

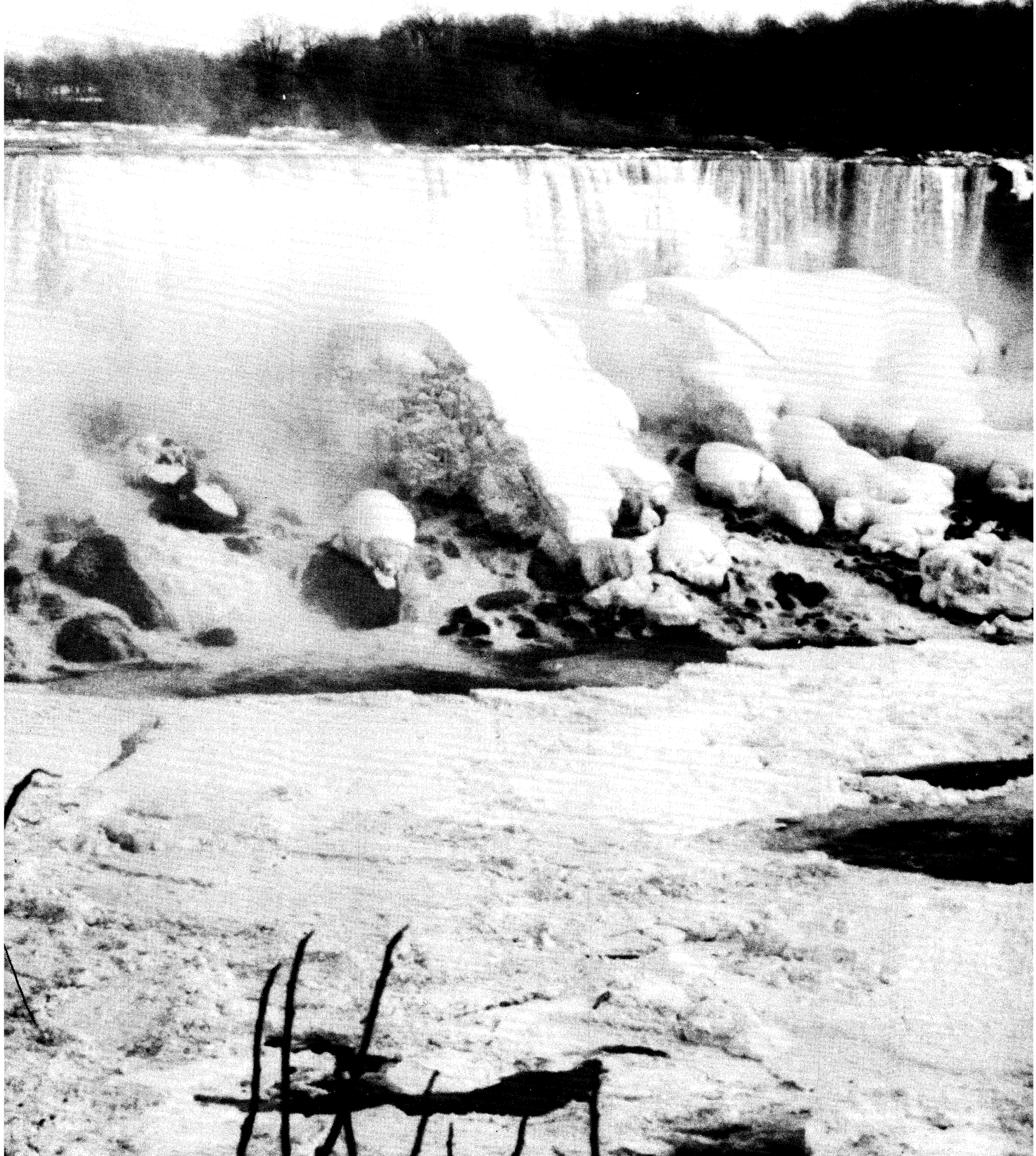


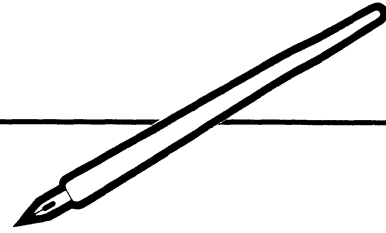
Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Family singing

Have you ever been with a group of campers and been asked to join in singing? Chances are that your experiences were close to those of a columnist who wrote that "One of the most pathetic sounds in this country is a group of ordinary Canadians trying to sing together." The result was that this "massed effort amounted to nothing but an unhappy, quavering squeak" (B. Draine in *The Globe and Mail*, 2 September 1989). By and large singing has become a lost art for many people. How is that with us? As those who go to church twice each Sunday we undoubtedly sing considerably more than those who do not worship on the Lord's day. However, is singing still an integral part of our life as Reformed people, whose heritage includes singing as a regular feature of family worship?

The command to sing

It is striking how often Scripture exhorts us to sing. Why is that? The reason can be the need to praise God because He is God! For example:

O come, let us sing to the LORD;
Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!
For the LORD is the great God, and the great king above
all gods. (Psalm 95:1-3)

As is already clear from the above, a closely related reason is thanksgiving and gratitude that we may know Him as merciful and gracious, as God who saves and redeems His people. For instance:

Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God;
for He is gracious, and a song of praise is seemly.
The LORD builds up Jerusalem; He gathers the outcasts
of Israel,
He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.
(Psalm 147:1-3)

God's work continues in the lives of His children and so the Psalms can exhort us to sing a new song! Indeed as renewed creatures in Christ the incentive to do so is all the greater! In singing we can also tell others of the great works of God.

O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD all the
earth!
Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from
day to day!
Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works
among all the peoples. (Psalm 98:1-2)

For all these reasons, one can therefore also call on the LORD in trouble and difficulty and thus the Psalmist exhorts:

Sing praises to the LORD, O you His saints, and give
thanks to His holy name.
For His anger is but for a moment, and His favour is for a
lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30:4-5)

The above can be summarized by stating that songs must be sung to God for He is God!, the God of our salvation, the God of the covenant who in mercy has come near and saved us and who therefore hears the cries of those who call on Him. After the cross and resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ the exhortation to sing to the LORD can only be more pressing upon us. Is it enough to leave such singing to one day per week? The answer, I am convinced, is No!

Daily singing

How can we restrict our thanks and praise to God by song to one day a week? Singing is speaking in an intensive manner. Does God not expect the most intensive form of thanksgiving and praise that is possible with words when we have the opportunity to not only speak, but to sing to the LORD? When we want to recount the great deeds of God, what better medium is there than song, also for remembering these acts of strength? (Consider, for example, Psalms 105-107.) And who cannot but be moved when hearing the cry of Psalm 42 vocalized in the singing of a person or family in anguish and distress as the downcast soul is poured out before God? Indeed, is singing not a powerful form of prayer, be it of thanksgiving or of supplication with thanksgiving? Does singing to the LORD not underline the beautiful covenant bond that we are privileged to have with the living God because of the work of Christ?

The world is full of ungodly music and songs which are absorbed by countless people to their detriment. But we are not of the world, although in it. Is the singing of God's praises not a good place to start in asserting the special style of God's people? Listen to what God's Word has to tell us. "Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks. . . ." (Ephesians 5:18-20).

Singing and family worship

As a beginning of reaffirming or rejuvenating the eminent place of singing in our lives, should singing not receive renewed attention or be introduced in the family worship where it has either disappeared over time or never existed? What better way is there to experience together as family something of the joy in Christ and give expression to our communal gratitude for the many blessings received? Such regular prayers (for that is what singing to the Lord is) also help bind a family together. Together we raise our voices and souls to God. What a joy for the Spirit and what anguish for Satan and his cohorts when the songs of the covenant are sung! Then the Spirit receives

more and more room to work in our hearts and lives and the danger of grieving Him is lessened. Then the family, young and old, is strengthened for their task as children of God in His world. All are reminded again of the new reality in Christ! "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

And finally . . .

There is also something else. Singing the praises of God can and should be an integral part of the renewal of our tongues

and language. It belongs to what we could call Christian lifestyle and culture. Consider in this context how often the exhortation to sing is an appeal to sing a new song to the Lord (for example, Psalm 33:1; 149:1).

Now we have only a small beginning of the new obedience. Later we will be able to obey in perfection. That will also involve much singing. Remember how the redeemed, the great family of God, are described as singing new songs in the book of Revelation (for example 14:1-3)! Isn't it great to be able to savour now already in the way we conduct our family worship a small foretaste of that future thanksgiving and joy in the Lord?



Worthy of full acceptance₂

By C. Trimp

Human suffering — acting as a damper on L.D. 10?

Given the many options, one should not be surprised that we wish to broach the problem of human suffering when we reflect upon the trustworthiness of the gospel. This topic concerns all of us. Both in our personal life and in the community in which we live, we are time and again harshly confronted with this problem. Not a day passes by without our running into suffering of some kind, often in a grievous and painful way. We meet it in all sorts of illnesses, handicaps, sorrows and disasters.

Each day certain terrible things happen that bewilder us and make us ask how in the world it is possible that people can treat one another in such a heartless manner.

All of us are aware of the terrifying arms race, which exceeds all bounds of human understanding.

We feel threatened by these and many other things in our lives and society. We feel the enmity against our existence. We sense something of the complete hold of death, a stranglehold from which nobody is able to save himself.

