

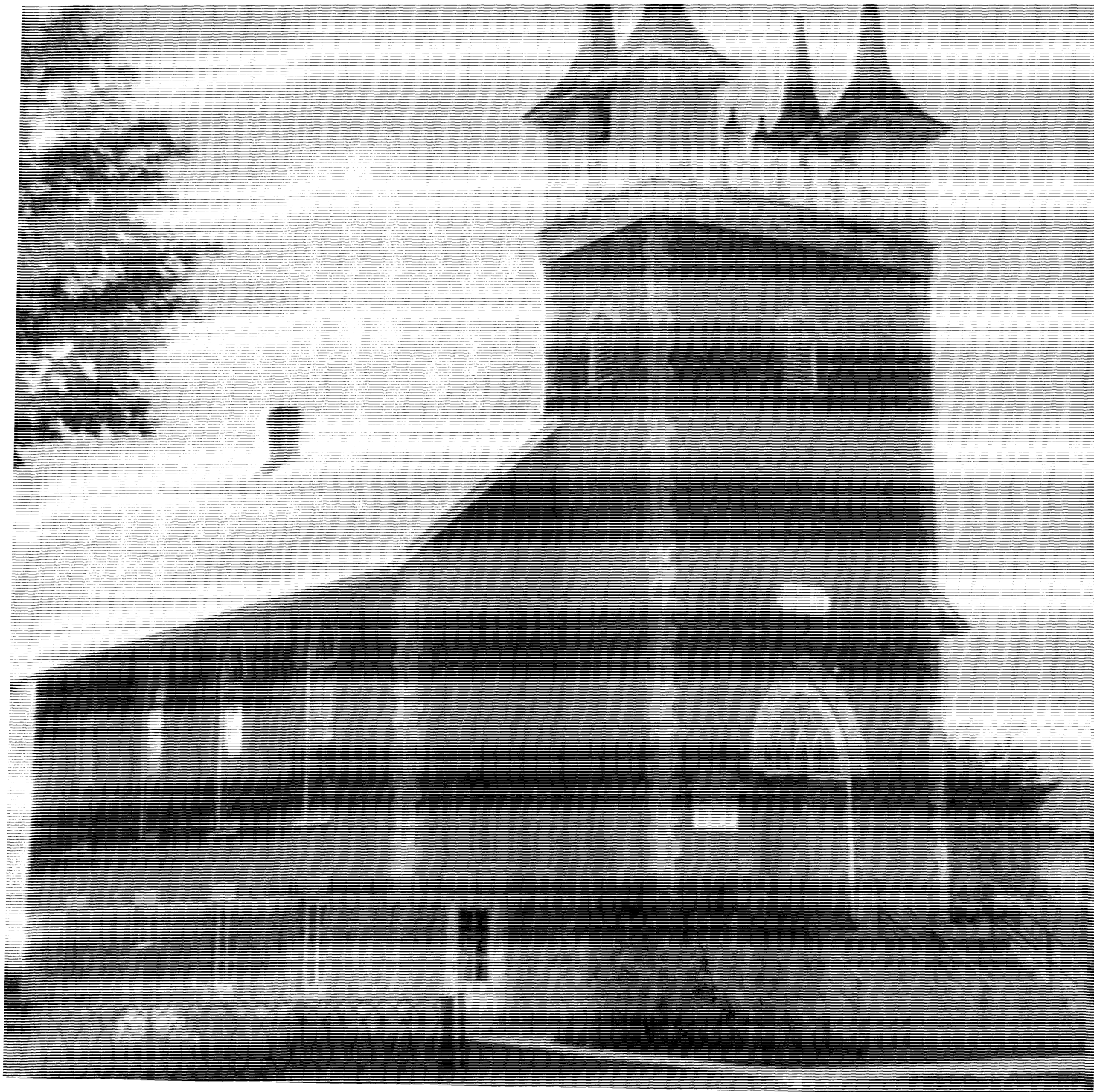


# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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## Some Voice; Some Answer

Honesty commands that I write a sequel to the article "No Voice; No Answer" (No. 15 of this Volume, dated July 28, 1979). Our readers possibly remember our indignation when the Interchurch Relations Committee recommended to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church not to answer the communication which the Canadian Reformed deputies had sent to all Christian Reformed consistories (our Appeal 1977).

The recently published *1979 Acts of Synod*, however, show that the Committee Report evoked responses from Classis Chatham and the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. Classis Chatham was convinced that no reply whatever is no way to pursue interchurch relations by a committee which has as mandate to actively seek to promote and maintain relations of the Christian Reformed Church with other Churches of Reformed persuasion. The classis was of the opinion that the courtesy of a fraternal reply to fellow believers is the very least that can be expected. It overtured the Synod of 1979 to instruct its Interchurch Relations Committee to respond to our appeal.

In answer to the unpublished communication of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC) the committee agreed to delete some sentences from its agenda report, among others, the recommendation. The committee assured Council and Synod that it had no objections to the Council's pursuing its proposed efforts to promote contacts with the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Synod therefore decided not to accede to the overture of Classis Chatham and to recognize with appreciation the willingness of the Canadian Council to launch efforts to contact our churches. It is understood that this Council will keep synod's Interchurch Relations Committee informed of its program and progress. At the moment I do not want to comment broadly on this new development, limiting myself to one remark. One of the grounds for the decision not to follow the Chatham proposal was this:

In the light of our experience in seeking contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches, it appears wise to explore other ways to establish contact with them than by addressing ourselves point by point to their communication — ways which will serve better to convey our Christian love and concern for them as our Christian brothers and sisters. (1979 Acts, p. 52/3.)

I cannot see other ways than dealing with the issues we brought forward in our Appeal, e.g., the devastating influence of the synodical churches in The Netherlands upon the Christian Reformed Church in North America. We tried to convey our Christian love and concern by way of a strong warning and exhortation. Does the Apostle Paul not ask, after his stern

admonition to the Galatians: "Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (4:16). In similar manner we may ask: Have we not shown our Christian love by warning you and urging you, e.g., to follow the example of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in breaking off a relationship that prohibits a truly Reformed confessional stand? Classis Chatham gave as ground for their overture that a response by synod's Interchurch Relations Committee would be a sign of Christian love and concern. I can understand and appreciate such a proposal. But efforts to contact our churches without addressing the points raised in our communication would be signs of a vague love and of a concern that is not to the point.

Our synod of Smithville 1980 will have to consider not only the change in *agency* and the status of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, but especially this change in *approach*.

### IN A STATE OF DOUBT

Now that the Acts 1979 of the Christian Reformed Synod have been published, we took note of some overtures regarding the translation of the Belgic Confession. Our readers know that the topic is of significance; it earned and received our vital interest in past issues of *Clarion*.

The consistory of Lucas, Michigan, overtured synod to instruct the committee to use that version of the Belgic Confession adopted by the Synod of Dort and revised by the Synod of 1958, as the basis for their new English translation. This is the received text and "adopting the 1559/61 deBres version of the Belgic Confession would amount to a revision of our confessional position. This is the case particularly with respect to the doctrine of the sacraments as sealing ordinances and possibly also with respect to election and reprobation."

This consistory is right about the main issue, but our readers know that it is my conviction that there is no *doctrinal* difference between de Brès' version of 1561 and the revision of 1566 as far as the doctrine of election and reprobation is concerned. It is mainly a matter of a printing error of 1561 that had to be corrected in 1566. Further, it is possibly a matter of some stylistic changes. That the translation committee speaks of "emerging scholasticism," and "decretal theology," is nothing but fiction under the influence of a theological fad.

Classis Hackensack also overtured the Synod of 1979 not to accede to the recommendation that the 1559/61 text of the Belgic Confession be used as the basis of the committee's translation. "Many of the descriptions of historical circumstances and the ascriptions of theological motives in

the committee's report are highly debatable and should not be used to substantiate the committee's recommendation for a revision of the Confession." I could not agree more with this statement of Classis Hackensack. Also the examples are well taken: The sacramental theology of 1619 text is linked to "emerging scholasticism" and "decretal theology," even though the report itself recognizes that the language of the text is John Calvin's. A change in Article 8 (on the Trinity) is attributed to a "new scholasticism" while it appears only to be repeating traditional, ancient definitions of the Trinity. Another change in the text with regard to the proof of the Trinity (Article 9) is attributed unconvincingly to political conditions in The Netherlands. Furthermore, adoption of the committee's translation would result in restoring language to Article 36 of the Belgic Confession that had been deliberately removed by the Synod of 1938. Our readers know that this involves the famous revision of the Article concerning the civil government, and, should you not know it, you may want to read the note on page 386 of our *Book of Praise* about the twenty parenthetical words. Those twenty words were deleted by the General Synod 1905 of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland as not being in harmony with the Biblical teaching concerning the mandate of the government. The Christian Reformed Church did the same in 1910. Our sister churches in The Netherlands are discussing this revision in connection with their new translation of the Belgic Confession, and it will be worth our while to take up this interesting point in a later "Editorial."

For the time being I express by gratitude for the remark of Classis Hackensack. Adoption of the committee's work method would mean a restoration of a text that had been deliberately abandoned not only by the Christian Reformed Church but also by other Reformed churches all over the world.

In the meantime, Synod 1979 referred Report 33 back to the Belgic Confession Translation Committee. They are to translate the revised text of the Belgic Confession in the general form and style of the committee's "provisional translation" of the de Brès text. Both texts will then be published in side-by-side columns. The committee is to study the history of the text of the Belgic Confession from 1561 to 1619 and to consider "the problem of the text of a creed and the bearing of the official adoption of a creed on the status of the text of that creed." The Synod enlarged the committee by two church historians, Dr. H. Zwaanstra and Dr. Louis Praamsma.

Although this addition is undoubtedly a guarantee that the committee will not launch again all kinds of wild and (unverified) theories about the history and text of our Belgic Confession, I can not see the reason why a translation committee has to "study the problem of the text of a creed." The committee created some problems where no problems existed, and a synod should not follow a committee's red herring. It would have been better if Synod 1979 had immediately corrected the wrong remarks in Report 33 regarding the binding to the text of creeds and confessions. I think, e.g., of the statement, now reprinted on page 603 of the Acts, that we should not "try to 'patch up' either the statements of De Brès or the Revision. For by definition a creed, written at a certain time, is an historical document. In our view it should not be rewritten or revised but only translated, at most, by later generations." This is the main reason why I, although I respect much of the translation work of this committee, spoke of the latest attack on the Belgic Confession. Synod 1979 of the Christian Reformed Church should not have left

any doubt about the question whether or not the Belgic Confession is anything "but an historical document." Now the uncertainty around the status of the text of creeds and confessions is prolonged. The Christian Reformed Church is now officially not *in statu confessionis*, but *in statu dubitationis*, not in a state of confession but in a state of doubt.

#### AMBIGUOUS

One of the most important issues before Synod 1979 of the Christian Reformed Church was undoubtedly the case of Dr. Allen Verhey. He had stated in his classical examination that the serpent in Genesis 3 was not necessarily a real serpent, and that the earthquake in Matthew 28:2 may not have been a real earthquake but an apocalyptic symbol. He also declared that Jesus did not necessarily utter the "except for fornication" clause in Matthew 19:9. According to the Advisory Committee the central issue for Synod 1979 was whether a method of interpretation which leads to such results is in harmony with Scripture and the Reformed creeds. One would expect a clear answer, either yes or no; this method is Scriptural and Reformed — or it is not.

What did Synod do? First of all, it accepted "with gratitude to God" Dr. Verhey's confession that the Bible is the fully reliable and authoritative Word of God and his intention to avoid arbitrariness in interpretation by means of a carefully-articulated method. Synod then declared that it is not persuaded that some aspects of Dr. Verhey's method have been shaped by and integrated into his, and the church's, confession about the Bible. It urged him to re-examine his method of interpretation and advised him that in suggesting interpretations which diverge from those widely held in the church he should speak cautiously. Action was withheld with respect to the recommendation that synod caution the Dutton Consistory — the consistory that made objection to Verhey's admission to the ministry — not to continue to make unwarranted and unsubstantiated charges against Dr. Verhey.

