

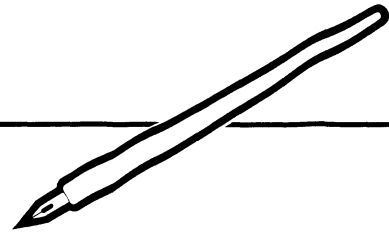
Clarion

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After 350 years – which Bible translation?

The need

This year it was 350 years ago that, in Holland, the State Bible (de Staten Bijbel) was published: 1637. That was the final result of deliberations, decisions, appointments and labours from the Synod of Emden in 1571 until the year of publication. Actually, before the Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, the results were rather negative. Appointments were made, but time was not available and also death often prevented the execution of the work.

Nevertheless, many felt the need for a reliable translation from the original languages. There were quite a number of different translations available in those days. Most of them, however, were translations from rather bad translations, e.g., in the German language. This explains the need.

As said, the change in the situation came with the Synod of Dort, mentioned above. In the "Post-Acta" of this Synod, the 177th session, sub IV, we read the following as part of a letter to the Government: "And since the Synod has judged that it is necessary that the Dutch Churches, according to the example of all the Reformed Churches of other languages and nations, also have an accurate and reliable translation of the Old and the New Testament in the Dutch language from the original languages; as often was decided before at previous National Synods . . . , so this Synod has now delegated (provided you, Honourable Members of the States General, give your approval) three ministers for the translation of the Old Testament, and three others for the translation of the New Testament and the Apocryphal books." It is further suggested that these ministers should be free from other work and that the work be paid with government money, since it is going to be very costly.

This simple proposal to the Government for their approval and support was the result of days of deliberation and decision making at the very beginning of this Synod. The matter of the Bible translation was, in fact, the very first matter that was dealt with. The Synod was opened on Tuesday, November 13, 1618, in the morning. That whole first week the formal matters of credentials, letters, rules, and so on, had the attention of the Dutch and foreign delegates. Then, from the sixth session on Monday, November 19, through the thirteenth session on Monday, November 26, the Synod dealt with the need for a new Dutch Bible translation, the principles for translating, and the appointments for both the translating itself, and the testing and approving of the translation.

We can understand that the Synod judged that the matter of "an accurate and reliable Bible translation" was of the greatest importance for the churches. Who can disagree with it? Thinking about it, we can conclude that the present situation, in which the matter of Bible translation is so very much in the hands of Bible Societies and individual scholars, is far from ideal, yes, in fact, wrong. It takes most of the control away from the churches.

It was good that our Reformed fathers judged that the matter of a Bible translation was a matter that pertained to the churches in common, and that it, therefore, legitimately was a synodical matter. While one complaint was that there were several translations available, and all rather unreliable, another complaint was that there was no unity in the use of one good Bible translation by all the Reformed Churches. Thus it was with the aim to come to one new "accurate and reliable" translation for all the churches that so much time and attention was given to this matter at the Synod.

The King James

It is interesting that the delegates from Great Britain were asked to tell of the experience of the British churches with their authorized translation, the King James Version, which had appeared in 1611. The Acts first tell us the following:

The Theologians of Great Britain, not thinking it advisable to give a hasty and cursory response to such an important question, have considered it to be their bounden duty, after mature deliberation, while praising mention is made of the English translation, which king James, with great care and cost, recently gave into the light, to make known to this Esteemed Synod how and in what way His Royal Maj. has brought about this sacred work.

Did you enjoy this solemn, somewhat complicated, English (literally translated from the Dutch) with me, even though it required some effort? We leave the report regarding the practical organization of the English translating work for what it is and continue with "the laws, prescribed for the translators." These laws were the following (I summarize): First, one should not make a totally new translation, but that the old, which was adopted by the church for a long time, should be purified from all faults and mistakes; and that therefore the translators should not deviate from the old rendering unless the original truth of the text, or some emphasis would require this.

Second, no marginal notes were to be made, except for references to similar texts. Third, when the Hebrew or Greek word allows for two different, and nevertheless good, translations, the one translation should be placed in the text, the other in the margin. Fourth, the most difficult Hebrew and Greek idioms must be placed in the margin. Sixth, when the translation needs a complementing English word that is not in the original language, this added word must be printed in a smaller type letter. Seventh, each Bible book must be preceded by a new "Argument" (= introduction) and each chapter by a new summary of the contents. Finally, a complete genealogy must be added at the end, as well as a description of the Holy Land.

The Dutch judgments and decisions

The unanimous judgment of the Dutch delegates at the Synod was:

"that a better translation of the Bible from the original

languages themselves into the Dutch would not only be profitable for our Dutch Churches, but also very necessary; that therefore, as was judged and done at previous National Synods, there should be diligence so that this work of a new translation would be begun as soon as possible and in the most capable manner and the shortest possible time.

“It was also judged advisable by majority vote to start from the beginning a new translation rather than to review and correct the old Dutch [versions]. But [this should be done] in such a way that from the old everything can be kept that does not take away from the truth, nor from the purity and own features of the Dutch language, in order to avoid irritation because of too much change.

With their translation work from the original languages the translators should make use of the aid that existing translations and commentaries were able to offer. Then we read that the following rules were adopted for the translators who would be appointed:

I. They must always carefully abide by the original text, and preserve the manner of speaking of the original languages as much as the clarity and property of the Dutch language can allow. But if somewhere a Hebrew or Greek way of speaking occurs which is too difficult to keep in the text, then this must diligently be noted in the margin.

II. If it is necessary for a correct rendering of the text to add Dutch words in the translation, they must do this with as few words as possible, and they must mark them with a different type of letter and enclose them within brackets in order to distinguish them from the words of the text.

III. For every book and chapter they must write a brief and clear summary of the contents, and in the margin they must make reference to identical [similar] places of Holy Scripture.

IV. They must add some brief notes, in which the reasons for a translation are given in case of difficult places; but it is judged neither to be necessary nor advisable to add observations regarding doctrinal points.

Everyone who reads these rules must be impressed by the deep respect which they show for the Word of God as this has been given to us in the original languages, and for the people of God, the members of the churches, who are to be enabled as much as possible to receive that Word of their God in such a way that they can trust: this is as accurately and reliably and faithfully translated as was possible. The translation must be as literal as possible and as free as necessary, while, in case the translation is somewhat free, the translators still must show what the original text says literally. That is showing deep respect for both God’s Word and God’s people, indeed. And it is good to remember these rules for translating as formulated by our Reformed fathers at the Synod of Dort.

Today’s situation

When the Canadian Reformed Churches were established, they began with using the King James Version for their worship services in the English language. However, when familiarity with the modern English language increased, it was discovered that the King James language was too old-fashioned and that its translation in many places was far from understandable. It was felt that holding on to this translation just because of the sound principles that underlie it, while, at the same time, it had become difficult to read, would defeat the purpose.

Modern, new translations were (are) frowned upon and rejected, because they were (are) suspect on account of the often liberal views of the scholars who translated them; one did not want to alienate the church people from the Word of God. However, we should have (and we had) an open eye for the danger that, when we hold on to an old and, practically, obsolete

translation whose language has become strange and obscure, precisely then do we cause the very alienation from Scripture that we sought to prevent.

Therefore, after many deliberations and investigations and reports during a number of years, our churches made the following decision at the Synod of Smithville, 1980, (Art. III):

Synod decides:

2. a) To use the Revised Standard Version for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms as much as possible.
- b) To recommend to the Churches to use this translation in the worship services and for catechism instruction in order to come to uniformity of practice.
3. To leave it in the freedom of the Churches to use the K.J.V. and the N.A.S.B., if the acceptance of the Revised Standard Version meets with insurmountable objections.

Consideration 8 of the Advisory Committee that served the Synod of Smithville, 1980 (*Acts*, p. 78) says this:

The Church at Cloverdale, in requesting Synod to refrain from leaving the use of the N.I.V. in the freedom of the Churches, points to its translation method which results in greater clarity at the expense of faithfulness and fidelity, and on the “recent” character of this translation.

The Majority and the Minority Reports of the Committee [on Bible Translations, as appointed by the previous synod; not to be confused with the Advisory Committee at the Synod of Smithville, J.G.] both point to a lack of exactness and faithfulness with respect to the N.I.V. for its “free” translation

Is it so that this consideration and this decision of the Synod of Smithville are not well-known anymore among us? I get the impression that the N.I.V. is more and more welcomed also among us. I have not seen it on a pulpit yet. Neither have I heard that it is used in a catechism class. But I notice that in our schools, at public meetings, the N.I.V. is read. Now it is true, of course, that a school is not a church. And the Synod decision does not speak about schools. Many would say: how could it.

Nevertheless, I ask the question: is it a healthy situation when the youth of the churches that have officially decided to recommend the R.S.V. are confronted with the situation that in the church they have the translation that was officially recommended, while at school they read, and listen to, a totally different translation, even one about which a General Synod judged that it is lacking in “exactness and faithfulness” and whose clarity in English is “at the expense of faithfulness and fidelity.”?

Should we not all ask that question: is that a healthy situation? In my opinion, it is not. Church and school should be one in this respect, and not confuse the youth of the church. The use of two, or more, different translations at different locations and times does not promote becoming familiar with the Scriptures. Comparing two or more translations at certain times is a different matter. That is more study than reading. Yes, yes, all reading should be studying, I know. Should we not think and act more ecclesiastically?

The N.I.V. as translation

One of the translators of the R.S.V. wrote in a letter that the principle behind the translating of this version is: as literal as possible and as free as necessary. That is one of the reasons why our churches could recommend this version. Although the scholars behind the R.S.V. belong more in the liberal camp, this principle is basically that behind the K.J.V. and the Dutch State Translation, as we read in the rules quoted above.

