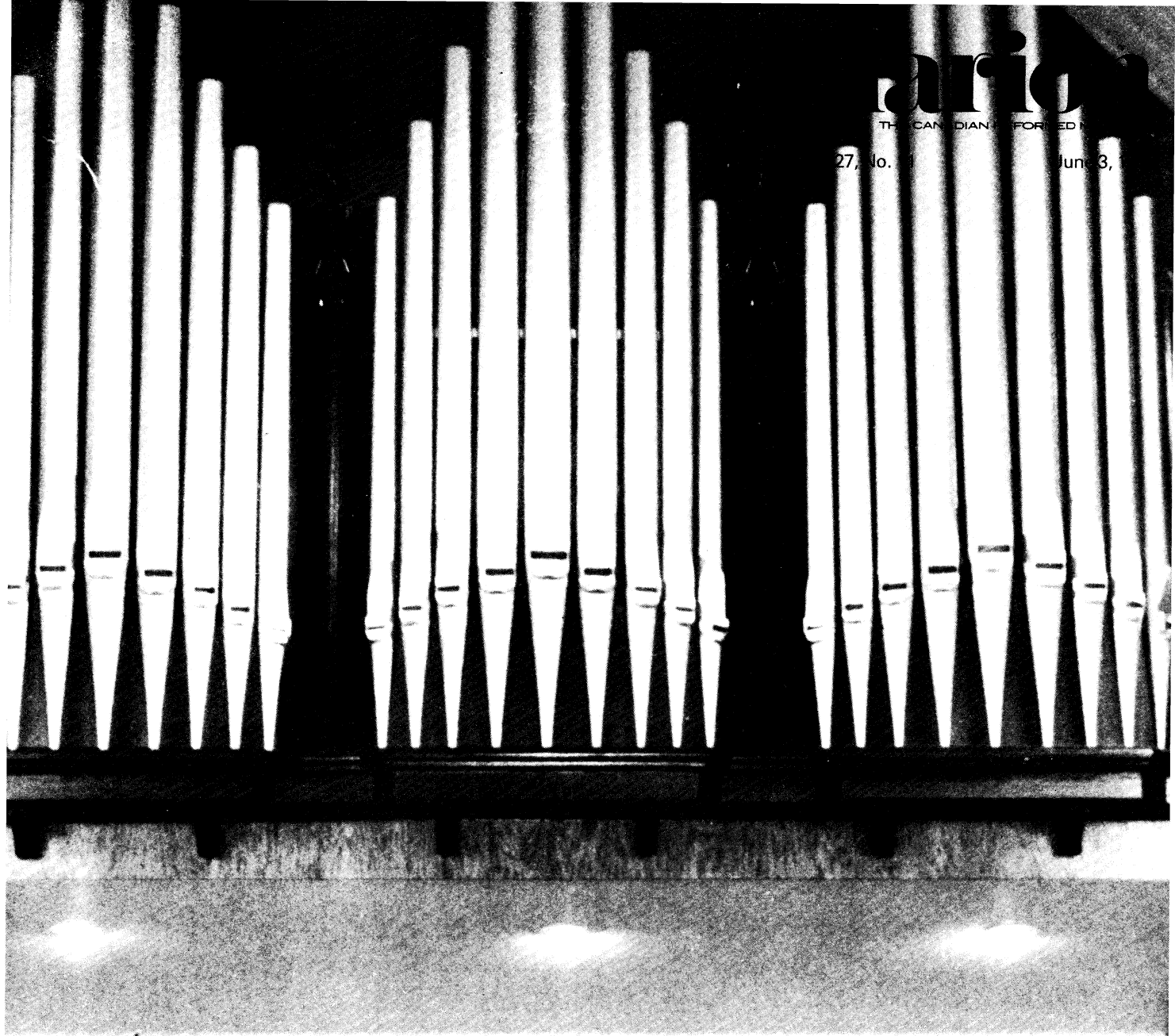


ation

THE CANADIAN REPORTED

27, No.

June 3,



The Covenant Service of Love for the Joy and Freedom of God's Children* 1

Some Principles for Diaconal Service

INTRODUCTION

What exactly is the task of the deacons? What is the nature and object of their work? Some time ago, I heard the remark that our deacons, generally speaking, have very little to do. There appears to be relatively little need for the distribution of financial gifts, and, for the needs that do exist, the gathering of sufficient funds seems to be no problem. Must therefore the conclusion be drawn that, on the whole, deacons have very little to do, and that their office is in a sense no longer all that relevant in today's world?

It is the purpose of this introduction to attempt to get a Biblical perspective and answer on this question. In order to do so, we will try to determine what the key relevant Biblical principles are, so that we are helped in seeking to understand the task of deacons for today — their task in taking care of the poor and needy. We will first look at some Old Testament data, then turn to the New Testament, and finally draw some conclusions for today. To give you a foretaste, the title of this article bears the theme of our introduction; namely, the covenant service of love for the joy and freedom of God's children.

THE OLD TESTAMENT FOUNDATIONS

Great Concern

The Old Testament is full of concern for the poor, the oppressed, the widows and orphans, and others with special needs. Frequently the Lord impressed on Israel their obligations and duties over against these needy in their midst. He would not let Israel forget! The Lord also gave detailed social and economic legislation so that the poor and other needy people be helped in concrete and effective ways. Indeed, the Lord promised that if Israel truly lived up to His good law, then the poor would cease to exist in Israel (Deuteronomy 15:4ff.). However, due to disobedience, this could never be realized (Deuteronomy 15:11).

Why did the Lord repeatedly ex-

press such great concern for the plight of the needy in Israel and warn Israel in no uncertain terms of His great wrath and vengeance to those who afflicted the needy and who did not help them (e.g. Exodus 22:22-24)? At the basis of the Lord's special interest and care for the needy and oppressed is the fact that He, the Lord, had once led Israel out of the bondage and oppression of Egypt and had claimed them as His own precious possession, His covenant people. And the Lord who saved them from that oppression and bondage no longer wanted to see any of His people bound in any way!! He had set them *free*, and they must stay free of all oppression — be it the oppression and bondage of poverty, or of fear, or of loneliness. His people are a royal people — claimed by the Lord of heaven and earth, and they must therefore not suffer any kind of want! He, the Lord, will provide for them (Leviticus 26:1-13), but His provision included that His people remember their past deliverance, and appreciate their freedom which they did not deserve but is of grace alone, and therefore obey His good law in joy and thankfulness (Leviticus 26:1-13; Deuteronomy 24:19-22; Deuteronomy 28:1-14). Now that law made Israel realize (among other things) that they were to use also the material things in life for the purpose of ensuring the continued joy in the freedom from all oppression in which God had set His people.

We will get a deeper appreciation of this freedom of the people of God and the proper use of possessions if we look briefly at the main implications of the Eighth Word of the covenant.

Eighth Word of the Covenant

"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall not steal." In this basic covenant word, the Lord lays the groundwork and principles for freedom and use of possessions in Israel — principles which the Lord later elaborated on.

In order to understand some of the implications of this word of the covenant, we can ask ourselves: "What was

the worst sin imaginable against this command?" That was an Israelite stealing or kidnapping a fellow Israelite for gain (i.e. for sale abroad as a slave). That this was not unknown in Israel is clear from other passages that refer to this crime, for example, Exodus 21:16: "Whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death." (See also Deuteronomy 24:7.) Obviously what made this crime so terrible was that here one stole from the Lord God His most precious possession (Deuteronomy 7:6; 32:6)! The fact that such a kidnapped person would for obvious reasons almost always be sold abroad and separated from the covenant community meant that he would be effectively separated from the Lord and His people. And so the Lord lost a most precious possession of His, and the Israelite involved lost his place and freedom within the covenant community of God. But God's people must not be bound in any way! Each Israelite's place and freedom must be guaranteed within the covenant community! Therefore do not steal any of God's people! That is a clear message of the eighth commandment.

However, for the purposes of this introduction, something else should be added. One could also paraphrase the meaning of this eighth word of the covenant this way: Do not rob *yourself* from the Lord and from the freedom in which God has placed you by being bound to your possessions and being a slave to them and therefore seeking out whatever means possible to increase them. That, too, brings terrible bondage; it will also bring hardship to widows, and the poor will be oppressed. (Think of the time of Micah and Isaiah.)

This command reminds us that man is but a steward of the material possessions he has. He owns nothing in any absolute sense. It all belongs to God, and He has given it to His people of grace alone without them earning it. How clearly the Lord taught this to His people by leading them into a land which was ready and prepared for them. They could enter Canaan and

simply receive it from God's hand and take the fields, houses, vineyards (see Deuteronomy 6:10, 11; Joshua 24:13). Now the danger is always great that God's people forget that they have earned nothing, but have received all the material things of grace alone, and that they are but stewards (Leviticus 25:23) whose aim in working is not to gather riches and ensure one's food and drink, but whose aim in life must be the seeking of God's kingdom and the labouring for the Lord and His precious possession; namely, His people, that they remain in the joy of their Lord, free from all bondage. (See Matthew 6:31-33. The Heidelberg Catechism is to the point when it says concerning the eighth command: "What does God require of you in this commandment? That I further my neighbour's profit wherever I can or may . . . and labour faithfully that I may be able to relieve the needy.")

So the Lord in the Old Testament gave detailed legislation precisely regarding the material things of life. For God did not want to be robbed of His most precious possession by bondage to Mammon, but He wanted to keep them in the freedom in which He had set them free! (See Leviticus 25:39-46.)

Provision for All

Therefore the detailed social and economic legislation in Israel underlined and stressed in the first place that the Lord provides for His people's needs and freedom! (Think, for example, of the Sabbatical years when no crops were to be grown and the Israelites had to leave the land fallow; or of the Jubilee year when again the land was left fallow and when also property was returned to its original owners and the poor who had lost their freedom were released [Leviticus 25:28, 54].)

God's detailed laws also stressed that Israel's resources, crops, food, and money must be used for the well-being of His people. God's provision for His people's needs is effected through His people's obedience to His laws. God taught Israel to put, as it were, a distance between themselves and their possessions. Those possessions were to be used for the good of all.¹ Liberty to the poor is seriously emphasized (Deuteronomy 15:7-11). Every year at harvest the gleanings of the fields and vineyards were to go to the poor. The corners of the field were to be left to them, and, if a sheaf was forgotten, it had to remain (Leviticus 19:9ff; 23:22; Deuteronomy 24:19); and during the

Sabbatical year the poor had free use of all that grew spontaneously in field or vineyard (Exodus 23:11; Leviticus 25:5ff). Fruit and ripe grain in a field could be eaten by any hungry person, but none was to be carried away (Deuteronomy 23:24ff.) Money was to be lent readily to the poor, and no interest was to be charged (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-37; Deuteronomy 15:7ff.).

One will notice that all these laws had applicability for every Israelite who had means. The people as a whole were mobilized to help the needy, for the needy must not be in the bondage and oppression of poverty, for the Lord had also set them free from all bondage to be His children!

Who are the Poor?

Up till now we have been concentrating our attention on those in Israel who were economically less fortunate and knew the spectre and oppression of poverty. However, the question can be raised whether these are the only ones who are to be the object of the covenant service of love by the people of God for the maintenance of the freedom of the children of God. The answer is no. There are also the orphans and the widows, and even "the strangers."

The Lord does not want *any* of His people bound or oppressed in any way! Although orphans and widows appeared more often than not to have financial needs (the Lord reckoned with this; for example, Deuteronomy 24:19-21; Deuteronomy 14:29), yet this did not necessarily always have to be their first or most important need.² The widows and orphans could be socially neglected and/or despised. They may need special protection. The Lord therefore says in Exodus 22:22ff.: "You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do afflict them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry . . ." The word "afflict" indicates "to humiliate" and includes not only unjust oppression, but every kind of cold and contemptuous treatment.

Also judicially they are not to be mistreated (Deuteronomy 24:17, see Jeremiah 7:6). The Lord is their protector! (Psalm 68:5; Psalm 146:9)! It is therefore the holy calling of the people of the Lord likewise to protect and see to their needs, that the widows and orphans may share in the joy of the Lord and may know that their place and freedom is secure within the covenant community.

