



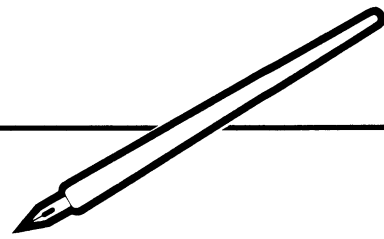
# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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## The 1986 General Synod

In a previous issue of our magazine the official Press Release of the General Synod of Burlington, 1986 was published. A Press Release is only a short report that summarizes the decisions of the ecclesiastical assemblies. The *Acts* also will soon be published. Therefore, it is not necessary at this time to deal with every matter that was on the table of this synod. We shall say a few things here about two of the main issues. That is in the first place the relation of our churches with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) and churches in the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). In the second place, there is the matter of appeals against decisions of the Synod of Cloverdale, 1983 regarding the doctrine of the church.

### Divergencies in confession

In 1977, the Synod of Coaldale decided to recognize the OPC as true church according to Art. 29 of the Belgic Confession and to establish with this church a temporary relationship of ecclesiastical contact. The next synod, held in Smithville, had to deal with objections against this decision. One of the objections was that the Synod of Coaldale made its decision without a clear pronouncement on the divergencies between the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards.

These divergencies were listed in a report that served at the Synod of New Westminster, 1971. This report is added as an appendix to the *Acts* of the 1971 Synod. The underlying question is: can a church that adheres to the Westminster Standards be a true church? Should we not first remove the differences in confession, before we come to mutual recognition?

The 1971 report concluded already that the divergencies do not form an impediment for recognition. Synod Coaldale followed the Dutch sister churches. In spite of some differences, the Westminster Standards were recognized as fully Reformed. Synod Smithville, 1980 acknowledged that an evaluation of the divergencies showing that the Westminster Standards do not form an impediment for recognition as a true church should as yet be given. Synod 1986 received this evaluation, published last year in *Clarion* by the Committee for Contact with the OPC.

This does not mean that a number of our churches, especially in the Classis Ontario-South region, as well as our committee did not speak of concern regarding the OPC and our relation with this church. This concern regards, among other matters, the continued membership of the OPC in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES), quite intensive contact with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in its present development (which development is a great concern, also for many within the CRC), and the matter of the fencing of the Lord's Supper table. The latter has to do with the question how discipline is maintained, and has been an issue in connection with objections against what is practiced in some churches within the OPC in this respect. On this point the Tricounty Reformed Church in Laurel and the Blue Bell Church seceded from the OPC. Our synod charged the Committee for Contact with the OPC to give special attention to this point in its further contact with the OPC.

In the meantime, we watch also what is developing in the OPC in the matter of "J and R." This is the abbreviation for

"Joining and Receiving," a joining and being received by the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA). Many expect that there will be a two-third majority in favour of this proposal at the General Assembly. Our synod has decided to let the OPC know that such a decision would have as consequence that official contact with our churches would come to an end, since "The official contact relationship is not transferable to the PCA.

Another consequence of an acceptance of "J and R" will be that membership of the OPC in the RES will be terminated. The PCA is not a member in this organization, and is not planning to apply for membership either.

This year's synod could not decide to terminate the official relationship with the OPC. The presence of the Rev. G.D. Jerrel showed appreciation, anyway with a growing number of people, in the OPC for contact with our churches. Let us wait and see what will happen. Either the OPC will join the PCA, or, if this is voted down, our committee will convey our concerns, and our next synod will deal with the reaction of the OPC. I am of the opinion, however, that the temporary ecclesiastical contact must lead to a sister church relationship or be terminated at some time in the future. I hope that the former can be realized, but I do have some doubts.

### The ICRC

The Press Release mentioned that the synod charged the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad, not only to open contacts with the Free Church of Scotland in order to investigate whether we can come to full recognition and a sister church relationship (as requested by the committee), but to do the same with respect to the other members in the ICRC. Why should we make an exception? There are, for instance, the Reformed Churches of Sumba-Savu, fruit of years of mission work of our Dutch sister churches.

The Press Release did not give a reason for this decision. There was first some hesitation on the floor of synod. Was it not the custom, so far, that the churches themselves had to come with well-prepared proposals to a General Synod via Classis and Regional Synod, when there was the wish that our churches should establish contact with another church or rather church group? The conclusion was that our churches had already decided in principle to seek such contact with other members in the ICRC by accepting the Constitution. In Article III it says, "The purpose of the Conference shall be: 1. to express and promote the unity of faith that the member churches have in Christ; 2. to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member churches; . . ."

If we can recognize each other as Reformed Churches in the ICRC, this should have consequences for our relationship. That is correctly expressed in the "Purpose" of the Conference. It is a Conference of Reformed Churches. Also in this connection our churches have acknowledged the Westminster standards to be Reformed. Article IV, dealing with "Membership," says that, "Those Churches shall be admitted as members which 1. adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards stated in the Basis; . . ." Article II says, "The Basis of the

Conference shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort) and the Westminster Standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms).

### The appeal against Synod 1983 on the doctrine of the church

The appeals were against the Articles 148, 165 and 166 of the Synod of Cloverdale. The basic issue can be taken from the considerations in Art. 166. Under 3 we read, "In Lord's Day 7 we confess that those are saved who are ingrafted into Christ by a true faith. Regional Synod West of September 20-22, 1983, correctly stated that the true believers 'thus are included in the Church gathering work of Christ (*congregatio*).'" But the question is, "How it is possible that there are true believers who yet are not members of Christ's Church (*coetus*). Rev. DeBruin clearly tries to find an answer to the same question, the answer to which the LORD has reserved for Himself, Deut. 29:29."

Consideration 4 reads, "However, the statement that 'all who have received a true faith become by virtue of that faith 'a member of Christ and of His Church' . . . and as mutual members of the same Body (Art. 28) they are therefore duty-bound to join themselves to Christ's Church' in fact nullifies what we confess in this very same 28th article, namely,

that no person ought to withdraw from the church;

that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it;

that all believers are to join themselves to this congregation;

that all who separate themselves from it or do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God."

Consideration 5 said that, "The statement that there is a plurality of Churches in fact undermines the Confession that everyone is in duty bound to join the Church and to this end 'ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church.'"

Consideration 6 reads, "Although some statements and teachings of Rev. DeBruin are to be rejected, yet it cannot be said that he attacks the Confessions and has thereby broken the promise given when he signed the subscription form for ministers of the Word. Coming with a certain interpretation of the Confession which is to be rejected does not necessarily mean launching an attack on the Confession."

The appeals stated that these considerations, especially 4 and 6 are contradictory. On the one side, the 1986 Synod was asked to take away the contradiction and declare Rev. DeBruin worthy of suspension. On the other side, the request was made to declare the statements of Rev. DeBruin not in conflict with the Confession.

It is not the place here to go into all the arguments and answers. The appeals were quite lengthy, and so was the report of the advisory committee at synod. This can all be read when the *Acts* are published. What I like to do is to take over the "Doctrinal Considerations." They are,

"*Re: the Confession about the Church:* Scripture and the Confessions speak about the church in a general way and a more specific way. On the one hand there is the general aspect of Christ's work of gathering all those whom the Father has given Him and whom He regenerates. This gathering work of Christ is broader than the local, true churches. It is, therefore, within the bounds of Scripture and the Confessions to say concerning the holy, catholic church that it is the gathering of those who are chosen and by regeneration are ingrafted into Him. Calvin calls this the church as God sees it, cf. Eph. 1, 5:32; Col. 1:18, 24; Art. 27 B.C.; L.D. 21 (Q. & A. 54). There is also the

more specific aspect of the holy, catholic church as it is gathered locally by Christ in true churches, in the unity of the true faith, according to the norms to which we are bound for the gathering of the church. Although Scripture and the Confessions place the church-gathering work of Christ on the foundation of God's decree of election, of which regeneration is a fruit, this does not mean that they teach that election and regeneration as God's invisible work are now the *norm* for the gathering of the church (Deut. 29:29). The norm is and remains what God's Word teaches, namely, that Christ gathers it in the unity of the true faith, according to the marks of the true church. When Art. 27 B.C. speaks about the holy, catholic church as congregation and assembly of the true Christian believers, this church is gathered locally by Christ — the word *ecclesia* indicates a visible assembly of believers. These believers are bound to the *norms* which Christ has given regarding the gathering of His Church, cf. Arts. 28, 29 of the Belgic Confession. By taking election not only as their starting point but also as their norm, the appellants neglect the true norms for the gathering of the church as confessed in Art. 29 B.C.; and they also neglect the *norms* for church membership as pointed out in Art. 28 of the Belgic Confession and in L.D. 21 (54) with the words, "by His Spirit and Word in the unity of the *true* faith" (cf. John 17:20; Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3; 2 John 9-11; 3 John 5-8).

*Re: The Plurality of the Churches.* When Scripture speaks of churches in the plural, it speaks of a plurality of local, true churches (e.g. Rev. 2 and 3). A plurality of churches does not mean a plurality of differing beliefs and Confessions. Christ does not work for a plurality in the latter sense, but for unity and purity. For example, Christ in His seven letters [to the seven churches in Asia] maintains the purity of doctrine, calls for godliness of life, and exercises discipline against some churches, even warning one that, if it does not repent, He will remove the lampstand. When Rev. DeBruin in his 'hand-out' applies the term 'plurality,' he applies it to different local churches in different denominations or church groups . . . This is the consequence of his use of election and regeneration as a starting point for his definition of the church. Since, according to him, regenerated people reside in various 'churches' and 'church federations' and thus have various confessions, he consequently arrives at this conclusion. But thereby the norms for the church, as we read them in Christ's seven letters, and as confessed in Art. 29 of the Belgic Confession and in Q. & A. 54 of the Heidelberg Catechism ('in the unity of the true faith') are again neglected, and the congregation becomes confused.

*Re: The Communion of Saints.* The Apostles' Creed characterizes the church as the communion of saints. The Heidelberg Catechism explains this communion of saints as having two sides. There is the participation in Christ, which makes the communion of saints a gift, and there is the community of the believers who are to be a hand and foot for each other. This latter aspect shows that the communion of saints is a normative description of the church. In order to be gathered, defended and preserved the church is bound to Christ's norms, and these same norms apply to the communion of saints, cf. Art. 28, 29 of the Belgic Confession. The communion of saints must be exercised and has to function there where the true church of our Lord Jesus Christ is gathered in the unity of the true faith.

Rev. S. DeBruin and the consistory of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton state that the communion of saints 'is as broad as the holy, catholic church,' defining the church as those who are elected and regenerated, i.e. saints, who are by faith ingrafted into Christ. Rev. DeBruin also states that the 'communion of saints is not just a legal relationship or entity, but it must also be (and become) a functioning relationship' ('hand-out,' p. 12). These views do not take into consideration that the gathering of local, true churches is essential to the gathering

of the holy, catholic church. Thus Articles 28-32 of the Belgic Confession are again neglected.”

