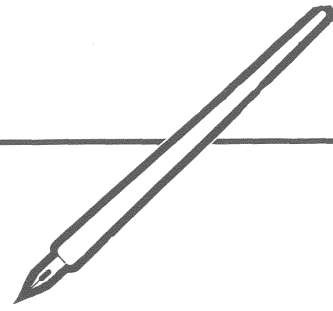




**Clarion**  
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## Restore the balance

During the last weeks no fewer than three policemen were killed in the Toronto area. And this is only one of the regions where violent crime, even though it may not be on the increase, certainly is not on the decrease either.

As is understandable, there is a cry for the return of the death penalty. Especially the chiefs of police of the various local forces advocate such a return.

The latest killing in Toronto added fuel to the fire.

"The shooting brought new calls for a return to capital punishment, with Kingston Police Chief Gerald Rice saying bluntly that those who kill "should get what they give." "You don't let mad dogs continue to roam the neighbourhood. You eliminate them. You destroy them." This is what our daily newspaper reported.

One can understand the words of Chief Rice and one can understand the indignation of all others who spoke in similar vein. We can even agree with one of the Chief's reported statements: Those who kill "should get what they give." However, if this is all, we have to call it insufficient. There is no basis for it. It only amounts to "tit for tat."

All sorts of arguments can be brought to the fore in favour of reintroduction of capital punishment, but as long as the basic point is not seen, it remains very pragmatic and will not gain permanent supporters. Public opinion is very fickle. Under the impression of recent killings of policemen, people may call for reinstatement of the death penalty; but as time drags on, the mood changes and the impressions become vaguer and vaguer.

### Deterrent?

One of the arguments which is adduced in favour of capital punishment is that it will prove to be a deterrent and will make someone think twice before taking a person's life. In support of such argument statistics are quoted and it is tried to prove that abolition of the death penalty resulted in more murders being committed. Since statistics can be used to prove almost anything, others succeed in making it look as if abolition of the death penalty did not have any noticeable effect on capital crimes.

And indeed, it is very doubtful that capital punishment will be a deterrent and that someone who is planning to commit a murder will take into account that his own life will be taken as well.

In the first place, someone who commits a crime will always flatter himself with the expectation either that it will not be discovered who committed it or that, if it is discovered, he will succeed in remaining free by going underground or by fleeing to another country.

And in the second place: are not many of those who commit murder either for personal reasons or in the course of com-

mitting a different crime, oftentimes desperados or people who could not care less if they themselves perished in the course of the whole process? They live with danger and expect that one day they will pay the ultimate penalty, but who cares? They keep going and take things as they come for as long as it lasts. Reinstatement of capital punishment won't make one bit of difference.

Besides, this argument is completely pragmatic. The necessity of capital punishment is thus argued from the (possible) effects it may have on the actions of people. As long as an argument is completely pragmatic, opinions can differ and it all depends on the feelings of the majority at a given moment.

### Restoring balance

There is for Christians only one argument which cuts ice. It is the argument that the LORD God has commanded that whosoever sheds forth man's blood, his blood shall be shed forth by man. The feelings of people are irrelevant when it comes to obeying the command of the Lord. Until this is the conviction of the people, the debate will sway back and forth, the issue will become a burning one when policemen are murdered; it will be put on the backburner when time goes on and nothing of that nature happens for quite a while.

The call for the return of capital punishment is generally restricted to people who murder policemen or prison guards while on duty. This, too, is an inadmissible restriction of what the Lord demands. Why should a murderer of a policeman or of a prison guard be put to death but not one who kills his ex-girlfriend from jealousy or one who commits a murder in the course of a robbery?

When someone's life is taken, there comes an unbalancing of life; and life can be brought back into balance only when the murderer's life is taken. As Chief Rice is reported to have said, they "should get what they give." No, we do not approve of the wording, but the thought itself is in the line of what the LORD commanded in the Old Testament days: restore the balance by taking an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This is not typically Old Testamentic cruelty as opposed to the preaching of love which we find in the New Testament. This is a basic rule for *all* of life.

The balance should be restored. This can be done only by inflicting similar punishment, punishment which is equal to the crime. Such is the will of the LORD God. He Himself even acted in the same vein: When He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ had to bear the punishment which we deserved because of our fall. He bore it completely.

Reinstatement of capital punishment for *all* murders may not cause capital crimes to decrease, it certainly will restore the balance and thus assure us of the approval of the LORD God, the Lord of all.

Then righteousness will sprout; then peace, overall well-being will reign. Such is the fruit of obedience to the Lord's command.

### The cause

What was the underlying cause of the most recent Toronto murder?

The paper reported that the eighteen-year-old young man who committed it was dressed like one of his heroes in a film which portrayed "a commando of the Green Berets in Vietnam who shoots several small-town officers after escaping from a prison where he was unjustly held."

It is said that many crimes committed by young people are committed in imitation of what they see in movies or on television. Let the parents beware!

This week I heard that a young boy of four years old, upon coming home from the house of his grandmother where he watches television most of the time, told his parents things that he had seen which stunned them.

If your eye offends you, pluck it out and cast it from you: it is better to enter life with one eye than to be cast into hell with the whole body intact.

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# Marriage and divorce<sub>3</sub>

## 7. The rules of I Corinthians 7

We have seen in the previous section that our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 5 and in Matthew 19 mentions only one legitimate reason for divorce.

In I Corinthians 7 the apostle Paul mentions another reason. In the verses 10-16 we read: "To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from the husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband) — and that the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. For God has called us to peace. Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?"

In this Scripture portion we have to distinguish between two different cases, namely in the verses 10, 11 and in the verses 12-16.

In the verses 10, 11 the apostle speaks apparently to married couples who are both members of the congregation. If there is something between them that disturbs their relationship as husband and wife, they should not break up their marriage. Here we find a reference to



what we have learned from Matthew 5 and Matthew 19. He warns against the way the Jewish people abused the rule of Deuteronomy 24 to get divorced for all kinds of minor reasons. That he does not mention the exception of unchastity stands to reason, because his readers were well aware of the implications of such unfaithfulness. He warns them not to separate for all kinds of minor reasons and, even if it comes to a separation because of great difficulties and almost unbearable situations, to reconcile or to remain single. That is why in the Christian church separation (without divorce) has generally been accepted in cases of insurmountable difficulties between both parties. Such a separation can be, as we have stated be-

fore, a matter of: *a.* a mutual agreement, perhaps for a certain period of time; *b.* a verdict of a judge on request of one of the parties in a situation of physical danger or; *c.* a matter of wilful desertion on the part of one of them, against the will of the other.

In all these cases, as long as there is no unchastity involved, the separation can be an outlet to prevent things from getting worse, but the aim should remain reconciliation, and neither of the parties is allowed to remarry. If they cannot reconcile, they should remain single.

In the verses 12-16 the apostle mentions a completely new situation. If one of the two is a believer and the other is an unbeliever, the service of the Lord can

become the main issue. We have to realize that the apostle here by no means speaks about a believer who wants to get married to an unbeliever. That is something he clearly condemns in II Cor. 6:14 and following verses, "Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God."

In I Cor. 7:12-16 the apostle refers to the situation where a couple got married while they both were unbelievers and later on one of them became a Christian. That

— when the girls were considered to belong to the "spoils of victory" — then his wife had no choice but to participate in the worship services of her husband, regardless of whether she became a believer or not. The problem, addressed by the apostle Paul in I Cor. 7:12-16 became relevant in the early Christian churches, because the gospel was spread and the message of the Word of God was preached all over the world and each individually, either man or woman, had to make a personal choice: to believe and embrace the gospel or to reject the message. It is clear that, when the apostle says in verse 15 "the brother or sister is not bound" this means a termination of the marriage. If the unbelieving partner persistently refuses to live

or she does not have to divorce. A separation may suffice.

Although divorce should not take place for any other reasons than we have mentioned above, we have to face the reality that it still happens. If, without the consent of the believing partner, it has come to a divorce and the other partner either has become guilty of fornication or has married someone else, the divorced partner is free to remarry. He or she does not commit adultery, because their marriage has been definitely dissolved by the other party.

If a divorce has taken place because of unchastity, committed by one of the partners, the innocent partner is allowed to remarry. If after such a remarriage the guilty party comes to repentance and amendment of life, there is no possibility to reconcile anymore. In such a case also the other party is free to remarry "in the Lord" with a believer who is prepared to accept the past. This might be very important for a young woman who has been divorced and has to take care of a child born out of unchastity. The man who marries her does not commit adultery.

The Westminster Confession and a great number of theologians consider a divorce and subsequent remarriage also legitimate in case of "such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church, or civil magistrate." Personally I doubt whether that is correct. What is such a "wilful desertion as can no way be remedied"? To me it is too vague. I can see that the relationship can be disturbed and disrupted in such a way that it seems to be irreparable. A continuation of the relationship can become an ordeal and almost unbearable. In such a situation a separation might be necessary and unavoidable. Still I am not convinced that there is a legitimate ground for a divorce on Biblical grounds, as long as there is no case of unchastity or a situation as described in I Corinthians 7. That means: both parties should remain single, hoping and praying for reconciliation. What the Lord has joined together man shall not put asunder. I cannot see that "wilful desertion" is a Biblical ground for divorce and remarriage. It rather opens the door for the same abuse that the Jewish people have made of the certificate of divorce, mentioned in Deuteronomy 24.

## 9. Discipline

Some remarks must be made in respect to Church Discipline in all such cases.

In a previous section we mentioned already that the word "adultery" can be used in different ways. The original meaning of the word was to mix the real and pure thing with something of inferior quality, like mixing wine with water. In our

## ***"... we must consider that discipline always deals with a sinner who is not willing to amend his or her life and who continues in sin."***

caused problems in the young congregation of Corinth. What were they supposed to do when their spouse did not want to serve the Lord? Their marriage could never become a marriage "in the Lord," within the covenantal relationship with their Father in heaven. In such a situation the apostle gives the advice to bear patiently with one another. He says: it has taken you quite a while to come to conversion. Through the grace of the Lord you have become a Christian, a believer, sanctified in Christ. Give your spouse time to consider these matters. Do not rush. You never know whether the Lord will work a true conversion also in the heart of your spouse. He might well use you and your Christian way of life as a testimony to convince him or her. If your spouse consents to live with you, do not divorce. However, there might come a time and a situation that he or she becomes a hindrance in the service of the Lord. If your spouse would try to make it impossible for you to serve the Lord, you have to obey God rather than man. Therefore, if the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so. You have tried to save your marriage, but your choice to serve the Lord has brought your marriage to an end. "In such a case the brother or sister is not bound."

Here the apostle introduces a completely new situation. In the Old Testament this situation could not exist, because the position of the woman was of such a nature that she did not have a real choice. She simply had to obey and to follow her husband. Even if a Jewish man took as wife someone of another nation, as was sometimes the case in times of war

together in peace and at least allows the other to serve the Lord without hindrance, then the believing partner is free. To me, there is no doubt that this includes the possibility of a new marriage with a believer, a marriage "in the Lord."

## 8. Some conclusions

After what we have learned from Scripture in the previous sections we will try to draw some practical conclusions for the situation which we have to face today in our society and among our church members.

Our starting point and norm has to be that a marriage, according to the Word of God, is completed and finished only through the death of one of the partners. What God has joined together let not man put asunder. If there are problems in the relationship between husband and wife, even almost unsurmountable obstacles, we should always try to reconcile. However, a separation, perhaps for a shorter or longer period of time might be the only remedy to prevent things from getting worse and to avoid even physical harm.

Such a separation, however, does not mean a divorce. The aim and target should remain reconciliation.

A divorce with the possibility of a remarriage should only be considered in two cases. Either when one of the parties is guilty of unchastity, or when one of the partners is an unbeliever and makes it impossible for the other to serve the Lord. In both cases a divorce with the option of a remarriage is legitimate, although not necessary. If someone prefers to leave open the possibility of reconciliation, he

contemporary English the word adultery means a sexual relationship of a married person with someone who is not his or her spouse. The Bible and our Confession in Lord's Day 41 are using the word adultery in a much broader sense, namely, for everything that disrupts the married state or that defiles body or soul, which have to be kept pure and holy as temples of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore sin against the seventh commandment and the discipline of the church in such cases is much more comprehensive than what the world calls "adultery."

