



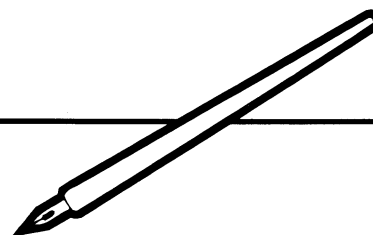
Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 41, No. 19 September 25, 1992



By J. Geertsema



The College Evening

On Friday, September 11, the annual "College Evening" was held, announced as "The Eighteenth Convocation and the Twenty-third Anniversary Meeting." In his opening word, the Rev. Cl. Stam, chairman of the Board of Governors, explained the two parts of this name. "Convocation" points to the academic part, the graduation of our one graduating student, John Ludwig. The "Anniversary Meeting" formed the rest of the evening. It contained the Principal's Report, the address by Dr. C. Van Dam on Psalm 133, "When Brothers Dwell in Unity," and the presentation of a cheque for the library by the Women's Saving Action. It is all presented to you in this issue. The audience also enjoyed again a "Musical Interlude," this time performed by the choir of the Burlington churches, "*Soli Deo Gloria*."

Rev. Stam mentioned also the greetings from the Free Reformed Churches at Armadale and Kelmscott in Australia, as well as from the Deputies for Training for the Ministry on behalf of the Australian brotherhood in general. The Australian sister churches wished the College God's blessing. We are thankful for the cooperation and support of the Australian churches. Working together binds together. In this respect, too, the truth of Psalm 133 shows: how good is it when brothers dwell and work together in unity; for there the LORD gives His blessing. At this moment two of the students enrolled in the College are from Australia, and next year we expect two more. This, too, strengthens the bond of the unity of faith.

The importance of the College for the churches has been stressed before. Unity in the training of students for the ministry will, under the blessing of the LORD, serve the unity of the churches in the common faith. I would like to mention two significant aspects of having the College. The first aspect is that of the churches' calling; the second is that of unity.

In both the Old and the New Testament, our God made clear to His people that it is their calling in the covenant with Him that they preserve (and observe) His Word just as He has given it to them. Throughout the history we are instructed not to add to His revelation nor to take away from it. Satan has as goal to destroy the people of the LORD. His first and foremost weapon is the twisting of God's Word. This began in paradise. Satan asked Eve: Is it so that God has said...? And then he changed around what God had said. Therefore we see how also in the New Covenant the apostles warned the churches to abide by what they gave them and preserve the apostolic "tradition" without altering it. The apostle Paul writes to the Galatians that every one is accused who proclaims a gospel that differs from the gospel that he received from God and preached to the churches. And when he came to the end of his life and work in the service of the Lord and His church, he commanded his fellow worker in this service, Timothy, to entrust to faithful men what he had heard from Paul; these faithful men, in turn, had to be able to teach the same truth to others (1 Tim. 2:2). In this way

the Word of God, as revealed by prophets and apostles, will be preserved. This Word, and this Word alone, is the basis for the existence of the church. Take this Word away and the church falls apart.


Thus, faithfully preserving the Word of truth and passing it on to the next generation is the task of the church. Within the framework of this calling, the churches set up their own College for the training of ministers of God's Word. The College is to be the means through which the churches themselves preserve and pass on the gospel of Christ Jesus, the only and complete Saviour.

As part of the fulfillment of this calling, the churches control their College through their general synods which appointed a board of governors. These governors present to each general synod an extensive report which is published in the synodical *Acts*. In this way the Board of Governors and the churches themselves through their synod watch over the faithfulness to God's Word and the adopted Confession and Church Order in the teaching at the College.

All this has to serve the unity of the churches in the truth. In this context it might be of interest to point to the beginning of the theological school of the Secession churches in Kampen, in 1854. The churches of the Secession experienced much division through differences in view on certain matters, aggravated by misunderstandings and a lack of trust. This division was strengthened by the fact that there were several schools for the training of ministers, one in Groningen set up by the churches in Groningen and Friesland. Then there was a school in Drenthe, and one in Overijssel-Gelderland. A fourth school trained students in the province of South-Holland. The training at these schools was mostly in the hand of one minister with some assistance.

At the General Synod of Zwolle, 1854, this was changed. First the division between Rev. A. Brummelkamp, one of the leading ministers in the Secession, and others was discussed and the unity between them restored. Then it was decided to set up one school for the training of ministers. Kampen was chosen as the place for the seminary. Four professors were appointed. And the unity on the basis of Scripture and Confession was built up and strengthened, very much, through the means of the one theological school.

In line with this, it is and remains our prayer that our College, also in the coming course year, may serve the faithful preservation and passing on of the truth of God's Word and the unity of the churches in that truth. At the same time, we shall not forget to seek unity with others who stand on the same basis.

