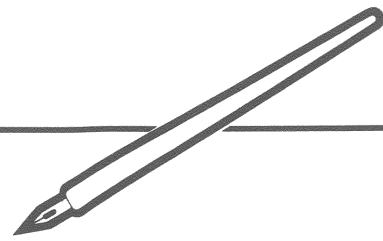




**Clarion**  
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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## Let us remember

### It is good to remember

It is good to maintain Remembrance Day and to remember, one day every year, that the lives of so many millions were taken during the two World Wars of this century. We often say, "They gave their lives." That, of course, is true. Those who fought gave themselves in this fight for freedom with their whole life. It is also true that all these men and women and children did not plan to give their lives. They wanted to live. But, in and through the war, their lives were taken. They were killed or plainly murdered, because they stood up for freedom and were against the enslaving imperialistic powers in those days, or simply because they became victims.

It is good to remember that so many gave or lost their life for the freedom that we still may enjoy. Remembering the cost can help us realize that we should not take our freedom for granted. It should also mean that we do not fool around with it. Freedom is a gift of God's grace. Also with respect to the so dearly paid for political freedom we do good to listen to the words of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 5:13, "... only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another." Paul gives direction to the freedom in Christ of which he speaks. It is the direction, first of all, to God and His service, and not to sin. It is, in the second place, the direction of love for the neighbour, and not of human selfishness. Also the freedom for which many gave their lives in the two World Wars needs restrictions in order to be maintained as true freedom.

### It is good to remember properly

Forty years have passed since the Second World War. Must we not conclude that during this period freedom has increasingly become a freedom for the flesh, a freedom in which many just think, say, and do what they want without restrictions from God's law? Is this not the sad reality in 1985? When we ask why this is so, the answer is obvious. For many, Remembrance Day is a day on which they remember what people did. For many, God has nothing to do with what happened. God is out of the picture.

However, the proper way of remembering is to remember the great works of the LORD God. God gave many "Remembrance Days" to His people Israel. At the Passover feast Israel remembered the redemption from Egypt's house of slavery. At the Feast of Weeks — Pentecost — Israel remembered that the LORD made a covenant with them at Mount Sinai and gave them His covenant law. Later on Israel also had its Purim feast to remember how Haman's plan to destroy the Jews was foiled.

However, the purpose of these yearly occasions was not to remember the great deeds of certain people. The Israelites were called to remember the great works of redemption of the LORD, the God of Israel. They gave thanks to God. They acknowledged that their freedom in their own land was a free gift from God. And they realized that this gift from God called

for thankful, obedient service in submission to God's Word.

I realise that there is a difference between the history of the people of Israel and the history of our modern times. The history of Israel is the history of salvation in Christ. This history is described in the Scriptures through prophetic inspiration. We are not allowed to approach our twentieth century history as the history of salvation in Christ. And nobody can claim, when describing this history, that he was an inspired prophet. Nevertheless, as Christians, we believe that God rules all things in His providence. Every good gift comes from Him. Therefore, the freedom gained at the cost of so many lives is a gift of God's goodness. This means that we must receive this freedom as a gift from God with which we must work to His honour and in His service.

We are Christian believers. Therefore we say, as God was in the center on Israel's days of remembrance, so God ought to be in the center on our Remembrance Day. That is what is missing so much in our days. And that is why the freedom is used so unrestrictively for the "flesh."

This abuse of freedom can only be corrected by faith, repentance, and conversion. Otherwise the freedom that was gained can easily be lost again. Love for each other, but then a love that is rooted in the love of God in Christ must give direction to our use of the freedom we possess. This is the task of the church, to preach the gospel of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ for sinners who are lost in their sins. It is the gospel of Christ that leads to salvation. Salvation is the forgiveness of sins and unbelief. Salvation is also a renewed submission to God's love and so to God's holy will. The church must also herself "live" this gospel, showing its truth in her own Christian life, remembering God's great works of salvation with great enthusiasm. When the church so backs up her preaching with her redeemed life, her message will receive credibility.

May God receive the glory in our remembering and in our life in freedom as *living* witnesses of His grace in Christ, as witnesses who "live" this grace.

### THE INTERNATIONAL REFORMED CONFERENCE

In this and the next issue of *Clarion*, the reader will find the report of the Rev. J. Visscher, one of our delegates, on the meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) held in September of this year in Edinburgh. I also received from him, for our magazine, the papers delivered at that meeting. It is good to read and know what was spoken at the Conference. That is and must remain a public matter. Our Canadian Reformed Churches have decided to join this Conference. It is our right and duty to know how things are developing. The ICRC is not an organization of some people, but of churches. For that reason we are thankful for the extensive report, as well as for the papers that were delivered, which hopefully will appear in the following issues of *Clarion*.

J. GEERTSEMA

# Loving discipline<sub>1</sub>

## 1. An outdated system?

Corporal punishment seems to be outdated in our modern society. The Bible speaks in many places about the use of the rod to discipline a child. The rod is the symbol of corporal punishment. Above this article we quoted two texts, and later on we will mention a few more, in which discipline is discussed. The main emphasis must be on the fact that discipline is a matter of love. That applies to every relationship in which we are confronted with authority and the obligation to obey. The discipline exercised by the civil government is different from the discipline exercised by the office-bearers in the church, and parents will discipline their children in a different manner than the teachers at school. However, the basic rule and guideline for every form of discipline has to be love, the intention to help, to correct, to educate, or even to rehabilitate the person. That is the meaning of the above texts and we will further elaborate on them in this article.

Proverbs 13:24 says that to spare the rod means to "hate" your son, while love makes one diligent to discipline. In Hebrews 12:6 the Bible teaches us that the Lord shows His love in the way He disciplines us, while those who do not receive discipline are considered to be illegitimate children. Discipline, also corporal punishment, has to be based upon and carried out in love.

Nowadays corporal punishment is considered outdated. According to the principles of modern pedagogics, children should be left free. No moral standards and values should be imposed upon them, and they should be given the opportunity to develop their own standards and their own value system. It disturbs their individual development when adults, either parents or teachers, instill in them certain ideas. They should only be provided with factual information, and even that has to be subject to their preference. They should not be bothered too much by what the teacher thinks is important, but they should be occupied with what personally interests them. In this way they can freely develop their own personality and their own ideas about good and evil. They can freely grow according to their intrinsic capacities. That is the concept of modern, humanistic child rearing and education. In this

*He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.*

*(Proverbs 13:24)*

*... the Lord disciplines him whom He loves . . . .*

*(Hebrews 12:6)*

philosophy there is no place for discipline, let alone corporal punishment. No parent or teacher has the right to impose his ideas upon such a tender child; he is too vulnerable to be treated in such a rough way. It will do lasting and irreparable damage to his concept of justice and create feelings of frustration, aversion, and rebellion in the mind of the child. This whole theory is based upon a humanistic idea about mankind. Mankind is good in itself. Evil thoughts and actions are only caused by environmental influences. A human being, left to himself, without any bad influence, supposedly develops into a perfect being, at least he is potentially capable of developing that way.

This idea has been developed and practised in education everywhere. Some educators practised it only to a certain extent, others have gone to the very extreme. However, it does not work. The generation of children, educated according to these principles is not happier, more satisfied, or more mature and independent, with a greater awareness of responsibility than the previous generation. On the contrary. There appear to be feelings of disappointment, disillusionment, emptiness, and sometimes desperation. According to statistics the suicide rate among teenagers in the U.S.A. has climbed to an all-time high of five-thousand a year, while for each of these registered cases there are about fifty to a hundred youngsters who unsuccessfully attempt to commit suicide and, according to specialists, many fatal teenage accidents are disguised suicides. That is an alarming development instead of an encouraging result of modern child rearing and education.

## 2. Anarchy

The results of the modern approach



are not only evident in the private lives of the teenagers, as the statistics about suicide show, but are also felt in public life, in the schools and in the families.

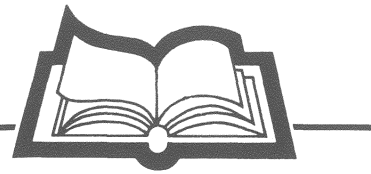
It is a well-known fact that there is a growing uneasiness among teachers in public schools. Some have given up their jobs because they cannot handle the problems any longer. Others feel threatened in the classroom and are afraid to use disciplinary measures or reprimand a student because they might be physically attacked by the students. Some have taken courses in self-defence. In some schools there is little enforcement of the rules and anarchy reigns in the classroom.

The same is happening in public life. Police forces are unable to enforce the law. When acting against juvenile crimes, they often face much criticism, resistance, and red tape. At the same time mass demonstrations against legislations, which have been enacted by a democratically elected government, can force the government to back down, to give in, to change the law, or to abstain from enforcing a current law. Right is not what the law says but what public opinion propagates. And this so-called public opinion is often the voice of the most vocal and aggressive action group or the group that manages to attract the most coverage by the news media.

The humanistic approach preaches freedom for everyone. The old slogan of the French revolution is still vivid: freedom, liberty, and equality. However, the result is a loss of freedom, and the imposition of the rules of the strongest pressure group upon the silent majority. It is the law of the jungle. It brings lawlessness, chaos, violence, and a spirit of revolution. The final result is anarchy.

