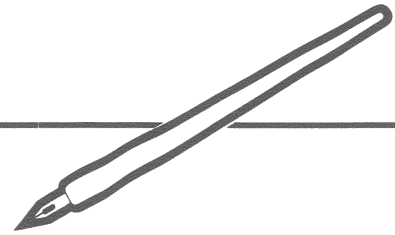




**Clarion**  
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 35, No. 11

May 30, 1986



## An eternal covenant

### A book review

In this issue the reader will find a review, written by Rev. J. VanRietschoten, on a very instructive book. The author of the book is professor J. Kamphuis, professor in Dogmatics, formerly in Church History, in Kampen, the Netherlands. The title of the book is *An Eternal Covenant*. We are thankful that the Rev. VanRietschoten wrote this review for us and asks our attention for this book.

Now you may ask why, in this editorial, I am writing about the same book. Is that not overdoing it? My answer is: the book deserves our attention. I will try to make clear why.

During the first week of General Synod of Burlington 1986, its members enjoyed the presence of the Rev. G. Jarrell, delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In a conversation which I had with him we talked about the two different ways of preaching, the subjective way and the covenantal way. (In a previous issue of our magazine we also asked attention for these two lines of thought in connection with infant baptism and the slightly different approach between the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Catechism.)

The subjective approach in preaching focuses all the attention on the assurance of faith in the heart of the believer. The minister confronts the congregation with questions like, Are you, my listeners, sure that you have part in Christ's salvation. Is there in your heart the assurance of faith? Do you feel that God's grace is also for you? The important question here is how a person can be sure of his salvation. The reader understands that in this manner of preaching the listeners are urged to turn their attention to their own inward experiences, whereby (and this is the point) the assurance of faith is based on the inner experience of the believer.

The other approach in preaching, the covenantal one, directs the attention of the listeners to God and His promising Word and the inherent obligation of faith. The basic approach is: God says to you, I am the LORD your God for the sake of the blood of Christ. This is my sure promise. And I want you to live in the faith that this is true. Do you believe this? Do you live accordingly? In this covenantal approach the assurance of faith (and that again is the point) is based on the sure promises of the LORD. God promises, and I have to believe it. Not to believe what He promises would be disobedience.

The Rev. Jarrell expressed his thankfulness that he had become acquainted with the covenantal approach through contact with our churches. With gratitude we notice here the fruits of the struggle of the Liberation of 1944 in the OPC. It is a joy to hear that we are allowed to share with others what we have received through grace. The English translation of this book of Kamphuis is, in my opinion, a very good instrument in sharing our inheritance, our covenantal approach over against the subjective one, with others in the English speaking world.

### A comparison

The importance of the book for gaining insight into the

struggle that led to the Liberation in 1944, and for seeing the significance of this struggle as a struggle against subjectivism can be shown with the following extensive quotation from the book. The reader can find it on page 38. Kamphuis compares the struggle of the Reformation (Luther) with the one in the Liberation (1944). Under the heading "For the Reformation's 'Sola Fide'" he writes the following.

The reformatory preaching of God's Word [in the thirties, before the Liberation, J.G.] was misinterpreted and made suspect by subjectivism, — but in reality — in the context of the 20th century, the 'sola fide' of the Reformation was at stake!

Striking parallels can be pointed out on all sides between the Roman-scholastic resistance to the Reformation of the 16th century and the Kuyperian-scholastic opposition offered against the reformatory movement during the thirties.

Allow me to illustrate this at one particular point.

When Martin Luther's clarion-call was heard to live from faith in God's gracious promise alone, the spear-head of the opposition was continuously pointed at this "alone." They expected to strike at the very heart of the Reformation by accusing it of *one-sidedness*. Of course, nobody wanted to deny that God calls to faith in Him, *but* Martin Luther forgot that there was more. Who would like to deny that Christ is the Redeemer? *But* objection was raised against "Christ alone." Who would like to deny the need of grace? Scholasticism of the Middle Ages wrote many thick volumes on this subject. *But* objections were raised as soon as Martin Luther reduced *everything* to the same denominator of grace: by grace alone! The "Sola fide," "sola gratia, solus Christus" has raised suspicion and opposition. It has awakened the accusation of one-sidedness, of things having been made absolute. For no longer any room was granted to *man and his piety, to his pious achievements*. God and His grace, surely, have their place, but we are there, too!, and the collectivity of the church is there as well! This is why all through the ages the Church of Rome has accused the Reformation of causing the *fullness* (catholicity) of the message of the gospel to be lost. For it is a matter of faith, certainly, but not of faith *alone*; the input of pious man was there, too! The same was said concerning God's grace, justification in Christ, etcetera. Over against the unconditional reformatory preaching of "by faith alone" a reasoning was put with its structure of "not only — but also." The promise of the gospel is there, *but* have I made myself worthy of it?

It is really worthwhile to give our attention to the fact that during the 16th century there was, apart from the opposition offered by traditionalism against the "sola fide," also a sort of "modern subjectivism" in Anabaptism and kindred groups and persons. Remember the fierce opposition offered by Sebastian Franck, who originally joined the Reformation, but then, feeling disappointed, turned away

and attacked the "Wort-heiligkeit" of the Reformation. (literally: Word-holiness; Franck accused the Reformed of acknowledging the Bible, the Word of God, as the only norm for a holy life.)

However, from whatever corner the opposition is offered, it always turns against the "alone" of the Reformation. That is the stumbling block. The background and the instigating motive — though hidden to those who resist the "alone" — is seen to be the desire of religious *man* to be acknowledged, i.e. man who wants to speak about grace and faith in that way only.

It is a balance between God and man, between His grace and the works or the piety of man.

Well, it was exactly the same manner of speech — the pretence of proper balance — that was heard over against the reformatory movement in the Reformed Churches. This time there was no strong reasoning from the meritorious character of man's good works, but more from "experience." The latter became an *independent component* alongside faith, instead of being considered as a *fruit* of the communion of faith with the LORD in the Covenant. The distance between the Church of Rome of the 16th century and this late-Kuyperian Scholasticism is less than it seems to be at first sight. In the call to examine oneself whether one is a believer and whether one belongs to God's Covenant, *man was thrown upon himself* just as much as in the Roman-Catholic doctrine of the meritorious character of good works or in the "pious experience" of Anabaptism.

Those who have experienced the stranglehold of subjectivism when on Sunday — after the preaching of "objective salvation" they were referred back to themselves in search of the *final* assurance within their soul, and who frequently in the selfsame church building during a subsequent service would hear the gospel of God's true Word of promise

proclaimed (as happened to me and to many of my contemporaries) — those people realized (among many other things they did not know) that a *choice* had to be made, quite apart from the ecclesiastical *choice* in the days of the Liberation. It was a choice for life's sake. I remember how, in the midst of an environment that was marked by the latter days of Kuyperianism, I experienced the reformatory preaching as liberating. In that little village church we were, under this kind of preaching, placed eye to eye with the living God in His faithfulness to the Covenant, in the reliability of His speaking in promise and calling. Then already — on the church yard — the insinuation was heard that 'pious experience' was being destroyed. But faith, also that of many tempted young hearts, experienced *the great liberation*. We have been put in the freedom of Christ, by this kind of preaching. In an even more concrete way than we had ever heard before, that preaching pointed to the real sins but at the same time unconditionally proclaimed acquittal for sinners, with the appeal of "faith alone." Great was the power of such preaching.

### Conclusion

Even though the book in its English translation is not always easy to read, I wish this book in the hands of every American/Canadian Reformed person. When one has studied this book and knows its contents, one knows what the Liberation was about. Especially we, as ministers of God's Word, who have to proclaim God's Word, should read and re-read a book like this for our preaching from Sunday to Sunday, in order that the inheritance which we received may not get lost, and in order that the congregations be led in the ways of the covenant communion with the LORD.

J. GEERTSEMA

## Dealing with grief<sub>3</sub>

### 8. Some conclusions

The Bible tells us about a number of different cases in which people experience suffering and grief. The reason behind it can be completely different. We have to be careful that we not too easily categorize others. We have to examine our own heart but we have to leave it up to the Lord to judge others.

In the example of Job we have seen that there was a struggle going on between the Lord and the devil. The Lord showed, in the life of Job, the victory of His grace, although Job and his friends were not aware of this background and came to wrong conclusions.

In the case of the man who was born blind, there was no specific sin in his life nor in the life of his parents, but it was, that the works of God might be made manifest.

With the man who had been ill for

thirty-eight years, we get the impression that there was a relationship between his way of life and his suffering. He received the warning: "Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you."

Paul suffered, because he was given a thorn in the flesh, to keep him from being too elated. When he asked to be relieved from this "thorn," because he thought it hindered him in his work as a preacher, the Lord answered him: "My grace is suf-

ficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

In general we can learn from Hebrews 12:6 that "The Lord disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives." In verse 8 he even says: "If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, than you are illegitimate children and not sons."

When we are confronted with cases of suffering and grief we have to be careful



that we not try to categorize every case according to one of the examples. We have to bear in mind that they are all special cases, used by God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ for a very specific purpose. Further we have to realize that in most cases different aspects are involved at the same time, and that the Lord does not always give account or an explanation, as in the cases mentioned above. Finally, we have to leave it up to each individual to determine (if they ever will) what the purpose of their suffering and grief is. It is certainly not up to us to translate it in a personal message.

## 9. How to approach

Now we come to the practical question how we have to approach families who suffer grief. Very often we hear the complaint, as it was also voiced in a letter I received, that most people shy away from the issue and avoid speaking about it. Sometimes they even stay away from people who experience grief, because they do not know what to say and how to comfort. In one letter the complaint was heard that during the house visitation the elders did not feel comfortable when the matter was brought up, and soon changed the topic. Still the people themselves wanted to talk about it. Not to complain about what they had gone through, but to cherish the memories of beloved ones, who were also remembered by others. What is the proper approach in such a situation? Do people ask too much if they want to bring up the past and talk about it? Or are the visitors wrong in evading the issue, afraid they will open old scars? There are two aspects we have to consider, and two dangers we have to watch out for. In this and the next section I will try to pay attention to both aspects in a balanced way.

