

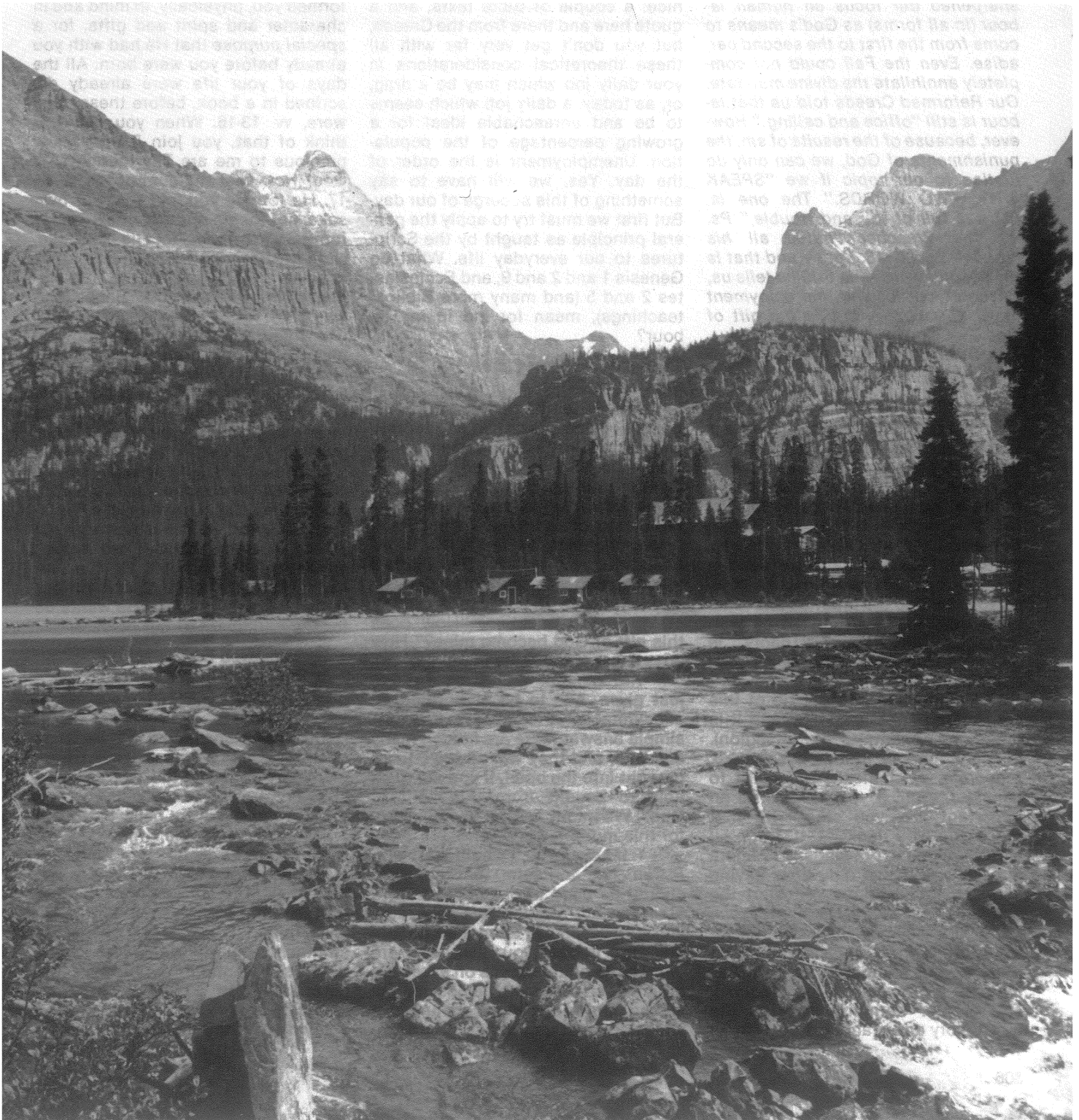


# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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# LABOUR AS A MANDATE

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## Part 3

After we found in Article 1 the general foundation for labour as a divine mandate, Genesis 1, which brought us in sharp conflict with all kinds of socialistic thoughts and practices, Article 2 sharpened our focus on human labour (in all forms) as God's means to come from the first to the second paradise. Even the Fall could not completely annihilate the divine mandate. Our Reformed Creeds told us that labour is still "office and calling." However, because of the results of sin, the punishments of God, we can only do justice to our topic if we "SPEAK WITH TWO WORDS." The one is, "Life is full of toil and trouble," Ps. 90; the Preacher "hated all his labour," Eccl. 2:18. Yet — and that is the second word — in 5:19 he tells us, "Accept your lot and find enjoyment in your labour — this is the gift of God."

This third article will elaborate on this "gift of God."

### Theory and Practice

One example of language corruption is that these two, "theory" and "practice" are often used and understood as being opposites and opponents of one another. Someone defends a certain thesis. We listen. Some say, "Nice!" Others say, "Yeah, that's all nice and dandy; it sounds good, but it's all theoretical. As soon as you come to the practice and reality of daily life, you can't work with that beautiful theory." "Theory" is one thing; "practice" is something completely different.

We should try to get rid of this corruption of the language (and it is only one example of a legion). "Theory" comes from a Greek verb, *theorein*, which means: to look at, to consider. Well, if you have to do an important job, you start with that *theorein*: you look at it from all sides; you make drawings; you figure out the costs; and only *after* having done all these things you start the "practice," (from *prattein* or *prassein*, i.e. to do, to work) the execution of the picture that has already taken form in your mind. You "see" it (i.e. theory); now you "do" it (i.e. practice). The greater harmony between the two, theory and practice, the better is

the end-result, and the better it is for you and for everyone involved.

I elaborated a bit on this theory/practice pair in order to (hopefully) prevent the reaction: "Sure, that's all nice: a couple of Bible texts, and a quote here and there from the Creeds; but you don't get very far with all these theoretical considerations in your daily job which may be a drag, or, as today, a daily job which seems to be and unreachable ideal for a growing percentage of the population. Unemployment is the order of the day. Yes, we will have to say something of this scourge of our day. But first we must try to apply the general principle as taught by the Scriptures to our everyday life. What do Genesis 1 and 2 and 9, and Ecclesiastes 2 and 5 (and many more Biblical teachings), mean for me in my labour?"

### Enjoyment in your Labour — the Gift of God

Underline that in your mind: it is the gift of God. It's not something you can accomplish, although you can do a lot to spoil the gift and the enjoyment in it. It is a gift of God which is found on the way of obedience to His Word and ordinances. To narrow it down: enjoyment in your labour is given when you accept the Biblical teaching and mandate re: our daily labour, whatever it be. This is the answer to your question, "How does this gift of God become mine?" How does it become reality in my life?

The general and brief answer, just given, has to be elaborated on considerably. Or let's say: in this one, simple answer there are hidden many answers, and they will all have to be brought into the open, if you are to be able to benefit from this "gift of God." We might as well use numbers for this multiplex answer.

1. If I were you, I would start with *Psalm 139*, a Psalm that not only should be used in our opposition to abortion, but one that we may taste and turn around to admire all its facets. One is that you, yes you!, are *unique!* As all the leaves on a tree are different, so all human beings, moulded and formed by divine care and love and wisdom in a mother's womb, are

different. There is no one exactly like you in the whole world. The LORD moulded you that way, not just "for fun," although He takes pleasure in all the works of His hands, but He formed you, physically, in mind and in character and spirit and gifts, for a *special purpose* that He had with you already before you were born. All the days of your life were already described in a book, before these days were, vv. 13-16. When you come to think of that, you join David, "How precious to me are Thy thoughts, O God! How vast the sum of them!" v. 17. He formed you, not for your own sake, not for sin or devil, but — as He formed all things — for His own sake, His own glory. He created you for that specific "mansion" in the fatherly house with the many mansions, John 14.

This last line, as a bolt from the blue sky, comes quite unexpectedly, and seems irrelevant to the topic "labour." Am I now talking about heaven? If so, is heaven not the place of eternal rest; thus, what about labour there?!

My answer (and it will become clearer as we continue) is: I am convinced that, also with respect to whatever job you find, and labour you will do, we must "speak with two words" (cf. my second article). On the one hand, I trust that our Father leads our lives, and gets us where He wants us for the fulfillment of our prayers:

"Hallowed be Thy Name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done as in heaven so  
on earth."

But I am also convinced that because of sin we live in a broken world, where many things, also in the lives of God's children, are far from ideal. To stick to the point: I also believe that in many cases people, moulded as Psalm 139 has it, do *not* reach that place and station in life where the gifts they received can blossom and flower in perfection. As much as we know in part (I Cor. 13) and as there is so much "in part" in this life, I think there is a wonderful comfort in this permission to "speak with two words." On the one hand, I can find enjoyment in my labour, and that is

the gift of God; on the other hand, it is all in part; it is not yet perfect. Why so many people miss the mark in the context of their labour is something we cannot answer. Here is the mystery of the wisdom of God. With the one He uses the talents of an individual to the full, because He chooses to use them for the furtherance of His kingdom. In another case He guides a child of His in such a way that most of his special gifts and talents remain unused, undeveloped. That is God's wisdom, too, and such a child of His must learn to resign himself to it: his God plans to use them to the full in the new universe.

I say to myself: some will understand what you are trying to say; others will call it abacadabra. Okay then, "He who is able to receive this, let him receive it," Matt. 19:12.

This, then, is the *one* word to be said about our labour as divine mandate: God formed and prepared me for a specific task in this life. He adopted me as His child, so that my labour would be part of the covenant relationship Father-child. He did all this for His own honour.

