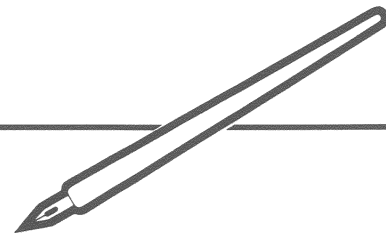




Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 36, No. 19 September 25, 1987



Is unborn life human?

The abortion issue in Canada is going to the Supreme Court. On July 29, 1987, this court gave the well-known Manitoban, Mr. Joseph Borowski, leave to challenge a Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruling of April 30 that the constitutional guarantee of the right to life does not apply to the unborn. Mr. Borowski contends that unborn children are protected by the constitutional guarantee that every individual has the right to life.

So a key question that will be placed before the Court appears to be whether the unborn are to be considered human and are therefore to be protected by the constitutional guarantee that every individual has the right to life. Pro-abortion groups deny this.

Life before birth

Without any doubt, readers of *Clarion* do not need to be convinced of the fact that the Bible teaches that the unborn life is human life that deserves legal protection. Passages like Psalm 139 come to mind. Did David not see *himself* as being in the womb of his mother when he confessed:

“For Thou didst form my inward parts,
Thou didst knit *me* together in my mother’s womb.
I praise Thee, for Thou art fearful and wonderful.
Wonderful are Thy works! Thou knowest me right well;
my frame was not hidden from Thee,
when *I* was being made in secret,
intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.” (vv. 13-15)

This personal identity started from the moment of conception, as is also clear from Psalm 51:5 “. . . in sin did my mother conceive *me*.” (See also Job 10:8-11.) Life in the womb before birth is described as “children” (Gen. 25:22; Luke 1:41) — think also of the expression “to be with child.” More passages could be given but that is not the object of this article.

What about Exodus 21:22-25?

My purpose is to point out that in the battle surrounding abortion, the Bible is sometimes referred to in order to support the position that the unborn are less than human. The passage in question is Exodus 21:22-25. Is this a justified use of Scripture? Let us first listen to a translation that can be interpreted to favour a pro-abortion position, and listen to some conclusions. (Needless to say, not all those who may favour a translation that leaves itself open for pro-abortion interpretation necessarily draw the same conclusions.)

In the Revised Standard Version we read Exodus 21:22-25 as follows: “When men strive together and hurt a woman with child, so that there is a miscarriage [Lit. “and her children go out” c.v.d.], and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt her shall be fined, according as the woman’s husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.” The gist of this passage, according to this translation, has been put this way. Since the mishap involving the woman “only” results in a miscarriage and no further harm is done, a fine will suffice. If however the woman herself is harmed, then

the rule of life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth shall apply. The conclusion has therefore been drawn that the life of the unborn is less than human since for that death a penalty which is far less is demanded. This conclusion is used by pro-abortionists to argue for liberal abortion laws. According to them, abortion was and therefore still is permissible because God does not regard the life within the womb as a human being no matter how far the pregnancy has gone.

What the text says

Since the Revised Standard Version is a widely used translation and since the interpretation of the passage as given also has many adherents, the words of J.W. Cottrell in his important article, “Abortion and the Mosaic Law” (*Christianity Today*, March 16, 1973) bear repeating. “There is absolutely no linguistic justification for translating verse 22 to refer to a miscarriage,” (p. 8). Probably the reference to miscarriage in Bible translations has been influenced by the fact that laws which legislate a fine for miscarriages due to an injury inflicted by someone else were well-known in the ancient Near East, including the time roughly contemporary with Moses.¹ However, there is no need to turn to help from extra-Biblical sources in translating Exodus 21:22 because there are no special linguistic difficulties. What the Revised Standard Version translates “so that there is a miscarriage” is literally “so that her children come out.” The normal words for “child” and “going/coming out” are used. The plural “children” can be interpreted as denoting an indefinite singular. The verb is used elsewhere of a child coming out of the womb in birth (e.g., Gen. 25:25f.; Job 1:21; Jer. 1:5). Never does the word for “going/coming out” refer to a miscarriage unless this is specifically specified (e.g., Num. 12:12). Further there is a special word in Hebrew for miscarriage, but it is not used in Ex. 21:22. It is found, e.g., in Exodus 23:26, “none will miscarry or be barren in your land.” (Also see, e.g., Hos. 9:14.)

The New International Version of Exodus 21:22f. accurately conveys the meaning. “If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye . . .” This rendition is in line with the traditional understanding of this passage as seen in the notes to the Dutch Statenvertaling, Calvin, C.F. Keil, and others.

Two things can be pointed out. In the first place, the fine is imposed when there is no serious physical harm to either the mother or child. It has been argued that it makes no sense to impose a fine when all is well (and therefore the fine must refer to the death of the unborn child). However, it can be answered that “the fine presumably is imposed because of the danger to which mother and child are exposed and the parents’ distress in connection with the unnaturally premature birth” (Cottrell, *op.cit.*). In other words, the husband is allowed to sue his wife’s attacker and the judges will see to it that the fine is reasonable.

In the second place, the rule “life for life” applies equally

to the mother as well as to her unborn child. "If there is a serious injury [that is to either the child or mother, c.v.d.], you are to take life for life, eye for eye" etc. If the mother dies, so shall the guilty party; but also if the child dies. The life of the unborn is valued just as highly as that of the mother in this legislation. In today's context the conclusion is unavoidable. This passage in Scripture shows that abortion is murder.

The state of our society

The fact that the abortion issue needs to be heard by the Supreme Court is an indication of how far our society's morals have decayed. Abortion, and even illegal abortions, have become very commonplace. Abortion was so abhorrent even to the pagan ancient Near East that the Lord did not deem it necessary to specifically prohibit abortion in the laws He gave to Moses. He then peoples like Assyria felt a strong repugnance towards aborting

the life of the unborn. According to Middle-Assyrian law (ca. 1450-1250 B.C.) a woman guilty of aborting her unborn was condemned to be impaled on stakes and not to be buried. Even if she died in the process of committing the abortion, she still was to be impaled and denied burial. She was "hung up in shame as an expression of the community's" repudiation of such an abomination. It is hard to imagine a more damning commentary on what is taking place in enlightened America [or Canada c.v.d.] today than that provided by this legal witness out of the conscience of benighted ancient paganism!"²

C. VAN DAM

¹A compilation of such laws can be found in M. Stol, *Zwangerschap en Geboorte bij de Babyloniërs en in de Bijbel* (1983) 13f.

²M.G. Kline in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 22 (1977) 201. For a modern translation of this legislation see H.W.F. Saggis, *The Greatness that was Babylon* (1962) 213 (no. 53).

The Heidelberg Catechism: an historical look¹

The setting

On the banks of the Neckar River in Germany there lies an old city that is full of charm and character. Few who walk its streets, adorned with antiquated buildings and old churches, or who travel the surrounding countryside of rolling hills and vineyards, come away indifferent to its spell. It is blessed with a moderate climate that includes mild winters and tempered summers. It is endowed with a center of learning that is in many ways the envy of Europe.

Yet this city is noted not just for its charm, but also for its history. It has witnessed the rise and fall of empires, both ancient and modern. It has experienced the tumult of war with its bitterness of defeat and its joy of victory. It has known eminent people: scholars, princes, merchants, craftsmen. Truly, over the centuries this city has been party to many great occasions and events.

Which one was the greatest? No doubt many could debate that long and furiously, but for some no debate is necessary because they identify this city immediately with something that was written there over 400 years ago. What in particular? Was it a political manifesto, a philosophical treatise, an economic program? No, it was none of these; it was a religious work. Was it long and elaborate, filling hundreds of pages? No, it was rather brief and to the point. Was it deep and intellectual? No, it was easy to read, and for many, easy to understand. What was it? It was a catechism, a little booklet filled with all kinds of questions and answers. That does not sound like much. That hard-

ly qualifies in the eyes of the world as a momentous event, or as something exceptional. But it was. It made that city famous throughout the world. And the name of that city? It is Heidelberg.

In the minds of many the Heidelberg Catechism, for that is the title of this little booklet, is still today this city's chief claim to fame. But you may wonder about that. Why was this Catechism written? By whom was it written? When was it written? Why is it famous? To answer all of these questions and more, we need to go back, far back into history, all the way back to the sixteenth century.

The Reformation comes to Heidelberg

In the year 1544 Frederick II became the new ruler of that German mini-state called the Palatinate with its capital called Heidelberg. It was a tumultuous time. For over twenty years already, great religious debates had been echoing throughout the length and breadth of Europe. A monk by the name of Martin Luther had seriously disturbed the peace by challenging the mighty power of Rome. Like others before him, but now with much more effect, he had called the Pope to account for the doctrine and life of the Church. Far and wide his ringing cry of *sola scriptura* (by Scripture alone), *sola gratia* (by grace alone) and *sola fide* (by faith alone) could be heard.

It was in such a time that kings and kingdoms had to make great decisions. Would they continue to align themselves behind the Church of Rome or would they choose for the cause of Reformation? In

the Palatinate the matter hung in the balance for some years. But with the arrival of the new elector, Frederick II, the scales soon tipped in favour of Reformation. In the years 1545 and 1546 the first Reformation decrees were issued.¹

Still, it would be wrong to ascribe these changes to the forceful leadership of Frederick II, for all accounts seems to indicate that he was of the extremely cautious variety. It would be more accurate to say that Frederick was to some extent overtaken in these events by others. Reform was hastened because of the influence of Luther's chief associate, Melancthon, because of the pressure brought to bear by the Elector's nephew, Otto Henry, and because of the leanings of the people.²

Of these three it would appear that the influence of Otto Henry was the most pervasive. Earlier he had lived at Neustadt and ruled over a small principality. In 1529 he had been converted to the Protestant cause and the following year he had helped form the Smalkald League, this being an alliance of princes who were determined to resist the attempts of the Emperor Charles V to crush the cause of Reformation. For his trouble, Otto Henry was deposed as a ruler in the Holy Roman Empire. He moved to Heidelberg and there he continued to espouse his cause.

The result of his activities, as well as those of others, caused the Palatinate, and then especially its chief city, Heidelberg, to have a change of heart. On Christmas Day, 1545, the Lord's Supper was administered for the first time in a Protestant worship service in the chapel of Heidelberg Castle. Among the celebrants were Frederick II and his family. Shortly there-

after, on January 3, 1546, this service was repeated in the main church of Heidelberg, the Church of the Holy Spirit. The Reformation had officially come to Heidelberg!

