

Tentative Report on the Matter of Women's Voting Rights ⁽²⁾

VII. WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. *The Gospels*

Between the Old and the New Testament dispensation there is no radical difference in teaching regarding the position of the woman. We see this almost immediately in the way that our Lord viewed the opposite sex. He never considered women to be inferior to men. Whereas in His days some expressed themselves to the effect that they were grateful that they had not been created as women, the Christ had females among His closest friends and followers (Jn. 11:5).¹¹ He upheld the sanctity of marriage and expressed His disapproval of the convenient way that men divorced their wives in the times of Moses (Mk. 10:1-12). He healed a number of women from their infirmities (Matt. 8:14-17; Lk. 13:10-17; Mk. 5:25-34). He even went out of His way to converse freely with the Samaritan woman, something which official Judaism of those days considered a scandalous thing (Jn. 4:7-38). He also made mention of the fact that due to the resurrection women as well as men would be like "angels in heaven" (Mk. 12:25).

As for the role of women in the church, the Gospels do not contain any statements that bear directly on the issue of women ruling, teaching or voting.

B. *The Acts of the Apostles*

(i) *Acts 1:15-26*

That women had a place in the New Testament church, and an important place at that, is evident also in Acts. In chapter one we are informed that when the apostles "devoted themselves to prayer" they did so "together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus" (Acts 1:14). Immediately following that we are told about the replacement of Judas Iscariot in the verses 15-26.

Now there are a number of details in these verses that require our attention. In the first place, verse 16 informs us that Peter began his speech with "brethren" or literally "men and brethren."

This has led some to assume that at this particular meeting only men were present; however the word "brethren" can also include women.¹² That it was mainly the men who were being addressed by Peter may be the case seeing that the literal expression is "men and brethren" and seeing the customs of the time. As to whether or not women took an active part in the meeting, there is no way of determining that, although it seems doubtful.¹³

In the second place, it is noteworthy that this passage continues to maintain that the apostolic circle must be male. Our Lord chose twelve males as apostles, and here, when a replacement is sought for Judas Iscariot, the choice is quite clearly between two males — Justus and Matthias.

In the third place, there is verse 26 which states "and they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was enrolled with the eleven apostles." It is especially the phrase "and they cast lots" that calls for our attention. Some have tended to interpret these words as if a vote was held among the members present — males only or males and females — and that the leading candidate won. We would, however, point out that the translation "and they cast lots for them" is not totally accurate. Literally, it says "and they gave lots to them."¹⁴ This raises the question of *who* gave lots to *whom*. Did the members give lots to the apostles concerning these men? Did the apostles give lots to the nominees? Did the nominees pass them back to the apostles? We cannot be certain. Indeed we have to admit that on the basis of the scanty description which Acts gives, we are unable to reconstruct the actual procedure of selection. Was it by the casting lots or otherwise? How were the lots cast? Was it a majority vote that prevailed, a vote taken among the apostles only or the apostles and the other male (and female) participants? We cannot say. What we can say is that this passage of Scripture does not allow us to make any direct inferences regarding voting for office bearers in general or voting by women in particular.

(ii) *Acts 2:16-18*

The same can be said of Acts 2. There the followers of Christ are all together and the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them. What is particularly noteworthy here is that the Holy Spirit filled them *all* (v. 4), women included. Peter also makes special mention of this fact by citing Joel 2:28-32 and stating,

"your sons and *daughters* shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams yea, and on my menservants and my *maidservants* in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy."

Previous to Pentecost the Holy Spirit confined His operations to the narrow limits of Israel and then only to certain people in Israel, but now the Spirit's power and influence is bestowed on believers generally, both young and old, male and female. What a gift this is! Speaking in I Corinthians 14, the apostle Paul states that prophecy is the best and highest gift of the Spirit. The execution of the prophetic task may be done by all — male and female (cf. Acts 21:9). At Pentecost Moses' wish came true, "would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them" (Num. 11:29).

But how does the fact that women may prophesy entitle them as well to ruling and official teaching in the church? Does it do away with all restrictions also as these pertain to the offices in the church?¹⁵ We think not. As we have mentioned already, we maintain that prophesy is an activity to be distinguished from ruling and teaching. The Lord uses all kinds of believers to prophesy, to witness, to testify today, but He does not allow all kinds of believers to *rule* His church.

(iii) *Acts 6:1-5*

Another passage in Acts which deserves our attention is found in chapter 6:1-5, the selection of the seven "deacons." Here we may say that it is even more likely that women were present at the gathering. Again there is no direct proof of this; however, the phrases "body of the disciples" (v. 2), "brethren" (v. 3) and "the whole multitude" (v. 5) seem to indicate this very strongly. This is especially true because

the word "multitude" is used in chapter 5:14 and there it includes women.

With regard to the matter of selecting the seven, verses 3 and 5 indicate that the "multitude" did the choosing, although it was very definitely under the leadership and supervision of the Twelve. Did the women take part? There are some who answer "yes, because in verse 5 it speaks of 'the whole multitude.'" There are others who say "no." Lenski, a reputable Lutheran exegete, and one of the few who elaborates on this process of selection, states in his commentary on Acts,

"Luke does not need to say that only those who had attained the proper age took part in this meeting in accord with the spirit of the Fourth Commandment, Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20; likewise, he need not mention the fact that only men voted in accord with the Jewish practice which was based on Gen. 2:18-23; 3:16, and was for this very reason the apostolic practice, I Tim. 2:12-14. This point has now become controversial, but exegetically neither the apostolic practice itself nor the grounds on which it rests, God's creation and thus nature and the condition produced by the fall, can be controverted."¹⁶

Lenski's point, and that of others as well, is that the expression "the whole multitude" cannot possibly mean "whole" in the sense of everyone: men, women and children. It would be absurd to assert this. So the question becomes, "where must the line be drawn?" Lenski draws it at men, thereby excluding children and women, and would seem to regard the men as being the representatives of the whole multitude. What they did would automatically meet with the approval of their wives and children, seeing the position and standing the husband and father had in those days.

Needless to say this point can be argued about at great length. In the final analysis it is doubtful whether one will be able to speak a conclusive word about the matter of female involvement in this passage. Absolute deductions and applications for our modern situation cannot be derived from this passage.

(iv) Acts 15:22

In this verse we read the following: "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas." Also in this passage, as with the previous one, the

controversy swirls around the meaning of a certain expression, namely "the whole church."

Yet here again the possibility exists for two different interpretations, the one arguing that it includes women and the other that it excludes them. Again your Committee cannot make an absolute choice for the one or the other; however it feels that the "excluding position" is much more likely (see Lenski, quoted above). Also we would draw your attention once again to the fact that it is very clearly *men* who are delegated to go to Antioch. Hence "the whole church" seems to refer to the men who represented the whole church, also the wives and children.

C. The Epistles

(i) Galatians 3:28

Surely one of the most frequently quoted texts in this matter of women and the church is Galatians 3:28. There the apostle Paul says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave or free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In response to this text there are those who argue that the apostle here abolishes all distinctions in the church of Jesus Christ as they relate to race, social standing and sexuality. The Jew is equal to the Greek, the slave to the free man, and the female to the male. Furthermore, this text is said to imply that within the church no distinction may any longer be made between what responsibilities are entrusted by the Lord to male and to female. They are equal participants in every facet of the church's ministry.

Nevertheless, we believe that such an interpretation of Galatians 3:28 is going to extremes, to say the least, and is actually a misinterpretation. The basic point that the apostle is intent on making is that ethnic, racial, social and sexual factors are not determinative in regard to one's spiritual standing in Christ.¹⁷ All believers are equal participants of the benefits bestowed by Christ. As inhabitants of this world we recognize the sad fact that our ethnic origin, our social standing, our sexuality may produce discrimination and inequality, but as children of God, as believers in Christ, we are to stand firm in the conviction that we are "all one in Christ Jesus."¹⁸ In our relationship to Jesus Christ there is no difference. He does not have different classes of followers.

But whereas our standing before

Christ is equal, our roles and responsibilities in Christ's church are not all identical. The Lord continues to entrust different duties to males and females, husbands and wives, employers and employees, rulers and subjects. These must be recognized, respected and obeyed.

(ii) I Corinthians 11:2-16

Another Scripture passage that is very pertinent to our discussion is I Corinthians 11:2-16. We begin with verse 3.

In this particular verse the apostle Paul describes what may be called a "hierarchy of headships."¹⁹ That this concept of headship is not demeaning or insulting is established by the fact that Paul also refers to the headship of Christ over every man and the headship of God over Christ. It is note-



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worthy too that here an oft contested role relationship, that of man being the head of the woman, is sandwiched between two incontestable ones.²⁰

Still, the question may be asked, "what is meant by the word 'headship'?" The scholars are not unanimous on this point; however, your Committee believes that it refers to two basic ideas, that of *rulership* and that of *origin*. Man is the head of the woman and rules over her (cf. I Tim. 2) and man is the origin, the source of the woman. She was made from him (Gen. 2:21-23). Of the two ideas, we would give the greater emphasis to the concept of rulership. As Christ is the head (ruler) of every man, so man is the head (ruler) of the woman, and the Father is the head (ruler) of Christ (I Cor. 11:3).²¹

Verses 4-6.

From these verses we may digest the fact that both men and women are allowed to pray and prophesy in church. The bone of contention is *how* should they do this? It seems that in Corinth some ladies were not too pleased with the whole idea of headship and with the Biblical teaching on these points. Purposely they went about with their heads uncovered. This was to demonstrate their new found freedom, independence and equality.²²

The apostle Paul, however, is not in agreement with their attitude and approach. He admonishes them and tells them to veil themselves. "For" he says, "if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her wear a veil" (v. 6).

Of course this raises the question "why? why must a woman go about veiled? why may a man go about unveiled?" We would answer with the following quotation;

"The husband shows his dependence upon Christ (and thus his dignity) by worshipping unveiled (11:4), 'since he is the image and glory of God' (11:7). The expression of this dependence, which is his glory, lies in being bare-headed.

The wife's dependence upon her husband is reflected in her worshipping veiled (11:5). As it is shameful for her to be shaven or have short hair — signs of disgrace and excommunication from the community — so it is shameful for her to worship unveiled, since 'woman is the glory of man' (11:7) and symbolizes her dependence upon him through her veil (11:10). Thus she would be stepping out of the established order if she cast her veil aside, like a prostitute or widow. This would be an abuse of her freedom in Christ."²³

Verses 7-10.