Why do we hear so often the complaint that people shy away from the issue, change the topic when it is brought up, or do not show up at all, although they have been good friends before? This is a real problem generally! I have heard it many times in my pastoral practice, while dealing with grieving families. Although I personally always have seen it as one of the most rewarding parts of my task as a pastor, many do not dare, or at least hesitate, to visit someone who is terminally ill and knows that he or she will soon die. It seems that many people, while visiting, only want to say positive things. When they greet such a person they often say things like: "you still look very good." "You are doing better than last time." "There seems to be some improvement." "It is not as bad as I had expected." Or, if all these things obviously are not in place, then at least they like to say: "Considering the *circumstances* it is not too bad." Did you ever think about this reaction? Why not a more real-

istic approach? Why not simply say: "I see you are very sick, you must have a lot of pain. I see that it is getting worse." Sometimes it seems that the visitor tries to play down the seriousness of the suffering. That might be an attempt to comfort and to uplift the person, but it certainly is a wrong approach, because it gives the impression and the feeling that the visitor does not realize the magnitude of the problem. It is often felt as evading or denying reality and is no comfort at all for the one who suffers.

Many people, especially those who have never suffered or faced grief, do not know how to show compassion. The best advice that can be given is, to listen first, to show that you understand, and if people want to talk about their grief, do not change the subject. They need an outlet, and appreciate your listening. And if people grieve about someone who has been taken away, don't avoid speaking about it or bringing it up. Many people don't dare to talk about the past in such a situation, because they are afraid they will open old wounds. However, in most cases the opposite is true. If the wound is still open, speaking about it is often as a balm upon the wound. If the wound has been healed, it is still a comfort and something to cherish, if people show that they still remember the beloved one who has been taken away. One person wrote me how much it meant for them, when people, after a number of years, made a remark about their child, parent, or spouse who had passed away. That does not open wounds at all. They cherish the memory and feel good if you show that you also remember them.

One thing you have to watch out for, and it is a mistake, quite often made without being aware of it. When you visit some-

one who is seriously ill or who has a beloved one who is sick, don't come with all kinds of stories about similar cases. It happens too often that when someone visits another person who is sick or a relative of someone who is seriously ill, he begins a story - not being very thoughtful - about "a friend of mine who had the same and who *also* died." It is little comfort for someone who is ill to hear all these stories about other people, either the problems of the visitor himself or about some of his friends. The patient instead needs attention for his or her personal circumstances.


Another piece of advice to visitors is, although you should never shy away from a specific issue or avoid speaking about it, you should not overdo it either. You should also talk about other things, especially if the patient is interested in it. And often they are still interested, and want to hear about all kind of things of everyday life. If you speak openly and straightforward about the real problem, then there is also room for other conversations. Even terminally ill people sometimes appreciate it, if a visitor speaks about the news of everyday life. Of course, if a patient is very weak, you should not begin a discussion *among the visitors* about heavy subjects. But also sick people like to talk about the little things which meant a lot to them in life. They don't like being singled out or put on the sidelines. Once, in the Netherlands, I visited a terminally ill lady almost every day for a number of weeks, until she passed away. On a Sunday, a few days before she died, I dropped in after the service and she, in spite of her serious condition, started talking about the new suit I was wearing. She still was interested in the matters of everyday life.

## 10. To cherish grief

In the previous section we saw how important it is to talk about relatives who have passed away, because the survivors cherish the memories of their beloved ones. Now we have to be careful in another direction. It is a good thing to *cherish precious memories*, but it is quite another thing to *cherish grief* and sorrow. That is a danger those who went through a difficult time and lost a beloved one have to be aware of. When the Lord has taken away a beloved one we may wonder *why* it happened. We do not always understand the purpose of the Lord, neither do we receive an answer to all our questions. We cannot categorize each case according to *one* of the examples we have taken from Scripture. Every case is unique and, although some aspects of these Biblical examples can be applied, we can never directly identify our situation to one of them.

Life goes on. We can never forget

— continued on page 238



**CHURCH NEWS**

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CALLED to the Church at Surrey, BC  
 REV. G.H. VISSCHER  
 of Ottawa, ON

\* \* \*

NEW ADDRESS  
 REV. W.W.J. VANOENE  
 31405 Springhill Court  
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# Especially on the day of rest<sup>2</sup>

## Oldest festival: Easter

In the beginning of the Christian Church one celebrated only the Lord's Day. One considered the Lord's Day as the *weekly* commemoration of Christ's resurrection. Christ resurrected from the dead on the first day of the week. So that was *the* festival, which was celebrated in the meeting of the congregation. Very early data are available to confirm that. Although the Jewish Sabbath had not been abolished right away in the beginning of the new dispensation of Pentecost, it was gradually abolished and substituted by the Lord's Day. *Ignatius* writes for example, in the beginning of the 2nd century that the Sabbath must not be observed any more by the Christians. He also uses, in Rome, the term "Lord's Day" as a day of public worship. But besides the *weekly* celebration of Christ's resurrection, there was the beginning of the *yearly* commemoration.

There are data which go back to the middle of the 2nd century and that are within one century after the apostles' death. In the time of *Tertullian*, the old-Christian author from the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century, the celebration of Easter already extended for more than one day. In the term "*Pascha*" he summarizes a period of fasting, and administering baptism. Also an Easter-sermon by *Melito* of Sardes, which was held very early in the day, has been preserved. He lived in the latter part of the 2nd century. We learn from it that at that time there was a kind of "comprehensive" celebration of Easter. The suffering, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ were not separated, but considered as a whole. So there was not a special "Good Friday," to commemorate Christ's death and a separate Easter-day to remember Christ's resurrection, but it was considered in its entirety: the comprehensive, all-inclusive work of salvation of the Redeemer, summarized in "*Pascha*."

It would take too much time to explain how it was possible that besides the weekly Lord's Day there was also a yearly celebration of Christ's resurrection. It must be sufficient to know that this was connected with the Jewish calendar year. The Passover date was the 14th of Nisan to the Jews, but the Council of Nicea 325


left that date over against the Jews as a fixed date for the celebration of Easter. It was decided then to celebrate Easter depending on when there was a new moon. Until now that decision is still executed, namely, to celebrate Easter on the first Lord's Day after the first full moon of Spring.

## Jerusalem in the 4th century

Starting with the rule of Constantine the Great, important changes occurred in the Christian Church. Simplicity was then replaced by abundance. The antithetical attitude of the church changed into one of accommodation. The doctrine of salvation acquired, from pagan mystery-religions, a mystical notion. Important ecclesiastical centres arose and also with respect to liturgical matters considerable changes came to pass. After the Council of Nicea 325, Constantine visited Jerusalem and the church buildings which he and his mother Helena had built. This contributed greatly to the development of the liturgy of the Jerusalem Church in the

4th century. The pilgrimage of Helena to the holy city was taken as an example by many others.

There was, for instance, a nun of Northern Spain, called *Egeria*, who visited Jerusalem in 381-384 A.D. She wrote a travel story about that journey and gave many details of the Jerusalem-liturgy of bishop *Cyril*. Time and again she writes that in the services in Jerusalem hymns, antiphons and Scripture-readings were "according to the day and the place." Special attention is paid to Palm-Sunday, the Sunday before Easter, when the bishop enters Jerusalem like Christ did before, surrounded by the people, saying "Hosanna!" Special attention is also paid to the many, many services in the so-called "Great Week," the week before Easter, and in the Easter week itself. The bishop again took Christ's place. He performed as a holy person, who impersonated Christ. All the services were conditioned by *topographical* factors. The places at which the bishop performed were carefully chosen, according to the

 <p>Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd. Winnipeg, MB</p> <p>EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:</p> <p>Editors: J. Geertsema and W. Pouwelse Co-Editors: J. DeJong, Cl. Stam and W.W.J. VanOene</p> <p>ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:</p> <p>CLARION 9210 - 132A Street Surrey, BC, Canada V3V 7E1</p> <p>ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):</p> <p>CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd. 1249 Plessis Road Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2C 3L9 Phone: (204) 222-5218</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>SUBSCRIPTION RATES</th> <th>Regular</th> <th>Air</th> </tr> <tr> <th>FOR 1986</th> <th>Mail</th> <th>Mail</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Canada</td> <td>\$24.00</td> <td>\$42.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U.S.A. U.S. Funds</td> <td>\$25.75</td> <td>\$40.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>International</td> <td>\$34.50</td> <td>\$57.50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Advertisements: \$5.00 per column inch Second class mail registration number 1025 ISSN 0383-0438</p>	SUBSCRIPTION RATES	Regular	Air	FOR 1986	Mail	Mail	Canada	\$24.00	\$42.00	U.S.A. U.S. Funds	\$25.75	\$40.00	International	\$34.50	\$57.50	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>IN THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>An eternal covenant — J. Geertsema ..... 234</p> <p>Dealing with griefs — W. Pouwelse ..... 235</p> <p>Especially on the day of rest<sup>2</sup> — K. Deddens ..... 237</p> <p>The exercise of interchurch relations<sup>2</sup> — J. Visscher ..... 239</p> <p>The visions of Daniel — G. Nederveen ..... 240</p> <p>Official Press Release — General Synod 1986 ..... 241</p> <p>Press Releases ..... 245</p> <p>Ray of Sunshine — Mrs. J. Mulder ..... 246</p> <p>Palmetto, Florida — Arie J. Hordyk ..... 248</p> <p>Number's Game — Mrs. John Roza ..... 249</p> <p>Book Review — Take and read — J. Van Rietschoten ..... 250</p> <p>Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty ..... 251</p>
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requirements of the situation and the time. A *dramatic repetition* was staged of the things which happened when salvation was accomplished by Christ Himself.