The principle behind the N.I.V. is different. It is more in line with the so-called dynamic equivalent approach, even

though the scholars behind it are in the conservative camp, where the Scriptures are received as God's infallible Word. This means that with the R.S.V. the reader mostly can still find out what is there in the original text or what is close to it. The N.I.V., although a very nice, smooth, English, is quite often far from a literal translation, and, as such, not in line with the rules adopted at the Synod of Dort in 1618.

Let me give a few examples.

In Matthew 6: we find the Lord's Prayer. In the N.I.V. the doxology is placed in a note. I am not dealing with this, for it is a text critical matter and not a matter of translation as such. We all know that the Lord's Prayer contains six petitions. In the N.I.V. these six petitions are rendered as exactly that: six petitions: one, two, . . . five and six. The conjunction "and" is found only once in the N.I.V.: between the fifth and sixth petition. This means that all six are neatly placed in a row.

However, in the Greek original the conjunction "and" is found twice: also between the fourth and the fifth. This is important for understanding the structure of the Lord's Prayer. It is clear that we have here two times three petitions. In the first three the word "Thine" is found; in the second three we find "us" and "our." But that is not the only thing. The first three are connected with a comma; the second three with two "and"s. The first three are three aspects of the same matter: our life for our Father in the covenant with Him; the one cannot be without the other: you honour God's Name by acknowledging Him as your King; and you acknowledge Him as your King by doing His will. The second three petitions deals with three different things which we need for such a faithful life in the covenant: bread *and* forgiveness *and* guarding care. The first "and" is missing in the N.I.V.

In Acts 2:14 Peter says to the people in Jerusalem on Pentecost day, "Fellow Jews . . . , let me explain this to you; listen

carefully to what I say." The R.S.V. reads, "Men of Judea . . . , let this be known to you, and give ear to my words." The latter is a literal translation that shows how Peter expresses that the Men of Judea must know. "Let this be known." In the N.I.V. Peter receives attention: He is going to explain. One can say: the result is the same, but that is not the point. The Greek text does not say that Peter says that he will explain. It says that the Jews must know.

I Thessalonians 4:14 is rendered in the N.I.V. in this way: "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him." The R.S.V. reads: "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep." Again, the R.S.V. translates literally. In the N.I.V. the Greek text which says that God will bring with Him (= Christ Jesus) is lost; the "with" is rendered by "in" and connected with "fallen asleep" from which it is separated by "through Jesus bring." Besides, although one can argue that the meaning of this text is: If we believe the one thing (Christ's death and resurrection), so we believe also the other thing (that God will bring those who have fallen asleep in Christ through Him), nevertheless, the Greek text does not repeat the verb "believe." That the second "believe" is added is not even indicated.

Certainly, one can also point to texts that are translated in a very good way. But it is the method of translating, the more dynamic manner instead of the principally literal way, that causes these freedoms, whereby the original text is not conveyed to the reader.

I thought it necessary to point out these things, and make the readers aware of them.

J. GEERTSEMA

The task of government today: some introductory remarks³

The last time we considered religious toleration and also some Biblical principles to help us appreciate the place and task of the state. We noted that God is sovereign and that His rights have priority; that government is to be bound by the norms of God's law, insofar as the state has jurisdiction and competence; that also secular governments are used by God to uphold justice and maintain peace for the well-being of the church and that church and state each have their own jurisdiction. Neither must rule the other. There is to be freedom of religion.

The current situation

How do these principles function in our secular pluralistic society? To answer this question, let us briefly consider two examples. The first deals with abortion. I do not think that any of us question the fact that abortion is the unlawful taking of human life (cf., e.g., Psalm 139) and thus is murder. As such this is forbidden in the sixth commandment. The Scriptures

make it very clear that government has a task to oppose and punish the unlawful taking of life. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image" (Gen. 9:6). The governing authority, as God's servant, "does not bear the sword in vain" (Rom. 13:4). Government should therefore take all necessary measures to protect the life of the unborn. This, however, is not being done. There are of course difficulties here in our modern secular society. Government does not see itself as being God's servant and is thus easily swayed by vocal (minority) pressure groups who represent special interests such as liberalized abortions. There should be freedom in a pluralistic society, so goes the argument. However, on the point of abortion there can be no compromise or freedom. Too much is at stake. Life given by God is snuffed out unjustly. God's right to have this life protected must be acknowledged by the government. It is fully within their jurisdiction.

A second example is the government's task with respect to the fourth commandment. How far does the government's authority go here? Clearly the state cannot force and demand, for example, that people spend the Sunday in a Biblical way and hallow that day. That is beyond the competence and task of government. However, the state should promote rest on that day and it has the duty to see to it that public worship is possible. This obligation weighs all the heavier for political jurisdictions in a country like ours with a heritage which exhibited Christian values and indicated a knowledge of God's revelation, His Word. This fact puts a special onus on Canadian government to recognize its responsibility in the first place to the King of Kings and the Lords of Lords and in the second place to the (silent) majority of Canadians who still call themselves Christian, be it nominally or out of conviction.

In 1985, the Lord's Day Act was tested in the Alberta Court of Appeal on the

basis of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1981). Mr. Justice Belzil gave a dissenting judgment in which he wrote that Canada is part of Western civilization, moulded in and impressed with Christian values and traditions which still are a strong constituent element in the basic fabric of our society. Part of his judgment bears repeating:

I do not believe that the political sponsors of the Charter intended to confer upon the courts the task of stripping away all the vestiges of those values and traditions, and the courts should be most loath to assume that role. With the Lord's Day Act eliminated, will not all reference in the statutes to Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving be next? . . . Such interpretation would make of the Charter an instrument for the repression of the majority at the instance of every dissident and result in an amorphous, rootless and godless nation contrary to the recognition of the Supremacy of God declared in the preamble. The "living tree" will wither if planted in sterilized soil . . . As much as it may be desirable and fair that all religious preferences be treated equally, there are times when that is not possible. The Lord's Day Act is an example. Civil authority, while bowing to pressure from religious groups, recognized the moral value of a day of rest. That it should have selected the day of the week regarded as holy by the great majority of Canadians is not inconsistent with the basic principles of democracy. That is political reality. Majority rule is restricted by the Charter only when it abridges or abrogates the guaranteed rights of others.

At the same time, the government has to reckon with the fact that today's society has a plurality of essentially conflicting religious outlooks. In seeking to fulfil its duty of preserving the civic peace, government will need to allow, for example, that it is possible for conscientious Jews to celebrate their Sabbath on Saturday. This can entail permitting their stores to be open on Sunday (provided they are closed on Saturday). Furthermore, in spite of our Christian heritage, civil government will also need to take into account the concrete reality of sin and growing secularization, so that "Sunday laws" remain enforceable and politically feasible. Something not completely unlike this principle is seen in the practice of divorce as recorded in Deuteronomy 24. Christ says, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because of the hardness of your hearts; but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). If Moses (yes, the Lord, who gave the law) had to reckon with the low level of Israel's spiritual life in the civil

legislation of Israel, how much more government today.

This of course does not mean that government today should merely allow society to drift into pure secularization. Government should not fashion policy simply by following the latest public opinion polls, but government should provide leadership as God's servant, heeding the norms of His revelation and showing the country that such leadership and laws benefit society in its entirety. Our society is not ignorant of God's rights and will. Government has a holy obligation and re-

a lamp before their feet, a light on their path (cf. Psalm 119:105). As God's servant, the civil authorities who are or are made aware of the demands of God, are obliged to promote Biblical justice and righteousness. That is surely the situation in Canada. The light of the Word of God should be used to show the way in the darkness of a vast array of issues and dilemmas of the day — moral, but also economic, education, health, labour and other issues.

However, even atheistic, revolutionary or pagan governments which are hos-

"When government fulfils its basic office of working for external peace and civil order, it promotes the work of Jesus Christ."

sponsibility in such a society to promote Biblical justice and righteousness (cf. Psalm 2:10-11). Much has been given to us as nation and much is therefore required. It is vital that the people of God remind and point governing authorities to this reality.

Concluding remarks

God has instituted civil government and to God government is responsible. Their office is ultimately to serve the glory of God and the coming of His Kingdom. Also for governments, the Word is to be

tile to God or ignorant of His demands, are God's servants. After all, God is sovereign and He works all things for the well-being of His people and the coming of His Kingdom through the Lordship of Jesus Christ. When government fulfils its basic office of working for external peace and civil order, it promotes the work of Jesus Christ. Then the gospel can be proclaimed, which is a crucial activity in this age. Did Christ not say, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . ." (Matt. 28:18ff.) and "this



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gospel will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14)? Church history is the focal point of world history. It is of great comfort to the church that all rulers stand under the authority of Jesus Christ. Even if there is persecution, the church can grow and increase. However, the church cannot grow where there is chaos and no order. Government must prevent such a chaos and guard society from dissolution. By so preserving the external civil peace, government serves the eternal peace that comes by means of the gospel proclamation.²

The government's office is specific and it is set off from other authorities in society. That means that in certain instances

it can do what a church, for example, can never do. Government can tolerate false religion in view of its office of preserving the civil peace. The church can never do this, for she is the "pillar and bulwark of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15). On the other hand, in other situations, government cannot do what is, however, within the authority of the church or of parents. For example, in this age, which tends at times to become rather obsessed with so-called women's rights, it is not unimaginable that government could be asked to legislate that it is unjust discrimination to bar women from the pulpit. A government that goes into such a matter transgresses its legitimate authority. Admission to the ministry of the Word is the prerogative of the church, not

the state. Similarly government would have no business legislating in the name of anti-discrimination that non-Christians be able to teach in schools operated by parents from Canadian Reformed Churches. That is not within the government's jurisdiction, but not the parents'.

Government has to know its place. It does not have absolute authority. That belongs to God alone. His is the Kingdom and the power and the glory for ever! That reality must never be forgotten.