Is this a burden? A thing to hate? (cf. the Preacher.) Would you not rather be free, be your own boss, and do with your life whatever you prefer? Is it not rather something about which to jump for joy? Because now you know that your life, in whatever way it develops, is not in vain, or, as the NIV translates: not "meaningless." It is part, maybe a very small part, of the one original mandate given to mankind to develop the world for the eternal kingdom. At the threshold of that kingdom may you hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been *faithful over a little*, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master," Matt. 25:21.

The *other* word to be spoken about our labour in this age is that it will never be perfect that — humanly speaking — we may not even reach the proper place to fulfil our task. On top: even the most holy man has only a small beginning of the new obedience, Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 44. No one will protest this quotation that speaks about "new obedience." All that we do is walk in the way of the Covenant Law; our daily labour is part of it, maybe the most important part.

2. We come to the second part of the answer: how to find enjoyment in our works as a gift of God. It is an elaboration on what already has been touched on sub 1.

We may and must believe that

the LORD our God has a *specific* purpose with each of His children. He fashioned them for that, Psalm 139. He (did you ever think of that?) brought you into the world in this special part of the twentieth century, and not 200, 400, 600 years ago. He placed you in a special part of His world, and it was not without Him that your parents planned to move to another part on this planet. When He established His Covenant with you, He gave you, in what we call "the second part" of that covenant, that old-and-always-new mandate of Genesis 1 and Revelation 22:3, that is as wide as the universe and as small as your little corner.

He has — you may be sure of that! — already assigned to you, if you were "faithful over little," a special place and task in His universal new kingdom. Christ went there, John 14, to prepare a place for you somewhere in "the many mansions"; a place just for you, where you fit and no one else. But Scripture also tells us that He "knows where you dwell," Rev. 3. In the back of my mind there is a song or Psalm which I learned in my youth. Translated, it goes something like this:

"Thou, O King, who directeth everything,  
Hast destined the place where I shall live,  
And decided upon the shop where I will do my work."

My memory may fail me or misguide me, but everyone of these words is true. If He even knows the number of my hairs, Matt. 6, would He not know about where I live and what I am doing? Did He not create me Himself, give me certain gifts, withhold others, guide me via the upbringing by my parents and the directives of my teachers?

Sure, it takes a lot of faith to accept all this. It takes the faith as formulated in Hebrews 11: assurance of the things that you do not see. And this brings us to the next part of the answer to the question, "How do I find enjoyment in my labour as a gift of God?"

3. Up till now we all agree, I assume, that my life is guided by our heavenly Father who in His divine providence guides every step of my life. But . . . how do I find out about the place where He wants me to live and to work?

The problem that we are facing now is somewhat similar to the question I often met at youth meetings: "You say that the LORD still today brings to every man his own wife, but

. . . how do I find her in the midst of all those girls that parade before me? And how do I know, when I think I have found her, that she is the right one?"

The first, simple answer, of course, is: pray and work. Pray as Isaac prayed while his father's servant went out to find a wife for him. And work, by seeking and visiting the right places where one may expect to find God-fearing young ladies. In other words: make it possible for the LORD to let you meet, one day, the right one. I know, this is not the whole truth, but it sends you in the right direction.

Now back to: what kind of work, job, calling, office, would you like to have? Or better: where does the LORD want to put you?

Although there come no direct answers from heaven — the Bible is completed and the LORD does not give individual additions to His revelation — one must be alert to notice indications. Some know already at a very young age what they want to become, and they show the capabilities and have the talents to prepare for it. For them it is a smooth ride; anyway a straight path. Others go zig-zag in the young, preparatory years, and have already become young adults before they really have any preference for any job. They may end up with, "I have two strong hands, and I can always make a living by using them," and that is surely not inferior to any "office and calling." I have met people in my life who confessed with sadness that they had never found what they were really looking for. Sure, they "made a living," they even "made a life," which is much more. But . . . was I a failure?

It goes without saying that for everyone it takes a lot of prayer, and good use of your young years, to prepare oneself for one's life's task. It has been said that the part of your life from the age of 14 to 18/19 is the most important, for it is the time for the three great choices of your life. It is hard to give the ideal chronological order, but in this stretch of your life you must make up your mind what you are going to do with the covenant promises of the LORD. Then, being a young adult, you start thinking about a partner for life. And then there is the need to choose a vocation, a line of study or whatever else may lead you to your life's "job."

In addition to what has just been said, that these three choices take a lot of praying and good use of your

— *Continued on next page.*

# More Synods Against Nuclear Weapons

From June 8-17 Synod 1982 of the Christian Reformed Church was held. Among other matters, there were two that I would like to give some information about here to our readers. Statements and guidelines were made on dancing and on "Justifiable Warfare." The latter should have our interest, because so much is being written nowadays about "peace." Attention was paid to this problem in one of the previous Press Reviews. The former is of interest, because I wrote about it in a previous volume of *Clarion*. Now I would like to pass on the "dramatic and powerful statement on warfare [which] was solidly passed by the delegates" of Synod. This quotation is taken from *Calvinist Contact*, June 25, reporting on the decisions of the synod. It also gives the statement itself, which is divided into three paragraphs: "The Just War," "Just War Implications," and "Exhortation." It follows here:

## THE JUST WAR

1. It is, in the Christian view, the task and responsibility of the state to establish and maintain a just political order and to secure in law the religious, social, and economic freedoms which its citizens require for meeting their obligations to God and neighbour.
2. It is recognized by the church that sin, expressing itself in lawlessness,

continuously threatens the established political order and the freedoms it guarantees.

3. The church believes that when this lawlessness is armed and directed violently against the state, the state is authorized by God himself to counter this attack through the use of such force as will render the attack inoperative, and enable the state to perform its function to preserve justice and freedom in society.

4. The Christian church in articulating the ideal of peace proclaimed by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, may not so construe that ideal as to deprive the state in principle of the sword given to it for the defense of order and freedom. There can, therefore, be no obligation *a priori* to the existence of a military establishment or to the manufacture and strategic disposition of weapons calculated to deter the lawless.

5. The state is authorized to counter with force not only the armed lawlessness of its own citizens, but also that of hostile states bent on conquest and enslavement. It may engage both in police action against its law-breaking citizens and in military action against foreign states forcibly disturbing the order of justice in which human freedoms are secured.

Before I make some remarks, I would also like to pass on the following information from *The Presbyterian Journal*, June 30, 1982. This issue reports on the Synod of the CRC and the General Assemblies of the PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) and of the RPCES (Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod) which voted to join the PCA, so that the RPCES will no longer exist as an independent church. Last year presbyteries of the PCA voted against the OPC's joining them. Further it reports on the Synod of the RPCNA (Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, the "Covenanters," who sing only Psalms in their worship services without the accompaniment of musical instruments). All these meetings were held at the same time

and at the same place: the grounds of Calvin College in Grand Rapids. Also this Synod approved "a warning against nuclear weapons." We read:

Addressing a resolution to leaders of the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Nations, the RPNA called upon them to "acknowledge your position as a servant of God, called to justice, to protect human life."

Further, the leaders were asked "to do all in your power to work to eliminate the use of all nuclear weapons by all nations."

Among the resolution's seven preamble statements were acknowledgements that "our failure to declare the whole counsel of God has contributed to the threat of nuclear war"; that "the proliferation and possible use of nuclear arms is a demonstration not only of man's contempt for man but of man's contempt for God and His creation"; and "that murder is forbidden by God and that the use of nuclear arms involves the massive indiscriminate killing of human beings."

It is hard to comment on these short quotations. One does not know what is concretely meant with the words: "our failure to declare the whole counsel of God has contributed to the threat of nuclear war." If this must be read in the light of what follows, "nuclear arms is a demonstration . . . of man's contempt for God and His creation," I consider this to be one-sided, to say the least.

Let us make it concrete. The bomb on Hiroshima killed many people. It also ended the Second World War. In that way, it saved the lives of thousands and thousands of others, both of the Japanese and of the Allied Forces. Many Japanese pilots were ready to fly their bomb-filled planes upon U.S. targets, thereby also killing themselves, for instance.

Further, if it means that the lack of preaching of the pure Word of God and the lack of obedience of Christians to that Word were part of the cause of great misery and injustice, for instance, in the days of the indus-

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## MANDATE — Cont'd.

time and energy, it is also clear that the three choices are interrelated to certain degrees. We cannot go into that now. Permit me to conclude this article with the wish that our young generation be eager to receive that gift of God of which the Preacher speaks: enjoyment in the work you have chosen.

G. VANDOOREN  
*To be continued.*

trial revolution, which gave to Karl Marx some reason to proclaim communism as a solution, yes, then I must admit that the church, Christianity, is guilty. But when the church, or rather Christianity, must be blamed for the fact that things went so far that nuclear weapons were made, I am not ready to say "yes." One can blame the church for everything. But is it justified to blame the church or Christianity as such for all the evil and disobedience which is committed in and by the world?

However, we return to the real point here: nuclear weapons cannot be justified. That is what the Christian Reformed Synod also declared. In its "Guidelines for Justifiable Warfare" we read further:

#### JUST WAR IMPLICATIONS

6. A just war, as traditionally understood and endorsed by the Christian church, is a war the *object* of which is not utterly to destroy but effectually to deter the lawless; the concrete aim of a just war is not the annihilation but the overpowering of the enemy state and the consequent assignment to it of its rightful place in the family of nations.

7. In the Christian view the *ultimate purpose* of a just war is the establishment of a lasting peace upon the foundation of justice. Its final end is the achievement of a righteous and stable political order within which concrete human values are preserved and a well-ordered human society can flourish.

