



**Clarion**  
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# Prayer in war time

By J. De Jong

Preaching in different churches, I heard that several of our members connected with the Canadian Armed Forces have been, or are about to be sent to the Persian Gulf war. When a country is at war, the church is directly affected. Hence it is incumbent on us all to pray for our Armed Forces, and in particular for those who are members of our churches. Indeed, we do well to pray for the multi-national coalition, that through them the Lord may restore his order of peace and stability in the world for the sake of the gospel.

In the time of the Reformation the defenders of religious freedom were conscious of the fact that they were called to fight the battles of the Lord for His church. Instances of this are too numerous to mention, but I came upon one example while examining the plight of the Huguenots in France. The Huguenots waged a continual battle for religious freedom in France, and for years they suffered innumerable persecutions and hardships. Yet, especially in the early years of the Protestant movement, they saw their cause as ordained by God.

In the prayer below, used by the defenders of the Huguenot stronghold La Rochelle, on the west coast of France, one notes the piety of the Huguenot soldiers. For fifteen long months this stronghold lay under siege, a prey to Richelieu's goal of catholicizing all of France. By the time the dragoons entered the city in 1628, many had died of starvation and disease. Henry IV, of Navarre, a kinsman and long time resident of the town of La Rochelle, could hardly have imagined a more damaging effect arising from his abjuration of Protestantism for the sake of France's stability in 1593. Little did he know that he traded Paris for La Rochelle.

Times have changed, but the underlying principle of the present war is the same: our soldiers stand in the defense of religious freedom and for the cause of justice and peace among men and nations. Peace can only be maintained if injustice and aggression is curtailed. Hence also this prayer can be the prayer of and for our soldiers.

This prayer was set to verse by George L. Catlin, translator of Louis Delmas' account of the siege of La Rochelle, in 1879.

## Prayer of Soldiers led to Battle, 1568

O God of armies! since it now doth please  
Thy will to lead us 'gainst Thine enemies,  
And ours, vouchsafe Thy might

To take away their courage and their strength  
In battle, and before us, Lord, at length  
To put them all to flight.

Or, should it please Thee in that trying hour  
To make them, through us, know Thy fury's power,  
Be pleased, O Lord, to aid  
Us by Thy mighty valor. It is true,  
We, of ourselves alone, can nothing do;  
But being by Thee stayed,

And led to combat, we shall bravely smite  
And rout them; and for that, Thou shalt, of  
right,  
Fore'er be praised. Imbue  
Us, God and Father, with such courage,  
then,  
In heart and hand, that all of us like men  
To Thee our duty do.

And if to call us hence it please Thee,  
Lord,  
Vouchsafe according to Thy Holy Word  
To gather us at last  
Into the Life Eternal; and although  
Our sins might justly cause us to forego  
This favor, hold us fast.

Be pleased those sins to pardon in the  
name  
Of Jesus Christ, Thy blessed Son, who  
came  
To pardon and to save:  
In whom we pray for this, and all things  
fraught  
With increase for Thy kingdom, as He  
taught  
Us in the prayer He gave.

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
and the power,  
and the glory, for ever. Amen.

From: L. Delmas, *The Huguenots of La Rochelle*  
(e.t. New York, 1880), pp. 271-2



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# L'Eglise Réformée du Québec

By G.Ph. van Popta

November 6, 1988, marks an important moment in the history of Canada, and particularly of Quebec. On this date, a group of churches known as l'Eglise Réformée du Québec (ERQ) was officially established. This was an historic moment since, although the Reformed presence in Quebec goes back to 1534, this date marks the beginning of the first organized French Reformed church in Canada.

A little known aspect of the history of Quebec is the importance of the Huguenot (French Reformed) presence. When the colony of *Nouvelle France* was established in 1534, many of the founding fathers and mothers were members of the Reformed Church in France. The first governor, Jean-François de la Rocque, sieur de Roberval, was a Reformed man. So were seven of the ten succeeding governors in the 16th and 17th centuries. The official Roman Catholic history has "forgotten" this.

The Edict of Nantes (1589), the decree signed by Henry IV of France tolerating the Reformed faith, enabled the establishment of several Huguenot bases in New France and allowed Reformed pastors to serve fishermen and sailors. However, missionary work was restricted to Roman Catholics. No Reformed churches were instituted.

The toleration came to an end under the influence of the ruthless Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642). In 1624 he was made head of the royal council. For the next eighteen years he virtually ruled France. Not only did he destroy the political and military power of the Huguenots in France, he also sought to stamp out the Reformed faith in New France. He declared the Huguenots to be enemies of the crown of France. After 1627, Huguenots had to renounce the Reformed faith in order to be allowed to enter New France. It even became illegal for the psalm-singing British fishermen of Newfoundland to sing the psalms of David in the port of Quebec. After 1665, Huguenots were required to attend mass. Only the Roman Catholic priest could solemnize marriages. Per-

secution of the Reformed intensified. In 1685 Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes. The effects of this were felt on this side of the Atlantic as well. Although the situation for the Huguenots improved somewhat when Louis XIV died, it remained far from ideal. When New France fell to Britain in 1760, the few Huguenots remaining after many years of persecution and suppression were given full freedom of religion by the new regime.

Thus we see that for two centuries, from 1534-1760, the fortunes of the Huguenots in New France had waxed and waned. However, the systematic opposition of the Reformed faith by the Roman Catholic Church prevailed. When the colony was ceded to Britain under the Peace of 1763, only a few Reformed believers were left.

In 1835, the Missionary Society of Switzerland began to work in Quebec in the French language. Soon the Franco-Canadian Missionary Society was established which supported Protestant missionaries in Quebec. The Presbyterian Church of Canada (PCC) sent missionaries as well. This work proceeded well until the beginning of the 20th century. Nine French PCC parishes (congregations) had been organized. But then began a period of decline.

In 1925, several of the parishes were assimilated by the merger which formed the United Church of Canada. As well, French Protestants tended to be absorbed by the English culture since, in the thinking of most Québécois, to be French is to be Roman Catholic whereas to be Protestant is to be English (an obvious confusion of religion and culture). By 1975 only three small parishes remained.

However, 1975 marks the beginning of a resurgence of Reformed missionary activity in Quebec. David Craig, a PCC pastor, began to work in Montreal. As well, the Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRC) and the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) saw Quebec as a vast mission field right next door. These three churches agreed that it would be good to work towards an indigenous French church in Quebec. In

1978 the Evangelical Reformed Alliance was formed in order to promote the work. Three goals were stated: to establish a faculty of theology (Institut Farel) in order to train French-speaking pastors and evangelists; to publish a paper of theological reflection, *Parole*; to publish and republish French Reformed material such as Calvin's *Institutes*.

The efforts bore fruit. In 1988 the possibility was seen to organize as a "denomination." However, the PCC, having worked among the French people of Quebec for about a century, was not ready to accept that. They were not prepared to endorse the concept of an indigenous French church in Quebec, and thus withdrew their support. J.H. Kouwenberg, writing about the decision of the 114th General Assembly of the PCC (Toronto, June, 1988) which cut official ties to the ERQ, says:

...the real concern of the Presbyterian Church was the evangelical nature of this new church and, in particular, one suspects, their position on the leadership of women. At present, the Reformed Church of Quebec has no plans to ordain women to the eldership and/or ministry (*Channels*, Summer/Fall 1988, p. 19 - a PCC magazine).

Since the theology of the PCC differed radically from that of the Reformed pastors and evangelists working in Quebec, a parting of the ways was inevitable. Two Presbyterian parishes left the PCC with their pastors and joined the ERQ. The other parishes transferred their membership from the CRC and the PCA. At present, the CRC and the PCA both support the ERQ financially.

On Nov. 6, 1988, the ERQ was established. As doctrinal standards they have adopted the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Confession. This reflects the fact that the ERQ is a product of the convergence of several streams of missionary activity.

At present the ERQ has eight congregations with a combined membership of 420 souls. Most of the members are converts from Roman Catholicism. The



churches are found in Montreal, Repentigny, St.-Georges de Beauce, St.-Lambert, St.-Romuald, Ste.-Foy, and Trois-Rivieres. One is in Vanier, near Ottawa. Pastors and evangelists are trained at Institut Farel, in Charny. They strive to be consistently Reformed bowing before the authority of the Scriptures.

The consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church in Ottawa has recently taken up contact with the ERQ. In November I was given the privilege of introducing our churches to their pastors

and elders at a meeting of le conseil régional de l'ERQ.

The ERQ is small, but growing. They face the difficulty of proclaiming the gospel in the midst of a secularized society which has largely rejected the Roman Catholic traditions, which considers the "miserable Protestant" faith to be an English religion, and is thus looking for comfort among the multitude of eastern cults. The people among whom they work do not respond easily to the good news of free grace in the Lord Jesus

Christ. And yet they are convinced that God has "an elect people in the city," and so they preach and trust that God will give the growth.

*Sources:*

- Discussion with pasteur Yannick Baudequin of Vanier, ON.
- Wilson, Douglas, J. *The Church Grows in Canada*. Committee on Missionary Education, CCC, 1966.