Still, this coming was precarious, to say the least. All kinds of dangers loomed on the horizon. Conflicts between the supporters of Rome and Luther were the order of the day. On April 25, 1547, the Smalkald League, under the leadership of Elector John Frederick of Saxony, was defeated at the battle of Muhlberg. A number of Protestant electors were dethroned. As well, the forms of worship as prescribed by Rome were restored in an edict of the Emperor called the Catholic Interim of 1548.

How did Frederick II and his kingdom fare? On the whole he managed to weather the storm. Because of his cautiousness he had not supported the Smalkald League and that saved his electorship. Nevertheless, he left no doubts as to where his sympathies resided. When the mass was celebrated again in the Church of the Holy Spirit, Frederick II marched out. He remained committed to the cause of the Reformation and he decided to wait out the Emperor.

It turned out to be a wise choice, for seven years later, in 1555, the Catholic Interim was lifted and replaced by the Peace of Augsburg. It established the principle of freedom of religion in the Empire. Yet it was not complete freedom, for it was qualified by the condition *cuius regio, eius religio* (whose the reign, his the religion). This meant that if the prince was Roman Catholic, his domain would be Roman Catholic too. Still, in the case of Frederick II, whose loyalties were clearly on the side of Protestantism, it meant that in the Palatinate Protestantism became the recognized religion. The mass was abolished and the Protestant form of worship returned. In addition, Frederick II opened wide the doors of his kingdom to Protestants from other lands who were suffering from persecution. From England, France, and Holland, they came to live and worship freely.

A period of consolidation

Although Frederick II lived to see the dawning of this new era of religious freedom, he did not live long enough to consolidate the new gains of this era. On February 26, 1556, he died and was succeeded by his nephew Otto Henry. With the ascension of Otto Henry to the throne of the Palatinate, the period of cautious Protestantism came to an end. He soon passed an edict rejecting all papal errors and proclaiming evangelical freedom. In the Church of the Holy Spirit he had all of the images removed, with the exception of one crucifix. He also decided to assess the state of the Reformation in the churches and to that end he brought together a visita-

tion team of three men: Michael Diller, the court preacher; Henry Stoll, the pastor of the St. Peter's Church in Heidelberg; Johannes Marbach, a theologian from Strasbourg.

These men spent seven weeks investigating the life of the churches, after which they handed in their report. It was not very encouraging. It stated that the religious instruction of the youth was either totally lacking or much neglected. It concluded that the sacraments were held in rather low esteem. It went on at length about the moral indifference of the populace. It discovered a great deal of ignorance concerning the Word of God and its teaching. In short, the religious state of affairs in the Palatinate was far from healthy.

In response to this report Otto Henry decided that a number of initiatives were required. In the area of church government he appointed his three church visitors to draw up a Church Order which would give some structure to the life of the churches. The product that finally came from their hands called for a federated church consisting of a number of congregations but under the oversight of one consistory.

In the area of education, he approved the use of the Wurttemberg Catechism. It was a brief and rather elementary work consisting of 26 questions and answers, mostly on the sacraments. Otto Henry knew the shortcomings of this Catechism, but he believed that a start had to be made somewhere.

In the area of liturgy, he also made a number of changes. He promoted one of the least liturgical types of Lutheran worship. He curtailed the use of the church year and insisted that the clergy be called ministers, not priests. He discouraged the use of vestments and emphasized the need for more preaching and instruction. He had the church purged of images, side altars, crucifixes, and the other trappings of Roman Catholicism.

Finally, in the area of theological education Otto Henry also took some action. He established the *Collegium Sapientiae* (School of Learning), a precursor to the modern day theological seminary. Realizing that also in this area advise was needed, he invited Melancthon to Heidelberg in the fall of 1577. The reformer's advice, which Otto Henry accepted, seemed to have gone in the direction of openness and tolerance to all the shades of Protestant theology, even the Reformed. In 1557 the Elector began to appoint a rather diverse faculty for his college. He recruited Henry Stoll and Michael Diller who were Melancthonians; Peter Bocquin, who was a French Calvinist;³ Thielemann Heshshuss, a staunch Lutheran; Thomas Erastus,⁴ who at least on the Lord's Supper took a Zwinglian position. By all accounts it was a rath-

er unique and curious collection of theologians, an experiment in ecumenical Protestantism.

Mention should also be made of the fact that Otto Henry donated his own magnificent library of 3500 volumes to this new College. It was officially dedicated on January 19, 1559 and opened with an enrollment of 60 students.

— to be continued

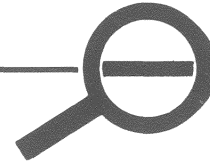
J. VISSCHER

¹Bard Thompson et al, *Essays in the Heidelberg Catechism* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1963), p. 9.

²George W. Richards, *The Heidelberg Catechism: Historical and Doctrinal Studies* (Philadelphia: Publication and Sunday School Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1913), p. 36. Richards stresses that the Reformation in the Palatinate was under the influence of Melancthon right from the very beginning. The Augsburg Confession as accepted by the Palatinate Church was the Confession of 1540 altered by Melancthon. This leads Richards to the conclusion that the Lutheranism of the Palatinate was of "a mild and conciliatory type."

Bard Thomspson, pp. 11ff., states that Melancthon deviated from the so-called Lutheran orthodoxy at two points of doctrine: free will and the Lord's Supper. "With reference to man's freedom, he adhered closely at first to Luther's early opinion. In the *Loci Communes* of 1521 Melancthon declared: 'Seeing that all things which happen, happen necessarily according to divine predestination, there is no freedom.' But he was deeply affected by Erasmus' polemic against Luther in the book *De Libero Arbitrio* of 1524; and subsequently he began to insist that the work of conversion must be attributed to three 'connected causes' (*copulationem causarum*): the Holy Spirit as the primary agent, the Word of God as the instrumental agent, and the human will which consents to this action and freely yields to it Of far greater importance to the turn of events in the Palatinate was Melancthon's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, which he attained only after years of worry and reflection. Already by 1528 he entertained serious doubts about Luther's doctrine, particularly Luther's treatment of ubiquity and the Real Presence. Yet in all matters of uncertain exegesis, Melancthon adhered to the testimony of the ancient Fathers, which appeared to sustain Luther in this instance Later in 1530, however, a treatise by John Oecolampadius convinced him that the Fathers did not in fact support Luther By 1534, his thought having crystallized, Melancthon concurred generally with the doctrine of the Spiritual Real Presence which John Calvin and Martin Bucer also affirmed."

³James I. Good, *The Heidelberg Catechism In Its Newest Light* (Philadelphia: Publication and Sunday School Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1914), pp. 125-126. Bocquin had succeeded Calvin at Strasbourg. In March of 1557 he came to Heidelberg and lectured for a year on a trial basis. The following year he received a permanent appointment. Already years before the arrival of Olevianus and Ursinus he was busy championing the Reformed cause in the Palatinate.



The United Church of Canada

In the July/August issue of *Faith Today*, Canada's Evangelical Newsfeature Magazine, much attention was paid to the United Church of Canada (UCC). Since there is in most Canadian towns and cities a "United Church" and not everyone of our readers really knows much about the UCC, I thought it good to take some material from *Faith Today*.

The United Church of Canada is the result of a very significant merger in 1925 of three main church groups in Canada: the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists. The merger was celebrated at a grand communion service on June 10, 1925, where the Rev. Peter Rose (professor of Practical Theology at Wesleyan College in Montreal), a Methodist, marked the historic occasion by delivering a sermon on Ephesians 1:22 and 23, "the church, which is His body." This choice of text shows how seriously the merger was taken by the participants.

There were also those who disagreed vehemently. A great number of Presbyterians (at least one third) opposed the merger, and the prime spokesman of these opponents, Dr. Ephraim Scott, denounced the union as "our country's greatest national crime."

So there is still today controversy about the United Church of Canada. Yet it is the largest Protestant church body in our country, and is recognized widely by the Canadian Press as the spokesman for mainstream Canadian Christians. Whenever a comment is sought on major happenings, the press always approaches the archbishops and the United Church moderator. The press never interviews the local Canadian Reformed pastor.

Here are some current statistics. The membership of the United Church of Canada in 1985 was 881,314, with an estimated 2,199,968 "persons under pastoral care." This is, however, a significant decline from the sixties when the membership counted well over one million. The grand total of the United Church budget in 1985 amounted over 233 million dollars!

The question might be asked why an *evangelical* magazine like *Faith Today* would devote space to an undoubtedly modern-liberal church like the UCC. The answer is given as follows:

I suspect some of our readers, on seeing our cover this issue, may question why a *mainline* denomination should be featured in an *evangelical* publication.

On the other hand, we're sometimes asked why we seem to exclude the United Church from our pages.

That's a problem with labels (though they have their uses). We tend to put denominations into slots of "evangelical" or "mainline" and heaven forbid there should be any fuzziness of the line separating "them" and "us."

Classifying is not the point of considering the United Church of Canada in this issue; we are not out to examine whether or not it fits the evangelical label, whether it is "one of us" (which we evangelicals admittedly get rather exclusive about sometimes).

Even if we wanted to and if labeling were important, I don't think it would be possible. The United Church isn't easily classified.

If there were a fence between evan-

gelical and non-evangelical and someone wanted to put the United Church on one side or the other, I envision a lot of exercise in climbing fences: Look at the roots, go to side A; consider some of the theological or social positions it has endorsed, move to side B; get to know United Church member X and clamber back over to side A; visit church Y and hop back to side B.

Whether one agrees with the United Church of Canada or deplores it, we can't deny that the denomination has been a prominent figure in the Canadian church scene.

The United Church, like most other churches everywhere, is undergoing much change. From the article, "Passages of the United Church of Canada, we take the following.