When I read this last recommendation, I thought, "That's the icing on the cake!" It would have been the big shame of these statements, if the synod had rebuked the Dutton consistory that had rightly sounded the alarm. As far as the adopted recommendations are concerned, they start with a subjectivist statement about Dr. Verhey's confession and intention. There were no doubts about his intentions, but there were objections to his plain statements. Let us not make important confessional issues into friendly discussion points. The question is: Were Dr. Verhey's statements Scriptural and Reformed, yes or no? The answer is: No. It is not a point that Dr. Verhey should package his statements more cautiously. Let us — and him — speak frankly, in a way that all brothers and sisters within the communion of saints can understand. They understand the question: Did the earthquake of Matthew 28 happen or not? They know that a Bible-believing, Reformed minister will say: Yes, certainly, for God's Word tells us so. They heard Dr. Verhey say: "I don't know, maybe." Is this tolerable with respect to an event connected with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? If anywhere, then here ambiguity should be excluded. This set of synodical decisions cannot be and should not be the end of "the Verhey case." There is more at stake than the opinion of one person; it is the whole direction of the Christian Reformed Church, in humble submission to Holy Scripture, or in haughty disobedience.

J. FABER

# press review

As promised we continue with the articles of Prof. L. Doekes about the Church. In *De Reformatie* of June 16, 1979, he writes under the heading "One Body, One Spirit." After he has referred to his previous article about a church seeking her own identity as church, on which he reacted critically, he remarks that we must not derive our speaking about the church from what people see as the reality, but from what the Word of God says.

Prof. Doekes then points to the fact that all kinds of changes, e.g., a change in Bible translation, in psalm rhymings, and other matters, do not make a church lose her identity. There has been quite a change in many little things since the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Then he continues:

Nevertheless, we may speak freely about the identity of the church. That freedom we do not derive from rigid conservatism, which holds on to a form from the past over against all historic development. The identity of the church is only given and guaranteed in the Word of God, the Word of Scripture. All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like a flower in the grass; that is also true with respect to the church, as it continues its life in successive generations.

Prof. Doekes mentions the fact that leaders in the history of the church work and die. Symptoms of activity of faith are seen, and they disappear. Brothers work together for years, and grow away from each other because of differences in views. In The Netherlands big congregations come to almost nothing. The same happens all over Europe. Churches in North Africa in the days of Augustine have disappeared completely. The same is true for Asia Minor. And then we read:

From human observation of history it seems that the church is an experiment that failed already many times; and that any new attempt to form and reform the church sooner or later has to end in another failure. But he whose thinking about the church is formed and ruled by the Word of God, receives a totally different view on the congregation of Jesus Christ. That church is one. And we have to speak about her in the singular. We believe the triumphant word of our Saviour, in which He speaks about the rock on which He will build His congregation. "My church": that is the one church of all cen-

tures, until the last day of the history. That congregation is not a hotchpotch of all kinds of denominations and communities with alternating experiments, which are formed in the course of history and also disappear and fade away again. It is the one, holy, catholic church which is gathered and preserved by the Son of God. She has been there from the beginning of the world and will be there to the very end: built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, while Christ Jesus Himself is the cornerstone. The gates of hell will not overpower this congregation.

What is now the identity of this church? That is shown to us in many ways in Scripture. John writes his second letter to "the elect woman and her children." That is a name of honour of the congregation of Christ, to whom the apostle sends greetings also from an elected sister church. This oneness in faith and love is based (the apostle writes) on the truth which remains in us and will be with us in eternity, II John:2.

With that truth is meant: God's gift in Jesus Christ, namely, the gift of the Holy Spirit, Who is the truth. He is the One Who continuously reminds the church of all that Christ has revealed to us.

The great commandment for the church is and remains for all places and in all circumstances: walk in this truth (II John:4-6). It is the old commandment which Christ gave us, and which is always new: the commandment of true love to God and to His people, the communion of saints. "And this is that love: that we walk according to His commandments." This means: true love does not consist in friendly words, and in deeds of religious enthusiasm and in moving humanitarianism, but in honouring by our deeds the commandments of Christ for the life and fellowship of the church.

This requires continuously new attention for the totality of God's revelation in Scripture. The Spirit of Christ Who inspired this Scripture in its totality and in all its parts, wants us continuously to *hear the truth and learn to obey it*. The true Pentecost congregation excels not only in willingness to sacrifice and in thankful praise, but *first of all in her faithful perseverance in listening to the gospel* and in maintaining the communion of saints in the celebration of the Lord's Supper and in praying (Acts 2:42; [Italics mine, J.G.].

In holding on to the gospel of the truth the congregation shows, everywhere, her true image as bride and body of Christ Jesus. It also results time and again in recognizing and acknowledging each other as sister churches, locally and

regionally, differing through all kinds of circumstances, but nevertheless joined and united with heart and will in one and the same Spirit, through the power of faith (Art. 27, B.C.).

Prof. Doekes states that that true fellowship shows in the Christian salutation, as we find at the end of the apostles' epistles and with which the congregations expressed their oneness in faith in Christ. As example, I Peter is taken. Prof. Doekes also draws attention to the honourable name that is given to the congregation, and which also shows the fellowship of the churches. They are God's *elected congregations*. And he continues:

In our view these are "big words," far above the reality of church life as we know it now. Nevertheless, we must always repeat our confession: I believe in the Holy Spirit, and therefore also (in) the one holy church of Christ. With respect to that church the same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, as what the Reformers told us



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with respect to the correct thinking and speaking about the sacraments: we have to satisfy ourselves with the ordering which Christ and His apostles have taught us, and speak as they have spoken about them.

God's Word teaches us to distinguish the church, to appreciate her rightly, and to maintain the fellowship of the church locally and in federation. We do not have to seek the identity of the church: it is revealed to us in the Scriptures. He who abides in this doctrine, which has been given to us from of old, will also abide in the fellowship of the Father and the Son, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Herein the true church of Christ finds her sister churches in this world. Everyone who goes beyond that and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, loses the fellowship with the triune God (II John:9). This is a serious warning for the congregations as a whole, as well as for each of their members. Where people do not "walk," that is, do not constantly continue to go in the way of the truth, that is where the fellowship is being torn apart: the fellowship with Christ and with His body, the church.

The contents of God's revelation about the church of Christ gives us, in this time

and to the end of days, the comfort and the power to carry the cross of Christ and to seek and maintain the communion of the church. Our generation is not the first one to be greatly tempted to go its own way and to seek fellowship in a circle where the feast of encounter and fellowship is enthusiastically and seriously celebrated and experienced. We have enough to complain about with respect to the lack of love and faithfulness in the life of the church. This our forefathers have known as well. Their confession makes that known to us. The church of the Old and of the New Testament experiences the trials of decline and unfaithfulness, of heavy affliction in the struggle to keep the communion of saints pure. That struggle is at the cost of flesh and blood. For many the sacrifices have become too heavy. The way of the cross is no longer attractive. The perseverance of the saints is and remains a matter of faith. It is a miracle of the Spirit of God, Who herein manifests His power in the midst of a disobedient world, and over against all kinds of unfaithful and apostate communions which continue to bear the name of church.

Through faith sinful people have learned to fight the good fight to come to and to

remain in the true gathering of the church of Christ. The unity of His body in one Spirit herein finds its confirmation again and again. One who only pays attention to the conflicts and the schisms, to alienation and splitting apart, will eventually lose heart completely, or let himself be drawn into a movement for unity which does not honour the body of Christ. But the Scriptures admonish us to walk worthy the calling with which we are called, with all humbleness and meekness, being eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit. For Christ did not render us helpless to every wind of doctrine, and to the false cunning of men in their craftiness which leads to error. From Him the whole body derives its growth, as one body through one Spirit.

In the next article more attention is given to the church as the body of Christ, related to what we confess in Articles 28 and 29 of the Belgic Confession. But that we leave for the next time.

J.G.



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

#### NASHVILLE, TENN. (RNS)

The Christian school movement appears to be gaining momentum in the Southern Baptist Convention, the 13-million member denomination long known for its support of Christian education.

A study conducted three years ago by the Nashville-based Baptist Sunday School Board found 189 elementary and secondary schools associated with Southern Baptist Churches. Estimated total enrollment in the

schools in 1976 was 38,000 to 40,000 students.

A "calculated guess," . . . is that such schools now number "in the neighbourhood of 300," with some 50,000 students. (CN)

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#### LOS ANGELES (RNS)

A U.S. scholar has cut through some of the secrecy surrounding early Christian manuscripts found four years ago inside St. Catharine's Monastery near Mt. Sinai, but he thinks they may be hidden by the monks from outside for many years.

In an interview, Dr. Charlesworth said the Genesis portion is from a fourth century Greek manuscript and the Mark segment from a sixth century rendition.

But 37 of 47 "cartons" . . . are said to be in languages other than Greek — Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, Latin, Slavic, and Syriac. If any of those pages or documents are as old as the Greek ones, or older, there is the potential that some long-lost treaties might surface.

Scholars know a second century church man named Tatian compressed four or more gospel accounts into one gospel, called the Diatessaron (that name shows that he used just four

Gospels, vO) but no copy has ever been found. Discovery of that text or other early gospel versions from old Syria and other eastern regions would provide specialists with significant comparisons to the more familiar western Christian texts. (CN)

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#### TORONTO (RNS)

Half of Canada's people have no vital connection with any church, says a church demographer.

Dr. Dennis Oliver asserted that recent research indicates that the percentage of Canada's population with no religious affiliation is much larger than the six percent reported in the 1971 census.

"Secular indifference to organized religion is not only the accepted 'faith option' of most Canadians, it might well be the most rapidly growing," said the Presbyterian minister, a church growth coordinator for his denomination.

Dr. Oliver predicted that "increasing numbers of Canadians will become European-style secularists, for whom theistically oriented beliefs and behaviour have become irrelevant." (CN)

vO

# Report on a Marvelous Tour <sup>7</sup>

ISRAEL: MAY 1979

## *The sixth day: From Jerusalem to Tiberias (I)*

Our stay in Jerusalem had come to an end on Tuesday morning. That we had finished sightseeing does not imply that we had seen everything. "And what is 'seen'?" one may wonder. Do you take it the way of the American tourist who "does" Europe in ten days, starting in Sicily or Spain and ending someplace in Norway or Denmark? Or do you mean that the things viewed were taken in indeed? That is how it should be, but I'm afraid that is too much to ask. Let me put it this way: The tourist's life and outlook on life is enriched by many experiences, and it is up to him how to assimilate them. You have to be selective.

As a matter of fact, more could be viewed in the "Holy City," and more could be told about what we had seen. Pictures had been taken on the flight of steps in front of the Dome of the Rock (and of the first group also in front of the hotel). "Serious things" such as that of the young Arab woman who stood in front of me begging and crying: "Please, sir, a *backsheesh*" (alms). Moved in my heart by the sight I gave her a couple of dollars. To what effect, I found out later, as her children pursued "the generous man" for half an hour through the streets of the city, begging: "Please sir . . ." and crying like Mom. As the tree, so the fruit. "Funny" things, and I think of the scene at the Jaffa Gate with that intru-

sive shoeshine man "offering" his services. Not meeting with positive response, he pushed his way into the group and knelt at the tourleader's shoes to give proof of his ability. Meanwhile he shouted his orders, and, because there was no language communication possible (or he was too lazy for that), he explained what he meant by a tap with a stick on the member concerned: right foot! left foot! and so on — all this in the midst of the group that stood in a circle laughing. Well, the shoes badly needed polishing; there is no denying that. For "in Jerusalem the streets are not of gold yet," Mrs. Mundy had forewarned us.

Tuesday morning we were scheduled to leave the city where past and present, in contrast with each other as in no other place in the world, are united now under the "sceptre" of Teddy Kollek, the mayor, a man whose name is mentioned in one breath with other prominent statesmen of Israel — a national figure. (I can recommend his book; *For Jerusalem a Life*.) That morning all members were able to join the tour, and I was happy about that, for three on the first and one on the second tour had to spend most of their time in bed because of illness. However, their conditions had improved so far that they were able to board the bus and accompany us on our way to the north.

