



# Clarion

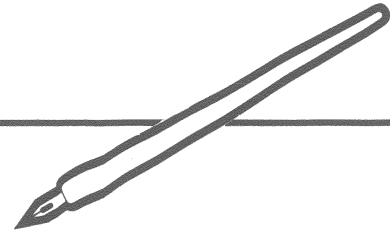
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 40, No. 4

February 15, 1991

No Smoking  
No Drinking  
No Alcohol  
No Firearms

Defence  
in Force  
Avalanche  
to Rescue  
No  
Action  
No



## The problem of Palmetto

### Two letters

In the November 23, 1990 issue of *Clarion*, br M. VanderVelde recommended that those who were going to Florida for a longer (or shorter) period of time seek the brotherhood, especially on the Day of Rest, and worship in Palmetto with their Canadian and American Reformed brothers and sisters in order so to practice the communion of saints. Two letters to the editor came in. Both are in disagreement with the whole matter. The first one is from br. A. Van Pijkeren of Vineland. He ask:

Is this not somewhat confusing? In the past we have always tried to encourage our people to meet in worship within the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches. What incentive is there to go specifically to Palmetto? Is there a consistory? Is there a ministry of mercy (deacons)? Please, let us not confuse our next generation, and clearly define where the Lord has placed us. There it is that we must practice the communion of saints.

Br. Van Pijkeren's concern is

with the well-being of the church as a whole and for the generations to come. Perhaps, we will, for the sake of a holiday, open the door of our church concept so wide, that it will have far-reaching implications for generations to come.

The second letter came from br. B. Schutten of Ancaster, who was "surprised to find such an advertising article in our Reformed magazine" which might be a sign that "this 'church of convenience' is condoned by our churches and the membership at large." He notices among the older and younger generation an increasing number going to Florida, "because we have more time on our hands, we become more affluent, and (I hope not) we become more complacent." He continues with saying that br. VanderVelde's description of a "normal" Sunday in Palmetto has not convinced him "that the Palmetto gathering is in accordance with God's Word." The churches in the Classis Ontario-South region were requested to deal with this matter. Br. Schutten says that the writer "did not mention what the decision was at the classical level" and then continues:

Could it have been that their request was refused because it was not in accordance with our Church Order (Art. 40, 41, 52)? "Palmetto" has requested Classis Ontario South to do what is the task of believers themselves. They wish to have official (in the ecclesiastical sense) church services, Lord's Supper and the blessing without officially instituting a church. It is a situation which they themselves have created because they wish to stay in Palmetto for extended periods of time. Such a situation is a matter between each member and their home church.

This gathering has not been legalized. Can we then say that in the meantime we invite all the brothers and

sisters to Florida to join us in worshipping the Lord as it may convenience or suit us? If Florida life is that necessary and important, then these members should take steps to institute a church and make Palmetto their permanent residence. People who are away from their church for weeks and months are not under church supervision nor partake in the communion at the Lord's table. And where there is no supervision, there is no discipline – discipline being a mark of the true church. I feel that our brother VanderVelde should re-think what is meant by the word church and the implications that go with it. If this migration becomes acceptable and normal, we will soon have a gathering up-north in cottage country to facilitate those members who vacation there during the summer months. Br. Schutten concludes with referring to the end of an article in *Clarion* of October 18, 1985 (vol. 34, no. 21, p. 435) on "Casualness and worship," which he quotes to a large extent (The article dealt mostly with the question how to dress in connection with our meeting of the LORD in the worship service.):

We are working on the preservation of the church when we remain precise and particular in our worship in every respect. Being precise and particular in the manner in which we meet with the LORD, as well as in the manner of worship, always asking what the LORD wants, how He prescribes it in His Word, will have this effect that we remain precise and particular also regarding the doctrine of the church. We struggle to maintain our Reformed doctrine as we confess it in our Reformed standards, convinced that this is the doctrine of the Scriptures.

Let us keep and build up this attitude of being precise and particular in our service to the LORD, not seeking our own comfort, but the honour of the LORD and the preservation of the church for which Christ not only accepted discomfort but for which He went through hellish agony. If His Bride was of such great value for Christ, the preservation and further gathering of the church should be the first priority in the life of every Christian.

### Some comments

To begin with: I would like to express my appreciation for the concern for the well-being and faithfulness of the churches as this shows in these two letters. It is true that much more than before there is time and money available for travelling and taking long(er) vacations. The dangers of affluence are real. Besides, it is easy to say that something is wrong, when one cannot afford it. This is true in a wider sense, too. People can fiercely oppose something when it does not touch their own person, but "change their mind" when their own desires or convenience play a role. We have to be aware of these things, and should be honest, but not in a judgmental and condemning way. When we can afford something



or something would be convenient or attractive, and we still abstain from it for reason of our principles, then those principles are shown to be truly principles.

On the other hand, we should also be willing to admit that something we once considered to be wrong was not really wrong, but that we were stricter than the Word of God. An example is here the T.V. When it first came many said that having a T.V. is sin. However, not the possession of a T.V. is sin, the manner in which it is used can be. "To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure; their very minds and consciences are corrupted" (Titus 1:15). When I do not have a T.V., I have no responsibility regarding its use. When I bring this communication tool (which is so very much used to proclaim the things of the anti-Christian and ungodly world to those who watch) in my home and family, I load an extra and heavy responsibility on my shoulders regarding myself and regarding my family, since we belong to Christ. This responsibility concerns both the time spent with it and the programs watched. Nevertheless, sin is not in the tool, it is in the human heart.

One additional remark should be made here. When Paul writes to Titus that to the pure all things are pure, and says to the Corinthians, "All things are lawful for me" (1 Cor. 6:12, 10:23), it is clear that the apostle does not include things forbidden in God's Word. What God's Word determines to be sin is never lawful or pure. Paul speaks here about things which in themselves are not sinful, but good. We can here refer to what he writes to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:4-5), "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; for then it is consecrated by the Word of God and prayer."

As I see it, "Palmetto" is a matter of the same Christian freedom and responsibility. The "Florida problem" has been with us for more than fifteen years. During these years a number of the brothers and sisters who were going there, some especially for health reasons, have asked local consistories as well as classical meetings in Ontario to look into this matter and organize something for them. So far the result was negative, not because of opposition always, but at least as much because of not seeing a possibility to do something. Therefore, it appears to me that there is no good ground for br. Schutten's suggestion that a recent Classis Ontario South did not want to deal with a request that something be done, because it considered the request in conflict with the Church Order, Art. 40, 41, 52. At this moment the consistory of the church at Ancaster has taken upon itself to study the problem.

I would like to point here to a historical angle. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, in the days of the East India Company, many ships went to the East and the West. They were often away from home for more than a year. Away from home meant away from the local home church. Yet, there were many Reformed sailors on those ships. Was this wrong? Sometimes they had a minister with them, but not a consistory. Often sermons were read by the captain or by someone else in worship services on board.

After World War II, in the Netherlands, many went to one of the islands in the north of the country for their vacation. On these islands there were no liberated Reformed congregations. What was done? Were the people told: you cannot go there during your vacation? No, the church at Dokkum organized worship services on Schiermonnikoog. The church at Harlingen did the same with regard to the islands of Vlieland and Terschelling, to accommodate the brothers and sisters who decided to spend their vacation there.

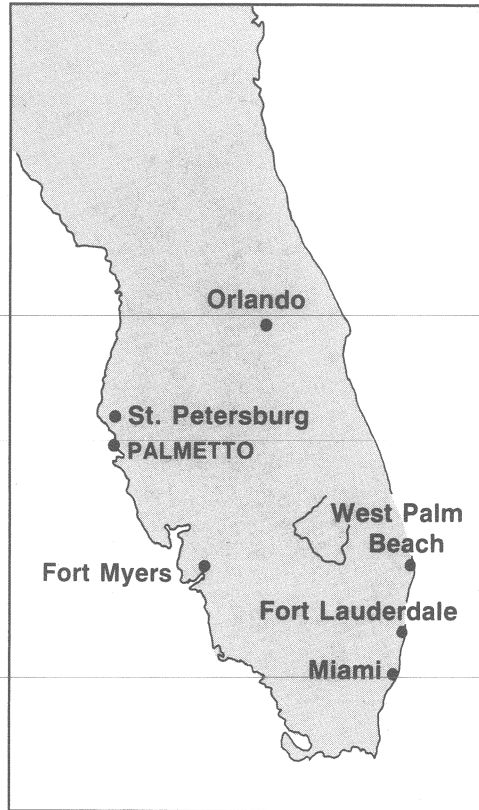
Now br. Schutten will argue that in the Netherlands local churches organized worship services for the brothers and sisters and thus made them ecclesiastically legitimate, which is not the case yet with Palmetto. However, fact is that requests for church-organizational help have been here for many years. In Holland, too, the vacationers came before the organization. There consistories did act. Here, so far, none did. I am aware that there is a difference here: the distance makes it so much more difficult. But does this mean that it is impossible?