But the frequent services were very tiring, so that by the end of the week the people that followed the bishop from the one holy place to the other and from the one service to the other, were extremely tired. Egeria writes concerning the early morning of Good Friday: "The bishop addresses the people, comforting them, because they have laboured the whole night long and they are to work this whole day, encouraging them not to weaken, but to have hope in God, who will for this labour bestow on them an even greater reward. So comforting them as he is able, he addresses them, 'Now go again, each one of you to your homes, sit there for a while, and be ready to be back here about eight o'clock, so that from that hour until about noon you may be able to see the holy wood of the cross, which we believe to be profitable to the salvation of each of us. And from noon on we must again assemble here, that is, before the cross, that we may devote ourselves to readings and prayers until the night.' "

Actually there was a whole Easter-cycle with many special days and special services. Rome itself adopted from Jerusalem the Palm-Sunday procession and the adoration of the cross. It was told that Helena found the wood of the cross in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, more than four centuries after Christ's death! Egeria is convinced, too, that it was the wood of Christ's cross. So on Good Friday she writes, "the bishop's chair is set up on Golgotha behind the cross, which now stands there; the bishop is seated on the chair, and before him is placed a table covered with a linen cloth. The deacons stand in a circle around the table and the silver casket decorated with gold is brought in, in which is the holy wood of the cross. It is opened and taken out, and both the wood of the cross and the title are placed on the table. While it is on the table, the bishop sits and grasps the ends of the holy wood with his hands, and the deacons, who are standing around him, keep watch. Here is why they guard it so. It is the custom that all of the people here come one by one, the faithful and the catechumens, bowing before the table, kissing the holy cross and moving on. I

was told that this was because someone (I do not know who) bit off and stole some of the holy cross. Now it is guarded by the deacons so that it dare not be done by someone again. So all of the people pass through one by one, bowing, first with their foreheads and then with their eyes touching the cross and the title, and so kissing the cross they pass through, but no one is permitted to put a hand on the cross. But when they have kissed the cross, they go on . . . ."

The whole Easter-cycle is marked by a development according to this description of Egeria of the Jerusalem model.

After the 4th century the church calendar is gradually filled up with festivals, feastdays, and saints days. In the 8th century 106 dates are occupied in the calendar year as special days and festivals. In the 16th century, at the end of the Middle Ages, only four dates are still vacant . . . .

The whole Christian year becomes a sacramental preaching of special services with a sacrosanct meaning.

— to be continued  
K. DEDDENS

## Dealing with grief — continued

and although wounds might heal, they always leave a scar. However, those who survive still have a task in life and they have to carry on, no matter how difficult the task seems to be. Therefore they have to be careful not to *cherish their grief* instead of the *precious memories*. That would be a lack of thankfulness for the precious gifts the Lord has given them, and a denial of the task which still lies ahead.

### 11. Active support

In I Cor. 12:26 we read: "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together." That should be the case and should be more and more experienced within the communion of saints. It is nice when all the members join in a party at a festive occasion, but it is no less important that we join in carrying each others burdens. That is, according to Galatians 6:1, the way we have to fulfil the law of Christ.

Such support should be given in the proper way and at the proper time. No one will deny that support should be given to those who have grief and sorrow. We have to support those who have lost a beloved one. That, in itself, is already difficult enough. As I have tried to point out in a previous section, many do not know how

to speak and how to listen. They feel uncomfortable in a place where grief and sorrow is. Especially those who have never been confronted by death. Still, when you visit such people, and try to act as normal as possible, it will often be felt as a relief, for the visitor no less than for those who are visited. Every artificial attitude should be avoided. The personal feelings should be respected. Keep in mind one basic rule for such visits: it is not the question how you feel most comfortable during such a visit, but whether you serve the others and make them feel comfortable. A too lengthy visit in a time that already many are visiting, can become a burden, because no one wants to ask his visitors to leave, although lots of other things are waiting, and need to be done.

We mentioned already that visiting those who suffer losses and who carry

grief might be difficult enough. More difficult seems to be to keep it up. We hear quite often from widows, that at first they received lots of visitors. All the friends of the deceased husband came. But very soon they stayed away. Some ladies drop by once in a while, but the friends of the husband are gone. A general complaint of widows is that they are more or less placed in a category of people who are only interested in housekeeping, while they have lost contact with what goes on in church life and in public life. They have no husband to keep them informed and to talk with. And if they receive visitors it is often only the ladies. I have heard quite often that also widows appreciate it very much when they receive a visit from a couple or some couples, where they can take part in discussions about issues which are not so often discussed when there are only ladies present. After all, they belong to the communion of saints and this communion is certainly not a matter of the sisters only.

These things need our attention, to see whether we show and exercise the communion of saints in this respect. It is not without importance that the apostle says in James 1:27: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and keep oneself unstained from the world."

W. POWELSE

## OUR COVER

Sailing on Okanagan Lake  
Near Summerland, BC

Photo courtesy:  
Tourism British Columbia

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# The exercise of interchurch relations<sub>2</sub>

## Other approaches

### a. *The dual approach*

Thus far we have looked at two of the most common approaches to the matter of interchurch relations as it is exercised by the members here present; however, we have not exhausted the list of possibilities. For there are churches which do not make a choice between these two categories, instead they recognize and employ both. Among the churches which are then recognized as "sisters," there are "fraternal sisters" (excuse the contradiction) and "correspondence sisters."

Now it has to be admitted that in this way a measure of flexibility is incorporated into the exercise of interchurch relations, however, at what cost? I would say, "Probably at the cost of having first-class sisters and second-class sisters." For it stands to reason that a church will have closer contacts with those church federations that it recognizes as sisters in the "correspondence" sense. But is that proper? If a church has been recognized as being a true Church of the Lord, is it then defensible to accord to such a church second-class status because of what may be termed "practical difficulties?" Does the oneness of the catholic church not imply a calling on the part of those local churches that recognize each other as true churches, to deal with each other on an equal footing?

This approach may be attractive when viewed from a purely practical side, but it raises serious difficulties of a theological nature. Either we are all sisters equally, or else we are a family of sisters and step-sisters. The Scriptures teach the former, not the latter.

### b. *The gradual approach*

Another approach which is being taken these days also uses both models, but then in a different manner. In this case the "fraternal category" is made preparatory or introductory to the "correspondence category." What happens then, and one can cite the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands here present as an example of this procedure, is that when you come into contact with a church federation which is faithful to the Scriptures and has a proper creedal basis, but with which several difficulties remain to be ironed out, you

offer it a kind of preliminary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact" which is almost synonymous with the "fraternal category." This contact then becomes an umbrella for further contact and discussion, and hopefully will smooth the way to the goal which is "correspondence."

Now it has to be admitted that the Canadian Reformed Churches have had a hand in this development. In order to promote its long-standing discussions with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Canadian Reformed Churches decided at their 1977 Synod to offer a temporary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact" to the OPC. However it should be understood that this relationship was applied in an isolated case and was never meant to function as a new and general approach to building and expediting future ecclesiastical relationships.

Our sister churches in the Netherlands, however, analyzed this decision of the CRC and decided that this might be a useful procedure to imitate on a general scale and proceeded to standardize it. Hence, whenever they meet a church which has sister church potential, they begin by offering that church "ecclesiastical contact" and then use it as a building block to come to "ecclesiastical fellowship" or correspondence.

Do the Canadian Reformed Churches applaud this development? General Synod 1983 went on record urging "the sister churches to maintain correspondence according to the adopted rules as the only form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship." (*Acts 1983*, Art. 110, D, 1.) What motivates this statement? It is the fact that synod was of the opinion that if one uses "ecclesiastical contact" as a precursor to "correspondence," it is very well possible that what is meant to be preliminary becomes finalized. After all, it is a reality that some churches are unfamiliar and perhaps uncomfortable with "correspondence," but have little difficulty embracing a less sweeping relationship. And so the question remains whether the Dutch procedure will not result in a host of "step-sisters" but not too many real sisters? Will it then not be a case where two relationships are maintained as permanent, the one higher and the other lower, the one first-class and the other second-class?

Are there ways around these difficulties? There are but they may prove unattractive. The one would be to set a time limit on the use of the "ecclesiastical contact" relationship. This would stress to one and all that it is not meant to be regarded as a permanent fixture, but as a stimulant to something better.

Still, this suggestion would be viewed by many as too drastic and artificial. It would force churches to negotiate under the pressure of deadlines. Perhaps more helpful would be to make this form of contact renewable. It would then go into effect for so many years, after which time it would face an automatic review by the general assembly or synod. Signs of progress would lead to a renewal of the contact; whereas, no movement towards correspondence would lead to termination of the contact.

Far more drastic an option would be to terminate this preparatory stage altogether. And yet, even that would have certain advantages. For when you enter into an official preliminary relationship like "contact" what you are actually doing is formalizing what is essentially a negotiation stage. With the result, that precisely at that point where you would otherwise want to leave your options open, you end up limiting them. At the same time, you draw a lot of attention to a process which is incomplete and thereby risk creating a certain level of expectation that may never be rewarded. Besides, it is also a fact that terminating negotiations is not nearly as difficult as terminating an official agreement, albeit an interim one.

In short, one is led to wonder whether using categories like "fraternal" and "correspondence" in tandem is really all that advantageous.

### c. *The variable approach*

Leaving these different frameworks behind, it is also possible to turn to other approaches, some of which may never have been tried but which are being contemplated. The one such approach might visualize a situation in which a church decides to call all of its contact churches by the same name, but then varies the rules that apply to each. Under such a scheme a list of rules are drawn up, and then depending on the particular church with

which a relationship is being contemplated, the rules that would best fit in that particular situation are applied.

A variant on this approach would be to have no ready-made set of rules handy at all but to give all contact churches the same name and then to proceed to tailor make rules that would be considered the most conducive in that particular situation. In such a case the situation would dictate the rules and, not as might be the

case in the previous instance, be made to fit the rules.

What shall we say about these alternatives, real or imagined? No doubt a great deal could be said but in the end it would come down to this that unity would be sacrificed on the altar of flexibility. The danger would then become very real that the different sets of rules in existence would cause endless confusion, especially in the case of third parties. Still, that

kind of confusion might even be tolerable if all of the churches kept their distance; however, the moment they would seek to find themselves in a body such as the ICRC where common aims, common purposes, and common procedures are the aim, misunderstanding and friction would result.

— to be continued  
J. VISSCHER

## The visions of Daniel<sub>2</sub>

IV. Let us now turn our attention to the interpretation of Daniel's visions. We will restrict ourselves to Dan. 7 and 9.

In the vision of the dreadful four beasts we also have that beautiful scene of the throne room in heaven. Thrones were placed but only one was occupied. The Ancient of Days took His seat on that throne. He is the judge. A multitude served Him. The court sat in judgment and the books were opened.