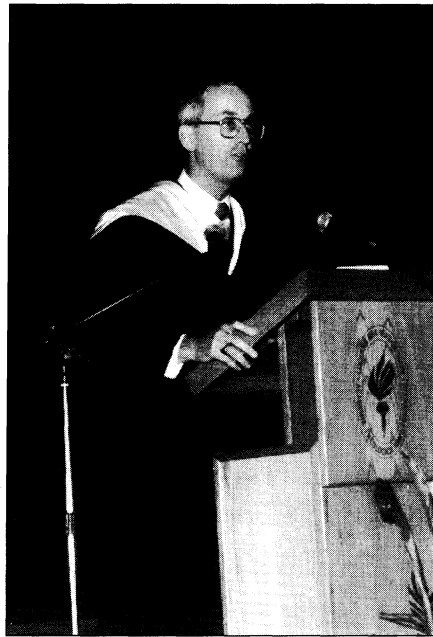
A last remark for those who like to know this: the Lord blessed us with a collection of \$2049.91. The money will be spent on the purchase of "education aids." We, at the College, thank all those who have contributed in different ways to the well-being of our seminary. 

When Brothers Dwell in Unity

By C. Van Dam

A speech delivered at the Eighteenth Convocation and the Twenty-third Anniversary Meeting of the Theological College on September 11, 1992. In keeping with the nature and space limitations of Clarion, footnoting has been kept extremely brief.

“Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity!” These words from Psalm 133 are well-known and they have appeared in more than one ecumenical context. To mention two examples. When attempts were made to express confessional unity in the 16th century, then a *Harmony of Confessions (Harmonium Confessionum)* was produced in 1581 and an appeal was made to the entire church not to let the “poison of discord” spread any further “that we being by a friendly league coupled together in Christ, may vanquish all antichrists, and may sing that hymn to the Lord our God, “Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity!”¹ A second example brings us to 1892. Indeed, an important stimulus for this topic tonight is the fact that this year is the 100th anniversary of the union of two Reformed church bodies in the Netherlands on June 17, 1892. Both churches, the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerken, had earlier left the state church (respectively 1834 and 1886) and had then found each other. The session of the combined synod that unanimously agreed to this historic coming together sang from this Psalm near the beginning and at the end of this unique meeting.² In our present situation where independent (Christian) Reformed churches are being established and where faithful Reformed churches are beginning to seek each



Prof. Dr. C. Van Dam

other in the unity of the faith, the words of Psalm 133 again come to mind. “Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity!”

Let us take a brief look at some aspects of Psalm 133 this evening and try to understand key elements of this part of God’s Word and why it is relevant for ecumenical endeavour today.

Context

At a certain point of time, David³ was moved to exclaim, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” Impressed with the brotherhood and moved by the Spirit David went on in poetic elegance to describe that unity in terms of the high priestly oil coming down Aaron’s beard, and the dew of Hermon coming down upon Zion.

What triggered such a graphic description on the fact of unity and the blessings associated with such unity? What circumstance did the Holy Spirit use to impel David to such praise? As is the case with so many Psalms, with our limited knowledge we cannot insist on a single right answer. Two possibilities can be mentioned here.⁴

In the first place, it has been suggested that David rejoiced in the unity of God’s people, when he finally became king over all twelve tribes of Israel. By that time Israel had gone through a terrible civil war that lasted more than seven years. David was king only over Judah in Hebron while Saul’s house ruled over the rest (2 Sam. 5:1-11). When all the tribes of Israel finally came to David and asked him to be king according to God’s promise to David, David must have been moved by the obvious show of unity (2 Sam. 5:1-2; 1 Chron. 12:23-40). This event may, therefore, have been the initial occasion for Psalm 133.⁵

However, the reference to Zion in Psalm 133 probably favours another occasion for this Psalm, likewise moving in its implications for a people united under God. This event occurred when David, along with all Israel, brought the ark into the capital city of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12-19; 1 Chron. 15; cf. 13:1-6). David had captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites and this military manoeuvre could be seen as a brilliant political move to make this city the capital around which to unite all Israel. After all, it was in neutral territory between Judah and the tribes that had favoured a continuation of a Saulite king. But David was aware that much more than shrewd politics was needed to unite the country. The ark, which had been in relative obscurity for years⁶ had to be

brought here. For what had been David's idea in bringing the ark into Jerusalem, the capital? To give *the* King of Israel, the LORD God, under whom he served, the central place He warranted. Thus, the ark of His presence needed to be in the capital, in the centre of the nation. So, the ark was eventually brought into the capital Zion amid the rejoicing of all the tribes of Israel. In my opinion, this important event was probably the first occasion for Psalm 133.⁷

Something else respecting the context of this Psalm needs to be mentioned. The heading of this Psalm reads "Song of Ascents." In all likelihood (although it cannot be proven), this heading indicates that this Psalm was later used by the pilgrims who went up to Jerusalem for the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles in obedience to God's law (Ex. 23:17; Deut. 16:16).⁸ As will become clear, it is however problematic to see such pilgrimages to Zion taking place in any significant numbers in the time of David.