Is meeting in Palmetto, where we do not have an instituted church with its office bearers, in conflict with the Articles 40, 41, and 52 of the Church Order? Art. 40 reads, "In places where a consistory is to be constituted for the first time or anew, this shall be done only with the advice of classis." I do not see how this article speaks against "Palmetto." The next article says, "Places where as yet no consistory can be constituted shall be assigned to the care of a neighbouring consistory." As I remember well, this is exactly the article which has been used as ground for the requests for help addressed to both local consistories and to classes.

Art. 52 says that "The consistory shall call the congregation together for worship twice on the Lord's Day." How-

ever, this does not mean that the consistory forbids the members who have placed themselves under its oversight and discipline to go on holidays and to travel. The matter is here somewhat complicated. One could say that "Palmetto" confronts us with a situation, created, indeed, by those who go there for a longer period, which is not covered by the Church Order. Now the question is: is something forbidden when, and as long as, there is no provision made for it in the Church Order? Let us wait for the results of the study undertaken at this moment by the consistory of the church at Ancaster.

Can "Palmetto" be misused? Can someone say: those people are not in the regular worship services for quite a number of weeks, so I don't have to be faithfully in church every Sunday twice either? If there were someone who does this, here would be applicable what Paul says: for the pure everything is pure, but for the corrupt nothing is. I find it a sign of faithfulness that the brothers and sisters who go to Florida for a longer (or shorter) period want to come together there and organize their "own" Canadian-American Reformed services on the Lord's Day, instead of going to all kinds of other places. If this faithfulness, this being precise and particular, with regard to the Sunday worship, remains among us and is taken over by the next generation, I see no danger in "Palmetto" with regard to "church consciousness."



# REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By R. Schouten

## Why the church?

Why should people be members of the Church of Jesus Christ? What good does being a part of a Christian congregation bring?

Over the years, many people have decided that there is no earthly benefit in being a church member. The church, they feel, is irrelevant. It does not speak to the needs of the age. Membership has no payoff value. And so a whole generation has abandoned the church. The "me" generation concluded: "There is nothing in it for me."

Lately, however, we hear some amazing accounts of a return to the "church." The Dec. 17 issue of *Newsweek* magazine ran a feature article entitled, "And the Children Shall Lead Them: Young Americans Return to God." The figures are even more surprising: 18 million souls are returning to the "church."

What are we to make of this? Are we watching the beginning of a Great Awakening? Why are the young people going back to the "church?"

Well, the article in question sheds a great deal of light on the matter. It turns out that the youth are asking the same questions as always. They are still saying: what's in it for me? How is the church "relevant?" Can the "church" satisfy my search for meaning? Can it fulfill my needs?

The difference is that today there are many so-called churches which are very busy developing "programs" which do, in fact, serve the "needs" of this generation. The *Newsweek* article reminds us that many so-called churches have very little to do with the real Gospel. For instance, we read that many clergy have "air-brushed sin out of their language." Young people will not go to a church which calls people to repent and give their lives to God in totality. Clergy focus more on the supposed sins of society (capitalism, racism, multi-national corporations, sexual discrimination etc.) than on individual sin.

In this modern movement, ministers are not evaluated on the basis of their faithfulness to the Word of God, but according to their "success" in keeping the people "coming and giving." How can



ministers do this? First of all, by doing away with all talk of hellfire and judgment. Instead, the church must "totally accept people as they are without any sort of do's or dont's."

A pastor who wants to be "successful" will not be inclined to discipline his flock into obedience to the Word. Conversion, repentance and a renewed walk of life according to the Word are all antiquated concepts which cannot "speak" to the youth of today!

the great object of the modern (so-called) church is to make people feel good about themselves. A positive self-esteem, a bubbling ego, these are the great goals of this modern religion. *Newsweek* evaluates the situation with these words: "Unlike earlier religious revivals, the aim this time (aside from born-again traditionalists of all faiths) is support not salvation, help rather than

holiness, a circle of spiritual equals rather than an authoritative church or guide. A group affirmation of self is at the top of the agenda, which is why some of the least demanding churches are now in greatest demand."

Thus, it is no wonder that a modern generation goes back to "church." For this church is no church at all! At best, it is only a vestige of the true church of God. At worst, it is a religious club with an explicitly pagan agenda.

Let us not be deceived. This is no true revival. This is no national conversion. Instead, it is a retuning of a humanist program. The big concern in this program is still the glory of man! The sovereign Word of God is still silent. About the Lordship of Jesus Christ people will hear nothing. They cannot stomach such a message because they do



not want to give God jurisdiction over their lives.

In the kind of approach to religion that is exemplified in the *Newsweek* article, we hear nothing about the real reason for the existence of the church. What is that, you ask? Well, as church, we exist to glorify God! The church is to be God-centered and not man-centered! We are not called to be church members so that our human needs might be satisfied! We don't go to church on Sunday morning and afternoon in order to give our collective self-image a good boost. The point of being in church, rather, is to worship God and to serve Him at every moment of our lives.

God calls the church into existence so that He might again have a people that knows and loves Him, a people that praises Him every day again, a people that can "live with Him in eternal blessedness to praise and glorify Him" (Lord's Day 3).

Of course, it is always easy to critique non-Christian views of the Christian church. But what of our own views? How do we look at the church? Do we look at the church as something that exists *for us*? I've often heard remarks like this: "Church doesn't do anything for me." Or: "I don't get anything out of church." Or: "Church is boring. It doesn't interest me."

All these complaints might even have some validity to them. It is not good that the Gospel is sometimes presented in a boring manner. And a sermon should be relevant, that is, it should speak to the issues of the day. It should bring the Gospel with a discerning awareness of contemporary temptations and questions. It should help us face the challenge of being a Christian in this modern world in which we live.

And yet, we may not think of the church as existing *for us*. No, the church exists for God! And the biggest question is never: what's in it for me? Instead, the number one issue is: "What can I do for my God and King?" Instead of always complaining about some supposed lack in the local church, we should be severely self-critical, asking ourselves: "What does God get out of me? Do I worship Him with my whole heart? Is He glorified by my words and conduct? Is it my aim in life to "hallow His Name?"

True religion means that our lives are centered on God. It means that we repent of our self-worship and learn to serve Him alone with our whole heart.

This kind of religion, of course, will be deemed "irrelevant" by a big portion of this modern generation. People will think that a church which preaches such a message cannot really "do" anything for

today's world. It can't help in solving modern problems. Modern people don't want to talk about a holy God in heaven who has certain rights over us and who is angry about our sins. Instead, they want to talk about man and his needs. Religion stays on the horizontal level.

But this earthbound perspective is exactly why modern religion cannot really help man. Oh sure, these modernist churches might soothe people's feelings and dull the pain of a meaningless life, but they cannot really help man because they don't deal with the root problem which is rebellion against God.

The only way to find help on the horizontal level, the only road to true problem solving here on earth, is to first recognize the sovereignty of God over our lives. We need to acknowledge His claims. His Word speaks with authority to us and we are called to submit. True healing for modern man starts when he repents of his self-willed ways and learns to obey God.

Thus, the only church which is truly relevant is a faithful church, one which is God-centered and which does not cater to a modern mind. A modern church can only follow people away from God; it can't lead people back to God! For it derives the content of its message from the world. It allows the world to set the agenda.

And so let's not be so quick to criticize the church. Instead, let's be happy and thankful to be part of a body which simply sticks to the sure pattern given to us in divine revelation. And let's do what we can to make sure that our local church remains a "pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), a church which makes no compromises when it addresses a modern generation.