Of course, not only our own generation is confronted by this antagonistic force. All the way back to the days of Adam and Eve has mankind been preoccupied with this issue. All generations have wrestled with this issue. Should we wish to look for spectacular examples, any period of history could serve the purpose. Antiquity tells us about massacres, carnage and cruelties that defy belief, even today.

The Middle Ages, the period in history when Europe took shape under the tutelage of the Christian church, reveal to us a desecration and degradation of human life that fills us with repugnance and that should make us thankful to be alive in the twentieth century.

In the fourteenth century the bubonic plague made so many victims that at least one-third of Europe's total population lost its life. In 1755, when Lisbon was struck

***"All the way back to the days
of Adam and Eve has
mankind been preoccupied
with this issue."***

by an earthquake, some sixty-thousand people died in one single day.

The extent of suffering brought about by the Napoleonic Wars is indescribable.

Also the use of so-called conventional weapons can radically destroy life as we have learned, for instance, from the battle of Verdun during World War I.

So, in the event someone is looking for an alibi to justify his unbelief or his leaving the church, here is a wide choice of arguments to do so. Yesterday's facts can always supply him with that kind of justification. For that purpose one doesn't even need to be referred to the hideous drama of Auschwitz or the manifestation of some dreadful cancer.

Yet, however true this all may be, it is also true that in our own day the problem of suffering seems to have a vitality

that hits us more intensely than ever before. Never before have our communication systems been so perfected as they are now. Every day and right in our comfortable living rooms, television puts into plain sight the most poignant images of human suffering and human calamities. Also, there is no denying the acceleration in the production of life-destroying weaponry. We could admire the technological sophistication and the ever-increasing precision of it, but for the fact that they are employed in the annihilation of life.

In this century we have witnessed the barbaric murder of six million Jews by one of the most cultured nations of Europe.

All these and similar things make us realize that we lack the capacity to grasp completely the nature of human suffering; nor can we appropriately respond to it emotionally. Actually, we hardly know any longer what we are talking about when we discuss the stupendous destruction of life which daily threatens our society. Admittedly, in connection with problems at this level, the Christian church has for centuries on end made pronouncements about God's providence. She has reflected on how God governs all things and how God (actively) allows evil to happen. The church has made profession of this in her public writings.

That profession means in a very specific way that a Christian is able to meet his God in all situations of life: in both positive and negative things, in both understandable and perplexing matters. Or, to use the time-honoured language of the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 10: God "so governs them that leaf and

blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come not by chance but by His Fatherly hand.”

But also this confession seems no longer able to cope with current issues. It is, or so it seems, unable to offset the overwhelming questions, problems and perils of the age we are living in.

There were times when the confession of Lord’s Day 10 was cherished.

On another front there is the battle cry in the camp of the theology of revolution. They rebuke the church because of its doctrine of God’s providence that is said to be siding with the establishment, the rich and the affluent. Lord’s Day 10, they say, belongs to that kind of opium the proletariat uses to deaden the pains of their misery.

It shouldn’t come as a surprise, then, that in our own age a popular and widespread slogan appeared: “Since Ausch-

say what we believe about God’s government of all things, and defend that belief as well? Are we not forced by the superiority of the facts to relinquish the confession that “all things come not by chance but befall us by God’s fatherly hand” — as we heard it in answer 27 of the Catechism just a moment ago?

Is it not much more logical, simple and clear-cut when we put the matter like this from now on: God has the best of intentions towards us, and all good things come from His hand. Our God has nothing (whatsoever) to do with evil, whether the evils of injustice, disease, disasters, or affliction. Evil originates in a hostile power, a power we can only hate. We have to throw that power out of our lives and chase it away like a burglar. After all, God can’t help it either that the enemy is still able to develop so much power. God is fighting on our side against those burglars. He shows solidarity and shares in our suffering. And if you are unable to believe this right away, they say, just take a good look at Jesus.

It is not without good reason that this supreme sufferer is called the ‘son of God,’ is it? From this anybody can infer God’s immense solidarity with mankind. And yet the fact remains that in spite of all God’s good intentions evil often lashes out in the wrong places. It’s too bad that evil often strikes good people. They deserved a better lot, didn’t they? So, it is concluded, we ought to have quite a bit of patience with this God.

This is more or less the recipe of the American rabbi Harold S. Kushner in his bestseller: *When bad things happen to good people*.² But a pleasant *theodicy* it is not! We can hardly say that this book offers much comfort. Yet it has the charm of being manageable and well-structured. To be sure, God’s hands remain clean, but we better be astute enough not to talk about the *almighty* hand of God any longer. Also, we had better put an end to that confession about all things coming “by His fatherly hand”; nor should we tell one another during those trying circumstances that we must “be patient in adversity,” or that “all creatures are so completely in His hand that without His will they cannot so much as move.” Further, we should be more careful with our obituaries and be a little more frugal in our use of words like “comfort” and “acceptance.” Turn in these irrelevant concepts and you’ll be given an acceptable and marketable image of God in return.

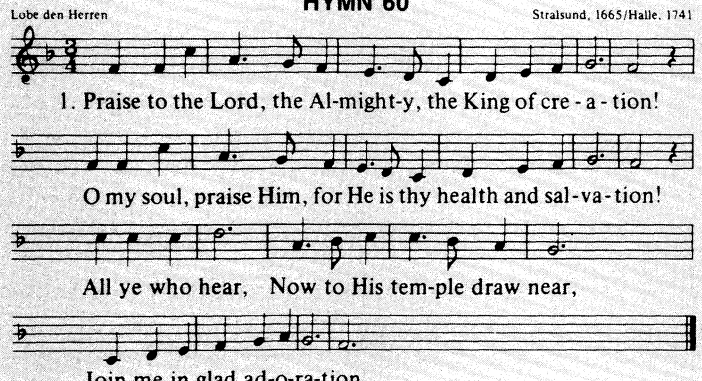
In the next article we hope to comment on these conciliatory proposals.

¹i.e. a judge who treats God as the defendant (R.K.)

²Kushner, Rabbi Harold S. *When bad things happen to good people*. New York: Schocken Books, 1981. **C**

HYMN 60

Lobe den Herren Stralsund, 1665/Halle, 1741



1. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the King of cre-a-tion!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and sal-va-tion!
All ye who hear, Now to His tem-ple draw near,
Join me in glad ad-o-ra-tion.

Many generations have comforted themselves with the stately diction of the Catechism: “We can be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and with a view to the future we can have a firm confidence in our faithful God and Father that no creature shall separate us from His love.” (Answer 28). But those days are apparently gone. It is, in fact, trendy or “in”, no longer to be satisfied with this confession. From widely divergent trains of thought and the most dissimilar circles arise loud protests against Lord’s Day 10. By means of prayer-healing sessions and charismatic movements we are informed that Lord’s Day 10 is akin to a serious “industrial accident.” Does Lord’s Day 10 not preach ‘resignation’ at the very moment we should be called to arms? And does he who preaches surrender to the inevitable, during the hour of battle, not betray the city under siege?

Sickness and death are not allies but enemies of life, are they not? When such enemies are encamped outside the city gate, you simply don’t teach the citizens songs like these by Georg Neumark:

Be still! What God in His good pleasure/To you in Wisdom may impart/Is given you in perfect measure;/Thus be content within your heart./To Him who chose us for His own/Our needs and wants are surely known/[Hymn 48].

witz I can no longer believe in the God of Providence (that is, the God of the Christian church).” It is held that there is no future in Europe for any church that does not quickly adapt its message on this very point!

“God cannot help it either”

This way an ancient problem is attacking us with renewed vitality, namely the problem of the so-called ‘vindication of the justice of God.’ If you wish to express this idea in a concise and elegant way, you might in this context use the word *theodicy*. How is it possible that God can do this, that or the other thing, or else: how can He allow it or approve of it?

Here we are facing the problem of the “why?”. We meet it in the child of God who is laying down his grief, his sorrow, his wretchedness before the presence of God. We meet it in a completely different key in the study of the philosopher who, sitting like a judge behind his desk, puts God in the dock.¹

Whenever we let this “why?” question sink in, or feel it rise up out of our own life, we as children of God feel challenged. Can we still get along with a Bible which assures us that not a sparrow falls on the ground and not a hair from our head without [the will of] the heavenly Father? Do we still have the courage to

No anarchy but prophecy on the organ bench!

By K. Deddens

In *Clarion* vol. 38, no. 20, Sept. 22, 1989, a letter to the editor was placed, titled *Anarchy on the Organ bench with the Blessing of Synod*. It was written by Dr. Bernard Smilde. Dr. Smilde wrote that it was gratifying that in our *Book of Praise the Liedboek voor de Kerken* is followed for the music notation of the psalmodies. But he continued, "it is to be regretted that the General Synod of Winnipeg recently decided, 'to confirm that the above decision — to use the *Liedboek voor de Kerken* notation — does not compel consistories, organists, and congregations of the Canadian Reformed Churches to change the traditional practice of singing certain psalms with the use of chromatically altered notes since it is not in the province of Synod to make such a decision'."

The conclusion of Dr. Smilde is that the Synod of Winnipeg contradicted itself.

I do not have the Acts of the Synod of Winnipeg yet, but I assume that he is quoting correctly. It is my conviction that Dr. B. Smilde is wrong and that the decision of the Synod of Winnipeg was right.

When a Synod decides to have a certain music notation printed, this does not mean that this notation is *binding* for the churches. Such a binding decision has never been made and I hope that it will not be made either.