In summary, the context of this Psalm is most likely the bringing of the ark into Jerusalem, an event all the tribes participated in. This Psalm, however, probably also served later as a pilgrimage song when the faithful went to Zion and this possible context also needs to be kept in mind. Zion is central in this Psalm. It is the place of unity.

Zion, the place of unity

The reference to Zion comes at the climax of this Psalm. In a graphic way David compares the dwelling of brothers in unity to high priestly oil and the dew of Hermon. But, where does one find these illustrations become reality? In Zion! "There the LORD commands the blessing – life for evermore." It is unfortunate that in our rhymed version of Psalm 133, the reference to Zion as the place of blessing and life everlasting has been lost. But Zion is that place.

David knew of this central importance of Zion. More properly, God had made him aware of it. As David recounts in Psalm 68 and 132, (both of which were in all likelihood composed for the move of the ark to Zion), the LORD desired this mountain as His habitation (Ps. 68:16; 132:13)! Here in Zion God wanted to dwell in the midst of Israel! That being the case, the ark which signified the presence of God (cf., e.g. 2 Sam. 6:17) needed to be brought there and David did so! God the King in the midst

of His people Israel, just as was once the case in the tabernacle in the midst of the tribes encamped in the desert!

When we ponder these things, then it becomes clear that it was God's presence which made Zion the place of brotherly unity. For that unity was found in their God who had saved them and made them His people and who gathered His people around Himself. But, there is more involved. When God had come to live in the midst of His people at the Sinai, He had come in covenant grace and faithfulness. That means that He the Holy One had taken measures so that He could live in the midst of a people who by nature are unholy. For that reason, God had not only specified that a tabernacle be established, but also that a sacrificial service of reconciliation be instituted. God had also designated Aaron to be anointed as high priest to mediate between God and man. And so in and through the high priest, God and man could come together in holy communion and so true unity among the Israelites could also be realized.

When David brought the ark into Jerusalem, Abiathar was apparently put in charge as high priest over this sanctuary.⁹ We may assume that as such, he would have provided for the sacrificial ministry of reconciliation in Jerusalem so that God could live in the midst of Israel and Israel could approach God.¹⁰ Through the high priest and the blood of the covenant (cf. Ex. 24:8) Israel could approach God and find their unity as brothers together. Only on the basis of this service of atonement could God command the blessing of life everlasting (Ps. 133:3).

The unity of brothers and sisters in the LORD is a miracle. It is only possible because of God's grace in making provision for the reconciling blood of the covenant. Israel consisted of tribes which had a common blood bond. One could think that this would unite them under all types of circumstances. But that was not the case. All the tribes had their own distinctives, inheritances, and special interests (cf. Gen. 49; Deut. 33; Josh. 14-22). Furthermore, they more than once came to blows. Indeed, consider David's time. In recent memory these tribes had been fighting each other in a civil war when David was not yet acknowledged king of all the tribes. However, in their common worship of their God in Zion, on the basis of the

blood of the covenant, they were one people around and in their covenant God and Saviour. This is a miracle of God's grace. He makes possible what even a human blood bond does not realize. Their unity came from God and was dependent on Him.

When we understand the central significance of Zion in this Psalm, then we can appreciate something of those images of oil and dew that are used to describe the unity.

Oil and dew

First of all, a general comment about the oil and dew. It is stressed in this Psalm that they come from above. The same Hebrew word for going down (*yrd*) is used three times; twice with the oil ("running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes") and once with the dew ("falls on the mountains of Zion"). This feature underlines that unity comes from above and is a gift of God. Man cannot make this unity. It comes from God.¹¹

In the second place, Aaron and Zion figure prominently. The one reminds us of the service of reconciliation and the latter calls to mind the place where God dwells in the midst of His people.

In the third place, as far as the images themselves are concerned, there is little agreement on their precise significance and they have been interpreted variously. It is probably best to see the point of comparison for both images in the fact that both are very precious, find their origin in God, and are used for His purpose. The oil by which the high priest was anointed to service (cf. Lev. 8:12-30) was of a very special manufacture specifically dictated by the LORD and was set aside as holy. It was not for common use (Ex. 30:22-33). So also the unity of believers is of God, is very precious and holy, and is designed by God, and is to be consecrated to His service. Was Israel not to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (Ex. 19:6)? With respect to the dew of the snowcapped mountain of Hermon, this dew was proverbial for its quantity and in the climate of Palestine it was invaluable for making the land fruitful. If the winds were right, even Zion could benefit from the climatic effects of Hermon and receive such heavy dew.¹² The unity of the brothers was like that. A gift from above, from God, invaluable for the purpose God gave it. And that pur-

pose here is for life! Life in the full sense that God intended it to be enjoyed.

Thus the general picture is clear and most encouraging in its speaking of the beauty of the unity of the brothers.