8. No war may be considered just which, while visiting destruction upon all that is bad, destroys every living human witness to that which is good; no war can be considered an allowable remedy for evil which destroys, together with this evil, all or almost all of history's accumulated goods; no war can be considered a fit political instrument for the establishment of peace which brings no peace but the peace of death.

9. Although a just war is in principle thinkable, and in the past was concretely possible, it is at least questionable whether, in view of the destructive power of modern weapons, it can any longer become actual. Any war which would scorch the earth, destroy all or the major part of the technical, cultural, and spiritual treasures of mankind, and annihilate the human race or leave alive only a maimed and wounded fragment of it, lies outside the traditional concept of a just war and must be judged morally impermissible.

#### EXHORTATION

10. The church recognizes that there exists in thermonuclear weapons and missiles a destructive power too frightful to contemplate and too sinister to tolerate. Considering the extreme diffi-

culty, if not the impossibility, of limiting nuclear weapons if war should break out, the church enjoins upon the nations of the world their duty to establish a framework of mutual agreement to scrap these weapons, and to do so without delay under international surveillance.

11. The church recognizes that the decision to do this will not be taken if men and nations are not prompted thereto by the Spirit of God. It, therefore calls upon all its members to pray for the initiation, continuation, and success of disarmament discussions, and indeed for the establishment of peace with justice.

12. Because prayer is neither sincere nor effectual when not expressive of personal commitment and when not accompanied by appropriate deeds, the church calls upon its members to work for peace in every honourable way and to support with Christian judgment, charity, and vigor the existing agencies and institutions, national and international, which have been established to secure justice, understanding, and cooperation among nations and peoples.

13. Because no work is maximally effective which is not directed by understanding, the church calls upon its members who are theologians, philosophers, and scientists, and upon its members who are pastors, teachers, and other leaders to provide instruction and guidance in matters of national and international concern in order that through the relevant proclamation of the Word and through the disciplined judgment and enlightened activity of its members the church may also in this area be in truth "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world."

Although churches can propose to a synod to protest, as a federation of churches, to a certain sin against the Word of God which a government is in the process of committing or making legal, we do have to be very careful. We must ask ourselves the question: Is this the task of a synod? Or is it rather the task of the individual members of the churches in their political calling? The members can organize and form a political study club or something like that. Even though it may make more of an impression when a synod, as the broadest assembly, protests, than when individual members do so, we do not have to let this practical aspect dominate our actions. We must ask whether it is the task of a synod to make political statements. My opinion is: it is not. Many of the large, liberal churches' *highest* (!) assemblies have made pronouncements against nuclear weapons, thinking in that way to promote peace on earth. But this liberal action is not the norm to follow. As I

see it, making a political statement on nuclear weapons is not an ecclesiastical matter. That in the first place.

In the second place, I am of the opinion that also the synods of the CRC and the RPCNA speak about nuclear weapons as such, in themselves, and not in the context of our real political situation. Sure, if we could speak about nuclear weapons as such, in themselves, we could all agree: man should not use them; man should not even make them, creating the possibility of using them. But we are dealing here with these weapons in a world situation, in which one of the powers of our days clearly intends to conquer and rule the whole world and force its "peace" upon our entire world. To reach that goal, this power is building up its strength with conventional weapons as well as with nuclear weapons, so that it can clearly outdo and beat the Western powers.

After the Second World War we have seen how this communist power



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brought country after country under its influence and into its power, and that it violently subdued efforts to regain some freedom for these countries. Under communism, there is no freedom. It comes from the devil and hates God and Christ and Christians, and everybody who thinks differently. That is today's political reality.

Further, wherever communist revolution takes over, people try to escape and flee the oppressed country . . . flee to freedom. That is also the political reality of our days. This communist power of Russia is in possession of the largest and biggest conventional and nuclear weapons arsenal. That is the political reality of our days as well. It is true, still today, that if one wants peace and freedom, one must be strong, at least as strong as the opposing power that intends to conquer the whole earth. Very real, also, is the fact that the communist power laughs at the churches with their statements, and is only glad that it can use the churches and their disarmament statements for its own goal: to weaken the West and conquer the world. That's how Billy Graham was in Moscow. Therefore, statements like these made by Reformed synods, in my opinion, should not be made. Not only are they useless, because the communist power makes itself stronger and stronger with nuclear weapons anyway, but they are also dangerous and misleading. They fail to show the intentions of communism, and they undermine the resistance against this attack on freedom in the whole world. Also by evil powers way of such statements, in which "peace" is promoted (so people think in their naivety), the way can easily be paved eventually for an anti-redeemer of this earth: no nuclear war, but peace on earth more and more becomes the real true "redemption" and "peace", also for Christians. If we want to talk about the church's guilt in not preaching the whole truth, must we not watch out that we do not fall into the modern trap of promoting the false peace of the communist-socialist revolution?

There is one more thing on which I would like to state my opinion. This point is probably the basis for the view that the use of nuclear weapons never can be justified. The basis for what is said in the first paragraph about "The Just War" must be Romans 13. In sub 4 we read about the State having the right to use the sword, while in sub 3 they speak of the state as being authorized by God to counterattack violent evildoers. In

Romans 13:4 the apostle Paul speaks about the government that does not bear the sword in vain.

By the way, I would rather speak about the government's bearing the sword, than about the state's doing so. The word "state" usually means a nation or (looking at the United States) a part of a nation, which includes both the government and the people. My dictionary also gives the meaning "civil government." Not the state in the sense of the government *and* the people has the sword. The government alone has. And the government does not get its authority and sword from the people. Paul says: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment." (Romans 13:1,2). Even though we have a democratic society, where people choose the members of parliament, we must see the government in the light of what Paul writes here.

It is remarkable that this synodical statement constantly speaks about the Christian and the church: "in the Christian view" (sub 1,7); "it is recognized by the church" (sub 2, see sub 10 and 11), and so on. Why does the Synod speak this way? The view of the Christian or of the church, or, let us say, the tradition of the church, cannot be the authority for faith and life. Only the Word of God is. Why does the Synod not come with the Word of God as the basis for its statement? This speaking about the view of the Christian and the recognition of the church makes the statement weak and relativizes it or is that the intention? Besides, this Christian view and the recognition of the Christian church that a just war is possible will be denied by some Christians: the Mennonites have always been opposed to any war.

Now the Synod states that "the church believes that when this lawlessness is armed and directed violently against the state, the state is authorized by God himself to counter this attack through the use of such force as will render the attack inoperative . . .," and that the ideal of peace may not be construed in such a way "as to deprive the state in principle of the sword given to it for the defense of order and freedom." I do not deny at all that the government bears the sword to maintain order and freedom of its citizens. But I find it remarkable

that the Synod constantly speaks in this way: the sword is given to defend *order and freedom*, while the apostle Paul says that those who resist the government "will incur judgment" (RSV), are "bound to be punished" (Phillips translation). This "judgment" or "punishment" means the punishment from the side of the governing authorities and not God's judgment, according to Greijdanus in his commentary on this text.

This is even clearer from verse 4. Here Paul writes that the government does not bear the sword in vain. It is the servant of God to execute *His* wrath on the wrongdoer. Here we see what the Word of God, with respect to the calling of the government, says: *execute God's wrath on the wrongdoer!!* This is a very important word. The punishment which the government gives the wrongdoer must be an execution of the wrath of God against him. What that wrath of God against sin is we can find in the Bible. Terrorists and revolutionaries who try to overthrow the government, as well as another state that tries to conquer a land with force, must not only be counterattacked. God's wrath must be executed here. (By the way, not only in such cases does the government have this task; the same is true regarding other acts of lawlessness, sins against other commandments of God, like murder, rape, robbery. For this reason I am against the humanistic, cruel "love" of the abolition of capital punishment.)

In my opinion, if we stay close to what the Bible says about the task of the government here, that is, that governments are called not only to maintain order and freedom, but also to punish the wrongdoer, this can make us cautious in saying: nuclear weapons as such are always wrong to use and to make and have. Communism is ruthless. It has killed millions and millions, and is continuing to do so, in Asia, in Africa, in Europe, and in America.

But did Christ not say in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5, that we should not kill, but turn the other cheek? Certainly, Christ said that to His disciples. Christ, there, was opposing personal self-revenge: when you hit me, it is my right to hit you back; and what you do to me, I do to you. That is totally wrong. But Christ was not undermining the authority and calling of the official government, of the judge, to exercise justice and punish the wrongdoer. Certainly not.

J. GEERTSEMA

“... and she laughs at the time to come.” Prov. 31:25b.

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# The Laughter of Hope

Of all the virtues of the worthy woman mentioned in Proverbs 31, this one appears to be out of the ordinary and slightly off track. With ever-increasing global upheaval, economic turmoil, and social decay, what do we gain by having laughing women around? Is it their job to help the men keep a carefree and light-hearted view of things? Must they turn everything into a joke, something like the way Sarah laughed when the messenger from heaven told her that she would have a son? She was obviously wrong then, but here the laughter of the worthy woman in Israel concerning the things of the future is especially noted and praised. How is that possible?

This is obviously not the laughter of giggling girls for whom the future simply does not exist; this is the laughter of the *mature* woman, the woman who acknowledges and performs her responsibilities in her household. In performing her daily task, she consistently maintains a confident, worry-free attitude to the future. The future does not rule her or ruin her; rather, whatever the conditions may be, she appears to be on top of the future, running with it and laughing at it.