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# The emergence of the victims of sexual abuse<sup>1</sup>

By R. Gleason

There is an epidemic that is sweeping the world that is one of the most destructive we have ever known. It is a pandemic that has brought us into contact with words such as "victim" and "survivor."

These words have been in our vocabulary for many years, but in the late 1980s and currently they have taken on new connotations. Today they are applied to people who have been abused. There are three main categories of abuse which have brought these words into the foreground: emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

It is my intent to concentrate upon sexual abuse. As I begin writing this article I have no idea how long it will take me to adequately deal with the topic. In a very real sense, one cannot deal adequately with it since it is so terribly complex. Yet, I am convinced that the church must address this issue. She must face it squarely and search the Scriptures to see what the Word of God has to say about it.

I will, by no means, be able to exhaust this topic, but I do hope and pray that these articles will serve as a catalyst to further discussion about and reflection upon sexual abuse. More than that, it is my prayer that those who read these articles and who are victims/survivors will be granted the courage to come forward and tell their story and that

there may be healing through the power of God's Word and the support of local churches.

As a general outline I shall follow the following course in my writing: A general introduction will be followed by an investigation of a few of the most pertinent Biblical texts such as Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:20-25; Leviticus 18:6-30; Leviticus 20:11-21; 2 Samuel 13:1-22; Proverbs 11:29; Proverbs 28:13; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16).

A third section of material will deal with such topics as the place and the role of parents in nourishing, instructing, correcting/disciplining and protecting their children. We shall examine what happens to abused children when the authority structure around them breaks down. We shall listen to some case histories of victims who have a little voice in their head that says, "What happened to you is all your fault!" We shall discuss "flashbacks" and the need for the abused to talk; to confide. We shall investigate the need for support groups, prayer support, understanding and love for the abused.

One issue that should not escape our attention is the role the civil authorities will have to play when abuse takes place with minors. Finally, we shall look at the role of the church with the abuser

and the abused and the role of counseling.

In all of this I will warn the reader that I am but a simple pastor feeling my way in what seems a dark labyrinth of sinful occurrences. Please bear with me. In spite of my many shortcomings I am becoming increasingly convinced that there are many who are hurting and in need because they were or are being sexually abused. It is primarily to them that I am writing in this article.

Even as I sit at my computer writing this, my heart is hurting with them and for them. I most certainly do not have all the answers to victims but I do know that God has provided us with His Word and Spirit that we might be spiritually healed. There is nothing in this world that can separate us from the love of God. In spite of the ugliness and radicality of sin we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus our Lord. We can do all things through Him who strengthens us.

## It doesn't happen in our circles

One of the biggest lies Satan would love to have us believe is that all that I have been describing above does not and would not occur in Canadian Reformed circles. It has. It is. It will continue unless we are prepared to face the problem squarely and Biblically and deal with the issue in a compassionately Biblical manner.



The Dutch theologian, Herman Bavinck, wrote in the preface of the first edition of his Reformed Dogmatics (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*) that his work would bear the stamp of his time (p. iv). That is my wish for these articles. I want them to bear the stamp of the time in which we live. That time is one in which Christians are abused and have to live in fear and pain because of the fact that the abusers have violated them.

To suggest that sexual abuse has not and does not take place in Canadian Reformed families is to simply bury one's head in the sand and refuse to face reality. Obviously, it is not a very pleasant reality to have to face, but the consequences of not facing it are horrendous.

The victims are left to live in their secret world of shame and disgrace all the while maintaining a good outward appearance. The abusers are left to go on abusing perhaps even more people all the while never having to deal with their sinful actions.

So let us begin by admitting that sexual abuse is something that occurs in Canadian Reformed families. Honesty will get us much farther than a denial of the existence of this problem.

### Social levels affected

In the past when I thought of an abuser I conjured up a lecherous, dirty old man in my mind. He (or she) was the type of person from the very low-class strata of society who was always lurking in dark alleys waiting on someone to pass by.

They were always disheveled, unshaven and wore shabby clothing. Such are the imaginations of children. I must admit as I grew older I abandoned those initial thoughts, but somehow the image stayed with me, albeit altered.

I am learning that my childhood images were naive and misleading. No doubt, there are lecherous abusers who fit the mould of what I just described. The danger is limiting our understanding of the abuser to such obvious externals.

The current data point us to some startling facts. In the first place, abusers come from all walks of life. They are professionals and "blue collar" workers. They are both very educated and unlettered. They appear to be normal, clean-cut citizens. They are, at times, the pillars of the community and of the church. They are pastors, elders, deacons and the "man in the pew." They are soft spoken and quite often the ones we might consider the least likely candidate for an abuser.

Someone has said that statistics can be very misleading. I must admit of being very tired of all the current "Gallop" polls

that tell us what we like and do not like. Who is popular politically, who is hot and who is not. Nonetheless, I am going to venture a few statistics. You may take them with however many grains of salt you wish.

While traveling to a holiday recently my wife, Sally, and I listened to a victim named Mrs. Audrey McDonald on a cassette tape. She is a registered nurse who has done rather extensive speaking and research on the issue of abuse. Here are some of her findings. Of the current reported abuse cases approximately 80% of them come from homes that are, in some sense, Christian.

Ironically enough, a very high percentage of the incidence of abuse in both Jewish and Christian circles (again  $\pm 80\%$ ) come from the very orthodox circles. That is, Orthodox Jews and very "right-wing" Christian groups experience a higher degree of sexual abuse than other groups.

In addition, of the cases of sexual abuse reported, almost 75% of the abusers are men. In one study more than half of the women surveyed said there had been some unwanted violation of their sexual space, either inside or outside the family, by the time they were eighteen. More than one out of three (38%) had been molested. The remainder described incidents such as confrontations by an exhibitionist, nongenital intimate touching from adults, or unwanted sexual advances.

Here is the statistic than stunned me. Only two percent of the cases of abuse occurring within the family and only six percent of those occurring outside of the family were ever reported! Reporting agencies and organizations that research sexual, physical, and emotional abuse measure the number of new victims each year in the hundreds of thousands and the accumulated number of victims in the tens of millions.

Anyone who has a heart that is being moulded and shaped by the Spirit of Christ our Lord and Saviour cannot help but feel concern for this situation. If there were only one victim in our federation it would be too many. Unfortunately, I know there are more.

I will never reveal who they are to anyone. But I know they are there. I love them and I hurt with them and deeply empathize with them. I also know that God can and will help them. There are Biblical steps to recovery and healing for every victim of sexual abuse. There are caring and loving Christians in our churches who will believe and support victims of abuse.

A victim need not be alone. In the Canadian Reformed Churches God has given us to one another in Christ. Best of all, God has given Himself to all who hurt and carry the marks of sin deep within us.

In the next segment we shall turn our attention to the Biblical texts which deal with incestuous relationships.



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# REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By G.Ph. van Popta

## “The dominion mandate – the source of environmental crisis”: fact or myth?

Do you come from a family of more than two children? did you know that much of contemporary thought lays the blame for environmental crises at the doorstep of large families?

Many environmentalists moan about the threat of overpopulation. They say that humanity is overburdening the environment. The environment cannot sustain any more people. Its resources are limited. Humanity must quit breeding like rabbits, or face a sure and certain catastrophe.

So say many environmentalists.

They unabashedly declare the source of the problem to be the dominion mandate proclaimed by the LORD God in Genesis 1:27, 28 which says:

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

Christians, say many environmentalists, in their quest to fulfill this mandate to beget children and exercise dominion over the world, have caused ecologic chaos. Ultimately, they blame the Word of God for the mess we're in.

If anyone blames God's Word, and therefore God Himself, I'm going to be skeptical.

What are many of the environmentalists saying? They say that the world has cancer, and that cancer is man. They talk about the population bomb, a population explosion, population pollution, a population plague.

Imagine – man the image of God is described as cancer, pollution, and a plague!

We are told that the orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature is the main source of the problem. Christianity is said to bear a huge burden of guilt for environmental deterioration. Western disregard for the environment can, supposedly, be traced back to the Biblical notion of man's dominion. Apparently the Chris-

tian tradition pits man against nature. Man and nature are at enmity with one another. This enmity makes man have contempt for the world.

And so we hear advocates of Zero Population Growth (ZPG) suggest that we must alter our behaviour in order to avert major catastrophe. We must start acting intelligently and quit breeding mindlessly. Today's institutions – the United Nations, public schools, public health facilities, Planned Parenthood, etc. – must work to mold new attitudes. We must bring about a shift in values. Rather than valuing children as blessings from God, we must value the environment. They tell us that the only way to save the environment is to strive for ZPG.

This reshaping of attitudes and molding of new values is taking place. The prime indicator is the practice of abortion. Clearly society in general does not value children. An unwanted child is considered garbage.

What are we going to say about this accusation that God's command to man to be fruitful, to multiply and to have dominion over the earth is the cause of ecologic disaster? Is that a fact? Or is it a myth?