Earlier in the report it was pointed out that Rev. DeBruin, in his “hand-out,” instructs the young people “that when they are away from home on the Lord’s Day they should first of all seek a Canadian Reformed Church (when possible) and after that look for a church close to one’s own e.g., Christian Reformed or Free Reformed, then various Presbyterian churches which still maintain the Westminster Standards, Evangelical or Confessional Lutheran churches, Missionary Alliance, and any church where God’s Word still receives a place of honour.”

The synod came to the conclusion 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 the saints are not in harmony with the Scripture and the Three Forms of Unity, and are therefore to be rejected.” The whole judgment was published in the Press Release.

In the Netherlands our sister churches rejected the narrow view of the church as taught by Rev. Hoorn as if there are not really true believers outside the Reformed Churches. The Synod of Heemse decided “to pronounce that — taking everything together — in the view of Rev. Hoorn injustice is done, in an unacceptable way, to the broadness of Christ’s work and the mercy of God in the gathering of the church.”

In the first ground the Synod of Heemse says, “In sovereign good pleasure God has entrusted to His Church the Word of reconciliation in order to save, through her preaching, those

who believe. (Cf. Rom. 3:1; 1 Cor. 4:2; 2 Cor. 5:19ff.; Gal. 2:7; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Pet. 1:23-25.) Through this He has bound us to the church and her preaching. But He does not bind Himself to her in such a way that He, with His Word and Spirit, is nowhere else than within the concretely visible church, as we know her in the offices, in the assembling together, and so on . . . Calvin also speaks about someone outside the church who ‘sowed the seed of the pure doctrine in the hearts of many people.’ He thanked God for it. (Comm. on Phil. 1:16).”

The synod, then, points at Christ who was rejected and crucified and, nevertheless, continued to seek the children of Jerusalem. This motivated not only the apostles, “but also Calvin and De Brès, as well as the Reformed Churches in the Act of Secession and Return, and in the Act of Liberation and Return to call those who remained behind *to the church*.” I emphasize the last words here: There was in Christ’s word, in that of the apostles, in that of Calvin and De Brès, in that of the Reformed Churches in the Secession and in the Liberation a *call to the church* for those who had not come along and so had not joined the (true) church.

When Rev. DeBruin rejects the narrow view of Rev. Hoorn, as if only members of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches are true believers because these churches are the only true churches, we stand beside him. However, at the same time church consciousness and the call to believers (and others) who are not members of a visible, true church must not be undermined either.

J. GEERTSEMA

## Moral implications of the computer<sub>2</sub>

### 1. Does it increase crime?

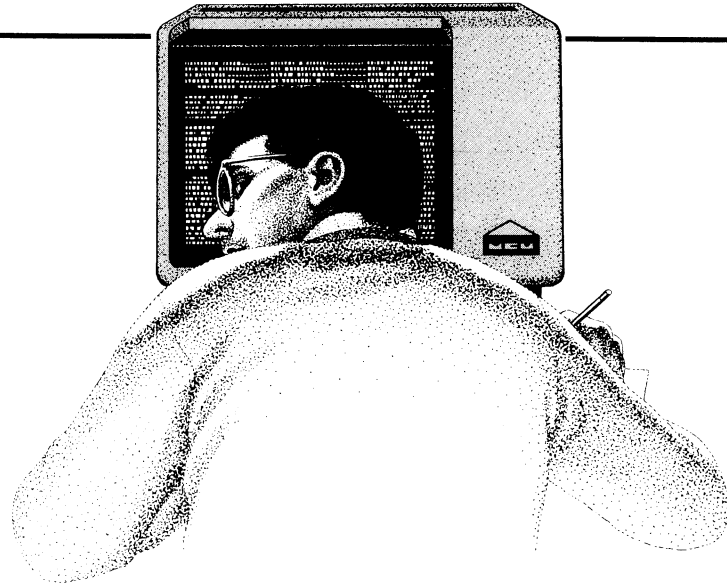
Many wonder whether the introduction of the computer has caused an increase in crime.

No one can deny that this new technological development has been, and can be, used in a criminal way. Bank robbers have discovered a new avenue. Cases of fraud via the computer have been reported. They take place more often than the general public realizes. Most financial institutions are very reluctant to report and prosecute such intrusions in their system. They are afraid of bad publicity. If the general public finds out about certain cases of malicious intrusion into a banking system, then there are two different consequences for which the bank managers have to watch. In the first place such publicity often results in a copycat effect and only increases the problem. Another side effect of such adverse publicity is that the general public upon hearing about intrusion of the banking system and, “peek-

ing” into their confidential information by strangers, may lose confidence in the banking system and turn away from a certain institution. That is the reason why some banks rather take a considerable loss, then report a fraud and have the perpetrator prosecuted. Moreover, prosecution and conviction of the intruder does not solve the problem. Instead they try to close the loophole in the system and consider the loss as a price to be paid for finding out the weak spots in their security.

Every new system has its initial prob-

lems. However, it is quite well possible to develop a reasonably adequate protection system. It is just a matter of keeping up with the developments. This problem is not typical for computer systems. The same applies for the old-fashioned system of a vault in which to store cash money. These vaults have become more and more sophisticated in the course of time. It is almost impossible for thieves to open a vault in a bank. However, the technological means and tools of the professional bank robbers have improved in the same



way, and they always try to outsmart the security people with their tricks.

Crime in the field of the computer will be no exception. Also here there is, and will be in the future, a continual race between the good and the bad guys.

## 2. Can a computer error trigger a world war?

Some people are afraid that a computer error may cause a third world war. We can hear and see, via the news media, all kind of stories about children who, with their home computer, intrude into a secret military system, and set in motion a process which cannot be stopped. In this way a third world war could allegedly be triggered. Others are afraid that the systems have become so complicated, that no one is able to comprehend or oversee the whole system, and to forecast all the possible implications. They fear that a computer error or a programming mistake can set off action through an unidentified false alarm.

A number of things have to be said to put things in the right perspective. In the first place the stories about children who gain access to secret military systems are more sensational fantasy than reality. It is technically only possible to intrude with one computer into the data files of another computer, if both are connected with the same data communication system. There are a number of international data communication systems. It is easy to get access to these systems. Often one simple password is sufficient. Via such a connection a lot of information can be retrieved from the system. By finding out the secret code of other customers, it is not too difficult to reach information which is not meant to be public. Therefore, being connected to such a system, brings with it the possibility and the risk that others can reach or "tap" your information, or interfere with your system, at least as long as your system is "on line." When you unplug the system, no one can reach it. It is the same as with your telephone. When you unplug the cord, no one can bother you or intrude your privacy, but you cannot reach anyone else either.

Now with respect to the sensitive and secret military systems, it is a different story. They are not connected with the public data communication systems. The military have their own communication network.

There remains, however, the remote possibility that through a human error or a technical breakdown, a system can be maliciously intruded, or that a program error causes an unpredictable chain of events. No matter how many sophisticated precautions are taken and safety measures are in place, there is always the possibility that something can go wrong. Mis-

takes are made by all human beings, and equipment sometimes fails. However, that is not typical for a computer controlled system. Even with the oldest systems of communication, such as flag waving or smoke signaling, mistakes were made and misunderstandings occurred. In a very tense situation such a mistake or misunderstanding can have devastating consequences. The safety precautions have to be adequate and in accordance with the risks involved. That causes certain very specific problems in the computer age, in which decisions have to be made within a very short period of time, sometimes in a split second. Still the basic problem is not inherent in computer controlled systems. Also in the past wars have been triggered by a wrong communication or, by a lack of communication, between the people at the top of the military or political system. Moreover, a computer system is much more reliable and less prone to errors than any old-fashioned communication system.

## 3. Malicious intrusion by a computer bug

We have pointed out in the previous section that malicious intrusion in the military system is very unlikely, because these systems are not hooked up to the generally accessible data communication systems. Moreover, even for systems, hooked up to a communication network, there are different options to make mali-

cious intrusion difficult, if not impossible. Though also here the punishment has to fit the crime. A balanced comparison has to be made between security and convenience. That is true in many areas of life. Let me mention an example to show what I mean. It is possible to make an airport safe and avoid any smuggling in of weapons or explosives. It implies that every person who enters the premise has to be thoroughly checked. This is, for practical purposes, virtually impossible. It would not only delay the traffic in an unacceptable way, but it would also cause so much inconvenience to the public that it would scare them away, and the business of the airlines would suffer and become close to nil. Therefore a compromise has to be struck between safety and convenience. To avoid unnecessary trouble, well-considered risks are often taken. Even with your personal telephone you are confronted by the problem. When you order something by phone, when you give an instruction to your bank, or when someone asks you your visa card number, you are not always sure whether you are talking to the right person. Neither does the salesman have a guarantee that the customer gave his real name. Still you take the risk. A simple way to eliminate many phony telephone calls is to double check by returning every call. When you order by telephone and you have to give your visa number, the salesman can ask for your phone number, hang up and call you back, to verify that you really gave the right



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phone number. However, also here the inconvenience and extra work prevents people from taking such precautions. The risk of being fooled is apparently not worth the effort of double checking every call.

In general the risk that computerized information is abused or retrieved by unauthorized persons is not greater than by conventional systems. At least not when you consider that every new system has its "warming up" time and initial problems, which soon can be eliminated. Security is always a battle between the smart security specialists and the professional criminals who try to outsmart their coun-

terparts. That is true for the lock on your front door as well as the vault in the bank. It also applies to computer data communication systems.

data communication system. Every file can be used in the wrong way, and private information can always fall into the hands of the wrong people. During the second world war we saw how personal information was used against citizens in occupied territories. Sometimes these files were purposely destroyed by the underground resistance movement, to avoid abuse of it by the enemy. Such an abuse of information can be made by an oppressor in occupied territory. It can take place through breaking in, to retrieve classified information, as the Watergate case has shown. It happens also when, through an error, con-

As technology progresses, the tricks of computer bugs may increase and they will continue to try to outsmart the security specialists. However, also the possibility to protect files from being reached by unauthorized people are unlimited. A simple 8 digit password or security code is easy to "break," but it is exactly the computer which provides endless possibilities to scramble and descramble, to double and triple check, in order to protect confidential or secret files.