Indeed, the Lord emphasized their security and freedom by specifically mentioning that when the covenant people rejoices at the feast of Weeks and remembers their past bondage in Egypt, the sojourners and the fatherless and the widows are also to rejoice with them (Deuteronomy 16:11). The tables are to be served for them, too! And likewise with the feast of Booths (Deuteronomy 16:14). The fatherless and the widows belong and must share in the joy of the Lord and the freedom of the people of God. Therefore every third year the tithes of the first fruits which were usually brought to the



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Second class mail registration number 1025.

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2C 3L9
Phone: (204) 222-5218

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
P.O. Box 54,
Fergus, Ontario, Canada N1M 2W7

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor: W.W.J. VanOene
Co-Editors: J. Geertsema, Cl. Stam,
D. VanderBoom

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

\$19.50 per year (to be paid in advance).

ISSN 0383-0438

IN THIS ISSUE

The Covenant Service of Love for the Joy and Freedom of God's Children(1)	
— C. Van Dam	234
New Form for the Ordination of Deacons	
— C. Van Dam	236
Press Review — J. Geertsema	237
Official Dedication of Lincoln's New Church Building	239
Capital Calling — W. Scheper	241
International — Cl. Stam	242
Press Release — Guido de Brès	
— Arie J. Hordyk	242
A Corner for the Sick	
— Mrs. J.K. Riemersma	243
News Medley — W.W.J. Van Oene	244
Perspectives on Death, Grief, and Funerals (2) — H. Sieders	248
Letter to my Father	250
Food: Facts and Fallacies	
— J. Vander Stoep	251
An Undesirable Candidate	252
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	253

sanctuary and to be eaten there, were to be eaten with the Levites, the sojourners, the fatherless, and the widows in one's home town. That meal must surely have been a joyous occasion (Deuteronomy 14:28, 29; see Deuteronomy 26; see also Nehemiah 8:10ff.; Esther 9:22).

All were to share in the joy of redemption! Indeed, anyone who was prevented from sharing in this joy, and was in one way or another oppressed or wronged in the covenant community, or whoever therefore did not see his place free and secure was called "poor and needy." (See, for example, Psalm 40:17; Psalm 86:1; Psalm 109:22.) So the word "poor," while usually meaning simply economic poverty in the books of Moses, becomes more and more coloured by the other afflictions and forms of bondage that suffering children of God can experience within the covenant community. Over against *all* these poor and needy, of whatever origin their poverty, bondage, needs, and unhappiness was, the people of God as a whole had the holy calling to see to it that they shared in the joy and the well-being and the freedom (from all forms of oppression) of

the covenant people of God. Yes, all had to share in that — even the strangers in the midst of Israel.

Strangers

Although this does not have direct bearing on our subject as stated in the title, yet, because this may have some bearing on the task of the deaconate today, let us briefly consider the strangers. In Leviticus 19:34 we read: "The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." The stranger, therefore, received virtually the same treatment as the Israelite poor. He was not to be oppressed (Exodus 22:21; Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:33ff.). He is ranked with the fatherless and the widows, and God is also his protector and defence (Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 94:6; Psalm 146:9), although as a stranger he is not set free in the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:45ff.). (He is subordinate to Israel and in their service.) He can, however, share in the joyous eating from the festive tables of the tithes of the first fruits (Deuteronomy 14:28ff.) and the feasts

of Weeks and Booths (Deuteronomy 16:11, 14, see Deuteronomy 26:11).

Although the sojourners were not really foreigners, they were distinct from Israel. But the Lord saw to it that Israel's non-covenant neighbours could share in many of the benefits of the covenant and benefit in a real way also from the service of covenant love and the economy of mercy which the Lord had instituted in Israel.

(To be continued.) C. VAN DAM

¹This is not to deny the importance of private ownership in Israel. Indeed, the ownership of land by all the tribes (except Levi) was a guarantee, as it were, for economic viability, and therefore freedom from poverty. (See Leviticus 25:25-28; Numbers 27:5-11; 36:5-9; I Kings 21). This, however, is not our main concern in this introduction.

²After all, the law of Levirate marriage gave the widow considerable security (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; see Genesis 38:11) and a childless widow could return to her father's house (see Leviticus 22:13; see Ruth 1:8). The orphans, too, were not without security. Their rights of inheritance were to be protected, and many would be aided by family and friends (see Job 29:12; 31:17).

**Address given at the Ontario Office-bearers' Conference on April 15, 1978.*

New Form for the Ordination of Deacons

As an aid in the discussion concerning the place and task of the deacons, a translation of the new Form for the ordination of deacons is offered here. This form was approved by the General Synod of our sister churches in The Netherlands at Kampen, 1975, and is found within the form of the "Form for Ordination of Elders and Deacons" in the new *Gereformeerd Kerkboek* (p. 436ff.). It is also found, with an extensive commentary by Dr. C. Trimp, in *Dienst*, Vol. 24, No. 6, pp. 51-60.

Form

Concerning the ministry of mercy, Scripture teaches us that this proceeds from the love of Christ. He came into the world to serve and He had compassion on many who were in distress. (*Mark 10:45, Luke 22:27, John 13:15.*)

In imitation of her Lord, the first Christian congregation saw to it that no one in her midst suffered want. To each was distributed according to need. (*Acts 2:46, Acts 4:32-37.*)

Also now the Lord calls us to show hospitality, generosity, and

mercy, so that the weak and needy may share abundantly in the joy of God's people. No one in the congregation of Christ may live un comforted under the pressures of sickness, loneliness, or poverty. (*Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:2, 16, I Peter 4:9, Deuteronomy 14:28, 29, Deuteronomy 16:11, 14, Deuteronomy 24:19-21.*)

For the rendering of this service, Christ has given deacons to His congregation. We read how the apostles had special office-bearers chosen when they realized that they, because of their heavy work load, were in no position to fulfill this service properly.

It is therefore the task of the deacons to see to the good progress of the rendering of this service in the congregation.

By means of family visits, they shall acquaint themselves with the difficulties and stimulate the members of the congregation to render help. They shall gather and manage the gifts and distribute them in Christ's name.

The deacons should encourage and comfort with God's Word those

members of the congregation who receive Christ's gifts of love.

They shall exert themselves with word and deed that the communion, which the Holy Spirit works in the congregation and has the congregation enjoy at the Lord's Supper table, becomes visible. (*Philippians 1:1, I Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-7.*)

So we will grow in love for each other and all people. (*Galatians 6:10, I Thessalonians 3:12, II Peter 1:7.*)

From the address:

Brother deacons, be faithful and diligent in the gathering of gifts and distribute them joyfully to those who need help. Be of help to those who are burdened with cares or are lonely. Give in all this a good example to the congregation of the service to which Christ calls us all.

From the prayer:

Give us ardent love for each other. Grant that we may joyfully provide the deacons with what they need, so that those who need help lack nothing.

Translated by: C. VAN DAM

press review

WORLD-WIDE

Under this heading the Rev. C.J. Breen of Amsterdam wrote an article in *Gereformeerd Kerkblad voor Overijssel, Gelderland, Utrecht en Noord-Holland* of March 25, 1978. It appeared in the column "Kerkelijk Leven" (Ecclesiastical Life). In it he informs his readers about the contents of the report of the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad made to serve at the General Synod of our sister Churches in The Netherlands, which is meeting presently (The General Synod of Groningen-Zuid 1978). The following is a translation of almost the whole article. He writes:

From this report it appears that contacts with churches all over the world have again strongly increased. "In an unexpected way the King of the Church led us to churches, mostly small, which are found faithful in the struggle against the false prophecy" (Quotation from the report). At the end of the Introduction the deputies express their hope that perusal (of the report) by the consistories will give direction and contents to the prayer in the congregations for the brotherhood in the world

WITH WHOM?

From the report it appears that *correspondence* is maintained with Churches in Australia, Canada, Korea, Sumba, and South Africa.

There was *contact* with Ireland, Scotland, Japan, Taiwan, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Rev. Jeong in Sao Paulo (Brazil), South Africa (Die Gereformeerde Kerk, The Reformed Church), in America the Christian Reformed Church, while a beginning was made to gain information regarding other American Churches. There has also been contact with the Committee Support Brotherhood Spain regarding the work there.

World-wide, indeed.

For the information of the reader who might ask: "What is happening there? The Canadian Reformed Churches broke off contact with the Christian Reformed Church, and the corresponding Dutch sister Churches have had contact?" I will quote here from an article in *The Banner*, of March 17, 1978, in which the Rev. Tymen E. Hofman writes about "Our Dutch Connection." "Our" here means the Christian Reformed Church. In this and two other articles he gives a report about the experiences of a delegation of some ministers of the Christian Reformed Church to confirm and esta-

blish contact with several Churches of Reformed origin and character in The Netherlands. About the contact with our sister Churches and with the Reformed Churches "outside the Federation" the following is reported:

Our Netherlands delegations have met with both of these churches. The 1975 meeting with the original Liberated Churches was one in which the new relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship was explained by the delegates, and the concern of the CRC to bring all truly Reformed churches into fellowship was set forth. The participants in the discussion made it clear that, while appreciating the admonition the CRC had given the GKN (Synodical), they urged the CRC to be consistent and to break off relations with those churches. When they were informed that the CRC had no intention of doing so in the present situation, the meeting came to a rather sudden adjournment with the declaration that the new relationship of churches in ecclesiastical fellowship and the continuing relationship with the GKN were both unacceptable to the Liberated churches. The synod subsequently broke off "relationships" with the CRC. In spite of this, the 1977 delegation was able to meet with representatives of these churches in a very friendly atmosphere but with no essential progress.

This is in line with the decisions of our Canadian Reformed Churches in their Synods of Toronto 1974 and Coaldale 1977 on this matter.

For information I also add the following:

The first serious meeting with the "buiten verband" was held in November after considerable groundwork had been laid by letter to the 1976 national assembly of these churches. Here we sensed an entirely different spirit and a different attitude toward the program of the CRC in inter-church relations The IRC [Inter-church Relations Committee of the CRC] has endorsed the recommendation of the delegation that the CRC offer to establish the relationship of CEF [Churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship] with these churches. This will likely be decided, after endorsement by our synod, by the 1980 national assembly of what has been called the Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerken. This name has not yet been officially adopted but does appear on the cover of the minutes of their 1976 assembly. Their February 1978 national assembly will have given initial consideration to the invitation of the CRC.

Further, a remark about Sri Lanka and

the Rev. Jeong. To begin with the latter, the missionaries in Curitiba sent out by the church at Assen, discovered in Sao Paulo a small group of believers around the Rev. Jeong who is a Korean missionary in Brazil and works without backing or support of Korean churches. The group is very small because of a split which was caused by the refusal of Rev. Jeong to compromise. Last year there also appeared two articles in *Nederlands Dagblad* about the Reformed Churches on Sri Lanka (Ceylon). In the seventeenth century Dutch sailors also came to Ceylon. This island even was a Dutch colony for quite a number of years. During that period Dutch people emigrated there and settled on this island south of India. They also spread the gospel among the native people. And although the churches that originated from this have gone through many struggles and battles against liberalism, the churches meant here have been faithful and maintain the Reformed confessions and church government. One of the ministers visited The Netherlands and is at the moment, as far as I know, studying in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We continue with the article of the Rev. Breen.

CONSEQUENCES

The extension of the contracts causes us to ask attention for certain consequences which (can) come forth from it.

In the chapter that deals with "The contents of correspondence," the "rule of Berkel" is discussed. This "rule" is at stake when contact is being established with churches which already have ties with churches with which we do not maintain correspondence. They can be loose ties, so that these churches only accept support. Those can also be closer ties. It can also be a tie within the RES (Reformed Ecumenical Synod).

The General Synod of Berkel and Rodenrijs 1952 considered "that it is impossible to establish correspondence with a group of churches which from its side at the same time seeks fellowship with different groups of churches between which mutual correspondence appears to be impossible." This rule is mentioned emphatically by the previous synod in its instruction for deputies. This instruction reads: "to seek contact with other churches abroad with which the possibility of correspondence may be considered, in order to investigate this possibility more closely and to prepare a contingent realization according to the accepted order" (Cf. *Acts Gen. Syn. Amsterdam 1936*, Art. 122; and *Acts Gen. Syn. Berkel/Rodenrijs 1952*, Art. 56, Cons. 3). The Committee now asks the

coming general synod to draw the attention to this rule of Berkel's.

