

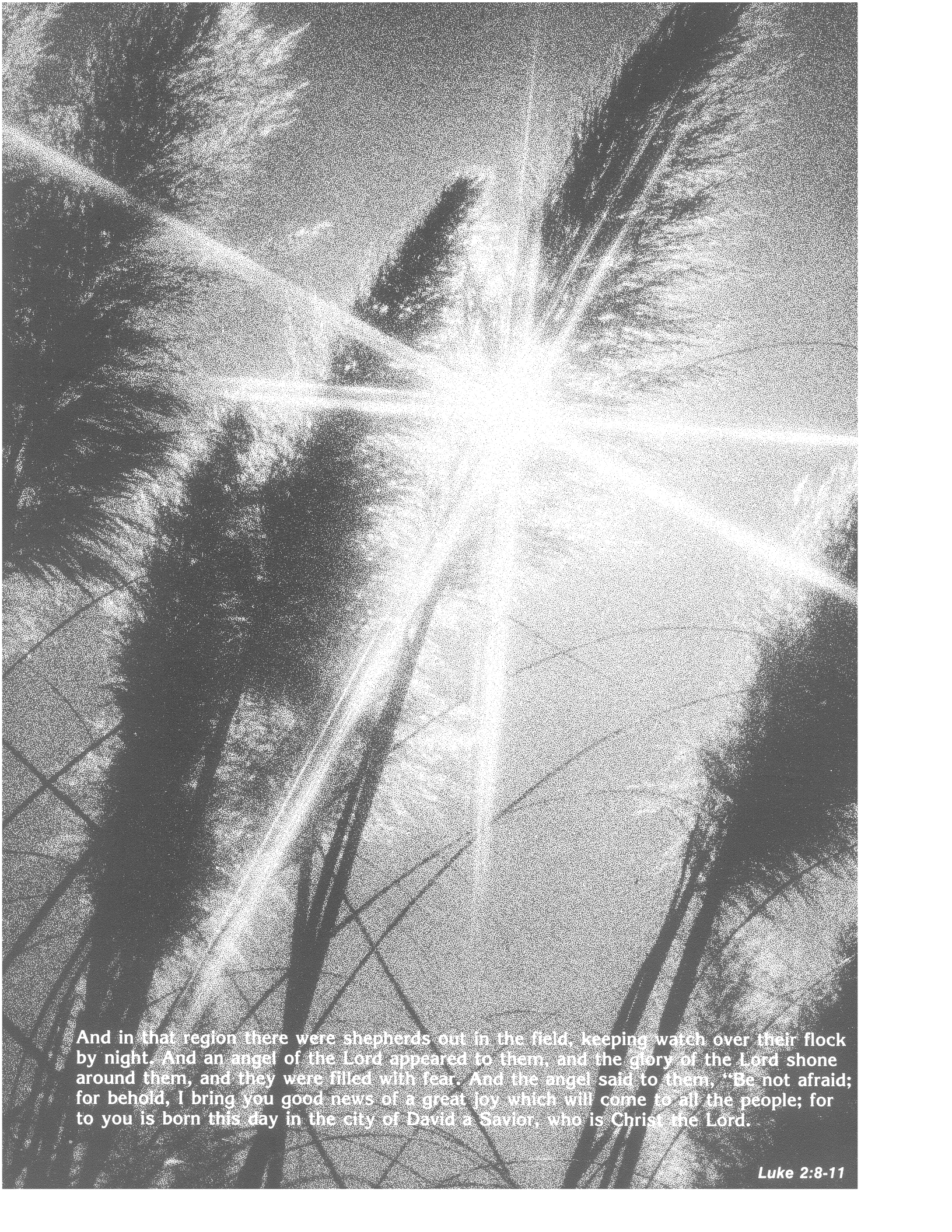
*And this gospel
of the kingdom
will be preached
throughout
the whole world*

Matthew 24:14a

 **Clarion**
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:8-11

The Divine Peace Initiative

“I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.”
I will tell you of the decree of the LORD: He said to me,
“You are my son, today I have begotten you.” Psalm 2:6,7

Perhaps the most dominant issue in recent news reports has been the planned deployment of new nuclear weapons in Western Europe. A storm of protest has arisen concerning the matter, and all the major cities of the Western world have witnessed demonstrations for peace. The “hot autumn” of protest is now over; deployment has begun. But the issue is evoking more attention all the time. Never before has there been such an outcry against nuclear weapons, and never before has the fear of nuclear warfare been greater.

Fueling the whole matter is the increased tension between East and West. Events in Afghanistan, Grenada and Lebanon have brought relations between the US and the USSR to an all-time boiling point, and it is obvious to all that the period of *detente* in diplomacy is over. The US has suffered too many aggravations, and the incidence of communist infiltration continues to increase. Keener competition with regard to economic resources only appears to fuel the fires. A climate of impetuosity, impatience, and hostility prevails.

In this climate, the Canadian Prime Minister has taken it upon himself to singlehandedly initiate a new peace process and disarmament agreement between the superpowers. He has introduced his own proposals, asking for a new round of talks involving more participants. He made a whirlwind tour of several countries of the NATO alliance in Europe, received a papal blessing(!) and then took his proposals to the Commonwealth Conference in New Delhi. This personal initiative has received plenty of press coverage, even though the leading governments of the US and USSR have not said much about it.

Now we do not wish to dwell on all the details of this one-man initiative at this point. This is not really the place for it. Yet this peace initiative is a striking example of the political *ideology* which motivates Pierre Trudeau, and it is this political ideology which we wish to focus on in the light of God’s Word. Obviously, Trudeau’s aim is not to take sides. He wishes to enter the scene as a mediator who stands “above” the conflict. According to him, different ideologies can still seek the common good of mankind. The two superpowers must dwell less on their own ideologies, and see the good of the global community. Otherwise the human performance is in danger of coming to an end.

One cannot but plainly see the *humanistic* basis of this one-man initiative. It’s an initiative that seeks to attain peace through the efforts of man on his own, apart from his Creator. It’s an initiative based on the assumption that man can achieve peace through his own inner will to what is good, and what is best for himself. The whole initiative, with its countless “talks” and “high-level consultations” is a fine example of what the psalmist speaks about in the beginning of Psalm 2: “Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain?” Men meet in secret counsel, build alliances, make agreements, hold talks — but what is the result? And where is this initiative

headed? Several critics have already pointed out how in fact peace is being undermined in this one-man initiative, and the NATO alliance is being threatened more than ever before. For now our country appears to be participating in the growing estrangement of the US from the Western European countries, and we, too, have been isolating the Americans — leaving the full burden on their shoulders, and simultaneously increasing the danger of a split in the Western alliance.

However, this all comes as no surprise to us and certainly should not alarm us. From the same psalm, Psalm 2, we could know that this initiative was doomed to failure at the outset. As an initiative begun on humanistic principles it is both anachronistic and hostile to the counsel of God. It runs counter to the *divine* peace initiative which He began long ago. With all the talks and consultations, it only amounts to *conspiracy* against the LORD and His Anointed. Thus, it only adds fuel to the spirit of revolution which pervades the whole world. It may know nothing of strife, and may take place in all quietness; yet it runs *violently* counter to the divine peace initiative that has been established in Christ.

For God’s servant David revealed the divine initiative for world peace long ago. It begins with the appointment of the Anointed One, the Messiah. What David says concerning his own throne and dynasty is fulfilled in the coming of the Saviour Jesus Christ. Through His obedience to the divine will, He is set as King and Judge over all things in heaven and earth. The ends of earth are His possession, and He is the Sovereign Ruler who God appoints over all things — King of kings, Lord of lords. He is the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron, Rev. 12:5, who judges and makes war, Rev. 19:11.

And it is with the coming of the Son into the world that the divine peace initiative takes effect. He is the peace that was long foretold to Jerusalem, Isaiah 40. How? He makes peace with God through the defeat of sin, and the powers of evil. He initiates *real* peace, the peace that is born out of restored fellowship with the Father. He brings it through His humiliation, through His suffering and death. For this divine peace initiative adopts divine methods, and follows divinely established ordinances. Here peace comes not by force, but by *right*, Psalm 2:6. Here peace flows forth from the eternal counsel of God. In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself, II Cor. 5:19, so making and granting true peace to His own. The *cross* is the only real road to world peace. And that road has been travelled by God’s only Son, the Messiah.

This is the peace we may share, not simply at Christmas, but all through the year. It is the peace that includes justification and righteousness, peace with God, and so peace with men in the world. This peace is communicated with divine means of grace — the Word and holy sacraments, means of the Holy Spirit. This is the peace that endures, the peace received and appropriated in faith, leading to eternal life. And

all who hear the gospel may share this peace by faith alone — looking to Christ as their sole Redeemer and Mediator before God, the Author of peace.

However, one thing we must know: this divine peace initiative is still under attack in the world. Satan, the source of all violence and hatred, seeks to eliminate the fruit of this divine peace offensive in the world — he still attacks the Church. Thus, God's peace initiative asks for war and strife — using His weapons, Eph. 6:10ff. And if we are partakers and participants in the divine peace initiative, we must know that wars and rumours of wars must come over the world, Matt. 24:6ff. All human attempts to achieve peace can only suffer shipwreck on the rocks of God's eternal will and counsel, set out in the reign of His Messiah, Psalm 2:7. He rules with a rod of iron; He judges and makes war. And His judgments must go forth in the world in order that the kingdom of true and lasting peace may come. His peace offensive includes judgments: war with the bold and haughty opponents of the decree and counsel of God.

Therefore, we may not join the demonstrations for peace, and may not become participants in the essentially global *humanistic* drive for world peace. We know it is doomed to fail. But what may we do? "Serve the LORD with fear, with trembling kiss His feet!" We may bow before the divine peace initiative, and submit ourselves to the yoke of His Anointed. That requires self-denial, repentance and humility. It requires a new heart, a changed frame of mind. But it brings *lasting* peace. For knowing about the judgments that come and will come over

the world, the psalmist nonetheless adds "Blessed are those who take refuge in Him." Psalm 2:12. He keeps His own in perfect peace, Isaiah 26:3, 4.

For the prophet Isaiah shows us the picture of world peace that brings to completion the divine peace initiative of the Father. It begins with the call of the angels, "Peace on earth," but after Christ has completed His work, and is seated on His throne, after His Spirit is given to the church, this picture emerges:

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come and say: "Come let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. Isaiah 2:2-4.

Who would not want to belong to this divine peace initiative? Let us heed our Master and Lord, the King on Zion's throne, follow Him, and so share lasting peace with God.

J. DEJONG

In Retrospect

Since the time and efforts of the brothers who usually write columns such as this one are at this moment being consumed by the weighty matters of General Synod, the task of writing the annual review has fallen to one of those persons who appears less frequently in this periodical. Gladly I make myself available for this task, for is it not fitting that at the end of the year we reflect not only on that which the LORD in His grace has given to us as individuals and as families, but also to us as churches? Surely, it is appropriate that at the conclusion of another Year of the LORD, also as churches we stand still for a few moments in order to meditate on God's goodness, to reflect on our own shortcomings, and to ask ourselves where we are headed as the clock of history brings us closer and closer to the final days and the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is one thing to accept such a task; it is something else to execute it. For after all, what does such an annual review have to say to those who have followed closely and are up to date with the things that have happened within the churches? Surely, those who, for instance, regularly read the News Medley will not find anything *new* as such in this annual review; if they do, then by definition this is not really a "review." Its purpose seems then to be of a different nature. What we will attempt to do instead is to concentrate on that which was *distinctive* and *special* about 1983. We have no pretensions about covering each and every aspect of that which happened during this year; rather, the question is: how has 1983 especially contributed to the development of the churches?

Let us begin with those areas which perhaps brought about the most developments.

MISSION: AT HOME AND ABROAD

Although the matter of home mission was this year extensively debated in *Clarion*, it was precisely during this year that one of the greatest contributions in this field was made. I think of the fact that on February 27, 1983 the Rev. C. VanSpronsen was formally installed as home missionary of Smithers; upon his shoulders was laid the tremendously difficult but at the same time beautiful task of proclaiming the Gospel to the native Carrier Indians of the Bulkley Valley. Surely it is fitting that this should be one of our first major, formal home mission projects, for after all do we who number among the many immigrant peoples that now make up this country not also share part of the blame for the terrible misery that as a result thereof has come upon the Indian peoples as a whole? Because of their sense of obligation in this respect, the Canadian people have tried to make up for this misery by giving to the native people such things as land, money, and rights. But what better gift can we give to the original inhabitants of this land than the gift of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour? This and this alone is able to deliver them from the morass of misery in which they live! May the LORD God greatly bless this endeavour and grant to many of our native people the gifts of faith, righteousness, and life eternal!

Another significant development in this field took place when in January the *Reformed Evangelism Taskforce* was officially launched in the Fraser Valley. The mandate which it took upon itself is an extremely ambitious one: the publication of a magazine, Bible course, brochures, and a training manual,

all for evangelistic purposes. The first issue of the magazine called *Evangel: the Good News of Jesus Christ* has already appeared. May it, as well as everything else that in the future is published by the Taskforce be used, not to gather dust on our shelves, but rather in order to assist us in reaching out towards all the inhabitants of this our nation! For this is the beautiful nature of the Gospel: those whose hearts are truly affected by its message are also motivated to share this treasure with those who are yet without it.

On the field of foreign mission, the work in Brazil and Irian Jaya carried on quite smoothly in 1983. In *Manggelum*, there was for a time quite some concern about the Christian school set up by our workers; it was feared that it would be taken over completely by the government and its Islamic teachers; but our prayers were heard again and the Christian school was itself recognized by the government. The Church at Hamilton and those who support her, however, continue to offer up prayers to God that they may be permitted to send out a missionary to the people of Brazil; twice in 1983 however, calls in this respect were declined. Despite the disappointments and setbacks which accompany all of our human endeavours on this earth, the work of the missionaries and mission aid workers was however once again richly blessed by the God of all grace.

OTHER CHURCHES: FAR AND NEAR

The year 1983 will go down in church history books as a year of considerable ecumenical activity; think of the assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver this summer. Also within our circles 1983 will probably make a significant contribution to the manner in which we carry out our mandate to be truly ecumenical. For on the table of Synod Cloverdale were laid the matter of our relationship with the OPC, the possibility of a relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (KoryuPa), the possibility of commencing contacts with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and the matter of joining the International Conference of Reformed Churches.

Also in other respects, the Canadian and American Reformed Churches were busy establishing contacts and ties on this North American continent. Rev. P. Kingma of the Grand Rapids Church found himself quite occupied with such matters; in March he travelled to Nebraska where he was favourably impressed by the Reformed Church in the US (Eureka Classis). Later he made a journey to Maryland in response to an invitation from a church which had seceded from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The pastor of this church, Rev. Hofford, was given the floor at Classis Ontario-South in order to explain their predicament and the Church at Grand Rapids was encouraged by classis to continue contacts with the Tri-County Reformed Church at Laurel, Maryland. Classis Alberta-Manitoba was on two occasions approached by the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC and requested to exchange fraternal delegates; classis decided, however, to await a reply from our Committee for Contact with the OPC before honouring this request. In Ottawa, some informal contact has been had for some time already with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America; concerning it, the Church at Ottawa decided to address Synod.

At the time that this is written little is known about what Synod will do about many of these items. But one thing is certain: 1983 was a year in which our churches with their Dutch immigrant beginnings progressed in finding their way in their relatively new North American environment.

MINISTERIAL "SHUFFLE"

In politics, cabinet "shuffles" are commonplace; in the church, something similar to that takes place almost every year when, in response to the call of God through His congrega-

tions, ministers move from one place to the other. In 1983 the "ministerial shuffle" was a considerably large one. Travelling from the West to the East, we can mention the following. The Church at Langley, British Columbia was not vacant very long when it received word from Rev. W. Pouwelse of Burlington-West that he accepted the call extended to him; the same can be said of the Church at Houston when Candidate E. Kampen accepted their call while declining two others. The Church at Neerlandia, however, had been vacant almost nine years when it received the joyful news that Rev. A. de Jager of The Netherlands accepted their call. Likewise, the Church at Carman, after several attempts, was successful in obtaining Rev. P.K.A. DeBoer of Watford as their new minister. The Burlingtons found all their vacancies filled during 1983, for Rev. D. DeJong of Calgary relocated to Burlington-East, Rev. J. Mulder of Toronto has recently accepted the call extended to him by the Church at Burlington-West, and the Burlington-South Church, which was instituted on January 1, 1983 found that the first call which they extended already brought them a minister: the Rev. J. DeJong of London, Ontario. After receiving many negative responses throughout her three year vacancy, the Church at Orangeville received an answer to prayer when the Rev. M.