It's a myth. The accusation that the only polluting cultures are those which take the dominion mandate seriously is simply false. Just one example: Recently we have heard about the Aral Sea in the USSR. Once this large inland sea was a very rich source of fish. However, for years the rivers feeding into it have been diverted in order to irrigate land. Today the Aral Sea is a fraction of its former size. Most of it is now desert. Skeletons of fishing boats are lying in sand 50 km. from the water. Why did this happen? I suppose that some central bureaucrat in Moscow was taking Genesis 1:28 seriously. Yeah, right!

There is clear evidence that ancient Chinese, Greek and Western civilizations were guilty of deforestation, soil erosion and over-grazing. Cultures which have been traditionally Christian are not the only guilty ones.

But the most important point to note is that God, in Genesis 1:27,28, did not

give man unlimited dominion over the earth. No Christian claims it either. God appointed man to be a trustee, a manager, a steward over the earth – one who is accountable for what he does. Christians realize that the earth is the LORD's and that the fulness thereof belongs to Him (Ps. 24). God gave each family of Israel some land, but they had to treat it well, because it was His. In fact, they had to give it a year long break every seventh year. The Bible promotes care for the environment, not careless exploitation of it.

The notion that the Bible is the source of environmental crisis is a myth. It is a lie. It is an attack against the Word of God – against God Himself.

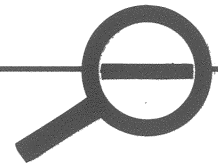
The overpopulation scare is a myth as well. If all 5 billion people alive in the world today were to live in the province of Ontario using up all the land (I've excluded the lakes) leaving the rest of the world absolutely empty, there would only be 5610 people per sq. km. Reckoned differently, there would be 23 people per acre or less than six people per large 1/4 acre city lot. How many of you live with more than five other people on a city lot? In Manitoba (a little flatter than Ontario) there would be nine people per 1/4 acre.

Is the world overpopulated, about to collapse? I don't believe it.

Let's not be misled by the scare tactics of antichristian environmentalists. We may not be complacent about the environment. It is God's earth. He created it. We treat it with respect. We support efforts against pollution. We don't litter. We are happy when alternative (cleaner) forms of energy are developed. But let's be thoughtful and reflective about the issues and not believe everything that antibiblical environmentalists say. A healthy dose of sober skepticism is in order whenever one of them speaks.

And let's remember that children are a blessing of the LORD and not pollution, cancer, or a plague as the ZPGers say. We do still believe (as the marriage form says, p. 637, *Book of Praise*) that the continuation and increase of the human race is the second purpose of marriage, don't we?





## The Reformed faith in France

France is a country of considerable importance for the Reformed faith. Was Calvin himself not French, born in Noyon, Picardy? Were there not many who in the sixteenth century confessed the Reformed faith in France? The Roman Catholic persecutions tried to smother the Reformed faith with the blood of the Huguenots, as French Reformed believers were called. Many were able to flee the country and so enrich other nations with their commitment to the Reformed cause. Yet, in spite of the considerable difficulties, the Reformed faith was not extinguished in France. To this day, descendants of these believers are still found there. Indeed, in the southern city of Aix-en-Provence, there is even a Reformed seminary (Faculte Libre de Théologie Réformée). In December of last year, a financial drive for this seminary was initiated within our Dutch sister churches. Besides paying attention to this, I would also like to use the occasion to pass on some of the information on France and the Reformed faith which *Nederlands Dagblad* provided for its readers (in the issues of December 1, 6, and 8, 1990). It may help us to appreciate something of what the Lord is doing in that country.

### Aix-en-Provence and Kampen

In 1982 the Foundation Kampen-Aix-en-Provence was established in order to strengthen the bonds between the Theological University of our sister churches in Kampen and the Reformed seminary in Aix. The school in Aix was founded in 1974 because of dissatisfaction with the theological climate in the French Reformed Churches (see further below). This seminary is thus independent of any church federation. However, it binds itself to the French Confession of Faith (1559), a document Guido de Brès used and followed in drafting the Belgic Confession.

Professors from Kampen have from time to time given lectures in Aix and so strengthened the bond. The feeling grew, however, that also more tangible assistance should be given to this Reformed institution which seeks to teach the Reformed faith in a faithful manner.

Because no federation of churches in France officially cares for the financial well-being of this seminary, they are dependent on gifts and assistance from both inside and outside France. It is hoped that via the new Foundation, Kampen-Aix-en-Provence, the Reformed Churches (Liberated) will also become more involved in supporting this worthy Reformed cause. The plan is to raise at least 180,000 guilders in the current drive so that over the next three years 50,000 guilders can be given each year.

The new Foundation is headed by Prof. J. Douma and also includes Prof. G. Kwakkel of Kampen and Mr. H. Henneveld, an advisor of the deputies for contact with foreign churches.

With an independent Reformed Seminary in Aix, the question arises what kind of churches are involved in France? Why could they not provide their own sound Reformed training for the ministry? Where do the graduates go? How does the future look?

### French Reformed Churches

Within the context of this article it is enough to note two church bodies in France that identify themselves as Reformed. Their origin lies in 1938. At that time two churches that called themselves Reformed united to form L'Église Réformée de France (ERF), that is the Reformed Church of France. This large church was influenced by liberalism and Barthian theology, but continues to have a number of orthodox ministers. Although subscription to the confession was required, it was not to be taken literally. For that reason, a small group of churches refused to go along with this union in 1938 and formed a federation of churches known as La Union Nationale des Églises Réformées Évangéliques Indépendantes (EREI). This Union of Reformed Evangelical Independent churches wanted to maintain a strict subscription to the confession. This adherence to the confession did not mean, however, that a homogeneous Reformed church was the result. There are different streams within the EREI, including charismatic and Baptist. However, officially these churches are

bound to the French Confession of Faith (1559), or as it is also called, the Confession of La Rochelle. This adherence means, for example, that if someone with Baptist ideas wants to become a minister, he will be refused. On the other hand, these churches do not always appear to be as aggressively Reformed as one would expect, although recently this is changing for the better. There are leading figures in these churches who want to keep up the work of reformation.

The EREI have about 12,000 members in 50 congregations (including mission posts which do not have their own consistory). The Reformed Churches (Liberated) have no official contact with the EREI, but they are following the EREI closely and translating an information booklet about the Dutch churches into French.

### Theological Education and EREI and ERF

Because of the internal divergencies and resulting tensions within the EREI, their training for the ministry was abolished in 1961. The EREI was apparently too weak to sustain such a seminary. As already noted, in 1974 the school at Aix-en-Provence was started. The initiative for providing a Calvinistic training for the ministry lay with some ministers from the EREI. Fairly quickly, however, conservative ministers from the ERF also became involved. It was important for the establishment of the school that prominent Calvinist ministers from the ERF, such as P. Courthial from Paris, identified themselves with the school. (The ERF has its own training for the ministry in Montpellier and Paris.) It is hoped that the work of ecclesiastical reformation will be stimulated by the establishment of a Reformed Seminary whose graduates would labour in the EREI and ERF. The fruits have not become evident as quickly as anticipated, although they are there. Issues like church discipline demand attention.

### The future of Aix-en-Provence

Since 1980, enrollment has stagnated around 70. This year there are 71, of whom 34 have a Reformed background



and 31 are evangelical. Half of the student body comes from outside France, especially Zwitserland and Africa. This fact underlines how few orthodox Reformed French seminaries there are. As can be expected, nine students come from the EREI, but remarkably from the much larger ERF there are only five. Those from the ERF are penalized for not attending the ERF seminaries whereas for the EREI, Aix-en-Provence

virtually functions as their training school. The relatively little impact that Aix-en-Provence seems to be making on the larger picture of the Reformed cause in France is not encouraging for the seminary was established with this in view. But the faculty are committed to the Reformed faith and continue their work in the knowledge that their labours are of utmost importance. As *Nederlands Dagblad* put it: "Here is the silken thread on

which hangs French Reformed theology. It must be maintained at all costs." The initiative from within our Dutch sister churches to provide financial help is to be applauded. Through this school with its seven full-time faculty the seed of the pure Reformed theology continues to be sown in France and the French speaking world.



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## Alberta-Manitoba office bearers conference

On Saturday, November 3, 1990 the office bearers of the Alberta/Manitoba classical resort held the first office-bearers conference in recent memory. The facilities of the Immanuel congregation were graciously provided in order to host 39 active office bearers from Alberta. A delegation from Manitoba was unfortunately not possible due to distance.

The chairman, Rev. R. Aasman, after opening with prayer and Scripture reading, introduced Rev. M. van Beveren who was our first speaker.

