



# Clarion

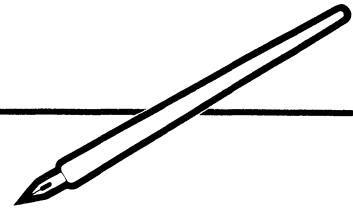
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 38, No. 1

January 2, 1989

# EDITORIAL

By J. De Jong



## Time will tell . . .

### Another year

Another year has passed, and for many it passed as quickly as it came. Where does the time go? Do these rapidly passing years have any special significance? Does time have any special goal or direction?

Just when one might have thought that the world was getting tired of these ultimate questions, we are confronted with a new book which indicates that modern man is still as busy as ever with them. This past year witnessed the publication of a book by a British theoretical physicist, Stephen W. Hawking, with the title *A Brief History of Time* (Bantam Books, New York). There is a touch of irony in his title, as Hawking is covering what for him is a period of billions and billions of years in the space of a mere 180 pages. "Brief" for him is an understatement.

What makes this book interesting for us is that Hawking also touches upon ultimate questions: the origin and nature of the universe. We cannot get involved in details, and don't pretend to understand all the physics he brings forward. Even this book – written for the scientifically untrained – is quite a handful of theory. But we are interested chiefly in the *theological* aspects of what he is trying to say. Suffice it to say that Hawking is searching for the one unified theory that will unite both quantum mechanics – the theory of the very small – with general relativity theory – the theory concerning the very large in the universe. While he does not yet have his theory, he has a couple of related proposals, and does know what some properties of this theory would look like. He predicts that the theory will be in place in this generation, and that from then on, there won't be that much interesting to do anymore in theoretical physics.

What makes this all the more interesting is that Hawking is a victim of ALS, or motor neuron disease. This is a crippling disease affecting the whole nervous system, and it is at present incurable. Although the disease progresses at different rates, it always leads to death. Hawking can hardly move any part of his body, and literally looks like a bundle of clothes piled up in a wheelchair. When he first contracted the disease it was felt that he had only a couple of years to live. But that was over ten years ago, and aside from some nasty operations, he is still very active. Even his voice is gone, but he is now speaking through a computer connected to a voice synthesizer. It takes quite a while, but Hawking can compose sentences, and speak them through his machine in an even more coherent way than before he lost his voice. And, as *Time* writer Leon Jaroff notes, while his body appears totally disabled, his mind continues to soar to the farthest regions of the universe.<sup>1</sup>

Hawking's brilliance, coupled with his disease, has made him a figure in high demand. He has quickly evoked the sympathy of an age that cannot accept human suffering. A good

number of Foundations have come to Hawking's aid and were all part of the effort that made him realize a life-long dream – the publication of a book in straightforward English that explains to the novice and unschooled what cosmologists are doing in the world of physics.

Hawking's popularity has now also been fueled by the unfolding *drama* that his situation presents to the world. He's a scientist in the tradition of Galileo, Newton, and Einstein. (He holds the chair Newton once held in Cambridge.) He is looking for the last piece of the puzzle to explain the universe. At the same time, for Hawking this search has become a race against time. His own disability only adds to the irony of the title of his book. Indeed, the only thing more brief than his book is – humanly speaking – his life, which seems to hang on a very thin thread. And the question which this book now presents to the world is: who will win? Hawking or his disease? Will Hawking realize his dream? Will he find the missing piece and so come to the theory that will be able to explain the universe in a unified way?

### Tragedy in the drama

For the Christian scientist, who in his scientific work operates with fixed biblical principles, Hawking's quest represents more of a tragedy than a drama. It reflects the undaunted human spirit in its search for knowledge. As he says:

"Today we still yearn to know why we are here and where we came from. Humanity's deepest desire for knowledge is justification enough for our continuing quest. And our goal is nothing less than a complete description of the universe we live in."<sup>2</sup>

But his quest takes its starting point in physical reality, without any regard to God's *revelation* concerning the beginning and goal of the universe. A Christian knows at the outset that Hawking will not only lose his battle with time; he has, in fact, already lost it, and his search remains futile. In his person and his condition, he is an outstanding example of what human science *can* do. But his work is also an example of how far man without God dares to go in asserting himself as autonomous in this world.

We repeat that we cannot bring any of the details of Hawking's quest forward. The interested reader can easily pursue the matter himself. Yet we can say that Hawking essentially puts forward a proposal which seeks to scientifically explain the origin of the universe. The so-called "big bang" is no longer an event which starts off the process leading to the conditions of space and time as we know them; rather, the "beginning" is an event *in* space-time. Our universe began with an infinitesimal fluctuation explainable in terms of quantum mechanics, occurring some 15 billion years ago. And the upshot of all this is that there is no such thing as "beginning"

or "end" in what physicists call space-time. The world simply is. The universe would simply be, says Hawking. And then he asks provocatively, "What place, then, for a creator?"<sup>3</sup>

### The tragedy exposed

Hawking is a talented and humorous communicator, and he does a good job placing his work within the context of the whole history of science. He paints a picture of science consistently destroying man's ingrained religious beliefs. Newton was reluctant to accept the results of his own investigations because they forced him to abandon the notion of absolute space. Einstein was reluctant to accept the results of relativity theory, because they forced him to abandon the notion of absolute time. And he objected even more to the results of quantum theory. "God does not play dice," he said at the time.

Yet these theories of physics cannot be held to be directly against Scripture. If anything, they just point out that the universe is much more complex than man originally thought it to be. But Hawking's historical sketch makes one thing very clear. Einstein may not have accepted the Redeemer, but he still believed in a Creator. With the "big bang" theory, and with modern-day developments, even the necessity of a Creator has vanished from men's minds. God has become unnecessary in man's world. Everything can be explained purely in terms of the laws of science. That is the heart of this modern-day tragedy. To be sure, Hawking admits God might still be there; but there really was not much for Him to do, and there still isn't. He does not seem to intervene in the physical world in any recognizable way.

The tragedy expands from this point on. What an empty gospel for modern man! Man is here only a speck of intelligent matter in a universe that has existed for billions of years, is expanding, and will continue to exist for tens of billions more. What's one year in this perspective? What is the life of man in this world of pure science, where, as Nietzsche once said, man has rolled from the centre into x? What hope and what future is there? Nothing but the survival of the fittest – the only stark and cold "hope" that the gods of pure science and evolution have to offer.

### Divine irony in the tragedy

However, there is in all this a note of divine irony – irony beyond the tragedy. For Hawking, man's moment is "brief"; but for the LORD – who is the Creator! – the time is *short*. John says, "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him," Revelation 1:7. He hastens to lead all things to the great culmination. And regardless of what the man of science says, biblical prophecy announces the imminent end of all things and the coming of the kingdom of God.

This puts another dimension into Hawking's search for the last missing piece of the puzzle of the universe. Luther once said that God is greater than the greatest thing imaginable, and smaller than the smallest thing imaginable. It's a statement open to some question, one reflecting his nominalist background, but there is also a measure of truth in it. For man has his theories of the very large and the very small, and these theories have remarkable predictive power. But they do not give the *final* answer. The mystery of this creation remains beyond reach. One may think he can exhaust the awe and majesty of the physical realities making up creation, and yet the key element, the unifying picture, still eludes him. God is greater than the sum of all things! And, as He says to Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me – if you have understanding," Job 38:4.

Christian scientific work cannot avoid the problems and complexities of the universe. But it may start out with some definite answers. It may work within the framework of the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of the great consummation.

The origin and end of the universe is a matter of divine *revelation*. And all our theories must be bound by the limits that biblical revelation sets.

### Joyful science

With a perspective like this, the Christian can do his work with confidence and joy. He knows that the last days will bring scoffers who come with scoffing, and will say, "Where is the promise of His coming?", 2 Peter 3:4. And the scoffers will continue to build their theories outside of God and His revelation. But their theories will remain incomplete. They will come to the number 666, but not the 777, Revelation 13:18. As K. Schilder said, the cultural striving of apostate man culminates

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***"For the one who submits his labours to the coming of God's kingdom, there remains an abiding reward."***



in a truncated pyramid. The quest never ends, and the final desired goal of humanism is never reached.

But for the one who submits his labours to the coming of God's kingdom, there remains an abiding reward. He may not finish his quests, his interests or pursuits. But what he does will be finished by the new life given at Christ's return. Therefore, as the age draws to its close, and as the decline of faith becomes universal, those who labour in the context of the truth may labour joyfully. With each passing year, we may say with ever more certainty: the end of all things is at hand. And then we shall know all things in Him!



<sup>1</sup> *Time*, February 8, 1988, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Hawking, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Hawking, p. 141.

Reference: Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time – From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Bantam Books, 1988).

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# Is there a time gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 ?<sub>2</sub>

By C. van Dam

In the preceding article we started to consider the gap theory by which a large time span was said to have existed between the first two verses of Genesis 1. One way this idea was defended involved imposing a rigid separation between the verbs "to create" and "to make." In this way it has been suggested that the earth was created once in the beginning, but subsequently remade due to the fall of creation in sin. The evidence for this argument was found wanting. We also saw that the beginning of the Hebrew text of verse 2 does not al-

low the view that verse 2 follows verse 1 in time. Two other important arguments still need to be considered.

## "... without form and void"

It is reasoned that the expression "without form and void" has negative connotations of God's judgment. When verse 2 tells us that "the earth was without form and void," we can draw the conclusion that God has judged the earth because of a preceding fall into sin. However, such a conclusion is unwarranted. The terms in question do not

necessarily speak of God's wrath. The usage of these terms elsewhere makes that clear. The first word "without form" (Hebrew *tōhû*), although sometimes also translated by "vanity" or "vain things" (e.g., 1 Samuel 12:21), literally means "emptiness." It is thus used of "a pathless waste," not formed into hospitable territory (Job 12:24; Psalm 107:40). It pictures the loneliness and desolation of a barren desert. This is clear from the parallelism in Job 26:7. The first part reads: "He stretches out the north over the void [*tōhû*];" the second corresponds to this: "and hangs the earth upon nothing." From the above it can be concluded "that the meaning in Genesis 1:2 is that the earth was still devoid of all the countless living creatures which now occupy it in all of their colourful multiplicity. It was still one expanse of emptiness."<sup>1</sup>

The second expression in the pair "without form [*tōhû*] and void [*bōhû*]" only occurs with *tōhû* in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 34:11; Jeremiah 4:23) and it is therefore difficult to evaluate it separately. The usage of the term *bōhû* appears to indicate that it is used to strengthen the meaning of *tōhû*. The sense is that the earth was as desolate and empty as could be. Good translations are therefore "without form and void" (RSV) or "formless and empty" (NIV).