Here in the verses 7-10 the basic argument of headship is continued. Only now the element of *origin* in headship begins to receive stress, specifically the *order* in this origin. Man is described as being created first and then the woman. Also Paul stresses that this order reveals a fundamental fact of life, namely man was not created for woman but woman for the man. Closely linked to this is the fact that Paul states that man is "the image and glory of God," whereas the woman is "the glory of man." With regard to *origin* man is *directly* derived from God who breathed into him the breath of life. This makes him God's image and glory. As for the woman she is *directly* made by God from man and hence is described as man's glory. Does this mean that the woman is any less the image of God? We do not think so since the language of Genesis 1:27 is clear. Both man and woman are made in God's image.

As regards to the expression found in verse 10 "because of the angels," your Committee could not come to any firm conclusion as to its meaning. We would ask you to consider the following as a possible interpretation, namely, the angels serve as ministering spirits doing the bidding of the Lord and serving the needs of the believers. It would be insulting to them if God's created order, as this relates especially to man and woman, was negated and if thereby marriages was dishonoured. So the woman should wear a veil, not only because that is showing respect for God's creative work, but also because it pleases the angels.²⁴

Verses 11-16

In these verses the apostle argues that although differences exist between man and woman, there is nevertheless a relationship of mutual interdependence between them. In addition he touches on the matter of hair and states that while short hair is honourable for the man, long hair is honourable for the woman. A woman's long hair is like a veil which acts as a covering.

Now there are those who state that today, for consistency sake with I Corinthians 11, female believers ought to have long hair and covered heads, whereas men should have the opposite. This viewpoint is not shared by your Committee. We consider that the apostle's injunctions on these points cannot be isolated from the

ideas, customs and mannerisms of his time. What is primary and binding for believers today is not long hair and veils (hats) but the underlying principle of headship and the fact that the wife should conduct herself properly in relation to her husband, to her married state and to the Lord. In addition she must not scandalize the world (if that is possible today) by her behaviour.

(iii) I Corinthians 14:33b-36

Even more pertinent than I Corinthians 11 to the point under discussion is I Corinthians 14:33b-36. It is a very controversial passage, not only because of what it says, but also because of how it relates to I Corinthians 11. In the latter it says, "any woman who prays and prophesies" (v. 5) assuming that any woman is allowed to do these things in the worship services. Whereas I Corinthians 14 states "women should keep silence in the churches" (v. 34). Now it should be noted that in I Corinthians 11 the subject of women "praying and prophesying" receives only incidental mention; whereas I Corinthians 14 (and I Tim. 2) states quite clearly and emphatically that woman may not teach or rule in the church. As such our interpretation of I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 should govern our interpretation of I Corinthians 11 and not vice versa. In addition, various suggestions have been made as to how these two chapters can be reconciled with each other: (1) the praying and the prophesying did not occur in the official worship services.²⁵ (2) These activities did occur in the church; however the apostle Paul does not condone them.²⁶ (3) Women may prophesy in the church because these activities are permissible according to I Corinthians 11.²⁷

²¹Jewett refers to this and quotes Rabbi Juda ben Elai (c.A.D. 150) as saying "One must utter three doxologies every day: Praise God that he did not create me a heathen! Praise God that he did not create me a woman! Praise God that he did not create me an illiterate person!" cf. P.K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1975, p. 92.

²²F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1951, p. 76, states "The word is otiose, and does not necessarily exclude women."

²³E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1971, p. 159, note 5 states "Though the women are probably thought of as present, they have no part in the proceedings." Unfortunately, he does not supply any proof for this statement.

²⁴Bruce, p. 80.

The Beauty of Reformed Liturgy⁽²⁾

¹⁵There are many theologians today who argue that since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been given equally to men and women and that therefore there should be no hesitancy to ordain women into all the offices in the church. The special gifts of the Spirit are then said to be the basis for female ordination. Needless to say this viewpoint leads to extreme interpretations of I Corinthians 11, I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2.

¹⁶R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House) 1934, p. 242.

¹⁷G.W. Knight III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House) 1977, p. 19.

¹⁸D.C. Arichea Jr. and E.A. Nida, *A Translators Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies) 1976, p. 85.

¹⁹Knight, p. 33.

²⁰Knight, p. 33.

²¹C. Brown, (ed.) *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1976, p. 160 (vol. 2). This Dictionary goes in the same direction as does the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* when it asserts, "Here head is probably to be understood not as 'chief' or 'ruler' but as 'source' or 'origin.'" Whereas Arndt and Gingrich in their *Greek-English Lexicon* state that kephale (head) is used "in the case of living beings, to denote superior rank . . . the divine influence on the world results in the series: God the kephale of Christ, Christ the kephale of the man, man the kephale of the woman" (p. 431).

²²F. Zerbst, *The Office of Woman in the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House) p. 40. He states "The arguments of Paul will be rightly understood and appreciated only when the attempts of Corinthian woman to lay aside the headcloth are recognized as an attack in general upon the relations between man and woman as established in creation."

²³D. Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Los Angeles: BIM Publishing) 1977, p. 65. Another author quotes from the Tamud to the affect that "The following married women are to be divorced without the marriage portion: Such as go out with their heads uncovered . . . It is a godless man who sees his wife go out with her head uncovered. He is duty bound to divorce her." R.C. Prohl, *Woman in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) p. 28.

²⁴Zerbst, p. 43.

²⁵C. Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Carter) 1857, p. 305.

²⁶A. Robertson and A. Plummer, *I Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T.T. Clark) 1914, pp. 324-325.

²⁷Knight, p. 46. (cf. J.B. Hurley, "Did Paul Require Veils or the Silence of Women? A Consideration of I Corinthians 11:2-16 and I Corinthians 14:33b-36." *Westminster Theological Journal* 35 (1973) p. 203.

To be continued.

The first article described the history of Reformed Liturgy in the period 1920-1975 in The Netherlands. The conclusion was that, notwithstanding attempts to "reform" the liturgy and clear up the confusion, real Reformed impetus was lacking. Synod Kampen 1975 may be considered a fruit of the Liberation of 1944 in its return to the original Liturgical Order. C. Trimp gives priority to *Liturgics*, not only because it encompasses all other disciplines, but also because "Public Worship" is the very centre of the life of the church and its members.

Definition

The word "liturgy" is derived from a verb that in the Old Testament (Greek translation or *Septuagint*) is used for serving the LORD in general. In a more special sense it describes the service in and around tabernacle and temple; the specific "service" of priests and Levites. Thus it became the obvious term for what we usually call "public worship."

We should, as we continue, keep in mind those two meanings: the general one and the more specific one. Meeting on the day of the LORD is (see first article) the occasion on which all the work of the office-bearers finds its central expression. At the same time, it is the heart of congregational life and, consequently, of the life of every member of the body of Christ. This is so beautifully expressed in Psalms like 42, 84, 122, and many others. "As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for Thee, O God." "How lovely is thy dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs for the courts of the LORD." "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.'"

Although these cries of longing come to us from the old dispensation, the New Testament church does not hesitate to make full use of them. The fulfilment of the Old Testament liturgy by Christ Jesus even makes the "liturgy" richer. In Hebrews 12:12ff. we are told that we have not come to Mount Sinai (which stands in this chapter for the whole Old Testament meeting with God); "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the in-

numerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge Who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel."

This avalanche of glorious expressions signifies the excellency of the new covenant above the old one, in order to warn Jewish believers against the temptation of going back to temple and synagogue. It also instills in our hearts the glory and holiness of meeting with the LORD on the first day of every week. In the gathering of the New Testament church, the heavenly Jerusalem is descending among us, and we are under the same roof with the angels. We are in the midst of "the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven." It cannot be stressed too strongly that in our worship meetings we are in the presence of a most-gracious, but also most-holy, God!

ROBERT G. RAYBURN starts his recently published book *O Come, Let Us Worship* (sub-title, Corporate Worship in the Evangelical Church) with these words, "The worship of God is at once the true believer's most important activity and at the same time it is one of the most tragically neglected activities in the average evangelical church today." His experience compelled him to write this book in which he elaborates in great detail on what the Scriptures teach us about meeting with the LORD our God.

Because we are presently engaged in a discussion of a "definition" of "Reformed Liturgy," this is not the place to say more about this book. It is only mentioned to stress how important and how holy our worship service is, because the Lord is present among us. This should govern our attitude in church, in every detail of the order of liturgy.

Rayburn addresses himself to "evangelical" churches; churches where the salvation of the sinner by grace alone is preached on the basis of the Bible as the perfect Word of God.

However, there is the danger that the salvation of man and his experiences take the centre seat, and that no justice is done to each and every element of the liturgy: not only the preaching but also singing, prayer, confession of sins, yea, our whole attitude. Further on, each of these elements will be discussed. Also the proper order of these elements.

May it now suffice to warn ourselves and each other that such a "tragic neglect" also occurs in our Reformed churches. Does our attitude, our preparation for going to church, our behaviour during each part of the worship service, show that we are filled with awe for being in the presence of a holy God? Hebrews 12, from which we quoted, concludes with, "Thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire." Do we attend church "with a broken heart and a contrite spirit"? Is it not a specifically "Reformed" danger that for us the worship service is nearly exclusively a meeting place where we listen to, and evaluate a speech by, the man whom we pay to entertain us? Sure, Hebrews 10:25 speaks about "not neglecting to meet *together*"; but it is more than that! It is meeting (with) the Lord; it is coming to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Let this, then, be the climate in which we together continue meditating on the meaning of our Reformed Liturgy.

The word "Reformed" now asks our attention. Speaking about Reformed Liturgy means for us that it has its specific character (and beauty), in distinction from other liturgies.

Although we did not plan to mention and analyze all the liturgies there are under the sun, of necessity we must mention that "our" liturgy finds itself between two "extremes" in a specific respect.

On the one hand, there is the *Romanist* liturgy, in which not only the "accursed idolatry" the Mass (Heid. Cat., L.D. 29) is central, but the congregation or laity is practically *passive*. It is not even necessary that there be a congregation present! Where the bishop or priest is, there is the church, even if he is all by himself, busy at the altar.

On the other hand, there is *Independentism* in its various forms, which all boil down to: a gathering of individual believers, without special of-

fice-bearers: there is only the "congregation." Each member may contribute his input; it is a free-for-all. Especially with the enormous growth of *Neo-Pentecostalism* in our time, this kind of "meeting together" is rampant. Many people seem attracted to this form of worshipping, even people with a Reformed background. When you ask them why they turned their back upon the Reformed church, the answer usually is, "because the (Canadian) Reformed church is too 'institutionalized.' There is too little participation by the congregation. The church service is a one-man business without room for spontaneous expression of what lives in one's heart." And thus they try to find a place where there is still something of the life of the early Christian church, as they see it. Thus we find ourselves between those two extremes: with the one, only the priest is active; with the other, only the congregation.