Nowadays we hear about hijackings,

— Continued on page 481



“The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against Him, how to destroy Him.” Mark 3:26

## Strange bedfellows Herodians and Pharisees<sup>1</sup>

It is certainly a strange combination which heads this meditation. Pharisees and Herodians do not go together. The two parties are essentially different from each other, arch-enemies even. The one party rivals the other, and normally they would not be on speaking terms. Yet here they are holding counsel together!

The Pharisees formed the very strict party of the Law in Judea. They rejected and despised all Roman rule and authority, and yet they cooperated with the Romans in order to preserve their own position among Israel. The politics of the powerless! Still, the Pharisees saw the cooperation with the Romans as being only a temporary thing; for the Pharisees had a very strong expectation concerning the Messiah-King who would save Israel from all its enemies and restore the Kingdom of David (cf. Mark 12:35-37). The Pharisees know exactly where this Messiah will be born (Matthew 2:6) because many of the Scribes were members of the Pharisee party. So we have a party that is directed fully to the coming of the Messiah! The great King is coming . . . .

The Herodians also sought the good of Israel. But their hope is based completely on the house of Herod, the Edomite. After all, the house of Herod had converted to the Jewish faith, was related to Israel, and was to be preferred above the hated Romans! Had Herod the Great not seen to it that not all parts of the Holy Land had come under direct Roman occupation? Herod had ensured some measure of self-rule. So the Herodians were dedicated to keeping Herod and sons on the Throne. The Herodian Party was an influential one, containing many Sadducees and scribes. The party of the Pharisees was much smaller.

The Pharisees formed a fanatical, anti-Roman, anti-Herodian Party, and would not accept any compromise. They preached the coming of the King and were interested in signs pointing to this coming. That is why many Pharisees went to see John the Baptist! But the Herodians do not believe such things. They have their King already. They are satisfied with the status quo, and would like to see it maintained.

Totally different parties. Therefore it is at first a bit strange to read, “And the Pharisees . . . held counsel . . . with the Herodians . . . .” Generally they do not give each the time of day, but now they must meet together and discuss matters of mutual importance.

The question is: why? These two parties have suddenly found some unity because they have discovered a *common enemy*! They bury the hatchet in order first to deal together with another problem. Arch-enemies suddenly become allies. Strange bedfellows, but bedfellows nonetheless.

Their mutual enemy is Jesus Christ. The Pharisees from

Jerusalem have heard of Jesus and have “investigated Him.” But Jesus does not show them any messianic qualities or potential. On the contrary, the Pharisees discover that Jesus goes against their teaching, and that His life-style is terrible: he blasphemes God and eats with sinners and desecrates the Sabbath! This Jesus may incite the multitudes to riot and force the Romans to send in more troops. The Pharisees see their peace and position disturbed, and they conclude: this Jesus has got to go.

The Herodians, too, also see danger in Jesus. If there is a revolution in Northern Palestine (Galilee) the Roman troops may come to the non-occupied territories and force Herod Antipas from his throne. They, too, want peace to remain. Therefore, the Herodians will have agreed: this Jesus must go. And the Pharisees will have pressed the point: you, Herodians, must do something to stop this Jesus. For after all, the Lord was still in the area governed by Herod. The Herodians must secure Herod’s permission and aid to destroy Jesus. So they are conspiring together against the Lord.

It is interesting that Mark does not tell us anything about the *result* of this counsel. Most likely they could not come to an agreement. Perhaps they could not agree on the exact charge to be brought in against the Lord. Or they were afraid that the multitudes would riot if Jesus were arrested. While Herod, the fox, would rather wait for a more opportune moment.

But the devastating point is: our Lord is condemned and rejected already at the very beginning of His ministry by the MAJOR PARTIES as being not useful! The Pharisees want a Messiah-after-their-own tastes. The Herodians already have a Messiah, and don’t need another. They all have their ideals and plans in Israel, but Jesus does not fit in any of them. For the realization of their own plans the one party sometimes uses the other, but they have no need of Christ. He stands in their way, and must be removed. A negative alliance for an evil purpose.

We understand, then, how rich we are when we hear the full proclamation of the complete Word of God. Then we do not have wrong expectations regarding the Messiah. Then we do not seek unChristian compromise and unholy alliance, for the Word creates *positive communion*! We do not gather because of a mutual enemy, but we gather under one Lord and Saviour. In that communion we do not use one another for our own purposes, but we strive to seek the glory of God and the upbuilding of our neighbour. This communion is not for one moment or for one single project, this communion is a matter of our whole life.

CL. STAM

**Loving discipline — continued**

kidnappings, rape, murder, break-ins, and other acts of violence as never before. It is no longer safe to walk in the evening and in some areas women and children are not even safe on the street in clear daylight if they are without protection.

In many of these crimes, teenagers are involved. According to statistics more 17-to 20-year-old male persons are involved in almost every class of crime, including homicide, than any other age group. The new approach to child rearing did not make the new generation happy. It rather made them feel desperate. The downfall of moral standards is not caused by the bad economic situation or the high unemployment rate. It is not poverty that brings anarchy but rather affluence and, first and foremost, lack of loving discipline.

**3. Biblical guidelines**

In this series of articles we will discuss some aspects of discipline. We will first pay attention to how the Bible speaks about the task of those who are set in authority and those who are subject to it. Authority begins in the home. That is where children first are confronted with authority and loving discipline. It is there that they have to learn the basic rules of authority and discipline. If they are not taught to obey authority and to appreciate loving discipline as something that protects and guides their life, they will never rightly understand the meaning and value of it.

Lord's Day 39 says that I have to "show honour, love, and faithfulness to my father and mother and to all those in authority over me, . . . since it is God's will to govern us by their hand." Discipline may be felt as unpleasant at the moment it is applied, but children should be taught, and they should experience, that it is meted out with loving care. In Hebrews 12:11 we read: "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

The two texts, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him," (Proverbs 13:24) and ". . . the Lord disciplines him whom He loves" (Hebrews 12:6) contain the ongoing teaching of Holy Scripture. Discipline is not a matter of being hard, tough, and merciless. On the contrary. Discipline is and should always be a matter of tender loving care. It is to protect the person from a danger of which he may not even be aware. It is to keep the child on the right track and to teach him what really matters in life. In Proverbs 1:7

we read: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and understanding." That is the basic rule and foundation of all instruction and discipline. The word "fear" in this text does not mean in the first place anxiety, being afraid of some punishment that might be coming, but it means to have a great respect and regard for the Lord and His commandments, to obey Him in thankful submission.

By allowing children to be free and letting them grow up without discipline, we are not doing them a favour. Proverbs 13:24 says instead that it is a matter of hate. It means denying the children one of the most elementary "rights." The Lord Himself shows His love towards us in the way He disciplines us. Those who do not receive discipline are called illegitimate children.

Parents should not be afraid that corporal punishment, used with love, will damage their children. Proverbs 23:13,14 says: "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you beat him with a rod he will not die. If you beat him with a rod you will save his life from Sheol." That is clear language. He will not die, on the contrary, he will live, he will be saved from Sheol. Proverbs 22:15 says: "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him."

Also Proverbs 29:15 speaks about the instruction, received via loving discipline. "The rod and reproof gives wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother." That is what we very often see. Children are left to themselves. They do not get the discipline


they ought to receive, and finally they bring shame upon their parents. That is the result of a lack of loving discipline. That is what Proverbs 13:24 calls to "hate" your child.

Discipline should not begin when a child becomes a teenager, because then it is too late and the damage is done. It should start right from the beginning. Proverbs 19:18 says: "Discipline your son while there is still hope; do not set your heart on his destruction." The absence of discipline, at an early age, is called "his destruction."

Such discipline is not always felt as a matter of love, not even when parents are well aware of the purpose of discipline and exercise it in a fair and consistent way with tender loving care. In Hebrews 12:11 we read: "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." When we stick to the Biblical rules of discipline applied in love, children will sooner or later acknowledge that the parents have shown them tender loving care in exercising discipline. They will "yield the peaceful fruits of righteousness" instead of the bitter fruits of unrighteousness, lawlessness, and desperation, caused by a lack of discipline.

Now that we have discussed the Biblical rules, principles, and guidelines for discipline, we will turn our attention to a number of practical aspects of discipline.

— *To be continued*  
W. POUWELSE



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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editors: J. Geertsema and W. Pouwelse  
Co-Editors: J. DeJong, Cl. Stam and W.W.J. VanOene

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:  
CLARION  
9210 - 132A Street  
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## IN MEMORIAM

# Pieter Jongeling — 1909-1985

Even though it is somewhat late, we will still pay attention to the passing away of br. Pieter Jongeling. In August, at the age of 76, he was called Home. I hardly have to say who Jongeling — alias Piet Prins — was. He was well-known in The Netherlands and in our circles, as a Reformed journalist, politician, and author. He published a number of books, often containing selections of his articles, dealing with political, social, and spiritual issues, which were discussed in the light of the Scriptures. Besides these, Jongeling wrote more than sixty books for young people, of which many are translated into the English language.

In The Netherlands Jongeling was especially known as a Reformed politician. He was for many years one of the leaders of the Reformed Political Al-

liance, the Reformed political party, and during fourteen years he was a member of the Dutch Parliament as the representative of the Reformed people. In this function he showed himself a sincere, knowledgeable, Christian politician whose leadership helped many to learn and to understand what Reformed political thinking is.

