



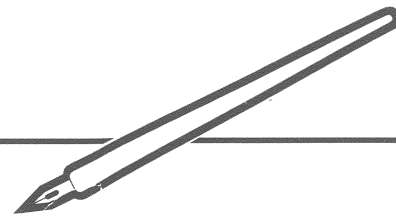
Clarion

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Pentecost — Christ Jesus pours His Holy Spirit upon His Church

Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians that “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (5:22 ff.). With these words he pointed out what a truly Christian life is, and what it is to be imitators or followers of Christ. Such a Christian life through the Spirit is the result of one of the great events in the history of God’s redemptive acts in Christ Jesus: the act of Pentecost. Having received the Spirit who was promised to God’s covenant people in the “last days,” Christ sent Him to His church on earth to fill her and abide with her (Acts 2:33).

At Pentecost the Spirit was sent by Christ Jesus. Christ ruled the action from His heavenly throne. Christ was the Sender. That was just the reverse of what happened before His resurrection and exaltation to the throne in heaven. When in humiliation, as a servant, the Lord Jesus was sent by the Spirit then the Spirit ruled the action. As a child the Lord was conceived by the Holy Spirit. At His ordination as the Christ, the Office-bearer, He was anointed with the Spirit, who immediately led the Lord into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Luke 3:22; 4:1). After having defeated the devil, He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee (Luke 4:14). It was “through the eternal Spirit” that Christ “offered Himself without blemish to God” (Hebr. 9:14). And through the Holy Spirit He was raised from the dead (Rom. 1:4). In all His life and work Jesus Christ was ruled by the Spirit, and so He was the perfect Redeemer, Servant of God, for God’s people.

This was fulfillment of God’s promise. When things went totally wrong with Israel and Judah, when it showed that the Law could not sanctify God’s people. God made His prophet speak of the future in which He would bring full redemption through His great Servant, the Son of David, on whom would rest and who would be anointed with the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1). When therefore the New Testament points out that Christ Jesus, filled with the Spirit of God, accomplished the work of redemption which He was sent to do, it shows that with the coming of Christ Jesus the promised time of redemption had arrived for God’s people.

The same is shown in the fact that the exalted Christ Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to His church. This also is fulfillment of prophecy. God promised “I will pour My Spirit upon your descendents, and My blessing on your offspring” (Isaiah 44:3). And Peter quoted from Joel’s prophecy: “It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out MY Spirit upon all flesh” (2:28). With Pentecost, the last days, the days of redemption and salvation, the days of the Spirit, had arrived for God’s people.

When He did His work on earth, guided by the Spirit, Christ Jesus was led by the love of God. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes in Him might not perish, but have eternal life. In Christ we see the love of God. Filled with that love Christ died (on the cross) for sinners. In love He fulfilled His task.

The apostle Paul writes in Romans 5:5 that “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” It is on this basis that those who believe can now also fulfill their Christian calling. The Spirit of Jesus Christ and the love of God is in their hearts. Thus the Christian shows the fruits of the Spirit in his life: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

Conversion is the work of the Spirit. It is a heartfelt sorrow that we have provoked God with our sins and, then, also hate and flee from our sins; It is also a “heartfelt joy in God through Christ, and with love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works.” (Heid. Cat. L.D. 33). Speaking about conversion as work of the regenerating Spirit, the Canons of Dort, Chapter III/IV, Art. 12, says that “this is that regeneration so highly extolled in Scripture, . . . evidently a supernatural work, most powerful, and at the same time *most delightful*, astonishing, mysterious and ineffable.”

In our Confessions we can and must speak about conversion, (both the beginning as well as the continuing conversion) as a “heartfelt joy in God through Christ and a “most delightful” experience in life. It is fully in accordance with what Paul writes about the love of God being poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and with what he says in his letter to the Philippians about the joy in the Lord as the gift and calling of believers.

It was great joy for Christ, led by the Spirit, to do the will of the Father and faithfully accomplish His calling on earth. Now Christ redeems His people and through the Holy Spirit, makes them rejoice in God and take delight in faithfully fulfilling their calling as God’s adopted children in this life.

This “marvelous” work of the Spirit must have our attention in preaching and teaching as well as in personal study. Nobody can enter the kingdom of God, or even see it, unless he is born of the Spirit, regenerated and made into a new creation. When I say that the work of the Holy Spirit of Christ must have our attention, I do not only mean that we must think and study about it. It also means that we must have our hearts open for the Spirit and His work. And the promise is that, also here, the Spirit will do His work through His Word. Studying the work of the Spirit can be the tool of the Spirit to open our heart for the love of God in Christ Jesus in order that we may not lose what we have, as Christ warned the Church at Ephesus: “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not. . . . But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.”

May the Spirit gird us with the love of God in Christ Jesus to His glory.

J. GEERTSEMA

A word of welcome

At the moment of writing these lines, Dr. K. Deddens is already in our country for a month.

Nevertheless, we like to add a word of welcome to the many that undoubtedly are spoken. We do so herewith. We heartily welcome you, Dr. and Mrs. Deddens and family. (One daughter and three sons came along.) We hope that you have acclimatized somewhat by now, and express the wish that you may have a good time in the midst of the churches and will soon feel at home among us. It should



not be too much a problem, since we are of the same faith and, in that unity of faith, seek to serve the same Lord and His churches. May He bless all of you and especially Dr. Deddens in his task to teach future ministers of the Word of God in the history and polity of the church.

As readers of Clarion, we do not immediately count on contributions from your hand. We are aware that you need all your time for preparing yourself for your professorial task. But we hope that later on we may receive some instruction from you via the pages of our magazine.

In the meantime, we wish you the wisdom and strength of the Lord.

J. GEERTSEMA

Hal Lindsey⁵

A thousand years on earth?

11. Millennialism

Hal Lindsey sees a great difference between God's purpose for the nation of Israel and His purpose for the Christian Church. The history of the Old Testament was the history of God's dealings with the Jewish people. We are now living in the age of the Christian Church (p. 131). However, in the last seven years prior to Christ's return the history of the world will again be the history of God's dealing with the Jewish people, and then, finally, the real victory for the Jewish people will arrive during Christ's thousand-year-reign as the Jewish Messiah. That will be the so-called "millennium."

Lindsey deals in his book extensively with the millennium. Because this theory is so widespread today, and because so many people in all kinds of churches adhere to this theory, it is important to say something about it.

"Millennium" is the Latin word for thousand years. The theory about a thousand-year-reign of Christ, as a King on earth, is called "millennialism" and those who adhere to this theory are called "millennialists."

In Revelation 20 the Bible speaks about a period of a thousand years. Without going into detail with respect to the exegesis of this chapter, we have to notice that the period is described as the time in which the Devil and Satan will be bound (v. 2). It is also a period in which "the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands" will reign with Christ (v. 4).

We believe that in this chapter the

Lord gives us revelation about the whole New Testament period. In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, a thousand years is the full, complete period, set by the Lord for the gathering of His Church. This time of Christ's reign over heaven and earth began when He rose from the dead. Before He ascended into heaven, He proclaimed His Royal dignity and said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). This is also the time that the power of the devil was restrained. In Revelation 12 we read that, after Christ's ascension into heaven the devil was thrown down from heaven. In the vv. 10-12 we read: "And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, 'Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!'"

We also read that the dragon pursued the woman who had borne the male child. That means that the devil turned all his power and hatred against the Church on earth, against "those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus" (v. 17). However, his effort appears to be in vain. He will not succeed. The Lord protects His Church (12:14) and even the earth comes to the help of the Church (12:16).

It is clear from the whole context that

the thousand years is the period between Christ's ascension into heaven and His return to the earth. It is the fullness of time, a time set by God the Father Himself. "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

Hal Lindsey tries to make us believe that these thousand years refer to a period of time which is still to come. A period in which Christ will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem after He has established His historic kingdom on earth for a thousand years (p. 159).

He often uses many Bible texts and gives remarkable explanations and interpretations of these texts. It all sounds impressive and convincing but it is "tailor-made" for his preconceived view.

In Zechariah 14:1-4 we read: "Behold, a day of the LORD is coming, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in the midst of you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women ravished; half of the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on a day of battle. On that day His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward."

We do not pretend to have a clear explanation of the meaning of this text. It belongs to those revelations which we see in a mirror dimly (I Cor. 13:12) or which are "shut up and sealed to the time of the end" (Dan. 12:9).

Hal Lindsey has his own explanation of this text. He writes: "Jesus' feet will first touch the earth where they left the earth, on the Mount of Olives. The mountain will split in two with a great earth-

quake the instant that Jesus' foot touches it. The giant crevice which results will run east and west through the center of the mountain. It will go east to the north tip of the Dead Sea and west to the Mediterranean Sea (Zechariah 14). It was reported to me that an oil company doing

“Hal Lindsey tries to make us believe that these thousand years refer to a period of time which is still to come. A period in which Christ will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem after He has established His historic kingdom on earth for a thousand years.”

seismic studies of this area in quest of oil discovered a gigantic fault running east and west precisely through the center of the Mount of Olives. The fault is so severe that it could split at any time. It is awaiting ‘the foot.’” (p. 163).

Apparently even the report of an oil company and their seismic studies can be used to “prove” the reliability of his predictions. He even explains how this split in the earth and this crack will be used. It will open a cavern to be used by the Jewish remnant in Jerusalem as a bomb shelter during the thermonuclear blast, which will be the end of the war between the Western Allies and the army of Red China (p 163).

We do not believe that this is the way to use the Bible. On the contrary. This is rather an abusing of the Word of God and a matter of imposing one's own preconceived ideas upon the Bible.

Article 2 of the Belgic Confession tells us clearly that the Lord has revealed Himself to us in His Word “as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to His glory and our salvation.” However, the Bible is not given to satisfy the curiosity of people. The Word of God should not be used to make impressive predictions and to produce, in this way, a number one bestseller of the decade.”

Article 13 of the Belgic Confession says it right to the point: “as to what He does surpassing human understanding, we will not curiously inquire into farther than our capacity will admit of; but with the greatest humility and reverence adore the righteous judgments of God, which are hid from us, contenting ourselves that we are pupils of Christ, to learn only those things which He had revealed to us in His Word, without transgressing these limits.” This humility is badly missing with Hal Lindsey.

12. Summary and conclusions

1. There is increasing uneasiness among people which makes them receptive to all kinds of soothsaying and seemingly reliable predictions with respect to the future of this world.

2. When we study the Bible we have to be aware of the fact that there are different types of literature. The Historical Books give us, in the first place, information about the Lord's great works in history. The Poetic Literature teaches us, in a very profound way, the wisdom of the Lord and proclaims His glory and majesty. The Prophetic Literature shows us, in a painting with perspective, the great works of the Lord in the past, the present and the future.

3. Many prophecies have a multiple fulfillment. Sometimes they have an actual or first fulfillment at the time of the prophet and a second and more glorious fulfillment in the future. The first fulfillment is quite often in itself a prophecy of what is going to happen in the more distant future. Although we can see in many events of our present time a fulfillment of the prophecy, we should always realize that there might be an even greater and more impressive fulfillment.

4. The Word of God is clear and perspicuous. It reveals to us all we have to know for our salvation and to serve the Lord in obedience. However, with respect to the prophecy, our knowledge is imperfect and we see as in a mirror dimly.

5. If someone presents himself as a prophet and his prediction comes true, it is no proof that the Lord has sent him. We always have to search the Scriptures to see whether a theory is in accordance with the whole Word of God. The Lord sometimes puts us to the test to see whether we love Him with our whole heart (Deut. 13:3).

6. Hal Lindsey's exegesis of Daniel 11 is a fantastic and preconceived the-

ory about the political and military development in the Middle East rather than a “literal explanation” of the Bible, as he pretends it to be.

7. His “Rapture” concept is based upon two presumptions. The first one is that Christ's return will be a public matter, to be noticed by everyone while the taking away of all believers will come like a thief in the night unnoticed by the unbelievers. The second presumption is that God's final dealing with this world, in the time of the tribulation, will be a matter of the Jewish people only and not a matter of the Christian Church.

8. The theory about a period of seven years between the “Rapture” and Christ's return is based upon a wrong exegesis of Rev. 11:1-3, in which he adds together two figures which are actually referring to the same period of time and in which he ignores the fact that the “one hundred and forty-four thousand saints” are “before the throne and before the Lamb” in heaven and not on the earth.

9. The theory about a massive conversion of the Jews in this seven-year period is based upon a wrong exegesis of Rev. 14:1-5, namely, that the one hundred and forty-four thousand, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, are one hundred forty-four thousand Jewish Billy Grahams upon the earth.

10. The prediction that Christ's return will take place around the year 1988 is based upon a very speculative and preconceived interpretation of Matthew 24.