For the moment at which this compromise begins is also the moment that the church has become truly irrelevant. As soon as the church starts catering to man, it at once becomes useless for man.

Is there a payoff in being a church member? Does it help us in our human life? Can the church be "relevant" in a modern, problem-filled world? The answer to all these questions is positive. But the church can be all these things only if we realize that the first and last goal of life is to glorify God. As we learn that truth, then, indeed, our own lives, too, are transformed. We learn peace. We become whole. We put away bad habits and learn new and holy ones. Life is restored and healed under the refreshing influence of the Holy Spirit.

We live to glorify God. But what's good for God is good for us. His glorification means our sanctification. In that truth lies the relevance of the church.



Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd., Winnipeg, MB

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES		Regular	Air
FOR 1991		Mail	Mail
Canada*		\$28.50	\$51.00
U.S.A.	U.S. Funds	\$32.50	\$47.75
International		\$43.00	\$74.00

Advertisements: \$6.00\* per column inch

\* Canadian Subscribers Please Note:  
The Goods and Services Tax effective January 1, 1991, requires that you add 7% GST to the subscription rate and advertisements.

Second class mail registration number 1025  
ISSN 0383-0438

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# “Teach us to pray”<sup>2</sup>

By J.W. van der Jagt

*This is the second part of a speech on prayer and students in school.*

## Religious belief of students

Many people are afraid of psychology. They may not like it, understand it nor are willing to accept its values. Many people think psychologists are not necessary because we are Christians. Yet, these people will use psychology everyday. Psychology is just a study of how a person “ticks,” i.e. how he thinks, behaves, and the reason for it. A psychologist is a person who has knowledge about many different kinds of people and may be able to assist individuals gain better insight into themselves so that they can behave in a more norm-oriented fashion if possible.

How a student thinks in the field of religion is a part of psychology. We may also use this part in the study of prayer for our schools since God has given this subject to provide better insight into our covenant children although some caution is necessary.

Harms has made one of the most important and best studies about religious developmental stages in students. Using 5000 students in both public and private schools he found three distinct stages that students go through. Stage I was the fairy tale stage of religion. These students were three to six years old and believed that God is bigger than dragons and giants but is essentially in the same category. Stage II incorporated the seven to twelve year old students. They were in the realistic stage in which God is seen as an actual person of a father. Stage III consisted of ages twelve and older. They were in the individualistic stage in which they saw God progressing from a conventional father to a mystical one.<sup>31</sup>

Knowing Harms may have used only a small number of Christians in his sample (since private schools do not necessarily mean Christian schools) it may be that our students are a bit more advanced in this area.

D. Matthias studied the relationships between the ideas of God in 12 to 15 years olds and their moral conduct. Sixty eight per cent scored high in their belief in God. The belief tended to increase with their own increase in chronological

age and mental ability. However, it is interesting to note that although God was seen as all-powerful and seeing and on whom one is dependent before age 12, it decreased after age 12. God is seen as personal at all ages but His love quality is an increasing concept with age.<sup>32</sup>

With regard to prayer, Elkind and Spilka found that children aged five to seven had a very indistinct understanding of the meaning of prayer. A large amount of progress had been made from ages seven to nine where the children conceived prayer as a concrete, particular and appropriate activity differentiated from other activities. They “... never thought beyond the mechanics of prayer to the cognitive and affective significances which, to the older child and adult are the essence of prayer...” From ages 10 to 12, prayer came to be understood as a private conversation with God having subjects not talked about with others. Beyond age 12 prayer changed to a form of direct communication with God.<sup>33</sup>

Children aged 9 to 12 who pray at routine times also tend to pray more spontaneously in response to feelings like anxiety and loneliness. Negative emotions motivate prayer more often than positive feelings. Furthermore, as individuals approach adolescence they become more self-conscious and hesitant although they led others easily in prayer before. Prayers also become more altruistic and concerned with the real world.<sup>34</sup> At this same age i.e. from 10 to 12, children begin to judge their own behaviour according to some standard. Thoughts are concerned with how faith relates to life and they can discuss and explain what they believe. They begin to evaluate the belief and action relationship.<sup>35</sup>

At first, children expect their prayers to be answered according to their own self-centered way. It is only later that they pray in a petitionary way where their own desires and wishes conform to the will of God. It isn't wrong for children to ask things honestly and frankly, says Pittenger, but it is when they think that they can make God give them.<sup>36</sup>

There is also some disillusionment among adolescents with prayer because

they see that God doesn't always answer prayer according to their wishes.<sup>37</sup> Up to age 12 or 13 children try to understand what they think might be God's point of view but beyond 13 or 14 years the acceptance that their prayer may have influence decreases rapidly both for its punitive and protective aspects.<sup>38</sup> So why should they pray? Right?

Prayers of thanksgiving also climax at ages nine and ten and decline through the later years.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, up to and including ten years there is an assumed learning process assisted by the widening of experiences and increasing verbal ability. From ages 12 to 13, however, prayer concepts take on a more realistic appearance in which there is a peak of altruistic praying with a more spiritual quality.<sup>40</sup>

We may conclude from this that each person will pray according to the age and psychological make-up he is at a particular stage of life. Both Goldman and Strommen draw similar conclusions when Goldman writes,

“... there is very little relationship between frequency of praying and insights both into prayer itself and into God's operational power in prayer.”<sup>41</sup> Strommen describes it even better when he writes,

“Though Christian educators may explain accurately to children what is meant by sacramental life or prayer life in the Christian tradition, they will encounter strong opposition attributable to the epistemological categories characteristic of child thought. Thus the explanation of a Christocentric prayer will be first assimilated according to the egocentrism and emotional makeup of a child.”<sup>42</sup>

A private prayer is different from a public prayer. In a private prayer one may ask anything. Are we going to ask children to pray a public prayer when they are still in their egocentric stage or when they do not consider thankfulness even as important? Thankfulness is the chief part of prayer according to us. God is not even seen as all-powerful after age 12 according to the above. When people pray publicly, they are to be an example for others in the church also, this includes classmates.



Shelley mentions, as quoted before, that from ages 10 to 12 children are apt to discuss questions they have concerning their beliefs including faith. I wonder if that also holds true for the majority of students we have in our Canadian and American Reformed Schools. The opportunity is definitely there. Is there already apathy in the upper elementary grades which continues in the junior high school grades and high school? Is there so much peer pressure that they already want to forget themselves?

It may thankfully be noted that in many colleges and with possible extensions into the high schools of North America there are Christians who are very active and have prayer and Bible study groups because they *want to know more!* Neither are they quiet about their belief in God. Unfortunately, they often do not have a local Scriptural church to go to. New Christians in high school or thereafter are most often more prayerful and closer to God, it seems than Canadian and American Reformed Church members. I have seen this in my own lifetime.

### Prayer education of covenant children

The year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety. The beginning of a new decade bringing us closer to the return of Jesus Christ. Are all of us ready? In the past few months we have seen barriers break open in Eastern Europe causing an influx of people who have been suppressed in their religious freedom. Most of the immigrants, however, probably do not come for religious freedom but for the materialistic West. Many people applaud the broken barriers in Eastern Europe but in Hong Kong, people are transported back to their homelands because they came for economic gain and not for religious freedom as such. Every generation has commented at one point or another in their lifetime, "Oh, how much more dangerous life is now for Christians." Yes. In this new decade it will become even more difficult. Our covenant children are growing up in a materialistic society which has infiltrated the church federation to a much larger extent than many people realize. In the next few years, the Eastern bloc people will infiltrate further into Europe, North America, Australia and Africa. They do not even need to come physically for the danger does not lie in the body but in the philosophical ideals that will slowly permeate all of society. Therefore, it becomes more important than ever that young people know how to pray correctly in public.

Following are a few guidelines which may help the prayer education of covenant children (and possibly adults) so

that the church will hopefully become more edified in the future.

1. School education is an extension of the home, not in place of it. The basis for a healthy prayer life is the home itself. We, as teachers, should not take it upon ourselves to teach the basics of prayer. If we do, responsibility is taken away from the parents and the parents themselves may also become complacent. Parents should teach children to pray at meal- and bedtimes as soon as they can talk. As the children reach ages 7 to 10, prayer requests could be made by them. From ages 11 years and up both the Lord's Prayer and free prayers could be made by the child.