The actual situation

However, in spite of all the beauty of this unity, it was far from perfect in the days of David. Consider the situation. David may know and sing of the centrality of Zion and that *there* the unity is to be found. But meanwhile one could say that the actual situation is more a reason to cry than to rejoice. After all, in those days, there was not one, but there were two high priests in Israel and there was not one but two centres of legitimate worship of the LORD. That was because David had come to the throne after a long period of religious degeneracy and chaos. Already in the days of the Judges the tabernacle and the ark had become separated. The tabernacle had moved from Shiloh to Nob (cf. 1 Sam. 1:9; 5:1-11; 21:1-9) and eventually came to Gibeon, about eight kilometres north of Jerusalem, where it was in David's day (1 Chron. 16:39). At Gibeon, the bronze altar of burnt offering stood before the tabernacle (1 Chron. 21:29) and Zadok was high priest (cf. 1 Chron. 19:39).¹³ At Zion was the second site of worship. Here the ark was and Abiathar served as high priest. Zion too had its sacrificial service.¹⁴ The problems these two centres posed for conscientious Israelites must have been many. To which one should the people go to worship? To Zadok or Abiathar? Small wonder that Scripture informs us that "The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD..." (1 Kings 3:2).

With all David's singing of unity, there was still a basic disunity in the country. That is why it is unlikely that this Psalm was composed originally as a pilgrim song. The people did not even worship together. David was powerless to change this situation of two high priests. David desired very much to build a temple to God in Zion (and so also work for the unity of Israel), but God forbade him to do this (Ps. 132:1-5; 2 Sam. 7:1-17; 1 Chron. 17:1-15). In God's sovereign wisdom, it was only in Solomon's day that there was one high priest and one temple in Jerusalem to which all the pilgrims were expected to converge for the sacrifices and the feasts.

So there is a poignant air to this psalm that cries for a better day. To be sure, all the tribes had been involved in bringing up the ark to Zion (2 Sam. 6:12-19; 1 Chron. 15; cf. 13:1-6), but the disunity in the worship of God could not be denied. With all the blessings that David enjoyed, how he must have longed for the blessing of the temple which would combine tabernacle and ark into one location again!¹⁵

When Solomon's temple came, Psalm 133 could be sung by the pilgrims as they came from all over the land for the three annual feasts. They could experience the unity in a most concrete way. The different tribes, with all their different characteristics found their unity in the Aaronic service of reconciliation and so found their communion with their God. This later pilgrimage context of this Psalm gave a foretaste of the full and perfect joy of the unity of the people of God.

But this joy did not last. The church became divided into two kingdoms and Jeroboam I decreed that Dan and Bethel would be the places of worship for his realm, lest the tribes return to the house of David (1 Kings 12:26-33). With the reformation of Hezekiah and Josiah the northern tribes came to

Jerusalem again (2 Chron. 30; 2 Kings 23:21-23/2 Chron. 35:1-19; cf. 34:6-7), and once again there was that foretaste of the perfect joy of the unity of the people of God. That perfect unity would come with the fulfillment of the temple, when God came to man in our Lord Jesus Christ, Immanuel.

The situation today

When we look back from the time in which we may live to the age of Psalm 133, then how rich we are in Christ! The order of Aaron with its sacrifices of reconciliation on Zion has been superseded and fulfilled by our high priest Jesus Christ, after the order of Melchizedek. In Christ and in His atoning work we may find each other and be brothers and sisters together in holy unity. No one today would think of going to an earthly Zion or Jerusalem in the land of Israel to experience unity of the brothers and sisters on the basis of the sacrifices offered there. God no longer lives there in His sanctuary. Today, we have come, in the words of Hebrews 12, "to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." And therefore, as in the days of the Old Testament, the unity of God's people is still a gift of God, it



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comes down from above, because of Christ's sacrifice. And because of that same sacrifice, the anointing oil of the Spirit has now come down upon God's people which is a kingdom of priests, sharing in the anointing of Christ (1 Cor. 1:21-22; 1 John 2:27) in whom the church is one. God gives the unity of the church. It comes from above. The unity of the church is only found in Christ and His work of salvation (cf., e.g. Eph. 2:11-22). It is not something that man can achieve. The unity of brothers and sisters is a gift of God and a manifestation of His grace in a broken world. But at the same time it must be sought. It is a mandate (Eph. 4:1-6). As Israel's pilgrims sought it when they made their way to Zion.

It is easy to see why Psalm 133 was sung in 1892. Our forefathers recognized the unity from above which God had given in Christ, also between them as the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk and the Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerken. Our forefathers did not dare to remain separate as two church organizations, but did what they could to manifest with integrity what God had already established, namely, their unity in Christ. A hundred years later, new ecumenical challenges face the church of Jesus Christ. Psalm 133 reminds us of some basics. Brothers and sisters find each other in the atoning work of Christ. In Christ, true unity and life is found. Real unity is found nowhere else. Today Reformed believers are found in different ecclesiastical bodies that seek to promote true unity in their midst by not tolerating error and promoting truth in Christ. To stay close to home, we can think (besides the Canadian Reformed Churches) of the independent (Christian) Reformed Churches, the Orthodox Christian Reformed, and the Free Reformed Churches. Like the tribes of Israel, each has their own specific identity. But the underlying unity in Christ, the fact that we are brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. e.g., Mark 3:35; Rom. 8:14; Heb. 2:11), needs to be acknowledged and manifested.