The little horn that came forth from the fourth beast spoke great words. The haughtiness of that horn even came before the throne of God. But then the end comes. The beast is slain and his body is destroyed by fire. The dominion was taken away from the other beasts and it was given to one "like a son of man."

This expression "son of man" as used here, can only be understood from a New Testament perspective. And then we see that it applies to the Lord Jesus Christ. When He stood before the high priest Caiaphas, the Lord did not only confirm that He was the Messiah, He also quoted these words from Dan. 7:13 and applied them to Himself: "But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64). Thus Dan. 7 foreshadows the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to whom everlasting dominion is given (v. 14). Daniel may see that the Most High God sits in judgment. A multitude of servants stand before Him. The last beast is being judged and then destroyed. At the same time, someone "like a son of man" appears on the clouds of heaven and becomes ruler of all peoples, nations and languages.

Now it is the fourth beast that alarmed Daniel most. He likes to know the truth concerning this beast. It represents a fourth kingdom on earth that is different

from preceding ones, not so much in kind as in intensity. Beast-like, it will devour the whole earth. Out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise. This symbolical number points to a fullness. With the ten kings this kingdom will reach its height of power but the end is not yet. An eleventh king will come who will do even more drastic things.

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***"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."***

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Four characteristics of his rule are given. His rule will be one of blasphemy against the Most High. He shall wear out the saints by a long, drawn out persecution. He will try to change the religious festive days and the law of God. That means, he will try to change everything that characterizes the norms of God by advocating a new morality. And the fact that he TRIES to do all this shows that he puts all effort behind it. He will even succeed. They shall be GIVEN into his hand for a time, two times and half a time.

Note the words: "They shall be GIVEN into his hands." He does not have it of himself. A Greater than he is in control, and whereas this last king thought to

change the times, a Greater than he decreed the time, two times and half a time. The expected progression, one, two, three is cut off arbitrarily and decisively. Then judgment begins.

And please note that we do not read in v. 27 that the one "like a son of man" receives the greatness of the kingdoms. The kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High (cf. v. 18). The saints of the Most High will rule the kingdom (Luke 22:28-30). Then the original goal of creation to "have dominion" (Gen. 1:28) will again be restored to its full glory and lustre.

Who is this fourth beast? Some identify it with the terrible ruler Antiochus Epiphanes. I believe that in light of the vv. 21, 22 where it says that this eleventh horn will exercise its authority till the final judgment, we must see the fourth beast as the last power before the coming of Christ's return. This is the period of the beasts described in the book of Revelation. (Rev. 13:5-10; 16:10-16). The book of Revelation takes up the theme of conflict from where the book of Daniel leaves it, and looks to a final confrontation with the powers of evil who war against the church. But it will not end there. With His triumph accomplished the Lamb holds "the key of Death and Hades," (Rev. 1:18). The powers of evil still persecute to the death God's witnesses (Rev. 11:8), but their final triumph is sure because "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). Daniel sees the first advent of Christ; John in the Revelation sees his second advent.

Finally, we must briefly look at the vision of the "seventy sevens" in Dan. 9. I have already stated that this is probably the most difficult vision to interpret. That is why I have kept it for last. Our whole



article could have been devoted to this one vision. But my assignment was "the visions of Daniel." That includes all of them, and rightly so. We must see all the visions as a sort of unity. They all zero in on a specific time frame. In Dan. 9 this time frame is "seventy sevens."

This number is no coincidence. It is in connection with what Daniel had discovered in the prophecy of Jeremiah. There he read that the exile would last seventy years (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10). He then implored the Lord God to remember His promise and to restore Jerusalem and the temple. In answer to his prayer Daniel received a vision in which the number seventy is taken up. Only it is used symbolically. Seventy sevens. And then, I believe, verse 24 is the key factor in interpreting this vision. For it gives us two groups of three things that will happen in that time. The one group is negative, the other positive.

Negatively, to finish the transgression. In that time transgression will run its course till an end is put to it. Secondly, to put an end to sin. Sin, the doing of all wrong will come to an end. Thirdly, to atone for iniquity. During the "seventy sevens" God will complete his work of atonement for the forgiveness of sin.

These three things will have to be

cleared out of the way to make room for bringing in everlasting righteousness. Righteousness belongs to God who alone is righteous and who hates all sin. Also, during these "seventy sevens" both vision and prophet are sealed. Now to seal can mean that you close something, but also that you can authenticate something. That is the meaning here. During the "seventy sevens" both vision and prophet will be authenticated and be proven true. Finally, to anoint a most holy place, a place for the true service of God.

But during these "seventy sevens" several things will happen. Seven sevens will pass and then Jerusalem will be rebuilt. For "sixty-two sevens" the city will be rebuilt under troubled times. You can read of that in the prophecies of Ezra and Nehemiah. Also an anointed one will be cut off and the city be destroyed. One who set up "the abomination of desolation." This will be for a "one-half seven," for half a week. Then the end will be poured out upon the desolator.

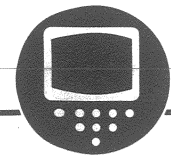
Many commentators believe that this was all accomplished when the Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes set up a statue of Zeus in the temple. But here again we must not forget that we have the New Testament. In Matt. 24:15 the Lord Jesus himself speaks of this prophecy of Daniel,

and uses it as a sign of the coming destruction of Jerusalem, fulfilled in 70 A.D. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ gave further meaning to the prophecy of Daniel. It did not stop with the outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes. Also the book of Revelation takes up the symbolism of the "half week." In Rev. 11:2 we read of the forty-two months, during which the holy city is trampled underfoot. In Rev. 13:5 the beast has authority for the same period. Thus the New Testament most certainly encourages the interpretation that the "seventy sevens" point forward to a culmination at the end of history. Daniel's vision ended with the persecutor meeting his deserved judgment. Jesus took the message a stage further in Matt. 24:30, and focused hope on His coming in glory.

At this point I break off my article. On purpose I say "break off" for I'm well aware that I've not exhausted the topic. I may have exhausted you. But let us realize that we have only scratched the surface. The last word on this topic has not yet been spoken. That will happen at the time of the end, when the Ancient of Days gives the kingdom to the Son of man and to His saints for ever and ever.

G. NEDERVEEN

## PRESS RELEASES



### General Synod Burlington-West 1986 April 15 — May 7

Article 1. *Opening:* On behalf of the convening Church at Burlington-West, the Rev. J. Mulder opens the meeting. He requests the brothers to sing Psalm 72:1 and 10. He reads from II Timothy 2:1-13, and leads in prayer. He then welcomes all the delegates who came from far and near to attend Synod. He speaks a special word of welcome to the Rev. G.D. Jerrell of Rosswell, New Mexico, who is present as fraternal delegate from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Synod 1986 is declared opened. The meeting sings Hymn 1A.

Article 2. *Examination of Credentials:* The brothers C. VanDam, J. Hutten and Rev. J. Geertsema examine the credentials. The following delegates are present: From Regional Synod West: *Ministers:* P.K.A. DeBoer; J.G. Geertsema; W. Pouwelse; M. VanBeveren. *Elders:* H. Berends; J. DeHaas (alternate); E. VanWoudenberg; H. Veenendaal.

From Regional Synod East: *Ministers:* W. Huizinga; P. Kingma; J. Mulder; Cl. Stam. *Elders:* J. Gelderman (alternate); G.J. Nordeman; N. Torenvliet (alternate); J. VandenBos.

(In the course of Synod, J. VandenBos is replaced by T.M.P. VanderVen) Synod is constituted.

Article 3. *Election of Officers:* The following officers are elected to serve Synod: *chairman:* Rev. M. VanBeveren; *vice-chairman:* Rev. Cl. Stam; *first clerk:* Rev. W. Pouwelse; *second clerk:* Rev. W. Huizinga.

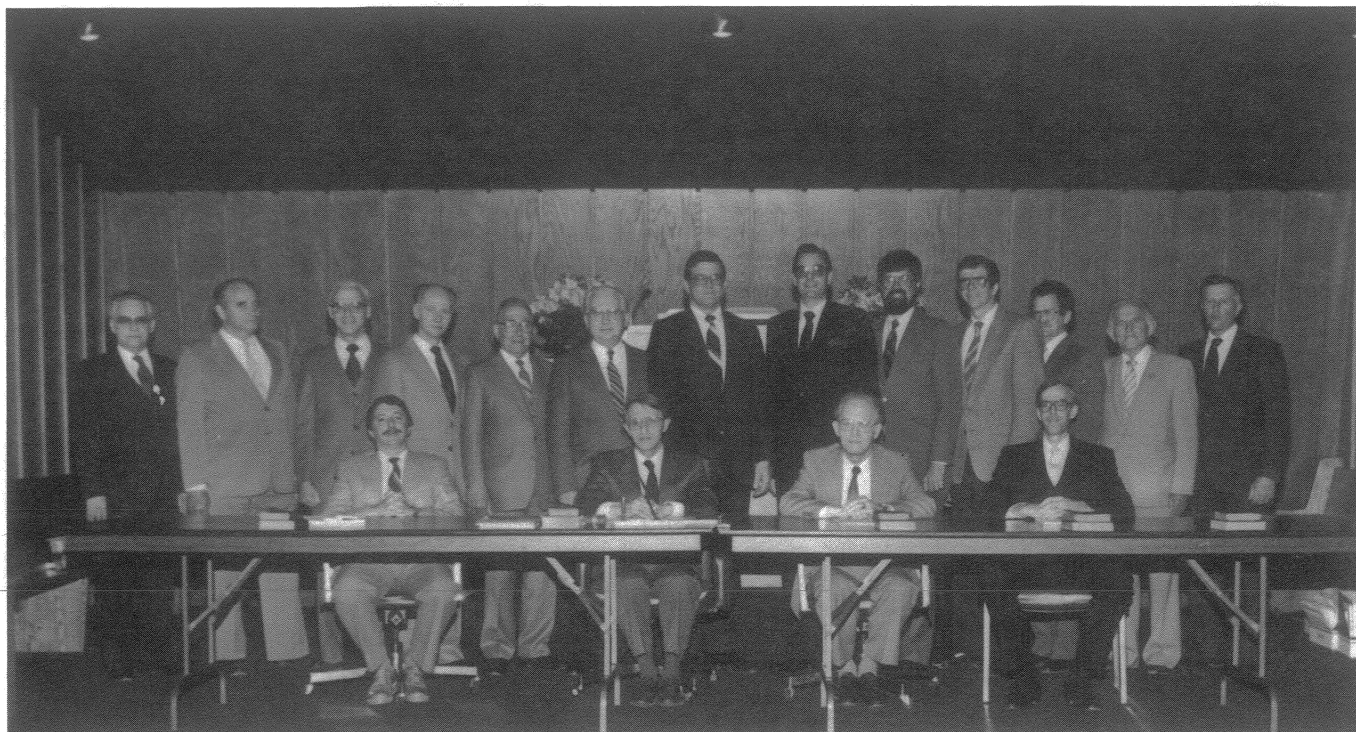
The chairman, Rev. VanBeveren, expresses gratitude for the trust placed in the officers of Synod. He thanks the convening and hosting Church for the preparations made and the care received until now. He also thanks the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene who conducted the prayer-service the previous evening. A letter is read from the sister churches in South

Africa wishing Synod the blessing from the Lord.