What, then, is the specific essence and character, and form, of Reformed Liturgy?

It is "*covenantal*." We all know the words of the Form for Baptism, "In all covenants there are *two parts*." We may add, "In all covenants there are *two parties*." That is not twice the same. The "parties" in this covenant are the LORD and His people. The "parts" are, on the one hand, what the LORD "contributes" to the liturgy (of which we are speaking); on the other hand, what His people "contribute."

This statement must, of course, be further qualified. In the first place, the "partners" in this covenant are not equals, and therefore their mutual "contributions" are not of the same kind or category. Although, in a certain sense, the covenant of grace is *bi-lateral*, in that there is now a "back-and-forth" relationship between the LORD and us, in general, and also in the liturgy, in its origin this Covenant is bestowed upon us as a "testament," a free and sovereign gift. "Love came from one side," while we were yet enemies. The LORD took, and still takes, the initiative. Thus the covenant, in its origin, was *uni-lateral*, and it always remains that way. We are always on the receiving end. Even when we give to our God, we give what we have first received.

Still, in the blessed covenant-relationship there is *two-way* traffic. As a result, the various "*elements*" of Reformed liturgy can be divided into

two groups, i.e., first those elements that come from the LORD, such as His blessing, His Word, etc.; secondly, those that come from us, His people, such as praise and prayer and offerings, but most of all the sacrifice of a repentant and thankful heart. Conscientious partaking in this liturgy ought to mean for us all that we are fully aware of what is going on. First, we are to be fully aware that we are in the presence of the LORD our God Who is holy. Then, we really receive His blessing; we hear Him speak to us and we respond in faith. Finally, also that we are giving our sacrifices of thanksgiving to *Him*, and that we sing, not just for our own pleasure, but to the glory of His Name. This, then, is Reformed Liturgy, and has to become Reformed Liturgy more and more. These articles are written to promote this.

Questions.

Before closing this article, we return to some criticism that was already mentioned. Is the liturgy, as we practice it, indeed not too much a one-man business? What, exactly, is the function of the special office-bearers in the liturgy? Cannot the participation of the congregation be enhanced and strengthened? Should we not, instead of the method of preaching to which we have become accustomed, introduce some more "dialogue"? The believers are mature since Pentecost, are they not? Do we do justice to that fact? How can we get more out of a church service? Are we allowed to introduce more modern forms of expression, in the way of music, plays, drama, especially to get the young generation more interested and active? Are our church services not a drag for them? Should we not open the doors a bit wider, instead of having, in fact, closed sessions: "for members only"?

In order to get the proper answer to such questions, we must first consider some more — fundamental — principles; and while doing that, keep in mind the "history of redemption." We are the New Testament church; so not the first church. There was an Old Testament church, and ours is the fulfilment of that one. Therefore our liturgy is rooted in the liturgy as the LORD revealed it, in great detail, to Moses.

G. VANDOOREN

(To be continued.)



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.

SAN FRANCISCO

A San Francisco Superior Court judge decided yesterday that a church has the constitutional right to fire a homosexual employee, despite a city ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The ruling was a result of a lawsuit filed by organist Kevin Walker, 23, after he has refused to disavow his homosexuality last August and was dismissed by the pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The small Church is located in the Sunset District.

The case pitted the San Francisco gay rights ordinance against the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Judge John Ertola threw out the suit yesterday, saying it "unconstitutionally infringes upon the rights of the local church and its members to freely exercise their religious beliefs."

The decision leaves the ordinance intact, except where it comes into specific conflict with the First Amendment rights of religious freedom.

Ertola said he carefully balanced the competing rights brought forward by the suit, but concluded that "the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that freedom of religion has a preferred position in the pantheon of constitutional rights."

A key question raised last month when the two parties argued the case before the judge was whether Walker, as an organist, was a member of the church's worship team.

Lawyers representing Walker argued that the courts have ruled that employment discrimination laws apply to church members in non-spiritual

jobs. They argued that Walker was in such a job.

But the judge ruled that the church officials had "overwhelmingly shown that they believe the organist in a congregation is part of the worship team." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, April 4, 1980).

KAMPEN

If the Reformed Churches in general agree with it, an extra-ordinary synod will be held in the beginning of October in order to make an appointment in the vacancy-to-be, caused by the retirement of prof. H.J. Schilder.

The Board of Governors decided to direct such a request to the Churches. It is the second time since the (regular) Synod of Groningen-Zuid that such a synod will be convened. Last year the first extraordinary synod . . . appointed Drs. D. Deddens in the vacancy caused by the appointment of Prof. J. Kamphuis to the chair of dogmatology in the vacancy caused by the retirement of Dr. L. Doekes.

The Board of Governors has meanwhile come to a conclusion in the matter of a nomination to fill that future vacancy (per September 1, 1981). (ND)

ROME (Reuter)

The Roman Catholic bishops of China are planning to have a synod before the end of the year.

The Chinese bishops will speak at their synod about their relations with Rome and about using the native language for the liturgy.

Bishop Foe recently was chosen as bishop of Peking. He was chosen by the Chinese bishops without the cooperation of the Vatican. The latter cannot recognize that election as long as the Chinese church continues to follow its own course and to appoint bishops and priests.

In an interview, bishop Foe said that cooperation with the Vatican will depend on the latter's respect for the independence and autonomy of the Chinese church. (ND)

World Vision is negotiating with Cambodia's Heng Samrin government about re-opening its hospital in Pnom Penh, which had been completed in

1975 just weeks before the Khmer Rouge over-ran the capital. World Vision has asked to renovate and re-equip the building as a 150-bed general care facility; it was designated originally as a pediatric hospital. (CT)

The Israeli government reverted to the monetary unit used in Israel during much of the Old Testament period in February. One shekel replaced 10 Israeli pounds in a move designed psychologically to combat inflation and avoid confusion between "new" and "old" pounds or liras. In announcing the currency change, the government also stressed the shekel's biblical symbolism. (CT)

One positive result for Christians in India resulting from Indira Ghandi's return to power has been the scuttling of the controversial "Freedom of Religion Bill." The bill, favoured by elements in the Janata coalition, which has now disintegrated, would have banned nationwide the use of any "inducement" to bring about conversion from one religion to another. Mrs. Ghandi denounced the bill as unwarranted government interference in the religious arena. Similar legislation remains in force, however, in several of India's states. (CT)

PROVIDENCE R.I. (RNS)

Whether two Baptist church schools in Rhode Island can operate without first obtaining state licences and compliance with regulations mandated by the State Board of Regents will be argued in court under an agreement reached by lawyers for both sides.

All schools in Rhode Island, public and private, to be licenced must meet certain health and safety standards mandated by state and local codes and minimum education standards prepared by the Board of Regents.

Officials of the two schools . . . claim that the state regulations violate their First Amendment right to operate church schools without state interference. (CN)

vO

The Family with a Handicapped Child and the Congregation

When speaking about a family we usually refer to a couple of parents with one or several children. Two young people love each other, are brought together by God, and decide to unite themselves for life. They request the blessing of the Lord upon this marriage. Sooner or later the Lord often gives a special blessing to this union resulting in a time of joyful expectation. The Lord commences His creative work and starts to form this life from the beginning, the fertilized egg, as His handicraft. See Psalm 139. Slowly, but surely, the unformed mass is shaped into a child, and on a certain day He has completed His work, and causes the child to be born. Now there is joy in the family which has increased in number, and there is also happiness in the Church since it is built up by this means.

God uses human help to assist mother and child for the process of birth during these often difficult hours. At that moment it can happen that with one glance the doctor makes the terrifying discovery: this is a mongoloid child, or: this child is lacking a hand or a foot or something like that. Perhaps a nurse has to fight against death in the case of a baby that has turned blue and threatens to suffocate due to lack of oxygen, or the alarmingly white baby that appears to be lifeless. The battle is won and the child remains alive. However, later it becomes evident that the child has sustained brain injury and its development proceeds more slowly than that of other children. This will result in a struggle by the parents of that now increased family to practise their confession and to accept everything, also this, out of God's Fatherly hand (Lord's Day 10). It is a great blessing when they are able to experience that peace and surrender.

The consistory, including the minister, as well as the congregation, have to fight that battle. For they also have received from the Lord a handicapped brother or sister no matter how small, and they also have to accept it as it is.

We often hear: "Why, oh, why does God let such children be born. If God is love, why then did He not give a well-formed child?" The reply to that

is usually that we are to let the whys and wherefores be. God has His own wise intentions with it. This is indeed true. However, have you ever stopped to think that God actually created these children to be like that? Some people say: "God does not really want this," and the devil gets the blame. The result of this would be that handicapped children are no creatures of God but of Satan. Let us hold on to Psalm 139. He wove every human babe in its mother's womb from the very start. Would God then forget a small piece if He made the eyes, but no sight? Or ears, but no hearing? Did He forget something when a hole was left in the little heart or a hand was missing? Was His work sloppy when He made the chromosome pattern different from the usual one? Or did He forget a few brain cells? We would not dare to give an affirmative answer. But what then? Why is it that to the one He gave so great a brain and to the other such a limited one? Why is the one physically in perfect shape and the other never able to walk and look after himself?

We believe that the members of the Church are living stones of the Kingdom of God. The Church is built by them. If we keep this image of the stones in mind and think of the beautiful buildings that churches often are, then we know that the walls are erected on the foundations with straight, perfect bricks. Exceptions are cornerstones and, for example, the bricks at the windows where often half or at least a piece has to be removed. Also the slanted roof involves fitting and measuring, chipping and breaking off

pieces to get them all to fit. A normal, straight stone does not fit in there, so they have to be damaged or the church cannot be finished. It is the same with living stones, a little bit off this one, a little different form for that one, etc., or they will not fit. The building of the Church of Jesus Christ must be finished, for otherwise He cannot return on the clouds.