Two things have to be emphasized in this respect. The first is that protection and security is always a compromise and a well-considered taking of risks. A maximum of security and protection creates an unacceptable nuisance, bothers the general public too much, hampers a smooth working system, and is extremely expensive. Therefore risks have to be taken in order to reach a balanced compromise. It is the same as with the protection of your house against robbers. If you want to make your house fully burglar proof, you have to convert it into a fortress, in which you cannot reasonably live. On the other hand, leaving the doors unlocked, the newspaper peeping out of the mailbox, and all the lights out when you are not home in the evening, invites potential robbers to enter your house and take away your valuables. You have to consider how far you want to go in protecting your house. You might tend to install a burglar alarm after you have had a break-in, instead of, according to the old saying, "Shut the stable door after the steed is stolen." It is the same with the protection of data files in a computer system.

Our conclusion must be that much of the stories about intrusion of data systems, retrieving secret information, and abusing this information, is based on a lack of knowledge about the subject, or is the product of fantasy and the desire to bring sensational stories. At the same time we have to realize that every new system has its initial flaws, and that in all these matters there is an ongoing competition between the security specialists and the professional criminals. It is the old competition between the locksmith and the burglar. Each trying to outsmart the other in using new techniques.

We also have to be aware of the fact that the Devil will use every opportunity for his satanic purpose. The computer is no exception in this respect. Still we do not believe that the computer is a potentially greater hazard than any other technological novelty. It is just another tool, which can and should be used to the honour of the Lord, and which also can and will be used by the power of darkness.

— To be continued  
W. POUWELSE

## **"A maximum of security and protection . . . hampers a smooth working system."**

### **4. Loss of privacy**

Another generally discussed matter is the danger that the centralized computer data banks might cause loss of privacy. It is certainly true that, the more information stored in one central location, the greater the risk that unauthorized people may gain access to certain files. Also in this respect we have to be reasonable and realistic. The central storage of information has advantages and disadvantages. In banking and in the medical field many advantages can be noticed. Having all the desired information available immediately and accurately can benefit the client or the patient. Also information about criminals can be retrieved within seconds if the police are searching for a certain person. The use of an identification code is necessary in all these cases to link together the different files. However, here in Canada there is already such a numerical code. In many files the social insurance number is used as an identifier to link information together from different sources. The ready availability of information has many advantages.

There are also undeniable disadvantages. There certainly is a danger of loss of privacy. Information can become available to persons who are not supposed to have it. Information can be used in a wrong way and, without someone's consent, against a person. It can even be used, by an anti-Christian government, against believers. It can be used as a tool in the hands of the devil to persecute the church.

Still, it is not typical for a computer

fidential documents are discarded in an improper way, as recently occurred, when certain government documents ended up in the storehouse of a recycling company, without being properly shredded. Later the documents had to be seized to prevent abuse or publication of it. The problem of loss of privacy and leaking of confidential information is not inherent to a computer system, but is a general problem of protecting privacy.

### **CHURCH NEWS**



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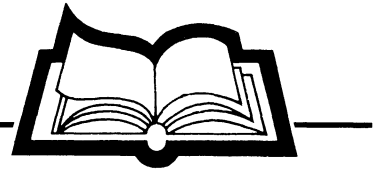
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*“And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”*  
Acts 6:7

## The Growing Word

In the first chapters of the book of Acts, we can read about the enormous growth of the Church at Jerusalem. Many new members are added daily (Acts 2:47). There seems to be almost no end to this growth. Even a “great many of the priests” break away from the false worship and are incorporated into the Christian church.

These are, indeed, impressive developments. When even many of the priests withdraw from the temple service and place themselves under the discipline of the apostles, there must be much that attracts in the Christian congregation. The brothers and sisters in Jerusalem will have been very happy with this ever-growing membership. Are we, too, not extremely grateful when outsiders come to join the Church of the Lord?

With us, however, it is an exception; in Jerusalem it was common: new members were added every day. The question is, how can we explain this difference? Why is there not such enormous growth in our time? Is this because of our “preaching,” our “image” or our “lifestyle”? Do we lack the spiritual power which the Church at Jerusalem apparently did have? It may be necessary that on these points we must examine ourselves to be sure that we do not hinder others by wrong attitudes.

The question remains how we must explain the tremendous growth of the first Christian church. Shall we ascribe this “success” to the members of the congregation? Certainly, the apostles and the other members of the church were filled with the Holy Spirit and witnessed joyfully and faithfully of the Risen Lord. But this growth is not out of people! Shall we ascribe this growth, then, to special gifts and miracles which were evident at that time? Indeed, these gifts were given to the church with a view to its upbuilding and increase, and the many miraculous signs will have contributed to the growth of the church. Yet the Bible teaches us that the church does not live by miracles; signs and miracles can even cause people to turn away and to harden themselves. Our Lord Himself did many signs and miracles, but they nailed Him to a cross. In the final analysis, we cannot ascribe the growth of the church to the powers and signs exhibited and shown by the apostles and other members.

The Bible itself gives us an answer to our question. The growth of the congregation, of any congregation, is to be understood and explained only from out of the *growth of the Word*. In the above mentioned text, where we read of the number of disciples being multiplied and many priests being added, we read first, “And the Word of God increased . . .” The Word of God increases, and that is the only reason why the church increases. The growth of the congregation is a

direct result of the increase of the Word! Church growth has to do more with the Word than with signs or miracles. The greatest gift of God to His Church is the Word and its growth.

There are other places in the book of Acts where we read the same. In Acts 12:24 we read, “But the Word of God grew and multiplied.” In Acts 19:20 we read, “So the Word of God grew and prevailed mightily.” The Word grows! The word that is used here for “to grow” or “to increase” means actually “to grow in power or effect” and so “to become powerful.” When the Word of God grows or increases, it shows its power and begins to gain authority over people. This is a characteristic of the Word of God: it is never without effect, but fulfills the purpose of God. The “growing Word” indicates that the apostolic preaching begins to take effect and reaps results among the hearers. The Word penetrates deep into the hearts and brings about faith and repentance. Only then are new members brought to the church. The growth of the church is ALWAYS the result of the growth of the Word, the harvest of the powerful preaching of the gospel. It is no wonder, then, that we confess the preaching of the true doctrine to be a mark of the Church of Christ!

We should not forget that especially in Jerusalem the people had for many centuries been subjected to a false, legalistic preaching which made them captives of the Law and destroyed true faith. This unholy bond is now broken by the living preaching of the true gospel. The growing Word liberates many captives. That Word of God must be powerfully maintained and boldly proclaimed, and only then will the Church of Christ see real growth.

So it is in Jerusalem and *everywhere*. Where the true gospel is repressed and the Word is rejected, the growth stops and people lose interest also in the church. The sad situation in many unfaithful churches is exactly that the Word no longer grows or increases in strength but is losing its effect. The Word is not heard anymore; therefore many churches are going empty. Many huge church buildings are for sale because the membership dwindled away.

Our Western World and its many churches are by and large turning away from the Word of God. Christianity is clearly on the decline. Often those churches which no longer preach the Word of God faithfully must search for other means to get people’s attention. Instead of preaching the Word, the emphasis is on liturgy and (personal) testimony. The services are spruced up with choirs and (Christian) rock groups. This is to be expected, for wherever people reject God’s revelation, they must turn to their own imagination. Then, despite all efforts, there is a decline in membership.

And there appears to be little interest in churches who still faithfully proclaim the Word of God.

But wherever the Word is preached faithfully, there is growth. It may perhaps not always be so spectacular as in Jerusalem, but there the church does grow and the communion of saints functions. We may as churches today still experience that the Word of God is indeed a power which binds together and grants increase.

Therefore it is imperative that the Word of God *contin-*

*ues* to grow among us. That we do not begin to stagnate. We must all continue to grow through the Word of God to full maturity in Christ. The Word must grow among us so that God is everything to everyone.

The promise of Pentecost is that the church will grow wherever the Word grows, until the last one has been brought in and full maturity has been achieved.

CL. STAM

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## A teenager on rock music

### Introduction

What follows here is an unpretentious essay on rock music. It is written by a Grade twelve student. In this case I deem it better not to publish the name. I take it over in *Clarion*, because there are good things said here. That I want to say in the first place. In the second place, it gives me an opportunity to make a few additional remarks, basically in line with the essay.

When certain titles are given, the reader could ask: Is it really necessary to print that? Does that belong in our Canadian Reformed magazine? I asked the same questions and considered to use my editorial pencil and leave a few titles out. However, I left them all there. Perhaps, as the writer suggests, there are here and there parents who are not aware of what (their) teenagers are (sometimes?) listening to. It is good to know. Here follows then, from one of our older teenagers:

“Some thoughts on rock”

### Some thoughts on rock

What is rock? Is it an expression, a verbalization of inward emotions? Or maybe an escape, a way of enveloping and losing oneself in a different, sometimes more pleasant world? Is it a fad, just a passing trend, or a lasting way of life? Should we actually concern ourselves with rock or disregard it, its effects and results? As Christians in a world with an “if you can’t fight ‘em, join ‘em” attitude maybe we ought to take a good look at what is challenging us, upgrade our knowledge and reformulate our values.

The word “challenge” seems to imply a confrontation of two opposing forces. Is rock really our challenger? If so what does it challenge? Well, let us take a look at what rock involves: the lifestyles of the

performers, the lyrics and the music.

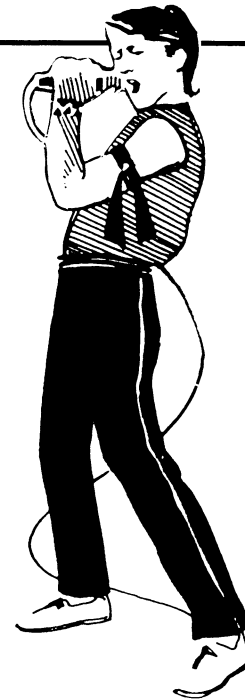
The lifestyles of the performers are often quite questionable. Of course it would be unfair to label all the artists under one title just as it is to say all Christians, regardless of denomination and creed, are the same. But it can be safely said that their lifestyles are mostly quite contrary to that described by God as favourable in His sight. Promiscuity, homosexuality, and the use of narcotics and alcohol are frequently practised and regarded as normal (cf. I Cor. 6:19, 20) and many, in their search for happiness and stability turn towards the occult and its powers for guidance and peace (cf. Ex. 20:3, 4, 5).

As a result of these beliefs and practices the lyrics of their songs can be quite saturated and polluted with these themes, sometimes obvious, sometimes hidden but always made to be an attractive and desirable way to live.

The music can range from mellow and “laid back” with a slow drum beat to loud with screaming guitars and overwhelming drums, all depending on the lyrics. But the beat is exactly what makes rock rock and different from classical or church music. It makes people want to stand up and dance, move around and break free, often crossing the barriers of “acceptable” dancing to wild and sexually stimulating dancing.