To one who likes to travel from Jerusalem to the northern part of the

land there is a choice between three possibilities.

In our itinerary it says: "We leave Jerusalem via Mitzpah and Ramalla, see Shiloh and Bethel en route to Biblical Shechem (now Nablus) for a visit to Jacob's well. We view the mountains of Gerizim and Eval. On to Megiddo . . ." This part of the route had to be cancelled, though. Again it was for the same reasons as with Hebron five days earlier. It was not safe to go there. In Shechem as well as in Samaria there were very hostile groups (in Shechem, Communist-oriented) who (ab)used children to throw stones or other more serious projectiles at buses with tourists! This is also a form of child-abuse! So we didn't go that route. Too bad! I would have loved to see Shechem lying on its *shechem* (shoulder) in between Ebal and Gerizim . . . But what else can you do? Safety first, was the advice. So we were forced to do what Jews were forced to in New Testament times, that is, to reach our destination by a roundabout way. With an allusion to Luke 9:52, 53 one can say: People would not receive us, because we came from Jerusalem.

The other two options left were the route along the coast and the route along the Jordan. The writer of this report was so fortunate as to have travelled both.

We now first join the members of the first tour, going the first route. At some place in the modern part of Jerusalem we were shown a pillar which once had formed a part of the portico of Herod's temple, and later had been transported out of the city to be used for some other purpose, and not so long ago was unearthed and left lying on the spot as it was found.

At about the city limits a tall minaret on top of a high hill can be seen: Nebi Samwil (Arabic for "The prophet Samuel"). Samuel is said to have been buried here, but that tradition is disputed. Be that as it may, from this vantage point, at over 3000 feet above sea level, Crusaders and pilgrims approaching from the west could catch a first glimpse of the Holy City. That's why it was also named Mons Gaudii, that is, "Mount of Joy." The bus did not stop here. About one km. directly



*New highway to Bethel.*

north of Nebi Samwil is El Jib, which is in all probability the site of Biblical Gibeon. *Gibeon where the sun stood still* is the title of a little book by the well-known archaeologist James B. Pritchard. The readers know the story of Joshua 9 and 10, and of II Samuel 21.

Another member of the league of four cities Gibeon belonged to, was Qiryat Je'arim. Where is Qiryat Je'arim — I mean its remnants — to be sought? Is it Der el-Azhar, that is, Qiryat el-Enav on the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa? Or is it rather Abu Ghosh, which we pass on our way? It was here that the Ark of the Covenant rested for many years after its glorious return from the land of the Philistines, before David brought it to Jerusalem. Qiryat Je'arim, a Hebrew name, can be translated as "city of the forests," sharing its name with a not unknown city in south-western Ontario, which bears this nickname. The cloister of the Sisters of St. Joseph, built in 1924, stands over the traditional site of the house of Abinadab, where the Ark was kept. There is also a connection with the New Testament. Once again I start with a question. Is it here that the village of Emmaus, "which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs" is to be sought (Luke 24:13), close by the ruins of a Crusader castle? It depends what reading of the original text you follow. Was it sixty stadia from Jerusalem, or 160, as some manuscripts have? "The variant reading seems to have arisen in connection with Patristic identification of Emmaus with Amwas, about twenty-two Roman miles from Jerusalem. This, however, is too far for the travellers to have re-traversed that same evening" (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, pp. 184/5). Sixty stadia, that is, seven miles or eleven kilometres, sounds more plausible. So we may conclude to an identification: Qiryat Je'arim = Emmaus. At present it is a quiet village, inhabited by Arabs, Moslems, who — believe it or not — took sides with the Jews after the Second World War and cooperated with the Israeli defence forces before and during the War of Independence!!

The scenery around us now is beautiful. Ancient Qiryat Je'arim, the forest city, lives up to its name again. After having been denuded for centuries on end, the area has been reforested. In the "Forest of the Martyrs" in this vicinity, 6,000,000 trees were planted to commemorate the victims of

the Nazi fury . . . . On the left side of the road is dense growth, whereas to the right there seems to be thinner growth. How come? Luba made a joke which I pass on: "The traffic from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv is so dense, that the trees hardly have an opportunity to cross the road!" The Jews like a joke and I hope you do too. So smile.

Past Abu Ghosh, now a quiet village, a couple of centuries ago a den of robbers where poor pilgrims were exhorted by a not-so-friendly sheich and his helpers, we are leaving the Mountains of Judah and entering the Shephelah, that is, the lowland of the foothills, extending almost to the coast. There is quite a descent at Sha'ar Hagay (=Gate to the Valley). Here one of the most severe fights of the War of Independence, 1948, took place. Down in the foothills farther to the left are the sites of Zorah and Eshtaol, the scene of Samson's youth (Judges 13), north-east of Beth Shemesh, in olden times the tribal territory of Dan. Also in the territory of Dan is the Valley of Ayyalon, where about 3400 years ago another fierce battle had been fought, namely, of Israel against the five kings of southern Canaan (Joshua 10).

To the left of the road, nearby, is Lod; farther to the left is Ramlah which I touched on already in the report on the first day. When I told the group that Lod is Biblical Lydda, I was "corrected" by Luba, who replied: No, Lod is the Biblical name, for by this name the city was known in the Old Testament (Ezra 2:33; Nehemiah 7:37; 11:35). I do not deny that, and again the lady showed thorough acquaintance with the Bible, but — the reader has concluded for himself already, I think — the New Testament does not belong to her

Bible. The discussion ended with my "yes" over against her "no."

Modern Lod has a population of close to 30,000, many of whom work at the nearby airport, the Ben Gurion Airport where our plane had made its landing.

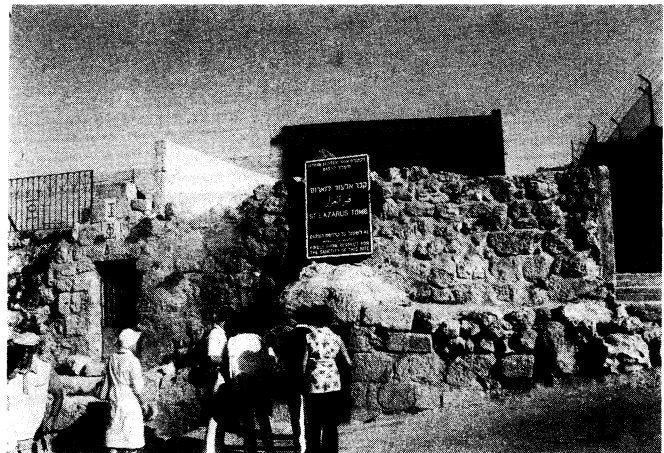
I now take the liberty to leave the first group, which continued its way along the Mediterranean Coast, via Caesarea, through the Carmel to Megiddo. We'll have ample opportunity to report on this trajet in the last instalment, since we visited the coastal plain again later.

\* \* \*

Let us now join the members of the second tour under the guidance of Amos. Heading for the same destination: Megiddo, Nazareth, Tiberias, they wanted to get there the other way around, I mean the way along the Jordan, east of the Samaritan mountains, the third option.

As on the Friday before, the bus took us around the foot of the Mount of Olives, now in the reverse direction, from Jerusalem to Jericho. Around the corner, at the foot, is Bethany (the first group had visited the little town Monday afternoon), home of Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus. The reader knows the history of John II. Off the road, on the left, is a garden leading to the Roman Catholic Church. The marble floored church is decorated with mosaics depicting the story of Lazarus. Interesting Byzantine mosaics can be seen in the floor. Past the Church, going up a hill, is the entrance to the Tomb of Lazarus. The tomb was open to visitors, and so we went down, one behind the other, down twenty-four slippery steps into a dark cave, where

*Continued on next page.*



*Lazarus' Tomb.*



*Refugee camp in Jericho.*

**MARVELOUS TOUR** — Continued.

there was room for the group to assemble. Peeping through a hole in the rock one could view the tomb in a lower vaulted room. As we lingered too long in the depth, Amos impatiently raised his voice and called: "Come out!" If this was meant as a joke, nobody could appreciate it. Outside the tomb Arab children were waiting, begging for a *backsheesh* (alms), obviously taught to do so by Mom, who had the key to the tomb.

Let us go on! We have a long way to go, and much more is to be viewed this day. Next was Jericho. The first group had been taken here already on Friday afternoon, where they enjoyed a stop in a restaurant opposite the fig tree of Zaccheus. Whether the tradition is correct or not, Ahmed and Hassan, or whatever name they may have, have a good business, and they were waving and dancing on the sidewalk when the bus arrived. I presume they were acquainted with Amad the busdriver, who was treated with distinction here (because of all the busloads of passengers he ushers in from time to time??). We are in the Westbank again — so surrounded by Arabs. A Palestine refugee camp still stands as a "memory" of bygone times. Now it is abandoned. The Israelis don't like that sort of memories. At least they try to help the Arabs to find a new home and regular job. As the readers knows, these camps and their inhabitants are used as propaganda material against Israel by other Arabs: like a sore or an ulcer that is not allowed to heal, but is scratched open over and over again. Amos seized the opportunity to enlighten us about the Israeli viewpoint in the peace negotiations: "Israel likes to have settlements on the Westbank and military

outposts. As to the Arabs living there, they can all stay here . . . on the condition that they have no army. That stands to reason."

However, after these less pleasant matters, which cannot escape one's attention, let us focus on the town as it lies there, at the outskirts of the Jordan valley, which is very broad here. Jericho still lives up to the name it already had in Biblical times: the Palm city. It is a lush oasis of date palms, banana plantations, and orange groves, rising out of the parched, dry desert which completely surrounds it. An agricultural town, every villager has his own field. In the summer, temperatures can rise to 120 degrees. Many natural springs are used for irrigation. In winter, since it is cold in Jerusalem, Jericho is a pleasant place in which to stay. The roads are lined by trees (flamboyants), and, as I told already, Zaccheus sycamore is a real attraction. "Is the tradition well-founded?" I hear you wonder. Well, the manager of the restaurant will be the last to dispute it. Let us leave him with the opinion.

What a rich history this city — and now I say "city" — has! From the New Testament (Zaccheus) we go back to the Old Testament, and everybody thinks of the history of its capture, related in Joshua 6, which we believe as it is reported in the Bible as a miracle performed by the LORD. A miracle such as has never happened again, to our knowledge. There must be a reason. Let us not forget, Jericho was the first city to be conquered on this side of the Jordan. It was the key to the land, and its conquest the key to the conquest of the entire land. Now, obviously, it was the LORD Who opened the gate to the promised land! Ancient Jericho was not on the site of the present village, but was hidden in the nearby tell: Tell es-Sultan. This artificial mound now stands more than fifty feet above the bedrock level of the first settlement. We were taken to the top by bus, climbed the huge mount, and viewed the site. The excavator, Dame Kathleen Kenyon, an expert in archaeology, has done quite a job here. She was not the first one, though. In the early 1930s other excavators claimed to have found evidence of the destruction in the time of Joshua. These findings were part of the argument for the earlier dating of the Exodus. Jericho was said to have been destroyed in the 14th century and showed signs of having been burned. I, for one, still endorse this view. As far as I can see the entry into Canaan must have taken place in or around 1383 B.C. (Dating of Dr. J. de Koning, *Studien over de El Amarna brieven en het Oude Testament*, diss. 1940). In modern books on the subject you read:

"More recent archaeological work at Jericho using newer and more precise methods of dating have shown the earlier excavators to be wrong. Tell es-Sultan is



*Overlooking Jericho, with beautiful flamboyant tree in centre foreground.*



badly eroded. If there were ever any evidence of a Hebrew destruction of the site, or of any Late bronze (1550-1200 B.C.) or Iron I disaster (1200 - 900 B.C.), it is now gone. What Prof. Garstang and his colleagues in the 1930s thought to be 14th century materials are, in fact, from . . . the early Bronze Age, so 2000 B.C.!"