The reason why Jongeling was so well-known in Reformed circles in-and-outside The Netherlands was especially in his work as a journalist. He was the man of *Het Gereformeerd Gezinsblad* (the Reformed Family Daily), later on called *Nederlands Dagblad* (the Netherlands Daily). It was especially through this paper that he, with others, gave strong, Reformed leadership in spiritual, ecclesiastical, social, and political matters.

The Lord of the universe, the Head of the Church, gave in this talented man very much to His Church in The Netherlands, as well as to the Dutch nation. Hebrews 13:7 is applicable here, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God, consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith."

It is so easy to deviate from the teachings and leadership of a first generation after a reformation. It is easy to become "broad" and less "strict" again, to lessen the norms and become more easygoing. It is our wish that both in The Netherlands and overseas also this leader is remembered in the proper way; that his example will not be forgotten, nor his teachings will be covered with dust.

J. GEERTSEMA

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## A report of the first meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches<sub>1</sub>

### The Preliminaries

On the first weekend of September 1985 the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, was in the process of catching its collective breath. All during the previous month it had been wall-to-wall tourists. They had come from practically every corner of the globe in order to experience the Edinburgh International Festival with its plays, concerts, dance troupes and famous Military Tattoo. But now the foreign hordes were departing, having satiated their appetites and, no doubt, emptied their bank-rolls as well.

Still, it was not all a case of outflux, for as the thousands exited, a few visitors began arriving in preparation for the first meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). They came by plane, train, car and bus. Either they were welcomed at their point of arrival by a representative of the Free Church of Scotland, the hosting church, or else they made their way to the Pollock Halls of Res-

idence of the University of Edinburgh where they were greeted by the Rev. J. Macleod. It seems that in some mysterious Scottish way he had been conscripted to act as conference organizer. Some were even heard to refer to him later, and that rather irreverently, as the "ecclesiastical gofer," a name not totally out of order since he was always "going for this" and "going for that." In any case, he bore it all with good humour and did an excellent job taking care of the needs of his guests.

By Monday evening, September 2, most of the delegates, advisers, and observers, some accompanied by their wives, had arrived and were transported to the Assembly Hall of the Free Church, St. Columba's Church, in the heart of the city. The occasion was the Prayer Service for the first meeting of the ICRC. Prof. C. Graham, Principal of the Free Church College, opened with prayer, after which Prof. Dr. J. Faber read the Scriptures. The Rev. D. Lamont, Minister of St. Columba's Church, delivered the message based on

that always relevant third verse of the epistle of Jude, "Beloved, being very eager to write to you of our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." In his address Rev. Lamont dwelt especially on the issue of concern in this verse, as well the commitment that this verse calls for. Following this service a social gathering took place in which most of the appropriate introductions were made.

### The conference meetings open

On the next day, Tuesday, September 3, the first meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches commenced. The Constituent Assembly which had been held three years before in Groningen, The Netherlands, was about to produce its first fruits. Some were heard to speak of the moment as being of historic proportions, others were more moderate in their assessments.

On behalf of the hosting church, the

Free Church of Scotland, Prof. A.C. Boyd, professor of New Testament at the Free Church College and the past Moderator of the General Assembly, brought the meeting to order. Psalm 93 was sung without musical accompaniment, as is customary in the Free Church where organs are absent and a precentor sets the tune. Revelation I was then read. Prayer was offered in the customary posture of the Free Church which means standing. After that Prof. Boyd welcomed all of the guests.

With the opening formalities out of the way, the meeting proceeded with the examination of the credentials of the churches represented. A committee consisting of the Revs. J. Klamer (Indonesia), A. Veldman (Australia) and J. Visscher (Canada) scrutinized the documents presented and reported that all were found to be in good order. The following churches, in their representatives, were present:

*a. Participating churches —*

Canadian Reformed Churches —

Rev. M. van Beveren, delegate  
Rev. J. Visscher, delegate  
Dr. J. Faber, adviser;

Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland —

Rev. D. Thomas, delegate;

Free Church of Scotland —

Rev. J.N. Macleod, delegate  
Rev. D. Lamont, delegate  
Prof. D. Macleod, adviser  
Prof. C. Graham, adviser;

Free Reformed Churches of Australia —

Rev. G. Van Rongen, delegate  
Rev. A. Veldman, delegate;

Gereja Reformaci in Indonesia —

Rev. J. Klamer, delegate;

Gereformeerde Kerken in

The Netherlands —

Rev. O.J. Douma, delegate  
Prof. H.M. Ohmann, delegate;

Presbyterian Church in Korea —

Prof. P.S. Oh, delegate.

*b. Churches applying for membership*

Free Church in Southern Africa —

Rev. N.P. Mpayipeli, observer-delegate  
Rev. H. Sliëp, observer-delegate  
Prof. A.C. Boyd, adviser;

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia —

Rev. W.P. Gadsby, observer-delegate  
Rev. J.D. Heenan, observer-delegate

Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland —

Rev. T.C. Donachie, observer-delegate  
Rev. C.K. Hyndman, observer-delegate.

*c. Observer churches*

Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore —

Rev. L.C. Kwee, visiting-observer;

Free Church in India —

Rev. D. John, visiting-observer;  
Free Reformed Churches of North America —

Rev. C. Schouls, visiting-observer

Rev. C. Pronk, visiting-observer;

Free Reformed Church in South Africa —

Rev. F.J. van Hulst, visiting-observer

Mr. J. Moes, visiting-observer;

Iglesia Evangelica Presbiteriana del Peru —

Rev. A. Tuesta, visiting-observer;  
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (South Africa) —

Rev. J.E. Potgieter, visiting-observer

Dr. P. Rossouw, visiting-observer;

Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Christchurch, New Zealand —

Rev. A. Young, visiting-observer;

Orthodox Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. —

Dr. F. Kingsley Elder, visiting-observer

Rev. J.P. Galbraith, visiting-observer

Rev. J.J. Peterson, visiting-observer;

Reformed Church in Japan —

Rev. S. Morinaga, visiting-observer;

Christian Witness to Israel —

Rev. M.A. Macleod, visiting-observer.

Upon the recommendation of the Provisional Committee, the following executive was proposed and agreed to: chairman, Rev. D. Lamont; vice-chairman, Rev. G. Van Rongen; recording-secretary, Prof. C. Graham; corresponding secretary, Rev. M. van Beveren.

Next, the agenda was adopted and the Provisional Committee tendered its report. This committee was appointed in 1982 at the close of the Constituent Assembly in Groningen to oversee the preparations for this first meeting of the ICRC, as well as to assist the Provisional Secretary. The reporter, Prof. C. Graham, mentioned that there had not been all that much work for the committee to do. This was due especially to the fact that the ICRC was still in an embryonic stage and that the participating churches were somewhat unclear as to what their input should be. He expressed the hope that in the future the ICRC would have on its agenda not just topics of a theological nature, but also topics of an ethical, social and more practical character. The conference should have a full agenda and not be solely dependent on formal lectures or introductions.

**New members**

After this report, the conference went over to the next matter on the agenda which had to do with applications for membership. The following churches had requested to be received as new members: The Free Church of Southern Africa, The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

To scrutinize these applications a committee was proposed consisting of the delegates: H.M. Ohmann, convener, J.N.

Macleod, A. Veldman and J. Visscher. This committee later met and examined the documents that each of these churches had submitted according to the Constitution. Interviews were also conducted with representatives of these churches in which further information was received, and pertinent questions asked. The result of this process was that on the next day the committee could report that there were no obstacles to admitting these churches as members of the conference and to upgrading their representatives to delegate status. (Elsewhere in this issue certain basic facts about these new members can be found.)

With regard to these applications a few points require further elaboration. All three churches have as their subordinate confessions the Westminster Standards, while the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Ireland) also holds to the historic Covenants. The Free Church in Southern Africa is in the process of translating these Standards into the Xhosa language, and will submit this translation for scrutiny to the conference once it is completed.

The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia was queried especially about its subscription form for office-bearers and what it meant to accept "the system of doctrine" as set forth in the Westminster Standards. Was this in any way a weakening or a qualification in this matter of subscription? From the discussion that followed, it became clear that there was no desire whatsoever to compromise here, but rather to emphasize that office-bearers do not stand in exactly the same position over against the confessions as they do over against the Scriptures. The Scriptures have divine authority and must be believed in their totality; whereas, the confessions have ecclesiastical authority and may contain human interpretations and insights which are not infallible. Nevertheless, the doctrine which they seek to summarize and stress is faithful to the Scriptures.

As an illustration of this it was mentioned that the Westminster Standards identify the AntiChrist as the Pope of Rome. In the time when these Standards were being written that may have been an obvious identification, but today it is considered dubious. The Pope may exhibit certain tendencies that are AntiChrist-like, but an absolute identification is something that few would want to make. By the same token, one can also refer to the fact that our previous edition of the Belgic Confession considered the letter to the Hebrews to be a product of Paul's inspired pen, whereas almost all office-bearers took exception to this. Did that undermine their Subscription? Not necessarily, since it is a recognized fact that the authority of our confessional standards is a subordinate

one. They always have to be tested with the touchstone of the Scriptures.