At the beginning of the LORD's creation work, the earth could not be inhabited. There is no mention of a fall of creation in the judgment of God or any implication that creation had to be remade. We can think here of Isaiah 45:18. "For this is what the LORD says – He who created the heavens, He is God; He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty [*tōhû*], but formed it to be inhabited – He says, I am the LORD, and there is no other" (NIV). The emptiness, the "without form and void," was but a first, initial phase in His creation work. The rest of Genesis 1 will show how God transformed this empty desolation to become an earth fully prepared to receive man.





## Darkness over the deep

A fourth (and for our purposes final) argument for a time gap between Genesis 1:1 and verse 2 that can be noted concerns the reference to darkness in verse 2. It is said that this implies the presence of evil and judgment since darkness symbolizes sin and judgment in Scripture. (See, e.g., John 3:19. "And this is the judgment that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.") It is therefore supposed that God originally created the world in light and that the darkness resulted from the fall into sin and God's subsequent judgment.

However, just because darkness can symbolize evil does not make darkness itself a manifestation of evil or inherently bad. God's Word teaches otherwise. Darkness is part of the cycle of day and night as God created it (Genesis 1:5; cf. Psalm 104:20-24). Man needs the darkness to get his rest. It is beneficial to him.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, there is no scriptural basis for the theory that Genesis 1:2 describes the earth after it fell into God's judgment because of sin. What verse 2 does describe is the first stage in the preparation of the earth for man. "It is the first picture of the created world that the Bible gives . . . . The earth was desolation and waste, but all was in God's hand and under His control; nothing was contrary to His design."<sup>2</sup>

Genesis 1:1 is a broad statement of the creation of heaven and earth. Verses 2 and 3 specifically describe the first day of creation.

## Genesis 1:2

In this verse are three circumstantial clauses which describe the condition of the earth in the beginning after being created. The earth was "without form and void," "darkness was upon the face of the deep" and "the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." We have already considered the meaning of the first clause ("without form and void"). Let us now look briefly at the last two.

"Darkness was upon the face of the deep." This shows that no light was present. All was in darkness. The earth was covered with water. Psalm 104:6 refers to this. "Thou didst cover it [i.e. the earth] with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains." All the earth was covered. (Cf. Genesis 1:6f., 9f.) Concerning God's setting the bounds for the water on the third day, we read in Psalm 104:9 ". . . that they [i.e. the waters] might not again cover the earth." The dominant place of water in

the earth as first set forth also reminds us of 2 Peter 3:5, ". . . by the Word of God heavens existed long ago, and an earth formed out of water and by means of water."

"The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." The earth was not yet habitable; but it was also not forsaken and left for what it was. No, God's Spirit moved over the face of the waters. Literally it says that the Spirit hovered, as a bird can hover, in care for what lies below. This calls to mind the image of the LORD hovering over Israel, as an eagle taking care of her young (Deut. 32:11). The hovering of the Spirit of God over the deep shows that He is closely involved in the work of creation.

The close involvement of the Spirit in the work of creating can also be seen in other passages of Scripture. Two examples can suffice. "By the Word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of His mouth" (Psalm 33:6). Note that "the breath of His mouth" (which is a literary way of speaking of the Spirit) is parallel with "the Word of the LORD." There is a close connection between the Spirit and the Word. The work of the Spirit in creating is also seen in Isaiah 40:12-13. "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the

LORD or as His counsellor has instructed Him?"

Genesis 1:2 and Scripture elsewhere show that the Spirit participated in making creation ready for man. It can therefore be said that the Spirit's hovering over the face of the waters was not an empty act, or a mere presence of the Spirit. Aalders put it this way: "an active power goes forth from the Spirit of God to the earth substance that has already been created. This activity has a direct relationship to God's creative work. Perhaps we can say that the Spirit preserves this created material and prepares it for the further creative activity of God by which the then disordered world would become a well-ordered whole, as the further creative acts unfold for our view in the rest of this chapter."<sup>3</sup>

Before we proceed to continue with the rest of the creation account, it may be good in the next article to pause and address a question that is always there in any discussion of Genesis 1 and 2. What is the relationship of the biblical account to the scientific study of origins? What role (if any) should science play in understanding these chapters?



<sup>1</sup> G.C. Aalders, *Genesis*, I (1981; orig. pub. in Dutch 1933), 54.

<sup>2</sup> E.J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (1964), 38.

<sup>3</sup> Aalders, *Genesis*, I, 56.



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

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### ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

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

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

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.  
One Beghin Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5  
Phone: (204) 663-9000 Fax: (204) 663-9202

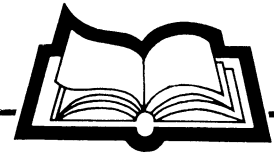
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Advertisements: \$6.00 per column inch  
Second class mail registration number 1025

ISSN 0383-0438

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By J. De Jong

"Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins." Isaiah 40:2

## Double Payment

The introductory words to the second half of the book of Isaiah form a summary of the theme that occupies his prophecy from this point on. In order that those burdened by their sins might not become too deeply weighed down with guilt and punishment, the LORD grants them prophecies which predict the coming of a great restoration. As prophecy, these words extend beyond the immediate situation of the people to the time of the new covenant. At the same time, there is an obvious focus on the time of the exile and its imminent end. Jerusalem's "warfare" might also be rendered her "time of service" or "time of slavery," hinting at the bondage of slavery and service in the exile.

Yet some have difficulty in accepting this period as a double payment for Jerusalem's transgressions. To be sure, it was a *complete* period, a period of seventy years. This was the time of bondage explicitly foretold, cf. Jeremiah 25:11, 12, 29:10. Yet Israel's sins had continued for generations, and all the prophets the LORD had sent did not bring any change in their hearts. They only added to their guilt, compounding it beyond measure. How then can the LORD speak of a double payment that was made in the period of exile?

Clearly this is a form of *hyperbole*, in which the LORD exaggerates the real state of affairs in order to confirm His intentions of love and affection for His people. He uses a figure of speech to indicate that after the period of His anger He hastens to return and renew His love and favour towards them. These words particularly emphasize the *mercy* of our covenant God.

Yet the dimension of God's *justice* cannot be ignored. Some suggest that judicial categories are entirely out of place here, but that hardly accords with the language of sacrifice evident in the text. The time of service has ended because God has declared Jerusalem's iniquity to be *pardoned*. The free declaration of the forgiveness of sins brings an end to the misery the people had so long experienced. The LORD announces that a legal payment has been made!

This language of legal payment really only begins to make sense when we keep in mind who the guilt offering was. The LORD looks ahead to the Saviour who was coming! No sacrifice or prophet brought real reconciliation during the exile. Rather, the LORD looks ahead, and on the basis of a *future* sacrifice He declares that He has received double payment for Jerusalem's transgressions. His words have Golgotha in view.

Now Reformed dogmatics traditionally speaks of the twofold obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ – His *active* as well as His *passive* obedience. Naturally these are

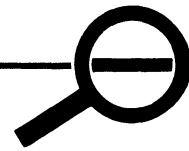
only analytical terms, since every act of our Saviour involved both kinds of obedience before God. But the first is meant to isolate Christ's righteous fulfillment of the obligations of the law, while the second points to Christ's obedience in carrying the punishment of the law, or the burden of the curse of the law. Our salvation required that Christ perform *both* elements of the required obedience: substitutional righteousness and substitutional payment. Only in this way could the covenant be restored, and only in this way could we inherit again the position we had received out of favour in our first parents, Adam and Eve.

So we can speak of a kind of double payment made by our Saviour on our behalf. The terms *active* and *passive* with respect to Christ's obedience are intended to stress the fullness and completeness of this obedience for us and in our stead. Nothing was lacking in Christ's sacrifice for us! He faithfully performed many righteous deeds on our behalf and He faithfully carried the burden of God's wrath against our sin. In doing both of these, He opened paradise for us again!

So we are all the more confirmed in what we may confess concerning God's mercy and God's justice. These two attributes of God never contradict one another. In fact, in the language of God's *mercy* we may faintly see the language of His perfect *justice* in the background. When God says He has received double payment, He accentuates His love for us, but if we consider the actual payment made, He also accentuates His justice and righteousness.

This is not to say that we are to recover all our dogmatic distinctions in Scripture. But legitimate distinctions, based on Scripture, only assist in confirming the reality and completeness of our redemption. In these words of Isaiah, too, we may be sure that God's speaking is not based on a sudden change of plan, or a whim of good feeling. His words are backed up with blood – the blood of His only Son! And His grace is sealed in a death of inestimable value.

Here we find our real comfort, and here we may be assured that our sins are truly taken away. For the great and wonderful Counsellor has appeared, the righteous Branch who was also the suffering Servant. And the LORD laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, Isaiah 53:6. He made Himself that offering for sin which brought the incomparable payment – so that the LORD received more than double for all our sins. Therefore we can only give thanks to God for the mystery of His mercy and His justice, and for His fixed purpose to make us partakers of His righteousness and mercy. **©**



## The realignment of some Orthodox Presbyterian congregations

For many years there have been different attempts at union between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) and the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The PCA came into being as a separate body in 1973 after seceding from the liberal Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS). This new church body is thus conservative and seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures. Although initially found only in the southern states (the PCUS is a southern denomination), from the outset the PCA wanted to be a national church and sought merger or union with others. In 1978 its General Assembly accepted a motion to initiate talks with the OPC and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES). In 1982 the latter body joined the PCA. However, the OPC has not done so. There is division on this point within the OPC. As was already reported in *Clarion* in 1982, there are in the OPC those who do not look forward to a merger for "they fear that the thoroughly Reformed character of the OPC will be erased and that a broader and bleaker Presbyterian evangelicalism will prevail. They would rather strengthen the bond with truly Reformed churches" (J. Faber, *Clarion*, 31:3, p. 51). This indicates how many in the OPC see the character of the PCA.

As far as the present relations between the OPC and the PCA are concerned, there is in effect a moratorium on progress to an eventual union. This does not sit well with those who believe that a union with the PCA is long overdue. In this context, a news report in *Journey* (July-October 1988) pp. 4-5 is of interest to us.

News and rumours are rife concerning some Orthodox Presbyterian congregations/pastors who are seriously considering leaving the Orthodox

Presbyterian Church (OPC) for the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). In a letter dated January 6, 1988, the Rev. Mark Maliepaard announced that the New Life Presbyterian Church of Mira Mesa, California, had voted to realign with the Presbyterian Church in America. That church has since realigned.

Through the Summer and Fall there have been further developments. The New Life Church of Escondido, pastored by the Rev. Richard Kaufmann, has publicly announced that their Session is considering realignment. This is significant because this church has been so influential at Westminster Seminary (West).