It is remarkable that the Scriptures reserve this laughter at the future for the worthy *woman*, who here may be identified with the believing mother in Israel. While men sometimes seem only to doubt, worry, wonder, or question, here we have a place where someone laughs at the future — only, it’s a woman. Yet this is not so surprising when we consider the manifold kindness of the LORD to her in the history of redemption. She sinned *first*, and the man followed, 1 Tim. 2:14. Nevertheless, she heard the gospel *first*, Gen. 3:15. And when the great day of redemption finally dawned, she heard of it *first*, Luke 2:31. After the Lord Jesus had completed His work, giving His life on the cross, He appeared to her *first* again, John 20:1ff. And in the Church of Pentecost, next to the apostles, she is mentioned *first*, Acts 1:14.

All this shows how wonderfully the Messianic future was communicated to her, and how it was so much, as it were, a part of her and her own future. Indeed, in the LORD’s eyes she was anything but inferior, even in the old dispensation. The *real* things to come were hers; precisely this allowed her to laugh at tides of changing times which also affected her place and task so much. She laughs because she has the promise. In a moment of unbelief, Sarah laughed, and that was her shame. The be-

lieving woman may laugh in hope — and that is her virtue.

The faithful mother in Israel — the mother who also steadfastly refuses to circumvent her task of bearing and raising children — can derive great comfort from these few words. For when He faced the hour of upheaval, the Lord Jesus did not shrink back from telling how great its force would be. He did not tell the weeping daughters of Jerusalem to laughingly brush off the times to come; rather, He told them to weep for themselves and for their children. And He said, “For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!’ ” Luke 23:29. And in His discourse to His disciples about the things to come, the end-time tribulation, He points out that it will be particularly hard for those women who are expecting or recently had a child, Matt. 24:19. For them the hour of upheaval will bring much sorrow, tribulation, and woe.

Here, however, mothers are told that they can *laugh* at the things to come. Today’s daughters of Jerusalem who are faithful in their task and calling may also count on the special care and favour of the Lord, through which they will be strengthened and comforted as darker futures roll upon them. There may be reason for fear, and yet they may laugh at the things to come. At the dawn of the impending distress (1 Cor. 7:26), their laughter strikes a note of certain, steady joy — the inner joy of knowing, possessing, and being a part of the Messianic promise as it claims its children in the world. Their laughter is the laughter of hope, the laughter that sees beyond the moment to the eternal joy of the age to come.

Indeed, precisely because the worthy woman can laugh *at* the time to come — running counter to her time in bold obedience — she also laughs *with* the age to come, the final age of glory. Even today, her humour about the times of this age reflect the victorious power of the age to come. It is this laughter that best describes the eschatological hope of the congregation of Christ. It is this laughter that sets the tone for full joy of the age to come: it starts with the mothers; but soon “the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in its streets,” Zech. 8:5. And, as the prophet says, will that not be marvellous in our eyes?

J. DEJONG

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# REVISED CHURCH ORDER: IMPROVEMENT OR IMPEDIMENT?

At the Classis West of December 13, 1951, the matter was discussed again. Art. 14 of the minutes reads:

The Church of Edmonton proposes to the meeting not to consider settled and binding the decision of the previous meeting to leave the observance of the Ascension Day in the freedom of the Churches. The meeting takes the proposal of the Church at Edmonton over, since according to Art. 67 C.O. the Churches decided in their broadest assembly to observe this day. Possible change — if desired — is to be tabled in an ecclesiastical manner, as is decided in the Church Order. This was not done.

Classis also agrees with the Church at Edmonton that no decision was necessary about observing the “second feast-days,” since this is regulated in the Church Order. And regarding the Good Friday nothing at all would have had to be decided, since no provision at all is found regarding it in our Church Order.

The need for changes in the Church Order was felt at that time already; concrete proposals were not slow in forthcoming.

At the Classis West of March 20, 1952, the Church at Houston had the following proposal put on the agenda regarding the number of classes per year:

To change Art. 41 C.O. in the following manner: to replace the words “three months” by “one year.”

The “three months” refer to the time within which a Classis is to be held. It shall not be held more than three months after the previous one. However, the distances and the cost and time involved for the Western Churches made it almost unjustified to have a Classis every three months for the simple reason that the Church Order provided this. Thus the Church at Houston proposed to provide that a Classis should be held at least once every year. However, Classis did not accede to the proposal.

During the discussion it is remarked that this proposal cannot be adopted, since a classis, as a minor assembly, does not have the right to change the Church Order. Upon proposal by the Church at Edmonton Classis decides:

- a. Classis establishes that the Canadian Reformed Churches in Western Canada cannot follow the literal text of Art. 41 C.O. with a view to the vast distances and the high costs involved in convening a Classis.
- b. Decides to inform the Churches in Eastern Canada about this.

That was the proper way: the Churches did not consider it justified to spend so much money — which was very scarce in those days — and time in convening a Classis for the simple reason that three months was mentioned

as the ultimate period in which one was to be convened. However, they also decided to inform the Eastern Churches of it.

At the Classis West of November 19, 1953, there was a “proposal from the Church of New Westminster regarding revision of the Church Order. New Westminster is advised to come to Classis with concrete proposals.”

At the Classis West of July 24, 1954, various proposals regarding changes in the Church Order are discussed and decisions are made.

This brings us to the first General Synod of the Churches, the one that was held in Carman in November 1954.

As you can read the Acts of this Synod yourselves, I shall not quote all the decisions regarding our Church Order *in extenso*. There was a proposal regarding Art. 41, the period within which a Classis had to be convened. Synod decided to add “unless the great distances render this inadvisable.”

With respect to Ascension Day, Synod decided to leave the day on which to remember the fact of the ascension in the freedom of the Churches, since Ascension Day is no holiday in Canada.

Art. 70 — regarding the solemnization of marriage — was also left in the freedom of the Churches.

What interests us most of all, however, is the decision made upon the proposal of the Church at Edmonton “to appoint a committee with the mandate to investigate whether and — if so — which articles of the Church Order need to be changed and what that change should be, and to report to the Churches on this before the next Synod.”

It is interesting to quote the whole article from the Acts. It is Article 94.

Rev. VanDooren proposes,

The Synod,

Having heard the overture of Edmonton to appoint a committee with the mandate to investigate whether and — if so — which articles of the Church Order need to be changed and what that change should be, and to report on this to the Churches before the next Synod, considering that revision of the Church Order is necessary in connection with the changed historical situation as well as in connection with the specific Canadian situation,

decides to appoint deputies with the mandate in preparation of an eventual revision as mentioned above, to study the Church Order and to come with proposals to the Churches not later than one year before the next Synod.

Rev. Selles proposes:



Synod, having heard the proposal of the Church of Edmonton, decides not to accede to it at the moment since in this stage of ecclesiastical development it cannot be foreseen which articles will need to be changed.

Synod decided:

Having heard the proposal of the Church at Edmonton, considering that changing the Church Order is necessary in connection with the specific Canadian situation,

decides to appoint deputies with the mandate, in preparation of this proposed change, to report on that ultimately one year before the next Synod.

From this decision it is clear that the brethren wished to deal with this subject very carefully and not to take any hasty decisions. The need for change was felt, a need which existed not only because we were living in Canada and therefore could not use the Church Order in its present text and form, but also because the historical situation had changed so much in the course of the centuries that patchwork would not bring satisfactory results. Yet, it was decided to confine ourselves to changes necessitated by our immigration to Canada.

At the Synod of Homewood-Carman 1958, various changes were made, but they regarded mainly the terminology and the absence of particular or regional synods. Articles 37, 60, and 72 of the Acts inform us about the decisions.

The Synod of Hamilton 1962 made only one change: in the article concerning Church Visitation a few words were added: "unless the great distances render this inadvisable." This refers to the Church Visitation to be brought every year.

The Synod of Edmonton 1965 had to deal with the revision of the Church Order as a result of a request from the Particular Synod of Ontario 1965.

Art. 170 contains the following decision:

About the translation of the Church Order.

The General Synod has read the request of the Particular Synod of Ontario 1965, to "decide to have the Church Order translated into English in order to come to an official text of it; and in due time to have this text included in the *Book of Praise*.

Synod considers:

- a. That there is indeed a need for the fixing and publication of the English text of the Church Order in force among us;
- b. That the present Church Order has been taken over from the sister Churches in The Netherlands and applies to the Dutch conditions and circumstances;
- c. That the present Church Order contains several words and refers to matters and situations which we do not know here (e.g. in Art. 6: particuliere heerlijkheden, gasthuizen; Art. 26: huiszitten meesters of andere aalmoezeniers; Art. 51, which speaks of the relation of Reformed Churches of Europeans in the Netherlands Indies with the Churches in this country).

Synod decides:

To appoint three deputies with the mandate to translate the present Church Order as much as possible and to send the results of their work to the next Synod, with copies of this report to the Churches at least six months before the forthcoming Synod.

Here we see that the mandate for the committee is somewhat wider than before: certain situations are to be taken into account although as a whole it is still a very cautious

charge. Nothing is said about a changed historical situation.

The Acts of 1968 contain the draft translation of our Church Order.

However, there was more at this Synod. It was felt in the Churches that this translation was not the last word. More was needed. The Regional Synod of Ontario took over a proposal by Ontario South to come to a substantial revision. In support of its proposal, Ontario South had mentioned five articles that had to be corrected, ten articles that should be changed, four articles which should be dropped either partly or in their totality, and ten items which might have to be added. All in all, sufficient reason to charge the committee-to-be-appointed with an extensive revision.

Yet, Synod 1968 was very cautious. It decided (Art. 179):

2. To appoint a committee with the mandate
  - a. to improve the wording of the draft translation where necessary;
  - b. to revise the Church Order where such revision would profit the Churches (Art. 86 C.O.);
  - c. to report to the next General Synod;
  - d. to send a copy of their report to the Churches.