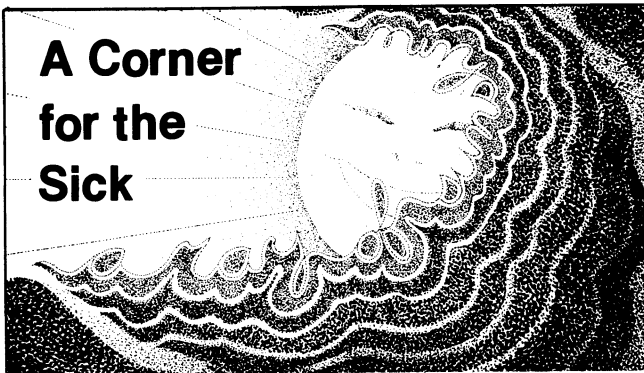
The conclusion drawn from this imagery is: we need our handicapped people and they need us. Not merely accept, but need. The hand cannot say to the foot: "I do not need you," for everyone needs everyone. This can be a great comfort both to the parents and to the Church. All of them count, also the handicapped ones. They did not choose God, but God chose them, also them. A simple stone with a piece chipped off, but without that stone there would be a gap; now there is a perfect entity. If we sincerely begin to understand this, then our acceptance of the handicapped will be totally different. Then our fellow brothers and sisters will bring up their children in such a way that they also know that these handicapped children are, not a senseless, but worthwhile part of the communion of saints. Then the parents will realize that they have received a child from the Lord accompanied by a difficult mandate. But then it can even be an honour to be allowed to bring up such a child for God. In spite of all the remaining sorrow, their joy will prevail, knowing that they also may assist in building up the Realm of God, despite sin, of which the handicapped are also a result. For these sins, however, Christ gave His life, whereby He bought us all with His blood.

Translated by:
MRS. G. RAVENSBERGEN
(with permission from the Society,
"Het Koningskind.")

Psalm 139:13-18

For Thou didst form my inward parts, Thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise Thee, for Thou art fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are Thy works! Thou knowest me right well; my frame was not hidden from Thee, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance; in Thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. How precious to me are Thy thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. When I awake, I am still with Thee.

A Corner for the Sick



Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it
after many days. Ecclesiastes 11:1

*When we read the book of Ecclesiastes we may
find it very depressing.*

"All is vanity."

"A generation goes, and a generation comes."

"The sun rises and it goes down."

"Round and round goes the wind."

"All things are full of weariness."

*"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled
with hearing."*

*"Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new?'"
(Quoted from Ecclesiastes 1.)*

*It is refreshing when we come to chapter 11 and
12, where the author urges the readers, on a positive
note, to live a responsible life, to do their daily work
faithfully, carefully, and joyfully, in the knowledge that
they all shall have to give account of all their doings.
He urges them on, to cast their bread upon the waters,
for they will find it after many days. In the New Testa-
ment, Paul is very positive about the fruitfulness of his
work. In Philippians 1:21, 22, he writes, "For to me to
live is Christ, and to die is gain. If it is to be life in the
flesh, that means FRUITFUL LABOUR for me."*

*We may read in Acts 9:15 that Paul was a
chosen instrument in God's hand to carry God's name
before Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel. This
was Paul's daily task. We read about the hardships he
had to endure, while fulfilling this task in II Corinthians
12. Our tasks may be quite different, but we have been
given instructions in many different Scripture passages.
In Colossians 3:23, 24 we read, "Whatever your task,
work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, know-
ing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance
as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ."
"Cast your bread upon the waters, for you WILL find
it after many days." "Fear God, and keep His com-
mandments; for this is the whole duty of man."*

*With our readers who are able to enjoy the Dutch
language, I would like to share the following poem:*

WIJ ZULLEN VERSTAAN

Soms zijn de woorden van de Prediker de mijne:
je wordt van alles vaak zo moe, zo grensloos moe.
Alles wat leeft groeit op, het bloeit, en gaat verdwijnen,
en 't moedeloze hart vraagt soms waarom, waartoe?

Wat heeft de mens bereikt met zwoegen en met
werken?

't Geslacht dat na ons komt weet niets van ons
bestaan.

Wat graven, en wat namen op verzakte zerken,
dat is wat bleef van hen die ons zijn voorgegaan.

Toch, eenmaal is die ring, die cirkelgang doorbroken
toen 't graf de Zoon van God aan 't leven af moest
staan.

God heeft Zich machtig op de wrede dood gewroken.

Als straks tot hemel, aarde, zee en zon en maan
het laatste woord door God de Schepper wordt
gesproken

dan zullen wij verbaasd Gods wijze raad verstaan.

by E. Yskes - Kooger

Uit de bundel: *Een fluit van riet*

We have received the following note:

*"Hierbij wil ik allen hartelijk dank zeggen voor de vele
kaarten die ik mocht ontvangen, zowel uit Ontario als
uit Zuid B.C. Ook degene die mij opgegeven heeft voor
CLARION, en verschillende Young People Societies,
onder anderen Chilliwack, B.C.; Watford, Ontario; en
Smithers, B.C. Hartelijk dank jongelui!*

Mrs. A. Stad

Smithers, B.C.

P.S. My apologies for not mentioning Stan Leyen-
horst's address. It is as follows:

STAN LEYENHORST

13090 Kennedy Road,

R.R. 1,

Pitt Meadows, B.C.

Sorry Stan! May you still receive many cards!

H.R.

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma

380 St. Andrew Street E.,

Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

Psalm 119:53, 54

Thy promise is well-tryed and stands secure;
Thy pledge I love, in Thee, O LORD, confiding,
Though I'm of no account, despised and poor,
I'll not forget Thy precepts and Thy guiding.
Thy righteousness for ever shall endure;
Thy law is truth, eternally abiding.

Though now I suffer anguish and distress,
Thy law is my delight and consolation.
For everlasting is Thy righteousness,
And faithful are Thy words of revelation.
Thy servant, LORD, with understanding bless,
That I may live, that I may see salvation.

Copyright: *Book of Praise*

WELCOME TO BURLINGTON REV & MRS POUWELSE

With great thankfulness and joy, the congregation of Burlington-West welcomed her new pastor and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. Willem Pouwelse. A special welcome evening was held in the John Calvin School Auditorium, which was filled to capacity with young and old. After singing Psalm 116, stanzas 1, 9, and 10, br. J. Poort,

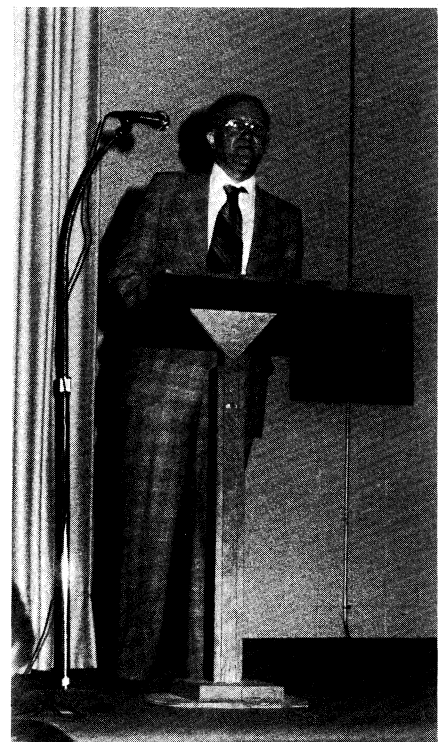


Closing remarks by Rev. Pouwelse.

the chairman of the Consistory, read Psalm 116 and lead in prayer. Br. Poort extended a warm and Christian welcome to Rev. and Mrs. Pouwelse on behalf of the congregation and expressed the heart-felt gratitude to our heavenly Father for filling the vacancy so soon, in such a wondrous way, after the departure of Rev. Cl. Stam to the Church of Smithville. He recalled the great joy experienced when the telephone call was received from The Netherlands, that the call to Burlington-West was accepted. Phones kept ringing that whole evening in the Burlington Canadian Reformed Community to pass on this happy news. Br. Harsevoort spoke of the special ties between the Church of Bergentheim, The Netherlands and the Church in Burlington, and how the calling committee found out about this "English-speaking minister." The evening continued in a happy atmosphere. The Young People's Societies surprised everybody by singing in English, French, and Dutch. They presented the minister with a large Webster's Dictionary. Sr. A Reinink read a poem in Dutch, "Het Ambt van Predikant," ending with the words: "Be of good courage!" Lorraine Bosch spoke a word of welcome on behalf of the Girls' and Boys' Clubs. Br. Van Woudenberg spoke on behalf of the Men's Societies. Br. A. Buist welcomed the minister and his wife in poetry form in which he viewed the first meeting with Rev. and Mrs. Pouwelse and what has happened since, upon their arrival in Burlington. Alan Buist and Lisa Van Egmond presented many good wishes from the John Calvin School. In a skit, "The Rummage Sale," the minister and his

wife became acquainted with the various activities among the membership and the famous "Dutch-English talk." The Women's Societies presented this welcome with the letters "REHOBOTH" and a beautiful "coffee drip machine." The Choir, "Soli Deo Gloria," and the Canadian Reformed Male Choir from Burlington East and West, contributed to the evening with their singing. Prof. Ohmann passed on greetings from the Theological College in Hamilton. Rev. Van Beveren spoke on behalf of the church of Burlington-East. A letter of welcome and congratulations was read from Rev. Cl. Stam. In closing, Rev. Pouwelse expressed his deep gratitude for the welcome extended to him and his wife, not only this evening, but since they stepped out of the plane upon their arrival in Canada. He spoke of the difficult time in arriving at a decision pleasing to the Lord in considering this call to the Church in Canada. "Now the decision is made and we arrived here, the Lord will give us guidance and wisdom. We will not overestimate nor underestimate this manifold task, but do our utmost to fulfill our mandate with the help of our Lord in looking after the flock." After singing Psalm 115 br. N. Torenvliet closed the evening with a prayer of thanksgiving.

* * *



Br. J. Poort, chairman of consistory.