A number of private meetings, beginning with an August 6th gathering of approximately ten men, have been held to discuss realignment. Another meeting was held on September 10th where four presentations were made in the morning, and four in the afternoon. The possibility exists of six California churches realigning, including the aforementioned Mira Mesa and Escondido works, as well as almost half the Orthodox Presbyterian teachers at Westminster (West). (One professor, the Rev. Mark Futato, is new; and while worshipping at the PCA leaning Escondido church, has been preoccupied with settling his family into Southern California.) Central among these professors is John Frame who worships at Escondido and wrote a "position paper (letter)" for the August 6th meeting.

In his letter, Frame characterizes the OPC as being divided between the "Outward-facers" (these emphasize Mission work, C.v.D.) and the "Traditionalists." While he notes that in the past he has tried to subdue the centripetal forces at work, he now argues for realignment.

Both in his original letter, and in subsequent arguments, Frame denies that the Outward-facers can carry out the Great Commission from within the traditional OPC. Yet at the same time he does not want to condemn (by denying that same ability to them) those who stay, with a failure *vis-a-vis* this commission; and he speaks with affection for the traditionalists.

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In the Southern California area, some PCA representatives have been invited to speak with the dissident churches/men. The Rev. Allen Mawhinney spoke at the September 10th gathering and the Rev. Philip Clark (MNA) [Mission to North America, a committee of the PCA, C.v.D.] was named in a congregational letter as having been scheduled to speak at a November meeting of the Escondido church.

A few churches in other parts of the country have also been mentioned as possible realigners. New Life Jenkintown (Philadelphia area) with its pastor the Rev. C. John Miller, has long been considering departing and is the most prominent. And there may be a few others who have shown some sympathy toward the idea. Over the past two years a number of individuals, namely the Revs. Dominic Aquila and Lewis Ruff have realigned privately and quietly. Aquila joined the staff of a large Colorado PCA church while Ruff is working with the PCA in California.

It goes without saying that the trend of congregations leaving the OPC to join the PCA will make the possibility of a future merger of the OPC with the PCA less likely. This trend will also strengthen the Reformed character of the OPC. This gives all the more reason for us as Canadian Reformed Churches to intensify our contacts with the OPC.

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# Education in the Word in an age of the picture<sup>2</sup>

By C. van Dam

## The place of the visual

If I understand E.W. Schaeffer-de Wal correctly, then she may be going too far when she writes: "The language of the relationship between God and us is definitely not the language of imagery (or the language of images) but it is a verbal language."<sup>4</sup> Much as I affirm that God speaks to us through His Word and that He cannot be understood without the Word, yet, it is not purely an "either-or" dilemma as presented above.

When we speak of the *Word* of God, we speak of God's *revelation* of Himself. Without doubt there is the priority of language; however, images and visual aids were not neglected.<sup>5</sup> God recognized them as necessary so that the Word might be as effective as possible. Signs served the Word, and indeed could not be understood without it.

I would like to illustrate this point first with reference to God Himself and His self-revelation with respect to His very person, how God showed the eyes of Israel something of His glory so that it became tangible as it were to them. We have already touched on the first two examples. The LORD went before Israel "by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people" (Exodus 13:21ff.; cf. 14:19, 24; Numbers 14:14). In this way the LORD very concretely showed His presence. Through this cloud the LORD also effected a type of nonverbal communication. When God caused the cloud to go up from the tabernacle, Israel knew they had to travel. If the cloud was not taken up, Israel did not need to travel that day (Exodus 40:35-38; Numbers 8:15-23).<sup>6</sup>

At the Sinai, the LORD also used Israel's perception, not just by the ear, but also by the eye to impress on them His presence and greatness. We read in Exodus 20:18 that "Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD

descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly" (cf. Deuteronomy 5:4). At a later date, a select number from Israel went up the Sinai to have a meal of covenant fellowship with God. Exodus 24:10-13 informs us that they went up "and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. . . . they beheld God and ate and drank" (cf. Exekiel 1, especially v. 28b). Also, as covenant mediator, Moses spoke to God face to face as a man speaks to his friend (Exodus 33:11; cf. Deuteronomy 34:10; also cf. Jeremiah 32:4). This included that he beheld "the form of the LORD" (Numbers 12:8). This is more than seeing God in a vision or dream (cf. Psalm 17:15; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 22:4).

Also when it comes to the message of the LORD, we find a wide array of images that appeal to perception through the eye rather than the ear. Think of the tabernacle and later the temple, as well as the elaborate rituals and feasts connected with the service of God. These were not incidental, but pictured the gospel! These "pictures" were crucial for Father's teaching the covenant children in the old dispensation. The LORD did not want His children to be brought up only by hearing the gospel. He also wanted them to see it and to perceive it by means of their physical eyes. As a teaching principle we can learn from this. We certainly cannot dismiss this as something belonging to the Old Testament and having no further relevance for us today. In this context one can also think of the two sacraments that the LORD has given us. Also in the last age, our heavenly Father wants to make use of our eyes in reinforcing the message of His Word and strengthening our faith.

## Some teaching principles

If we reflect for a moment on what has been said up to this point and also

try to place ourselves in the situation of Israelite parents and children according to data found in Scripture, several principles that are very important for us today become evident.

First we must reaffirm the priority and dominant position of the Word in our teaching. It was the Word of God that had to be passed on to the children. The gospel with all its ramifications had to be taught to them. The well-known words of Deuteronomy 6 come to mind. "These words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). Whenever and wherever possible, the sustained teaching had to continue.

However, it was not to be a long, interrupted, and difficult monologue. Children could and were expected to ask questions. After all the Word was to be understandable and so practical and usable to them. If the Word did not speak to them, then questions were to be asked. As the LORD said further on in Deuteronomy 6, "When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and statutes and the ordinances which the LORD our God has commanded you?' then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand . . .'" (Deuteronomy 6:20ff.), and the great deeds of the LORD are recounted. An answer was to be given! God demanded it and therefore children could expect it! A clear answer, one they could understand and that would encourage further listening. A practical answer which showed the relevance of salvation for their situation, namely, living a life of gratitude to God and enjoying true life with Him.



The Word was to be clear. When God spoke from the Sinai, Israel understood. Although God came from heaven, He spoke their language. This is also evident from the languages that Scripture is written in. God used the languages current at the time the revelation was given. So we have to speak in such a manner that the children can understand. We must never in any way encourage or promote a special religious or church language over against the so-called ordinary language of everyday.<sup>7</sup> Life is a unit and we must speak to our students in such a manner that they understand irrespective of the subject. The problem of "children" (students) not listening can be a problem of the teacher not being able to communicate and make the subject meaningful for them. We need to speak to them and not at them. If questions are forthcoming, rejoice. You're getting through. Already in the Old Testament God told parents, the first teachers, that they could expect questions. Questions indicate that what has been said relates to their situation and to their life. It means they can talk about it and therefore also speak to God Himself concerning the things that have been learned. It means that the student is part of it and belongs and that the world of God and His Word is not foreign to him. It is obviously very important that also today the Bible continues to be related to this life. Thus teaching the Word by verbal means must be and remain the first priority.

This brings us to the second principle, namely, the necessary use of visual aids. In the Old Testament the LORD demanded the use of what could be seen in helping to bring the Word also to children. The whole way of life was immersed with sacrifices, festivals, and memorials. All these visual stimuli not only helped integrate faith into the fullness of life but also prompted questions from the children. For example, with respect to the Passover sacrifice, the LORD said through Moses: "When your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, for He passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when He slew the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" (Exodus 12:28ff.) Again a clear answer had to be given and a historical consciousness of the great deeds of God was imprinted in the children. Even if there was no question, the opportunity had to be seized to tell the children the meaning of what they saw. For example, regarding the eating of unleavened bread, the LORD demanded that they tell the significance of it to the children (Exodus 13:8). Sometimes the LORD commanded that memorials be erected

so that children would see and ask about their meaning. Think of the twelve stones erected in the Jordan as a memorial of the miraculous crossing in the time of Joshua. Then were to be erected "that this may be a sign among you, when your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' Then you shall tell them . . ." (Joshua 4:8). Note how all these visual helps serve the passing on of the Word and the great deeds of God as well as the remembering of the contents of the Word.

Similarly prophets made use of visual aids. When the prophet Ahijah is about to tell Jeroboam that the LORD will tear the kingdom from Solomon and give ten tribes to Jacob, then he took off his new garment and tore it into twelve pieces (1 Kings 11:29-31). In Isaiah 20 we read that Isaiah had to go naked and barefoot through Jerusalem to reinforce this message from the LORD. "As My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians captives and the Ethiopians exiles, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot . . ." Judah would therefore hope for help from these nations in vain (Isaiah 20:3-8). More examples could be mentioned. However, it should be pointed out the use of "visual aids" went to quite some length. For example, Hosea's married life was to be a picture of what happened between God and His adulterous people. Think of the initial command of the LORD to Hosea: "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry, for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the LORD" (Hosea 1:2). And Ezekiel was told that his wife would die and he was not to

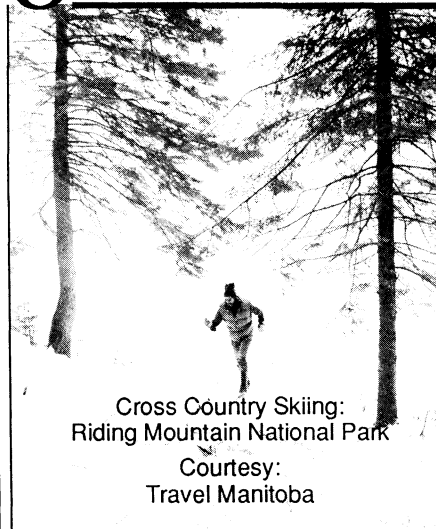
mourn, for Ezekiel was to be a sign to the people. They too were not to mourn when their precious temple was desecrated. It was God's just judgment (Ezekiel 24:15-27). It is important to notice that the signs and pictures which were given could not be understood without the Word. They are there for the Word and are not independent of it. They serve the better understanding and remembering.

On the basis of all this, I am convinced that teachers can and should use visual aids where responsible and possible to support them in their task of getting the Word and the implications of the Word across. Although we no longer live in the old dispensation, yet the principle of "illustrating" the great salvation deeds of God is still relevant. To this very day our heavenly Father speaks to His children also through images and pictures. One can think in this context of the rainbow (Genesis 8:8-17) and also the sacraments. Notwithstanding the special place of the sacraments, these signs and seals are in agreement with this principle of using visual aids. In a more general context we confess that God makes Himself known to us "by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most beautiful book" (Art. 2, Belgic Confession). I therefore reject the dilemma as that is rigidly put forward that the language of the relationship between God and us is definitely not the language of imagery (or the language of images) but is a verbal language. Insofar as we can use pictures to reinforce the transmission of the Word to those in our care, it is justified. One can think in this context of the effective use that can be made of pictures in so-called children's Bible story books (although we must be very careful here!). The imaginative use by teachers of visual aids can only be applauded and encouraged. Positive use can be made of the technological advances that are ours. The key thing is that it must all serve the transmission of the Word, for that is the crucial thing! An important precaution is therefore that our pictures and images be very carefully chosen so that they are not burdened by secular connotations.