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IN THIS ISSUE

The Divine Peace Initiative — J. DeJong	521
In Retrospect — G.H. Visscher	522
The Birth of Christ and the Birth of Children Today — J. Geertsema	527
Address to Synod — Rev. J.J. Peterson	528
Response — Rev. M. VanderWel	530
Farewell Address to the Rev. J.J. Peterson — W.W.J. VanOene	531
Press Release of the General Synod of Cloverdale — J. Geertsema	532
Press Release	535
Divine Providence and Human Accountability — W. Pouwelse	536
From the Scriptures — Swaddling Cloths — J. DeJong	538
Patrimony Profile — W.W.J. VanOene	539
School Crossing — N. Vandooren	541
Building Church Relations — J. Geertsema	546
A Ray of Sunshine — J.K. Riemersma	548
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	552

Werkman of Lincoln accepted their call. Most recently it has been learnt that the vacancy which has existed in the Brampton Church for some four and a half years will, D.V., be filled shortly, for Candidate G. Nederveen has accepted the call extended to him. And our smallest and most easterly congregation, the Church at Ottawa was presumably pleased when, after a vacancy of almost twenty years, the undersigned, formerly of Houston, British Columbia, accepted the call extended to him.

Although all these churches rejoiced during 1983, there is also an opposite side to the same coin. There is the Church at Smithers which in effect sacrificed her own minister in order to spread the Gospel among the natives and has after extending many calls still not received another minister in return. There is the Church at Calgary which had to decide, when their minister left for Burlington, that it was not yet financially feasible for them to call another one. There are large churches such as at Coaldale and Smithville which are concerned about the fact that their church buildings can hardly contain all their members any longer. There are small "churches" such as the growing house congregation in the Okanagan Valley, and the possibility that something similar might be started in Florida via the Grand Rapids Church. Then there are still other churches without their own minister or without the missionary whom they would like to send out. But yet, the future is not bleak; for it is possible that in 1984 as many as six (!) students will graduate from the Theological College and become eligible for call within the churches. Again the LORD provides.

While some ministers move, and others come onto the scene, there are yet others who recede into the background. We think of the Rev. D. VanderBoom who, after serving the Canadian churches for twenty-six years and after having continued well past the normal retirement age, decided that the time had come for his retirement. Not only the Church at Langley and the other four churches which he served, but the whole federation of churches can be thankful for that which the LORD has given in the faithful labours of the Rev. and Mrs. VanderBoom. We expect that even though he has officially "receded into the background," if he has his way, he will not disappear out of sight altogether but will continue with that task he enjoys so much: the proclamation of the Gospel. May the LORD in his grace yet give the Rev. and Mrs. D. VanderBoom many happy and blessed years together.

A RETIRED LECTURER AND A FOURTH PROFESSOR

Although 1983 is significant also for the fact that it is a year wherein the churches met together in General Synod, not much can be mentioned about this assembly since little is yet known by way of official channels. However, one decision has already received some attention in the church press: the fact that Synod has decided to appoint Dr. K. Deddens of Groningen, The Netherlands, as a fourth full-time professor. It is indeed a significant decision; it is another sign of the fact that our young seminary is expanding and growing in stature in response to the needs of the churches. One of the Rev. G. VanDooren's colleagues has already noted in *Clarion* that the fact that Synod asked Dr. K. Deddens to occupy himself full-time with a task that the Rev. VanDooren did on a part-time basis is not to be taken as a reflection on the manner in which the Rev. VanDooren executed his task. It is perhaps fitting that this fact be underlined by one of the Rev. G. VanDooren's many students. As students we were often amazed by the fact that the Rev. VanDooren could be pastor and teacher to a large flock and yet could find the time to do what he did for us. Out of his love for the churches and the Word of God, he gave himself relentlessly to the task of instructing us how to do that which he loves to do so much himself — proclaiming God's Word from the pulpit and bringing it also in other ways to bear

on the hearts and lives of all those in, as well as many of those around, the flock. Indeed, it is because of the tremendous importance of the diaconological disciplines that a full-time professor in this field is fully warranted. For without meaning to diminish the value and necessity of any of the other theological disciplines, it could be said that all the other disciplines provide the background for this one; it is with such matters as preaching, teaching, and counselling that prospective ministers will find the majority of their time and energy consumed. The churches need to thank the LORD for everything that he has allowed the Rev. VanDooren to do (even for six and a half years past the normal retirement age!). Thus we look forward in anticipation to the arrival of Dr. and Mrs. K. Deddens and we express the wish that the Rev. and Mrs. G. VanDooren may now finally receive the rest and relaxation which they truly deserve.

CHURCH IN THE NEWS

A review of 1983 is probably neither truthful nor complete if it does not also mention the fact that this was the year in which for the first time the Canadian Reformed Churches received the attention of the national press when a former member of the Burlington West Church attempted to take her grievances to the courts. To be honest, we have no desire to mention it; for it is a terrible thing that in *this* way our churches come into the limelight. For not only the name of the churches is at stake here, but also the name of Him who is Lord over His Church! Would that our zeal, our conviction and growth would be so great that the secular media could not avoid mentioning that!

Yet this may be an appropriate point on which to examine ourselves as churches. For, if I am not mistaken, in recent years it has happened in more than one place that members of the church dragged each other to court because of one or the other dispute. Without meaning to pass judgment on any of these disputes as such, and without meaning to sound unsympathetic to those who have really been wronged, it can be asked: is it not disgraceful that we deal with each other in such a way? That there is strife and serious disagreement is already bad enough; but that one should flee to the secular judge in order to solve such situations, that is still worse. Also in this respect we need to be careful not to adopt the ways of the world; for in the world it appears that the one is always ready to sue the other even for the smallest disagreement or tiniest infraction. But so it ought not to be in the body of Christ. The member who initiates such a lawsuit may think that he or she has something or the other to gain by it; but we might ask: how much does the name of the church not lose by it? How much damage is not done to the cause of the Gospel when others see that so it goes within Christ's Church? The church has her own courts of appeal (the consistory, classes and synods); besides these Paul once mentioned another possibility: that we ask wise members to arbitrate and agree to abide by their judgment. And then there is yet a third possibility; Paul spoke about it when he said: "To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?" (I Cor. 6:7.) That is, Paul is saying: even if one should gain a favourable verdict from the judge, the outcome is still really defeat rather than victory. Defeat for the body of Christ. It may mean betterment for ourselves, but it certainly means injury to the church and her cause. In such cases, Paul suggests, a real victory might be obtained by choosing instead to suffer wrong and be defrauded!

THE HANDICAPPED

Also for our handicapped brothers and sisters 1983 was a significant year. For during this year, the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped decided to go ahead with the

goal that has been the subject of discussion for quite some time: the establishment of a home for brothers and sisters who can no longer be properly cared for in their own homes. To be sure, it is a necessity; for what a sad thing it is when we have no other choice than to place such covenant children into an un-Christian environment and to entrust them into the hands of those who cannot care for them from out of the perspective of God's love and faithfulness in Jesus Christ. Also such a home is no luxury; it needs desperately to be supported also by those who do not have such handicapped children. We are happy to hear as well that the Association has succeeded in gaining the needed counsellors. May 1984 be a year in which these plans all take shape under the Lord's blessing.

THE AGED

Along similar lines, 1983 was also the year in which we took another step towards fulfilling the obligations that we have with respect to the elderly among us. On June 25th, the beautiful facilities of Ebenezer Villa in Hamilton were officially opened. In the Fraser Valley as well there is progress in this respect; a suitable property has been purchased and money gathered so that in the foreseeable future construction can begin. Again, a very worthwhile and necessary endeavour, for is this not the Scriptural way for things to be done within the covenant community: the elder generation first does the utmost to care for the wellbeing of the younger generation, but when the older generation becomes more old and the younger generation less young then the roles are reversed and it is time for the young to come to the aid of the old. Indeed, "religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress. . . ." (Jas. 1:27 NIV.)

EDUCATION

It seems that there is not too much to be mentioned in the field of education. Although many things undoubtedly happened, and there is much to be thankful for, there is little that is distinctive as such of 1983. A couple of facts can be mentioned however. The Teacher's College too is expanding; a good supply of students necessitated a third full-time instructor, and so Mr. A. Witten was appointed. Also in the field of education a new development took place in the Fraser Valley, namely, the Fraser Valley Study Center; the goal is apparently to offer courses in various fields to a wide range of people. Once again, a laudable endeavour!

CONCLUSION

In bringing our annual review to a close, words which according to the Nov. 18th issue of *Clarion* were spoken at the opening of the tenth General Synod come to mind. For indeed, if 1983 is any indication of that which has been happening over the years, then what we are seeing is progress within the Canadian Reformed Churches over the last three decades or so. During the early years, the pressures of immigration were so many that the most that could be done was to make sure that churches were instituted and the Reformed manner of life continued. But since then, the LORD has richly blessed us: schools have been established, even higher institutes of learning for the training of ministers and teachers; new congregations have been started, vacancies filled and missionaries sent out; the ways and means have also been found to publish various periodicals, to erect old age homes and now a home for the handicapped; the means are opening up for us to spread the gospel throughout our nation, and a good beginning has been made with the work of establishing contacts with other faithful churches on this continent and in this world. Despite the many shortcomings and the failures that are still there in our midst and the gaps that need yet to be filled, it is true: 1983 and the years leading up to it were years in which we ourselves were by the

grace of God consolidated as churches. As was said at the opening of General Synod: "It all points to the fact that the immigration period in the life of our churches is over. We are settled. . . ." Now that the bulk of our own concerns have been dealt with, the emphasis will and ought to shift somewhat. As we saw, 1983 was also a year in which there was a fair amount of "outward-oriented" activity: the work of evangelism and establishing contacts with other faithful Christians occupied a considerable amount of attention. May 1984 and the coming years continue this emphasis and bring us rich results! For after all, despite the troubles and concerns that will always be there within our own house, we are tremendously wealthy as churches. The continent to which we have come, contains a body of peoples who are starving because of want of solid spiritual food; we have the food with which to save them: Christ Jesus, the Bread of Life! This world in which we live contains many faithful bodies of Christians; just as we can undoubtedly learn from them, they can learn from what we have experienced and worked on in our history. Also the riches that we have are not our own, but belong to Christ; therefore they may not be hoarded for ourselves or kept out of sight of others, but they are to be used in His name and for His purposes in this world. For 1983 is drawing to a close, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; when the Day dawns, there will come also this question from the mouth of our beloved Lord: what have you done with that which I entrusted to you as individuals, as families, and as churches?

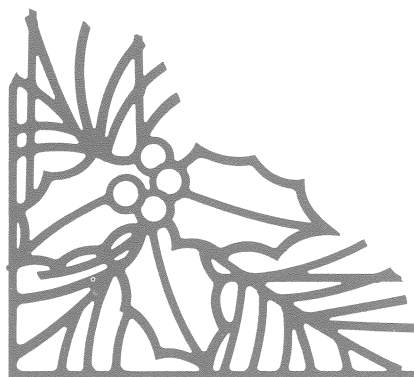
Ottawa, ON

G.H. VISSCHER



*I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
lo, I have not restrained my lips,
as thou knowest, O Lord.
I have not hid thy saving help within
my heart,
I have spoken of thy faithfulness and
thy salvation;
I have not concealed thy steadfast love
and thy faithfulness
from the great congregation.*

Psalm 40:9, 10



EPIPHANY

We have seen His star in the east.

Matthew 2:2

*Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning;
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.*

*Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.*

*Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom, and off'rings divine?
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?*

*Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favour secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.*

*Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.*

REGINALD HEBER

The Birth of Christ and the Birth of Children Today

In our modern society, we do not see many large families any longer. For many, to have children is not a blessing but a burden. People know and use a variety of contraceptives in order, as the word indicates, to prevent conception. They even kill "the fruit of the womb," when he/she (not, "it") is still in his/her growing process towards birth.

This situation should not amaze us. We find ourselves in a world which is dominated by the humanistic philosophy of human rights, and not by the promises of God's grace in Christ. It is not God and His Christ, not the service of God, that is in the centre of life, but man with his so-called rights, with his wishes and desires and needs for himself. Man lives for himself, for his own pleasures, his own convenience, his own selfish "freedom." He wants to be "free" to live his own life as it pleases him. With such an attitude the responsibility of having and of having to bring up children is easily experienced as a burden. Children restrict the parents' "freedom." They endanger convenience.

The Word of God teaches us to see life in a different light, the light of the Good Tidings of salvation in the Lord Jesus, and to think in a different way, God's way of redemption of life through Christ.

When Leah, Jacob's first wife, gave birth to her firstborn son, she called him "Reuben." This means, "See, a son!" In this name we can hear her excitement, the joy of motherhood.

But there was more. Jacob had inherited the promise of Abraham: he would become the father of a great nation, the people of the only true God; he would become the father of the great Seed of the Woman (Gen. 3:15). To say it in today's language: Jacob had the promise that he would become the father of the coming Christ Jesus and of the Church of Christ. Conception and birth in Jacob's tent was a matter of working with the Son of God toward His birth, His coming in the flesh, and for the building of His church.

However, it is not the power of flesh and blood itself that brings the Saviour into the world and builds the church. God is the only one who can do this and who does it. We must even say: in spite of flesh and blood.

Not only Leah exalted at the birth of her firstborn son. Jacob was no less filled with joy and pride. We can still hear that in the words he spoke to Reuben at the end of his life. He said: "Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits [the beginning] of my strength" (Gen. 49:3). A son, particularly the firstborn son, was the pride of his father: he was proof of the manly strength, the physical, procreative power of the father.

However, Jacob's physical strength, Jacob's own proud flesh failed also here again. Later Jacob had to take away from Reuben the double portion of the inheritance of the firstborn, because this son had dishonoured his father by violating his stepmother. Joseph received the double portion, while Judah received the promise of the eternal scepter. It is in spite of the

flesh that God holds onto His promises and fulfils them: Jacob's twelve sons did become twelve tribes: the church of the Old Testament.

This grace was only possible because of Jacob's great Son, the Seed of the Woman. Jacob's pride and human flesh could only bring forth sinners. God brought forth holy Seed from Jacob in His own wonderful way. The angel Gabriel said to Mary: "You have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son. And you shall call His name Jesus." Jesus means "the LORD saves." The angel explained: "Mary, your son will not be the result of the strength and pride of a man. On the contrary, "the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:30, 31, 35). This firstborn son is conceived by the power of God. He is God's strength. Therefore He is the Redeemer. He can and will build the church.

What does Christ's conception and birth have to do with conception and birth today? It is this: those who believe in Him as their Saviour may again, in marriage, bring forth children for the LORD. They may again build the church of Christ also with their children. This church is not just the church on earth. It will be the church of eternity.

Many people celebrate Christmas. They sing the carols about the newborn babe. What does it mean to them? Does it mean some pleasant moments during a rich Christmas dinner at an exclusive restaurant, shared by a man and his wife or by a man and the woman who just live together, who say that they cannot afford or do not want children? Is Christmas the troubled cry out of the depth of a heart filled with misery because of the killing of a woman's unborn child?

Or is it the feast of a family that goes together to church to worship God and praise Him? Is it a father and mother who together with their children are members of the church, and who seek to serve their Lord and Saviour? Is it a family that can sing together at home? Is it a family that can sing of the salvation of Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem, to grow up and die on the cross for the forgiveness of sin, the sin of unbelief, the sin of living for oneself instead of for God, the sin of abortion, and so on. The message of the child in Bethlehem is that in Him we may find remission of sins and the restoration into new service to God and so to man. We may build the church of Christ in the midst of a poor world. We may let the saving light of Christ shine, also in and with our Christian families. Children are not a burden. We seek children for the Lord and for His eternal church. In spite of all the pain and trouble, children are a joy to have, a joy to procreate and to bring forth in faith on the basis of the conception and birth of Christ Jesus long ago in Bethlehem. Yes, children in the covenant and church of God.

J. GEERTSEMA

General Synod Cloverdale 1983

Address of the Rev. J.J. Peterson

This is the address of the Rev. J.J. Peterson of San Antonio, Texas, fraternal delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, to the General Synod of Cloverdale 1983.

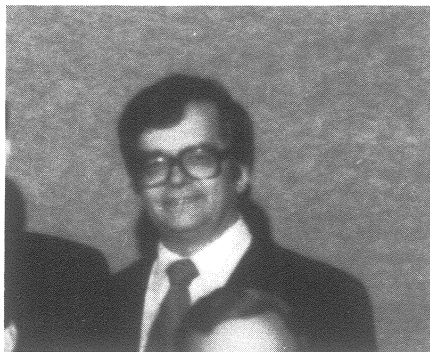
Mr. Chairman, and brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

My words will be supplementary to the letter that was read last night from the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations.

It is a joy for me to be with you at this Synod of Cloverdale 1983. I have met many of you on the pages of *Clarion*. I have met other of your men in the meetings of the Contact Committees in the past. I was privileged to attend the convocation of the Theological School at which Professor Faber was installed in his present position. And I enjoyed the fellowship with brothers Faber and Huizinga at recent meetings of our general assembly.