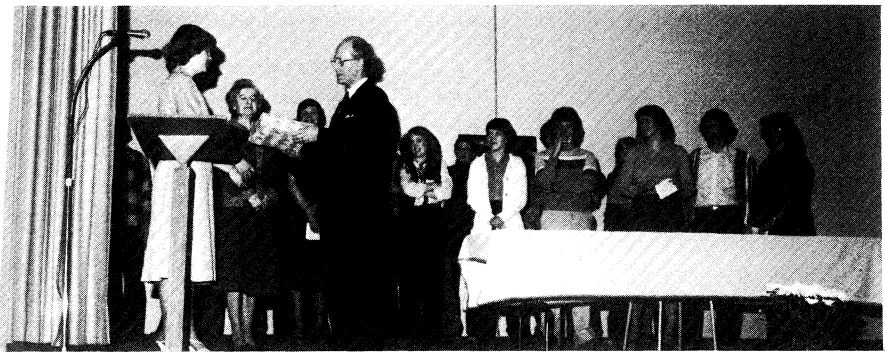
On Sunday, April 14, 1980, the installation of Rev. W. Pouwelse took place in the morning service, conducted by the counsellor and former minister, Rev. G. Van Dooren. The sermon was from Romans 4 verse 25b: "Raised for our Justification." If Christ was not risen, our preaching would be in vain! The resurrection of Christ opens the possibility, grants the power, and gives us the program for preaching. After this sermon Rev. Pouwelse was installed as our minister with his clear answer: "I do with all my heart." In the afternoon service, Rev. W. Pouwelse preached his inaugural sermon for which he chose as his text Ephesians 4:4-6. "The Unity of the Spirit," the fact of this Unity, the foundation of this Unity, and the obligation this Unity brings. The fact of the true Unity crosses oceans and brings us together as minister of the Word and congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our only foundation. There is not only the call for the minister to preach the gospel, but also the call for the congregation to fulfill its calling in walking in the ways of the Lord. He reminded the young people to realize as covenant children the tremendous riches we have in belonging with body and soul to the Lord Jesus Christ and the privilege to serve Him.

The blessings of the Lord have indeed been abundant for the Church of Burlington-West. We may be sure that the Lord will also strengthen His servant Rev. Pouwelse in his ministry and make him a blessing in the congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praised be the Lord!

M.B.

Ephesians 4:4-6

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, Who is above all and through all and in all.



Presentation by Young People Societies.



Presentation by John Calvin School students.



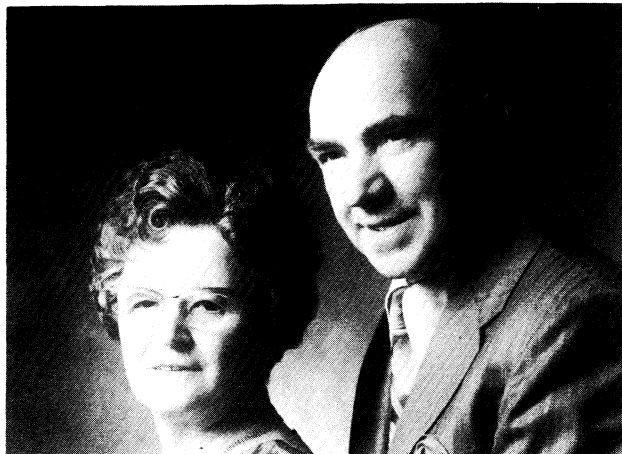
During intermission.

news medley

If we had to be satisfied with the news that is to be mentioned about the various Churches, we would have a rather short news medley this time. There are always things about which we could write quite extensively, but the news medley is not all that well-suited for articles about information which we find in some bulletins concerning members who have appeared before the Consistory to confess having committed a certain sin. I wonder how that can be qualified as keeping confidential that which has to be kept confidential and how that can be considered to be in accordance with the calling we all have to consider a matter closed when a sin has been confessed. I am convinced that in some instances Church bulletins contain information which should have remained confined within the walls of the Consistory room. And a Congregation has to trust that the Consistory pays due attention to matters and to sins committed, even though no information about that is "leaked" via the bulletin.

However much I feel that a thorough discussion about that point would be beneficial, I have to abide by the statement in the beginning, namely that the news medley is not all that well-suited to take on the nature of an article. Therefore we proceed to other points.

45th Wedding Anniversary



On May 16, 1980, the Lord willing, Luit and Geertje Oostenbrug will be celebrating their 45th Wedding Anniversary. On May 16, 1935 they were married in Holland. Luit was an active farm labourer with a dream to someday own a farm of his own, so in 1952 they immigrated to Canada along with their seven children. They arrived in B.C. June 3, 1952, and the family tried their hand at picking strawberries, raspberries, beans, and potatoes. After moving to Fleetwood, Luit dug peat. In 1955 his daring nature prevailed and he started farming for himself (a dream come true). In 1956 a new daughter arrived on the scene. In 1957 the Oostenbrugs purchased their first farm in Mt. Lehman, where they lived until they retired. They now live on a miniature farm in Sardis where their goats, his wood carving, etc., keep them both busy.

One thing that I notice in the various bulletins is that the number of weddings is on the increase. Some bulletins contain no fewer than four announcements of intended marriages.

That also will reflect in the situation as it will exist some forty years from now. As the situation of forty or forty-five or even fifty or fifty-five years ago is reflected in the events of our days.

Brother and sister Leonard and Josina Lodder of Guelph will celebrate their fifty-fifth Wedding Anniversary, the LORD willing, on May 28th. They both may still enjoy reasonably good health and there is hardly any occasion in Church life or School life where they are not present. They keep abreast of all things that happen and those matters have their full interest. They still live on their own, although children or grandchildren or friends bring them where they wish to go, since brother Lodder has not been driving for quite a number of years. We wish them the continuous blessing of the Lord and some more time together with their family and the Family.

For two forty-fifth Wedding Anniversaries we go to the Valley. There are in the first place brother and sister D. Sikma, who will celebrate their anniversary on May 10th (well past when these lines reach you) and brother and sister L. Oostenbrug, who will be married for forty-five years on May 16th. Even the latter date will be a thing of the past when *Clarion* is deposited into your mailbox or mailslot.

When the above couples were forty years married I told you a few things about them. I shall not do so this time, for I would only be repeating myself. On behalf of all I extend our heartfelt congratulations, and wish our brothers and sisters much joy in the Lord on their further pathway and much friendship and love within the communion of saints.

Since most of the news for this time comes from the Valley anyway, we continue with that region.

As for the general news, there seem to be some financial considerations which compel the brotherhood to restrict the size of the high school building for the time being. Let me quote literally from the *Church News*. It was decided to split the project into two parts, one stage to be completed now, another to be completed later on. It was decided to

build all classrooms this summer and at a later date the kitchen, the home-ec room and the foundation of the gym. In short, no U-shaped school but an L-shaped school, to be completed later.

The result of this decision will be that some \$65,000 is cut off the total sum for the moment which, considering today's interest rates, will give a healthy saving in interest alone. The only drawback in this respect is the experience that building additions oftentimes has to wait too long since no funds are available and that ultimately it is a big question whether all that much is saved, since the cost of everything certainly will not come down as far as I can see. On the other hand, I can appreciate the carefulness displayed, for we should not take upon ourselves unnecessary burdens. The burdens we have to bear are already heavy enough, generally speaking.

Another point of general interest is a notice I found in the *Church News*. I did mention this activity before, but my attention was drawn by the "title" which I found before some names: "Ms." I thought, "Are we going into that direction, too?" Then, however, I saw that the note was from the Ministry of Human Resources of British Columbia. It reads as follows.

We would like to say "Thank you" to the volunteers from the Canadian Reformed Church who dedicate their time and talents regularly to the people at Woodlands. The people in your congregations who have extended their commitment of faith beyond their Church membership, and whose ministry outside the church reaches out to include some of the most handicapped people in our community are

I do not think that the people involved would appreciate seeing their names here, and therefore, I omit them. I only wished to pass on the note as such.

There is not only some activity in the matter of school building; there is also building activity which affects Church buildings.

Chilliwack is not so much planning to build as to take possession of the building which they purchased; however, the Consistory report tells us, "There are no new developments regarding the negotiations with the Mennonite Brethren Church." We recall that initially it was expected that the transfer would not take place till this fall. Therefore we don't despair!

It is a different story in Langley.

Since the original plan of subdividing the building site for a church building, a highschool building and a resthome appeared not feasible, the building committee proposes to make some changes with respect to the re-location of the driveway. This would result in the loss of some frontage for the church and the resthome but not in square footage. This has to be approved by the authorities. A new site-plan is submitted. The building committee recommends acceptance of this plan. After ample discussion it is decided to accept the proposal.

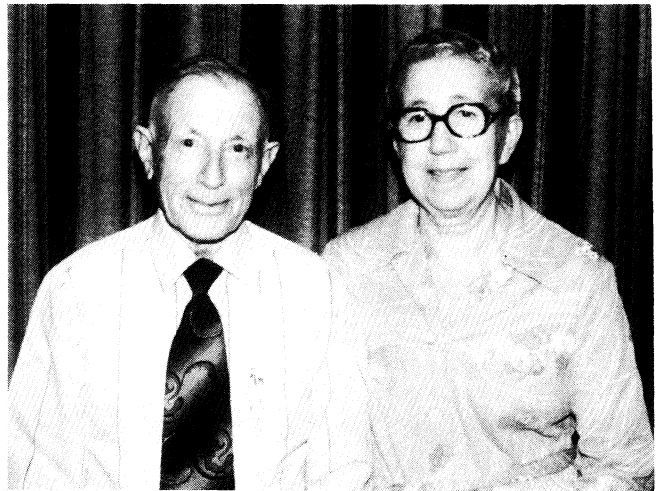
Perhaps you will read it anyway when we publish part from the *Mission News* of the Maranatha Church in Surrey, but I thought that it would be good to draw the attention to the following.

45th Wedding Anniversary



On June 6, 1980 Mr. and Mrs. Bouwkamp (nee Westerhoek) hope to celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary with their children and grandchildren. They were united in marriage in Hoogkerk, Groningen. They emigrated to Canada in September 1952. After a brief stay in Chatham, they settled in Toronto, where they still live today. They both enjoy good health and hope that they may continue to enjoy their retirement in good health for many years.

55th Wedding Anniversary



Pieter and Susanne Kok were married in 1925. After their marriage they took up residence in Ulrum, Groningen. In 1949 they and six of their seven children immigrated to Canada. First they lived in Iron Springs, Alberta. After a few years they took up residence in Lethbridge. Pieter was employed by the Federal Government Research Station for many years. He retired in 1968. A few years ago they moved to Coaldale, where they still live. Both enjoy their retirement, in reasonably good health.

The Rev. Boersema writes about activities in the Congregation in São José. In our well-organized congregational life we oftentimes tend to forget the struggle which the young Churches in the mission field have to go through. For that reason it is good when we listen to some of the things which are being discussed there and which we are inclined to take for granted.