This is basically what is involved in rock. Is rock our challenger? Most definitely! What does it challenge? It challenges our Christian faith, our morals and the lifestyle as God demands and states in the Bible as being “. . . whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely . . .” (Phil. 4:8).

Establishing that rock is a challenger inevitably will give rise to the question whether *all* rock is bad and how one discerns the good from the bad. Is there a



definite line we can draw between the two? If so, where?

Just as in literature there is the good and the bad; so in rock there is the good and the bad. And just as it is unwise in literature to throw out the good with the bad so it is in rock. It is in discerning between the two, however, that most tend to wander off the path and get caught up in the worldly vices and levels of standard. This is often due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the lyrics and what they are trying to say.

Generally in rock there are three different kinds of songs. The first are love songs dealing with love and loneliness (e.g. “What About Love” by Heart: “I’ve been lonely. I’ve been waiting for, waiting for you. I’m pretending and that’s all I can do. The love I’m sending ain’t making it through to your heart . . .”). Mostly these songs are quite mellow and meant for easy listening.

Second are the songs about life, politics, and war (e.g. “Brothers In Arms” by Dire Straits: “. . . Through these fields of destruction; baptisms of fire, I’ve watched all your suffering as the battles raged higher . . .”; “St. Elmo’s Fire” by John Parr: “. . . Gonna be a man in motion, all I need



is a pair of wheels. Take me where the future's lying in St. Elmo's Fire . . ."). These are songs usually written to make a statement about life or to protest war, mostly containing underlying meanings.

Third are the songs about drugs, sex, violence, the occult and Satanism (punk rock belongs in this group) (e.g. "Highway to Hell" by AC/DC: "Wango Tango" by Ted Nugent about sex: ". . . Brand new dance . . . Rock and roll sensation . . . get my baby propped down and her butt propped up . . . I think you're in the right

## ***"Should the energies one directs at popular music perhaps be redirected and channelled in a more 'upwards' motion?"***

position . . ."). These songs are written solely for the purpose of sexual stimulation, praising Satan and the occult, and endorsing the use of narcotics. They usually contain a great deal of screaming both by the vocalists and the instruments and loud, relentless drums.

On the average most parents are quite unknowledgeable about the third kind of rock and either don't care or don't have the time to obtain information about it. And because kids, particularly teenagers are at a very vulnerable age, they tend to fall victim to the results of the warped minds of the writers and performers of this kind of music . . . or rather garbage. This music is straight from hell and Satan's domain. It downgrades healthy minds and goes directly against God.

Although the blame cannot be entirely placed on the parents it is their God-given

responsibility to bring up their children in the fear and wisdom of the Lord, which includes involving themselves in their children's listening habits, updating themselves, and obtaining information on the groups their children are listening to.

The second kind of rock (songs on war, life, politics) cannot be so quickly dismissed. Although the statements made are often very humanistic and secular in approach, the songs can contain very valid and true values. These have to be dealt with in a very selective way, the underlying

statements analyzed carefully (always remembering the Bible) and never losing sight of what the Bible says about the topics at hand.

Not much can be said in favour of the first kind of rock. It is usually quite "mushy" tearful, and commercial with not a whole lot to say about life. Although it does not carry the same dangers as the second and third kind of rock, discernment is no less important here.

Is all rock bad? No, not all but not all is good either and discerning the good from the bad is never easy but, nevertheless, extremely important. How does one draw the line? About the best answer to that is: with the Bible in one hand, the lyrics in the other, and knowledge of both in one's heart.

After realizing and accepting the aforesaid, the natural next step is to reas-

sess and reformulate one's values. Should the emphasis one tends to place on rock be as strong as they are? Should the energies one directs at popular music perhaps be redirected and channelled in a more "upwards" motion? This is something each person must do for himself and no one can pressure or push another into it. Each person must decide for himself if the proper importance is placed in the proper areas, being careful to always stay close to the Lord because, although it is much easier to give in to peer pressure, in the end we will not be answering to our peers but to God.

To the Praise of His Glorious Grace  
*M.W. Smith*  
(contemporary Christian singer)

Let us praise the One  
who chose us.  
Let us thank the One  
who knows us.

Set apart, blameless in His sight,  
through the Son we have faith,  
we have life.

To the praise of His glorious grace.

May the God of our Lord,  
the almighty Father  
Give you wisdom and peace,  
his comforting Spirit,  
that you may know His hope,  
you may know His riches,  
that you may know His mighty strength.

To the praise of His glorious grace.

To the praise of His glorious grace.

Amen.

(as recorded on Reunion Records Michael  
W. Smith 2)

# **Yes, what about rock?**

## **Some additional remarks**

Good for you, Grade 12 student, that you want the Lord and His Word as your norm and guide. I am also thankful for the clear and unambiguous statement regarding the third group of rock: "This music is straight from hell and Satan's domain" and "It downgrades healthy minds." How true both statements are! Teenagers in the church, who have received the sign and seal of the holy covenant, it is one of your own who says these things. Listen to these words and refuse to have anything to do with what comes "straight from hell" and "downgrades [your] healthy minds." Shun it. Hate it, for your God hates it. As holy ones of the Lord, grow a holy aversion against it.

Christ Jesus gives to those who believe in Him and live out of Him true human worth and dignity, to the glory of the

Creator. This "music" that comes straight from hell, its message and effect, downgrades those who give themselves to it, either by producing it or by listening to it and drinking it in. It makes them into beings who reject and lose all the good things mentioned in Philip. 4:8 and quoted in the essay; and in rejecting that what is just and pure and lovely, gracious and excellent, and worthy of praise, they lose human worth and dignity."

This, the music, the words, and the (accompanying) lifestyle of which it speaks, is one loud, offending, cursing, perverse, satanic, scream of hatred against the Creator and Redeemer of life, intended to insult Him and Christ Jesus, His Son, and His Holy Spirit. Must this "music" that is a mocking insult in the face of our good and holy God of grace be the entertainment sought by His covenant children? The essayist says clearly, "No." And I like

to add: Young people (and older ones) who give themselves to this kind of entertainment and continue to do so, ask yourself very seriously the question: can one who gives himself continually to this satanic corruption and does not have an intense holy aversion against it, truly be born again, regenerated, and ruled by the Holy Spirit? Is Christ for them truly their Lord and Master? Which connection is there between Christ and Belial, between righteousness and iniquity, between the temple of the living God (the church and its members) and idols (II Cor. 6:14-16)?

Further, I am sure that those teenagers who want to live in faith, who have received Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and commit their life to Him, and who grow older and perhaps become parents themselves, and live close to His Word, will see sharper all the time, that the distinction between the different kinds of rock, al-

though undeniably present, is not a distinction in principle (good rock overagainst bad rock), but in gradation (less or more ungodly).

We can see that insight already coming through in the fact that also the first group of rock songs is rejected by the essayist. It is the group of the mellow "love" lyrics, "usually quite 'mushy,' tearful, and commercial with not a whole lot to say about life."

Do you allow me to say it a little sharper? These songs are not only sentimental,

Although our Grade 12 student sees also dangers in the second group of rock lyrics, singing of life and politics and war, here we meet the most positive evaluation. "The songs can contain very valid and true values," we read. A warning is added again. "The statements . . . are often very humanistic and secular in approach," and the lyrics "have to be dealt with in a very selective way," whereby one has to remember what the Bible says.

Again I say, good for you. Here is the right principle and approach: as chil-

Psalm 90 not speak of the same truth, saying that "our years come to an end like a sigh, . . . yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away?" Is it not so that not only older people, but also young people can have, and often do have, exactly the feeling which is described by those repeated words, "Dust in the wind; all we are is dust in the wind?" What is the use of things? What is the meaning of this vain life of ours? So, can our conclusion be that this is a good song?

Let us listen to the Bible. In the first place, as far as Psalm 90 is concerned, this Psalm speaks about the cause of the shortness of life: that cause is the wrath of God against sin. However, this Psalm does not only speak of God's wrath and the shortness of our troublesome life here on earth, but it also speaks of God as a God of grace. Therefore, the end of this Psalm is a prayer of hope:

"Let thy work be manifest to thy servants,  
and thy glorious power to their children.  
Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,  
and establish thou the work of our hands upon us,  
yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."

This is a totally different message. Here is not the cry of despair: "All we are is dust in the wind." Here we find the confession of faith in a gracious God and Father, who is asked to establish the work we do, so that the results remain. He who has God, has hope. And the Christian hope is certainty, based on the reliability of the sure promises of an eternal and trustworthy God of grace. His promises are sure in Christ.

When we listen to the message of the Preacher in the book Ecclesiastes, it seems so pessimistic, so full of despair: "Everything is vanity." That is true, indeed, regarding this life here on earth as it has been placed under God's curse because of sin. The Apostle Paul refers to that theme of the Preacher when he writes in Romans 8 that this life with its many forms of suffering and sighing is subject to vanity.

But both the Preacher and the apostle of Christ say more. They speak about God, the Creator and Redeemer. Therefore, for both there is hope. Sure, there is also a difference. The Preacher's emphasis is on this life's vanity. Therefore, his Old Testament book is one cry for God's Redeemer. But the conclusion of the preacher, especially for young people, is:

"Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth . . . .  
Fear God and keep His commandments;



***“. . . as children of the LORD, we must listen to what the Bible says.”***

or (to say it in your words) mellow and mushy, but also very much misleading in the Biblical sense of the word. They give a wrong, deceiving picture of the reality of life; a picture that is in clear conflict with the gospel. What is called "love" in these "mellow" lyrics, is that not a sentimental, emotional *selfishness* with sensual feelings as underground? Is this picture of love not far removed from the true (Christian) love, also between husband and wife, a boy and his girlfriend, as the gospel speaks about it; the love that is first of all a gift which flows from the love of Christ and, then, is also seen as a calling and duty, a responsibility and matter of self-sacrificing care for the other person; a love which shows to be image of God's pure and holy love in Christ? Is it not so that this sentimental, "mellow," often sensual, love, not only gives a deceiving picture of what a good life is all about, but also is part of the cause of so much marital unfaithfulness, of many separations and divorces? How many of our Christian young people, and younger and older couples, are influenced by the deceiving picture of such a sentimental, selfish "love," as a consequence of the fact that they surround themselves constantly by this kind of rock and other music?

dren of the LORD, we must listen to what the Bible says. Let me give an example. It is probably not an example of this kind of rock music as such, but, I think the matter is the same. Some years ago there was a popular song with the title "Dust in the Wind." It was sung by the Kansas group. The lyrics are the following:

"I close my eyes, only for a moment;  
and the moment's gone.

All my dreams pass before my eyes  
a curiosity: Dust in the wind.

All they are is dust in the wind.

Same old song

Just a drop of water in an endless sea.

All we do crumbles to the ground  
though we refuse to see.

Dust in the wind.