Synod Winnipeg did actually the same as the Synod of Heemse 1984/85 in the Netherlands. Also the Synod of Heemse decided to follow the *Liedboek*-notation. Since it was not allowed to take over only some rhymal versions from the *Liedboek*, nor to make changes in the text or melody, Synod Heemse decided for practical reasons to take over the complete notation. At the same time this Synod declared "not to be competent to give a judgment on the contending opinions of disagreeing musicologists as experts in the matter of the notation of music" (Acts Heemse, vol. II, art. 211).

The matter of notation is indeed controversial and has aroused a good deal of debate in the Netherlands. I asked for the opinion of my son, P. Deddens, who

is a professional musician in the Netherlands. He sent me the following answer:

Personally I consider the opinion of Dr. B. Smilde (and also others) as a rationalistic delusion. They state that the psalm melodies in their original form did not use chromatically altered notes ('accidentals'). As such this is correct. Furthermore they conclude that these accidentals damage the originality of the psalm melodies, and say that the original version of 1562 has to be restored.

However, then they leave completely out an experience of harmonization of centuries. The 'accidentals' are namely not accidental, but they proceeded from an existential background of harmonization. In a four-part version for choirs the harmony can only be considered as a more-part ver-

sion of psalms. Even in a one-part 'a capella' — sung melody of a psalm, harmony is present latently. The point is that we are not able any more in the 20th century to think in a pure melodic way. That honour is to be paid to the early medieval people who had no harmony available. The Gregorian chants are an example of such an early, conserved, pure one-part musical shape. One of the last one-part music forms is the Genevan Psalter. However, at that time the more-part versions were already present.

See for instance the five-part version of psalm 15 by Thomas Champion of 1561, and the numerous four-part version for choirs by Claude Goudimel of 1568. Claude Goudimel used already in 1568 an 'accidental' in psalm 23 at the end of the first line and also



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Mr. Dirk Jan Zwart, son of the famous Mr. Jan Zwart

at the end of the second line. I am of the opinion that the decision of the Synod of Winnipeg 1989 that consistories, organists and congregations are not compelled to change the traditional practice of singing certain psalms with the use of chromatically altered notes, is a wise decision.

When I read these comments of my son, I thought to myself, that it is not strange that the well-known J. Worp warned already a long time ago: "If one does not want to become stiff and constrained, one has to turn often to the harmonization of our contemporary tone system." Worp wrote these words in his preface on his harmonized psalms. Worp's book has

been used for decades in many churches and it is still used, also in Canada.

Does it lead to *anarchy* on the organ bench when organists are not bound to one prescribed notation? I think, we may expect something else from the organ bench, namely *prophecy*. The organist needs to have a rich life of faith and be an active member of the church. He has to combine that with his knowledge of singing and playing. In this way he has to lead the congregation to the praise of God.

That organ-playing is related to prophecy, Jan Zwart already told the Reformed people in 1934. He spoke of "prophesying during the worship ser-

vice, before and after the sermon, in a language the people understand" (quoted by Prof. Dr. K. Schilder in *De Reformatie*, Feb. 23, 1934). At Zwart's death he came back to this. Then Schilder wrote, "What our forefathers in not even circuitous ways concluded from I Cor. XII (namely that also from the organ bench the neighbour has to be edified), that Jan Zwart felt burning within him and how he was consumed by that fire!" (*De Reformatie*, XVII:42, July 16, 1937, p. 341).

A year later, during the unveiling of Zwart's tombstone, Prof. Schilder said: "His life's work was to prophesy from the organ bench, and when we say that we give true expression to what motivated this man." (cf. *Gedenkboek Jan Zwart, 1877-1937*, Kralingscheveer, 1957, p. 239).

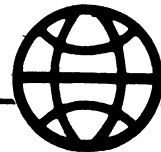
In a commemoration address (1947) K.S. called Jan Zwart a confessor who did not wish to push prophecy aside. He ended with: "To those people for whom the language of art was foreign, and who had their own Christian faith content, he spoke in his own language; art's norms were obeyed and the church's 'credo' was honoured. He who is able to do that has done a great thing." (*De Reformatie* XXII:43, Aug. 2, 1947, p. 349).

There is thus a clear connection between organ playing and prophecy. The organist who understands his task well will confess his faith in his organ playing and so contributes to the edification, that is, to the building up, of the congregation.

To grant the organist a certain *freedom* does not lead necessarily to *anarchy*. I am much more apprehensive of *hierarchy*, namely that we bind each other beyond Scripture! C

INTERNATIONAL

By W.W.J. VanOene



EDMONTON, AB

(RNS) The number of people leaving the United Church of Canada accelerated in 1988, according to statistics released May 1.

Membership at the end of 1988 was 849,401, down 1.7 percent from 863,910 members at the end of 1987. Attendance at Sunday services was down 7.1 percent, and participation in Sunday schools and church education programs was down more than 9 percent.

Church officials discounted the possibility that the controversy in the church over the ordination of homosexuals was completely responsible for the decline.

The church lost 37 congregations during the year, bringing the total to 4,138.

About 25 churches lost a significant number of their members as a result of the controversy.

Also, 36 ministers have formally resigned so far as a result of the controversy. (CN)

In the periodical *Church Information* of the (Syn.) Reformed Churches in the Netherlands it was revealed that in Lelystad all elders are women. In Amsterdam 62% of the elders and 57% of the deacons are women. In 1975 there were 6 female ministers, at present there are 80 of them. The "most advanced" church is the one at Lelystad; the most "backward" church is the one at Urk, where all elders are men. (KNGK)

New Presbyterian Church inaugurated in England

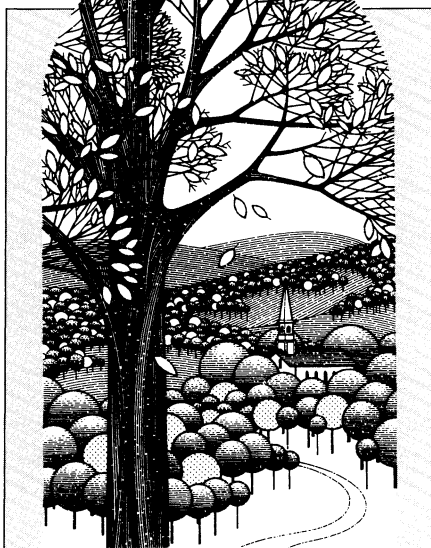
By J.D. Nicholls

Earlier this year in the *Clarion of March 31*, we noted that a new and faithful Presbyterian church was being formed in England. The Rev. J.D. Nicholls of the Free Church of Scotland in London is involved as are also The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Rev. L. Moes, who at one time ministered in Canadian Reformed Churches in Canada. Furthermore, the deputies for contact with churches abroad of our Dutch sister churches are following the situation closely. From the Rev. Moes, we received an article by the Rev. Nicholls which informs us about further and encouraging developments. It follows here. C. Van Dam

In a large Victorian hall in a northern English town, on Friday September 1st, a sizeable crowd gathered from many parts of England, as well as Wales, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. Members of the Reformed Churches (Liberated), the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland (EPC), and the Presbyterian Association in England (PAE) met to witness the constituting of the East Lancashire Presbyterian Fellowship as a mission-church of the EPC, and the installing of Rev. Norman Green as its first minister.

Mr. David Watson, moderator of the EPC, led the meeting and pronounced the formal words of constitution. Paul Nutter, a founder member of the Fellowship which meets in the town of Accrington, read a narrative of the founding and growth of the group, and its discussions with the EPC and the PAE. Prominent in the early days, back in 1988, was Mr. Art van der Temple, who came to Lancashire from Eindhoven, working for DAF. Though now removed back to Eindhoven, he and his family were present to see this important stage in the church's life. Rev. Norman Green is an Englishman who has been ministering in Northern Ireland, in the EPC Church at Omagh. He comes to Lancashire with his wife and three teenage sons.

As a demonstration of the involvement of the Liberated Churches in the developing Presbyterian cause in England, the exhortation to the new minister was given by Rev. Luke Moes. Mr. Moes has preached at several of the new Presbyterian churches in England, and his exposition of John 7:37-39 stressed the source and the power of a true gospel ministry. Following the singing of a hymn, the congregation was addressed by Rev.




John 7:37b

“ . . . Jesus stood up and proclaimed, ‘If any one thirst, let him come to Me and drink.’ ”

Gareth Burke of the EPC. He applied Philippians 4:1-7, showing the new church's need of unity, hope and prayer.

Following the formal meeting, greetings were brought from friends and churches in various parts of Britain, including one from the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland. Rev. John Nicholls, minister of Cole Abbey Presbyterian Church in London, spoke on behalf of the PAE, welcoming the new church into the Association. Rev. Moes then brought messages and gifts from several congregations of the Liberated Churches, including one memorable greeting in the form of a poem!

The East Lancashire Church is now a part of the EPC, which has recently ordained two new ministers, is showing increasing interest in evangelism and church-planting, and has committed itself to support and oversee the new church. But the EPC is also working in the closest co-operation with the PAE. Rev. Green is now a Council-member of the Association. It is recognised by all that as the PAE grows and is able to be formed as a fully-fledged English Presbytery, the church in Accrington will be part of that, rather than of the EPC. The EPC is thus acting as a “nurse-maid” to the cause of Presbyterianism in England. The Liberated Churches, through their committee for contacts with churches abroad, have expressed moral and practical support for the cause in England, both through their links with the EPC, and through direct contacts with the PAE. The next landmark in the PAE's development is the installation of the Rev. Iain Murray as minister of the Cambridge Presbyterian Church, a congregation planted by the PAE and constituted as a church in May 1988.