I have come to you as a fraternal delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is made up of about 170 congregations which total about 16,000 members. Our history as a separate church goes back almost 50 years — a short history compared to yours. And the first 35 years of this century in the old church were spent in the battle against growing liberalism. In that battle many united against the spirit of antichrist. When separation came in 1936 the number was far smaller. And when the separated church settled down to do the full work of the church, they found that unity in opposition to liberalism does not necessarily mean unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. So a year later a group left the church over the issues of Christian liberty, independentism, and premillennialism to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. In the 1940s a controversy arose regarding the incomprehensibility of God, which basically was a clash in the area of apologetics between the presuppositionalism of Professor Cornelius Van Til and the rational-

ism of Dr. Gordon Clark. That controversy culminated in 1947 with many of the Clark supporters leaving the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Several of them, by the way, are now in the Presbyterian Church of America. In the 1950s there was a controversy over the doctrine of guidance — how does the Lord lead His people in their living their Christian lives. That contro-



Rev. J.J. Peterson

versy has been resolved with the conviction that the Lord leads His people by His Spirit by means of His Word alone instead of mystical experiences.

I say this to show that we have struggled with doctrinal issues in our midst. But in our dealing with doctrinal issues, the agenda has been set by the controversies at hand. Although we had been instructed at "old" Westminster Seminary by Van Til and Murray and Stonehouse in the historical-redemptive approach to Scripture, the issues involved in that approach had not had the quiet reflection needed for us to fully appreciate and adopt that approach as our own. Many of us, and I include myself among them, had unconsciously adopted a more scholastic approach to Scripture which was satisfied, more or less, with citing proof-texts to answer the errors in the midst of controversy.

Beginning in the 1960s a period of a less controversial nature was upon us.

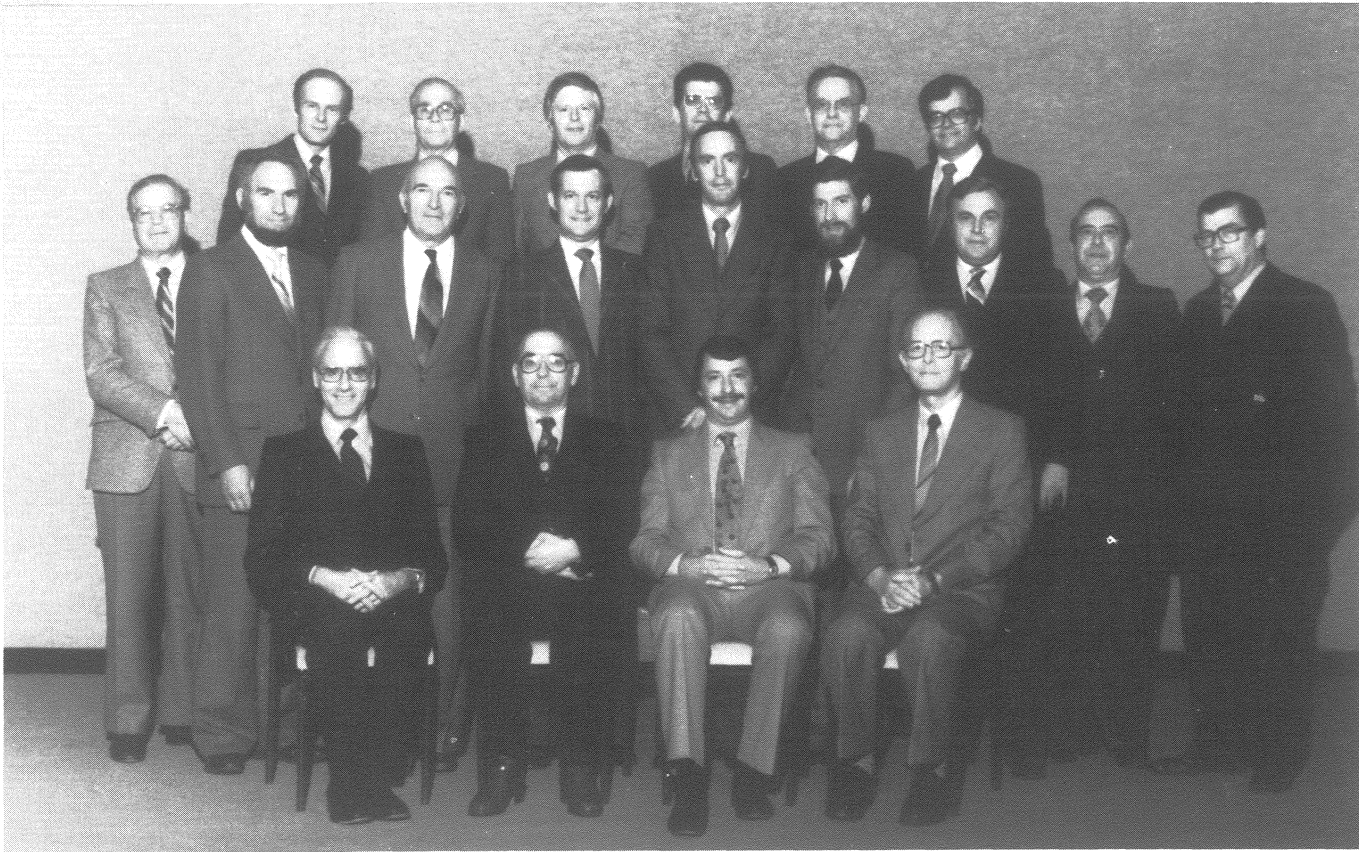
We were given time to reflect a little more on broader issues such as our approach to Scripture. Some in our midst began to appreciate the historical-redemptive approach to Scripture, the centrality of the covenant as expressing the relationship between God and His people with His promised presence among His people, and the reality of the promises and demands of Scripture. Contributing to this appreciation were the writings of Professor Schilder, Sidney Greijdanus on the controversy in The Netherlands over preaching, the two volumes of Ridderbos, the newly translated volumes of S.G. DeGraaf — plus the instruction of Professors Norman Shepherd and Richard Gaffin.

Some in our midst did not and do not appreciate this emphasis. You would call them scholastics.

But that is where we are. That is the background of the Shepherd case; a case complicated by the fact that Westminster Seminary is independent of church control. Some of us are in full agreement with Professor Shepherd. Others strongly disagree with his position. Professor Shepherd, for reasons good or bad, has left the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and is now a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. And some of you have said he has jumped from the frying pan into the fire. For reasons that I have not yet been able to figure out, the antagonism against him and his teaching has not yet fallen on those of us who agree with him — rather, in some cases, a listening ear. I pray that this will grow into a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the historical-redemptive reading of the Scripture, a more thorough Christocentric, covenantal understanding of the Word of Our Lord.

Let me address one area which to me is significant, and which, to date, has not entered significantly into our discussions. That area is the distinction between the true and false church of Belgic Confession 29, and the distinction of our Con-

General Synod Cloverdale 1983



Members of Synod Cloverdale 1983 and Guests

Sitting l to r: Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. W. Pouwelse. Middle row l to r: elders M. VanderVelde, R.J. Oosterhoff, J. Hendricks, E. Ludwig, Rev. B.J. Berends, Rev. J. de Gelder (OPC), elder P. Jansen, Rev. M. VanderWel, Dr. K. Deddens (Fourth Professor). Top row l to r: elders A. Poppe, T. VanLaar, G. Lodder, Rev. J. Visscher, Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. J.J. Peterson (OPC)

fession of Faith which speaks of more and less pure churches, some of which have so degenerated as to become synagogues of Satan, that is, the false church. The approach of the Belgic Confession is much simpler, but does it adequately deal with the context in which we find ourselves? The approach of our Confession sees the church-world around us in its sinfully fractured condition. Yes, there are the true and there are the false. But within the scope of the true, there is also variety. The marks of the true church are seen in varying degrees — some pure, some less pure, some even on the border of the false, ready to capitulate totally to the evil one. And we have a duty to all

these, to bear witness to them of the full truth of the Word of God so that the Spirit of God may bring true reformation. We recognize them as Churches of Christ, less pure, not in the pluriformistic way, but as existing in a sort of de facto relationship of discipline; recognizing God's covenant grace among them, but urging them on to greater faithfulness to the Lord and His Word so that we may come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. And in that way we are willing to risk recognizing their membership in the covenant by recognizing the validity of their baptism, and even on occasion inviting them to the Lord's table if they happen to be in our midst.

Brothers, it is good to be in your midst. I bring greetings from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Thank you for your strong stand for the Reformed faith. Many of us regularly read *Clarion* and know what you are.

I have tried to show you a little bit more of who this Orthodox Presbyterian Church is, and how history has brought us to what we are and where we are. My prayer is that we may continue to walk together in those paths of righteousness for the sake of His name, that name of the Lord who is our God according to His promise, whose people we are, and who dwells in our midst — "surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."

General Synod Cloverdale 1983

Rev. M. VanderWel's Response

This is the response, on behalf of the Synod, to the Rev. J.J. Peterson.

Reverend Brother Jack J. Peterson,

The chairman of this General Synod has given me the privilege to address you for a moment as one of our esteemed guests in the past days. If this address was only meant to be a reflection on your presence among us as a person, I certainly would not have any difficulty with expressing our sincere appreciation for the way we could converse with you. We can simply say, that our meetings with you in the committee rooms as well as at the meals were most pleasant. We got the impression that you felt right at home among us, and once in a while you could even help us out in finding the right words in the formulation of our reports. (Although it may be needless to say: the latter did not go for the composition of the Advisory Report on the matters concerning the OPC, for that report was already completed by the time you made your first entrance into the room of Committee II.)

However, we realize that you were not only in our midst as an interested friend and brother, but also as a representative who had been delegated to our Synod by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In this quality you have then also addressed our Synod last night. It is in response to this address, that on behalf of this Synod I now may speak a few words to you.

First of all, we like to thank you for the fraternal greetings which you have brought us from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. We also appreciate your assurance that our aim, n.l. to stand for the Reformed faith, is known to many of you. Please, convey in return our Christian greetings to the brotherhood of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

In your address to us you have more or less followed up on the letter you wrote to our Contact Committee, of which letter this Synod has received a copy. What has struck us in this letter, was the humble and honest way in which you have

tried to answer several questions from our Contact Committee. We deem this to be promising for the continuation of the fraternal relationship which we may have at the present, and also for a further discussion and evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies which are



Rev. M. VanderWel

existing between us. It does not belong to my task to elaborate on these divergencies at this moment. I'm sure that by listening to the discussion of the Advisory Report last night, you must have received a vivid impression of the concerns which are living among us with regard to several points on which we differ in opinion. With a view to this I should like to say the following:

From your address we have learned, that in the course of 50 years the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has gone through many a struggle. To mention just a few of them: battles had to be fought against liberalism, independentism, and mysticism. It must be known to you that we as Reformed churches, having originated from The Netherlands, have had our struggles as well. If I am not mistaken, certain important elements which we both had in common in our battles have even formed a motive to look for each other as churches on this wide continent. Issues like the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over His Church, the reliability of God's covenant promises, and the faithful adherence to the Reformed confessions have, so to speak, shaped our attitude as Canadian

Reformed Churches. If therefore a certain hesitance can be observed among us in our relation to other denominations today, such a hesitance must then be explained from our concern not to loose what we have gained by God's grace in the history of our churches.

I trust, Rev. Peterson, that we both love our churches, and that is the way it should be. However, they are not *our* churches. The Church is *Christ's*. In our communication we must therefore not let ourselves be guided by reasons of traditionalism, favoritism, or even chauvinism, but by a mutual concern for the holiness of the House of God and for the preservation of the true principles of the Reformation. If such a concern is found on both sides, I am convinced, that this will bring us to a better understanding, and also to a clearer recognition of each other. It is our prayer, that for this purpose, the Lord may lead us further in all truth by His Word and Spirit, to the glory of His Name.

As it is your intention, Rev. Peterson, to depart from us tomorrow, we bid you farewell, wishing you thereby the Lord's strength in the ongoing battle for the unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God in which you are involved in your church. I may conclude this address with a quotation from the New Westminster Confession. In Chapter VIII, Article 1, it says: "It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Saviour of His Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world; unto whom He did from all eternity give a people, to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified."

Since we then both are called by this Mediator, given by God, and since He gathers, defends and preserves His people by His Word and Spirit, in the unity of true faith, so let us then go on in obedience to His holy Word, serving and edifying each other in the relationship which has been established.

General Synod Cloverdale 1983

Farewell Address to the Rev. J.J. Peterson

This is the farewell address of the chairman of the Synod, the Rev. W.W.J. Van-Oene.

Dear Brother Peterson,

Last night our brother VanderWel replied to the address which you gave. It is not my intention to add anything to his very capable handling of the matter and his Christian reply. However, this is the day you are going to leave us, and it is the duty of the chairman to welcome delegates and to bid them farewell.

You have conversed among us for some three-and-a-half days. You have seen us, you have heard us, you have tasted us, so to speak. You have seen many of our weaknesses, you must also be aware of our strength, a strength which is not the fruit of practice or exercise, but

of grace and mercy bestowed upon us.

During these three-and-a-half days you will have learned to know us a little, to understand us a little better, we hope. One of the first words you said to me after your arrival was: "I know who you are, for I read the News Medley," I am certain that you will be even better able to grasp this phenomenon within the Canadian Reformed Churches from now on.

Now our ways part. May it be temporarily. And may both you and we continue to travel together, though separated by distance. You know what I mean.

From what you said to us in your address it has become very clear where you stand: on the basis which has been laid by prophets and apostles. This will not make things easier for you. The concerns which you found with us must also live

with you, concerns about the course which many in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church appear to take. The struggle to remain faithful to our Lord and Saviour will be hard and long, and at times, perhaps seem to be fruitless and hopeless.

Know that also here, in this country, there are men and women who desire to remain obedient to their Lord and King. Let me conclude with these words:

*Go forth in His service,
Be strong in His might
To conquer all evil
And stand for the right,
For this is His word:
His saints shall not fail,
But over the earth
Their power shall prevail.*

May the Lord be with you.

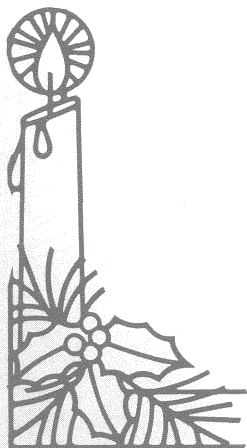


The Church's one foundation

*The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word:
From heav'n He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her
And for her life He died.*

*Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses.
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.*

Hymn 40:1, 2



Press Release

of the General Synod of Cloverdale 1983, held from November 2 to November 28.

At 9 o'clock in the morning, on Tuesday, November 1, the Rev. J. Visscher, chairman of the convening Church of Cloverdale, called the meeting to order. We sang Psalm 107:1 and 12, listened to the reading of God's Word in Ephesians 2, and called upon the Name of the LORD, beseeching Him to grant us His blessing for the glory of His Name and the upbuilding of His Churches. In his opening address the Rev. Visscher welcomed the delegates as well as the guests. He mentioned especially the Rev. D. VanderBoom, who conducted the Prayer Service, and the Rev. P.K. Meijer, who was on furlough from the mission field in Brazil. With the words, "May your decisions be a great blessing in the churches. May you be filled with the Spirit and be led by His Word. May the Lord be with you all and with all His people," he concluded and declared the tenth General Synod of the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches opened.

Letters with good wishes from the sister churches in Australia and South Africa were read. The credentials were examined. The Rev. J.D. Wielenga's place was taken by the Rev. J. Visscher, while br. G. Lodder had come as alternate for br. J. Medemblik. The delegates were:

from the Regional Synod East:

Ministers: P. Kingma, W. Pouwelse, Cl. Stam, and W.W.J. VanOene;

Elders: G. Lodder, E. Ludwig, R.J. Oosterhoff, and M. VanderVelde;

from the Regional Synod West:

Ministers: B.J. Berends, J. Geertsema, M. VanderWel, and J. Visscher;

Elders: J. Hendricks, P. Jansen, A. Poppe, and T. VanLaar.

The following officers were elected: Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, chairman; Rev. J. Geertsema, vice-chairman; Rev. Cl. Stam, first clerk; and Rev. W. Pouwelse, second clerk.

Advisory Committees were appointed and the matters on the Agenda were divided and given into the hands of the four committees.

After the opening of the second day of Synod the Rev. and Mrs. VanOene were congratulated on their fortieth wedding anniversary. Later that same day Synod decided to direct the Board of Governors of the Theological College in Hamilton to appoint Dr. K. Deddens as

full-time professor of Diaconology for a period of six years, and to thank the Rev. G. VanDooren "for his many years of faithful and fruitful work done as lecturer and temporary instructor at the College." The Board of Governors was further directed "to grant tenure to Professor C. VanDam and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene."

Synod appointed the following active ministers as governors of the college: Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. Cl. Stam, and Rev. J. Mulder from Eastern Canada (with Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. M. Werkman, and Rev. J. VanRietschoten as substitutes, in that order), and Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. M. van Beveren, and Rev. J. Visscher from Western Canada (with Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. B.J. Berends, and Rev. C. VanSpronsen as substitutes, in that order); and the following brothers who are not ministers: A.L. VanderHout, H. Kampen, C.M. Loopstra, M. VanGrootheest, and A. Hordijk. Gratitude was expressed to brother H. Dantuma and brother J. Medemblik "for their many years of faithful service as Trustees/Governors."