11. His theory about the millennium is a widespread concept, adhered to by many people in different churches. However, it ignores the fact that the book of Revelation speaks in symbolic language and it contradicts what we read in Matthew 28:18 and Revelation 12.

12. We should not use the Bible as a jigsaw puzzle, in a curious effort to look into God's plans and to make impressive predictions. We rather should be prepared to meet our Lord when He returns “like a thief in the night” when no one expects it. Then we will be able to understand fully even as we have been understood (I Cor. 13:12).

W. POWELSE

P.S.

An interesting evaluation of Hal Lindsey's writings can be found in the Rev. T. Boersma's book, translated into English under the title: *Is the Bible a Jigsaw Puzzle. . .* (St. Catherine's: Paideia Press, 1978).

Rev. VanDooren's last lecture



Faculty of the Theological College, February 22



Rev. G. VanDooren in his room at the College

On February 22, 1984, the Rev. G. VanDooren delivered his last lectures as Lecturer (and later temporary instructor) in Diaconiology.

The very last lecture dealt with the preaching and was a fitting conclusion of the work which Rev. VanDooren had been doing at the College since its opening in 1969.

This lecture was attended by the complete faculty, by representatives of the Board of Governors, some ministers, and also by Mrs. VanDooren and members of their family.

After the lecture, words of appreciation were spoken by Rev. J. Mulder as president of the Board of Governors, by Mr. Chris Bosch on behalf of the students, and by Dr. Faber on behalf of the Faculty.

Upon the conclusion of the official part of the morning, a reception was held and thus the sadness of the moment was greatly dispelled by the unofficial get-together and also by the gratitude which was expressed for all Rev. VanDooren had done and meant for the students and for the College.

Although a more official "report" on the farewell lecture — which I expected — did not materialize as yet, now having received a few pictures taken at that occasion, I did not wish to let the fact go unnoticed, but wanted to let our readers share to some extent. One picture shows the Rev. VanDooren in his room at the College, the other one shows the faculty being together on the occasion.

VO

CHURCH NEWS

MARANATHA (Surrey)

The Council of the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church in Surrey announces that by mutual accord the agreement with the missionary, Rev. R.F. Boersema, will terminate on April 5, 1986, because Rev. Boersema is of the opinion that to continue his work in mission he needs to give more time to mission studies and because Council sees a continuing need for a full-time missionary in São José da Coroa Grande. Rev. Boersema is available to follow up another call after April 5, 1986.

OUR COVER

Pear blossoms overlooking Okanagan Lake, BC.
Photo courtesy of D.K. Deters, BC.

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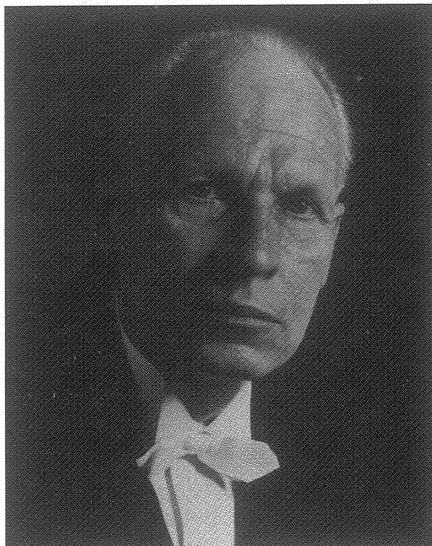
In Memoriam: Prof. H.J. Schilder (1916-1984)

On the 12th of May, the Lord called His child and faithful servant Professor Herman Johannes Schilder to Himself. His death was unexpected and for those who have known him well it is difficult to adjust to this new reality. In gratitude to God for what He has given to His church in this minister of the Word and Professor of the Old Testament disciplines this "In Memoriam" is here given. I would like to pause at two aspects of his life.

The first is the specific place that was given to him in the Liberation of the Reformed Churches in 1944 from supra-Scriptural binding to human wisdom and synodical hierarchy. As a candidate called to the Church at Noordeboos he stated at his classical examination (in 1944) that he could not promise to abide by the Synodical pronouncements of 1942. In these pronouncements, Kuyper's theory of presumptive regeneration was made the doctrine of the church and therefore candidate Schilder considered them to be in conflict with Scripture and the Confessions of the church. As a result of his stand, he was not admitted to the ministry (June 2, 1944). He was later that year called and ordained as minister of Bergschenhoek which had earlier liberated itself from un-Scriptural synodical teachings and was then promptly expelled from the federation of the Reformed Churches by the Synod of Utrecht. By the stand which he, enabled by God's grace, could take and by the events that followed, candidate Schilder was undoubtedly instrumental in exposing for many the true character of the synodical decisions and the hierarchical manner in which this major assembly functioned. The entire difficult conflict, which Schilder went through in 1944, is fully documented in his book, *Op de grens van kerk en secte* (1948).

After serving the Church at Bergshenhoek for two years, H.J. Schilder was called to Utrecht. He laboured in this city as pastor and teacher for six years. In 1952 he was appointed Professor of Old Testament to fill the vacancy left by the death of Professor B. Holwerda. All this brings me to the second aspect of the person and life of Prof. Schilder. As professor he remained a pastor. That is, although

he was a man of great learning, very meticulous and extremely sensitive to the finer points of scholarship, his erudition was not an end in itself. He was not the man of the proverbial ivory tower. The goal of all scientific study of the Old Testament at the Theological College was that the Word of God had to be preached. Sermons, not lectures, are to be the eventual fruit of a student's labours at the College. He pointedly underlined the significance of the pulpit when he characterized the regular preaching of the Word in church as the primary means (or "school") for the training for the office of believers in this world. Here, among others, the youth are trained for their calling as Christians in this world and for the special office of elder and deacon. (See his, *In Sion is het Woord nabij*, 157ff.) H.J. Schilder's own continued involvement as Professor in preaching the Word and meditating on the Word underlines the pastoral side of his professorate. Most of his pub-



lished meditations and studies of portions of Scripture can be found in *Rachel's troost* (1960), *Ik schreeuw het uit* (1973), *Ik kom thuis* (1981), *Richteren en Ruth: een vacature vervuld* (from 1951-1957, published as book, 1982), and *Het Schrift dat niet verslijt* (from 1953-1976, published as book, 1983). In another way his pastoral heart was evident from the genuine interest he took in others. For instance, when he preached in Kampen, he would first visit the sick for whom he would pray as a guest preacher on Sunday. His concern for the well-being of others was also reflected in the warm relationship he had with his students.

When Professor Schilder responded to the speeches given at the occasion of his official farewell at the Synod of Arnhem (1981), he stated that one Old Testament passage in particular had his attention throughout his service as professor. This text encouraged, admonished and so guided him. The passage was Psalm 32:8 where God speaks these words: "I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you." It is with gratitude to God for His faithfulness that Schilder could acknowledge this as a sort of motto for his life, — a life in which he experienced

in several ways hurt, struggle and grief, but in which he also knew the joy in Jesus Christ. Professor H.J. Schilder's course on this earth has now been finished, be it unexpectedly for those left behind. His race has been run. May the Lord comfort his wife

and family in their sorrow. May He also continue to bless the decades of labour given by His servant that it may bear rich fruit.

C. VAN DAM

Coming Home: Professor Herman J. Schilder, 1916-1984

On Saturday, May 12, the LORD took to Himself Herman J. Schilder, professor of Old Testament at the Theological College of our sister churches in The Netherlands, at the age of 68 years. Retired in 1981, he served as professor at the seminary for over 25 years. And these were years of faithful service throughout.

If anyone would characterize Schilder's work in the churches, one must say that his whole ministry was characterized by the struggle of faith. Even before he became a minister, he was a principal figure in the doctrinal conflict in 1942-44. As a candidate, he was required by a classical committee to submit to the doctrinal statements made by the Synod of Utrecht, in 1942-43. On refusing to do so, he was barred from the ministry. The consistory of the church where he was a member at the time, Bergschenhoek, became involved in his struggle, and, due to the conflict which ensued, became the first of the Reformed Churches to liberate itself from the synodical decisions on August 13, 1944. Schilder later became minister there, and spent just over two years there before moving to Utrecht. In 1952 he took up duties in Kampen.

The years in Kampen were characterized by a different struggle, the struggle against *independentism*, which left such a devastating mark on Dutch church life after the Liberation. Along with several other colleagues, he was instrumental in stemming the tide of independentism amidst the churches, and in holding the seminary itself to the true, ecumenical basis as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity.

Perhaps the best summary of this ministry of conflict which characterized his life and years on earth is found in the title of one of his more recent publications, a collection of meditations with the title, *Ik Kom Thuis* (Vijlbrief, Haarlem, 1981). The title is taken from the meditation on Psalm 23:6: ". . . and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever." The meditation is a fine example of both Schilder's style as a writer, and skill as an exegete. He always buried himself deeply in the text, capturing its most minute details. Analytically outlining the various stages and images in the psalm, he

comes to the last one: the LORD as Master of a new home. As Shepherd, Host and Final Master, God gathers His own to His fold. So Schilder writes of the last stage:

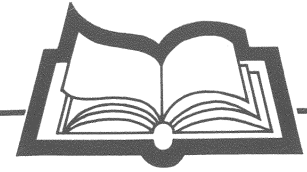
"But how do we continue? There is a future before us. What will it be like? The last verse gives the answer in advance. The poet does not sing of fleeting gifts, passing periods, or moments of safety. No, he is assured of the *durability* of the received care and protection: yes, the good, the blessed and the faithful continuation of goodness will follow and accompany me every day of my life. And now the summarizing key to the secret: in the house of the LORD I may dwell, remain continually, to length of days, every day; as far as the eye can see in the future, and still farther endlessly.

This means as much as: I come, I am, and I remain at home with the LORD. Here the last word of the psalm ties back to its beginning which also names Him, indeed, starts with Him: *Jaweh* — my Shepherd; in similar, figurative and direct language now: in the *house* of the *Jaweh*. The Lord — my Shepherd . . . with the LORD — at home" (p. 61).

So Prof. Schilder, too, may be at *home* with the LORD, the Good Shepherd. Gathered, invited, and drawn to the eternal dwelling place, he now enjoys the greater fellowship with the Master of the house. He fought the battle, first on one side, then the other. Now his earthly course is over.

Let us also hope and pray his life may be an example for us who are called to carry on his struggle. The same battle continues, and faithful believers must continue to ward off the attacks from all sides. The enemy is still at the gate. On we must go, in the Name of Him who bought us, and who with love and mercy prepares a home for us, John 14. If we are faithful to Him and to His voice, we will be able to say with Schilder — and all the saints —, "Ik kom thuis; I've come home." Then we will all know that there's nothing quite like coming home.

J. DEJONG



“. . . and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing.”

Ezek. 34:26b

Showers of Blessing

In the middle of Ezekiel's prophecies concerning the restoration of God's people, we hear of a unique blessing promised to God's people: showers of blessing. The new age of the covenant of peace will include God's constant and tender care for His sheep. He will provide all they need in season, so that they are not lacking for a moment. Around His holy hill, Jerusalem, He will send down the early and the latter rain, rains in their season, cooling rains which provide restoration and vitality to the thirsty ground.

Just exactly what these showers of blessing are has been debated, and some even propose to delete some terms from the text. But we can see clearly what these showers are if we recall what the LORD had promised to His people before they entered the promised land. He often promised them showers "in their season," and in Deuteronomy 28 clearly sets before them the two alternatives, two pathways connected to His covenant. If Israel obeyed the voice of the LORD, and was careful to walk in His ways, He would send down showers of blessing: "The LORD will open to you His good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hands," v. 12. But if the people refused to listen to the voice of the LORD, those very showers of heaven would become a curse for them: "The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it will come down upon you until you are destroyed," v. 24.

And Israel's history shows how they brought the curse upon themselves. The LORD could not but bring on the destruction of city and temple, and the full curse over their lives. Indeed, Israel became a desert land, a habitation of desolation. Ezekiel, too, had to prophesy all these things. Yet he also prophesies a new age, and points out God's merciful faithfulness to His covenant. The people who faithfully follow their Lord and Master — they will be restored. A new Shepherd was coming, the Good Shepherd who would unite the sheep and lead them in green pastures. And it's obvious that these words reach out directly to the time of Jesus Christ, the Well-Beloved, David's great Son, the Man after God's heart.

For in Him, in His death and resurrection the new covenant of peace is sealed for God's people. He establishes His holy throne, His heavenly hill in the Jerusalem which is above, and from there He showers His gifts and blessings

upon His own, all over the world. He feeds and nourishes them, and gathers them to Himself. And for them He also provides material sustenance, the food and drink needed every day. Upon them He sends the showers which renew the ground and cause life to spring up with power: the soft showers and gentle rains that make the crops grow and provide food for the plants, flowers, and all living things.