The East Lancashire Church meets in Accrington. Its services are held in the Golden Age Club, Avenue Parade, Accrington, and are at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., each Sunday. Rev. Norman Green can be contacted by telephone at 0254-60388. 



Many weeks have passed since we wrote the previous medley. For various reasons we could not find the time and opportunity to do so. However, now we have to sit down and do it before anything else.

It will surprise no one when we begin with mentioning what is already known to all, namely, the destruction by fire of the Ebenezer church building in Burlington. We can understand some of the sadness which many members must have felt, when they recalled how that they were baptized in front of the pulpit, how that the caskets of their dear ones were standing there, and how they were strengthened in it by the proclamation of God's Word and the receipt and use of the sacraments. It is true that the church is the people, the congregation, and that a church building is dispensable. Yet, one feels a fondness for buildings as well, especially when so many events took place in them.

Financially it does not appear to have made things more difficult for the congregation. "Fortunately, the church and contents were adequately insured, including personal items," we read in the bulletin.

One of the first things that came into my mind upon hearing the news the next morning was: "What about all the archives?" Burlington East is the church that keeps also the general archives. Soon, however, we were assured that the archives had been saved. And the consistory reported that "Brother A. Vandenbrink joined the meeting and explained that the records of the church and of the churches and general synods were all salvaged and will be restored." For this we are thankful, for buildings can be restored and rebuilt, but all the archives are lost for good when destroyed by fire.

In the meantime the congregation is active regarding cleaning up and making plans for rebuilding. It is to be hoped that this time they will increase the height of the building considerably so as to improve on acoustics and atmosphere. More than once I heard the remark in the past that the arches should have been much higher, but that the monetary situation did not allow them to be made any larger than they were. Now this can be corrected.

Perhaps provisions for ample room for a Lord's Supper table are possible now as well, so that the congregation can sit at table instead of staying in the pews!

The congregation received many offers of help, but also with a view to distance and the possibility of "beaming" the services into an elderly citizens' home nearby the offer of a Christian Reformed Church was accepted.

Burlington East's experience prompted the consistory of Burlington West to make the following decision: "The committee of administration will be asked to check whether our insurance for the churchbuilding is adequate."

The Rev. J. Visscher wrote in the *Church News*: "For your information and peace of mind our fire insurance policy was updated this year and has been paid. Further to that, I might still remind those of you who continue to struggle with the noxious weed to ignite it elsewhere than in the church or on church property. And before you remind the Council, yes, another fire drill will be held soon."

Now that we are speaking of buildings anyway, we might as well continue for a while.

Ottawa has tried a few times to acquire property, but so far with little success. This time "some discussion is held on the prospect of purchasing a property that is for sale. After a

lengthy discussion it is decided first to embark on a fund-raising effort."

Grand Valley's bulletin which might have given me some information about the success or failure of their efforts to receive permission for building a manse first on the purchased property, is missing from the pile, and thus I cannot provide you with any further information.

In Watford the consistory decided to put the manse up for sale. "Hopefully a good price can be had, to give us a good sum of money for a more appropriate manse."

In Burlington South "The building committee proposes via letter that the consistory make an offer to purchase the property located at 1350 Waterdown road. The offer to be \$300,000.00; \$100,000.00 down with the balance held by the vendor at 10% a year. Possession date: March 1990. The consistory endorses the proposal with purchase contingent upon approval of the congregation and acquisition of the required building permits."

Winnipeg decided to prepare the building for air-conditioning, for which purpose the heating system will have to be changed, if I understand it well. At a later date air-conditioning can then be added without additional costs.

Brampton proudly reported that "we now own an additional 3.6 acres of land for future use." Good for them.

According to the Fraser Valley Church News the Calgary building fund "has made available for sale their '25th Anniversary Tiles.' Please consider supporting the members of the Calgary congregation by purchasing a tile. They are available for \$10.00. . . ."

And the board of Manoah Manor triumphantly informed us "The roof is on, the windows are in and the whirlpool has arrived." Also a director was appointed for the intermediate care unit which will be occupying the main floor of the addition being built.

It appears necessary to guard the possessions of the church not only during the week, but also on Sundays.

Cloverdale reports that "on August 24 a sum of money which had been placed in the library room in the church basement by one of the clubs which uses the church hall, was discovered missing. The doors had not been forced, and only the paper money was missing."

Worse things happened in Ottawa. There even the minister's car was taken, although it was recovered later on. However, also the "money box" became a victim and was deprived of the cash it contained although the cheques were recovered.

"In connection with the theft of the money box and the minister's car, it is decided that during the services the door to the C. E. Hall will be locked and some brothers will be assigned to monitor entry into the church building after the service has commenced."

In spite of this setback, Rev. VanPopta informed the consistory that he had "enrolled in a Master of Arts program in the department of Religion at Carleton University. This will involve three hours of lectures per week and whatever time needed for study and papers, etc. (In case you are interested, the focus will be on Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, and then especially the early Post-Acts period of church history)" The consistory encouraged their minister to do it and keep it up.

Speaking of study, we also pass on what Burlington South's bulletin told the congregation: "Rev. DeJong informs the con-

sistory that his thesis has been completed and accepted." The official promotion and the conferring of the degree will most likely take place next spring. Our congratulations also from this place.

There are congregations that have an abundance of good organists and can afford the luxury of having them play one out of three or one out of four services. Not so Burlington South. "In the event there is no organist and the organist has been unable to find a replacement, brother A. will lead the a capella singing."

Burlington West decided the following: "The remuneration of guest ministers was reviewed and raised." It is nice to notice that consistories pay attention to this aspect, too.

The Surrey consistory discussed possible sale of three lots at the back of the parking lot. A new idea, however, has been put forward. "The recent congregational meeting is discussed concerning the matter of the back lots. A letter is received which suggests that there may be an interest in having the property developed for the purpose of an apartment structure for our seniors." That would be nice, for then they don't have to walk far to church and there is also the possibility of having a link with the church building so that services can be "piped in."

The prospects of another church in the Fraser Valley are good. "Yes," the Rev. J. Visscher wrote, "our membership has gone over the 700 mark." "We are over the 500 mark again," Abbotsford reported. "We have passed the 300 mark," Chilliwack told us.

At the latest Classis Pacific the unanimous approval was given for an institution. A meeting was scheduled for October 18 "of all those who intend to join the new congregation north of Cloverdale and Langley. The purpose of the meeting is to elect a steering committee to take care of the organizational matters regarding meeting place, future budget, etc."

According to "rumours," which will be quite accurate in this case, the new congregation would number some 250 or more. Although this provides some relief especially for Langley, we still expect another church in the Aldergrove area in the not too distant future.

Herewith we take leave of the Valley and return to Manitoba.

Rev. DeBoer of Carman (the name is not CarmEn, as I read in some bulletins! "Carmen" is the name of an opera by George Bizet. The name of our sister church is CarmAn) wrote "During the first week of October, brother H. Veenendaal and myself visited some of the Reformed Churches of the U.S. on behalf of the consistory in our continuing study to see whether closer contact with them and the Canadian Reformed Churches will be possible."

Carman also decided "that in the future, when a member of the congregation departs with an attestation, a letter giving notification will be sent to the church for which it was requested." In the past more consistories made a similar decision, but I wonder how many consistories kept it up.

In the matter of contact, the Calgary consistory had contact with the consistory of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Church in that place. They had a formal meeting, and Rev. Schouten wrote a lengthy piece about it in the bulletin. Serious discussions, he wrote, are ahead. "The OCRC in Calgary has indicated that one of reasons for their not seeking out contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches lay in the area of ecclesiology — the doctrine of the church maintained by our churches. It also remains to be seen as yet whether the Calgary OCRC really sees it as a calling to seek institutional unity, or whether they would be happier with some kind of 'working together' without formal unity. Together we will have to discuss the differences that may stand between us. Your consistory hopes to do this in an honest, straightforward manner."

As for this "ecclesiology," the doctrine of the churches

is none other than that laid down in the confessions. If one does not agree with that, or tries to interpret the confessions in a manner which hollows them out, there is no prospect of unity. Besides, we do not wish to have a repeat of the Edmonton experience. Of this the brothers in Calgary are well aware, as appears from Rev. Schouten's article, of which we quoted only a small portion.

In Hamilton — sorry if we jump a little all over the place — "The deacons of the church are proposing a 'sister-help' system. It would work as follows: If a brother or sister or child of the congregation is sick and/or even unable to care for him/herself and family for a few days, sisters and brothers in the congregation who have volunteered their labour and time would help in whatever way was needed. This could mean cooking and delivering a meal, cleaning a house, even possibly looking after a child for a day or two."

The deacons do not want to "downplay the role of our families," all they want to do is make sure that every one is helped quickly and ably. Something to ponder.

A different question was raised in Kelmscott. "Some time ago the deacons requested consistory's advice as to whether or not it is proper for deacons to extend their support to people outside the Church. A discussion ensues in which various views and opinions are expressed. Some brothers are of the firm opinion that the office of deacon is restricted to those within the church, while others like to see greater flexibility by allowing deacons to extend a helping hand to those in need outside the Church community." An "in-depth study" will be required, it was stated.