C. VAN DAM

¹As quoted in *The Guide*, March 1987, p. 3.

²See J. Douma, *Politieke verantwoordelijkheid*, 146-147.

Making babies₂

Manipulation

There is also a tremendous danger of manipulation. We can hardly begin to imagine how far people will go. We should be aware of the various spiritual forces, ideologies, and philosophies, which will try to take advantage of this new ability to make babies. The idea of breeding a superior race, much in the same way that animal breeders try to develop better stock, is a reality to be contended with.

The idea of developing a super race is not new. Already in the fourth century B.C., the Greek philosopher Plato advocated this in his book *The Republic*. Plato did not know of the abilities of modern science when it came to making babies. Still, he knew of practical ways. He said that the whole process of mating and getting children should be controlled by the state. The state should choose the best men and women, physically and intellectually. They should be allowed to reproduce. Inferior people should be discouraged from mating. If children were born to them, they should be destroyed. Further, Plato thought that family life should be abolished. There should be a collectivization of children. Thus parents would not know who their children were, nor children who their parents were.

What we see here is the suggestion to manipulate people like a prize herd of cattle. This same philosophy is found today. Karl Marx, the father of modern communism, said that the family should be abolished, for it was a capitalist phenomenon, where women and children were practically slaves of a man. It is interesting that both Russia and China tried to abolish

the family, but soon found that this was impossible, for it would lead to incredible chaos.

Despite this, there are still sociologists and feminists who talk in this negative way about the family and thus see a great ally in modern science's ability to make babies outside the bond of marriage. One man talks as if the family idea is inherently and dangerously evil. It is even said that the family is the source of all discontent in life.

The ability to "make babies" at will can thus become a dangerous tool in the hands of those who are anti-God and anti-family. It is a dangerous tool in the hands of those who base their thinking on evolutionary and humanistic principles. It is said that through selective breeding of the best people, people chosen for their good looks, intelligence, and genetic health, we will develop a better mankind. Yes, through selective breeding, man will reach perfection! To achieve this goal, there would be a need for strong leadership, basically a totalitarian state. A board of geneticists would have complete records of every person, especially of their genetic family tree. They would decide who could donate eggs and sperm. The rest of the men and women would be sterilized. Sterilized women would be allowed to carry a fertilized embryo, carefully chosen and fertilized in a laboratory under the control of the geneticists. In this way, fathers would be merely symbolic figures. Some feminists see this as ideal, for this would completely equalize the sexes. Sexual relations would merely be for pleasure, and nothing else. This also would open up for sexual rela-

tions with anyone, regardless of whether they were male or female.

Such talk may sound strange, yes, even scary. But, it is realistic. We mentioned Plato, who already promoted this idea. Hitler tried in Germany to produce a super race. Thus he wanted to eradicate all Jews and invalids and other undesirable people which would only weaken the race. And, we all will have heard the title of the popular novel, *Brave New World*, which speaks of conception and gestation completely outside the womb, in bottles! We should realize that today there are powerful philosophers and scientists who think that the only way the human race can survive is through such total genetic manipulation and control. Indeed, it is thought that the time has come that man must now take control of the forces of evolution in order that the climax of evolution, the perfect man, can be reached. It is an evolutionary principle that matter controls the mind; that is, chance developments have led to the development of human minds. The time has come, it is said, that man's mind start to control matter!

Born in sin

At the beginning we referred to the catalogue approach to having babies. Well, the technology is there to do that. There is a big problem, however, which the scientists are not willing to recognize. No matter how carefully you breed, it is impossible to breed sin out of the human race. It is noteworthy that despite the tremendous technological advances of the last one hundred years, man as a moral creature has not gotten any better.

With the increased technology he only has more ways to show his total depravity! Just think of what modern technology has meant for the increase in terror and destructiveness in war.

What modern science does not want to recognize is that no matter how much control you exercise, you cannot control the heart of man. Producing a very strong, healthy race, most certainly will lead to increases in wickedness. It is also forgotten that the greatest leaders and men who had the most impact on human history, were often physically very weak. Just to mention one, John Calvin was a man of frail physical stature. Yet, how mighty an instrument of the LORD has he not been?

What we can notice in these modern attempts to breed a super race is that there is no room for Jesus Christ. Man thinks the only way to get rid of sin, to perfect mankind, is through selective breeding. Thus, it is thought that man has the power in himself to save himself. This is a purely evolutionistic viewpoint. The only way that man can be saved and delivered from sin is not through selective breeding, but through faith in Jesus Christ. Sinful parents produce sinful children. Only when we are born anew by the Holy Spirit can sin be overcome through faith in the blood of Christ. Of course, the message of the gospel, of Jesus Christ crucified, does not fit into modern man's thinking. The cross is folly to modern man, who thinks he can overcome sin by himself.

We should not be surprised, however, that man has been able to get so far in the field of science and technology. The LORD has laid tremendous capabilities within creation. Man was to go and have dominion over the earth. That mandate remains. What we see, however, is that man uses the potentials of creation not to the glory of God, but to his own glory. If we read Revelation 13 about the beast out of the earth, we see that sinful man will be able to do tremendous things.

Conclusions

After all this, it is time to draw some conclusions when it comes to children and man's ability to make them. When it comes to such matters as children, conception, and birth, then we must first of all keep in mind God's norms, His rules. His creation order is that husband and wife together are to procreate and fill the earth. Procreation is part of their mandate. When they do this in faith, God will be glorified.

The LORD clearly established marriage between a man and a woman. Though the Old Testament does give examples of men having more than one wife, this was not the norm, and seldom, if ever, gave the man true happiness. Think of

the bickering between Hagar and Sarah, Jacob's wives, and Elkanah's wives. Think of the misery Solomon had with his one thousand wives! Adultery is definitely forbidden. This can also be extended to technical adultery, where a third party enters the marriage through the donation of an egg or sperm. Genetic material from someone else is introduced. The LORD has commanded husband and wife to be fruitful and multiply. If He closes the womb



or may not allow conception to take place.

We should approach this whole area of "making babies" with great care. Though we can perhaps see its benefits to help overcome a problem in the wife, it is open to much abuse. Much development in this field is motivated not by faith but by man's curiosity, his desire to control everything. We live in an age where people always clamour for their rights, also their right to procreate. In the consumer society we

"When we are dealing with babies, and with conception, . . . we are dealing with the creative work of God."

and then we try to introduce a third party to bypass that, we are stepping outside of what He has ordained.

It should be clear then that artificial insemination with the sperm from a donor is not acceptable, for we are introducing the genetic material from a third party. Likewise, the donation of eggs is to be rejected. In the same line, surrogate motherhood is to be rejected. In this case there is even the element of greed, as a woman hires out her womb. All these encroach on the marriage bond, call for improper actions, e.g. masturbation, and often involve aborting the unwanted extra embryos.

As far as artificial insemination from the husband is concerned, in order to bypass some blockage in the wife, we should not discount this too easily. Medical intervention should not be ruled out, even though we are dealing with the conception of babies. We do not hesitate to interfere throughout a pregnancy to help the mother keep the child. Likewise, caesarian sections, though medical interventions, are also very beneficial. It should be kept in mind that artificial insemination does not guarantee conception. This method merely makes it possible for the husband's sperm and the wife's egg to come together. Whether conception does take place remains outside human hands, but in the power of the LORD, who may

live in, many couples feel that they have a right to have a child, and will thus go to any length to get what they want.

As children of the LORD, we confess that nothing takes place outside of God's providential care. This means that also when a couple desires children, but the womb remains closed, this is in the hand of the LORD. It can be very painful for young couples when their desire is not granted. Families which are richly blessed should sympathize with them, and be careful not to shut them out from regular activities, just because they have no children.

What we must watch out for, however, is an overly technical, medical approach. It is so easy to say when a woman does not get pregnant, that it is simply a matter of the parts not functioning properly. Perhaps there is a medical obstruction. A visit to the doctor to find out would be most appropriate, and within the domain of our God-given responsibility. At the same time, let us not forget that we have a heavenly Father. Conception is not strictly a technical, physical matter. Conception is in His hands. He creates life when He so wishes.

We should thus pay proper attention to the spiritual factor, and lay also these concerns before the LORD in prayer. There are some examples in the Bible where the LORD opened the womb, not after the

visit to the doctor, but after His children earnestly begged this of Him in prayer. We all are familiar with Hannah's prayer, which the LORD blessed by granting her a child, Samuel. There is also the case of Isaac and Rebekah. For some twenty years after they were married, Rebekah was barren. We read in Genesis 25:21 that Isaac prayed for His wife. Here is an outstanding example of the husband laying the concerns of him and his wife before the LORD. The LORD also answered that prayer. Certainly, there may be medical, physical problems. But, let us not forget to lay these things before the LORD in prayer. After all, we have ready access to His throne through our Saviour, our High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is always ready to intercede for us. Couples would do well to lay these concerns before the throne of their Father. Even if He does not grant the request for children, He will most certainly grant His grace. And His grace is always sufficient.

We should be careful also in how we look at receiving children. It is not some right we all have. Children are a blessing. We go in the wrong direction when we want children merely to satisfy our desires and wishes. Further, a marriage without children is not a failure. Receiving children and raising them requires much energy. Those who do not have children will have much extra energy they can direct elsewhere for the sake of God's kingdom. Perhaps they may decide to adopt a child, perhaps one of mixed race or slightly older or even handicapped. Perhaps they can find ways to use their energy to help other parents. Not having children may give the feeling of emptiness, but it does not mean at all that life is meaningless. It is just that energies can and should be spent elsewhere.