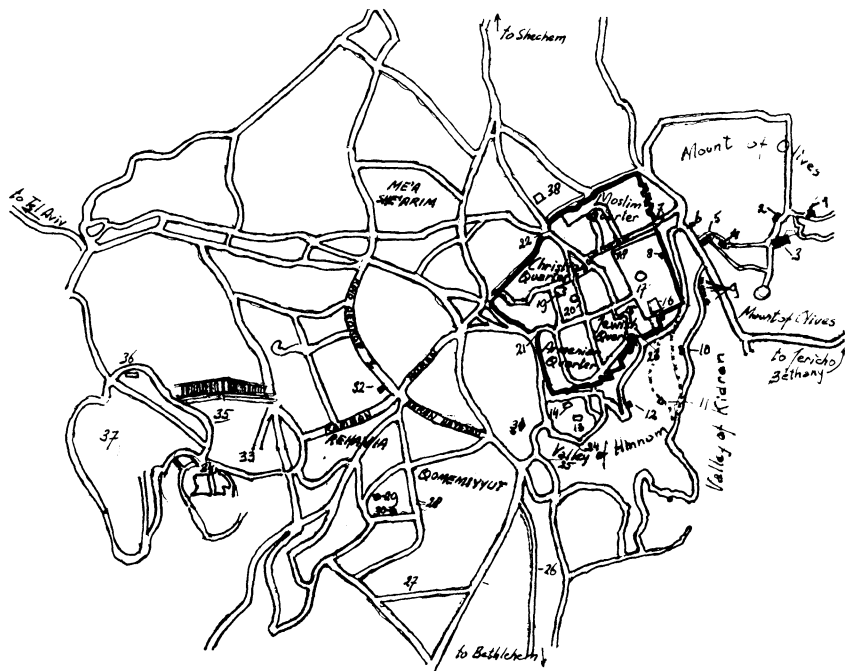
During the Middle Bronze period (1550 - 1550 B.C.) the walls around Jericho were renewed three times. The last renovation is represented by a wall close to a moat. It is the period of the Hyksos, which was terminated by the Egyptian Pharaoh Ahmosis. It was then, 1550 B.C., that Jericho was destroyed, experts claim today. Afterwards Jericho hardly existed for some centuries. So, they conclude, what is or can be true of the history of Joshua? Later, from 1200 on, you can speak of Jericho as a city again. I, for one, am happy that archaeology does not have the final say in the matter. It is not only facts but also interpretation that plays a part here. And scholars must admit that the tell is badly eroded, something which is to be taken into account when reading and weighing their argument.

The same holds true for another point I mention now. In one of the lowest strata, Miss Kenyon unearthed the Neolithic village of Jericho, with remains of a huge stone wall fronted by a moat and, behind the wall, a most impressive circular tower built of stone and mud. Neolithicum is a period prior to 4000 B.C. going back even to 7000 B.C. Again the question arises, how to tally this with the view that the creation took place forty centuries before Christ? In this case I would ask: Does Scripture really teach us so, or is it a conclusion former students of the Bible have drawn by using the genealogies of the Bible in a way they deem right but which actually is not correct? I cannot go into further details now but would like to refer the interested reader to: G. Ch. Aalders, *Korte Verklaring*, Genesis, I, page 313ff. and: J.C. Whitcomb and H.M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, page 474ff., for further study. So far this digression on Archaeology and the History of the Bible.

Looking westward from the vantage point of the tel, you can see the so-called Mount of Temptation of Matthew 4. On the slopes of the mount the wall of a very old monastery of the fifth century is visible and so are the caves in which the monks used to meditate.

H.M. OHMANN

(To be continued.)



MAP OF JERUSALEM

————— Wall of Sultan Suleiman, enclosing the old city.  
 ..... Dotted line encircling ancient Jerusalem = Jebus = City of David  
 = Mt. Ophel.

1. Church of the Ascension.
2. Chapel of the Ascension.
3. Pater Noster Church. (*Palm Sunday Road*).
4. Church of Mary Magdalene. (*Palm Sunday Road*).
5. Church of All Nations and Gethsemane. (*Palm Sunday Road*).
6. Tomb of the Virgin Mary.
7. St. Stephen's Gate.
8. Golden Gate.
9. Tombs of Yehoshaphat, Absalom, BeneHezir and Zechariah.
10. Gihon Well.
11. Pool of Siloam (between 10 and 11 Hezekiah's tunnel).
12. St. Peter in Gallicantu.
13. Tomb of David and Last Supper Room. (*Mount Zion*).
14. Dormition Abbey. (*Mount Zion*).
15. Western Wall = Wailing Wall.
16. El Aqsa Mosque. (*Haram esh Sharif*).
17. Dome of the Rock. (*Haram esh Sharif*).
18. Antonia Fortress.
19. Holy Sepulchre Church and Golgotha (between 7 and 19, the Via Dolorosa).
20. Church of the Redeemer at the Suq Khan ez-Zeit.
21. Jaffa Gate.
22. Damascus Gate (from 22-15: Al Wad Street)
23. Dung Gate.
24. Hativat Jerushalayim.
25. Derekh Hevron, site of Ariel Hotel.
26. Derekh Bethlehem.
27. Emeg Refaim - (Isaiah 17:5).
28. Rehov David Marcus.
29. Presidential Residence.
30. Jerusalem Theatre.
31. Montefiore Windmill.
32. Hechal Shlomo - Chief Rabbinate.
33. Monastery of the Cross.
34. Israel Museum - Shrine of the Book.

# Official Opening of Credo Christian School

Saturday, September 22, was a beautiful, sunny day. It seemed to the people of the congregations of Toronto and Brampton an even sunnier day. This day would show the fruits, from the Lord, after many years of hard work. *Credo Christian School* was finally going to open its doors officially.

The outdoor ceremony was held outside the grey, architectural-block-clad building with its brown metal flashing. We all gathered to the one side sheltered from the wind. As the people gathered around in a semi-circle, the Chairman of the School Board, Mr. H. Kampen, asked everyone to sing Hymn 52:1. He then read Psalm 145, followed by prayer. Mr. Kampen welcomed all those present, especially those guests who had come from far and wide for this joyous event.

Because the physical building plays an important part in the activity of a school, he thanked the Building Committee for their tremendous task of setting up the small, but practical, four-classroom school. He then asked Mr. W. Visscher to speak a few words. Mr. Visscher told us that the mandate given to the Building Committee was to set up a suitable building. There were, of course, many obstacles to

overcome, but here is the building standing. He went on to thank all the members who with their various tasks contributed to the final outcome. Mr. C.Y. Nobel was thanked for the drawing of the building plans. Mr. E. Roodzant, Mr. J. Lootens, and Mr. P. Oly were also thanked for all their time and contributions.

Mr. Visscher then presented the key to the Board. Although it was not a big one, he noted that at least this one would fit the lock.

The Building Committee also presented a gift which was symbolic. It symbolized the freedom of our country, that we, as Canadian Reformed people, were able to establish our own school. It was a thank you for a free country that a Canadian flag can hang in front of our school. The flag was presented and then raised by Mr. C.Y. Nobel with the help of Mr. J. Lootens. Spontaneously we sang our national anthem, "O Canada." Mr. Kampen thanked the Building Committee for the flag and pole.

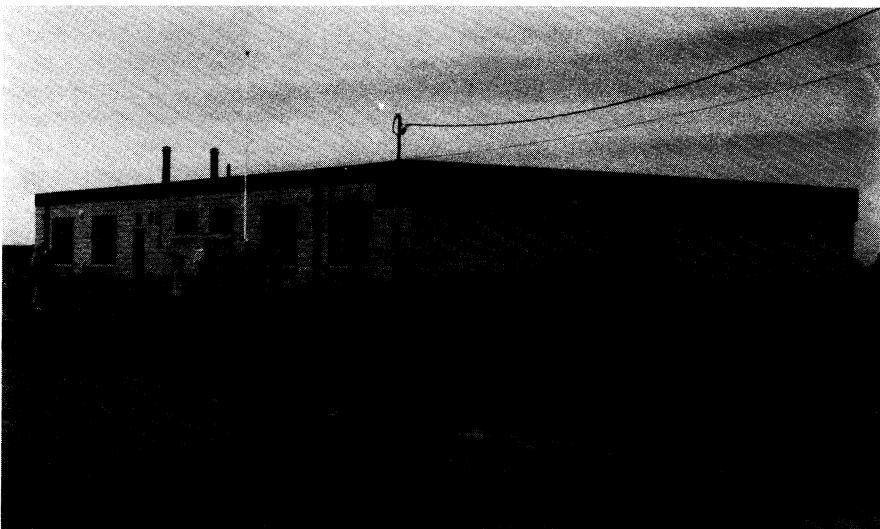
The new staff at Credo Christian School was then introduced. Mr. F. Ludwig from Burlington, the appointed Principal, teaches Grades 6 to 8; Miss B. Maat from Smithville teaches Grades 3 to 5; and Miss T. Vandebos, fresh



*Chairman, Mr. H. Kampen, addressing the audience.*

from Teachers' College, teaches Grades 1 and 2. After this we had an opportunity to hear the voices of Grades 1 to 4 as they sang Psalm 79:5.

Mr. Kampen spoke to us for a few moments. "Why are we here?" he asked. That could be a physical question meaning, "Why on Huntington Road and not in Toronto or Brampton?" That was easy; because it is a central point for both congregations. The question could also be: "Why are we here at an independent school?" The answer may not seem so simple, but, when you look at what basically motivates us, the answer becomes clear. Through the name "Credo Christian School" we find the answer. "Credo" means "I believe." This speaks personally to each member of the society, as we speak of ourselves. What do we believe? In the second part of the name this becomes clear. The word "Christian" says that we are Christ's. Thus we confess that we believe we belong to Christ, just as is so beautifully summarized in Lord's Day 1. Therefore we members pledge that the school is to be an instrument which we will use to praise God, for it belongs to Him. It is but a small offer of thanksgiving in our life to acknowledge the greatest offer sacrificed, namely, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore such expression of

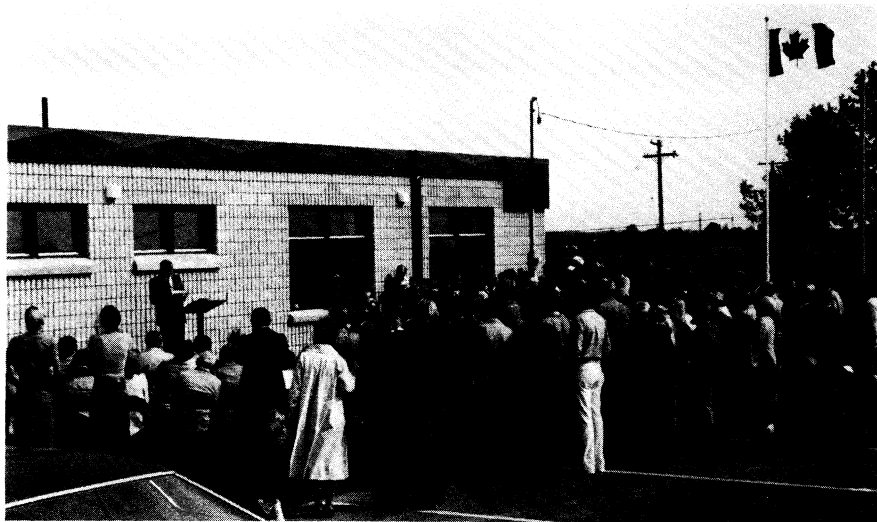


*The school building.*

commitment and teaching is not possible in just *any* school. The awareness of these facts will make past, present, and future insignificant, but we all must keep in mind our tasks. We are a small society, and we must pray that the Lord will provide for and strengthen our enrollment, support, and even out our financial difficulties. We have pledged that "we believe," and that all things are in Christ Jesus. Thus all things, the teaching, and education of the children, are entrusted to Him. There are and will be many mistakes and weaknesses, but nothing should hinder us in this service to the Lord. We shall flourish because of our joy to serve the Lord, and this shall also guide us over the rough spots. The home, the church, and now the school, having the same foundation, form a strong unit. Let the



*Mr. C.Y. Nobel raising the flag with the help of Mr. J. Lootens.*



Mrs. L. Kampen, who suggested the name of the school, then had the honour of cutting the ribbon.