In dealing with the wide ranging topic of "family visits" Rev. van Beveren with his usual eloquence dealt with numerous issues that occur before, during and after such a visit. He examined the purpose of such a visit, as charged by the Lord Himself, and reminded the brothers of their task as office bearers to go on behalf of Christ. Rev. van Beveren indicated that such a visit is an inquiry where one must go with an understanding of the members being visited, with love, with tactfulness and with an ability to be able to speak words of encouragement. As ambassadors of Christ we ourselves must ask for His help and guidance so that as one result we gain the trust, confidence, respect and attention of the congregation. Rev. van Beveren dealt as well with the practical applications of a home visit; for example, preparation by the visiting elders, prayer and Scripture reading during such a visit, the ability to listen and to know when to be quiet, the necessity to "break the ice" and to use

common sense, the length of a visit and the ability to use HOW questions.

After the presentation the brothers were able to address any questions that came up as a result of the speech, and this in turn generated an opportunity for Rev. van Beveren to expand on some of the issues dealt with in his introduction. Discussion was held on such matters as: a fixed theme during the course of a season, going with two elders and situations where that may or may not be applicable, the ability to be able to listen, the matter of difficult visits, and kinds of questions to be asked. As you can appreciate, after such heady discussions we saw the necessity to break for lunch which had been gratefully prepared by a number of ladies from both congregations.

After the appropriate introduction to the afternoon session Rev. Wieske was introduced as our second guest speaker. Rev. Wieske, during the contemplation of his speech dealing with discipline decided to deal with discipline as it relates the "Preservation of the Holiness of the Church."

During his opening remarks Rev. Wieske dealt with the issue of Lordship salvation vs. faith salvation.

Rev. Wieske stressed that discipline as the third mark of the true church must be preserved. It was noted that there is a danger in a person's statement of faith not being followed by actions. No unholy or unbelieving member should be allowed to remain in the church. We

were reminded that Christ allows for discipline and that through the application of that discipline we must keep all in obedience to God. Discipline is personal and there is no doubt that the rule of Matthew 18 must be followed and then the member becomes involved with the consistory and eventually the congregation is informed and as a result carries the responsibility to address the individual(s). Rev. Wieske reminded those present that we must at all times submit to Gods Word and not underestimate the power of His holiness.

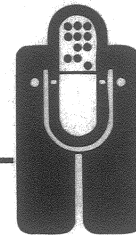
It is the practical application of this discipline which created a good and somewhat spirited discussion after Rev. Wieske's speech. How does one determine when discipline should take place, is there a difference between discipline for communicant and non communicant members? If so, how do we correct the problem? What do we do with "oncers," with those who exhibit no desire to contribute of their first fruits in thankfulness to the Lord? The practical application of discipline as you can see takes on many forms.

The day was enjoyed by all who attended and as a result it was decided to hold an office bearers conference on an annual basis. The next conference will be held, D.V. on the first Saturday in November 1991. Rev. R. Aasman consented to introducing the topic of the aged and sick and Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar will address the issue of the youth.

JOE BOSCH

# NEWS MEDLEY

By W.W.J. VanOene



It does not happen very often that I quote from private correspondence. In general, what is private should remain private. This time, however, I am going to make an exception. This is done in connection with what I learned from a private letter regarding the institution of the Rockway church. Here it comes. "There was such a good cooperation between the members of the congregation before the institution in decision making. There were no squabbles, no severe bickering about borders, or of money, who gets what, etc. There has been such a good mutual feeling to each other that everyone still speaks of it. Thanks be to God who made this all possible." This was worth to be passed on, was it not?

A special "Farewell Evening" was held on December 28, 1990, "in Commemoration of the Institution of the Rockway Canadian Reformed Church." The bulletin remarks that "one of the highlights" would be a "dessert smorgasbord." The Rockway church has eight office-bearers and a total membership of 221 (112 communicant members), while the Lincoln church now numbers 345 members (177 communicant members). On the first Sunday after institution the Rockway church already witnessed baptism. It also seems to be the intention to continue with a combined bulletin, as Smithville and Attercliffe have it.

Speaking of combined bulletins, the Burlington West consistory dealt with the "request to reconsider the matter of 'combined bulletin' with the Burlington churches." I almost hesitate to say again whether this suggestion found acceptance or not, for the opinions seem to have wavered back and forth. The only tangible result was that in one of the Burlington bulletins I found a sheet with general information, a "General News Sheet." There is progress.

Continuing with Burlington West, we may mention that Rev. Mulder "continues to progress but needs further time to recuperate." We are thankful for the progress. We are also thankful for the following information: "We could thankfully take note of the fact that the necessary moneys for our past year had been received. Our committee of administration could report that it was able to balance our budget." I know that I am not good in financial matters, but I thought that you could always balance a *budget*, but I may be wrong.

The Burlington South bulletin has received a face-lift. It is very stylish, and we only express the wish that within the foreseeable future they may also be able to have their own, permanent address printed on it.

Burlington East joyfully took possession of their new church building. The Rev. G. VanDooren, who also conducted the first service in the one that burned down, was privileged in officiating at the first worship service to be held in the new one.

The parsonage that housed the VanDooren family for such a long time has been sold, and the Castleguard parsonage has been put up for sale, too.

Staying in the neighbourhood for a while, we visit Toronto. There it was reported that responses to an advertisement resulted in no fewer than 38 people requesting the course "A Gift from Heaven." The consistory decided, among other things, to have a telephone answering machine installed in the church building. This is a good idea. Most of our church buildings have a telephone installed, but this telephone is more for the use of the membership to phone out than that it is being used to receive and answer calls that come from without. Our ministers do not have an "office" or a study room in

the church building, and most of the time there is no one in the building to answer any incoming call. An answering machine will record calls and thus provide the opportunity to contact people who phoned in.

Glad tidings come from nearby Orangeville. In a surprisingly short period of time matters have developed in Thornbury, Owen Sound and Chatsworth to such an extent that official worship services are being conducted there now. However, I had better quote literally from the Orangeville bulletin.

"The main item which is of significant interest is the development in the house congregation of Thornbury! Since the previous update (Dec. 24, '90) things have been moving very well and steadily. We are very thankful that the combining of efforts and endeavours of the members in Grey County (Thornbury Group) and Bruce County (members of Elora, Grand Valley) was blessed so much! The committee which was set up ... has worked very hard and with good results. After they received the approval of the session of the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at Chatsworth ON, the good communication between 'yours truly' and the Committee resulted in a detailed letter with requests to the Council at Orangeville.... Alongside with the organizational developments, the LORD has blessed us also with many good contacts among concerned members of the Christian Reformed Church in the Owen Sound area. We were very thankful that last week we could announce the approved request of the A. family, which is one of these families. Last week we could receive in our midst a number of these families as well, brothers and sisters who are eager and hungry for the faithful preaching of the gospel. After having listened to many tapes of our services, they decided to make the long trip to Orangeville and attend in person, in great anticipation, however, of the planned services in Chatsworth. How beautiful it is to see the Lord bring brothers and sisters together who are united in the one, true faith! All in all the expected number of families to attend the services in Chatsworth next week will be around 15 or 16 (however, the official membership of the house congregation consists of 11 families, 22 communicant members, 34 baptized members). (Are the communicant members not baptized? VO) The renewed momentum in the progress of the house congregation was sufficient reason for Council to move also in the direction of "normal" services, including the administration of the sacraments. From now on two elders will be going up to conduct and supervise the services, until the time is ripe that one or more office-bearers can be appointed from their midst."

From the Consistory meeting report we quote the following. "All members of this house congregation will become members of Orangeville. Their services will be held in the Chatsworth St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, commencing Sunday Feb. 10, 1991. Times for the services will be 9:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Rev. Den Hollander will conduct the services on this first Sunday in Chatsworth. The Lord's Supper will be held on the fourth Sunday of March, June, September and December in Chatsworth. Arrangements for further reading services were made. Rev. Den Hollander will preach there one Sunday every two months. A request will be made to have a classical preaching arrangement set up for every two months as well. In that event, a minister will conduct the services there one Sunday per month." I hope from the heart for the brothers and sisters in Chatsworth that they will receive a minister

once a month, but when I consider that of the twelve churches in Ontario North four are vacant and that Rev. Mulder still has to take his rest, I am not all that optimistic. May I be wrong.

The situation is not much better in Ontario South. There five of the twelve churches are vacant. Moreover, Grand Rapids' consistory reported that "under new business the upcoming retirement of Rev. Kingma was further discussed."

Coming up from Grand Rapids, we stop over in Watford. Enclosed with the bulletin was a copy of a letter that the consistory of the Wyoming Christian Reformed Church sent to their members. Rev. Moes wrote: "I have included this letter so that all of us can be aware of what is going on in their church." The Watford consistory decided on a letter to be sent to the Christian Reformed Church at Wyoming expressing our concern for their present situation in their federation as revealed to us in the 'Open Letter.' "

Regarding the internal matters of the Watford church we may tell you that the parsonage has been sold.

From Hamilton comes the information that the Kroeze family moved back from Recife to São José, and that they are planning to stay there till the end of the year.

For those who might visit Ottawa we pass on that the celebration of the Lord's Supper is scheduled for the fourth Sunday of every second month, that is of February, April, June, August, October, and December. If you go there, take some extra money along, for the "request to have a weekly collection at the door for the work of the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund" was granted (for six months). It will be held after one service only.