A mere formal application of this rule from 1952 could be an impediment for a desirable or even commanded contact with an other church community in the situation of our days.

In this connection it is important to consider how this rule came up. The synod of Berkel and Rodenrijs had to do with a situation in which The Reformed Churches of Australia [not the Free Reformed Churches, our sister Churches] wanted to minimize the gap which was caused by the synods of 1942 and following years in The Netherlands, both for Australia and for The Netherlands, and therefore wanted to use the means of a "double correspondence." That's how it was *then*.

But *now* the deputies have to do with an entirely different situation in their contact with churches such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Rev. O.J. Douma and Rev. P. van Gulp have been there. What they found was that the preaching could fully be called Scriptural. It is a pure preaching of the Gospel. The administration of the Sacraments is pure as well. From the conversations it appeared that ecclesiastical discipline is maintained to punish sinners.

In 1973 this church severed the ties with the synodical Reformed Churches. They stand radically critical over against the development in those churches. That is a totally different stand from the one taken in Australia at the time. The membership of the RES was discussed when the two ministers were there. After their return, the Irish churches wrote that for the time being they would remain in the RES. But they do have objections. They will deal with this matter further. And they are not the only ones. The Free Church of Scotland, the OPC in America, and another church in Ireland (The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland) also have objections with respect to the course which matters take in the RES. These churches together aim at purifying the RES.

In their letter these churches wrote regarding us that they are of the opinion that they and we have much in common and that further correspondence contact would bring forth fruits.

Their attitude with respect to the RES is determined by their own situation and by what they, in that situation, see as their Scriptural calling, and not by Dutch-ecclesiastical relations.

Therefore, the coming synod shall have to face the question whether it can be justified to refuse to enter into fellowship with churches which we otherwise recognize as sister churches, as long as they do not break all contact with the RES as well as all other contact that is of the same character on the said point.

Therefore the committee proposes to the coming synod to pronounce, while remaining as close as possible to the for-

mulation of Berkel and Rodenrijs, that

1. Ecclesiastical correspondence with churches abroad means: the mutual recognition of each other as sister churches in the Lord Jesus Christ, and an exercising of contact which is in accordance with this recognition;
2. This entering into correspondence is hampered when a church-group abroad from its side maintains or wants to establish fellowship with a church-group in The Netherlands or abroad, with which no mutual ecclesiastical fellowship is possible;
3. When it appears from contact with churches abroad that there is already contact with churches with which the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands have no ecclesiastical correspondence or fellowship, then this matter shall always, according to the nature of the situation, be brought to the attention of that church-group;
4. The general synod shall decide from case to case, which course of action ought to be followed in accordance with the Scriptural confession of the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 21, and Articles 27 and 29 of the Belgic Confession, with observance of those decisions which have been taken by general synods since 1892 in connection with Art. 86, C.O. [Our Art. 85].

So this is an important matter to be dealt with at synod.

A REFORMED INTERNATIONAL SYNOD?

The Committee of the (Free[?]) Reformed Churches of Australia for Correspondence with Churches Abroad, in their letter of March 11, 1977, has asked the attention for the following: to have an ecumenical synod, or a session at a general synod, where, then, all the churches can be represented: Africa, Australia, Canada, The Netherlands (and Korea). We think it is of great importance to speak together in such a way, and have oral contact as churches which have the same basis.

The deputies write in their report that they are of the opinion that the deputies of the Australian churches have raised a matter here which is worthy of consideration. Several reasons can be given why it is of great importance that churches which stand on the same foundation speak together and have oral contact:

- a. an oral, and thus more direct, contact with each other makes it possible to bear an impressive testimony of the unity of the Reformed Churches on all five continents of the world of today and at the same time over against modern-day religious associations;
- b. such a contact can be encouraging especially for small and/or young churches abroad, which often have to live in isolation;
- c. the obligation which we have according to the correspondence-relation to listen to our sister churches; at an in-

ternational synod these churches can come together as churches that are each other's equals;

- d. to promote the bond which we as sister churches have in knowing and recognizing each other;
- e. since doctrine and church government form a common possession, matters which are of common concern for the Reformed churches all over the world can be discussed at such an international synod.

In this connection we can mention matters like the "double correspondence," Reformed Mission strategy in connection with present day developments, giving spiritual and material support to churches such as, e.g. in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and the question of which matters can and which cannot serve at an international synod.

Much deliberation on these matters will be necessary.

It is also a fact that first there has to be much correspondence about this with the churches abroad.

Therefore the deputies advise the coming general synod to charge the deputies who will be appointed to come with proposals on this matter to the next synod.

THE RES

Deputies are of the opinion that it is important to explain this matter in a clear way for the churches abroad, and to circulate this explanation widely, at least for the churches which are members of the RES. Therein the objections that can be brought in against the RES have to be discussed.

Therefore the deputies propose to synod that the deputies to be appointed receive the charge to write a brochure on this matter.

THE NAME

In the contact with English speaking churches it appears more than once that our concept of "correspondence" (meaning: to exercise ecclesiastical fellowship) is not known. With "correspondence" they mean only the exchange of letters.

Therefore deputies deem it desirable to find a more precise term in the English language, in order to indicate that more is at stake than the exchange of letters; namely, the exercising of ecclesiastical fellowship. This, too, will have to be a matter to be studied by the new deputies, so that the next synod can come to a decision.

So far the article of Rev. Breen. Interesting and promising and a good thing, I would say. Let us hope that this matter of an international synod for more than only the sister churches that have correspondence now can and will be realized. We can learn from each other and help each other. And it is the visible reality of what we believe and confess: that Christ Jesus gathers His Church all over the earth. J.G.

Official Dedication of Lincoln's New Church Building

On the evening of May 5, 1978, people from various parts of Ontario joined the congregation of the Canadian Reformed Church at Lincoln officially to dedicate their new church building.

To start the program, Rev. M. Werkman invited the audience to sing Hymn 52:1, 2, and 5. With great joy and thankfulness we sang praises to the Lord for all He has done for us in making this evening possible. Rev. Werkman then read Psalm 127: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it . . ." and led in prayer.

Rev. Werkman spoke a word of welcome to the many people who filled the church to capacity. A special welcome went to the choir, brothers and sisters from neighbouring churches, ministers, professors of our Theological College, guests, and representatives of the Free Reformed Church in Vineland. We are especially grateful to the Free Reformed Church for the free use of their church building during the months when our church was under construction.

The Smithville-Lincoln choir took an active part in the program. Their



Mr. H. Van Luik, Chairman of the Building Committee.

singing was enjoyed by all. Directed by Mr. J. Van Huisstede, they sang "Crimond," by David Grant, and "O Jesus Grant Me Hope and Comfort," by J.W. Franck.

One of the Building Committee members, Mr. H. Van Luik, gave a short report on the work done by the Building Committee. It was a year and a half ago that the Committee received the mandate of the Consistory to start building the "superstructure." For seven years we were able to use the basement, but then, due to the growth in the congregation, it became necessary to start building. However, before that could begin a lot of preparatory work had to be done. First of all some changes had to be made in the layout of the blueprint. Different churches were visited in order to learn from their mistakes and perhaps to avoid some of their inconveniences. With Mr. Geo. Vos as supervisor, and the Building Committee as general contractors, the actual building could start in August of last year. Every Sunday people on their way home from church showed their interest by stopping at the building site and seeing what progress had been made during the week. All were anxiously waiting to see the finished product. On Good Friday we were able to have our first service in the new building.

This marked the beginning of the third period in the history of our church; the first period being the humble beginnings in the little village hall in Campden, and the second, the time we spent in the basement. Now we have a new church building. May it serve to the honour and glory of the Lord, through the true preaching of the Word of the Lord.

Mr. Van Luik officially presented the church building to the consistory when he handed a beautiful, large, symbolic key to Rev. Werkman.

Rev. Werkman then delivered his address on the theme of Psalm 127. After the singing of this same psalm, we enjoyed some fine organ music. Mr. P. Buist played some pieces from Handel's "Organ Concerto No. 5 Op. 4." The choir sang "O Thou That Tellest



Rev. M. Werkman, minister of the Church at Lincoln.

Good Tidings," by Handel, and "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," by Martin Luther. With the last song the audience was invited to sing the melody while the choir harmonized.

The various societies presented the consistory with very beautiful and also very useful items for the new building. On behalf of the Consistory, the Rev. Werkman presented a small token of appreciation to the Building Committee and their wives.

Especially the older ones present enjoyed the next piece very much. This does not mean that we didn't all enjoy it, even though some of the youth could only understand the word "Hallelujah." It was beautiful. Mr. B. Hopman sang the "Ambrosiaanse Lofzang," with organ accompaniment by Mr. W. Schulenberg.

The Theological College and several churches in Ontario (Burlington-West, Hamilton, London, Smithville, Toronto, and Watford) sent delegates who spoke fitting words on the occasion. The churches of Brampton, Burlington-East, Chatham, Guelph, and Orangeville sent their congratulations by letter or telephone. From our former minister, Rev. A.H. Dekker, we received a telegram with these words, "Rejoicing with you." Mr. P. Van Wouderberg, delegate from our "mother church," the church at Smithville, also presented the Consistory with a cheque.

A special thank you went to the Dedication Committee that made up



The Building Committee presenting the symbolic key with a painting of the Church to Rev. Werkman.

the program and the girls who took turns baby-sitting this evening.

To complete the program we sang Psalm 150:1, 2, and 3 and Rev. Werkman led in prayer.

A social hour followed in the hall downstairs. Several people made use of this opportunity to view the building.

It was a wonderful evening, one which we will not easily forget.

“Unless the LORD Builds the House . . .”

Brothers and Sisters,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you entered our new church building tonight, did you notice our *cornerstone* as you passed it? Do you remember the *words* on that stone? These words: “Unless the LORD builds the house . . .,” Psalm 127. These words, suggested by elder L. Vandergrindt at one of the Consistory meetings, were accepted by the Consistory as very fitting words to be permanently inscribed on our church building. Do you agree? Are these words appropriate on a building that is *finished*? Are these words not a little too late? Should we not have erected a sign with these words written on it *before* we started building this church? At the beginning of its construction?

For these words “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it, labour in vain” seem to be very applicable when *starting* a building project or while we are in the process of building it. But are these words not a little out of place now? Now that the whole building has been completed? Now that it is completely finished? It seems that way.

For the completion of our new church building seems to be clear proof of the fact that the LORD *has* blessed us in building it. It seems to be very evident that the LORD *did* build it, and that therefore the work of the Building

Committee, and those who built it, was not in vain. You only have to see it and to be here tonight to be convinced that the LORD has blessed our building project.

We have come here tonight to celebrate the official opening or dedication of our finished church building. And yet, that cornerstone is there! And it is there to stay! These words of Psalm 127 cannot be erased again. They are a *permanent* inscription on the new building of the Canadian Reformed Church at Lincoln.

We have come here tonight to open officially our new and completely finished church building. It no longer has to be built. It is finished! Are then the words of Psalm 127 on our cornerstone appropriate on our *completed* church building? Yes, they are! They are very appropriate and very much to the point. Tonight, but also in the future! For this church building is *not* really *finished* yet!

Let us see what Psalm 127 really says: “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.” Immediately, many commentaries hurry to tell us that everything we do and build depends for its success on the blessing of the LORD. If the LORD does not bless our activities, they will come to nothing. Then our work will not stand or last. Then whatever we build in this life will come to

ruin. Even our *Book of Praise* goes in that direction: “No enterprise can have success unless the LORD decides to bless.”

Now, of course, we wholeheartedly agree with these words. For it *is* true that all our enterprises, including the building of a new church, depend on the blessing of the LORD. But that is not the point in Psalm 127. And that is not what the text says. The psalmist does *not* say: “Unless the LORD *blesses* the house, all the work of the builders is in vain,” but: “Unless the LORD *BUILDS* the house . . .”

Does that mean that without the LORD we cannot build anything? But does man not build many great things in this world without God? There are many great and impressive buildings, even whole cities of houses and other buildings. Does it mean that none of those buildings will ever get off the ground, or, if they do, that they will soon lie in ruins? And, on the other hand, even God’s own children often build houses and other buildings with the LORD and in humble dependence on Him, asking for His blessing. And yet, sometimes what they build is broken down before they can use it or soon after. Many things which the Church of the LORD has built up in this world now lie in ruins.

