



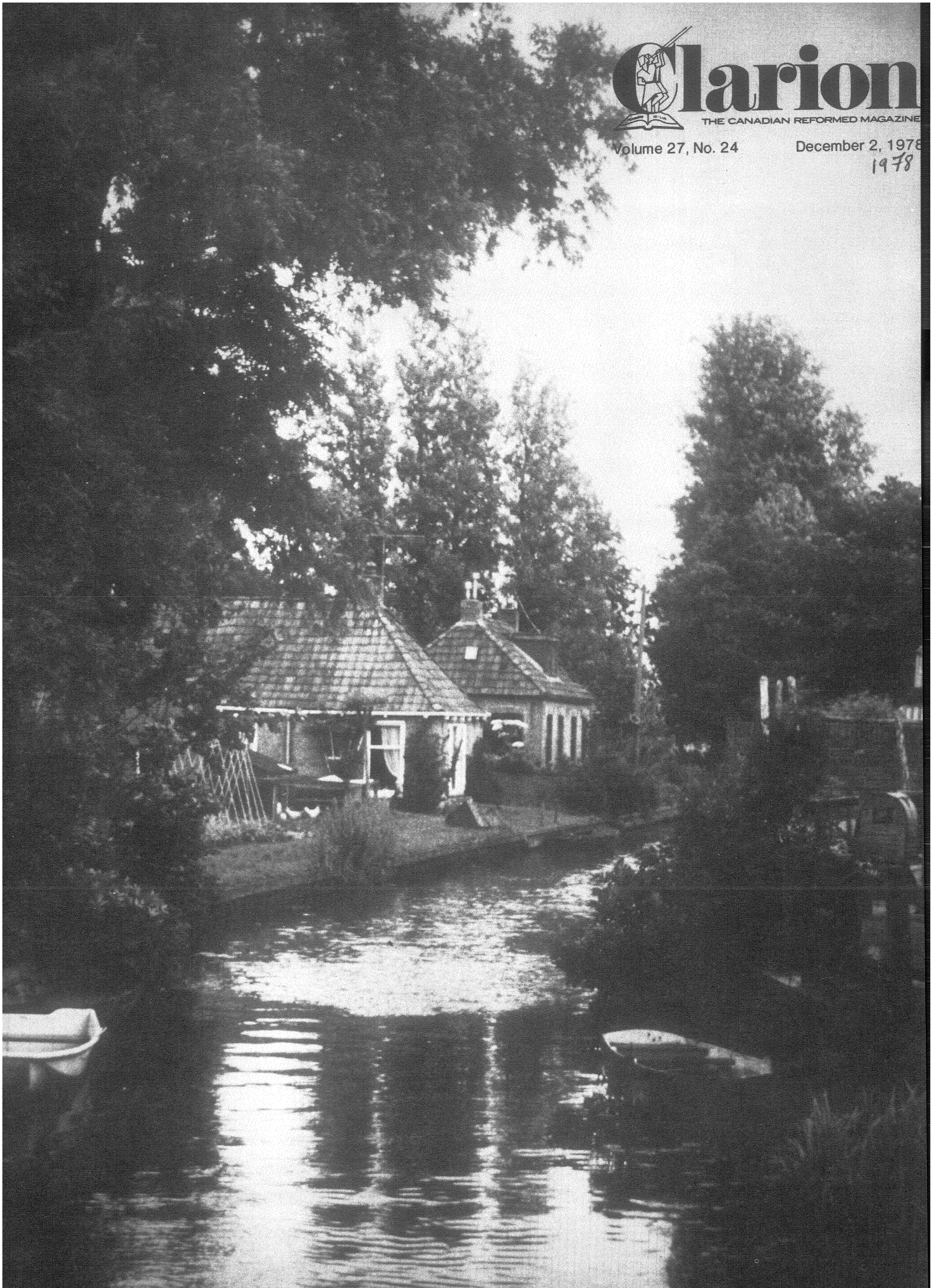
Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 27, No. 24

December 2, 1978

1978



What About "Cremation" and "Donation of Body-Organs"?

A POSITIVE APPROACH

As a brief introduction to the discussion of these two issues we would suggest to approach them in a positive, rather than a negative, way. For that matter, we should make it a Christian custom *always* to be positive.

With relation to the two issues, a "negative" approach would be to condemn cremation out of hand as a proof of atheism and the denial of life after this life. The "positive" approach would be to start from the riches of our Christian faith. We will attempt to demonstrate this briefly.

CREMATION

Although not expressly forbidden in Scripture, cremation has "traditionally" been rejected by Christians on the basis that, while in Israel burial of the body was considered honourable, the surrounding nations applied cremation for their dead. The Early Christian Church took that over, and thus . . . why should we abandon that good, old custom? Especially when we have ample reason to believe that cremation in the Western World was propagated by the conviction: death is the end, period, finished — we might as well burn the "remnants."

We would not deny any of the above reasoning and its validity. However, there is a stronger, a more-positive stand to be taken when we are put before the choice "dust to dust," or "dust to ashes." While some might ask, "What difference does it make anyway: after some time a handful of dust, or rightaway a handful of ashes?" — there is a better way.

The same goes for

DONATION OF BODY ORGANS

By way of a question, the suggestion has been put forward in this magazine some time ago that such a donating of one or more parts of our body after death (even the whole body) would bring us into conflict with our beautiful and comforting confession, Lord's Day 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism: that we belong, *body* and soul, to Christ. Paul says in I Corinthians 6:15 that "our bodies are members of Christ." Thus we would not be allowed to give what

belongs to Him to anyone, and anyway not to an unbeliever.

This approach is not only negative but also far-fetched. The same would then have to be applied to donating blood while we are still alive; maybe even with a reference to Genesis 9:4: "the life is in the blood." The same would have to be said about a person saving the life of his brother by donating one of his two kidneys. But this, again, would bring us into conflict with Paul's praising the Galatians (4:15): "If possible you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me."

Thus we rather recommend

THE POSITIVE APPROACH RE: DONATION OF BODY ORGANS

What is a body? What is my body?

The answer is, that it is the God-given instrument by which I may and must serve my God, and obey His Commandment, i.e., to love Him above everything and everyone else, and to love my neighbour as myself. On this commandment depend all the Law and the Prophets. For fulfilling that commandment I was bought by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Thus I have to use my body, its energy, its possibilities, also its organs for *service* (in the New Testament, *diakonia*), for love. As Christ gave Himself, so I must be willing to give myself, or part of myself, as in the case of being a blood-donor, for the welfare of my neighbour. That is our Christian motivation. Without that love, it would have no value before God, not even if I gave my whole body to be burned (I Corinthians 13:3).

When my course is completed here on earth, and I will no longer "be at home in the body," but, away from the body, "be at home with the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:6ff.), all my body organs will become company for worms, *unless* one or some of them be preserved in order that they may serve a fellow human being, so that he again may see, and walk, and live!

Should, so we ask, humanists, on humanitarian grounds, then be in the foreground here, while we, confessors of the only Comfort, make default?

Finally, one need not worry that

donation of organs will cause any problems for the Lord when He raises us from the dead! As much as the blind, the retarded, and those who lost members by amputation, will receive a complete and glorified body from Him, so will those who donated organs to be used after their death for the benefit of others, receive a complete body.

POSITIVE APPROACH TO CREMATION

We will not deny or underestimate the weight of the argument that burial, not cremation, was the custom in biblical times. But there is a stronger argument. We find that in I Corinthians 15:37 and following. There the Holy Spirit calls burial a "sowing of a seed," the "kernel" of which, by way of speaking, will be the start of the new body. While not forgetting that the language here is symbolical, and that we should not try to derive from it some "physical conclusions," yet, this sowing of a seed as an expression of our faith in the resurrection: "this grave will be opened again!" — is a far cry from "throwing the ashes to the winds." To that may be added, not only the beautiful Old Testament expression of "being gathered unto one's fathers," but more strongly Paul's teaching that we (Romans 6): have been "buried with Christ." This being the case, I want to be buried and not to be cremated. My burial, then, will be the "completion" of my having been buried with Christ in His death. For *that* reason we reject cremation.

CONCLUSION

We take this position — *against* cremation, and *for* donating organs — on the basis of our Christian faith, as outlined above. While we do this, we remember, with reverence, the many martyrs for whom the decision about what should be done with their bodies was cruelly taken out of their hands. We remember the gas-chambers of Nazism.

We should start preparing ourselves for the possibility that, in years to come, not only laws may be made to cremate the bodies for the purpose of saving real estate, or for so-called

health-reasons; but that on the horizon we see the day coming near that the world will gaze at the dead bodies of the last witnesses and "refuse to let them be placed in a tomb" (Revelation 11:9).

Whatever the case may be,

Organ Transplants

When in 1967 Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the first heart transplant the era of transplants dawned. In the mind of the man on the street, the very idea conjured up images of medical miracles hitherto only dreamed of by the science fiction writer. While the transplantation of hearts seems to have petered out, the principle of transplantation has become firmly ensconced in the mind of our generation, and the practice, in one form or another, is a daily occurrence in most hospitals.

Before proceeding, a definition will be offered, and the Christian view of the situation examined. Transplantation for purposes of this discussion involves the removal of an organ or tissue from one body, and its implantation or infusion into another body, so that it might resume its normal function in the new host. When discussing this issue from a Christian point of view, the second part of the Great Commandment must be the guiding principle. After all, our body as well as our mind is an instrument God gave to us in order to obey that commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this: you shall love your neighbour as yourself." Part of obeying the first commandment consists of obeying the second. There are, no doubt, different ways of demonstrating your love for your neighbour, but can you think of a greater manifestation of love than to give of yourself, of your own body, of your own flesh and blood?

From the definition it becomes clear that there are limitations to transplantations, two of which are the vital necessity of some organs, and the problem of rejection. Many organs are vital to our normal function, and could not be removed without causing the demise of the donor, e.g. heart and liver. Conversely, other organs or tissues may be removed with impunity, providing there is adequate reserve,

"Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's!" (Romans 14:8).

G. VANDOOREN

**This article, as well as the two following ones, served as a brief introduction to the discussion of the above topic at a meeting in Burlington, Ontario.*

e.g. kidney and blood. Consequently, in the former case, those organs are never removed until the person is clinically dead, i.e. the brain is dead as determined by the absence of brain waves, even though the heart may still be beating and the lungs still moving with the aid of a respirator. The rejection problem is a normal defence phenomenon, caused when the host's immune system recognizes the transplanted organ as foreign, and attempts to destroy it. It is never a problem in identical twins, since the two are of one flesh, and it is rarely a problem in bloodless tissues such as the cornea. However, it is a big problem when fleshy organs such as heart and kidney, though its magnitude can be reduced by matching donor and host as closely as possible before the transplant, and using immuno-suppressive medication after it.

Many different organs and tissues have been used for transplant purposes. Some uncommon examples are entire knee joints for replacement of arthritic knees, hearts for terminal heart failure, skin for grafting burn victims, and bone marrow for aplastic anemia. Far more common is the use of blood, kidneys, and corneas for transplants, and we will briefly elaborate on these.

Blood for transfusion purposes constitutes by far the most common application of the principle of transplantation. Blood is needed in cases where there is a shortage of red blood cells, as a result of either accident or disease. Often not whole blood is required, but one of the fractions that may be separated from it by either chemical or physical methods. For example, hemophiliacs, who have a hereditary deficiency of a specific clotting factor, may receive a fraction of blood called cryoprecipitate, in order to stop a bad bleed. This fraction, separated from blood during a process that includes freezing — hence its name — is rich in the desired clotting factor, and its discovery and availability have

changed the hemophiliac's life expectancy dramatically. Anyone may donate blood, providing two prerequisites are met. The donor must be able to spare it, so that illness and anemia would be contraindications. Secondly, the donor must not be a carrier of a disease that could be transmitted by the blood, e.g., serum hepatitis.