On February 7 we had our monthly congregational meeting. We had a good discussion about the Christian discipline of our children. In the discussion there came a lot of complaints about the discipline in the schools. There was considerable interest in a Christian school as the right solution. So, it was decided that five people should work on the matter. They should work out the first steps concerning how to proceed in order to improve the Christian education of our children. These people have met in the meantime and will propose to start a society for the promotion of the education of our children with a three point program: 1. helping the parents to involve themselves more directly with the education of their children at home; 2. giving supplementary education, besides the present school; 3. organize a Christian school. Of course, it will be a long, hard road to follow. Especially when we consider that some of these people do not even have enough money for their daily bread.

The Rev. Boersema adds that these lines should not be understood as being a covert request for financial aid. It is to inform the contributing Churches and the brotherhood in general.

The above does show, however, that whenever the obligations of the parents towards their children are understood, there also comes the awareness of the necessity of a

45th Wedding Anniversary



The Lord willing, Mr. and Mrs. J. Dejong hope to celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary on May 18, 1980. They were married in Leeuwarden and immigrated to the Orangeville area in 1952 with four sons and one daughter. In 1970 they moved to Smithers, B.C. where they still live in good health. Their address is Box 2864, Smithers, B.C. V0S 2M0.

school where the work done in the Church and in the family is continued.

There are other things, too. "Another important development of this month was a meeting of the men of the church to study together for the training of office-bearers. All the men were there as well as one who is not yet a member, but is enrolled in the membership class and shows much interest." There was much appreciation for the meeting, Rev. Boersema writes, and the decision was taken to meet every two weeks to continue this work.

My only difficulty is that one man who is not a member and attends a meeting of the men of the church to study together for the training of *office-bearers*. I gather that he still has to learn the basics, but it may be the only way of instructing him. Anyway, the development is a reason for joy.

We have dwelled long enough on the news from the Valley, and therefore transfer our attention to Ontario. No, let us first mention that Carman had their last service in the old Church building and that now the work on the new one is well underway.

The Ottawa Consistory discussed "a request regarding the singing of the 'Credo'; it is decided that at this time it would not be feasible as the melody of the 'Credo' is not well-known by the Congregation." I can well understand that, but I repeat what I said another time: How will the people ever learn if it is not sung? If the families have an organ or a piano at home, they may study the melody; in many instances, however, there is no such instrument to be found in the home. Besides, generally speaking, the knowledge of music and of reading music is very limited among

us. Would that our schools had people capable of teaching music and the playing of musical instruments. There are some schools that are so blessed as to have teachers who know music. In other cases, however, the lack is felt very much.

One wise rule to be followed in Church life is that no decisions should be made when a concrete case is under discussion. Rules for election should not be changed when an election is imminent. The best time to do that is when recently an election was held and when the next one is still almost a year away.

Perhaps that was also the reasoning followed by the Smithville Consistory. They had a discussion "about a New Year's service; it is decided not to have a service on New Year's Day. The Consistory also decided to discontinue the Ascension Day service on Ascension Day and will be held on the Sunday prior to Ascension Day." Although the latter occasion is not all that far away, the former certainly is not impending.

That is then the end of our news for this time. I could tell you a few things about the evening in which the Burlington Congregations celebrated the 25th anniversary of the institution of the Burlington Church; however, that would cost me too much sleep for this issue, and therefore we postpone that till next time. An added advantage is that in all likelihood we shall have some pictures available to show you some of the people who took a prominent part in the proceedings. I tell you this to whet your appetite. And so I remain your

vO

Population Control

*When Jacob into Egypt went
he came with but a few;
but babes were born in ev'ry tent,
and soon their number grew.*

*A long time after Jacob died,
and all his sons died, too,
a new king feared this growing tide;
he said, "What shall I do?"*

*'t Was quite a plan this ruler had
to keep their growth rate down:
"The baby girls may live," he said,
"but all the boys must drown."*

*We shake our heads judicially,
but should we make a fuss?
Abortion does prenatally
what drowning later does.*

JOHANNES DEVIET

Books

H. Antonides et. al. *Labour of Love: Essays on Work*, Wedge Publishing Foundation, Toronto, 1980, 123 pp., \$3.95.

This book contains a very interesting and stimulating collection of essays on the subject of work and labour, and how we as Christians must regard our work and place of work. The book forms a sequel to *A Christian Union in Labour's Wasteland*, which was reviewed last year in this paper. On the whole, however, this is a better book. It is more concerned with the basic issues and questions regarding labour than with practical applications, and it seems to me, this is the direction in which the discussion should be oriented if any consensus on these matters is to be attained.

Of the six essays, I found the three written by Peter Nijkamp and Sander Griffioen to be the most valuable and educational. That is not just because I feel more affinity to their way of thinking, but also because their work reveals a wealth of insight into the economics of labour, and they both show a high degree of familiarity with the underlying currents of thought and belief in this field. It is apparent from their perceptive and balanced presentations that they are seeking to develop a truly Biblical view of labour and work.

Nijkamp, in his first essay, describes the different views of labour, and shows how in the main labour has either been idolized and deified, or degraded and abused. In strictly economic terms, both communism and capitalism do not offer a correct and liberating view of work. Yet, Nijkamp does not overlook the fact that a capitalist society allows religious freedom in its political life, while communist society does not. This is no reason for us to support capitalism *per se*; yet, it is important. In my view, the point of religious freedom may even have more weight than Nijkamp gives it. Our critical notations to forms of economic organization in our society should always be couched in spirit of thankfulness for the freedoms that we still have in this day and age.

In his essay *The Future of Labour*, Griffioen goes on to describe how both the glorification and depreciation of labour are equally prevalent in our time, and how these differing beliefs are really opposite sides of the same

coin. If one idolizes production and the abilities of man, one inevitably is confronted with the conflict between labour and technology, man and the machine of man's making. The only escape from this dialectic of labour is a Christian view of labour and technology, which places both man and his inventions at the service of God. Drawing on the classic work of Rev. Sikkel of Amsterdam, as well as some of the more recent work of Prof. Douma on the ethics of labour, Griffioen defines the liberation of labour as a liberation in which man is called to serve his covenant God. Our work must be seen as a calling, in which we seek to glorify God. This does not mean that every job is a specific divine calling, but rather that we must let our work be conditioned by our faith in Christ.

This matter of work as a calling is also raised in the first essay by Paul Marshall. His conviction is that the Reformers erred in their interpretation of I Corinthians 7:20 when they took this text to mean that everyone should remain in the work and estate that he was already in. In other words, the Reformers accepted the given occupations of the world too readily, and should have been more aware of the need to transform and redefine the various occupations open to the believer. While the theologians Karl Barth and Jacques Ellul may be applauded for pointing this out, we cannot accept their solutions.

To my mind, this essay raises more questions than it answers. Is it our task to actually redefine occupations and tasks in the world? Granted that the word *state* and *calling* in I Corinthians 7:20 refers to our calling to be Christians in the world, it is still a big jump to assume that the Reformers "sidetracked the biblical theme" and that the notion of calling "tended to be reduced to the activities required by being in a particular place in society." As Bishop Lightfoot says in his commentary on I Corinthians, the word *calling* was attached to specific occupations long before the Reformers came along, and while Calvin misinterpreted the word "calling" in I Corinthians 7:20, essentially what he was saying was correct. The point of the text is that we see our work in the light of our calling as followers of Christ. That will certainly have its implications for *what* we do, and will even have implications for the work place, and the *way* things are done in

the work place. But I do not think that this means we should applaud Barth and Ellul because they pleaded for the transformation and redefinition of the sphere of operation.

Edward Vanderkloet touches the same question of "calling" in his essay "Why Work Anyway?" While he along with Griffioen is more appreciative of the Reformers' notion of calling and work, he adds some elements of his own which partly add to the problem. Besides defining work in terms of service and stewardly care, he also calls it a form of worship, and that first of all. While I do not want to fight about words, I would hesitate to call work a form of worship. The term *worship* as I see it is more fitting to what happens on that special day of the LORD in which we as His people may gather in His presence to hear His Word. That must result in an obedient life of *service* throughout the rest of the week. Goudzwaard's image of the liberating and rest-full Sunday followed by a work week is more in tune with the covenant message of the Scriptures.

This critical note does not mean to take away from the good points of Vanderkloet's article. He makes a number of practical observations which we do well to listen to. For I do not doubt that the problem of affluence that he is struggling with also applies to our membership. If we really want to reveal some of Christ's liberation in our personal and communal lifestyle, we should keep our consumption habits under scrutiny. As the author says:

"We should question such things as whether we really need bathrooms full of cosmetics (for our protection), a colour TV, the latest car, a bigger house, the endless stream of gadgets that enchant for a while and then are thrown into the garbage. We might also re-examine the luxury of making an annual pilgrimage to Jamaica, Barbados or Acapulco" (p. 44).

These are concrete questions of lifestyle, where it seems to me, all reformation begins.

Much more could be said, but this should suffice to give a taste of the book. I am pleased with its appearance. I am thankful, too, that Nijkamp in a very forthright way stresses the importance of the visible church and the church gathering work of Jesus Christ for a positive and truly Reformed and reforming vision of labour and labour relations today, p. 104.

Edward Vanderkloet also openly pleads for a church institution in which the Word of God is proclaimed in such a way that it provides direction for all of life. As I read that, it reflects Nijkamp's stress on the importance of gathering with the visible church in which Christ has His Word proclaimed. That also implies following the path of living and actual reformation in the church whenever deformation exists or is growing. If this were the prevailing conviction in the CLAC we would have cause for rejoicing. So far this does not seem to be the case, but I hope this book may be taken seriously by all members, and that this may also lead to more direct confrontation with the question of the preaching and the fundamental role of *true* preaching as the basis of any reformatory possibilities in our time.

I hope this says enough concerning the value of this book. I recommend it to the critical reader. It is also a neat and well-structured publication. Unfortunately, page 79 contains an annoying printing error: the name of God is left uncapitalized.

J. DEJONG

B. Goudzwaard, *Capitalism and Progress: A Diagnosis of Western Society*, Wedge Publishing, Toronto, and Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 1979, 270 pp. \$10.95.

This is the English version of a revised edition of the book *Kapitalisme en Vooruitgang*, which was reviewed in this paper in 1978, (*Clarion*, Vol. 27, No. 3). Since the contents of the book were outlined quite extensively at that time, there is no need to elaborate on the book now. Perhaps a word concerning the translation might be in order: this is indeed an excellent and highly readable translation performed by Josina Van Nuis Zylstra, who managed quite well in getting some of Goudzwaard's unique Dutch terms and expressions into presentable English.