To be continued



## OUR COVER



Cross Country Skiing:  
Riding Mountain National Park

Courtesy:  
Travel Manitoba

<sup>4</sup> E.W. Schaeffer-de Wal, "Christelijke opvoeding als vertaling III," *De Reformatie*, 82 (1986-87), 32, as translated in *Orange Courier*, Jan. 18, 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. on this R.S. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, (1957), 78-81.

<sup>6</sup> See W.H. Gispen, *Numeri*, I (1959), 147.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. K. Schilder, "Kerksaal en leven," in idem, *Om Woord en Kerk*, III (1951), esp. pp. 169-188.

# NEWS MEDLEY

By W.W.J. VanOene



Whoever never was an officebearer is hardly aware of the many, many hours which officebearers spend in the direct service of the church.

I was reminded of this anew when seeing the following in the Ottawa bulletin: "Minutes of the 450th consistory meeting."

Mind you, on January 4th it will have been thirty years that the church at Ottawa was instituted. This occasioned a festive gathering on January 7th.

It is good when we recall the great deeds of the Lord and His care for His church by paying special attention to these anniversaries. A dinner as is planned for Ottawa is a very good way of celebrating together. When you sit down at meal together this is one of the best ways of expressing the bond as members of the one body.

Let us return to those 450 meetings. Do you realize that this is at least some 1350 hours? Every one can make further calculations if so desired.

The congregations are to appreciate the work of the officebearers and the time they put in. May it be made possible for them to do their work without undue burdens.

This requires the cooperation of all. There needs be only one member who makes everything miserable for the others and the joy can be snatched away, be rendered impossible.

I had to think of this also when I read the insert in the Grand Rapids bulletin. The consistory deemed it necessary to issue a warning to the congregation about the singing. The consistory considered it even necessary to include in its letter the reminder that "the law of the State determines that no person shall wilfully disturb, interrupt or disquiet any assembly of people met for religious worship, by profane discourse, by rude and indecent behaviour, or by making a noise either within the place of worship, or so near as to disturb the order and solemnity of the meeting."

In a separate envelope I received the very same insert apparently from a different source, with the words, "some sing fast, some sing slow, some sing loud, some sing soft." These words were very bravely handprinted instead of written in longhand. Apart from the fact that the grammar is wrong – it should have read "slowly," "loudly," "softly" – there is an individualism in these words which is taboo in the church of God.

If you are in the shower it does not matter whether you sing slowly or at the top of your voice as fast as you can manage. When you sing in the church of Christ, you sing all together and follow the same tempo, the tempo which the organ indicates. If, in your opinion, the organist plays too slowly or too fast, you can discuss this with him or her, but this does not give anyone the right to follow one's own tempo, thereby disturbing the singing of the congregation.

I don't know whether it was the intention that I should comment on the handwritten lines, but if it was, you have my comment. Even if it was not, you still have it.

It is sad that the consistory had to remind the congregation of the provision of the law that "it shall be the duty of all presiding elders, and ministers of the gospel, deacons, stewards, and official members of any church or religious society . . . on sight to apprehend the offender, and take him before some justice of the peace, or other magistrate authorized to convict as aforesaid, to be proceeded against according to law."

If there is any such disturbance, and if admonitions in the ecclesiastical way do not have the desired result, the civil authorities are there for the protection of the church of Christ.

Let us return briefly to Ottawa.

"Some possibilities of purchasing the (or a) parsonage as opposed to paying rent are discussed. More exploratory work will be done."

From Ottawa we reach Toronto.

"The sisters A. and B. were present to outline a plan to set up a homecare program in our congregation. This program would include taking care of the elderly, helping to babysit when needed, help the sick and handicapped, etc. A worker would have to be hired and paid for by the church. Council decided that a more detailed plan would have to be presented before a responsible decision can be made."

It is a praiseworthy endeavour to provide help where help is needed. In the past I saw many such efforts, but there are difficulties which should be considered beforehand.

It is the experience of congregations where such help was organized that the sister or sisters who made themselves available for this work sometimes were without work for a considerable time, as there were no cases of serious illness where they were needed. At other times they had to be split up into three or four different persons at the same time, because there were three or four families where they had to be. This, of course, was impossible.

We had it ourselves: right after the birth of a baby we had to let go of the sister who helped because there was another mother with more children than we had who needed the help more urgently. And: no one else was available. Even if one had been available, the society could not afford to have two sisters engaged.

This brings me to the main point: such work is not an ecclesiastical matter and does not belong at a consistory. It would be wrong if such a person were "hired and paid for by the church."

Here is a task for the communion of saints as such, but then not under the direct leadership and authority and supervision of the officebearers. Here forming a society for this purpose is the proper course to follow.

Orangeville comes next. The cover of the bulletin shows already the profile of the church building as it will be. We expect to see a real picture in *Clarion* in due time, but can say now already that it looks quite different from what it was.

Drawings of a parsonage were also presented to the congregation and "the building committee has the O.K. to go ahead with the manse on the church property if they can get a permit."

Recalling mentally the size of the church property in Orangeville and trying to visualize a parsonage of the size as proposed, I find it difficult to see how all the cars can be parked once the part for a parsonage has been taken off. Perhaps the property is larger than the parking lot was. Maybe I'll have a chance to see it for myself at some point in the future.

In Fergus the "Club Z Points" have reached their first goal: sufficient points for the "promised VCR" which has been ordered for the Maranatha School. They keep up the work for as yet to be decided upon goals.

We go to the Burlingtons.

In Burlington West "two alternate proposals will be presented to the congregation by the committee, consisting of either partial or full paving of the parking lot. It is intended that 75% of the funds required be raised by a special drive."

I hope that it is a slip of the pen when it is said that the *committee* will present these proposals to the congregation. A congregational meeting is a meeting of the *consistory* with the congregation where the *consistory* comes with plans on which the advice of the congregation is sought. If the consistory asks the committee to explain the plans, that is fine, but the presentation comes not from the committee but from the consistory.

Burlington East's consistory report contains the sentence that "Our pastor informed us that he is under doctor's care again.... He has to watch his workload." We wish our brother a speedy recovery.

The consistory also discussed the manner in which the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated. The opinion of the congregation was sought and "Having discussed this, the council has decided to come to the congregation with the suggestion that we discontinue the double services, stay in the pews, and introduce the use of individual cups."

As for this last element, in my opinion something essential would be taken out of the celebration if individual cups were used. Then the minister no longer would have to say, "Take, drink ye all from it," but then he should say, "And now, take each one your own cup and drink it." Speaking of community! I'm sorry, but I cannot see it otherwise. It is my sincere wish that such practice will find no acceptance among us.

In Burlington-South they count on a rather short general synod, the one that is to be held in Winnipeg this spring. "Dr. J. Faber will preach on April 16 and 30, when Rev. DeJong is at General Synod." We join in their wish that it won't last more than three weeks.

"The consistory decided to have the announcements read *before* the start of the service. This will take effect as of January 1, 1989. You are asked to remain seated for the announcements. Then you will be asked to rise, after which the service will begin. This change was introduced so that we would no longer need to make special announcements before the prayer."

I was happy to read "you will be asked to rise." Sometimes all I hear is "Lift up your hearts to the Lord," whereas the preacher means to say "Please rise." We are used to the latter here in Abbotsford and I am happy that Burlington-South follows the same procedure.

There was a very pleasant piece of information in the Hamilton consistory report. "An invitation is received from brother and sister A. for the minister, elders and deacons with their spouses to attend their anniversary evening on . . ."

It is gratifying when the officebearers are honoured in this way and when appreciation for their work is expressed in such a pleasant manner.

Report meeting Mission Board: "A letter was read from the Free Reformed Church at Launceston, Tasmania, stating that they would like to contribute some funds for the work of mission supported by Hamilton. The Board proposes to the consistory to reply to the effect that additional funds are not needed at this time."

Also in this way the bond of brotherhood is demonstrated and this is the more appreciated since Launceston is also committed to the work in Papua New Guinea which the church at Albany W.A. has undertaken.

In Lincoln the nursery facilities are "bursting at the seams." "Though no hard and fast rules can be laid down, I do want to tell those parents concerned that four six-year-olds do not belong there anymore. They should be taken to the church. After all, they also belong to God's people and, though they can not understand many things, you'll be surprised what they do learn."

That's what Rev. Wieske wrote.

I can add some proof. Once, in the Netherlands, I said in

a sermon on "You shall not steal," that stealing did not start with big and important things but with little things, seemingly unimportant, such as stealing from Mom's sugarpot.

On our way home we overtook a family with four little girls. One of the youngest ones – I don't recall her age – had assured her mother that she had never stolen from the sugarpot yet. The mother told us this right there. The little one had heard it!

Lincoln's membership stood at 528 on October 2, 1988. Brrr!

A "cutting schedule" for UPC symbols was inserted in the bulletin. For the first session 21 names were mentioned, for the second session 20 names. "Would you believe that our average turnout is 1%? Now you know why we put so many names on the list." In spite of this their total "take" stands at \$ 16,380.41 !!

This is the more amazing since only 1% of at the most 21 has achieved this feat. And 1% of 21 is . . . : 0.21, one fifth of one person.

Amazing feat!

Not so amazing is what we are told about nearby Attercliffe." A proposed manse will cost approximately \$ 160,000 if erected on church property. This proposal was discussed at length and it was decided to hear the congregation at the next congregational meeting."

We had better retreat to Edmonton in haste.

In the Immanuel Church a start has been made with the building of the manse. The tentative target date for completion is the end of February. Total cost ? The contractor's price is \$ 96,495.00. With additional work to be done the total cost is expected to be somewhat less than Lincoln's, namely \$ 117,000.

"Manse Fund News. There is some interest in printing up a 'Coupon Book' whereby businessmen from the Edmonton churches and other persons who provide a service would be offering discounts to customers, with the proceeds from the selling of the book going to the manse reduction fund."

Is the manse too big, and do you need a fund for "manse reduction" ? I think I know what you really mean, though.

There are other means to collect money, too. For this we go to Calgary.

"To all nonsmokers – those who have never smoked – and those who have impressed us with their incredible willpower and virtue by quitting smoking. You have complained, condemned, cajoled, and sermonized and warned us of the evil of smoke. It is time to put your money where your mouth is. A. and A. have taken up the challenge of quitting and ask your support. You can encourage us to give up the weed by sponsoring us in our nonsmokeathon. You may sponsor us for a set amount of money per day we don't smoke. For example: \$.50 per day for a maximum of one month would be \$ 15. (unless some cheapee takes February, VO) All funds raised will go to the building fund . . . A. is quitting Nov.1, and I will quit when I have \$10 per day in sponsors."