The cornea, or the clear front "window" of the eye, is needed for transplants in those cases where the cornea of the host has opacities, as a result of injury or disease. The cornea is, of course, never donated until after death. The eye must be removed from the donor within 12 hours after death, and sent to the Eye Bank in Toronto (for Ontario, that is). It is my under-



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:

What About "Cremation" and "Donation of Body-Organs"? — G. VanDooren	530
Organ Transplants — H.A. Scholtens	531
Cremation — H. Sieders	532
Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church(2)	
— J. Mulder	534
Press Review — J. Geertsema	536
Eligibility — W.W.J. VanOene	538
News Medley — W.W.J. VanOene	540
A Corner for the Sick	
— Mrs. J.K. Riemersma	543
All About Insurance (2)	
— J.H. Hofsink	544
Understanding Your Missionary and His Calling — R. Boersema	547
Our Little Magazine	
— Aunt Betty	549

standing that the healthy eyes of anyone who died of a non-malignant disease, are acceptable.

Kidneys are required for transplantation into patients with chronic kidney failure. Without either dialysis or transplant, these people face a certain death, within weeks or months. Dialysis, whether this be done at home or in the hospital, is expensive, and so cumbersome, that it really interferes with the patients' normal life-style, while transplantation allows an almost normal way of life. Not all people with chronic kidney failure are willing to undergo such major surgery, however, while others, e.g., those over 55 years of age and those with other major physical problems, are not considered suitable medically.

Kidneys are obtained from two sources, from relatives, usually siblings, and from people who have died suddenly. Apparently about 10% of kidney transplants are sibling transplants, where tissue typing has indicated that the donor and the host are very compatible, and, consequently, the success of such a transplant is virtually assured. The remaining 90% of kidneys for transplants are obtained from those who have died suddenly, and where there is no reason to believe that the kidneys might be involved in a disease process. For example, if someone dies of a heart attack, his kidney will likely also show the effects of hardening of the arteries or of high blood pressure. Or if someone dies of cancer, the kidneys may well also be involved. It follows that most of these kidneys come from accident victims. The kidneys are removed after death has occurred, as indicated by the lack of brain activity on the E.E.G. (electro-encephalograph).

How can we participate in this entire area? Firstly, let those of us who can, donate blood regularly. Secondly, discuss with your loved ones your thoughts about the donation of your kidneys, for example, if you were to die in an accident. If you and they feel comfortable with the idea, then indicate this in writing somewhere, so that after your death there is firm, legally acceptable evidence of your consent. In Ontario, every driver's licence contains such a consent, and this is no doubt the easiest way to do it. Above all else, however, we must be convinced of our Christian mandate, also in this aspect of contemporary life.

H.A. Scholtens, M.D.
Freelton, Ontario

Cremation

Tonight I wish to confine myself to the area of cremation primarily in my capacity of, and role as, funeral director. I briefly wish to say something about donating body part or body donations, as it involves me as funeral director.

Under the heading of cremation, I would like to dwell on a) definition, b) brief history, and c) the process, procedure, and costs, etc.

DEFINITION

Cremation is that process where a human body is reduced in the space of a little more than an hour, by means of intense heat, into harmless gases, and a small amount of skeletal bone fragments, most commonly referred to as ashes, but more appropriately called cremains or cremated remains.

BRIEF HISTORY

The practice of reducing the body to its essential elements by burning it on an open fire was introduced to the western world by the Greeks as early as 1000 B.C. By about 100 A.D., however, cremations were stopped. Among the various explanations cited is the spread of Christianity. Although cremation was not explicitly taboo among Christians, it was not encouraged because of pagan associations.

Pagan cremation was practiced in the period of persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire as an anti-Christian punitive measure, so as to mock the faith in the resurrection (e.g. burning of the martyrs). Cremation was reintroduced by supporters of the French Revolution in 1797, joined by freemasons, materialists, and Marxists in the 19th century. After long hesitation, cremation was declared inconsequential as far as the salvation is concerned in the Protestant Church. For reasons of hygiene and lack of space, cremation has gained vogue alongside burial in most churches.

PROCESS, PROCEDURE, AND COSTS, ETC.

Cremation in Canada permits the same ceremony as earth burial or entombment. A service may be conducted, with the body present before cremation, or after cremation. It may be held at the funeral home, church, or crematorium. No part of the cremation process is seen by the public.

When it is desired that cremation

take place, the funeral director should be notified immediately. It is his responsibility to see that the cremation application forms be completed, to secure a coroner's certificate, and to notify the crematorium of the day and the hour when it is desired to have the cremation take place.

Cremations are not carried out on Sundays or holidays, nor within 48 hours after a death takes place, except on special order by one of the Regional Health Units in the Province.

In most cases, cremation committal services are held at the funeral home immediately following the regular funeral service. While the family retires to their home with their friends, the funeral director looks after taking the casket to the crematory.

The body is always cremated in the casket as it is received from the funeral director, and under no circumstances will its removal from the casket be permitted. After cremation — two or three days is the usual length of time — the cremated remains are available for disposition as directed by the family. They can be scattered, enshrined, or buried in metal, bronze, wood, marble, or concrete urns. In most cases, the urns are buried in the family plot or an urn garden in the local cemetery. Arrangements can also be made for shipping the cremains abroad.

Q. What does cremation cost?

A. Cremation Fee: Adults — \$100.00, under age 10 — \$60.00, under age 1 — \$40.00 and the coroners fee is \$10.00. These are the crematory charges only; they do not include the funeral director's charges.

Q. Is it necessary to have a casket for cremation?

A. The same type of casket is used for cremation as for interment (earth burial).

Q. Does anyone have to witness the cremation?

A. A witness is not necessary.

DONATING OF BODY PARTS

The donation of a body or any of its parts to medical science is a most vital contribution in relieving the suffering of people and in preventing needless deaths. Today, more transplants than ever before are being successfully performed in Ontario, largely due to the

increasing number of people willing to donate much-needed human tissues or organs. The Ontario Government works closely with medical institutions throughout the Province to help administer an organ retrieval program in as efficient a manner as possible. Though public response has been good, more organs and tissues are still urgently required to help those in need to live healthier lives.

WHAT IS NEEDED

For example, eyes are in great demand for corneal transplants and other treatments for the blind or people with affected sight.

Pituitary glands are required in large numbers to extract growth hormone for treatment of one type of dwarfism, a particularly tragic deficiency which affects children at an early age and prevents them from reaching full growth.

More kidneys are required to keep up with the needed number of transplants, to alleviate the discomfort and expense of artificial kidney treatment.

Twice the number of knee transplants could be performed for people in need if a sufficient number of knee joints were available.

The fight against heart disease, one of Canada's biggest killers, would be greatly assisted by the availability of more heart muscle specimens for research.

Lungs, livers, bones, hearts, and brains are also in demand to help cure diseases and prolong life. Other human tissues and organs may be required in the future for transplants and medical research.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Any person who has attained the age of majority may give consent for donation in writing signed by him at the time, or orally in the presence of at least two witnesses during his last illness. The best way to give effective consent is by filling in the donor portion on the back of a driver's licence. Non-drivers can obtain additional donor cards by contacting the Chief Coroner of Ontario: Dr. H.B. Cotnam, Chief Coroner for Ontario, Coroner's Building, 26 Grenville Street, Toronto, Ontario M7A 2G9. The signature on the card of the donor is all that is needed to make consent legal. The card can be invalidated simply by destroying it.

TIMING

Timing is crucial — therefore the need to carry the donor card with you.

Coroners, pathologists, doctors, and policemen are requested to look for donor cards when any death occurs. Persons should write on the card any "useful parts." This freely offers consent that choice of any organ or tissue may be used to help someone to live a healthier life.

OTHER METHODS OF CONSENT

Where a person of any age who has not given consent dies, or in the opinion of a physician is incapable of giving consent by reason of injury or disease and death is imminent, consent by others is possible. Consent may be given by a spouse, children of the age of majority, parents, brothers or sisters who have reached majority age, other next-of-kin, or the person lawfully in possession of the body. Such consent may be given in writing by the spouse, relative, or other person, or orally by the spouse, relative, or other person in the presence of at least two witnesses; or by the telegraphic, recorded, telephonic, or other recorded message of the spouse, relative, or other person.

DONATION OF THE ENTIRE BODY: ONTARIO SCHOOLS OF ANATOMY — DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY

- Queen's University, Kingston
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto
- University of Western Ontario, London
- Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, Toronto
- University of Guelph
- McMaster University, Hamilton

Each school reserves the right to refuse any body if it is not in good condition due to circumstances of the death, or because it is too far away for practical transportation, or because an autopsy has been performed, or because there may not be a need for a body at that particular time.

THE HUMAN TISSUE GIFT ACT

Under this act, the identity of organ donors and recipients is protected by law. Except where legally required, no information can be disclosed about either a donor or recipient. Only a donor or recipient can disclose such information. For additional information on the method or procedure to donate the whole body see previous article in *Clarion* titled "Perspectives on Death, Grief, and Funerals" under donating of body parts and body donations. The above information was taken from a pamphlet called: "Help somebody,

someday (How you can register as a human tissue donor)," put out by The Ministry of the Solicitor General, Ontario, 25 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y6.

DONATING OF BODY PARTS

After the removal of the part (or parts) of the body for the purpose of organ donation(s), custody of the remaining part of the body vests in the surviving spouse, next of kin, or other persons under the obligation to dispose of the body. The body, therefore, can be present for the purpose of the funeral.

BODY DONATIONS

Relatives who wish to reclaim a body, which had been willed to a university for the purpose of medical science, may do so by written request on the bequeathal form at the time of death of the donor. In this case all expenses concerned with burial or cremation must be borne by the estate of the deceased. Usually, this is approximately 18 months to three (3) years following receipt of the body by the university.

H. SIEDERS

REFERENCES

- Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Book 6, Page 740.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Book 4, Page 475.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Book 6, Page 740.
- Booklet "What Every Family Should Know" — Niagara and Hamilton & District Funeral Directors Association.
- Pamphlet — Hamilton Mausoleum and Crematory.
- Article for *Clarion* — "Perspectives on Death, Grief, and Funerals" — H. Sieders.
- Pamphlet — "Help Somebody, Someday" (Ministry of the Solicitor General, Ontario).

Church News

CALLED:

by the church at New Westminster, B.C.,

REV. C. VAN DAM

of Brampton, Ontario.

OUR COVER

Frisian countryside, The Netherlands. (Photo courtesy E. de Haan.)

A LETTER FROM THE

COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

to the

COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH RELATIONS 2

B-1: PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED SYSTEMS OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

With respect to the differences in church government you ask us (p. 4, paragraph 5) to consider the Proposed Form of Government (referred to as the New Form). We will comply with this request though we do not know as yet whether it has been officially adopted. You suggest that the local church in our conception corresponds more nearly to the regional church in the new Form of Government. The consistory would then correspond to the presbytery and the local church in your Form of Government to a "wijkgemeente" in our conception. However, as you undoubtedly know, our Church Order does not know of such a "wijkgemeente." That indeed in some larger congregations (in Holland) this concept is still functioning, cannot be denied. But the trend is to divide larger city congregations into smaller ones with their own consistory. Therefore, according to us, this example of the "wijkgemeente" does not fit and it tends to minimize the difference between your Form of Government and our Church Order.

We keep having difficulty, not so much with the terminology, as with the structure of your concept of church government in this respect. That difficulty is not so much that you in the new Form of Government wish to recognize that the church comes to expression also on the regional level, since in a certain way we do the same in our Church Order with our classical assemblies. Our difficulty is that in your Form of Government this regional church with its presbytery, dominates the local congregation or session. According to us this conflicts with the biblical evidence that the local church is not just a part or a branch of a regional church, but is in its own right a complete church of the Lord (I Corinthians 1:2; Revelation 1:20). This difference in structure with respect to the relation between the presbytery and the local congregations (sessions) shows up, e.g., when the new Form of Government states:

"The presbytery has the power to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care The presbytery shall examine and approve or censure the records of church sessions. Further, the presbytery has power . . . to ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers." (Chapter XIV, 5.)