With respect to the College, Synod confirmed the adoption of the By-Laws and Regulations that come with the Act and thanked br. Loopstra for his work in preparing the Act and By-Laws, as well as the Hon. Mr. George A. Kerr, MPP for sponsoring the Bill in the Ontario legislature that led to the official recognition of our College. Reports and Financial Statements of the Board of Governors were received and dealt with. They will be added to the Acts as Appendices.

On Monday, November 7, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was congratulated on the fact that the LORD had allowed him to serve the churches for forty years. In the evening of the next day the delegates from the Dutch sister churches, the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens and the Rev. J. de Gelder, and the delegate from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Rev. J. J. Peterson, were welcomed with fitting words. Dr. K. Deddens responded, not so much in his function as delegate, but because of his appointment as professor in Diaconology. He informed Synod that he accepted this appointment and said that



*The executive officers
of Synod with
Dr. K. Deddens*



Rev. P. Kingma, elders R.J. Oosterhoff and E. Ludwig

he would do his work "depending upon the grace of God and in faithfulness to His Word." As members of Synod we were very thankful.

On this Tuesday Synod adopted "Guidelines for General Synod Meetings," which had been prepared by the Church at Cloverdale.

On Wednesday Synod dealt in closed session with appeals of br. W.B. Slomp and of the Church at Hamilton. The decision was "not to accede to the appeals." In the evening Dr. Deddens addressed the brethren as delegate of the sister churches in The Netherlands, and the Rev. J.J. Peterson spoke on behalf of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Hereafter the report of the advisory committee on our relation with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was further discussed. The decision was made "to continue contact with the OPC" and to give our Committee for Contact with the OPC the mandate to publish a detailed evaluation of the "confessional and church-political divergencies"; to evaluate a reaction from the OPC committee on these divergencies; to continue the discussion with the OPC committee on the relationships of the OPC with other churches; and to pay special attention to new developments in the OPC: their entertaining a possible invitation to join the Presbyterian Church in America, the "Hofford-case," and the "fencing" of the Lord's Supper, as well as "the so-called Shepherd-case."

At the opening on Thursday morning, the chairman addressed the members of Synod in connection with the 500th anniversary of the birthday of Martin Luther. In the evening the Rev. J. Vischer responded on behalf of Synod to the words spoken by Dr. K. Deddens. And

the Rev. M. VanderWel addressed the Rev. J. J. Peterson. This same evening the decision was made "to insert the word 'begotten' into the text of the Apostles' Creed" again ("His only begotten Son").

On Friday, November 11, Remembrance Day, we started with "remember(ing) those who gave their lives in the course of the wars that were fought in this century." We sang the National Anthem. The Rev. J. J. Peterson spoke a few words of appreciation for the good days and the warm hospitality which he received. The chairman addressed him with words of farewell. Synod decided on this day "to reinsert the word 'Christian' into Section III of the Apostles' Creed" ("A holy catholic Christian Church").

We began the third week of our sessions with remembering that 365 years earlier, on November 13, 1618, the Synod of Dordrecht was opened. On Wednesday the revised Church Order was adopted, after a number of changes

were made by Synod. The now adopted Church Order will be published in the *Book of Praise* and as a separate booklet.

On Thursday, November 17, Synod dealt with our relation with the sister churches in Australia, South Africa, and The Netherlands. It was decided to continue our sister church relationship (not called "Correspondence" any longer, but "Ecclesiastical Fellowship") with these churches and to request the churches abroad "that in the matter of relationships or contacts with 'third parties' there be consultation and coordination between sister churches."

The next day saw a decision on our relation with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pak). The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad had recommended to Synod to establish a sister church relationship with these churches. Synod decided not to do so as yet, and to charge the Committee to obtain more information regarding the Form of Government of the Korean Churches, to seek an official evaluation from the Koryu-Pa Church regarding the divergencies in confession and church government, and to seek information regarding the relation of the Koryu-Pa with the "Hap-Dong Churches."

On Saturday morning the question what kinds of relationship we should have, was discussed. The decision was made to maintain the relationship of "Correspondence according to the adopted rules as the only form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship," and to inform the sister churches that we have "not made it a common practice to formalize ecclesiastical contacts with churches with which Correspondence cannot yet be established."

We also dealt with a report from the Financial Committee of General Synod Smithville 1980, a report regarding the General Fund, a report about the archives of the previous Synod, a report of the



The executive officers busily at work — Rev. J. Geertsema, vice-chairman, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, chairman, Rev. Cl. Stam, first clerk, Rev. W. Pouwelse, second clerk

Church at Burlington-East as "Address Church," a report of the Committee on Bible Translations, and the recommendation (which was adopted) "not to enter into informal discussions with the Inter-church Relations Committee of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada," because this committee "is not able to deal with issues that keep our 'denominations' apart."

On the first day of the fourth week, Monday, November 21, the decision was made "to join the ICRC" (= International Conference of Reformed Churches). Proposals to amend the Constitution of this organization were adopted; two of these proposed amendments are: "delegates subscribe only to the standards of their own churches," and "a dual membership in ICRC and RES is not possible." Synod also decided to request the ICRC at Edinburgh to deal with the doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions, the doctrine of the Covenant in the same, and the exercise of interchurch relations. Our Committee will also request the ICRC to "hold its second Conference" (1989) in the Vancouver area.

Synod dealt with a number of proposals of the Standing Committee on the *Book of Praise*. We adopted, among other things, a rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed; the *Te Deum* (Hymn 2), and Hymn 8. The Psalm and Hymn Sections are ready for publication.

At this Monday's evening session, the chairman, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, spoke a few words of farewell to the Dutch delegates. Rev. J. de Gelder responded, saying that it had been a plea-



... the celebrating couple had a great day!

sure to be present and to enjoy the fellowship, and that the coming Synod of Heemse has to discuss many matters that were on the table of our Synod of Cloverdale.

During the next days Synod dealt with the revision of the Prayers and the liturgical Forms in our *Book of Praise*, and finalized a provisional adoption. They will be scrutinized linguistically once again and be published together with the Psalms and Hymns and the Church Order.

We also discussed appeals from the Churches at London and Neerlandia against a decision of Synod Smithville (Acts, Art. 143); as well as appeals from br. H.J. Noot and J. Werkman against decisions of the Regional Synod West, held September 1983, in Abbotsford. All these appeals, as well as one from br. H. de Jong, dealt with basically the same matter: a point of the doctrine about the church. Although these appeals were dealt with separately, it is sufficient for this Press Release to summarize the considerations of Synod as they were given in the advisory report regarding one of them: We considered that Regional Synod West "correctly stated that the true believers 'thus are included in the Church gathering work of Christ (*congregatio*);' " that "Regional Synod, however, upholding the judgment of Classis Alberta/Manitoba of May 3-5, June 15, 16, 1983, hereby leaves room for identifying being 'included in the Church gathering work of Christ' and 'being a member of Christ's Church,' thus trying to answer the question how it is possible that there are true believers who yet are not members of Christ's Church (*coetus*)" "However, the statement that 'all who have re-

ceived a true faith become by virtue of that faith' 'a member of Jesus Christ and of His Church' . . ." in fact nullifies what we confess in Art. 28 of the Belgic Confession, namely "that no person ought to withdraw from the Church; that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it; that all believers are to join themselves to this congregation; that all who separate themselves from it or do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God"

Synod went through the revised Heidelberg Catechism; a number of proposals from churches and from members to amend the text were rejected, others were adopted. In this way Synod came to a provisional adoption of the revised Heidelberg Catechism text.

There was an overture from the Church at Ottawa requesting Synod to "express its willingness to initiate contact with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America," a church that has its origin in Scotland and maintains the Westminster Standards. Synod considered that the Church at Ottawa did not supply sufficient material and should have introduced this matter in the way of the minor assemblies. It decided, therefore, not to grant the overture of the Church at Ottawa and to advise it to go the way pointed out in the considerations.

On Monday, November 28, the last day of Synod, we continued and finished our work regarding the revision of the Canons of Dort and the Belgic Confession. After a number of changes were made, the text as proposed by the committee for the revision of these two Forms of Unity was adopted provisionally. Also this text will be scrutinized linguistically once more. Herewith the whole new *Book*



Rev. J. Geertsema

of *Praise* was provisionally adopted and will be made ready for publication.

Synod made the following appointments:

Board of Governors: See above;

Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad: E.C. Baartman; A.C. Lengkeek; Rev. M. van Beveren; Rev. J. Visscher.

Standing Committee for the Book of Praise: Rev. J. DeJong; Dr. W. Helder; M. Kampen; Prof. C. VanDam; Mrs. H. VanHalen; J. van Huisstede.

Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church: J. Boot; Prof. J. Faber; Rev. W. Huizinga; Rev. J. Mulder; Rev. P. Kingma.

Committee on Bible Translations: Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. P. Kingma; Prof. C. VanDam; Rev. J. VanRietschoten.

Churches for Days of Fasting and Prayer: the Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth) and the Church at Edmonton (Providence).

Church for Administration of the General Fund: the Church at Carman.

Church for the General Archives: the Church at Burlington-East (Ebenezer).

Church for the Inspection of the General Archives: the Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth).

Church to Audit the Finances of General Synod of Cloverdale 1983: the Church at Langley.

Church to Audit the Finances of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise: the Church at Brampton.

The Address Church: for Canada: the Church at Burlington-East (Ebenezer). for the United States: the Church at Grand Rapids, MI.

The Committee for the Printing of the Acts: the chairman e.t., and the clerk e.t.

The Convening Church for the Next General Synod: the Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth).

Censure ad Art. 44 C.O. (old Art. 43) was not necessary. The last part of the Acts was read and adopted. The Press Release will be approved by the officers of Synod.

The vice-chairman expressed appreciation for the good and capable manner in which the chairman, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, fulfilled his task. Hereafter the chairman spoke his closing words in which he summarized the work of the Synod, paying special attention to the provisional conclusion of the work on the *Book of Praise* after the many years of preparation. He mentioned the relationship with the sister churches and with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as well as the matter of the appeals in connection with what we confess concerning the church. The chairman thanked the members of Synod for their good cooperation; the convening church for the ex-

cellent preparation; the sisters for the excellent care, especially sr. Audrey Mostert and sr. Effie Sikma.

We sang Psalm 150. Then the chairman closed the Synod of Cloverdale, 1983, with thanksgiving and prayer.

For the Synod,
J. GEERTSEMA, vice-chairman, e.t.

PRESS RELEASE

of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Teachers College Association, held November 18, 1983.

The chairman, G. Nordeman, opens the meeting in the customary Christian manner.

Minutes of the previous meeting are adopted. Some matters arising from these minutes are dealt with.

The treasurer presents his monthly report. The income received this year thus far is still below budget. At present receipts are approximately \$10,000,00 less than is required. This of course is an area of concern, however we trust that the membership will respond to the

needs once they are aware of the situation.

Correspondence, incoming and outgoing is dealt with. Report is made by the membership committee. Specific information with respect to the number of local members, and financial matters, is requested from the governors.

The principal delivers his monthly report. The operation of the college is running smoothly. There are no mentionable difficulties other than that, due to the amount of space available, the number of students the College can handle at the present time is at its practical limit. The atmosphere among students and staff is excellent.

Mr. Van Der Ven has obtained his M.Ed. For this achievement he receives our heartfelt congratulations. All of our full time teachers now hold this degree.

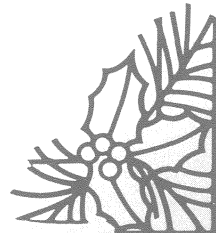
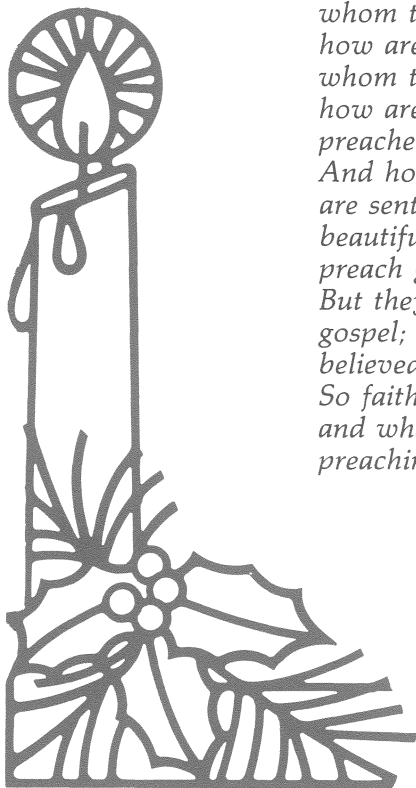
Some preliminary discussions are held about the graduation evening in May of 1984. Also preparations are made for the National Board meeting to be held D.V. in February 1984.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for December 9, 1983. Following that meeting, future Executive Committee meetings will be held the first Friday of the month. The meeting is closed with prayer and adjourned.

For the executive,
C.J. NOBELS

*For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved."
But how are men to call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?
And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!"
But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"
So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.*

Romans 10:13-17



Divine Providence and Human Accountability²

4. God's Providence

We have seen in the previous instalment that the expression "the Will of God" can be used in two different ways. It can be used to refer to the law of the Lord as well as to His divine plan. As the title for these articles I have chosen "Divine Providence and Human Accountability." Speaking about God's providence, I clearly refer to God's concealed Will or His divine plan and purpose.

I already mentioned Article XIII of the Belgic Confession. There we read that God, "after He had created all things, did not forsake them or give them up to fortune or chance, but that He rules and governs them according to His holy Will, so that nothing happens in this world without His appointment; nevertheless, God neither is the Author of nor can be charged with the sins which are committed. For His power and goodness are so great and incomprehensible that He orders and executes His work in the most excellent and just manner, even then when devils and wicked men act unjustly."

Also Lord's Day 10 speaks about this providence and calls it "the almighty and everywhere present power of God, whereby, as it were by His hand, He still upholds heaven, earth, and all creatures, and so governs them that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea all things, come not by chance but by His fatherly hand." In question 28 we further read: "What does it profit you that you know that God has created, and by His providence still upholds, all things?" and the answer reads: "That we may be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and with a view to the future have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that no creature shall separate us from His love, since all creatures are so in His hand that without His Will they cannot so much as move."

It is perfectly clear that this confession leaves intact divine providence as well as human accountability. That seems to be difficult for modern man to accept.

First, a few things about the divine providence. Seeing all the misery in life, people question whether there is a God who governs all things. How can things get so bad, if a Divine Being who is fully in control really exists? The strange thing is that people deny that God exists, and at the same time blame Him for all the misery in life. That shows the inconsistency of their theory and also the desperate way they are looking for an excuse for their mistakes. People try to do away with God, but time and again they feel their own failure and their dependency on Him. Modern technology seems to be able to achieve a lot of things, but all of a sudden the Lord intervenes: heat, cold, rain, drought, or other so-called natural phenomena can cause disasters beyond human control. We, however, have a rich comfort. Everything is in God's hand.

That does not mean that God is the Author of sin, or that He can be charged with the sins which are committed (Art. X, B.C.). He leaves human beings in their responsible position. Man is created after God's image, little less than God (Psalm

8), and God has never taken away this responsibility or accountability. We all will be called to account for every action, word, and thought. But at the same time the Lord fulfills His plan; He uses human beings, sometimes willingly, sometimes in spite of their own unwillingness. Even unbelievers are used to promote the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and to fulfil God's divine plan.

The Bible gives us plenty of examples. In Isaiah 10 we read that the LORD used Assyria as a rod in His hand against His own people. The LORD sent the King of Assyria to execute His punishment and wrath against Israel. But at the same time we read about the intention of the Assyrians. They were not willing to serve the LORD. We even read that the Assyrians would be punished for what they had done. Isaiah 10:12, 13 says: "When the LORD has finished all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will punish the arrogant boasting of the King of Assyria and his haughty pride. For they say: 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; I have removed the boundaries of the peoples, and have plundered their treasures; like a bull I have brought down those who sat on thrones.'"

That seems strange: the LORD uses the heathen king as a rod in His hand, but at the same time the heathen people will be punished for what they have done. They have served the purpose of the LORD, but then as an axe which "vaunts itself over him who hews with it" or as a saw which "magnifies itself against him who wields it" (Isaiah 10:15).

That shows us the supremacy of the LORD over all creatures. He fulfills His plan, no matter what human beings are doing or are intending to do. Sometimes He disturbs the plans of those who try to oppose Him. Sometimes He uses their plans to serve His purpose in an unexpected way.

We can see the same in the history of Joseph and his brothers. The LORD used Joseph's going to Egypt to save His people Israel and to keep them alive during a famine. In Gen. 45:5 we read: "And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life." And in Genesis 45:7, 8 we read: "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord over all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt." The LORD used the attempted assassination and the plotted betrayal of Joseph by his brothers to keep the people of Israel alive.

The providence of the Lord is a rich comfort for us when we are in trouble. Even when our enemies — Christ's enemies — seem to have success, we know that the Lord takes care of us. His providence is in all things of life.