2. The church has a higher responsibility for teaching prayer than the school. A large portion of the Heidelberg Catechism speaks about prayer. When students have Catechism instruction the practice of prayer could be taught as the practical part of the instruction. This could be done by having students close the instructional period and/or even writing prayers for their homework so that the content of the public prayer can be internalized and the spoken part be concentrated upon when it is their turn.

3. There is a decrease in dependency feeling on God as students get beyond age 12. By this stage the students are getting beyond the stage of considering God as their own father. They also become more hesitant and self-conscious as they approach adolescence. Now is the time for schools to definitely become involved. If parents and schools let them go here, the students development of prayer life may continue at the same level or it may regress. Therefore, students

in grade 8, already praying family prayers at home and at catechism instruction, should then also continue in the same manner in school. The prayers could be at lunchtime or even the opening prayer. This must be continued in high school if it is to have effect in the public prayer life after high school. Students at this age desire a greater responsibility and in grades seven to nine it would be an excellent way of showing it.

Students in the primary grades would be allowed to make prayer request and these requests would be incorporated in the public classroom at the discretion of the teacher. In the junior grades e.g. four to seven, prayer requests would also be made and in these grades the Lord's Prayer would be allowed to be said publicly by the students.

4. Biblical knowledge is a base in prayer and should be stimulated with questions asked by both parents and children. Children's Bible stories are read at home prior to their entrance to school. This is excellent although I have found that many have much difficulty recalling the stories. It is not strange that this occurs since Bible stories are very abstract. In grade 1, as they turn seven years old, the children enter a different developmental stage. Now they can remember facts better although inferences through abstract thought usually is not achieved. I ask parents to assist their children in the task of reviewing the daily Bible stories at home. Some do this consistently. This begins the laying of a firm base of Biblical knowledge which is continued in the rest of the grades.

In school there always is the opportunity for the students to ask questions for thought stimulation also for other students. At home, parents could also do this when they read a portion of the Scriptures after meals. Part of the Scriptures read can be incorporated into the closing prayer. We must remember that the stones placed in the Jordan River during its crossing by the Israelites were meant to stimulate the Israelite children to ask why and what had happened at that location.

5. Knowledge about the saints in the church should be recognized in prayer. Church bulletins provide needed information to pray for church members who are sick or have special needs. How many children and students are really a part of the conversations between parents mentioning that this brother is ill or that sister has a birthday? How many students actually know who the elderly brothers and sisters are? If students are to pray for them they must visibly and preferably know who they are actually praying for. Otherwise, they cannot re-

## OUR COVER

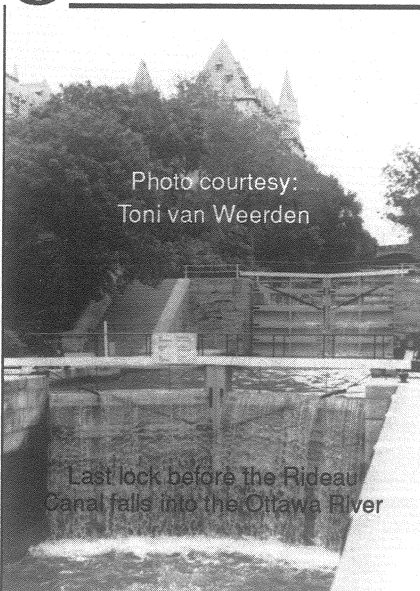


Photo courtesy:  
Toni van Weerden

Last lock before the Rideau  
Canal falls into the Ottawa River

late to their own prayer. Get them in touch with the elderly. The elderly also belong to the same communion of saints. Elderly people are the living stones of past church history. The present generation are the stones of the present church history and the younger generation are the living stones of the future history of the church. All of these are built on one another for use and support.

Meetings to be held during the week are also listed so that a blessing and support for them may also be asked. Prayers may be offered more than once a week for these needs. In school, bulletins would serve the purpose of making the students aware of the communion of saints so that at the grade 8 level it can be incorporated into their prayers.

6. Knowledge of past and present history of the church and world is indispensable. Church history is a very abstract conceptual subject for the lower and middle elementary grades. It is even very difficult for many students in the upper elementary grades and in high school to study it no matter how good the teacher is. We, as adults, have developed a greater level of abstraction than most of these students. Once one has attained this level of abstraction, e.g. understanding the church concept, it becomes even more difficult to understand those who have not done so. Those who are able to abstract well as students may consider themselves very blessed. Most students, though, are too concretely oriented in elementary school and will often sit bored in class or act as if they are interested and understand everything taught because they have a good memory for facts.

Do parents know enough about church and world history to assist their children? Parents, teachers and students should be informed about the everyday affairs of the world. God has given us many different types of media to use for this. We must use them for the enhancement of our prayer life. We are too rich in technological innovations to have an excuse for not keeping up to date with the history of the church so that we may pray constantly for its preservation in the tumults of current events.

In school, world events should be discussed daily in grades 5 and up. In the younger grades the children may become very scared about occurrences in the world since they have a tremendous amount of imagination. Current events are part of church history and must be attempted to be seen in that light also. Parents could discuss current events at the supper table to stimulate their children to ask questions, listen to the next news broadcast and transfer it to their peers.

7. It is of prime importance to realize our dependence on God. How can we make children aware of this? A farmer knows that he is dependent on the weather that God gives. A city student often thinks no further than that the store will always provide food. Parents could assist their children by teaching about the beauty and dependence of plants, animals and people on God by taking them on day trips through forests, swamps during summer and winter. Let the children listen to the birds and the serenity of the forest and field. Instead of sunbathing on the beach all day, go on hikes while camping. Both rural and city dwellers could visit art galleries and museums a few times a year. One must be aware of the technological innovations and the aesthetic progress of mankind through the centuries to also note that God will only let us progress as quickly as He wills.

8. The church is built on the past and present generations who have prayed for its preservation and it continues to be built by the younger generation. Therefore students must get into closer contact with the elderly who have experienced the church history of the past. It is also part of the communion of saints for generations to assist each other in supporting God's church. Parents could invite the elderly over or visit them regularly even though they may not be closely acquainted with them. Students at the junior high level could be invited to listen and even ask questions during the constructive conversations about present and past church life and politics. I know that although I never said anything during the discussions taking place at home, I still recall that the essence often gave me something to think about. Students now are much more verbose and will be stimulated to ask questions if they are involved and treated as interested baptismal church members although their questions may seem simplistic. Or are the parents afraid of questions?

9. Materialism decreases the need for prayer life. A materialist feels he can get everything by earning money and forgets his thanks to God and his own dependency on God. It is the most difficult aspect of life to fight against. It is also one which is initiated the earliest in the home. If parents attach a tremendous amount of importance to money and speak about it consistently, their children will internalize the subject. When children watch television they see all kinds of advertisements with toys. They will want them and think, "If I only had the money, I could buy those toys." When children have a birthday party, I am shocked at the number of toys that they

receive. When one gets more and more, it becomes very difficult not to want more yet. Greed builds greed. It would almost be better if birthday parties did not require presents. Children would only receive presents from their parents. It may allow them to become more thankful for the friends themselves.

Many teenagers already work by having paper routes. This is excellent for the dissemination of information and also to teach them stewardship. It would also be excellent if they volunteered work by assisting handicapped children or adults, elderly and other church members or people on a regular basis.

Two other ways of combatting materialism are the acquisition of books as stimulation towards reading good literature or going to the public library on a regular basis. Similarly, going to concerts, plays and other cultural activities would possibly raise their interests in greater esthetic and cultural values instead of monetary ones.

Does this mean that all young people will be able to pray properly later on? Certainly not. I have only given some aspects of personalities and weaknesses which may be attributable to a weak prayer life. Some people do not have the ability to speak well no matter how much they may be encouraged and taught in school. However, we must encourage them also in such a way so that they will not be afraid to pray publicly. The security of the home is the initial place of instruction.

Freedom and independence in the world is not easily achieved when one considers the many weaknesses and shortcomings people have. We are within the tight web of a materialistic civilization. It becomes more and more important to be able to pray publicly for our dependence on the Lord, showing thankfulness to Him who helps us to preserve the Church. May we humble ourselves and internalize true humbleness in our covenant children so that they also may continue building a firm foundation for their own future generation.