Hopefully this "in-depth study" will go far back, for example to the early Christian Church, whose liberality towards "all men" was proverbial, something which undoubtedly contributed considerably to the spreading of the Gospel. Prisoners were visited, whether they belonged to the congregation or not, support was provided for a wide circle of needy persons. And although the needs of the congregation are to be filled first of all, so that in the congregation of Christ no one has to live under the pressure of loneliness, illness, or poverty, I do not know why the Lord would forbid our deacons to extend help also to others, showing therein that the mercies of Christ are infinite and that the Lord keeps His hands stretched out towards the whole world. So great is His mercy that there would be room for all.

Another question was raised at the Brampton consistory. "The item of the votum proclaimed during reading services was raised. Certain articles will be photocopied and distributed and the item will be discussed in a future meeting."

From liturgy and buildings to organs is a small step.

In Byford "the committee of management presents . . . the proposal to purchase a Johannus organ for about \$20,000.00. This is adopted for incorporation into the budget."

From organs to choirs is perhaps an even smaller step. Thus we do take this step now.

Here and there efforts are undertaken to come to a male choir. No objection to this, as long as it does not mean that our "mixed" choirs will be compelled to become "women's choirs." The choirs usually have a great lack of male voices, and although I personally also love male choirs, I would deplore it greatly if such choirs were established to the detriment of the mixed choirs.

In Watford-London-Chatham other efforts are underway. "Organization is underway to start a regional choir, comprised of interested persons from the congregations of Chatham, London, and Watford." The suggestion is to practise weekly locally, and to practise in a combined practice once every three weeks. Much success!

We conclude our medley in Australia this time.

With the home visit reports in Armadale it was stressed

that "one general area of concern is the small amount of reading and study which takes place in the families." This is a reason for concern indeed, and for this reason we pass this remark on. Perhaps our office-bearers can pay some special attention to this point when they enter the homes and look around to see whether there is any bookcase or bookshelf and what kind of literature is found on these shelves, if any, that is. Don't let yourselves be fooled by a copy of *Clarion* or *Reformed Perspective* displayed very prominently, so that the brothers cannot miss it.

It was also reported that "contacts are also being extended to several persons who are not members of the church. Some of these contacts are quite encouraging, and have led to several requests for instruction in the Reformed faith." Very encouraging and reason for gratitude indeed.


When I read the following, I was happy, as I saw progress here. "The observation is made that the Dutch services are no longer being listened to in Fair Haven. The English service

seems to be preferred. . . . If no one requests the Dutch service, the English service will be switched on."

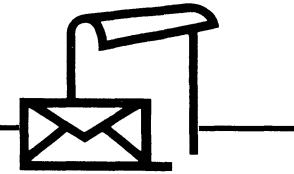
To some extent the happiness was tempered by a subsequent piece of information. "It is reported that people prefer to listen to recorded sermons from Holland rather than the Dutch reading services. Consequently the English services will be switched through to Fair Haven."

The Bedfordale congregation purchased an existing church building, and the total cost of purchase, renovations, and so on comes to approximately half of what the congregation would have had to pay if they had utilized other possibilities.

From Byford comes the information that at "the coming boundaries meeting . . . the Rockingham group would like some representation there. Brother A. will speak to (with? VO) them before attending the meeting."

Having reached the boundary of our information, we shall respect a boundary for this time and place a fat period. 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



The Free Reformed Churches and the Book of Praise

Dear Editor,

In the "Press Review" column which appeared in the October 13 issue of *Clarion* the following statement, quoted from a report in *The Messenger* on this year's Free Reformed synod, caught my attention:

In view of the fact that the publisher of the "Book of Praise" will only grant permission to use this psalter if we use it in its entirety (which means that we would not be allowed to edit any translations with which we may not agree) and since there was a lack of interest in the entire project expressed by many delegates, it was decided that it is no longer feasible for us to pursue the project of adding the "Book of Praise" to the "Psalter."

As chairman of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*, I feel compelled to set the record straight.

The statement that "the publisher . . . will only grant permission to use this psalter if we use it in its entirety" is not based on the facts. The liturgy committee of the Free Reformed Churches of North America inquired only about the possibility of taking over all 150 Psalms in the *Book of Praise* as a supplement to the *Psalter*. At no time did they express any desire to adopt either a selection of Anglo-Genevan Psalms or any other part of the *Book of Praise*. We simply applauded their intention to keep the Genevan *Psalter* intact and offered our full cooperation.

The reporter's (or synod's?) conclu-

sion that no alterations of any kind would be permitted is equally unwarranted. Our committee stipulated only that no changes were to be made without the permission of copyright holders. Any need for editorial adjustments was never even discussed.

Several readers of either *The Messenger* or *Clarion* have privately told me of their disappointment that the members

of the Canadian Reformed committee responsible for publishing the *Book of Praise* were so unaccommodating and inflexible in dealing with their Free Reformed brothers. Let me assure everyone that the impression created by the above-quoted report is totally erroneous.

William Helder
Hamilton, Ontario

BOOK REVIEW


By C. Bosch

Have you heard of *Thy Way*? It is a compact, colourful, stimulating little magazine published by some brothers and sisters in West Australia. It is aimed at the youth of the church and is especially helpful for the younger youth clubs and study societies. Often these societies are on the lookout for stimulating study material. *Thy Way* will help them out in a substantial way. Although it comes from "down under" it is "tops" and I recommend it without hesitation.

The contents of this magazine are built around study outlines written by G. Slings and first published in the Netherlands. Though these translated outlines form the core, yet every issue carries more! The contents of the Sept. 1989 issue reads: Jonah 4, Esther 1, Luke 5:1-16, Luke 6:1-12, Matthew 5:1-16 (those are the outlines), "Use Your Bible," "Going to Church Twice on Sunday," "Dancing wrong or right," "Handicapped Children," "Puzzle Page," and "Quails."

Church history has not been neglected either. Recently the complete series of church history outlines was even published as a separate booklet.

It would be a shame if *Thy Way* would stay only in this far corner of the world. It deserves a wider audience and I hope every Canadian Reformed Study Society will have a good look at it. It would also serve very well for the purpose of evangelism. I am thinking of the Vacation Bible Schools which are held in many of our churches.

The Publishing Committee eagerly awaits your letter of interest and your order! Please contact the secretary of the publishing committee: Mr. A. Schiebaan, 3045 Albany Hwy., Kelmscott, WA 6111, or the chairman, Mr. B. Schoof, 375 Railway Ave., Armadale, WA 6112. You could even call Br. Schoof (0011-1-(area code) 399-2785) but do keep in mind the time difference (6:00 a.m. Toronto is 6:00 p.m. same day Kelmscott!). 

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

It all depends on what one means by it. If it is taken in this sense that office-bearers, when visiting the families, do not consider this family to be a heathen or Muslim family but a Christian family, people who believe in the Lord, fear and serve Him, unless and until it appears that they don't — if taken in this sense, as a rule according to which church members are to be dealt with and regarded, then they could go along with it.

One could question whether it was good that such a decision was taken which was open to different interpretations.

The history of some thirty-five years later proved how it could be abused when taken out of its historical context and could in that manner even be directed against those who basically were vindicated in 1905.

For the next three decades the Conclusions of Utrecht worked for the peace and rest of the churches.

No one was bothered for advocating either view.

Candidates could declare at their peremptory examination that they disagreed with the Conclusions and they could do so with impunity.

On the other hand, Kuyper's ideas gradually gained terrain and were introduced bit by bit, for example in booklets used in catechetical instruction and written by his followers.

When, in the course of the thirties, there came more and more opposition to these ideas and when the riches of God's covenant and of holy baptism according to Scripture and Confession were more and more brought to the fore, Kuyper's followers raised the alarm, and the result was that Kuyper's teachings and theories in this respect were elevated to the level of confessional truths. This led to the Liberation of 1944; but this is something for later.

In 1908 the Christian Reformed Church in North America took over this Conclusion of Utrecht 1905. This, too, is something to which we shall return at a later stage, the Lord willing.

A Correct Term?

At the beginning of our rendition of Dr. S. Greijdanus' analysis of the fourth Conclusion of Utrecht 1905 we stated that we have only one remark concerning his treatment and that this remark concerns his understanding of the term "regeneration."

This is the place to come back to that.

When someone uses a term, it is always good to ask whether he uses this term correctly, whether he indeed means by it what was its original meaning and what everyone else understands by it. Accepting someone's use of a term may cause an opponent to fail in his opposition.

The same applies when someone puts up a dilemma. If one accepts the dilemma without asking whether it is a correct dilemma, one may have lost the battle even before it started.

It is to be deplored that Dr. A. Kuyper's opponents fell for his use of the word "regeneration" and the contents which he gave to it.

Mind you, Kuyper was not completely original in his understanding of "regeneration" as being the "beginning of the new life" or "the implantation of new life," which

then was supposed to be done by the Holy Spirit immediately, that is: without any means. He took it over from a theologian who lived a few hundred years before.

It was Kuyper's wrong interpretation of the term "regeneration" which should have been recognized by his opponents. Now they sort of lost their prime and sharpest weapon in the battle against his new theories. Falling for Kuyper's interpretation, they basically were an easy prey.