Anyone who gauges our time well realizes that these showers are becoming relatively more infrequent, while the showers of destruction and curse seem to become more frequent. And that is understandable, for the same covenant stipulations of the beginning still apply. God's blessings still come according to the measure of faith. Our nation, too, has left the pathways of the Lord. Is it any wonder that floods and torrential rains increase in many places on our continent, while other areas of the world increasingly suffer from famine and drought? As the ascended Shepherd closes the treasury of heaven, the whole earth groans in increasing travail.

Yet He will feed His Church, and provide for His own. He sends His healing showers upon us, materially and spiritually. Only, we must follow Him, and be obedient to Him first of all. Now that Christ is risen, and has sent His Spirit upon the Church, how can we fail to acknowledge Him as the source and fountain of all blessing? Most assuredly, if we fail to trust in Him above all, and fail to acknowledge Him as the Giver of all good, relying on our own efforts or gods of our own making, all our material blessings only become a curse to us, and the heavens will close before us more and more. But hearts open to His will and commandments will experience an open heaven, where the cooling and life-giving showers of the early and latter rain will come splashing down in continual tokens of refreshing goodness, and where all the abundance showering forth will be a blessing, leading us to the new heaven and new earth. Then, regardless of future trends or past mistakes, we know that we will have what we need, and all that is given us from God's Fatherly hand, whether it be more or less, will profit us, because it is attended with His special care and blessing.

J. DEJONG

PATRIMONY PROFILE³⁸

By Rev. W. W. J. Van Oene

This "spirit of intolerance" was making itself felt soon enough. At the first Church Visitation after his ordination, elder H.M. Feringa declared, "I wish to express my deep sorrow because of the fact that there are members in this consistory who, by confessing and proclaiming another Jesus than the One of the Scriptures, place themselves outside the Christian Church and thus ought to cease being members and ministers of the Netherlands Reformed Church."

Repeatedly complaints against the preaching of the modernist ministers were lodged with the consistory. A few times an elder even stated loudly upon completion of the sermon that what had just been proclaimed was not out of the Holy Spirit. It is understandable that Dr. Kuyper's coming to Amsterdam was greeted with joy by the above brothers. All complaints were received and filed, all except one. When one of the modernist ministers denied bluntly the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus, one protest received concluded with the request that the consistory should depose the minister involved and his like-minded colleagues. Now the complaint was passed on to the classical board as an accusation by the consistory itself within the sphere of church polity.

The classical board, however, declared the complaint inadmissible with a view to the fact that the resurrection of the Lord, in its opinion, belonged to the doctrines concerning which no unmistakable standard existed in the Regulations. . . .

This was a shameful decision.

It prompted seventeen elders to address the congregation in March 1872. Giving their reasons for it, they declared that "from now on, insofar as their office permitted them, they would absent themselves from religious functions led by modernist ministers; that they would no longer listen to any of their sermons, and that they would not be present at the administration of the sacraments." They stated that their consciences forbade them to be present any longer and that by their "sitting" at preaching and administration of the sacraments would give the impression as if they did not consider the false teachings to be all that dangerous. They further urged the congregation not to attend services conducted by those ministers who showed themselves clearly to be opponents to the truth of the Scriptures.

The term "sitting" comes from the provision that there should be a "sitting elder," i.e. an elder who was appointed to officially sit in on this particular service. Elders were appointed by rotation. No provision regarding this was found in the Regulations; it was something found only in the bylaws which the Amsterdam Consistory had drawn up.

A protest against the above declaration was sent to the consistory; it was signed by 1077 male and 245 female communicant members.

Dr. A. Kuyper was the reporter of the committee appointed by the consistory to draft a reply. He practically

formed a one-man committee, and the extensive report which he drew up in which all accusations against the seventeen elders were examined and declared invalid appeared in print as a 144-page brochure.

This was only one of the factors which contributed to the Doleantie in Amsterdam, although it was a symptom of what could be expected in the future.

Kuyper's Further Course of Life

Dr. Kuyper did not remain a minister. He entered the political arena and was elected as a member of parliament in 1874, and was forced thereby to make a choice. The Constitution of The Netherlands provided that "the members of Parliament may not be ministers of religion." Thus Kuyper either had to resign the ministry or to decline the mandate received from the voters in Gouda.

He chose Parliament. Upon his request, the Provincial Church Board of North Holland declared him a minister-emeritus, and the way to Parliament was open.

For a brief period — from June 1, 1874 — Feb. 7, 1875 — he was an elder in the Amsterdam Church but had to resign since being an M.P. demanded all of his time. He became overworked, however, and spent some fifteen months abroad, returning to The Netherlands in May 1877. That summer he resigned his seat in Parliament.

On December 5, 1878, a society was formed which brought another of Kuyper's ideals closer to realization. It was the Society for Higher Education on a Reformed Basis. Through restless labour and by mobilizing the common people, a university was opened on October 20, 1880: the Free University. Five professors had been appointed: three for the Faculty of Theology, one for the Faculty of Law, and one for the Faculty of the Arts. For the course of our story it is important to know at least two of them: Dr. A. Kuyper and Dr. F.L. Rutgers.

There was one professor for each student — five of each.

In March 1882, the Electoral College of the Amsterdam Church chose Kuyper again as elder and, after some time of irregular attendance, he was present at the meetings most of the time with noticeable results.

The work as Professor at the Free University continued until, in 1894, Dr. Kuyper was again elected as a member of Parliament. Being returned every time, he became Prime Minister on August 1, 1901. The Free University of Amsterdam gave him leave of absence.

In 1905, elections brought the defeat of the Right Coalition, and Kuyper retired at age 68. Fulfilling an old desire, he set out on a journey around the Mediterranean Sea, a journey which took him over a year.

In 1908, Kuyper was again elected to Parliament, was reelected in 1909, but upon the advice of his physician resigned his seat in September 1912.

On July 8, 1913, the Provincial Legislature of South Holland elected him to the Senate or First Chamber.

On Monday, November 8, 1920, Dr. Abraham Kuyper fell asleep in his Saviour, as the inscription on the tombstone reads upon his instruction. He reached the age of eighty-three years and ten days.

The influence which Kuyper exercised came to a large extent through his publications among which are to be

mentioned the daily *De Standaard* and the weekly *De Heraut*. He succeeded in touching the hearts of the common people and was their revered leader. Kuyper wanted to be a leader, and it appeared difficult for him not to have his way and occupy the first place.

One of his daughters wrote:

"This is what was so extremely difficult for my father with his mighty, ambitious nature. His whole nature, his character, all his wonderful gifts and talents were directed towards giving leadership, not towards being led; towards going at the head, not towards following; towards giving commands, not towards obeying commands; towards making decisions, not towards waiting for decisions.

"And now the night came. My father had to learn to lead less and less, to command less and less, to decide less and less, to follow more and more, to be led more and more.

"This was for him "contra naturam," against his nature. And yet, that's how it had to be. That's how God who loved him so much wanted it. It was a hard and extremely painful school for my father.

"Many a battle was fought, much grief was suffered and many a prayer was offered up before the great, giant man, stripped of all the power and all the strength with which God had adorned him so exceedingly, was lying there like a helpless child contentedly and quietly waiting until God would take him unto Himself.

"And so he did learn." In spite of all the objections we may have against several of Kuyper's theories, we are thankful for all the Lord gave to His struggling Church in this man in that period of its history.

Note:

At the conclusion of the part regarding Abraham Kuyper we will have to interrupt publication of this column for some time.

We are not certain at this moment when publication will be resumed, but hope that we won't have to test your patience for too long.

Thank you for the interest with which you have followed this series.

Thank you also for the corrections which I received from readers who were keen enough to discover mistakes and who were kind enough to let me know about them. It was greatly appreciated.

Sometimes I received remarks about what was considered to be a mistake but appeared to be conflicting information from the sources used. It will be tried to come to a responsible choice whenever the sources differ.

In answer to questions whether it is the intention eventually to have this series appear in book form it be said that this is up to the publisher first of all: if he sees a possibility, it is fine with me. Then I shall also be able to list all the books from which I gathered my knowledge. It may be best to let the publisher know if any are interested in having this material in book form. It must be a viable undertaking, as all understand.

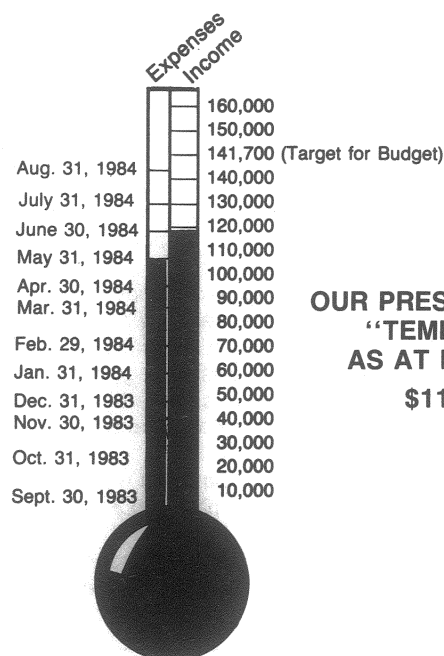
Herewith we have to take leave of our readers for some time.

May we meet again in due season.

W.W.J. VANOENE

TEACHERS' COLLEGE

On May 25th, a large crowd gathered in the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church in Hamilton. Hearts were overflowing with thankfulness, for it was on this evening that we could witness the graduation of seven students from our Teachers' College. We are also thankful that this could be achieved financially, that the Lord has enabled so many to support the College. The end of the school year is August 31, 1984, and thus our expenses have to be met for another three months. In the past we asked you to keep an eye on the thermometer to make sure that the income stayed at all times ahead of the expenses. Up to the end of May our expenses were \$117,719.57. Our income was \$118,279.33. That means that our income up to this date was \$559.76 more than our expenses. However, traditionally June, July and August are lean months. Our treasurer tells us that we need \$28,400.00 during this three-month period. \$9,500.00 per month is needed to cover the expenses. Many of our people have not yet paid their share. May we urgently request you to do so at once? We do not want to beg for your contribution for your College but it seems that we will be forced to do so unless you help us out with *your* share *now*. If there is anyone who is able to help us out above and beyond their share, please send your donation to Mr. J. Gelderman, 491 Karen Drive, Burlington, ON L7R 3J2.



**OUR PRESENT FINANCIAL
"TEMPERATURE"
AS AT MAY 31, 1984
\$118,279.33**

How does the revision of our Church Order affect us today?²

A completely new article is the one about missionaries. Nothing will change, I think, because of Article 18 which is found in the Revised Church Order. Our missionaries do already report to the consistories that sent them; they do go to the region assigned to them by the consistory or chosen by them in consultation with the consistory that sent them. We therefore can continue with other articles.

As for the description of the task of the elders as well as of the task of the deacons, we have taken the description which is found in the new form for the ordination of elders and deacons. And no changes are necessary here.

The article concerning the subscription to the confessions has been moved from 53 to 26. Besides, Articles 53 and 54 have been combined, so that now we have only one article which speaks of subscription to the confession. It was considered proper to have this provision immediately after the articles dealing with ministers, elders, and deacons.

In the new article it is also provided that subscription to the confessions shall be done by signing the form(s) adopted for that purpose. This addition has been prompted by our experience with Mr. C. DeHaan in Winnipeg, who refused to do so. In order to prevent any such occurrence from happening again, we now provide that wherever a form for the purpose of subscribing to the confessions has been adopted, it will be required to subscribe by means of signing that particular form. Simply expressing agreement with the confessions at a certain moment is not sufficient: there should also be guarantees and promises for the future.

The previous Article 53 was the only article in our Church Order in which a classis received the right to suspend an office-bearer; in this case then a minister. The old article provided namely, "and the ministers of the Word who refuse to do so shall *de facto* be suspended from their office by the consistory or classis." That the classis is mentioned here is the result of the fact that ministers who have come into the classical area are required to sign at the first classis they attend.

However, if a minister were suspended at a classis, we could have an awkward situation; besides, is it really correct to provide that a minister — in this particular case — can be suspended by a classis?

When we had the De Haan-case, the matter was discussed at various classes, but the suspension was ultimately the work of the Winnipeg Consistory together with the Consistory of Carman.

In our Revised Church Order we no longer speak of suspension by a classis. We state, "and classis shall not receive him." Then it is up to the Church that delegated this minister what to do with him. Herewith we have removed the only instance in our Church Order where a classis had the right to suspend a minister. We think that it is a tremendous improvement.

Article 30 of the Revised Church Order has a provision added to it, a provision which was not found in the old Article 30. We took this provision over from the Netherlands sister Churches. It is this provision: "A new matter which has not previously been presented to that major assembly may be put on the agenda only when the minor assembly has dealt with it."