<sup>31</sup>Harms, 1941 (in Goldman) *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, (1964), 26.

<sup>32</sup>Matthias, D. (in Goldman), 28.

<sup>33</sup>Elkind and Spilka, 1967 (in Strommen), 135.

<sup>34</sup>Shelley, J.A. *The Spiritual Needs of Children*. Downer's Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, (1982), 45.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>36</sup>Pittenger, 44-45.

<sup>37</sup>Shelley, 65.

<sup>38</sup>Strommen, M.P. *Research on Religious Development*. New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc. (1971), 134-135.

<sup>39</sup>Goldman, 181.

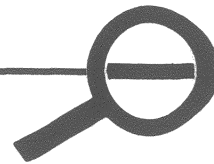
<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 191-192.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 213.

<sup>42</sup>Strommen, 135.



By C. Van Dam



## The Reformed cause in Japan and Romania

### The Reformed Church of Japan

At the Schilder Symposium held in Kampen, the Netherlands last December, one of the participants was a Japanese scholar, Dr. Yoshikazu Makita, professor at and principal of the Reformed Seminary at Kobe. He had studied Schilder's view of history at Kampen ten years ago and now returned to take part in the discussions. H. Hoksbergen used the occasion to write an interesting article (in *Nederlands Dagblad*, 12 January 1991) about the Reformed Church of Japan.

### Background and relationships

This church originated in 1946 by separating from a theologically mixed body where the paramount concern was unity. It is interesting to note that contacts with the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS; cf. *Clarion*, Jan. 4, 1991) were instrumental in opening the eyes of the Reformed in Japan to secede and form their own church life. The Reformed Church of Japan subsequently received much support from RCUS missionaries. Contacts were also made with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Christian Reformed Church, and the Koinon Church in Korea.

During the 1970s contact was also established with the Reformed Churches (Liberated) in the Netherlands. In 1981, the Synod of Arnhem offered the relationship of official contact with these churches. That contact has been reaffirmed, most recently by the Synod of Leeuwarden in 1990.

### The Japanese context and Schilder

The Reformed Church of Japan numbers less than 10,000. They are therefore a very small minority in this populous and predominantly pagan country. Although there is an official separation of state and religion, yet much of national life is pervaded by shintoism and emperor worship, even though he is no longer officially regarded as divine. The danger of combining old pagan beliefs (such as ancestor worship) with Christianity is very real and syncretism constantly needs to be combatted. It is

precisely in the need to reaffirm the antithesis that Schilder's work can show the way to the Reformed in Japan, according to Prof. Makita.

Another area where Schilder makes an important contribution to the Reformed cause is in his showing that one's faith is never just a personal business. The temptation to keep your faith as a private matter to yourself is very real in such an overwhelmingly heathen society. Schilder's *Christ and Culture* has been translated into Japanese and the works of Schilder that have been translated into English are also available.

This small church with its seminary in Kobe stands as a shining light of the gospel in Japan.

### The Reformed Church in Romania

The euphoria surrounding the overthrow of the hated dictator Ceauscescu (cf. *Clarion*, Feb. 16, 1990) has largely evaporated. Rev. L. Tokes, whose actions were a catalyst in the uprising leading to the dictator's removal and death, has even called for a second revolution (*Nederlands Dagblad*, 8 Dec. 1990). Tokes who became a bishop in the Hungarian-Reformed Church in Romania after the country was freed of Ceauscescu has faced harassment and he claims that the serious automobile accident which he had last summer was an attempt on his life.

A mere five months after the overthrow of the dictator, when Tokes was widely hailed as a national hero, this Reformed minister was defeated at the polls in a bid for a senate seat. In an interview J.R. McAuliffe conducted with L. Tokes and P. Negrut, a Baptist pastor, (printed in *Chalcedon Report*, Nov. 1990), Tokes blames this setback on the organized propaganda the government waged against him. According to them, Tokes was an agent of the CIA and to blame for all the country's problems! All dissidents were given such treatment and not a single one won an election for political office. On top of that the Reformed people in Romania are for the most part ethnic Hungarian and there is a strong anti-Hungarian bias which is promoted by the media.

According to the same interview (on which the rest of this article is based), there are still no laws granting freedom, although the revolution has given more possibilities to speak up and to act. It seems doubtful that constitutional freedoms will ever be granted in the foreseeable future. Of course Romania is sensitive to demands for religious freedom from the West. Thus a likely scenario is that there will be an appearance of such freedom but they will allow the evangelical churches to be persecuted by the large (Eastern) Orthodox Church, a body which has always cooperated with the state. If countries ask about this, it will be dismissed as interdenominational troubles and internal religious problems. Whereas the Orthodox Church has almost unlimited access to the media, the Reformed churches are not allowed to have a printing press or a means to produce their own paper and it is very difficult to have a presence on the radio or T.V. The Evangelical Alliance was formed in part so that a wide array of conservative "denominations" could work together for religious freedom and democracy.

Officially the government allows the establishment of independent Christian schools. In reality this is almost impossible to achieve because of lack of resources, both financial and in terms of personnel. For 45 years no training of Christian teachers was allowed. Indeed to even say that you were a Christian has meant losing the opportunity to study.

The outlook for Romania looks very dim, both politically and economically. What can be done? Negrut put it this way. "As Christians in Romania we say to the Christian in the West, 'Give us the tools and we will evangelize the country.' We desperately need Bibles, books, and financial support to start schools and to organize institutions that would promote religious values, freedom and democracy. We have to educate the whole nation what freedom, democracy and a true Christian lifestyle is. So we would appreciate it if the support that started very generously after the revolution would continue for the next year" (*Chalcedon Report*, Nov. 1990, p.19). **C**

# Emmanuel Christian High School – Guelph in new building

On January 8 the students of the Emmanuel Christian High School started classes in the newly completed building.

After the old high school building in Geulph was sold in the summer of 1988 the students were temporarily taught in the basement and meeting rooms of the Fergus Church. These facilities were not really meant for 70 lively students, and the results could be noticed, especially after using them for one year and four months.

Finally, the day came to move into the spacious building, which includes a gym, a resource centre, five classrooms, a home economics room and a kitchen.

On February 9, members of the Canadian Reformed School Society of Fergus-Guelph Inc. and guests assembled in the new gym for a brief assembly of thanks and praise. On this occasion the chairman of the board, br. K. Sikke-  
ma, spoke the following words:

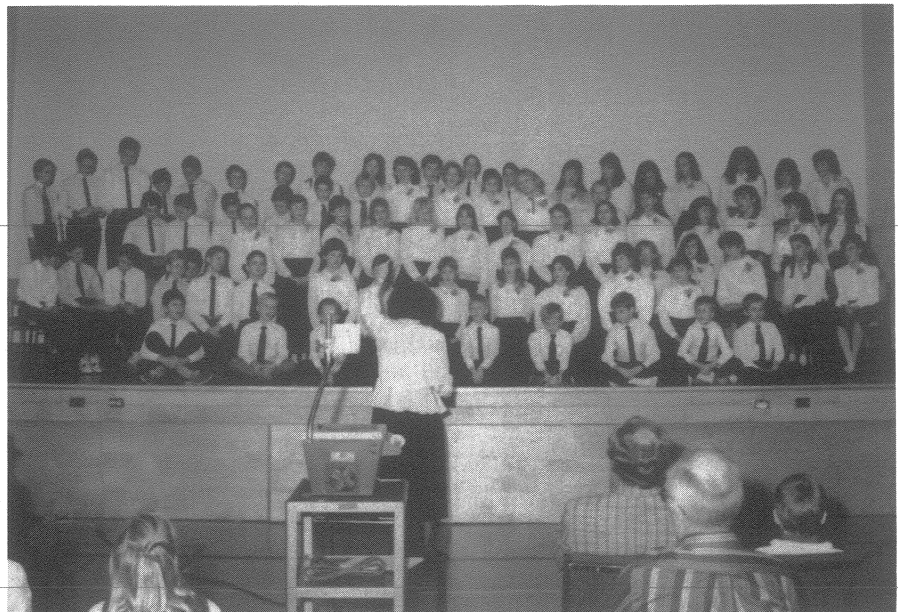
**Very esteemed audience:**

During the course of the years, I have had the privilege to welcome you at many of our school event meetings, but few of these meetings do compare with the one of this evening.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to welcome you here this evening.