Further we must consider that discipline always deals with a sinner who is not willing to amend his or her life and who continues in sin. That might have consequences in cases of divorce as well.

When someone comes to a divorce, or even a remarriage, which is not acceptable according to the Word of God, the office-bearers must speak up and admonish. However, even when the sinner acknowledges that what he has done was not right, and repents, the result of such wrongdoing cannot always be undone. A single woman should not become pregnant but single mothers do exist, also among us. When divorce has occurred and the brother or sister has married someone else, there is no going back to the way it was. That is exactly what Deuteronomy 24 forbids. Admonition must still take place and after real repentance has been shown and confession of sin made before the office-bearers discipline has come to an end.

We must always be aware of the danger of people acting in a hypocritical way, namely, that someone goes a certain route knowing that as soon as the marriage has become a "fait accompli" he can simply "confess" his mistake while still achieving what he wanted in the first place. However, this is true also in other instances e.g., when someone makes public profession of faith or joins the church just to get married. We must judge what is in the heart of man by the testimony they give and by the clear evidence of that testimony in their way of life. Only the Lord can truly see what is in man's heart and He will be the final judge.

### 10. Final remarks

We have mentioned a number of times Deuteronomy 24 and Matthew 19. With respect to Deuteronomy 24 one remark has to be made. We read about an "indecency" which might be a ground for divorce. We have seen that unchastity or extramarital sexual relations is legitimate ground for divorce. There are, however, some other possible cases to which Deuteronomy 24 may refer as well. If there are physical infirmities or other things which are making a real married life impossible,

and which are *purposely hidden* for the other party until the day of the wedding, it might, in some cases, constitute a ground for divorce or, rather, facing the reality that the marriage vows were not valid but rather a matter of deceit. Although this happens very rarely, there are cases where someone finds out after the wedding that the partner is a homosexual or, for another reason, not willing or able to establish a sexual relationship, while this was purposely hidden for the other until the day of the wedding. Of course, a marriage is much more than a sexual relationship, and a marriage in which husband and wife are a real "help fit for him or her" is quite well possible even without sexual relations. Many cases can prove this reality. However, the sexual relationship is certainly an integral part of it. If one of the partners purposely keeps secret the impossibility of such relations, it can be a ground to dissolve the marriage. In such a case we do not even speak about a real divorce but about a so-called "matrimonium non consummatum," a marriage which never came to its consummation or never became a reality. Even the Roman Catholic Church, which is very strict regarding divorce, recognizes such a case. It is basically a matter of deceit instead of faithfulness.


Finally, we have seen that divorce should not exist, but as long as sin, and the devastating influence of it, has not been taken away, we will be confronted with the hardness of heart of mankind. That was already so in the Old Testament,

as we have learned from Deuteronomy 24. It will remain the same until our Lord Jesus Christ returns upon the clouds of heaven. Then there will be no divorce anymore. There will not even be any marriage. Only the great marriage feast of the Lamb.

Let us as Christians, in our married state, live together in such a way, that it is in accordance with what the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:25-32 "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the church to Himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of His body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church."

We can count on our God of the covenant and on our Lord Jesus Christ. He will never divorce the Bride He has chosen and prepared for Himself, His Church, the Church of which we are allowed to be members, by mere grace.

W. POWELSE



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# Thanksgiving 1984

Thanksgiving Day has arrived once again. Another growing and harvesting season is behind us. Another spring and summer bear witness to the faithfulness of our almighty God. After the flood He said to Noah that He would "never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." And neither would He "ever again destroy every living creature" as He did in the flood. The LORD promised that "while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease," Genesis 8:21, 22.

Most versions read v. 21 as the RSV does: God will not curse again, *for* the imagination of man's heart is evil. The Hebrew conjunction used here is in most cases indication of a reason or ground (*for*), but it can also have a concessive meaning: "However true it is that." One could read here: "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth anyway." It is even better to read: "Even though the imagination of his heart is evil from his youth."

In spite of the fact that the punishment of the flood has not changed man's evil heart at all, and although man remains a creature conceived and born in sin, growing up in rebellion against God, God promised not to bring again a universal, all life destroying flood, but to let winter and summer, cold and heat, seedtime and harvest, continue without ceasing.

The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Scripture teaches us this truth on all its pages, and daily life exhibits it. All God's commandments are constantly and consistently transgressed without remorse and repentance. Evil is called good and good is called evil. Man with his sinful passions is his own norm. He declares right what feels good. Lying and deceiving is for many a way of life. Greed for money rules society and is the cause of all kinds of evil. Immorality and unchastity is a source of passive and active entertainment. Murder is the order of the day. Rebellion against divine and human authority dominates the thinking of many. People curse and swear. Godlessness and ungodliness characterizes modern life. That is the world of 1984.

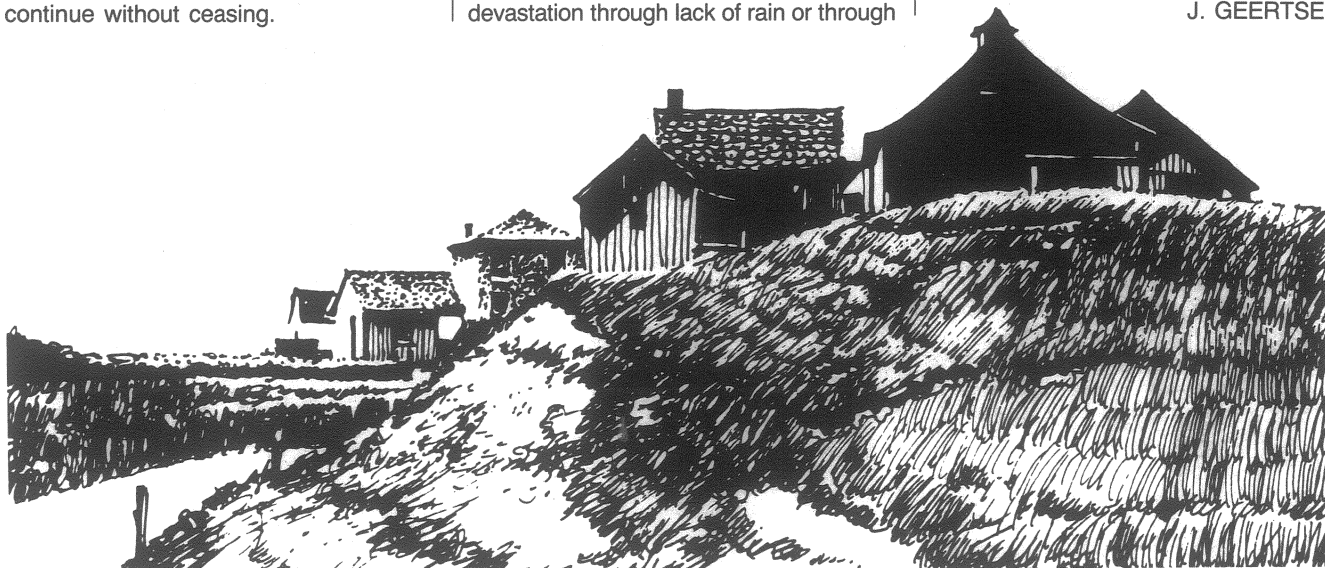
Is it better in the church? When we look at the picture of Christianity, we see an adapted social gospel take hold of the proclamation of the gospel. Worldliness conquers holiness. Many Christians live their lives only for themselves, instead of being clear images, clear pictures, of their Lord and Saviour. This world conformity breaks the spiritual power of many a Christian church. For this phenomenon God's Word uses the term "harlotry." It is unfaithfulness to the Lord. This is the situation also of 1984.

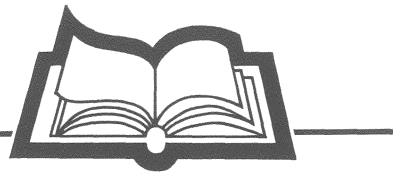
Therefore it is *no wonder* that our world of 1984 knows its disaster areas with their devastation through lack of rain or through

too much of it, through floods and drought, and through other destructive forces in nature. And, yes, it is a *wonder* of God's faithfulness — of His enduring patience — that, in spite of all the evil imaginations of man's heart, devastation was only local or regional and not global. It is a wonder of God's undeserved faithfulness that there was seedtime and harvest, and that the earth brought forth its produce for man and animal, for the continuation of life, even though the imagination of man's heart remains evil from his youth. There is still enough, if not abundance, sufficient for all, if only those who have abundance share with those who do not have enough.

We certainly have reason to give thanks to God, the Creator and Upholder of life, for His merciful patience, for His undeserved faithfulness, for His providing a crop to harvest, for an unfaithful mankind. And where the world does not thank God but takes His gifts for granted, the church should show true thankfulness to God in worshipping Him with thanksgiving, receiving His gifts and using them in His service, for a life that is devoted to Him in obedience to His holy will, while calling the world to repentance and conversion. Let us not forget that God gives us our food that we may serve Him.

J. GEERTSEMA





“ . . . yet mercy triumphs over judgment.”

James 2:13b

“ . . . for their Redeemer is strong; He will plead their cause against you.”

Prov. 23:11

## The Triumph of Mercy

General statements are easily misunderstood, and when taken out of context, are sometimes used to defend all sorts of error. So these words of James in this second chapter are sometimes taken to mean that there will be no judgment, and unconditional mercy will be universally applied to all. Yet, if we look a little more closely at what the apostle says, we see how his general statement actually concerns a very specific matter — the treatment of the poor in the church. And once again we see how closely this letter reflects themes in the wisdom literature.

James makes a strong appeal to the church not to show partiality to the rich man; he rebukes the situation where the rich are wrongfully honoured, and the poor wrongfully dishonoured. Partiality of this kind creates divisions in the congregation, leads to a denial of the law, and amounts to holding the form of religion, but denying its power. True religion manifests itself in a heart of mercy and compassion to orphans and widows, (1:27), the poor and the afflicted. And the real show of mercy begins by accepting the poor man as a brother, a coequal fellow-heir of the blessings of Christ Jesus. Where this is lacking, judgment and condemnation cannot but fail to come.

Nevertheless, precisely because God has chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, v. 5, their cause will not go unheard. Although he is often trampled underfoot by the rich man, a victim of injustice and oppression, yet the poor man who is faithful may count on the help of his God. Even though the rich may be powerful enough to use the courts and rulers for their own ends, so that injustice appears to pass unnoticed from one generation to the next, and a thousand wrongs are left undone, the LORD does not forget the poor man's plight. Mercy will triumph, and in fact begins its triumph in this life — in the line of the promise, through the generations. What appears as forgetfulness and neglect is really only the patience and longsuffering of the LORD, Who brings redemption to the poor, and fulfills His promises to all who wait for Him.

Is this not what the wisdom of the Proverbs repeatedly tells us? In himself the poor man may have no means of redemption, (13:8), but through faith and obedience he is confined in the conviction that his Redeemer lives, and is strong, 23:11. For the LORD Himself stands in as Redeemer! Indeed, He sent His Son to be the real and only Surety, the great *Go-el* through which redemption comes to those lost and forlorn, but judgment prevails over those who trust

in their own wealth, and ignore the needs of fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord. And Christ Jesus, “who became poor so that by His poverty we might become rich” (II Cor. 8:9), shows in His suffering and death the greatest mercy and kindness ever revealed on earth. He showed the fullest mercy, for He lay down His life for His friends.

By virtue of the mercy He manifested, and through the Spirit of freedom so graciously given to us, the law of mercy revealed in ancient times still applies with absolute strictness and force today. May He, who has shown us every mercy, not expect the same kindness and benevolence among us? Here, as the context indicates, we touch on the heart and summary of the law. And it's a recurring theme throughout the Scriptures. The heart of true faith is to do justice, to love mercy — that is, kindness, steadfast love — and to walk humbly with your God, Mic. 6:8. Again, our show of mercy can only but reflect the greater mercy the Father has shown to us in Christ. Our exercise of “steadfast love” is but a poor imitation of the full measure of steadfast love revealed through Christ. Yet without that steadfast love in our midst, we incur judgment without mercy.