A stop-over in Carman makes us know that "We have received an invitation from the Reformed Church of the U.S. to attend the Northern Plain Classis to be held on Feb. 20 and 21, 1991. Rev. De Boer and Elder J. Kuik will attend."

I was happy with the information that Rev. DeBoer gave us about the Reformed Church of the U.S. in a previous issue of *Clarion*. And I had to think of this when I read some remarks about our medley in a Dutch periodical. The writer there had some critical remarks about what I had written concerning the use of symbols for the divine Persons. I warned against this use, as I am afraid that it brings us into conflict with the second commandment. The writer asked where one had to go in case the news medley "went too far" (het al te bont maakte). Perhaps he could address his objections to the Reformed Church in the U.S. with which his churches have a sister church relationship since their latest synod. I am sure that he will get a sympathetic ear, for according to what Rev. DeBoer wrote, their text of Lord's Day 35 of the Catechism forbids even the use of pictures of the Lord Jesus. They go even much farther than the news medley did (and thus "maken zij het al te bont"). And in *Study Helps on the Heidelberg Catechism*, published by the Publications Committee of the Eureka Classis, Reformed Church in the U.S. and authored by the Rev. Norman L. Jones, I read: "Pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ are another matter, however. They are always sinful, even though most Protestants and even some Reformed people see nothing wrong with them.... The reason that Christ may not be pictured is that He is God, and God may not be imaged. If it is objected that Christ is also true man, we reply that that is correct, but Christ's humanity cannot be separated from His Divine nature. Every so-called picture of Christ's human nature is not only a figment of the artist's imagination, but it is also an attempt to separate the two natures in Christ, and the result is a false Christ — an idol. Thus, the so-called pictures of Jesus are violations of the Second Commandment, and they must never be found in our churches or in our homes." p.194.

I got another shock when I read in the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley that "The topic for the upcoming month's

broadcast was prepared by the Rev. A., and deals with the four persons of Christ." It is a good thing that the Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands of 1939-1943 did not know about this, for it would have led to another doctrinal pronouncement and prof. Hepp would have had ample material to write another brochure about "Threatening Deformation."

Above we told about door collections in Ottawa. Surrey, too, made a decision about it. "Proposal to have door collections the last Sunday of the month for approved causes, and to have the congregation informed ahead of time as to the nature of these causes, is accepted."

The consistory of Houston wrote a letter to the consistory of the Christian Reformed Church in that place, making use of the one written by Hamilton. Rev. Slomp wrote: "In the meantime I have had verbal confirmation that the consistory of the local Christian Reformed Church has met and responds positively to this letter. They indeed would like to meet with our consistory. We await written confirmation, at which time further details will be worked out."

"One aspect of the mission work," Smithers wrote, "that we should probably mention is the fact that we are now holding Tuesday night Bible study in Moricetown." Thus the work is expanding, slowly but surely. Moricetown is west of Smithers. It will be on the map.

Let us visit Australia for a while. The Perth Metropolitan area churches have issued another *Yearbook*, but several changes have to be made already. There is an almost constant moving back and forth among the membership, just as is the case in the Fraser Valley, where also a new directory was published which for a considerable part is already overtaken by members moving back and forth.

Let us first pass on some happy news. The Bedfordale organ has arrived. "The brothers of the organ committee are thankful for all the positive responses regarding our new organ. After a two-week Christmas holiday at the airport of Kuala Lumpur, it finally arrived. It is a joy to play it, that is for sure." And the brother who wrote these lines can know!

Separate services have started in Rockingham, and thus we may look forward to the institution of another church, possibly this very same year.

And now some less pleasant news. The Albany consistory had to give some sad information regarding the mission work to the cooperating churches. "A letter from Rev. Koelewijn and one from the Port Moresby consistory is read out in connection with this. Rev. Koelewijn has contracted glandular fever and taken several weeks' leave from Port Moresby on doctor's orders. After due consideration is given to all aspects of the recent developments and Rev. Koelewijn's evident inability to cope with the pressures of the environment, consistory decides to terminate Rev. Koelewijn's work in Port Moresby by 1st February 1991, allow him to repatriate to the Netherlands for three months furlough, after which he becomes eligible for call as minister by the 1st May, 1991."

This is a big disappointment, but the situation regarding the refugees from Irian Jaya is somewhat confusing. We did mention the other time that political aspirations and faithfulness in the point of church membership are at times in conflict with one another. May the work as such proceed and the difficulties be overcome.

For this time we have to stop. The previous medley has not yet been published, but now there is some material for the next issue as well.

Wishing you all a fond good evening, I sign off

As always

Yours very truly

VO

P.S. Have you made a will already? It is absolutely necessary. Do not postpone it!







By W.W.J. VanOene

## VIETNAM.

Vietnam has given the United Bible Societies permission to import 10,000 Bibles. The arrangement was made through David Thorne, the production consultant for East and South Asian Bible societies. Thorne visited Ho Chi Minh City (the former Saigon) and Hanoi last year. It was the first time Vietnam granted a visum to a UBS representative since 1975. (REC NE)

## GENESIS A 'STYLIZED ACCOUNT' SAYS CRC REPORT.

The Christian Reformed Church in North America has prepared a report on Creation and Science for its synod in 1991. The church asked for the study following a controversy arising concerning three professors in the natural science division at Calvin College. In 1966 the church declared the relation between creation and science to be problematic. It was not until 1988, however, that a case came before the synod, so that synod felt called on to make its own study.

The report says that the historiography of Genesis 1-11 must be understood by looking at other historical sources that are coming to light for pre-Abrahamic history. "Our increased knowledge of early human history has underscored the highly stylized and compressed nature of the biblical account and cautions us against drawing historical inferences unrelated to the revelational intention of the account," the report read (p.16). The Bible does not intend to present us with a detailed history, nor even an entire history in which the narrative is rooted, the committee concluded.

The committee rejected several terms that have become current to try to describe the Biblical account. It argued that it is impossible to treat the chapters as parable, nor could its form be separated in any way from a supposed kernel of content. It also rejected the term *primeval history*, advocated by Calvin College physics professor, Howard Van Til.

Focussing more closely on the issue of creation, the committee noted that debate about Genesis 1 and 2 dated back to the early church. A position one way or the other has never been made a matter of confession. The CRCNA's own history showed considerable diversity on this question. No one rejected Genesis 1 as unacceptable, but there was dis-

agreement about its meaning. And the committee found itself also in disagreement with each other on this point.

The report defined evolutionary theory, and then described possible ways of approaching it. The options range from rejection, to some degree of mediation, to complete acceptance. It admits, however, that the main problem facing the church is the apparent incompatibility between the account in the Bible and the picture presented by modern science. It concludes: "none of the proposals for harmonizing them are completely satisfactory" (p.36).

The report advocates that the findings and texts on both sides of this difference must be subject to interpretation. It also recognizes limits. "However stylized, literary, or symbolic the stories of Genesis may be, they are clearly meant to refer to real events... [The] reality of the events described is of foundational importance for the entire history of redemption," the report states (p.38).

The key point where the committee differed was on whether the Bible rejects the possibility of an "evolutionary forebear" of the human race. Some wished to reject "all theorizing that tends either to minimize or to obliterate this created uniqueness [that is, the image of God]." By this formulation, that part of the committee did not rule out the possibility of an evolutionary forebear of the human race. Both sides presented strongly stated grounds why their recommendations should be adopted by the synod. (REC NE)

Comment: How silly can you get when you abandon the simple faith, and when you even consider it *possible* that the results of un-

believing science could ever be or would ever have to be made compatible with the divine revelation, let alone the other way around! What communion is there between the kingdom of light and the realm of darkness?

## TOGETHER ON THE WAY

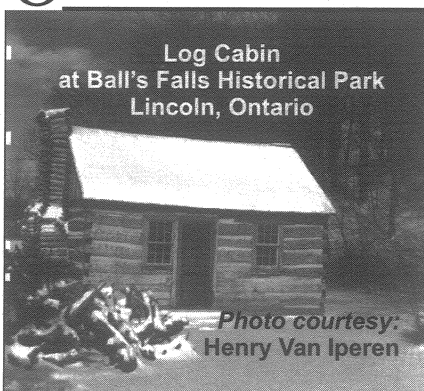
A successful joint synod meeting has restarted the union process between two Reformed churches and a Lutheran church. The process called "Together on the Way" (TOW) stalled in February 1990, when the two Reformed churches could not agree on a new church order. However, in a meeting in late October, the two agreed that the first 30 Articles on the church order of the Netherlands Reformed Church (NRC) would be the basis. The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) first preferred to have a completely new church order. The RCN believed that adopting the NRC's church order gave the impression that the RCN was rejoining the NRC. The RCN split from the NRC in the last century. The present agreement, however, makes it clear that the 30 Articles are a starting point, a basis from which a new text may be written. The joint synod appointed a task force to draft a church order by October 1992.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands formally joined TOW at this synod. The ELC had been an observer since 1984.