This evening we have certainly come to a climax in the history of our school society of Fergus-Guelph and district.

If we look back to the time when we became the proud owners of the little country school building on Nichol Sideroad 2 and 3 some 25 years ago now, (\$3500), or if we look back at the time when we purchased the old King Edward school building in Guelph for approximately \$87,000 we must certainly admit that by seeing this building complex which has a price tag of approximately 1.6 million, that we have come a long way. No one dared to dream about such a building 25 years ago.



*Maranatha Children's Chorus directed by Mrs. B. Bouwman*

The building which you are about to inspect this evening is certainly a *dream fulfilled* for our teaching staff and for our student population as well.

It is also a crown upon the labours of the countless meetings and discussions that were held to prepare for this building project, and it is also a visible evidence of the many financial sacrifices and donations that were made by you as members and donators.



*Spacious, beautiful new gymnasium*

But, above all, esteemed audience, this building stands as a monument of God's grace and faithfulness. It was *from* Him, and *through* Him that we have received the means and the endurance to finish this project.

Every time we come by or every time we are in it, let then this monument of God's grace make us humble and thankful. And, above all, may it be so that whatever is taught and studied in this building may be *to* His glory and in accordance with His Word, that we may always acknowledge it was from Him. And through Him and to Him shall we bring our thanks for as long as this building stands. That is the only way in which we can expect His blessing.

The children's choir and the audience praised the LORD for His faithfulness in prayer and song. May He continue to bless the Reformed education in Fergus and area.

A. GUNNINK



# A dwelling place of God in the Spirit

"A dwelling place of God in the Spirit" was the theme of the first sermon held in the new Ebenezer church building in Burlington (Eph. 2:19-22) by its Pastor-Emeritus Rev. G. VanDooren on Sunday, January 27, 1991.

The members began to arrive already at 8:45 to make sure they would have their seat picked for the 9:30 service!

Let me give you the highlights of Rev. VanDooren's preaching:

"Welcome back to Dynes Road! You may, in entering the beautiful premises,

have exclaimed: 'Look! what wonderful stones and wonderful buildings!' (Mark 13:1). You may have prayed that the LORD would repeat the promise of Haggai 2:9 'The later splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts, and in this place I will give prosperity.'"

"But when we sang: 'Walk around her citadels, count her towers and crenelles' (Psalm 48), we knew that the Scots put it correctly: 'The church goes in.'"

"Not the building of which in the end not one stone will be left upon another (Mark 13:2), but *you* are the Church. When you entered – the Church came in."

"And when you leave, *the Church goes out*, while the building remains behind, empty. The heptagon on top of the steeple may sparkle in all directions as a



Rev. G. VanDooren on the new pulpit



◀ Church auditorium

▼ Exterior



symbol of the Scriptures, but we have to bring the Gospel to mankind, and mankind starts next door."

"Paul says: 'YOU ARE BUILT INTO A DWELLING PLACE OF GOD.' The *chief cornerstone* who governs and directs this building is Christ Jesus himself, no one and nothing else. It is the LORD's doing: I lay in Zion the cornerstone. The *foundation* is the testimony of the apostles and prophets, the complete Word of God. The one and only calling is to open the Scriptures. And the *holy temple* grows. (It is all alive, the cornerstone and the living stones). It grows into a dwelling place of God, in the Spirit.

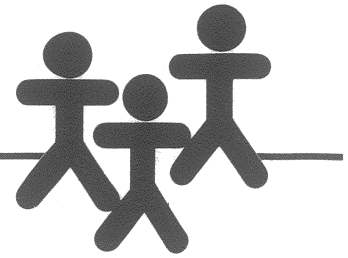
'O LORD of Hosts, O God of grace,  
How lovely is Thy holy place.  
How good and pleasant is Thy dwelling.'

Psalm 84

"The first words spoken in this building were not new:  
'Our help is in the Name of the Lord' and  
'I am the LORD your God....'"

Needless to say, the congregation of Burlington-East had a wonderful beginning in the new church building, which was packed. Praised be the Name of the LORD.

ARIE J. HORDYK



## About watching T.V.

*The following article written by Mr. J. Roukema, principal, Credo Christian Elementary School, Langley, B.C. is taken up in this column in order to highlight the ongoing concern among educators about the potentially negative impact of television watching on the youth. Taken from the Credo Bulletin – Branches, September 30 and November 25, 1990. (a.w.)*

### Silent Intruder

"O God, we are aware of the power of the media in our lives, offering us images and visions that repel us and attract us, frighten us and comfort us, inform us and confuse us.... Help us, O God, to use the media in a responsible way and to call it to account when it encourages violence and exploitation."

— a new United Church prayer  
(*Vancouver Sun*, Sat., July 14, 1990, p. All)

"Television is becoming the primary expression of the mores and the meanings of our society – the real religion – for most of us." (*Television and Religion: The Shaping of Faith, Values and Culture*, William Force.)

The main values promoted by the media include:

- 1) happiness is limitless material acquisition
- 2) the fittest survive
- 3) it's a mean and dangerous world
- 4) progress is only in the "new and improved"
- 5) hero worship.

Several years ago I conducted a survey on T.V. watching and to my horror learned that, on the average, children were watching T.V. 4-5 hours a day. At that time we did not survey how many books were read but I suspect that there is some relation there.

It is not my intention to pontificate what programs children should or should not watch but allow me to ponder over and share with you some concerns.

Many North Americans would agree with us that the major networks broadcast too much trash: violence, sex, obscenity, profanity. Many North Americans are lobbying for better, more wholesome programs. As Christians we could readily agree but we must be very careful here.

The Walt Disney program is a good example. This is "clean" entertainment, very informative, highly interesting. There is no obvious violence, sexism, or profanity. Yet here is where the T.V. can subtly become an invader, an intruder into our way of life. Subconsciously this type of program conveys to us a set of rules, a value system and ultimately a religion (way of life).

In his lifetime, Walt Disney tried to build a "heaven on earth." His motto was: "Children are our richest material resources." This idea was not new. Years before, the French philosopher, Jean Jaques Rousseau, claimed the same thing (1700s) and he was one of the forerunners of the French Revolution. Inherent in this motto is the idea that a young child is by nature good. Deep down inside it is good, it is innocent. It is a corrupted society that eventually makes the child bad. Therefore Disney's plan of action was to educate the young child about himself, about animals, about nature: how to live in harmony with its neighbours, with the environment. If the child can be taught to be "good" and "lead the good life," then society will become better too.

However, Scripture teaches us that man was conceived and born in sin and that deep down inside (his heart), he is corrupt, inclined to do evil. No, we may not use "Society" as a scapegoat for our evil. Adam did that too when he used Eve as the scapegoat, cause, for his sin. God did not accept his excuse.

Disney's idea seems to be also behind the so-called good programs. They are not violent. They even teach neighbourly love ("Love your neighbour" is the *second* part of the great commandment; the *first* part is to "love the Lord

your God." Only when we love the Lord our God can we truly love our neighbour.) Yet what motive is behind these programs? Into what frame of thinking do they force us? What way of life do they teach us? These so-called "good" programs do not recognize God as Sovereign, nor the fact that one is *by nature* evil. These programs too profess the belief that man of himself is good, and can better himself. They profess the belief that man is autonomous, is free. If there is the "right" education, and enough of it, man will succeed in building a "heaven on earth." If only everyone can be taught and believe that "good" will win over the "bad." If only everyone can be taught to put these minor "religious" differences aside and join in the major task of bringing about the brotherhood of man!

No matter how high the volume of your T.V. set, these motives are hidden and silent. Quietly they invade our homes, intrude and infringe upon our family way of life. Even today's situation comedies (sit-coms) convey mannerisms/habits to which (especially) our young children have adapted. The on-liner upmanships are at the expense of the victim and all too often one's feelings are hurt.

The timing of the programs is also a concern. Children's programs are timed for the immediately-after-school hours time frame and after the supper hour. After these "family type" programs are over, it is bedtime for most children. So when is there time to talk (communicate) with mom or dad, brother or sister? What effect is such a schedule having on the family bond?