We realize that the presbytery always must respect "the liberties guaranteed to the individual congregations under the constitution" (Chapter XIV, 5), but this does not cancel out the rule that the local church with its session as a "lower assembly" is "subject to the review and control" of the presbytery as a "higher assembly" (Chapter XII, 2). In our judgment this is not only a matter of your "characteristically vertical dimension" in distinction from our "characteristically horizontal dimension" but tends indeed to a "hierarchical ordering" and an infringement upon the completeness of the local congregation as a church of the Lord, which is under the care and supervision of local elders, appointed thereto by Christ as Head of the church.

When you therefore state that the kind of supervision

authorized, does not differ materially from the supervision exercised by the broader assemblies among our churches, this is according to us, incorrect. Looking at the difference between the relation "local church — classis" in our Church Order and the relation "presbytery — local congregation" in your Form of Government, there is not only a difference in terminology, but also a *material* difference, i.e. that in the Church Order, local churches are not under the care of, nor subject to the review and control of a broader assembly as in your Form of Government.

In this response to your letter of April 1976, we made it our main task to pay attention to some areas where divergencies still do exist. This, however, does not take away the fact that there are many more areas of whole-hearted agreement. Besides, we have also noticed some substantial differences in the New Form of Government compared to the (Old) Form of Government with respect to the matter under discussion.

Under the heading "Of the Church" the old Form of Government, e.g., stated (Chapter II, 2, 3) "The universal church . . . should be divided into many particular churches." Under the heading "Of the Presbytery" the old Form read (Chapter X, 1), "The church consisting, as it does, of many separate congregations . . ." That these statements do not appear in this form in the new Form of Government, is an improvement, according to us. We also noticed that where the old Form of Government stated (Chapter XIV, 2) that the presbytery "consists of all the ministers . . . and *one* ruling elder," the New Form reads (Chapter XIV, 2), the presbytery "consists of all the ministers and *all* the ruling elders of the congregations . . ." We are of the opinion that this does more justice to the office of the elder in the church and diminishes the special place of the minister among the office-bearers. This is also the reason, we presume, that the statement in the old Form of Government (Chapter IV) — "The office of the minister is the first in the church, both for dignity and usefulness . . ." — is eliminated in the new Form of Government, which speaks of "ministers or teaching elders" (Chapter VI).

B-2: OFFICE-BEARERS

You further write (p. 5, paragraph 4) that it is not clear to you that the rule exercised by the elders in your higher judicatories differ in *principle* from the rule exercised by the elders in our classes and synods.

We agree with the principle that the elders do not derive their authority from the governed but from the Head and King of the church. But the point is that, according to us, Christ authorized the elders to be overseers and rulers in a specific local church and that consequently they exercise that specific charge to be overseers and to feed the flock only there (Acts 20:28). When elders are delegated to a classis, they do not rule and supervise the church on a regional level the same way as they are authorized to do in their local congregation, but they are authorized and charged *as delegates* of their consistories to help decide all matters properly placed before a classis, where only matters which pertain to the churches in common or which could

not be finished in a minor assembly (consistory) are dealt with.

With respect to the membership of the pastors in the local congregations (p. 5, paragraph 5), we realize that it is hard to break with a historic Presbyterian practice. We also feel that this matter is closely related to the way in which the presbytery is structured and functions in your Form of Government. However, we still find the following rule of Chapter VI, 4 hard to reconcile with the principle of Acts 20:28-30: "a minister shall be a member of a regional church and has communicant fellowship in any local congregation of the regional church. The presbytery . . . may request a session . . . to exercise pastoral care over him in its behalf."

According to us, the local consistory (session) has been entrusted by the Lord with the pastoral care and supervision also of the minister, while the classis may serve to prevent injustices. In your Form of Government it is actually the other way around in that the presbytery, for example, has the major and ultimate authority in determining the placing of the call extended to a minister by a local congregation (Chapter XXII, 10) and the presbytery has the power to ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers (Chapter XIV, 5).

B-3: AUTHORITY OF CHURCH ASSEMBLIES

We agree with you (p. 6, paragraph 2) that the concern expressed under B-3 in our Committee's letter of March 1972 indeed failed to take into account that decisions must be in harmony with the Word of God, if they are to be binding (Westminster Confession, Chapter XXXI, 2). From Chapter III, 5 of the new Form of Government on "The Nature and Exercise of Church Power" we learned that this principle is also clearly expressed where it states that "decisions when properly rendered and *if in accord with the Word of God* 'are to be received with reverence and submission' . . ." We noticed that in the Chapter on the General Assembly, a similar provision is made, when it reads (Chapter XV, 8) that "deliverances of the General Assembly, if declarative of the Word of God, are to be received with deference and submission . . ." We are thankful to note that the principle of our Article 31, Church Order is treasured in your and our form of church government alike and that the Word of God is acknowledged as the only rule for faith and order.

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

With respect to the last part of your letter in which you deal with the significance of interchurch relations in terms of a broad perspective on the church, these comments are, according to us, more suitable for an oral discussion. This is also in accordance with the mandate which our General Synod 1977 gave our committee, namely, to discuss with you and to evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other churches. Only permit us to make the following observations:

1. When on page 6, paragraph 4 of your letter you write that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church does acknowledge the existence of geographically overlapping true churches, we can accept this but we stress that they may not *continue* to exist separately. If they are true churches of Christ, then they must and will strive towards "organic visible unity." You also acknowledge this by stating that fraternal relations are not to be regarded as an end in themselves.
2. In reference to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession and the Westminster Confession, you write (p. 7, paragraph

2) that "as a simple distinction between membership in good standing and excommunication does not adequately meet the needs of judicial discipline, so also a simple distinction between the true church and a false church does not meet the needs of a complex ecclesiastical situation." May we in this context remind you of John Calvin's words: "There is, however, a slight difference in the mode of judging of individuals and of churches." (*Institutes*, Book IV, Chapter 1, 9.)

Further we agree with you that deformation is a process which generally takes place through the years and in various measures. The one "denomination" may give more evidence of deformation than the other. However, this does not take away the fact that the *marks* of the church are clear also "in a complex ecclesiastical situation." This is also acknowledged by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church when today in a complex situation it states (Chapter IV, 3): "There are organizations which falsely call themselves churches of God, and others which once were churches, but have become synagogues of Satan. Communion with such is spiritual adultery and an offense against Christ and His saints."

3. With regard to your preference for "fraternal relations" over "ecclesiastical correspondence" (p. 7, paragraph 2), we recognize that this preference is related to your views of the church as discussed in the first part of this letter (A-1). We also realize that your "fraternal relations" must be regarded as a first step towards organic unity. We also thankfully note that you do regard these relations very seriously, as is evidenced in your terminating these relations with "De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Synodaal)."

When you call our rules for correspondence impractical because "nationally distinct churches cannot conveniently act as one denomination," you presume that churches adopting these rules for their correspondence are to act "as one denomination." This is in our judgment a wrong presumption which leads to wrong conclusions. There is a significant difference between a *merger* and *correspondence* between churches. Churches which maintain ecclesiastical correspondence did not merge and they did and do not act as one denomination. This would be inconsistent with the concept of church correspondence as such.

4. As you will understand from the above, it is not clear to us from your letter that Scripture or the Form of Government of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church prevent you from adopting our rules for correspondence for maintaining correspondence with The Canadian Reformed Churches. The more so, since it is clear from the (old) Form of Government that the idea of ecclesiastical correspondence is not foreign to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. For, your (old) Form of Government states (Chapter XI, 5): "To the general assembly also belongs the power . . . of corresponding with foreign churches, on such terms as may be agreed upon by the assembly and the corresponding body . . ." We did notice that also the new Form of Government has a similar (although not identical) provision in Chapter XV, 6: "The general assembly . . . shall seek to promote the unity of the church of Christ through correspondence with other churches."

As stated above, our General Synod 1977 commis-
Continued on next page.

press review

OUR TESTIMONY — AN APPEAL

The "Appeal" went out to "our brothers and sisters in the Christian Reformed Churches." It appeared in *The Outlook*. The first part was written in the October 1978 issue. It starts with the following paragraphs:

For a long time members and friends of Reformed Fellowship have felt that the time has come to state succinctly and yet fully the positions which we believe to be biblical and confessional over against the many deviations which confront us.

Certain of our brothers in Northwest Iowa were found ready to try their hand at drafting such a statement The results of their labours are now before us.

The introduction further informs us that a list of forty names is added, which are the names of those "who have indicated willingness to stand with the signatories to this statement." It also says: "It is our hope that large numbers of Christian Reformed pastors will rise up to say, 'We agree.' I would like to express as my hope that not only 'pastors,' but also many, many, many sheep will follow with their 'we agree.' For what are pastors without sheep?"

Since we have an important "testimony" here, I shall quote a number of passages from it to give the readers of *Clarion* an idea about what is said. In the introduction we read:

False theologies, philosophies, and patterns of life have gained ascendancy in many communities and nations. These can only produce darkness of understanding, distress and despair of soul, together with everlasting death for all who

forsake the Word. Our address, therefore, we regard as an act of humble obedience to the apostolic command that believers are to be "ready always to give answer to every man that asketh of you a reason concerning the hope that is in you . . ."

Earnestly we plead with you to pray for revival and reformation, lest God in judgment remove the light from its candlestick. For unless He shines with truth and grace upon our lives, the darkness will grow ever deeper For unless the Spirit again invigorates and directs us, we also in our families, churches, schools, and other communal Christian enterprises will bring forth only leaves where fruit should be found.

These are weighty words which show how serious the situation is seen.

In the first part of the Appeal there is spoken about "The Church of Jesus Christ." It begins by pointing to the grace of God which "made us 'a people for His own possession' (I Peter 2:9)." We then read:

This Church, however, is no vague, ill-defined, ethereal spiritual reality; it, by Christ's appointment through the apostles, assumes visible shape and form among the sons of men (Acts 2:42; 9:31 . . .).

Every believer, therefore, in company with fellow-believers must discern before the face of the Lord the marks (distinguishing characteristics) of that instituted congregation to which he or she is joined. According to God's Word only such a church may rightly expect His blessing where the Word is purely preached, the sacraments are rightly administered, and Biblical discipline is faithfully exercised

Because of our mutual infirmities it has pleased Christ to ordain within His church the special offices of the ministry of the Word . . . , the ruling of eldership . . . , and the diaconate In recent times these offices in Christ's church have fallen into disrepute.

Thus the prophetic calling of the preacher of the Word has often been reduced to that of a psychological counselor or of one who leads the congregation in "sharing" individual insights and experiences. This we deplore and we call the church back to such preaching which affirms without hesitation "Thus says the Lord,"

The kingly office of the ruling elder has also been undercut in these days by those who reduce the scope and authority of the discipline of the church. Here we express deep concern that family visiting, once a strength within the Reformed churches, is being grossly neglected or is degenerating into a social visit with only a few spiritual emphases

Likewise the diaconate must be called to its Scripturally-ordained task of showing mercy and benevolence. We reject every view and practice which reduces this high office to that of fiscal control and accounting;

We assert that these three offices in Christ's church are not open to women

The second "chapter" of the Appeal deals with the "Holy Scripture and its Interpretation." We read about the Bible:

That Word, although coming to us in God's condescension through human language and through human writers, we confess to be entirely and in all parts inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is both infallible and inerrant

We therefore reject as illegitimate and spiritually disastrous any attempt to make its authority and/or reliability dependent upon man's understanding or scholarship And any method of Scripture interpretation which destroys, limits, or otherwise denies the manifest sense of the words of the Bible, going

A LETTER — Continued.

sioned us "to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Christian Reformed Church" (Art. 91, IV, recommendation d, *Acts* 1977). We would like to place this matter on the agenda for our combined meeting.

Besides, our Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad asked us to ask you what relationship(s)

the OPC has with the Korean Presbyterian Churches (Koryu-Pa and Hap-Dong).

We hope and pray that also this letter and our continued discussions under the rules for "the ecclesiastical contact" offered to you, may lead to full ecclesiastical correspondence.