This was followed by the singing of Grades 5 to 8: "The Lord is my Shepherd." Thereafter, we all sang Hymn 61.

Mr. Kampen closed with us in prayer and invited us all to tour the school while we had coffee and cake served by the Ladies Auxiliary. The bell adjourned the opening.

Two Bystanders

one complement the other as we live our life of total commitment to Him Who loved us first.

After the speech of Mr. Kampen, Mr. Hollingshead, the town councillor of Vaughan, spoke a few words of sincere congratulations and approval of our school opening. A letter from Rev. VanDam and his family conveyed their sincere congratulations on the opening. Then Mr. Schutten, on behalf of the Guido de Brès School Board; Mr. Vandervele on behalf of John Calvin School, Smithville; and Mr. E. Ludwig on behalf of John Calvin School, Burlington; all offered their congratulations on the opening of the school.



*Pupils of Grades 1-4 singing.*

# news medley

Let us begin with personal matters.

In Burlington brother and sister B. Bremer celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary on November 9th. I still see some old Canadian Reformed Magazines once in a while, and then I also see the picture of Ben Bremer who is praised as being *the* address if you would wish to buy a good second-hand car. Then you see that age shows, but the last time I saw them they were still in good health as far as I could discover. In any case: we wish them the Lord's blessing in their forty-first year as richly as they have received and experienced it during the previous forty years.

Five days after the Bremers have their fortieth wedding anniversary, brother and sister A. Schulenberg of Beamsville, Ontario, will celebrate their fiftieth anniversary. To them, too, we extend our heartfelt congratulations on this happy occasion. It is especially something to be very grateful for that they both are still enjoying good health. When I saw their picture in the issue of October 20, I could not help but note that they look so much alike that they could easily be closely related to each other. Or it could be that husband and wife begin to look like each other more and more in the course of the years. May brother and sister Schulenberg continue to receive many blessings without which our lives would be empty.

There is one more thing regarding a person which I should like to mention. From the Grand Rapid's bulletin I learned that Mr. Dewey Westra passed away at the age of eighty. I quote the following passage from that bulletin.

We received notice that Mr. D.D. Westra died last Monday morning at the age of 80. He was founding principal of several Christian schools, and a poet and translator. Forty psalms of this poet have been inserted in our *Book of Praise*. His name is mentioned in the Acts of the General Synod 1962 of the Canadian Reformed Churches, Art. 118, pt. 3. Deputies were authorized in this article to make contact with Mr. D. Westra for the use of his psalms in the *Book of Praise*. The Canadian Reformed Churches' *Book of Praise* in which, according to the Grand Rapids Press, forty psalms can be found of Mr. Westra, is also the *Book of Praise* of the American Reformed Church at Dutton.

I have never counted the rhymings by Mr. Westra which we did insert in our *Book of Praise*, at least in its provisional editions. It behooves us to acknowledge that by his work we were helped greatly, especially during those first years. If it had not been for Mr. Westra's work, it would have taken us much longer before we could present the membership with songs to be used during the services. That most of those Psalm rhymings were replaced later on and others thoroughly revised does not take away any of our appreciation for the use of Mr. Westra's rhymings. It is proper to express that appreciation openly.

Herewith we proceed to the news from the Churches. Being in Grand Rapids with our thoughts anyway, we might as well quote one more thing from their bulletin. It is sort of strange, and I don't understand it.

We all know by now that the MAF lost its largest airplane in Irian Jaya, the NOMAD. The pilot also lost his wife when apparently the plane disintegrated in the air. At least,

that's the impression we get. Both here and in The Netherlands actions are underway to support the MAF by extra gifts so that they can replace the lost aircraft. We are particularly interested in that since it operated chiefly in the area which is also served by the missionaries from the Canadian and Dutch Churches. It is therefore encouraging when the need is seen by the Church members. Proof of seeing the need was given also in Grand Rapids. The bulletin mentions, "A gift from someone containing \$100.00 towards the purchase of an airplane to replace the one that was lost in Irian Jaya. It is a plane for the MAF which serves the mission workers." But then there follows something which I don't understand: then the address of an organization in *The Netherlands* is given and we read this sentence: "This money received will be sent to The Netherlands."

I thought: Here is a Church which — at least at that moment — is still cooperating with Toronto, and thus a Church whose "own" missionary and missionary workers are directly involved. But instead of honouring those bonds and sending the money directly to the MAF either in the U.S.A. or in Canada, or sending it to Toronto with the request to pass it on, it is decided to send the money to . . . The Netherlands, from where, at some time in the future, it will again have to be sent to this continent. Instead of showing that *we here* care and wish to support the MAF, money is sent to The Netherlands and thus an incorrect impression is given when the various contributions are tabulated.

Let what is closest remain closest and let that be proved too.

The bond with the Church here should be more dominating than the relationship with our corresponding Churches.

We cross the border again and re-enter Canada. Our first stop will be the Ebenezer Church in Burlington. From the bulletin of that Church we first mention something about the refugee families. In one bulletin we are told that "two refugee families will be arriving in Edmonton this Sunday and we will be picking them up from either Malton Airport or Port Hope coming Tuesday or Wednesday." As far as language is concerned, "Although two male immigrants supposedly speak some English, we have secured the help of two interpreters who will be at the airport as well. We have two jobs available already and are busy finding a third opening."

The next bulletin has the following information: "Three of the people speak English quite well, so that makes it much easier for us. With tears in her eyes, one of the ladies said, 'I have never seen such a beautiful home in my whole life.'"

In this respect Burlington East has it somewhat easier than Burlington West, for the bulletin of the latter Church says that their refugee families speak only Cantonese.

Guelph does not yet have their family. "We almost received our 'boat people family' last week, but since the immigration officials were not able to reach certain members of our congregation, this family was passed on to another sponsorship. Another family is expected soon."

We return for a moment to Burlington East.

Our readers will recall that some time ago we made some remarks about the "fate" of members who live far away from a Church. That is a point which has had the attention of Consistories for as long as the Canadian Reformed Churches have been instituted, and it does not become less urgent as time advances.

The Church at Burlington East considered this point anew. They have members even in Papua New Guinea, a

brother and sister who work there for the Wycliffe Bible Translators as teacher and as technical advisor. We had some interesting articles from them, as you know. However, they are not the only ones and their case might be considered to be somewhat extraordinary, isn't it? There are also members who have moved away here in Canada either temporarily — e.g. for study reasons — or more or less permanently. What to do with them?

Let me now first quote what the Consistory of Burlington East decided.

A letter from the A.A. family . . . The consistory decided to consider this family still members of the congregation and to give them a travel attestation which will be valid for six months, and thereby implement a previous decision regarding members who live far away for a certain period. If after six months no request is received to renew the attestation, they will lose their membership. In the meantime the consistory will try to establish a better contact with them. This counts also for other members who have moved so far away that the consistory is unable to provide proper supervision. These members will also receive a travel attestation.

The more I think about it, the more appealing elements I find in the above solution.

There is in the first place this: The Consistory endeavours to hold on to the members who have moved away for specific reasons. The Consistory does not say, "You have moved away and thereby you have ceased to be members of the Church of Christ; we shall send you an attestation and that means that you have ceased being a member of this Church." No, the Consistory holds on to them, still considers them members, and will try to increase the contact and to make it more meaningful.

In the second place there is this element: that the brothers and sisters *themselves* are to show that they wish to uphold and maintain the bond with the Church where they are members. It should not be so that they can live somewhere for two years, never write, never bother to contact "their" Consistory, and then all of a sudden show up again in the midst of the Congregation and expect that they can simply continue the life of two years ago without any further ado. I know such cases, where people lived away from the Church for some years, but never even bothered to acknowledge letters and other communications. Then, I think, a Consistory is indeed faced with the serious question whether those people can still be considered members of the Church. In such cases I would be inclined to say, "They have not contacted us for so long, they have not acknowledged our letters, they have not given any proof that they wish to belong to the Church here; thus we come to the conclusion that by their attitude and failure to respond they have broken in deed with the Church."

When, on the other hand, brothers and sisters prove that they do wish to maintain the bond with the Church, the solution which Burlington West has found may well be the best one. It keeps the members on their toes as well. When they are able to go to the nearest Church, they will have an attestation to prove that they are entitled to partake in the celebration of the Holy Supper or to have their child baptized.

This solution deserves serious consideration in similar cases.

That exhausts the news from Ontario, except for the fact that the Fergus Consistory decided, for the duration of the winter months, to discontinue the Dutch services. They



## 45th Wedding Anniversary



*Mr. and Mrs. Klaas and Geertien VanderLand will celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary, the Lord willing, on November 15, 1979, with their children and grandchildren. They were married in Marum (Gr.), The Netherlands, on November 15, 1934. They immigrated to Canada with their six children in 1951. Brother and sister VanderLand are members of the church at Edmonton. Their address is 14019 - 106 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 1B3.*



are conducted in the evening and it was felt that the weather conditions during the winter are oftentimes such that especially our elderly brothers and sisters face many dangers. During the summer months those adverse conditions do not exist; besides, then there are always many visitors from The Netherlands and their number seems to increase by the year.

Winnipeg's Consistory could state, "Since all debts have been paid off, the Consistory decided to work towards building up a fund for a new manse. Therefore \$500.00 per month will be set aside for that purpose as long as our financial position permits us to do this."

I do not think that there are many Congregations that can say that all debts have been paid off. I also think that Winnipeg will not be able to execute its decision for many months. The arrival of their new minister will upset the whole plan; but then, they won't regret that, I'm sure.

Houston has its new minister by now. "The extra gifts for the minister's house came to a total of \$18,450.00." That is a praiseworthy result.

From Smithers comes the following news.

More or less regular contact was maintained with children who attended the youth camp. Some of them visit the homes of the leaders. "But to make it more effective we decided to organize monthly get-togethers, which idea was received with enthusiasm by the children. From now on we will refer to it as the "Native Youth Club" and we will try to meet every last Saturday of the month."

About the young people: "They also have their own 'paper' *Trail News*, edited by the leaders. The name refers to the theme of our work . . . : in God's trail . . . . With some of the parents close contacts have been established and we can help them in their personal problems by showing them the way to Christ."

Our journey ends in New Westminster.

"It is decided to support an overture from the Church at Abbotsford to Regional Synod regarding delegation of ministers. Namely, that if ministers are appointed to General Synod and accept a call from a Church outside of the area of the Regional Synod which appointed them, they should give up that appointment.

I think that I know what occasioned that proposal. I also know that arguments can be adduced in defence of either course of action: resign one's commission or go although one has "changed" regional synodical districts. At the moment I am inclined to disagree with the proposal, since one does not sit at a broader assembly as representative of a Church or of a group of Churches, even though one has been sent, delegated by a Church or by a specific group of Churches. If one were sent to a broader assembly to "defend" and "represent" the interests of a particular Church or of a group of Churches, then one should resign his commission as soon as one moves out of the regional synodical district. Now I can see no need for it.

No minister or elder (for it also applies to the elders!) is thereby prevented from resigning his commission; no minister or elder should, on the other hand, be compelled to do so, at least as far as I can see it at the moment.

When I put a big period behind this medley, I do not do so as a sign of resignation; it is only a sign that my news has been exhausted. Cheerio!

vO

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## Income Tax Break for Homeowners and the Effect on the Real Estate Market

On Wednesday, September 5, Finance Minister John Crosbie announced that the P.C. Government will start a program where the individual homeowner will be allowed to deduct mortgage interest and municipal taxes from his gross income. The details will be announced this fall, hopefully before his budget will be presented, and the homeowner will already benefit for the 1979 taxation year.