Was signed : "A. and A." (True initials, VO.)

Any takers among our readers? You can send your pledge to Rev. Schouten.

Well, girls, we'll see how you make out. Let me know, will you?

Vernon discussed the question whether there is need for a second deacon. "It was felt that at this time there is no need for it."

"It was noted with gratitude that a gift of \$ 2,000. was received from outside the congregation for the building fund."

The consistory also discussed a proposal to rent Knox Presbyterian Church "when it might become available." However, "At this time it appears that the cost might be too high."

Coming to Cloverdale, we are reminded of the upcoming

meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches. "From the Committee Relations with Churches Abroad; informing that General Synod has designated Cloverdale to organize a Prayer Service before the commencement of the meeting of the ICRC which has been scheduled for June 20 – 29, 1989."

Finally, in Surrey the amazing decision was made "to hold the New Year's Service on Sunday January 1st, rather than on December 31st."

When a minister says: "And finally," you are to be prepared for more to come.

It won't be long this time. We just go to Australia for a short while.

Until some time ago Armadale's church organized a Dutch service every Sunday, simultaneously with the regular English afternoon service in the church building. Gradually this will be phased out.

The consistory decided that from February 1st on a Dutch service will be conducted every other Sunday and that at the end of the year 1989 the matter will be reviewed again.

"The consistory trusts that the congregation and especially the older brothers and sisters will understand and agree that some 38 years after the institution of the church in Australia the use of the Dutch language in the church services must come to an end."

For those who know him, we pass on the item from the Kelmscott part of the bulletin that "We have been informed that Prof. Dr. S.G. Hur has been appointed Rector of the Korea Theological Seminary in Pusan."

Where did I read that the Seminary was scheduled to be moved to Seoul?

Kelmscott does not expect their minister, the Rev. C. Bosch to arrive till the month of May, even if they get their visa before that time.

The Byford consistory received a "letter from a brother in Armadale regarding his translation of the Dutch book *Een Geschenk uit de Hemel*. He requests support by the purchasing of a number of these books to keep costs to a minimum. Consistory decided not to support this on the grounds that this work is already available in Canada."

The Kelmscott consistory, on the other hand, "resolved to purchase ten copies at \$ 20.00 per copy."

It might be good to have some more contact between our two countries also in this respect. The bulletin of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington contained the information: "The Bible Course, 'A Gift from Heaven' is now completely finished and ready for use." And as we can see from the Byford consistory report, the fact that work was being done in Canada was known in Australia as well.

Our manpower is too little for us to waste precious gifts and time.

This is the first medley of 1989.

Also from this place I wish all the brothers and sisters, here and abroad, the Lord's blessing and strength, His wisdom and guidance so that we all may proceed towards the day of Christ which we draw nearer by work and prayer.

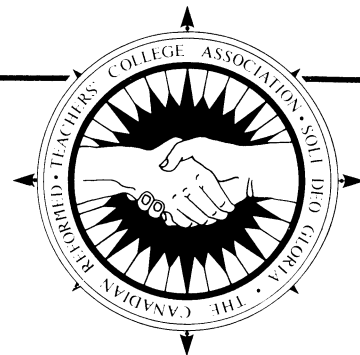
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# Graduation 1988

## Canadian Reformed Teachers' College

By W.F. Horsman



Last May, 1988, graduation exercises were held for the fifth consecutive year as six students received diplomas from the Teachers' College in Hamilton.

As usual, the evening began with an excellent dinner prepared by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Timothy Can. Ref. School. While graduands, faculty, and invited guests enjoyed food and fellowship, they were entertained by first and second year students who had ably organized this part of the evening. Congratulatory messages from the staff at Credo Elementary School in Langley, BC, and from governor H. Moes were read by the principal.

The actual graduation exercises began at 8:15 p.m. when the graduands entered the auditorium. The chairman, Mr. A.J. Hordyk, officially opened the festivities, and welcomed the audience. The address to the graduands was deliv-

ered by Mr. Ronn Van Andel, a teacher at Guido de Brès High School, himself the first graduate of the Teachers' College (1983). He strongly urged the graduands to make the best use of what they have learned by being *thinking* teachers in the tradition of Paul who urged the Philippians:

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, *think* about these things.

After the address by the Principal, Mr. T.M.P. VanderVen, the conferring of the diplomas was next on the programme. Receiving the Diploma of Education was Herman VanBarneveld, B.A. The Diploma of Teaching was conferred upon Henrietta Bartels, Linda

Jager, Karen Kuik, Helen Sikma, and Margaret VandenHaak.

Karen Kuik spoke on behalf of the graduates. In her address she compared the three years at the Teachers' College to learning how to swim (across a lake, no less). The first year consisted of mostly floundering and coming up for air; the second year of treading water and floating with the current, while the third year made the last laps difficult but worth it. She acknowledged that even though the students had now become teachers, the process of learning would not stop but continue in September as each graduate would enter a new phase.

Mr. J. Kuik from Carman, MB, closed the evening with prayer of thanksgiving. Many people took the opportunity to congratulate the graduates, have a coffee, and meet old or new acquaintances.

## Principal's address (in part)

By T.M.P. VanderVen

It certainly has been a hot topic this year: where do we get teachers from, where do we get Reformed teachers from? The advertisement pages in *Clarion* testified and testify to the ongoing, and apparently increasing need of teachers for our schools. In preparation for the 1988-89 school year some of our schools were forced to take emergency measures in order to staff their school, while at least two schools are still faced with an unresolved staffing situation for the coming school year. Indeed, the CRTC's Class of '88 had no fear at all whether or not they would find employment. It is therefore with even greater regret that this year not all candidates could be recommended for graduation.

Including the class of '88, the total of CRTCA graduates now stands at 36, of which, the Lord willing, 30 will be employed in our schools in September. This means that next year some 600 children will be taught by teachers trained at our institution. These statistics are not brought forward in order that we may increase our level of pride, or to demonstrate the increasing influence of the College. We quote them to underscore with gratitude the fact that the original purpose of the College is being fulfilled, i.e., to train teachers in a Reformed way in order that our children may receive Reformed education.

The 1987-1988 year was in general a good, ordinary year. The various programmes of the College have proven to be viable and the increasing experience of the faculty helps the College to operate smoothly. We like to publicly thank in particular our part-time staff. Without their contribution – often of necessity rather isolated – the College could not operate. Mrs. Sjanie Bethlehem returned to share her artistic and creative talents with the students. The Lord allowed Mrs. Selles to return during the second term to teach French. Dr. Oosterhoff has just concluded her first year as College lecturer in Church History – we understand that she enjoyed her part-time return to postsecondary teaching. Rev. Aasman provides the theological, and at times also pastoral element to the College, while Dr. Helder continues as the part-time instructor in English. Despite his efforts, some of us prefer Shakespeare and Stratford over Beowulf. In addition, there are the unseen workers: Mrs. VanHuistede as secretary and administrative assistant, and Mrs. Boeringa assisting with the library. All in all, the full-time faculty can boast very



CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN VERMEER, HAMILTON, ONTARIO

### CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS' COLLEGE, 1987-1988

**FRONT ROW:** Linda Jager (Class of '88, teaching in Smithville, ON), Peggy VandenHaak (Class of '88, Smithers, BC), Erica Blom, Henrietta Bartels (Class of '88, London, ON), Mrs. S. Bethlehem, Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff, Elaine VandenBos, Nancy Vandergriendt, Sharon VanderSluis.

**BACK ROW:** Edith Hofsink, Helen VanderVen, Frouke Bos, Joyce Veenendaal, Herman VanBarneveld (Class of '88, Smithville, ON), Mr. W.F. Horsman, Mr. A. Witten, Mr. T.M.P. VanderVen, Lisa Harsevoort, Helen Sikma (Class of '88), Carolin Boeringa, Karen Kuik (Class of '88, Hamilton, ON).

**ABSENT:** Rev. R. Aasman, Dr. W. Helder, Mrs. G. Selles.

strong and faithful support services – and do they need that!

Perhaps the most exciting news of this past year was the purchase of our own building. The Board and the building committee saw their efforts rewarded, and in September we hope to begin the next school year in our own home on Mohawk road. We hope and pray that the proposed drive to finance this venture will be successful, and will show the continued support of the community at large for the Can. Reformed Teachers' College.

However, a College such as ours cannot merely extend its existence from year to year, from graduation to graduation. Thoughtless routine is not compatible with its Reformed character. Also the past year has witnessed the endeavours of faculty and students to come to grips with that great, but demanding phrase: Reformed education. This continued thinking about the task and responsibility of Reformed educators is necessary. Each new generation of graduates must work hard to make such Reformed educational thinking their own, to come to a personal understanding of and commitment to it. Sure, we can learn from those who went before us, but each generation must become involved in that most personal struggle of growing understanding

and resulting commitment. Being a Reformed educator is not what you know in the first place, but what you are. We are grateful that we may and can continue this work, because we find our strength in doing the LORD's work. We do this work in humbleness, not boasting in our own scholarship and expertise, but standing in awe before the great majesty of our God who commands us and enables us. Indeed, He bends down to make use of limited and failing human beings.

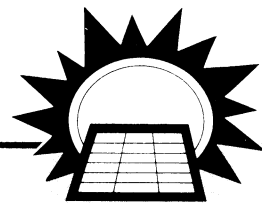
(After making the customary personal observations which of course are unsuitable for publication, I concluded my remark as follows:)

Here they are then, the Class of '88. May the LORD give you strength and wisdom to show in your work and your life you own awe for the greatness of your God. Remember that they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, and they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not be faint.

Mr. President, on behalf of the faculty of the CRTC, I may inform you that these six people have satisfied all requirements of the respective programmes of study as laid down by the Board of the CRTCA, and I request you to come forward to confer the diplomas.







By Mrs. J. Mulder *Who considers the power of Thy anger and Thy wrath according to the fear of Thee? So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:11, 12*

## Dear brothers and sisters,

This Psalm is a prayer of Moses, the man chosen by God to lead the people of God to the promised land.

Israel, however, did not take serious the wrath of God over sin and unbelief. They did not think that God was able to fulfill His promises and bring them into the promised land of Canaan. They distrusted the LORD who for ages had been their refuge, who had protected and sustained them in times of need. And because of their distrust and disobedience the anger of the LORD consumed them and the desert became a place of death. Moses saw a whole generation dying in the wilderness. Like grass that in the evening fades and withers.

In his grief Moses pleads with the LORD for the return of His grace. He prays that Israel may learn to acknowledge the cause of their misery, their sin of unbelief, and that they may learn to submit to God's judgment. For only then they will be able to experience again the favour of their covenant God. Only if the LORD lifts up His countenance upon them, they can go their way with rejoicing.