With brotherly greetings,
From Committee for Contact with the OPC,

J. Mulder, Convener
J. Boot, J. Faber, W. Huizinga, W. Wildeboer

beyond the boundaries of a confessionally Reformed hermeneutic, is anathema

At the same time we are compelled to deplore the growing neglect and ignorance of the Bible which characterizes the lives of many professing Christians today. Too many by their preoccupation with favorite texts or topics (such as prophecy or doctrine or ethical commands or devotional material) do grave injustice to the unity of God's Word

We affirm also that Scripture itself is to be the source for all faithful teaching in and by the church Therefore we condemn the prevalent idea and practice whereby the needs of the human situation dictate the content of preaching, teaching, and counselling. Such a problem-solving approach is man-centered and undermines the purpose, clarity, and efficacy of Holy Scripture

A third "chapter" deals with "The Preaching of the Gospel." From this part I quote the following:

. . . our Lord has laid upon the church as its primary responsibility the preaching of the Word

Each congregation, and therein especially those who hold special office, must remind itself repeatedly of the place which preaching is accorded by the Bible. Likewise it must avoid, also for the sake of its own well-being, all patterns and practices in its public worship and witness which allot a secondary and subordinate place to the official proclamation of the Word. The Gospel as preached must be central to all ecclesiastical activities without exception.

Full well we realize that complaints about preaching abound also in our churches many members of Christ's church have little taste for sound instruction; they insist on personal inspiration or stirring of the emotions. Others disapprove of the time-honored method of catechetical preaching. Still others claim that in liturgical experimentation rather than in faithful presentation of the full counsel of God lies the hope for church renewal

. . . we repudiate those forces which urge the church to see the ministry not as office but rather as function in interpersonal relationships

The fourth part speaks about "The Creeds and Government of the Church." Also here we hear a Reformed testimony. We read:

. . . we pledge our wholehearted commitment to the "Three Forms of Unity" We deplore the sad condition prevalent in those churches which, while officially committed to certain historic creeds, now tolerate or even defend deviations from their own standards. Nor dare we in good conscience before the Lord of all truth allow for ourselves or any office-bearer in the church the liberty to signify

either in speech or writing adherence to these confessional standards with any mental or emotional reservations.

To safeguard the pure preaching of the Word and the integrity of the church's witness to the world we believe that the *Form of Subscription*, which has served the church well for hundreds of years, should be maintained without alterations

In sum, we assert that these historic Reformed confessions can and *therefore ought to serve as the boundaries within which the church does theology, interprets the Scriptures, and professes its truths*

The italics are mine. This is how it must be in a Reformed church federation. If this is lacking the Reformed character is gone.

Also, in subordination to the Bible and to the creeds, we pledge our loyalty to and defense of the *Church Order*. By common consent it has been endorsed by all the congregations of the Christian Reformed Church as the regulations by which we bind ourselves; hence also classical and synodical rules as well as consistorial may not overshadow or supersede the principles of the *Church Order* as it seeks to apply the teachings of the Bible and of the confessions to the life of the churches.

We feel it necessary to warn against both a threatening independentism by which either an individual or a congregation decides in how far it is pleased to implement these regulations, and against a tyrannical hierarchicalism by which classes and/or synods bind congregations beyond that which is either lawful or advantageous for local assemblies of believers Here we would remind everyone that consistorial authority within the churches derives directly from Christ Jesus and is therefore basic and original; the authority of broader assemblies is delegated and derivative

The last "chapter" of the first instalment of this Appeal has as its heading "On the Response to Gospel Preaching." I will quote this almost entirely, omitting the text references. If a reader wants to check them, let him get *The Outlook*. The authors write:

The primary purpose and aim of Gospel preaching, whether in the congregations or by means of mission outreach to the ends of the world, is to bring men, women, and children to personal repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. From this and this alone will spring that spiritual obedience which delights the God of our salvation.

Sin is first of all a matter of personal involvement; it incurs guilt and falls under God's wrath and deserves His righteous condemnation. Hence without the renewal of men's hearts and lives there can be

no hope for reformation in the various relationships and structures which are so much a part of our life in this present age. That salvation to which God calls us by His Word is grounded in His eternal decree. By this He has been pleased for reasons known only to Himself to display His mercy in saving some of the human race while passing by others in His sovereignty and condemning them justly for their sins. Yet the church has the commission to proclaim the Gospel to all men everywhere and without exception, declaring the sure promise of God that He graciously saves all who repent and turn to Him in faith. We therefore reject all views of man which minimize personal responsibility and teach that evil resides in the societal structures to produce human weakness and sinfulness.

When under Gospel preaching men come to such repentance and faith, they will in thankful obedience to their Savior and Lord unite themselves with a congregation which strives to demonstrate and defend the marks of the true church. This demand the Scriptures lay upon all who name the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. To its discipline the believer is to submit himself willingly and cheerfully. In its on-going work he is to share with other believers the time, the talents, the material resources, and the opportunities which the Lord provides

We decry the apparent ease with which not a few professing Christians separate themselves from a manifestation of the true church in order to satisfy some purely personal ambitions, notions, or passing desires. Nor can one who confesses Christ separate himself from the believing congregation and be by himself except in peril of his soul's salvation.

At the same time we recognize that since no congregation or denomination has attained to perfection, the call to church reformation and renewal is always in order. It is to be given in submission to the clear teachings of the Word and in the spirit of Christian affection and concern for the welfare of all. *And when this call continues to go unheeded and a congregation or denomination walks in the way of deformation and deterioration, then true believers are obligated for the sake of Christ's honor to separate themselves from such a company which will not correct its doctrine or pattern of life according to God's Word.*

That is the end of the first instalment. The italics again are mine. I wish that such a separation were not necessary. But the history of the Church shows that a church which is on the wrong track often will not return in its entirety. May the Lord God grant His strength to those who in the Christian Reformed Church(es) fight the good fight of a true, obedient faith.

J. GEERTSEMA

Eligibility

In the News Medley of October 21 I stated that candidates for the ministry, declared eligible for call within foreign sister Churches are not by that very fact (*ipso facto*, we might say) eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches. My conclusion was that it is illegal when a Church here extends a call to such a Candidate.

More than one reader asked me to elaborate on this point. It was also suggested that the point of Candidates for the Ministry was "overlooked" in the past and that we should have a proposal at our forthcoming general synod to "fill that gap."

I am happy with the reactions received, for that gives me the opportunity to explain my stand further. It also provides me with an opportunity to show that the point of Candidates has *not* been overlooked by the Churches here in Canada and that there is no "gap" to be filled.

From the outset we have lived and acted from the awareness that the bond with foreign sister Churches should be maintained. At the same time, however, we maintained that we have a separate, independent, autonomous Church federation here in Canada. Also in our general synodical discussions and decisions we upheld those two "principles." Our readers do not have to accept that on my authority (although it can be shown from the various Acts that I speak from personal participation and observation during some twenty-six years), but they can find proof of that in the decisions and their grounds as made and given by our broadest assemblies.

Comparison of our own decisions regarding the rules for Church correspondence with those of our foreign sister Churches will make clear that the Canadian Reformed Churches have followed their own way also in this respect.

Although we always have been and still are most willing to learn from the past and from the wisdom laid up in the decisions of the general synods e.g. of our Netherlands sister Churches, and although we consult those decisions especially when they regard the Church Polity, we have adopted for ourselves *only* the Church Order, not all sorts

of decisions regarding the application of the Church Order.

The result was and is that in many cases there was indeed a "gap."

Take the provision of Article 5 of our Church Order that the calling of Ministers who are already in the Ministry of the Word shall be done "with due observance of the . . . general ecclesiastical ordinances for the eligibility of those who have served outside the Canadian Reformed Churches."

Within the framework of the present article we cannot go into all the details of the history of the relevant decisions. Let it suffice to refer to the Acts 1965, Synod of Edmonton, Article 39.

Our 1965 Synod made such "general ecclesiastical ordinances" as are mentioned in Article 5 of our Church Order, and spoke only of Ministers, of persons "who are serving or served" in Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not, and Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do maintain Church correspondence.

No mention is made of Candidates for the Ministry.

Did Synod overlook that point?

Certainly not.

The point is that Candidates for the Ministry do not come into view at all in the provisions of our Church Order unless they are Candidates who have been declared eligible for call by one of our own Classes. The only foreigners whom our Church Order allows the possibility of a call are persons who are already serving in the Ministry. Our Church Order, although taken over from the Netherlands Churches, has not by that very fact become a document which covers both the Canadian and the Netherlands Church as if they formed one federation. When speaking of Candidates for the Ministry ("those who have not previously been in office") we speak of our own Candidates, not of Candidates in foreign Churches, however close the bond with the latter may be.

In harmony with the rules for correspondence which we have adopted, we recognize each other's Ministers and have provided that they shall be eligible for call without having been de-

clared eligible previously within the "other" federation. But that's as far as we go. That is already far enough and we should not widen the circle and the possibilities.

"But we are one in faith," someone may exclaim, "and if we were living in the same country we would be one federation!"

When saying that, the one may think of the Netherlands Churches, a second one may have those in Australia in mind, a third one will think of the Korean Presbyterian Church, Koryo-Pa, a fourth one may have in mind . . . , et-cetera.

There is no end to it.

With the trend to expand the number of connections and to add to the number of Churches which we recognize as sister Churches comes also the necessity to see to it the more carefully that we "remain boss in our own house" and that we keep complete control over the conditions on which someone should be admitted to the pulpit within the Churches.

It is even possible that we might recognize a certain foreign federation as sister Churches but that, at the same time, we would be extremely hesitant even to admit their Ministers into the ministry here, let alone their Candidates. It is only realistic and down-to-earth to reckon with such a possibility very seriously.

A solution *could* (but *should not*) be sought in differentiating between two or more kinds of foreign sister Churches. However, that is something which we definitely do not want. Even the "ecclesiastical contact" to which our latest General Synod decided met with serious frowning and was greeted with misgivings by many a Church member. The danger of setting out on a road of offering different relationships is indeed to be understood clearly.

While it is quite well possible that we are very hesitant to admit even Ministers of foreign Churches into the ministry here, with Candidates for the ministry things are even clearer. We have no control whatsoever over the conditions on which one can be declared eligible for call within foreign sister Churches. We may not even know what those conditions are, due to language — and other barriers.

For the sake of argument the following.

We recognize the Church at Butipiri, Irian Jaya, as a sister in the Lord. She came into existence as the blessed

fruit upon the work of one of our missionaries. Efforts have been made to come to a Church federation in Indonesia. In due time there will be Candidates for the ministry, there will be Ministers. Although we do not conduct official correspondence via a Committee on Correspondence, the sister-Church relationship is there, and I expect that a (future) federation in Indonesia will be included in the number of corresponding Churches.

Are Candidates for the ministry declared eligible for call there by that very fact eligible for call here?

"But that won't happen!" someone may exclaim.

In the first place: When you become a little acquainted with all the silly things that did happen in the Church during the past nineteen centuries, you won't say too easily, "But that won't happen!"

Secondly: Whether it will happen or not is not the point. The point is that we should deal with *all* corresponding Churches on the *same level*.

And a second point is that our first responsibility is towards our own Churches, not towards foreign sister Churches. That seems to be forgotten by not a few who make the impression to be more concerned about foreign sister Churches than about our own Canadian Reformed Churches. It is the latter Churches that have to be protected and safeguarded first of all. They are our first and foremost responsibility. To that end we are to have and to keep complete control of the conditions on which one can be declared eligible for call here, within our own Churches.

(To prevent misunderstanding and unwarranted criticism: when speaking of "our own Churches" I remain fully aware that the Church is Christ's and His alone.)

At the Synod of Orangeville 1968 the above-quoted decision of Edmonton 1965 came again into discussion.

The objection was raised that Synod Edmonton 1965, by deciding that a minister coming from foreign sister Churches has to submit to a *colloquium doctum* before the call can be approved and he can be installed, more or less cast a doubt on the truth and trustworthiness of attestations given by those foreign sister Churches. When, thus ran the argument, ministers who come over with good testimonials regarding their doctrine and conduct, still are to be "examined," what is left in that case of our promise to accept each other's attestations?