Synod 1971 was somewhat annoyed with the slowness of progress. Apparently there was some difference of opinion within the appointed committee as to the extent of the revision required. Synod stated that this might have been caused by the somewhat ambiguous wording of the mandate. It also reminded the Churches of the fact that revision of the Church Order had been on the table of General Synods from 1954 on. In other words: it is about time that something substantial be achieved!

I should like to pass on a few of the considerations of Synod 1971. Art. 82.

1. Art. 86 C.O. states — not only that "these articles *may*," but — that they "*ought* to be altered, augmented, or diminished, if the profit of the Churches demand it."
2. This "ought" needs to be stressed in order to prevent the danger that a partly outdated Church Order might undermine its own authority in the Churches.
3. It will be "to the profit of the Churches" (Art. 86 C.O.) to have a Church Order that is clear, straightforward, understandable for everyone and in all parts applicable to the life of the Churches.
4. This "ought" thus understood, implies that a revision should not be limited to the correction of some outdated expressions, but should be realized in a general revision as suggested to the General Synod 1968 by Regional Synod East and decided upon by this Synod (Art. 179, 2, b).
5. Such a general revision has to fully preserve the Reformed character of the Church Order in its present form.
6. A Committee, preparing such a general revision, should have the authority to propose changes "even there where also in the past no proposals have been received." (Report Committee)

Synod 1974 received a report which contained the revision of twenty-eight articles. No decision was made but the one to continue the committee. The only change that was made in the Church Order was the adoption of a new Article 84, to safeguard the rights of the Church regarding property held for the Churches in common either generally or regionally or classically.

Then came Synod 1977. It received a draft revision

containing thirty-three articles. The only judgment which Synod 1977 made was that the revised articles showed that the committee went in the direction which previous Synods pointed out.

A complete draft was sent to the Churches before Synod 1980. It was not possible, however, to send a revised complete draft to Synod itself. Only twenty-two articles were submitted to Synod, with the suggestion not to adopt any but to continue the committee in order that the Synod of 1983 might be enabled to receive and adopt the definitive revision of our Church Order. Synod concurred with this advice and charged the committee to send such a complete revised draft to the Churches for their comment before January 1, 1982. The draft was ready before that date, but the Consistories received it a few weeks later, something which should not constitute any problem.

From this brief survey of the history of our revision, it will have become clear that the urging to produce a more comprehensive revision came from the Churches and that it was the result of synodical decisions that the revision became more and more thorough.

We are not the only ones who have undertaken such a comprehensive revision. Our Netherlands sister Churches did the same, and adopted their revised Church Order at the General Synod of Groningen Zuid 1978. Our committee mentioned in its report that it made grateful use of the revision as it has been proposed to and adopted by the above Synod 1978.

In answer to the question whether the revision of the Church Order as such is an improvement, we must answer the question in the affirmative: Yes, it is an improvement. I can make this clear by reminding you of the arguments which the Synod 1971 had for its decision.

Let us recall them.

Synod reminds us of the wording of Article 86 C.O., that the articles "OUGHT TO" be changed, augmented, diminished when the profit of the Churches demands it. It is an obligation which rests upon us to change it in one way or another if this is better for the Churches.

Is it better for the Churches to have the Church Order overhauled? Synod 1971 said that an outdated Church Order might undermine its own authority in the Churches. If one provision is antiquated and, because of changed circumstances can no longer be kept, it means that part of the Church Order is put aside, at least practically. Thereby its own place and meaning in the midst of the Churches is undermined. This should not happen. Then we are to change the Church Order so that it again becomes possible to keep each and every provision of our covenant as Churches.

Another argument used by Synod 1971 was that it must be clear and straightforward and understandable to all members of the Churches and that each and every part of it must be applicable to the Churches and their condition at present.

It became clear in the course of the years that some doctoring did not produce the desired result. Piecemeal treatment left the Churches with an unsatisfied feeling. Gradually it became clear that nothing but a complete revision would satisfy the Churches. Thus such a complete revision was undertaken.

From the decisions of our General Synods it also became clear what the reasons for such a general revision were. One can undertake an overall revision for several reasons. It can be done because the Churches desire to incorporate into the Church Order practices and patterns which have become generally accepted even

though they are not found in the Church Order. We saw that when both the Synodical Churches in The Netherlands and the Christian Reformed Church revised their Church Order. More than in the Christian Reformed Church Order, we see in the Dutch Revised Church Order the detrimental influence of the theories regarding broader assemblies and discipline which were developed within the Reformed Churches after Assen 1926 and which found their culmination point in the suspension and deposition of office-bearers by broader assemblies in the years around 1944. What the Synodical Churches have done is simply fix in writing that which had become a practice among them. Such a revision is not to the profit and for the benefit of the Churches. Such a revision is a bane and not a boon.

If the Canadian Reformed Churches had had such a revision in mind, a warning voice should have been heard long ago, and efforts should have been made to stop such a development in the bud. We may say, however, that any such thought was far from the mind of all Churches. From the Acts of our various Synods it becomes abundantly clear that each step was taken very carefully.

Thus we can answer the first part of our question in the affirmative. The profit of the Churches requires that we shall update our Church Order, deleting those provisions which no longer make sense or which refer to completely different circumstances. It does not at all promote the honour in which the Church Order is held if we have to say of various provisions, "Oh, but that is no longer applicable; that was the situation four hundred years ago, but it is totally different now." If there are such provisions, we must have the courage to either drop them altogether or change them in such a manner that they do become applicable to our present situation.

It goes without saying that we are to be very careful when doing this. Extreme care is to be taken that we remain in the old, proven line and follow the old, Scriptural course. This, too, was expressed by the General Synod of 1971: remain in the old, Reformed line and preserve fully the Reformed character of our agreement.

Ultimately, therefore, the question can be reduced to this: "Are the proposed changes serving the profit of the Churches? Are the articles as they read *now* an improvement? Are *they* a boon or a bane?"

This question can be answered only when they are examined one by one. It is well nigh impossible to discuss them at the moment. That was not asked of me either. Perhaps some points can be clarified in the discussion. At least those among you who are officebearers will have received a copy of the proposed changes. As for the rest I have to come to the conclusion of my introduction.

The proposed revision will result in fewer proposals regarding the Church Order to future General Synods. It will also prevent a piecemeal change, now this, now that. This, too, is beneficial to the Churches.

The esteem in which our Church Order is held will be equally enhanced, since those provisions which were either greatly antiquated or hopelessly outdated will have been removed, which will result in a more faithful observance of the provisions that are left. This, too, cannot but be beneficial to the Churches.

As an introduction is only an introduction to the discussion, I am afraid that I have taken too much time away from the discussion already, and for that reason thank you for listening to me so long.

W.W.J. VANOENE

# news medley

Although you missed the news medley only once this summer, this does not mean that yours truly did not have any holidays. How things were managed will remain a secret to the vast majority of our readers, but we are happy that your favourite and favoured column is back after skipping only once.

Having just returned from the West, we hasten to pass on to you the news which has the interest of all our members, and this time we begin with the personalia, which means: matters pertaining to persons.

It will not be taken ill of me when I begin with offering our congratulations to one of our ministers. From *Clarion* I learned that the Rev. M. VanBeveren celebrated the completion of twenty-five years in the ministry. I do not know how much of a real celebration there was — if any — but even if there was none at all, this should not withhold us from offering our heartfelt congratulations on this occasion. As Rev. VanBeveren is serving “his” fifth congregation since coming to Canada, he is one of the better-known ministers, I presume, even though one never learns to know a person thoroughly. No one knows man but the spirit of man that is within him, Scripture says. However, those who have learned to know the Rev. VanBeveren in his ministry have learned to appreciate him as well. We realize that it is no achievement to have been a minister for twenty-five years, for when the Lord spares our life we reach such a point almost automatically. Yet we should honour those who lead us and guide us in the path of salvation, and that’s why we mention this celebration. May the Lord our God continue to bless our brother and cause him to be a blessing, to the edification of Zion.

From this very personal thing, we proceed to the matters pertaining to couples.

Quite a few wedding anniversaries have to be mentioned. Some are already past at the moment of this writing, but we shall mention them as yet.

On June 10th brother and sister G. VanGorkum celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. If I am not mistaken, they belong to the Church at Watford, for that’s the Church to the territory of which Strathroy “belongs.” I am certain that nearly the whole congregation and many from other places have shown that also in days of joy there is the bond of the communion of saints. It is too bad that I cannot tell you any further particulars about this couple, and that these lines have to suffice.

Jumping all the way to Surrey, B.C., we congratulate brother and sister K. Grim who, on August 25, will celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. They arrived in Lethbridge and stayed there for some time, but later on moved to B.C. where brother Grim had a bakery in Vancouver. A few weeks ago we drove past the street where their bakery was and mentioned it to each other. For quite a few years now they have been retired and been living in Surrey. Although especially brother Grim was in the hospital a few times during the last years, they are privileged in being allowed to have this celebration. May the Lord guide them in the future as well, giving them health and strength and gratitude.

On the same day brother and sister Homan in Smithville (or St. Ann’s) will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary. Alas, it was not possible to have them men-

tioned in the news medley in the same issue in which their advertisement appeared. Our absence due to holidays is the reason for this. Now, however, they have the distinction of being mentioned in two consecutive issues of our magazine, and that is something which does not happen to just anyone. From the caption with the picture you can learn when they were married, when they came to Canada and how they made out. Blessings are countless, must be their conclusion and the strength and comfort which the Lord has given will abide with them. May it be for many more years.