We as parents must show a responsible use of time for ourselves as well as for our children. It is our task to care for and develop this creation *responsibility*. Do we really have the time to "wastefully" watch the tube? Does T.V. become a cop-out that replaces our responsibilities? Do we really have all that time for T.V.? Do we really *know* the time? Is it not also our duty to teach this responsi-

bility to our children? Are we being fair to them by allowing them a lot of T.V. time? Does it not shrink their creativity and originality?

Does that mean we should throw our T.V. sets out? I am not in a position to pontificate such drastic action. However, I do think it imperative that parents *know what* their children are watching and that they actively engage their children in leading them to a positive response about these programs. For T.V. watching too involves nurturing the child. Then timing/time, too, is vital, because children are to be led to responsibly respond in all areas of life so that they may be equipped in later life.

What, then, shall we do with T.V.? For one thing, we must set priorities and make choices.

1. Certain activities/events are much more important and we cannot negate these because our favourite program happens to be on.
2. There are certain programs which are informative and noteworthy for expanding our knowledge about certain things. Still a word of caution though. Informative programs (such as the News) have a "slant." We must know the "time," the spirits of the age.
3. Aside from the fact that our (older) children have homework, it is so much more rewarding to teach your children to enjoy reading, listening to music, etc. Read stories to your younger children, help them with homework, etc.
4. When you allow certain programs to be watched, be consistent: certain days, certain programs. Your children will know the rules and not continually nag about watching other programs. Explain to them why you won't let them watch certain programs/certain days.
5. Let your children tell you what they have watched and discuss with them. Such sessions make for good communication. It's a two way street to understanding. As well, it can teach them the process of discerning. After all, that's what we're called upon to do in this life: to discern the spirits of this age and respond responsibly to God's call, also when watching T.V.

*From the November (1990) issue of "Focus on the Family" (James Dobson) the following is included:*

"Welcome to the world of network television – a place where writers, producers, executives and performers frequently serve social causes ranging

from the environment and homelessness to world peace and harmony. But when it comes to reinforcing traditional values and standards of morality and decency, T.V.'s judgment is clouded by a hostility to anything that smacks of Judeo-Christian mores.

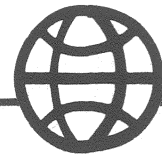
All too often, today's traditional nuclear family is portrayed in the crudest terms imaginable: Dad, usually a weak character, belches at the dinner table; Mom, formerly a nurturing presence in the home, reigns as a put-down queen; and the children act bratty and disrespectful – and are proud of it.

With the success of such T.V. shows as 'Married...With Children,' 'Roseanne' and 'The Simpsons,' family life is being satirized, skewered, ridiculed, mocked and held up for contempt – all for the sake of a few laughs....

If the 1990 fall season is any indication of the direction T.V. is headed, we may be approaching a bold new age of explicit sex, violence, horror and bad taste."

## INTERNATIONAL

By W.W.J. VanOene



### PRESS ATTACKS ON CHINESE CHRISTIANS INCREASE

"Christianity is rapidly becoming the sole movement with broad social support able to wage organized resistance to the Communist Party," according to *Zhengming*, a Hong Kong magazine of political commentary. This fact may be the reason for the steady increase in regulation of Christianity in China.

The press in China has increased its attacks. The *Worker's Daily* (Sep. 30) expressed alarm at the number of students becoming Christian. It called on the government to take action. The article further suggested that this religion was harmful to the students. Evening prayer, vigils and hymn singing harmed the students' concentration and caused dropping grades. Other attacks were found in China's *Legal Daily*. (REC NE)

### ETHIOPIAN CHURCHES EXPERIENCE WAR'S DESTRUCTION

Some 83 churches have been burned to the ground and 30 Ethiopian clergy have lost their lives in the last

### What to do when T.V.'s turned off?

How much T.V. is too much? (Secular) experts say children should watch no more than an hour a day during the week or two hours on weekends. Some families have stricter limits – no T.V. at all during the week.

If you decide to set limits on television time, expect to hear a lot of complaints. Kids who have depended on the T.V. for all their entertainment may not know how to spend time when the set is turned off. Here are 10 ideas you can offer. Kids can:

1. Read
2. Join a team
3. Play a game
4. Call a friend
5. Learn to sew; repair a bike
6. Go for a walk
7. Write a letter
8. Go for a bike ride
9. Play musical instrument
10. And, of course, do their homework.



year. Many of the valuable relics of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have been stolen, according to EOC spokespersons. Three of their orphanages have been forced to relocate, causing thousands of children to suffer. The EOC denounced as the cause of their suffering the Tigray People's Liberation Front, a hard-line Marxist group in rebellion since 1977. The EOC has recently returned to favour with the government after 15 years of isolation. Last year Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam renounced his leftist doctrine. (NIRR) (REC NE)

### KING RELEASES RELIGIOUS PRISONERS

King Birenda of Nepal has announced the release of those imprisoned and the dismissal of cases awaiting trial for 'religious activities.' Of the 29 Nepalese Christians who had been jailed for proselytising, 14 were under 18 years of age. (CBS-QN)

VO



# News from the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies

By M. Spithoff

The second meeting of this school year was held on November 23, 1990 at the Canadian Reformed Teacher's College in Hamilton.

## Salary Committee Report

An important aspect of the league is to prepare annually a salary report by which the individual schools can be better informed at arriving at salaries for their teachers. A salary committee, prior to tabling a report at the meeting, studies and deals with various material such as consumer price index, remuneration packages prepared in other jurisdictions, inflation rate, credentials chart, the grid and feedback from boards. It then proceeds to prepare a report with recommendations on health and life insurance, salary grid, pension plan, sick leave, principal and vice-principal allowances, part-time and substitute teachers, continuing education, school society memberships and miscellaneous recommendations.

Presently there is a credentials committee studying the present categories in the salary grid. They will in due time, report to the salary committee.

Since salaries form 75% of the average annual school budget, this report provides helpful information for the school boards.

## Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presents a statement of the previous years' costs and a proposed budget for the league for 1990-91. School boards are informed of the cost per pupil for league expenses and encouraged to pay promptly.

## C.A.R.E. Curriculum Assistance for Reformed Education

The traditional curriculum writing for schools has changed and in the future curriculum assistance will be in the form of the writing and implementing of General Resource documents for various subject areas. The documents are relevant teaching and learning theories and

practices. C.A.R.E. will assist teachers in the implement of these into the curriculum as they are being developed and prepared by the teacher for classroom use.

C.A.R.E. plans to present two workshops at the teacher's convention in February 1991. It also hopes that any 'teaching and learning' concerns that are under discussion at various education committees and boards will be raised by the league delegates and thus brought to the attention of the C.A.R.E. committee.

## Committee for Government Contact

The Forum of Independent School Associations (Ontario) continues to meet. By the end of November, 1990, the Ministry of Education will have informed them of a date for their first meeting. In the meantime, F.I.S.A. has established and will develop for presentation at that first meeting, a list of association priorities.

## Principal Association Report

The national conference held in November was a very pleasant and positive learning and sharing experience. A lot of material was covered and a booklet, containing the main topics, will be printed and distributed to the local school boards.

In the one session covered at the conference, 'Government Relations with Private Schools in Different Provinces,' it became apparent that the Ontario government is the least co-operative. Compared to the governments of the western provinces, our government does not see us as equals in education, but believes that it is their job to educate all the children. Independent schools are merely tolerated. Also, and especially in the high schools, more restrictions are placed on private schools. Third, in various degrees, all western provinces have some funding. It is through B.C.'s experience and advice, that private schools, in a slow and methodical manner work at building a positive rapport with the government.

## League Day

Every year the league of Canadian Reformed Schools hold a Saturday conference for board members and interested persons. There are speakers and discussions to keep us better informed of matters pertaining to the educating of our children and maintaining of our schools. For 1991, February 16th will be the date for the conference.