Another matter which had the attention of the committee had to do with how these churches, requesting admission to the conference, related to churches in their own land who were already members. In Ireland the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was a member, and if the Reformed Presbyterian Church was admitted, there would be two churches in one country. The same was the case in Australia where the Free Reformed Churches were already in and the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia was requesting to be allowed in. In South Africa the situation was different because the Free Reformed Churches there were not yet requesting membership, although they might do so in the future.

In each case the committee was able to ascertain that there was an active striving on the part of these churches to promote unity. In Ireland the EPC and the RPC were doing their utmost to come closer together. In Australia the FRC and the PCEA were taking up contact with each other and were hopeful that it would deepen. There was no desire whatsoever on the part of the applicants to perpetuate their own existence and to refuse to heed the command of the Lord for unity.

#### **A committee on proposals and finances**

In addition to a committee on membership, a committee was also appointed to examine and report on correspondence, proposals from member churches, as well as financial arrangements for this and future meetings of the conference. To this committee were appointed: Rev. O.J. Douma, Rev. J. Klamer, Rev. D. Lamont, and Prof. P.S. Oh. The next day the Revs. W.P. Gadsby, N.P. Mpayipeli, and J. Vischer were added to this committee.

On Thursday, September 5, the committee's report was submitted and a considerable number of recommendations were adopted. With respect to conference expenses, it was decided to establish a General Fund to cover all expenses. The costs to the member churches will be based on the number of baptized members in each church taking into account the estimated average per capita income of these members. The reason why it was decided to go with the number of baptized members, instead of the number of communicants, has to do with the fact that in most of the Presbyterian Churches there are also sizeable numbers of "adherents." These are members who have been baptized, and who support the church financially, but who have not yet publicly professed their faith. If they had been ignored in the assessments it could have been rightly argued that certain member church-

es would be contributing at a less than proper rate.

The reason why it was decided to use "the estimated average per capita income" is probably more apparent. It relates to the fact that among the member churches there is a wide discrepancy when it comes to standards of living. At one point the committee was ready to recommend that "the national per capita" figures be used, but then it came to the conclusion that that too would be grossly unfair. To mention but one case in point, the Free Church in Southern Africa is a church made up almost totally of black people and their incomes are considerably less than those of the whites, hence it would have been unfair to expect them to pay the same fee. It is thus hoped that by using an estimated average per capita income formula the assessments will turn out to be much more equitable. At the same time it was realized that this formula has the potential to give the treasurer some serious migraines. If it proves unworkable, he will simply have to come to the next meeting of the conference with suggestions for improvement.

It was also decided that member churches would have to pay for the travelling expenses of their own delegates and that if that proved impossible assistance could be requested from the General Fund. An amendment to the effect that the conference also pay for travelling expenses was defeated on the grounds that it would prove too costly. As for churches sending observers or churches applying for membership, they would have to bear their own travelling and lodging costs.

With respect to this meeting of the conference in Edinburgh, it was decided that delegates and advisers of member churches would be billed L135.60 (\$260.00) per person, while observers would be charged L180.60 (\$350.00) per person. The discrepancy between these two figures relates to the fact that in the case of delegates and advisers, the hosting church, the Free Church of Scotland, decided to assume some of their expenses. In addition the Free Church also assumed the extra costs relating to secretarial work and sundry matters.

On a related financial matter, the conference also decided to appoint a treasurer

in the person of Mr. H.A. Berends of Surrey, Canada, and gave him a detailed mandate. The auditing of his books will be done by the treasurer's member church, in this instance the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Furthermore, the conference decided that each study committee which the Conference appoints is expected to do its business through the mail. If an actual meeting is called for, the committee has to submit a request to the Interim Committee which will either approve or disapprove the expense involved. In this way there exists some kind of control over study committees and their expenses.

A couple of member churches, namely, in Australia, Canada and The Netherlands had requested that certain amendments be made to the Constitution and By-Laws of the conference. In this matter the conference agreed with the proposal of the committee that these items could not be dealt with at this meeting but would have to be placed on the agenda of the next meeting. The reason for this relates to the fact that amendments to the Constitution need to be received by the member churches two years before the conference, and at that particular time only one or two churches had joined, one of them being a church proposing the amendments, namely, the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Needless to say, it hardly made sense to send these amendments to the member churches when there were only two members who could properly consider them and instruct their delegates accordingly.

Now there may be some who are of the opinion that the ICRC, in making this decision, was simply side-stepping the issues. That was not the case at all. The conference recognized the legitimacy of these amendments but could not handle them for reasons that have to do with the start-up of the conference. As such, part of the decision on these matters reads, "to inform those member churches (CRC, FRCA, GKN) which have submitted amendments to the Constitution and Regulations that the matters raised by them could not be dealt with at this meeting of the conference due to the fact that the establishment of the conference made it impossible to meet the constitutional provisions regarding amendments to the Constitution and Regulations; to place these amendments on the agenda of the next meeting of the conference."

Finally, the conference had received a proposal on missions from the churches in The Netherlands, and after some discussion it followed the committee's recommendation to appoint a study committee with the mandate: (a) to gather information from the member churches regarding their missionary activities and

## **OUR COVER**

Moraine Lake,  
Banff National Park, AB

Photo courtesy:  
Government of Alberta





ICRC Edinburgh 1985 — delegates and observers

training programs; (b) to study the possibilities of coordinating the missionary programs of the member churches when it comes to training, mission fields and exchanging missionaries; (c) to examine the need to produce listings of relevant missionary literature on an ongoing basis, and to promote the publication of an introduction to Reformed missions; (d) to report to the next meeting of the conference.

From this mandate it can be readily perceived that this study committee has a rather wide ranging task from information gathering to examining the whole area of missionary cooperation to stimulating certain publishing efforts. Once its report is tabled it will be up to the member churches to decide whether or not to make use of its recommendations. These in turn may prove very helpful when it comes to planning future missionary activities.

### **Tuesday evening — the doctrine of the church**

On Tuesday evening, September 3 at 7:30 p.m. the conference was back in session. The various applications for membership to the ICRC by the churches mentioned above were dealt with and approved. Afterwards, in what was to become an

evening custom, some of the lesser known member churches and observer churches received an opportunity to introduce themselves. On this particular evening, Prof. P.S. Oh gave some information regarding the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin), followed by the Rev. J. Klamer who introduced the Reformed Churches on East Sumba/Savu (Indonesia).

The next item on the agenda was the paper prepared by Dr. J. Faber, Professor of Dogmatics at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Hamilton, Ontario. This paper was titled "The Doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions." He began his speech by making reference to the timely character of this topic seeing recent developments in the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. He then went on to the Reformed Confessions and characterized them in a fourfold manner as being Scriptural, Catholic, anti-Romanist and anti-spiritualist.

Thereafter, Dr. Faber divided these Confessions into five periods: (i) the period of first reflection and consolidation (e.g. 67 Articles of 1523, Ten Theses of Berne of 1528, the First Helvetic Confession of 1536); (ii) the period of new orientation (e.g. the Geneva Confession of 1536, the

Geneva Catechism of 1541, the Second Helvetic Confession of 1562 or 1566); (iii) the period under the cross (e.g. the French Confession of Faith of 1559, the Scottish Confession of 1560, the Belgic Confession of 1561); (iv) the period of the Second Reformation (e.g. the Hungarian Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563); (v) the period of Reformed posterity (e.g. the Canons of Dort of 1618-1619, the Westminster Standards of 1643-1649).

Having made these distinctions, Dr. Faber then went back and examined the four characteristics in detail drawing on the Confessions for elaboration. Dealing with the scripturality of the doctrine of the church, he drew attention to the relationship between the Scriptures and the church, as well as to the nature of the church itself as being a gathering, a company. Under the catholic characteristic, he stressed the continuity of the church and gave as an example the expression "outside of the church there is no salvation." He also showed how the Reformed Confessions are so often structured according to the ecumenical creeds. In connection with this he deplored the whole development whereby the word "catholic" has sometimes been either replaced by or added to the word "christian" and sug-

gested that the conference might appoint a committee in order to come to a common text for the ecumenical creeds.

On the aspect of anti-Romanist, he showed how virtually all of the Reformed Confessions share this characteristic. Time and again one finds in them that Roman Catholic abuses are being attacked, especially those that relate to the government and offices of the church. Dr. Faber also stressed that the equality of ministers and churches is fundamental to Reformed church polity and should be powerfully maintained over against Rome and false ecumenicity. In this context he also wondered whether the Westminster Confession, while being a good Reformed document and anti-Romanist, did not leave itself open in Chapter 31 to hierarchism.

On the last characteristic of anti-spiritualist, the speaker showed how the Confessions do not promote a schismatic search for a perfect community. This aspect should also be considered timely seeing the 20th century with its holiness movements and neo-pentacostal revivalism.