Article 4. *Adoption of the Agenda:* The agenda is adopted after various additions are made. Closing date for incoming mail is set by Synod at April 16, 1986, at 12:00 noon. The Advisory Committees are appointed and parts of the agenda are assigned to each committee.

Article 5. *Appointment Theological College:* Synod meets in closed-restricted session to deal with the appointment of a professor in the forthcoming vacancy in the New Testament department. Upon recommendation of the Board of Governors, Synod instructs the Board of Governors to appoint the Rev. J. Geertsema of Surrey, B.C., as professor of New Testament per May 15, 1986.

Synod expresses gratitude for the faithful and fruitful work of Prof. L. Selles. The chairman speaks a few words of congratulations and encouragement to the



Standing left to right: Rev. P. Kingma, Mr. N. Torenvliet, Rev. J.G. Geertsema, Mr. E. VanWoudenberg, Mr. J. DeHaas, Rev. J. Mulder, Mr. G.J. Nordeman, Mr. H. Berends, Rev. G.D. Jerrell, Mr. H. Veenendaal, Rev. P.K.A. DeBoer, Mr. J. Gelderman, Mr. J. VandenBos. Sitting left to right: Rev. C. Stam, Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. W. Pouwelse, Rev. W. Huizinga.

Rev. J. Geertsema. Rev. Geertsema declares that he will consider his appointment and report to Synod as soon as possible.

Article 6. *Address Delegate OPC:* The Rev. W. Huizinga introduces the representative from the OPC, the Rev. G.D. Jerrell, of Rosswell, New Mexico.

Rev. Jerrell brings Synod the best wishes of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. At the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the OPC he briefly sketches the history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He shows how the teaching of the covenant is vital to the OPC, but also mentions that it takes time to grow in the Reformed life. He also frankly discusses the possibility that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church may entertain a proposal to merge with the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA).

The Rev. W. Huizinga responds on behalf of Synod and reciprocates the greetings. He expresses some of the concerns of the Canadian Reformed Churches with respect to the OPC.

Article 7. *Finances General Synod 1983:* Synod deals with the report of the Financial Committee of General Synod Cloverdale 1983. The Church at Langley reports that the books are found in good order. The balance was forwarded to Synod 1986. Synod appoints as Financial Committee for Synod 1986 the brothers A. Driegen, J.J. Poort and L. Sipkema.

Article 8. *Appeal re the support of the*

*Rev. C. Olij:* Synod deals with appeals against a decision of Regional Synod East 1985 re the support of the Rev. C. Olij and family. Synod decides "that it is proper that financial support from the Church at Orangeville with the help of the sister churches in the classical resort of Ontario North be given for the Rev. C. Olij and his family in case his needs are not adequately met."

Article 9. *Acceptance of Appointment:* The Rev. J. Geertsema makes known that he accepts his appointment as professor in the New Testament at the Theological College in Hamilton. The chairman, Rev. VanBeveren, expresses the gratitude of Synod for this decision of Rev. Geertsema and wishes him the blessing of the Lord in the preparation for and the execution of his task.

On behalf of the Board of Governors, the Rev. J. Mulder speaks a few words of congratulations. On behalf of the faculty of the College, Prof. Dr. J. Faber speaks a few words to Synod and the Rev. Geertsema. At this time also, the retiring Prof. L. Selles is addressed with some appropriate words. Synod expresses gratitude for all that the churches and the Theological College have received in the work and person of Prof. Selles and wishes him the Lord's blessing in his forthcoming retirement.

Article 10. *Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church:* Synod discusses the report of the Committee on Contact

with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Synod also takes leave of the Rev. Jerrell who has visited Synod during a period of five days. Suitable greetings and best wishes are exchanged at this occasion.

Article 11. *Greetings Dutch Sister Churches:* The chairman reads a letter written by the secretary of the Deputies for correspondence of our Dutch sister churches, the Rev. J. DeGelder, explaining that the Dutch churches cannot send delegates to this Synod but nevertheless expressing that the Synod may work fruitfully under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. On behalf of Synod, the chairman expresses appreciation for these best wishes.

Article 12. *Address Federal Government:* The Church at Surrey B.C. requests Synod to address the federal government "requesting new legislation which will address the following areas of concern: the sanctity of life, the observance of the Lord's Day, the honour of God's Name, and the moral conduct of Canadian citizens." Synod is not convinced that this is indeed an ecclesiastical matter (Art. 30 Church Order) and decides not to accede to this request.

Article 13. *General Fund:* Synod receives a report from the Church at Carman on the General Fund. It appears that the books of the treasurer of this fund are found in good order. Synod thanks the treasurer and the Church at Carman for the administration of this Fund.

Article 14. *Guidelines General Synod:* The Church at Burlington-West requests that the guidelines of Synod regarding the amount of copies of all material to the convening Church be changed. Instead of requesting that copies be only to the delegates and *first* alternates. It is expected that this will significantly reduce the cost and workload for the convening Church.

Article 15. *Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church:* The Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church of Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia approaches Synod with the following request "that a sister church relationship be established between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Covenant Reformed Orthodox Church" (CORC). The CORC desires this relationship because they do not yet feel ready to join the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches. One of the main differences is that the CORC has life eldership. The Church at Ottawa supports the request of the CORC and also asks Synod to establish guidelines for the admission of other churches into the federation. In connection with the above, the Church at Ottawa and the CORC ask for guidelines with respect to "differences in eldership."

Synod decides to express gratitude for the contacts which Classis Ontario North and especially the Church at Ottawa has with the CORC, but not to accede to the request to establish a sister church relationship with the CORC (a church in the same country) but rather to urge this church and the Church at Ottawa, along with the Classis Ontario North, to work at removing any obstacles preventing admission of the CORC into the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches.

Synod decides not to adopt specific guidelines for admitting other churches since "the procedure of admitting other churches to the federation has always been a matter of local churches with the judgment of Classis and the concurring advice of Deputies of Regional Synod." Synod decides not to deal with "differences in eldership" because "the policy and practice with respect to the terms and duties of the office-bearers in the Canadian Reformed Churches have been clearly defined in the confessions, forms and order of the churches." Synod adds to this consideration, "This does not mean that compelling local circumstances cannot lead the churches to accept various existing situations, which are not against Scripture, when a church of a different background and development is admitted to the federation. A church admitted to the federation is from then on obligated in future decisions and policies to abide by the adopted church order."

Article 16. *Revision Belgic Confession and Canons of Dort:* Synod deals with a request re the revised text of Article 8 of the Belgic Confession to return to the words "co-eternal and co-essential" (instead of "For these three, in one and the same essence, are equal in eternity"). There is also a request to change the heading of Canons of Dort Ch. II Article 4 into "Why His death had infinite value." These suggestions are accepted and will be passed on to the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* for insertion in the next edition.

Article 17. *Revision Church Order:* Synod deals with several appeals/letters regarding the revision of the Church Order. The following changes are adopted:

Article 13. C.O.: "If a minister is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office because of age, illness, physical or mental disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. The same obligation exists towards a minister's widow and/or dependants. Retirement of a minister shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis and the deputies of regional synod."

Article 44. C.O. to add, "The president shall ask whether the ministry of the office-bearers is continued, decisions of the major assemblies are honoured, and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their Church."

Article 72. C.O.: it is decided to remove the word "habitual" with respect to "drunkenness" (as ground for suspension) since drunkenness" as such is sufficient reason for suspension."

Various linguistic remarks are passed on to the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*.

Article 18. *Text Apostles' Creed:* Synod discusses various requests to have the word "Christian" removed from the text of the Apostles' Creed as adopted by Synod 1983. There are also some requests to retain the word. Synod decides not to have this word removed, but instead to have it inserted also in the text of the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 21, Question 54, "What do you believe concerning the holy catholic Christian Church?" and in the Canons of Dort, Chapter II, Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 1. Synod decided that if it is possible this word will also be inserted in the rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed (Hymn 1A).

Article 19. *Standing Committee Book of Praise:* The Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* reports to Synod on its various activities. There was good cooperation with Premier Printing in the publishing venture. Approx-

imately 19,600 copies of the *Book of Praise* were printed of which over 16,000 copies were distributed in the Canadian Reformed Churches. The Standing Committee hopes to proceed with a second printing after Synod 1986, including any changes that Synod adopts. Synod decides to reappoint the Standing Committee with the mandate to see to it, among other things, that "the *Book of Praise* remains available to the churches at an acceptable price" and that the "necessary arrangements with printers and others for the production and distribution of the *Book of Praise*" be made.

Synod requests the Standing Committee also to see to the linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed and Athanasian Creed (which have not yet been revised) and to report on this to the churches and the next Synod. The next General Synod 1989 is set as "target date" for the final edition of the *Book of Praise*.

Synod also passes on to the Standing Committee "an alternative melody" for Hymn 1A to see whether it can be used or that another suitable melody is found.