So also John reminds us to consider our brother in need, I John 3:17, and holds this as a cardinal rule in the church, a living testimony of true and faithful love. We certainly ought to be careful in maintaining and fostering this love and care for each other, so that none are lacking in the body of Christ. That applies especially to those who are closest to us, our own brothers and sisters, and also applies to all their needs, including the needs of the children and their covenantal education in the fear of the Lord. We ought to be on guard against the dangers of a blind and selfish individualism, which essentially says that every man must fend for himself. An unhealthy *competitiveness* can also create many difficulties for fellow believers who do not find it easy to make ends meet.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,” says the Lord Jesus, Matt. 5:7. “The measure you give will be the measure you get,” Matt. 7:2. Only those whose hearts are open to each other, and are filled with tender mercy, receive the heavenly reward. Let both words and deeds testify to the love of Christ in our hearts. Then we will see the triumph of *real* compassion and mercy — in principle here and now, in this life, and in fulness, when our only Redeemer returns to us again.

J. DEJONG

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# Lectori Salutem — Attende Lectioni!<sup>2</sup>

## (The function of the reader and the reading of the Holy Scriptures in public worship.)

*Inaugural address by Dr. K. Deddens, delivered on the occasion of his installation as Professor of Diaconology at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, Hamilton, ON, September 7, 1984.*

The Reformation of the sixteenth century knew the office of the reader as well. Calvin for instance maintained in the beginning two servants in the services. He called them according to the old names: deacons and subdeacons.<sup>58</sup> Especially in the daily services there was a lectio continua. The task of the lector in the time of the Reformation was often: to read the Holy Scripture before the beginning of the service. So we can read in the articles of Wesel (1568) that it is useful, to prevent idle talk, that one of the elders or deacons should read a chapter of the Scriptures. But the readers must be mindful that it is not their office to explain the Scriptures. Therefore they have to stay away from any explanation. They may not strike their sickles in the harvest of another one, and in the second place they may not disturb the common understanding of the church by untimely explanations.<sup>59</sup>

In the same way we read about readers in the Acts of Synod Dordrecht 1574. The reading must not be done from the pulpit and most of the time the readers should be teachers of the school.<sup>60</sup> We also read about the readers in the Acts of particular and provincial synods in the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. The provincial synod of Haarlem 1606, in answering a question of the Church of Alkmaar, decided that the lector must be a member of the church.<sup>61</sup>

In the same year the provincial synod

of Nijmegen said: the readers may not interfere “in partes ministerii,” the office of the ministers of the church.<sup>62</sup> Apparently it was necessary to forbid that again and again. It is also to be noted that at the time of the synod of Dordt 1618/19 a reader in Kampen did not only read the Holy Scripture, but he read a long letter defending the Remonstrant ideas and heresies as well. The provincial synod of Overijssel then decided that this reader should be suspended.<sup>63</sup> At the same time there was the case of a reader at the provincial synod of Utrecht. He not only read the gospel, but gave explanations too and baptized as well. It was decided that he had to abstain from all ecclesiastical ministry because he had no licence for it. Moreover he was condemned to be unworthy to read the Holy Scriptures in the services.<sup>64</sup>

In the meantime synod decided that the readers had to be examined. If it was clear that they could read well in public worship, they were allowed to do it. If not, they could not be a Scripture reader of the church.<sup>65</sup>

### Amsterdam

It is most interesting to hear how the reader functioned in the capital city of Amsterdam in the beginning of the Reformation. Exactly half an hour before the service started, the organ stopped and the reader stepped behind his desk. In the beginning he did not read the announcements of the consistory. The ministers did that on the pulpit. But the Reverend Plancius proposed to change this and his proposal was adopted. So the lector read the announcements before the service. He filled the remaining time with

reading the Bible. He started with Genesis 1 and proceeded to Revelation 22.

So it was a real “lectio continua,” of course divided over many Sundays. Later the ministers made a list, more or less adapted to the liturgical year. Scripture reading was interrupted by singing psalms. This custom was maintained in Amsterdam until the twentieth century.<sup>66</sup>

### Dordrecht

In 1578 the Scripture reading before the preaching had been introduced in Dordrecht. The consistory decided to ask elders for that task, but also decided to wait until the new elders had been installed in their office.

In the beginning the elders only read in the services of the Lord’s Supper, but after seven years, the consistory decided to do that every Sunday. The elder who was a reader in the cathedral of Dordrecht received a free habitation in the Guest House. In the year 1619 the municipality appointed the readers. The consistory examined them and presented them to the burgomasters, who elected them. Their function also included the visiting of the sick and hearing the children recite their Catechism lessons. For the last task they received twenty-five guilders yearly.<sup>67</sup> This office of the reader was a very serious matter.

In Zeeland a synod decided that the calling of readers and singers should be done by the consistory. The argument was: their service is fully ecclesiastical. Another decision of the same synod was: “When both offices of reading and singing in public worship have been done by one and the same person, such a call must be extended in the same way as the

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<sup>58</sup>W.D. Maxwell, *Eredienst in de gereformeerde kerk, Kerk en Eredienst V* (‘s Gravenhage, 1950), p. 18. It is, however, not sure if they had a task as lector.

<sup>59</sup>Rutgers, *Acta*, pp. 19ff.; cf. E.F. Kruyf, *Liturgiek* (Groningen, 1901), p. 71; P. Biesterveld & H.H. Kuyper, *Kerkelijk Handboekje* (Kampen, 1905), pp. 13ff.

<sup>60</sup>Rutgers, *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>61</sup>J. Reitsma & S.D. van Veen, *Acta der Provinciale en Particuliere Synoden I* (Groningen, 1892), p. 394.

<sup>62</sup>*Id.*, *ibid.*, IV, p. 146.

<sup>63</sup>*Id.*, *ibid.*, V, p. 340.

<sup>64</sup>*Id.*, *ibid.*, VI, p. 433.

<sup>65</sup>*Id.*, *ibid.*, VI, p. 323.

<sup>66</sup>R.B. Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam, II, De Kerk der hervorming in de Gouden Eeuw* (Baarn, 1967), pp. 57ff.

<sup>67</sup>G.J.D. Schotel, *De openbare Eredienst der Nederlands Hervormde Kerk in de 16e, 17e en 18e Eeuw* (Leiden, n.d.), pp. 313ff.



call of the ministers of the church.”<sup>68</sup>

## Other countries

How was the situation in other countries? In many churches there were readers. In the “Holy Liturgy” of the Byzantine rite of the “orthodox churches” in the East the reading belongs to the “cheirothesia,” one of the lower ordinations.<sup>69</sup>

As for England, we read in the “Form of Prayers” of 1556, used by the Puritans: “Upon the days appointed for the preaching of the Word, when a convenient number of the congregation are come together, that they make fruit of their presence till the assembly be full, one appointed by the eldership shall read some chapters of the canonical books of Scripture singing psalms between at his discretion: and this reading to be in order as the books and chapters follow, that so from time to time the holy Scriptures may be read throughout. But upon special occasion, special chapters may be appointed.”<sup>70</sup>

In Scotland, a similar practice soon appeared. Readers were appointed from 1560 onwards to “read the Commoun Prayeris and the Scripturis,” and this practice of reading was to be carried on daily in the town churches.

There is a description of the year 1635 of an English Puritan visiting Edinburgh. He writes: “Upon the Lord’s Day they do assemble betwixt eight and nine in the morning, and spend the time in singing psalms and reading chapters in the Old Testament until about ten . . . . The afternoon’s exercise, which begins soon after one, is performed in the same manner . . . save the chapters then read out of the New Testament.”<sup>71</sup>

Remarkable is the fact that sometimes women read the Scriptures. In the *Manual of the French Carmelites*, 1680, there is a full description of the solemn reading of the gospel at the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday. A nun takes the gospel book from the altar and goes to the desk, preceded by lights and incense; she censes the book and reads

the gospel exactly as the deacon does at High Mass.<sup>72</sup>

But this replacement of deacons by women, as in this case in the Roman Catholic Church, is an exception. Almost always *men* fulfil the task of reading the Scripture, and this task had been maintained as a *constituent part* of public worship.<sup>73</sup>

Often they were “lay readers.” In Lutheran Germany the schoolmaster carried this burden more often than the pastor.

In Scotland in the majority of sixteenth-century parishes the Lord’s Day services were also conducted by the readers, following the *Book of Common Order*. In those parishes the ordained minister (with some of the congregation) entered only just before the sermon. The minister also felt free to substitute prayers of his own in the stated liturgy. A similar institution developed in continental Reformed churches, the French with their “lecteurs,” and the Dutch with “voorzlezers.”<sup>74</sup>

As for the Presbyterians, they were uneasy about the rapid expansion of unlicensed preachers and laymen, which the Independents encouraged in congregational “prophesying.” They also wished to set limits on “lecturing.” “Lecturing” was a running exposition of Scripture and was especially popular through the system of Puritan “lectureships,” of endowed preaching posts outside the regular benefices. The Directory permitted lecturing, but specified that if the Scripture was to be expounded, it should wait till the end of the chapter. What was merely permissive here soon became general practice. The minister added an expository “lecture” to his reading of Scripture in addition to the sermon. The Scotch assembly had to set the hour for morning worship half an hour earlier to accommodate the additional time added by the “lecturing.” And the old “reader’s service” disappeared altogether. The question was now, how to reunite the separate services of the reader and the preacher.<sup>75</sup>

## Special readers or not?

Are the readers (elders, deacons or laymen) able to read the Holy Scriptures in public worship? More than once the answer given is: No!

There are many stories about reading elders, who made mistakes, who could not read strange terms and strange names very well.

It is known that a reader in the morning service and in the afternoon service on account of two different ministers had to read the same chapter of the Epistles with many names for greetings. In the first service he stumbled over his words when he read all the names. In the second service he took it easier, saying in short: “Furthermore you may have the greetings of the same people as this morning!”

And well-known is the story of the reader who was the chanter as well. He had to sing an unknown song, but he could not read it very well. So he apologized for that, saying on a half melodious tune:

“My eyes are dim, I cannot see” —

The congregation, however, thought this sentence was the first of the song, and sang after him:

“My eyes are dim, I cannot see” —

And so it went on, to the very end, every sentence repeated by the congregation:

“I speak of my infirmity”

“I did not mean to sing a hymn”

“I only said: My eyes are dim!”<sup>76</sup>

But good *preparation* is the way out here. And what about that minister who is sometimes unintelligible on the pulpit? That happens more than once!

Almost a century ago the advice had been given to each Scripture reader: “Do not read the Scripture like a notary but like an heir reads the last will!”<sup>77</sup>

It is a challenge to those who read the Scriptures to do it well. The reader should never give the impression that he is reading just because the order of ser-

<sup>68</sup>Reitsma & van Veen, V., pp. 164ff.

<sup>69</sup>Wegman, *ibid.*, pp. 223ff. During the first part of the service the main celebrant draws himself back in quietude in the sanctuary.

<sup>70</sup>W.D. Maxwell, John Knox *Genevan Service Book 1556* (Edinburgh/London, 1931), p. 177.

<sup>71</sup>Maxwell, John Knox, p. 178; cf. H. Davies, *Worship and Theology in England from Andrewes to Baxter and Fox, 1603-1690* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 278ff.

<sup>72</sup>F.C. Eeles, *Ministries of Women in and since the Middle Ages. The Ministry of Women* (London, 1919), p. 166; in the Anglican Church women are readers too since 1866; cf. J.P. Davies, *The Westminster Dictionary of Worship* (Philadelphia, 1972), pp. 330ff.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. C.G.M’c Crie, *The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland* (Edinburgh/London, 1892), pp. 200ff.: “The reading of Scripture is expressly recognized by the Directory as a constituent part of public worship.”

<sup>74</sup>J.H. Nichols, *Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition* (Philadelphia, 1968), p. 70.

<sup>75</sup>Nichols, *ibid.*, pp. 102ff.; today it still happens that *laymen* are asked to read the Bible in public worship. That is a matter of fact in the Anglican Church, and in the United Church of Canada as well. In one of the services they are asked by the minister to come to the “lectern” and to read the Scripture.

<sup>76</sup>In other languages this story is translated, even in Dutch dialect.