Here we have a new provision which is to prevent that a Church submits a matter to a general synod, e.g., which has not been dealt with and discussed in the consistories or classes or regional synods. I recall that at the Synod of Coaldale 1977, we suddenly received a submission from a Church with the request to instruct our Committee on Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church also to seek contact "with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Ecumenical Synod, with a view to determining whether Church correspondence can be established with this Church federation."

This proposal was not acceded to, however, solely on the ground that the Church that submitted the proposal failed to give sufficient information. If this information had been provided, the Churches might have been in for a surprise: a new contact which had never before been discussed within the Churches or at the minor assemblies. Yet, we did not have any provision to bar such surprises.

Things have changed since Synod Cloverdale 1983: we now provide that the minor assembly must have dealt with a matter first. This means that no classis may deal with matters which have not been dealt with in the consistories; the same applies *mutatis mutandis* to regional and general synods.

"Matters once decided upon may not

be proposed again unless they are substantiated by new grounds," Article 33 of the Revised Church Order. Hereby it is prevented that matters are brought to a classis or synod time and again for the simple reason that a consistory does not agree with what was decided about certain matters. The famous — or should I say notorious — requests for revision. Oftentimes these were no more than camouflaged appeals which were at the wrong place as they should have been directed to the broader assembly. An appeal — we have agreed — should be directed to the broader assembly. They should not be addressed to a following, similar, assembly under the cover of "request for revision."

There are, of course, things of which a Consistory may be convinced that they should be changed, without there being any shade of appeal. Let me make up an example. Let us say that classes are always held in the same place, as is the case both in North and in South Ontario, if I am not mistaken. A Church has proposed to change this and to alternate either between two places or to have the convening Church also be the hosting Church. This proposal, however, was not accepted. Our present Article 33 provides now that such a matter shall not be brought at a classis again unless there are new grounds, circumstances which were not there when the proposal was rejected, or grounds which have been discovered after the decision was made. If such new grounds are not there, the matter is inadmissible at a following classis. No nagging and trying to get one's way!

Now that the Synod of Cloverdale did not go for the suggestion that the consistory consists of the minister, the elders, and the deacons, the provision that the deacons may be added to the consistory has been retained. The provision that this shall always be done where the number of *elders* is less than three has been complemented by the provision that it shall also be done where the number of *deacons* is less than three. It is an old saying and almost a standing rule that three persons form a college, a body that is able to make proper decisions. When two elders are not considered to form such a body but when in that case the deacons have to be added, then the same applies to the deacons. Practically not much will

change through this new provision, but it is good that we have added it.

We now have an article about the archives. Article 43 provides that the consistories and the broader or major assemblies shall ensure that proper care is taken of the archives. This provision has not been inserted to introduce something new, for in each Church there will be someone who does take care of the archives; the provision has been inserted to remind ourselves of the need for proper care of the documents and other valuable papers which are of great importance for the future.

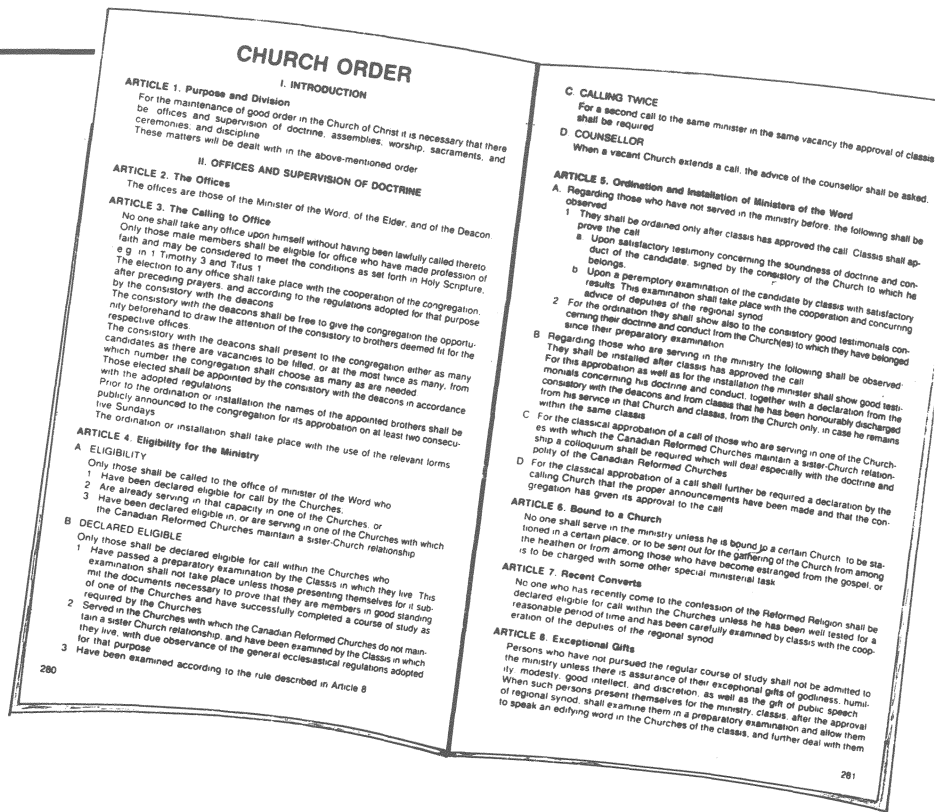
Until now our Church Order did mention counsellors, but there was no separate provision regarding them. Nowhere it was provided that a vacant Church shall have a counsellor, although we did state that the counsellor shall give advice and shall do so particularly when a minister is called by a vacant Church.

Article 45 speaks of counsellors, and states that each vacant Church shall request classis to appoint a counsellor. However, we have made certain that no minister is imposed upon any Church, for we state that classis shall appoint the minister whom this Church requests it to appoint. Although in by far the most cases the neighbouring minister will be the choice — also for convenience's sake — yet it should not be an automatic thing that he is appointed: the appointment is made by classis; the choice is the Church's.

The relationship with Churches abroad, or foreign Churches received only scant attention in the old Church Order. The whole matter of Church correspondence, of recognizing each other as sister Churches was hung on Article 86: "Foreign Churches whose usages differ from ours in nonessentials shall not be rejected." This article does not say anything about recognition as sister Churches.

In our Revised Church Order we have Article 50, following immediately after the article regarding the general synod. It reads as follows: "The relation with Churches abroad shall be regulated by general synod. With foreign Churches of Reformed confession a sister Church relationship shall be maintained as much as possible. On minor points of Church Order and ecclesiastical practice Churches abroad shall not be rejected."

The advantage of this formulation is that it becomes clear that correspondence runs via general synod. It is a correspondence not between the Church at A. in Canada and the Church at B. in



Hong Kong; it is a correspondence between federations.

A second advantage of this formulation is that we state that correspondence, a relationship as sister Churches shall be practised "as much as possible." In many instances such correspondence is practically impossible because of language difficulties. We experienced this at Synod Cloverdale when our Committee on Correspondence came with information about Korean Churches. Our Committee had to go to quite some trouble to get this information, and when they received it and had it translated, it appeared that this was not all by far that they were looking for. You will be able to read this in the Acts of Synod. One can make big gestures and enter into a sister Church relationship with I-don't-know-how-many Churches, but when such correspondence does not make much sense it is of little, if any, value.

And the last sentence makes clear in what things foreign Churches shall not be rejected: in minor points of Church Order and ecclesiastical practice. This is clearer than the "nonessentials" of which the old article spoke.

In the very-old Church Order, that is: the one, as it was in force, before the Liberation, we find an article about a Mission Order, but the whole article about mission was deleted after the Liberation when the fear for "mission-by-deputies" instead of "mission-by-the-Churches" made the Churches in The Netherlands decide not to have an article about mis-

sion. Efforts to formulate an acceptable article failed.

Still it is good to have the missionary task of the Church mentioned in our Church Order, and that's what we did. In Article 51 we now state, "The Churches shall endeavour to fulfill their missionary task. When Churches cooperate in this matter, they shall, as much as possible, observe the division into classes and regional synods." The second sentence of this article prevents misunderstanding of the first sentence. It was so, namely, that some thought that the sentence, "The Churches shall endeavour to fulfill their missionary task," might give rise to the thought that mission was a matter of the Churches in common, as it says "The Churches." This was one of the reasons why the Netherlands Churches could not agree on a formulation in 1951. Indeed, we should watch out that we do not make mission a matter of the Churches in common, although all Churches have to do with it. No, each Church shall fulfill its task in one way or another. This does not mean that all Churches necessarily have to send a missionary if they are to be able to say, "We fulfill our missionary task." They all should be active, that is the meaning.

If they cooperate in this work, they should observe the ecclesiastical districts, so to speak. The situation would become somewhat chaotic if the Church at Fergus supported the Church at Hamilton in its mission work, and the Church at Smithville the Church at Surrey. As

much as possible the ecclesiastical divisions into classes and regional synods should be respected.

Putting it in this manner makes clear, at the same time, that mission is not a matter of the Churches in common. If that were the case, the formulation would have been different. Cooperation is a voluntary thing, not a matter of the Church Federation. From the outset the Canadian Reformed Churches have endeavoured to maintain this principle.

I hope not that I bore you when I continue with Article 52. In this article we now provide that the consistory shall call the congregation twice together for worship on the Lord's Day. Even though this was already customary, it now has found a place in our Church Order. We have dropped the provision, that the preaching of the Catechism shall take place in the afternoon service. Now we say that: The consistory shall ensure that, as a rule, once every Sunday the doctrine of God's Word, as summarized in the Heidelberg Catechism, is proclaimed. Even though it will most of the time still be done in the afternoon, no one can say that a minister acts wrongly when he does it in the morning service. It may seem like a small thing, but we all know that sometimes small matters are blown out of proportion.

The old Article 21, regarding teachers, has been reworded and is now Article 58. It reads, "The consistory shall ensure that the parents, to the best of their ability, have their children attend a school where the instruction given is in harmony with the Word of God as the Church has summarized it in her confessions."

As you will have noticed, the emphasis is no longer on what the consistories shall do, but what the parents shall do. The old article stated that the consistories should see to it that there are good teachers. Now we stress the point that the consistories are to pay attention to the parents, that the parents fulfill their obligation towards their children. Is it not the task of the Overseers to activate and to make sure that the members of the Church do what they are obligated to do?

In the old Church Order the provision was found that the Lord's Supper shall be administered at least every two or three months. We have dropped the "every two," not because we would advocate celebrating the Lord's Supper only once every three months, but because it sounded somewhat strange "at least every two or three months." If it is to be celebrated at least every two months, we should not add three; if we mean that it shall be celebrated at least every three months,

we don't have to mention two. No change is required, however.

The article concerning the solemnization of marriage has undergone some change. The use of the old article had been left in the freedom of the Churches by the Synod of Homewood-Carman 1954. It was, however, considered advisable to have an article dealing with the solemnization of marriage. Again we stressed the task of the consistories, for our Church Order is basically a handbook showing what the consistories shall do, how we as Churches are to live together within one federation.

"The consistory shall ensure that the members of the congregation marry only in the Lord, and that the ministers — as authorized by the consistory — solemnize only such marriages as are in accordance with the Word of God. The solemnization of a marriage may take place either in a private ceremony or in a public worship service. The adopted Form for the Solemnization of Marriage shall be used."

In the first part of this new article the consistories are reminded of their obligation to look after the flock also with respect to marriage. Since marriage is a very important step with consequences also for the Church, the office-bearers should not neglect this part of the lives of the members.

And then: from where do the ministers receive their right to solemnize marriage? Is it not from the fact that they are a minister of the gospel? And have they not been called to this by the consistory as representing the congregation? They are, therefore, not free to solemnize just any marriage. Also in this part of their work they are subject to the supervision of the consistory. Our Church Order stipulates that the consistories shall pay attention to this as well.

Regarding the provision that the solemnization may be conducted in a private ceremony or in a public worship service, we must admit that this is still a giving in to the idea which is maintained by some within the Churches, that it should be done in a worship service. This is still a remnant from our Dutch past. It is to be hoped that in due time the conviction becomes general that marriages, just as funerals, are not ecclesiastical, but family affairs, and should be conducted accordingly. Then we can drop the public worship service from our Church Order as well.

Be patient with me, I am nearing the end.

At the Synod of Orangeville 1968, we adopted a form for the excommunication of noncommunicant members. It was only

the logical sequence to this decision that also in our Church Order we make provisions for the manner in which a consistory shall reach the point of excommunication. Article 68 now contains such provision which does not differ from the line shown in the revised Form for the Excommunication of noncommunicant members.