Article 20. *Board of Governors, Theological College:* Synod receives a report from the Board of Governors of the Theological College. Synod accepts the resignation of Mr. Arie Hordijk and Mr. Maas VanGrootheest as Governors. Synod appoints the following brothers to the Board (Finance and Property Committee): Hendrik Buist, C.A. Heeringa, A.L. Vanderhout, Henk Kampen, and C.M. Loopstra. Synod appoints the following ministers as Governors:

From Regional Synod West: M. VanBeveren, M. VanderWel and J. Visscher (alternates: B.J. Berends, C. VanSpronsen, J.D. Wielenga, in that order); From Regional Synod East: P. Kingma, J. Mulder and Cl. Stam (alternates: J. VanRietschoten, M. Werkman, J. DeJong, in that order). Synod expresses gratitude to the departing Governors for the many years of faithful service. Synod also expresses the same for the work done by the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene as lecturer of Ecclesiology and by the Rev. G. VanDooren as temporary instructor Diaconology until the end of February, 1984.

Synod deals with the report re 'finances and property' of the Theological College. Synod expresses gratitude to the churches for their faithful and regular support of the Theological College and for their special contributions to the College Building Fund. Synod makes decisions regarding the updating of the salaries of the professors.

From the report of the Board on academic matters, Synod notes that a "special missionary training" has been established at the college (In addition to

the regular program). Synod approves the establishing of a 2-year-program leading to a diploma theological studies.

Synod expresses gratitude that the work at the Theological College could continue without interruption and that all the instruction given is in harmony with the Word of God and in agreement with the Reformed confessions.

Article 21. *Women's Voting Rights:* Synod deals with various appeals against the decision of the previous Synod 1983 regarding "women's voting rights" in the election of office-bearers. Synod 1983 had decided not to grant these rights. Synod 1986 agrees with an appellant that the last part of the considerations of Synod Cloverdale 1983 is incorrect, but does not agree that therewith the decision of the previous Synod is removed.

Article 22. *Report of the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church:* Synod deals with a report from the Committee for Contact with The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Synod thanks the Committee for the diligence shown in fulfilling its mandate. Synod notes that "there is no evidence from the Committee report that there is progress in reaching full correspondence."

The Committee published a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-governmental divergencies "for the benefit of the churches," as requested by previous Synods. Synod "thanks the Committee for publishing this evaluation, and receives this report as the evaluation which should have been given by Synod 1977 for its decision to recognize the OPC as a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Synod takes note of the reaction of the OPC Committee for Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations to the divergencies, and also expresses disappointment that the letter of the CEIR did not bring the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Canadian Reformed Churches "much closer to a uniformity of opinion." Synod decides to continue the Committee for Contact with the OPC with the mandate "to continue the discussion of the divergencies, which are a matter of mutual concern." Synod expresses the hope that this continued discussion will remove obstacles to full correspondence.

With respect to the relations that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has with the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, Synod decides that these relationships "remain stumblingblocks to reach full correspondence." With respect to a possible "joining and receiving" of the OPC into the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), Synod decides that in case of such a joining and receiving, the official contact relationship is not transferable to the PCA.

Synod deals with the section of the

report on "the fencing of the Lord's Supper" (Hofford case) and decides to pass this report with the considerations of Synod on to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church through its Committee for Ecumenicity, asking the OPC to respond to this report. Synod considers that "the matter of fencing the Lord's Supper is a serious confessional divergency which is a major issue of mutual concern." Another consideration of Synod in this respect is that "although guests (who attend the Lord's Supper) are not specifically mentioned in Article 61 of the Church Order (re admission to the Lord's Supper), it should not be concluded that in the Canadian Reformed Churches there is no general rule in the matter of admitting guests to the Lord's Supper." Synod considers that Article 61 C.O. is "the rule which governs the admission of all those who seek to partake in the Lord's Supper."

Synod denies various appeals to have the temporary ecclesiastical contact relationship with the OPC terminated.

Synod responds to a letter of Classis Ontario South (March, 1986) to address the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on the doctrinal issues arising out of the "Hofford" case and the Blue Bell controversy. Synod decides that the Blue Bell issue is already included in the mandate of the Committee for Contact with the OPC, but that the matter of the Tricounty Reformed Church (Hofford) is not yet finished at the minor assemblies and that Synod cannot deal with it.

Synod decides not to grant a request to condemn the decisions of Classis Ontario South (September 1985) "re admission of the Reformed Church at Blue Bell into the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches" since an appeal against a decision of a classis must be dealt with by a regional synod.

Article 23. *Liturgical Forms:* Synod deals with an appeal against the revision made by Synod 1983 of the Forms for Public Profession of Faith and Holy Baptism. Appellants object to the fact that the phrase "in the Articles of the Christian Faith and which is taught here in this Christian Church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation" was changed into "summarized in the confessions and taught here . . ." Synod decides not to accede to this appeal, maintaining that all communicant members of the church are bound to accept the "Three Forms of Unity."

Article 24. *Correspondence Churches Abroad:* Synod receives the report from the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad. Upon recommendation of this Committee, Synod gratefully decides to continue the correspondence with The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, De Gereformeerde Kerken in

Nederland, and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika.

With respect to the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa) Synod decides "to recognize with regret that due to language and communication difficulties, at this time a correspondence relationship with the KPC (Koryu) can neither be established nor maintained fruitfully." The Committee is charged, among other things, "to be diligent in the endeavour to improve communications with the Presbyterian Church of Korea so that entering into the maintaining of correspondence become possible."

Synod decides to instruct the Committee to prepare the next meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches, as outlined in their report. The Church at Cloverdale will be asked to organize a prayer service before the commencement of the 1989 Conference. The sister churches will be consulted on suitable topics for this meeting. The executive of the ICRC will be advised as to the proposed amendments with respect to the constitution of the ICRC Synod denies an overture asking that unless the purpose of the ICRC is changed the Canadian Reformed Churches terminate membership in the ICRC.

Synod agrees with the request of the Committee on Correspondence that the name of this Committee be changed because the word "correspondence" does not "convey properly the true nature of the work of this Committee." Synod decides on the name, "Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad" (CRCA).

With respect to the relations with churches abroad, Synod decides to charge the Committee "to continue to address the sister churches on the matter of church relations," setting forth the decisions and concerns of the Canadian Reformed Churches, as outlined by previous Synods. The Committee was also charged to "evaluate the reactions of the sister churches on these matters with respect to a possible common approach and to report to the next Synod with suitable recommendations."

In reply to the request of the Committee to be allowed to contact the Free Church of Scotland, Synod decided "to charge the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad to open contacts with the Free Church of Scotland, to investigate and evaluate their history, background, doctrinal standards and their maintenance, church government and their practices, in order to ascertain whether we should recognize them as true church of our Lord Jesus Christ and should enter into a sister church relation with them." Synod also asked the Committee "to inform the churches about the history and standards of "the other

churches which participate in the ICRC with whom we do not have a sister church relationship."

Article 25. *Appeals*: Synod decided not to accede to an appeal of Br. C. Groenewegen to appoint a new committee for a general revision of the Church Order. Synod is of the opinion that Br. Groenewegen "submits the same material without new grounds."

Synod deals with various appeals regarding the decisions of Synod Cloverdale 1983 (Acts, Articles 148, 165 and 166) regarding the views of Rev. S. DeBruin and the situation in the Immanuel Church of Edmonton. Synod decided:

1. That the explanations and applications of Rev. S. DeBruin, as supported by the consistory of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton, concerning the confession about the church, the issue of the plurality of the churches, and the confession about

the communion of saints are not in harmony with the Scripture and the Three Forms of Unity, and are therefore to be rejected.

2. That Art. 166, Consideration 6, of the Acts of the 1983 General Synod of Cloverdale was inconsistent and is hereby rescinded. Herewith many other appeals concerning this matter were considered to be answered. The following appeal was added to the decisions of Synod in this matter, "General Synod beseeches all the office-bearers of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton to bring their views, their preaching, teaching and ruling in harmony with the Scripture and the Three Forms of Unity, and thus in line with their ordination vows and their signature under the Subscription Form."

Article 26. *Closing of Synod*: The necessary appointments to the various committees are made. Censure accord-

ing to Art. 44 C.O. is not necessary. The Acts are adopted as far as is possible. The Press Release will be approved by the moderamen.

The vice-chairman, Rev. Cl. Stam, speaks a few words of gratitude to the members. He also mentions the care which the members of Synod received in the hosting Church of Burlington-West. The next Synod will be held, the Lord willing, in the fall of 1989, at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Rev. Cl. Stam leads in closing prayer and thanksgiving.

Synod is adjourned.

For General Synod 1986,

M. VanBeveren, Chairman

Cl. Stam, Vice-Chairman

W. Pouwelse, First Clerk

W. Huizinga, Second Clerk

### Classis Alberta/Manitoba, March 11-13, 1986

1. Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar of the convening Church at Barrhead calls the meeting of delegates to order; Psalm 89:1 and 7 are sung and Psalm 89:1-17 is read.

2. *Credentials* are examined and classis is constituted. Officers: W. den Hollander, chairman; J.D. Wielenga, vice-chairman; S. De Bruin, clerk.

3. *Reports*. The following reports are approved and received with gratitude: a. of the treasurer of classis; b. of the church for inspection of the books of the treasurer; c. of the church for inspection of classis archives.

4. *OPC*. Letter from the Presbytery of the North and South Dakotas of the OPC informing classis that this presbytery has been split into Presbytery Dakota and Presbytery South-West, with information about their respective next meetings. Classis decides to invite an observer from the Presbytery of Dakota to the next classis and to send its own observer to this presbytery, if invited, and to inform both presbyteries of this decision.

5. *Needy churches*. a. Request for financial support from Edmonton-Immanuel, in accordance with classis-instruction Fall 1985. Classis appoints an advisory committee consisting of the chairman of the Committee Needy Churches, Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar and Br. D. De Ruiter. The committee is charged to look into the financial difficulties of Edmonton-Immanuel, to give advice and to report to next classis.

b. Classis grants the request of the Church at Calgary for financial support towards the call of a minister of the Word to this church.

c. The Committee Needy Churches is instructed to assess classis churches on the basis of the number of communicant members of each church.

d. The Church at Calgary requests and is granted pulpit supply for the next half year.

6. Advice is given in a matter of church discipline.

7. Classis adopts the proposed revision of Article 4 of the Mandate for the Committee for Aid to Needy Students.

8. *Appeals*. a. From members of Edmonton-Immanuel. Dealt with in closed session.

b. From brother and sister H. Noot re Article 61 Church Order.