<sup>77</sup>E.F. Kruyf, *Liturgiek* (Groningen, 1901), p. 75; cf. G. VanDooren, *The Beauty of Reformed* (Winnipeg, 1980), p. 35 about careful preparation of public reading in the church services.

vice calls for a reading from the Scripture at that time. He should convey to the congregation that what he is reading is of very great importance.<sup>78</sup>

But to read well is a rare accomplishment. It is much more common to excel in singing or in public speaking.<sup>79</sup>

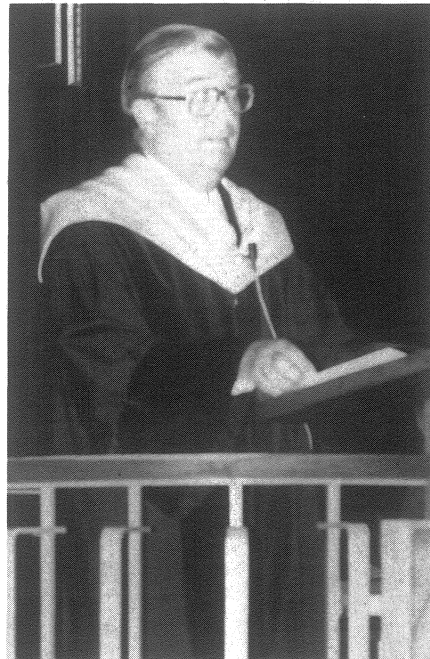
It is very important that the reader prepares always the Scripture reading before the service. Already in the first century the synagogue reading was prepared very well. The reader knew at least the day before the service was held what part of the Scripture he had to read, and he was supposed to read in the service very well and "with melodious voice."<sup>80</sup>

But the congregation must attend to the reading too. We agree with the wish of a contemporary liturgical scholar: "It is of great importance that members of the congregation should follow the reading of the Scriptures in their own Bibles or in Bibles provided for them in the pews."<sup>81</sup> We must not leave the Bible on the *pulpit* alone. That is the reason too why we would strongly defend to have a special reader of the Holy Scriptures in public worship, and to look for men who are able and capable to read the Bible in the services of the church. For the question is: is the Bible property of the minister of the church, so that only *he* is able to read it? The answer is: no, our LORD gave the Bible in the hands of all His people. The reading of the Bible, therefore, is not a privilege of a pastor, neither especially something of an office-bearer!<sup>82</sup>

The institute of the "lector" as reader of the Holy Scripture has been defended strongly by Dr. A. Kuyper. He writes that the minister is already the Jack of all trades and that is not good in the church. Moreover, from the beginning of the Christian church, the acts of the official services were divided among two or three persons. Kuyper pleads in favour of the reader apart from the preacher. He writes: public service means a meeting. It is not only a meeting between God and His people, but a meeting of the people together as well. And therefore it is not good to think that everything is to be done by one person and that everybody only comes to hear that one person.<sup>83</sup>

## Connection between reading and preaching

When should the Scriptures be read? We said already it would be good to have no gap between reading and preaching, except singing psalms or hymns between both. But should that close association of



Dr. Deddens delivering his inaugural address

the Scripture reading with the preaching be an argument against the restoration of the institute of the lector, as has been said?<sup>84</sup>

I do not believe that. It is a fine variation in the service, especially when things have been prepared very well. No doubt it would promote the beauty of the Reformed worship if the special task of the reader were to be restored. With A. Kuyper I say: think it over, consider it and discuss it!<sup>85</sup> And we can use the pulpit and the reading desk as well, from which places even in large buildings, one can be quite understandable, with today's modern technology!<sup>86</sup>

But let the minister announce all elements of the service previously. All ele-

ments. For the caretaker, for the organist, for the Scripture reader too, for the whole congregation, so that everybody can come to worship well-prepared!

And let us give content to the task of the public reader in the church. It was not good that the lector read the announcements of the consistory quite sometime before the service started. But why should it be impossible that the reader of the Scriptures reads the announcements at another time, when the whole congregation assembles? And would it be impossible that the reader announced the psalm which is to be sung after the reading of God's Law? And if there is no minister preaching in the service, is there any objection that in that case two brothers appear, namely as reader of the Scriptures and as reader of the sermon?

A sensitivity for these liturgical matters would be very desirable.

We have to see the exalted place of the Word of the covenant of the LORD in public worship, where He and His people meet one another.

We have to see the exalted place of the preaching of the Word of God by the ministers of the church in public worship.

We have also to see the exalted place of the Kingdom of priests, as all the members of the church are, especially when they meet together in the service. Let us all see our place and task, worshipping the LORD, praising our God in all the parts of the beautiful public worship! So we are now going to finish our address with the following

## Conclusions

1. The reading of the Holy Scripture was already known in the time of the Old Testament and in the synagogue; it was one of the constituent elements of the Christian public worship.

2. It is necessary that this principle of Scripture reading be maintained in public worship; for the Bible is the covenant document for today as well.

3. The Law of God in the Ten Commandments is to be read as the constitution of the covenant of the LORD; besides

<sup>78</sup>R.G. Rayburn, *O come, let us worship*, (Grand Rapids, 1980), p. 208.

<sup>79</sup>J.A. Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, 4th ed.*, (San Francisco, 1979), p. 319.

<sup>80</sup>Strack & Billerbeck, *ibid.*, IV, p. 157: "mit wohl lautender Stimme."

<sup>81</sup>Rayburn, *ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>82</sup>We do not agree with the opinion of K. Dijk, *Handboek voor de ouderling* (Delft, 1959), pp. 117ff., who seems to think that only the minister of the church can read the Bible very well.

<sup>83</sup>A. Kuyper, *Onze Eeredienst*, pp. 171ff., 262ff.

<sup>84</sup>This argument against the lector is used by G. vanRongen, *Zijn schone dienst* (Goes, 1956), p. 97.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. my, *Waar alles van Hem spreekt* (Groningen, 1981), pp. 45ff.

<sup>86</sup>S. Greidanus defended in Thesis VIII at his dissertation *Sola Scriptura* (Kampen, 1970), that there should be only one place for the Scripture reading and the preaching, namely the *pulpit*. But why only one liturgical place for two liturgical acts? There are different places as well for celebrating the sacraments. Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Liturgiek*, (Nijkerk, 1940), pp. 118ff.

the reading of the Law of God, at least one other part of the Holy Scriptures is to be read in every service.

4. Scripture reading, preaching and teaching belong together; it would be better, not to interrupt these elements, except for instance by singing between the readings or between reading and preaching.

5. Reading of an arbitrary part of the Bible, without any relationship to the text of the sermon, is not good; it is preferable to select the readings carefully in connection with the preaching.

6. The Holy Scripture is not the property of the minister of the church, but the whole congregation possesses the Bible; it is therefore desirable that the reading of the Bible takes place by another reader.

7. It is not necessary that the Scripture reading be done by an office-bearer; the main thing is that the Bible will be read clearly in public worship.

8. It will be good that the function of Scripture reader is not limited to only one person; variety and interchange are here desirable.

9. Just as for all elements of public worship a good and timely preparation is indispensable; the best way is that the minister makes all the elements of the service known ahead of time.

10. It is desirable to give content to the task of the public reader; he can take care of the reading of the confession and the announcements of the consistory as well.

### Esteemed governors!

By appointing me as Professor of Diconiologie at the Theological College in Hamilton, at the direction of Synod Cloverdale 1983, you have taken a great responsibility upon yourself. As far as I am concerned, it is not a small matter to exchange the pulpit for the lectern after a thirty-three year pastorate. But, I thank you for the confidence you have placed in me and I comfort myself with the thought that I may teach precisely what has the love of my heart, namely the pastoral ministry. Also, the pulpit will remain open for me.

Insofar as I have met the members of your Board, I may mention the cordiality and friendliness with which you have treated me and my family. I thank you heartily that you have in more than one respect eased for us the transition from The Netherlands to Canada.

### Esteemed faculty!

Insofar as we did not yet know it, we have realized during the months that now lie behind us what binds us together. Together we want to teach at the College in submission to God's infallible Word

and in faithfulness to the Reformed confession. Within this bond, your friendship is very meaningful for me.

When I especially direct myself to you, Prof. Dr. J. Faber, principal of the College, then the time that we were students of the same year and were even housed under the same roof in Kampen comes to my mind. At that time we could not have thought that we would one day stand shoulder to shoulder for the theological education here in Hamilton. I do not doubt for a moment the sincere cooperation of all of you in the one service for the gospel.

### Esteemed VanDooren!

No one will take it ill of me when I also here mention separately the name of my predecessor. In you the College is losing one of the workers of the first hour. You have only been able to do part-time what I may now do full-time. You have not been a "lector" as has just been described — for that matter you have never been a *reader* of sermons but a preacher without notes — yet you have been a "lector" in the academic sense. You have won your spurs here in Canada, not only by your lectureship but also by the entire service for the churches, notably for the *Book of Praise* that now, in the year of your departure as lecturer, appears in its final form.

### Brothers and sisters!

We live in the year of the commemoration of the Secession of 1834. Immediately after that year, my father's grandfather, the late Rev. G.H. Deddens seceded as the first one of his entire family. He was trained by the Rev. Helenius de Cock and he served as shepherd and teacher until practically the end of the previous century. As he himself once wrote: "To serve God is the desire of my heart."

We also live in the year of the commemoration of the Liberation of the church. This month it is forty years ago that my father, the late Prof. P. Deddens had to endure the shame of being suspended from his office because he could not follow the synod in its wrong dealings. The LORD gave him the honour to still teach twelve years in the training for the ministry of the Word.

With deep thankfulness I mention the faith and piety of my forefathers, parents and parents-in-law (of whom only my mother-in-law is still alive). How we have experienced, also in our own family, that the LORD works throughout the generations!

This can also be the last word to you, the students. It is a great privilege that our faithful God of the covenant instills in us — often by means of believing parents —

the desire to serve Him in the marvellous office of minister of the Word. The subjects that I may teach are especially directed to that.

Sometimes strange stories circulate about professors and apparently professors in the Western hemisphere are not excluded. About half a century ago, Joel Elias Spingarn maintained that European scholars had the strange assumption that on the American continent there were three sexes, namely men, women and professors.<sup>87</sup>

I do not know on what this idea could have been based. In any case, I do not intend to advocate this teaching. I also hope to escape the odium that someone else has expressed thus: "Our American professors are like their literature: clear and cold and pure and very dead!"<sup>88</sup> I would rather be mindful of the old Latin proverb: "Vir sapiens semper tiro," a wise man always remains a recruit.

Indeed, let us together be recruited in the military service of Christ by our only Commander and General who has the final say and who has the absolute authority in all our theological labour.

I thank you.

K. DEDDENS

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### OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

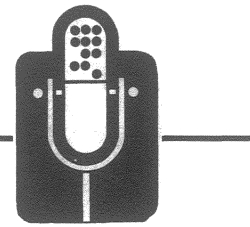
VAN DER PEET, Nicolaas, geboren 8 oktober 1919, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Baansingel 33, Alkmaar, naar Canada vertrokken in 1954.

ROOS, P., geboren op 24 februari 1919, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Acaciastraat 44, Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 25 april 1952.

SIJM, Petrus Boukje, geboren 7 juli 1951, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Steenpoortsestraat 17, Andijk, naar Canada vertrokken op 7 mei 1982 met vermoedelijke bestemming Calgary.

VERHOEVEN, Cornelia Josepha Maria, geboren op 8 september 1951 te Udenhout, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Radesingel 18a, Groningen, naar Canada vertrokken op 9 september 1980.

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



It takes a while before the normal pattern of life has returned after the holidays. This is evident also from the irregularity with which the New Medleys appeared or did not appear. We cannot make any promises for the future, but expect that things will be more normal from now on.

One of the disadvantages of holidays and irregular activities is that at times it does not make all that much sense to mention as yet those who celebrated a wedding anniversary that we should pay attention to in our column. If the event is some two or more months "old" it is better to continue without giving it a place in our medley. This issue will not reach our readers before October, and it would be something like "mustard after the meal," as they say in Dutch, to come with congratulations to a couple who celebrated forty or more years of marriage in July or August.

For this reason I don't mention any this time, without malice towards those who had their day of commemoration during the past two or three months. Personally we have paid due attention to the facts and, in some instances, also know that many others did.