To that, Synod Orangeville reacted in its considerations as follows (*Acts*, Art. 109):

With respect to the acceptance of each other's attestations it is to be remarked that the admittance of a minister from foreign churches into the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches is entirely different from accepting members of foreign churches into the community of the Church on the basis of an attestation.

The Canadian Reformed Churches do not have, nor have they ever had, any control over the training of ministers in foreign churches or over their admission into the ministry of those churches. Therefore Synod 1965 does not question attestations from foreign churches on the basis of which their members are received into the community of the Canadian Reformed Churches. It merely established a means for the Churches to ascertain prior to admittance of a minister from foreign churches to the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches whether he adheres to the reformed doctrine and Church polity.

And in its conclusion, Synod stated,

By establishing the rule that ministers from foreign churches with which correspondence is maintained shall have to submit to a *colloquium doctum* prior to admittance into the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches as part of the general ordinances mentioned in Art. 5 of the Church Order, Synod 1965 did not come into conflict with the adopted rules for correspondence with foreign churches.

Synod 1968 did delete the word *doctum* (learned) and did so "in order to prevent misunderstanding. Therefore we are no longer speaking of '*colloquium doctum*' but just of a '*colloquium*.'"

(One brother wrote me that he had discovered that I am "not familiar with the decision of Synod 1968, Art. 109, V.b." That is the part about deleting the word "*doctum*." Perhaps he bases his discovery on the fact that I still spoke of a "*colloquium doctum*" instead of speaking only of a "*colloquium*." Personally, I prefer the full term as it was in use before Synod 1968. It is not just a conversation, a discussion, a chat which is conducted, but it is a thorough and "learned" discussion from which it is to become evident that the minister who wishes to be installed in the midst of the Canadian Reformed Churches has a good understanding of and is wholly prepared to adhere to the Reformed doctrine and Church Polity. And as for not being "familiar with the decision," careful reading of the *Acts* may reveal that I had been appointed a member of the

very same committee which prepared the above synodical decision . . .)

* * *

Thus it was wholly in the line of the decisions made by our Synods that I wrote that extending a call to a Candidate who has not been declared eligible for call by one of our own Classes, is a wrong and illegal act. Candidates are eligible only when they have been declared eligible *here*. The documents which have to be submitted for the approval of a call extended to a foreign minister have been clearly named by our Synod 1965, *Acts*, Art. 39, and it is evident that a Candidate cannot meet those conditions. Thus Candidates are excluded.

They should not be included in the future either.

We shall honour the promises made when entering into correspondence with foreign sister Churches.

As for the rest: we shall keep full control over who shall be declared eligible and who not.

The Canadian Reformed Churches are our first and foremost responsibility.

We stand on guard for thee.

We may see no specific dangers right now and be very grateful for that. We are equally to see to it that eventual dangers, if they should arise — and may the Lord graciously forbid it — are prevented from constituting a threat to the Churches here.

Here, too, we should be willing to learn from God's guidance in the history of His Church. Here, too, we should hold on to not just the autonomy of the *local* Church but also — and perhaps even more strongly — to the autonomy of the Church *federation*. vO

P.S. One brother reminded me in his letter of Art. 171 of the *Acts* of Orangeville 1968: I shall quote here Synod's decision:

To be admitted to the ecclesiastical examinations candidates shall submit proof that they have completed their studies at our Theological College. Candidates who took their theological training at other institutions shall present a Certificate issued by the Staff of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches stating that they have followed and/or complemented a course of studies conforming with the training provided by the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

I think that I understand the reasoning

Continued on page 544.

news medley

Unfortunately (on the one hand) I did not have time to prepare a news medley for the previous issue. I shall not elaborate on the reasons for that, for our readers will know of the blessings which we received from our heavenly Father during the past weeks. One of the greatest blessings was the experience of the power of the communion of saints. We hope sincerely that all those who also remember God's goodness received during some twenty-five or thirty or thirty-five or forty or even more years, may experience the very same thing which we experienced.

Coming to more personal data, we begin with Rev. and Mrs. Loopstra. I was not aware of it and no one else submitted a piece about their celebration of forty years of marriage and forty years in the ministry. The date for the latter was October 30th. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to our brother and sister. For quite a number of years now the Rev. Loopstra has enjoyed retirement; it did him good; the tension of the office was too much for him during the last years of his active ministry and thus he had to retire prematurely. The Lord gave him, however, strength and desire to conduct services, something which he does regularly. Mrs. Loopstra underwent a few operations to relieve her of arthritic pain and discomfort. She did benefit from those operations, but the last few years have not been all that easy for her. We wish them both a good health and more years together in the favour of our God.

Mentioning another minister, we tell you that the Rev. Roukema was not feeling too well lately and that the doctor has ordered him to take it easier. The result is that, at least for the time being, he will have to refrain from conducting Dutch services in Burlington. We wish our brother restoration of his health and patience during the time he has to take it easy. Especially the latter is not easy for active people, and Rev. Roukema is active.

One couple was 40 years married on the second of November. We never forget that, because they are exactly five years ahead of us. They are brother and sister R.A. Schaap of Langley, B.C. They can be certain that we did not forget them and extend to them the same wishes as to so many others: May the Lord our God continue to bless you and to guide you by His Spirit, surrounding you with His mercies.

I hope not that I have forgotten anyone who should have been mentioned. Postal strike and personal circumstances rendered life somewhat confused during the past weeks. Things are returning to normal (if there is ever anything such as "normal" in the life of a minister who also has to see to it that our readers receive their **Clarion** on time) and that's why you see our medley again.

From various bulletins I gathered that new directories are being prepared or even have been handed out. Remember: I should like to receive one, too, since it comes in so very handy when I have to write someone to have the address readily available. Besides, it happens not infrequently that I receive a phone-call with the request to give the number or the address of the So-and-so family. What I haven't got, I cannot give; on the other hand, I'll gladly give whatever I've got.

We wish to extend our somewhat belated congratulations to our Australian sister Churches. "Their" periodical (**Una Sancta**) celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. It is of a somewhat more modest nature than our **Clarion**, since it is issued in mimeographed form, perhaps offset, but it is always important to have a periodical which proves to be a binding and uniting force in the midst of the Churches.

One thing I noticed: they pay more attention to political questions than we do, and in this respect I am jealous. We too, have tried for many years to find someone who is knowledgeable in the field of politics and who is willing to use his gifts and insight for the edification of the whole membership. Then I am jealous of a federation with so few Churches and so few members (in comparison with us) where they appear to be able to find such a contributor. Hopefully the revival of political study-groups in our midst will produce some fruits for the membership at large. We'll see and are still waiting.

Yes, and now we'd better settle down to discuss the news from the various Churches.

We begin this time in the south of Ontario, in Watford.

The Steering Committee of the Watford School Society is active. "It was emphasized that we must make a good start soon, to save money, and impress upon the membership that we are working towards having our own school in the not so distant future. This is especially important so that we have something to offer the new immigrant families that may soon come to settle here."

Yes, I was happy to read that Watford can be looking forward to receiving another family from The Netherlands, after having welcomed the first one. And it is a fact: it is of utmost importance that in each place there be a school, too, for otherwise people might leave again after some years and seek an opportunity to have their children follow reformed instruction elsewhere. I wish the brothers and sisters there a prosperous journey in this respect.

From Watford we come to Ebenezer Burlington.

It appears again that the devaluation of our money brings specific problems with it. Especially those living abroad who depend on our gifts and donations feel the pinch. That was the reason why "The Consistory also dealt with our pledge of \$180.00 to Wycliffe Bible Society. The question came up (that now with the devaluation of the dollar) we paid enough. The Consistory pointed out that our pledge was \$180.00 Canadian money, and that till now we have fulfilled the promise."

Whenever a Congregation receives a new minister, there are bound to be a few changes here and there. That is the case in Burlington too. Concerning the liturgy we read,

At the latest Consistory meeting the liturgy for our worship services was discussed. It was decided that as a rule the Scripture reading be before the first prayer. (If I remember well, that was usually **after** the first prayer, vO.) The offertory will remain at the end of the service. The Consistory did not wish to set a rule for what should be first, the so-called "long" or "brief" prayer. (If I remember well, the rule was that the "long" prayer should be offered up at the end of the service, after the sermon, vO.) The special needs of the Congregation will be brought before the throne of grace usually right after the Scripture reading, but the minister should have the freedom to mention those and other needs in the second prayer; the contents of the sermon or circumstances in the congregation may have bearing on it.

Now that the support for Korea is diminishing all over, new

mercy to those who are suffering. In Ebenezer Burlington support is given to the Dutch "Foundation Save a Child." This Foundation, we read, supports children's homes in India and Kenya.

The question could be asked, 'Where do all these children come from?' Most of the children in these Homes are not true orphans in the sense that they have no parents at all. Many of them have only one parent left and this one parent, for various reasons, is unable to take care of his/her child/ren. For what reasons would a parent bring his/her child to a Home to be cared for? Extreme poverty and lack of a job so that the parent is unable to provide food and shelter for his child. Sickness, so that the parent is unable to work. Imprisonment, so that the parent is absent and unable to care for the child. Persecution, due to religion, so that the parent must flee, or has fled, and has neither home, money, food, or clothing left to care for his child. Children come from slums and refugee camps. Children are brought because their parents suffer from leprosy and must be admitted to leprosy camps where children are not allowed. Children are brought because they are found wandering on the streets because their father has been imprisoned for killing his wife. Children are brought because their mother with several children has been deserted by her husband, and she cannot find any work.

What a misery! How blessed are we when we compare our own situation with the condition of those people and the condition of our children with that of the children in the countries mentioned above. And that is then only the surface of all the misery which exists. For the time being we don't have to worry about any lack of causes for which to give our donations.

From Burlington East we go to Burlington West.

The Consistory disbanded the Committee of Administration as it had existed until then, and formed two separate committees: one a Financial Committee and one a Property Committee. I do not know whether such a splitting up is actually feasible, since the activities may partly overlap. I do realize, however, that such a division of work may render the task of the Committee of Administration somewhat lighter. Oftentimes it is not realized in the midst of the Church how much work is done by the brothers of such a Committee. When I see how many hours our members of that Committee here in Fergus spent during the past months on the remodelling program with all the headaches that came with it, then I think that a special mention should be made of all those who serve the Churches without much ado and without fanfares but without whose labours many things which we now oftentimes take for granted, would never have been done.

A novelty was a brief report on the meeting of the deacons. I do not recall at the moment ever having read such a brief report of a meeting, although I did read reports from the Deacons on their work as such. From this report I quote the following passage.

The Deacons have considered a form of "homevisitation" to all families, as was suggested at office-bearers' conferences, but have decided that such is at present not feasible or necessary. It is considered more beneficial to pay greater attention to potentially troubled areas.

The financial balance is noted and discussed. Deacons will determine a fixed amount for a reserve fund,

and when at the end of a given book-year this amount is surpassed, donations will be made to responsible institutions of mercy.

In Brampton the people are happy: the Board of the School Society

is thankful to report that finally the deal on the land is closed. The property now legally belongs to the School Society. The "red tape" caused a lot of concern the last few weeks; we may thank the Lord for His grace shown to us in bringing this to a satisfactory conclusion. We may now with the more vigour work towards the next goal: the building and the operation of the school. Congratulations.

With our congratulations for Toronto we shall have to wait a while. No, I do not mean congratulations on the occasion of legally acquiring (with Brampton) the school property. Those congratulations we extend right away. But I mean the ones with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the institution of Toronto's Church. As date for the celebration was chosen Friday, February 2, 1979. Keep it in mind, people.

The Consistory also discussed "the singing (or non-singing) before the service."

It has now been discontinued for a few weeks and the consistory decided not to start it again. It has been done for about fifteen years with the purpose of getting familiar with the language and the difficult tunes of some Psalms. We may presume that this practice by now has served that purpose. Further, it was considered not very edifying and respectful that, while part of the congregation is singing about God's acts of salvation, others are talking and/or walking in and taking their seat. Also the Psalms to be sung often did not fit in with the theme of the service.