Classis judges that the Consistory of Edmonton-Immanuel has not proven that what brother and sister Noot say about Article 61 Church Order is contrary to the Confessions.

9. *Appointments*. a. Convening church for next classis: the Church at Calgary; Date: October 7, 1986 at Edmonton-Providence.

Suggested officers: M. van Beveren, chairman; W. den Hollander, vice-chairman; J.D. Wielenga, clerk.

b. Delegates to next regional synod: Ministers: P.K.A. De Boer; A. De Jager; W. den Hollander; M. van Beveren. Alternates: J.D. Wielenga; E.J. Tiggelaar; S. De Bruin.

Elders: A. Van Abbema; T.M. Veenendaal; G. Bikker; C. Meliefste. Alternates: C. Veldkamp; J. Van Assen; I. Veurink.

10. Censure ad Article 44 Church Order is not needed.

11. After singing Psalm 147: 4, 6 and prayer classis is closed.

J.D. WIELENGA

### "Anchor" Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, May 9, 1986

The meeting was opened with prayer and Scripture reading.

Since the chairman and vice-chairman were absent, brother P. Feenstra chaired the meeting and welcomed all the members present, especially our new representative from Ancaster, Sr. Nell Hart.

The minutes from the previous meeting of April 4, 1986 were read and adopted.

Thereafter, the "Anchor" home director Daryl Kooiman gave his report.

The van, recently purchased for the "Anchor" home, will need some body repair work and we are currently getting some estimates.

An application for a full-time position at the "Anchor" home was received and subsequently approved.

The property committee made a tender on a property in Grimsby but it was not successful. The committee will continue to look for a suitable property in that area.

The public relations committee is planning to stimulate a greater base of support for the "Anchor" home, during the early summer months.

The advisory committee is having difficulty finding volunteer and paid help to relieve some of the workload of the di-

rector and his wife. Help is especially needed for relief on the weekends, for cleaning and for driving.

The minutes of the general membership meeting held on May 2, 1986 was presented but will be discussed at the next board meeting.

A letter will be sent to the Mt. Nemo Lodge Nursing Home granting their request to use the "Anchor" Home van occasionally.

The press release was read and approved.

The meeting was closed with prayer and the singing of a psalm.

K. J. SPITHOFF

### Canadian Reformed Teachers' College, May 9, 1986

On May 9, 1986 the Executive Committee of the Teacher's College met at the Cornerstone Church, Hamilton. After the usual Christian opening we approve the minutes and deal with the financial report, as always presented to us by our Treasurer, J. Gelderman. We were happy to see that our funds are again in place for the next

month. However, also the past month we did not receive as much as we paid out and we are looking forward to an increase in revenue. Those who have not yet paid their 1985-86 fees are urged to do so now.

From the school society in Edmonton we received a request to explain our fee structure as they are considering assisting the Teachers' College financially.

Miss Ria Hofsink, one of our graduates who has a teaching position in Smithers, has been granted "a system-restricted Temporary Teaching Certificate" by the Inspector of Independent Schools in BC. This means that Ria has received permission to teach in one of our schools in BC on the basis of her Diploma of Teaching. We are grateful for this form of recognition of the training received at the Teachers' College.

From the school society in Armadale, Western Australia, a letter is received indicating that they fully support the work at the college. Further consultation will take place to allow the Australian Society to participate meaningfully in the development of the Teachers' College.

Enrolment for 1986/87 is discussed,

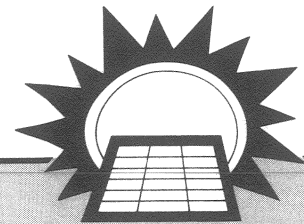
and will be finalized in the July board meeting.

The Principal has been invited to visit our schools in Manitoba and Alberta during the month of June and the educational conference in British Columbia planned for August.

The Chairman welcomes a number of delegates from school societies to the meeting. The Executive of the Teachers' College had invited representations of the various school societies in Ontario to discuss possible representation on the Board of the Teachers' College. An overview of the present situation is given. Currently, the Ontario support for the Teachers' College comes largely from local "chapters" which are not associated with school societies. The executive would like to see this changed. Various aspects are outlined, indicating the benefit of the College for the school community at large. A fruitful discussion ensues. The executive decides to give serious consideration to suggestions and ideas brought forward.

On behalf of the Executive Committee,  
C. HOFF, London

## RAY OF SUNSHINE



In sickness or health  
We all must display  
God's image that grows  
In service each day!  
(Taken from a poem by Ida Tillema)

### From the Mailbox:

*I received several letters from our "Ray of Sunshine"-friends! Roselyn Kuik's mother asked me to thank all the brothers and sisters who sent cards and gifts for Roselyn's birthday. "The response was overwhelming," she wrote.*

*Albert Dorgeloos writes: "Thank you for putting my name in the Clarion for my birthday. I got sixty birthday cards and I had a very good birthday . . . ." Thank you for your letter, Albert! You sure have very neat handwriting!*

*From Mrs. G. Koerselman I received a change of address. Her daughter Joan has returned home to Coaldale from Stony Plain. Joan is now working in a greenhouse operated by the Rehoboth Christian Association for the mentally handicapped.*

*Some time ago I received an essay written by Helen VanderPol from Cloverdale, BC. Helen wrote about her youngest sister, who is four years old, physically handicapped and also mentally slower than other children of her age. On request I include this essay in our corner. It shows us how the LORD through His loving care enables a family to cope with special covenant children and how such children are often a blessing to their family. Here is Helen's essay:*

### My sister

*As I sat on the living room couch, I came to think about God and His unexplainable ways. Why does He do what He does? How come it always seems like the unbelievers are blessed more? But God does give us blessings. Sometimes they are blessings in disguise. I have a blessing in disguise at home: my sister.*

*My sister had, and still has, many problems. Something was wrong with her joints when she was born. She could move her arms and legs only a cer-*

tain distance. Mom had to exercise her — stretching her muscles and smoothing the bumps in her joint sockets. It was very painful, both to her and to Mom. But all that work paid off. She can now put her arms and legs almost straight and she has been crawling for over a year now.

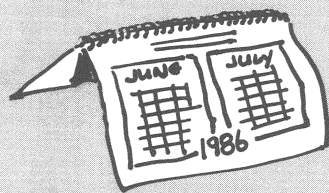
My sister is legally blind having been born with cataracts. The cataracts were removed leaving her with no eye lenses. With her glasses she is able to see. Without, she is virtually blind, seeing only fuzzy shapes. If my sister had been born ten years ago, she would not be able to see. This shows that God cares about people and gives us the wisdom and ingenuity to do what we can do.

Despite her problems my sister is a happy child. She loves music. Whenever she becomes cranky we just sit down and sing to her or put a record on. She is a ray of sunshine in our house (when she in a good mood)! We rejoice when she learns something new, like a new word, or when she does something her physiotherapist and Mom have been trying to teach her to do for three months and she makes it look like she has been doing it for years. Even though she is unpredictable, stubborn, and susceptible to temper tantrums we all love her.

As I sat on the living room couch my sister crawled up to me and said 'Helen'. And with her sign language she said 'more music.' Yes, God does bless us. Sometimes He gives us blessings in disguise.

Helen Vanderpol

**Our  
birthday  
calendar:**



First as yet a belated congratulation to a new addition to our birthday calendar:

**DANIEL STROOP**

Little Daniel will celebrate his fifth birthday on June 20, 1986. He lives at home with his parents, five sisters and a brother and he receives special education for the mentally handicapped. I think it would make him very happy if you send him a card. His address is:

2387 Maryvale Court  
Burlington, ON L7P 2P1

Now we go on to the month of July:

July 4

**JIM BUIKEMA**

4486 Guelph Line  
Milton, ON L9T 2X6

Jim will be 25 years old. He is one of the two first residents who moved into "Anchor-Home," established by the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped. He enjoys working for the business of "Peter VanEgmond and Sons." Recently his mother passed away and he needs some extra sympathy and attention!

July 7

**JENNY HANSMAN**

19890-55 A Avenue  
Langley, BC V3A 3X5

Jenny will be 39 years old. She suffers from a form of "sleeping-sickness" and is consequently confined to her home most of the time. I'm sure a card or letter will be very much appreciated!

July 20

**CHARLIE BEINTEMA**

401 Park Street  
Chatham, ON N7M 3S7

Charlie hopes to celebrate his 11th birthday. He keeps a scrapbook for all the cards he receives. So, take this opportunity to add to his collection!

July 28

**JIM WANDERS**

Huron Regional Centre  
PO Box 1000  
Orillia, ON L3V 6L2

Jim will turn 25. His hobbies are swimming and biking. Have a happy birthday, Jim!

Brothers and sisters [young or older] remember these sick and often lonely members of the Church of the Lord in order that they experiencing the communion of saints may be strengthened and comforted.

Please, do not forget to send me any changes of address to prevent cards or letters getting lost or returned to the senders!

We wish you all the LORD's blessing!

**MRS. J. MULDER**

1225 Highway 5, RR 1  
Burlington, ON L7R 3X4

# Palmetto, Florida

If you like to enjoy some better weather during the long Canadian winters, and are vacationing in the Tampa to Sarasota area there is an opportunity to come together with other members of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Since there are a number of our "elderly and retired" people spending up to six months in this warmer climate, a rather large group decided a few years ago that they would not attend any of the services of the local churches, but rather listen to taped sermons of one of our own ministers, and hopefully attract a visiting minister on holidays.

During the two weekends we were in the area this March, we experienced both kinds: the tape, which featured Rev. Gleason in the morning, and Rev. James Visscher in the afternoon; and the second week the physical presence of Rev. G. VanDooren in both services.

I counted about sixty to seventy people on each of the two Sundays. The services are held in the Baptist Church on 49th Street and Highway 41. The morning service is at 11:00 a.m., followed with coffee and (your own) lunch. The afternoon service is usually at 2:00 p.m.

For those who plan to spend some time in this area, I would suggest to call Br. J. Oostdyk (813-729-4863).

ARIE J. HORDYK



Rev. G. VanDooren



Meeting for worship services, coffee, and lunch.