Last summer, at its 31st General Council, the United Church of Canada (UCC) made headlines on issues of inclusive language and ordination of self-declared homosexuals. Such debate probably took



Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, MB

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Geertsema
Co-Editors: K. Deddens, J. DeJong,
Cl. Stam, C. VanDam and W.W.J. VanOene

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
41 Amberly Boulevard
Ancaster, ON, Canada L9G 3R9

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
One Beghin Avenue
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5
Phone: (204) 663-9000

SUBSCRIPTION RATES	Regular	Air
FOR 1987	Mail	Mail
Canada	\$24.00	\$42.00
U.S.A. U.S. Funds	\$25.75	\$40.00
International	\$34.50	\$57.50

Advertisements: \$5.00 per column inch
Second class mail registration number 1025
ISSN 0383-0438

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial — Is unborn life human? — C. van Dam	406
The Heidelberg Catechism: an historical look — J. Visscher	407
Press Review — The United Church of Canada — Cl. Stam	409
A minister in Vernon — C. Bouwman	411
School Crossing — Computers in our schools — T.M.P. VanderVen	413
Graduation '87 — Immanuel Christian School, Winnipeg — D. Lodder	414
Institution — Grand Valley, ON — J. W. Jonker	416
Patrimony Profile ⁴⁸ — W.W.J. VanOene	417
Ray of Sunshine — Mrs. J. Mulder	419
Book Review . . . and we escaped . . . en wij zijn ontkomen — J. Geertsema	420
Letter to the Editorial Committee — R.N. Gleason Editorial comment — J. Geertsema	421
Press Release	422
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	422

no one by surprise. Controversy is not new to this denomination which has been a prominent force in Canadian Protestantism.

Loyal UCC members would regard their church as a progressive exponent of a faith that comes to grips with the complexities of modern life. They see it as combining the best of the Christian tradition with an openness to all truth.

But to many Canadian evangelicals, both outside the denomination and within it, mention of the United Church brings no such positive vibrations. On the contrary, they see it as an embodiment of religious compromise.

However one views it, the United Church is a force in Canada's religious make-up that cannot be ignored or dismissed. Historically, her theology, ideas and leaders have helped shape this land.

Statistics demonstrate that the UCC is an imposing presence in Canadian life. Most communities in English Canada have a United Church congregation and the 1981 census showed that the UCC has the largest Protestant following in seven of the ten provinces. A total of 16 percent of Canadians claimed UCC affiliation, amounting to 30 percent of all non-Catholics in Canada.

Though Canada has no state church, in the minds of many Protestants, the United Church of Canada fills that role.

Today, that imposing force is changing — going through, as it were, a mid-life crisis. Internal struggles, declining membership and controversy demonstrate the evolution taking place.

Many evangelicals outside this mainline denomination are inquisitive about this transition. What elements made the United Church the power it was? What forces are bringing about change? What is the United Church becoming? What influence will those struggles have on the broader scene? These are important questions for the Canadian church.

There is within the United Church, of course, an evangelical *movement* (otherwise *Faith Today* would not bother with the UCC) called "The United Church Renewal Fellowship" which appeared in 1965. We read the following about this movement.

A Sunday School curriculum may have been an unlikely catalyst that prompted the emergence in 1965 of the United Church Renewal Fellowship — a movement within the denomination to promote spiritual renewal and to protest perceived biblical and theological drift.

The appearance of that new curriculum brought a deluge of protest from within and outside the denomination, charging that it diluted or denied biblical teachings.

Some members withdrew from the denomination at that time to seek membership in other churches where they

found convictions with which they concurred. Other ministers and members contended that there was a need for loyal United Church people to remain within the denomination and seek to summon it back to its evangelical moorings.

The UCRF emerged out of that concern. Its doctrinal statement is the Basis of Union on which the United Church was founded.

In the 32 years since its inception, the UCRF has sought to rally evangelical sentiment within the church and to organize regional groups to provide fellowship for those who share its convictions and concerns.

The UCRF now has more than 3300 members from every province. They are to be found in 60 regional chapters; and more chapters are being formed as UC members become conscious of the movement. An additional 2,000 people subscribe to *The Small Voice*, the quarterly UCRF publication.

Executive director John Tweedie estimates there are about 215 UC clergy in the movement.

"There has been a marked increase over the past three years in the number of ministers joining our ranks," he states.

He identifies two recent issues that contributed to the intensified interest — the proposal to ordain practising homosexuals and the adoption of inclusive language.

"For a good number, those were the last straws," he said.

It is because of the existence of this Renewal Fellowship in the UCC that many "evangelicals" stay in the United Church. One of them explains it as follows.

I am a member of the United Church because that struggling congregation asked my husband and me to come — as laypeople — and be one with them, to help them hear and obey God's voice. Over the past dozen or so years, we've watched in awe as the Spirit of God has called a people of God into being, a church into new life. And we have realized that as long as God's Spirit is pleased to work within the United Church, there is no reason why we should not be pleased to serve there.

Within this great, sprawling, brawling denomination, I find myself part of a plucky band of evangelicals, many of whom identify themselves with the United Church Renewal Fellowship, a movement within the denomination which prays and works to call the church as a whole back to its historic evangelical roots. The UCRF views itself as an interim structure, praying that as the denomination is renewed, the Renewal Fellowship as an organization may no longer be needed. Meanwhile, it functions to "strengthen feeble arms and weak knees." It reminds those of us who sometimes feel, "I, even I alone am left," that there is yet a faithful remnant within the United Church, and that

God has a long history of dealing kindly with faithful remnants.

Others do not share the same opinion and have left the United Church. Dr. J. Berkeley Reynolds, a retired minister in Ontario, motivates his leaving as follows.

Usually people leave a church over its doctrine or its polity. In my case, it would be more correct to say the United Church left me, as I was placed on the "Discontinued Service List."

In one sense the separation was political in that what brought it about was a three-year struggle with the presbytery about relocating the congregation. Yet the whole controversy had its roots in theology in that I was labeled an evangelical and there was no fair hearing for an evangelical.

When the West Ellesmere United Church, where I was the minister, outgrew its facilities, we applied to the presbytery (the regional body that oversees churches within its zone) for approval to relocate. Initially we received a good deal of support, but a presbytery commission established to consider the proposal voted no, saying that West Ellesmere was an "evangelical conservative congregation."

I hoped the church I had served so long would be more respectful of theological positions. I felt sure the church would listen, by sympathetic. I thought surely the church that proclaimed generosity to all flavors of theology, the church that promoted ecumenicity, the church that proclaimed liberality, would make room for a strong evangelical ministry in Toronto.

I discovered that in spite of its proclamations of holding in tension a variety of theological opinions, the mosaic cracked at the point of evangelicalism.

The United Church of Canada still wants to be the embodiment of mainline Canadian Protestantism. The motto always was and is "A Canadian church for all Canadians." Today, many of its "clergy" are far ahead of the "laity." It seems to be governed by a radical-liberal wing which is more occupied with social and political issues than with the true preaching of the gospel. The church stands in the forefront of support for liberation movements, gay rights, and feminism.

The cause lies in the *beginning* of this church. The Union of 1925 has been a major factor in effectively nullifying any progress of truly Reformed thinking in Canada and was an overwhelming victory for *Arminian theology*. And it is the Arminian-Wesleyan belief in the power of human reason that has led to the breakthrough of radical liberalism in this church. This is a church which has fully abandoned the Word of God.

The press should find another spokesman for Canadian Christians.

CL. STAM

A minister in Vernon

Christ sends His messengers to whom He wills and when He wills

April 26, 1987: Rev. C. Van Spronsen was installed in Vernon, B.C., as minister of the Word of God. The occasion is sufficiently important that the membership of the Canadian Reformed Churches pause to marvel with the house congregation in the Okanagan Valley at the grace of God displayed in this event.

The history of the continuing church-gathering work of Jesus Christ as exhibited in the Okanagan Valley is unique within our Federation. Some six years ago, three Canadian Reformed families approached Classis Pacific with the request to be recognized as a house congregation. Since no church could yet be instituted in the Okanagan, these families and individuals were assigned by classis to the care of the consistory of the church at Chilliwack (according to Art. 41, CO).

Exercising proper supervision over the membership residing in the Okanagan Valley was for the consistory no small challenge. The sheer distance was prohibitive: from Chilliwack to Vernon/Kelowna was at that time at least a 5½ hour drive. Besides, the consistory could at that time find no one in the house congregation who could serve as office bearer. In fact, although the total membership in the Okanagan Valley was scarcely 10% of the membership in Chilliwack, the consistory spent considerably more than 10% of its time dealing with matters pertaining to the house congregation in the Okanagan Valley. It requires no apology to state that the consistory was itself not at all optimistic about the future of the house congregation.

My purpose in recounting this data from the past is not to slight the brotherhood in the Okanagan. My purpose instead is to give the readers of Clarion some perception of what — humanly speaking — the potential of this house congregation was.

Against that background, the miracle summarized in LD 21 becomes apparent. While we laboured in such an inadequate manner from a distance of 500 kilometers, the Son of God was gathering, defending, and preserving for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true



In front of the Vernon Church after Rev. Van Spronsen's installation. From left to right: Rev. C. Bouwman, Rev. C. Van Spronsen, Elder G. Kleine-Deters

faith, a church chosen to everlasting life. As reports came back of visits made to the membership of the house congregation, the pessimism of the consistory turned to amazement. For the Lord saw to it that in the Okanagan Valley there would be not only growth in numbers; there would be great growth in faith as well.

The membership of the house congregation perceived from the beginning the need to remain Canadian Reformed; they did not join any of the local churches. The reason for this desire to remain Canadian Reformed was not a matter of simple preference or sentimentality; it was rather an awareness that the sheep of the Lord can thrive only when they hear the Voice of the Shepherd. And these sheep realized that the Voice of the Shepherd was not distinctly and clearly heard from any pulpit in town. That left them with no other option — short of moving — than to see to it that in town there would be a pulpit from which the full and complete Word of God was heard.

To this preaching of the Word of God — a preaching that by the grace of God could be complete and authoritative — people of the community were attracted.

Consequently, the consistory was confronted with the requests for membership from people living in the community. The net result is that today more than 20% of the addresses in the congregation have come from the Christian Reformed Church in Vernon. These brothers and sisters from the Christian Reformed Church had hungered for the Word, and heard and recognized here the Voice of the Shepherd. Accordingly, they followed the call of the Shepherd.

Again, this is not recorded to elevate the membership in the Okanagan. This is instead recorded because here is displayed before our eyes that the Lord God sends His Word when He wills and to whom He wills (Canons of Dort, I, 3). It was the Lord God who used the few and insignificant Reformed families in the Okanagan for His purposes. He it was who saw to it that the group that began in the Okanagan should appear small in the eyes of man. He it was who so blessed this small and fragile core that they might grow large in zeal for God's service. He it was who caused the pulpit in the Okanagan Valley to be located in Vernon, that it might there be a blessing to the community. And all of this teaches us that NO church-gathering work depends on man. Nowhere is it the quality of the persons involved that assures the gathering of the Church. Always is it Jesus Christ who uses the limited work of sinners to gather, defend and preserve those chosen to life everlasting.