I used the word "commemorate."

Via strange ways of combining things to which our brains are often inclined, I come to the word "memorabilia."

It is good when we realize what words mean and how they are to be used.

Recently we talked about it in the coffee break at our College that some ministers still speak of "classis meeting," instead of "classis" or "classical meeting." Then the remark was made that this was a result of the fact that people nowadays do not know the languages any more.

It hurts when language is being abused, and one might expect from someone who learned the Latin language — still a requirement at our College — that he knows that "classis" means "a group of people that have been called together." It is, therefore, nonsense to speak of a "classis meeting," which is: "a meeting meeting." Besides, it has hierarchical overtones.

I had to think of the lack of knowledge of the language when I read in a bulletin that "the memorabilia is mentioned." Another bulletin did even worse: "Memorabilia are held."

"Memorabilia" means: "things that can be told, that are worthy to be mentioned." The word "memorabilia" is plural, and thus the verb has to be in the plural as well.

And it is a complete riddle how you can "hold" the things that can be told, that are worthy to be mentioned.

Mind you, the press and radio are not much better. They speak of "the media of the press," ignoring the fact that they should have said that the "medium of the press" is sloppy at times. "Media" is the plural of medium: we speak of a "medium" with spiritistic seances, but of the media of press, radio, television, and so on.

Well, how's that for an appetizer?

Let's go on to the news.

Many of our consistories have banned smoking at their meetings or even in the church building and meeting rooms. I have not read anything about The Netherlands in this respect, but have the impression that not much progress is made there in this field.

Faraway Cape Town, S.A., however, has taken the bold

step. There the consistory reports that "Motion is made not to smoke during the meeting. Adopted."

It is a little cloud as a man's hand, but the beginning is there.

I could mention more things about the church there, but then I would have to translate the Afrikaans and when you translate Afrikaans much of the attractiveness of the language is lost. I love reading it but do not know it well enough to be able to get the flavour into an English translation.

As far as this goes, the brethren in Launceston, Tasmania make it somewhat easier on me. They write in English, and I am glad that I can go by the written text, for the Australian pronunciation makes it sometimes hard for me to understand what is being argued.

Anyway, Launceston has purchased a pipe organ!

Since we do not mention all that many particulars from the brotherhood down south or "down under" as they say it oftentimes, I think I should quote a little piece from what I read in *Una Sancta*, the periodical of our Australian brotherhood.

"The Launceston congregation has been able to obtain the organ of the Central Baptist Church, Launceston. This organ, built probably in the 1860's by Albert C. Pease of Stoke Newington, London, belongs to a small but select group of organs in this country which are representative of all that's best in English organ building. It has served the Central Baptists in two locations for well over a century.

"There are plans to rebuild and perhaps augment this fine instrument over the next year or two. In order to let our readers know what is going on, we had an interview with br. J.C. Meijer, the man behind the restoration of the organ in the Koepelkerk in Arnhem, The Netherlands. Br. Meijer, who now serves on the Launceston Organ Committee, will be in charge of the technical side of the Launceston project."

From this interview we take the following sentences to give an impression of the instrument.

"The instrument is 120 years old, it is still in a sound condition which is evidence of its high quality. A valuable addition has been made with the Bourdon 16' which gives a sturdy bass for the congregational singing. The sound is sweet and the replacing of a Pico 2' by a Vox Celeste 8' made it even sweeter. However, the principal stops will have their characteristic sound returned by careful revoicing. By adding three more stops and omitting the Vox Celeste the volume will increase considerably. Without changing the original part of the organ it will be possible to add a second manual.

"To rebuild the organ with two additional stops and a new case will cost around 700 man hours. Addition of a second manual would take a further 500. These figures must be tentative at this stage, as we still have to submit a worked out plan to the consistory. Cost of rebuilding could be around \$4,000 and that of adding a second manual around \$3,000."

These are Australian dollars, of course; still we can agree with the concluding statement: "If all goes well, our congregation will be blessed with a fine pipe organ at a very good price indeed."

Congratulations.

In our own country similar activity is going on.

Chilliwick planned to have a congregational meeting on

August 24, at which purchase of a pipe organ was to be discussed. They also received a "Letter from Mr. Dirk Jansz. Zwart re a proposed organ. This brother suggested to make some small changes to the plan which was presented to him. The Committee of Administration will do some work and present council with more financial figures."

The same consistory also received a "report from the Okanagan brotherhood re a minister for the Okanagan. The report presents council with all kinds of data which would be necessary to work with and would be necessary to prepare a proposal for classis."

As for further developments in the region of the Southern Fraser Valley, "the services in the State of Washington have started. The meeting place is the Covenant Christian School which is situated one-half mile north on Northwood Road from East Badger." It is about half-way between Aldergrove and Abbotsford, but then south of the border. Crossing is either in Sumas or south of Aldergrove. I have not read anything about attendance or further progress, and will have to let the above suffice.

The development in Washington will not be alien to the reaction of the Abbotsford Consistory to a report from the Committee of Administration "on the cost estimate to bring the balcony into service. It is suggested to leave as is until further requirements."

The general news from the Valley contains the information that the Glas family have arrived from Brazil and will visit the churches to tell them about their work in the mission field. This work is always brought much closer to us when there is someone to tell about it, being a mission worker himself. Have a pleasant stay in Canada and much strength and skill to you when you return to show the mercy of Christ and therefore of the Christians to those who are deprived of many of the blessings which we enjoy.

The Rest Home Society expected to be able to occupy their building by October 1st. Perhaps there will be a report on an official opening, sometime in the future.

For those who are planning to visit the Okanagan Valley it be mentioned that from September on the services will be held at 11:00 and 1:30, with Catechism Classes being held between the services.

From Coaldale comes the following.

"A letter from the Coaldale Christian School Board is received and discussed. It concerns members of the school who are unable to pay their dues; council decides that the deacons deal not with school boards but with cases of individual need."

Indeed.

There is growth within the churches. Yes, there are some that are losing members due to lack of work and consequent moving away. Generally, however, the buildings become too small to contain the worshippers. Then measures have to be considered.

In Burlington East "to alleviate the overcrowding at the Lord's Supper services, the consistory adopted in principle a recommendation to the Liturgy Committee to have two morning services in which the Lord's Supper will be celebrated instead of the present arrangement . . . Spouses that alternated their attendance between the morning and afternoon service will be able to do that between the two morning services." The matter will be put before the membership, to learn what the views of the congregation are in this respect.

In various churches Summer Bible Schools were conducted or — as they are also called — Vacation Bible Schools. In various bulletins one could read of fruit upon this work, of growing attendance and of contacts made as a result of them.

Burlington West's bulletin reported "We are presently organizing a Bible Study Class for those children who attended

VBS and for those in the neighbourhood of our church. We plan to hold these classes on Sundays, between the Worship Services. These classes are in no way intended to replace the Worship Services, but are mainly for the instruction of those children from 'outside' the church."

Once in a while I get a question with the request either to answer in a personal letter or to pay attention to it in the news medley. If the question is of a more personal character, I do the former, if it is of more general interest, I choose the latter course.

The question this time regarded Article 59 of our Church Order: "Adults who have not been baptized shall be engrafted into the Christian church by holy baptism upon their public profession of faith."

The question was whether such persons first have to make profession of faith, answering the questions which are contained in our form for that occasion, and then again have to answer the questions which we find in the Form for the Baptism of Adults.

This question can be answered quite briefly.

The answer is: No.

In the first place: the questions which are asked at the baptism of adults are exactly the same questions which we find in the Form for the Public Profession of Faith, be it that the former are more specified with a view to the situation. Asking a person the same things twice in a row makes no sense and is, in fact, an offence to the person. It might be considered an expression of distrust: You already said, "I do," but please repeat it, for we want to know whether you really mean it.

And in the second place: if you look up the Acts of Synod 1983, page 253, you will see that by the questions to be asked the person who is to receive baptism, it is printed in the margin "Public Profession of Faith." You will find the same on page 590 of our forthcoming *Book of Praise*.

That this is indeed a public profession of faith becomes clear from the following sentences: "It must become clear to all that you not only accept the Christian doctrine, but also intend, by the grace of God, to live according to it. Therefore, we ask you to answer sincerely the following questions before God and His Church."

Whenever, in the past, I had the privilege of administering baptism to an adult these were the only questions I asked. And if, at the same time, there were others who made profession of faith having already been baptized, I first let them answer the questions adopted for that purpose, and then read the Form for the Baptism of Adults and asked the person to be baptized to answer the questions contained in that Form only.

Until recently I had never heard of things being done differently in this respect. And I am thankful that the question was posed to me, for this gave me the opportunity to write about it.

This will then have to be the end of this medley.

Hopefully, things will become more normal in the coming months, although I cannot promise anything.

Till next time, the Lord willing.

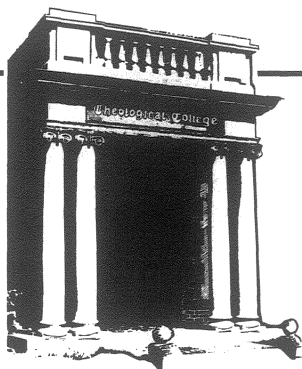
VO

## **C**HURCH NEWS



CALLED to Lincoln, ON REV. R. AASMAN of Guelph, ON

ACCEPTED to Watford, ON CANDIDATE M. VAN LUIK  
of Lincoln, ON



# Our college

## Principal's statement 1984

### 1. College evening

The eleventh convocation and fourteenth anniversary meeting of the Theological College was held on Friday, September 9, 1983. The Rev. D. VanderBoom, M.Th. was chairman for the last time. The Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., instructor in Diaconology, gave a farewell address under the title "Should the picture of the pastor change?" The Master of Divinity degree was conferred on Mr. Eric Kampen, B.A. and Mr. Robert G. Leach, B.Sc. Mr. Gijsbertus Nederveen received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

### 2. Students, faculty and lectures

The classes in the academic year 1983-1984 consisted of four freshmen, three sophomores, two juniors and five seniors, which makes a total of fourteen students. The freshmen were P. Aasman, M.K. Marren, R. Schouten and G. Van Popta. The other ten students followed the courses of the sophomore year. Five of them will now receive the M.Div. degree, namely D. Agema, C. Bosch, W. den Hollander, J. Moesker and M. VanLuik. Also in this academic year the lectures in the first semester were arranged so that Prof. C. VanDam could during the first two months continue his doctoral studies in Kampen, The Netherlands.

In September Dr. R.H. Bremer of Enschede delivered some guest lectures entitled "Herman Bavinck and present-day Reformed Theology in The Netherlands" and "Some problems in the doctrine of election." Other special classes were held: We saw a presentation on video tape of the main themes of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver 1983. On November 10, 1983, the Professor of Dogmatics delivered a lecture for the entire College community in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the birthday of Doctor Martin Luther. At the end of this lecture "Luther and the Bible" we sang together "A mighty fortress is our God." In the same month of Novem-

ber, missionary P.K. Meijer instructed us concerning the mission work in Brazil. Another noteworthy fact is that in this month of November we also commemorated the fortieth anniversary in the ministry of our lecturer in Ecclesiology, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th.

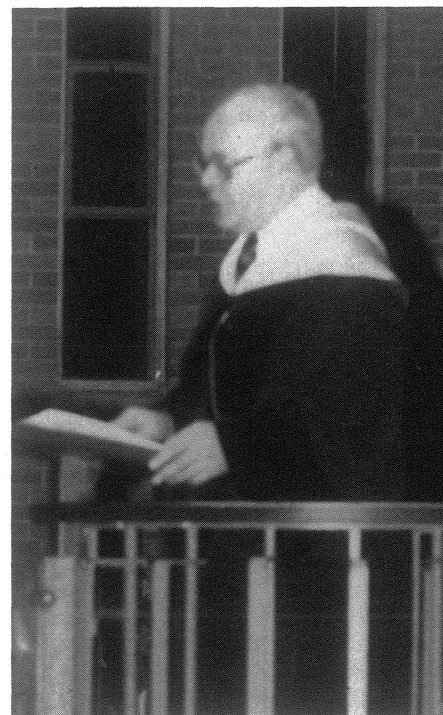
In the second semester, one morning of teaching was dedicated to the topic "The use of the computer in the pastorate" introduced and demonstrated by Mr. Leo Kampen. Last but not least, on February 22, 1984, the Rev. G. VanDooren ended his teaching in our Theological College with a lecture in Homiletics. He gave some remarks about S. Greidanus' publication on redemptive historical preaching. It was a good and fitting conclusion for our brother, who, in the thirties of this century, as a young minister in The Netherlands, began his preaching in the midst of the debates around the reformational movement. After the departure of Rev. VanDooren the Professor of Dogmatics gave instruction in the preaching of the Heidelberg Catechism. We are thankful that in spite of some disruptions — among others a short hospitalization of Prof. L. Selles and delegation of the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene to General Synod at Cloverdale — the work could be completely finished according to our curriculum.