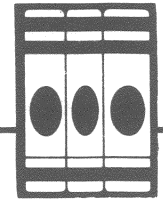


# NUMBERS GAME

By Mrs. John Roza



1. MYSTERY QUESTION: When Jesus performed this miracle, His disciples told Him that they had seven loaves of bread and a few fishes. How many people were fed from this?  
 MYSTERY CLUE: Add up one box (each box adds up equally). Take this amount and multiply it by the number of boxes. Then take this figure and multiply it with 10.  
 2. GAME: Players take turns drawing lines between matching numbers. The first player to have to cross a line already drawn, loses the game.



## Take and read!

With pleasure I bring to your attention a book which has been translated into English from Dutch: J. Kamphuis, *An Everlasting Covenant*. The translator is Rev. G. VanRongen, minister emeritus of our Australian sister churches. The book has been published by the Publication Organization of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia. It is available in Canada from the ILPB for the price of \$9.95. Orders can be placed with Mrs. Hetty Engbers, phone (519) 685-6057, London, or ILPB Box 783, London, ON N6A 4Y8.

J. Kamphuis is professor of Dogmatics at the Theological College of our sister churches in the Netherlands. Kamphuis himself studied at Kampen during the years preceding the Liberation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in 1944. He became a minister in 1948 and professor in 1958. This book was published at the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his professorate. You can expect to find in an anniversary book a certain amount of looking back, and also an evaluation of the years gone by. You will find that Kamphuis indeed looks back and evaluates, but not his own life's history. Kamphuis looks back to one of the central issues which was at stake in the years around 1944: The Covenant. He does not only look back, but he also shows us how the 1980s are marked by much of the same climate as the "thirties" and "forties" were. The sub-titles of the book make us aware of this. The first part of the book has a sub-title, *For the Right of the Covenant, The controversy on God's Covenant in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands around the Liberation of these churches in the year 1944*. A much smaller second section bears the sub-title, *Life in the Covenant*.

What, according to Kamphuis, is the climate which the "thirties" and "forties" share with our "eighties?" It is the climate of *religious subjectivism*. In the Preface to the book Kamphuis writes:

"We are going to deal with a number of events that took place some forty or even more years ago. Does that mean that we occupy ourselves with an antiquated story? Our answer is that the same questions and problems are again playing a role, though in a different context. There are questions concerning the ground of faith and its assurance, the nature of the Covenant and life in

the Covenant relation with God. We are convinced that this is being caused by the fact that today's general 'religious' and theological climate is characterized by a strong subjectivism."

On page 17 of his book Kamphuis tells us what he understands by subjectivism:

"In order to get a clear picture of the controversy that started about 1930 in The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands regarding the Covenant, we have to realize that these churches were confronted at an earlier stage, . . . with religious subjectivism. By subjectivism we understand any movement and belief which denies the Word of God and His Covenant their central, governing and dominating position and does not acknowledge 'true religion' to be determined by that Word and Covenant, but — to the contrary — grants the central position to man with his religious moods and beliefs. Within this subjectivism God actually comes into view only from the side of man's religiosity, and the divine *revelation* only from man's *experience*."

From these few quotes you can see that reading this book will give you much more than a historical review. Kamphuis makes an effort to make Reformed people of the nineteen eighties understand the spiritual climate of the time in which they live.

VanRongen did a creditable job of translating. We are indebted to him for bringing this valuable book within our reach. In translating VanRongen had to make some decisions. With the consent of the author the translator omitted certain items. VanRongen tells us about that in the Introduction:

"In the original, many references are made to books, pamphlets, statements in the Dutch language, and to a number of details in the situation in church life during the thirties and forties. This made it necessary to edit the original and to reduce its contents to what may interest a wider circle of readers. This has been done in full agreement with the author."

This is understandable and we should thank the translator for his thoughtfulness. Yet, having read the original book, I have a few remarks to make. In my estimation something important was lost when the scissors were applied to the original. The style of the original bore the marks of the spoken word. Kamphuis originally spoke on this topic to his students, not in lec-

tures, but informally. This informality makes the Dutch original smooth reading of what otherwise would be rather stiff material. Much of this informality is lost in the translation and editing. Kamphuis shows that he understands the position of Reformed young men and women in the eighties. His understanding comes out clearly in the Dutch original but is largely lost in the translation. Especially in the smaller second section of the book, which carries the sub-title *Life in the Covenant*, Kamphuis comes across with this understanding of youth in the eighties. It is true that Kamphuis refers for this to the contents of contemporary novels, published in the Netherlands during the last decades. With some minor editing this important section could have been translated, much to the benefit of our young men and women. Editing has reduced the second section, which in the original consists of fifteen densely printed pages, to ten pages of a much larger print in the English translation. Maybe VanRongen and Kamphuis can get together and rewrite these pages so that the gist is retained and our young men and women also can benefit from Kamphuis' insight. What Kamphuis writes about in these pages is not limited to Holland. Here and in Australia we are confronted with the same climate of our times. The rewritten pages could be published in *Clarion* and *Una Sancta* respectively.

To give the reader a taste of the contents of those lost pages, I'll attempt to translate a few lines from page 113 of the Dutch original. There Kamphuis leads us to the Covenant theme Father-father-son. God has become our Father in His Covenant. God has also given us the father-son relationship here below. The father-son relationship is only fruitfully lived when it is practised in Covenantal faithfulness by sons of the heavenly Father. In the eighties the father image has lost its trustworthiness because of estrangement from the God of the Covenant. Truly a vital contemporary theme! Kamphuis writes in part:

"This is then what the present-day coin looks like on each side: The name of father *on earth* has decayed. The name of Father *from heaven* is considered unbelievable, and the one influences the other. There is a vice-versa-movement. 'A world without father' does not present an outlook on the Father in heaven. The

refusal to give the Father in heaven the honour due to Him, undermines the father-son relationship among men. This often has remained obscured. In our time it pushes its way to the surface. The father no longer has an office, he at best plays a role. A role which is interchangeable with another one.

No wonder that a feministic theology gladly would get rid of the name father and that this theology gets a hearing. Is there not more warmth and nestling to be found with a motherly goddess? Then Jesus has no longer satisfied the justice

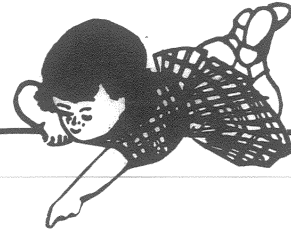
of God. He becomes 'the peer-brother in the group' . . . we live on with the symbol of 'brother Jesus.' "

So far I commented on the First and Second parts of the book. There actually is a third part. This third section contains excerpts from some official synodical documents of the years 1905, 1944, and 1959. In the English edition the author and the translator have added in part a translation of the "Deed of Liberation or Return" (Akte van Vrijmaking of Wederkeer). The partial translation of these documents will

help us to become more aware of our church roots. This also is a welcome aid in teaching the catechism students and candidates for public profession of faith. Without any reservation I heartily recommend this book. To the lesser experienced reader I would say, take, read, persevere. Pick it up again. It is worth the effort. The publishers presented us with a clear print and attractive cover: An Everlasting Covenant on granite rock!

J. VANRIETSCHOTEN

## OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



### Dear Busy Beavers,

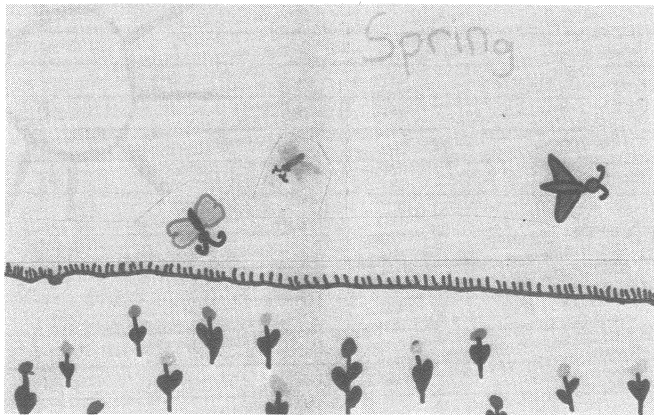
Here is a poem sent in for you to enjoy, written by one of the Busy Beavers quite a while ago already.

#### God's Creation

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

Busy Beaver *Betty Bergsma* writes:

"We just had a week of holidays. Our family went to a fair in Brandon on Wednesday. We saw lots of animals. There were some pigs. (We have lots of them in our barn!) We saw calves, and donkeys that were really small, and mini horses. There were lots of rabbits and roosters. Some rabbits were really big. We saw some chicks hatching in the incubator. At the end we got something to eat and watched the horses. People were riding them. The horses were jumping over all kinds of things in the arena. My little sister liked all the animals. I was tired when we got home!"



by Busy Beaver *Gwenda Penninga*.



### From the Mailbox

Did you enter our "Fantasy Garden" Contest already, *Carla Schoon*? I see you have been very busy! Keep up the good work. And be sure to let me know when you get your pen pal, *Carla*.

Thank you very much for the lovely picture, *Lisa DeHaas*. And also for your chatty letter and the poems! I hope your weather has improved by now, *Lisa*. Write again soon.

I'm glad you have such a good friend, *Linda Van Sydenborgh*! You'll have to read last time's *Our Little Magazine* very carefully again! How is your knitted purse coming along, *Linda*?

Thank you for the poem, *Wendy Beijes*. I enjoyed it. Congratulations on your new brother, *Wendy*! I think he enjoys you talking to him and playing with him, right?

And congratulations to you, too, *Helena Beijes*, on your baby brother. Does he smile when you sing to him? You had a good birthday, *Helena*! Now you're going to be very busy using all those nice things!

Busy Beavers we need a pen pal for:

*Carla Schoon* (age 10)  
 8 Gretna Drive  
 Brampton, ON L6X 2E5

### RIDDLES FOR YOU

Enjoy them with your friends and your family!

Thanks for sharing Busy Beavers *Randy Dykstra* and *Marjorie Barendregt*.

1. What can you put in a barrel of oil to make it lighter?
2. What do you get when a lion crosses a desert on Christmas Eve?
3. What do you get when you cross a cow with a reindeer?
4. Where does a peacock go for a new tail when he loses his own?
5. When does an astronaut have his mid-day meal?
6. Which trees do fingers and thumbs grow on?
7. What's green, hairy, and goes up and down?
8. What was purple and tried to conquer the world?
9. What did one eye say to the other eye?
10. How does an elephant get down from a tree?

(Answers next page)