When we are dealing with babies, and with conception, then we are dealing with the springs of life. We are dealing with the creative work of God. As with everything else, man tries to control and manipulate it. It often seems that human life itself has become a plaything for man. We do best not to be wiser than God, but simply follow His normative way for family life and bringing forth children. It may never come to the point where we look at conception as merely "making babies," as if they are consumer items we can order from the catalogue. Certainly, there is the human factor, in that babies are the fruit of love between the parents. Still, in the end babies are made by the LORD. He knits them together in their mother's womb. Man should know his limits also when it comes to the springs of life. And, rather than manipulate he should learn to appreciate and praise the creative work of God, also in the "making of babies."

E. KAMPEN

The "Statenvertaling"

Recently the press within our Netherlands sister churches dedicated considerable space to the fact that it was 350 years ago that the so-called "Statenvertaling" appeared. (The translation of the Holy Scriptures by order of the States General)

Actually, the title "Staten-Vertaling" is a misnomer, since the urge and decision to have a new and reliable translation of the Word of God did not come from the civil authorities but from the ecclesiastical assemblies.

The States General received this honour only because the finances for this undertaking came for by far the larger part from the civil authorities.

Almost from the very beginning of more or less organized church life after the Reformation, the Netherlands churches saw it as their duty to do their utmost to provide a trustworthy and correct translation of the Holy Scriptures.

The first general synod of these churches was held in Emden, on German soil, in 1571.

There the brothers from Cologne came with the question regarding "a good Netherlands translation of the Bible." No decision was made, but "the Brothers were of the opinion that this should be postponed till the General Synod." This evidently means: the next general synod.

The gathering in Dordrecht in 1574 actually was a provincial synod, although it is always mentioned in the row of general synods. There the brothers received a question from the delegates from the island of Walcheren regarding "a new translation of the Bible into our Netherlands language," and they replied that they "should wait till the translation of the Bible into the French and Latin languages, about to appear, has come out, in order that from these languages more easily and better a translation might be made."

The next general synod was (again) held in Dordrecht and took place in 1578. It received the question:

"Whether it is proper and necessary to translate the Bible from the Hebrew into the Netherlands language, or at least to revise the common translation, and who shall be charged with this."

The reply was that in due time such a translation would be needed but that the translation which was commonly used

"shall in the meantime be revised after the French, Latin, and other translations, especially the new Heidelberg translation. The French annotations on the Old Testament should be added."

It was not deemed wise to charge just one person with this immense task and therefore synod appointed Marnix, "Lord of St. Aldegonde and Petrus Dathe-nus to look for men who would be able to execute this work properly."

At the General Synod of Middelburg 1581, four classes were appointed to look for able persons to each take a part of the whole project; but at the General Synod of The Hague in 1586 it became clear that nothing had been achieved.

This Synod also received a lengthy letter, apparently submitted on behalf of Ian Canin, who urged synod to have the work of translation done.

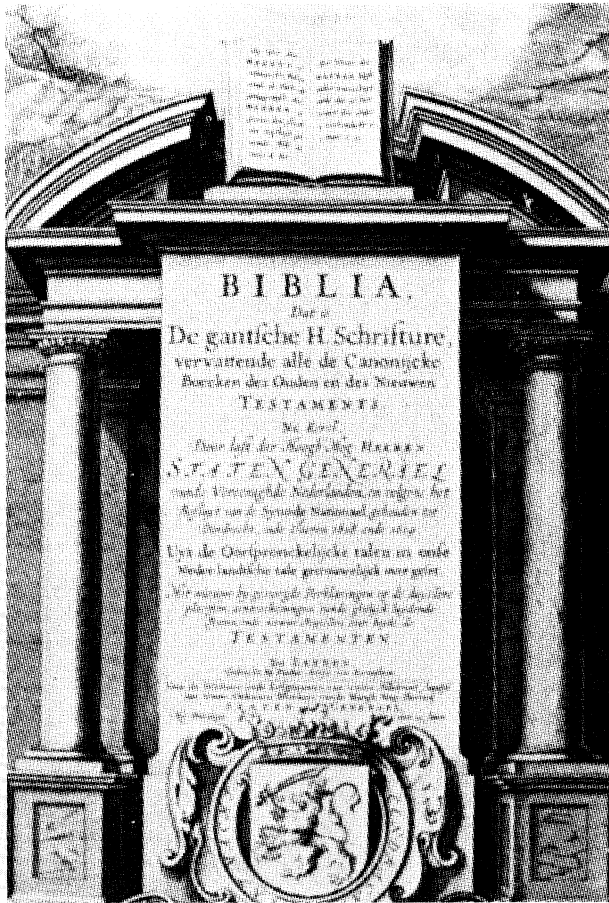
In this letter he stated that the translation in use, revised after the German translation, was not all that accurate even so that "especially in Job, the Psalms and the Prophets the meaning of the Holy Spirit has not been grasped."

The writer has been asked by many ministers and high officials whether not once a correct translation could be made available in our language. Foreign churches have been more diligent, he states, and especially when the Latin translation by Tremellius and Iunius was printed, financed by Frederick III of the Palatinate, the writer was compelled to ponder the question again. With the help of kind gentlemen and friends he obtained the privilege (sole right) to print the Bible for a certain number of years; otherwise it would not have been advisable to go into so much trouble and expense.

After this, he wrote, "since this is a work which concerns the whole church in these countries and would be done to their benefit, and since for this reason the translation ought to be made correct and decent, he first approached the South Holland Synod at Rotterdam and then the General Synod of Middelburg in June 1581, in order that some ministers be assigned to him and appointed to do this work of translating."

He then referred to the decision of 1581, mentioned above.

However, he wrote, "until now not even a beginning had been made to the work, to great harm to the churches, to



Statenbijbel: title page of the first edition

great inconvenience of the ministers, and to great shame of these countries, that here less diligence is shown to have a correct and decent translation in the common language than in other countries. Besides, suppliant is being held back from a good purpose to serve the churches, and also privately suffers damage, because with the efforts to obtain the publishing rights he has already run into quite high costs because of travels and in other respects. Nevertheless, suppliant has had no lack of anything and he has always been willing to conduct himself honestly and to satisfy those who were to do the work of translating as they ought to."

Some people, he stated, have done some translating, but he would rather see that it were done by capable ministers, "with advice, knowledge and approval of the synod of these countries, because this is a matter of great consequence, which ought not to be undertaken without due consideration or rashly, as it neither can nor should be changed or resumed lightly."

The brother was genuinely concerned, but did not forget his business interests either.

"Suppliant therefore begs you . . . to have this praiseworthy work done as soon as possible in the aforesaid manner . . . or in another better way — at your discretion — in order that many who have been longing for this for a considerable time, be finally comforted and the whole church may be served with a faithful translation; also in order that the sole right to print, which suppliant received by advice and

OUR COVER

Trinity United Church
where services of Calgary's
Canadian Reformed Church
are held.

favour as well as at great cost, be not rendered illusory; and in order that not possibly somewhere someone be found who on his own initiative make a translation or has it made without previous knowledge, consent or advice of Synod, to great hurt of the churches; something which would have happened long ago, if not suppliant had prevented this by his patent."

He assured Synod that "this work not only will serve to the honour of God and the service of the churches, but that it will also be praised by all descendants as a laudable act to the honour of the whole Synod."

The prediction at the end of this letter has come true.

Until the appearance of the new translation made by order of the Netherlands Bible Society the "Statenvertaling" was the source of knowledge, comfort, strengthening of faith and inspiration for the generations. It is difficult to visualize that until some thirty-five years ago this was the translation used almost everywhere.

As was the case with the King James Version, so this translation shaped the language and countless are the expressions and concepts which have been derived from it.

Our Netherlands sister churches have again appointed deputies for Bible translation, but things are not as "simple" any more as they were 350 years ago.

As for us, we lack the manpower to undertake such a tremendous work and, besides, we should not isolate ourselves from others. It may become necessary to do it, for the translations which come off the press nowadays are oftentimes outdated within a short time because of their "modern" language, for the more "modern" a style and language is, the sooner it is antiquated. And the nonsense of removing so-called "sexist" language from the Word of our God may go so far as to compel us to go it on our own.

We, therefore, gratefully acknowledge the blessing derived from a work undertaken in obedience more than four hundred years ago, as we are also grateful for the blessings resulting from the King James Version which, apparently, still is the translation sold most widely in the English-speaking world.

VO

Ordination and installation of Rev. P. Aasman

Sunday, September 27 was a day of gladness for the congregation of Hamilton, the cooperating churches in the classis area Ontario-South, and above all for br. and sr. P. Aasman and their family. On this day br. P. Aasman would be ordained and installed as minister of the Word in order to be sent out as missionary.

Rev. R. Aasman from the neighbouring Church at Ancaster officiated in the ordination service and installation of his brother P. Aasman as missionary. Based upon the words of Isaiah 52:7 "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'" Rev. R. Aasman pointed toward the immediate fulfillment of good tidings and the ultimate fulfillment of good tidings. It was stressed that in a decadent world permeated with sin during the time before the exile and also today here and particularly in Brazil the church is to proclaim that message of peace, the good tidings. That message giving the ultimate and complete liberation for those held captive by sin is Christ. He is the Message and the Messenger who will bind the broken hearted, heal the sick, give good tidings for the afflicted and proclaim liberation to the captive. Rev. R. Aasman addressed his brother showing "how beautiful are the feet of him who brings good tidings" because of the MESSAGE he is to bring. Encouragement for the difficult task of missionary and missionary family was given by illustrating that the Rev. P. Aasman would be joining a long line of messengers when he goes out to proclaim the good tidings to those held captive by sin in Brazil. Dr. K. Deddens and our former missionary and present counsellor Rev. D.G.J. Agema participated in the laying on of hands. After the service the "new" Rev. Aasman and his wife and the extended family for whom forty seats were reserved in a "full" church building were heartily congratulated during a "coffee social."