It is not always easy to accept this. When there is sickness, adversity and even persecution of those who believe in Jesus Christ, we sometimes wonder how the Lord can allow

it to happen. We do not always understand why. We do not know the "Will" of the Lord — His plan, that is — but we do know that He takes care of us and will make all things subservient to our salvation.

We cannot change the plans of the Lord, but, in all circumstances of life, we are allowed to pray to our heavenly Father. Even when something seems to be impossible, we are allowed to pray for it, at least if we add the phrase: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Moreover, we do not know what *is* possible or impossible. When a doctor says that someone is incurably ill, we still are allowed to pray. The doctor only says what he expects to happen, but only the Lord knows what will happen. Some may say that everything is decided upon by the Lord and has been decided upon already before the creation of the world. Therefore, why should we ask for something? It will happen according to God's "concealed plan from eternity" anyway. That may sound like solid argumentation, but don't forget that also our prayers and the impact of our prayers are part of God's eternal counsel and purpose. Jesus Christ knew, as the Son of God, that He had to suffer for our sins. But still He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me." But He also added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." That is the way we have to pray as well. We are allowed to lay everything before the countenance of our heavenly Father, knowing that He is willing to listen to us and also able to give us everything we need. We can count on Him and His help. His divine plan is not revealed to us. We do not know what will happen. But we know for sure that He listens to us and will take care of us. That is the comfort of His providence.

The word "providence" has a dual meaning. It is derived from "pro" and "video." "Pro" means "before" and "video" means "to see." So "pro-videre" means: "to see beforehand." The Lord knows what will happen. He has foreseen everything. Nothing can take Him by surprise. In His eternal counsel He has known everything beforehand, He had "seen-before" all things that will happen. That is one aspect of His "providence."

The word "providence" also includes that He will *provide* us *with* and will *provide for* everything we need according to His providence. He knows everything and therefore He is able to *supply* us with all we need.

That makes the comfort of His providence even greater.

All this, however, leaves intact human accountability, as we will see next.

5. Human accountability

To show the close relation that exists between God's providence and human accountability, we recall the example of Joseph and his brothers. In Genesis 45:7, 8, Joseph said to his brothers, "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father for Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt."

This shows us the providence of the LORD. He was at work and He used the actions of Joseph's brothers. But it did not take away their own responsibility. In Genesis 50:20 we read that Joseph said to them: "As for you, you meant evil against me; but God has meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as it is today." The LORD used the evil actions of Joseph's brothers to fulfil His plan. We can also put it this way: in spite of their attempt to annihilate their brother, the LORD used him to keep His people alive. They had to serve the purpose of the LORD. This does not take away the fact that they had to give account of their evil works. They remained accountable.

Some may argue: they had to sell Joseph; it was the LORD's plan to rescue His people. Joseph had to go to Egypt

to let his people survive anyway. That is true to a certain extent: Joseph had to go to Egypt, but the way he went was a shame and an accusation against his brothers.

Someone may ask: What if they would not have sold him? Well, the answer will be clear. The LORD could have sent Joseph to Egypt in a different way. We know about another Joseph who also went to Egypt to work the salvation of the people, to keep alive God's people and to set them free from slavery. But he did not go as a slave, sold by his brothers, but by a divine revelation and instruction. It was Joseph, Mary's husband, who went to Egypt after the Lord had spoken to him in a dream. It was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophets, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son" (Matthew 2:15). We can also put it this way: if Joseph's brothers had been faithful, and if they had not sold their brother as a slave, the LORD could have sent Joseph to Egypt via a revelation in a dream, in the same way as with Mary's husband Joseph. What I mean to say is this: the fact that the LORD used his going to Egypt does not take anything away from human accountability.

It is the same with the example of the King of Assyria in Isaiah 10. There we read that the LORD would punish Assyria because of the bad intentions during the execution of their punitive expedition.

Nowadays we can see how people oppose and transgress the law of the Lord in many ways. There is increasing lawlessness and immorality, even persecution of those who serve the Lord. In this country we are still living in freedom and we can serve the Lord without any hindrance. How long will that last? We do not know what will come upon us and what is going to happen. The Bible teaches us clearly that the power of the evil one will grow. The lawless one will reveal himself. In II Thess. 2:6 we read that he will take his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Let us not be surprised that such things are going to happen. The world and the people of the world will try to oppose the plans of the Lord. The Bible tells us that the lawless one has to come and has to be revealed. Human beings can violate and transgress God's commandments and His law, but they can never change or oppose God's divine plan, and they will be held responsible for all they do. Finally the Lord will call them to account.

Langley, BC

— *To be continued*
W. POUWELSE

*How beautiful upon the mountains are
the feet of him who brings good tidings,
who publishes peace, who brings good
tidings of good,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion,
"Your God reigns."*

Isaiah 52:7



FROM THE SCRIPTURES

“And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:12

Swaddling Cloths

When the shepherds are told by the angel from heaven that the long-awaited Saviour and Messiah has come into the world, the message is confirmed with a *sign*: they would find the child wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. The sign corresponds exactly to the simple and sober birth announcement of verse 7. There is nothing unusual, dramatic or miraculous in this particular sign. Indeed, we might wonder what exactly the sign was for the shepherds. Was it the child? the mother? the manger? or the swaddling cloths?

Actually, all these factors play a role, and the whole picture presented to the shepherds is one of an ordinary human birth. Even the manger setting is not all that unusual, considering the circumstances. This is not a “wonder-child” or unusual being. He is an ordinary baby, fully and truly human. Indeed, the whole picture is one of poverty and simplicity. The parents are obviously poor, and the manger setting only adds to the impression of lowliness, simplicity and poverty that surrounds the birth of our Lord. Nothing can be found here which reflects the honour and glory of David, or the majesty of the Messiah.

Yet one thing stands out amidst the dismal, and — as one may assume — the generally soiled and unkempt atmosphere surrounding the birth of our Lord. What stands out, in contrast to the other features of the birth scene, is the care the child receives in this setting, and how He is wrapped with swaddling bands. The flight into Egypt brought circumstances of poverty to Joseph and Mary. Obviously they could only travel with the bare necessities. But here we find an expression which points to no lack, no deprivation. The child is covered in swaddling cloths. And this same maternal action described in the birth announcement reappears in the angel’s words. A seemingly small and insignificant element of the birth is isolated and repeated.

This element of the birth scene becomes more significant when we recall that the prophet Ezekiel uses a similar expression to describe the work of the LORD for Israel. The Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, uses the same expression in Ezek. 16:4 as we have here, and there the fact that Israel was not swathed in bands describes the sin and uncleanness of her origin, the shame of her past. But the LORD covered Israel’s nakedness, (vs. 8), swathed her in fine linen, and covered her with silk, (vs. 10). He had done the same for our first parents, Adam and Eve. When they fell into sin, they knew that they were naked. And in shame “they sewed fig leaves together, and made

themselves aprons,” Gen. 3:7. But then the LORD gave His promise of salvation, Gen. 3:15, and with the promise came restoration and deliverance from shame. “The LORD God made for Adam and his wife garments of skin, and clothed them,” Gen. 3:21.

Here the sign begins to speak to the shepherds. For although this child is born in conditions of lowliness, poverty, and uncleanness, it is not a *deserved* humility, or *deserved* uncleanness. He Himself does not reflect the shame and nakedness of sin; rather, He reflects the perfect righteousness in which He was born. Right from the first day, the Lord Jesus was clothed with honour and dignity. So He appears as *Saviour*, one who is without sin, clothed with the care and love of the Father, but who is found willing to take our sin upon Himself, and so enter the human race in humility and lowliness. And the swaddling cloths are a sign of the favour of His Father, a sign in which the future glory of the Messiah is visible, even in the simple bands of birth.

However, much must happen before that glory is revealed. The same Lord, who was wrapped in swaddling cloths as a sign of His perfect righteousness and the divine favour upon Him, had to shed all His clothing in order to fulfil His Father’s will. They stripped Him, Matt. 27:28, divided His garments by casting lots, vs. 35, and gloated over His shame. As the psalmist had foretold, shame and nakedness covered Him, Ps. 69:7. But this shame was not deserved. That is what the swaddling bands of birth tell us. He freely and willingly took our shame and nakedness upon Himself, so that we could be clothed by the Father again. He bore our shame, and through His sacrifice we, too, may be clothed with glory and honour. Through His death and resurrection we may receive new garments — a new, heavenly tent, wherein what is mortal is swallowed up by life, II Cor. 5:3ff.

So we may rejoice in the sign given to the shepherds, the sign of redemption through the cross. From the first day, the lines of His journey to the cross were pointed out. And He followed them in obedience, to the end! Thus, in Him, who is now fully covered with robes of life, Rev. 1:5, we also may be found by faith in Him with the company of the saints who are clothed in white robes, Rev. 7:9, singing, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!”

J. DE JONG

PATRIMONY PROFILE 27

Management Changes

Since 1819 the government had the administration of ecclesiastical assets in its power. However, in 1866, King William III issued a decree by which the churches received back their right of administering the possessions of the church. However, when churches are master in their own house as far as their possessions are concerned, any power and hold which a synod may have is greatly diminished. It is understandable that the Synod was afraid of losing much of its power and control. It would have loved to see that all management and control over all the assets of the churches were in its own hands. When this was not feasible, the gentlemen hit upon another idea: they established a "General College of Supervision," consisting of thirteen members of whom eleven were chosen by the provincial colleges. Groen van Prinsterer saw the danger and warned the churches not to fall into that trap and not to relinquish their rights to administer the possessions of the church without interference or control by anyone else. Some churches listened; many others placed themselves voluntarily under this additional yoke. Some churches received an express invitation to place themselves under the supervision of the established "College of Supervision," an invitation coming from Synod itself. One of these churches was the Church in Amsterdam. Amsterdam decided to keep what they had: their own free administration.

The Synod had one trick up its sleeve: if a consistory did not wish to toe the line, Synod could always depose such a consistory; and a deposed consistory could no longer administer and control the church's assets! Some churches sensed this danger, too, and especially Amsterdam did so. The Consistory adopted, among others, the following provision, and did so already in 1875:

When a member of the Committee of Management, one of those entitled to vote, or one of the officials, is placed under ecclesiastical censure — of whatever nature it may be — the Committee shall decide if, and to what extent such censure has effect on the right which the person involved may have or be given by virtue of any provision of the Regulation. In any case he shall retain his position . . . until a decision has been made.

The Classical Board considered this a dangerous provision, but did not dare to do anything. Yet the Amsterdam Consistory did not feel at ease: it could be that the Classical Board suspended the whole Consistory, and this would undo the effectiveness of the above decision. For this reason the Consistory also provided that "The authority of the Consistory can never be transferred to a higher board."

Efforts to Maintain the Reformed Confession

It was not only those who broke with the Netherlands Reformed Church in 1834 who were concerned about and

wished to do something about the general deterioration and the neglect of the Reformed Confession. We already met the Rev. Dirk Molenaar whose brochure, written in 1827, saw its tenth printing in 1841. The same minister endeavoured to defend the Reformed Confession in other writings as well, although no action was undertaken. The Rev. H.P. Scholte already wrote to the Rev. H. de Cock that Molenaar "is as scared as a weasel," and in 1860, Molenaar and others of similar disposition were compared to "sentries who, on guard duty, walk back and forth, their rifle in their arms, wailing because the enemy is streaming in, meanwhile firing their rifles into the air, giving the enemy a hand, making much noise and doing nothing." Further we met Dr. A. Rutgers. He wrote to Synod in 1835, urging that assembly to take a further decision regarding the words used in the new subscription form. The Rev. J.J. le Roy sent an address in which he declared that the present manner of government in the Netherlands Reformed Church rendered maintaining ecclesiastical supervision and discipline impossible.

There was, however, a big difference between the various "concerned" ministers. The Rev. S. van Velzen in Drogeham, e.g., did not receive the slightest cooperation when he invited colleagues to a meeting to discuss the maintaining of the Confession. Others felt compelled to write to Rev. H. de Cock or even to visit him. And we already mentioned above the names of a few ministers who sent an address to Synod.

In 1841 the Synod received an address from four consistories: those of Nijkerk, Oosterwolde, Elspeet, and 's Grevelduin Capelle. In these identical submissions the consistories urged that the Confession of the Church be maintained. However, since with these submissions a synodical rule for correspondence had been violated, the addresses were received and filed. . . .

There was still another address on the synodical table which could not be wiped off the docket all that easily. It is about this document that we wish to say a little more. The request was made to Synod "that the High Church Assembly restore the Reformed Church on its old and firm foundation by upholding the Forms of Unity to be subscribed to by upcoming ministers, and by revision of the ecclesiastical Regulations and Ordinances to the end that these may be brought into harmony with God's Word and the Church Order of Dordrecht." The first signatory to this address was the Rev. B. Moorrees, minister at Wijk, in the land of Heusden. With five other ministers he now sent an appeal to Synod. No fewer than 8790 members affixed their signatures to the document.

Were there not more ministers willing to support such action? There certainly were more ministers who agreed with it but did not sign for one reason or another. They will have had various reasons for not doing so, but the fact remains that they did not sign.

Also among the membership at large not signing did not yet constitute disagreement. The well-known lawyer Mr. M.C. van der Kemp, e.g., did not sign because he thought that it did not make any sense and that it was

foolishness when the Reformed would go to ask their very enemy to restore their rights. There was something in Mr. van der Kemp's reasoning. In their address, signatories declared that the Synod had been imposed upon them by the civil authorities contrary to articles 30 and 31 of the Belgic Confession. Why, then, go to the very same Synod?

Senders of the address also appealed to the King with the urgent request to support their wishes with Synod, but they never received any reply to this submission.

Did Synod reply? Yes.

Was this reply more favourable than the one which Brummelkamp, Van Velzen, and Gezelle Meerburg received upon their submissions? It was not.

As for the request to return to the old Subscription Form, Synod shrank away from that. "This would be completely in conflict with the present condition of things that, for reason of progress in every branch of theology, as well as new needs, is too different from things that occurred two centuries ago."

Regarding the accusations concerning the changes in the church, the synodical report says, "to hurl such accusations without proof and to make them generally known by printing them, to violate our whole ecclesiastical organization, and to ascribe to our Reformed Church as it is existing at present a pernicious and un-Christian spirit, to imperil a number of respectable ministers that they lose the confidence of their congregations, would be preparing lamentable disasters in our church. . . ."

The haughty and derogatory manner in which those who defended the truth, and stood up for the rights of true believers, and seceded from the Netherlands Reformed Church, were judged by officialdom was also found with the Synod in the case of Rev. Moorrees and his fellow-protesters. The judgment about the people who had signed the address was not all that favourable here either. "By far most of the lists carry the signatures of the less civilized level of participants, and in a very large number of them one can find *marks* instead of names of those who are unable to put a signature. . . . Let this not be said . . . to despise them . . . but to determine how much or how little one can consider such signatories capable of judging correctly matters against or in favour of which they wish to be zealous."

Did Moorrees' action have any result? No, for he and many others confined themselves to words and refused to come to any *action*, any decisive *deed*. The Rev. Moorrees himself denied that it was mandatory, even after all means to bring about a change had failed, to break with the Netherlands Reformed Church and to join the Seceders: "As members of the old Reformed Church it is our obligation, as long as we are not called by the Lord in the clearest way, through His Word and His Spirit and in the way of His providence, to remain in this church and to labour with prayer and supplication for the restoration of the church, if it might please the Lord to restore our delapidated church, to pour out His Holy Spirit upon the ministers, professors, and congregations, yea, upon Prince and peo-

ple; who knows what the Lord may do as yet according to the incomprehensible riches of His grace."

Do you want to hear the judgment of a contemporary? "The result is much paper faith, paper power, paper Christians, who sigh because all want and know not to maintain anything . . . always paper, always reading, always judging the sermon beautiful, always stopping at what the apostle calls the first elements, conversion from dead works. . . ."

And yet. . . . In spite of the in-action of author and adherent's Moorrees' address did bear a fruit which clarified the situation. In their address signatories dared to call the Netherlands Reformed Church "a liberal church without confession of faith, lacking the one true Head, Jesus Christ, through whom alone the true church exists."

Synod, in its judgment, declared "that the old and firm foundations of the Reformed Church have in no way been pulled loose with the present organization of the Church." Thus Synod denied the appeal. Was it a slip of the tongue when Synod did what it had constantly refused: give a further explanation of the new subscription form? Synod dropped the remark that in this form we speak only of the maintenance of the doctrine "as the same, in its character and spirit, constituting the essence and principal points of the Confession of the Reformed Church."

This, and that the matter of confession and doctrine was kept alive by it were the only results of the Rev. B. Moorrees' impressive but impotent gesture.