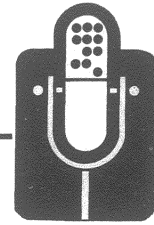
"When someone repents of a public sin or of a sin which had to be reported to the consistory, the latter shall not accept his confession of sin unless he has shown real amendment," we say in Article 69. Insofar we don't say anything new. What is somewhat different from the old text is the following. "The consistory shall determine whether the benefit of the congregation requires that this confession of sin shall be made publicly and — in case it is made before the consistory or before two or three office-bearers — whether the congregation shall be informed afterwards." This opens the way for the consistory to deal with these delicate matters in any manner which it might consider to serve the edification of the congregation best.

Concerning the readmission of persons who have been excommunicated, we provide in the Revised Church Order in Article 70, that the time between the public announcement of their desire to be readmitted to the Church and the readmission itself shall be not less than one month. It was argued that this would interfere with the provision in the Form for Readmission that the excommunicated person will be loosed from the bond of excommunication at the next celebration of the Lord's Supper. However, Synod Cloverdale did not go for this reasoning, considering that the process of readmission is not one which is concluded within three or four weeks. If the Lord's Supper were celebrated only once a year, this argument might cut ice; now that we have the Lord's Supper once every three months at least, the period of one month does not appear to be excessively long.

Herewith, Mr. Chairman, I have come to the end of my story. I realize that there was one small disadvantage: the brothers could not yet follow my quotations from the Revised Church Order in their own copy; this will have to wait for a few more months, perhaps. It is a good thing that Synod Cloverdale decided to make the Revised Church Order available not only as part of our definitive *Book of Praise*, but also in the form of a separate booklet.

It is my sincere wish that I may have contributed a little to its understanding.

W.W.J. VANOENE



Quite a few brothers and sisters have to be mentioned today as they celebrated a wedding anniversary, marking their having been united by the bond of marriage for forty or more years. Once again I am sorry that for all of them these congratulations will come as “mustard after the meal,” as they say in Dutch, but if we are not aware of it that a meal will be served — to continue the imagery for a moment — we cannot provide the necessary ingredients in time either. Anyway, here we go.

The bulletin of Burlington South informed me that on May 11 brother and sister Ronda celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary; the bulletin of Smithers told us the same about brother and sister Janson, but in the latter case we had to do without specific information as to the date on which.

Another forty-fifth anniversary was celebrated by brother and sister Luinge of Beamsville, Ontario, and their date was May 26. Ten days earlier brother and sister H. Kiefe of Brampton remembered that half a century ago they were united in marriage, while at the moment of this writing the day is still future for brother and sister B. Smouter of Toronto: their fiftieth anniversary will be on May 30th.

As for the last-mentioned couple, is this not the second time that we met shortly before an anniversary? Do I recall correctly that at their forty-fifth anniversary I mentioned having met them a short while before that date so that I could attest to their obvious good health? Again we greeted each other a few weeks ago, and again I was not aware of their upcoming day.

It is with pleasure that we mention the names of the above brothers and sisters and may assure them that we share in their happiness and gratitude. A long life is still a gracious gift of our God and Father, and every day we receive here is a foretaste of the life which never ends, the life on the new earth. If *only* for the future we were hoping in Christ, we would be most miserable today. Now we see all our days in the light of our Father’s favour. May this favour continue to surround them and us all for as long as it pleases the Lord to give us breath and life on this earth.

As most news for this medley comes from the West, we start in the East, or rather, the South.

In a previous medley I mentioned the idea of having a minister-at-large for the United States, an idea which was raised in the Grand Rapids Church. This Church wrote to the May Classis (I think that “June 2” is a mistake) regarding such a minister. In the Grand Rapids bulletin we read the following classical decision.

“Classis advises that if Grand Rapids proceeds with the calling of a minister, he should be subject to the Consistory of Grand Rapids according to the Articles 6 and 7 of the Church Order.

“And it expresses itself to be in favour, in principle, with this proposal to cooperate in calling a minister-at-large, but it would like to see a more detailed task-description for such a minister and it would like to give the Churches more time to address the financial implications of this proposal. Grand Rapids can put this proposal on the table of a future Classis.”

Did you notice the correct phraseology? It does not say “table it at Classis some time in the future,” but — correctly — “on the table of a future Classis.” Gratefully acknowledged!

The Grand Rapids Consistory “is making up a detailed

task-description proposal for such a minister, and will present it to the June 20 Classis. A congregational meeting on this matter will be held soon, the Lord willing.”

We will return to the point of a minister-with-a-special-task later on, when we reach the Fraser Valley.

The Burlington South bulletin contains a piece about seminars at which — it is the intention — a program will be set up for the whole year for the young people’s societies. Seven different committees have been appointed, each with a specific task. “Reports from these committees are made at the seminar meetings. Seasonal planning is also discussed. The last meeting is held in a restaurant, after which we listen to an introduction on our theme topic.”

What are the committees and what is their task?

“*Literature Committee*: finds study material on our topic, for use throughout the year.

“*Publishing Committee*: responsible for getting the program published before September.

“*Speaker’s Committee*: arranges for speakers for the combined meetings.

“*Entertainment Committee*: sets up outings throughout the year.

“*Photography Committee*: tries to get pictures (slides) of happenings during the year.

“*Dinner and Coffee Committee*: arranges the dinner at the end of the seminars and makes sure we all get a coffee break at society.

“*Annual Meeting Committee*: prepares for and sets up the Annual Meeting.”

Perhaps something can be learned from this for other places as well, or at least it may give some ideas to other societies.

The Burlington East bulletin informs us further about the Catechism Classes in the John Calvin School.

“A proposal from the ministers of the three Burlington Churches to lift the catechism from the John Calvin School and starting next September to conduct this instruction in the Church building was accepted. The reasons in favour of this decision are many; the ministers had documented twelve reasons, and the principal had also requested the transfer of the instruction.”

Things will not be as bad as the above formulation might suggest. I don’t think that the Catechism will be lifted out of the John Calvin School, leaving it with only two confessional forms in its basis.

I shall not quote all twelve reasons given for the above decision, but just a few.

“Only two of the three ministers give catechism instruction to these age groups, but each minister to children of three congregations.

“Each minister has his own program and approach.

“Ministers like to have contact with their students from the beginning of their catechism attendance.

“Contact between parents and minister and vice versa is difficult as far as children from other Congregations are concerned.”

Even if it had solely been for the above reasons, the decision would have appeared fully justified, I think.

Let us go to Orangeville:

“A discussion (I think it should be “suggestion,” VO) to

have a sermon prior to the celebration of the Lord's Supper on that Sunday is discussed. The decision is to leave this up to the minister who conducts the service, as was done in the past."

Yes, and now we move on to Alberta.

The matter of the possible sale of Coaldale's Church building has not been laid to rest, as may appear from the following notice: "It is reported that a written offer will be made by the Christian Reformed Church in the near future, including all conditions of their proposals."

Consistories are aware of the difficulty they oftentimes have in finding sufficient suitable candidates for the offices of elder and deacon. In most congregations there is a "rest period" of two or more years; which means that one who has completed his term of office will have to wait two years before he can again be nominated. I think that this is a wise decision and rule, for the brethren in most cases are happy to be free from the tensions and extra labours which being an office-bearer brings with it. Insofar — but only in this respect! — the suggestion that ministers shall serve for five years may have some merit. But then, a minister has the opportunity — if he gets a call — to leave the congregation for another church, which means a new start.

The Consistory of Coaldale discussed this "rest period" for elders and deacons, and came to the conclusion that it should be deleted. "In its place, 'An outgoing office-bearer can not be nominated again until the next following election' is inserted."

I am afraid that hereby the difficulties are not solved in every respect. The Consistory deprived itself hereby of the opportunity to nominate someone again without delay if this should appear necessary. Without denying the right of a Consistory to make such a decision, I would like to point out that the revised Church Order offers more possibilities which the Coaldale Consistory has now discarded as far as Coaldale is concerned.

A warning for other churches is contained in this sentence: "You all know that a person or persons unknown broke into the Church on April 29, 1984. The morning collection was stolen. It is not known whether the Donation Box was ransacked or not."

I wonder, seeing the location of the Coaldale Church building and the neighbourhood of which it is part how someone could enter in broad daylight without being noticed. It is a warning for all our people to have their Church buildings locked between services and not to keep any money in the building. Perhaps a notice "No valuables are being kept on these premises" would keep would-be thieves out. It is only a suggestion.

"Greetings!"

This refers to a "Greeting Motion" which the Providence Edmonton Consistory adopted. This I took from an explanation which was given in the bulletin. And necessary this explanation was! The motion itself reads as follows:

"To appoint a committee consisting of representatives of the Consistory, the deacons, the Committee of Administration, the ushers, the open house organizers, the evangelization committee, and a member of the congregation-at-large to organize a congregational effort to greet the membership and visitors on Sundays."

I would almost have been afraid to enter the Providence Church building on Sundays if I had to face such a giant committee. And in spite of the explanation given, it still is a riddle to me why the "Consistory believes it is very important that the membership . . . be greeted before the services." That strangers are greeted is something I can understand, and it may make them feel at home. But why should "the membership" be greeted? Is it not customary that we greet each other

when we see each other while entering the Church building or when taking our seat in the auditorium? And I become outright scared when I see that in the explanation I Peter 5:19 is quoted: "Greet one another with the kiss of love." Something especially for the ushers?

I trust that matters will be simpler than the above might suggest. I have no need of being greeted by an appointed committee "with a sincere word of welcome, and a firm handshake." Let's not overdo it or follow the socializing trend of many religious communities around us. The membership does not have to be made feel welcome: we come in obedience to the Lord's command; *that's* why we are a "companion of all who fear Thee, and of those who keep Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:63). However great the social aspect of our coming together may be, let's avoid everything which would draw this aspect to the fore and might relegate the main reason and aspect — unwittingly and unintentionally — to the second place.

The general news from the Fraser Valley is that the construction of the Rest Home in Langley has started. No big ceremony of "sod-turning" was planned. Everyone who wanted to do so could come, see the bulldozer "turn the sod," and make a few snapshots on this occasion.

Abbotsford was one of the few congregations where prayer was offered in the Consistory room before the morning service as well as after the afternoon service. This is no longer done there.

"A matter regarding prayer before and after the worship services in the Consistory room had the attention of the Consistory. The decision was taken to eliminate this prayer as it is the duty of the congregation — and not particularly of Consistory members — to pray for a blessing on the worship services."

It will not make much difference to the brethren, but I wholeheartedly agree with this decision. I think that I expressed this before, and therefore won't say much about it this time.

Most likely the custom originates from times when the services frequently were disrupted by outside interference, rocks through the windows, soldiers or police officers entering and forbidding continuation of the service, and so on. And: it could very well be that on a certain Sunday the situation is such that the brethren feel the urge, before entering the auditorium or whatever facility may be used, to ask the Lord together that the services may not be disturbed and that all danger be averted.

This is different from having the custom of offering prayer before the morning service and after the afternoon service in times when we are enjoying peace and tranquility. What these prayers mostly amount to is asking the Lord to strengthen the minister and to grant His people an open ear and an attentive heart. This certainly is a much-needed prayer, but the question is whether the Consistory — that happens to be together before the service, at least in most instances — should do again what each and every family is supposed to have done at home within the family circle. Abbotsford joined those who say, "No."

Chilliwack's Committee of Administration "presented more information about a new organ. Again, the Council requested more information from different organ builders before they make a decision. They requested that this information be made available for the meeting scheduled in June." Patience, dear readers! It is an important decision and all aspects should be thoroughly investigated before a decision is made.

From Chilliwack's Consistory report we also learn that at a meeting regarding the broadcasting "it is suggested to the Abbotsford Church to look into the possibility of calling a minister who can dedicate all his time for that purpose. The result of that meeting is discussed but it is clear that the last word has not yet been said regarding this matter."

Certainly not! I wonder whether the time has come for this. Besides, I referred already to the suggestion of Grand Rapids to appoint a "minister-at-large" for the United States. It is obvious that the financial burden of such an undertaking would have to be borne by the Churches of, at least, Ontario together. It would have to be investigated whether the urgency is such that such a burden should be laid upon the Churches. What also should be investigated is whether the Churches would be able to carry such an additional burden.

Then: a minister especially for broadcasting would be nice, assuming that we have such a man suitable for this kind of work. Special qualities are required for this work. We can right away eliminate all of the ministers who have the slightest trace of an accent. We should also eliminate anyone who in style and voice sounds like those of all sorts of sects and movements who in a "singing manner" try to impress the listeners. We don't need a special "pulpit voice" or something like that. I could go on mentioning all sorts of qualities which the man should possess, but we aren't that far yet.

There is another argument which weighs more heavily, I should say. That is the fact that not all vacancies within our rather small federation have been filled. I certainly would not advocate creating the position of "radio minister" in order to provide employ for one more of our graduates, but think that the time has not yet come.