But the Psalmist does not say that it will all come to nothing, that it will not last. He says: “It is all in vain! It is all useless!” The question is: Does the LORD build it? Is what we undertake actually the LORD’s work? Is HE the BUILDER of it? If the LORD builds it, our work will not be in vain. But if He does *not* build it, if it is just *our* work, *our* building, then it is of no use.

The real question is: Who is our BUILDER? Who is our ARCHITECT? If you want to build anything, a house or a church, you first make sure that you have an architect to make a drawing, a blueprint, for you. If our Building Committee had started building this church *without* a blueprint, none of us would have had much confidence in their work. Or if they had used the *wrong* blueprint, we would have worried, too. But what did they do? They used the blueprint of an architect! (Whether he was a professional architect or not is not the point here.) And they hired people to build this church according to that blueprint!

Who then is really the builder? Is that the contractor, the carpenters, or bricklayers? The Building Committee? No, but the man who made the blue-

print. The architect! He is the builder! Unless the Architect, the Master Builder, builds the house, the contractors' labour is in vain.

All the work done is of no use unless behind this building stands our Architect with His blueprint! If His blueprint is not followed or a wrong one is used, we may still have a beautiful building. People may admire it. But if it is not built according to the blueprint, then it is not the proper building. Then it is not fit for the purpose the architect had in mind. Then it is not the architect's building! Then he will never say: "That is one of my buildings; I have built that church!"

Unless the Architect builds the house . . . Unless the LORD builds . . . The LORD has given us His blueprint. He is the Architect of His House, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And His blueprint is His Word, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. And according to His blueprint He builds His Church — not of stone and wood, or of gold and silver, but by the pure *preaching and teaching* of His infallible Word. That is how the House of the LORD is built, also here in Lincoln. And for that Church-gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ we needed a bigger building . . . but a building according to His blueprint! That means a building with THE PULPIT IN THE CENTER! For from this pulpit the Word of God must be preached for our whole life. That is what the blueprint shows us. And there had to be rooms for the Catechism classes and the Bible Study Societies. For that blueprint of the LORD must be taught and studied during the week as well.

Yes, UNLESS the LORD builds His House, His Church, in this new and beautiful building, by the preaching

and teaching of His Word, all our labour is in vain. Then all the work done by the Building Committee and contractors and others IS in vain. Then it is useless and makes no sense! Oh yes, then we still have a beautiful building, but it does not serve the PURPOSE of the Architect. When building the Church of God is *our* work only, when the LORD Himself is not in it, when He does not *build* it, then our church building, and all our activities in it, make no sense and are of no use. For then this building misses its goal!

I said at the beginning: this church building is not finished yet. Well, may it *never* be finished as long as it stands! May always and ever the pure Word of God be proclaimed in this building, so that the LORD may build HIS House, His Church, of which we by the grace of God are members as living stones.

And if sometime in the future — and may the LORD FORBID — we lose sight of the LORD's blueprint; if we forget about it, contradict it, or disregard it; if not the Word of God but the word of man will be heard in this building; may then the LORD HIMSELF DESTROY this building! May it then come to ruin by a storm, fire, or earthquake!

For then there will be no more use for this church building. Then all our building is in vain.

Why do we have this building? For our comfort on Sundays? So that we can sit in our comfortable pews? Or to show off to others? No, there is only ONE PURPOSE: to have the LORD's BLUEPRINT PROCLAIMED ALWAYS AND EVER. Then the LORD will BUILD and FINISH His House.

This church building is not really finished. It will not be finished till the house of God is completely finished!

Let us then use this building for

that purpose. With the help of the LORD's blueprint. And always according to His specifications!

Thank you.

Address delivered by Rev. M. Werkman at the official opening of the new building of the Canadian Reformed Church at Lincoln, Ontario, on May 5th, 1978.

Capital Calling

Another year has gone by in which the Lord has provided us with more than we are in need of. That applies both to us as Churches and to us as Church members. We only have to look at the "search" for more mission projects. That is a good indication, I would say.

With the sunny summer days ahead, it stirs in most of us the desire to travel and to spend our holidays away from our daily environment, and again Ottawa invites you all to spend some of your time with us. Come and explore your Capital for yourselves. Hopefully then, of course, you will like it so much that some of you will make it your hometown.

Ottawa is not only the city where our tax money is collected and divided, our laws and controls are hammered out, or which is a battlefield for national unity. It is also a city with many year-round recreational facilities of many kinds.

Our congregation, consisting from construction workers to professional engineers, has a zero unemployment rate, while our growth rate last year hovered around 20%.

Ottawa really appreciated the many visitors from in and outside our national border line. It gave our small congregation a feeling of confidence to know that we are united brothers and sisters in the Lord.

As for special local activities, there is almost always something to do or see. We would advise you to contact "Canada's Capital Visitors and Convention Bureau" at 251 Laurier Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6, or phone (613) 237-5158.

For the Congregation of Ottawa,
W. SCHEPER



The Smithville-Lincoln choir directed by Mr. J. Van Huisstede.

OUR COVER

Interior view of the church at Lincoln, Ontario.



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

POSSIBLE MERGER?

Wezep, The Netherlands. At their third National Gathering, the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Liberated, Buiten Verband) considered creating a federation with the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken (Dutch Christian Reformed Churches). The federation, it was stressed, would not be viewed as an end, but as a means by which to achieve genuine unity. The Gathering also discussed possible membership of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES). Despite a strong recommendation by Rev. J. Vonkeman, observer for these Churches at the Capetown RES, the Unaffiliated Churches decided to postpone action.

ICCC: 30 YEARS

Amsterdam, The Netherlands. This year it is 30 years ago that the International Council of Christian Churches

(ICCC) was instituted in Amsterdam. This occasion will be celebrated in August in Amsterdam. The ICCC was organized in 1948 as a counter-movement to the World Council of Churches (WCC). All the delegates of 1948 (who are still alive) will receive an invitation to the anniversary.

SYNOD GRONINGEN

Groningen, The Netherlands. The Synod of the Reformed Churches (Liberated) in The Netherlands has mostly been meeting in committees and only a few plenary sessions have been held as yet. The Synod did discuss the matters concerning the Theological Seminary at Kampen and appointed Drs. M.K. Drost as lecturer Missiology in the vacancy of Rev. D.K. Wielenga. Synod

will most likely take a summer recess on June 9th. On behalf of the Korean Presbyterian Churches, the Synod was addressed by Rev. M.D. Han who extended the best wishes of the Korean fellowship.

SWISS CHURCHES: NO PCR

Bern, Switzerland. The Swiss Evangelical Church Federation does not support the WCC Program to Combat Racism (PCR), but does feel that an intensive dialogue is necessary with the South African Churches as a real alternative to the PCR. The purpose of the dialogue must be "to search for a common witness concerning reconciliation and justice." Swiss delegates have recently completed a three-week visit to South Africa. CI. STAM

GUIDO DE BRÈS

PRESS RELEASE

Board of Guido de Brès High School, Meetings held April 17th, 1978, and May 1st, 1978.

Chairman, J. Schutten, opened the meeting, and proposed an agenda which was adopted. Letters to be mailed to delinquent members were approved. A letter informing br. G. Alkema of his appointment to our Staff was read. Br. E. Vanderboom submitted his resignation since he decided to enter University again. We are sorry to see him go. Br. R. Bakker of Dronton, The Netherlands reported to us by letter about the final stretches of the Drive. We were requested by the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies in Ontario not to hold our membership meetings at their Board meeting times. We were supplied with a few dates for the balance of 1978. The League further wanted us to decide on a form of membership within this Association, and the Executive Committee was instructed to settle the issue, bearing in mind that the League is mainly for the elementary system and that the same people support the secondary schools. Also, there already are school societies operating elementary and high schools, all for the same assessment per member.

The Principal reported that we received a Federal Government cheque for \$1,532.00 as a subsidy for our French programme. Open House and Fine Arts Day will be on May 19th.* A track and field day will be organized with the senior students of our elementary schools. The Board approved participation in a track meet in Toronto, provided we would get permission from the parents of the children involved.

Mrs. S. Bethlehem was appointed to teach in our Arts programme. Suggestions made by the Education Committee regarding an earlier decision of this Board about the formation of a Committee dealing strict-

ly with Personnel matters were referred to the Executive Committee for further study, as this could involve a by-law change. A proposal made by the Transportation Committee to ensure that our children from Toronto would get to school faster was approved. The Board will encourage our Principal to suspend students caught smoking from the time they board the bus in the morning until they leave the bus in the evening, as we are responsible for the students during this time. The Board will support our Principal in the effort to eliminate the smoking problem, and requests the parents' help in this matter.

The salary grid for the next school year with the benefits was adopted as presented by the Executive Committee. The secretary reported briefly about the progress in the immigration procedure of br. H. VanBeelen, who hopes to arrive with his family from Holland before August 1st. We received a written resignation from br. A. VanEgmond, Chairman of the Property Committee, and Chairman of our former Building Committee. This brother spent an enormous amount of time and energy before and during the construction of our beautiful building, and the Board acceded to his request. Br. H. Van Luik was appointed the new chairman of the Property Committee. A substitute for future vacancy was also appointed. The Board approved a proposal to form a study committee to deal with general employment conditions of our staff and probational and permanent contract proposals. The Chairman will be L. Rozema, with Dr. W. Helder, L. Jagt, and H.F. Stoffels as members.

Additional information regarding our budget was given by our Treasurer.

The Property Committee will be asked to have the shelving in the library varnished as soon as possible.

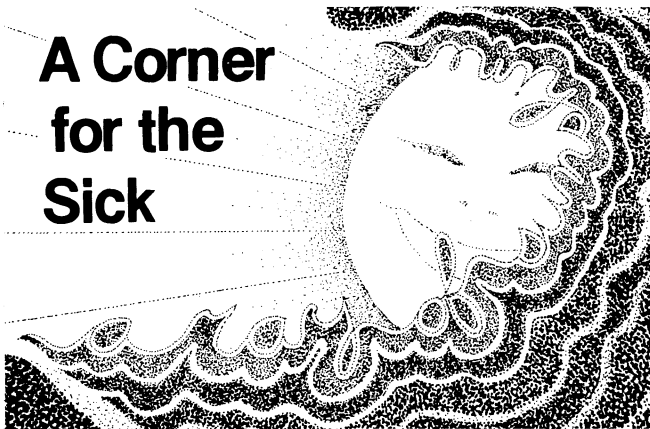
For the Board of Directors,
ARIE J. HORDYK, Secretary

*In the meantime Fine Arts Day has been postponed to June 2nd, 1978.



*Drs. M.K. Drost
"new lecturer Missiology..."*

A Corner for the Sick



And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. Luke 6:31

When we try hard to live according to those wise words, which the Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples, we are very busy indeed, and we will have a lifetime job!

Since our fall into sin, in Adam, our nature has been prone to hate God and the neighbour. If someone wrongs us, our first reaction is to do the same to him, or worse. Jesus did not teach in a negative way, as a worldly saying goes ("What do you not want others to do to you, do NOT do to them"), but, "Do to others what you would want them to do to you!" That is positive; it requires action from us, not reaction. If we live positively, we will show a life-style which is founded on Christ's teachings, and we will be as living letters from Christ. Then people will see that we live in the light and that we love one another, not only in word, but also in deed. Our sinful nature is very forceful. One of our greatest sins is PRIDE. Our pride is very easily hurt when others offend us, but by this same pride we can hurt others very deeply. Our pride always wants us to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to. Paul in his letter to the Romans (read Chapter 12 with me!) warns them against this sin. In our Catechism we confess in Answer 114 that even the holiest men have only a small beginning of this obedience, namely, to obey all God's commandments willingly, to hate all sin with our whole heart, and to delight in all righteousness. It is hard to love our neighbour as ourselves. We need the help of God's Holy Spirit in order to be willing instruments. God has promised to give to those who ask, Matthew 7:7, as we confess in Question and Answer 114. Chapter 12 of Romans concludes: "Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good." In the power of Christ's Spirit we are able to conquer all evil.

Go forth in His service,
Be strong in His might
To conquer all evil
And stand for the right.

Hymn 33:3.