### 3. General Synod 1983

General Synod, held at Cloverdale, BC during November 1983, was of great significance for our institution and its place within the Canadian Reformed Churches. First of all, there was a change in the Board of Governors. The ministers D. VanderBoom and D. DeJong were replaced by the Revs. P. Kingma and Cl. Stam, the non-ministers H. Dantuma and J. Medemblik by the brs. H. Kampen and A.L. VanderHout.

In our previous anniversary meeting special attention was paid to the retirement of the chairman of the Board of Governors, the Rev. D. VanderBoom. Let me now express the deepfelt gratitude of Principal and Faculty for the faithful labour of the brothers

Hessel Dantuma and John Medemblik. From the beginning at Synod Orangeville 1968 and then for a period of fifteen years these brothers have done an immeasurable amount of work for our Theological College,



*Dr. Faber reading the Principal's Statement*

br. Dantuma as treasurer and br. Medemblik as secretary of the Board of Trustees. While ministers in our churches often receive full attention, we shall not forget the pioneering work of these so-called lay brothers.

As far as the Faculty is concerned, Synod Cloverdale appointed the Rev. Dr. Karel Deddens of Groningen South professor of Diaconology for a period of six years. We publicly welcome Dr. K. Deddens in our fifteenth anniversary meeting and express the hope that the Lord our God will

grant him years of deeply satisfying labour in the theological field of which each area has its own beauty. May his teaching instruct and enthuse our students to become good and faithful shepherds of God's flock.

General Synod 1983 also adopted By-laws and Regulations which on the basis of the Act 1981 govern the affairs of our Theological College. Of more general interest is the fact that Synod directed the Board of Governors to give the matter of acquiring other facilities full attention, and to have this matter finished before the next General Synod. This direction was immediately heeded and this leads us to our following point, our physical plant.

#### 4. Building

Although our present building at 374 Queen Street South is impressive because of its neoclassic entry porch, its marble fireplace, open halls, broad wooden stairways and fancy banisters, it remains a mansion,



*Mrs. L. Selles speaks on behalf of the Women's Savings Action*

not suitable to house a growing library of an educational institution. The Finance and Property Committee, which in the past years had already inspected several properties in and around Hamilton, was in the beginning of the year 1984 led to the Chedoke Presbyterian Church, 110 West 27th Street, on Hamilton West's Mountain. It is an educational building with an auditorium that can be converted into a spacious library. The lower educational center does not have enough space for four Faculty offices so that an addition — already planned in the

original structure — has to be erected. The remainder of the lot leaves room for a parking area and for other additions, let us say twenty years from now or after the year 2005. The offer of purchase for the amount of \$275,000 was accepted in February,

will increase slightly, as is evident in our new provisional Handbook 1984.

#### 6. Contacts

In this academic year we received a visit of two delegates of the Reformed



*Faculty and graduates: Front row (l. to r.) Prof. VanDam, Prof. Selles, Dr. Faber, Rev. VanDooren and Rev. VanOene. Back row (l. to r.) Mr. Chr. Bosch, Mr. D.G.J. Agema, Mr. J. Moesker, Mr. W. den Hollander, Mr. M.H. VanLuik*

1984. It could not have been extended without the generous help of our Women's Savings Action and it will be more than proper that the auditorium or future library will bear a plaque commemorating their achievement in faithfulness. While the closing date of the purchase is at the end of December 1984, we hope to move into our new building after this academic year is concluded, that is in June 1985. This is a tentative date, also depending on the sale of our present building. This important move will undoubtedly greatly influence the life of our College community; our hearts are filled with anticipation of things to come.

#### 5. Curriculum and handbook

The appointment of a fourth full-timer changed the curriculum. More hours will be dedicated to the disciplines of homiletics, liturgics, catechetics and poimenics. Especially significant is the introduction in the Sophomore Year of a new course "History of Religions," which together with missiology and evangelistics may prove of value for our future missionaries. The new professor will also take care of the course in Latin for the Freshmen. The number of lecture hours

Church in North America (Eureka Classis) and we attended the inauguration of Dr. J.A. DeJong as president of Calvin Seminary. We decided not to participate in the fourth conference of the International Council for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education. We wrote a letter expressing our disagreement with a one-sided politicizing of this organization with respect to the Christian universities and seminaries in South Africa. Prof. C. VanDam attended the Conference of Learned Societies in Canada. Under the heading of contacts it may also be mentioned that the Professor of Dogmatics conducted a semester course in the philosophy of education under the auspices of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' College. He also gave a seminar of seven lectures on "The Church" for the Fraser Valley Study Center in Langley, BC.

#### 7. Conclusion

The Lord our God may enlighten us with His Holy Spirit, endow us with His gifts, and enable us to continue our work to His glory.

J. FABER

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## Rev. D. VanderBoom 30 years in the ministry

On September 29 it was 30 years ago that Rev. D. VanderBoom, M.Th., began his service as minister of God's Word. At first our brother, son of a minister, did not go in the footsteps of his father. He studied science, and, after World War II, he went to London, England, and, later on, to Venezuela as an employee of Shell Oil, working in the area of geological exploration.

However, in 1950, the science of geology was exchanged for the science of theology. From the creation he went to its Creator, and Redeemer.

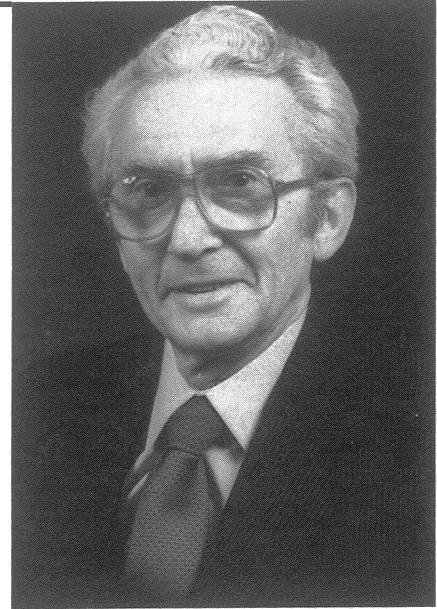
A sharp, scientifically trained mind, and the urge of having a family to take care of, made him complete the theological training in three and a half years. And on September 29, 1954, Rev. D. VanderBoom was ordained as minister of the Church at Alkmaar-Broek op Langendijk, The Netherlands. In January 1957 Rev.

VanderBoom continued his ministry serving the Church at Cloverdale. Later he was minister of the Churches at Orangeville, Burlington, Toronto and Langley.

He also served the churches in general as a delegate to classes, regional synods and general synods, as member of synodical committees, as member and later on for many years as president of the Board of Governors of the Theological College.

He knew what it meant to study, for beside all the daily work the study for a masters degree in Theology was completed.

Most of all, Rev. VanderBoom was and is preacher of God's Word, of the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus, the Mediator in the covenant of grace. And although now retired, Pastor VanderBoom still loves to proclaim the gospel, thankful that the Lord enables him on many a Sun-



day in that way to teach and instruct God's people in the knowledge of the Scriptures and in the ways of the Lord.

Thankful for what the Lord allowed Rev. VanderBoom to do for the churches, we hope and pray that He will continue to grant health to our brother and his wife and the strength to go on in the Lord's service, that is in the service of the churches, especially in the Fraser Valley.

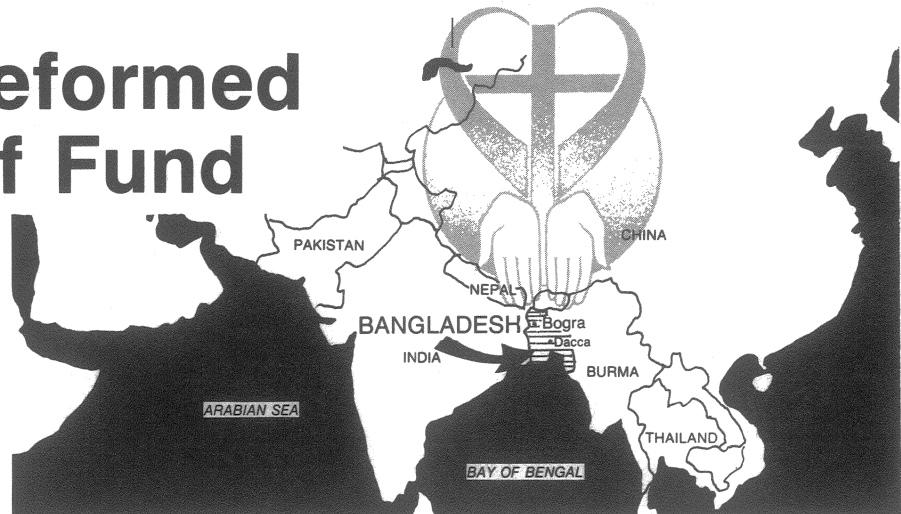
J. GEERTSEMA

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## Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund

As promised, we hope in this article to provide you with more information on the work done by Peter and Geraldine Ysselstein in assisting the poor in Bangladesh, one of the world's most impoverished countries. The Ysselsteins, members of the Guelph congregation, are working primarily in Agriculture to increase the welfare of farmers who are unable to completely support their own families. (see *Clarion* article May 18, 1984 for a more detailed introduction to their work and CRWRF's involvement in it.)

This article is a composite of letters and reports written by the Ysselsteins



during their six months or so in Bangladesh. We hope that all the "pieces" will combine to bring you a more complete picture of life and work in this small, densely populated country — and that

with these insights, the work will be brought closer to your heart and prayers.

Some basic facts about the country may help us better visualize the situation within which the Ysselsteins work.



Although Bangladesh carries in its name 3000 years of history, it has been a nation only since 1971. Previously, it was known as East Pakistan after partition in 1947 from British India. Between 1947 and 1971, East Pakistan belonged with West Pakistan.

Physically it is a very small country, (about 55,598 square miles). Bangladesh is surrounded by India on three sides except in the southeast, a small area by Burma and one side by the Bay of Bengal. The country is fissured by many rivers and streams flowing into the Bay of Bengal.

The climate is warm, temperate to tropical and humid. Rainfall averages annually about 85 inches nationwide and in places is among the heaviest in the world.

Bangladesh has three clearly defined seasons. Summer falls between March and June. Monsoon season starts in June and ends late in October and the winter season is from November to March. The hottest months are April and May. Temperatures between 105-115 are occasionally recorded. Temperatures during the Monsoon period are usually in the eighties and nineties with an average humidity factor of 90%. Winter season climate is ideal — no rainfall, blue clear skies for weeks on end and temperatures in the 45-75 degree range.

Abundant rainfall and warm temperatures give Bangladesh an ideal climate for agriculture. Crops can be grown 12 months a year. Vast underground aquifers give the country a tremendous potential for irrigation in the dry winter season.

About 98 percent of the people of Bangladesh belong to the Bengali ethnic group and speak Bangla. Urdu-speaking non-Bengali Muslim immigrants from India and various tribal groups make up the rest.

Religions: Bangladesh is 83 percent Muslim, Hindu 16%, Christian, Buddhist and others 1%. Despite Muslim predominance, society is still basically Hindu in its outlook on life. Traditional distinctions which classify people in to a class hierarchy still permeate society.

With more than 90 million people, Bangladesh is the world's eighth most populous nation. It's population density around 1,600 persons per square mile is the highest of any country in the world except for Singapore and Hong Kong, a fact that is all the more remarkable in light of the country's low level of urbanization. Ninety percent of it's people are rural and live mainly in the 71,000 or more small agricultural villages dotting the landscape. Eighty percent depend directly upon agriculture as a livelihood.