All we are is dust in the wind.

Don't hang on.

Nothing lasts for ever but the earth and sky.

It slips away

All your money won't another minute  
buy

Dust in the wind

All we are is dust in the wind

Everything is dust in the wind."

This is what we would call a song with a message, with which nothing is wrong. It is a nice and clean song about the reality of life. No drugs; no violence; no occultism. Could we not even say that this song expresses the basic message of Ecclesiastes? Is its message not, "All is vanity?" Life is vanity; dust in the wind. Does

for this is the whole duty of man.  
For God will bring every deed into  
judgment  
with every secret thing, whether good  
or evil.”

(Eccles. 12:1, 13, 14)

As for the Apostle Paul, he writes about  
the Redeemer of life for whom the Preacher  
cried. He wants us to sing along:

“There is therefore now no  
condemnation  
for those who are in Christ Jesus . . . .  
. . . for the creation was subjected to  
vanity . . . .  
. . . the whole creation has been  
groaning in travail  
together until now;  
and not only the creation,  
but we ourselves, who have the first  
fruits of the Spirit,  
groan inwardly  
as we wait the adoption as sons,  
the redemption of our bodies.  
For in this hope we were saved . . . .  
What then shall we say to this?  
If God is for us, who is against us?  
He who did not spare His own Son but  
gave Him up for us all,  
will He not also give us all things with  
Him?  
Who will bring any charge against  
God’s elect?  
It is God who justifies; who is to  
condemn?  
It is Christ Jesus who died,  
yes, who was raised from the dead,  
who is at the right hand of God,  
who indeed intercedes for us  
Who shall separate us from the love  
of Christ?  
Shall tribulation or distress, . . . ? No!  
For I am sure that [nothing] will be able  
to separate us  
from the love of God in Christ Jesus  
our Lord.”

Romans 8:1, 20, 22-24, 31-35, 38, 39

And I ask, is it right for someone who  
knows Jesus Christ as his Redeemer to  
feel like “dust in the wind?” Can you still  
say such words, when singing along with  
Paul in faith? and when knowing that you  
are of such great value for God that He  
sent His Son to take your curse, your guilt,  
your condemnation away from you? Can  
you when you believe that you are so valu-  
able for God’s Son that He was willing to  
go through hell in your place to bring you  
to eternal glory as adopted child and heir  
of God?

“Dust in the wind,” yes, that is true  
for those who are not in Christ, and reject  
Him. Psalm 1 contrasts the righteous, the  
believer, and the unrighteous, the unbe-  
liever, who rejects God’s Word of promise  
and guidance. It says, “The wicked are .  
. . . like chaff which the wind drives away,”  
yes, *they* are like “dust in the wind.”  
However, the righteous are blessed,

for the LORD knows their ways. Those  
ways can go through deep troubles, that  
is true. Life can seem vanity, also to them.  
But holding on to Christ, they say: our life  
is not vain in the Lord.

When the rock lyrics in the second  
group, I come back to them, speak of life,  
of war and politics, they do so from a hu-

---

***“Let us confess Christ  
also in our music, in  
the midst of a world  
in despair.”***

---

manistic point of view. But this humanistic  
point of view is in our post-Christian society  
a rejection of Christ and His salvation.  
That must be seen. We have to do also  
here with the enmity which God put in  
paradise between seed of the woman and  
seed of the serpent. This antithesis must  
be maintained.

Further, when these rock lyrics speak  
about war, do they not reject war in a pac-  
ifistic, and often leftist, way? Do they main-  
tain that the government has the calling to  
protect its people against an invading  
enemy? And when these lyrics speak  
about politics, do they acknowledge that  
the government is servant of God, and that  
rebellion against the government is also  
revolution against God? Or do these  
political lyrics criticize government in a  
revolutionary manner? I only ask.

Do you agree that the difference is  
one of gradation, not of principle?

I express the wish that in our Chris-  
tian homes and families much more sound,

**BECAUSE OF THE  
HOLIDAY SEASON**

Issues 13 and 14 are combined.

**OUR COVER**

Berg Glacier Lake  
Mount Robson National Park, BC

Christian, spiritual music is listened to  
and played.

In this connection, a last remark may  
follow about “Christian rock.” An example  
is provided at the end of the essay. The  
words are based on and taken from Ephe-  
sians 1. I agree with you that they are  
good. But can’t you agree with me that  
we should make a few remarks? In the  
first place, is the kind of music fitting the  
words? Is it fitting to “beat” the words into  
the minds of the listeners? Perhaps, you  
find me too critical here. Well, give it some  
thought, nevertheless.

In the second place, having listened  
to Christian rock, I find there is often great  
shallowness in it, and strong emotion, feel-  
ing. There can be a constant repetition  
of the same words, which, together with  
the beat, can easily bring, and probably  
is intended to bring, the listeners into an  
emotional state of mind. It is, in my opin-  
ion, comparable with the effect that mass  
crusades for Christ can have on people  
whereby they are brought into an emo-  
tional condition in which they come for-  
ward to give testimony of their turning to  
Christ. This emotional condition is often  
seen then as the experience of now being  
born again. Is the music intended to re-  
generate people? Is that not the effect of  
God’s Word? Can we then not expect true  
regeneration?

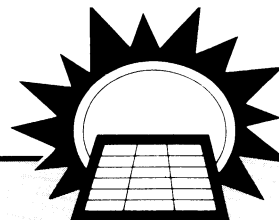
And in the third place, is it not so that,  
like so many evangelical, methodist hymns,  
many Christian rock lyrics speak of the  
soul of the believer, his experience, his  
feelings? Is not here the believer and his  
experiences in the centre?

Now, although a believer who lives in  
faith and serves Christ with a heart full of  
love does experience the joy of faith as  
fruit of his living relationship with Christ,  
this does not mean that we should live by  
experience; and we should not seek to do  
that either. We must live by the covenant  
words of the LORD, by what He promises  
us and what He requires of us. That  
sounds, perhaps, somewhat cold, but is  
Biblical truth and loving warmth.

I like to conclude with the wish that  
in our families the songs of God’s cove-  
nant, whether Psalms or other Hymns  
taken from the Old or the New Testament,  
are more sung. We have our Reformed  
heritage in music, in singing our Scrip-  
tural songs. Let us use what we have re-  
ceived. Perhaps, it is a good idea that our  
choirs practice more Psalm singing. Cal-  
vin’s principle was that the Psalms, and  
Hymns taken from the Scriptures, are the  
very words of God. That is what God’s  
people should sing first of all.

So, let us sing of the great works of  
God in Christ. Let us confess Christ also  
in our music, in the midst of a world in  
despair.

J. GEERTSEMA



"Those who trust in the LORD, are like Mount Zion, which will not be moved but abides for ever."

Psalm 125:1

## Dear brothers and sisters,

Christians are often confronted with struggles, trials and temptations! Left to themselves they are so easily shaken by the troubles that assail them, tossed to and fro like the waves of the sea. I am sure that also among us there are those who go through troublesome times, when there seems to be no solution and no way out.

In those circumstances we should listen to the LORD, who comes to us with His command to trust in Him with childlike faith. For He is the LORD, the God who in His covenant has adopted us as His children.

We may always count on this God. He will sustain and comfort us. He can do that for He is the almighty God and He will do it because He is also our faithful Father. All things are controlled by Him, the great events of this world, also the small ups and downs in our life.

Yes, then there is still loneliness, sickness, strife or sorrow but our God promises that we will not be moved but keep a steady course. Not because we are so steadfast, but He is our Father in heaven. He holds on to us in Zion, in fellowship with the church of all ages. That Zion abides for ever and trusting the Lord with all our heart as children of Zion we also will abide for ever. As that other Psalm says it:

For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from Him.

He only is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

Psalm 62:5

## From the mailbox:

A few months ago Jane Stad from Winnipeg asked us to remember Peter VanHelst who due to a tragic accident had been seriously injured. Now she writes:

"Peter's health has improved and he has returned to his home in Smithers, BC. Peter would like to thank all those who remembered him in their prayers. He greatly appreciated the mail he received."

That is good news and we pray that the LORD also in the time to come will be with Peter.

I received a personal note from Jim VanderHeiden, who wrote:

"I thank everybody who sent cards, best wishes and gifts for my birthday. It's very much appreciated."

It is good to hear that the "Ray of Sunshine" works and that there are loyal people who remember the sick among us. Let their gratitude be your reward! And keep it up!

## Our birthday calendar:

For the month of August you should mark these dates on your calendar:

August 5

**PHILIP SCHUURMAN**

485 Thorold Road  
Welland, ON L3C 3X1

Philip will be celebrating his 27th birthday. He lives with two other boys in an apartment (run by "Christian Horizon"). Phil enjoys working in the kitchen of a restaurant. Our best wishes for your birthday, Phil!

August 9

**ROSE MALDA**

Oakland Centre  
53 Bond Street  
Oakville, ON L6J 5B4

Rose will, D.V., be 29 years old. She suffered from meningitis which damaged her brain. When she is happy she shows a big smile and claps her hands. Let's give her lots of reasons to be happy on her birthday!

August 18

**FENNY KUIK**

38 Rizzuto Bay  
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3Y8

Fenny will be 34 years old. In spite of her handicap, (unable to hear or speak) she is very much involved in church life and works regularly in her father's printing business, Premier Printing. Have a happy birthday, Fenny!

August 23

**JACK DIELEMAN**

307 Connaught Avenue  
Willowdale, ON M2R 2M1

Jack will be 14 years old. He is paralyzed from his chest down and spends most of the day in a wheelchair. But he takes part in all kind of activities and is doing well in school. I'm sure a cheerful note or card will be appreciated!

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF YOU!

In quietness and confidence  
My strength shall ever be!  
No weariness shall overcome  
The soul that trusts in Thee.  
Though trials sore, and hardships come,  
My strength He shall renew.  
His presence shall envelop me,  
He'll always help me through!

Till next month, we hope!

**MRS. J. MULDER**

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

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# Mount Nemo Lodge

## Report of the activity director

A few weeks ago the board asked me to speak a few words about volunteering at Mount Nemo Lodge. The Lodge has many volunteers. Some of these ladies have been coming faithfully for ten years. Some others, especially from our own church, have joined within the last half year. To make the Lodge more homelike some volunteers have sewn tablecloths, approximately seventy, big bibs have also been made.