Finally, Dr. Faber turned his attention to two distinctions, the visible and invisible church and the true and false church. Regarding the former, he referred to the First Helvetic Confession of 1536, as well as to the Genevan Catechism. In particular he made mention of the fact that Calvin spoke of the church in two ways, that which is invisible to us but visible to God and that which is visible to men. He also showed how the Belgic Confession, although not using the terms visible and invisible, speaks in the same vein. As for the Westminster Standards, they use this distinction in a pointed and systematic manner. It was precisely this systematizing that drew some critical remarks from Dr. Faber. Drawing on the writings of Prof. John Murray, he wondered whether the Westminster Standards do not speak of the visible and invisible church as two distinct subjects, two separate entities? He warned that this can so easily lead to a polarization of the so-called invisible and visible church. Dr. Faber did, however, add that these Standards do not show a low esteem for the visible church. Furthermore, the Article 26-31 prove that they show in many striking respects, the Scriptural, Catholic, and anti-Romanist and anti-spiritualist tendency of a typically Reformed Confession.

As to the matter of the true and false church, the speaker traced their development through the Genevan Confession of 1536, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Confession of the English Congregation of Geneva, the Scottish Confession, the Belgic Confession, and the Westminster Confession. He stressed that this distinction between true and false must be maintained, that it should always be

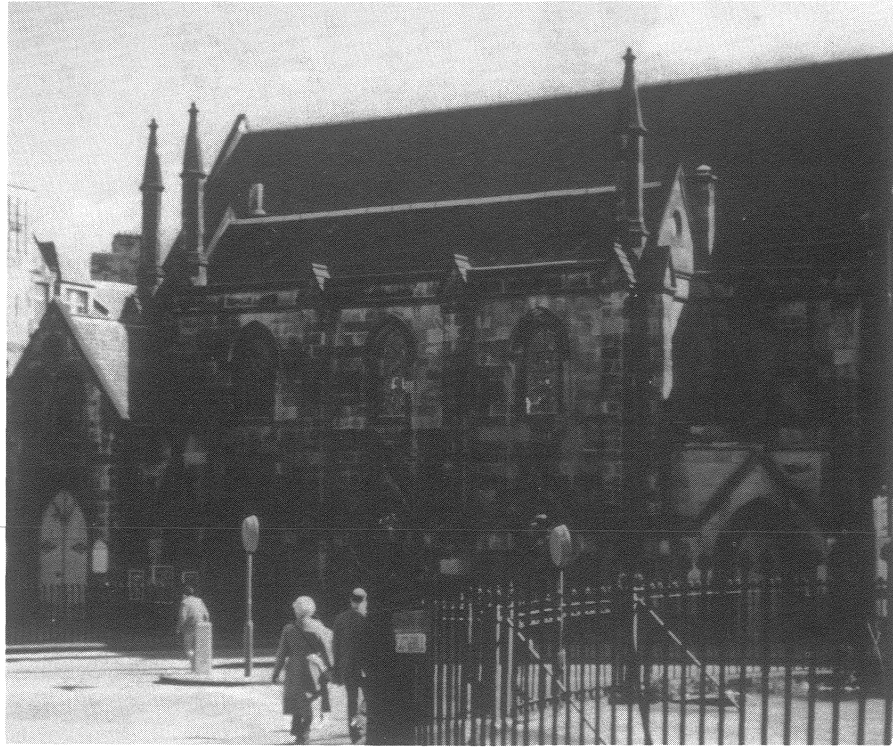
so that the true church hears the voice of the Good Shepherd and follows Him because it knows His voice.

### Wednesday morning — discussion

Although one question regarding Dr. Faber's address was handled on the Tuesday evening, the bulk of the discussion took place on Wednesday morning and early afternoon. The issues raised were

It would only work confusion and lead to a wrong identification with them.

From a pastoral point of view, Dr. Faber urged that our approach should be to speak to Roman Catholics and ask them whether they know what it means that they have been baptized into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If they do not, then it is incumbent upon us to educate them.



St. Columba's Church — site of the ICRC meeting

many and varied. Space does not permit us to mention all of them, but here follow the main ones.

It was asked whether the Reformers went far enough in their condemnation of Roman Catholic baptism and whether they should not have requested that converts be re-baptized? A later supplementary to this question was put rather bluntly, "If an unregenerate man (a false priest of Rome) can baptize, why cannot any Tom, Dick or Harriet do it?" In his response, Dr. Faber went back to Augustine and his struggle with the Donatists and showed how this controversy had influenced Calvin's position in his *Institutes*. Calvin did not want to go in the direction of re-baptism, and we should be careful not to depart from his position. In connection with this, he mentioned that this topic also has the attention of our missionaries in Latin America; however, he stressed that he was not in favour of re-baptism, also seeing the influence of neo-pentacostalism and anabaptism in that part of the world.

As for the possibility that any "Tom, Dick or Harriet" could baptize if a priest is allowed to do it, Dr. Faber used the apt illustration of an errand boy. He is given a letter which contains all kinds of promises and commitments in it, only in the process of carrying it he soils it with his dirty hands. Does such an outwardly soiled letter void the promises in it? Not at all. They remain valid. So it is with baptism too when it is administered by a person unfit to do so.

Dr. Faber was also asked to elaborate on what is meant by the "pluriformity of the church." In doing so he dealt with the background of this expression. He showed how Abraham Kuyper had propagated this idea in his *Stone Lectures*, as well as in his *Principles of Sacred Theology*. According to Kuyper, the essence of the church shows itself in many forms. Relying on the idealism of German philosophy, Kuyper saw Lutherans, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, the Reformed as being different forms of the same essence. By way of illustra-

tion Dr. Faber mentioned that he had seen the garden of Principal Graham which has in it all kinds of beautiful flowers. Well, so Kuyper would say, it is with the church too. It is made up of all kinds of beautiful flowers (denominations) and together they form one beautiful garden (the church).

In his criticism of this Kuyperian construction, Dr. Faber pointed especially to two things. The first is that Kuyper did not recognize the impact of sin in all of this. He failed to see that divisions in the church were the result of sin and conflict. In addition, Kuyper also undermined the whole confessional distinction between the true and the false church by his stress on pluriformity.

Another question that arose had to do with the possibility of appointing a study committee in order to come to a common text on the ecumenical creeds. Dr. Faber stated that he could support such a suggestion.

On the matter of visible and invisible church, one of the Scottish brethren felt that a few comments and questions were in order. According to his understanding it was never the intention of the Westminster divines to teach the existence of two separate churches. Rather they wanted to emphasize that the church can be viewed from two perspectives, namely, the church as we see it and the church as God sees it. That some may have taken refuge in the concept of the invisible church is not a proper extension of this distinction but rather an abuse of it. As for the matter of incipient elements of hierarchy being present in the Presbyterian system of church government, he wondered whether this was an accurate statement. What is wrong, he asked, with submitting the judgment of the few to the judgment of the many in Synods or General Assemblies?

In reply, Dr. Faber made it quite clear that he appreciated those who love their confessions. "I love people who love the Westminster Confession," he remarked. As for the distinction visible and invisible, its origin can be traced to Augustine in his struggle with the Donatists, also Wycliffe and Hus used it in their conflicts with the Roman Church. It has a legitimate use, but it can also be used in such a way that polarization takes place between these two aspects. That is what we should be on our guard against. One should not take refuge in the invisible church, and by the same token one should not take refuge in the visible church either. "I always tell our people, 'You are not saved because you are a member of the Canadian Reformed Churches, but you are saved through faith in Jesus Christ,'" he said.

The question was asked whether the fact that the Westminster Standards do not speak of a true and false church could

be attributed to the later character of these Standards? And what about this distinction, is it outdated, too simplistic? How do you handle such a distinction today, for example, in this conference? In Ireland, South Africa and Australia there is more than one true church.

Dr. Faber reacted to these questions by stressing that the Westminster Confession is in the same line as the Belgic Confession and the Scottish Confession when it comes to this matter of true and false. The terminology may differ because the Westminster Confession speaks about the false church as "the synagogue of Satan" but the teaching is the same. As for this distinction being outdated, Dr. Faber denied it. It is a Scriptural one. It also goes back to Augustine and the Donatists.

But how then should this distinction be handled? Dr. Faber pointed out that when the Westminster Confession speaks about pure and less pure churches, it is referring to a distinction that is made within the true church. In this regard one can think of the seven churches of Asia Minor which were all true but not all equally pure. As for the matter of unity and the relationship of true churches to each other, Dr. Faber made mention of Calvin who time and again showed that he was no schismatic. He was even willing to sign the revised Augsburg Confession if that would promote the cause of unity with Luther. More up-to-date, he mentioned the situation in Canada where there are two true churches, the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches, who exist side by side. Such a situation exists yet it should be recognized as

being an unbearable one. There should be unity. We should sit around the same Lord's Supper table. We should do everything possible to promote unity.

Can you put a deadline on coming to unity of say six to seven years? Dr. Faber doubted the wisdom of that. All kinds of factors play a role in these divisions, often sociological and non-theological ones too. Nevertheless, we should continue to preach the message of Ephesians 4. We must do what we can to remove stumbling blocks. We must have the attitude of Romans 15 and if that means that organs in the church would have to go at the cost of communion, then the organs should go. We must never forget the teaching of I Corinthians 1 and John 17. Christ is not divided. To which he added, "my conscience cannot rest if Christians in the same city do not come together."

In addition to these questions others were asked about the rights of the consistory, about the "gathering" aspect of the church, about the marks of the church.

On the whole, Dr. Faber's presentation, as well as his responses to the questions raised, was very well received. As a matter of fact, the impression created by this whole discussion on the church was that there really are no basic differences on this point between the member churches of the conference. There are no doubt differences in practices and applications, caused in large part by the differing historical backgrounds and developments, but there appeared to be no essential ones.