When speaking of the unity of the church it is easy to speak of "them" and "us." Psalm 133 teaches us to speak more in terms of the central place of the sacrifice of reconciliation given in Christ. Christ is the focal point of church gathering and only in Him is true unity to be found. Thus, we must be careful in seeking church unity not to insist on

our own way, but on Christ's way. Not what we may prefer, but what Christ demands is to be paramount. May our gracious God work ecumenical miracles again in our day. The miracle of the unity of brothers and sisters and churches that comes from above and that finds its real focus in the new Jerusalem. Like the dew of Hermon, such unity will work in a refreshing and invigorating way. For where brothers and sisters and churches are united in Christ and find their unity in His atoning work, there the Lord commands the blessing, even life in its exhilarating fullness, now and...for evermore!



¹The Harmony of Protestant Confessions, rev. and enlarged by P. Hall. (1992, reprint of the 1842 edition), p. xxxvii (preface).

²See *Handelingen van de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk 7 - 17 Juni 1892 en der Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland 17 Juni 1892 gehouden te Amsterdam* (1892) pp. 11, 24 (respectively Art. 7 and 27). Another ecumenical occasion for which Psalm 133 was used was the opening of the Constitutive Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches on 26 October 1982 in Groningen, the Netherlands. Rev. G. Van Rongen opened this meeting by speaking first on Psalm 133. See *De Reformatie*, 58:6 (1982) 90.

³The RSV (and the New RSV) inexplicably leave out the reference to David in the heading of the Psalm. In agreement with the heading as traditionally translated, David is assumed to be the poet of Psalm 133. See on the headings of the Psalms and Davidic authorship, e.g., E.J. Young, *An Introduction*

to the Old Testament (1964) 297-304. Also see H.-J. Krause, *Psalms 1-59* (1988, orig. 1978) 22-23.

⁴Another important suggestion is that Psalm 133 is a didactic poem that "praises the (harmonious) living-together of brothers on a common hereditary estate." H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60 - 150* (1989, orig. 1978) 485, 486. See further J.P. van der Ploeg, "Psalm CXXXIII and its main problems," in *Loven en Geloven* (1975) 193-195.

⁵See, e.g., J. Calvin, *Psalms*, V, 163-164; S. Cox, *The Pilgrim Psalms* (Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1983; first pub. c. 1877) 214-215.

⁶After the ark had been returned by the Philistines, it remained in Kiriath-jearim until David brought it to Jerusalem (1 Sam. 7:1, 2; 2 Sam. 6:2-3).

⁷See, e.g., on David's motives, C.J. Goslinga, *Het Tweede Boek Samuël* (1962) 125-126. See on this occasion for Psalm 133, E.W. Hengstenberg, *Commentar über die Psalmen*, IV.2 (1847), 81.

⁸Some headings like that in Psalm 133 appear to have been added later, judging from the author and contents. (See N.H. Ridderbos, *Psalmen*, I (1962), 8; also D. Kidner, *Psalms 1 - 72* (1973) 33.

For different interpretations of "Song of Ascents" see, e.g., the summary in L.C. Allen, *Psalms 101 - 150* (1983) 219-221. Understanding the Songs of Ascent as sung by pilgrims going to Jerusalem is the most widely accepted interpretation, but we cannot be sure. Cf., e.g., the caution of Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 308-309 and R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (1969), 980-981.

⁹Cf. 2 Sam. 20:25; see C.F. Keil, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology*, I (1887) 159. Abiathar had and used the high priestly ephod and Urim and Thummim. See, e.g., 1 Sam. 23 and on Ps. 20, N.H. Ridderbos, *De Psalmen*, I, 215-217.

¹⁰Besides this argument, others that could be mentioned include: 1. Earlier precedent. Sacrifices were offered before the Lord (whose presence was symbolized in the ark) in the days of the judges (Judges 21:4; cf. 20:27). 2. The sacrifices offered on the ark's arrival in Jerusalem set a possible pattern for future worship there. See Keil, *Manual*, 159. 3. Psalms of David associate the Zion tent with sacrifices (e.g. Ps. 20:2-3; 65:5). See further, e.g., J. Niehaus, "The Central Sanctuary: Where and When?", *Tyndale Bulletin*, 43 (1992) 19 n.41; J. Ridderbos, *De Psalmen*, I (1955) 48, 173. Cf. Goslinga, *2 Samuël*, 121.

¹¹See Kidner, *Psalms 73 - 150*, 453.