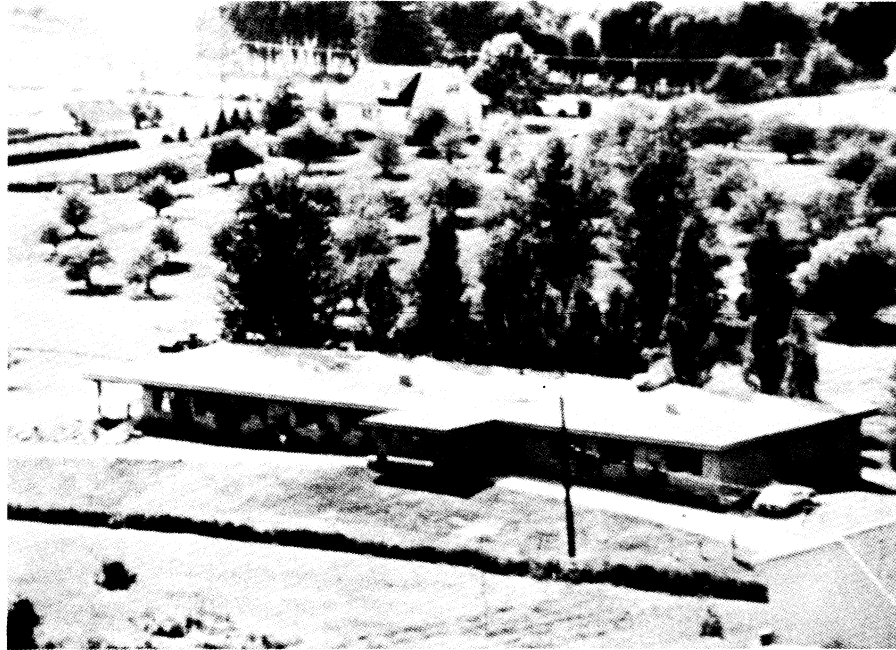
One volunteer makes a monthly Birthday poster. As you can see one doesn't necessarily have to go to the Lodge to be a volunteer.

I thought it best to go over the weekly activity schedule with you and then maybe you could see a need or feel that you have a talent you could apply at this nursing home. Let's start with Sunday, a church service of one kind or another is held every Sunday. The first Sunday of the month is looked after by a couple from the United Church. This couple has been doing this for a long time. You can marvel at such faithfulness. The second Sunday, and when applicable the fifth Sunday, is looked after by the Church of Burlington West. The Anglican Church looks after the third Sunday and as far as I know their minister does the service himself. On the fourth Sunday we welcome the Sunday School children from the United Church. The nice thing about this variety is that it keeps these churches involved with their members and the residents with their community.

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, the residents do exercises. (With volunteers or myself.) These consist mainly of making use of all the joints and some stretching. Particular attention is paid to arms and hands. It is very important to maintain the use of one's hands or in some cases the one functioning hand. Manicures are given every other Monday by two volunteers.

On Monday afternoon four or five volunteers come in to have a sing-song with the residents, this is a very popular program and many golden oldies are sung. Some very good voices are found among the residents.

Every other Tuesday two volunteers come in to look after our plants with some of the residents. A small Bible study group



has also been started and is faithfully attended by a small number. (This study group had to stop for the summer since outings are planned for this morning.)

Once a month, ladies from the SPCA come to visit with some animals, rabbits, dogs, cats, etc.

A modified game of trivia is often played in the afternoon.

Once every three weeks, five residents go out on Wednesday morning to visit a volunteer who has opened her home to the residents. The trip to her home is paid for by the Lions Club of Waterdown. This is a much looked forward to outing for the residents. They meet other people of the community and chat about "the good old days." The parents of this particular person come once a month to the nursing home to make music for and with the residents.

Thursdays are our craft days. The first Thursday of the month is looked after by one of the many churches in the district on a rotating basis. Crafts on the third Thursday are looked after by two volunteers. Birthday parties are held on the last Thursday of the month. The Scouts come in one Thursday evening a month, they

play games with the residents. The John Calvin School has been sending different grades every third Friday of the month. The residents have enjoyed their talents in sing-song, piano and recorder playing etc. We also heard a girls choir from Guido de Brès.

On the first Friday of the month some films are usually shown. We have seen some comedies and beautiful nature films.

On Saturday afternoon, different people from the churches of Burlington come in to serve coffee or tea with homebaked goodies.

Popular is also the hymn sing we do a couple of times a week before lunch. The residents are in the last stage of life, a very lonely and difficult stage with death all around them. How good it is then to sing these comforting hymns: "Safe in the arms of Jesus" or "Blessed Assurance Jesus is Mine." Hymns not particularly known within our circles anymore except by our own aged and then in Dutch.

Nevertheless this is the comfort we can bring and that is where our duty lies.

LIZ DE JONG

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# The Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc., Hamilton, ON<sub>1</sub>

Recently we were informed that very little is known about our Society and then in particular about Mount Nemo Lodge outside Ontario. We hope to rectify this problem by means of a series of articles in *Clarion*, using the reports delivered at the annual meeting, held on April 18, 1986, as basis for these articles.

In his opening word, the chairman of the Society, Br. Tony Vanderhout, stated that much had taken place in the past year which created a lot of excitement. On May 16, 1985, almost a year ago, the membership had taken the courageous decision to purchase Mount Nemo Lodge Nursing Home on Guelph Line at Burlington, ON. Only six weeks later the Board was able to remove the conditional clause regarding financing. Our membership had more than tripled, bonds carrying low interest rates were quickly sold, and last but not least a substantial amount in donations and gifts had been paid or pledged by many members and some diaconates.

However, many obstacles still had to be removed or overcome. In order to obtain approval from the Ministry of Health to take over the license to operate this thirty bed nursing home, we had to prove that we were capable of operating such a home. This was difficult and required many meetings and the services of a specialized consultant as well as advice from the legal profession. Nevertheless our efforts and negotiations were richly blessed when the Society officially became the "Owner" on November 1, 1985 and assumed responsibility. Indeed we had entered a new era in the life of our Society. We have now operated the Nursing Home for six months and may report to you that all is well. We go on in faith and share our many blessings with those amongst us as well as others who need our help and assistance because they no longer can take care of themselves. And that number will be growing as our community ages.

May our heavenly Father grant us wisdom and understanding and may He be pleased to bless the work of our hands and establish it. In humble dependence on His Grace and Mercy and Love, we give honour and praise to His Holy Name.

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to

those who are of the household of faith," (Galatians 6:10). The chairman publicly thanked each and every Board member for their determination and hard work. It would not have been possible to get the job done without them. Countless hours at meetings and on the phone, numerous miles and frustrations, you name it, we did overcome them all and have done so in good harmony.

In a way we were relieved when the Nursing Home purchase was closed and we thought that most of the work was over and done with. However, the fun was only beginning. Hence the proposal to expand the Board to nine members. A new plan of reorganization is receiving priority discussion at Board level.

Matters of staff hiring and training, program development, local public relations, promotion, communications, volunteer recruiting, coordination of services, as well as other matters, need constant attention.

In the report of our Management Committee you will hear that we have a wide spectrum of matters to deal with. It is a challenge to make it work and we are thankful for what we were allowed to accomplish thus far.

Presently we employ five Canadian Reformed staff members and eighteen others. In addition we have eight Canadian Reformed volunteers and eleven others. We have one Canadian Reformed resident and twenty-nine others. We also received inquiries from three other Canadian Reformed families.

Surely it will take time to become a Canadian Reformed Nursing Home. The daily management is handled by Mrs. Nancy McCullough who is our Administrator, Food Services Supervisor and Director of Nursing. Indeed no small task, but she is well qualified in all departments and respected by us all, as well as by the Ministry of Health. This respect is based on their comments during regular and routine inspections. Our brother Dr. H. Scholtens is our Medical Director and Nursing Home Doctor.

In consultation and cooperation with our Management Committee, and our Activity Director, the Board has already made a number of changes to bring about a

Christian atmosphere in the Home. I am sure you will hear about it from our Activity Director, Mrs. L. de Jong. We need to have a solid grip on all operational aspects to understand all functions of the day to day operations, before we can constructively implement changes which we feel are important and beneficial for a Christian environment.

As stated above, Nursing Homes are under very strict control by the Ministry of Health. We are pleased to report that the different inspection branches submit satisfactory reports. Because of this we have decided to proceed with our objective to have our Nursing Home accredited by the "Canadian Council on Health Facilities Accreditation." We will strive to meet the standards that are accepted throughout the country and will subscribe to standards that can be compared throughout the country. We intend to make the application in November 1986 and it will take one year or longer to receive any accreditation. If we receive this recognition, we will be known as an institution that is providing care in compliance with the highest standards which addresses every activity within our facility. We consider this a very important matter.

The Society as "Owner" and we as "Board" are not health professionals. Of course, we may have some good ideas and all are no doubt well-intentioned, but they are not done with professional knowledge. Through accreditation, we are assured that the various professional activities are carried out within Canada wide accepted standards, which are completely reviewed every two years or three years depending on the level of accreditation received. By the same token we can assure our residents that everything in the Home is in place and in good order. The final award, however, takes all of three years and is rather difficult to achieve. Usually only those receive this level who are considered leaders in the Nursing Home industry and who present programs from which new standards may be developed. Indeed, we would be extremely happy with a two year accreditation level, but you may challenge us! Only 46% receive this level.

Because the Society is recognized

as a non-profit and charitable institution we are investigating the possibility of being exempt from paying realty taxes in the same way as Ebenezer Villa is, as well as from paying business tax.

You will have noticed that we have given extended information on the Nursing Home in Burlington (West) and on Ebenezer Villa in Hamilton in the 1986 *Yearbook* of the churches with all telephone numbers. Presently 50% of the Ebenezer Villa is occupied by Canadian Reformed church members and almost all of the remainder belong to the Christian Reformed Church. We are somewhat concerned that our waiting list for an apartment hardly shows any of our own senior members. We would recommend to you to register yourselves on the waiting list. This does not commit you to move into Ebenezer Villa when a unit becomes available, but we would give you a phone call to consider it. The atmosphere in this beautiful Villa is excellent. Mrs. W. Faber, convener of our very active Care Committee will tell us all about it, as well as about our endeavours to obtain "limited care" for the residents, partially funded by the Ministry of Social Services.

We hope you will not hold back constructive criticism and that you will respond to our invitations and urgent appeals to assist us where possible. Only a few hours per week as a volunteer on a regular basis is of much help. We invite you to support us in promoting this work of mercy in God's Kingdom. In fact, it is the responsibility of each and every church member to promote all the work done in the Kingdom of God in obedience to His Word. Also this work of caring for our senior members and our weak and elderly brothers and sisters and others. This is of much importance within our Canadian Reformed community at large to the end that God may receive all glory. Yes also in this work we may be the salt of the earth and a light of the world. We will do good to all men and welcome them in the Nursing Home and at Ebenezer Villa, however, we do explain our terms and conditions as stipulated in the basis of the Society. In this respect we thankfully report that no difficulties have arisen.