Seeing this church gathering work of God makes the observer humble. From a human point of view, why ought the church to be gathered in this place? From a human point of view, why ought this small group to be such a blessing to those around it? From beginning to end, it is God's grace alone. It pleases God to use the weak, those who in the eyes of men are of no account. To these He sent His Word and Spirit so that the weak might grow and be a blessing for the kingdom of the Lord. It makes one humble. And it fills one with awe for the amazing grace of the Lord God, a grace for sinners invincible.

In the course of the years, the Lord's

church-gathering work in the Okanagan had developed to such an extent that the consistory in Chilliwack was convinced that a full-time pastor was needed; although by now an elder had been appointed in Vernon, the distance continued to make it impossible to do justice to the increasing workload.

And again, even as we watched in amazement, the Lord caused the first call extended to be accepted. So it was that on that memorable Sunday a minister of the Word could be installed in this house congregation, a minister who can labour specifically in the midst of this flock of just over 50 members. Here the Lord gives evidence that He is not about to forsake the work He had begun in the Okanagan Valley. The Son of God defends and preserves the Church that He has begun to gather.

That gives confidence for the future of the house congregation in the Okanagan Valley. The Word was not sent here in vain, nor was the Church gathered here for nought. The Lord has a task for His people in Vernon, and for that reason saw to it that a faithful Church would be gathered in this town also.

That same reality gives assurance to all God's people that the truth confessed in LD 21 is not at all antiquated. Although our age gives so much evidence that Satan vigorously pursues the Church in order to destroy it, the Son of God will not permit the evil one to triumph. Despite the sinfulness of men, God's own must be gathered into one. He is pleased to use certain sinful persons for that work.

How humbling.

And how encouraging.

Truly, who has known the mind of the Lord? From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever!

C. BOUWMAN

Inaugural sermon

Rev. Van Spronsen for his inaugural sermon chose as text Matthew 16:15-18, under the theme: "Christ will build His Church upon the foundation prepared by God." The points for the sermon were: 1. Peter's confession; 2. Christ's benediction and 3. Christ's promise.

In his introduction he brought out that although this day may be totally insignificant in the eyes of the world as far as the installation of a minister in Vernon is concerned, it nevertheless is another milestone in the coming of the Kingdom. By faith we know that it is not our work, but Christ's church-gathering work, the work He spoke about to Peter at that most important turn of events we read about in Matthew 16.

At this stage Christ enters his final

days of suffering and death here on earth and now His disciples must know who He really is, for they are going to have to continue Christ's work here on earth. Jesus comes to them with the question: "Who do you say that I am?" They have heard His words and seen His works: what did this now reveal to them? And then they come with that most wonderful profession of their faith in Jesus as the Son of God, the Christ. "You are the fulfillment of all we have been waiting for!" Their confession, by the mouth of Peter, is the whole Gospel in a nutshell.

Jesus' mission is not in vain: the Father has given faith to His chosen ones, there is a response of faith to the work of Jesus Christ. And that is why they are called blessed by the Lord: it is the work of His Father in heaven. They have been chosen by God to be part of His new creation! Chosen by grace! And upon that work of His Father in and through the disciples, Christ will gather His Church! That is how His work can and will continue even when He returns to heaven. It is the same church-gathering work which Christ also continues to do here in Vernon when people, upon hearing about the Christ, profess their God-given faith.

And then there is also the great promise that Christ will build His Church in such a way that nothing can overcome the Church. He will build His Church on this rock, on what you have become by the grace of God. A disciple has become a confessor; a follower, a worshipper. "You are Peter": that is a promise, a promise that he will be a rock by God's grace. The Church will be a building of confessing Christians, they are the building stones, used by Christ to build His Church.

Even death cannot prevail against the Church. "Prevail" does imply that there will be a struggle, but still the Church will stand. That is the sure promise we have! Christ will do it. Have a living faith in Him and be His Church.

As a minister of this small flock, Rev. Van Spronsen intends to keep that perspective before them and urges the congregation of Vernon to let themselves be guided by the chief Shepherd, to let Christ use them as building stones for His Church. "May He bless us and make us a blessing for others, to the honour of God's Name!"

Welcome evening

On Friday evening, April 24, 1987, the house congregation of the Okanagan Valley held a welcome evening for Rev. Van Spronsen and his family. The evening was attended by many visitors, many from as far away as Coaldale, Alta., and Surrey, B.C.

Most of the churches in Classis Pacific also sent delegates to the Okanagan.

With the number of people in attendance the church was filled fairly well. Br. G.K. Kleine Deters opened with Scripture reading (II Cor. 4) and prayer. He then on behalf of the membership in the Okanagan welcomed Rev. Van Spronsen and family, and our many guests. Br. Deters spoke a few words where he likened the small congregation in Vernon to that of an apple tree, which takes many years to mature before it bears an abundant crop. At this point the proceedings were turned over to Br. D. VanderLinde, the Master of Ceremonies for the evening, who led us through a program in which the congregation displayed its many talents. It started with a slide presentation that showed the history of growth and progress in the Okanagan Valley. There were many slides of church gatherings at members' homes to a more permanent location and finally to our present location at the Vernon Chapel. The slides also indicated that most of the ministers felt right at home in our midst, especially Rev. Van Spronsen, who seemed to turn up many times in our midst, in slides before the installation here.

Rev. Bouwman then spoke a few words on behalf of the church at Chilliwack, welcoming Rev. Van Spronsen as a second minister of Chilliwack. Rev. Bouwman also took the opportunity to say a few parting words to the house congregation, not only because of the arrival of Rev. Van Spronsen, but also because of his impending move to Australia.

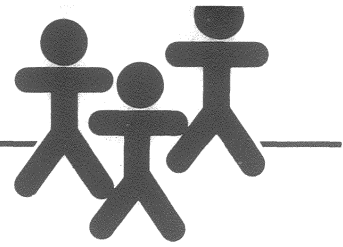
The evening was filled with many skits and congregational singing as well as songs presented by the small children. Several delegates of the sister churches in Classis Pacific spoke a few words of congratulations and welcome. Br. Van Vliet, delegate of Cloverdale, spoke his welcome in Portuguese. We trust that what he said made sense, although most of us will never know for sure.

As is the custom on such evenings, a gift was purchased for the new minister and his family. However, due to the size of this gift, it could not be presented in the church building that evening. The next morning the Van Spronsen's received a large and well-crafted picnic table to enjoy the Okanagan sunshine.

The Rev. Van Spronsen was then given the floor; he thanked everyone for the warm welcome they have received.

Rev. Bouwman was asked to close the evening with prayer, but before he did so, he remarked that he had not seen all of the male members of the congregation on stage, and promptly made them come up and sing a song. The evening was then closed, followed by coffee and refreshments which were enjoyed by all.

A grateful member
in the Okanagan Valley



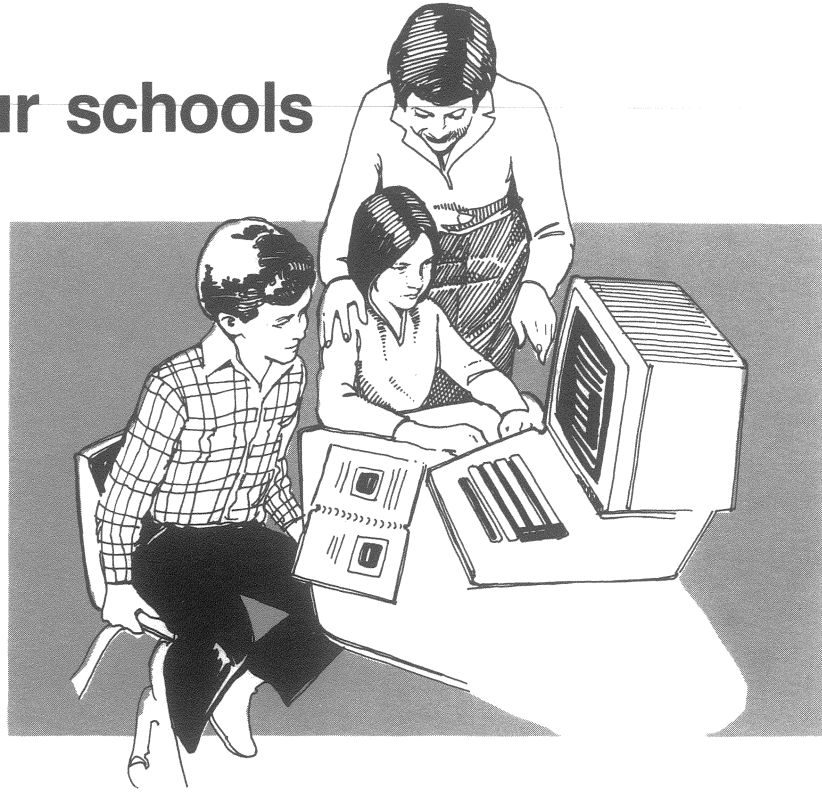
Computers in our schools

1. Some years ago there was somewhat of a frenzy about introducing computers into the school's programmes. In general, parents worried about the possibility of missed chances for their children if no computer classes were offered. The phrase 'computer literacy' was born, and with it a new subject, not only for the secondary, but also for the elementary schools. The Ontario Ministry of Education even ordered the development of a new, educational computer system special designed for its schools. Courses were developed to make teachers computer literate. Indeed, the computer was said to have the future.

Our own schools also felt a need to consider the function of the computer in the school, but (perhaps fortunately!) financial restraints forced slow going. Various schools had already done some work in this regard; some schools even managed to experiment with computers, compliments of some generous donors. Our high schools have already introduced computer literacy classes as an option for their students. However, considering the needs of our schools as a whole, a more thorough, comprehensive study was necessary.

2. The Canadian Reformed Principals' Association, Ontario decided in its meeting of March 21, 1986 to appoint a committee to investigate the matter of computers in our schools. The committee considered how the computer might be used in our schools. Four areas of possible use were identified: (a) at the school's office, where it might be used as an aid to staff and administration; (b) computer-assisted instruction in the basic skills of mathematics, spelling, and reading, as well as computer simulation in mathematics and social studies; (c) in a remedial setting, providing untiring practice opportunities and immediate feedback to the student; and (d) word processing, that is the use of the computer as an advanced typewriter.