We have entered the year 1989! Also this year the LORD asks of us to live by His grace. To seek our salvation and well-being apart from ourselves in Him only. He expects us to fully trust His promises, even if the facts around us sometimes seem to contradict those promises. If God is for us, who can then be against us! Seek His kingdom and trust that all things which you need to be good soldiers of Christ will be given unto you.

If we are only concerned about having a good and comfortable life; if we with all our good talk actually ignore the Lord Jesus Christ and follow the desires of our own heart, we will experience the fierceness of God's wrath. We even more so than the people in Moses' days. For we know the Lord Jesus Christ and we see Him crowned with glory and honour.

If we now still distrust the LORD and His promises God's final judgment will come upon us.

As spokesman for God's people Moses prayed, "LORD, teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom."

That means that every day the LORD gives us, is very special and should not be wasted but used in His service and in obedience to Him. Every day He will give new mercies enabling us to fulfill our tasks.

Each day we may trust that we are guided by the Holy Spirit and by His Word, depending upon His grace in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

When we so number our days, using them as

good gifts of the LORD, then we will receive wisdom, not the wisdom of the world, which is folly (1 Corinthians 3:19) but the wisdom from above which is pure and without insincerity.

Then we also know what to do and not to do, what to trust and not to trust. Wise are we, when we learn to take refuge in the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, exposing ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit, trusting our heavenly Father and following His commands. So He leads us safely to the promised land. And on our way He will be our refuge and strength, also in the year 1989.

## Our birthday calendar for February 1989:

### ALBERT DORGELOOS

199 Westwood Road, Unit 16  
Guelph, ON N1H 7S1

*Albert hopes to celebrate his 30th birthday on February 12.*

### CONNIE VANAMERONGEN

Russ Road, RR 1  
Grimsby, ON L3M 4E7

*February 12th is also Connie's birth date, when she will become 24.*

### CORA SCHOONHOVEN

24 James Speight  
Markham, ON L3P 3G4

*Cora will be 38 years on February 18.*

### MRS. A. STAD

Box 2374  
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

*Mrs. Stad is the oldest member on our list. She will, Deo Volente, reach the age of 90 on February 19th.*

I wish you all the LORD's blessing for the time to come.

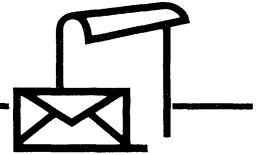
May your birthday be an enjoyable day!

God will never fail us,  
He will not forsake:  
His eternal covenant  
He will never break.  
Resting on His promise,  
What have we to fear?  
God is all-sufficient  
For the coming year.

### MRS. J. MULDER

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

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR



## BULLETIN BEEFS

### Dear Editor

In the "News Medley" in the *Clarion* of April 15th, '88, Rev. VanOene brings up once more the subject of Combined Bulletins.

I will not go into all the pros and cons to be mentioned, except for one statement which is wrong and misleading. He writes: ". . . more combinations which would save hundreds and perhaps even thousands of dollars per year." This is not correct.

A combined bulletin comes basically down to this, that a congregation supplies members of an other congregation with their bulletin, and therefore needs more copies.

For example: If congregation A. needs 200 copies, and congregation B. 100 copies, then, by combining them, A. would have to increase its number of copies from 200 to 300, which is one third more. And B. from 100 to 300, which is three times as many.

From this you can see, that the more churches are involved in a certain combination, the higher the cost will be. It is also a fact that the paper is the most expensive item in the cost of bulletins. So instead of saving hundreds or thousands of dollars, combined bulletins cost the churches perhaps hundreds or thousands of dollars more per year. It is like everything else: nothing is for free.

It is also puzzling how Rev. VanOene expects to save hundreds of hours in man- or woman-power, after all, practically the same copy has to be typed out, but a lot more copies have to run off and a lot more copies have to be folded and inserted, etc. So where is the time saving? Thank you.

A. Harke  
St. Albert, AB

## A REACTION

By W.W.J. VanOene

In the first place we have to apologize to brother Harke for the long time it took to react to his letter. This past summer we briefly talked about it already, and it was quite a while after that that I did receive his submission. However, here is my reaction.

As far as the number of copies of bulletins which would be required is concerned, brother Harke is right. However, hereby the following is to be considered:

announcements which are found in every bulletin, having been received from an "outside" source, would be inserted only once instead of in every separate bulletin and thus the number of pages might be reduced so as to influence the calculations favourably.

I took just one particular bulletin of Burlington-West.

There I found: An announcement from "Anchor" of 9 lines. The same in the bulletins of the other Burlington churches. There was a piece from the Home for the Aged of one and three-quarter pages, complete with a typed out membership application form. There were eight lines of an announcement of a Christmas Program of the John Calvin School, which school serves the three Burlingtons.

Burlington-East shortened the one from the Home for the Aged but Burlington-South did not.

In total, these announcements covered more than two pages, which had to be typed two-and-a-half times (two times for the two, half of it for the one). Once would have sufficed if there had been a combined bulletin.

Mind you, I do not say that these submissions should all have been inserted! I have experience with typing and running off bulletins, as I did it for 32 years. Once, after having typed submissions from one particular, nonlocal society several times in succession, I returned the next submission with the remark: I have given you sufficient free advertising; if you have something to communicate to our membership, send me so many copies, and I'll have them handed out with our bulletin.

It is very easy to send one copy with the request to have this printed in the bulletin. It is cheaper, too, but the local church has to pay for it and the poor typists have to spend hours on these free advertisements. I think it is time that our bulletin editors start refusing such submissions.

I realize that this goes beyond br. Harke's letter, but it is all connected with the topic.

I have nothing against inserting brief announcements, but I do wish to pass on a remark of Dr. J. Visscher in the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley: "I will let it pass this time, but next time the editorial knife will be out. Our policy has been and remains to publish notifications, not articles or reports."

I am amazed at the skill of some of

my colleagues who succeed in making a mountain out of a molehill and who think that they are under obligation to write lengthy pieces or articles in the bulletin even when there are no or hardly any particulars to be mentioned concerning the life in the congregation. I can well understand it that a neighbouring church is not very eager to pay for that and that they would then rather have their own, simple and separate bulletin.

Since I have nothing to do with the redaction of the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley, I do not hesitate to put it up as an example of how things could be done properly. Policy: no articles, no meditations, no lengthy pieces, just announcements and consistory reports, plus a rather brief mention of events in the various congregations. The general announcements - which otherwise would have to be inserted in the bulletin of each church - come first; then follows the news of the separate churches alphabetically.

When speaking of the "Fraser Valley" I am not completely correct as also the Church at Vernon in the Okanagan Valley participates. At the latest get-together of the colleagues in British Columbia the possibility was even discussed of Houston and Smithers joining us. The modern means of communication render this possible.

The news is restricted to that from the churches and what the churches have approved of. For example: No reports of schoolboard meetings are inserted, as I sometimes see in other bulletins. Schoolboards should publish their reports in school publications and not use the church-bulletin for it.

How I envisage that money could be saved?

1. Let everyone use legal size paper, folded so that you have pages of seven by eight-and-a-half. Stencils do not cost more whether you use them for half legal size pages or for half letter size pages. You can put more on a page and the cost of running them through the machine - whether stencil-machine or photocopier - remains the same.

2. We are to consider the time our typists put in. I know that in by far the most cases it is a work of volunteers. Yet we should make it as easy as possible on them as well. Besides, why should the work that they do *not* be remunerated? Much less time is needed when one person types a combined bulletin - besides general announcements having to

be typed only once instead of three or four times – than when four persons type a separate bulletin for four churches.

3. It costs far less time to run off 450 copies from one master than to run off three times 150 copies from three different masters.

Perhaps this reaction to brother Harke's letter is too long already. I had better conclude it before I receive a frantic call from our editor.

It is quite possible that I miscalculated the financial savings that could be realized when combining bulletins.

There is one aspect which cannot be disputed: it keeps us informed about each other and prevents alienation. Here in the Fraser Valley and the Okanagan Valley you'll find one large Family. That the bonds are strong and that we are informed about each other's weal and woe is the fruit not only of bonds of blood and family relations but not in the last place of the fact that ever since the day when a second church was instituted here a combined bulletin has been issued so that we kept being informed about the life and experiences of the brothers and

sisters in the other congregations.

Sometimes when I enquire about life in a neighbouring congregation in another part of the country, the reply is: "I don't know; we don't know what's going on there at all." This is then said about a congregation which originally formed one church with the one where I put my question to a member. Isn't this sad, extremely sad?

Enough about the topic. My reply has become an article. May it bear fruit and serve to strengthen the bond.

C

## PRESS RELEASES



### Of the Board of Governors of the Theological College, Hamilton, ON September 8, 1988

Opening: The Chairman, Rev. J. Mulder, opened the meeting with the reading of 2 Timothy 4:1-8, led in prayer and welcomed the brothers. All members of the Board of Governors were present.

Agenda: A few matters were added to the agenda, after which it was adopted.

Officers: The existing officers were reappointed.

Chairman – Rev. J. Mulder  
Vice-chairman – Rev. J. Visscher  
Secretary – Rev. Cl. Stam  
Treasurer – Mr. H. Kampen

Procedural Matters: A proposal regarding the following of a certain procedure for this meeting was adopted.

Minutes: The minutes of the last Board meeting held on September 10, 1987 were adopted.

Executive Committee: The Secretary, Rev. Cl. Stam, reported on the correspondence. The College evenings will be videotaped and made available to the churches in Australia and Canada. The Convocation Committee, together with the Finance and Property Committee, will make the necessary arrangements for production and marketing. The transfer of funds from the Australian sister churches was discussed.

Academic Committee: This Committee reported at some length regarding its activities.

Finance and Property Committee: The Sixth Annual Report was dealt with; financial statements were received and

the budget for 1989 was adopted; the auditors' report was taken note of and new auditors were appointed. Tuition fees were set for the academic year 1989-1990.

Faculty Vacancies: The Senate was admitted to the meeting and welcomed. Their input was sought especially in connection with the filling of the upcoming vacancies in the areas of dogmatology and diaconology/ecclesiology. The recommendations of the Senate were discussed and decided upon. They will be forwarded to General Synod. Proposals to Synod with respect to the starting dates of the new professors will also be passed on.