Above announcement was the result of an election promise of the Progressive Conservative Party, and had certain limitations: The total allowance for mortgage interest to be \$5,000. Municipal tax allowance up to \$1,000. And the plan would be phased in over a four-year period.

Since the Finance Minister did not elaborate in any detail about the program, one might assume that efforts are made to present the Canadian public with a plan in accordance with the proposal or commitment made at election time.

What does this mean to a homeowner or prospective homeowner? In the first place a reduction in his annual income tax. It does not take an expert to calculate that a \$40,000 mortgage at

12½ % will be the limit of the interest deduction, and that a reduction of net income of \$20,000 to \$14,000 to 1978 tax tables would save about \$2,200 in income tax. It also means that a prospective homeowner within the framework of the above has about \$185 a month more available to get out of his apartment and into a place of his or her own. The plan was designed to make ownership of a home easier to attain. The result is expected to be also more attractive for those homeowners who have been looking around for a larger or better home. They can now afford to take on a larger mortgage because of the tax break. This may very well cause a ripple effect from the lower priced housing to upper middle range, and may also contribute to a higher cost of homes.

From personal experience in Ontario, we have not seen the cost of housing increased to the extent of inflation in general. As a matter of fact, I would doubt that during the last five years, prices, in general, have gone up by more than 10% on the average for the total of those five years. Statistics have shown that after the war over any twenty-year period the average annual

increase of single family homes have been 7% per year. The value of real estate has always been determined by demand and supply. The resale house market and the resale values have been crucially important for the builders of new homes, since they will not stay in business too long if they cannot compete with the market. A lot of small builders have quit building recently. They either retired or have gone bankrupt. Only the very large ones stayed in business. And the supply of their stock is getting lower. Most of these larger builders have options on building lots, and sell to build from model homes.

And what will happen after the expected tax break comes through? We will have more people than ever looking for a home. The ones that never owned a home will be able to buy, and the owner of a smaller home will buy a larger one. There will be a shift towards a sellers' market, and this will seriously effect the value of real estate upwards. In the Hamilton area we already experience increased sales activity since Mr. Clark came in office. The announcement by Mr. Crosbie will further influence this.

Arie J. Hordyk

*Br. Hordyk of Burlington, Ont., is President of the Metropolitan Hamilton Real Estate Board. He predicts that Multiple Listing Sales for his Board will exceed \$400,000,000 for 1979.*

# HOEK VAN HOLLAND

*De heer John De Vos uit Chilliwack heeft zich bijzonder verdienstelijk gemaakt door rondom onze Hogeschool-festiviteiten in Brits Columbia een reportage te verzorgen voor het Nederlands Dagblad. Het was goed dat onze zusterkerken in het oude vaderland weer eens in contact werden gebracht met het kerkelijke leven hier in Canada. Het tienjarig bestaan van onze Theologische Hogeschool in Hamilton was een uitstekende aanleiding daartoe. Uit reacties van Nederlandse kant heb ik begrepen dat een en ander met belangstelling is gelezen en dat men de berichtgeving op prijs heeft gesteld.*

*Het Nederlands Dagblad heeft echter niet alles kunnen publiceren wat de vruchtbare geest en vlotte pen van br. De Vos had gereproduceerd. Zo bleef o.a. een verslag achterwege van de toespraak die ik hield over de opvatting van H. Berkhof met betrekking tot de Persoon van onze Here Jezus Christus. Omdat we bemerken dat met name onze oudere lezers het op prijs stellen dat ze iets in hun moedertaal kunnen lezen, geven we graag aan dit in meer dan een opzicht knappe verslag een plaatsje in ons blad. De oorspronkelijke text is te vinden in nr. 20 van deze jaargang.*

## **Theologische Hogeschool Hamilton. Verslag Schoolavond.**

*Referaat Dr. J. Faber: "Wie zegt gij dat ik ben?" Moderne stromingen in de Christologie.*

De Christusbeschouwing komt in de huidige theologische ontwikkeling steeds opnieuw in de discussie. In 1977 bijvoorbeeld deed een groep Britse theologen een aanval op de aloude leer van de vleeswording onder de uitdagende titel "De mythe van de vleesgeworden God," waarin de uitspraak wordt gedaan dat de noodzaak bestaat om Jezus te erkennen als de man aangesteld door God voor een speciale rol in de Goddelijke raad, maar dat begrippen als "Vleesgeworden God," en "tweede persoon van de Heilige Drie-eenheid" mythologische of dichtelijke manieren zijn om Zijn betekenis voor ons uit te drukken. In antwoord daartegen werden, eveneens in 1977, een aantal opstellen uitgegeven onder redactie van Michael Green met als titel: "De waarheid van God's vleeswording." Een uitgave van opstellen onder de titel "Vleeswording en Mythe; het debat voortgezet" is nu aangekondigd, waarin vertegenwoordigers van deze beide opinies in de anglikaanse kerk hun kritieken zullen voortzetten. Een ander werk waarvan

de uitgave hier is aangekondigd is een engelse vertaling van het werk van Dr. H. Berkhof, "Christelijk geloof, een inleiding tot de geloofsleer." Ik verwacht dat dit dogmatisch handboek in Amerika grote invloed zal hebben. Als we dan de christologie van Berkhof in het raam van zijn dogmatiek bezien, valt het op dat hij meegaat in de moderne richting waarbij men tegenover begripsomschrijvingen, verhoudingen en werkingen stelt. Zo komt men dan te spreken van "openbaring als ontmoetingsgebeuren." De moderne mens denkt niet in categorieën van substantie of wezen, maar in functies en verhoudingen. Men vraagt niet, "Wat is dit?"; men vraagt "Hoe werkt het?" Tegenover zulke begripsomschrijvingen als "twee naturen in een persoon" uit de belijdenis van Nicea en van het Chalcedon, die volgens Berkhof uit de Griekse denkwereld voortkomen en die voor het persoonlijke geloofsleven van de moderne functioneel denkende mens geen waarde meer hebben, zegt hij het bijbelse verbondsmatige spreken te stellen over "Messias," "Knecht des Heren" of "Zoon van God." Het zoonschap van God is dan een heilshistorisch gegeven dat in Jezus zijn vervulling vindt. Nu zijn dit bekende woorden: "Verbondsmatig, en heilshistorisch." Maar betekent het dat Berkhof met de katholieke kerk aangaande Jezus Christus belijdt, dat Hij is de eniggeboren Zoon van God, geboren uit de Vader voor alle eeuwen; God uit God, Licht uit Licht, waarachtig God uit waarachtig God? Nee, we moeten volgens Berkhof de speciale eigenschappen van Jezus binnen Zijn mens-zijn situeren en niet herleiden tot het bezit van een dubbele natuur. Binnen dat raam is er geen ruimte voor prae-existentie: Hij kon toch niet bestaan voor Hij geboren was. Bijbelteksten die daarop zouden wijzen, zoals Philippenzen 2:5 worden dan mythische taal waarin Paulus het goddelijk initiatief verheerlijkt.

Dr. Faber vatte zijn betoog in een viertal punten samen:

1. Deze moderne Christologie wijkt af van de oude belijdenis van de Kerk, zowel het spreken van Nicea als van Chalcedon omdat het God-zijn van Christus in principe wordt ontkend.

2. Wat betreft de kritiek dat de oude Kerk verward was in Grieks ontologische beschouwingwijzen, ver-

gete men niet dat Grieks de taal van het Nieuwe Testament was, en dat de Kerk in die dagen zich in de griekse taal uitdrukte. Het is wel merkwaardig dat de kerk slechts na aarzeling zulke uitdrukkingen gebruikte als "van hetzelfde wezen met de Vader." Slechts toen zulk woordgebruik nodig was in de bestrijding van Arius werd het officieel uitgesproken. In wezen is Berkhof's begrip van de ontmoeting meer gedrenkt in de filosofie van het existentialisme dan dat het confessionele spreken van de oude kerk beïnvloed is door de griekse wereldbeschouwing.

3. Deze christologie is in wezen alleen mogelijk als men de schriftuurlijke regels voor de schriftverklaring opzij zet. Zodoende komt men terecht via de schriftkritiek bij de liberale theologie.

4. a. De leer van de drie-eenheid wordt in deze beschouwing afgevoerd. Men spreekt nog wel dezelfde woorden uit, maar men bedoelt in wezen iets anders. In dit zogenaamde verbondsmatige spreken is de Vader dan de Goddelijke Partner, de Zoon is de menselijke vertegenwoordiger, en de Geest de band tussen die beiden en daarom ook tussen de Zoon en de zonen die hij tot de Vader trekt.

b. Een ander gevolg van deze leer is dat de maagdelijke geboorte wordt ontkend. Dit was slechts een latere verfraaiing door de traditie. Berkhof betreurt het dat in de apostolische geloofsbelijdenis de leer aangaande de maagdelijke geboorte het kenmerk van de orthodoxie is geworden.

c. Door de sterke benadrukking van het werk van Jezus wordt de betekenis van de persoon van de Christus veronachtzaamd. Men spreekt dan liever niet dat Jezus aan het kruis van God verlaten was of dat Hij de straf gedragen heeft. Als men volhoudt dat door Jezus de Zoon, wij zonen worden, dat is, dat wij delen in de relatie van de Vader en de Zoon, dan wordt daardoor tenslotte het oneindig onderscheid tussen schepper en schepsel teniet gedaan, waarbij men wel uit moet komen bij de vergoddelijking van de mens.

Tegenover deze oude dwalingen in hun nieuwe gewaden dienen onze aanstaande predikanten zich te wapenen. Jezus Christus vraagt niet alleen: Wat zeggen de mensen dat de Zoon des mensen is? Hij vraagt ons, wie zegt gij dat ik ben? Spreek dan Petrus na: "Gij zijt de Christus, de Zoon van de levende God." "Broeders, sta op en predik de Christus der Schriften en de Schriften van de Christus."

## Refugees Sponsored by Hamilton

Several months of meetings and preparatory work were culminated with the arrival of three Vietnamese families at Hamilton Airport on Monday, September 24, 1979.

Earlier this year the government challenged Church and private groups to sponsor Vietnamese refugees. Hamilton's Cornerstone Church enthusiastically accepted the government challenge and began to set the wheels in motion for eventual reception of three Vietnamese families.

Initial meetings held in July and August of this year saw the appointment of Prof. L. Selles as chairman of the "Action Committee Help the Boat People," and the formation of various sub-committees to deal with Housing, Furnishing and Clothing, Employment, Transportation, Reception, and Counselling.

The congregation, when approached and asked for their support, immediately responded with contributions totaling over \$10,000.00 and pledged another \$20,000.00 to be paid when and if required. At this point it became quite apparent that not one or two families would be sponsored as originally hoped for but a total of three families could easily be supported by the funds raised and pledged.

During a visit to Immigration offices members of the Action Committee were informed that applications would be processed without the usual delay if the applications were first approved by a government recognized relief

agency. The Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, recognized as such a relief agency, was contacted and Rev. A. Van Eek, executive secretary of this body immediately agreed to help in the endeavour.

Applications were soon endorsed by Rev. Van Eek and at a subsequent meeting with him members of the liaison committee received answers to their numerous questions.

With some of the initial work out of the way and many members of the sub-committees now actively engaged in the various preparatory functions it was felt another meeting should be held to keep everyone informed. On August 22, 1979, all the sub-committees came together and the conveners of each committee gave a report on their areas of responsibility.

For the liaison committee Prof. Selles passed on a number of suggestions that were made by other sponsoring groups. It was deemed important that refugees once arrived be put in touch with other Vietnamese and that interpreters be provided so that some meaningful dialogue could take place between the refugees and the Christian sponsoring group. Rev. Daniels of the Chinese Alliance Church had been contacted and was willing to co-operate in securing the necessary interpreters.

Other matters dealt with during the meeting concerned housing, clothing, furniture, and a discussion regarding church attendance for the new families.