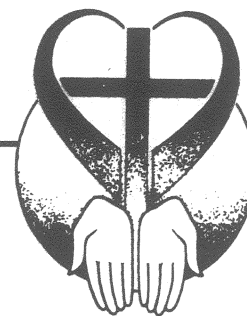
The churches agreed that a full joint synod would meet at least every two years. They decided that a small synod, made up of 12 persons each from the NRC and RCN and four from the ELC, would meet twice a year to discuss progress. (RCN Persbulletin) (REC NE)

Comment: No fear would have had to exist about "rejoining" the Netherlands Reformed Church if the condition of the *Act of Secession or Return* was being met, namely, that the Netherlands Reformed Church must have returned to the true service of the Lord. What becomes evident in TOW is false ecumenism. A permanent "synod" of 28 persons will be formed. The "Synodical Board" of King William I's creation has returned.

## OUR COVER



# Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund



25th Anniversary

*A former member of C.R.W.R.F.'s executive for many years, Mrs. Femmie VanderBoom agreed to provide a written account of C.R.W.R.F.'s 25th Anniversary celebration held last fall. Here follows her report.*

On the evening of Friday, September 28, 1990 people from all over Southern Ontario converged on the Christian Reformed Church building on New Street in Burlington to celebrate the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund. The Fellowship Hall, where the meeting was held, had been decorated to suit the festive occasion. About 150 people who over the past twenty-five years had been active in this organization at one time or another, gathered to celebrate together.

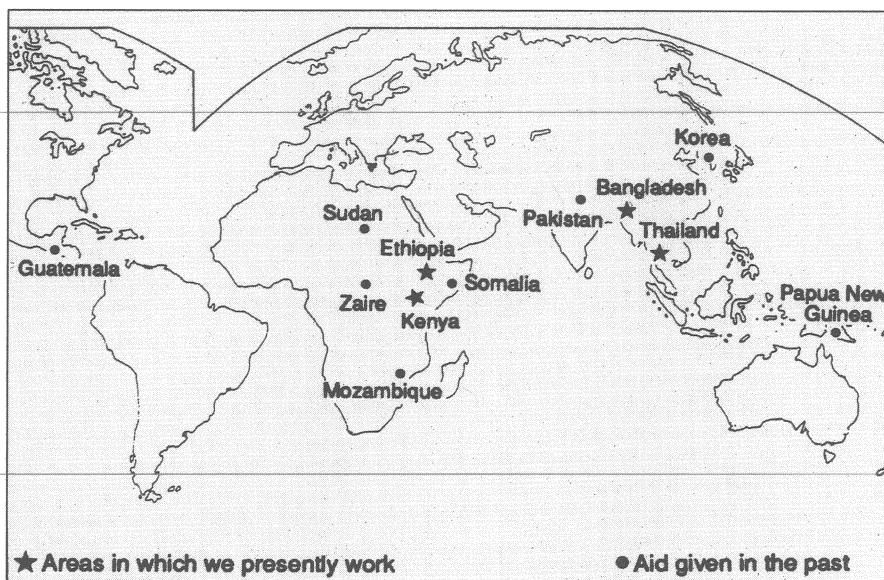
The evening was opened with singing, prayer and Bible reading. Prof. L. Selles, who is the present Chairman of C.R.W.R.F., welcomed us all. He outlined the history of C.R.W.R.F., how it was started and its first involvement with Love Home in Korea. Prof. Selles then gave a special welcome to Miss Ayoon Kim and her mother who presently live in Toronto, Ontario, but who spent many years working at Love Home during the years that Love Home was supported by C.R.W.R.F. He expressed the hope that the work of C.R.W.R.F. might be instrumental in gathering people to Christ and that this work of "filling stomachs" might bring others to sit with us at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

A musical interlude followed, in which Miss Sonja VanderLaan sang a beautiful solo called "Proclaim the Glory of the Lord." She was accompanied on the piano by her mother, Mrs. Toni Kampen. Prof. N. Gootjes was then welcomed as the guest speaker. Prof. Gootjes, from his experience while living in Korea, spoke to us about "Orphans and Orphanages in Korea."

Prof. Gootjes started by stating three things he had noticed about orphanages while living in Korea. First, Koreans do not willingly volunteer information about orphanages. Second, all the children in orphanages are not real orphans in the sense that they had no parents at all.

Thirdly, there is heavy foreign involvement in the running of orphanages. He then went on to relate how traditionally the family structure was very strong in

families sent their children to the orphanages was because it was seen that children in orphanages received a good education, and since the parents were



Korea, and that children would always be looked after by the extended family if for some reason parents were not able to do so. However, due to the Korean War many children were left without parents, and families were so badly fractured and divided, that large numbers of children were left destitute. The American soldiers gathered them together in orphanages and supported these children, since it seemed that there was no other solution.

As time went on and Korea was rebuilt by its very industrious and hard-working people, orphanages continued to exist, but for different reasons. They were, unfortunately, misused at times by poor families as dumping grounds for their children. Children from poor families, especially handicapped ones, were sent to orphanages so that the family would not "lose face" by having poor or handicapped children around who might offend the neighbours by their poverty or handicaps. Another reason why poor

unable to provide this, they felt the children would be better off in an orphanage.

Many Koreans still have strong family ties and are deeply ashamed of orphanages. Foreign money supports them, for they have no accepted place in Korean culture and society. They are a mixed blessing, for the children in orphanages often have excellent care, but grow up never having known family life.

A musical duet followed, in which we were all impressed by the skillful playing of Laura Kerpel (age 12) and Karen Spithoff (age 8) on their violins while accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Aafke Spithoff. An intermission with coffee and cake was then enjoyed by all.

Mrs. Geraldine Ysselstein was introduced by Prof. Selles, which was not difficult for him to do since Geraldine is his daughter. Geraldine and her husband Peter spent several years in Bangladesh working in cooperation with Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. C.R.W.R.F. contributed to the support of

the projects they initiated. Geraldine related to us stories of the people they met and were able to help while in Bangladesh, a country with 100 million

babies, they hardly know how to look after them since they are not much more than children themselves. The purpose of the women's project, one of several the Ys-

family by a higher standard of living. They also taught child care and nutrition, hoping to improve the life of the children. Geraldine told us the personal stories of several women, their hardships, tragedies but also some victories making us all realize how blessed and fortunate we are in receiving God's good and abundant care.

Miss Ayoon Kim then treated us with a solo, singing "The Holy City" accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Aafke Spithoff.

Mr. Mike DeBoersap from the Executive Committee of C.R.W.R.F. made a slide presentation, showing us slides of the work done by C.R.W.R.F. from its small beginnings to the present day. Prof. Selles in closing noted with appreciation the contribution made by several people to the work of C.R.W.R.F. throughout the years. Many hours of volunteer work by many dedicated people has made possible the significant contribution that C.R.W.R.F. has been able to make through the years to the needy in the world. Appreciation was expressed for everyone who has helped in this work.

We closed with singing Hymn 59:1 and 3, and with prayer. So ended an enjoyable evening, in which we praised God with word and music for His abundant blessings. May the work of C.R.W.R.F. continue for many years, to His honour, to the end that many may come to know the Saviour as they receive "a cup of cold water" in His Name. Praise be to the Lord!

C



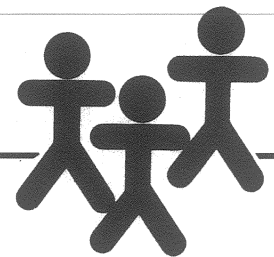
C.R.W.R.F.'s first "project" involved support of an orphanage in Korea called "Love Home" which we supported from 1967-1977. Funding ensured that the children could enjoy a comfortable home and a Christian upbringing. Boxes and boxes of clothing were also collected and sent until mailing costs became prohibitive.

people. There is no women's liberation in Bangladesh; in fact, there is no education for women, and girls are married off at a very young age. When they get ba-

selsteins were involved in, was to teach the women some skills so that they can earn a little money to complement the family income, thus benefitting the whole

## SCHOOL CROSSING

By S. Foster and A. Gunnink



## Prayer in our schools

The following writing, by Mr. S. Foster and Mr. A. Gunnink, is taken up in this column as published in Link, December, 1990, a monthly publication for the promotion of communication published by the Board of the Canadian Reformed School of Fergus-Guelph and District Inc. (a.w.)

### Introduction

Prayer is important to all of us. Praying must be taught. Parents have the first obligation to guide their children in praying faithfully to their heavenly Father. In school, the students receive opportunity to lead devotions. The following survey

shows what is done in the various classrooms:

**Grade 1:** Students say the Lord's Prayer before lunch if they wish. This is done during the last semester of the year.

**Grade 2:** From September to June: The Lord's Prayer is prayed by those who are ready to do it, before mealtime. The Lord's Prayer is prayed by all, by row or individually. Prayer before or after the meal - a choice of the Lord's Prayer or the students own.

**Grade 3:** All students take turns saying the Lord's Prayer before the meal. Students are given the choice to pray their own prayers which they "make up"

on the spot (with spontaneous discussions on prayer i.e. purpose, content). For final prayer of the day, one student suggests one thing to pray for and the teacher incorporates this in prayer. Students take turns reading parts of the Bible passage during opening devotions.