Finally, in this introduction we urge you to remain a member of the Society in good standing or join us as a new mem-

ber, that means, pray for us and our work and support us financially (\$100. yearly) and if possible, attend our membership meetings to show your interest and concern. Encourage us to go on and please warn us when necessary.

With these introductory remarks, the annual meeting was opened and thereafter we received the reports from three committees.

In a following report, we will tell you about the affairs at the Nursing Home and its operation.

If you wish to write us, our mailing address is: PO Box 6032, Station "F," Hamilton, ON L9C 5S2.

Presently the following serve on the Board of Directors: Tony Vanderhout, chairman; Leo Knegt, vice chairman; Anko Scholtens, secretary; George Hart, treasurer and administrator; Henk Breukelman, director; Jake Oosterhoff, director; Joe Boersema, director; Cor Langhout, director; Ike Vanderwoude, director.

— *To be continued*  
TONY VANDERHOUT

## God gave the growth

The church communities of Fergus and Guelph have indeed been blessed by growth during the last twenty-eight years. This is seen not only in the growth of the churches but also in the rapid expansion of the Reformed schools set up by the parents of these churches.

A small beginning was made on December 11, 1957. The first membership meeting was held by the eight members of the school society. They began to seek ways to fulfill the third question of the form of baptism, dealing with the instruction of the children in the Bible and in the articles of the Christian faith. The school was to become an important extension of the home and the church in providing true covenantal education.

The task was not easy. It was not until 1968 that the membership of twenty-six parents were able to appoint a teacher and start classes for Grades 5, 6, and 7 in an old school building bought for that purpose. The name chosen for the school was Maranatha, (the Lord will come soon), and it was located just south of Fergus. By December 1985, the school membership had grown to 110. The total church membership of Fergus and Guelph at that time was 774. There are two school buildings (Grades 1 to 6 in Fergus and 7 to 10

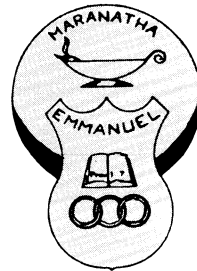
in Guelph) with a total enrollment of 178 and nine teachers.

By September 1990, we can expect a total enrollment of at least 220 students with twelve teachers. Indeed, the Lord has been merciful.

"So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth" (1 Cor. 3:7).

With these blessings come also hurdles that have to be overcome. The two school buildings are very old and extra space cannot be added. The elementary school building in Fergus must have more room by September 1986; the high school building in Guelph will need more room three years later. We have to move! To plan for this relocation, the school board has been very busy obtaining a ten acre property in Fergus. The plan is eventually to construct one building that will hold all the grades.

There is one major hurdle in completing this plan on schedule. The need for a new building is great, the will of the people is strong, but the finances are limited. Our members will donate money, we will take out loans, we will ask for donations from Reformed people across Canada.



However, this will still not be enough. We are located in Ontario, one of the few provinces in Canada where private Christian

schools do not receive any money from the government to help run the schools. In the past, any new expansion in teachers and building came completely out of the pockets of the membership. However, the growth in students has been so great, our existing buildings so old and overcrowded and a new facility so expensive, our membership will not be able to shoulder the burden alone.

### History

To give you a better idea of how our schools have developed, it is important to detail the steps in the ongoing growth of our schools.

1. April, 1968 — A second teacher was hired for Grades 3, 4, 5.

2. September, 1973 — The wish of many years was finally realized when all eight grades were taught in the school. The ninety-three students were taught by three full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. An extra classroom was added.

3. Attempts were made to buy more land adjacent to the school, but it was not possible. The existing property was too small to put on any more classrooms and the board looked for ways to add Grades 9 and 10.

4. In 1977 an existing school building in Guelph was purchased. Although surrounded by a small property, the building was near a large park and the city library. Grades 7 and 8 were moved from Maranatha and Grades 9 and 10 were added. This school was called the Emmanuel Christian High School. There were now two school buildings run by one board located 18 km apart.

5. From 1978 to 1981, Grades 11 and 12 were added. These extra grades plus the continued growth in the remaining grades required four extra teachers. After 1981, we were unable to continue to operate Grades 11 and 12. It was hoped that as soon as there were sufficient numbers of students, adequate facilities, and enough qualified teachers, these grades could again be added.

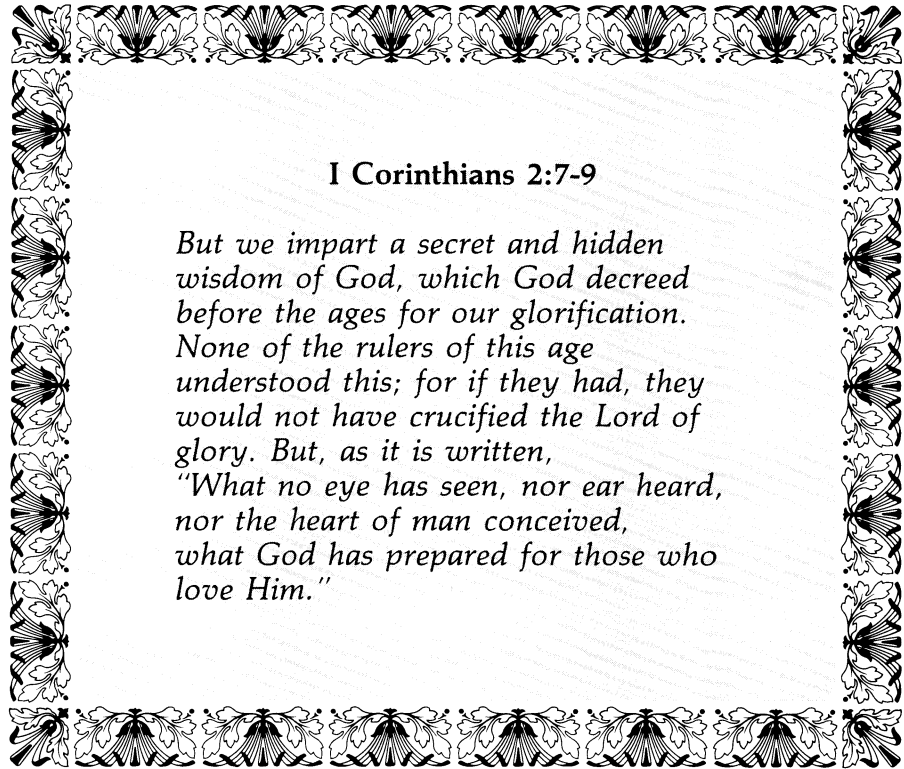
6. In September 1981, there were the equivalent of nine full-time teachers at two schools operating Grades 1 to 10 with a total enrollment of 145 students. At this time, a few parents from the Church in Orangeville started sending children to Grades 9 and 10 at Emmanuel. From 1981 to September 1985, the number of teachers remained the same while the number of students grew to 178.

### The plan

Already in 1982 the teachers and board began to make plans to deal with this tremendous growth. It became evident that the existing buildings could not have their space expanded. There were also no existing buildings that could be purchased that suited our needs. In 1984, the membership gave the board the mandate to look for a property in Fergus on which to construct a building that could hold all the grades. Fergus was selected because it was central to supporting churches in Guelph and Orangeville and the cost of land was cheaper.

As was indicated in the introduction, a 4 ha parcel was purchased. At the present time, fund raising drives are underway as the design of the school reaches completion. The school board is faced with a difficult decision. How much can they build by September 1986? Ideally they wish to construct a building with the following features:

- a six classroom elementary wing for Grades 1 to 6
- a six room high school wing that would include specialized science, typing-computer and woodworking-drafting-power mechanics rooms
- separating the two wings are shared



### I Corinthians 2:7-9

*But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him."*

facilities to include a gymnasium, library, offices, kitchen and staff room

— the design would allow for the future addition of Grades 11 and 12 and kindergarten.

The total cost of this building: approximately \$1,200,000. Realizing that the combined membership from Fergus and Guelph and some support from Orangeville cannot raise all this money, the board has to be prepared to construct this building in stages. While this plan will reduce the amount of money required for the initial construction, it has several disadvantages.

1. Each year that parts of the plan are deferred, the costs begin to go up.

2. It is more expensive building in stages.

3. Each new stage would require another fund raising drive that would make it difficult for the membership.

4. One of the existing two schools would have to be maintained with the result of continued high transportation costs, crowded conditions, inadequate facilities, and high maintenance costs of an old building.

### The need

We have seen that the Lord has richly blessed the growth of the schools operated by the Canadian Reformed School Society of Fergus/Guelph. With increased support from Orangeville and increased

growth in the churches, the number of students will continue to expand at a steady rate. Already in 1976 the school board wanted to purchase a new property on which to construct a school building housing Grades 1 to 10. In 1986, they will have a new property, but what type of school will they be able to complete? Faced with no government funding and a low re-sale value on the two old existing school buildings, the membership would have to take on a financial commitment that would be very difficult for them to bear alone. In Ontario, there is only one other Canadian Reformed high school, but Guido de Brès is over an hour's drive away, with no direct public transportation links.

Will the membership be able to fulfill their drive to complete a school that can house all existing grades under one roof? Will they be able to provide a full high school for the parents living in the Fergus-Guelph-Orangeville area? Your financial assistance will go a long way in helping your brothers and sisters fulfill their mandate to instruct their children in a Reformed and covenantal school.

On behalf of the Board  
J.G. VAN DOOREN

For further information, contact: The Canadian Reformed School Society of Fergus, Guelph and District Inc., Leonard Lodder, Secretary, 272 Auden Road, Guelph, ON N1E 6S3, phone (519) 821-0623.



# Attestations

The Consistory of the \_\_\_\_\_  
declares that \_\_\_\_\_  
born \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_  
born \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
are (is) admitted to the Lord's Supper and, as far as is known, are (is) sound in doctrine and of irreproachable conduct.  
The Consistory recommends the above-mentioned brother and sister to the Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
and requests the Overseers to undertake the Christian supervision of \_\_\_\_\_  
Holy Sacraments and to receive \_\_\_\_\_  
Children:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A Biblical item

Time and again we notice within our churches that members feel slighted when asked to produce a valid attest from their home church when wanting to attend the Lord's Supper as guest in a sister church. There is no reason to feel that way for the issuing of attestations to travelling brothers and sisters is a practice, that is in line with the Scriptures.

There is a general remark of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:1 concerning letters of recommendation. "... Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you?"