It is good and necessary to stress that limiting or confining "regeneration" to a momentary, one-time occurrence is not in accordance with the teachings of Holy Scripture and the language of the church in her confessions. It is good to remind ourselves of this again, not only with a view to a good understanding of the events in and after 1905, but also in light of the use of this term "regeneration" or "to be born again" as it is being found all around us. In our days these terms are used in the sense in which Kuyper used them: referring to a momentary happening, a one-time event.

This is wrong.

The terms "regeneration" and "conversion" mean the same and, as we confess in Lord's Day 33 of the Heidelberg Catechism, are a lifelong process.

This process does indeed begin at a certain moment, but in by far the most cases this moment cannot be pinpointed as, by the grace of God, indeed in by far the most cases the children of the covenant love and serve the Lord from their early days on, from the days on when they begin to understand things, as was the case with Timothy.

Even there where the beginning of the regeneration or conversion can be pointed out it would be wrong to let this term refer exclusively or even mainly to that beginning.

As we are dealing with church history and not with doctrinal controversies as such, we'll confine ourselves to a few remarks.

In our Belgic Confession we confess in Art. 24: "We believe that this true faith, worked in man by the hearing of God's Word and by the operation of the Holy Spirit, regenerates him and makes him a new man. It makes him live a new life and frees him from the slavery of sin."

It is clear that the order is as follows: The Holy Spirit makes one hear the Word, whereby He works the faith in the heart; this faith is an active faith and it regenerates man, that is: it makes him flee from sin and endeavour to do God's will.

This is also the way in which our form for the baptism originally described regeneration: "This new birth consists of these two parts: First, that with sincere contrition and sorrow for our sins, we deny our own nature and all sorts of desires and submit to the will of God and hate and flee all sin from the heart. Then also that we begin to have desire and love to live according to the Word of God in all sanctity and righteousness."

Does this differ in any way from what we confess in Lord's Day 33 regarding the true conversion of man?

If the brothers in 1905 had gone back, behind Kuyper's concept of the regeneration as something different from the lifelong conversion, to the language of Holy Scripture and Confession, their criticism of Kuyper's new theories

would have been much more to the point, sharper, more penetrating to the heart of the matter and more devastating.

Now they clipped their own wings, so to speak, and did not rise above the dilemma posed by Kuyper.

After 1905

What was the effect of the Conclusions of Utrecht 1905?

When we look at it from the angle of pacification, we may call it a successful solution. The Conclusions were a compromise and they worked well as long as they were loyally regarded as such. As every compromise, however, they also bore in themselves the very possibility of further trouble.

During the first period after the Synod of 1905, they were received as a compromise indeed, and no one was bothered or persecuted because he could not agree with them or with certain passages in them.

Initially the discussion about the presumptive regeneration and the nature of the Covenant of Grace were continued, even though gratitude was expressed for the fact that "sinful irritation" had been removed by the synodical Conclusions.

In 1906 there appeared a book entitled *The Covenant Bond*, whose author was Dr. A. Kuyper Jr. Therein the thesis is defended that "The elect covenant children are sanctified in Christ from the moment of their birth on, regenerated in the strict sense of the word."

"We also know," the author wrote, "that they are sanctified in Christ insofar as they are elect, and that therefore, as members of His church, they ought to be baptized."

Here the fatal mistake is made that regenerated (taken in the wrong, restricted sense of the word as a momentary, immediate act of God) and "sanctified in Christ" are identified, as if they meant the same thing. It is clear that in this manner the very character of the first baptismal question is fundamentally changed and no longer applies to all children of believers but only to the elect among them. Since we do not know whether a child is included in the number of the elect, we are to presume that they all are, until and unless the opposite becomes evident. . . .

Between brackets: For the knowledgeable observer it is clear that the whole concept of the covenant of grace as found in mysticist circles, as for example the Netherlands Reformed Congregations and such like, rests on the same presumption that God's covenant is only with the elect. The only difference is that in Kuyper's line it is presumed that they are all "regenerated" until the opposite becomes evident, whereas in the mysticist circles it is presumed that none is "regenerated" until and unless it appears that one is. Their understanding of the covenant of grace as well as of regeneration is wrong with both of them, and their theory is the same although their conclusions differ.

Others published works in which they opposed the views of the Kuypers. One of them even suggested to replace the words "whether you acknowledge that they are sanctified in Christ" by "whether you acknowledge that they have a right to the promise of God." Such a formulation would have rendered a Kuyperian interpretation of this question outright impossible; which does not imply that the present text may be interpreted in that vein!

In spite of the propagation of Kuyper's ideas as well as of those who opposed them, there was relative peace within the churches and the merging of local congregations

proceeded gradually. It would take till the early thirties for the last churches designated as A (Secession origin) and B (Doleantie origin) to become solely known as the one Reformed Church at. . . , but the distinction was overcome and disappeared in more and more places.

Pluriformity of the Church

Not only in the question of the covenant of grace but also in other respect were Kuyper's ideas propagated and taught by his pupils. There was, for example, his theory of the pluriformity of the Church.

Although not all who adhere to this theory agree in each and every point, yet the following may be considered an accurate summary of it.

According to this line of thought the church, as the body of Christ, consisting of the elect under their Head, is invisible. In various places this body of Christ manifests itself as soon as two or three persons openly profess the Name of the Lord Jesus. These persons, in whose confession and conduct the invisible church becomes manifest, are bound to establish an institute for the ministry of the Gospel, as much as possible in bond and communion with other manifestations of this same body of the Lord in other places. One can, therefore, belong to the invisible church while one does not yet live in a visible church.

This is what Dr. A. Kuyper Sr. wrote in his explanation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

One can see how this theory leads to the concept of the pluriformity of the church. These "manifestations of the body of Christ" vary from case to case as far as the purity of this "manifestation" is concerned. No particular manifestation can or should be designated as or called the true and only "manifestation," since no particular church is perfect and wholly pure. There is a gradation in purity, and we should look for the "purest manifestation of the body of Christ" in each and every place. It is deplorable that there is such a variety and variation of these "manifestations," but this is the effect of our fall: there is no one whose understanding is not impeded by sin, and for this reason no gathering of believers can claim that they together form the true church of Christ in a certain place. All they can achieve is that they are the "purest manifestation of the body of Christ" in that place.

According to some, this pluriformity of the church — actually, a better and more proper title would be this "plurality of churches of Christ" — is even the fruit of the fact that the multi-coloured wisdom of God cannot be expressed and displayed in one ecclesiastical institute, and thus, instead of being a fact to be deplored as a bitter fruit of our fall, this plurality of churches comes close to being a desirable thing.

Thus far a brief description of what are the main characteristics of the theory of the "pluriformity of the church."

Basically, the idea of an invisible entity which manifests itself in more or less pure forms is an idea which does not originate from the Word of God but from the ancient Greek philosophy which continued to influence the philosophical thinking in the Western world.

Our confessions do not speak in this vein either and the proponents of this theory have never succeeded in making it acceptable that this theory is so much as not in conflict with what the Church confesses about herself on the basis of the Word of God.

— *To be continued*

Ordination and installation of Candidate D. Moes

By J. Janssens

Monday, October 9, 1989 was Thanksgiving day in Canada, but especially so for the congregation of Watford. On this day the family of Candidate D. Moes arrived in our midst and moved into the manse in Strathroy.

On Friday of the same week, a welcome evening was held. All the families of the congregation introduced themselves to the Moes family. This was done by a short story, a poem or even a song. The children of the congregation sang some songs accompanied by a guitar. A brother of the congregation led the singing of Hymn 46 on the trumpet.

The societies then introduced themselves. The women's society did this by having each member hold an individual letter. Together, they spelled out FAMILY MOES. Each member had a poem and a gift of food (appelmoes, stampot moes, etc.). The young people's society presented a humorous skit which had everyone laughing.

Once all the talent was exhausted, Cand. Moes spoke a few words of thanks and gratitude to the congregation for the warm welcome received and for all the gifts of food which will stock their cupboards. Above all, he thanked our heavenly Father Who made all this possible. Without His will, this event could not have come about. After singing Hymn 65, Cand. Moes led in thanksgiving prayer. Afterwards, a social hour was enjoyed by all with coffee and refreshments, and everyone had the opportunity to meet and speak with the Moes family.

Sunday, October 15 was again a day of thanksgiving to our heavenly Father. Cand. D. Moes was ordained and installed as minister of the Word of the Canadian Reformed Church of Watford by his father, the Rev. L. Moes, from Vlissingen, the Netherlands.

Because of the many visitors expected, the services were held in the auditorium of East Lambton Secondary School in Watford. Our congregation swelled to more than twice the normal size that day.

Rev. L. Moes chose Matthew 5:8 as his text:



Rev. D. Moes

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

The sermon was divided into the following points:

1. What it means to be pure in heart.
 2. Why the pure in heart are blessed.
- To have a pure heart means that your heart is cleansed, without hypocrisy, and not divided. Blessed are all those whose hearts are cleansed by the



Rev. L. Moes and son Rev. D. Moes

blood of Jesus, who do not hide anything, and who are fully dedicated to their God. They may travel together to the heavenly city, which is Jerusalem, where everything is pure. No one will enter who is impure, but only those whose names are written in the book of life.

The pure in heart are blessed because they shall see God. The promise that they shall see God is partly fulfilled here on earth, and will be completely fulfilled on the new earth. Here on earth, we, as true Christians with pure hearts, see God everywhere — in His creation, in the events of history and in our own lives. On the new earth, we shall see God face to face. When Christ reappears we shall become like Him, because we shall see Him as he really is.