The Seven Gentlemen's Address

Of the signatories of an address which reached Synod in 1842 it certainly could not be said that they hardly knew how to write their name or even not at all. All but one of the "Seven Gentlemen of The Hague" had graduated from law school. They were not slow in using Synod's answer to the Rev. B. Moorrees. It became the basis for their further address. Groen van Prinsterer was the author of the address which reached Synod in the year 1842. Synod replied to the Rev. Moorrees that the doctrine meant in the Subscription Form "constitutes the essence and principal points of the Confession of the Reformed Church." Very well, the Seven Gentlemen said, but permit us then to ask: What is the standard by which it is to be measured and judged what the "essence" and what these "principal points" are. Is that the opinion about them, which changes with the centuries? Is it the spirit of those who drew up our Forms? Or is it the very character of the Reformed Church? Please take the ambiguity away!

This was the main purpose of the address: the Seven Gentlemen asked for a clear and outright explanation of this one sentence. Four points were raised for which the attention of Synod is asked and Synod's cooperation is requested. In the first place the matter of the Forms is discussed. The Gentlemen ask for a clear declaration whereby without any ambiguity is recognized, as guide for preaching and instruction, that which the Netherlands Reformed Church always considered to be the essence and principal points of the Reformed doctrine.

— *To be continued.*

School Crossing

A. Covenantal Education — Ethical Dimensions

On Friday, October 28, the teachers of the Ontario Canadian Reformed Schools, held their annual fall convention in Burlington. Twice a year, ideas are shared, new concepts learned and old friendships renewed. Approximately seventy teachers were joined by more than twenty students from our teachers' college. The guest speaker was Mr. W. den Hollander, who has taught in our schools for a number of years, and who is presently studying at the Theological College in Hamilton. He presented the topic mentioned above, under the sub-heading "Parents — Teacher Alignment." His speech provided a lot of food for thought. What follows is a condensed version and since this summary is still rather lengthy, it will be spread over two School Crossing columns:

Introduction

In order to approach our topic from the proper perspective we need to move from the broadest basis to the particular issues in a progressive manner. We find this basis in the prayer following the administration of baptism of infants. The entire congregation prays that "God may so govern this child by His Holy Spirit that it may be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness, and grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ, in order that it may acknowledge Thy fatherly goodness . . . , live in all righteousness . . . , manfully fight and overcome sin . . . , and eternally praise and magnify Thee. . . ."¹ The italicized parts in this sentence, containing *task and objectives* for a Covenantal Education, may serve as a handle on the topic we are to deal with today.

The nurturing in the Christian faith takes place informally in the instruction at home and more formally in Bible study classes, Catechism instruction, and Reformed religion lectures. The inherent nurturing in godliness prevents all such instruction from becoming a theoretical enterprise. From early childhood the instruction should be paired with the implementation of the principles taught in a life of godliness.

The Scriptural connotation of *godliness* can best be illustrated from its usage

by respectively the apostles Paul and Peter in their epistles. The former uses it to teach the Scriptural meaning of godliness versus the distorted view of asceticism, while the latter contrasts its meaning with libertinism *Paul* uses the word (and its cognates) in order to show that godliness and Christian faith are one and are reflected in a particular walk of life which is all encompassing. This conduct in godliness can be trained for, exercised in, and is in line with steadfastness, gentleness and righteousness. It has an effect on the person himself/herself, it being of great gain, and on those who are without (cf. H.C. L.D. 32, II Tim. 3:12). *Peter*, on the other hand, teaches that godliness is the opposite of an ungodly walk. Overagainst the free life of the libertines he places self-control; versus their whimsical following of fads and fashions he poses steadfastness; and from true godliness he shows brotherly affection to follow, (which includes Paul's distinction of the weak and the strong of whom the strong are taught to abstain sometimes for the sake of the weak). For Peter, too, godliness is the *sum* of all individual ac-

tions which are determined by the fact that we live in the last days (II Peter 3:11).

Godliness can be translated literally as our "good worship of God" resulting from a sound doctrine. Like in the O.T. the teaching of the commandments, of the precepts, the judgments, and the ordinances of the Law had to result in a fear of the LORD, a leaning on, trusting in, and clinging to the LORD, so also the N.T. teaches that godliness in the communion with God is the fruit of a true knowledge of Him. From the concept of godliness as "worship" in all our daily work we come to other, similar, terms expressing that our life is a "spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1).

The Reformers stressed that godliness (also called religion) is a spiritual communion with God. Calvin² called it a "confidence in God coupled with serious fear." He shows that "the heart is the seat of godliness" and that, considering that from the heart are all the issues of life, "religion embraces the entire man with all his thoughts and feelings and volitions." Therefore we must stress God's call in our educational efforts which says,



Sleigh rides . . . lots of fun!

"My son/daughter give me your heart." As a result of this stress during the Reformation, our *liturgical* (liturgy is one of these cognates of godliness) forms express this unity of doctrine and godliness too. In the form for adult baptism³ the question is asked whether the person does not only accept the Christian religion but also intends to direct his life in accordance with it; he further promises to continue steadfastly in the same doctrine . . . and to lead a Christian life. In the questions to those who make public profession of their faith⁴, the question concerning their faith is paired with a question about their intention to forsake the world, to mortify their old nature, and to lead a godly life. Also in the form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper⁵ we promise to walk sincerely before God's face. . . . "That we may no longer live in our sins, but He in us and we in Him." From the form⁶ for the excommunication of baptized members we learn that they are held responsible when they deny the communion with Christ and the Church. (I John 2:15-17 is a choice mandatory for our youth as well.) They too, and we with them, pray "that we may avoid all pollution of the world and of those . . . who through unbelief and recklessness of life go astray."

Covenantal Education

From the Rev. Cl. Stam's speech⁷ we pick up that "Covenantal Education" deals with Covenant children, instructs in the Covenant way of life, with the one Covenant revelation." This educates aims, he adds, "to bring about a covenant awareness and responsiveness in the child." Here we find the two aspects side by side again: By instruction in the Christian faith the child becomes more and more aware of the essentials, principles, and meaning of the covenant which should bear fruit in a sanctification of life, a responsive and normative walk. The well-known word *Torah* is derived from the Hebrew verb for aiming at a target (e.g. with bow and arrow: to shoot). Consequently, the word for sinning is "missing the mark." The target of the Book of the Covenant was that God would have a people living again to His glory.

This covenantal education is a concern for parents and teachers *together*. Together they prayed the prayer mentioned in my introduction, and together they carry out the task involved in this "nurturing in the Christian faith and in godliness." From the objectives in this prayer we may recognize the same unity between commandments and prayer (ge-

bod and gebed) as we find in the third part of the H.C. I may remind you of Peter's admonition to hasten the coming of the day ("Thy Kingdom come") with a walk in godliness and holiness (2 Peter 3:11). Together we teach the child awareness of its own place in the covenant communion with God, its own place in the covenant community of man (family and church), its own place as covenant child in society.

In the N.T. dispensation this education has received the initial fulfilment in that it is now carried out "*in the Lord*." Paul's teaching to Timothy to live a godly life *in Christ Jesus* is evident now, for instance, in our sabbath-celebration *in the Lord* on the day of resurrection (4th commandment) and in his admonition to the children (in Eph. 6:12) to obey their parents *in the Lord*. The O.T. distinction in the service of the priests on the one hand, and the service of the Israelites on the other, has become *one* worship, liturgy, in the Lord Jesus Christ!

The *awareness* required for a truly covenantal service before God must be strong and be strengthened. For parents and teachers there is no end to their own training in godliness, in order that the children may see and follow this awareness, reap the fruits of it in their own growing awareness, and bear the fruits in an increased covenantal responsiveness.

Cultural Mandate

The covenant restores God's Sovereign Ownership on our whole life. The purpose of this, John Calvin stressed, is that God may receive the glory which is due to Him. Guido de Brès, too, stresses that man should serve God his Creator (Art. 12 B.C.). Dr. K. Schilder emphasized that "culture and religion (godliness) are one!"⁸ He expounds that in the term "culture" is contained all man's activities, labours, etc. for the development of the earth. All the work done to God's glory is true culture; culture and godliness apply to our everyday activities in home, garden, and kitchen, for church, state, and society.

Besides this true culture there is also a false (counterfeit) culture, which is directed wrongly, n.l. at the glory and pleasure of man. Romans 12:2 literally shows that there are two schemes, patterns, in this world from which the products of man originate. Philosophies, motives and results of the work of man underlie the cultural output of man. Paul teaches that a metamorphosis is required (transformation by the renewal of mind) in order to come to the proper culture, religion, before God. Previous to Rom. 12:1, 2 however, he exclaimed "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen." (11:36.) Man needs a metamorphosis in heart and



Now it is
my turn

mind in order to execute his cultural mandate to that end.

God had created man in His own image in order to enable him to work out his cultural mandate acceptably. We educate our children that they may become imagebearers of God *again*. This means that we teach them to put off the old nature with its practises and to put on the new nature. This education is not only shared by parents and teachers "in Christ," but it also finds its contents "in Christ." The children have "to learn Christ" (Eph. 4:20). Philosophically speaking this means also that "in our daily work (culture! W.d.H.) we label as false and reject as deadly any system of thought (cf. Rom. 12:2: two schemes, W.d.H.) that does not have its reference point in revelation" (Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff in her speech).⁹ Educationally speaking we believe that since "foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child. . . ." We must help the children to "stay away from the grasp of death which reaches out for them in so many subtle and terrible ways." (G.H. Visscher.)¹⁰ Terrible, indeed are the ways of sex, sensation and sensuality. Subtle indeed, are the attractions of drugs, drinking, and drudgery. The breath of death is evident in booty, booze, and boredom. This reminds us of the Book of the Revelation to John which warns for the sin of Balaam or the Nicolaitans, a sin which tries to lure away from the true service of God, away from the true culture to God's glory. This same book of Revelation also speaks about the position of the Church: in the desert! The Church is in the desert, which does not mean that it does not engage in culture. On the contrary! It does mean however, that a desert-culture is a lot more sober than a paradise-culture.

The culture performance to God's glory is not only in the midst of the false culture, it also uses this culture's products. Isaac da Costa said with respect to the inventions of the art of printing that any invention is a step to heaven or a step to hell, depending on *how* it is used. Therefore we must be on our guard! We must also practise truly the humble confession in Q. & A. 127, "since we are so weak in ourselves that we cannot stand a moment . . ." or Q. & A. 114, "even the holiest (godliest, WdH.) men have only a small beginning. . . ." Therefore we must walk circumspectly. We must also enter upon the cultural market circumspectly. Dr. L. Doekes¹¹ compared our present state as a being under treatment of the Great Physician, and the cure from death is only in its *beginning* phase. This condition should prevent us from invading all of life, embarking upon all sorts of enterprises, taking possession of every cultural activity, grabbing, grasping, and groping for every pleasure to be enjoyed. We



We must help the children to "stay away from the grasp of death which reaches out for them in so many subtle and terrible ways

should start from the Physician's clinic (the Church) with a new therapy of life — obedience — working towards a pure culture: a culture which pleases the Owner of life and world, a *godly* culture. If a man who is recuperating from a sore back has to walk circumspectly already, how much more they who are called from death to life. If we as parents and teachers have to look upon culture-participation this carefully and circumspectly already, how much more the Covenant-youth. We desire to raise them in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. This fear of the Lord compares to the nurture in godliness in the Lord of the N.T. Covenant — youth. It is the beginning of wisdom, the A.B.C.'s of life, it also is the principle of wisdom by which we judge all of life, every culture. We do not only begin with fear, we also want to reach true wisdom, teaching Christ: the Truth, the Way and the Life. Their entire liturgia (religion/spiritual worship etc.) should be to God's glory! If we think that this sounds too nice and lofty we should realize that the O.T. connotations for the word "wisdom" (chokmah) are very down to earth, practical, pragmatic if you like. This child nurtured in this wisdom cares for his writing, his clothes, his equipment, his fellow students. Covenantal education teaches the *awareness* that God is not only concerned with the big words such as "sin" and "grace" but also with neatness, order, listening, helping, doing your utmost, manners, etc.

On Monday morning, October 31, 1983 your covenantal education in this awareness continues because you have learned Christ, the Word. Reformation Day reminds you an your students that a return to the Scriptures meant a return to wisdom, to image-bearing, to culture, to

covenantal responsiveness in the things of the ordinary, everyday chores, such as timetables and neat lockers. Before we set out to apply this to some specific points of ethical consideration we would stress that this plain, everyday work is true culture. Indeed we must deal with the responsiveness in the sense that we reject everything that is unclean, unharmonious, displeasing, and contrary to the law of God. But first and foremost we shall stimulate, promote and produce everything true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, (Phil. 4:8). Music-composition, literary production, poetry, and painting in honour of God the Creator should have our primary interest. I remind you once again of Rom. 12:1, where we read that "we are to present our bodies, our whole existence, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, "but then I'd like to draw your attention again to the previous verse "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. 11:36.)

— To be continued

¹Book of Praise, p. 500.

²Calvin quoted through L. Berkhof, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 102.

³Book of Praise, pp. 503, 504.

⁴Ibid. p. 505.

⁵Ibid. pp. 507, 511.

⁶Ibid. pp. 520, 521.

⁷Rev. Cl. Stam, "Covenantal Education," speech P.D. Day Jan. 26, 1979.

⁸K. Schilder, *Christus en Cultuur*, (Franeker: T. Wever, 1968) pp. 55, 69.

⁹F.G. Oosterhoff, "The Biblical Image of Man as Basis For a Biblical Philosophy of Education," *C.R.T.A. Magazine*, Vol. 9, No. 1.

¹⁰G.H. Visscher, "Education in the Scriptures," *Clarion*, Vol. 30, No. 17, 18, 20, p. 372.

¹¹L. Doekes as presented in W.G. de Vries, *De Gereformeerde Levenswandel*, (Goes, Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1965), p. 137.

B. All About Evaluation

(i) You Asked . . .

Your son brings home three tests; one in Bible, one in mathematics and one in reading. There were fifty answers to be given in the Bible test, ten mistakes were made by your son. His mark: 80%. His math test had 100 additions; he made only six mistakes and received as mark a 40%. His reading test had ten questions and he had made two mistakes. For one the teacher subtracted eight points, for the other one fifteen points. Mark: 74%. Why these strange discrepancies?

The Bible test was a test of recent material dealt with during the Bible lessons. Each question was given an equal mark value; fifty questions each worth two points; ten mistakes, forty correct ones: 80%.

The math test was given in a grade six. But the addition facts were given as a review of grade three work. They had no business making any mistakes. Therefore the value had been set at missing ten points for every mistake made. Six mistakes resulted therefore in a mark of 40%. Had the same test been given to a grade eight class the marking might be twenty-five points off for each mistake.

The reading test had only ten questions. But some of the questions were worth more points than others. One ques-

tion was: "What was the name of the boy's friend?" Another one was: "Why would his friend have left him to face the stranger alone?" Give three possible reasons." The answer to the first one might simply be given in the story. The answer to the second one requires looking at the problem from different sides; coming up with different understanding and solutions requiring personal insight. However, eight and fifteen is not the same as one hundred and seventy-four (see above). But the student knows that the teacher subtracts up to five points in reading tests for spelling mistakes or for poor sentence structure. That makes up for the difference.

I hope that the above clarifies to you why the marks your child receives may have been arrived at in different manners. If you are not sure how it worked, please ask. That is what one parent did. He understood the explanation and asked if I would also explain it in the Newsletter since more people might wonder about this. As you can see, I gladly did explain these apparent discrepancies. And if you are still not sure, feel free to ask again. It's good for us to review and put in words what we do. After all, they are the marks of your children.

(*School Bulletin*, Dufferin Area Christian School — Orangeville, ON)



(ii) New Report Cards

On November 25, D.V., the students of this school will receive their first progress reports. Most parents will find that we have come up with a different format of report: a report booklet. A few of the senior grades will continue to use the old report cards but for the rest, everyone will be exposed to a new form of report but also a somewhat different form of evaluation. Instead of using the A,B,C,'s, we have decided to use numerical values for all the subjects. Those quite used to this system might wonder why. Basically, the staff (and the Education Committee concurred) that the letter values were ambiguous and therefore led to a lot of confusion, especially in "borderline" cases. Furthermore, we felt that a booklet, one for the grades 1-4 and another for the grades 5-8, would be more functional so that parents can compare their child's performance from year to year. The more organized parents among us carefully file their children's report cards for future reference, but I think most of us don't. And therefore we have come up with this attractive little booklet. A booklet is **MORE EXPENSIVE**. Please take good care of it because in most cases it must last 4 years (12 progress reports). Please return these booklets to the school as soon as possible after you have seen and signed it. Any questions you may have concerning the method of evaluation, please direct these to the teachers concerned on the Parent-Teacher interview evening.

(*News and Views*, John Calvin School — Smithville, ON)



Studying for results

(iii) Report Cards — Interviews

On Friday, November 11, the students in grades 7 to 10 will be taking home their Interim Report Cards. These reports will indicate the students' performance for the first few months of this school year. These reports can be used by teachers to note strengths and weaknesses early in the year, and plan suitable action. An early contact with parents is also important. For this reason, parent-teacher interviews are planned for Friday, November 18. Details will be included with the report cards. All parents should make an effort to attend in order to discuss their child's progress and effort. The mutual support of the home and school is important in the education of our children.