First of all, I would like to pass on to you two thank-you notes I received.

Mrs. Foekens of Chatham, Ontario, asked me to convey her sincere thanks to all of you who sent cards to Marinus for his birthday. He really enjoyed all the attention! The supervisor of his ward said that he had never seen so many cards for one person on his birthday!

Allard De Vries of Beamsville, Ontario, has recuperated from his kidney operation. He was a very sick boy for a while, but the Lord has spared his life. He, too, received cards from all parts of Canada, and he has put them all in a nice big scrapbook.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for making both boys happy!

Our attention has been asked for an elderly sister, a younger sister, and a young brother.

MRS. A. ESTIE

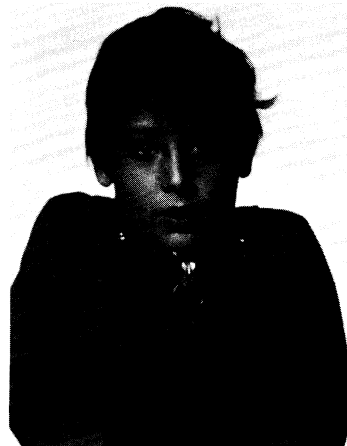
St. Bernard Convalescent Home,
Room 208, 685 Finch Avenue West,
Willowdale, Ontario

Mrs. Estie is 84 years old. She broke her arm, and she has been very ill also. The Lord has spared her life, and presently she is recuperating in a convalescent home. She is doing very well and would really enjoy receiving cards.

MRS. ROSA WITTEVEEN

1240 Sumas Way, R.R. 2, Abbotsford, B.C.

Mrs. Witteveen underwent a back operation last year, and it took months before she was able to look after her family. The pain still remained, and now she had to be operated on again. The healing process will take several weeks. Our sister loves nature and working in the garden. She is trying, but it is hard on her to be patient. She is 35 years old and has a husband and three children. The children's ages are eleven, seven, and four.



JACK DIELEMAN

307 Connaught Ave.
Willowdale, Ontario
M2R 2M1

Jack is a five-year-old who is paralyzed from his chest down. He spends his days in a wheelchair but is able to attend a special school in the mornings. He lives at home with his parents, two sisters, and five brothers. He is a very bright and happy boy!

Brothers and sisters, shall we make this a very special day for them?

If you know of anyone, lonely or sick, who would benefit by our special attention, please send in your requests (with permission of the person involved), possibly with some information concerning the circumstances. Do not forget to send in the birthday requests for our "special children" well ahead of time.

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma

380 St. Andrew Street E., Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

news medley

Last week I was surprised when finding a copy of *Una Sancta* among my mail. As some of our readers may know, that is the periodical which is "published fortnightly for the Free Reformed Churches of Australia."

Mentioning those Churches, I also have an opportunity to comply with a request of the Rev. G. Van Rongen.

He noticed at more than one occasion that there is confusion among our membership when the name "Free Reformed Churches of Australia" is mentioned. It seems that some of our members think of what in Canada are called the Free Reformed Churches when they hear of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

In Australia our sister Churches are meant by that name.

In Canada the name Free Reformed Churches is carried by what (roughly speaking) in The Netherlands would be called the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken.

It was from someone in those Australian sister Churches of ours that I received an issue of their bi-weekly publication. Mind you, when I say "their" I do not mean those Churches as such; then I refer to the members of those Churches. *Una Sancta* is not published by but only for the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

I felt greatly honoured when I received a copy, for it does not happen fortnightly that I receive one. In fact, this was the first time and as such a memorable occasion.

To speak with the Westminster Confession, "The catholic church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them."

I recall that some years ago a now very reverend gentleman wrote, for the information of our Dutch sisters, that in purity the Dutch Churches were somewhere at the top, with the Australian Churches running a close second. The Canadian Churches were mentioned all the way at the end of the list; "less pure," to use the Westminster terminology. I use that terminology with the more boldness since in recent years those Dutch Churches have discovered other faithful Churches that have and uphold the Westminster Confessional Forms.

Our readers will understand my excitement when I received a special token of attention from "down under." On the cover I read, "Report from the Deputies for Correspondence with Overseas Sister Churches." Would there perhaps, I thought, be some favourable comments about the Canadian Reformed Churches which the sender of *Una Sancta* wishes me to pass on to our readers?

Suddenly my attention was drawn to a little note, written twice on that same cover: "See page no. 16." "That must be it," I thought. It was indeed "it" though not what I thought "it" to be.

The column "Press Review" contained just one item. It was, of all things — pardon the honour — taken from our news medley. Let me pass it on to you in its entirety.

What is wrong with the information methods of Clarion? In News Medley, "Clarion" April 27, 78 we read that: the church of Coaldale called the Rev. Wielenga of Armadale . . . the Rev. Wielenga can only be released from his office in Australia by a decision of Synod . . . The Australian Churches have a general synod once a year . . .

the largest Church in Australia, instead of calling a second minister, should have split into two Churches . . . (and no second minister? K.B.).

Come off it, Rev. vO; it is better to spread no news than to propagate wrong news. This time you gave more muddle than medley-news.

Armadale (!) W.A.

K.B.

I do not know whether the writer of the above comments knows what quotation marks are used for. He does not use any in the "press review" except around the word Clarion, where they should not have been used. Titles of books and/or periodicals are to be printed in italics when used in an article and not to be adorned (in the Dutch manner) with quotation marks. In typed copy they are to be underlined.

Let me say that these little things (" ") indicate that one passes on what someone else wrote or said.

In my medley I quoted the Coaldale bulletin, as clearly indicated by those little marks.

Yes, "Armadale" was my error which I failed to correct when checking what I typed. I only am to blame for that. I know exactly where Armadale is situated. Some twenty-six years ago I was called by the Church there, you see, and I collected quite some information before making a decision. But alright, I goofed when writing "Armadale." That should have been "Albany"; a mistake which I already did correct in *Clarion* of May 13. In that issue I also passed on some other corrections which I received from the Rev. G. Van Rongen who, in a kind letter, instructed and corrected the ignorant in all meekness and kindness.

I must admit that I did grave injustice and caused "intellectual confusion" (according to my favoured you-know-who that's one of the meanings of "muddle") by passing on some information which appeared not to be completely correct.

One question was directed to me, which I gladly answer. I repeat the relevant passage here:

"The largest Church in Australia, instead of calling a second minister, should have split into two Churches . . . (and no second minister? K.B.)"

To that question I answer, "Indeed, I am convinced that a Church should split into two Churches if it becomes too large for one minister to do properly what is a minister's task."

No second minister, but a second Church with a minister of its own.

* * * * *

Let's return to our own country.

Then we start out West, which is "closest" to Australia.

From the Valley we report only about Langley this time. The Church there seems to have come closer to the realization of their desire to have a Church building of their own. Perhaps the decisions made will also promote the cause of Resthome and High School. Although I did not yet read about a final decision (one taken after the meeting with the Congregation), I think our readers will be interested in knowing what has been done thus far. Here comes that information.

45th Wedding Anniversary

On April 19 the Consistory had a meeting with the Property Committee at the Bergsma's residence. The letter referred to above (from the Consistory to the Property Committee) is read, as well as a report from the Property Committee to the Consistory. This report is accompanied by a map, a conditional agreement of sale, and a legal description of the tract of land which the Committee recommends the Church of Langley should purchase together with the School Society and the Resthome Society. Br. T. Pothoven fills in the details and states how and why the Committee has arrived at the recommendation. The Consistory learns that 25% of the total area of 17 acres is recommended for Church property. The Committee also suggests that an architect be employed to determine a proper location for a future church building on this site.

After having discussed these proposals in a congregational meeting, to be held on April 25th, the Consistory will take a final decision regarding the acquisition of a building site as outlined above.

We shall, therefore, have to wait till the next *Church News* arrives for the final verdict, but that does not matter: there are more building and/or acquisition plans to be mentioned in our medley.

For that we go to Edmonton in the first place.

The *City Guide* contains an extensive letter from what I assume to be the chairman of the Property Committee, who expresses the wish that the Church building be beautified. When the Church building was erected, not much attention could be paid to beautification. The finances were very limited, and thus only the "bare" necessities were provided. Now there are plans to make everything more "attractive," so to speak. "I received a lot of suggestions; to name a few: Stained glass window in the wall behind the pulpit; on the same wall a cross or fish symbol; change green colour and install new contrasting or matching carpet, in conjunction with changes on the wall and ceiling over the pulpit for light and sound purposes."

I do not know whether it would be wise to install a stained glass window in the wall behind the pulpit. It does not happen too often that I sit in the pew, but I have an idea that the eye would become very tired if it had to look into the light which would come through such a window. When you look at things from a distance, a few feet in height won't make much difference, and if there were a window a few feet above the preacher, that would bother me. Then I personally would prefer an empty cross.

I know that there are some among us who would object to a cross. However, an empty cross would have nothing against it: then we do look at the symbol of the suffering of our Saviour, and at the same time we would be reminded of His satisfaction once given so many hundreds of years ago: the cross is empty, He is no longer there but in heaven. Our objection to the Romish practice is not that they have a cross, but that they have crucifixes, crosses with an image on them, symbolizing the still continuing sacrifice (in their opinion, that is).

Anyway, we shall hear more from Edmonton in this respect.

The Church there also purchased an additional set of pipes (one rank) for their Organ. "Do not expect to hear their sweet sounds for awhile, because the trip from Holland through the Panama Canal, up the coast to Vancouver, and then by train to Edmonton is time consuming. But I am



Gerrit Jan and Geertje Hofsink were married on June 23, 1933 in Hardenberg, The Netherlands. They emigrated to Canada in November 1950. Their destination was Houston, B.C., where they lived till May 1965. Then they moved to Smithers, B.C., where they are still living at present.

They often go for a trip to Ontario to visit their two sons and families, and are always willing to give a helping hand to their children whenever necessary.

The Lord blessed the Hofsincks with three sons and one daughter, all of whom are married, and they have twenty-three grandchildren.

sure we have them before Christmas! Unless as a pessimist pointed out to me, the ship sinks."

On May 13th, a music evening was held. "Because of the response we had you may look forward to an evening of variety: Organ, Piano, recorder, trumpet, solo singing, etc." I am especially interested in what that "etcetera" stands for. But then, sometimes I am too curious.

Since the time available is too short, the Consistory is not going to build a parsonage but will purchase an existing home. That applies to Edmonton. About the Coaldale plans for a parsonage I informed you a previous time.

Carman, too, has plans for expansion. They even have the opportunity to purchase some additional property. The price seems to be on the low side, until you start figuring

what it comes to per acre! However, when a piece of land is conveniently located, that is worth something, too.

The Consistory discussed the possibility to purchase a part of the railroad property behind ours. The C.P.R. has put a strip along the railroad track for sale, 1500' X 80' at 52¢ per sq. ft. The consistory decided to offer to buy the part of the property which is directly behind ours, approximately 213' X 80'. At the end of April Marathon Realty, which acts as a realty company for C.P.R., will examine all offers received and decide accordingly. So it is not for sure that our offer is accepted.

We are once more kept in suspense, but hope that we can inform you further about the developments in our next issue.

The Carman Consistory also discussed again the question of the Dutch Services. "A matter that comes up once in awhile again is the matter of the Dutch service once a month. The consistory still deems it better to continue these, at least for the time being."

We are not through with Carman yet. A rummage sale was held and the result was gratifying. Therein Carman is no exception. What struck me, however, was the following: "We also thank . . . the many boys and girls for helping gather beer bottles. It is nice to mention the sum of \$222.00 for the bottles; this does not include the pop bottles." Man, you need a lot of beer bottles to reach an amount of \$222.00! They must have trudged many miles along the highways to collect that many.

A word which I wish to pass on to you from Carman's bulletin will conclude our stay in Carman.