For his inaugural service in the afternoon Rev. P. Aasman also chose an Old Testament text, namely, from the prayer



Rev. and Mrs. P. Aasman and Joshua

of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings 8:41-43. "Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of Thy people Israel, comes from a far country for Thy name's sake (for they shall hear of Thy great name, and Thy mighty hand, and of Thy outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to Thee; in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name and fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Thy name." The sermon about this prophetic prayer for the welfare of the congregation and the gathering of the church from among the nations was summarized by addressing the condition of the prayer, the petition of the prayer and the ultimate goal sought in this prayer. Shown was that God rules all creation and that the church is meant to draw from all peoples in the world. Others, foreigners, will know God through the church therefore Israel, the church, damned the other nations by forsaking God. We were encouraged by our missionary to be a faithful sending church by letting God's glory be our guiding light and we were assured that we should not stumble if the Spirit is among us.

After the service, the chairman of the consistory br. A. Witten, expressed on behalf of the congregation gratitude and joy and congratulated Rev. P. Aasman and his family. He thankfully acknowledged and read from letters received from the supporting Churches of Chatham, Smithville and Watford extending congratulations and prayerful support to Rev. P. Aasman and the Church at Hamilton. The Church at Surrey also offered congratula-

tions and expressed the wish that the missionaries from Hamilton and Surrey might be able to work together for many years in a fruitful vineyard. The expectation was raised that the planting of a federation of Reformed Churches in Brazil is no longer an abstract idea for the Lord has opened many doors in Brazil. These encouragements were well received. Br. H. Bartels chairman of the Board of Mission and member of the consistory briefly elaborated on the work of the past eight years leading up to this day and expressed thankfulness and joy for the events made possible by the grace of God. Rev. D.G.J. Agema on behalf of the Church at Attercliffe and on behalf of the other cooperating churches of the classis area Ontario-South who as counsellor and former missionary had been able to be particularly helpful in the work of calling a missionary, spoke next. He congratulated Rev. P. Aasman and the Church at Hamilton and pointed toward the reality that God's Word is a stumbling block for many but brings salvation for others here in Canada but also in Brazil and encouraged Rev. P. Aasman and his wife for their beautiful but difficult task. Br. E. Helder, one of the representatives from the cooperating Church at Lincoln then extended his congratulations. Finally, Rev. R. Aasman on behalf of the Church at Ancaster and on behalf of the family and as brother spoke encouraging and personal words of appreciation for the joy experienced during this day. A joy that all present shared and in closing expressed with the words of Hymn 36:1, 5. "... Let us spread this truth abroad ... To the Spirit we give Praise ... Fill the earth's remotest end ... Holy Spirit, Thou be praised!"

A PARTICIPANT

The Canadian Reformed Church of Elora



On Sunday afternoon, September 6, 1987, a new church was instituted in Elora, Ontario. Rev. Cl. Stam, who conducted the service, called this an historic occasion for Fergus and the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches. We were told not to direct attention to ourselves, but to the Lord Jesus Christ as head of the church. In Revelation 1:12-16 we are shown the excellent glory and power of Christ that we may glory in His service.

The Elora congregation with its 113 members would have been lost in the Knox Presbyterian Church building which was used for the institution service. The arrival of brothers and sisters from Fergus, Guelph, Orangeville, Grand Valley, Hamilton, the Burlingtons filled the pews to a crowd of 400 people. The red banners festively suspended throughout the building read "150 years." This reminder of the pioneer drive to put the church in the centre of their community enhanced the sense that we were indeed caught up in an historical event of significance.

Before the sermon, Luitzen DeWitt, Allard Gunnink and Jerry Hutten were ordained as elders. Fred Reinink and Alex Thalen were ordained as deacons.

In the sermon it became clear that Revelation was written in a time of threat to the new churches. John himself was banished. There were many martyrs for the faith. "What yet must happen" is revealed to John. The triumph of the Lamb

of God is the main theme here. The text was summarized by the theme "The appearance of the risen Christ to John on the island of Patmos at the beginning of his final revelation." In this theme three elements became apparent: the central position of the Lord, the exalted person of the Lord, and the holy purpose of the Lord.

John saw Christ in the midst of the lampstands. Christ is in the midst of His churches with His power and glory. The lampstands radiate the light of the gospel. We in Elora are to be as pure gold lampstands. As a lampstand we are to be independent and free under Christ in the midst of the lampstands or the federation. We may rejoice because Christ says to Elora, "I am with you. I am in the midst of you."

John describes the Lord as clothed with a long robe and a golden girdle around His breast. His clothing, His eyes, voice and feet as they are described all point to the head of the church as the Priest/King. Christ as omniscient and omnipotent God appears to His troubled churches of Asia Minor. Also in the turbulence of these latter days Christ will preserve His church.

Christ does not appear as a rigid statue, but as an acting person. The seven stars, that is, the office-bearers who preach the Word, are held in the hand of Christ. The strength of Elora is the preached Word.

Christ will lead the Church at Elora onward to the Great Day of His coming. Our focus must be on the victorious Christ.

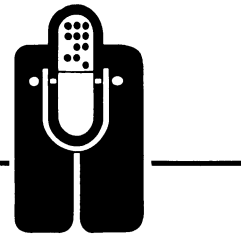
After the worship service br. Klaas Sikkema spoke on behalf of the Church at Fergus. He expressed happiness that enough growth had radiated around Fergus to enable the community of Elora to establish an independent church. A certain sadness also comes with leaving the Church of Fergus which so many of us have attended. In the bonds of the federation, the school society and the closeness of our communities, however, we are not separated entirely.

The institution of Elora also drew in two families that formerly were members of the Church of Guelph. Rev. P. Feenstra of Guelph brought two official congratulations: from Classis June 18, 1987 and from the congregation of Guelph. In the congregation greet one another with a holy kiss.

Br. Ron Bergsma spoke on behalf of the newly instituted Church at Grand Valley. Using the analogy of human development he expressed the wish that the Church at Elora might grow from its infancy to maturity in Christ.

On behalf of Rehoboth Canadian Reformed Church of Burlington, br. John Hutten charged the Church at Elora to be beautiful and pure as the village of Elora itself is. A coffee social and a congregational photo session completed this joyous day of institution.

PETER SMID



Let us begin this time with some very pleasant news. The day before yesterday I again received an envelope with bulletins from Toronto. Thank you, brothers. Since I did mention it when it was decided no longer to send them I mention it also now that I receive them again.

This joy is not unmixed, however. I received an *editio castigata*, as they express it in Latin. That means: various parts had been removed and of some pages just one-quarter was left. Our readers understand that it is of little use to receive only pages on which we are told what cantata Bach wrote for certain occasions and who are babysitting in Toronto.

I must respectfully request the brothers to save themselves the time used for censoring and the cost of postage, for what I have received now is useless for our column.

Speaking of Latin, it appears that words derived from this language still cause problems, even for ministers who are supposed to be well acquainted with this tongue. A few years ago I sort of poked fun at the term "preemptory" examination which some seemed to prefer over and above the official name "peremptory examination," but it seems that none of the ministers present at the Classis Ontario North of September 18, 1987 raised any objection when the press release was read at the end of classis and this word was used.

I would have assumed that it was a printer's or typist's error if not the same term had been found in bulletins. I still don't know what "preemptory" actually means. Something like "emptying beforehand"? Or "advance buying"?

Let's go to some more exhilarating news.

No, I do not mean the report which the Providence Edmonton consistory received "on installing a 'lift' for our senior members. The cost of this chairlift was estimated at \$20,000."(!) This is not very uplifting, is it? Twenty thousand dollars for such a device! Is that why the number of theses which Luther affixed to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg was reduced to 75?

The more exciting news is about the institution of the Church in Vernon. The brothers and sisters there had a social hour afterwards, which was held in another building. Vernon's membership is given as 58, and there is some expectation that more people will settle in the Okanagan Valley. I have no doubt that a report will be found in *Clarion* one of these days.

Going to the Bulkley Valley, we discover that the property we mentioned another time has now become the church's. "The Board of the Houston Canadian Reformed School Society sent a letter dealing with the possibility of obtaining a piece of the property the Church has bought. The Board will be informed that there are no objections to this." Already with the purchase the consistory kept the possibility of such acquisition by the School Board in mind.

Houston's consistory also reports: "The Church at Lynden requests continued support. A letter supplied by the Church at Lynden informs us that they would like to have continued support so that they can proceed with putting up a church building. The Consistory is of the opinion that classical support of a Church should be directed to the cost of maintaining a minister. When it comes to building plans, it may be better to approach the Churches individually for help in this matter."

I shall not make any comment on the case as such. At the latest Classis Pacific the request of Lynden was granted, so this matter has been settled. The reason why I mention it never-

theless is because the thoughts expressed by Houston are found with others as well, and for this reason it appears warranted to pay some more attention to it.

In the first place: There are people who object to military expenses and to the manner in which the money for the military is being used by the federal government. In protest they withhold from their taxes the amount which, in their opinion, is used for military purposes.

This is pure nonsense, even apart from the revolutionary character of such action. No one can separate the one branch of government from the other and determine what precise amount of one's taxes (income taxes, that is) is used for the department of immigration, what sum for external affairs, and so on.

I use this as an example, not for any other purpose, and no one should seek more in it.

Can we ever determine precisely where support is needed and for what part of the expenses when a church asks the sister churches for their help? I challenge anyone to come up with a precise tabulation. What church would ever reason and come with a request to a classis as follows: "We need so much for renting a building, so much for costs of church federation, so much for hydro and water, so much for this, and so much for that; now we have come to the conclusion that we have only two thousand dollars left for the support of the minister and his family, and therefore we need from the sister churches the rest for his support, his transportation costs, for the rent of a house, and so on."?

Apart from the fact that no church ever reasons like that, it is impossible to separate the various items on the budget in this manner.