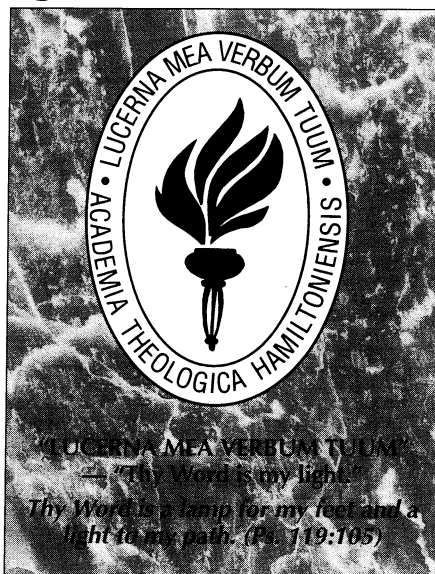
¹²See F. Delitzsch, *The Psalms*, III (1968; 1st pub. in Ger. 1873), 319-320.

¹³Zadok apparently became high priest after Saul's massacre of the priests, including the high priest Ahimelech, at Nob and after Abiathar's flight to David with the high priestly ephod.

¹⁴See footnote 10 above.

¹⁵It was also bitterly ironic that Zion where David praised the unity of the brothers, was also the place where David experienced the terrible dissension and bloodshed in his own family during the rebellion of Absalom.

OUR COVER



Principal's Report 1992

By C. Van Dam

As we stand at the threshold of a new academic year, our thoughts go back to the many blessings which we have received in the year past.

College Evening

The Seventeenth Convocation and the Twenty-Second Anniversary Meeting of the Theological College took place on Friday, September 6, 1991. Dr. J. DeJong delivered his inaugural address entitled "The Impact of New Trends in Biblical Interpretation." The Master of Divinity degree was conferred on Mr. Wilhelmus M. Wielenga who now serves the American Reformed Church at Lynden, Washington and Mr. Ken Herfst who serves as missionary for the Free Reformed Churches in Cubulco, Guatemala. This degree was also conferred *in absentia* on Mr. Roger Dean Anderson who served in a pastoral ministry for a year in Hamilton, New Zealand and is now studying at our sister institution in Kampen.

Students, Professors, and Lectures

Two new students were admitted last year, namely, Mr. Johan Plug of the Free Reformed Church in Albany, West Australia, and Mr. Joe Poppe of the Canadian Reformed Church at Guelph. Besides these two freshmen, there were three sophomores, five juniors, and one senior, for a total of eleven students. That single senior student is of course our graduate this year. He is Mr. John Ludwig who has accepted the call from the church at London, Ontario.

This past academic year it was again possible to extend some financial help to students from the Faber-Holwerda Bursary and from the Christian Disciple Fund.

With respect to the professors we can begin with the emeriti and grate-

fully note that during the past academic year Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber and Dr. and Mrs. K. Deddens could celebrate their fortieth anniversaries of both their marriages as well as of their respective office as minister of the Word.

With gratitude it can also be stated that the faculty were able to give their lectures unhindered by sickness. Within the context of the regular lecture hours we can note that Rev. G. Van Dooren, a former lecturer at our College, was willing and able (at the age of 81!) to conduct two sermon sessions while Dr. J. DeJong was in Brazil. Also within the department of Diaconiology we were able to benefit from the expertise of Mr. H. Van Dooren, Clinical Director, Child and Adolescent Services, Hamilton-Wentworth Region, who lectured on counselling and Mr. H. Sieders, funeral director, who gave the students insights into care for the grieving when they visited his funeral home. Mr. H. Scholtens, M.D., made himself available for a lecture on medical ethics.

Other special lectures also took place. On December 3, 1991, Dr. M.E. Botha, Professor of Philosophy at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education in South Africa, addressed the question "Does Theology Have Philosophical Foundations?" On February 24, 1992, Rev. B. Giay, a native of the Western Highlands of Irian Jaya and now in graduate studies in anthropology in Amsterdam spoke to us on how the Iranian people first perceived the gospel when it was preached to them by missionaries. On March 17, 1992, Dr. B. Gaal, Professor of Systematic Theology at the Reformed Theological Academy, University of Debrecen, Hungary, visited the College and spoke briefly on the circumstances in which Reformed people in Hungary find themselves.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Last year at this time, Dr. J. Faber was in Kampen on the invitation of the Board of Governors of the Theological University of Kampen in order to teach dogmatics in the fall term while Prof. B. Kamphuis was on a special study leave. This was no holiday! Dr. Faber taught a full load in less than the normal time and exercised all the other responsibilities expected of him.

In light of the upheavals currently taking place in the Christian Reformed Church and the secessions that have occurred it will come as no surprise that members of the Senate have been involved in unofficial discussions with those who are concerned and with those who have already left. Several meetings with these brothers took place in Hamilton at which not only the professors but also other ministers of Canadian Reformed churches participated. In May, 1992, Dr. J. Faber addressed public meetings for Canadian Reformed and (ex-)Christian Reformed audiences in Calgary and Edmonton on the notion of the pluriformity of the church and on the relationship between Canadian Reformed churches and churches which were once Christian Reformed.