In the last number of weeks quite a number of members of our congregation went on an "honourable" journey either within Canada or to The Netherlands. We may be thankful that all arrived safely home. This outflux in springtime gives a foretaste of summer holidays. I hope that in planning for holidays we also plan for the Sundays which fall during that time. It is a rich experience to "discover" the Sister Churches during our holidays. Getting to know our brothers and sisters adds to our holiday joy, and to our relaxation, as obedience always does. Thinking on Lord's Day 38 of the Heidelberg Catechism, I realize that the "Sabbath attitude" does not only come into the picture when planning for the First Days which fall in our holidays; all seven days of the week of our holidays are to be planned as so many days in which I begin to enjoy the Eternal Sabbath! The temptation is great to be a chameleon-Christian when away from home; to shed the armour of faith and to put on a neutral camouflage for the purpose of getting lost in the world for a few weeks. Let us plan our free time, resisting temptation to take time off from being a member of Christ. Rather let us plan in thankfulness to God who never takes time out, nor for awhile forgets that He is our Father. He is our faithful Father at *all* times. We must honour Him likewise at *all* times, places and cases. Then we will receive His much needed blessing on the hours and days of relaxation."

With this we say farewell to Carman for the time being and we turn our attention to Winnipeg. Our readers may recall that for quite awhile already it has been tried to come to an agreement with the City of Winnipeg regarding part of the Church property. The end is in sight now, for we read,

"City agrees with the consistory's proposal as to selling price of the part of the church's property. A final settlement . . . is expected in approximately four months."

As we are speaking of buildings and properties anyway, we may as well go to Lincoln right away. They had their "dedication evening," which was a joyous event. The joy was even increased by gifts which were received. The Rev. Werkman tells us, "We were surprised with various gifts from the societies or individuals. From our "mother" Church (Smithville) we received a cheque for \$250.00, from the "Slave Labourers" an amount of \$157.27 to be used for the purpose of a piano. And from the Hockey Club an amount of \$104.20. Right after the meeting a person who wants to remain anonymous (not a member of our congregation) shoved several bills into my hand. They totalled \$100.00 cash. Thank you very much!"

I do not recall at the moment whether I ever mentioned that the two Burlingtons were released from their obligations towards Toronto's mission work and were permitted by the co-operating Churches to go on their own. That permission has nothing to do with hierarchical tendencies; it is simply the result of the agreement that Churches can be released only with the consent of the other co-operating Churches, which should not be brought into difficulties.

Anyway, that permission, consent was given. Now, however, the Consistory of Burlington West decided to continue its support of the Toronto work. "The primary reasons for this decision are financial ones."

That gives us the opportunity to tell you something about the latest meeting of the co-operating Churches, where also the request of Hamilton was discussed to release that Church plus most of the Churches of Ontario-South. The Rev. J. Geertsema reports on that meeting in the Chatham bulletin.

Last week Saturday Br. Westrik and I went to Hamilton to attend a Mission as well as a Mission Aid meeting. As for the latter, you find a report about the finances in this Church News. There was not all that much news to report here. The work continues. Br. Vegter and Rev. Versteeg are both in Sentani to follow a course to get fluent in the Indonesian language. As for the Mission, Rev. Mulder told us about the fact that the Versteegs had arrived, that the work in Butiptiri as well as Manggelum and surroundings continues. Another church has been instituted, namely at Bomakia, so that there are three instituted Churches by now. Plans are there to set up, besides the Central Bible School, which instructs people for guru, a kind of evangelist, a Theological School for ministers, where one or two ministers will have a full daily task. We can conclude that the work in Irian Jaya is increasing. It is a good thing that a number of churches work together here, and that we may partake in the work there too. And it is only good that more and more work and people is/are needed.

At our meeting the proposal of the Church at Hamilton was also amply discussed. That proposal was that Hamilton also becomes a sending church and receives the support from the churches of Ontario South, with the exception of Chatham. Our consistory was more in favour of remaining with Toronto, and come to sending a second missionary. In the Bible we also read about the sending of two or even more apostles, or disciples. Some of the churches said at the meeting — via their

40th Wedding Anniversary

delegates — that they were in favour of Hamilton's proposal, even when that would mean quite an increase in the contributions. Other churches were for practical reasons or agreeing with "Chatham" not in favour of the proposal. As it stands now, a decision is planned at the next meeting in October. Also here the finances were discussed. They were in the bulletin last week. Also in Irian Jaya the work of the Spirit of Christ continues. And at the same time the adversary works too. I read in *Una Sancta*, the magazine of our sister churches in Australia, that the Indonesian government is following a policy of bringing in Irian Jaya quite a number of Japanese Moslems. Irian Jaya is mainly Christian through the mission work of many churches. Through this immigration policy Irian Jaya could also become mainly Moslem like the rest of Indonesia, while Christians then form an allowed minority. It is still deplorable that The Netherlands gave this island to Indonesia. It should have become independent. May the work of the LORD be maintained and increase to show fruits.

It was a lengthy quotation, but informative for our readers and that is the main thing.

Let me conclude the news part of our medley with telling you that also in Fergus some building plans are about to be executed. Perhaps the work has already started by the time you read this.

After the institution of the Church at Guelph, the membership of Fergus has again grown to such proportions that sometimes worshippers have to sit on chairs in the aisle. Thus an increase in the seating capacity is mandatory, also with a view to the growing number of children attending the services. Besides, our meeting facilities are pretty poor and not conducive to an undisturbed discussion. Another factor is the danger which the outside stairs constitute in the winter time. It is almost impossible to keep them so clean that even the less-agile members can mount them without fear for their continued health and wholeness of bones. The plans which have been accepted provide for parking-lot level entrances both in the front and in the rear. Meeting rooms will be added, the auditorium will be somewhat enlarged, the organ and pulpit will be raised, which will render it easier for the members sitting further to the back to see the man in the pulpit and to understand what he is saying.

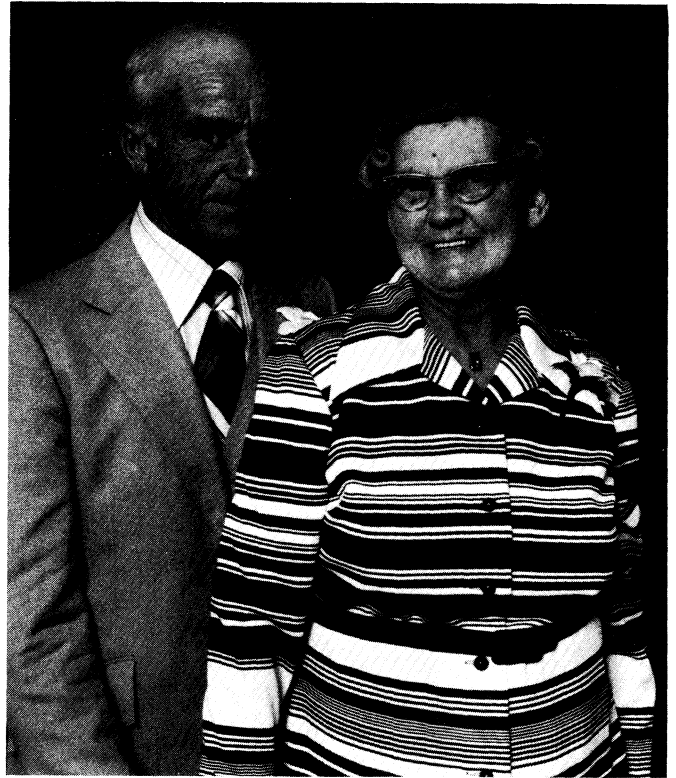
In due time we shall present to our readers a picture of the changed appearance of our Church building. For the time being the above will have to suffice.

That is then the end of the news.

It is not yet the end of our medley. We have some words of congratulation to speak.

Let us begin with brother and sister G.J. Hofsink of Smithers. At the occasion of their fortieth wedding anniversary I elaborated on some of the facts from the past, from those first years here in Canada. I shall not do that this time, for I would only be repeating myself, and that will not be appreciated by the readers. Let me say that I am assured that our brother and sister are grateful to the LORD that they are allowed this day with their children and grandchildren. More than once illness caused hospitalization, but the Lord heard the prayers and spared them. May He also further surround you with His care and love.

In Surrey, B.C., there are brother and sister J. Jongs who celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. To them, too, we extend our heartfelt congratulations. I could tell you something about them, too, for I have known them



Jan Smid and Jandine Buurma married on May 4, 1938 in Sellingen, The Netherlands. They farmed in Mussel from 1938 till 1952. It was in Mussel that their three sons and two daughters were born. Mr. Smid was an organist in the Churches to which they belonged and has been so for fifty years. He also completed two terms as an elder. Both Mr. and Mrs. Smid are still enjoying good health and are still putting in full days on the farm. Both were born in 1909. In Canada they were members of the Church at Chatham from 1952 till 1959, and from then on they have belonged to the Watford Church. Their greatest joy is to see their children and their twenty-one grandchildren growing up in unity, all being members of the Church of the Lord.

for many years. Let it be sufficient to congratulate them and to express the wish that they may also further enjoy the Lord's blessing in the midst of His Church, together with children and grandchildren.

Then we go to Burlington, where brother and sister G. Vandenberg will celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary on June 9th. I could not tell you anything about them, but since we live in the communion of saints, they share in our congratulations and best wishes. It appears every time anew that we are all together one body, for I hear time and again that those mentioned in our medley or in the Corner for the Sick are almost covered by cards, letters, and other tokens of Christian love. That "covered" is a slight exaggeration, but I could find no better word.

A final congratulatory message goes to brother and sister J. Smid of Watford, who celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary on May 4th. May the LORD grant them many more years so that, in due time, we may congratulate them on their forty-fifth anniversary.

Hope to see each other two weeks from now. vO

Perspectives on Death, Grief, and Funerals 2

VIEWING THE BODY

Viewing the body is a subject for much debate. This should be a family decision. For some the viewing of a dead body is the reassurance of their own aliveness, and relieves their personal threat of death. For others, a refusal to look at the body could well mean an inability and refusal to accept the death and their own emotional anxieties about it. Personally, as a funeral director, I have found that the viewing of a body is not only important but beneficial to the mourners. Most funeral directors prefer and some even insist that one member of the family identify the body in the casket as a means of identification, also the fact that that particular body of a loved one is in that particular casket and thus serves as a protection for the funeral director and also the family.

Many people, not given the opportunity for viewing, may conjure up all sorts and kinds of images as to what is in the casket or what the body may look like, i.e. mutilated and disfigured, etc.

Dr. Kubler-Ross states "that it is better to let a family see and even touch the body even though it is a traumatic experience; for if a mourner or survivor cannot or will not see the body they may remain in a stage of denial for years and this can cause severe psychological problems. Unexperienced grief can cripple life and make us ill."

If people do not see the body in the casket, they will never know for sure if that person is really in the casket. This also has been my personal experience. Widows have told me months after the funeral, especially those who asked or even demanded closed caskets, that they can't envision their loved ones at peace or they just can't come to grips with whether or not he was really in that casket.

Now I agree that in some instances an open casket is not possible or even recommended due to severe mutilations, decapitation, burns or diseases which disfigure or scar the body. That would be cruel, yet even then someone in the family should make an identification of the body in that casket.

There is another aspect to the

open casket. Quite often the first impulse of people following a death is to withdraw into themselves and seclude or isolate themselves with their family. Many express the wish to have a private service and a closed casket, and notice of such put in the paper later. There is also the trend to have a private family service and the body whisked away for burial and then hold a memorial service.

However, as Christians we all belong to one Family. We are not islands unto ourselves. When one of the Family or member of the church passes away, we all suffer. Death is too personal a matter to be left a private event. The funeral also provides an opportunity for the Family, fellow church members and community to acknowledge and respond to the death of a particular person. What an opportunity also to witness at such a funeral. And, "Sorrow shared is sorrow diminished" and many people derived and felt strength by the Spirit through the communion of the saints.

EMBALMING

Is embalming necessary? To be brief, here are several observations.

First of all, embalming is not mandatory under Canadian law, contrary to popular opinion. Only if the body is to be shipped out of the province or country is embalming mandatory. However, there is value in viewing the remains in the casket, and to have the body present for such and at funerals or wakes; and embalming is necessary for sanitation and preservation if there is to be viewing. Embalming is the process of sanitizing and preserving human remains to render them safe for handling while retaining naturalness of tissue for funeral viewing purposes. Bacteria simply do not die when the host dies.

If there is value in viewing casketed remains, it then makes sense that the deceased must be prepared in such a manner, that sanitation and preservation are accomplished and the body is safe to handle. In answer to some usually asked questions, here is some factual information about organ or body donations and autopsies.