Secondly, however, it has to be borne in mind that we do not say in our Catechism in Lord's Day 38 that "the minist^{ER} of the gospel be maintained," but that the minist^{RY} of the gospel be maintained."

The ministry of the gospel is all that belongs to the existence and activities and obligations of the church. This includes the renting or erecting of a place where the worship services can be held; it includes the contributions that are required for the mission work, for the spreading of the gospel in our own surroundings, for the proper support of the ministerial family, and so on.

If a church cannot meet its financial obligations as a result of payments to be made on a loan taken out for the erecting of a place of worship, the sister churches will come to its aid. And if a church, already being supported to some extent by the sister churches, comes to the conclusion that it is necessary to have their own meeting place, this support will have to be continued. The support is for the minist^{RY} of the gospel, and this includes everything.

It would be proper to approach the sister churches individually instead of coming to a classis with the request for support if a church, able to maintain the ministry of the gospel without help, came with a request for financial aid with a view to building a place of worship. This, however, is a different situation.

So much for this point.

A previous time we mentioned that the Elora Church wanted to continue its cooperation within the Home Mission

Committee of the Fergus Church till the end of the year. Now the bulletin mentions that "It is the Consistory's intention to set up a Home Mission Committee in the new year." Sounds like a sound decision.

The Ladies Aid in Fergus has another project to tackle. They have captured an 85-unit motel, so to speak, for cleaning, and the ransom money will be the tidy sum of \$3,400.00. The ladies plan to spend three days on the project and "This money will go towards buying playground equipment for the grade school."

There is another item from Fergus to which we are going to pay some more attention and to which we are going to give ample room in our medley.

This is what the Rev. Stam wrote.

"MEMORIAL GATHERING

"Perhaps some of you recall that the consistory a year or so ago sent a letter to the Fergus mayor and the local Canadian Legion branch complaining that we could not participate in their 'decoration day service' because it was held on a Sunday and interfered with our own service times. Our congregation has therefore never really been involved in any such civic or community related 'remembrance' ceremonies.

"Now you might know that the local Legion annually in November goes into one of the local churches with a 'flag ceremony,' that is, the national and regimental flags are marched into the church building to begin a memorial service. This is apparently an old civil-military custom in Fergus. The Legion has now asked us if we are prepared to receive them and to organize such a memorial service in our church building. They have indicated that they would like to attend our service on the morning of November 8, 1987.

"When the consistory received this request, it was faced with some compelling questions. First, we do not want to partake in what may even seem like an inter-denominational service, let alone organize one! Second, we feel that our regular services (with the emphasis on congregational worship and the preaching of God's Word) are not at all suited for such a civic memorial. So we could not decide to organize this 'memorial' within the framework of an official worship service.

"There were only three options left. The first one was to deny the request altogether. The second was to see if it could be organized on another day, let's say on a Saturday. The third option was to have it indeed on a Sunday, but then as a *separate* gathering, and not as a regular church service.

"The consistory felt that we could not let this opportunity pass by without a positive response. If we may organize it and conduct it according to the Scriptures, there is every reason to present a reformed witness to our community! It became evident that the Legion preferred to have this memorial on a Sunday, as is their custom. Therefore only the third option was left open to us.

"The consistory therefore decided that a public memorial gathering will be organized in our church building on *Sunday, November 8, 1987*, to which the representatives of the government and the Canadian Legion will be invited for the 'flag ceremony.' To make this possible, our regular morning service will commence at 9: 00 a.m. while this gathering will begin at 11: 00 a.m. The Legion members and dignitaries will assemble at the Fergus Community Centre and march into the church just before 11: 00 a.m. It is possible that refreshments will be served downstairs after the gathering.

"The consistory wishes to stress that this is not a church service, as we know it, under the supervision of the consistory, where the Word is officially proclaimed and the benediction given. It is a special memorial gathering, which will be conducted by our own minister according to his best insights. This will be made clear to our guests. The gathering will follow the general pattern of our worship services, but is nothing more than a public gathering for a specific purpose.

"It should be duly noted by everyone that the congregation is *not required* to attend this gathering, since it is not a worship service, but everyone is, of course, invited and urged to attend, also with a view to the singing. We sincerely hope that this gathering may be a true testimony of the power and glory of God to our community. It is an excellent opportunity for home mission."

Having read this, our readers will be convinced that it was not because of some sort of chauvinism that I quoted at length from the Fergus bulletin. It is the first time that I have read something like this happening in any of our congregations, and I am happy about it that it did take place in Fergus. This may dispel another myth about the Canadian Reformed Churches, namely, that we are too much introvert and have no feeling for the community in which we are living.

I have not heard any "report" on the event, but expect to get at least a clipping from the local newspaper, the contents of which I'll pass on to you.

From Fergus to Burlington West is only an hour's drive. As the crow flies it doesn't even take that long, and with our thoughts it takes just one second.

"There are no problems to get guest ministers every Sunday once. Some drawbacks of this method are discussed: Rev. Mulder preaches more about the Catechism, since guest ministers mostly prefer a 'free topic.' Efforts will be made that also guest ministers preaching in the afternoon service proclaim the Word as confessed by the Church in the Heidelberg Catechism."

There appears to be a difference between the ministers. Although I have no preference for either a "text sermon" or a "Catechism sermon," I love the latter and always ask the church that invites me to conduct services which Lord's Day I have to take.

When I was still serving one particular church, I preferred to continue the Catechism series, just like Rev. Mulder apparently, to preserve the line and to have a series complete, without gaps of missing links. If a guest minister asked me which Lord's Day was next, I mostly told him that he could take any Lord's Day, but not the one which followed last Sunday's! The result is that I have only very few gaps in my various series of "Catechism sermons."

A previous time I already mentioned that the new periodical for office-bearers, *Diakonia* is being received very favourably by the various consistories and I gratefully note that almost all whose bulletins I receive have decided to subscribe for as many copies as there are office-bearers. I am certain that the editor of this periodical will appreciate suggestions regarding the contents, although I can tell you that a schedule has been set up for quite a few issues.

One suggestion, however, which I read appears to me to make the whole undertaking superfluous and, if followed up, would sink the whole ship of *Diakonia*.

Lincoln's consistory reports, "It is decided to subscribe to the magazine *Diakonia* and a letter will be sent to the publishers of this magazine suggesting that these articles be published in *Clarion*."

It goes without saying that I love our *Clarion* and will support any suggestion which is made to improve it and to expand the number of columns and the field of vision.

In this case, however, I think that our beloved magazine would not be the proper place to publish the contents of the new magazine for those who serve in the various offices in Christ's church. The new magazine contains articles specifically for elders, deacons, and ministers and, in my opinion, should remain a publication especially for them. I'll give my opinion for better, but cannot see how the new magazine could survive if the contents were also included in *Clarion*.

The following is not restricted to Australia, for I found the very same "complaint" in bulletins from our own midst. The

Byford consistory report reveals that "Some particulars are discussed, including the inclination of some members to slumber when the Word is preached." As long as it is confined to an inclination, things are not too bad. However, it appears that among us as well as far down south the inclination becomes a sad reality. One of the things which would be very helpful is: going to bed in time on Saturday night. And: keeping an open eye on each other, showing mercy to those who are in danger of losing the battle not by handing them a peppermint but by accidentally hitting them with elbow or shoe.

"It is further reported," Byford tells us, "that brother and sister Buist have been appointed to again serve in PNG (Papua New Guinea), and hope to leave Nov. 18, for a period of two months." This brother and sister were there already a couple of times before, helping the brotherhood in Papua New Guinea organize church life. I was happy to learn that they are going there again. They love the work and the people as they told us themselves, and we wish them much wisdom and patience, together with much joy as the other times.

In Armadale "There is a suggestion that the minister and the duty elder present to the parents who have had their child baptized, a certificate immediately after the church service. This is agreed upon."

I was wondering why two brothers have to do this and why

it is done after the service. Personally I always love it, immediately after the baptism, to present the mother with a signed certificate. As the father usually holds the baby, it is nice to give something to the mother, that she does not return empty-handed to the pew either. I did not read of a reason why it was decided in Armadale to wait till after the service. Perhaps this secret will be revealed to us at a later occasion.

For those among us who are still waiting for the tape of the concert given by the massed choirs for the Association for the Handicapped, I pass the information on that the master tape appears to be of a quality you don't write home about. It has been given to one of the brothers whose skill is believed to enable him to make something bearable out of it. Patience, dearly beloved.

The above came to my mind when I read in the Armadale/Byford/Kelmscott bulletin that "The **Festival Fanfare Concert Band**" was going to give its "first concert Nov. 21, 7: 30-9: 00. Pieces will range from 15th Century till today's style of music." Too bad I could not attend. Hopefully, the latter part was not too modern.

John Philip Sousa would be all right, though.

Before I start blowing my own horn — Althorn, that is — I had better sign off. That's what I am doing right now.

VO

COLLEGE CORNER

New students

After the Fifteenth Convocation and Eighteenth Anniversary Meeting of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches on Friday, September 11, the new Academic Year started.

This time I will inform the readers of *Clarion* concerning the new students at our College.

Four students left our College and all four of them received one or more calls from the Canadian Reformed Churches or the Free Reformed Churches in Australia. Fortunately, exactly the same number of students came for the first time to our College as "Freshmen."

These four young men are: *Dean Anderson*, who was a member of the Church of Silverstream, one of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

Dean made a long trip this summer. He travelled throughout the United States and then he presented himself to our College. He is now a member of the Canadian Reformed Church at Ancaster. He followed in New Zealand also a course in music, so he is able to play the organ in our Conference Room, especially when "Chapel" is to

be held, at the beginning and the end of the week. In that respect he is the successor of Rob Schouten, who played the organ for four years.