As a *revision* the book has improved, as is to be expected. In this edition, Goudzwaard seems to pay more attention to the *ideology* or progress, which lends more credibility to the argument. However, the over-all structure of the book remains unchanged. It is and remains a book about economic realities and economic conditions, and tends to leave questions of politics and freedom out of the picture.

The basic problem with Goudzwaard's viewpoint is that it fails to allow the Bible, particularly the prophetic writings in the Old Testament and in the Revelation to John, to speak directly to the events and conditions of our time. It is not until the very end of the book that it becomes clear that the total restructuring of society that Goudzwaard envisions requires a new and renewed conversion of believers and unbelievers alike: a commitment to a new way of living and a new way of buying and selling. This new way is the way of structural disclosure leading to a social order in which man can develop all of his talents and creative possibilities. This to my mind only begs the question: is it in fact reasonable and Biblical to think in terms of such a reordering, and to expect it in this time? This could hardly take place without the judgment of God on the last day.

In our view of Christian politics and Christian economics, we cannot ignore that the Bible makes some pointed statements as to how things will develop in the last days. We are in the last days, and the signs of the end of the times manifest themselves more and more. Before the end comes, the antichrist must appear and grow in this world. As the book of Revelation points out, he will increase in power and demand the loyalty of all men. He will have his hour, II Thessalonians 2. Only then, through judgment and catastrophe, will the end come.

Hence, while the questions concerning our calling in economic and political life should continually have our attention, we must also let the Biblical doctrine concerning the last days form our view concerning both the possibilities open to us, and the avenues we should take. The knowledge that the Church will be persecuted in the last days, and will dwindle in number, may not be encouraging from the point of view of building a Christian party and exercising Christian influence in our society, but it affords unspeakable consolation to the believers when they see how the truth is being trampled in the world. These elements, therefore, must become constitutive elements in our view of society and the future. I miss this in Goudzwaard completely, and to a certain extent I find it short-changed in the essays by Peter Nijkamp in *Labour of Love*. A believing response to our Creator does not in-

volve a response to abstract creational norms, but to the clear and living testimony of the truth in the written Word of God.

J. DEJONG

PRESS RELEASE

of the Board Meeting of the Canadian Reformed High School Association in Ontario, held on April 21, 1980.

1. The meeting was chaired by our vice-president G. DeBoer. Eighteen delegates were in attendance.

2. After scripture reading and prayer the minutes were read and approved.

3. The outgoing mail was read and the incoming mail was discussed. The secretary was directed to reply to a fee inquiry.

4. Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff gave the Principal's report. Enrolment is 259. Our newly appointed teachers will spend some time at the school in May to get acquainted with our system. The use of the gym by early arriving students is regulated. Fine Arts Day will be held on April 24, with Open House at 9:00 p.m. The Board is pleased to accommodate the Women's League Day in October in our gym and kitchen. Student Council will be asked to assist in the purchase of 50 additional lockers.

5. *Education Committee Report:* We were pleased to note that they could shave the supply budget by 25 percent. Three curriculum days are scheduled: June 25, 26, 27, 1980.

6. *Finance:* The treasurer proposed a different approach re financial responsibility for our locals.

7. It came to our attention that some bus repairs were rather high.

8. L. Jagt was thanked for his service on the board.

9. The next board meeting was set for May 26, 1980.

For the Board,
A.J. HORDYK, Secretary

OUR COVER

Manitoba Spring Scenery. (Photo courtesy Manitoba Government.)

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on May 10, 1980.

mission news

BRAZIL

FROM THE COUNCIL

As far as the work in Maragogi is concerned, the Rev. Meijer reported to Council that this town appears to be a real Roman Catholic bulwark, and, humanly speaking, the work may be more difficult here than in São José. The Roman Catholic clergy is active here. About eleven nuns do social work, visit the homes, and assist the priest. They have great influence and even managed to bring back some members of the Pentecostal church to the Roman fold. May the Rev. and Mrs. Meijer be strengthened, encouraged, and enabled by their Sender as they now start the work in Maragogi and may we also remember this work in our prayers.

THE PEOPLE OF BRAZIL

To bring the gospel most effectively to a people different from your own it is important to learn to know them, to understand how they think and behave and if possible, why. When you communicate with your own people, you unknowingly pay much attention to these things. You know many things about them because you are one of them, and you always speak in terms that you both understand. Among a different people this is not the case. If, for example, you tell a Brazilian that the father has to be the head of the family, he may agree with you, but he will have a very different idea of what this means than you will. You have to ask him more specific questions to find out whether you really agree. When you find out that he thinks quite differently about it than you do, you have to ask yourself whether your ideas are all Biblical, or whether some are really based on your own culture and what you are used to. As another illustration, you cannot just simply tell the Brazilians around here that you have to trust that the Lord is good and always does what is right. This is almost the first thing they say when they have some difficulty. But do they really mean it in a Biblical way? Very often they do not.

An effective ministry to the Brazilians must involve a study of the

people. Brazilians are a blend of native Indian, white Portuguese, and black African. In this article we want to say something about the natives. I am using a book by a very important Brazilian sociologist, Gilberto Freyre. The English translation of this book, published by Alfred A. Knopf, is called, *The Masters and The Slaves*.

The natives have had a much greater influence on the present-day Brazilian people than did those in North America. The Portuguese colonizers did not destroy the Indians in the way the Spanish wiped out the Incas and the Aztecs. Nor did they have the same prejudice against them as the British did in North America. The Portuguese soon used the native men to help them in war and to clear the land, and they used the women to gratify their sexual desires. The Indians in Brazil did not have a culture developed in such a way that, when they fought the white men, they were either exterminated or driven off into their own areas with their own culture and language. Over the years the Indians and Portuguese "smelted" together, and, with the help of the African influence, became a new people. Brazilian society is a hybrid one. A society was organized that on the surface was supposed to be Christian, with the recently-baptized native woman as wife and mother of the family. Yet, in her daily life and the running of her household, she made use of her native traditions, experiences, and tools.

The Indian male contributed to the development of Brazilian society in invading and conquering the Backlands, where he served as guide, canoeist, warrior, hunter, and fisherman. As far as the dreary labour in the cane fields was concerned, he was a failure. Nevertheless, he was a help to the plantation owners as a warrior. Each plantation maintained upon a wartime footing dozens and even hundreds of men, ready to defend against savages or pirates.

Thanks to the Indian woman, Brazilian life was enriched with foods still used today, with drugs and house-

hold remedies, with traditions related to child-rearing, with a set of kitchen utensils. From her comes the hammock, the use of coconut oil for women's hair, a group of domestic animals, corn, the cashew, porridge, personal neatness, and bodily hygiene. The Indians washed frequently (a minimum of one bath a day) at a time when Europeans bathed only once a year or less.

The men were fishermen and hunters, so that, when some planting was done, it was done by the women. However, it was only a few tribes which planted some corn, peanuts, mandioca, and other tropical plants. The animals which were domesticated were, as a whole, only kept as pets. There was a close friendship between animals and men. Some say that the Indians made no definite distinctions between animals and men.

Among the Indians it was very common to have more than one wife, even many wives. The changing of husbands and wives was very common. Both husbands and wives could leave for another, and, generally, the one left was not annoyed by this. It is not surprising, therefore, that the relations between the Portuguese men and Indian women were very free.

The Indian's life was filled with fears and superstitions, many of which have their counterpart even today. One example is the belief in the prophetic powers of the *caipora*, a nude little one-legged man, whose appearance to the great ones was a sure sign of trouble to come. Their belief that everything was possessed by a spirit, their beginnings of astrology, and their taboos are still evident in the low-grade spiritualism very prevalent today. Many Brazilians still turn to these things for healing.

The homosexual way of life was not frowned upon by the Indians, and, it seems, was even fairly common. These effeminate men held in their hands the powers and functions of mystics, healers, medicine-men, and counsellors. Also this influence is openly evident today, again, especially among spiritist leaders.

REPORT FOR DECEMBER

SÃO JOSÉ, BRAZIL

In December we celebrated the birth of Christ. For some weeks the Sunday School had been preparing a program to present on Christmas Day. In the first weeks of the month these preparations were finalized. Many Bible texts and psalms and hymns were memorized. The program started with Creation, proclaimed the birth of the Saviour, and finished with the Apostles' Creed and a hymn of thanks to God. Besides this presentation by the children of the Sunday School, we also told the Bible narrative around the birth of Christ and sang a number of hymns. Christian calendars were distributed with some pictures for the younger children as well as other pictures to colour. It was a happy celebration with a good attendance.

Early in December we had a congregational meeting as we do every month and which, as usual, was very well attended. This time Rev. Meijer made a presentation concerning the communion of saints: In the discussion it became clear that visiting among members and helping each other when in need still need improvement. One of the brothers, who seems to have a good insight into this aspect of the communion of saints, suggested that one person should be made responsible, so that, when someone is in need, this person could make a list according to which the members could help out in turn. This remark led to a discussion of the need for a deacon in the congregation. We promised to come back to the matter at another meeting. [Meanwhile the matter has the attention of the missionaries and the sending church-Ed.].

Just before the end of the year the husband of one of sister Ester's daughters was shot to death. Dona Ester's daughter is not a believer and neither was her husband. The funeral was in Camêla (roughly half way between here and Recife). Br. Kuik and Ronald and I went to the funeral. As you maybe know or would expect, a funeral here is very different from what we are used to in Canada. No undertaker needs to be involved. A simple casket is bought or made by someone. The body is taken care of by the family or friends and is not embalmed. It stays in someone's home until the burial, which is usually the next day. This sober simplicity and the

close contact with death, I think, is healthy.

On the other hand, death is virtually always accompanied by a variety of superstitions. To mention one, some candles are lit and set beside the body and kept burning until it is removed. The purpose: something to do with driving away evil spirits. Also other things raise questions in my mind. Every one is very curious. They seem to love to look at the body. In this case, also many pictures were taken, that is, pictures of the dead person in the coffin all covered with flowers except the face. It also struck me as typically Brazilian that the grave had not been dug large enough. Very often, rather than making sure that something is done properly, they first try a little less. The coffin was set on a pile of dirt beside the grave while every one watched the diggers finish the job. Of course, there was no shortage of advice, nor was it a surprise to me that the shovel broke and the job had to be finished with a hoe.

Dona Ester asked me to say a few words at the grave side. I agreed. Had I not done so, no one at all would have. Of course, I could not say anything about the man. I spoke about the horror of death and how man can really do nothing about it. But for the believers in Christ death is conquered, and there is hope.