AUTOPSIES

These are usually requested by

physicians of a patient in order to find out the actual cause of death (especially in sudden or unexpected deaths), to find out whether or not the treatments and drugs a patient was receiving were having the desired effects in the treatment of a particular disease.

Families can usually consent to or refuse this request for an autopsy unless the death is under the jurisdiction of a coroner. A coroner can overrule a physician's or family's decision to hold an autopsy under Canadian law. Most coroner's cases would be: deaths in hospital where the stay of the patient was less than 24 or 48 hours; deaths at institutions such as nursing homes, or children's homes etc., all murders, drownings, accidents, suicides or deaths at home or where the police have been called or are involved.

Autopsies only interfere with the funeral if they are not carried out within a reasonable time. For example, in some large urban centres or far northern communities, coroners or pathologists do not work on weekends or holidays, and therefore if a death occurs after 5 p.m. on a Friday, the autopsy probably wouldn't take place until the following Monday or Tuesday, if Monday was a holiday.

As far as the body is concerned with a view to preparation for viewing purposes, it is no great problem other than that some extra time is involved for the preparation. This also applies to those bodies that have had organs or eyes removed for donation purposes. An autopsy or donation of organs will not delay the planning of the funeral or the burial, and it would not necessarily distort the features of the body after preparation or embalming.

ORGAN DONATIONS

There should be no confusion about the availability of a body for the purpose of a funeral from which an organ has been donated for transplanting. The authorization card points out that the anatomical gifts (organs) must be medically acceptable to take effect upon death. The card also states that after removal of the part (or parts), custody of the remainder of the body vests in the surviving spouse, next of kin or other persons under obligation to dis-

pose of the body. The body, therefore, can be present for the purposes of the funeral for those who so desire.

KIDNEYS: The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Box 45, Mississauga, Ontario.

EYES: Eye Bank of Canada, C.N.I.B., 1919 Bayview Avenue, Toronto 17, Ontario.

BODY DONATIONS

Anyone wishing to donate his body to the department of Anatomy of one of Ontario's Universities must obtain and complete the necessary bequethal forms during his lifetime. It is too late if an executor or next-of-kin learns of a person's wishes when the will is read after the death has occurred. At the time of death, the relatives or whoever may be responsible for the affairs of the donor, should telephone immediately the Department of Anatomy of the closest University. All Universities have an extension of regular office hours, as well as an additional extension for after hours and holidays. It should also be pointed out that the Anatomy Departments reserve the right to refuse to accept a body regardless of conditions even though a proper bequethal form may have been completed in advance by the deceased.

Bodies on which autopsies have been performed cannot be accepted. Relatives who desire to have the body for private burial or cremation may do so by making written request on the bequethal form at the time of death of the donor. In this case all expenses concerned with burial must be borne by the estate of the deceased. Usually this is approximately eighteen months to three years following receipt of the body by the University.

SCHOOLS OF ANATOMY FOR

ONTARIO: Toronto, London, McMaster (Hamilton), and Ottawa. Queen's (Kingston), Guelph, and Canadian Memorial Chiropractic Hospital (Toronto).

CHILDREN AT THE FUNERAL?

In respect to children and the funeral it is best they be told the truth. This will also protect them from their own fantasies and imaginations in regards to death. A study performed on children and the funeral has been concluded and supported by many noted grief-psychiatrists and specialists. It concluded that children from the age of seven and up that express an interest in attending a funeral, should definitely

be allowed to do so. Children under three rarely understand death and experience grief in relation to separation of a loss rather than death per se.

From three to five years of age, children begin to realize that there is some hint of power beyond human control, and in Christian families all our children know Who directs life and also death. They know that they have to adjust to it. By the age of five, children begin to develop accurate and factual knowledge about death.

From six to nine years of age, children begin to realize that death is not casual and that it is irreversible. They connect death with darkness and are very concerned about what happens to the dead body. It is very important to answer their questions honestly.

From ten to teens, this group is ready to face up to reality, but are troubled by thoughts of their own death and the fact that death is inevitable but also unpredictable. They need a great deal of reassurance, also in regards to their fears that they may have been responsible for a death in their family.

Most children will accept death more easily than adults and will often react and respond to the actions and statements of their parents. Modern parents often try to shield and protect their children from the unpleasantness of death. But it is very important how we react and handle death, and to be truthful; then we will be able to be an example and show to our children that we can entrust all things to our Heavenly Father.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE FUNERAL

The cost of the funeral is a matter which must be determined by the family. This most frequently includes: Professional Services of Funeral Director and staff; Use of Facilities and Equipment and Staff; Motor Equipment and Transportation Needs; Casket and Outer Container (Cement graveliners or vaults - if required by local cemeteries). Additional cash disbursements would include newspaper, cemetery, out-of-town transportation, clergy, long distance telephone charges, telegrams, etc.

There are three types of caskets: softwood covered with cloth, solid hardwood caskets, and metallic caskets made of steel, copper or bronze. Each type of casket will have varying grades

of quality. "The casket is not the funeral and the funeral is not the casket."

In order to protest costs and elaborate customs of funerals, many Memorial Societies have stepped up their membership drives with a lot of free and paid newspaper, T.V. and radio advertising. Their aim is to provide a dignified and simple funeral at a low cost. They are not a provincially licensed or qualified educated group as far as funerals are concerned, and encourage members to join their society for promotion of basic funerals. They require by law a cooperating funeral director to carry out and execute their contracts. When reading their pamphlets, it first appeals to the Christian, but upon closer examination there is also a lack of commitment to Christian values and Christian hope. They often encourage immediate disposals and cremation.

It costs a good amount to take care of the body of the deceased, even when it is done most simply. The funeral director is a combined professional and business man. He is subject to all taxes and business responsibilities that anyone else in the business world is. Today's funeral director fully recognizes and accepts the responsibility for meeting the needs of survivors. As a successful professional or businessman he is constantly aware of the costs of operation.

A constant cost factor built into each service is required to provide a building which houses offices, chapel, preparation room, casket room, wash-room facilities, funeral coach and other vehicles, and capable professional and clerical staff. To provide these essential services requires prorating costs among all those having to use the facilities and services. To remain in business, costs must be recovered. To open a business each day, one assumes fixed costs which have to be met whether one does business on that particular day or not.

Unlike government, where deficit is the name of the game, funeral home financial advisors expect them to operate in the black.

The cost of the funeral is determined by the family. There is a level of selection for all and there have never been more funds available for the funeral than in today's society:

Canada Pension Plan Death Benefit, Workman's Compensation, Life Insurance, Veteran's Death Plan, Last Post Fund (Veterans), Public Trustee, Municipal Social Services.

At some later date I would like to do a follow-up article about Cremation and the Christian view in relation to it; also some information regarding pre-planning, pre-arranging and pre-paid funerals, and something about expressions of sympathy such as charitable memorial donations or flowers.

It is hoped that this article has been of some use in answering some of the most often asked questions about funeral service, also with a view to the Christian aspect of it.

I would like to conclude by saying that the Christian funeral is not determined by cost, but by the message it proclaims. The Christian funeral as stated previously is one of hope and proclaims a statement of faith; it is a shining light in a dark world.

Lords Day I.

H. SIEDERS

OTHER SIGNIFICANT BOOKS DEALING WITH DEATH, GRIEF, AND BEREAVEMENT:

1. *On Death and Dying*, Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.
2. *Funerals are Good for People, M.D.'s Included*, William Lamers, Jr.
3. *The Widow-to-Widow Program*, Phyllis Rolfe Silverman.
4. *Funeral Customs The World Over*, Habenstein and Lamers.
5. *You and Your Grief*, Edgar N. Jackson.
6. *For the Living*, Edgar N. Jackson.
7. *The View from a Hearse*, Joseph Bayly.
8. *The Significance of the Christian Funeral*, Edgar N. Jackson.
9. *Telling A Child About Death*, Edgar N. Jackson.
10. *Funeral — Vestige or Value*, Paul E. Irion.
11. *Explaining Death To Children*, Earl A. Grollman.
12. *Death, Grief, Mourning, the Funeral and the Child*, William Lamers, Jr.
13. *Understanding Grief*, Edgar N. Jackson.
14. *The Nurse and the Dying Patient*, Jean-ne Quint.

SOURCES OF REFERENCES AND QUOTES FOR ARTICLE:

Holy Scriptures

A Fact of Life — Supplement to *Globe & Mail*, by Toronto Funeral Directors' Assoc. *Facts About Funerals*, by Alberta Funeral Directors' Assoc.

What Every Family Should Know, Booklet by Niagara & Hamilton and Districts Funeral Directors' Associations.

Canadian Funeral Director — Journal, Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan. /75; Vol. 4, No. 4, April /76; Vol. 4, No. 5, May /76; Vol. 5, No. 11, Dec. /77.

Canadian Funeral News — Journal, Vol. 2, No. 2, Feb.-March /76; Vol. 2, November /76; Vol. 1, November /75.

The Christian Way of Death, Gladys Hunt *Speech* by: H. Sieders, October 1977, Burlington One Parent Family Association (Coping With A Loss).

Speech by: H. Sieders, December 1977, Burlington Central High School (People Helping People).

Speech by: R. Steepe, Funeral Director, Waterdown, Ontario (The Funeral and Its Purpose).

Avondgebed voor Kinderen

*HERE God, nu ik ga slapen,
vouw ik eerst mijn handjes sâam,
En ik vraag U heel eerbiedig:
zie mij in genade aan.*

*Dank U, Vader, voor uw zorgen.
Dank, dat ik uw kind mag zijn.
Leer mij naar uw stem te luist'ren,
ook al ben ik nog maar klein.*

*Wil mijn zonden mij vergeven.
Ook vandaag deed ik U zeer.
Leer mij toch U lief te hebben.
Doe mij leven tot uw eer.*

*Wilt U zorgen voor de zieken.
Spaar ons allen deze nacht.
Geef dat morgen, als wij opstaan,
U de lof wordt toegebracht.
Amen.*

(wijze: "Rust mijn ziel, uw God is Koning.")

Letter To My Father

Dear Dad,

This morning, out of curiosity, I watched "Meeting Place" on T.V.

The service took place in an Anglican church in B.C. I have seen an Anglican service before and although foreign to my upbringing, it was not so much the service that caught my attention, as the short talk the minister gave from his office, explaining the workings of his congregation. What set me thinking was his reference to children participating in the Lord's Supper. I will try to write down my train of thought so you can follow.

We've been talking about baptism recently, discussing various stands, especially concerning child versus adult baptism, in the light of such passages as: "Repent and be baptized," or: "believes and is baptized" (cf. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12 and 18:8) both of which a small child simply cannot do. Yet we believe children of believers to be of the family of God and we baptize them. We, not the Bible, then require them to make a public profession of this faith when they reach the age of maturity.

What does this have to do with the Lord's Supper? Well . . . Why allow children the sacrament of baptism and not of the Lord's Supper? I realize I Corinthians 11:27-29 is in the Bible, but so are the verses I mentioned about baptism.

I think you can probably follow my thoughts. Hope I gave you enough information to receive an answer from you. Until then,

Love, Jean.

Food: Facts and Fallacies

NATIONAL FOOD STRATEGY CONFERENCE

On February 22 and 23, I had the privilege of attending the National Food Strategy Conference held in Ottawa. This conference was the final phase of the first round of a consultative process that was set in motion last June when the Government of Canada published "A Food Strategy for Canada." In that document, the government's overall intent concerning food is stated: "Government policies must continue to develop and expand Canada's production and export strengths to ensure the adequacy of safe and nutritious food supplies for the domestic and export markets at reasonable prices which are responsive to competitive forces over time."

Since the release of the document, the government has sought a wide spectrum of opinion so that account of these might be taken in the further development of national food policies. Consultations were held in December 1977 with spokesmen for associations representing various sectors of the food system. A Federal-Provincial Conference was held in January 1978, and now this final Conference.