Dr. J. DeJong was in Brazil from October 15-25, 1991 attending the Latin American mission conference in north-eastern Brazil. Such a conference is held every two years to discuss matters of common interest and concern to the various mission fields in that part of the world.

Dr. N.H. Gootjes spoke at the Ministers Workshop on January 6, 1992 on the Lord's Supper. On April 4, 1992 he spoke on medical ethics at an Office-Bearers Conference at Winnipeg.

Dr. J. DeJong spoke at the spring Minister's Workshop on June 1, 1992, on the Union of 1892. He also spoke on the same topic on June 17, the one hundredth anniversary of this ecclesiastical Union of 1892 at a public meeting of commemoration organized by the Theological College.

In June Dr. J. Faber and Dr. N.H. Gootjes travelled to Edinburgh for a meeting of the ICRC Committee on Theological Affirmation.

From August 11-15, Dr. N.H. Gootjes and Dr. C. Van Dam attended an international conference on Faith and Science in Ancaster, Ontario, organized by the Pascal Centre for Advanced Studies in Faith and Science and Redeemer College.

Mid-America Journal of Theology published an article by Dr. C. Van Dam, entitled "How Shall we read Genesis 1?"

Under the auspices of the Publication Foundation, preparations are under way for a first volume on the work of Dr. K. Schilder. We appreciate the generous financial support from within the churches for this purpose and we hope

that this support will become tangible in the publishing of a first book sometime this academic year.

Before leaving the work of professors, there is one historical item that should be mentioned. Our College is relatively young. Tonight is our Twenty-third Anniversary meeting. Yet, lest we forget those who preceded us, portraits of all those involved with the College have been made or standardized and hung in a dignified manner in the lounge at the College. There are already nine. The list starts with the Rev. J.T. van Popta who passed away before he even knew of his appointment as Professor of Dogmatics and continues through with Prof. F. Kouwenhoven, Th. M., who served less than a month as Professor of Old Testament before being taken away, and Rev. H. Scholten, Th. M., who served from 1969-1980 as lecturer in Church History and Church Polity and who was called to glory in 1982. The remaining pictures are of those who are still with us and in order of retirement they are: Prof. H.M. Ohmann, former Professor of Old Tes-

tament and now serving in that function at the Theological University at Kampen; Rev. G. Van Dooren, Th. M., former lecturer in Diaconiology; Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, Th. M., former lecturer in Church History and Church Polity; Prof. L. Selles, emeritus Professor of New Testament; Dr. K. Deddens, emeritus Professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology; and Dr. J. Faber, emeritus Professor of Dogmatology.

Library

No principal's report would be complete without mentioning the Library and the constant faithful support of our sisters from all the congregations through the Women's Savings Action. With the \$20,000 which we received from you we were once again able to purchase the necessary tools in the form of books and journals for studying and teaching. Important works acquired include a complete concordance to the writings of Josephus, an important Jewish historian of the first century A.D. and a complete set of all the important theological works of the first dogmati-



◀ L. to r. Prof. Dr. N.H. Gootjes, Prof. L. Selles, Prof. J. Geertsema, Mr. J.E. Ludwig, Prof. Dr. C. Van Dam, Prof. Dr. J. DeJong and Prof. Dr. J. Faber



Board of Governors and Trustees ▶

cian of the Reformation, Melanchthon (edited by Stupperich). We can also mention multi-volume important reprints of original documents from ancient Egypt (translated and edited by J.H. Breasted) and Assyria (translated and edited by D.D. Luckenbill). We also gratefully acknowledge that the Women's Savings Action financed additional new shelving in the library.

During this past year, another worker of the first hour in the Women's Savings Action was called from this earthly life to the Lord. We remember with gratitude the labours of Mrs. C. Lindhout who along with her husband meant so much for the Women's Savings Action during those first years. They worked closely with the late Mrs. L. Selles in gathering and funnelling the gifts of the sisters to the Theological College. Recently br. Lindhout entrusted the archives of the first years of the Women's Savings Action to the Theological College and it will have a special place among the archival material we are in the process of collecting.

Besides the Women's Savings Action we also notice the interest of the brothers and sisters in our library in the spontaneous and often quite valuable gifts that are presented to the College. These have been regularly acknowledged in the College Corner column in *Clarion*. The interest in our library is also evident from the volunteers who provide a very important service for the smooth operation of the library. We could count again on the regular support of Mrs. Marsha Ostermeier and Mrs. Allison Schutten. Mrs. Ostermeier was not able to continue after December and Mr. U. Krikke volunteered his time and services. We are very appreciative of all the volunteer services. The library could not function normally without them.

Our regular library staff, Ms. Marian Van Til, Associate Librarian, and Catherine Mechelse, Library Technician, continued to process the new books and persevered in the cataloguing of the Van der Waal collection. It is hoped that this cataloguing can be finished within the next year or so. It is appropriate to mention at this point that October 27, 1991 was an important and joyful day for Catherine and the College community since on that day she officially joined the Canadian Reformed Church at Ancaster.