**Grade 4:** In September - October the Lord's Prayer is said in unison at the beginning of lunch hour. October - December one student says the Lord's Prayer. All students participate. January - June the students will take turns beginning lunch with the Lord's Prayer. At the close of the meal, students will take turns saying (or reading) their OWN



prayers. We will be talking about prayer before this is begun.

*Grade 5:* After lunch one student reads a passage of Scripture, discusses it, and ends off with prayer.

*Grade 6:* After lunch students take turns to read a portion of Scripture and close in prayer. Until December the Scripture portion is chosen for the students. In January the students can choose their own portion. Their prayers are to be written down.

*Grade 7:* Students read a portion before lunch (teacher choice at this time student choice later). Students lead in prayer, their own prayer, which must be written down.

*Grade 8:* The students take turns. A student starts with Bible reading and after that leads in prayer.

*Grade 9:* Before lunch a student reads a Scripture passage. A list is drawn up by the teacher. After lunch the student reads the prayer. Students write out a prayer to make sure that it contains all the elements of prayer. This guide is used:

- A doration
- C onfession
- T hanksgiving
- S upplication

*Grade 10:* Semester One: the teacher reads historical book (O.T.) and a student leads in prayer. Semester Two: Students read from the New Testament and lead in prayer.

## Prayer: what and how

On the Professional Development Day in October, Mr. S. Foster presented a paper about the topic "Prayer in Our Schools." With his permission we quote the following from his handout. This information is beneficial for teachers and parents to teach our students/ children how and what to pray.

### 1. The question of prayer

"Prayer at bottom is committing oneself to God. Prayer is to acknowledge in faith, God as He is. Prayer is an active self-expression to the Father and simultaneous, conscious, attachment of the self to the Judge. To pray is to put oneself in the right position over against God."

— Dr. K. Schilder

### 2. The literature on prayer

Most literature on prayer is of a theological nature and often not practically oriented. Treatise on prayer more often than not explain why we should pray, and how prayer is important to our faith. When books on prayer discuss how we should pray, often a method is given. These tell us how we are to organize

***"Prayer is important to all of us. Praying must be taught."***



our words, and how we are to choose our words. These methods when used moderately are very helpful. When they become the ground force which we pray they lead to formalism... Extensive reliance on any method often leads to dispassionate prayer and "form" prayers.

A positive aspect of a method for prayer is that it helps to organize one's thoughts when coming before God. The negative side is that one can come to rely on the method more than the expression of thanksgiving.

### 3. Improving prayer

Obviously direct instruction is appropriate to a degree when dealing with prayer. The degree depends on the age level of the students. Direct instruction allows students to learn the place of prayer in their lives as Christians, and it gives the students a starting point for their own prayers. But direct instruction should always only be a guide and never an end in itself.

### 4. What do the students say?

A confidential questionnaire administered to grade ten students, revealed the following:

- (i) All identified the purpose of prayer as the coming before God in humble communication. To thank Him, to ask for forgiveness, to ask for the relief of illness of the sick and needy, to strengthen in faith all believers. These are the most common details.
- (ii) Students acknowledged that they need to learn how to pray properly, but weren't sure exactly what it is that they lacked.
- (iii) Many students mentioned the guide:

- A - adoration
- C - confession
- T - thanksgiving
- S - supplication

P.D. Day was how we can assist the students in translating the "theory" about prayer into their actual prayers. Some comments are listed below:

- a) Allow students to write down their prayers and discuss them.  
Use the model prayer given in Scripture, namely, the Lord's Prayer.
- c) Discuss prayers with the whole class.
- d) Take ample time for devotions.
- e) Set a proper tone; create a proper atmosphere. Singing a song may help.
- f) Review with the students if there are any special needs to be addressed in prayer.
- g) Insist on a 5 second delay after the word "Amen" before starting on the next activity.

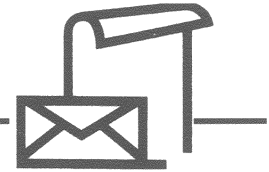
### Final thought

This is the final thought we would like to share:

All our actions throughout the day are always leading up to prayer. We ask for a blessing on the day — do we fill our day worthy of what we have asked for? Students witness the process of the day, and it seems fundamental to prayer in our school that our learning environment reflects what we pray for. In this way prayer is not seen as a formality, but as a reality. We live according to our supplications. In this way, as subtle as it is, we demonstrate to students a consistency and application of prayer in our school. That we pray in a certain way with a specific method is not a central question here. How we pray has two points: First, the devotion with which it occurs, and second, the application of what has been prayed in our daily life.



# LETTER TO THE EDITOR



## Is superannuation acting as pseudo-federation?

Dear Editor:

Allow me to respond for a moment to some remarks made in the medley in the *Clarion's* Year End issue. These remarks relate to the work of the Foundation for Superannuation. Rev. VanOene expresses his opposition to a proposal made by the F.S., a proposal which to VO's dismay and disappointment is apparently acceptable to the membership.

The reason for my letter is not so much to convince VO, but more importantly to re-assure the reader and our members (the total number of Canadian/American Reformed Churches save one) that there is some sense behind the proposal and that VO's remarks are, to put it mildly, somewhat one-sided.

For those who may have missed the medley, I could summarize the proposal and VO's remarks as follows:

The board of the F.S. proposes "to establish a supplementary benefit of \$5,000 to be paid to all eligible members with communicant members, full supplementary benefits, over 50 c.m. full supplementary benefit less \$33.33 for each c.m. in excess of 50 members."

VO wants to register his serious objections to the above proposal. He believes that although according to him things cannot be changed any more, the basic and original setup of the F.S. is abandoned. In his view the basic and original setup of the F.S. was "Equal payments, equal benefits." VO believes that F.S. has now become a pseudo-federation that lends aid to needy churches. VO accuses the F.S. that it takes away the task of the Federation, yet it "plays church federation" and therefore the idea this change promotes is "a completely wrong one."

The objects of the Foundation according to its constitution (Art. 4) "shall be to assist the members in fulfilling their financial responsibilities with respect to their ministers, missionaries, ...etc. etc., ... in-so-far as they result from the provisions of Art. 13 of the Church Order of the Canadian Reformed Churches." In fulfilling the task at hand, the board of the F.S. attempts to respond to the membership as best it can so that the objectives of the F.S. will be promoted and the membership will be helped in fulfilling their obligations. I can assure the membership therefore, that in spite of the fact that this

proposal has overwhelming support, further changes can be made. Flexibility is only one of the advantages of having our own fund and therefore changes are possible, but only of course, when good grounds are presented.

Another great advantage in administering our own fund is that ministers can move from place to place without having to be unduly concerned about their pension plan. As long as the members, while they have an active minister, invest sufficient funds, the F.S. should have enough assets to properly assist a member who has a retired minister. In this way the member not only receives a certain amount of financial protection during the minister's years of service in the event of early death or retirement, but the member also benefits when the minister retires by receiving annual payments which are helpful in meeting its obligations.

When one analyzes the history and operation of the fund, it is to be noted that so far hardly any "smaller" churches benefited directly from the fund. As a matter of fact a case can be made that the small churches subsidize the larger ones. Ministers tend to retire generally speaking from larger churches. Presently the churches at Burlington East, Fergus, Winnipeg, Edmonton Providence, Langley and Cloverdale among others are receiving benefits. It could be argued none of the above can be considered small.

Not many ministers have retired in small congregations. This has several reasons. One possible reason may be that smaller churches cannot carry the burden of the extra funds needed to bridge the gap between the benefits of the fund and the Canadian Pension Plan on the one side and the overall financial needs for a retired minister on the other side. The larger member churches have no difficulty closing this gap via their annual budget. In or-

der to assist in this potential problem and in order to enhance the unrestricted movement of ministers, the membership decided to adopt the most recent proposal. This decision could allow, or at least give the option, for "older" ministers to go to "smaller" congregations if this became possible and desirable. The "smaller" church would then not become a needy church. Is this acting as a pseudo, a false federation? Is the F.S. now taking away the task of the Federation? Is it now playing church federation? I should say not! No the F.S. acts within the framework of its purpose. It does not abandon its original setup. No it responds to its members' needs as best it can and therefore responds to its objectives. For who says, or better perhaps, where does it say in Scripture that in *all* cases of need we must resolve matters via the Church Federation? Where does it say in Scripture or the Church Order that there is no room for personal initiative in these matters? Who says that I cannot support small churches such as Vernon or Ottawa directly by myself or more indirectly via our local church without involving the Church Federation? Who says that the F.S. cannot change its rules in such a way that the "smaller" churches might receive some benefits also? Who says that it is the God given right and duty of the Church Federation to dispense all good and charitable gifts in times of need?