Reports:

- a) Convocation Committee – the 1989 Convocation will be held, D.V., on September 8. Prof. K. Deddens will be the featured speaker;
- b) College Visitors – the Revs. P. Kingma and J. Mulder reported on their visits made in the fall of 1987; the Rev. M. VanderWel and M. van Beveren reported on their visits made in the winter of 1988;
- c) Senate – Each professor reported on the work done in his particular department, including subjects taught and assignments given. The progress of the students was noted with gratitude. The lecture schedule for 1988-89 was adopted;
- d) Principal – The Principal, Prof. J. Faber, reported on his activities;
- e) Librarian – The Librarian, Prof. J. Faber, reported on the development of the library;
- f) Registrar – The Registrar, Prof. C. VanDam, reported that John Ludwig, a Canadian Reformed student and Richard deLange, a Christian Reformed student, had requested admit-

tance. Interviews with these prospective students were held and reported on. It was decided, with gratitude, to admit them to the course of study.

College Visitors: The following Governors will visit the College during the Fall term, the Revs. Cl. Stam and P. Kingma, and during the Winter term, the Revs. M. van Beveren and J. Visscher.

Other Business:

- a) A program leading to the degree of Theological Studies was adopted and will be publicized;
  - b) A proposal from the Senate to create a special publication committee to make available scholarly works written by members of the Faculty was studied, discussed and endorsed. Two of the Governors will study the matter in more detail and report in due time;
  - c) It was noted that the following Governors cannot be reappointed by the upcoming Synod unless they have been off the Board for one year: H. Kampen, C.M. Loopstra, J. Mulder, and J. Visscher. M. van Beveren has officially retired and is no longer "in active service." Nominations to Synod for the upcoming vacancies in the Finance and Property Committee will be forwarded;
  - d) It is gratefully noted that the amount of money given to the Library by the Women's Saving Action will be raised from \$10,000 to \$15,000 annually.
- Press Release: This will be handled by the Executive due to the late hour.

Closing: The Rev. M. van Beveren led in prayer. The Chairman closed the meeting.

For the Board,  
J. VISSCHER

C

## Regional Synod East October 19, 1988

1. *Opening:* On behalf of the convening church at Guelph, Rev. P.G. Feenstra welcomes the brothers, asks that Ps. 89:1,3 be sung, reads Ps. 89:1-18, and leads in prayer. He remembers in thankfulness that Rev. J. Kroeze accepted the call from Hamilton to serve as missionary in Brazil, and that Rev. C. Stam accepted the call to serve as minister of Hamilton. He also remembers that Rev. R. Aasman has received calls from the churches of Launceston, Tasmania, and Chilliwack, B.C.

2. *Examination of Credentials:* Two brothers are asked to examine the credentials. The credentials are found to be in good order with all first delegates present.

3. *Election of Officers:* Regional Synod is constituted. The following officers are elected: Rev. J. Mulder, chairman; Rev. R. Aasman, vice-chairman; Rev. J. DeJong, clerk. Rev. Mulder remembers with thanksgiving that the church at Orangeville received an affirmative answer to their call extended to Rev. W. den Hollander.

4. *Agenda:* With the addition of some mail the agenda is adopted as proposed by the convening church.

5. *Appeal of br. L. VanZandwyk:* Br. L. VanZandwyk appeals a decision of Classis Ontario South of March 9, 1988, which did not accede to his request to declare as a doctrinal error a statement by Prof. Dr. J. Faber in *Clarion*, Vol. 34, No. 5, "Scripture does not speak in a Christocentric but in a theocentric manner; not the Christ is in the centre, but God."

Regional Synod judges that it cannot grant the appeal of br. L. VanZandwyk because he has proven neither that Classis Ontario South of March 9, 1988, was incorrect in its judgment nor that Dr. Faber's statement was a "public promulgation of false doctrine."

6. *Appeal of Burlington-East:* The Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington-East objects against the way in which Classis Ontario North of June 17, 1988, approved the release of the Rev. M. Werkman from the ministry of the Word.

Regional Synod accedes to the request of the council of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church and judges that classis should have pointed out to the consistory of the church at Orangeville and the church visitors that they should have acted in accordance with article 71 of the Church Order. When a minister has committed a public or otherwise gross sin, he shall be suspended from office by the judgment of his own consistory with the deacons and of the consistory with the deacons of the

neighbouring church. If he repents and asks to be released from his office, article 71 leaves this up to the judgment of the classis with the concurring advice of the deputies of regional synod.

Regional Synod does not intend with this judgment to repeat the procedure of the release of Rev. M. Werkman, but to show to people within and without the Canadian Reformed Churches that sin and discipline over sin are not taken lightly.

7. *Appeal of E. Kampen:* Br. E. Kampen of Burlington-West appeals a decision of Classis Ontario North of June 17, 1988, "to approve, with the concurring advice of the deputies of Regional Synod, the release of Rev. M. Werkman by the consistory of Orangeville." Regional Synod decides to send Br. Kampen a copy of the answer to Burlington-East. Regional Synod also judges that article 71 of the Church Order does not necessarily bind Classis to depose Rev. M. Werkman.

8. *Appeal of E. Kampen:* Br. E. Kampen of Burlington-West also appeals a decision of Classis Ontario North of June 17, 1988, which declared his letter concerning the release of Rev. M. Werkman of the office of minister of the Word inadmissible.

Regional Synod does not accede to this request, pointing out that Br. Kampen is neither appealing a decision of his consistory nor dealing with a matter "of the churches in common." At the time of his letter to Classis, the release of Rev. M. Werkman was strictly a matter of the church at Orangeville.

9. *Treasurer of Regional Synod:* Regional Synod gratefully takes note of the report from the treasurer of Regional Synod, br. P.L. Schuller.

10. *Auditing Books of the Treasurer:* Regional Synod gratefully takes note that the books of the treasurer of Regional Synod are in good order, as audited by the church at Lincoln. Synod discharges br. P.L. Schuller of his task as treasurer and thanks him for the work which he has done.

11. *Archives of Regional Synod:* The church at Brampton reports that the archives of the district of Regional Synod East are in good order. This report is gratefully received.

12. *Deputies of Regional Synod:*

1. A report by Rev. C. Stam and Rev. J. Mulder states that they could give concurring advice to the decision of Classis Ontario South of September 21, 1988, to permit br. J. Kroeze to the ministry of the Word.
2. A report by Rev. R. Aasman and Rev. J. VanRietschoten states that they gave concurring advice to the decision of Classis Ontario North of June 17, 1988, to approve the release of

Rev. M. Werkman from the ministry of the Word.

13. *Report of Committee for Investigating the Desirability and Feasibility of Dividing the Regional Synod East into Three Classical Districts:* Regional Synod decides on the basis of several submissions that there is no unanimity among the churches of the district of Regional Synod East as to the desirability and feasibility of three classical districts. Therefore Regional Synod decides not to proceed with the matter and encourages the churches to keep this matter alive in the congregations.

14. *Appointments:*

- a. Convening church for next Regional Synod is London; time: fall of 1989.
- b. Delegates to General Synod, April 1989, are: first ministers: R. Aasman, D. Agema, J. DeJong, C. Stam; alternate ministers: P. Feenstra, J. Mulder, G. Wieske, P. Kingma, in that order. First elders: G. Nordeman, J. Schutten, A. VanEgmond, A. Witten; alternate elders: J. Schouten, M. Kampen, J. Hutten, A. Ruggi, in that order.
- c. Board of Governors of the Theological College.  
Regional Synod nominates the following to General Synod as governors of the Theological College: Revs. D. DeJong, P. Kingma, C. Stam; alternates: Revs. J. VanRietschoten, R. Aasman, J. DeJong.
- d. Deputies for Regional Synod.

Regional Synod appoints the following as deputies of Regional Synod: For Classis North: Revs. R. Aasman, J. VanRietschoten; alternate: C. Stam. For Classis South: Revs. D. DeJong, J. Mulder; alternate: P. Feenstra.

15. *Personal Question Period:* Rev. J. VanRietschoten thanks the officers for the good work which they did.

16. *Censure ad Article 44, C.O.:* Thankfully, censure is not required.

17. *Adoption of Acts and Approval of Press Release:* Regional Synod decides to leave it to the officers to finalize the Acts and Press Release of Regional Synod.

18. *Closing:* Rev. J. Mulder expresses appreciation that there was good harmony among the brothers and thanks the ladies of Guelph for taking care of meals and refreshments. He mentions with sadness that br. Werkman is no longer a minister of the Word, and expresses the concern that br. VanZandwyk will be at peace with the judgment of Regional Synod. He asks that Hymn 2:1, 2 be sung, leads in prayer, and closes the meeting.

For Regional Synod,  
R. AASMAN, vice-chairman.



**Classis Pacific**  
**November 28, 29, 1988**

On behalf of the convening church at Abbotsford, Rev. M. VanderWel requested all present to sing Psalm 119:1 and 49. After reading 1 Timothy 1:1 to 17, he led in prayer. Rev. VanderWel then welcomed all those present, especially candidate W.B. Slomp and the deputies Regional Synod, Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and Rev. J.D. Wielenga, who were present for the peremptory examination of br. Slomp.

The credentials were examined and found to be in order. There were no instructions from the churches. Classis was declared constituted with the following moderamen: chairman – Rev. C. VanSpronsen, vice-chairman – Rev. J. Moesker, clerk – Rev. B.J. Berends. The proposed agenda was adopted with one addition. The convening church received one letter, from the church at Houston requesting that the peremptory examination of cand. W.B. Slomp be placed on the agenda, as well as the approbation of the call extended to this brother by the church at Houston.

Classis then proceeded with the examination of cand. Slomp. The relevant documents were checked by the moderamen and found to be in good order. Br. Slomp delivered a sermon proposal on Titus 2:11 to 14 before all those present. The sermon was discussed by the delegates in closed session, and classis decided to continue the examination. Due to the late hour, it was decided to adjourn classis until the following morning. Psalm 63:1 and 3 were sung, and the chairman led in prayer.

The next morning, the brothers were called to order at 9:00 a.m. The chairman requested all to sing Psalm 138:1, and read Romans 10:11 to 18. He then led in prayer. Roll call was held, and it was noted that the alternate delegate from Chilliwack, br. J.K. vanEllenberg, was present to replace one of the primi delegates from that church. The chairman welcomed all present and in a short address to the classis mentioned Rev. R. Aasman's decline of the call extended to him by the church at Chilliwack, and the death of Rev. A.B. Roukema who served the churches for many years.

Classis continued with the examination of cand. W.B. Slomp. He was examined in O.T. exegesis, N.T. exegesis, knowledge of Holy Scripture, doctrine and creeds, church history, ethics, church polity, and diaconology. After a lunch prepared by the sisters in Langley, the delegates discussed the examination in closed session. Classis decided to admit br. W.B. Slomp to the ministry of the Word in the Canadian Reformed Churches. After having reviewed the proper documents, classis approved the call extended to br. Slomp by the church at Houston. Br. Slomp signed the classical subscription form. He was congratulated by the chairman who also wished him continual strength from the Lord. In connection with this, Psalm 121 was read. After singing together Psalm 121:1 and 4, everyone was given the opportunity to personally congratulate the brother. The deputies Regional Synod were thanked for their presence and advice in connection with the examination.