After having heard five cabinet ministers address them, the delegates, representative of all stakeholders in the food system, were divided into six workshops. Each workshop was asked to focus its attention on one of the following six primary subject areas:

- income stabilization and support
- trade policy and safeguards
- research, information, and education, including nutrition and food safety
- marketing and food aid
- processing, distribution, and re-tailing
- consumer concerns

Each subject was discussed for a full afternoon by five to six subgroups within each workshop. Ideas, opinions, and concerns pertaining to the subject were expressed from the particular point of view of the delegates. That the views were diverse, was guaranteed by bringing together farmers, processors, suppliers, distributors, retailers, consumers ("average" as well as special

disadvantaged groups), nutritionists, scientists (university and government), and government ministry representatives. An interim statement of consensus was drafted and further discussed by the subgroups. A final document, as representative as possible of the viewpoints expressed by all workshop participants, was drawn up and presented to the Conference in plenary session on the final afternoon.

It was quite surprising, but at the same time encouraging, to find people of such different backgrounds and interests sitting together discussing issues of mutual concern. Differences of opinion were aired, often strongly. Misunderstandings of the various sectors of the agriculture and food industry were brought into the open, discussed, and hopefully corrected.

Many items and suggestions were presented, all of which must be duly considered, many adopted and put into practice, if Canada's food system is to be secured, and if programs are to be developed to enable us to adapt to the ever-changing environment around us. Although the specifics of the discussion are far too numerous to be recounted fully in this article, some are of sufficient interest to a number of us to warrant specific mention.

The workshop on income stabilization and support seemed to agree that primary producers are the first to suffer from instability in supply and demand. When production is high, prices fall, and producers suffer losses, while, for a short period of time, consumers benefit from low prices. In the longer run, weak prices discourage production, and this, of course, causes prices to increase again. This instability in the food chain is well known to us all. The obvious solution to this problem, according to many Canadians, is income stabilization and/or support programs. Marketing boards, or other means of collectively directing the marketing and distribution of agricultural produce, have been an issue of considerable contention in Canada. The workshop on consumer concerns was divided about the desirability of such marketing boards and how they should be organized. But there was general agreement, however, that a fair and equitable return must be assured every

sector of the food system, and that this not be achieved at the expense of producers alone but rather be shared by all Canadians, without jeopardizing the buying power of consumers. It was pointed out by one workshop that efficiency must be a consideration in the development of income stabilization programs.

This equality for all, and, as a consequence of this concept, the bearing of the burden by all, strikes a somewhat discordant note with me. The unnatural pressure to make all persons equal, in my opinion, is in direct opposition to what the Bible teaches us. Everyone receives what he is entitled to: wages according to work done and blessings according to God's good pleasure. Not all are equal, nor can we make them so. Here is an example of how government intervention and control, for the purpose of assuring an adequate and affordable food supply on the one hand, infringes on God-given freedoms on the other. Similarly, the unification of individual efforts for the purpose of marketing agricultural products profitably, frequently borders on denial of personal entrepreneurship in agriculture.

In assuring access to reasonably priced and nutritious food on a continuing basis, Canada's trade policy must also be considered. The feeling of the workshop dealing with this subject was that our food producing capability should be expanded where possible also to meet our global obligations. Foreign aid programs should be provided, particularly when disaster hits,

Consulaat-Generaal der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 KINGSTREET E.,
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5C 1C3
PHONE: 364-5443

OPSPORING ADRESSEN

VAN DER VEEN, Sape, geboren 11 oktober 1917.

VOOGT, A., geboren 7 december 1913, naar Canada vertrokken op 2 oktober 1951.

VAN DE WAL, Rinke, geboren 2 december 1912 te Oldelamer, naar Canada vertrokken op 14 juli 1952.

VAN DE WELLE, Jan, geboren 3 oktober 1928 te Den Haag.

VAN WIJNGAARDEN, Klaas, geboren in 1900, naar Canada vertrokken omstreeks 1925.

De Consul-Generaal, voor deze:
MEVR. G. SCHNITZLER

but Canada should, in the main, encourage less fortunate countries to develop their own agriculture programs, so that they can achieve a greater level of self-sufficiency. It was stated furthermore that there is concern about the effect of tariffs and non-tariff barriers on the cost of inputs at the primary producer level, but that Canada should join, and, where necessary, promote any international agreements which would result in increased price stability.

We often easily forget, when immersed in our own little world with our own specific concerns, that we are citizens of a country which occupies a place in a much larger world. There are many countries considerably less fortunate than we, with respect to the natural resources they possess. Again, the world was not created equal and uniform, but the excess which we frequently take for granted could alleviate much suffering elsewhere. We so easily forget the plight of others.

One recurring theme in all the areas of discussion was the need for communication among all sectors of the food system. Much of the criticism about the performance of different system components, it became clear, stems from a basic lack of understanding and appreciation by the different segments of each other. Little is understood about the complexities of modern day agriculture, processing, merchandising, and consumerism. Likewise, there is a considerable lack of knowledge about the actual commodities produced and available for consumption. The only way that these problems can be alleviated is to foster a common understanding of educational needs and goals; common in the sense that all sectors are involved. To meet this objective much research is still required, particularly in the area of how to market effectively nutritional information. It was pointed out that food and nutrition programs should be expanded from kindergarten through high school and into professional education.

It may well be asked: "Why the concern about increasing our knowledge in the area of foods and nutrition?" There is no doubt that Canada, in general, is one of the best-nourished nations in the world, almost to the point of being over-nourished. Still, there is considerable room for improvement. More efficient utilization of the treasures which we receive daily and less outright wasting is a mandate

which we often overlook. We were put on this earth to manage it, not solely for our own benefit, but also, through our well-being, to the greater glory of our Maker.

The Food Strategy Conference was an extremely innovative and interesting approach to the ongoing development of a Food Policy for Canada. The delegates were very positive in their reaction. It is still too early, even at the time of this writing, to see

what government activity will result from this exchange. Even if few further initiatives were to result from the Conference, it did demonstrate that communication is possible. The exercise of the Food Strategy Conference will have, albeit possibly small, a definite impact on the securing of Canada's food system and will enable the appropriate changes to help us adapt to a changing environment.

J. VANDERSTOEP

An Undesirable Candidate*

A congregation needed a new minister. One of the elders wanted to know what kind of a minister the consistory was looking for. In order to find this out, he wrote the following letter, acting as though he were a minister who applied for the call (something which seems to happen in some churches), and thus he read this letter to the consistory:

* * *

Esteemed brethren,

Having heard that your congregation is vacant, I take the freedom to apply for the open place. I have several qualities which, I expect, you will appreciate. I have always preached powerfully. I also had some success as an author. Some say that I am good in organizing. In most places where I served, I fulfilled a leading role.

But there are people who have some objections against me. First, I am past the age of fifty. Then, I never preached in any church longer than three, or at the most, four years. I was forced to leave some places because my work had caused disunity, even riots. I must also admit that I have been in jail three or four times, but that was not my fault.

My health is not too good, but I can still do quite a load of work. I had to work at my old job (before I became a preacher) in order to make ends meet. The Churches I served were usually very small, through they were located in big cities.

I could not cooperate very well with other church leaders in various places. Some have threatened me, even brought me before the court, and have injured me physically pretty badly.

I am not too good in administration. They say that I cannot even remember whom I baptized. Yet, I hope that you can use me. I will do my

utmost, even — if you can't pay a full salary — make some money on the side.

* * *

Thus far the letter. Having finished reading it, the elder asked the consistory if they were interested in this applicant. Their answer was, unanimously, that it would be impossible to call such a minister. They were not interested in a man who was ailing, caused trouble, was troublesome and absent-minded, let alone a man who knew the insides of prisons so well. They felt offended that such a man even dared to write, and that the elder dared to read his letter.

The only thing they were interested in was: Who in the world was the preacher who had written such a letter?

Then the elder answered: the Apostle Paul!

*Free translation of an article in the Dutch magazine, *De Kruisbanier*, vD.

Church News

CALLED to Burlington-East, Ontario:

REV. M. VAN BEVEREN

of Langley, B.C.

* * *

DECLINED to Winnipeg, Manitoba:

REV. M. VANDER WEL

of Abbotsford, B.C.

* * *

CHANGE IN CORRESPONDENCE:

Effective immediately, please note change of address:

H. De Vries, Secretary,

R.R. 2,

Beamsville, Ontario L0R 1B0

for the Canadian Reformed School Society, Lincoln-Smithville, Ontario.

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

It is a little late for an Ascension Day poem, I know. But it's always good to be reminded of this glorious Day for our Saviour. The poem will tell you why!

Ascension Day

As He was blessing, Christ ascended up on high,
His disciples were looking nigh.
Until a cloud hid Him,
But then an angel came to them!
And said, "What are you staring at?
Your Master is now in Heaven, so don't be upset!
Because in that same way
He will return to you some day!"
This promise has been given a long time ago.
It counts for us too! The time? We don't know!

by Busy Beaver, *Jolette Moeliker*

Now we're going to change the subject. Busy Beaver *Arthur Pieterman* wrote to tell us what he would like to be when he grows up. Let's listen to him.

"When I grow up I'm going to be an O.P.P. John Paul Van Amerongen and I are going to be partners on motorcycles. Harley Davidson is the kind of motor-cycle we are going to ride. But when it rains we have to go in a car. I'm going to have a gun at my side."

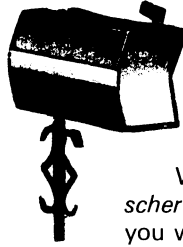
It's not Father's Day just yet, but let's be on time with this poem. Thank you for sharing it with us Busy Beaver *Yvonne Van Amerongen*.

My Father

1. My father is tall
My father is lean
Sometimes he's kind and
Sometimes he's mean.
2. He has talent galore
He plays . . .
The piano and
One instrument more.
3. Our Sundays he makes joyful
When he plays with us all
But our Friday evenings are better
When together we have a ball.
4. He rides a motorcycle
And we get rides too.
He's such a nice man
That you'd like him, too.

Time for birthday wishes! We all join in wishing the Busy Beavers celebrating a June birthday a very happy day, and many happy returns. May the Lord bless and guide you also in the year ahead.

Henry Dekker	June 1	Norma Vander Pol	June 19
Theresa Bouwman	3	Jacob Jongs	20
Marcelle Lindhout	3	Catherine Smouter	20
Nick Boersema	5	Joyce Dalhuizen	21
Arlene Buist	6	Debbie Medemblik	21
Rosalinde Moeliker	7	Marianne Bergsma	22
Calvin Lodder	11	Joyce De Gelder	23
Julia Huttema	12	Karen Gay Barendregt	26
Jason Klaver	13	Cathy Dalhuizen	28
Linda Van Dyk	14	Debbie De Boer	28
Bonnie Boeve	16	Harold Jansen	28
Cheryl Hansma	17		



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Gerald Boscher*. We are happy to have you join us. We hope you will really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Are you still enjoying your skateboard? Write again soon, Gerald.

Thank you for a nice, chatty letter, *Henrietta Gansekoele*. And for your contribution to our BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT, and the recipe! I must try it very soon. Your programme looked very interesting, Henrietta. And I hope you have a very nice day come June 23.

Hello *Helena Onderwater*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you very much for your letter, and the puzzle. And also your contribution to our PROJECT! Write again soon, Helena.

It's always fun to have friends stay overnight, isn't it, *Rosalinde Moeliker*? I see you girls were very busy yourselves, and you mean to keep all the Busy Beavers busy! Thank you for the puzzle, Rosalinde, and also for your contribution to our PROJECT. Bye for now.

Thank you for your poem, *Jolette Moeliker*. I think the Busy Beavers will enjoy it. Are you always on time now, Jolette? Now that you have your own watch?

Have you had your field day and your school trip yet, *Nancy Van Raalte*? How were they? Where did you go? I see you are a good puzzler, Nancy. Keep up the good work! And thank you for your poem.

Sounds to me as if you had a very interesting trip to the museum, *Mary Van Raalte*. I think you and Nancy will be busy watching your house being built. Or are you helping? Thank you very much for the picture, Mary, and for the poem, too.

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Corinne Terpstra* has some riddles for us.

1. What did the socks say to the feet?
2. Why is it hard for a leopard to hide?
3. Why did the farmer bring hay to bed with him?
4. What did the mayonnaise say to the refrigerator?
5. What country do sharks like best?
6. What do you do when your pen is itching?
7. What happened when the boy dreamed he ate a 5 pound marshmallow?

Answers: 1. You're putting me on!; 2. He's always spotted; 3. He wanted to feed his nightmares; 4. Shut the door, I'm dressing; 5. Finland; 6. Use scratch paper; 7. His pillow was gone!