— To be continued  
J. VISSCHER

**Communique:** Conference gave attention to the issuance of a communique reflecting, in general, their work.

This was agreed in the following terms:

The first meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches took place in Edinburgh 3 - 10 September and brought together ten member churches and observers from nine other churches. The participants came from many different countries, representative of all continents.

This being a first meeting the discussions were largely of a theological nature homing in on the concept of the church and the covenant in the Reformed Confessions.

While there was evident agreement on the bases of Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th centuries, underpinning unanimous affirmation with regard, e.g. to the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God and the only rule of faith and life; the Lord Jesus Christ as God and King of this world to whom all people and governments must give account: there was also recognition of difference of perspective on matters of less importance.

Conference recognized the Christian duty of securing the closest possible unity of Reformed Churches on the practical level. With this in mind, and having regard to the fact that Christ gathers His one catholic church out of all tribes, nations and peoples, there was set up a committee on Missions with a directive to investigate areas of mutual helpfulness in missions and in the training of those called to leadership in missions. Conference also appointed a committee to study the text of the three ecumenical creeds, in order to come to a common text that can be recommended to the member churches.

## The handicapped member of the congregation

Taken from the Dutch magazine *Dit Koningskind*

Belonging to the congregation of Jesus Christ is a unique situation. We ourselves do not search for a group of people with whom to share our journey through this world. We simply have to accept those people who will be our fellow travellers to eternity. We are born and baptized in the community of the church. As we grow up we learn to know the men and women, the boys and girls with whom we listen to the same sermon, or with whom we go to catechism and society.

When we move, we hand in our attestation to the address found in the *Year-book* of the churches, and wait to see whom we will meet in the church at our new residence. We are brought together. It is God who places us beside each other and unites us in the one bond of the covenant. And that is the point. That covenant which God establishes with the believers is a bond and makes a tie. It is not an oppressive bond, but provides a feeling of security, of protection in this world full of enmity and hatred. Communion, — being together — belongs to being human. God did not create man to be alone. The ideal of humanity is not the individualist or the solitary person. God also created the woman as a helpmeet for man. Together they were to create a family, build up a community. One human being needs another. Being a help indicates being tuned in to each other, being one in order to go on together.

### Variety within the church

The congregation, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ reveals a great diversity. It exists of men and women who all possess different gifts and talents. The one uses his head, the other his hands. One is a thinker, the other a doer. One person likes to go further, adventure is in his blood. Another one is content with himself, his possessions and his dwelling place. Altogether however, they join in building the one church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Office-bearers and congregation, old and young, the enthusiasts and those whose natures are more static, they all

have their own place and calling. There are healthy members and sick ones. People who have to be nursed, and those who practise the nursing profession as their calling. They also need each other. The handicapped believer also has his own place within the church, in the communion of saints. Indeed, that is the beautiful Scriptural name for the church. That is how, in the Apostolic Creed, we confess the church — as communion of saints. That name carries a note of security and comfort for the handicapped person. And for the others, who go through life with a healthy body and mind, it is a great calling.

### The handicapped in the church

Paradise knew of no handicapped person. Neither will the new heaven and the new earth. On this earth however, they exist with a variety of problems. It is because of man's fall into sin that everything has changed on earth and it is because of us that God's curse was called over creation. Since that time there have been tears, disappointments, the mutilation of perfect life, the mental and physical incompleteness. There is hardly a congregation in our country without the sick, the blind, the deaf, those who are worn-out and mentally exhausted by old age, those who are born with defects, who cannot help themselves and are totally dependent upon others, the mentally retarded.

What a blessing that they are born in the church! The Lord gave them His promises, they could receive the sign and seal of holy baptism. Right from the beginning they were given the certainty of the atonement of their sins, and the prospect of life eternal. However, they must still pass through this life, which is so hard and knows so little pity and loving compassion. Even in the church, believers are not perfect. Also in the church we are so often nearest to ourselves. Selfishness reigns there too. Fathers and mothers do not always have enough patience with their mentally deficient child. Oh, they know that the poor child cannot help that it is

always so difficult and is screaming so often. But sometimes it gets too much even for them. And always saying "please" and "thank you" to someone else makes you fed up at times, so that you would like to lash out at everyone and even look angry at God: why do others . . . but not !! You belong to the congregation with your physical or mental handicap but you often do not experience its comfort and joy. Many look past you, they are full of themselves and their own worries. They don't realize that, seated in your wheelchair, you are desperate for a bit of attention and a cheerful word. And still, time and time again you regain the knowledge that God thinks of you and stays beside you: the quiet surrender after a storm of revolt. It strikes through you like a wave of joy when you have been wheeled to church and you see the uplifted hand of the minister and hear his greeting for you, a greeting from heaven: grace be with you and peace.

Yes indeed, you belong, — to the congregation — to the Church of God. You may pray along and sing along and give thanks for such great blessings that you may still have: the grace of God.

### The calling of the congregation

The congregation sits around you listening to the same sermon. She is exhorted by the preaching of the Word, and reminded of her calling with regard to the neighbour, the fellow members of the same congregation who lack so much of what others possess. This is the calling of the believer that he love God above all and his neighbour as himself. Also the handicapped neighbour.

The healthy members are tested in their love toward God and the genuineness of their faith in their dealings with those church members who, unlike themselves, cannot see and hear, walk and speak, or who cannot participate because of their mental retardation. Are they truly eyes for the blind, ear for the deaf, fee for the lame, filled with love for the weak in mind? Here lies a mandate for the

church. What you have done for the least of these, you have done for me, says the Son of man on the day of judgment.

There are many possibilities. Some need a home where they can receive loving care which often cannot be given in a large "Home." Where can this be found, if not in the congregation, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ? He bought her with His blood. It is the Lord who brings the church members together, who gathers, defends and preserves His Church. It is the Lord who makes His congregation into a communion of saints.

The believers have all together, and individually as members, communion

with the Lord Christ and share in His treasures and gifts. The handicapped and the others, altogether. However, there now lies the calling to use the gifts, which they possess, willingly and cheerfully for the benefit and well-being of the other members. This mandate exists for both, for the sick and the healthy, for the handicapped and for those who are of sound mind and body. They must all believe God's providence with the heart and profess it with the mouth.

The adversity of the sick is never only adversity, and the prosperity of the healthy is never just prosperity. Both have one purpose: to worship God's greatness

and unsearchability in His blessings and in His trials. Everyone must live out of grace, God's grace in Jesus Christ. As members of Christ's Church they must be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity, and for the future put their trust in our faithful God and Father. They must all learn to do this continually, as disciples of their Lord. Then, in spite of all the questions and difficulties and unsolved problems, they may rejoice together at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the light of His salvation.

D. VREUGDENHIL

Translated by  
Mrs. T. Ravensbergen

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## Women's rally — June 5, 1985

On Wednesday June 5, 1985, the ladies of the Canadian Reformed Church of Calgary, Alberta had the privilege of hosting the Alberta League Day for the 53 ladies in attendance.

The day began with registration from 9:30 a.m. — 10:30 a.m. where coffee, tea and goodies were consumed by all.

Shortly after 10:30 a.m. the morning session was opened by our chairlady Mrs. A. Vanden Hoven. After we sang Hymn 45:1-4, Mrs. Vanden Hoven lead in prayer and read a poem called "Two Prayers."

A hearty welcome was extended to all and roll call was held after which Colossians 3:18-4:6 was read. We then sang Psalm 128:1,2.

Our speaker Rev. Wielenga was welcomed and introduced. Rev. Wielenga then spoke to us on "Aspects of Child Rearing." 1. Discipline 2. The use of T.V. in the home and 3. Peer group pressure.

There is a need for discussing this topic. There can be much worry and anxiety in child rearing. Many books are published on this topic, however, we can never follow any author completely.

We must discipline our children in the spirit of mercy and love. As God deals with His people so we must deal with our children. In kindness, forbearance, and intolerance of sin. We are co-workers with God in the rearing of our children. The Holy Spirit guides and governs the children. He is their advocate.

We must look at the quantity and quality of television in our homes. The T.V. can become a very convenient babysitter and paralyse the child's creativity. Our children should learn through play and develop their faculties through other means such as books, puzzles and group play.

We should remember that children can become accustomed to wrongdoing very easily. The television can be useful if the worldliness is pointed out and the children are told how and why it is wrong. Family viewing is the key.

Peer pressure can be an enormous influence in adolescence. It can give a person low self-esteem and an inferiority complex. The child will go to any lengths to be accepted by the group. Human need for approval and acceptance is there. The children must be taught to find this approval in God along with their family and brothers and sisters in Christ.

Children need love, warmth and support to stand strong in the world.

There was no time left for discussion before lunch so it was decided to have the discussion after lunch.

Lunch was a feast and enjoyed by all. The discussion of the morning session brought up many varied questions. There were a number of books recommended on Child Rearing, for example, *Parents in Pain* by John White and *Eros Defiled* by John White. We must always make the children aware of who they are. They belong to the Lord and we must teach them what that means.

As the ladies were preparing for the afternoon session, a small fire broke out in the fan of the kitchen. The fire department came to the rescue with 3 fire trucks and a paramedic unit. All the ladies were evacuated and the fire was extinguished by our able rescuers.