(Link — Emmanuel Christian High School — Guelph, ON)

(iv) Summing Up

The first term has been completed. All schools are involved in some type of formal evaluation. This involves a certain philosophy or perhaps more specifically,

a method of approach. Moving from school to school, one can expect a lot of different methods, marking schemes and report card formats. This great variety simply underlines the fact that *student evaluation* remains a complex and sometimes controversial topic. Reducing a child's mind to a letter grade or percentage, is subjective to say the least, and downright "degrading" in many cases. In the absence of better techniques, report cards will be with us for some time. Let me plead for the following however:

- confidentiality — report cards are private and should not be shared with other students; a sealed envelope forwarded to the parents is very important.
- consistency — this has to do with the approach which teachers should take in doing a written evaluation; the same uniform measuring stick must be applied in all instances.
- conference — no report card can provide a complete overview and therefore an *interview* must be arranged; too often parents come to school only when there is a problem.

C. The State of Education in North America

Professional magazines which arrive at school, as well as periodicals which arrive at home, often indicate that education is in a constant state of confusion and distress. Throughout the modern world, the educational enterprise is confronted with problems and concerns. Some students are going to school without learning to read properly — teachers are restless — parents want a greater say in the operation of the school — students are demanding changes. Dr. Benjamin Spock, the pediatrician whose *Baby and Child Care* has influenced millions of families, now speculates that experts like him, may have encouraged a generation of parents to evade their responsibilities, letting others decide what was best for their children. Spock says that he "laments the reputation he has acquired for encouraging parental permissiveness and an abnegation of responsibility." The most recent Annual Gallup Poll on "Public Attitudes Towards Education" found that in the minds of most Americans, "discipline was the single greatest priority for the schools."

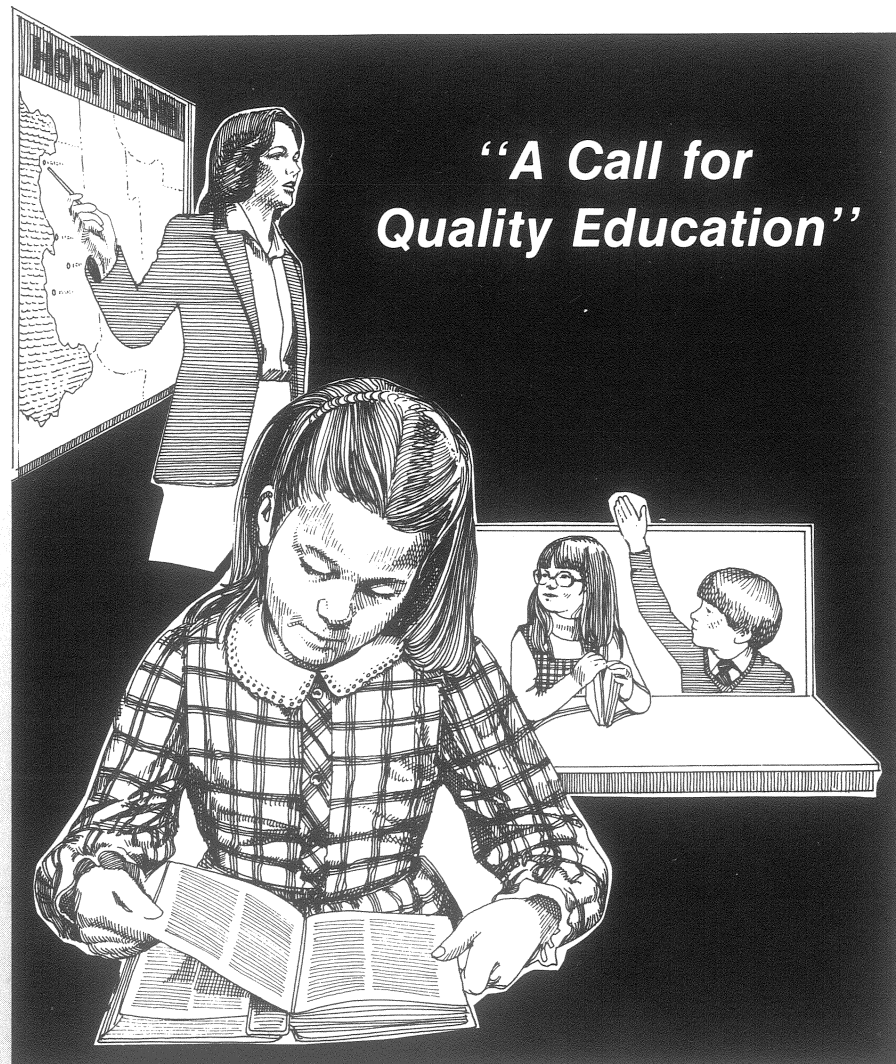
This disapproval about the state of the educational system was recently outlined in *LIFE*, in an article called "A Call for Quality Education." American education was seen as the "object of wide discontent, the source of malaise tinged with frustration, dashed hopes, and unrealized expectations." The article backs this up with examples such as drugs, inept teachers, a decline in literacy, government red tape, and a lack of values and standards. The author, Chester E. Finn, goes on to say "that schools have been reluctant to subordinate the fads and passions of older generations (and therefore) have offered students a smorgasbord of trendy, sugar-coated courses, rather than a balanced diet with plenty of intellectual vitamins, protein, and roughage." As a result of this, the article concludes, every American community has a growing reservoir of functionally illiterate dropouts and high school "graduates" who add little to the spirit of productivity of the nation, but much to its unemployment and welfare rolls.

Let's not for a moment believe that these characteristics will automatically remain as labels of other school systems. The call for quality education remains the active responsibility of *everyone* associated with our parental schools.

Until next time, the Lord willing!
Please address your contributions, letters, or other relevant information to:

NICK VANDOOREN

John Calvin School
607 Dynes Road, Burlington, ON



Building Church Relations

In recent years, much attention has been paid to interchurch relationships, not only here in Canada, but also in The Netherlands. This happened not only in other churches, like those belonging to the World Council of Churches and to the National Council of Churches, but also in our own circles. I may say that building international church relations is quite intensely practiced by our Dutch sister churches. Churches in Korea, on Sumba/Savu, and in Northern Ireland were added to the list of sister churches. A Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches was organized. Many an article dealt with this matter. Recently (in *De Reformatie* of November 5, 1983), Dr. C. Trimp wrote about it in connection with contacts in South Africa. I take over the first part of what he says:

With regard to the questions that deal with the matter of contact with churches abroad, we can distinguish, roughly speaking, between three models of ecclesiastical contact.

1. We make things easy for ourselves and we practice contact only with ourselves [as federation of churches, J.G.] and with the churches that came into existence through the emigration of Liberated brothers and sisters.

Also in this case we certainly are aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit does His work among more people in the world than just among us and those who belong to us. But with respect to those others, we declare that we cannot search the ways of the Spirit. Only when some Christians abroad come to a "recognition" of the "Liberation" do we seriously pay attention to them. But for the rest we remain on our own. We know the way and we understand each other's language.

2. We have contact with every church abroad that desires such contact. We surround ourselves with interesting friends from foreign countries, appear at all sorts of synods and international assemblies, and in that way develop a broad organization for ecclesiastical tourism.

We smile with the broad smile of the successful ecumenist. Has he not outgrown the narrow-minded existence of

the extremist, who is always worried about the many deficiencies in the various churches? We do not make things difficult for the other, and we expect the same from him.

3. We are thankful for our own heritage and with it we honour the good guidance of the Lord of the church. At the same time we know that He has placed also many others in this world upon His way. Our way is certainly His way. However, all His ways do not exactly follow our way. We mean to say: Christ calls His people in different times and countries and cultures and gives to all these people their own way, which fits their needs, history, and specific situation. They all receive their own possibilities, trials, and victories from Him. This results especially in the different confessions and church orders. And we had better respect this,

Prof. Trimp then writes that this third form of building contacts with churches in other countries is the most difficult one. We have our own forms and ways of doing things; we are used to them, and we think that our ways are the only good ways. Getting acquainted with others leads to a reconsideration of our own situation. He continues:

Whoever really communicates with children of God who were led along a different way than we were, will be freed of every inclination to self-sufficiency and an absolutizing of one's own ways. He also will not feel the need to find fault with the others and play the role of school master. On the contrary, he will discover that we can learn quite a bit from Christians in other countries, e.g. with respect to the liturgy and a Christian lifestyle.

We are thankful for our own heritage. At the same time we know that He has placed also many others in this world upon His way. Our way is certainly His way. However, all His ways do not exactly follow our way.

or, rather, we have to honour the Lord, the Head of the church for it.

Therefore, we have to approach and meet the believers in other countries with respect regarding their own history. This respect is not a polite tolerance or condescending friendliness. It is respect for the many-sided activity of Christ. Why cannot thankfulness for our own history go together with openness for the different way of others through the world?

It must be clear to the reader that our choice is the third "model." The first two are designed out of man and his convenience. The first shows a sectarian, and the second a pseudoecumenical, convenience.

The third "model" has its root in the faith that Jesus Christ lives and that He gathers for Himself a church in many places up to this present day.

If we realize these things, we will be able to escape the trap of fighting the powerful world of pseudoecumenism with the weapon of Liberated introversion. Christ has a better way for us, and His way is a royal way.

Why is this a royal way? Not because we can tread as kings on it through the world, but because He as our King goes before us and calls us, as His servants, to follow Him. . . .

What follows in Dr. Trimp's article deals with the concrete difficulties in building a relationship with the Reformed Churches in South Africa (the "Dopper" churches) because of "third-party" relationships: the Dutch sister churches have a sister church relation with the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, while there is no relationship at all between the two church

groups in South Africa; "the Dopper" churches have a relationship with church groups in The Netherlands with which our Dutch sister churches have no relationship. This is one of the difficulties on what Dr. Trimp called "the royal way." But I will leave that now for what it is. My remark goes in a different direction.

I can agree with what Dr. Trimp writes. We must not be introverted, but acknowledge that the church-gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ is not confined to our churches and our sister churches in this world. There is the calling to seek the unity with other believers on the basis of the truth of God, the true faith. Our churches form a federation of local churches that

called to have an open eye for this fact. And that is good. But it is the difficult way indeed, as Professor Trimp writes, particularly because this shift in emphasis can bring along a shift in direction. It can mean that we slowly go in the direction that we see the holy catholic church all over the place and forget the *norms* of Christ for the gathering of the church to which we are bound, so that wherever we find believers, we also find a true church; while, in fact, we fall back to a kind of pluriformity doctrine and eventually end up in a kind of thinking which we can call "general Christian," like we have it in the acceptance of "denominationalism:" all churches, whether Reformed or Presby-

ing into ecclesiastical contact." That is exactly the point.

The emphasis on the Reformed doctrine and confessional faithfulness must be maintained when we seek unity. We agree here. And I add: that is why we also should not have two different *permanent* ecclesiastical relationships: a relationship of Correspondence (now called: *Ecclesiastical Fellowship*) and a permanent Ecclesiastical Contact relationship. If we find other true churches which stand with us on the basis of the same faith, then that unity must be honoured completely in a sister church relation. That must be our principle. In that way we must both maintain the norms for ourselves and for the others, and also honour the others.

A temporary ecclesiastical relationship must aim at that full sister church relationship. If that is not acceptable such a temporary relationship must be broken off again. This is the line of thinking in the decisions regarding interchurch relations that were made by the Synod of Cloverdale. I hope that the Dutch sister churches come to the same conclusion regarding relations with other churches at the upcoming Synod of Heemse.

J. GEERTSEMA

Recognition of the Reformed doctrine on both sides is the deciding factor when entering into ecclesiastical contact.

have the same faith. This unity must also be sought internationally.

This road is not an easy one, indeed, not only with respect to contact with others, but also with respect to ourselves. Before recent times, we did not build or seek much contact with others. (And, looking at the decisions of Synod Cloverdale, we are still hesitant.) We concentrated our attention on our calling to be true churches over against others, also false churches. In our thinking (it was the same in The Netherlands), this distinction between true and false church, this stressing of the marks of the true church, as well as the calling of all to join the true church, received all our attention. This sometimes did lead to a somewhat introverted attitude.

However, we must not forget that the background of this emphasis on the doctrine of the true over against the false church, as well as on the calling of all believers to join the true church, was borne by the conviction that in Art. 27-32 we have the confessional, Scriptural way of speaking about the Church. It was also borne by the desire to remain a true church: a church which holds onto the true doctrine of God's Word as confessed by the Reformed Churches, and which lives according to it in faithfulness.

We can notice a shift in emphasis in this development towards building relationships with churches in other countries. Recently, much more than before, it is being stressed that Christ gathers His Church in this world not only in our churches. Especially recently, we are being

terian, whether Lutheran or Alliance, whether Reformed or Arminian — they are all branches of the one universal church; they are all realizations of the one, great, all-encompassing "body of Christ."

Now I know that Professor Trimp does not want to go in this direction at all. However, in his desire to make his point clear and bring it across to his readers, both in The Netherlands and in South Africa, he did not say enough in these paragraphs, in my opinion. What he writes about the ways of the Lord with others, which do not exactly follow our way, can leave the impression that all kinds of church ways could be included, Reformed (this includes: Presbyterian) and non-Reformed.

A number of members in our churches are not so happy with this building of contacts all over the world. They fear that an accepting of the different ways of others will cause our own churches to decline in confessional faithfulness and to relax in maintaining the confession for our own churches. To me it seems that what has been said regarding the third model of building ecumenical contact would have been more convincing if stronger assurance was given here that the other ways, of course, must be Reformed ways, because the unity can only be unity in the true faith. In order that the Canadian readers do not get a wrong impression from my remark, I shall also take over from the article the following sentence: "Recognition of the Reformed doctrine on both sides is the deciding factor when enter-



Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — to the only wise God be glory for evermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Romans 16:25-27

A Ray of Sunshine

God wisely withholds from us the events of tomorrow. They would overwhelm us and add an extra burden to today. Thus, He wisely shows us a day at a time. Who could stand to see a whole week before it was lived?

"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the days own trouble be sufficient for the day." Matthew 6:34

MORGEN

Morgen — is voor ons verborgen.
Morgen — dat weet God alleen.
En geen sterveling, geen een,
kan ook maar een dag of uur
blikken in Gods raadsbestuur.

Morgen — is voor ons verborgen.
Is het vreugd of ongeval?
Ach, wij weten niet met al
wat de dag van morgen geven
of wat hij ons nemen zal.

Morgen — is voor ons verborgen.
Zal ons hart te bloeien staan
met Gods weelden overslaan?
Zullen wij over Gods hoogten
of ook door Zijn diepten gaan?

Morgen — is voor ons verborgen.
U en ik, wij weten niet
wat de dag van morgen biedt.
Maar Hij, Die't heelal ompant
houdt ook "morgen" in Zijn hand.

*Uit: Bloedrode wijn
van Berendien Meijer-Schuiling*

Dear Readers,

In our mailbox we found the following thank-you notes:

"I would like to thank all the brothers and sisters for sending me birthday cards and presents. I appreciated that very much."

*Sincerely, Mary Vande Burgt
Abbotsford, BC*



Mary wrote about herself and I hope to share this information with you, readers, on her next birthday.

"I would like to say thank-you very much for putting my name in Clarion again. It is very exciting to receive so many beautiful cards. A big thank-you to all for the cards and good wishes."

*With love, Fenny Kuik
Winnipeg, MB*

"We would like to thank all those across Canada who sent Rose their best wishes on her birthday. Once again, she was delighted to see the many, many beautiful cards. Thanks again for making this day extra special for her."

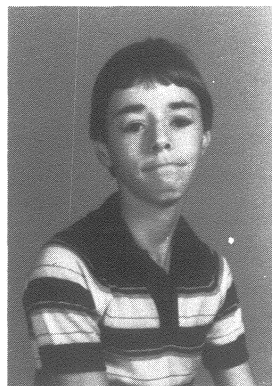
The Malda's

"On behalf of the boys I like to thank the senders of their birthday cards. It is always very exciting for them to receive so many cards. Many people faithfully sent cards and spread a little sunshine. Thank-you very much!"

Mrs. J. Dieleman

"Thank-you for the cards. I really liked looking at them. I especially liked the raccoon card."

*Yours sincerely,
Jack Dieleman*



"Thank-you for the cards. I had one big one of a qualla bear."

Love, Paul Dieleman

On our birthday calendar we have the following names of brothers and sisters who, the Lord willing will celebrate their birthdays in January.

LIZ KONING

c/o Michener Centre
Box 5002, Red Deer, AB

Liz is able to spend one weekend a month at home. She needs much extra care and attention. She is very happy and thankful for little pleasures. Liz hopes to enjoy her 23rd birthday on January 2.

CHRISTINE BREUKELMAN

Box 6566, Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0

Christine lives at home and attends school for the handicapped. She attends church in the morning but has trouble keeping quiet. She is a lively girl who likes happy music. Christine hopes to celebrate her 11th birthday on January 7.