3. Also the matter of computer literacy for all received attention. In this connection it is enlightening to take note of the comments of David Suzuki, noted scientist and columnist of *The Globe*



and Mail (February 1986). He notes how society's attitude towards computers is changing from an interest in how the computer works to what it can do. He acknowledges that computers are here to stay, but he considers that there are no reasons to force computers into the schools. He writes, "That cry for computer literacy has been, in my view, one of the biggest cons ever foisted on the school system." He discusses whether schools can anticipate the future needs of the workplace (He answers, No!); whether the computer can be used to teach children how to think through a series of problem-solving challenges (nonsense!); whether in our rush to make students computer literate we haven't forgotten to ask what we are trying to accomplish in the schools, reminding his readers of many instances of the hasty and ineffective introduction in the past of various kinds of technological marvels. He suggests that those "teachers who find a real pedagogical use for computers will overcome their temerity. If they see no use for a computer, why force them? The computer will allow us to manipulate even larger amounts of information at ever increasing speed. The challenge is to decide what "information is worth any thing and how to make

use of that information. That is best taught by teachers."

This sober, realistic voice is worth our attention.

4. The committee reported to the Principals' Association in the fall of 1986, in general cautioning a hasty and unprepared introduction of these machines. I quote from the recommendations:

Recommendations

(a) The Elementary School

- The elementary school has no direct responsibility for the teaching of computer literacy.
- The computer can be used most effectively in the administration of the elementary school.
- Although a computer can be used to advantage for enrichment and for limited skill training, there are few if any learning activities which demand the use of a computer; almost all activities can be effectively introduced in other (cheaper and simpler) ways.
- Limited exposure to computing may not be worthwhile the cost involved since students will need a great deal of time to become thoroughly familiar with the computer programmes and their applications.
- We must be careful and wary when

considering the computer as a "remedial teacher": the danger of another nice but ineffective — and certainly impersonal — device is real.

(b) At the Secondary School

— At the secondary level, basic courses in computer literacy may be offered as electives to provide students with a wide range of experiences with these machines.

— There are many ways in which the computer can be used effectively in mathematics, science, and vocational training.

— Basic introductory courses which are limited in time and application might in the end well be rather ineffective. Students need a great deal of time to become thoroughly familiar with various computer programmes and their applications.

— It is not clear whether it will be possible, or even desirable to offer opportunities for all students to become computer literate.

(c) General concerns

— Schools must carefully consider their

goals for the use of computers before purchase. Unless computers become solidly part of the educational programme of the school, their introduction might well turn out to be another white elephant. Careful planning and preparation is therefore essential.

— At the secondary level it may be assumed that teachers in charge of computer courses have been trained for this purpose. However, at the elementary level, where the computer might be used incidentally as an instructional aid, it is of critical importance that teachers are also trained in the use of computers, and their implementation in the instructional programme. The mere acquisition of a machine does not help novices to use it properly. If teachers are not able to work with computers, nor convinced that it is a useful exercise, chances of successful implementation and effective use are almost nil. Further it must be recognized that not all teachers will necessarily fall in love with computers.

— Acquisition and evaluation of software is not a simple process since software is expensive, and proper evaluation can only take place after extensive use. It is not unfair to state that there is considerably more chaff than wheat among the software packages currently available.

(d) Purchase

— Since our school system is limited, and geographically wide-spread, it is logical that at least some of our schools are best advised to investigate whether it is possible to acquire software from local public school sources.

5. The report on the computer in the school is being studied by the various schools and their boards. It is anticipated that in the coming schoolyear schools will develop their ideas about the computer in the school. SCHOOL CROSSING will attempt to monitor these developments during the coming year.

We would like to hear about computer developments in schools in other provinces.

T.M.P. VANDERVEN

Graduation '87

IMMANUEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Winnipeg

June 26, 1987. Another beautiful, warm, sunny Manitoba day. A day like so many others this past spring. But for the eight Grade Twelve students of Immanuel Christian School, it was a day long waited for, a day long hoped for. Graduation!

Long before, the program had been decided on, the guest speaker invited, gowns ordered, invitations printed. . . . The list of "things to do" for this first-ever Grade Twelve graduation at Immanuel had at times seemed endless.

The evening began with a dinner prepared by the mothers of the current Grade Eleven students. The graduands and invited guests enjoyed plenteous food, witty conversation, pleasant company. But this pleasure was marred somewhat, the guest speaker had not arrived.

Yet, there between the salad and the entree did he appear with his wife, a long journey fraught with difficulties behind him. Then the rest of the meal could be savoured in anticipation of the Graduation Exercises.

When everyone had been seated in the church auditorium, the organ sound-



Guest speaker Mr. L. Hoogerdijk

ed. The students filed slowly up the aisle, resplendent in royal blue caps and gowns. After the singing of our national anthem and a Psalm, the principal of ICS, Mr. Jack Marissen opened with the reading of Proverbs 4 and prayer. He then briefly introduced the guest speaker, Mr. Len Hoogerdijk, the first principal of ICS and present principal of Coaldale Christian School.

After a few preliminary remarks regarding some historical aspects of ICS, Mr. Hoogerdijk focussed his speech on the theme text for the evening, Proverbs 4:4, 5. He asked, how can we obtain the wisdom spoken of in these verses? Where does this wisdom come from? At what cost can we obtain it? James 1:5 summarizes the answers to these questions: "If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him." All we have to do is ask in faith to gain that wisdom. Mr. Hoogerdijk went on to say that if we possess that wisdom, we will be "different" — totally different from those who do not possess



Front Row (l to r): Audrey Kuik, Jennifer Van Dijk, Jacqueline Barendregt
Rear: Alan DeWit, Michael Kuik, Glenn Veenendaal, Ed Kos, William DeWit

it. We will be imitators of God and followers of Him who gives wisdom. Mr. Hoogerdijk ended by telling the graduands that although they were leaving school, they were not leaving behind what they had been taught by their teachers and parents. He urged them to use the wisdom and gifts given them to further the coming of the Kingdom.

Other speakers followed. Mr. Marissen, using the parable of the talents as an illustration, told the students to use their talents to the glory of His Name. Mr. Gerry Kuik, the chairman of the Board, spoke of "Immanuel" — God is with us — saying God will be with us and bless us if we daily walk in His ways.

Following Mr. Kuik's address, Bibles and diplomas were presented to each graduate. The valedictorian, Alan DeWit, was the next speaker. He highlighted each member of the graduating class — the first and best — so far — graduating class, in his words! These hilarious thumbnail sketches of the students from both Carman and Winnipeg presented life as it was at ICS. He expressed the wish that these graduates would use their education for the honour and glory of God.

Before the awards were presented, Mr. Ludwig, principal of Dufferin Christian School in Carman noted that this first-ever Grade Twelve graduation, was the

culmination of years of work not only by the teachers, but by the parents and all those who served on the Board and various committees.

Mr. Ivan Tiggelaar, chairman of the Education Committee, presented a \$1,000 entrance scholarship to the University of Manitoba to Alan DeWit in recognition of his scholastic achievements. His twin William was awarded the \$500 Centennial Scholarship by the University of Manitoba for his achievements.

One of the graduates, Michael Kuik, presented the Board with a cheque for \$450, which represented the profit from chocolate bars sold by Grades 3-6 this past year.

In closing, Rev. den Hollander spoke about being "totally different" in the eyes of others. We truly are normal for we have been trained to be normal, trained for the service of God. Family, church and school unite in this training. In conclusion he stated that by the grace of God we are renewed to be "totally different" yet "totally normal." He then led us in singing and in prayer.

After the recessional, we were invited to congratulate the graduates and their families, mingle with other guests, and enjoy a cup of coffee and delicious gebak.

Truly, an historic day. A day like no other.

D. LODDER

CHURCH NEWS



NEW ADDRESS:

REV. C. BOUWMAN

Lot 2, Mead Street
Byford, 6201 W.A.
Australia

Phone: 09525 1940

* * *

With thankfulness to the Lord we wish to inform the churches of the recent institution of a Canadian Reformed Church in Grand Valley, Ontario on July 19, 1987.

Worship services are held in the auditorium of Grand Valley Public School at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Address:

The Canadian Reformed Church
of Grand Valley
PO Box 173
Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0

Clerk:

M. Brouwer
RR 4
Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0

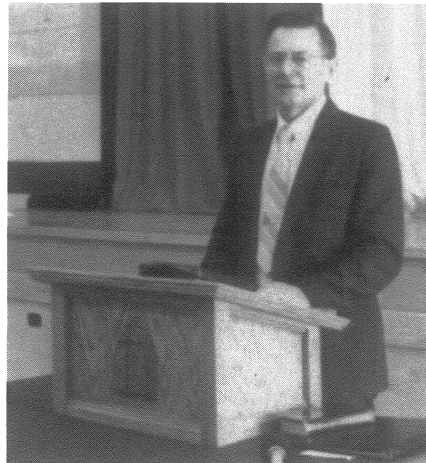
Institution — Grand Valley, Ontario

On Sunday, July 19, 1987, another event in the history of the Canadian Reformed Churches could be marked. Several months ago, some members of the churches in Orangeville and in Fergus met to discuss the feasibility of instituting a church somewhere in between. After months of preparatory work and meetings, a proposal could be made to the consistories of Orangeville and Fergus. The consistory of Orangeville in turn, could request advice from Classis Ontario-North of June 18, 1987, regarding this proposal. After receiving this advice, the Church of Orangeville could proceed with the institution of the Canadian Reformed Church at Grand Valley on Sunday, July 19, 1987.

On Sunday morning, many people must have felt that it would be a beautiful day for travelling to Grand Valley. From an approximate membership of 130, roughly double that number could be present. Visitors from Orangeville, Fergus, Guelph and Brampton could be seen. Even one of the original members of the Orangeville congregation could be present. This member could witness yet another branching off of the Orangeville congregation. Truly, on this day, we could be thankful to the Lord for His guidance and blessings through the years.

As we sang in the words of Psalm 150:1, 3, we could praise Him for His deeds so mighty! Our first service as a new congregation could be led by the minister of the neighbouring Church at Orangeville, Rev. M. Werkman.

Rev. Werkman chose as his text, Matthew 5:13. He pointed out in his sermon: who are the salt of the earth, how we must function as salt, and how Jesus warns us not to be saltless.



When Jesus says, "YOU are the SALT of the earth," He refers to His Church and His people, as is pointed out in chapter 7:24. This also refers to the special office-bearers and the congregation at Grand Valley.

Rev. Werkman pointed out that just as salt is used in small quantities, the Church at Grand Valley, though small, can and should be in the flavouring and preserving influence in Grand Valley and surrounding areas, and in the world! As such, we should not be content to let others in the community fight evil and corruption. We should not let ourselves be pushed into a corner where we won't be noticed.