No date was mentioned in the advertisement announcing the fortieth wedding anniversary of brother and sister E. DeHaan of Surrey. The only thing we were told was that it was in August. When we talked to each other a few weeks ago, I was not aware of their “impending” celebration; if I had known, I would have congratulated them right then and there; now we have to do it via our *Clarion*, but could you find a better way of doing it? I still recall the day when, together with brother M. Onderwater, I was waiting at the Port Coquitlam CPR station to welcome the DeHaan family and bring them to their temporary home. When they did not alight, we raced through the train before it continued its journey towards Vancouver, contacted them, and promised that they would see us there. When the train arrived at the Vancouver station, we were there to greet them once again. This time they had to get out, for that’s how far the train went. They settled in the Surrey area and have lived there ever since. Oftentimes I wondered how sr. DeHaan managed to have several foster children, sometimes four or five babies at a time, in addition to her own. However, she did manage, and they both looked none the worse for it a few weeks ago. They are looking forward to retirement and we wish them many more blessed years.

Thus we conclude our personal visits in Langley, where brother and sister P. VanderStoep celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary on August 5. Our acquaintance goes back to The Netherlands, where we met for the first time in Middelharnis. The VanderStoeps sometimes visited relatives there, and I had to go and preach in that place once every three months. It was quite a journey: boarding the “Island Express” (my title for the thing) which, especially on Saturdays, was extremely crowded, and whose size would make it feel more at home at a children’s playground than within the transportation system. However it was the only means to reach the island of Goeree en Overflakkee. Before the island was reached, one had to board a ferry in Hellevoetsluis; upon reaching the other side, one found another glorified streetcar waiting which brought one to one’s destination. It was, of course, possible to take the bike (who could afford even a motorcycle in those days?) but whoever recalls biking in The Netherlands will remember that the journey went always against the wind. If one hoped that by the time one had to return the wind was still blowing from the same direction, he was disappointed: it had turned around and again one had to pedal one’s best against the wind. It was after one of those never monotonous journeys that we met the VanderStoep’s in Middelharnis. And when we entered the Vanegmond kitchen in New Westminster in November 1952, they were there again to greet us. They as well as we recall the holidays we spent with them, sometimes in the strawberry patch, sometimes in the blueberry “forest.” Enjoying retirement, they still keep busy with all sorts of things among which the printing of the bi-weekly *Church News* of the Valley Churches occupies an important place. May the Lord give

you the health and strength to continue life's further journey with joy and contentment.

Hopefully, our readers were not bored by the above reminiscences. You don't have to read more about them today, for we turn to the news from the Churches.

As our last paragraphs concerned the Valley anyway, we continue there.

In Cloverdale "the Committee of Administration advises the Consistory that in order to install a sound system in the sanctuary three- or four hundred dollars will be needed. The Consistory decides to leave matters as they are for the time being and to ask the ministers who occasionally preach in our church building to speak up."

This is a word after my heart! More than once I expressed amazement at the fact that sound systems appear needed in our churchbuildings which — generally speaking — are not so big that the whole congregation cannot be reached with one's voice. I often wondered what was done in olden days when sermons were delivered in the high and vaulted cathedrals and when sometimes many hundreds of people were gathered together for the services. "Speak up!" is a very sound advice, to which I would add, "Speak slowly!" Whoever stands on the pulpit should bear in mind that he is not standing there for his own sake but for the sake of the congregation, and if the congregation cannot understand the speaker because he is too soft or too fast, the most beautiful sermon becomes worthless and the service a failure as far as this is concerned.

If there are members with hearing problems, sound systems should be installed for them; but to install a sound system for the ministers who conduct the services appears to me an unnecessary expense. If they cannot make themselves be heard and understood they should look for a job in another field.

A previous time I mentioned something about the Langley organ. It does sound very nice, I must say, having heard it (again) this summer. According to experts, however, it is not yet complete. "In the previous Short Report of the Consistory, the Organ Committee was granted the request to raise an extra \$1,600.00 for a 16' posauene on the pedal. Our advisor, br. Dirk Jansz Zwart, originally recommended a 16' Fagot which according to him is 'on-misbaar.' However, the price for this rank is \$6,000.00, which at this time is out of reach. Mr. Spilker, the organ builder, was able to re-condition with new resonators a 16' posauene (12 pipes added to the trumpet), complete with a windchest for \$1,600.00. This rank has almost the same effect as a Fagot.

As Organ Committee we hope to organize some music- and singing evenings for your enjoyment and at the same time hold collections to cover the extra expenses."

Speaking of organs, in Guelph "the Organ Committee will be given the go-ahead to order and complete the organ as soon as possible, since half of the funds required has already been made available."

Not everything costs much money. In Winnipeg the Consistory received a letter from a brother "informing the consistory of his efforts to organize a group of young people for the upkeep of a neat appearance of the church. A few items to assist him in this task will be purchased." To be followed!

Now that the Immanuel Church at Edmonton has a minister, the possibility of pulpit exchange exists in that city. The Consistory agreed "to the request for a regular monthly pulpit exchange, preferably on the fourth Sunday of every month, on the condition that this will not in-

## 40th Wedding Anniversary



*Mr. and Mrs. J. Homan*

*Jan Homan and Rienje Poort were united in marriage on August 25, 1942 in Zuidhorn, The Netherlands. In June 1952 they emigrated with their three sons and one daughter to Canada. For eight years they lived in Burlington. In 1960 they moved to a farm in Wainfleet. Presently they live in St. Ann's (Smithville area) and enjoy their retirement.*

cur any extra expenses for the church. This exchange is to be regulated by the ministers who wish to participate in it."

This is a wise decision, although I personally prefer two single services above one whole Sunday, but that is something on which others may have a different opinion. However many years one has been a minister, having to prepare two sermons every week is and remains an extremely heavy charge and although it becomes a little easier in the course of the years, no one should have the impression as if after twenty-five or thirty years preparing these sermons no longer requires thorough study and many hours of research.

At a meeting of the Home Mission Committee in Carman an introduction was given "on origin and establishment of the United Church of Canada. This together with copies of their catechism and confession of faith and some literature on church doctrine proved very informative. You may ask why we take the time and effort to study these. We as committee wondered about the same thing at first. However, the more we studied these things the more we found out how useful this could be (and is) when we work with people of this background, e.g. Boyne Lodge residents."

It is a long time ago that I mentioned efforts of our sisters in gathering funds for all sorts of worthwhile purposes. During the past months I read about garage sales, stands in malls, and other means to fill the coffers. Many thousands of dollars have been brought together by these activities. Once in a while we also read of the fruits of these labours and the useful purposes to which the moneys are used. This was the case in Carman as well, and I pass on to you the following passage from the Consistory report: "The Ladies Aid propose to install at their expense a range hood over the kitchen stove, an exhaust fan in the nursery (for obvious reasons), and an air conditioner for the fellowship hall at a cost of approximately \$2,600.00. This was unanimously approved." Aye!

Most Churches celebrate the Lord's Supper six times a year; and most Churches also still celebrate this Supper in both services. Orangeville's Consistory decid-

ed to ask the opinion of the Congregation regarding increasing the number of celebrations and having the Supper in the morning services only. Now that the family visits for the season have ended, conclusions can be drawn, and they were drawn in Orangeville. "During home visits this past season the congregation was asked their opinion regarding the number of times the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated, and also whether to have it only in the morning or in both services. The Consistory taking into consideration the opinions received decided to leave things as they are at this time." That means: four times a year and in both services.

I was wondering what the Consistory meant with the following sentence in Chatham's bulletin: "Letter from *Clarion*, the Canadian Reformed Magazine, asking for submissions of suitable articles for publication in this magazine." I did not recall having sent such a letter to our Consistories. It would have been an un-ecclesiastical action. The brethren may be assured that no such letter was ever sent to any Consistory. I think that mistakenly a personal letter got mixed up with the official mail. I did write a letter to approximately thirty-five members of the Churches all over the country in which I tried to show them that they have a responsibility towards the Church membership and should use their talents for the up-building of the community. From some I received a favourable response. One brother expressed his happiness with this letter, stating that one is condemned in his seeking of knowledge and in furthering his education if he does not let the membership share the fruits of this advancement. "No one lives for himself." The Chatham Consistory can remove this letter from its archives: it was not sent to them.

It is heartwarming to discover that committees of administration are constantly on the alert to improve things for the Church. In Toronto "the Committee of Management brings to the attention of the council that it would be possible to buy the house next to the church and sell the house presently occupied by the minister and his family. The council does not feel that this would be a real advantage to the congregation. The minister has no strong feelings on the matter and there would not be a financial advantage."

Finally, we go to Burlington West and investigate how things went with the suggested and planned institution of another Church. In Flamborough/Waterdown no sufficient majority could be found, as we saw the other time. Yet the institution of a new Church is to be preferred above splitting a Congregation into two parts. Rev. Pouwelse is of the same opinion. "The only relevant question in this respect is whether the area and the membership is enough to warrant this institution. Another advantage is that the discussion and the agreement about the plans can be confined to the membership in that area, whereas in the case of splitting *all* the members are involved and should like to have their say."

In a Postscript, Rev. Pouwelse writes, "After I had written these lines, I learned that there is already a new development."

What was this development?

The Consistory received "a request from sixteen brothers to investigate the feasibility of instituting a church in 'Burlington South.' This is granted. The consistory looks forward to a report by August 1st, 1982."

An information packet was handed out to the Congregation and a meeting was held on July 14th. After some brothers had given information about various aspects, "a lively discussion ensued and the above men-

tioned brothers answered the questions each for their own part." After the discussion and during the intermission the issue of the institution was put to the vote. The outcome of this vote was: 50 in favour of institution, 10 against institution. It was a good clear majority of 83.33%." "It was further decided to have a vote on the issue of the office-bearers on Sunday, July 25, 1982, the Lord willing. This vote deals with the choice either to retain the office-bearers living in the area of 'South,' or have a free election of new office-bearers to be installed [ordained] at the official institution."