## CHURCH NEWS



### CALLED TO:

Lynden, WA and Burlington South  
**Rev. R.A. Schouten**  
of Calgary, AB

### CALLED BY:

Surrey for Mission work in Brazil  
**Rev. R.A. Schouten**  
of Calgary, AB

### DECLINED TO:

Lynden, WA  
**Rev. R.A. Schouten**  
of Calgary, AB

### WORSHIP SERVICES:

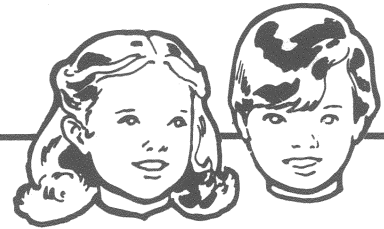
**Canadian Reformed Church  
House Congregation at  
Chatsworth, Ontario**  
(relocated from Thornbury)

Worship services held at the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church of Chatsworth.

Services: 9:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

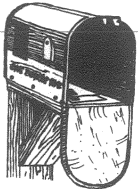
By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers,

Thank you for all your letters, puzzles, mazes, pictures, etc. etc. It was great to hear from you all! Keep up the good work!

Some of you wrote you had a new pen pal. I was happy to hear that, too! Now the trick is to keep *answering* those letters, Busy Beavers. That way it's *fun* to have a pen pal!



## FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Heather Leyenhorst*. You were lucky to have such a large rink on your own field! How long did it last? Thank you for the puzzle and the jokes and riddles, Heather. I know the Busy Beavers will enjoy them.

Welcome to the Club, *Sherri Malda*. We are happy to have you join us. I see you like to collect things and do puzzles. Thank you for the poem, Sherri. And will you write and tell us what happens when that fox family comes to live so close to your family?

And a big welcome to you, too, *Tracy Lynn Malda*. Thank you for your poem and picture. I think you had one grand Christmas holiday, Tracy Lynn! I'm looking forward to that letter you promised.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Sophie Witten*. Sounds to me as if you had a wonderful birthday party, Sophie! And you're lucky to have such an interesting park close to home!

And a big welcome to you, too, *Crystal Dejong*. Are you busy helping out with all those animals on your farm? Tell me when you get your pen pal, all right, Crystal?

Welcome to the club, *Anna Hordyk*. Have your gerbils had babies again? Why don't you look at last year's *Clarion* dated Nov. 23 for a list of people who would like a pen pal? Don't be shy, Anna. Maybe you can write more than one person!

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Miranda Krabbendam*. Thank you for your letter and pictures. I'm glad you had so much winter fun. And I hope you'll soon have a trusty pen pal. I think you will!

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Janesel*! I see you are a real Busy Beaver already, sending us jokes and a picture. Keep up the good work! And let's hear from you again soon.

Thank you for your letter and puzzle, *Esther Leyenhorst*. As you can see I had lots of letters to answer! I'm very proud of all the good work I see from my nieces and nephews! Did you get a "printing" set from Santa Claus, Esther?

Hello, *Carrie Lynn Schuurman*. Thank you for a very neat letter and a puzzle, too! Have you been skating again, Carrie? I like it, too!

Thank you for the puzzles, *Margaret Nyenhuis*. I see you are an excellent puzzler! Keep up the good work! Are you looking forward to spring, Margaret?

I'm glad you like reading, *Ruby Knol*. It's a great way to meet wonderful people, right? Too bad your calf died, Ruby. But maybe a new one has been born since then? Bye for now.

Yes we will have a drawing contest again sometime, *Jessica Dehaas*. Your sticker collection sounds great! Have you got any new ones lately? I hope you get some good advice on your stamp collecting, Jessica. Write again soon.

Hello, *May Hofsink*. I was glad to hear from you again. I can see that your sister getting engaged was a happy part of your Christmas, May. How did the play at school go? Were you in it?

I see you're a real Busy Beaver, keeping us all busy, *Florence Nijenhuis*! Have you had lots of winter fun? And are you looking forward to spring now, Florence?

I'm very happy to hear you have a pen pal, *Cecilia Barendregt*! And thank you for the puzzle. Do you collect stamps too, Cecilia?

Did you have a good visit in Carman, *Lydia Viersen*? I really enjoyed your poem. We'll have to save it for Christmas this year, Lydia. Have you thought of writing a spring poem yet?

Hello, *Albert Deboer*. I see you are a good puzzler. Keep up the good work! I'm looking forward to hearing from you again.

Too bad I got your Valentine cookie recipe too late, *Melanie Deboer*. But it will keep till next year, of course. Thank you for your letter and the recipe, too, Melanie.

Sounds to me as if you had a very good time at your grandma's house at Christmas, *Michelle Hordyk*! Tell you a secret, Michelle. The answer you are looking for is in *Clarion* #24, dated Nov. 23, 1990. All right?

Busy Beavers, we need some more pen pals for these Busy Beavers. Remember our rule:

Don't be shy! You write the first letter!



Crystal Dejong  
Box 22  
Vega, Alberta  
T0G 2H0

Anna Hordyk (age 10)  
4121 Aberdeen Road  
Beamsville, Ontario  
L0R 1B6

Miranda Krabbendam (age 10)  
9605 Paula Crescent  
Chilliwack, B.C.  
V2P 6H1

To all our Busy Beavers celebrating a March birthday we wish a very happy day and also many happy returns!  
 May the Lord bless and keep you all in the year ahead.  
 Here's hoping you have a super day celebrating with your family and friends!

## March

Brian Dykstra	2	Jodi Bouwman	22
Corinne Versteeg	3	Jeffrey Vandergaag	22
Rosaleen Jager	6	Amanda Bartels	23
Earl Van Assen	8	Helena Beijes	24
Sherri Malda	12	Suzanne Schouten	26
Monica Dalhuisen	14	Elisa Vandergaag	27
Linda Schouten	20	Erika Hopman	30
Rebecca Stel	21	Annette Jonker	31

Let's surprise Busy Beaver, *Corinne Versteeg* with a birthday card!

She lives far away from Canada on the mission field in Irian Jaya. She *also* lives away from *home*!

Send your card to

*Corinne Versteeg*  
 c/o The Reformed International School  
 Box 239 Sentani  
 Irian Jaya, Indonesia



### Chuckles

From Busy Beaver *Heather Leyenhorst*

**First Man:** Is it dark?  
**Second Man:** I don't know; give me a flashlight so I can see!  
**Question:** Why did Cinderella's football team always lose?  
**Answer:** Her coach was a pumpkin!

### CALLING ALL STAMP COLLECTORS!



One Busy Beaver wrote:

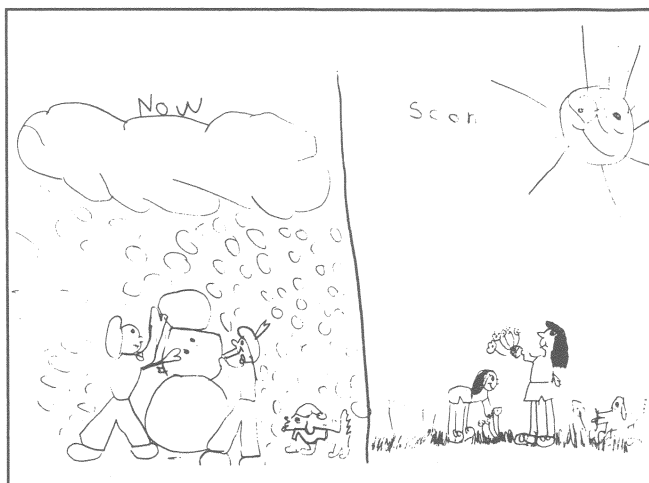
"I kind of have a stamp collection, and I don't know what to do with them. Can you please give me advice what to do with them?"

What do *you* do with your stamps?  
 How do you keep them organized and ready to show off?  
 Let's help this Busy Beaver organize her collection!  
 Please write and tell us your stamp collecting ideas.

The address is: The Busy Beaver Club  
 c/o Aunt Betty  
 Premier Printing Ltd.  
 One Beghin Avenue  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 3X5

### "IT SOON WILL BE SPRING!"

By Busy Beaver *Jessica Peters*



## Quiz Time!

### FAVOURITE GAMES WORDSEARCH

By Busy Beaver *Nicole Roodzant*

Is your favourite game in the list?

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

Look for:

- |            |                   |                |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Monopoly   | Water Works       | Bargain Hunter |
| Poleconomy | Truth and Triumph | Checkers       |
| Scrabble   | Voyageur          | Trivia         |
| High Hand  | Yahtzee           | Battleships    |
| Sorry      | Boggle            | Stockticker    |
| Chess      | Dominoes          | Pizza Party    |