Several commentaries on this text refer to the work of a German theologian H. Windisch who made special study of letters of recommendation in the Greek, Jewish and Christian environment. Based on this study of Windisch is what F.J. Pop and A. Plummer write in their commentaries on 2 Corinthians concerning written attestations: "Letters of this kind were commonly brought by travelling brethren as evidence that they were Christians and honest persons." (Plummer) "... strangers in the congregations were only accepted after producing such an attest." (Pop)

The Apostle Paul needed no letters of recommendation because of his apostolic office but others did need such letters. He used his authority to write letters of recommendation to the churches on behalf of others. Here follows a medley of Scripture passages where either an apostle or a church writes recommendations to sister churches so that the brothers and sisters may be received. Philemon all

The Letter of Philemon is a letter of recommendation for Onesimus to Philemon and the church at his house.

### Col. 4:7-10

Tychicus will tell you all about my affairs; he is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent him . . . .

### 2 Cor. 8:16-23

. . . Titus . . . with him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel; and not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work . . . . And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found earnest in many matters, . . . As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker in your service; and as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

### 1 Cor. 16:10-11

When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. So let no one despise him.

### Romans 16:1

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well.

## Acts 15:22ff.

The apostles, elders, with the whole church at Jerusalem sent men to Antioch as representatives . . . "to choose men and to send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth."

## Acts 18:27

And when he (Apollos) wished to cross to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him.

## 3 John vs. 12

Demetrius has testimony from every one, and from the truth itself; I testify to him too, and you know my testimony is true.

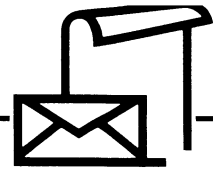
The last quote is from the little Third Epistle of John which in its entirety deals with the receiving of those who belong to the household of faith. Three persons are involved: Gaius, Diotrephes, Demetrius. Gaius has thus far shown hospitality to strangers who are brothers in the Lord. The care for travelling brothers however, is endangered by the attitude and actions of Diotrephes who refuses to receive the brethren and even puts out of the church those who do receive them. John apparently has written to the church to which Diotrephes belongs about the receiving of travelling brothers, but Diotrephes "who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge my authority." John encourages Gaius to continue to do well and not to follow the evil example of Diotrephes. At the same time John realizes that an attest is needed for those brothers who are travelling. He gives therefore an attest concerning Demetrius so that this brother might indeed be received as a brother in the Lord.

Three things are to be learned from this passage of John. First we see that it is an obligation among the Churches of Christ to receive one another's members and show hospitality to them. Compare here also Rom. 12:13 and Heb. 13:2. Second comes the Biblical condemnation of the refusal to receive such brethren. Thirdly we learn that travelling members of the churches need a recommendation in order to be received.

In the practice of the Federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches this means that we are to receive brothers and sisters who are travelling. The travelling brothers and sisters should at all times present for themselves an attest which has been issued by the elders of the Canadian Reformed Church to which they belong, or by one of its sister churches if they come from a foreign country. In our Church Order we incorporated this Biblical principle in Art. 61 which means that we have promised to issue attestations as well that we have promised to receive one another's attestations. With the "travel" season upon us it is good to remember this and to honour our promises.

J. VAN RIETSCHOTEN

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor:

It seems that I have written endless letters concerning the Church at Blue Bell, and to no avail, for it seems no one in the Canadian Reformed listens. Still, I do not tire to defend the truth, for we know that the truth set forth plainly commends us to the conscience of man in the sight of Almighty God, and that only those who are blinded will refuse to understand.

Let me say plainly: The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, both as a denomination and in its congregations, practices restricted communion. The Constitution of our church plainly states that "Such as are found to be ignorant or scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of faith, and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, may and ought to be kept from that sacrament by the power which Christ hath left in His Church, until they receive instruction, and manifest their reformation." It is the duty of the session, both as a body, and as individual elders, to enforce this regulation. Any session failing to do so is itself subject to discipline from the higher (or, in your terms, "broader") judicatory.

It is true that the way in which this injunction is enforced varies from congregation to congregation. For example, in

our congregation only those who are members of churches with which the OPC has fraternal relations may partake of the Lord's Supper without first meeting with the session to be examined, and anyone else who attempts to partake is refused participation. Other congregations enforce this rule in different ways, sometimes in ways that I do not find altogether acceptable. But again I say, *Failure to enforce the fencing of the Table is a disciplinable offence in the OPC.*

As a member of the visitation committee of our Presbytery (Southern California), I make it my practice to always inquire concerning the enforcement of this regulation, and I have been assured by every session that I have met with that they are aware of this rule and do their utmost to enforce it, and that they would most certainly refuse the Lord's Supper to anyone who sought to participate without the proper qualification and standing in the Church of Christ.

As to the Church in Blue Bell, they withdrew from the OPC before their case was adjudicated, and so there really is no way to know if they had anything worthy to complain about at all. At first, I had

some sympathy for their position, but when I realized that they did not have enough patience to teach the whole church concerning their position, but withdrew prematurely from us, I realized that theirs is a spirit of division and not a spirit of truth.

The continued insistence of the Canadian Reformed Churches to view the Blue Bell matter as if it had been decided within the OPC lends further credence to the false assumption that they left without further recourse or after the matter had been settled in their case. It had not, and now, as a result of their action, never will be (unless and until they return to the OPC).

If you have a response, or can correct me on any of these points, I will carefully consider all that you have to say. I will, however, trouble you to remind you of the warning in the Scriptures that no accusation should be brought against an elder without sufficient witness, and I would urge you to be careful when you spread these continued accusations against the practices of the OPC.

Yours in Christ,  
STEVE LARSON, pastor

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Dear Busy Beavers,

Are you going on holidays?

Will you be in the car for a long time?

Busy Beaver *Erica Moesker* has a game for you to play to help pass the time.

It is called: My Father owns a store.

Choose someone to be "It." "It" says, "My father owns a grocery store and he sells something beginning with a "B." He may be thinking of butter or bread.

Each of the players gets one guess. If they do not guess the right answer "It" starts over again. He says, "My father owns a grocery store and he sells something beginning with a "C." He may be thinking of carrots. Everyone gets another guess.

The person who guesses the right answer is the new "It."

Busy Beaver *Caroline Wubs* suggests this to keep busy in the car:

"Count red, green, yellow or black cars. The person who saw the most cars wins."

This Busy Beaver also suggests you bring your clipboard and play X's and O's!

Two more games to play while travelling. They are from Busy Beaver *Rita Wubs*. She writes:

"You can do pantomimes.

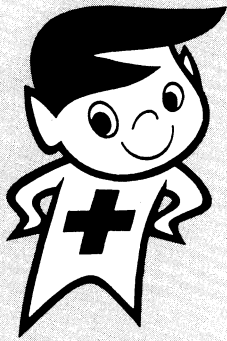
For example one person pretends to be peeling potatoes. He/she is not allowed to say that. The other people have to guess.

Another game. One person says (mouthing the words) three words. The other people have to guess what the person is saying."

If you enjoy these games in the car, Busy Beaver, let us know.

And if you have other games you like, please share them with us!

## Walter Safety...



### Swimming after dark

At the time of day  
When the evening turns grey  
And the sun goes to sleep out of sight.  
When the air becomes coolish  
It's terribly foolish  
To swim in the dark of night.  
If the water gets ruffled  
Your voice will get muffled  
By the waves rolling right past your head.  
If you can't see around you  
And no one has found you  
You will wish you were home  
Safe in bed!

Here are some tips from Walter Safety!

- Always swim at supervised areas.
- Be sure to swim with at least two other people.
- Swim in daylight when you can see and be seen.
- When boating, always wear a government approved life jacket.
- React quickly if someone stops breathing; learn and practice rescue breathing.

## From the Mailbox



Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Jodie Bowman*. We are happy to have you join us. How is your rabbit doing? And where are you going camping?

Bye for now, Jodie.

Welcome to the Club, *Christina Vandervelde*. Thank you for your pretty letter. Will you write and tell us about your dog and what you are doing to keep busy during the holidays, Christina?

Thank you for a very neat letter *Alex Sikkema*. What will you be doing now that school is out? Look for our Big Summer Contest, all right, Alex? Write again soon!

Hello *Shanna Bartels*. It's nice to hear from you again. Thank you for sharing the riddles. What do you like best about summer, Shanna? Bye for now.

### RIDDLES FOR YOU

from Busy Beaver *Shanna Bartels*

1. Why can't a bicycle stand up?
2. Why does a cow wear a bell?
3. What goes up but never comes down?
4. On what side of the house does a tree grow best?
5. What kind of keys cannot open doors?
6. Why is the letter "A" like a flower?
7. What two things can you never eat for breakfast?

(Answers below)

## Quiz Time!

Remember from last time, Busy Beavers, how we  
FILL IN THE FIRST PART

1. \_\_\_\_\_ the tanner
2. \_\_\_\_\_, Meshach and Abed-nego
3. \_\_\_\_\_ of Refuge
4. \_\_\_\_\_ and Gomorrah
5. \_\_\_\_\_ and hedges
6. \_\_\_\_\_, hope and love
7. \_\_\_\_\_ of Endor
8. \_\_\_\_\_ the coppersmith

9. \_\_\_\_\_ and Sidon
10. \_\_\_\_\_ the Moabites
11. \_\_\_\_\_ the Apostle
12. \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel
13. \_\_\_\_\_ and honey

### CODE QUIZ

by Busy Beaver *Alwin Plug*

3 - Y	9 - N						
15 - L	10 - R	16	10	17	1	16	4 9
2 - O	1 - S						
20 - D	17 - U	7	2	20	2	9	15 3
4 - I	16 - T						
7 - G							

### FLOWER CODE

by Busy Beaver *Lisa DeHaas*

3 4 6 12 5 2 6 7 1 4

G - 7	A - 6
O - 1	P - 12
S - 3	D - 5
N - 4	R - 2

### ANIMAL WORD SEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Carl DeBoer*

O	O	R	A	G	N	A	K	B	bird
T	A	O	T	C	A	T	S	Q	cat
N	Z	L	T	U	E	V	F	E	dog
A	L	T	E	F	B	I	R	D	elephant
H	L	H	I	J	M	O	R	O	kangaroo
P	O	N	S	G	W	A	E	G	lion
E	M	O	N	K	E	Y	I	M	monkey
L	Q	I	W	U	Y	R	C	G	owl
E	K	L	O	L	S	U	W	S	tiger

Answers:

*Fill in the First Part*  
11. Paul 12. the children 13. milk  
1. Simon 2. Shadrach 3. Cities 4. Sodom 5. the high-ways 6. faith 7. the witch 8. Alexander 9. Tyre 10. Ruth and supper  
*Riddles for You*  
1. It is a two-tired 2. Its horns don't work! 3. your age 4. the outside 5. monkeys 6. A "B" comes after it 7. lunch

Here's hoping you enjoyed the quizzes!

Look for our Big Summer Contest next time, Busy Beavers!  
Bye for now.

With love from  
Aunt Betty

You know my address:

*Aunt Betty*  
*clo Clarion*  
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