All this apart from the fact that we should watch out for all kinds of "special ministerial positions" which might create a special group of ministers who are in danger of losing touch with the Congregations. If we start now already, who knows where we shall end up! Recently I saw statistics of the Christian Reformed Church which showed that an alarming number of ministers are serving in all sorts of capacities and "have" no Congregation. Let us watch out for a development into that direction.

Good tidings came to us from the Cloverdale part of the *Church News*.

"The Acts of Synod are ready to go to the presses and should be shipped in a week or two. When we receive them will depend on the postal service. I am sure that they will furnish food for much thought and ammunition for many a debate. Let us hope that it will all be of a constructive character."

"The first clerk will arrange to have baptism certificate forms custom-printed at a local printer," Langley tells us. Too

bad that I read this too late, otherwise I could have reminded the brethren of it that Premier Printing did issue certificates quite a few years ago. They were not "custom-printed," but they are very attractive, and I am certain that Premier would be most happy to insert whatever a Consistory likes to see in them.

For a good understanding: I have no shares in Premier Printing Ltd., nor do I get any commission on anything. I only try to be helpful.

The same Consistory also discussed "the necessity of re-instituting Dutch services. . . . It is observed that there is a growing demand for this among older brothers and sisters, immigrants and visitors from The Netherlands. This topic will be further discussed at a later meeting."

Someone sent me the following quotation from a bulletin with the question whether it is Reformed. "Besides, since I intend to appeal the decision I am not bound by it in any way."

My answer: Whatever it is, Reformed it is in no way. It is baloney, yea, worse.

I do not know where the idea came from, although I know that there are some within the Churches that are equally confused about the matter. It is sometimes thought that, if you appeal a decision you are not bound by it. "Mocht je willen!" they would say in Dutch. (That's what you would like to see!) I would challenge anyone to prove to me from truly Reformed authors that the fact that I disagree with a decision and am appealing it is tantamount to a licence to disregard it and to act as if I am not bound by it.

I realize that there is no folly for which no example can be quoted from history. What is now has been before, we would say with Ecclesiastes.

However, there is still a difference between showing that something was done before and proving that it is Reformed, Scriptural, that it is the Church Polity that is valid and honoured among us.

If any of the students at our College proclaimed such nonsense I would make him repeat the whole course.

Have I made myself clear?

Sorry that I have to close on such a sad note.

Perhaps some cheerier news next time.

Sincerely

VO

**Consulaat-Generaal
Der Nederlanden
CONSULATE GENERAL
OF THE NETHERLANDS**

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Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3
Phone: (416) 598-2520

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BUITENWEG, Otto, geboren 31 december 1932 te Maassluis, laatstbekende adres in Canada (in 1977): 116 Hazelton Toronto, Ontario, gehuwd met Marion Waite. Uit een eerste huwelijk zijn twee zonen, thans woonachtig in de Vancouver area. Betrokkene is in 1965 naar Canada geemigreerd en is aangesloten bij de: Scientologic Sect, leider: Ron Hubbard.

JANSEN, Antonius Pieter, geboren op 14 april 1919 te Oosterhout, laatstbekende

woonplaats in Nederland: Den Haag, Hackfortstraat 32 naar Canada vertrokken op 15 december 1956.

DE KORTE, Adrianus, geboren op 28 december 1922 te Oudewater, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Rolafweg Noord 14, Lopik, naar Canada vertrokken op 26 augustus 1976. Laatstbekende adres: Hillier, Ontario K0K 2J0.

KREMER, K.J., geboren 15 april 1919, laatstbekende adres in Canada: RR 2, Blyth, Ontario.

MARINUS, Anne Elisabeth, geboren op 11 juni 1915 te Doorn, laatstbekende woonplaats in Nederland: Alkmaar, naar Canada vertrokken op 25 mei 1950.

NEDERPELT, Tony, geboren in 1939 of 1940 ongeveer, naar Canada vertrokken in 1953, laatstbekende adres: 55 Tindale Cres. 1109, Hamilton, Ontario, laatste werkgever: Levy Real Estate Ltd. 481 Main Street East, Hamilton, Ontario.

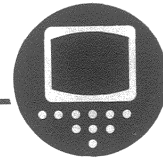
OKKERSE, Nelly Alida Annie, geboren op 3 november 1938 te Arnhem, laatstbekende woonplaats: Velp, naar Canada vertrokken op 4 augustus 1959.

ROZA, J.H., geboren op 17 april 1919, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Schaikseweg 67, Leerdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 december 1967.

STEYZIGER (OF STEYSIGER), Bart, geboren op 30 juni 1906, laatstbekende woonplaats in Nederland: Leerdam, naar Canada vertrokken omstreeks 1927.

VIS, Maria J., geboren 9 september 1941 gehuwd geweest met Jacobus A. de Jong, geboren 9 juli 1936 uit welk huwelijk is geboren een zoon Franciscus A.J. de Jong op 20 juli 1966. Mevrouw Vis is op 13 juni 1968 naar Canada vertrokken.

The Consul-Generaal,
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER



The coming Reformed Ecumenical Synod meeting

This month of June the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) will have its meeting in Chicago. The *R.E.S. News Exchange* of May 15, 1984 gave the following information with respect to the position of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (synodical), under the heading "GKN comes under scrutiny at Chicago."

(Grand Rapids) The theological and social developments in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN) have for a long time been a concern for the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. The RES Nimes 1980, after much debate, instructed the Interim Committee to consult with the GKN concerning their disputed views. The committee spent a week in The Netherlands in April 1983. The report of the Interim Committee appears in the printed Agenda and will provide the basis for discussion on the GKN at the RES Chicago 1984.

A communication from the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) in South Africa to RES Chicago 1984 questions the GKN's view of Scripture as it is stated in the report *God With Us*. The NGK further finds the GKN's view on homosexuality unacceptable and its membership in the World Council of Churches, "because of (the WCC's) maintenance of terrorism," as irresponsible. The NGK warns that it "has become difficult for the NGK to remain in the RES together with the GKN."

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has requested the Synod to declare that the GKN no longer qualifies for membership in the RES because it is a member of the World Council of Churches, allows women to hold church office, retains in teaching office men who openly deny central doctrines of the confessions, has issued a report that "undermines the inspiration and authority of Scripture," plans to reunite with the Hervormde Kerk and admits homosexuals to the Lord's Supper and ecclesiastical office.

The issue of homosexuality (homophilia) has also been under study by an international committee appointed in 1980. This committee now states that it will not be able to report in 1984. The convener, the Rev. Clarence Boomsma, would like the mandate of the committee to be continued after 1984 although the homosexuality issue itself will be on the 1984 agenda.

The report of the Interim Committee focuses on the GKN's view of Scripture, its actions in regard to homosexuality and the attitude of the GKN to the theological views of Prof. Harry Kuitert.

The Interim Committee report mentions that the GKN delegation assured the committee that the GKN formula of subscription "unambiguously accords supreme authority to Scripture," but that there is also an ongoing process of studying the hermeneutical problem. The conclusion of the Interim Committee concerning the mind of the GKN is that "there are relatively few settled generally accepted opinions; there is rather a stream of changing ideas." This pertains both to theological and social issues.

In its report the committee asked two basic questions:

1. Do the positions of the GKN on these issues do justice to the testimony of Scripture?
2. Do the positions of the GKN on these issues show a departure from the Reformed tradition?

In searching for an answer to the first question the committee expressed its concern on how the GKN arrived at some of its decisions: "Even before a consensus is reached on the meaning of the Biblical data for the topic under discussion, and even in the face of a continuing variety of viewpoints, the Synod issues pastoral statements that at least implicitly rest on an ethical assumption and steer the church in a definite direction. This is a dangerous precedent which may easily lead to un-Biblical positions. In fact, we believe that this is happening."

As for the GKN report on homosexuality, the Interim Committee says: "To our sorrow we must conclude that in the matter of homophilial relationships the report *Homophilia* has not convinced us that the GKN position is in conformity with Scripture."

The committee had difficulty in answering the question concerning departure from the Reformed tradition. It finds as disturbing the GKN view on human sexual relations and on the continuing validity of the Biblical norms. "Previously the GKN considered all sexual relations between persons of the same sex as sinful. Now it calls for the acceptance of homophilial members of the church. We were told that in fact such people do occupy church office and are often admitted to the Lord's Supper.

"Perhaps the most far-reaching change is the different view on the continuing validity of the Biblical norms. This constitutes a departure from the accepted Reformed tradition. Moreover, the way that this is applied to the view on homophilial relationships not only departs clearly from the Reformed tradition but bases it on a highly questionable use of the Scriptures."

The Interim Committee submits five recommendations:

1. That Synod, deeply aware that God's Word sheds light on the lives of His peo-

ple as they listen to the Word in this secular age, express appreciation to the GKN for their struggle to understand the Word of God as evident in the report *God With Us*.

2. That Synod, convinced of the need of all God's people, office-bearers and other members of the church, to follow the light of the written Word of God, regrets the GKN's use of certain philosophical and theological categories that threaten to diminish Scripture's clarity.
3. That Synod express its concern that the GKN's view on the nature of the authority of Scripture, as presented in *God With Us*, will lead to a weakening of the binding authority of Scripture for the faith and life of both the churches and the individual believers, and will tend to obscure the factual nature of what had been recorded in Scripture concerning God's miraculous deeds in the history of His people and of the world.
4. That Synod express its concern about the manner in which the view of God's law as the rule of life for God's thankful children in a world of moral decay is undermined by a one-sided stress on the Love Command expressed in *God With Us* and *Homophilia* which robs Christians of the guidance God has given them in many other commandments in both the Old and New Testaments.
5. That the RES express to all those among the member churches who are concerned for the purity of both their own witness as well as the unity of the Church of Christ and the RES itself, the RES's similar concern, and encourage the member churches to suggest advice to the Interim Committee as to how it may help them in their concerns.

The President of the Interim Committee, the Rev. John Galbraith, thought that the committee did not go far enough. He has stated that RES Chicago 1984 should either inform the GKN that they no longer qualify for membership in the RES or inform its member churches that the variety of divergences from Scripture and the creeds are allowable within the Constitution of the RES.

It is not such a great wonder that members of the RES have difficulties with the GKN. These churches have difficulties with themselves. The same *R.E.S. News Exchange* continues with the next information about the GKN.

Ecumenical identity crisis in Reformed Churches in The Netherlands

(Luntenen, The Netherlands) The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN)

are unsure about their Reformed identity. This identity is felt most keenly in the ecumenical contacts the denomination has with other churches in The Netherlands.

This was the thrust of a report from Prof. H.B. Weijland to the General Synod on behalf of the committee for national ecumenical contacts in The Netherlands. In his view the churches should carefully describe what they regard as the unique input of the Reformed Churches in their contacts with other churches. He also states that in determining what is authentically Reformed the churches should honestly face

the mounting polarization found in the churches.

The ensuing discussion, as reported in *Trouw*, made it evident that synod also was unsure about what it means to be authentically Reformed. There was no clear answer as to what the specific Reformed input in the ecumenical contacts should be.

It is sad to read this. But it shows that the GKN are no longer Reformed.

While especially the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa has its difficulties with the membership of the GKN, the

GKN will bring in objections against membership of the South African churches in the RES on account of the apartheid in that country. Also this racial problem will receive again the attention of the RES. We certainly hope that the RES will take a firm Reformed stand, and will not compromise but maintain as its basis the Reformed Standards. Only in that way this organization will give a truly helping hand to the GKN.

J. GEERTSEMA

The great Okanagan awaits YOU

It has been some time since we have written any information regarding the Okanagan Valley. Although some news has been spread through the encouraging words of "News Medley," we hope to generate further interest and thereby promote church growth so that also in the Okanagan we may soon have an instituted church.

The Lord will gather and preserve His Church in spite of recessions or poor economic conditions. We therefore also trust that further growth will occur not as a result of our endeavour but only through the will of our Father.