Now it must be said that a fund for Needy Churches can be a good and orderly thing. I believe it used to be related to C.O. Art. 11. Today one could base this activity on Art. 10 of the C.O. I think it is good to carry also in this sense some of each others burdens and it is good to use this tool and to recognize it as a gift of the Lord. It does however, need a bit of exegesis and explanation to get a mandate for this activity from the Church Order, especially one as inclusive as VO promotes.

It must be admitted there is room for improvement in the way the F.S. operates, there is room for criticism. However, there are better ways than to excoriate the F.S. in the News Medley.

Not specifically on behalf of the board of the F.S. but I trust with their agreement, I remain,

Yours in His service,  
HENK A. BERENDS

## CHURCH NEWS



CALLED TO:

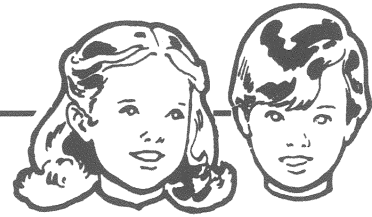
Smithville, ON

Rev. J.W. van der Jagt

of Emmerloord, the Netherlands

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers,

Do you ever think of your family as a *gift*?  
The Lord gave us all a family to live in.  
We learn things together.  
We work at different things together.  
We read and talk about the Bible.  
And, *don't forget*, we do fun things together!

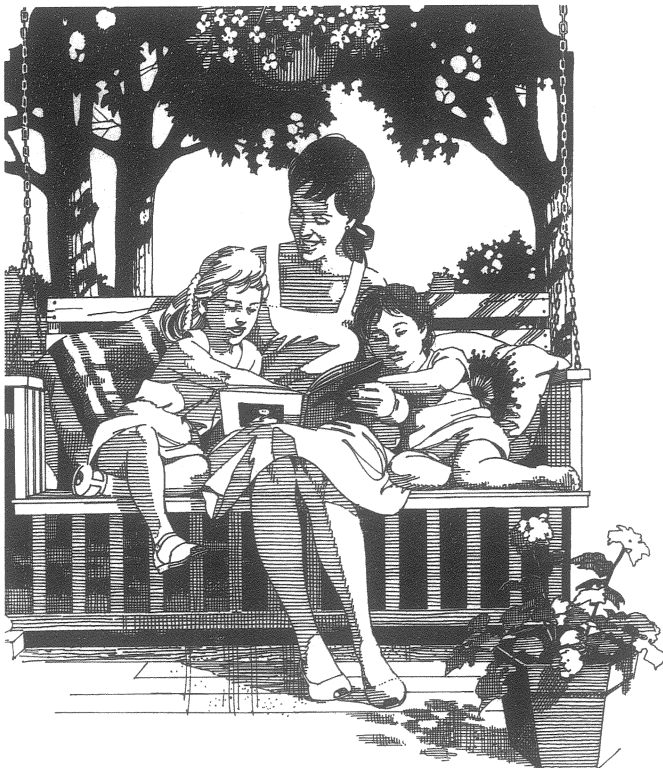
But every family is different, right?  
So every family enjoys different ways of having a good time together.

And it's most fun if everybody does his/her part to keep it fun, right?

So what family fun do *you* like best?  
Or what family activity?  
Will you write and tell us?  
We would love to hear you share your story!



Write to: The Busy Beaver Club  
c/o Aunt Betty  
Premier Printing Ltd.  
One Beghin Ave.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 3X5



## Quiz Time!

### GRIEVERS

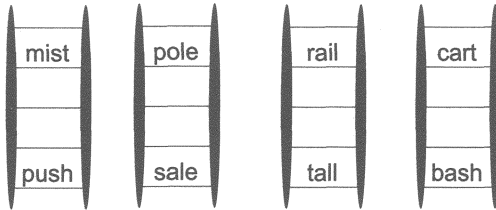
We do not like sadness, but grief is a normal emotion in life. Match the person with the reason for his/her grief.

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Job                | a. a loved one's body       |
| 2. Jesus              | b. childless state          |
| 3. Mary and Martha    | c. visions uninterpreted    |
| 4. Mary Magdalene     | d. the poor                 |
| 5. Men on Emmaus road | e. humanity                 |
| 6. Jonah              | f. repentance of enemies    |
| 7. David              | g. loss of a leader         |
| 8. Hannah             | h. mistreatment of a friend |
| 9. Jonathan           | i. plot to destroy the Jews |
| 10. Esther            | j. death of a brother       |
| 11. Daniel            | k. a sick child             |



## LADDERS

Are you good at climbing down ladders?



## CODE

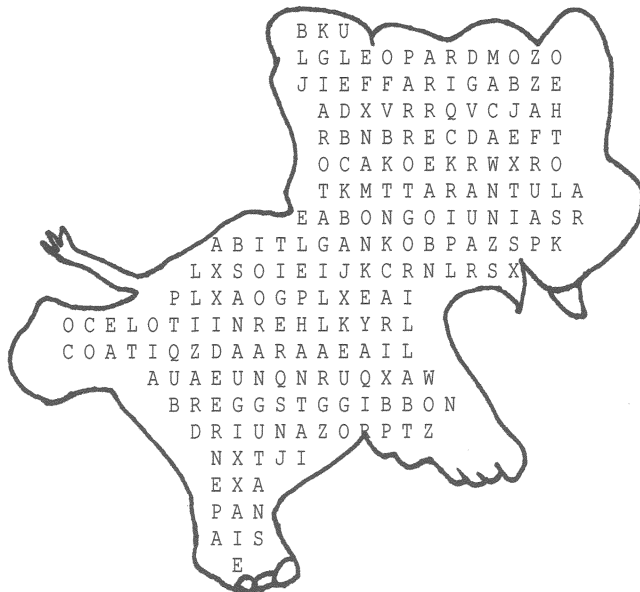
by Busy Beaver *Janine Vanderhoeven*

A=16 L=9  
 D=15 N=23 21 4 15 24 22 21 4 4 15  
 G=21 O=4  
 H=14 S=22  
 I=24 24 23 6 9 9 14 24 22

15 4 24 23 21 22

## JUNGLE ANIMAL WORDSEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Ivan Sikkema*



- |           |         |           |           |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| alligator | gibbon  | lizard    | parrot    |
| ape       | giraffe | leopard   | sloth     |
| bat       | gorilla | macaw     | snake     |
| bongo     | iguana  | monkey    | tarantula |
| coati     | jaguar  | ocelot    | tiger     |
| elephant  | lion    | orangutan |           |

## CHUCKLES

from Busy Beavers *Heather and Janese Leyenhorst*

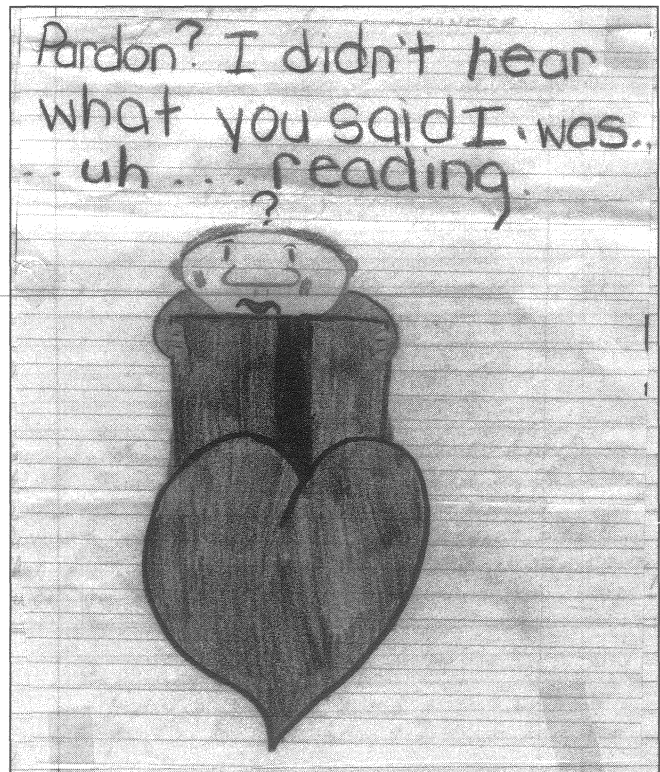
- How do they prevent crime at MacDonald's?  
With a burger alarm!
- How did Ronald MacDonald celebrate his engagement to Wendy?  
He gave her an onion ring!
- What flies through the air with syrup on it?  
Peter Pancake!

Knock, knock.  
 Who's there?  
 Owls go.  
 Owls go who?  
 That's right,  
 owls go "who."

Knock, knock.  
 Who's there.  
 Pecan.  
 Pecan who?  
 Pecan someone  
 your own size!

## CARTOON

by Busy Beaver *Margaret Nijenhuis*



## Answers

1.d 2.e 3.j 4.a 5.g 6.f 7.k 8.b 9.h 10.i 11.c

I hope you enjoyed the puzzles, Busy Beavers.

And how did you do on that Bible quiz?

Be sure to write your name and *address* on your send-in about *family fun*, so that I can send you your sticker *reward*!

Bye for now. Keep busy!

Love to you all,  
 Aunt Betty