Many of these do not "make it," unable to earn enough from their small plots of land to feed their families for an entire year. Some are forced to sell a plot of land to survive . . . and next year the situation is worse.

One way in which CRWRC helps farmers towards self-sufficiency is by



The Ysselstein family in their garden at Bogra

demonstrating and pointing them to better farming techniques. Another is by facilitating the procurement of small loans for the purchase of hand pumps or, as they are also called, *tube wells*.

Peter writes:

Why our interest in the hand tubewell? In Bangladesh, one readily recognizes the importance and obvious need for irrigation during the six month period of a relatively small amount of rainfall. The existence of irrigation guarantees the availability of moisture throughout the crop cycle and can also be used as a protection of the crop against fluctuations in rainfall. Thus irrigation not only creates the possibility of growing a crop, it also raises crop yields. Irrigation is a land saver in this respect. It should also be mentioned that the hand tubewell is a good means of supplying safe drinking water.

The hand tubewell is an important aspect of the Bogra Agricultural Program. The tubewell has made it possible for poorer (marginal) farmers to grow an extra crop of wheat, rice, or vegetables on land which in the dry season has traditionally remained unused. Rice is the main crop grown under irrigation although wheat and potatoes are gaining importance. Irrigation is not totally free of additional costs. It usually requires higher levels of complimentary inputs such as fertilizer, and crops with a high level input requirement for water. On the other hand, Bangladesh's labour surplus is benefited by irrigation because a high labour input is required. Farmers are usually able to reimburse the cost of their

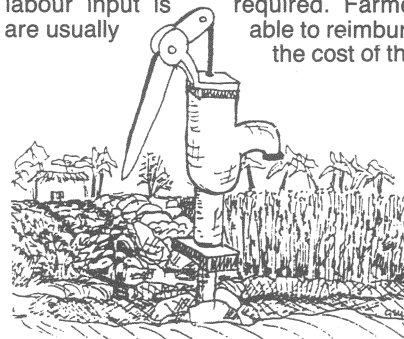
wells with the extra earnings they get from two or three seasons' crops.

With intensive hand pumping, a duty which is often shared among the members of the family, approximately two-thirds of an acre can be irrigated depending upon the layout of the land. The hand tubewell is proven to be much more appropriate to small farmer needs than the shallow-deep mechanically operated wells. Especially in areas with a high degree of land fragmentation, water distribution from the larger wells becomes a problem because it creates dependency by a large number of users.

The soil of Bangladesh can best be described as a huge sponge made of sand and clay. This soil acts like a bank by soaking up the rainwater in the monsoon and storing it for use during the drier winter only to be replenished again the following year. It is during the months of December and January that farmers begin to tap this resource and can be seen in the fields with groups of labourers attending their tubewell sinking operations. The whole process takes only a few hours and it is done entirely by hand. The farmer first decides where to install his tubewell; usually it is placed on his largest cropped plot or in an area that is within watering distance of all the plots he will winter crop.

Once ascertained, a large hole (approximately 16 sq. ft. x 2 ft.) is dug which is then filled with water for ground softening purposes. A steel pipe is lowered into the pit and progressively pushed down manually into the ground with sand and water gushing out the top until the proper depth is reached (around 20-40'). The steel pipe is then taken out and replaced with plastic or another steel pipe which has a sand filter at the bottom.

On top, a hand tubewell is attached to the few feet of pipe extending out of the ground. Water is drawn out of the ground by suction which is created by the up and down movement of the tubewell handle. The water once pumped on to the ground is carried away via constructed



mud channels to various points of destination.

More food in the dry season will mean that poorer farm families will have more to eat. In this regard, we are continually making the effort to provide ways and means for farmers to purchase a hand tubewell in full commitment to the program objective of self-sufficiency for the almost landless farmers.

Peter keeps very busy supervising this established program at Bogra and is working to set up a *new* project in the Khanjanpur area of northwest Bangladesh — a few bumpy hours drive from Bogra. As Project Manager, he will supervise a staff of national men with expertise in rural community development. We are happy to be able to support this new project (see May 18, 1984 article for details) and wish them strength and enthusiasm in this new endeavour.

Geraldine has not allowed herself to be an onlooker either. As her husband devotes his time to agriculture related projects, Geraldine has sought ways to assist the women in her area. She hopes not only to improve the craft skills, literacy, and health of these women, but also to assist them in expanding their meagre family incomes.

Workers in CRWRC in the Philippines have helped Philippine women develop their cottage industry into something viable. Beautifully embroidered shirts, tablecloths, toys, and many other attractive items are now shipped to North America and sold by volunteers. The profits return to the women who made the products, thus boosting both their self-esteem and their income.



*Geraldine and little Geraldine employ the normal means of transportation in Bangladesh — a rickshaw*

Geraldine hopes to emulate this program, though realizing that the task will require a great deal of time and patience, especially since Bengali women spend much of their time and energy in planting and harvesting crops. Still the dream persists. If the women can be encouraged to bring their work up to export quality, they will be opening up a new source of revenue for their families. The work of "Projaputi Crafts" (besides family and home responsibilities) keeps Geraldine busy, but she is happy with evident progress. She writes:

Peter and Geraldine work cheerfully in a climate and circumstances demanding their full energy and commitment. They acknowledge though, that they work in the Lord's strength, and they are encouraged by seeing Him work. Though direct mission work is not allowed by the Bangladesh government, personal witness is certainly not legislated against and work situations often permit such an introduction to the gospel. One of the Ysselsteins' helpers, for example, reads the Bible in Urdu, and every night after supper discusses with Peter the passage he has read. Another fellow, an accountant, has asked for a Bible and is reading it too. So there are encouraging opportunities not only to help the people economically, but also to point them spiritually in the way they should go.

Do pray for the work in Bangladesh — that the opportunities that exist to show the love and compassion of Christ, and to bring His life-saving Word to the people of this impoverished nation will be fully utilized, so that more people may come to a knowledge of the one true God — to the praise of His glory.

\* \* \* \*

Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

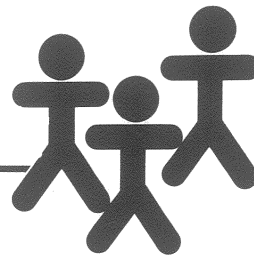
CRWRF  
PO Box 793  
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y7

All gifts are gladly received. Donations of \$10.00 or more will be issued a receipt for tax deduction.

Twelve ladies have been coming since the middle of June to my house and sit on a bamboo mat on the veranda. We are following a one-month training course which includes cross-stitch, crocheting, and quilting. The women are my neighbours and are very poor. Three are young widows with dependents; two are married but their husbands have left them; three are married but their husbands have only farm labour work; and four are young girls from poor families. I give them 5 taka per day (25¢) during the training period and from then on will pay for piecework. At 3 p.m. each day we stop for literacy training.

After four months training, the women should be able to cut sizes of cloth, baste, cross-stitch, package and label the finished product, etc. [The "finished product" should include such items as pillow covers, place mats, baby quilts, table runners, and more.] If a market seems favourable, I would then consider taking on a second group and perhaps hiring a project controller who would be in charge of marketing, health education, and bookkeeping. I hope that this program can become an extension of the Bogra project. Bangladesh products should become so well-made that people will want to buy them for their skilled and beautiful handwork, and not just in pity for Third World women.

As a project, I believe we can teach the women basic skills: cutting, sewing straight, producing a neat finished product, being regular in attendance, acquiring some basic health education, etc. Even these goals if met will make the project worthwhile. These women will grow in self-esteem and be able to contribute more to the family unit.



## A. Three practical guidelines — starting the school year properly.

**1. Keep the lines of communication open.** Teachers must keep parents and supporters informed and should present a positive, constructive image to the school community. Although we operate *parental* schools, all too often parents have little idea of (or part in deciding) policies and practices in these schools. By means of regular bulletins or newsletters, parents must receive an overall perception of the school climate. Principals and teachers would help the lines of communication if more time was spent on the *quality* of their school bulletins! Besides the written communication, an annual calendar of events is also a must. It should outline the PTA meetings, orientation evenings, variety nights, parent/teacher interviews and other special events. Thirdly, the parents must be helped to realize that the school has “an open door policy.” Obviously, they should not walk into the building anytime it seems convenient. However, the parents should know that they are welcome and that the teachers will make time to discuss a certain concern or to answer a question.

Equally important in the lines of communication are the parents. Don't contact the school *only* when a problem arises or when there is a complaint to be made. Get involved in your local school, whether it be in volunteering, joining a committee or by allowing your name to stand for election to the board. Perhaps the involvement has to be restricted due to other commitments. Let it at least be said then, that your home shows an active interest in what goes on at school.

**2. Strive for excellence.** The parents should not only expect *Reformed* education, but also a course of studies that is *sound* and meets the needs of the students. A staff is obliged to work out the school's curriculum and to suggest to the Education Committee, textbooks to be followed and material to be covered. It should also give due attention to the gifted children as well as to those who need extra or special help. A school community may expect that teachers are employed for twelve months and that besides the ten-month school year, work is being done to improve the educational process. At the beginning of a school year, a number of objectives are usually set by the staff. They might include the completion of a Lan-

guage Arts program or using different criteria for student evaluation. Ideally, school objectives and other long-range plans are set in consultation with the school community. A few more characteristics which deal with the striving for excellence are:

— teacher commitment to summer courses, with at least some remuneration from the board.

— an active Education Committee that knows what takes place in school and is able to offer insight, alternatives and direction.

— informed parents who are able to make reasonable requests and sometimes demands of the school.

**3. Remember that the strange thing about people is that they have the habit of acting human.** It is very easy to criticize, to accuse or to blame. A school is often like a glass house. Nothing seems to escape the attention of some people. As sinners, we can only make an effort towards building a supportive climate which keeps in mind people's fallibility. We are by nature self-seeking and prone to put people down. If we keep in mind however that the atmosphere of a proper supportive climate is at the very roots of our Christian responsibility and that it will greatly ease the complex tasks that must be done, then *all* of us are obliged to do something about it. Some characteristics of a supportive school climate are:

— problems and other difficult situations at school are dealt with on a “we” as opposed to a “they” basis.

— various methods and ideas in regards to education are not condemned outright; the right of parents or teachers to have a different point of view is respected.

— alternatives and plans for change are discussed or implemented in a very open and direct way (without the feeling that toes are stepped on).

— the trust level between the home and the school is high.

## B. Information for the parents

September bulletins are usually filled with a number of rules and regulations and requests. The following list comes from *Church and Child*, a monthly publication of the Timothy Christian School in Hamilton. It offers some practical advice which is relevant to everyone.

1. When you call the school, we would appreciate it if you would place your call at a time when classes are not

in session. (Emergencies excepted!)

2. Please mark your child's name on his/her possessions in order to avoid loss of lunch pails, boots, running shoes, etc. Older as well as younger pupils frequently fail to claim items in the Lost and Found Box.

3. When children arrive at school, they are expected to remain outdoors until the first bell rings. In case of rain or very cold weather, pupils will be permitted to come inside as soon as they arrive. Some exceptions may be made for pupils who arrive very early.

4. Pupils who arrive at school by bicycle are expected to park their bicycles in a designated area and to leave them parked for the duration of the day. All pupils must leave bicycles alone during the day.

5. School dress ought to reflect a Reformed way of life. As in the past, girls wear skirts, dresses, or dress slacks and boys come in slacks, neat jeans, or shorts (not gym shorts). Pupils may change for physical education classes or noon hours to engage in sports.

6. If your child is to be absent from school, please telephone *before* 8:45 a.m., if at all possible. A note from you sent with a brother or sister on the day of the absence is also acceptable, but notes sent do not always reach their destination on time. Telephone messages are preferred. If no news explaining a child's absence reaches the school by 9:00 a.m., the principal will call the child's home. All absences must be accounted for as a matter of responsibility, courtesy and safety.

7. If you wish to have your child stay indoors during recess times because of a cold or other reason, please inform us by telephone or note.

8. Pupils are expected to remove footwear upon entering the school. A pair of slippers or gym shoes for indoor wear is advisable, especially in the winter time.