Church and activities

The church in the Okanagan is presently a house congregation under the supervision of Chilliwack. At the time of this writing we have 32 members attending regularly and receive many visitors into our midst throughout the year. Over and above the monthly ministerial visits appointed by Classis Pacific, we often have ministers vacationing in this beautiful valley who are willing to preach the Word or, on occasion, to play the organ. Church services are conducted in the Eva Seaton Hall in Winfield at 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. September through May. Catechism is taught between services. When catechism classes are suspended during the months of June, July and August, our worship services are held at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. There is always time for chit chat and lunch after the morning service. The Young People's Society meets regularly, alternating between Vernon and Kelowna. These young people are also our "home mission" committee. We recently acquired a speaker system for our babysit area in the basement of the hall so that no one needs to miss a service. Winfield, BC was chosen as being the most cen-



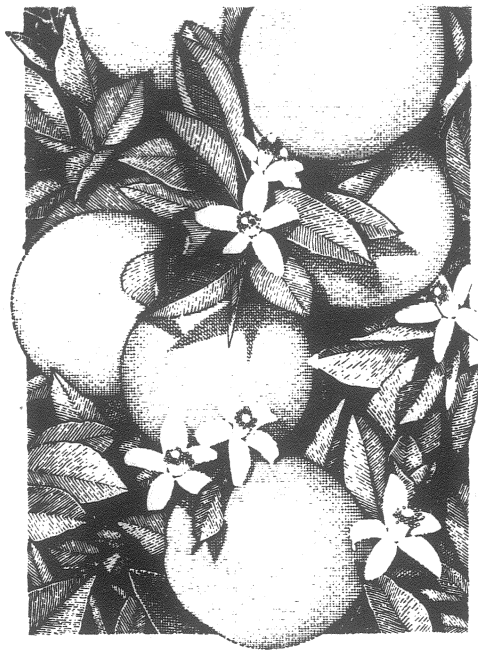
Eva Seaton Hall in Winfield. Summer services at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

tral location for the membership. The driving time from both Vernon and Kelowna is approximately thirty minutes. We also have members coming from as far south as Penticton and north from Salmon Arm, both approximately an hour and half traveling time. These drives may sound long, but they become short as we view the gorgeous roadside scenery.

Education

All of life must be lived in honour of our Lord. Vernon Christian School strives to teach all subject matter from a Biblical perspective. The moral aspects of

education and the discipline process are established according to the directives found in Scripture. Students are made aware that they are image bearers of Christ in the way they act and speak toward each other as well as the way they study and participate in school sports. Grades one through ten are taught following the Provincial Curriculum as well as the guidelines set up by the Society of Christian Schools in BC. Kindergarten is offered at all the public schools. Okanagan College offers first and second year university transfer, career, vocational and community education areas.



General information

The Okanagan is derived from the Indian words, Kana Gana, for "place of the lakes" which speaks for itself. Amid this wonderland of valleys, mountains, streams and lakes, vibrant communities have developed. Virtually every type of farming in the province is represented here, dairy and beef cattle, fruit trees, vegetables, swine, turkeys, poultry, assorted livestock, and greenhouse and nursery crops. Vernon is located in the South Central Interior of the Province of British Columbia, 540 km. (320 miles) equidistant from the major urban areas of Vancouver, BC, Calgary, AB, and Spokane, WA, USA. The population of greater Vernon is 38,500 with a trading area of 90,000. Vernon has fruit and vegetable processing plants, asparagus growing, sawmills, large dairy, and wood processing plants as secondary industries. Fiberglass Manufacturing (including the well-known waterslides), recreational vehicle industries and Consumer's Glass' largest plant in Western Canada are some of the other economic stabilizers in the area. Just north of Vernon is Armstrong, predominantly a dry-land farming area but also home of a cheese manufacturer, sawmill, plywood and veneer plant, chicken processing plant, and a flour mill (Roger's Wholesome Foods Ltd.) Twenty-two km. east of Vernon is the village of Lumby. It's population of 1300 and surrounding area population of about 4500 citizens keep the wood product/logging industry thriving in the North Okanagan. Agriculture is also an important industry along the fertile valleys. Kelowna is one of the largest cities in the interior of BC, with a population of over 50,000. It is well-

known for recreational vehicle manufacturing such as Okanagan and Vanguard units, as well as White Tractors' only Canadian truck plant. The North Okanagan is serviced by regularly scheduled Pacific Western and Time Air flights into Kelowna/Vernon Regional Airport. It is also serviced by Greyhound bus lines and two railways (CPR and CNR). Good major highways to Vancouver, Prince George, Edmonton and Calgary.

Recreational facilities and scenery

The Okanagan terrain is interesting and varied with a chain of blue lakes stringing through the valleys. The lakes provide excellent opportunities for swimming, fishing, sailing, windsurfing and various other water sports. For vacationers there are six provincial parks, plus many private campgrounds within the area. Springtime is a photographer's paradise with blossoming fruit trees on the orchard benchlands. Being centrally located in BC, the Okanagan is a natural

Summer is not the only great time in the Valley. When the temperature begins to drop, fall colours are splendid. Winter brings numerous opportunities to enjoy outdoor sports such as snowmobiling, downhill and cross-country skiing in the dry Okanagan powder on the easily accessible mountains such as Big White, Silver Star and Apex Alpine.

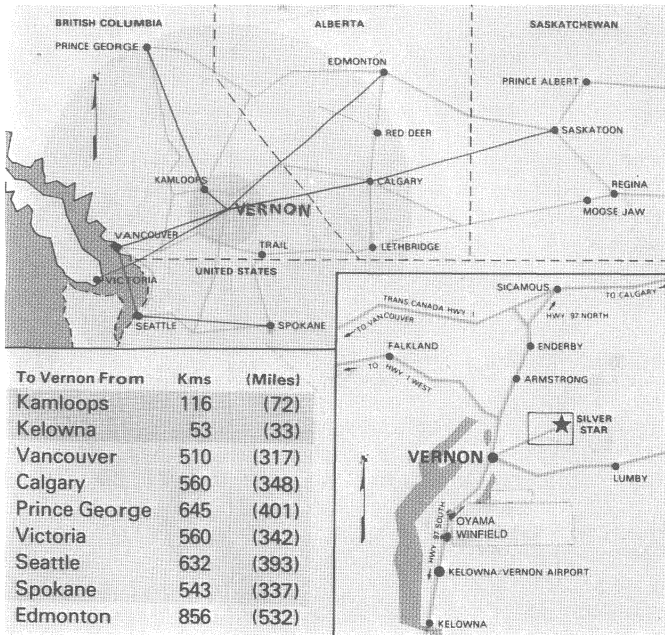
If you are considering relocating to the North Okanagan and have questions regarding the area, The Economic Development Commission (NOCI) can provide you with economic data, and assist in answering concerns pertaining to possible business ventures and work with you in locating suitable industrial land. In addition they can provide information on the various government grants available to small business. To help cut red tape contact them directly at 3700 - 33rd Street, Vernon, BC V1T 5T6, phone (604) 545-0771. One of their objectives is to stimulate and promote economic development through the establishment of new business.



St. Mary's Church in Oyama, our alternative when our regular hall is not available (3 or 4 times a year)

place to vacation or stopover on a trip from the Coast to the East, or vice versa. The drive is a joy to tourists and residents alike as cherries wink, red as stoplights, high in the trees. Apricots hang clustered upon the drooping tree limbs. Like an endless smorgasbord, fruit and vegetable stands line both sides of the highways.

If anyone is contemplating to spend their holidays in the Okanagan, our friendly hospitality does provide coffee between church services during the summer months but we ask you to pack some sandwiches sufficient for your own family. We generally take this time for fellowship and getting to know one another.



When it happens ...

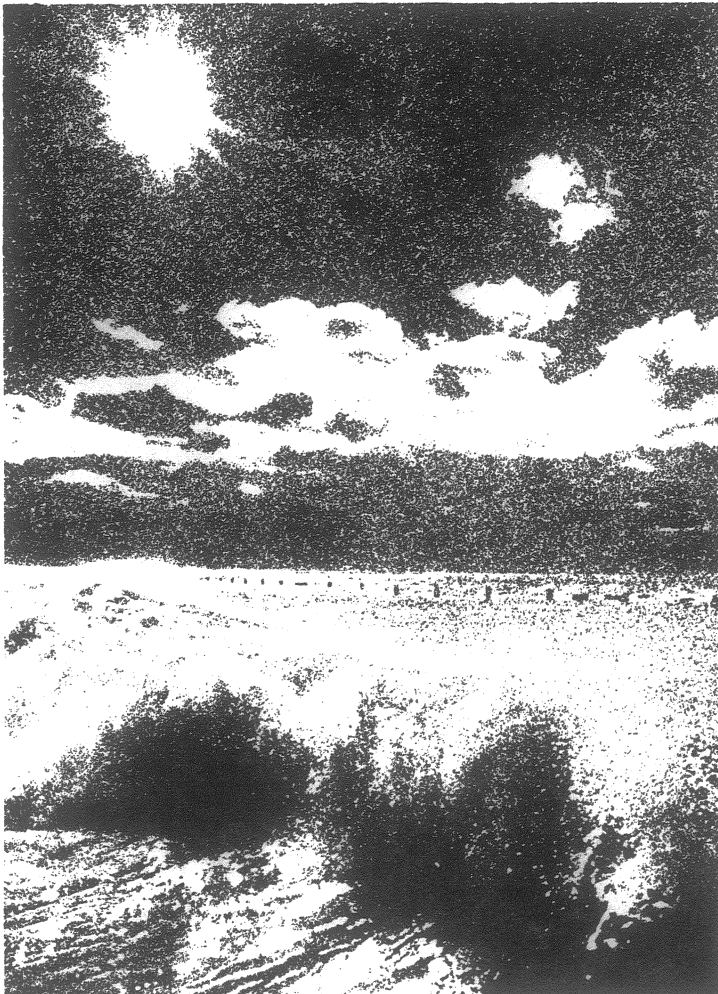
	Blossom Dates	Ripening Dates
Apricots.....	April 7 - 30	July 15 - Aug. 10
Cherries.....	April 15 - May 10	June 25 - July 20
Peaches.....	April 15 - May 10	July 30 - Sept. 10
Prunes.....	April 20 - May 16	Sept. 1 - Sept. 20
Pears.....	April 20 - May 16	Aug. 15 - Sept. 15
Apples.....	April 25 - May 20	Aug. 1 - Oct. 20
Grapes.....		Sept. 5 - Oct. 10

For further information please contact either:

G.K. Deters or J. Vandertas
 Site 15, Comp. 59 Site 15, Comp. 85
 RR 4, Vernon, BC V1T 6L7 RR 4, Vernon, BC V1T 6L7
 Phone (604) 545-9352 Phone (604) 549-3055

GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN

John Newton, 1779

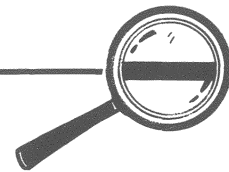


*Glorious things of thee are spoken,
 Zion, city of our God;
 He, whose word cannot be broken,
 Form'd thee for His own abode;
 On the Rock of Ages founded,
 What can shake thy sure repose?
 With Salvation's walls surrounded,
 Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.*

*See, the streams of living waters
 Springing from eternal love,
 Well supply thy sons and daughters,
 And all fear of want remove.
 Who can faint while such a river
 Ever flows their thirst t'assuage.
 Grace, which, like the Lord, the Giver,
 Never fails from age to age?*

*Round each habitation hovering,
 See the cloud and fire appear
 For a glory and a covering,
 Showing that the Lord is near;
 Thus deriving from their banner,
 Light by night and shade by day,
 Safe they feed upon the manna
 Which he gives them when they pray.*

*Blest inhabitants of Zion,
 Washed in their Redeemer's blood!
 Jesus whom their souls rely on,
 Makes them kings and priests to God.
 'Tis his love His people raises
 Over self to reign as kings:
 And as priests, His solemn praises
 Each for a thank-offering brings.*



Continued Classis Alberta/Manitoba, Edmonton, AB, May 15-17, 1984

The chairman, the Rev. A. de Jager opens the meeting in a Christian way and welcomes the delegates.

Appeals of several brethren and sisters are dealt with in closed sessions. It is decided to make the decisions public by means of the Acts.

The committee appointed to draft a new mandate for the Committee for Needy Churches submits its report. A new mandate is tentatively adopted. The Committee for Needy Churches is appointed as follows: J. Harthoorn, H. Kippers Jr. and W. Noot.

The Providence Church at Edmonton is appointed to convene the next classis for Tuesday, November 13, 1984, at 8:00 p.m. The suggested officers are: Rev. P.K.A. DeBoer chairman; Rev. A. de Jager, vice-chairman; Rev. M. van Beveren, clerk.

For the Regional Synod 1984 the following delegates are appointed: Rev. A. de Jager, Rev. M. van Beveren, Rev. J.D. Wielenga, and elders J. Kuik, A. Poppe, H. Veenendaal. The alternate delegates are: Rev. P.K.A. DeBoer, Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar, Rev. S. DeBruin, in that order, and elders W. Gortemaker, C. Hoogerdyk, A. Hamoen, in that order. During the Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O. one church requests and receives advice in a matter of discipline.

Upon the request of the Church at Winnipeg the Rev. B.J. Berends is honourably released from his service in Classis Alberta/Manitoba, since he has accepted the call extended to him by the Church at Smithers, BC.

Censura according to Art. 43 C.O. is not necessary.

The Acts will be taken care of by the moderamen.

The Press Release is adopted.

Rev. M. van Beveren leads in prayer and thanksgiving.

The chairman adjourns the meeting.

For the Classis,
M. VAN BEVEREN

Classis Ontario-South, Canadian/American Reformed Churches, London, ON, May 2, 1984.