In the second place I present *Ken Herfst*. He is a member of the Free Reformed Church of Dundas. He is the third student of Free Reformed background (the two others being now in their last year at the College). It is well-known that the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of a couple of years ago decided to send their theological students to our College at Hamilton.

The third student who came to our College is *James Pot*, a member of the Christian Reformed Church at Smithville.

Last I present *Bill Wielenga*, coming from the Canadian Reformed Church at Coaldale, now a member of the Church at Ancaster. Just as the principal, Dr. J. Faber, already mentioned at the Convocation Meeting, Bill is one of the fifth line in succeeding generations who will be a minister of the church, the LORD willing.

His father is the Rev. J.D. Wielenga, minister of the Church at Coaldale; his grandfather was the late Rev. D.K. Wielenga of Rotterdam, who was also Lecturer at the Theological Seminary

at Kampen; his great-grandfather had the same name as his father and was lately a minister of the Church at Franeker; and his great-great-grandfather was the late Prof. D.K. Wielenga, professor of ecclesiology at the Theological Seminary at Kampen. So already for more than hundred years there were ministers named Wielenga in our churches and sister churches!

We are happy with the newcomers and we hope to have a good time with them at the College.

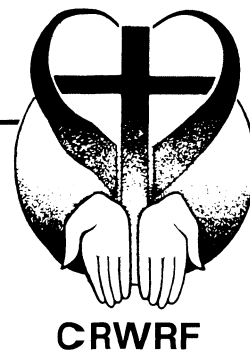
We are happy, but . . . not satisfied. There are still vacancies in the churches of Canada and in the sister churches in Australia as well. There are even more vacancies in the churches than Canadian Reformed students at the College.

So we need more young men who are able and willing to be trained for the ministry, especially from the Canadian Reformed Churches. My colleague J. Geertsema stressed that already several times in our magazine.

We may still say, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:37ff.).

K. DEDDENS

Ban Vinai — a village without any hope?



The refugee problem in the world is an immense, many faceted one which deserves our ongoing support. CRWRF has been pleased, with your help, to contribute in various ways over the past several years, for example, in supplying food and shelter to those who flee Soviet repression in Afghanistan. A more long-term commitment has been our annual contribution to ZOA which is responsible for medical care given 45,000 refugees at Ban Vinai, a refugee settlement inside the Thai border. To inform you more fully about the work there, we include the following article written by ZOA News Editor, Mr. J. Molenaar, who recently visited Ban Vinai.

Wednesday morning, July 22nd. At quarter to eight. The temperature is far above 30°. In the course of the day it will be almost 40°. We are reaching the village of Ban Vinai, (Ban village).

An ordinary village?

The road is blocked by a barrier. A Thai soldier gets out of his sentry box: campus inspection. A first indication that we are entering no ordinary village. It is a refugee village.

A refugee camp.

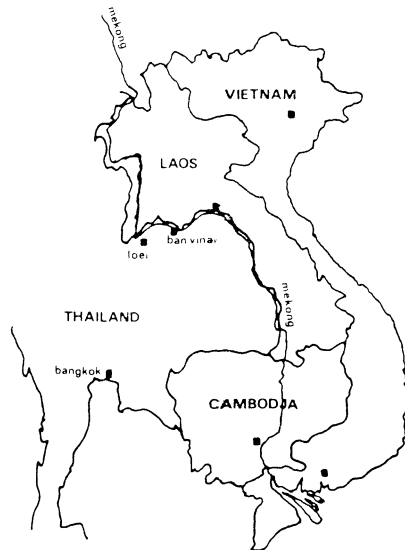
Ban Vinai: a village without any hope!? It is an exclamation, but also a question.

Thailand: refugee country

Thailand is one of the few countries in Southeast Asia without a colonial past. In the neighbour countries at the frontier — Kampuchea and Laos — the French wielded the sceptre for many years. In Burma, at the west border, the English ruled. Thailand remained free.

The country has a rich history. It developed prosperously and can hardly be called a developing country. The situation in the surrounding countries is quite different. After strife for many years, communism prevailed in Kampuchea and Laos. The Vietnamese, supported by Russia, raised a bastion of authority there. Free Thailand considers them a great threat.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees sought safety in flight. Thailand became a refugee country — particularly at the east border, but also at the west. Twenty thousand Karèn refugees from Burma are interned at the western border and still more arrive — from the west, but primarily from the east.



In the first six months of 1987 alone, more than 5,000 new boat refugees arrived from Vietnam in Thailand. It was two times as much as in the same period of 1986. It is clear that the influx of refugees in Southeast Asia has not yet ended.

A political problem

Anyone who goes into the refugee problem gets a powerless feeling. Giving aid to refugees is not yet the same as solving the problem. That problem is in



Tens of thousands of Hmong mountain-tribe people have fled over the past several years from Laos across the Mekong River to Thailand. They carry only their possessions on their back.

the first place in the country from which they come. For, the only real solution is return to their own country. That is also the ideal which most of the refugees cherish. Particularly the Kampuchians. They still have their political leaders. A visit to the camp of Green Hill, where more than 40,000 followers of Prince Sihanouk are sheltered, makes it clear. The camp makes a good organized impression. The people are active. They have organized education and provide for it themselves. Much attention is paid to cultural education. Training in nationalism is purposely held for the youth. Resettlement in western countries is hardly considered. They have one aim: to build a new future in the own country Kampuchea. Seeing this, the feeling comes over you: will it become reality? And when?

The Laotian camp of Ban Vinai makes an entirely different impression. It is the accommodation of 45,000 refugees, particularly of the Hmong tribe. The fire of hope has extinguished in many people. There is no longer a special leader. Of those people who had voluntarily returned to their country, a number have come back to the camp. Their country had no future. Here they look more to the west. If there is any expectation for the future at all, then it is in the United States. In this year 4,000 refugees have already left. But is it a real solution? Can the difference between eastern culture and western culture be bridged so easily? Practice shows something different. ZOA's department of Refugee care in the Netherlands is daily faced with it when assisting the Vietnamese who stay in the Netherlands.

The only real solution is and remains return to their own country. And as long as that is not possible, there is no real hope.

ZOA aid

In this camp without any hope ZOA has had the responsibility for all medical care for the last few years. With four doctors, nine nurses, and a dentist this aid is supervised.

Underline: supervised. For the most important aim is not to carry out the direct medical tasks ourselves, but to have the work carried out by Hmong trained for it. Therefore, important aspects of the work

of our volunteers are: training, organization, stimulation and supervision. Naturally some direct medical work is also carried out. Through the district health care much attention is paid to prevention, hygiene and immunization. In the district centres checks are also carried out. If necessary, people are referred to the hospital in the camp. Just during our visit there was cholera in the camp. One of the hospital barracks was reserved for these patients. When comparing the number of the ZOA team members (in which various nationalities are represented) with that of a few years ago, then we see that it has been cut down considerably. That is entirely in accordance with our aim: the Hmong themselves should take over the work as much as possible. But this turning over has limits. In practice it proves that refugee aid is not the same as development aid.

A few aspects which thwart this turning over of responsibilities are:

— the most educated Hmong are the first to be considered for resettlement in a western country. Most educated are those people who have had some training. That means that the number of helpers in the ZOA programme regularly thins out. The training then starts afresh. Besides, as a result of the resettlement, the number of people who are capable of and motivated for certain jobs is reduced (the so-called brain drain).

— the Thai government pursues more a different policy as regards the refugees. On the one hand they want to avoid having new refugees arrive again and again and on the other hand they want to stimulate an increasing number to return. Besides, they want to avoid that their own countrymen in the surrounding villages come off more badly than the people in the camp. All the time, new measures are taken which fit in with this deterrent policy. From the point of view of Thailand it is easy to understand that they have come to this policy. One of the measures which is strongly felt in the ZOA project is the abolition of the Hmong allowances. Till January 1, 1987 the Hmong who assisted in the implementation of the programmes received a financial allowance. From that date that is forbidden. As a result, an important motivation for a number of these workers has also gone, and they turned up at work irregularly or no longer at all. In consultation with other relief agencies and under supervision of the camp commander ZOA is trying to find possibilities to stimulate the workers yet. Fortunately, there are also many workers who — in spite of the measure in question — continued to do their work faithfully!

— because of living in a camp situation and the departure of the better trained Hmong, the authority structure within the camp population is at variance. Within the



Training; one of the most important parts of the medical care at Ban Vinai

Hmong there is insufficient authority and prestige to organize things better.

— although there is some improvement, there is still a lot of resistance against western methods of medical care and prevention. The counterpoise of the Shaman (necromancer) is still extremely large.

It can be understood that in this situation — beside the satisfaction and gratefulness to be able to do this work — frustrations and discouragements are not

unknown to our volunteers. Faith and courage are necessary to continue to work with dedication and perseverance. Therefore, our prayers for them are always and urgently needed!

Village without any hope?

Still, also a question mark. We had also a talk with an elder of the Hmong church in the camp. He told us that as a result of the CAMA mission there is now an independent church. And in spite of the fact that also always Christians leave for western countries, this church numbered more than 1,000 members. In the midst of the animism of the Hmong and the Buddhism of the surrounding Thai villages, a Christian church grows there. Is that not a sign of hope?

Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

CRWRF
PO BOX 797
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y7

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

CHURCH NEWS



NEW ADDRESS:
Clerk of the American Reformed
Church at Grand Rapids, MI
MR. WILLIAM H. HAAN
2056 100th SW
Byron Centre MI U.S.A. 49315

* * *

DECLINED to the Church at Chilliwack, BC
REV. E. KAMPEN
of Houston, BC

* * *

DECLINED to the Church at Surrey, BC
CANDIDATE J. KOELEWIJN
of Kampen, the Netherlands, for
Mission in São José da Coroa
Grande, Brazil.