After the sermon, Rev. L. Moes read the form for the ordination of ministers of the Word. To the three questions of ordination, Cand. Moes answered with a resounding "I do with all my heart." Psalm 134:1 and 2 were sung and the laying on of hands by the Rev. L. Moes and the members of the consistory took place. The congregation then sang Psalm 134:3 to our new minister, the Rev. D. Moes. Psalm 98:1 and 4 were sung in closing.

For the afternoon service, Rev. D. Moes chose Romans 1:1 to 7 as his text for his inaugural sermon under the theme of

Paul's apostolic address to the church at Rome. In this address, Paul

1. presents his credentials,
2. describes his gospel,
3. explains the purpose of his preaching, and
4. greets his readers.

Paul presents himself as a servant (or slave) of Christ. He is saying that he is owned by Christ; but, he is also "called to be an apostle," someone who is sent forth on behalf of someone else.

Paul describes the gospel, calling it "the gospel of God." In other words, the gospel is God's good news to man. No human being is allowed to refuse

it; on the contrary, every human being is obligated to believe it. It is the good news concerning "God's son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

The purpose of Paul's preaching was to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ; and, beloved, the purpose of my preaching is the same as Paul's — the gospel whose central theme is no one else but Jesus Christ our Lord. Woe unto me if I do not preach this gospel to you. I preach it, beloved, because I love my Lord and Saviour; make Him the centre of your attention. He must increase, and I must decrease. I also preach this gospel because I am concerned about your salvation, both now and in the life hereafter. Therefore, let us continually pray to our God and ask Him to graciously bless this preaching so that there may indeed be that vital obedience of faith in our homes, in our schools, in our church life, and in our work place.

Paul greets his readers with "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Grace and peace" is a greeting that will be like beautiful music to your ears and like sweet honey in your mouth if it is received in faith and followed by obedience of faith.

After the service, messages of congratulations were spoken by a brother of the church of London (who also spoke on behalf of Classis Ontario South), the church of Chatham, the church of Ancaster, and the church of Langley, B.C.

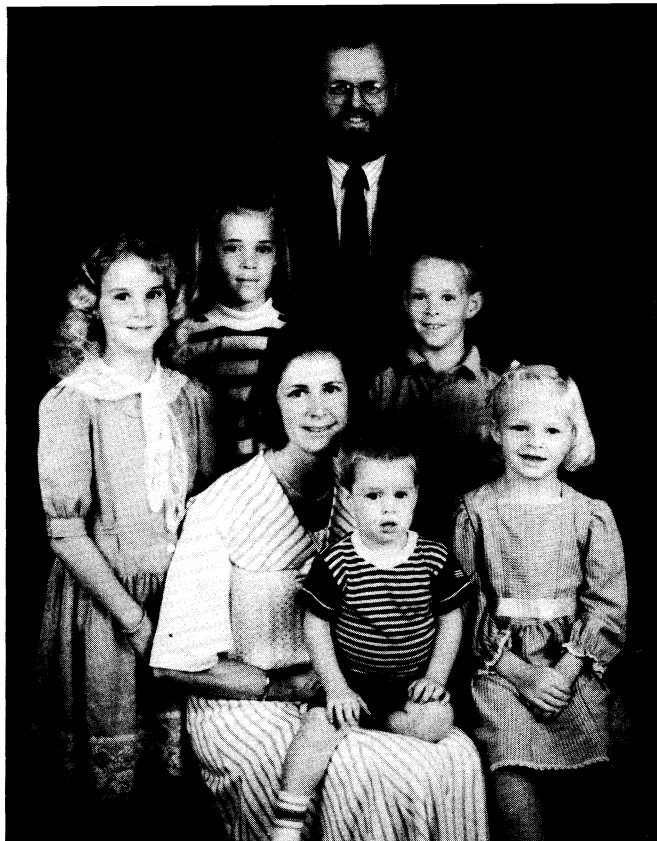
A letter of congratulations from the church of Lincoln was also read.

Rev. D. Moes spoke a few words of thanks for all the congratulations and encouragement and said further that

It is my prayer that together we may mature to the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ, and that we may grow up in every way into Him who is the Lord and Head of the church.

In thanks to our heavenly Father we sang Hymn 65 for all the blessings received in the past week.

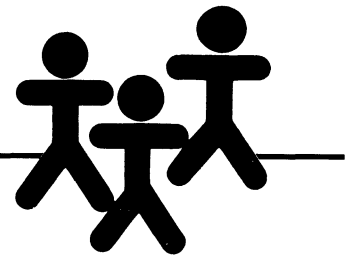
The ladies of the church again had coffee ready, and a social hour was enjoyed by all. We could go home with thanks and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, who had again granted His church here in Watford a minister of the Word.



Rev. and Mrs. D. Moes and family

SCHOOL CROSSING

By T.M.P. VanderVen



Perspectives on Teaching and Learning

Classroom supervision = co-operative learning

Let's be a hand and a foot to each other so that the body of Christ may function well. (Compare 1 Cor. 12, and the more excellent way of 1 Cor. 13.)

Picture yourself: you are busy, obviously enjoying your work immensely. One of your friends comes by. He shares your interest and enjoyment. He asks real, genuine questions; he might help; he might advise. Such an experience

makes you feel good. Genuine interest makes the job easier; such co-operation deepens the friendship: there is a common experience, and there is a common interest.

Real interest in our work — also from those who are not directly involved in it — boosts our achievement. It increases the level of our energy, and gives us greater enjoyment in our work. Those who are genuinely interested in our work are often

of great help, and are often able to help us cope with disappointments as well.

Yet, as co-operation and interest can be enjoyable and stimulating, so interference and meddlesomeness of someone who lacks genuine interest can be a hindrance and an annoyance. This is especially so when we ourselves become the centre of attention. We do not mind when people watch us at work; on the contrary, we are usually more than willing

to demonstrate the fine points of our skill. But we all know of those uncomfortable situations when we are watched closely by busybodies and knowbetters — they will let you know that they know better! Such supervision seems to disable us. We begin to pay more attention to ourselves than to our work, with the result that we become shy, nervous, clumsy. We start to worry about what might go wrong — and behold, things do go wrong. As soon as such an unwelcome spectator leaves, we feel relieved, but it takes some time for the bad effect to wear off.

There are people who revel in such admiration for their personal skill and achievements. They perform best when watched by others. But all too often such acrobatic performers have an interest in their own self, rather than in the work itself — don't you think I am clever; don't you think I'm an excellent performer?

* * *

One of the responsibilities of a school board is the supervision of the work of the teachers at the school. The principal is responsible for part of this, but most school boards have the good practice of regularly visiting the classrooms. Often the members of the board or education committee charged with this responsibility have questions and concerns about these supervisory visits: What is the character and purpose of these classroom visits? How can lay people assess what goes on in school? What is the relationship between the teacher and the visitor(s)? How should such visits be reported? To whom? How should/can such reports be used? By whom? etc., etc. Indeed, important and worthy questions. In seeking answers to these questions it must be remembered that board and teachers are engaged in a common task; they all are engaged in the business of their Father in heaven. In that business teachers and board members are co-workers. That business should be the centre of attention of any visit to the school.

Supervision does not mean a meddling checking whether all rules and instructions are being carried out; whether board directives are immediately implemented. The purpose of classroom visits is not a comparison with "when I went to school . . ." Supervision of the work at school means: co-operation between board members and teachers in the educational business of our Father. It means helping teachers to find ways and means to improve that work so that it may be most efficient and effective. It means providing opportunities for visitors to inform themselves about educational matters of importance. It means building the link between parent and school. Indeed, the board's supervisory responsibilities are a

OUR COVER

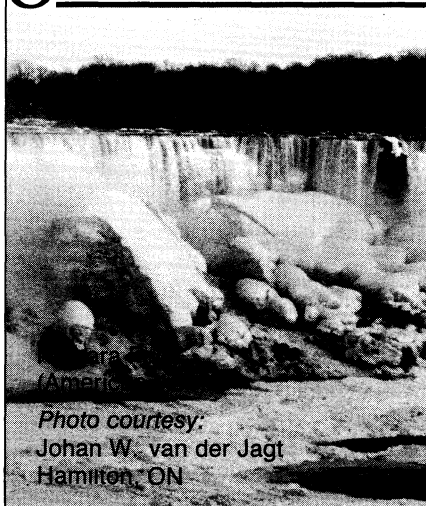


Photo courtesy:
Johan W. van der Jagt
Hamilton, ON

way of co-operation in education, a demonstration of the common concern of parents and teachers, each in accordance with one's own special task. It is truly an act of co-operative learning. And this is very much a matter of genuine interest, of desiring to be a hand and a foot to each other as members of the body of Christ.

* * *

School visitor, would you like to know what happens at school? Do not look at the teacher as performer. If that is your interest, perhaps you might better visit him when he is alone, and is able to give a polished, private demonstration of his skills. Indeed, if your interest is with teacher performance you will hinder the good *teacher*, the one whose concern is with his students. Be wise, be genuinely in-

CHURCH NEWS



Per November 1, 1989 the temporary address of

REV. D. DEJONG

in Holland will be

c/o Mr. L. Smilde
Transvaalstraat 10
RIDDERKERK, 2987 AT
The Netherlands
Phone: 011-31-1804-13723

* * *

CALLED TO:
Smithville, ON: Rev. B.J. Berends
of Smithers, BC

terested — no, not with the secret intent to inspect the teacher, and perhaps to catch him unawares. Be genuinely interested in the learning of both students AND teacher (!) that takes place in the school. Experience the story as the children do; experience what is being taught in history, in mathematics, in geography, in penmanship, in language. Join in, and become a learner yourself, absorbed in the business of learning — just as we would like the children to be absorbed in their learning. If interest is genuine and involvement is real, then the children forget themselves and become absorbed in the study of the beauty of God's creation. Let your interest be genuine and let your involvement be real. Forget your role as inspector and supervisor. Become absorbed in the learning activities, and you will discover what really goes on in school!