The vote was held, and "the result of the vote taken last Sunday was 31 votes for retaining the present office-bearers and 27 votes for a free election . . . . Our consistory will meet, the Lord willing, August 10, 1982, and the committee for 'South' will prepare a report to the consistory so the brothers will be able to decide on the request of the members of 'Burlington South' to take the favourable decision of the consistory to the classis September 24, 1982."

As matters look now, it won't be long before we can greet the ninth Church in the region of Ontario North. The main aspect, however, is that things are done in good harmony; only then will a matter succeed.

As other work waits and the news is exhausted for this time, we'll have to come to a close.

For those who are interested in it we mention that we had excellent holidays in "rainy" British Columbia, and that we took quite a tan along from there. When we approached Fergus towards midnight, we were greeted by driving rain as the result of a thunderstorm. It was good for cleaning the car to which the dust of road-construction and mudpools was clinging as if it were part of our vehicle.

Thus we are back at home, resuming the work and hoping that we have served you to at least some extent with our relation of facts and the odd evaluation of the same.

VO

#### THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE EVENING

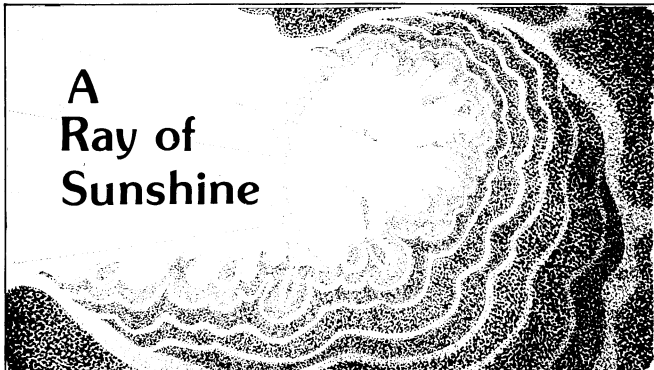
The tenth convocation and thirteenth anniversary meeting of our Theological College will be held, the Lord willing, on:

Friday, September 10, 1982 at 8:00 p.m.  
in the Wellington Square United Church,  
Caroline Street, Burlington.

The president of the Board of Governors, the Reverend D. VanderBoom, M. Th. will be the featured speaker. Vice-President, the Reverend J. Mulder will open, and the evening will be enlivened by the performance of the combined choirs of Burlington/Smithville/Lincoln under the direction of Mr. John VanHuisstede. A good sound system will be established by Mr. Harpert VanderWel. One of the highlights of the evening is the conferring of the Master of Divinity degree on Mr. Clarence Bouwman, B.A. There will be a social hour in the spacious meeting hall afterwards.

We hope and trust that many of our church members will come out and show their ongoing interest in the training for the ministry.

## A Ray of Sunshine



"For riches do not last forever."

Proverbs 29:24

People can be very self-satisfied, arrogantly fooling themselves with the thought that material riches will make them happy.

The Lord Jesus, the Author of the letter to the Laodiceans, knew about this kind of self-deception. He told John to write: "For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked." Note how the word **I** seems to stand out. It shows the character of one who is convinced that he/she accomplished all those riches in his/her own power. It reminds us of King Nebuchadnezzar who so conceitedly said: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by **my** mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of **my** majesty?" King Nebuchadnezzar had been warned by God, through Daniel's admonition, that he should repent. But he had to experience God's power before he would kneel before it.

In contrast to King Nebuchadnezzar's character we find King David's. In II Samuel 23 we read: "Now these are the last words of David: . . . When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth upon a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth. Yea, does not my house stand so with God? For He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?"

Note how David gave God the glory for his prosperity. We can find another contrast in two chapters of Revelation. Chapter 18 shows us the futility of riches without God. "In one hour all this wealth (of the great city Babylon) has been laid waste." In Chapter 19 we read: "Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying:

'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the glory . . . Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.' "

*When we experience the riches of God's salvation we cannot be haughty, but we will put our trust and confidence in His care and protection, which He will give to us daily and abundantly.*

Praise to the Lord, who does prosper thy work and defend thee!  
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.  
Ponder anew  
What the Almighty will do:  
He with His love did befriend thee!

Hymn 60:3  
Book of Praise

\* \* \* \* \*

From Mrs. Van Seters, Coaldale, Alberta, we received a thank-you note. She is progressing slowly, has a lot of pain, and is not able to attend Church services yet. She puts her trust in the Lord, who knows each of His children's needs. Mrs. Van Seters was very happy with the many cards she received from you, brothers and sisters. Several cards came from Australia. Thank you very much!

\* \* \* \* \*

For the last part of August we have on our birthday calendar:

**FENNY KUIK**  
38 Rizzuto Bay  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2C 3Y8

The Lord willing, Fenny will celebrate her 30th birthday on August 18. She has helped to put many issues of CLARION together. In this issue we congratulate you, Fenny, on this special occasion. May the Lord bless you in the coming year! Fenny cannot hear or speak, but she very actively takes part in church work. Have a nice day, Fenny!

\* \* \* \* \*

**JACK DIELEMAN**  
307 Connaught Avenue  
Willowdale, Ontario M2R 2M1

Jack, the second youngest member of a family of eight, will celebrate his 10th birthday, the Lord willing, on August 27. Jack is paralyzed from his chest down. He attends school in a wheelchair. He even joined a wheelchair basketball team. Let us know how you are making out, Jack. Did your team win? Have a nice birthday!

Send your requests to:

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

## PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis Contracta of the Churches in Alberta and Manitoba, held at Coaldale on June 18, 1982.

1. Rev. D. DeJong calls the meeting to order on behalf of the Church at Calgary, convening Church. He reads I Timothy 3 and leads in prayer.

2. Credentials are found in good order. The Church at Calgary is represented by Rev. D. DeJong and Deacon H. Van

den Hoven; the Church at Coaldale is represented by Rev. J.D. Wielenga and Elder P. Van Spronsen. Classis is constituted as Classis Contracta. Officials: Rev. D. DeJong - chairman, Rev. J.D. Wielenga - clerk.

3. Request from the Providence Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton to approve the call of Rev. M. VanBeveren, minister of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington, Ontario. Request is granted after Classis found the documents presented by Providence

Church in good order according to the requirements of the Articles 5, 10 and 11 C.O.

4. Rev. S. De Bruin of Immanuel Church at Edmonton will be requested to represent the churches of Classis at the installation of Rev. VanBeveren on July 4, 1982.

5. Acts and Press Release are adopted.

6. Br. P. Van Spronsen leads in prayer. Classis is closed.

J.D. WIELENGA, Clerk



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.

### GRAND RAPIDS (RES NE)

Meeting here at Calvin College, the 160th General Assembly of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES) voted 322-90 to join the Presbyterian Church in America. Following the completion of some last-minute housekeeping details, the delegates of the (now former) RPCES walked across the campus to where the delegates of the PCA were gathered and became part of their Tenth General Assembly. The merger has come about in less time than any known comparable church union. Less than three years ago the unusual approach was first proposed in a meeting at Lookout Mountain, Tennessee. The merger has increased the number of PCA congregations from 460 to 650 with about 150,000 total membership.

\* \* \*

### EDINBURGH (RES NE)

"Pastor or Potentate?" is the title of a declaration made here by the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland on the occasion of Pope John Paul II's visit to Scotland. The focus of the declaration is that the visit should not be seen as an isolated event but as one of a series of visits by diplomat Popes, who have tried to revive and enhance the image of the *una et sancta ecclesia* as it harks back to the Middle Ages. In each visit the pope should be seen as assuming three distinct but subtly blended roles in an effort to regain his *imperium*. He comes as the uniquely endowed and supreme spiritual leader (1) who works hard and travels far to revive the beliefs and renew the allegiance of some 80% of his adherents, (2) who aspires to a moral ascendancy and a generally accepted

mediatorship in international affairs, and (3) who, without relinquishing any prerogatives, presents a benign face to eager Protestant ecumenists in the hope that they will lead the rest of the "separated brethren" back into his fold. For these reasons a visit of the Pope is never simply "pastoral." Any resurgence and "triumphalism" of Roman Catholicism, according to the Free Church, is chiefly due to the potent influence of itinerant Popes on large, tradition-bound and unreflecting sectors of the church population. The Popes, especially John Paul II, have maintained conservative attitudes and claims, with a leaning towards authoritarianism and the cult of the virgin Mary.

\* \* \*

### COLUMBUS, GEORGIA (RES NE)

With an overwhelming vote the General Assembly of the 840,000 member Presbyterian Church in the US (PCUS) voted to rejoin the northern Presbyterians, the 2.4 million member United Presbyterian Church in the USA (UPCUSA). One week later the UPCUSA General Assembly voted almost unanimously to approve the union. The two groups separated over the slavery issue in 1861 and largely maintained their northern and southern alignment. The action taken by the two general assemblies now goes to the churches' presbyteries, of which three-fourths must approve reunion. If the union is consummated it will close a breach that has existed for more than a century.

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### GRAND RAPIDS (RES NE)

Acting on the advice of its Interchurch Relations Committee, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) decided not to enter into a relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship with the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (NGK) at this time.

The reasons for this decision were (1) that entering into such a relationship now would seriously compromise the CRCNA's "witness against racial discrimination and suggest an indifference to the plight of millions of non-white South Africans, including the black Reformed Christians, who suffer under the system of autogenous development which is supported and abetted by the Dutch Reformed Church" and (2) "The Christian Reformed Church ought not ignore the steadfast refusal of the Dutch Reformed Church to seriously reconsider its position and to recog-

nize the evil results in human tragedies that this policy has worked in family life, in personal lives, and in creating a society that engenders hate and foments violence." The CRCNA will reconsider ecclesiastical fellowship with the Dutch Reformed Church after the DRC has demonstrated "genuine concern and action to undo both the system and the evils of apartheid in the society in which it is strategically powerful."