We now leave Ontario and move on to Winnipeg. Alas, the Consistory of Winnipeg had to report that "the City of Winnipeg is still processing the land deal. It will take some weeks before the required signatures have been penned onto paper." Too bad that they cannot claim interest on the money; with the 10½ or 11% that would make a tidy little nestegg.

Moving on from Winnipeg to southern Alberta, we wish to welcome the Wielenga family also via our **Clarion**. We express the wish that our brother's ministry may be fruitful in the midst of the Canadian Reformed Churches and that we all may benefit from his experience and insight. The Coaldale Congregation planned a welcome-evening for the family on October 27.

Further news from Coaldale is that, with the cooperation of a Campaign Committee a brother has been elected to the Town Council. "As you already know, Mr. Meliefste won by a landslide." Again: Congratulations. We have not yet heard how things went in other places, but we are certain that at least in Coaldale every member of the Church will be happy with the result.

From Coaldale we move up to Edmonton.

The School Society in Edmonton is planning to add Grade X to their school, and to this end organized a drive in order to get rid of debts. Of the goal of \$30,000.00 some \$16,086.45 has been achieved, with more promises outstanding. A bazaar yielded \$1,401.00, and this amount, too, will benefit the school in one way or another.

The Association for a Christian Political Perspective had its first annual meeting on October 2nd. The members were promised that they would be able to listen to "Reports

NEWS MEDLEY — Continued.

on past, present, and future endeavours, i.e. abortion, Canadian Unity, Capital Punishment, and plans for the next Civic Election." There was also to be a speech on "The Christian and His Political Calling."

Another novelty — but one which should be considered very seriously by all the Churches — is a "Fire Drill Proposal." Yes, in our schools we have rules for evacuation in case a fire breaks out, and fire-drills are held regularly. But what about the Churches and the Congregations? I am afraid that in most Congregations panic would break out if there were ever even a minor fire.

Edmonton's bulletin gives rules and directives how and where the building should be vacated. The Consistory did not yet make a decision on the question whether an actual fire-drill should be held; in any case attention has been paid to that point and directives have been given. That is more, I think, than can be said of by far the most Churches. Would you please all consider the question: "How are we to vacate the building if a fire breaks out?"

Neerlandia's Consistory decided, with a view to the growth of the Congregation, to appoint an additional deacon. That must be a reason for joy when, because of the increase of membership, an additional office-bearer has to be appointed.

At the school in Neerlandia one of the teachers came from The Netherlands at the beginning of the new season. The principal writes about that: "In his short introductory speech, however, I could not detect any mistakes in his English, but in the students' shorter welcome speeches I heard, unfortunately, some English grammar mistakes. So there is ample opportunity for the students to learn English from their 'Dutch' teacher." I hope them there students won't waste no time and learn good.

The Van Spronsen's furniture finally arrived at the end of September and by now they must have embarked on their third honeymoon, so to speak. The first one the real one, the second one when they unpacked in Brazil, and the third one now that they can uncrate their belongings in Smithers.

Something which was not so nice is that the Church building was broken into. We read about that:

It was a great shock to all of us when we last week learned that the church building was broken into and that the culprits took off with most of the sound-system (estimated at \$2,500.00) and the safe which held all the income for the Church and School for the first three weeks of the month. Total cash involved is estimated at well over \$2,000.00. (Cheques are of no benefit to others unless line of payee is left blank.)

Today the R.C.M.P. informed me that the sound equipment was found hidden in the bush not far from the church building, and appears to be in good order. The safe was also there, wrecked, and no sign of the cash of course. We hope that we will recover part of the loss from the Insurance Company.

Of course we are upset about it, but I think it is much worse for the offenders. They have not merely stolen our money, but offerings that were dedicated to the service in the Kingdom of God. May God grant them repentance and forgiveness.

As for ourselves, we will have to seek ways to avoid that "temptation" of having such amounts of money stored in a building located in an area where a burglar can work for hours during the night without being disturbed.

We go down to the Valley, where we shall conclude our journey.

The High School has been operating now for some months, be it in rented facilities. I saw those facilities, and have come to the conclusion that it would be a beautiful location for our Theological College. Buildings are most suited for the purpose, there is no lack of space, of classrooms, and there is a dormitory, briefly, everything we would wish for. A large part of the property could be severed and sold with plenty of room left. There would also be lots of room for a teachers' college at the very same time, even after severance of the larger part of the property. If the High School had not been intended to be a High School for the whole Valley, the School Society most likely would have purchased the whole complex and they could have made no wiser move.

No decision has been reached on the property which the society did purchase. "However, the Langley authorities are not backing our proposal and therefore, in case the results are negative, two other properties of twelve acres each are being worked on by the 'committee'."

As for the local news from the Valley, I only refer to one item. In the Abbotsford Consistory report we read, "The matter of 'Pulpit Exchange' is discussed. The conclusion is that the minister has the freedom to arrange pulpit exchange with one of his colleagues any time he desires to do so, such however in consultation with the Consistory." That is a wise decision.

I have never understood why there is not a regular and scheduled exchange in the Valley. The proximity of the Churches there renders it easy to draw up such a schedule that the ministers exchange in rotation either (if they prefer that) for a whole Sunday or (and that is something I would prefer) for two services per month. It would be of much help to the ministers if that were arranged. The tension of having to have two sermons ready every week is something which one who does not serve in the ministry cannot visualize or imagine. An exchange for two services per month is no luxury at all, and I can speak from experience. For that reason I cannot but take grateful note of Abbotsford's decision. May it find many followers.

Even to all good things there is an end, including to this medley.

Thank you for your attention.

vO

Dear Reader

Enclosed with this magazine you will find your renewal notice for your Clarion subscription. A continuous growth in the number of subscribers and advertising revenue enabled us for the third year in a row to maintain our subscription price at \$19.50. YOU can help us to keep costs down in sending your subscription fee by return mail to Premier Printing Ltd. in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. DO IT NOW!

The Publisher

A Corner for the Sick



"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" *Psalm 139:7*

We can hide our feelings and emotions from people, but can we hide them from God? To put up a front works well sometimes. We might even fool others to some extent! We may give them the impression, for instance, that we live a carefree life, without worries or frustrations like the rest of mankind have, and that not even God's Word can shake us and make us see ourselves as we really are. We can hide from ourselves when we reject the picture that is shown us in the mirror of God's Word, and continue to live a disobedient life. Nebuchadnezzar was taught a valuable lesson by God when his pride induced him to think of himself as a semi-god. The Lord brought him very low, until he acknowledged God's supremacy over all things, and he glorified his Maker (read Daniel 4:28-end). By trying to hide or suppress our true feelings, we hurt ourselves and others! In order to live in harmony with our neighbour, our hearts and minds have to be in harmony with God's will first.

David in Psalm 139:3 confesses: "Thou searchest out my path and art acquainted with all my ways." He acknowledges that the Lord knows everything and that he cannot hide from Him. His prayer is for guidance; he makes God his hiding place. He knows quite well that, if left to himself, there would be no security. His security is in this prayer and confession: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"

Our security is in that same prayer and confession of Psalm 139. Let us hide in Him only, and let our prayer be: "Do not forsake the work of Thy hands" (Psalm 138:8b).

1. O Lord my God, Thou searchest me,
My heart and mind are known to Thee!
No things are hidden from Thy eyes
When I sit down and when I rise.
And from afar Thou art discerning
My thoughts and hopes, my secret yearning.
4. Where can I from Thy Spirit flee?
Where do I find escape from Thee?
If I ascend to heaven's height
Thou art there, present in my sight.
The grave can from Thy eyes not hide me,
For even there Thou art beside me.

13. Search me, O God, and know my heart,
See if I from Thy ways depart.
Try me and judge my inmost thought,
And let me by Thy Word be taught.
Keep me from wicked ways and heed me,
In everlasting ways do lead me.

Psalm 139, Book of Praise

For our readers who still enjoy the Dutch language, I will include the following poem:

De Vlucht

Die Gij besloot te zoeken,
Hij ontkomt U niet,
Al kruipt hij in de hoeken
Van moeite en verdriet.

Gij weet hem wel te vinden
In arbeids schuur,
Waar hij zich als een lindeblad
dekt aan de muur.

En mocht hij zich verschuilen
In liefde en plicht,
Een kever in rozentuilen
Tussen schaduw en licht

Gij schudt hem uit de bloemen
Met teedere spot,
Tot hij U zal noemen
Mijn Heer en mijn God!

WILLEM DE MÉRODE

Taken from *Nederlands Dagblad*

Fenny Kuik of Winnipeg sent us the following note: "I like to say thank you to all for the many, many cards I received on my birthday August 18th. It made me very happy!"

From a sister from Coaldale I received the following request: "Mrs. Hazel Davey has multiple sclerosis (m.s.). She has been ill for some 20 years and is progressively getting worse. Her husband brings her at 8 a.m. to the hospital where he works as an engineer. He picks her up again at 5 p.m. so that she can spend the night at home. He is very good to her. They are not members of the Canadian Reformed Church. She knows the Bible and says she prays to God for strength and help. They have hardly any friends. Is it possible for our people to send her a card and probably some comforting or encouraging words, for both of them?" Her address is:

MRS. G. DAVEY
1159 Lakeland Crescent
Lethbridge, Alberta

Brothers and sisters,

Let us remember the words of our Saviour in Matthew 25: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to ME."

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma
380 St. Andrew St. E.
Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

ELIGIBILITY — Continued.

of my brother. Obviously he reasons as follows: Synod 1968 reckoned with the possibility that a candidate from another country is called here; for the preparatory examination to which he has to submit he has to show such a certificate; but that does not mean that a Church is not allowed to call him. Rev. VanOene said that Candidates are not even mentioned. Here we have proof that they are mentioned.

There are a few points which should be borne in mind.

In the first place: Synod 1968 decided to establish our own Theological College. Thus it was to be expected that from now on students would attend that College and receive their degree from it. With that degree they could present themselves for the ecclesiastical examinations, that is: the preparatory examination (upon which they were declared eligible for call) and the peremptory examination for which the preparatory examination is the condition.

However, the Churches should not compel someone to attend our own College. And the Churches should not preclude *a priori* from admission to the pulpit every one who obtained his degree somewhere else. The Churches have always honoured the "principle" of "free studies," i.e. a student is free where he wishes to study theology.

On the other hand, the Churches are not obligated at all to admit to the preparatory examinations someone who obtained his degree at another institution without any further conditions. Synod 1968 therefore entrusted to the Faculty of our own College the task of examining any such candidate in order to find out whether he had followed a course of study conforming with our own training. If a candidate appears to have followed a similar and equally trustworthy and complete training (especially in Reformed Dogmatics and Reformed Church Polity) he will receive a certificate from our own Faculty without having to follow any complementary courses. Such will be the case e.g. with candidates who come from "Kampen." If, therefore, a candidate in the Netherlands Churches wishes to be declared eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches, he first approaches the Faculty of our College, requests them to provide him with a certificate as meant in Art. 171, Acts Orangeville 1968, and then comes to a

Classis with the request to examine him and to declare him eligible for call.

If a candidate studied e.g. at Knox College in Toronto and obtained his bachelor's degree from the Toronto School of Theology, our Faculty will decide which additional courses he will have to follow and complete in order to receive the desired certificate.

Synod 1968 did not think at all of candidates in foreign sister Churches who had been declared eligible for call there and who were called by a Church here.

Synod 1968 dealt with candidates who present themselves here to a Classis with the request to give them the right to conduct services and to be called by one of the Churches.

There were brothers in 1968 who were studying in the United States and of whom we hoped that, once our Theological College would be operative, they would come and attend our own College. We did have to reckon with the possibility that they stayed where

they were; and we also had to reckon very seriously with the possibility that someone, studying theology somewhere else, might wish to be admitted to one of the Canadian Reformed Churches and, upon having received his degree from the institution where he was studying, to become a minister within these Churches.