In the third part of the text, the Lord warns us not to lose our saltiness. In Christ's time, they did not have the pure refined salt that we have today. Especially when mixed with other substances, salt could lose its penetrating influence on foods. As salt, we should take care that we do not mix with the world. As such, we would

lose our saltiness, and be "trampled under foot." The church should retain its penetrating and permeating influence in order to preserve and prevent the world from decaying and rotting away. When the church and the world mix, the world always takes over and in the end steps on the church.

Above all, we should remember that salt is not important in itself. Salt is to be used for others. We should remember that in remaining salt, we sacrifice or give ourselves away in order to preserve the world.

When the world is salted by the Word of God, as preached and practiced by the church, we ensure that God receives all the glory!

We then proceeded to the ordination of elders and deacons, whereby the Church at Grand Valley was instituted. After closing with prayer and singing, delegates from neighbouring churches were given a chance to say a few words. We heard from delegates of the churches from Fergus and Orangeville as well as a representative of Classis Ontario-North. All were thankful that the Lord had made this day possible, and wished us the Lord's blessing in the future.

After the service, all present were invited to stay a few moments for refreshments as provided by several of the ladies of the new congregation. This allowed members and visitors alike, the chance to renew old and make new acquaintances.

Our afternoon service, which is held at 2:00 p.m., was led by Rev. Nederveen of Brampton.

May the Canadian Reformed Church at Grand Valley continue to grow and flourish for the honour and glory of His name.

J.W. JONKER



By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

The conference did come to some conclusions.

In the first place it was decided to invite all consistory members of "Christian Reformed Congregations to come to Amsterdam in order to discuss with them the possibility of a reunion; and that shortly after that a similar conference was to be convened of consistory members of Doleerende Churches."

Secondly, these conferences were to be convened by the Doleerende deputies for contact. The professors of Kampen were to support the invitation to the first-mentioned group, while they were also to attend the second conference.

In the third place, no theological debate was to be held at these conferences, as this would not be conducive to the efforts to come to unity. Instead, three points were to be dealt with in particular.

a. The need to re-unite, as the Lord has enjoined us to seek; b. The designation of both their convening Synods as the instances which are called upon to act in this matter; and c. The basis of the reunion.

Fourthly, as basis for reunion will be proposed: a. that the Statute of 1869 should be removed; b. that mutually the consistories would continue to exist; c. that the broader assemblies, Classes and Synods, would be combined; and d. that the necessary measures for transition should be taken in order to prevent all irregularity and clashes.

The Docents of Kampen keep their word: when the invitation to the conference has been sent to the Christian Reformed consistories, the Docents publish an appeal, urging all those invited to attend.

The April Conference

April 10, 1888 saw an estimated more than seven hundred consistory members of the Christian Reformed Church coming to Amsterdam to attend the conference. The original plan was that the meeting was to be held in the church building on the Keizersgracht, but the number of participants was too large for that; the well-known Frascati-hall was used instead.

Dr. Kuyper chaired the meeting. In his word of welcome he did his best to refute claims as if he had not from the very beginning desired unity with the Christian Reformed believers. He described the initial contact, which gave birth to this conference, stressed that no theological debate was intended, and mentioned the two points which should receive attention: first, do we consider living together to be our duty, and secondly, should not objections be set aside in order to come to a reunion?

From the side of the Christian Reformed brothers it was stated that no discussion is needed about the question whether a reunion is our duty. This is a matter-of-course. What is to be discussed is the question with whom the Christian Reformed are to unite. What is the relation of the Doleerenden towards the Netherlands Reformed Church? Did they secede from the Netherlands Reformed Church? This is a question which has to be asked and answered, because according to the conviction of the Doleerenden, all 175,000 Netherlands Reformed people

in Amsterdam are still under the supervision of the Doleerende consistory. Have you really broken with the Netherlands Reformed Church?

Is it — thus another question — not schismatic to constitute another consistory in places where a Christian Reformed consistory has been in existence for years already?

The reply by Dr. Rutgers is not very suited to satisfy the Christian Reformed brothers and to put them at ease. One cannot just leave all those people in the Netherlands Reformed Church for what they are, he states. The boards made the historical Church into a false Church and we, Doleerenden, broke with those boards. We do not have to marry the Christian Reformed. This marriage was already there, but because of sin a separation came about. We have to come together again and quit fighting.

Kuyper apparently sensed the mood of the meeting and "summarizing the stand of the Doleerenden," he states that "We, too, have broken not only with the Synodical boards, but also with the denomination."

During the discussion it became clear that the Doleerenden have to make a choice: if the Netherlands Reformed Church is a true Church, the Secession was sin; if it is a false Church, the Doleerenden have to come to a complete secession from it.

As for the second point, the Regulation of 1869, Dr. Rutgers receives the opportunity to elaborate on the objections to this document as they live with the Doleerenden. During the discussion it becomes clear, however, that the brothers of the Doleantie had several wrong thoughts and impressions regarding this document.

It is again Kuyper who summarizes the situation. The question is whether we can cooperate, each one having his own point of view. Perhaps the best solution will be that the Christian Reformed brothers drop their Regulation and let local regulations suffice. We of the Doleantie will now table the matter at our ecclesiastical assemblies in this way to approach your Synod.

Again Frascati

Two days later another conference was held. This time it was a meeting of approximately three hundred office-bearers of Doleantie-Churches. From Kampen the Docents were present as well.

Some questions are asked to which the Kampen Docents reply.

Dr. van den Bergh, e.g., came again with the question whether not the official documents lack sufficient awareness and confession of guilt regarding the sad situation in the Netherlands Reformed Church, which is a punishment from the Lord upon the iniquities of us and of our fathers.

To this it is answered that it is improper to accuse someone else of lack of depth of awareness of guilt. Awareness of guilt is of such a nature that it causes us to humble ourselves without daring to measure someone else after our own feeling of guilt.

Van den Bergh also asked whether the Christian Reformed, in case a new secession should become necessary, would just let go of those who remained behind. He further would like to know whether the Christian Reformed Church dares to call all Churches within the Netherlands Reformed denomination false Churches, even if they are orthodox.

As could be expected, the Regulation of 1869 is another point of discussion.

Docent Lindeboom replies to the question and points to the fact that the Dort Church Order contains articles which cannot be accepted without change, and that for the Christian Reformed Church the Dort Church Order alone has been the starting point already since 1869.

He reacts to the question whether the Christian Reformed Church could not declare "that it wholeheartedly goes along with the Reformation of 1886, and therefore does not abide by the point of view of the Secession."

"If," Lindeboom wrote, "I were convinced that the Doleerenden are right, I shall consider myself called to join them and to offer them my humble services as a minister of the Gospel. However, as long as I cannot come to any other conclusion than that their standpoint is unfounded, overlooks the work of God in '34, and will appear to be a very hard thing for the necessary union of all the Reformed — I cannot do anything while the time is still there but speak and write what I am convinced can contribute to prevent a sham union and separation-union."

The First Provisional Synod

Until now the matter of contact had been more or less a "personal thing," even though the conferences had been organized by the semi-official Doleantie deputies. No purely ecclesiastical assembly had appointed even them. The first (provisional) Synod was still to be held.

The advantage of this was that the office-bearers throughout the country became involved and that the "grassroots" certainly were not excluded from the whole process. We shall come back to this point later on when discussing the actions of those who refused to go along with a union, and only draw the attention to it for the moment.

It is clear that semi-official contacts — however important they may be and in this case were indeed — are only the initial stages. Mergers have to be decided upon via official channels and by those who have been authorized to take such decisions.

Thus the wait was now for the steps which the broadest assemblies would take.

The first Synod to be held was the one of the Doleerende Churches. As mentioned before, it was to be a "provisional" Synod, and was held in Utrecht, in the Oosterkerk, the same building in which, in 1944, another General Synod basically denied the Reformation of 1886 when suspending Dr. K. Schilder.

At this Synod the deputies, appointed by the Synodical Convent, reported on their activities. From nine classes questions and proposals had been received.

The result of the discussions was that the line pointed out by the deputies was followed. The following decisions were taken.

"The Provisional Synod decides regarding the matter of a merger to send a letter to the Synod of the Chris-

tian Reformed Church which presently is to be held in Assen."

The following course of action is suggested:

a. "Both Synods each appoint five deputies with the right of assuming membership in an advisory capacity.

b. "These ten Deputies take as basis for their discussions the points found as a result of the discussions which deputies for this matter had with the Docents of the Theological School.

c. "On that basis they shall draft an Act of Reunion.

d. "They send this Draft to the Churches at Utrecht and Assen which both inform the members of those delegated to their respective Synods, in order that both Synods meet again this coming fall.

e. "Synod express in these resumed sessions its judgment concerning this Draft.

f. "In case the Draft which has come about in this manner is provisionally approved, it then be sent by both to the Classes, in order that each Church be able to express itself.

g. "After this the Synods meet for the third time, with God's help to conclude this important cause in a much-desired manner."

These conclusions, accompanied by a letter, were sent to the Christian Reformed Synod which was to be held in Assen.

Not only were the conclusions and letter sent to the forthcoming Synod, they were also published and in this manner the membership became involved, while discussions in the press showed what lived among the Christian Reformed people.

One of the criticisms was that the Provisional Synod had laid out the pattern and that the only thing the Christian Reformed Synod was permitted to do was: follow that pattern. "We have received our instruction how to go about it, and all we are supposed to do is: obey it," the complaint is.

With many of the Christian Reformed Church there was also a certain fear for the domineering figure and position of Dr. A. Kuyper, a fear which in some instances and respects was not unfounded.

In a private letter Dr. H. Bavinck wrote, "Many among us are a little afraid of the less pleasant spirit and tone which is prevalent among the doleerenden, and not less for the supremacy of Dr. Kuyper.

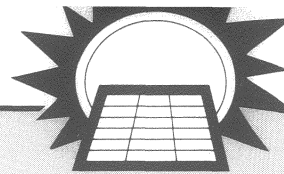
The Synod of Assen 1888

On Tuesday August 14, 1888, Synod is opened. It is decided to deal with the matter of union the next day already.

From the various provincial Synods proposals had been received. None of these proposals contained any advice not to proceed towards union, although it was stressed that the recognition of the Secession of 1834 as a work of the Lord may under no condition be abandoned.

Perhaps to the surprise of many, it appeared that no one was very much attached to the Regulation of 1869. Although Kuyper's term "Statute" is rejected as incorrect — it was only a notice given to the government — the brothers are all willing to advise the local Churches to get rid of it.