1. On behalf of the convening Church at Grand Rapids its minister Rev. P. Kingma requested the brethren to sing from Psalm 68 the stanzas 7, 8, and 12. He read Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:44-47; John

20:19, 20; and Mark 16:19-20. After prayer he addressed the meeting with some appropriate words related to the read portions of Scripture.

2. The Credentials were examined. It was reported that the Churches were duly represented. The Church at Watford had sent one representative.

3. Classis was constituted. The chairman Rev. Cl. Stam welcomed the brethren. An especial welcome was extended to the guests br. C. Walinga, Rev. W. Loopstra, and Rev. Dr. K. Deddens.

4. The Agenda was adopted with some items being added to it.

5. Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O. was held. Advice was asked and given at request.

6. A colloquium was held with Dr. Deddens. Classis expressed its satisfaction. For the approbation of the call extended to Rev. Dr. K. Deddens the necessary documents were checked and found in good order. Hereafter the chairman requested Classis to sing Psalm 134:3. Rev. Dr. Deddens signed the Subscription Form, and addressed the brethren with words of gratitude.

7. A letter from the Church at Grand Rapids, March 15, 1984, re convening Classis at a later date was read. Classis approved of the actions of the convening Church at Grand Rapids.

Letter and excerpts from the minutes of the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic of the OPC, Dec. 3, 1983, were read.

It was decided to pass this letter on to the Church at Grand Rapids since this Church is considering the matter discussed in the letter. Classis will inform the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic of the OPC of this action.

A request from the Women's Society "According to Thy Word," London, Ontario, to raise the classical fee for lunches and refreshments to \$125.00 has been granted.

The letter of the Church at Grand Rapids re a minister for Church work-at-large in the USA, was read and discussed. Classis advises that, if the Church at Grand Rapids, MI., proceeds with the calling of a minister, this minister should be subject to the consistory of Grand Rapids' Church according to the Articles 6 and 7 of the Church Order. Classis expresses itself to be in favour, in principle, with this proposal to cooperate in calling a minister-at-large, but it would like to see a more detailed task-description for such a minister, and it would like to give the

Churches more time to address to the financial implications of this proposal. The Church at Grand Rapids can put this proposal on the table of a future Classis.

A letter of four theological students at the Canadian Reformed College, Hamilton, Ontario, was read. They request that the date of the next Classis be set for June 20, 1984, with respect to time needed for the preparatory examination.

Classis complied with this request.

8. Reports: The Churches were reminded of their obligation regarding Art. 19 C.O. The Churches were reminded of a letter sent to them by the Church at Grand Rapids, asking their support for Reformed instruction by their ministers requested by the Tri-County Reformed Church at Laurel, Maryland.

9. Appointments: The Church at Smithville was appointed to represent the Churches of the classical Ontario-South district at the installation of Rev. Dr. K. Deddens in the Church at Hamilton.

The moderamen of the next Classis will be: chairman - Rev. J. Van Rietschoten; clerk - Rev. C. Stam; assessor: Rev. W. Huizinga. Place: London, Ontario; date: June 20, 1984; time: 10:00 a.m.

The following schedule for pulpit supply is adopted: For the Church at Watford: July 8 - Rev. K. Deddens; Aug. 19 - Rev. J. Van Rietschoten; Sept. 23 - Rev. J. Van Rietschoten. For the Church at London: July 15 - Rev. W. Huizinga; Aug. 26 - Rev. K. Deddens; Sept. 9 - Rev. P. Kingma.

10. The Personal Question Period has been held.

11. The Acts have been read and adopted.

12. The Press Release has been read and approved.

13. Censure ad Art. 43 C.O. was not necessary.

14. The ladies who took care of the meals and refreshments were warmly thanked for their dedicated service, and notified of the decision to raise the fee. We sang Psalm 122:3, and Rev. Stam closed Classis with a prayer of thanksgiving.

For the Classis,
P. KINGMA

Classis Pacific, Surrey, BC, May 23, 1984

Art. 1: The chairman of the convening church, Rev. J. Geertsema, calls the meeting to order at the appointed time,

requests that we sing Psalm 122:1, 3, reads Eph. 6:10-20, and leads in prayer. Rev. Geertsema welcomes the delegates to Surrey, speaks a few appropriate words, and declares the meeting *opened*. The delegates of the Church at Smithers report on the credentials. All the churches are duly represented. The Church at Chilliwack has an instruction.

Art. 2: Classis is *constituted*. The officers are: chairman, Rev. J. Visscher; vice-chairman, Rev. C. Bouwman; clerk, Rev. W. Pouwelse.

Art. 3 The chairman, Rev. J. Visscher, mentions the following *facts*:
— Rev. B. J. Berends has accepted the call to Smithers;

— Rev. R. Boersema has decided to terminate his work as missionary for the Church at Surrey;

— Rev. E. Kampen of Houston is present at Classis for the first time as a delegate.

The agenda for Classis is adopted.

Art. 4: Classis deals with the following *correspondence*:

a. The Church at Carman requests approval to have the Regional Synod West convened in the month of September instead of the proposed spring date. Classis consents to the request.

b. A letter is received from the Presbytery of the Northwest of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, inviting a delegate from Classis Pacific to the combined meeting of the Presbyteries of the Orthodox Church and the Presbyterian Church of America, to be held April 27 and 28, 1984, in Bothell, WA. This invitation is too late. A communication will be sent thanking them for their invitation, informing them that their invitation has arrived too late for us to act upon, and suggesting that future communications can be dealt with by a subsequent Classis.

Art. 5: Classis hears the following *proposal and request*:

a. A schedule for preaching arrangements in the Okanagan Valley is presented, and after some discussion, approved.

b. The Church at Chilliwack asks Classis for advice, whether or not Chilliwack should begin investigation into the possibility of calling a minister to serve the house congregation in the Okanagan. Classis decides to advise the Church at Chilliwack to investigate the feasibility of calling a minister for the Okanagan Valley.

Art. 6: Classis receives three *reports*:
a. The committee appointed by Classis Pacific, dated April 27, 1983, to study the matter of delegation to Classis of ministers who are not serving their congregations in a regular capacity presents their report. Classis decides to place the matter on the agenda of the next Classis. This gives all the Churches the opportunity to

discuss the report. It also gives to the Church at Smithers the opportunity to consult with Rev. VanSpronsen on this matter.

b. The Treasurer's Report is presented and withdrawn, due to discrepancies. It will be resubmitted, after corrections have been made, at the next Classis. The assessment for the Churches is set at two dollars per communicant member per year. The Churches are asked to pay the treasurer. The treasurer, br. P. VanEgmond, being present, is thanked for the work he has done so far.

c. The report concerning the Inspection of the Archives informs Classis that the archives are found to be in good order.

Art. 7: The *approbation of the call* of Rev. B.J. Berends to the Church at Smithers is next on the agenda. Since a number of documents re the call are not available to Classis, Classis is not able to approbate the call of Rev. B.J. Berends.

Art. 8: During *question period ad Art. 44 C.O.*: The Church at Abbotsford informs Classis that work is being done to begin worship services in the USA. These worship services will begin, D.V., September 2, 1984.

Art. 9: Classis makes the following *appointments*:

a. The convening Church for the next Classis is Abbotsford. The date is set for Oct. 10, 1984; the meeting is to commence at 9:00 a.m.

b. The suggested officers for next Classis are: chairman, Rev. C. Bouwman; vice-chairman, Rev. W. Pouwelse; clerk, Rev. J. Geertsema.

c. Delegates are appointed to Regional Synod West 1984. Ministers: *primi*- Revs. J. Geertsema; W. Pouwelse; M. VanderWel; and J. Visscher; *secundi*- C. Bouwman; E. Kampen; in that order. Elders: *primi*- H. Berends; A. DeLeeuw; R. Fenema; E. VanWoudenberg; *secundi*- R. Klaver; T.J. VanPopta; W. Kanis; M. Vreugdenhil; in that order.

d. The appointments as made by Classis Pacific, Smithers, October 4, 5, 1983, are reappointed, with the following addition: Rev. C. Bouwman is appointed as second alternate church visitor.

Art. 10: No questions are raised during *question period*.

Art. 11: Censure ad Art. 44 C.O.: the chairman notes with gratitude that censure is not required.

Art. 12: The Acts are read and adopted.

Art. 13: The *Press Release* is read and approved.

Art. 14: After the ladies who so kindly served us were appropriately thanked, the chairman requests that we sing Psalm 84:1, 2, and leads in thanksgiving prayer. Classis is *closed*.

On behalf of Classis,
C. BOUWMAN

Executive Committee, Canadian Reformed Teacher's College Association, June 1, 1984

The chairman, G. Nordeman, opens the meeting in the normal Christian manner. He welcomes all present and he expresses our thankfulness over the fact that just last week (May 25) we could witness the first graduation evening. We were also very happy that so many interested people attended so that the Cornerstone Church was nearly filled to capacity.

Since a quorum for the executive meetings was never formally established, it is decided that a minimum of three of the executive members must be present in order to have a legal meeting. (For this meeting five are present in addition to the principal, and the treasurer.)

The treasurer's report is presented by J. Gelderman. It is clear that before August 31 at least \$14,000.00 must be received. Even when that is received, we will be starting the new school year with \$0.00!! This is not a healthy situation; therefore we trust that all members who

are still in arrears will respond actively to this situation.

The membership committee also brings report of their activities and eventually a report for publication will be prepared which will show where the support for the College exists.

The principal makes his report. Following this report a proposal is made and adopted to have the graduation festivities organized in the same format as was done this time. Appropriate "thank-you" letters will be sent to all those that participated to make the graduation evening a success.

As the one-year program cannot be offered due to lack of enrollment, an adjustment to the number of part-time staff is required and will be made. Eight students have enrolled for the three-year program starting this September.

After the question period and establishing the date for the next meeting (July 6), this meeting is adjourned.

For the executive,
C.J. NOBELS



Hello Busy Beavers,

Summer is here!

Green, green grass, shiny new leaves, colourful flowers, everywhere — isn't it just great!

Here's a poem to match from one of the Busy Beavers.

GOD'S CREATION

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

* * *

Some Busy Beavers have another reason to celebrate, too! They have a summer birthday coming up! Let's wish them all a very happy day with your family and friends. May the Lord bless and keep you all in the year ahead.

JULY

Ian Hulzebosch	1 Sharalee Terpsma	13
Ingrid Veenendaal	2 Irene De Jong	14
Jessica Bijker	3 Kimberley Van Dooren	16
Debbie Jagt	3 Yolanda Van Egmond	16
Jeannie Barendregt	4 Anita De Vries	17
Katrina De Jong	4 Jessica Linde	18
Monica Haveman	4 Lloyd Lubbers	19
Angela Linde	4 Tammy Veldkamp	22
Shona Meerstra	9 Marsha Stieva	26
Rosalin Swaving	9 Jason Van Vliet	26
Joanne Hamoen	10 Darlene Lodder	29
Wilma Meerveld	11 Esther Bouwman	30
Karen Schouten	11 Erica Moesker	31
Rosemary De Haas	12 Michelle Peters	31



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Peter Sikkema*. You're a real Busy Beaver already! Thanks for the puzzle. How did you help plant all those onions, Peter? And will you help sell them, too?

Hello, *Heather Vandenberg*. It was nice to hear from you again. Are you looking forward to summer, Heather? Thank you for the puzzle.

What songs did you play for your variety night, *Carol Witteveen*? It must have been a very interesting programme! Did you get the wordsearch yet, Carol?

Congratulations on winning the trophy, *Alida Knol*. You and your friend must have been very excited, winning together. Thank you for the puzzle, Alida.

Hello, *Alan Van Raalte*. I see you have been busy! That's great. Keep it up! What are you planning to do this summer, Alan?

Quiz Time!

Soon it will be Father's Day.
 Can you name these Bible

FATHERS

1. Father who had his faith tested _____
2. Father who failed _____
3. Father of nations _____
4. Father of twelve tribes _____
5. Father who blessed the wrong son _____
6. Father of all living _____
7. Father betrayed by his son _____
8. Father who was partial _____
9. Father who lost all his children by tragedy _____
10. Father who wept over his son _____
11. Father whose sons were rejected for the priesthood by God _____
12. Father who gave His son for man's sin _____
13. Father whose daughter the Lord Jesus raised from the dead _____
14. Father of the oldest man in the Bible _____



CODE QUIZ

by Busy Beaver *Alida Knol*

KEY	
1-I	13-H
2-E	16-A
5-T	19-G
7-O	10-V
9-S	8-B
11-D	6-R
12-N	4-C

1	12	5	13	2				
8	2	19	1	12	12	1	12	19
19	7	11						
4	6	2	16	5	2	11		
5	13	2						
13	2	16	10	2	12	9		
16	12	11		5	13	2		
2	16	6	5	13				