On Wednesday, September nineteenth, committee members were informed that their dependants would arrive via Nordair on September twenty-third or twenty-fourth. Those expected would be the families of three brother and their mother — a total of seventeen people. A great deal of activity took place in the next few days. Housing arrangements were made with C.M.H.C. and suitable homes were provided without delay. The Furniture and Clothing Committee prepared the homes for habitation and Nick Nyenhuis, well-known for his ingenious mechanical ability, was able to make repairs and necessary mechanical and electrical connections to the appliances which had been donated.

At a hastily called meeting, last minute arrangements were made for transportation and reception of the Vietnamese arrivals and Bill Wildeboer was enlisted to organize the reception.

Mr. Wildeboer gathered all his helpers together at Hamilton Airport at 7:30 p.m. Monday, September 24th. Last minute instructions were given and numbers were passed out to counsellors charged with the responsibility for each family. A corresponding number was later given to each family. In this way they were able to identify the person who was charged with their care. Upon arrival, the new immigrants were met by a substantial number of curious Canadian Reformed people. No doubt they felt a bit uneasy with all this attention thrust upon them. The fact that they understood no English or French didn't help matters, all communication had to take place by gestures or through interpreters. However, when Mr. Wildeboer in a later statement welcomed the group to their new homeland, they indicated they were happy to be here and appreciated all the help extended to them.

The three families, who appeared extremely tired, were soon transported to their new homes. Although they were unfamiliar with many of the items found in their homes they were obviously very pleased with their luxurious new surroundings. An interpreter instructed one family in the use of their appliances, and one of the older girls in the family, who was able to digest this information quite readily, passed it on to the other families. At this stage the new families were left on their own and able to get some much needed sleep.

The committee members departed for Prof. Selles' house to discuss ar-



*Mrs. Selles tries valiantly to communicate with Mr. Huyhn.*





*Arrival of Vietnamese families at Hamilton Airport.*

rangements for the next few days. It was decided at this point that one person should be assigned to each family to help them get accustomed to their new routines — shopping, riding the bus, going to the doctor, etc.

Mrs. De Jong, Mrs. Schuurman, and Mrs. Vanderbrugghen were given the task of familiarizing the Vietnamese with their new surroundings. Occasionally an interpreter provided help but all too often the ladies were left without any help at all.

Harmina Vanderbrugghen writes that her family was fascinated and overwhelmed with their new home and furnishings. Communication is difficult and often amounts to little more than a smile. The new residents were found at first to be rather shy and reserved but after several days of visits, shopping excursions etc., a definite warming trend seemed to develop. The children especially extended an enthusiastic welcome on the counselors' arrival. Harmina notes that the Vietnamese are reluctant to take the money given to them for groceries and other necessities. It appears that the three fathers are eager to make it on their own.

Liz De Jong reported that Vietnamese customs are somewhat different from ours. Bare feet in the house seems to be the order of the day and beds are being used without sheets or blankets. Some customs are the same, however: Vietnamese children also like to scribble on the walls.

Liz mentioned that the children are happy and excited with all their new toys. Communication is difficult but all are anxious to learn their new language.

Liz joined her family for a rice lunch one day. The family squatted around the table top which had been placed on the floor and lunch was eaten with chopsticks.

While the girls were busy with the ladies in the family, the men were taken to their new place of employment — a bakery close to their residence.

On Sunday, September thirtieth, the congregation in Hamilton was pleasantly surprised when three good looking and neatly dressed Vietnamese families joined them for the morning worship service. Prof. Selles who led the services that day welcomed the visitors in the name of the Lord.

At a congregational meeting held on Friday, October twelfth, the three families had an opportunity to meet their sponsoring group. Rev. Huizinga, who chaired the meeting, introduced the families and spoke a few words of welcome which were translated by interpreter Elena Yip. From questions asked by members of the congregation it was learned the Huynh families had resided in a small village in South Vietnam. They were of Chinese ancestry, one being a cook while the other two were bakers by trade. A bake shop operated by the brothers produced goods that were sold mainly on the market.

Until the time that the communists took control of their country the older children had been able to attend school but were prevented from doing so after the communist takeover.

When asked about their first impressions, one of the brothers replied that they had been warned that Canada would be a cold and unpleasant place. Upon arrival they found Canada was indeed cold but they received a warm welcome and they were very happy in the knowledge that they were entering a free country which presented unlimited educational possibilities.

In a prepared statement written in their Cantonese language and translated by Elena, the families gave the following account:

They first of all expressed that they were very thankful to this Christian Church for helping them come to Canada, for arranging work, clothing, education for their children, giving Christian friendship and arranging for their unbelievably nice homes. They said it was difficult to express their thankfulness to the congregation.

Appreciation was also directed toward the Canadian government for allowing them to settle in Canada.

It was mentioned that freedom no longer existed in Vietnam. Family members were separated from each other and educational possibilities no longer existed. The brothers reported that they left Vietnam for Malaysia where they experienced sickness, no medication and an unfriendly reception. They departed from Malaysia by boat and settled on an offshore island where they were spotted from the air, rescued and taken to a refugee camp back in Malaysia.

All these events took place over a period of five months. During this time one Huynh family lost a child in Malaysia while another lost a child on the boat trip.

Rev. Huizinga at this point presented the three families with Bibles in the Cantonese language and also in English. He explained that in these pages they would find the reason why this group of Christian people took the trouble and gave their money to help bring them to Canada.

As a token of appreciation for all the help they had extended, the two interpreters Elena Yip and Connie Yang were presented with gift certificates to a Christian bookstore.

A slide show of the mission in Brazil was then presented for the benefit of the congregation and refugees. Following intermission, the refugee families were driven home.

Although their immediate needs have been met, the families still require the continued support of their counselors and other committee members. Sponsoring these families has certainly been a novel experience. Committee members have had to help and communicate with people from an alien culture, religion, and language. It presented an opportunity for a large number from the congregation to become actively involved in a very meaningful and worthwhile project. Christian love was extended to people who have fled persecution and arrived in our country destitute and in real need of help.

C. HEERINGA

# Fraser Valley Women's League Day

Wednesday, June 27, marked the day of the 16th Annual League Day of the Women's Societies of the Fraser Valley which was attended by approximately 150 ladies. This year the Women's Society "The Lord Is Our Refuge" of Chilliwack hosted the event.

At about 9:30 a.m. women started to arrive from all over the Valley, and some refreshments were served.

The meeting was called to order by our chairlady, Mrs. A.C. Lengkeek, shortly after ten o'clock. She opened it by letting us sing from Psalm 48, stanzas 1 and 4, "Great is the Lord, come sing His laud . . . Thy right hand holds the victory." We were then to open our Bibles and she read with us from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 7. Then we humbled ourselves before the Lord and she led us in prayer.

A hearty word of welcome was spoken, especially to some visiting sisters from Holland, urging them not to hesitate to take part in the discussions on account of language barriers, assuring them that they would be most welcome to state their questions or comments in Dutch. We then sang again from our *Book of Praise*, Psalm 101, stanzas 1, 2, and 3.

The floor was then given to Mrs. M. de Glint who was to introduce the topic which she chose entitled, "Our Calling in Being Married and Being Single," based on the chapter which we read before. Prof. Dr. J. van Bruggen's book, *Het huwelijk gewogen*, was the main reference material which she had used; also, Calvin's Commentary, Tyndale New Testament Commentary, and *Korte Verklaring* of Grosheide on the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. It was pointed out that in I Corinthians 7, Paul does not make a distinction between the married and unmarried state of life as the one being inferior to the other. He does not elevate the marriage state to the extent that it is the only way to serve the Lord, but he also explains how holy the marriage state is. The Lord does not want this bond to be broken, even if one of the marriage partners remains in unbelief, because the holy life of the believing partner can sanctify the unbeliever. Since the earthly worries are many, it is easier for some people to

serve the Lord in an unmarried state. Although God created man male and female, and the cultural mandate remains that we have to fill the earth, God's plan for salvation does not always require a union in marriage in order to serve Him. In heaven there will be no marriage. Looking forward to God's new creation, a believer can give himself in the service of his Creator without being married.

Before the topic was given into discussion we sang several stanzas of Hymn 31, based on Psalm 139 ("O Lord, Thou hast searched me . . ."). Then questions were invited and it did not take long before we all became involved in a lively debate. During this period several aspects of the topic were elaborated on. The fact that even though (according to Paul's letter) people were not to yoke themselves together with unbelievers, if one voluntarily committed oneself to such a union, he should bear the consequences in faith, and may not divorce. Divorce can never be justified simply because it would be easier for the believer to serve the Lord. It would only mean loading another sin upon a sin, especially if there are also children involved. God has His way of dealing with our shortcomings and sin, and His ways are never the easy way out. But forgiveness of sin is guaranteed, and Christ's yoke is easy and His burden is light. There appeared to be some disagreement on this point and in connection with this some more related questions came up. Is Paul actually condoning premarital sex relations in verse 36, when he refers to ". . . anyone who thinks that he is not behaving properly towards his betrothed because his passions are strong . . ."? When does marriage start? It was explained that in this verse Paul is not referring to a courtship but rather to a father and daughter relationship, and that the Revised Standard Version of the Bible implies a wrong interpretation of God's Word. The Bible certainly does not condone such improper conduct outside of marriage. Neither can it be so that "burning with desire" would be the only reason to get married and that, on the other hand, if a person is able to keep this natural desire under control, he should stay single. Besides, a Christian

marriage does not imply a free ticket to uncontrolled natural desires. Regarding the second question, we should not consider a sinful relationship before marriage as already being married before the Lord, and that the breaking up of such a relationship would actually mean a divorce. It would not be a divorce, but it would be just as sinful. For what is faith when our standards of life become so distorted? What counts is: what does God's Word say regardless of the circumstances. It was also mentioned that people can have wrong reasons for staying single. Time, as usual, was much too short to cover all the aspects, but it can be said that the introducer stood her ground and gave the impression that much study was done and insight gained from which we all did profit. The discussion was then closed and the Chairlady thanked Mrs. de Glint for her nicely-given presentation.

The next point on the program was a free contribution by Mrs. J. Aikema of Cloverdale. She read an article for us from *Almond Branch* (September '77) entitled, "Do I Have To?" which was translated and taken from a Dutch periodical, *De Poortwake*. Yes, a good question: Do we have to go to society? Do we have to study God's Word? Yes, we do. God requires of us that we commit ourselves to this task, and give it priority. After this the morning session was closed with the singing of our League Song.

A well-prepared cold lunch was waiting for us, and we all went downstairs to enjoy our meal. And did we ever! A pat on the back goes to those Ladies of Chilliwack who were in charge of the preparation. More than just refreshed, we went upstairs again for the afternoon session.

Mrs. S. Faber of New Westminster in the chair opened it by letting us sing from Psalm 92, stanzas 1, 2, 3, and 4 (A song for the Sabbath). The speaker, Rev. J. Visscher, was then introduced and given the floor. He gave an informative address entitled "The Inerrancy of the Bible." His references were Harold Lindsell's book *The Battle for the Bible*, back issues of *The Outlook* (Journal of Reformed Fellowship), E. Young's *Thy Word is Truth*, and J. Rodger's on Biblical Authority. Rev.