The afternoon session opened with the singing of Hymn 59:1,2, 3. Mrs. A. Vanden Hoven then introduced assistant pastor Rev. Harrold Cooper who spoke to us on behalf of Christians Concerned for Life. Rev. Cooper gave a brief outline

on what C.C.L. stands for and spoke of the literature available. We then saw the film "The Slippery Slope" which dealt with the "Baby Doe Case" in the United States, as well as infanticide — what to do, euthanasia — mercy killing, and death with dignity. A number of professionals and members of government also voiced their views on these issues.

We all have a stake in the human race. Ethics have shifted. At one time there was a sanctity of life; now we have a quality of life. Maybe the lack of Christianity in our country has altered our whole societies attitude. We need to build into our families love and care for others. These are all issues which are in our world today and we as Christians Concerned for Life must combat them with all our strength, for God is on our side.

Our speakers were thanked for their presentations and the societies present expressed sincere appreciation to the ladies of Calgary for an eventful and enjoyable day.

Before closing the day we sang the "National Anthem" and the "League Song."

Miss A. Oostenbrug closed the day with prayer.

Before going on our homeward way refreshments were served and the ladies continued the discussions of the day.

We may thank our heavenly Father for the freedom which we may enjoy in that we have the opportunity to come together in the unity of faith to study and discuss His Word and thus be strengthened for our task here on this earth.

A. OSTERMEIER

Calgary

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# “God so loved the world”

Third Annual Native Bible Camp, Canadian Reformed Church  
Coaldale, Alberta, July 8-12, 1985

Once again the Home Mission Committee of Coaldale, Alberta, has had a Native Bible Camp for native children in our area. We received the children through the Native Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta, and the Native Drop-In Centre in Taber, Alberta. Many children were not available this year from other areas such as Saskatchewan, because of lack of work for their parents in the sugar beet industry.

Requests via the church bulletin, Home Mission members, and past camp leaders supplied us with three leaders, two cooks, four teachers, and various part-time help. They made the Native Bible Camp (1985) a success.

Native children arrived on Monday, July 8, 1985, between 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Altogether, thirty-four children came to camp; age limits were from six to twelve years, but we also had (by request from parents) four children from thirteen to fifteen years old. We also welcomed the older ones and were thankful because they also showed much interest in activities and Bible lessons. They were also helpful with camp chores and the younger native children.



*The whole group together*

*The older kids enjoyed helping out the younger ones each day*



Every morning, the children and leaders were up at approximately 8:00 a.m., after which we had breakfast followed by wash-up and tent cleaning. At 9:30 a.m. our Bible lessons began; the children were divided by age, into four groups. “God so loved the world” was our camp heading and topic, which we divided into the four days as follows: Tuesday — Creation Day, Wednesday — Fall Day, Thursday — Redemption Day, Friday — Gratitude Day. Each lesson, and Bible reading at each meal, pertained to our daily topic. Each lesson also included various crafts and the learning of songs such as “This is my Father’s World” and “Trust and Obey.”

The children enjoyed the Bible lessons so much that many classes lasted longer than the scheduled hour, sometimes by thirty minutes. I also read them evening stories from a children’s Bible. It was not mandatory for the kids to join in the readings but every child was there and all enjoyed the stories.

The weather, during the whole week, was very hot. The children were only at



Daily Bible lesson being taught to the ten and eleven-year-old children



Enjoyed swimming daily in order to "beat the heat"

camp for maybe fifteen minutes and we had a water fight, as much to loosen tension as, to cool off. The temperature reached 30 — 35° C every day. We swam every evening in the river which was low and of no danger. This year we had a day trip to Writing on Stone Park for a guided tour and, of course, more swimming. We also went on two day trips to, once again, go swimming at Stafford Park (just outside of Coaldale, Alberta).

Some other activities that the children enjoyed included volleyball, soccer, flying dutchman and a wiener roast. All the children went to their tents without much trouble at 10:00 p.m. for a good night's rest that was much needed.

All leaders, teachers, cooks, and helpers were very helpful, which is a blessing and something to be very thankful for. I greatly appreciated the help. The children were also exceptionally well behaved. I grew to love all these children and pray that the Lord will be with them and their parents and that our follow-up program may be in His hands.

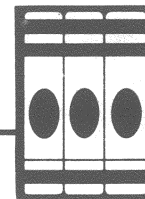
On the last day of camp, we presented Bible bookmarkers and booklets to the children with the cleanest tent for each day of the week. We also distributed a Bible to eight of the children who did not have a Bible in their home. Together with the leaders, children, and some of the children's parents, we sang the songs they learned with their Bible lessons, and sang "Happy Birthday" to one of the children. The children then put together their work sheets and self-made covers asking us all to sign them. After this, I officially closed the camp with prayer.

We invited all the children with their parents to join us at our church picnic in September and will later send each child a copy of the camp group picture.

On behalf of the Home Mission Committee,  
GERALD VAN SETERS,  
Camp leader



Closing day activities



## A brief survey

In April of this year the Pilgrim Canadian Reformed Church at London, ON, celebrated the 25th Anniversary of its institution. Such celebrations are splendid occasions to recall various events from the past, to relate how the Lord has guided and blessed in every respect, and to fix such reminiscences in written form.

The London Church, too, used the opportunity to issue a 55-page booklet in which a "brief survey of our history in word and pictures" is given by Cor Hoff. It makes for very interesting reading, although it is sometimes too much chronicle-like to my taste. We do get from it a good picture of London's history during the past 25 years. The ministers that served

the London Church contributed also via brief messages, while the writer quotes from Rev. Roukema's articles written during the latter's ministry in London.

One danger from which it is difficult to keep oneself is the temptation to let the writer and those who are close to him occupy a prominent place in word and picture, and the present booklet has not completely escaped it. An excessive use of capital letters (*His Hand, Who, Heavenly*) should have been avoided.

For everyone who is genuinely interested in the history of Christ's Church it will be important to add this booklet to his collection of particulars about this history. After all, it is locally that Christ's

work of gathering His Church becomes evident first of all. There may even be several among us who collect such commemorative booklets. They will do well by adding the present one.

It can be obtained for \$5.00, postage included. If you send this amount to London, you'll find it in your mailbox shortly after receipt of your payment. If the price seems somewhat high, be advised that the actual cost is even higher. Should it, therefore, be your desire to pay wholly for what you get, why not add a couple of dollars?

VO

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

One Dundas Street West  
Box 2, Suite 2106  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3  
Phone: (416) 598-2520

#### OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN ASPEREN, Hendrikus Jacobus, geboren op 15 mei 1922 te Rotterdam, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Hogenban 108D, naar Canada vertrokken op 12 maart 1957.

BAKKER, Jacob, geboren op 9 november 1920, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Nassaustraat 195 te Ridderkerk, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 januari 1952.

BAKKER, Robert Age Heere, geboren op 7 april 1948 te 's Gravenhage, laatstbekende woonplaats in Nederland: Amstelveen, naar Canada vertrokken in maart 1973, laatstbekende adres alhier: 7 Ashwood Drive, Cambridge, Ontario N3C 3H7.

BECKER, Cornelis Hendrik, geboren op 19 oktober 1920, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: v. Zesenstraat 16IIIA te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 3 november 1954.

BRUGMAN, R.F.F., geboren op 26 februari 1955, naar Canada vertrokken op 29 maart 1978.

GRAAFMANS, Johannes, geboren op 19 juli 1920, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Wilhelminastraat 71, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 juli 1954.

HAUZENER, F.S.E., geboren op 24 februari 1920, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Prunusstraat 46, Den Helder, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 januari 1954.

HENDRIKS, Jan, geboren op 2 mei 1933 te Workum, naar Canada vertrokken in mei 1957, laatstbekende adres tot nov. 1983: 12 Spinning Wheel Court, Thornhill, Ontario L3T 1G7.

JANSEN, Els, wed. van Leen Jansen, eerder gehuwd geweest in 1945 met Leo Schrijver, laatstbekende adres in Nederland:

Onbekende Gracht 2 of 3 te Amsterdam, later naar Canada geëmigreerd. Leeftijd omstreeks 70 jaar.

DE JONGE, Hermanus, geboren op 16 juli 1920 te Terneuzen, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Merelstraat 2, Sluiskil, naar Canada vertrokken in juni 1958, laatstbekende adres: RR 1, Schomberg, Ontario.

KRIJNEN, Hermina Johanna Wilhelmina, geboren te 's Graveland op 5 januari 1941

KRIJNEN, Everardus Johannes, geboren te 's Graveland op 18 sept. 1944 en

KRIJNEN, Bertus, geboren te Dwingelo op 17 december 1949. Genoemde kinderen zijn op 17 september 1954 naar Canada geëmigreerd met hun moeder Mevr. Lubberta M. van der Kuijl, die op 4 april 1952 te Dwingelo is gehuwd met Pieter van Ee.

POOL VAN ROSSUM, Mevr. P., naar Canada vertrokken in 1956.

VAN RIET, Petrus Joseph, geboren op 24 januari 1905 te Hontenisse, Zeeuws Vlaanderen, naar Canada vertrokken in 1923, alhier gehuwd en echtgenote had reeds twee kinderen.