The death of this man also illustrates another reality of Brazilian life, the *vingança* (revenge). Three years earlier this man had had an accident with his employer's truck resulting in the total loss of the truck and injuries to some other workers. The night this man died he left a dance in the early morning, quite drunk, and the son of the former employer was waiting for him with some friends. They called to him and shot him. His wife, at home, received the news shortly after that, when he had already died. Do not get your hopes up. There is plenty of proof, but it is not likely that any policeman will ever apprehend the killers. That is the way of this godless society. How necessary it is that the powerful word of the Master be effectively proclaimed. We cannot run away because we don't like such aspects and many others of Brazilian society. The Word of God must conquer. A soldier cannot leave the battle because he does not like the enemy. Pray and work that we may continue boldly in this way and that

many others may join in the battle, for there is endless opportunity for more Kingdom workers here. Pray and work to continue boldly in the battle which is no less real in Canada. We cannot be satisfied to let the enemy dominate on any terrain.

Another special event this month was the Young People's Society's trip to Recife. The turnout was disappointing, but the trip went very well. We visited a Ford assembly plant, a museum, some historical sites in Olinda, and a huge former jail which is now filled with souvenir shops. Such a trip brings the young people together in Christian fellowship and broadens their vision on what is happening in the world.

I think I have now covered the highlights of December. Lucille and I, together with our children, would like to thank every one for the many cards and letters we received around the holiday period. Every word of encouragement received from Canada is such a pleasure.

When we left Canada we received several gifts of money and particularly one from the William of Orange School. These gifts have gone to the purchase of books for a church library. We have bought some twenty books for different readers from grade one to high school. We hope to have them properly looked after for loaning out in the near future. The members were very happy with the idea and on behalf of them we hereby express our sincere thank you.

With Christian greetings, until next time.

RALPH BOERSEMA

Share your
Special Events
with
Clarion readers
by submitting
clear photographs
(with particulars).

PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba, held March 18, 1980 at Edmonton.

The meeting was held on behalf of the convening Church at Edmonton, opened by Rev. S. DeBruin. Psalm 139:1 and 13 were sung, I Thessalonians 5 was read, and Rev. S. DeBruin led in prayer. He welcomed the delegates, and extended a special welcome to Rev. Berends who was present as delegate for the first time. Also the audience was welcomed. Mention was made of the growth of the Church at Barrhead, which church now considers calling a minister. It was also mentioned that the Church at Edmonton has not yet decided about splitting and calling a second minister.

All the Churches are represented as per credentials. The Churches at Barrhead, Carman, and Edmonton have an instruction given to their delegates.

Classis is constituted with Rev. J. VanRietschoten as chairman, Rev. D. DeJong as vice-chairman, and Rev. J. D. Wielenga as clerk.

The Rev. VanRietschoten, after having taken the chair, informed the Classis that he has read that the ladies, who for many years cared for the physical needs of Classis members, have resigned; but also that other ladies might take over this task. He speaks words of thanks to the ladies who have served Classes so many years.

The agenda is adopted.

Reports

- a. Report treasurer over 1979 is adopted with thanks. The levy remains \$4.00 per communicant member.
- b. Report Inspection of the Archives of the Church at Barrhead is accepted with thanks. The Archives are found in good order.
- c. Report Auditing books of the Treasurer, by the Church at Edmonton, is not present. The Church at Edmonton will be requested to submit a report to the next Classis.
- d. Report of Committee for Needy Churches, about an alternative method of collecting money. The Committee suggests as possibility a contribution per communicant

member, and points out what this comes down to per church. It is decided to accept the suggested method of raising the contributions per communicant member. The Committee is thanked for its work, and instructed in accordance with the decision made.

- e. Reports of church visitations to the Churches at Carman and Winnipeg by Rev. D. DeJong and Rev. J.D. Wielenga are read.

Question period ad Article 41, Church Order is held. The Churches at Carman and Edmonton asked and received advice in matters of discipline. The Church at Neerlandia asked advice concerning young people who work in another place but want to stay member in their home-church, instead of asking for attestation to the church in the place where they work. From the discussion it appears that the rule to adhere to is Article 82, Church Order; how to apply this rule in specific cases is a matter of wisdom and of cooperation between the consistories of the Churches concerned.

Pulpit-supply for vacant churches. The Church at Barrhead requested pulpit-supply. There was also a letter from the Church at Neerlandia requesting pulpit-supply. Classis *decided*, having read the letter of the Church at Neerlandia, to grant Neerlandia's request for pulpit-supply, excepting Rev. D. DeJong, because of Neerlandia's appeal to the General Synod at Smithville 1980, and the consequent difficult situation for both Rev. D. DeJong and the Church at Neerlandia.

The following schedule for preaching arrangements in Barrhead and Neerlandia is drawn up: April 27: Rev. D. DeJong, Barrhead (2x); May 25: Rev. S. DeBruin, Barrhead (1x), Neerlandia (2x); June 22: Rev. J.D. Wielenga, Barrhead (1x), Neerlandia (2x); July 20: Rev. D. DeJong, Barrhead (2x); August 17: Rev. S. DeBruin, Barrhead (1x), Neerlandia (2x); September 14: Rev. J.D. Wielenga, Barrhead (1x), Neerlandia (2x); October 12: Rev. S. DeBruin, Barrhead (1x), Neerlandia (2x); November 9: Rev. D. DeJong, Barrhead (2x). On the Sundays before and after the next Classis: the ministers in Manitoba.

Regional Synod. The delegates of the Church at Neerlandia asked advice about the time for convening the next Regional Synod, scheduled to be convened in the early fall of 1980. The Church at Neerlandia was advised to

postpone the Regional Synod unless matters are submitted for the agenda which necessitate to meet at the originally scheduled time.

Instruction Church at Barrhead, re Article 5, Church Order. The delegates of the Church at Barrhead inform Classis that due to growth the calling of a minister has appeared to become possible. For this reason the Church at Barrhead asks Classis for a Counselor in accordance with Article 5, Church Order.

Classis expressed its joy about this, and appointed as Counselor the Rev. S. DeBruin.

Appointments. As *convening Church* for the next Classis is appointed the Church at Neerlandia. Place: Edmonton. Time: December 16, 1980, at 8 p.m. Suggested officers: Rev. Berends, chairman; Rev. VanRietschoten, vice-chairman; Rev. D. DeJong, clerk.

As *delegates to the next Regional Synod* are appointed: *Ministers:* Rev. Berends, Rev. DeJong, Rev. VanRietschoten; *Alternates:* Rev. DeBruin, Rev. Wielenga (in that order); *Elders:* S. Kok, L. Toet, W. Vogelzang; *Alternates:* E. Wierenga, A. Poppe, J. Jisink (in that order).

Personal Question period is held.

Censura ad Article 43, Church Order is not needed.

Acts and Press Release are read and adopted.

The ladies who adequately maintained Edmonton's reputation for providing excellent meals, drinks, cookies and fruit are thanked.

Closing. On Wednesday, March 19, at 4 p.m., Classis closed after singing Psalm 68:8, and thanksgiving prayer led by Rev. VanRietschoten.

For the Classis,
D. DEJONG,
(vice-chairman, e.t.)

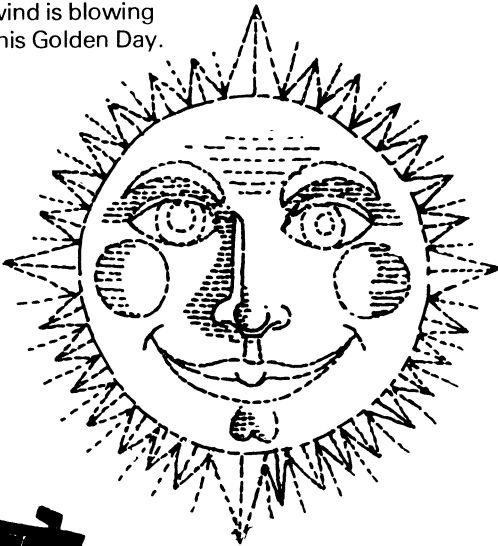
A Beautiful
Gift . . .
A Book.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,
For you! A spring poem from Busy Beaver *Irene De Jong*.

A Golden Day in Spring

Warmly, hazily, shines on high
The springtime sun with its golden eye.
Children are playing out in the sun,
Everyone's laughing and having fun.
Dogs are walking all around,
Hens are feeding on the ground.
Roosters are crowing
Plants are growing
No wind is blowing
On this Golden Day.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Craig Alkema*. We are very happy to have you join us. And we hope you'll be very happy joining us in all our Busy Beaver activities. How much paper did you collect for your school, Craig?

A big welcome to you, too, *Esther Bouwman*. Have you been to the zoo already? How did you and your brothers like it? Did you have a nice party on your Mom's birthday, Esther?

Welcome to the Club, *Cynthia Oosterveld*. We hope you'll really enjoy being a Busy Beaver and joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Thanks for the poem, Cynthia. Write again soon.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Jennifer Clarke*. Are you having lots of fun riding your bike? And have you finished your reader already? We hope you'll enjoy being a Busy Beaver, Jennifer.

Hello, *Annette Van Andel*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you very much for the puzzle. I think the Busy Beavers will enjoy it.

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The Secret Place

A story by Busy Beaver *Sharalee Terpsma*

Chris' friend was on the step ringing the doorbell. Down the stairs flew Chris, coat still half open.

"Bye, Mom!"

And before Mom could ask where they were going, the friends were gone down the sidewalk, heads together.

"Let's go to our secret place," said Chris' friend.

"O.K." said Chris.

So they went together. After a while when they got there, they took their flashlight so they could see. They saw something moving! Then Chris said,

"Let's get out of here!"

Chris' friend said no because it was only a bird. They laughed at Chris. Just then they saw something move again! Were they in the right place? Then they saw that it was a bear!

They started running until they were home and they never went there again.

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QUIZ TIME

Let's start with some riddles. These are from Busy Beavers *Craig Alkema*, *Anne Kottelenberg*, and *Gerald Schutten*. Thanks to all of you!

1. Why is the letter "t" like an island?
2. What appears in summer and winter but never in spring?
3. Why do cows wear bells?
4. What did one eye say to the other?
5. What bolt will you never find on a door?
6. What hawk is not a bird of prey?
7. What wig covers the head but is never worn?

Answers: 1. They are both in the middle of water; 2. The letter "e"; 3. Because their horns don't work; 4. Between us there is something that smells; 5. thunderbolt; 6. tomahawk; 7. wigwam.

Spring Quiz

Can you name the flowers this butterfly has visited?
Answers on next page.