Talk about the work; ask your questions; allow the teacher to explain the fine points of his craft; allow him to share with you his questions, his concerns, his frustrations. Not only will you yourself learn a great deal about the educational process, but hearts will open, and you will come to know the teacher as a person, and the teacher will come to know you! You will be welcomed in the school because the teachers can share with you their successes and their problems. Unintentionally, and almost unnoticed, you will discover what really goes on in the school and you will also discover how you might be able to help, even if only by providing a sympathetic, listening ear. Often such a listening ear can already help solve many a problem.

Those who are genuinely interested find satisfaction in the work itself, in the learning of the children, in their individual achievements, in the teacher's deepening understanding of the children as individual persons, in his skill to get children involved in the learning activities, in his search for alternative ways to reach his students. They will discover the successes as well as the many points that could yet be improved. Anyone who is genuinely interested in the work of the classroom is welcomed as a friend . . . and a lively, stimulating discussion will lead to renewed zeal, vigour, effort, leading to greater efficiency in teaching and learning.

Take this experience back into the board meetings. You will then be able to judge the better whether a particular course of action will really help the work in the school. And don't forget to go back to the classroom to see for yourself whether indeed that is the case!

Based on A. Janse: HET EIGEN KARAKTER DER CHRISTELIJKE SCHOOL. Kampen; J.H. Kok, 1935. Hoofdstuk VII: Belang stellen in 't werk of op je handen kijken, pp. 95-97.

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



Hello Busy Beavers,

In the library I came across a very interesting book. It was a book of children's science experiments and amusements. Games, I guess you could call them.

Some of these games were like tricks to amuse and baffle your friends.

For some science experiments special equipment is needed. But not for the activities in THIS book. (And that's important!)

Some of these science activities show how science can be put to everyday use.

I think you will enjoy the following activity. Give it a try!

LET AIR SHOW ITS MUSCLES

You will need: a balloon, three or four books.

Have you ever noticed how a car with a flat tire sags over?

Could you lift the low corner of the car? Of course not!

Yet when air is pumped back into the tire — presto! — the car is gradually lifted. That's air pressure at work.

You can test the lifting strength of air pressure with a balloon and a few books.

Tie together three or four books with string or a rubber band.

Place the bundle of books on top of a toy balloon.

Let the mouthpiece of the balloon overhang the edge of the table.

Take a deep breath and blow steadily into the balloon.

You will be surprised to see how easily the end of the pile of books is raised into the air!

See if you can lift more books than your friend, in this way.

We all join in wishing the Busy Beavers who celebrate their birthday in December a very happy day and many happy returns! May the Lord, our heavenly Father bless and keep you all in the year ahead.

Here's hoping you have a great time celebrating with your family and friends!



December

Alan Hofsink	1	Richard Feenstra	16
Kristi Viher	1	Stuart Schenkel	16
Annette Bax	7	Lisa De Boer	17
Hannah Harlaar	9	Jacqueline Bikker	19
Selby Bareman	10	Janice Berends	21
Leanne Beukema	10	Joni Dekker	24
Neil Van Seters	10	Wendy Hovius	24
Brian Janzen	11	Alwin Plug	26
Carlo Schoon	11	Elizabeth Vanderpol	26
David De Boer	16	Daniel De Gelder	29

Some of the other activities in this book are

- mirror writing and "invisible" ink
- making a ruler roar
- balancing coins on the edge of a glass

For each activity the author explains the scientific reason for what is happening.

As you can see children's science activity books can be a fun way to learn about God's wonderful creation.

My book was called "Science Experiments & Amusements for Children."

It was written by Charles Vivian, and has lots of pictures and diagrams to help you.



FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Denise Hoeksema*. We are happy to have you join us. I see you know what Busy Beavers are to do, Denise.

Thank you for the puzzle!

Welcome to the Club, *Jeffrey Vandergaag*. And thank you for a very neat letter. We hope you will really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities, Jeffrey.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Cecilia Barendregt*. Thank you for the puzzle. Will you write and tell me how old you are, Cecilia?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Margaret Nyenhuis*. Of course you may join and I hope you will enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities. Thanks for the puzzle, Margaret. That's a great start!

I hope by now everybody's recuperated from your accident, *Michelle Peters*! And are you all in routine at school? Thanks for the puzzles, Michelle. That should keep us busy for a while, right?

Hello *Anya Malda*. It was nice to hear from you again! It's a little late for a fall puzzle now, Anya. But it will keep, right? Will you write sometime and tell us about how you keep busy after school? Bye for now.

Thank you for your puzzle, *Steven Vandevelde*. I see you are a good puzzler. Keep it up! Is your brother a member of the Busy Beaver Club, Steven?

I hope you had a very good time on your birthday *Jenny Stroop*. I think your teacher had a great idea having you write to the Prime Minister. Let me know when he writes back, O.K., Jenny? Thank you for the puzzle.

You were fortunate, *Jeannette Jansen*, having such lovely weather. Are you planning to make something for your new nieces/nephews, Jeannette? And what kind of work do you do as a "candy-striper"?

Hello, *Garrett Penninga*. Thank you for the BIG puzzle. But I see you are a good puzzler. Keep it up! Write again soon.

How did you enjoy your birthday and your trip to Blue Bell, *Laura Aasman*? And how were your swimming lessons? Well maybe your voice isn't very loud, Laura, but I didn't have any trouble reading your writing! Thank you for the poems, the riddles, the puzzle, AND the "book look"!

Busy Beavers, we need a pen pal for

Laura Aasman (age 10)

20 Seymour Dr.

Ancaster, Ontario

L9G 4N1



“DOGGIE”
by Busy Beaver
Amy Hofsink

Quiz Time!

JESUS' MIRACLES

Match each miracle the Lord Jesus performed with the person for whom the miracle was performed.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. a nobleman, John 4:46-53 | a. son raised from the dead |
| 2. a multitude of people, Matthew 15:34-36 | b. water became wine |
| 3. Jairus, Mark 5:22-41 | c. son healed |
| 4. Bartimaeus, Mark 10:46-52 | d. brother raised from dead |
| 5. High Priest's servant, Luke 22:50-51 | e. fed with seven loaves and a few fish |
| 6. Peter, Matthew 14:29 | f. received sight |
| 7. widow of Nain, Luke 7:11-16 | g. fever healed |
| 8. Mary and Martha, John 11:39-44 | h. walked on water |
| 9. a bridegroom, John 2:1-10 | i. daughter raised from the dead |
| 10. Peter's mother-in-law, Mark 1:30-31 | j. ear restored |

“NAMES” SEARCH-A-WORD

by Busy Beaver Kerri-Anne Spoelstra

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| A B H A R R Y N O C T | | |
| E A B C N L M C P H I | Look for: | |
| F R D I K D Q I R R S | Andrew | Kim |
| J T G H M U R R R I V | Carolyn | Chris |
| A H Z N Y I Y E X S W | Greg | Christine |
| B A C Y D L K E W T F | Harry | Shelly |
| G M R L H I L J K I L | Kerri | Eric |
| G E J O H N S E R N M | John | |
| F W G R E G T U H E N | Tommy | |
| D E V A W C H R I S O | | |
| C B A C T O M M Y Q P | | |

MORE COMPUTER RIDDLES

from Busy Beaver Michelle Peters

1. What do you call a computer that cost a lot of money and makes many mistakes?
2. What do you get if you cross a computer with a refrigerator?
3. What is the easiest way to count cows?
4. What did the big computer call the little computer?
5. What do you get when you cross a computer with a mule?
6. What should you do with a computer that's a year old?
7. What do you get when you cross a computer with an onion?

(Answers below)

Answers

“More Computer Riddles”:

1. a million ERROR 2. very cool answers 3. on a cow culator 4. a CHIP off the old block 5. a computer that gives you a real kick when you plug it in 6. wish it a happy birthday 7. an answer that brings tears to your eyes!

Will you write and tell me how your balloon “experiment” worked?

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

Love to you all
from Aunt Betty

With thankfulness to the Lord, the Creator of life, we announce the birth of our daughter,

RACHEL LYNN

Born August 30th, 1989

Peter and Wendy Schoon
(nee Endeman)

4956 Church Street
Beamsville, ON
L0R 1B0

With joyful hearts, we give thanks to our heavenly Father, for His precious gift of another covenant child, a son, whom we called:

BENJAMIN WILLIAM

Born October 2, 1989

A brother for Amanda

Rick and Chris Eenkhoorn
(nee Selles)

And the proud grandparents
13935-116th Avenue
Surrey, BC V3R 2T3

Psalm 25:5a:
Lead me in Thy truth . . .

We received from the LORD this precious gift:

JONATHAN KARS

A brother for Deborah and Stephen
Wayne and Antina Chase

October 24, 1989
2207 76th Street
Caledonia, MI 49316