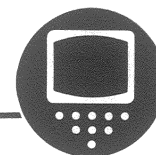
SIEMENS, J., geboren op 27 februari 1920, laatstbekende woonplaats: Selfkant Hongen, Duitsland.



Did you remember to hand in your family greeting for our "Year End" issue?

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





## Continuation of Classis Ontario South of Sept. 11 and 12 on Oct. 2, 1985

1. *Opening.* After the singing of Hymn 8:1,14 and the reading of Deuteronomy 32:1-14, the chairman of classis, Rev. C. Bosch, leads in prayer. The brothers are welcomed to this continuation of classis, and a special welcome is extended to brothers G. Peet and K.A. Kok who hope to be examined on this day. Attendance is checked and it is found that delegates from all churches are present. The agenda is reviewed.

2. *Examinations.* Both brother G. Peet and brother K.A. Kok successfully complete their respective examinations. After they promise not to teach anything which conflicts with the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, they are granted permission to speak an edifying word in the churches.

3. *Question Period ad Article 44 Church Order.* Question period ad Article 44 C.O. is held. Advice is given to one church concerning a matter of discipline.

### 4. Reports.

a. Reports are made of church visits to the Churches at Grand Rapids and Lincoln.

b. Report is made on Hamilton's continuing contact with the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church in Sackville, N.S. It is decided to encourage Hamilton to continue this contact until Regional Synod can give a ruling on who will deal with this matter. Classis recommends that the contact be continued since there has been good progress, and there is a genuine desire to know us better and to discuss affiliation with us. Copies of this report have been sent to Classis Ontario North and to Ottawa to keep them informed.

c. Grand Rapids informs classis of a request of Tri-County Reformed Church, Laurel, M.D. to the Church at Grand Rapids to take whatever steps are necessary to assist this congregation in affiliating with the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Classis decides to appoint a committee:

I. to investigate this request and for this purpose to be provided with all the relevant and official documents, including those from the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery and General Assembly 1983 of the O.P.C.

II. to advise, if possible, the next classis regarding the request and the

manner of admission to the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and to send this request to the churches five weeks before classis.

III. to evaluate the position of Rev. B. Hofford with a view to possible affiliation.

IV. during this investigation into the procedures for admission, to take into account that there are matters involved which have served at the broadest assemblies of the O.P.C. and Canadian Reformed Churches, and which will be dealt with at our forthcoming General Synod, 1986.

Appointed to this committee are: Rev. J. van Rietschoten, Rev. J. Moesker, elder B. de Vos, and another elder from Chatham.

d. Financial Report for 1984 of classical treasurer is adopted. It is decided to raise the levy for the classical treasury from \$4.00 to \$6.00 per communicant member for 1985.

e. The audit of the records of the classical treasurer by the Church at Lincoln is approved.

5. *Instructions.* Classis declares that all the necessary documents with respect to the call extended to Rev. R. Aasman have been submitted by the Church at Ancaster. Classis approves this call, and Rev. W. Huizinga is appointed to repre-

sent classis at Rev. Aasman's installation on Nov. 3 at Ancaster.

6. *Appointments.* The appointment of church visitors for Attercliffe, Ancaster and Blue Bell is set for next classis.

7. *Personal Question Period.* Personal question period is held, and Rev. P. Kingma uses this opportunity to report on his visit to Blue Bell on September 29. The delegates of Blue Bell express their thankfulness for the best wishes of the churches.

8. *Next Classis.* Date for Next Classis is set for December 11, 1985.

Convening church is the Church at Attercliffe. Proposed moderator: Chairman: Rev. P. Kingma, Clerk: Rev. C. Bosch, Assessor: Rev. M. van Luik.

9. *Adoption of Acts and Approval of Press Release.* The Acts are adopted after some discussion. After some amendments the press release is approved.

10. *Censure ad Article 44 Church Order.* Chairman judges that censure is not necessary.

11. *Closing.* Chairman thanks the ladies of London for their services. The brothers sing Hymn 59:1,3 and the chairman leads in closing prayer. Classis is closed.

On behalf of classis,  
J. MOESKER, assessor



Given consent to speak an edifying word in the churches by Classis Ontario South, September 11,12 and October 2, 1985:

Student G. PEET  
5 Rockwood Place, Apt. 14  
Hamilton, ON L8N 2G3  
Telephone: (416) 525-6113  
And student K.A. KOK  
324 Rosemary Avenue  
Ambler, PA 19002 USA  
Or: 241 Stone Church Road E.  
Hamilton, ON L9B 1B1  
Telephone: (416) 389-7264

CALLED to Armidale, Australia:

REV. J. VISSCHER  
of Cloverdale, BC

## "Anchor" Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped," October 18, 1985

The meeting is opened in a Christian manner.

The chairman welcomes all and especially Mr. and Mrs. D. Kooiman. A discussion with the Kooimans follows. Expected difficulties are highlighted. The board is impressed by Mr. Kooiman's knowledge and approach. A unanimous decision is made to appoint Mr. Kooiman as director of our group home.

Some information from the Society for a "home for the aged" regarding rezoning was received.

\$35,000 was received from the Hamilton societies.

The press release is read and adopted.

A question period follows.

After the singing of Psalm 84:6, the meeting is closed with prayer.

E.J. DE JONG

# ABC BIBLE COLLECTION - by Mrs. John Roza



## **P-palace** (1 Kings 5:8)

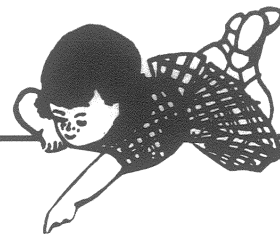
*Colour me!*

## Quiz Questions

1. What do we call the stories that were told by the Lord Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is also known as the \_\_\_\_\_. (Luke 22)
3. A governor asked Jesus if He was King of the Jews just before He was sentenced to death. Who is this governor? \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 27)
4. At this Jewish Harvest festival, tongues of fire appeared resting on the disciples and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. What is the name of this festival? \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2)
5. God used ten events before Pharaoh would let the Israelites leave Egypt. What do we call these events? \_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 7-11)
6. Which apostle persecuted the believers, before he was called by God? \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 9)

## Answers for the letter "O"

1. Offer 2. Obey 3. Obadiah 4. Old 5. Olive



## Hello Busy Beavers,

I still have a Reformation Day quiz for you.  
Join in!  
Look it up!  
Ask for help if you have to.  
Send in your answers to me for a REWARD!

### REFORMATION DAY

#### Who am I?

- I am a Reformer who had the first name of John. Name two!  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I translated the Bible into the language people in Reformation times could understand. Name two again!  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I was burned at the stake for boldly preaching the gospel in Bohemia. \_\_\_\_\_
- I served 19 months as a French galley slave and later became a bold Reformer. \_\_\_\_\_
- I had to escape through a window like the Apostle Paul and flee Paris disguised as a vinedresser. \_\_\_\_\_
- I died in battle defending the Reformation in my canton. \_\_\_\_\_
- I am the Reformer who had to be kidnapped for his own protection! \_\_\_\_\_

Send your answers to me at this address:

*Aunt Betty*  
*clo Clarion*  
Premier Printing Ltd.  
1249 Plessis Road  
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3L9

## DECEMBER



The last month of the year!

Special birthday wishes to all the Busy Beavers who celebrate their birthday in this month. Here's hoping you have a very happy day with your family and friends! Also a very thankful day for the Lord's love and blessings in the past year. May He guide and keep you also in the year ahead.

Bryan Jongbloed	2	Carla Schoon	11
Cynthia Van Raalte	2	Stacey Schutten	12
Sophia Van Raalte	4	Shirley Van Raalte	13
Gordon Van Egmond	8	Stuart Schenkel	16
Hannah Harlaar	9	Helena Hamoen	17
Monica Stroop	9	Peter de Witt	23
Joanne Flokstra	10	Julie Douma	23
Mary-Lynne Kottelenberg	10	Chandra Meerstra	23
Janice Scholtens	10	Alwin Plug	26

## Quiz Time!

### WHICH ONE DOESN'T BELONG?

Read the names in the groups. Decide which one does not belong with the others. Circle it.

- Job, James, Jonah, Jeremiah, Joshua
- Sinai, Pisgah, Ararat, Carmel, Philippi
- Jordan, Pharpar, Elimelech, Kishon, Kanah
- Ben-hadad, Hezekiah, Zedekiah, Jehoshaphat, Asa
- Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Caleb, Nehemiah
- The Sea of Galilee, the Lake of Gennesaret, the Sea of Chinnereth, the Sea of Tiberias, the Red Sea
- Galilee, Samaria, Goshen, Idumea, Judea
- Ephesians, Revelations, Galatians, Colossians, Philemon
- Dan, Gad, Naphtali, Obadiah, Zebulon
- Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Paul
- Aaron, Annas, Caiaphas, Abner, Eli
- Stephen, Barnabas, Silas, Mark, Timothy

(Answers next time)

### NUMBER SEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Michelle Peters*

9	9	9	7	6	6
7	6	8	8	8	7
6	8	7	7	7	8
6	9	8	8	7	9
8	9	6	7	9	6
1	9	7	8	8	1
2	9	8	7	7	2
5	4	9	8	2	3

FIND:

9999	9997
8787	7668
9887	8967
6789	6877
6123	7778