Synod 1968 protected the pulpit by providing that the brothers whom we called to teach students of theology should together be the sole body from which the Churches were to accept a certificate as to the standing of the candidate regarding his scholarly level as well as the Reformed character of his training especially in those two above-mentioned important fields.

When, therefore, Synod mentions candidates, those are candidates who are here and who present themselves to the ecclesiastical assemblies with the request that they may be declared eligible for call.

Here, too, we do not find any mention or thought of persons who are a candidate within foreign sister Churches. vO

All About Insurance ²

DEATH AND GIFT TAXES: CLEARING UP THE CONFUSION

Over the past few years there have been many rapid changes to the succession duty and gift taxes in all the Canadian provinces. Most provincial governments have either given up taxing inheritances and gifts or have substantially reduced these taxes.

Here is an up-to-date survey of where taxpayers stand in the various provinces with respect to Death and Gift Taxes:

All the maritime provinces are now free of inheritance and gift taxes. Prince Edward Island repealed its laws effective January 1, 1972. New Brunswick did away with inheritance and gift taxes on January 1, 1974 and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland followed on April 1 and April 9 respectively of that same year.

The Province of Quebec is still levying succession and gift taxes but has reduced its rates to only 20% of former rates. It is possible that if this

trend continues Quebec will eventually abandon these fields totally.

Ontario still levies both succession and gift taxes although some recent changes have given some fairly generous tax exemptions in many cases. Even with these exemptions, Ontario does not appear likely to abandon these taxes altogether.

In the prairies, Alberta still remains as a tax haven for inheritance and gift taxes and it was recently joined by Saskatchewan on January 1, 1977. Manitoba still continues to levy these taxes as it has done since 1972.

Since the Yukon and Northwest Territories are Federally administered, neither levies these taxes.

British Columbia eliminated all succession and gift taxes effective January 24, 1977.

The conclusion drawn from this review is that succession duty and gift taxes are a dying field (no pun intended). The reason for this seems to stem from the 1971 changes made by

the Federal Government which resulted in an increase in the number of items on which income tax must be paid following the death of a taxpayer.

It should be concluded that the elimination of succession duties and gift taxes is a very proper step from the standpoint of fairness, since to apply both inheritance taxes and income taxes to the same property or income source constitutes double taxation.

FAMILY ALLOWANCE: THE TAX SITUATION

Currently there appears to be confusion as to which way the family allowances are taxed and also why they are taxed in any event.

Until December 1973, the "baby bonus" as it was called, was not taxed at all but this was changed on January 1, 1974. On this date the family allowance, as it is now known, was substantially increased, however the amount received was also designated a taxable benefit. One of the classic cases of the large print giveth and the small print taketh away.

The reasoning behind this move appears to stem from the fact that people with higher incomes pay tax at a higher marginal rate than people with smaller incomes. What this in effect means is that if you have a high taxable income, then you actually get to keep less family allowance after tax than a family with a smaller income.

Bearing in mind that the income tax on the family allowance is payable by the parent who claims the children as dependents (in most cases this is the parent with the highest income), let us examine the case of three families of four people, one with a taxable income of \$15,000 per annum, one who is paying tax at the highest marginal rate of 66.5% (1976) and a family on a subsistence wage of \$5,000 taxable income.

In all situations, approximately \$530 of family allowance payments would have been received during 1976. In the first case, the family would retain \$327 of the total family allowance. The second family would retain only \$178 of the total amount and the third would retain about \$384 of all the payments.

Effectively, families with the lowest incomes and who have a greater need for the family allowance, retain more of it than do families with the higher incomes.

YOUR WILL: YOUR LAST DESIRE

As you well know, your Will is the

focal point of your estate, however large or small. Therefore, great thought and care needs to be exercised when having this document planned and drafted.

Once you have a Will drafted, it remains your final desire only until some circumstances causes your estate or your mind to change. A Will is only as good as its ability to reflect your desires regarding your current situation. All too often, heirs of estates face many hardships simply because the current Will did not cover the current situation.

For a moment, let's examine the two situations that can exist: 1) you do not have a Will; 2) you have a Will.

In the first situation, if you should die without a Will, the province in which you reside will step in and *your* property will be divided according to that province's laws of intestacy. This means that you will not have the ability to decide how your estate will be divided and who should gain ownership of your property. This inability to decide may cause varying degrees of hardship for your family and is certainly an undesirable state of affairs.

If you have a Will, how current is it? The changing tax laws, estate, or family situations could make your Will not only obsolete but dangerous to your family's continued welfare. Changed conditions equals a need for a changed Will.

There are many situations which may change and the following represent only a few examples:

- 1) changes in the Income Tax laws
- 2) a new dependent in the family (child or other)
- 3) change in province of residence
- 4) acquisition or disposition of property either real or personal.

If these or any other changes have taken place it would be wise to consult your lawyer for a review of your Will.

Only your Will can express your exact desires on the distribution of your estate, whatever its size. Drafting a Will takes a full knowledge of the laws governing Wills and you should consult your lawyer, in order to avoid a potential hardship for your family.

TOO MUCH MONEY?

Based on today's economic conditions there appears to be as many theories as to why conditions are bad, as there are people in the country. These theories range from poor government, the AIB, to the price of oil, but one theory which seems very

reasonable is that at least part of our economic woes can be blamed on the fact that too much money is in circulation.

In the four years from 1960 to 1964 the Canadian money supply increased an average of 6.2% per year while our average annual inflation rate was a very low 1.7%.

During the years 1965 to 1968 the Canadian government followed an expansionary monetary policy and as a consequence the money rate grew at an average of 11.9% per year. Inflation as a direct result of this policy increased to an average annual rate of 4.1% during 1966 to 1969.

In the fiscal year of 1969 the increase in the monetary supply reached a level of 17.1%, but during the period of March 1969 to March 1970 the money supply only increased .3%. As a result of this .3% rise the inflation rate also declined, however there was also a recession in 1970.

In the seven years since 1970 our money supply has had a very rapid expansion and has reached an average increase of nearly 15%. As you all know the rate of inflation has been correspondingly high during these years.

The apparent lesson from these facts seems to be that when we experience very rapid monetary growth we also have rapidly rising inflation. If the country experienced a more moderate money growth, there was little inflation, however, if the government followed policies which stimulated the economy by increasing the monetary supply at a rate much greater than the economy's real rate of growth, then a very serious inflation problem was the result.

RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES

When an employee retires or terminates his employment he may be eligible for special tax advantages on any payments he receives in respect of his leaving if these payments qualify as a retiring allowance.

To qualify as a retirement allowance, the money must be received from the employer upon or after retirement and it must be in recognition of long service or for the loss of employment. Further, Revenue Canada stated in Interpretation Bulletin 337 that retirement must mean the complete severance of employment with an employer and not merely a change in duties or position. As a result then, an individual may cease working for one employer and commence working for

another and still have the money received from the first employer qualify as a retirement income. Retirement may be defined permanent retirement or a loss of employment from dismissal or resignation, however, termination of employment as a result of death is not considered retirement.

Upon receiving a qualified retirement allowance, the taxpayer must include these in his taxable income. However, any income tax payable may be deferred for a significant length of time if the taxpayer purchases either an Income Averaging Annuity Contract, or makes a special contribution to his Registered Pension Plan or Registered Retirement Savings Plan. These special contributions will in no way affect normal contributions to either the RPP or RRSP.

The type and timing of the qualified retirement allowance will determine the type of tax deferral vehicle the taxpayer uses. If the taxpayer wishes to purchase an IAAC he may do so only if the amount is received as a single payment with respect to long service or for the loss of office and the payment is received in the year of retirement or within one year after retirement. Contributions to an RPP or an RRSP may be made irrespective of when the money is received.

Before an individual decides how he will dispose of the income received he should make sure that the money is indeed a genuine retirement allowance and act accordingly.

DEFERRED RETIREMENT

For generations age 65 has been regarded as the "normal" retirement age. Many people, however, are choosing to work beyond age 65 for various reasons. It might be that they feel like working a few more years or that they have not been able to build up an adequate financial base on which to retire or the current economic conditions make it desirable to work beyond retirement. In order to cope with this situation employer retirement funds are often structured in such a way that it is possible to defer receiving pension benefits until the employee has actually physically stopped working. In these situations there is an adjusting formula which takes into account the extra years that the employee's benefits are left in the fund and the employee's increased age at retirement, and this eventually results in an increased pension benefit when it is ultimately taken.

Problems arise when the individu-

al has difficulty in deciding whether he should take the pension now and continue working or wait until they have actually retired and take advantage of the larger pension. What an individual should finally decide is a product of many factors not the least of which are the terms of the pension plan in which he is a member. Many times the adjusting formula in the plan may be based on lower or outdated interest rates, say 5%. It might be to the individual's advantage to take the money today even if it is not required for current living expenses and invest it safely at 8% or greater.

The flaw in this argument appears to be the income tax consequences which will result when the taxpayer's income is inflated by his pension income giving rise to a very high marginal tax rate. This problem is easily solved however, if after the person has received \$1,000 and taken advantage of the tax free amount (assuming he has no other investments) the excess pension benefits could be contributed to an RRSP (provided the person is 71 or less). As you know this money could continue to grow on a tax deferred basis and will ultimately provide the taxpayer with a larger retirement income.

GIVE YOUR HUSBAND A PRESENT

On reaching age 65, Canadian residents normally are eligible to apply for and receive Old Age Security Benefits. Under the OAS rules eligibility is based on residence and not citizenship, so that if the individual has lived in Canada for the required period of time, then they will qualify for the OAS benefits.

For non-working wives, it is not uncommon for them to have had no personal income prior to receiving the OAS benefits at age 65. When the OAS benefits commence, she will now have a personal taxable income, but because of the personal exemptions and the age exemption she will in most cases not have to pay any tax.

Her husband however is not so fortunate. He has probably been accustomed to claiming his wife under the full marriage exemption, but will find that this has been reduced when she begins receiving the OAS. This is so critical in fact that in the year which she receives the full OAS benefit, his deductions will be cut by at least \$1,320 and this loss of deductions means he will pay more tax on his income. The resultant tax increase can mean the husband will pay between \$50 and

\$820 of additional tax (depending on his tax bracket) because of her OAS benefits on which she pays no tax.

If the person receiving the OAS benefits is under age 71 then some relief from this situation can be gained, if the benefits are paid into an RRSP. With the benefits being paid into the RRSP, an offsetting deduction can be made which reduces the wife's net income to nil and as long as the funds remain in RRSP the income tax is deferred. When the benefits eventually are received as annuity payments, the first \$1,000 will be exempt from tax and as a result no income tax may ever be paid on the benefits.

All that is required is that the wife set up an RRSP prior to March 1 and contribute sufficient money to the plan to offset the pension benefits and restore her husband's marital exemption.

INSURANCE POLICIES AS GIFTS TO CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

It is possible for taxpayers to make a gift of a life insurance contract on their own life to a registered charitable institution and receive a tax deduction for the gift, provided certain conditions are met.

The taxpayer may deduct his gift as a charitable donation if the policy has been absolutely assigned to the charity, the charity has been named the beneficiary, and provided the gift was made on the condition that all funds received from the policy be used for charitable purposes.

In order for premiums paid on the gifted policy to be eligible for a tax deduction, the taxpayer must first donate the money to the charity and it in turn pays the premiums with the donated money — premiums paid on the policy directly by the taxpayer are not deductible.

With existing policies, a taxpayer may make an absolute assignment of the policy to the charity and be deemed to have made a charitable donation equal to the cash surrender value. If there is no cash surrender value, there is normally no deduction, however gifts of subsequent premiums will be deductible.

An individual may either absolutely assign an existing policy after issue or if a new contract is desired, the charity may take out a policy with the taxpayer as the life insured and itself as owner, premium payer and beneficiary.

For further information please see Revenue Canada Taxation Interpretation Bulletin IT244.

Understanding Your Missionary and His Calling

My purpose is more to give an impression than a detailed explanation of the subject of our title. The eight points we will look at may raise more questions than they will answer, but that's part of the purpose — to get you thinking about the issues a missionary faces.