9. Pupils are required to display re-

### OUR COVER

A church in The Netherlands, built in the 15th century.

spect towards their teachers. Parents are asked to speak about this as necessary with their children.

10. We would appreciate it if chewing gum were left out of children's lunches. Chewing during class time is forbidden and gum often creates a mess on floors and desks.

11. Children like to bring toys to school upon occasion and this is fine. However, knives and toy weapons of any kind are strictly forbidden.

### C. Your comments and opinions please

During the last few years, a number



of people have written to School Crossing. These letters have always been appreciated, and the contents of many have been printed in this column. If you would like to comment on some issue pertaining to the education of our children, please take the time to do so. Let's keep each other informed and up-to-date!

### D. A September thought . . .

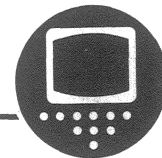
The smile of the child, as he starts for school,  
Is a bit restrained, as a general rule.  
The teacher's smile, in the same way,  
tends  
To droop a bit as the vacation ends.  
But the smile much wider than the others —  
As the summer riot ends — is *mother's*.

Until next time (D.V.)!

NICK VANDOOREN  
John Calvin School

607 Dynes Road, Burlington, ON

## PRESS RELEASES



### “Anchor” CRAFTH board meeting, Burlington, August 23, 1984

In absence of the chairman the vice-all opened the meeting with the reading of Matthew 22:1-5 and prayer.

Minutes were read and adopted.  
*Incoming Mail.*

Letter of Mr. W. Zomer of The Netherlands.

Report of a visit to Mr. Zomer by two persons who visited Mr. Zomer on different occasions.

Discussion was held and some questions answered.

*Summer Camp.* Mr. Gunnink reported on the Summer Camp. Seventeen participants and twenty volunteers attended this year's camp. And again it was a great success even though, due to weather conditions, the program had to be changed a few times.

*Financial report on Summer Camp.* Corrections of the bylaws will be discussed at the next meeting which will be held on September 6, in Burlington. Question period was held. Mr. Gunnink closed in prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

### “Anchor” CRAFTH board meeting, Burlington, September 6, 1984

The meeting was opened with the singing of Psalm 119:2 after which the chairman read a piece from the Scriptures and led in prayer.

A few matters arise from the minutes and they are then accepted.

*Incoming Mail.*

Letter of the building committee. A letter is drafted to send to the building committee.

*Report of the Public Relations com-*

*mittee.* A motion, to hire a coordinator is made and carried.

A letter is drafted to send Mr. Zomer answering several of his questions.

Date for next meeting is set for September 21, at 8 o'clock in Burlington.

Several questions are raised and answered at the question period.

After the singing of Psalm 119:16 and prayer the chairman adjourned the meeting.

### Classis Ontario North, September 13, 1984

1. On behalf of the convening Church at Fergus, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene asks the delegates to sing Psalm 107:1, 2, reads Deut. 28:1-19 and leads in prayer.

2. The delegates of Burlington West check the credentials and report that all churches are duly represented. Burlington West has sent an alternate elder delegate. From the Church at Ottawa only one delegate is present.

3. Classis is constituted. Chairman: Rev. D. DeJong, clerk: Rev. R. Aasman and assessor: Rev. M. Werkman.

4. The chairman welcomes the students C. Bosch and A. VanDelden who will be examined by classis, the visitors E. Wierenga of Neerlandia, AB, J. Gelderman of Burlington South, and Rev. G. Nederveen who is present for the first time as the minister of Brampton. He congratulates Rev. J. DeJong with the arrival of another child and the Church at Toronto with the acceptance of the call by Rev. Gleason.

5. Preparatory examination of student C. Bosch, B.Ed., M.Div. The required documents are examined and found in good

order. Classis then moves to the auditorium to listen to the sermon proposal on II Kings 2:19-22 by brother Bosch.

Classis meets in closed session and concludes that there are no objections to continue the examination.

In open session brother Bosch is examined in the exegesis of the Old Testament on Zechariah 1 and the exegesis of the New Testament on Luke 4:1-30 and the doctrine and the creeds of the church.

Classis meets in closed session to evaluate the examination.

Classis has no objections to declare brother C. Bosch eligible for call, for the period of one year.

Candidate Bosch orally confirms that he still stands behind his signature on the Subscription Form for students and candidates.

The chairman heartily congratulates candidate Bosch.

Classis sings Psalm 134:3 and the chairman leads in thanksgiving to the Lord. Classis adjourns. And all the delegates congratulate the new candidate.

6. After lunch, classis reopens, sings Psalm 66:1, after which roll call is held.

7. Examination student A. VanDelden. Brother VanDelden delivers his sermon proposal on Matthew 15:21-28, after which classis meets in closed session and concludes that there are no objections to continue the examination. In open session student VanDelden is examined in the doctrine and the creeds of the church.

Classis grants student VanDelden the privilege to speak an edifying word in the churches for the period of one year. The chairman reads the Subscription Form for students which brother VanDelden

signs. The chairman wishes him the blessings of the Lord and adjourns classis again. The delegates extend their congratulations to student VanDelden.

**8. Reports.**

a. from brother J. VanBodegom, treasurer of the Fund Needy Churches. This report is received with gratitude.

b. a report from the Church at Orangeville re support Rev. C. Olij is read and discussed in closed session.

c. reports of Church Visitation to the churches at Fergus, Brampton, Orangeville and Ottawa are read and received with gratitude.

d. a report from the Church at Toronto that the books of the classical treasurer for the year 1983 are in good order, is received with gratitude.

**9. Classis adjourns for supper.**

Classis reopens with the singing of Psalm 81:1, after which roll call is held.

10. The proposed "Classical Regulations" are postponed to the next classis. A letter from brother J. Gelderman at Burlington South and a letter from the Church

at Orangeville re the Classical Regulations are forwarded to the deputies for the revision of these regulations with the request to advise the next classis.

**11. Appointments:**

a. Church Visitors: the ministers;  
b. deputy church ad Art. 20 C.O.: Guelph;

c. deputies Fund Needy Churches: J. VanBodegom of Orangeville, J. Kottelenberg of Brampton and G. Lodder of Guelph;

d. examiners are continued. Rev. G. Nederveen is appointed as alternate for Rev. W.W.J. VanOene;

e. church for the Archives: Burlington East;

f. church for the inspection of the archives: Brampton;

g. classical treasurer: H. DenBroeder of Toronto;

h. church for auditing the Funds Needy Churches: Orangeville;

i. delegates to the next Regional Synod: ministers: R. Aasman, J. DeJong, J. Mulder, W.W.J. VanOene; alternates:

(in the following order) M. Werkman, D. DeJong, G. Nederveen, G.H. Visscher; elders: J. Boot (Toronto), H. Harsevoort (Burlington West), H. Plantinga (Guelph), J. Vanderwoude (Burlington South); alternates: (in the following order) H. VanDooren (Guelph), W.F. Horsman (Burlington West), C.J. Nobels (Brampton), P. Vanderschaaf (Toronto);

j. convening church for next classis: Guelph; date: Thursday, Dec. 13, 1984 at 9:00 a.m.; place: Toronto; chairman: Rev. J. DeJong; clerk: Rev. D. DeJong; assessor: Rev. R. Aasman.

12. Question period ad Art. 44 C.O. is held. In closed session one church asks for advice in a discipline case. Classis advises this church to continue with church discipline.

**13. Personal question period.**

14. After a psalm has been sung, the chairman leads in thanksgiving and adjourns classis.

For the classis,  
M. WERKMAN  
assessor

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



## Hello Busy Beavers,

Do you know this favourite children's hymn?

Can a little child like me  
Thank the Father fittingly?  
Yes, oh, yes, be good and true,  
Patient, kind, in all you do.  
Love the Lord and do your part,  
Learn to say with all your heart:  
Father, we thank Thee,  
Father, we thank Thee,  
Father in heaven we thank Thee.  
For the fruit upon the tree,  
For the birds that sing of Thee,  
For the earth in beauty dressed,  
Father, Mother, and the rest,  
For Thy precious, loving care,  
For Thy bounty everywhere,  
Father, we thank Thee,  
Father, we thank Thee,  
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

I think we can make pictures of this Thanksgiving Hymn. Let's make it a CONTEST!

Make your very best picture of the things for which we are thankful.

The "pictures" in the hymn above will help you!

Send your pictures to: Aunt Betty  
Box 54  
Fergus, ON N1M 2W7

Now it's time for birthday wishes!  
We all join in wishing the Busy Beavers who celebrate their birthday in October a very happy day and many, many happy returns.  
We hope you have a thankful day with your family and friends, too, and that the Lord will guide and keep you all in the year ahead.

## October

|                        |                   |                       |    |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----|
|                        | Karen Harsevoort  | 9                     |    |
|                        | Karin VanderVeen  | 17                    |    |
|                        | Cheryl VandeBurgt | 21                    |    |
| Jodi Hamoen            | 1                 | Carmen Van Middelkoop | 21 |
| Agnes Timmerman        | 1                 | Anne Kottelenberg     | 22 |
| Robert Van Middelkoop  | 1                 | Marilyn VandeVelde    | 22 |
| Nicole De Haas         | 2                 | Debbie Jongsma        | 29 |
| Terri Lynn Schulenberg | 3                 | Henry Moesker         | 29 |
| Brenda De Boer         | 4                 |                       |    |
| Michael Blokker        | 5                 |                       |    |
| Corinne Schulenberg    | 7                 |                       |    |
| Anita Tenhage          | 7                 |                       |    |

# “Horn of Plenty”

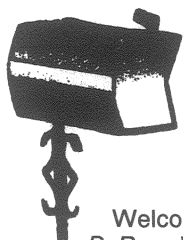
## WORDSEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Cynthia Van Raalte*

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

Look for:

|          |         |           |         |
|----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| carrots  | beets   | potatoes  | beans   |
| corn     | spinach | peas      | kale    |
| radishes | celery  | asparagus | cabbage |



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Mary-Lynn DeBoer*. We are happy to have you join us. Will you write us sometime and tell us about yourself and what you like to do after school?

What kind of solo and duet did you play at the wedding, *Nicole De Haas*? How did it go? Did you have a good holiday? I'm glad you did so well at your swimming lessons!

Hello, *Jennifer Clarke*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks for the game you sent. How were your holidays, Jennifer?

Thanks for a nice chatty letter, *Jane DeVos*. Sounds like your graduation play was a very funny one! Did you and your brother have a good holiday, Jane?

You seem to be getting quite a few storms there, *Marjorie Barendregt*. Good thing there was power next day. Thanks for an interesting puzzle, Marjorie. Did you enjoy your summer holidays?

You're a good puzzler, *Alan Van Raalte*. Keep up the good work! Your Dad was very happy I think, that you didn't forget him on Father's Day. Did you manage to keep busy during the holidays, Alan?

Busy Beaver *Nicole DeHaas* made up this poem to share with you.

### My Pony

My Pony is as sweet as sugar,  
 Never is she bad.  
 Her name's not all that silly  
 For her name is PAT.  
 She never bucks, she never stamps,  
 Never is she mad.  
 She's always walking gracefully  
 Except for when she's sad!

## Quiz Time!

Busy Beaver *Marjorie Barendregt* writes:

Fill in the missing letters to make sentences. Clue: the last letter is the first letter, too.

1. One \_\_venin\_\_ \_\_eorg\_\_ \_\_ntere\_\_ \_\_octo\_\_ \_\_alph'\_\_  
 \_\_auna.
2. Super \_\_alp\_\_ \_\_a\_\_ \_\_on\_\_ \_\_xcellen\_\_ \_\_hi\_\_  
 \_\_upper.

Answers next time!

## DECODE-A-VERSE

Using the key below, see if you can decode these verses.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
 m n o p z y x w v t s q r j k l h g f e d c b a i u

1. “\_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_  
 r i i k s z v f z m f i  
 \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_  
 m j p r i n d g p z j v f  
 \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ .” Mat. 11:30  
 q v x w e

2. “\_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_  
 q k c z i z i k d g  
 \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_  
 z j z r v z f m j p p k  
 \_\_ \_ \_\_ \_ . . .” Luke 6:35  
 x k k p

Bye for now Busy Beavers.  
 I'm looking forward to lots of CONTEST PICTURES!

Love,  
 Aunt Betty.