Visscher related to us that the book of Lindsell has shaken up the Evangelical world, because Harold Lindsell, an Evangelical himself and editor of *Christianity Today*, dared to become controversial in the New Evangelical movement. Among the Bible-believing Evangelicals who have aligned themselves from different denominations, there are now found those who reject the inerrancy of the Bible. Lindsell has become aware of this and deems it high time to raise a warning finger. The New Evangelical movement stands between modernistic liberalism and fundamentalism. Modernism is rejected because it denies the main doctrines of the Bible. Fundamentalism is rejected because it took a separate stand against apostasy; a stand which, according to the New Evangelicals, was much too harsh, because it did not apply the Gospel to the sociological, political, and economic areas of life. Now the Evangelicals have allowed a situation in which there is no clear-cut position and many have joined the ranks of the New Evangelicals but do not confess the orthodox doctrinal position. Do the New Evangelicals appreciate what Lindsell has done? Rev. Visscher informed us about three different attitudes. There are, in the first place, those who whole-

heartedly agree with Lindsell and are convinced that he has done the Evangelical world a great service by exposing this apostasy. Then there are, in the second place, those who entirely disagree with him and openly reject the Bible as the infallible Word of God; in other words, they believe that the Bible has errors. A third category agrees with Lindsell as far as inerrancy is concerned but are upset with him because he has brought the diversity out into the open by writing this book. They feel that was not at all necessary and that it will only bring more division and cause the world to scorn. But for Lindsell silence in this matter is considered to be a grave sin. Time did not permit a lengthy discussion on this topic, so the speaker was able to escape the more vital questions which are of no concern, because they were not asked! The less vital ones did not directly pertain to the topic but had to do with the translation of the Bible by people who, themselves, reject the main doctrines of the Bible, since in the morning session the Revised Standard Version of the Bible had caused some concern. Although these questions may appear less vital, they seem to be growing more important every day, because more and more new Bible translations are flooding the

market. Since time was too short, these questions more or less remained hanging in the air and created much food for thought. The chairlady spoke a few words of thanks to Rev. Visscher for his willingness to deliver this very enlightening speech after which he and his wife and infant daughter disappeared from the scene.

A perfect cool-off method was applied by the ladies of Abbotsford who entertained us with a Biblical quiz. A general discussion in which things of a more domestic nature were brought forward, was the last point on the program. Then we joined in song once more. From Psalm 119 we sang, "Thy testimonies are forever mine . . . How wondrous are they, O Lord," after which Mrs. Faber led in thanksgiving prayer. Before everyone left refreshments were served again, and we all got the opportunity to sign the greeting cards which were to be sent to our missionary families.

Looking back on a wonderful day of fellowship it can indeed be considered a perfect event to start off the summer holiday season.

On behalf of the Fraser Valley  
Women's Societies,  
A. HEETEBRIJ

## PRESS RELEASE

*of the meeting of the Regional Board of the Canadian Reformed High School Association held on October 15, 1979.*

We sang Psalm 68:1, 8. The Chairman read from Scripture, Psalm 67 and led in prayer. The agenda for the meeting is adopted.

1. Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting are adopted as presented.

2. Incoming Mail: Letter of resignation is received from our school secretary, Mrs. A. Nobel, who wants to be relieved of her duties as of December 22, 1979. Applications are invited.

3. Outgoing Mail: Letter to a member of the society of Lincoln, who has raised objections to certain operations of the school. This member again is urged to meet with the Executive Committee.

4. Election: An election is held for members of the Executive Committee.

Elected are: J. Schutten, chairman; G. DeBoer, vice-chairman, A.J. Hordyk, secretary; L. Jagt, recording secretary; H.F. Stoffels, treasurer.

5. Reports: a) Principal's report is read by the principal and is adopted. From this report we learn that on October 26, 1979 the commencement will be held; report cards for the first quarter will be handed out around November 9, 1979. The C.R.T.A. Convention — P.D. Day will be on October 26, 1979, and the Rev. J. DeJong will speak on "Our Cultural Mandate" at the Hamilton "Timothy" School. Board members are welcome to attend. It is also mentioned that a candle selling program has been initiated by one of the teachers, Miss Metzlar, in order that a small computer may be purchased. b) Education Committee Report is read and adopted. Class visits have been arranged, and an evening with the teach-

ers has been scheduled for February 13, 1980. The Education Committee proposes to appoint Mr. G. Kroeze for the position of Math and Physics teacher for the year 1980/1981; this proposal is adopted. c) Transportation Committee Report is read and adopted. d) Salary Committee Report is read and adopted. e) Maintenance Committee Report is read and adopted.

6. Question period.

7. After singing Psalm 68:11, 12, br. Aasman leads in thanksgiving; the chairman closes the meeting.

8. Next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 1979.

### OUR COVER

*United Church, 1876 Merivale Road, used by the Canadian Reformed Church of Ottawa.*

### FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on Saturday, November 10, 1979.

# A Letter to My Daughter

Dean Jean,

Glad to have you back on the line again, even if it is only on paper. I missed your letters this summer. But I understand that with all the excitement you forgot about the old man back home.

So you were made aware of some new things on your travels, eh? Did you never read the forms in the back of the Book of Praise? Or was that just theory by which you were not affected, and did reality hit you where it hurts? Anyway I suppose you are looking for some answers.

Let me start with the easiest one, not because it is really so easy, but because what I want to say about it can be said in a few words. I mean the mixed marriages. In the old country there is a saying: "Twee geloven op een kussen, daar slaapt de duivel tussen!" or in plain English: "If you have two beliefs in one bed, the devil is sleeping in between." And he seldom sleeps! No matter whether the other is a believer somewhere else or not, I have seldom seen it work out right. Have you considered the children? Do they go with the father or with the mother on Sunday morning? Or will they be divided 50/50? Do you think that is ideal? No, of course not! So one partner will have to go over with the other. You know that we are quite adamant about where the church is. Other people are not, and perhaps you are inclined to their way of thinking, because "there are also believers in other churches," are there not?

About this last part I read a good answer lately. Although the Israelites were called by the LORD to the temple in Jerusalem, that did not prohibit the LORD to work also in the realm of the 10 tribes. In other words: although we are limited to one church, to the church, the Lord is not limited, and He can also work somewhere else, even in the world. But may we speculate on that?

Furthermore, although other people are not so adamant about the church and say that there is no difference . . . just look around you and you will discover that the ones who say that there is no difference are usually the ones who never change. So, who is adamant after all?

I hope this will give you enough food for thought, and I trust that in this case your problem will no longer be a problem.

The case of the admonishment by the whole congregation will need some more time. You figure that this is more the task of the elders and older people. I think you are wrong there. I think especially young people can do important work here. They may get better results than older people, but I must say that it will be much more difficult for them.

First of all, those people, no matter what sin they are committing, are rebellious and in a rebellious mood. With the elders they see "authority" coming and their first reaction is "defence." They either close up or attack. Very seldom are they open for discussion or for listening. So any older person or elder starts off with a definite disadvantage.

Besides that, the advantage of experience in older persons is quite often offset by a "holier-than-thou" attitude, even if only in the imagination of the sinner. For young people this difficulty is even greater than with older people, making it much more difficult, as I said already.

However, when such a young person approaches the sinner, he will not be "rebellious, because he sees authority coming." He will not take a defensive stand right at the start. In other words, he will be frank and open, because he figures that this young person is not a hard nut to crack. If then the young person does not spoil the situation by a haughty, authoritative, and holier-than-thou attitude, he has a good start. The difficulty is to keep that advantage and to admonish without becoming haughty and authoritative.

Just remember, however (suppose you are that young person), that, but for the grace of God, you would also be in that sinner's chair. You are a sinner, just like him or her. So be humble; do not sit down over against him, but beside him, figuratively speaking, of course. There is no commandment that you have not transgressed, just like he or she, be it perhaps in a different way. Keep that in mind; don't treat him or her as a worse sinner than you are yourself, but talk about the grace of God, about the "great things" the Lord has done to you! Remember?

What more do I have to say, Jean? From here on you are on your own, but not really, for "the right Man of God's own choosing" is at your side. And He will stay there as long as you stay humble.

Perhaps you say: "Don't ministers and elders have the same?"

Oh, certainly, but you were in doubt about what YOU could do, and I hope you see now that you are not in a bad position, but that you even have an advantage over the older people. Use it, Jean, for who knows, perhaps you might bring joy in heaven about that one sinner that repents.

Love,  
Dad.

# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Have you been busy raking leaves and playing in them?  
 Did you have a fire to burn them?  
 Lots of fun, all those leaves, aren't they?  
 How it makes the trees look bare, though!  
 But you're looking forward to winter fun, right?  
 Summer is long gone, fall leaves have blown away.  
 Time to get out skates and sleds.  
 Oh that first snowfall!  
 Isn't it exciting!  
 Isn't it lovely, how the seasons change?  
 That way there's always something new!

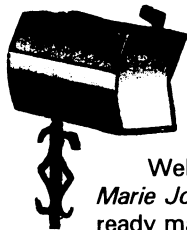
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It's still a little early, I know. But let's all wish all the Busy Beavers celebrating their birthday in December a very happy day with your family and friends. Here's hoping you have a really good time and many happy returns of the day! May the Lord guide and keep you all in the year ahead.

This goes especially for Busy Beaver *Alinda Kuik*, who celebrates her birthday in Brazil, far away from us. Have a very happy day, Alinda. Will you have some real Brazilian treats?

Bryan Jongbloed	December 2	Anna	December 15
Pieter Nyenhuis	5	Riemersma	
Martin VanderWel	5	Denise Van Amerongen	15
Yolanda Jongasma	6	Elaine Bisschop	16
Alinda Kuik	6	Jacqueline Kobes	17
Albert Riemersma	6	Margaret Eelhart	18
Glenn Leffers	7	Charles Lodder	19
Bernard Van Spronsen	7	Walter Van Grootheest	19
Loretta Dam	8	Case Hoff	20
Wilma De Vos	8	Jacky Nyenhuis	26
John Bos	10	Betty Ann Vander Meulen	28
Edith Hofsink	10	David Nienhuis	29
Sharon Koerselman	11	Mirjam Vander Bruggen	29
Wendy Endeman	12	Miriam Bosma	30
Jasper Harlaar	12	Wilma Bouwman	30
Linda Oostdijk	14	Louis Dykstra	30
		Christina Oosterhoff	31

(If any of the Busy Beavers have "outgrown" the Birthday List, please drop me a line and tell me so.)



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Anne-Marie Jonker*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already making up such an interesting puzzle for us. Keep up the good work! Do you help look after your little sister, Anne-Marie? I think she loves to have you play with her, am I right?

Hello *Bryan Jongbloed*. A big welcome to you, too, Bryan. Thank you for a very nice picture. Will you write us again sometime? Bye for now, Bryan.

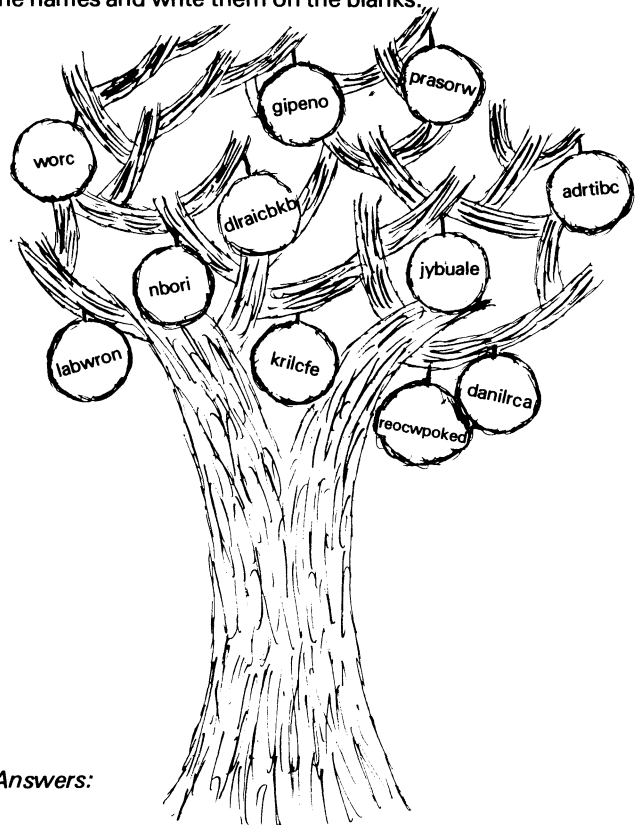
Thank you for an interesting puzzle, *Annette Vanandel*. I think the Busy Beavers will really enjoy doing it. It was nice hearing from you again, Annette. Bye for now. Write again soon.

## QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Anne-Marie Jonker* has a puzzle for us. Thanks for sharing, Anne-Marie.

### Names of Birds

Do you see them hiding among the apples? Unscramble the names and write them on the blanks.



Answers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_