GRACE HOMAN

RR 2, St. Ann's, ON L0R 1Y0

Grace hopes to celebrate her 28th birthday on January 17. Grace works in a workshop, but apparently she does not like the noise. She wrote that she wears earplugs while working. She loves organ music and singing.

JANINE SMID

RR 1, Arkona, ON N0M 1B0

Janine will have her special day on January 19. She will turn fourteen years old. She loves cards and pictures and reviews her albums regularly.

JAY VAN AMERONGEN

342 Wortley Road
London, ON N6C 3R9

Jay hopes to celebrate his 16th birthday on January 27. He has been a patient at the Children's Psychiatric Research Institute for quite a few months. I don't know if he still is a patient there. Just to make sure he receives his mail, I published his home address. Jay would benefit greatly from some extra attention.

HANK ORSEL

950 Warwick Court, Apt. 801
Burlington, ON L7T 3Z5

Hank hopes to celebrate his 53rd birthday on January 27. He enjoys his new apartment which overlooks the lake. He also likes his big television with rabbit ears as an antenna. He wrote that, "we all have to learn to take God's way only." How right you are, Hank. We all have to learn this!

Happy birthday, brothers and sisters!

The Lord's nearness and protection for the year 1984.

HR

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma
380 St. Andrew Street East
Fergus, ON N1M 1R1



65th Wedding Anniversary



On December 28, 1983, br. and sr. J. Kuik hope to celebrate their 65th Wedding Anniversary. Along with them and their family, we thank the Lord for the many years He has granted them. They have both reached the age of eighty-four years.

Br. and sr. Kuik emigrated from Enschede, The Netherlands, in July 1950, taking with them their memories of a difficult, but also blessed, life. They were not spared sickness and death. The Lord took two of their children unto Himself through sickness when they were still very young.

Like many others, the family resisted the German occupation during World War II, both actively and passively. In those terrible years their oldest son, Jan, then 22, was taken to a concentration camp in Germany, where he died.

When br. and sr. Kuik emigrated to Canada, they settled in the Carman area, where the family toiled in the sugar beets. Living conditions were certainly not what they are today. There are also many stories about overcrowded cars and flat tires. During those first years they helped many immigrants to get settled in the Carman area, and at the same time were diligent in seeking the institution of a church based on the Reformed confessions. Life was not always easy, but the light of God's Word continued to shine on their path and brighten their days.

Br. and sr. Kuik are very thankful that the Lord has preserved them, giving them many opportunities to serve Him, and blessed them with many children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Today they live a happy retirement life in the town of Carman. They are in good health and are active members of the Church of Christ.

We do not give honour to men. It is the Lord to whom their children, and all those who have felt their warm and serious hearts, give thanks.





Peace

My soul, there is a country
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry,
All skilful in the wars.

There, above noise and danger,
Sweet peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.

He is thy gracious friend,
And (O my soul awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace—
The rose that cannot wither—
Thy fortress, and thy ease.

Leave, then, thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure,
But one who never changes—
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

HENRY VAUGHAN

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55th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. H. Klos were married in Enschede, The Netherlands, on January 11, 1929. They were blessed with five daughters and two sons. In 1953 they immigrated to Canada and settled in Homewood, Manitoba. In 1955 they moved to the town of Carman where they still reside. Mr. Klos has great pleasure in working in his garden. Both Mr. and Mrs. Klos are in reasonably good health and remain active in the congregation.



50th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Vandergugten

Message from the Publisher

Looking back on the year 1983, we feel there is so much to be grateful for. We were able to continue publishing CLARION, due to the efforts of contributors and all others who were involved.

Some changes were made. This summer we were able to spend two days with the new editorial committee, setting out the lines for the next year of publishing.

The new editorial committee consists of Rev. J. Geertsema and Rev. W. Pouwelse, managing editors; Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. Cl. Stam and Rev. W.W.J. VanOene. We will make further changes also in the appearance of CLARION, which we hope will be received as improvements. We thank Dr. J. Faber for his contributions and hope he will find some time in the future to write for the readers. Sincere thanks also go to Aunt Betty, Mrs. J.K. Riemersma, Mr. N. Vandooren, and others for their dedication in writing for CLARION.

Our thanks are also due to our correspondents, advertisers, and readers for their continued support. Although sometimes it is a routine to work for and receive CLARION, it remains a very important part of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

As mentioned two years ago already, book publishing has been a part of our business which was faced with heavy losses. This forced us to end the cooperation with Paideia Press. It is our intention to continue publishing books on our own. Announcements will, of course, be made via this magazine.

From this place I also want to express my appreciation for the job performed by our staff. The dedication which was shown in every aspect made it a pleasure to work together for CLARION.

Our thanks go to the Lord who made it all possible to fulfill our task in this world, and we pray that we may continue to work in His Kingdom as good stewards.

I wish all of you a fine year-end and the blessings of the Lord in the year to come.

Gerald Van Dijken

our little magazine



Here is a poem for you, sent in quite a while ago by one of the Busy Beavers.

At Night In Bed

At night in bed, so snug and warm,
I'm happy as can be,
Because this very day, today,
The Lord has been with me.

He's been with me in all my work
In Science, Math and Art.
He's been with me in everything.
With Him I will not part!

Dear Busy Beavers,

What do you like best about Christmastime?
Do you know what I like best about Christmas?
I'll tell you.

I like the music and the singing!
If you have a Christmas concert, write me all about it!
Don't you think we should sing a lot at Christmastime?
The little ones like to sing "Away in a manger."

They like the pictures and the story of "the Baby in the manger," right?

But you are older.

You will know the hymns

"All glory be to God on high . . ."

and "To us a Child of hope is born . . ."

You can understand the Christmas hymn.

"That God's Own Son, Who laid His glories by,
Came down from heaven to suffer, yea, and die . . ."

Singing those songs helps us to think about the *real* Christmas.

Just listen to Simeon's (Christmas) song:

Thou didst for all prepare
This gift, so great, so rare,
That peoples might adore Thee;
A light to show the way
To nations gone astray,
And unto Israel's glory.

Busy Beavers let's join in wishing each other such a joyful Christmas!



Birthday wishes!

What a way to start the New Year!

Happy Birthday to all the Busy Beavers celebrating a January birthday. We wish you all a very happy day with your family and friends. And we wish you, too, the Lord's blessing and guidance all through the New Year. And that goes for all of you, Busy Beavers!

JANUARY

Heather Van Middelkoop	1	Linda De Boer	18
Susan Hejder	3	Marie Huttema	20
Jennifer Clark	8	Sylvia Sikkema	23
Alan Van Raalte	8	Bernard Breukelman	26
Teena Buzeman	11	Helena Onderwater	26
Michael John Mans	11	Gerald Schutten	26
Marjorie Barendregt	14	Marcella Veenman	28
Rita Wubs	14	Carol Witteveen	31
Richard Lof	16		



WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

by Busy Beaver Annette Haan

Luke 2

G A L I L E E M X T
C Q A R J U D E A O S J
V A Z E D Q R O R W A O
S B S E D J O Y K Y V B S L
S H R X S A B D E G L O E R
E H O K V A R T A X E D P F
F A E D B B R O U G H T H G
H I G P W E C O U N T R Y P
Y D E C H C T O L E G B D P
D T N L M E Q H T U H W I S
Y Z C B F D C R A L R H F V T
S P Q N F I O N D A E L R A E A
E H N A Z A R E T H S H O D N D
S U P A N G E L D H I W Y E X O B
K M Q I R O N R E V O G N H M H E F
G L O R Y E L M A N G E R L J H S C G

Caesar
Galilee
Mary
Joseph
country
field
manger

glory
shepherd
brought
David
governor
Nazareth

Bethlehem
baby
taxed
joy
shone
angel





From the Mailbox



Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Juanita Barendregt*. I hope you'll enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Thanks very much for your picture and puzzle, Juanita. Write again soon.

And welcome to you, too, *Alwin Plug*. We hope you'll like being a real Busy Beaver. Will you write and tell us about your favourite book, Alwin?

And a big welcome to you, too, *Marilyn Vander Velde*. Be a good Busy Beaver and join in all our Busy Beaver activities! What do you like to do in your spare time, Marilyn?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Alan Van Raalte*. I see you like to keep busy, too. Will you write and tell us about your best model, sometime? Thanks for the pretty sticker, Alan!

You are also welcome to join the Busy Beaver Club, *Dennis Flokstra*. I like your poem, and your picture, too. And I'm counting on you sending that puzzle you promised us, all right?

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Lois Lof*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already! Thanks for the puzzle, Lois. Did you have fun on your sister's birthday?

How many stickers do you have in your album, *Teresa Oosterhoff*? What kind is your favourite? Thanks for the puzzles and riddles, Teresa. Write again soon.

Hello *Sylvia Van Bodegom*. It was nice to hear from you again. You were smart to look up your answers! Bye for now, Sylvia.

Thanks for the puzzles, *Karin Vander Velde*. I'm sure the Busy Beavers will enjoy doing them! Write again soon, Karin.

Thanks for your pretty letter, *Felicia Viersen*. Sounds to me as if you had a very good time with your relatives in B.C. Bye for now, Felicia.

How are you doing *Lloyd Lubbers*? Thank you for a very interesting puzzle. Where did you find your answers to the quiz, Lloyd?

Hello *Frederick Dewit*. I like the way you think about your family. Do you think you could make them some pretty book-marks? Maybe you could get a book from the library to find out about making gifts for your family. Just ask the "library ladies."

Thanks for your letter *Helena Hamoen*. I'm glad you're doing fine. Keep up the good work. Bye for now.

Are you all better again, *Marie Hamoen*? I sure hope so! And I'm glad you have a nice teacher. Are you having a Christmas concert, Marie?

What a nice way to learn about biology, *Joanne Hamoen*. I think your class must have enjoyed that visit! Bye for now. Write again soon.

Hello *Janina Barendregt*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks very much for your code quiz. Keep up the good work!

Thanks for your picture, *Jeannie Barendregt*, and your letter, too, of course. It sounds to me as if you had a good time doing special things, Jeannie. Do you have time, still, to practise your calligraphy?



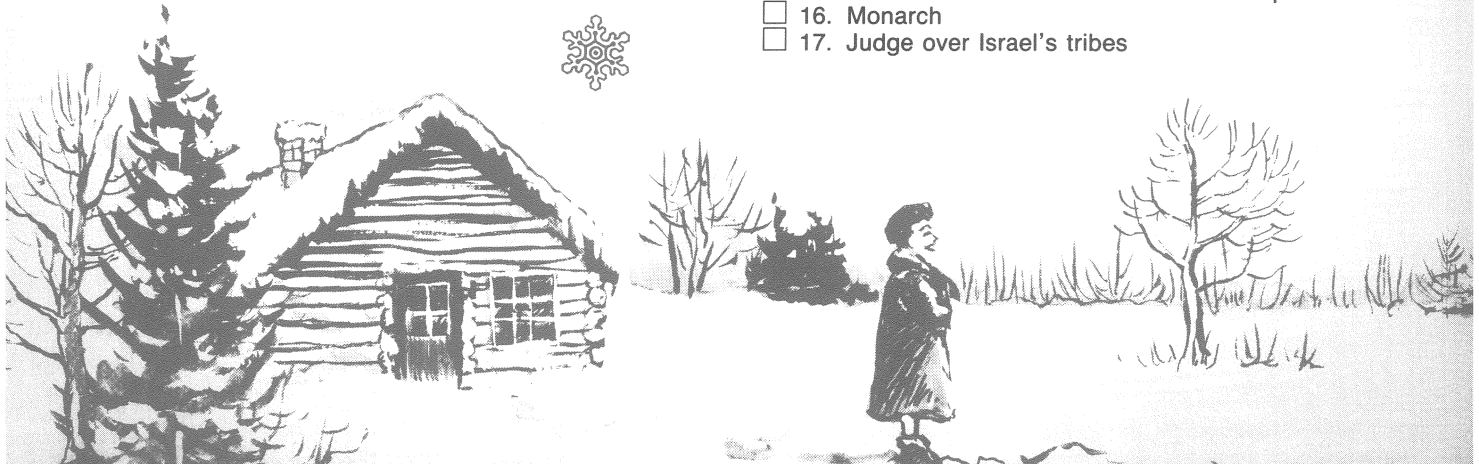
Bible Occupations

Can you match the occupations with the names of the people on the right?

- 1. Tentmaker
- 2. Fisherman
- 3. Dealer in dyes
- 4. Collector of taxes
- 5. Prophet so wise
- 6. Maker of garments to give to the poor
- 7. "Beloved Physician" with object to cure
- 8. High priest
- 9. Hunter
- 10. Planter of grain
- 11. Sheep herder
- 12. Cattleman over the plain
- 13. Silversmith
- 14. Captain
- 15. One of the scribes
- 16. Monarch
- 17. Judge over Israel's tribes

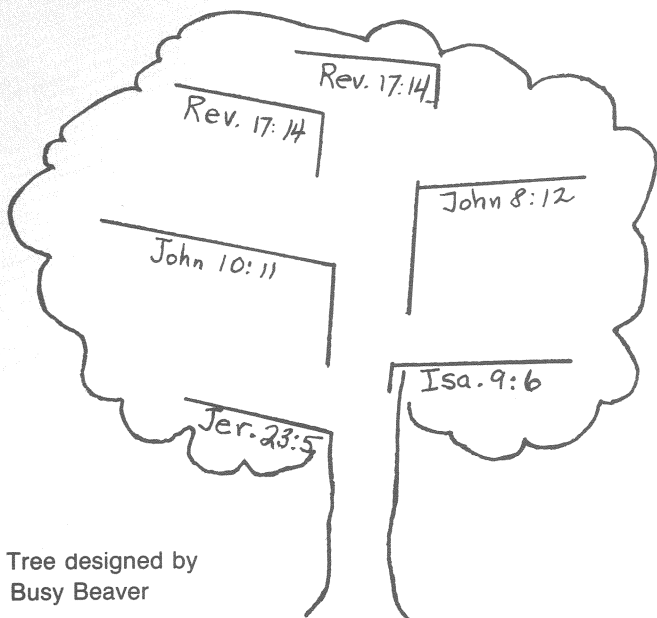


- a. Abraham
- b. Matthew
- c. Abel
- d. Elijah
- e. Aaron
- f. Boaz
- g. Dorcas
- h. Lydia
- i. Ezra
- j. Peter
- k. Paul
- l. Demetrius
- m. Deborah
- n. Solomon
- o. Luke
- p. Esau
- q. Naaman



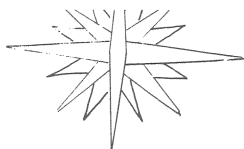
Bible Tree Puzzle

NAMES OF THE SAVIOUR



Tree designed by
Busy Beaver
Michelle Van Egmond

Look up the text to find the NAME that goes on the branch.



A little story for you by a Busy Beaver.

Good day May 19

Monday, May 19 was my favourite day. We went to my Grandma's place. Then we went to the airport and saw the planes take off and come in. Then we went to a restaurant called "Binos." It was crazy, but we had fun anyway. Then we watched T.V. and had a little play fight. We had a story and then my brother had to go to bed. I stayed up till 7:30. Then all the fun was gone, no more. Rats!

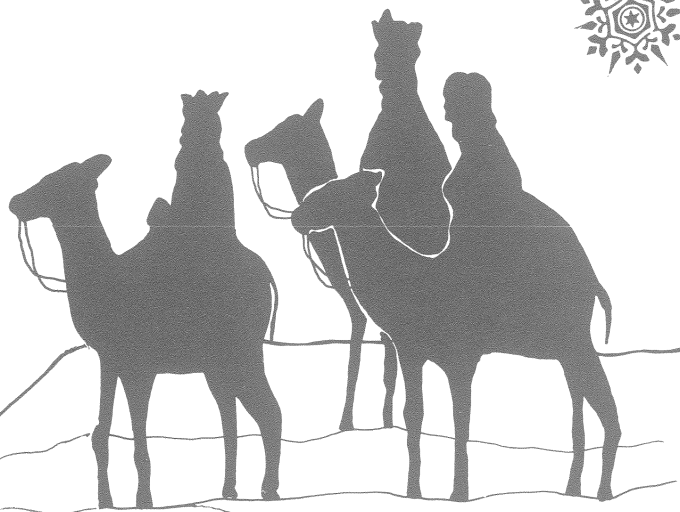
FOR YOU TO DO

Let's have a little Contest! Who can write the most interesting story about:

"My Favourite Day of 1983"

Sent yours in right away to:

Aunt Betty
Box 54
Fergus, ON N1M 2W7



Busy Beaver Mary-Ann Van Woudenberg sent in these:

NEW YEAR WORDS TO UNSCRAMBLE

- a) yajnrau
- b) reanwy
- c) 4918
- d) si 1489 rehe (3 words)
- e) 1839 enoisj (3 words)

Now it's time to say good bye, Busy Beavers.
Enjoy your Christmas Little Magazine!
Very best wishes for a happy holiday!

With love from your
Aunt Betty