— *To be continued*



“Be content with what you have, for He [the Lord] has said,
‘I will never fail you nor forsake you.’ ” Hebrews 13:5b

Dear brothers and sisters,

Contentment is the opposite of covetousness, an urgent desire for what you do not have.

How often are we ourselves not guilty of this sin of covetousness?

Are we sometimes not looking at others, who have according to us more than us?

More happiness, more money, a better position, better health, better behaving children? If this is the case then we should remind ourselves time and again that the LORD does not want us to think that way. He says, “Be content”

What does that mean? Certainly not a passive acceptance of things and circumstances which we can't change anyway. No, contentment in the positive sense is a firm assurance that the LORD has supplied us with all we need to love and serve Him. Being content also implies that we trust that the LORD will continue to care for us according to our needs. And what we need is determined by the tasks the LORD assigns to us.

To overcome that evil of coveting is to truly trust God's promise. He cares for you personally and He will not fail you.

Remember the Apostle Paul? He could say, “I have learned in whatever state I am to be content.” Note that also Paul says, “I learned . . . !” It did not come just like that! Not that Paul was so good and strong, no, he learned to be content through faith in Christ who strengthened him. Read Philippians 4:11-13. The basis for our contentment is God's grace and love. He gave up His only Son for us sinners. He adopted us as His children and promises that He will provide us with all good and will let all evil serve our salvation. He assures us that He will never fail us, nor forsake us.

You will never be content unless you have learned to find rest in our Lord and Saviour and His steadfast promises.

But when our eyes and hearts are open for that great wonder of God's mercy towards us, then we will be able to live a life of gratitude. Contentment is a basic ingredient for gratitude. If you have not learned to be content, you will never be thankful!

Trust your God at all times! Then we will be able to serve Him with what He entrusted to us, whether it be much or little. Keeping our eyes fixed upon Jesus Christ and His care, we will learn to be content.

Our mailbox

I received a note from Mrs. J. Dieleman on behalf of her sons Adrian, Jack and Paul. Adrian (see the previous “Ray” . . .) is doing quite well. He has been moved to Lyndhurst, a hospital specializing in spinal injuries. His current address is: Room 116, Lyndhurst Hospital, 520 Sutherland Dr., Toronto, ON M4G 3V9.

If a letter or card is returned to you undelivered, keep in mind that there are several weeks between the time I receive my information and you read it in Clarion. Meanwhile the circumstances sometimes have changed. Sorry about this but keep trying!

Our birthday calendar for October:

ALAN BREUKELMAN

Box 666

Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0

Alan will be 21 years old on October 17th.

HELENA HOFKINK

6705 Satchel Road, Box 40, “Bethesda”

Mount Lehman, BC V0X 1V0

Helena hopes to celebrate her 27th birthday on October 22nd.

JOHN FEENSTRA

RR 1, Wainfleet, ON L0S 1V0

John will D.V. be 29 on October 25th.

MARY ANN DEWIT

6705 Satchel Road, Box 40 “Bethesda”

Mount Lehman, BC V0X 1V0

Mary Ann's birthday is on October 28th, when she will be 31 years of age.

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU ALL!!

I am sure that these four young people would love to receive some special attention from our readers. Please, don't disappoint them!

Be still! What God in His good pleasure

To you in wisdom may impart

Is given you in perfect measure;

Thus be content within your heart.

To Him who chose us for His own

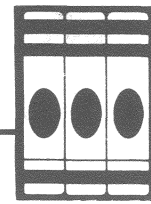
Our needs and wants are surely known.

Hymn 48:3

Greetings,

MRS. J. MULDER

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



G. Van Dooren, M.Th., . . . and we escaped as well as . . . en wij zijn ontkomen! Verhaal van Kerkstrijd in Oorlogstijd.

Last year, the Golden Jubilee Committee in Burlington, Ontario, published the above-mentioned book. At the request of the publishing company of Oosterbaan en Le Cointre in Goes, The Netherlands, the Rev. G. Van Dooren translated his book into the Dutch language. It will be published in two volumes. *Clarion* received a copy of the first volume of the Dutch version.

In this book the author relates to us his personal involvement as minister of God's Word in the struggle against the German occupation during the Second World War, but especially in the struggle for freedom from under "the third hierarchy," that of the synods of the Reformed Churches during the war years.

The conception of this book took place in 1984, at the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the (ecclesiastical) Liberation in The Netherlands, as this was celebrated in Burlington. The intention of the author is directed especially to the youth of the churches. In the original English version Van Dooren summarizes the reaction of his family with the following sentence: "The Liberation will never again be just a word." In the Dutch version we read that it was one of his grandsons who made this remark.

In his own personal way, the Rev. Van Dooren tells us here, basically, the story of the Liberation in Wezep, just south of Zwolle, where he was minister of God's Word. He shows how the Liberation had everything to do, so very strongly, with his ministry, his preaching; that he could not preach God's Word anymore, according to the teaching of the Scriptures, if he had to obey the synodical decisions in those days. Young people who have read this book attentively, will certainly say what was quoted above: "The Liberation will never again be just a word." The Liberation is brought close to the reader. He struggles along with the author. It becomes clear what the struggle was about, and why this struggle was a matter of faith, that is, of obedience to God's Word.

This does not mean that the book is only for the younger generation. On the contrary, an older member of one of our churches who read the book, said to me: The way Rev. Van Dooren experienced



the struggle in the church that led to the Liberation in those dark war years was also my own experience. I felt the same way and went, basically, through the same things. So, let us say that forty years after it all happened, the Rev. Van Dooren gave us his own, personal, particular liberation story, so fully part of the liberation story of the consistory and congregation in Wezep, and yet expressed in words that convey what many a Canadian Reformed grandfather and grandmother experienced in those days.

In other words, when grandchildren, and even, perhaps, great-grandchildren, like to know what their (great-) grandparents experienced during the dark war years, they should read this book. I can greatly recommend it from the heart. I hope that this book will find its way in all our families, beside the book of the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, *Inheritance Preserved*. The book deserves it. The Rev. Van Dooren has done our churches a great service with the writing of this book; and he has done the same service to the Dutch sister churches by translating it into the Dutch language.

So far about the English and the

Dutch versions together. In a preface on page 7, under the heading "Bij de Nederlandse editie" the author writes "De vertaling is nogal vrij. De oorspronkelijke lijn van 't verhaal is bewaard, maar als je na een tijd er weer neer kijkt, wil je 't wat anders zeggen; soms wat weglaten, maar vaker wat bijvoegen, bijvoorbeeld als 't gaat over 'de derde scholastiek'. Zo komt 't in de oorspronkelijke editie niet voor."

I don't have to translate this, because it is meant for those who understand Dutch, anyway. Reading the Dutch version, while comparing it with the English original, made me say at a number of occasions: "I find that the Dutch edition speaks to me in a stronger way. That can partly be caused by my own Dutch background. However, the Dutch is clearer in some places and more elaborate in others. The beginning of chapter 7 in the Dutch edition is re-written. Van Dooren mentions himself between brackets: "In the English edition I could not yet mention this." He refers to a remark in *Christian Renewal* after the writing of the English version. The longer Dutch edition not only is updated and gives more, but it also makes certain matters more lucid. This shows, for instance, in the additions on the pp. 149ff of the Dutch edition when compared with the English on pp. 76f.

I, therefore, express the hope that this book will receive a second printing in the English language including the Dutch improvements as well as the correction of a number of spelling mistakes and wrong words. An example: "at the evening of the Liberation at Wezep" should read "on the eve of . . ." since the Dutch reads: "vlak voor . . ."

I hope that many in North America, also outside the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, and beyond its territory, will read this book to learn who we are and what our background is. I also hope that many in Holland will read this personal account of a local Liberation. And for our older people who like to read in their Dutch language what is basically their "own" story, it must be a pleasure to go through this instructive book that reminds us of our past and tells us why we are "Vrijgemaakt" or Canadian Reformed.

The Dutch edition is published in the format of the well-known "RB serie" (Reformatie Boeken Serie). The price of this first volume is f.24.50.

J. GEERTSEMA

LETTER TO THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dear Editorial Committee

The Rev. R. Gleason sent us — the editorial committee — a letter of protest against what the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene had written in his *News Medley* in March regarding the decision of the Toronto Consistory to permit its minister to conduct a worship service in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in that place. Our reply was that the objection against what was written was not substantiated with grounds. What follows here was the response. We also received a letter of protest from a sister in Toronto, with the same contents, and do not see the necessity to publish that letter as well. We have not seen a letter from the consistory.

Dear Colleagues and Brothers,

First, at the end of your letter you state that Rev. VanOene used a printed source. I find this a very weak, self-seeking and specious argument. It is, of course, true that the bulletin is a printed source and I have no objections to him using the bulletin to read information and facts concerning the work of the congregation in Toronto. I do have *great* objections, however, with the liberty he took in drawing his mendacious conclusions and the public distribution of those conclusions. What Rev. VanOene concluded was not based on firm, adequate knowledge and is, indeed, misleading with regard to the decisions of the Toronto consistory. This type of liberty is exceedingly *unprofessional*. In secular circles both Rev. VanOene and *Clarion* would be open to charges of libel. Thankfully, we are Christians committed to the Lord of the Church and, therefore, do not use secular means to solve our problems. That is why I feel free to write to you and trust that you will be responsible before God in dealing with my objections.

You also state that I write that "I was done an injustice." Whereas I am, indeed, personally touched by the misleading information, my main concern is for the misrepresentation of the work of the consistory in Toronto. Rev. VanOene pictured this work as moving in a dangerous direction. Yet, our decision was, in our opinion, well thought out and tended toward the unity of the Church of our Lord for which the Reformers so valiantly strove. It was a decision that was made by the consistory with care, concern and a great deal of consideration. It is to be regretted that Rev. VanOene, without clarifying what we had done — of course, he could not have known based on the paucity of information given by the short

report — made such an accusation concerning the direction in which we are moving.

You ask me to provide you with reasons. Did you ask Rev. VanOene to provide you with reasons why he wrote what he did? It is with a great deal of hesitation that I provide you with reason and a *great deal* of surprise that you would ask me for the reasons. I would have thought that you would have asked Rev. VanOene to provide them. It saddens me that I must defend myself when I have written openly to you — as has the consistory in Toronto and another member of the church, who voices the feelings of many in the congregation! — that Rev. VanOene has misrepresented me and the consistory. As far as I am concerned Rev. VanOene should be proving his judgments and accusations.