By contrast, the CRCNA Synod decided to extend full ecclesiastical fellowship to three other South African churches: the (black) Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (NGKA), the (coloured) Dutch Reformed Mission Church (NGSK) and the (Indian) Reformed Church in Africa (RCA).

Also approved for ecclesiastical fellowship were The Netherlands Reformed Churches. These churches used to be part of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, Liberated (RCN-Lib), but fell into disfavour (1967 and following years) and for some years were known as Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, "Unaffiliated."

\* \* \*

### NEW ORLEANS (RNS)

In a break with church tradition, Southern Baptists voted at their annual convention here to endorse President Reagan's proposed constitutional amendment to put prayer back in public school classrooms.

The action, on a day that also saw sharp debate on abortion and support for Israel, made the 13-million-member church the first major U.S. denomination to back the current effort to overturn the Supreme Court's 20-year-old ban on classroom prayer and Bible-reading.

It also put the denomination, the nation's largest Protestant body, at odds with the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the nine-church Baptist coalition which has been among the prayer amendment's sharpest critics. (CN)

\* \* \*

### NEW YORK (RNS)

A major Reform Jewish organization has attacked Southern Baptists for abandoning their traditional opposition to government-sponsored prayer in public schools.

Officials of the 1.25-million-member Union of American Hebrew Congregations expressed "dismay and disappointment" at a press conference here over the Southern Baptists'

June 17 endorsement of President Reagan's proposed constitutional amendment to put prayer back in public schools. (CN)

\* \* \*

#### MANCHESTER, ENGLAND (RNS)

Mormons have grown at such a rate that they now have stakes — or dioceses — covering the whole of Great Britain.

In the words of an official of the Mormon Church "the final piece in the 'Mormon' ecclesiastical jigsaw in Britain has now been laid."

Mormons came to Britain in 1837 when thousands of converts were made, particularly in the industrial northwest, and over the next century some 100,000 British members had heeded the call to gather and strengthen the church in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

With the emphasis on emigration, the British Mormon membership remained around the 6,000 mark until the mid-1950's. With a renewed emphasis on building the church internationally, Mormon growth since then has been dramatic. Worldwide membership now stands at 5,000,000 — 115,000 of them in Britain. (CN)

\* \* \*

#### MOSCOW, U.S.S.R. (EWNS)

Unregistered Baptists who attended the services (May 9) at which American evangelist Billy Graham spoke have told a western visitor that they were "extremely disappointed" with both Graham's preaching and the quotes attributed to him.

Only a few unregistered Baptists managed to sneak into the services in Moscow — none are known to have received passes. The remainder of the congregation was Communist Party members, Moscow peace conference delegates and registered church members.

"They were very dissatisfied with his preaching," the western visitor said . . . "They could not understand why one of their own, a fellow Christian would not defend them."

The western visitor did admit that the unregistered Baptists were not aware that Graham had a list of prisoners and persecuted which he quietly presented to Soviet authorities.

A top Graham aide said that while Graham recognizes the plight of the unregistered church, it is necessary to work exclusively through the registered church. If he did not work thusly, the aide said, it would be unlikely that the evangelist

would be permitted to enter and preach in the Soviet Union. (CN)

\* \* \*

#### ELKHART, IND. (EWNS)

During the first six months of 1982, the number of Baptists imprisoned in the Soviet Union has increased from 133 to 160, according to the International Representation of the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union.

Citing recent arrests and stepped-up physical abuse of Baptist prisoners, Council President Gennady Kryuchov writes that the atheist authorities "want to register every congregation in order to subject them to the unbiblical legislation on religious cults. They also want to arrest all the true servants of the Lord, primarily those members of the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches who are still living in freedom."

The Soviet government does not officially recognize any of the Council's 2,000 member churches. (CN)

\* \* \*

#### AURORA, COLO. (RNS)

The moderator of a new conservative Presbyterian group says the planned merger of two major U.S. Presbyterian churches will double his church's size by next year.

Founded a year ago, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church now has 30 member-congregations and 10 more affiliated congregations in several states. The group held its national meeting here recently.

Irvin Rinehart, newly elected moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, suggested that the recent merger vote of the nation's two largest Presbyterian denominations could serve as a catalyst in driving many congregations from those bodies into his group. (CN)

\* \* \*

Liturgical and social dancing — except disco — has been approved for the 214,000 members of the Christian Reformed Church. Delegates at that denomination's annual synod warned against the "negative potential" of some social dancing but said it can be legitimate recreation when "genuine Christian maturity" is exercised. (CT)

\* \* \*

There is now one Third World missionary for every three North American missionaries. Even more significant, according to a recently completed study, is that "non-Western

missionary recruitment for full-time cross-cultural endeavour appears to be growing at least five times as fast as recruitment for missions in North America." A year of survey work by Lawrence Keyes, based in Saõ Paulo, Brazil, uncovered 368 non-Western mission agencies from at least 57 different countries. They are probably fielding over 15,000 missionaries, almost triple the number just eight years ago. (CT)

\* \* \*

There is a religious angle to the controversial Siberia-Europe natural gas pipeline. About one-tenth of the 100,000 people working on construction of the pipeline are forced labourers. Among the criminals and political prisoners are those incarcerated for their religious activities — believers such as Baptist preachers Vladimir Marmus and Alexander Ussatjuk. According to the International Association for Human Rights (IGFM) in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, the forced labourers are housed in "inadequate trucks that offer no protection" against temperatures of 30 to 40 below zero in winter. Many are reported to have fallen ill already. (CT)

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#### A LITTLE NOTE

In the "International" on page 272, July 16, 1982, someone tried to improve on my Latin. Upon checking my copy and after further consideration I would like to abide by my originally submitted version. "Peccavi" is still written as I submitted it, without an added "e" at the end.

VO



CALLED to Carman, Manitoba:  
CANDIDATE C. BOUWMAN  
of Fergus, Ontario.

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#### OUR COVER

Lake O'Hara, Yoho National Park,  
B.C. (Photo courtesy Department  
of Tourism B.C.)



# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Here it is!

Our Summer Quiz Contest!

Everybody join in the fun!

Send your answers right away!

Be sure to put on your NAME and AGE!

Here we go!

Send your answers to: Aunt Betty  
Box 54,  
Fergus, Ontario  
N1M 2W7

\* \* \*

## QUIZ #1

### FATHER AND SON

Connect the name of the father to the name of the son with a line.

- |                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. Manasseh         | a. Adam      |
| 2. Ham              | b. Zacharias |
| 3. Jonathan         | c. David     |
| 4. David            | d. Isaac     |
| 5. John the Baptist | e. Alphaeus  |
| 6. Esau             | f. Joseph    |
| 7. Abel             | g. Saul      |
| 8. Solomon          | h. Terah     |
| 9. James            | i. Jesse     |
| 10. Abraham         | j. Noah      |

\* \* \*

## QUIZ #2

### COLOUR SCHEME

Use colour words to fill in the blanks.

- The \_\_\_\_\_ Sea.
- "What are these which are arrayed in \_\_\_\_\_ robes?"
- "He maketh me to lie down in \_\_\_\_\_ pastures".
- "... thou canst not make one hair \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_."
- Lydia, a seller of \_\_\_\_\_.
- "Look not thou upon the wine when it is \_\_\_\_\_."
- "\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have I none," said Peter.
- "Lo, in her mouth was an \_\_\_\_\_ leaf."
- "... though your sins be as \_\_\_\_\_, they shall be \_\_\_\_\_ as snow; though they be \_\_\_\_\_ like \_\_\_\_\_ they shall be as wool."
- "Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in \_\_\_\_\_, and in \_\_\_\_\_, and in brass, and in iron, and in \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_."

## QUIZ #3

### TREES AND PLANTS TO FIND

Which trees or plants are needed to complete the following Biblical quotations?

- "Consider the \_\_\_\_\_ how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."
- "And he ran before, and climbed up into a \_\_\_\_\_ to see him."
- "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his \_\_\_\_\_ and under his \_\_\_\_\_, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."
- "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the \_\_\_\_\_."
- "(Much people) took branches of \_\_\_\_\_, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed in the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."
- "But I am like a green \_\_\_\_\_ in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever."
- "Send me also \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants."
- "Instead of the \_\_\_\_\_ shall come up the \_\_\_\_\_, and instead of the \_\_\_\_\_ shall come up the \_\_\_\_\_; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."
- "Then said all the trees unto the \_\_\_\_\_, Come thou, and reign over us."
- "And as he lay and slept under a \_\_\_\_\_, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat."
- "And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a \_\_\_\_\_ which is in Migron."
- "(The carpenter) heweth him down \_\_\_\_\_ and taketh the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest; he planteth an \_\_\_\_\_, and the rain doth nourish it."



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Irma van Ellenberg*. We are happy to have you join us!

Are you going to join in our contest, too? Please write and tell us about yourself, all right, Irma?

Of course you may join our Club, *Joyce Broersma*, and welcome! We hope you'll really enjoy being a Busy Beaver, too. Did you enjoy your holiday at the cottage, *Joyce*?

Hello *Lyan van Ellenberg*. Thank you for your puzzle. I'm glad you had such a good time at your graduation, *Lyan*. Just have your sister write me. Of course she's welcome to join!

You've been a real Busy Beaver, I see, *Linda De Boer*. And congratulations on a good report card! Have you entered the contest already *Linda*? Thank you for your letter.