Next, the chairman read the reports

of church visits made to the churches at Houston (June 16/88), Vernon (June 13/88), and Lynden (Nov. 21/88), made by the church visitors Rev. M. VanderWel and Rev. J. Visscher. An auditor's report from the church at Smithers concerning the classical fund and the fund for needy churches was also read and filed.

The delegates of the various churches were questioned according to Art. 44 of the Church Order. One of the delegates from Houston expressed gratitude to the Lord for the satisfactory examination of cand. Slomp. He also thanked classis and the counsellor of Houston, Rev. B.J. Berends, for their involvement in the call and examination of cand. Slomp.

The church at Chilliwack was appointed convening church for the next classis which is to be convened, the Lord willing, in Langley on April 4, 1989. The suggested moderamen are: chairman – Rev. J. Moesker, vice-chairman – Rev. B.J. Berends, clerk – Rev. M. VanderWel. Rev. B.J. Berends was appointed to represent classis at the ordination and installation of cand. W.B. Slomp in Houston on Dec. 11/88.

Personal question period was held. The chairman was thankful that censure ad Art. 44, Church Order was not necessary. The acts of classis were read and adopted. The press review was read and approved. Psalm 135:1 and 6 were sung, and the vice-chairman led in prayer of thanksgiving. The chairman declared the meeting closed.

For the classis,  
J. MOESKER, vice-chairman, e.t.



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

One Dundas Street West  
Box 2, Suite 2106  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3  
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**OPSPORING ADRESSEN:**

ALBARDA, Jan Horatius, geboren op 7 juni 1910 te 's Gravenhage, echtgenote: ALBARDA-van der Veen, Elske, geboren op 5 oktober 1909 te Bandoeng. Naar Canada vertrokken in 1951. Laatstbekende adres in Canada: 14 Riverdale Drive, Thistletown, Rexdale, Ontario.

ALTENBURG, Wijbe, geboren op 5 april 1924 te Hennaarderdeel, laatstbekende

adres in Nederland: Hooglandseweg 8, Amersfoort. Naar Canada vertrokken op 14 april 1954.

ANTHONIJZ, Glenn Bertus en echtgenote WATSON, Carole Lynn, resp. geboren op 6 augustus 1963 te Helmond en 7 oktober 1963 te Mississauga, Ontario. Naar Canada vertrokken op 29 april 1986 en de echtgenote eind augustus 1988.

LAMAIN, Aaldrik, geboren op 15 november 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Eemsstraat 7, Amsterdam. Naar Canada vertrokken op 1 oktober 1951 met bestemming Toronto.

ROSENDAAL, Johannes, geboren op 29 april 1945 te Rotterdam, laatstbekende woonplaats in Nederland: Barendrecht. Naar Canada vertrokken op 12 oktober

1979, laatstbekende adres alhier: RR 10, Brampton, Ontario.

ROSENTHAL-de Wit, G., echtgenote van M.M. Rosenthal, laatstelijk gewoonde hebbende op 320-4001 Don Mills Road te Willowdale, Ontario.

VERBUYT, Eulalie Marie, geboren te Biervliet, Zeeland op 16 februari 1906. In de jaren '30 naar Canada vertrokken.

VERBUYT, Alida Maria, geboren te Biervliet op 29 april 1918. Naar Canada vertrokken in de jaren '30.

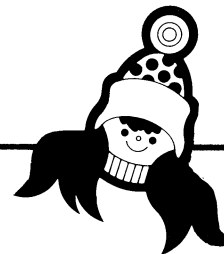
De Consul Generaal,  
voor deze:  
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER  
Kanselier





# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers,

A Happy New Year to you all!  
 Don't you think it's exciting to have a brand new year ahead of you?  
 Who knows what might happen!  
 Maybe something exciting like a new baby in the family, or going to a new school.  
 Maybe your family will go on the best holiday ever!  
 But this new year will also bring things that are not so "nice."  
 You know too, about sad, unhappy people, sick people, people who are hungry for food and God's Word.  
 Whatever 1989 may bring us we can count on the Lord.  
 Our heavenly Father has promised to guide and care for us always.  
 And that's why we can wish each other

**"HAPPY NEW YEAR."**

"Happy Birthday" and "many happy returns of the day" to all the following Busy Beavers whose birthday comes in February. Here's hoping you all have a thankful and fun day celebrating with your family and friends. And we send you our best wishes for the Lord's blessing in the year ahead.

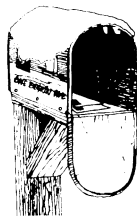
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## Poem

The clouds in the sky are floating by  
 In many shapes and sizes.  
 Some of them reach high in the sky,  
 And some have many disguises.

from Busy Beaver *Esther Hordyk*



## FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Kristi Viher*. I hope you will enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Will you write and tell us about your report on the brain?

Welcome to the Club, *Dennis VanOene*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already, making pictures to share with the Busy Beavers! Keep up the good work, Dennis!

Hello, *Yvonne Van Egmond*. It was good to hear from you again. I see you have no trouble keeping busy! How did you enjoy your holiday, Yvonne? Let me know when you get a pen pal, all right?

Sounds to me as if you have a good time at your school, *Michelle Peters*. Did you have a good holiday, too? I don't think I'll copy your backwards handwriting, though! Bye for now, Michelle.

How is your kitten doing, *Janine Van Der Hoeven*? And is your new barn finished? What did you do during your holiday, Janine?

Thank you for a very nice letter and card, *Christina Bredenhof*. I'm sure the Busy Beavers will enjoy doing the puzzles and things! Sounds to me as if you had a good summer, Christina. You'll be looking forward to more, I think!

How is your big pup doing, *Nellie Bosveld*? Are you enjoying your pool while we are enjoying snow and ice in Canada? I hope you have a lovely day on your brother's wedding day, Nellie. Will you write and tell us about it?

Hello, *Derek Bouwman*. Thank you for your letter and picture. I'm glad you enjoy school and sports. Did you have a good Christmas holiday, Derek?

Thank you for your letter and poem, *Esther Hordyk*. Congratulations a bit late on your baby brother. He will be really cute by now, right? Do you help look after him, Esther?

Hello, *Laura Bol*. Thank you for a pretty little letter. It was nice to hear from you again, Laura. Will you write and tell us how you enjoyed your holidays?

I see you enjoy reading, *Netty Sikkema*. That way you always have a friend and can go far-away places, right? Did you have fun in the snow during the holidays, Netty?

## Quiz Time!

### KIDS DID IT!

Can you identify these Bible children?

1. I was having a great time watching my Dad and the reapers harvesting the grain – and helping, too! But the sun got too hot for me and I was brought home very sick. Who am I ?

---

2. I helped my Dad carry a big bundle of firewood up the mountainside. How thankful we were that the Lord did provide an animal for the sacrifice, as my father said He would! Who am I ?

---

3. I told my mistress that in my homeland there was a prophet of God who could heal my master of his terrible disease. Who am I ?

---

4. My master prayed that the Lord would open my eyes. Can you imagine my surprise and joy when I saw all God's angels and their fiery chariots protecting us ? Who am I ?

---

5. We were there singing and shouting our joy at the King God sent us. How we waved our palm branches high as we ran alongside His donkey ! Who were we ?

---

6. Mile after hot, tiring mile we trudged through the desert, my mother and I. Thankfully God showed us a well when I nearly died of thirst. Who am I ?

---

7. I fell to the ground from an upstairs window when I got sleepy in the warm, smoky room during Paul's long sermon. Who am I ?

---

### A PUZZLING LETTER !

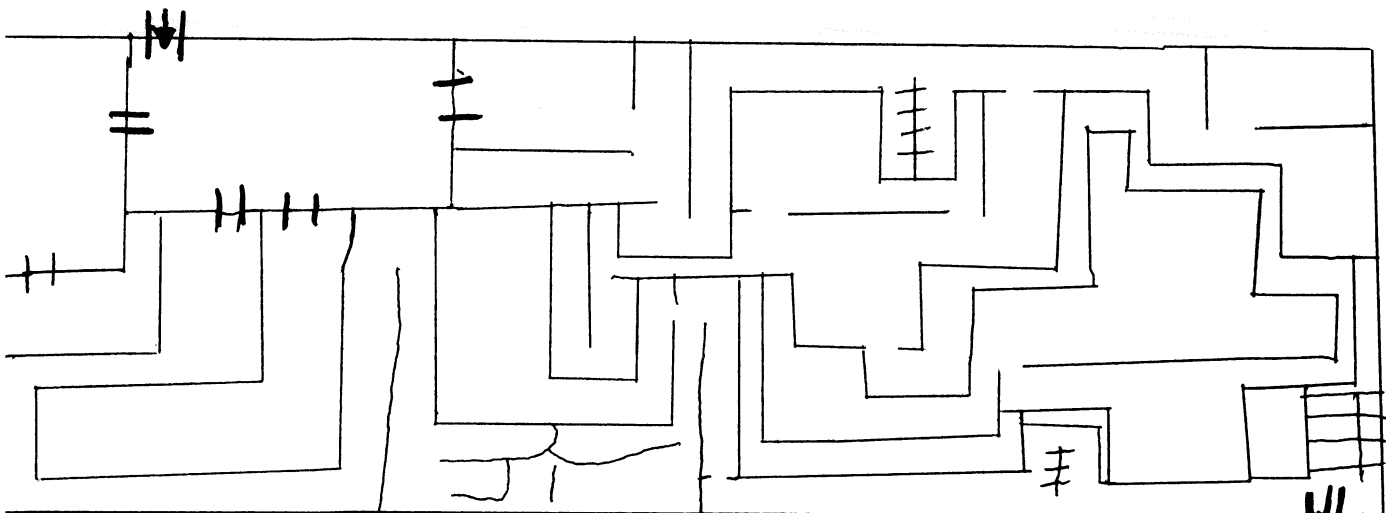
I got a letter that was like a puzzle. Here is a small part of it.  
Can you read it?

Dear Aunt Betty,  
Of course I'm not a letter writer because I have a  
million other things on my mind. I do like having pen pals  
though.  
I like writing backwards. It's easy when left-handed.

from Busy Beaver Michelle Peters.

### MAZE

by Busy Beaver Christina Bredenhof.



Find your way to the church.



### CHURCH NEWS



Called to *Fergus, ON* and *Grand Valley, ON*

REV. B.J. BERENDS

of *Smithers, BC*

I'm looking forward to hearing from you, Busy Beavers!  
Send your answers to me for the Kids Did It! quiz. And I  
will send you a reward.

My address is still:

*Aunt Betty*  
c/o Premier Printing Ltd.  
One Beghin Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2J 3X5

Love to you all,  
Aunt Betty