Rev. VanOene stated in his column, "as far as I can remember, there was never any contact between the session of that Presbyterian Church and the consistory of the Toronto Church." That is simply not true. There have, in fact, been contacts between the session and consistory even before my arrival in Toronto. Rev. VanOene's memory is, unfortunately, not the standard by which misleading statements are to be made. Even if his information were true — which it is not — what difference would that make? In truth, the consistory in Toronto is considering ways in which we might begin to make better contact with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Further, the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, our sister church, has declared the Reformed Churches of Scotland, of which the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is a member, as a true church. Thus, Rev. VanOene's statement that "we do not have closer ties than a general knowledge about their existence" is somewhat exaggerated. Our sister churches have gathered much information concerning this church. Though I admit that this does not directly affect the Canadian Reformed Churches, we can certainly be

more secure in approaching and helping a church recognized as true by a sister church.

Rev. VanOene states in his column, "Unless I misunderstand the sentence, the request came from Toronto's own minister." Again, Rev. VanOene jumped to erroneous conclusions. I conveyed the request to the consistory in Toronto since I was the one requested to do so by the session of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The decision, however, was a consistory decision.

Rev. VanOene continues, "... it was not a request for one specific service, but more or less for an extended time, for it says during the sickness of their minister." Rev. Compton had a brain tumor in a very precarious place. The request came for a more extended period of time due to the serious nature of the illness of Rev. Compton. We are convinced that we are correct in preaching and doctrine and life. Therefore, I would think we would welcome opportunities to proclaim the riches of Christ as often as we may. The real question for me is, "What business is it of Rev. VanOene's whether it is for one service or for a hundred and one?" This is a decision that bears directly upon Toronto.

Rev. VanOene concludes, "it has to be remarked that the people do not know the difference between 'proclaiming the Word' and 'speaking an edifying word.' To them it's all the same. Our own minister is ill, but we have one anyway, so what's the diff?" I find this a puffed up judgment, to state the case mildly. How does he know whether they know the difference or not? Is he that intimately acquainted with them? The members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church are very Reformed in their worship of our LORD. They perhaps know a *great deal* more than Rev. VanOene thinks. Their attitude was and is to hear the Word of God preached in a truly Reformed manner. They desire and thirst after the truth of that word. I find it to their credit that they recognized that they would hear Biblical, Reformed preaching from a minister of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

In light of these objections, I feel my request for an apology is justified. After all, the wrong conclusions have already been printed by *Clarion*. The damage has been done, so to speak. It seems only fitting and brotherly; it seems to me the bare Christian minimum that Rev. VanOene and *Clarion* admit the truth that the

OUR COVER

Lake near
Taylor Falls, Minnesota

Photo courtesy of
John F. Vanveen

material was not properly investigated.

It is conceivable that Rev. VanOene might still have certain objections, but then let those objections be founded on *knowledge* of the issues at hand and not on *conjecture*. Further, if he, indeed, had objections there are proper *ecclesiastical* channels for voicing them and handling them. The column, *News Medley* is *certainly not* the place to raise — in an unilateral manner — such objections.

The *News Medley* should not be a forum for Rev. VanOene, or anyone else for that matter, to unilaterally voice opinions. As I understand it, the purpose of the column is to provide the churches in the Federation with information concerning the various activities in the churches. That purpose can be beneficial and informative; a good way for the churches in the Federation to keep abreast of each other. If liberties are taken, however, as was the case in the March issue they cause difficulties and division. Surely, you do not want the latter results. I implore you to be more careful in the manner in which you approach this column in the *Clarion* in the future.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that it is not my intention to embarrass either Rev. VanOene or the *Clarion*. I regard you as my brothers in Christ. Moreover, I do not want this to become a major issue. I will be satisfied with a simple admission of error. It saddens me that this must be a public admission, for I prefer not to have it that way. I am, however, compelled to request a *public* retraction because the erroneous information has already appeared in print. As far as I am concerned, once the retraction has been placed there is no further need for conversation on the issue. If I

have harmed any of you personally with my reply, I ask your forgiveness for that. It was not my intention to do so.

R.N. GLEASON

Editorial comment

The Rev. VanOene wrote in a careful way, using expressions like “as far as I remember,” and “unless I misunderstand.” I maintain that VanOene went by a written source: information in a church bulletin. The brs. in Toronto could have simply sent an explaining letter to the editor, correcting what VanOene wrote, instead of blowing up the matter.

Moreover, I do not understand that the brothers in Toronto do not understand that their decision to allow the minister to conduct a worship service in a church with which our churches do not have any official contact was bound to meet with criticism, because it was an unecclesiastical way of dealing with this matter. I may refer here to what I wrote last year regarding admitting people from churches with which we have no relationship to the table of the LORD. In that connection I pointed at what happened with the Rev. Netelenbos of Middelburg who was suspended from office because he preached in the Dutch Reformed Church in The Hague. The unecclesiastical way was the main point of VanOene’s criticism; and he was correct on this point, in my opinion.

I could comment on a number of things in this letter, but shall refrain from it. Let us leave it and not continue to do things that stir up trouble in the midst of the churches.

J. GEERTSEMA

PRESS RELEASE

“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, July 23, 1987

The chairman br. J. Witten opened the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer, and then welcomed the members present. Some of the board members could not attend the meeting due to the holiday season.

The Anchor Home Director’s report was read and discussed. The residents of the Home are involved in a number of recreational activities as well as their regular jobs at the arc industry and other local industries. The residents are also being evaluated to determine the proper programs to help them more effectively in their special individual situations.

An application for counsellor at the Anchor Home was received. The applicant will be interviewed at the earliest convenient time.

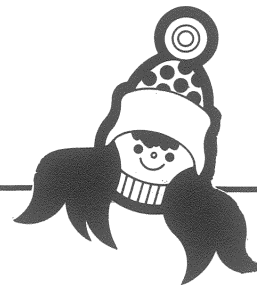
The Summer Camp wrapped up a very successful and enjoyable camp. Twenty-four handicapped people participated with about twenty volunteer helpers. Trips were made to the African Lion Safari and to the Voortman Cooky factory. The Board as well as the participants and their parents greatly appreciate tremendous amount of time and effort that the committee members and the volunteers put into organizing and running the camp.

The cassette tapes of the recent combined choir concert have become available, but on a very limited basis. We are experiencing some difficulty in getting the manufacturer to make the tapes, but we hope this problem will soon be rectified.

The meeting was then closed with prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF
Correspondence Secretary

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

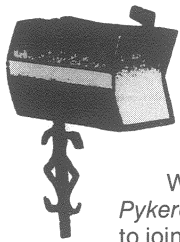


Dear Busy Beavers,

Ten men rush along the road to the city.
Look at their faces! They are beaming with joy.
Listen! They shout out their happiness.
You can tell their hearts are bursting with joy and gladness!
But look.
One of them stops.
He turns around.
He goes back.
With the same joy on his face and in his voice, he goes back to — the Lord Jesus.

And what does he say?
What does he do?
Falling on his knees he praises the Lord with a loud voice.
Over and over he thanks Jesus for healing his leprosy.
His thankfulness was so great!
But what’s this?
The Lord Jesus speaks — with SADNESS in His voice.
“Did I not heal TEN lepers? Where are the other nine?
You are the ONLY one to come back to say ‘Thank you.’”

This is the story we read in the Bible in Luke 17. It’s a very good story to remember for THANKSGIVING DAY, don’t you think, Busy Beavers?



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Jennifer Van Pykeren*. We are happy to have you join us. Be sure to join in all our Busy Beaver activities! Will you write again sometime and tell us about yourself and your family? Bye for now.

Welcome to the Club *Earl Van Assen*. I see you are a good puzzler. Keep up the good work! How did you enjoy your summer holidays, Earl? Will you write and tell us?

Sounds to me as if you had a very exciting holiday, *Hannah Helder*! Did you enjoy visiting faraway places? How do you feel about being back in school, Hannah?

How did you enjoy your holiday at the lake, *Amy Hofsink*? What did you like best about it? Did you catch any fish? Bye for now.

Sounds as if you had quite a time with the hive of yellow jackets, *Billy Dekker*. I'm glad no one got stung! How did your soccer team do, Billy? Write again soon, I enjoyed your letter.

Thank you for an interesting letter *Wendy Beijes*. Keep up the good work on your calligraphy. Lots of success in Grade Seven, Wendy!

How did you like your teacher's wedding, *Helena Beijes*? I'm glad you had such a good birthday and I hope you'll like Grade Four, too. Bye for now.

Hello, *Geraldine Feenstra*. I see you are interested in swimming! Did you have lessons this summer, Geraldine? And how do you like being back in school?

Quiz Time!

CODE QUIZ

by Busy Beaver *Karrie Eelhart*

1	3	7	13	2	6	11	4	3	5	4		
14	8	12	9	17	4	10	1	15	11	4	3	18
12	17	4	16	3	6	4	13	2	6	9	3	6

1 - I	10 - N
2 - O	11 - P
3 - A	12 - T
4 - E	13 - F
5 - C	14 - B
6 - R	15 - S
7 - M	16 - Y
8 - U	17 - H
9 - W	18 - K

Does this Bible text remind you of today's newscasts, Busy Beavers?

WORD SCRAMBLE

by Busy Beaver *Joyce Wiegels*

Joyce loves horses, I see, and to help you do this word scramble, I think you should read something about:

KINDS OF HORSES

- g a m o r n _____
- b a a r i n a _____
- d b h o o g t e r u h r _____
- o n i a l m p o _____
- i b n a l o _____
- a o p a l o s p a _____
- i h e r s _____
- e l a d s e d y l c _____
- i t p o n _____
- g n t a s u m _____

(See answers)

OCTOBER BIRTHDAY WORDSEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Anne Van Laar*

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

Look for:

Jodi	Laura	Karen
Agnes	Bryan	Karin
Robert	Erin	Cheryl
Nicole	Yvonne	Marilyn
Terri-Lynn	Karissa	Ann
Brenda	Corinne	Carmen
Michael	Anita	Tonya
Vanessa	Kim	Henry
Pauline	Anne	

Here is a list of all the NEW MEMBERS who have joined our Club this summer.

You will receive your NEW MEMBERSHIP CARDS just as soon as they are available.

WELCOME TO THE BUSY BEAVER CLUB!

Joni Dekker	Netty Sikkema
Margaret de Witt	Maria Stel
Sara Harsevoort	Earl Van Assen
Rebecca Hekert	Yvonne Van Egmond
Shannon Hoogstra	Jennifer Van Pykeren
Esther Leyenhorst	Neil Van Seters
Erin Siebenga	Karissa Veldman