1. THE MISSIONARY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.

“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6).

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

The Lord Jesus Christ has sent His church to disciple the nations. We are called to direct this disciple-making activity to all nations (also the Canadian nation) until the end of the age. What does this mean specifically for today? How many are disciples? How many must we still seek to make into disciples?

You will understand that the numbers we mention are only rough estimates to give a general impression. In July 1977 there were 4.123 billion people in the world. Of these, 3.901 billion were not Christians. There are more than 17 times as many unbelievers as believers. Even the number of 222 million committed Christians may have to be reduced. Another important number to consider is that if we add up the Muslim, Hindu, and Chinese people who are not at all being reached at present by the Christian message we get a total over 2,000,000,000.

The missionary church is still faced with an immense calling. The work has barely begun.

2. TO BE A FOREIGNER.

The second point I want to bring to your attention is to consider what it's like to be a foreigner.

We have a tendency to look at everything from our side, and so we sometimes have the idea that people stand ready to welcome the missionary. After all, we have much to offer them. We come from a developed na-

tion and bring with us the benefits of good education and advanced technology. We bring the great riches of the gospel.

However, imagine a Korean coming into Canadian society as a missionary. Do you suppose that with his faltering English, heavy accent, Korean customs, and high opinion of Korean culture, he would be well received by Canadians?

Missionaries go to a foreign country and make the worst mistakes in language. They don't know as much as the nationals do about heat, sickness, insects, and local customs. In many ways they look foolish.

How do you gain the respect of your listeners in such a situation? Will you really seek to do so in a Christian way, or will you unconsciously fall into humanistic habits?

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION.

The missionary comes to a different culture in which everything is strange to him. He and his family are totally dislocated and must build up all new life patterns. The culture shock is indeed a shock as many of us can testify as we remember our immigration into Canada.

In that situation the danger of traditionalism is very great. Because everything is different and you are very unsettled you naturally want to surround yourself with familiar things. You will want church life, worship services, and buildings to resemble what you are used to as much as possible, rather than consider what the biblical response to the word of God would be in that culture.

You may also be so unsure of yourself that you will be afraid to approach various persons or situations and will shrink back into your own home for protection. The need for a bold trust in God is obvious.

4. MISSIONARY PROBLEMS.

Under this heading I want to discuss problems that a missionary faces directly in relation to his work.

a. Self-managing Missionary. He is left entirely on his own, without any supervision and without the help of a secre-

tary. A great amount of time is lost due to the different cultural structures. The result is that it is very hard for a missionary to work to full capacity. (This is also the case for many pastors in Canada.)

b. Untrained Missionary. Also because so much time is lost in dealing with the different ways of doing things, he has too little time for reading and studying. He receives little help from colleagues and may get stuck in a rut. The missionary situation actually demands much more education and awareness because the missionary must deal with every part of church life plus applying the word of God to a very different way of life. Yet it is difficult for a missionary to keep up even the level of training he would maintain if he were a pastor at home.

c. Unspoken Preaching. The missionary must also be particularly alert to messages he conveys without intending to. Enrique Guang, rector of a seminary in Ecuador, writes:

Here is an example: if a missionary assumes a monopolizing role in the work — i.e., he teaches, preaches, visits, is musical, is the treasurer-counselor-pastor-evangelist, sings, decides, buys, sells, etc., the latent message he is sending to his congregation is: You are stupid, incapable, inept, don't know how nor are you able; you are the type of people who can't be put in charge of anything.¹

d. Flexibility. The missionary must always be flexible, ready to change his methods. He must always be watching to see where the Lord is opening doors. God must be the One Who directs the work, not the missionary's pet ideas.

5. MISSIONARY, NOT PASTOR.

Another important consideration in understanding your missionary is to remember that he is not simply a pastor who has gone to a different country. His is not the responsibility of shepherding one congregation. His work is church planting, bringing the gospel to those who do not believe. The hopes and concerns of people in different cultures are expressed so differently that usually only someone from the same culture can be truly an effective pastor. For this reason a missionary should always seek the help of nationals to understand things. He must not do everything in the church. He must not run the show, as it were. He must bring the Gospel and teach the new church how to function. They must do it. He must not do it for them. He does not stay as a pastor in one

place, but as soon as the church is planted he continues to work toward planting more churches.

6. FOREIGN CULTURE.

We must expand on a point we just touched on. In other cultures people live differently, look differently, act differently, think differently. They have other values, other expectations, other social pressures, and other ways of expressing themselves. Brazilians cry when we would never cry and laugh when we would never laugh. It is the missionary who is the one who is different. He is the one who laughs and cries at the wrong times and is looked at as being weird.

If the missionary makes mistakes in understanding the new culture he can give a very wrong impression. A friend of mine tells of how he offended a Korean when he was a missionary there by serving steak and baked potato — baked potato is the food of the poorest people in the winter when food is scarce.

The difference in culture also makes it very difficult for the missionary to understand the national. He may think all is well when suddenly some

members are found to be living in sin. His reaction may be that they are hypocrites, while it may have been a problem of misunderstanding all along.

7. BUILDING A NATIONAL CHURCH.

The church in Brazil must be Brazilian, not a Canadian or Dutch church in Brazil. It must become self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. The Brazilian church must be able to support itself financially. It must make its own decisions with its own pastors, elders, and deacons. It must do its own evangelism. We cannot supply their pastors or do their work for them. We are not even doing our own evangelizing and have a chronic shortage of ministers.

Being a Brazilian church means more. The Brazilians have to learn to understand the meaning of the gospel for the specifics of their lives and for their culture. They must learn to deal with drunkenness, with fathers deserting children, poverty, and with marriages which are not marriages. They have to adopt creeds that speak to those who are around them. They must develop answers to spiritism and superstition.

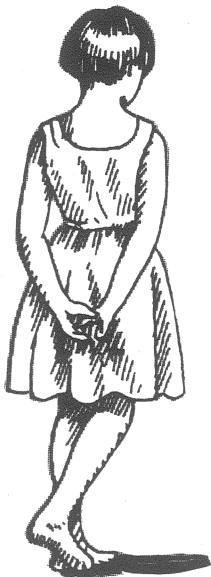
8. HOME CHURCH.

Lastly we mention the relation of the missionary to his home church (and supporting churches). The Christians in Canada are vitally involved. The Lord uses not just individuals but the whole church to bring His good news to the nations. Without the finances, without the keen interest of the home church and without its providing of workers, the work would be non-existent. But it is especially your involvement in prayer which is crucial. Unless the Lord changes hearts all our work is in vain. And He listens to prayer:

"You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us in answer to many prayers" (II Corinthians 1:11).

We must pray without ceasing. Our prayers must be of faith. Faith without works is dead. Prayer for foreign mission is an expression of love for our neighbours. This love is genuine only if we are really trying to bring salvation to our neighbours at home. Only when we do that do we pray in faith. One of the most damaging things for foreign mission is no mission activity at home.

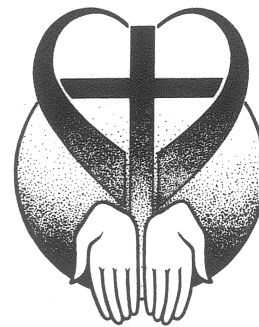
R. BOERSEMA



**“And whoever
receives
one such child
in My name
receives Me.”**

Matthew 18:5

**Support the hungry children
through the CRWRF**



***Canadian
Reformed
World Relief
Fund***

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Maybe you didn't hear it, but that "Hello" had an especially happy ring to it, Busy Beavers! I was really glad to hear from you once again.

Glad to see that you had been keeping busy with all our Busy Beaver activities.

Glad to hear from so many that things were going well at school.

Happy and thankful, that's how I feel when you send me letters like that!

I am sending out the rewards to all the Busy Beavers who sent me a story about John Calvin. Thank you, Busy Beavers.

Now it's time to wish all Busy Beavers celebrating a birthday in December a very, very happy day together with your family and friends. Also many happy returns of the day! And may the Lord bless and guide you in the year ahead.

December		December	
Pieter Nyenhuis	5	Jack Lodder	18
Bonita Stikma	5	Charles Lodder	19
Martin VanderWel	5	Walter Van Grootheest	19
Yolanda Jongsma	6	Case Hoff	20
Alinda Greta Kuik	6	Rita Bouwsema	21
Albert Riemersma	6	Edward Versteeg	21
Glenn Leffers	7	Linda Meliefste	23
Loretta Dam	8	Karl Veldkamp	24
Wilma De Vos	8	Corinne Welfing	24
John Bos	10	Jacky Nyenhuis	26
Edith Hofsink	10	Audrey Bultena	28
Sharon Koerselman	11	Betty Ann	
Wendy Endeman	12	VanderMeulen	28
Anna Riemersma	15	David Nienhuis	29
Denise Van Amerongen	15	Mirjam VanderBruggen	29
Elaine Bisschop	16	Miriam Bosma	30
Jacqueline Kobes	17	Wilma Bouwman	30
Margaret Eelhart	18	Louis Dykstra	30

Busy Beaver *Rona Kleefman* has a poem for us. Shall we dedicate it especially to our birthday people?

Thanks for sharing, Rona!

God's Creation

God made all the trees and plants,
 God made all the bees and ants.
 God made elephants and geese,
 God gave sheep warm coats of fleece.
 God gave everyone shelter and food,
 God gave us humour and mood.
 God gave us books and games to play,
 God gave us Bibles to read every day.
 God made gold, silks, and spice,
 God made everything so nice.

I hope you all enjoy the poem as much as I did, Busy Beavers.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *John Bos*. You are a real Busy Beaver already, I see. You know all about our quizzes and contests and even our BIRTHDAY FUND! Good for you. Write again soon,

John.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Arno Moeliker*. We are happy to have you join us. Are you having a nice visit with your grandparents? I like your picture very much, Arno. Thank you.

Hello *Rona Kleefman*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you very much for your lovely poem.

Think you can wait till Christmas, *Julia Vanderpol*? Will you let me know when your very special "Christmas present" arrives?

Thank you for your poem, *Elaine Hamoen*. It was nice to hear from you again. And a big thank you to Adrian, Joanne, and also to you, for your contribution to the BIRTHDAY FUND!

Aren't you lucky, *Adrian Hamoen*, to have a machine do the chores for you! Now you'll have lots of time for soccer, right? I'm glad you all like your new teacher. Thanks for the quiz, Adrian.

It sounds to me as if you're a hard worker in school, *Joanne Hamoen*. And a good helper for your teacher. Keep up the good work! I think your baby sister loves it when you go get her and you feed her. Am I right? Bye for now, Joanne.

Thank you for your letter, *Jolette Moeliker*. And decorated too! I agree with you, Jolette. We really should work at our BIRTHDAY FUND again for next year. Just think we already have the letter to send with our present! I'm looking forward to reading your story, Jolette.

Hello *Julius Wierenga*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you very much for your story. Write again soon.

The Busy Beavers are sure to like your puzzle, *Sharon Krol*. But we'll save it for next Reformation Day, if that's all right with you. Thanks for your story, Sharon.

You really were a Busy Beaver *Lucy De Boer*! Good for you. Thank you most of all for the story. You did well on the puzzle, but I really liked your story. Sounds as if you had a nice fall out your way, Lucy.

Hello *Florence Visser*. I was happy to hear from you again. Thank you for the poem. You asked a lot of questions, Florence! No, I did not go out with a lantern "when I was small." And now I want to ask YOU a question. Do you know the right meaning of Halloween. Better still, what is the real meaning of Reformation Day? Would you like to write me about what you think?

QUIZ TIME

Who Said It?

- "And I prayed for Aaron."
Clue: A near relative.
- "I have a secret errand unto thee, O king."
Clue: He spoke to a very fat king.
- "Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low."
Clue: He vowed unto the Lord.
- "There were two men in one city."
Clue: A prophet talks to a king.
- "Why should he go with thee?"
Clue: The one to whom he spoke had very long hair.