* * *

CALLED to the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton, AB
REV. W. DEN HOLLANDER
of Winnipeg, MB

CALLED to the Church at Neerlandia, AB
REV. B.J. BERENDS
of Smithers, BC

* * *
THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH of Elora welcomes you, instituted September 6, 1987.

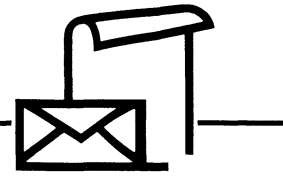
Worship services at 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
Lord's Supper services are held 1st Sunday, every 2nd month.
Services held at the Salem Public School, Salem.

Clerk: J. Hutten
R#1 Arthur General Delivery
846-9591 Elora

* * *
INSTITUTION, Vernon, BC
With gratitude to the Lord we announce the institution of a Canadian Reformed Church in Vernon, BC. This took place on November 1st, 1987.

Worship Services are being held in the Vernon Chapel, 3007-28th Street, Vernon, BC at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Mailing address:
Canadian Reformed Church
Box 956
Vernon, BC V1T 6L8



Dear Editor,

As an interested "outsider" looking in, I was delighted to read the articles by the Rev. G. VanDooren, "Analysis of an Interpretation," in your magazine. VanDooren is right in his observation: Believers from elsewhere are "shied away" by such an attitude, viz. the constant hammering on the fact that "we are the true churches." It has produced not a little self-righteousness among some of the Canadian Reformed people. For well over 30 years members of the Can. Ref. Churches have stared themselves blind on Art. 28 of the Belgic Confession, and the meaning still escapes them. What is more, the beautiful, clear first sentence of Art. 27 is not allowed to function because it does not fit into the "system." It is sad to see how the Rev. Geertsema by an elaborate and intricate (not to say confusing) line of reasoning tries to maintain the theory (de eene ware kerk) but meanwhile makes void the clear teachings of the confessions. I never knew the confessions were that unclear and confusing!

It is time that this "Achilles heel" of the Can. Ref. Churches be openly discussed. The problems will not disappear by keeping the lid on them. VanDooren is doing the Can. Ref. Churches a great service — one long overdue!

J. TUININGA, Lethbridge

Response

What we receive in this letter from the Rev. J. Tuininga, minister of the Christian Reformed Church at Lethbridge, Alberta, is a number of accusations and judgments, practically without arguments. It is, per consequence, not well possible to come with counter arguments. I have the impression that Rev. Tuininga does not expect this either. I have tried to make clear that the Synod of Burlington West, nor any synod of our churches, nor any other major assembly, has stated that the Canadian (and American) Reformed Churches are the only true churches that exist. The confession does not point at one certain federation of churches. It speaks normatively. We seek to maintain that confessional, normative language concerning the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, including the terminology "true" and "false," and the call of the Lord to maintain the

unity of the faith in congregations that adhere to the confessed norms for gathering the church with Christ and in obedience to His Word."

J. GEERTSEMA

Dear brothers:

In the editor's comments on pastor Gleason's letter to the Editorial Committee in *Clarion*, Vol. 36, No. 19 — Sept. 25, 1987, he states that allowing the minister to conduct a worship service in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was unecclasiastical. He then refers to "what happened with the Rev. Netelenbos of Middelburg who was suspended from office because he preached in the Dutch Reformed Church in The Hague." What impression must these comments leave with the uninformed readers? (The majority of them was born here.) Drs. R.N. Gleason and the Rev. J.B. Netelenbos are compared, and so are the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Dutch Reformed Church. There is a tremendous difference, however. The first minister needs no introduction: many readers in Ontario have heard him preach. But, who was the second one? His view of Scripture and inspiration, the matter of the foundation of our faith, and the relation of experience and Scripture had become points of controversy. November 19, 1919, he was deposed. The ground for deposing was: deviation from articles 4 and 5 of the Belgic Confession. He was **not** deposed on the ground of conducting a worship service in the Dutch Reformed Church.¹

Now the second comparison. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 593 Sheppard Ave., East, Willowdale, ON, definitely will not allow on its pulpit any man who holds un-Scriptural, and therefore, un-Reformed views, which is in keeping with its plaque on the outer wall "Reformed in doctrine and worship." In contrast, the Dutch Reformed Church does allow those who deny the Godhead of Christ or even put a question mark behind the historical existence of our Saviour.

The point here, dear Editorial Committee, is not whether one of our ministers can conduct a worship service in a non-Canadian Reformed Church — difference of opinion in that respect is quite well

possible — but the question is this: were the editorial comments factually correct and were the right conclusions drawn from these facts? I must add that in these comments the honour and reputation of neither pastor Gleason nor of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church were defended and promoted.

P. VAN DER SCHAAF, Thornhill

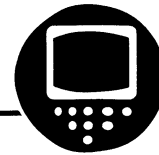
¹See: Toelichting op de Schetsen Kerkgeschiedenis, Derde Deel, Tweede Druk (Uitgave van de Vereniging De Gereformeerde Jongelingsbond 1939), page 346; Dr. R.H., Bremmer "Herman Bavinck en zijn Tijdgenoten" (J.H. Kok N.V. Kampen 1966), page 254, note 5).

Reply:

I thank br. Van der Schaaf for this letter and gladly place it in our magazine. It was not my intention at all, with my response to the Letter to the Editor in the issue of *Clarion* mentioned above, to even suggest that the Rev. R.N. Gleason must be compared with the Rev. Netelenbos on the point mentioned by br. Van der Schaaf; neither was it my intention to compare the Evangelical Free Church in Willowdale with one of the liberal Dutch Reformed (Hervormd) Churches in those days. If I created such an impression, I hope that this is herewith taken away. Perhaps, it would have been better to leave the whole Netelenbos case out of the picture.

In 1986 I wrote in our magazine about the matter of an open or closed Lord's Supper table. In that connection I mentioned the booklet of Dr. D.P.D. Fabius, *Kerkelijk Leven* (To Live [Act] Ecclesiastically). In that connection I mentioned Rev. Netelenbos' preaching in a service in a Dutch Reformed (Hervormd) Church, and I called that acting individualistically and not ecclesiastically. And in line with that, I wrote, is an open Lord's Supper table. We have accepted to live in a federation of churches. Therefore, we should not make individual decisions and undertake individual actions in ecclesiastical matters. That was and is my view. And that is what I tried to express. I hope that misunderstandings that I might have caused, are herewith removed.

J. GEERTSEMA



“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, October 16, 1987

The vice-chairman br. G. Lodder opened the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer. Br. J. Witten then arrived and began chairing the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Bep Hoogland, the new Anchor Home Director, delivered her first report as director. Although a number of changes have been made, the regular routine has continued at the Home. The residents are continuing in their regular work at Arc Industries as well as their regular lessons and health checkups. Miss Hoogland then informed the Board, that although she has just started this job she will have to resign shortly, because she plans to get married in January.

The Board decides to place advertisements for the position in *Clarion* immediately.

A letter was received from Audiocraft Productions regarding taking over the production of the tapes from the recent combined choir concert. Unfortunately, the video of the concert was inadequate for reproduction, and consequently will not be available for purchase.

A letter addressed to all the consistories in Ontario requesting their support and prayers was approved. A letter was sent to Guido de Brès High School to thank the students for a donation they made in memory of David Knegt. A letter will also be sent to the Golden Jubilee Committee which published Rev. G. VanDooren's book "... and we escaped," to thank them for their donation.

The Public Relations Committee is producing a slide demonstration which

can be used in schools or other meetings to improve understanding about the handicapped and to show what organizations like "Anchor" is doing to help them.

The Summer Camp Committee is holding camp reunion on October 24 at 2 p.m. in the Smithville school.

The Treasurer reported that up to this date almost \$67,000 should have been collected, but only \$55,000 has come in.

The Board then discussed and approved a restructuring of its meetings to make better use of the executive committee, in order to streamline the decision making process.

After the press release was approved, the meeting was closed with prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF
Correspondence Secretary



Who is like the LORD?

God anew has touched our home with His creating hand. With much joy we announce the birth of our fifth son:

KENNETH MICHAEL

Born November 1, 1987

John and Wilma Hutten

A brother for *Gerald, James, Matthew, and Mark*

RR 2
Kent Bridge, ON N0P 1V0

We thank the LORD who has richly blessed us with the births of two of His covenant children. We have named them:

DAVID WILLIAM
and
MATTHEW CORNELIUS

Born on Sunday, October 11, 1987
John and Irene VanAndel
(nee Vandenbos)

350 Queensdale Avenue E.
Hamilton, ON L9A 1L6

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.
Genesis 1:27

The LORD heard our prayers and has richly blessed us with the birth of our beloved children:

JUSTINE MARIE
and

JESSIE-LYN ALEXANDRA

Born on November 7, 1987

Proud grandparents:

Fred and Mieneke Stoffels
Jake and Ann VanRootselaar

Proud parents:

Jack and Marlene VanRootselaar
RR 2, Thamesville, ON N0P 2K0

With thankfulness to the LORD and Giver of life, He has richly blessed us with our second child, a daughter:

BRENDA MARIE

Born October 3, 1987

A sister for *Tanya*

Andy and Jan Meints
(nee Hartman)

Box 19, Site 8, SS 1
Houston, BC V0J 1Z0

The LORD has blessed us again, and made all things well with the birth of our son and brother:

JORDAN KYLE

Born September 24, 1987

A brother for *Alicia, Ian, and Lindsay*

Rien and Hilda Olthoff

123 Golfdale Place
London, ON N6C 5S3

With joy and thankfulness to the LORD, we announce the birth of our son:

ARIE DAVID

A brother for *Hendrik, Vanessa, Andries, Ike, Anton, and Megan*

George and Marge Alkema
(nee VanEs)

Born September 29, 1987

56 Aterno Drive
Hamilton, ON L9C 5S5