L. to r.
Prof. Dr. C. Van Dam,
Prof. Dr. N.H. Gootjes,
Mr. J.E. Ludwig, and
Prof. J. Geertsema

In the Midst of the Churches

One of the gratifying aspects of working at the College is being reminded in so many ways of the supporting community of churches that pray for and financially make possible the Theological College. It is truly a College of and for the churches. This close relationship is seen in the regular classroom visits brought by the academic governors and by the many hours of meetings and work the financial governors expend in their care for the College. This close relationship means that also the grief that struck the chairman of the Board and his family also impacted on the College community. We wish our br. and sr. Cl. Stam and the family the continued strength and comfort from the Lord our God in their loss of Edward this past year and the continued recovery of Richard.

The fact that the College does not exist in a vacuum but in the midst of a large supporting community was also underlined by the fact that we could have the grade four class of John Calvin School in Smithville visit us on March 27. On June 3, grades one through six from the Dufferin Area Christian School in Orangeville visited us. Such visits are greatly appreciated.

When we think of the supporting community, we also think of our Australian brothers and sisters who contribute financially on a regular basis.

We presently have one student from Australia (namely Mr. J. Plug) and in these days one more from Australia has been officially admitted to the College, namely, Richard Eikelboom from Byford. Four other students have been admitted (all from Canadian Reformed churches); Mr. T. Kelly DeVries of Cloverdale, BC; Mr. Theodore Lodder of Ancaster, ON (and formerly of Fergus); Mr. Jason Van Vliet from Cloverdale, BC; and Mr. James Baartse of Burlington, ON.

Physical Facilities

The Property and Finance Committee of the Board of Governors was able to continue the work entrusted to them with respect to the building. In spite of large capital outlays last year (the flat roof), several major repairs needed to be made and more are in the offing (window and floor replacements). Although the building is well constructed, it is getting older and the areas for repair mentioned are such that require regular expenditures over a long period of time.

This past year we were able to welcome a new caretaker, br. K. Post, who together with his wife, is keeping the facility sparkling clean. A new addition to those facilities you see before you tonight, this new lectern with the College logo on the front, is the work of br. John Bouwman of Burlington.

Farewells

The varied and important work of the Board of Governors has been mentioned. It remains to be noted that the terms of service for five of the eleven governors is coming to an end. Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. M. VanderWel, and Rev. J. Van Rietschoten have retired and Rev. Cl. Stam and brother A.L. VanderHout have served the maximum number of consecutive years allowed (viz. nine). To all these brothers we express our heartfelt thanks for work done in love for the Lord and the churches.

May He further bless you in your ways. General Synod 1992 will be appointing new governors.

In Conclusion

The Lord our God has been gracious to us as churches to have given us a training for the ministry. It is a tremendous gift from His fatherly hand. Many students have already graduated from the College. Where would we as churches be without it? We can also look forward to an increasing number of graduates, D.V., in the years ahead,

starting with next fall. The leanest years appear to be coming to an end. This gives much reason for gratitude.

Although we live in a time of economic recession, the Lord has also provided the financial means to keep the training for the ministry alive and well. For this too, we give Him our thanks.

May our gracious God continue to bless us with His grace in the coming academic year. We cannot do without that blessing for of ourselves we are unable and unworthy. All praise and glory be to Him alone! C

News from the Women's Savings Action

September 1992

Presentation at the College Evening

At the College evening, we – on behalf of all of you – were happy and thankful to be able to present a cheque of \$22,000.00 for the purchase of books and periodicals. This represents an increase of 10 percent over the last few years. As I am sure you are aware, 7 percent GST is now charged on all books; we decided therefore to give an increase of \$2,000.00. We also received a request from the faculty to fund the purchase of a slide projector for the Theological College. This slide projector will be used to show slides illustrating the geography of the lands of the Bible, as well as aspects of the history of the church. The cost is approximately \$800.00. Thus all together we donated, \$22,800.00 to the Theological College.

Only source of funds

Our annual presentation to the Theological College is a gift by which we as women of the church want to show our love for the work which is done for the training of ministers of the gospel. However, this gift is not a luxury; it is very much a necessity for the Theological College to keep operating in an efficient and up-to-date manner. The money collected for the Women's Savings Action is the only source of funds with which the Theological College can purchase books and periodicals. At the Library Committee Meeting held in April

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION

Contributions June 1, 1991 to May 31, 1992

Abbotsford	\$ 2,590.76	Hamilton	\$1,091.46
Ancaster	671.70	Houston	
Attercliffe	742.35	Langley	2,099.50
Barrhead	530.00	Lincoln	281.15
Brampton	28.50	London	119.50
Burlington East	1,197.60	Lynden, Wash.	501.82
Burlington South	609.50	Neerlandia	
Burlington West	1,245.00	Orangeville	271.50
Calgary	200.00	Ottawa	
Carman	422.65	Port Kells	
Chatham	572.00	Rockway	289.18
Chilliwack	1,080.00	Smithers	725.00
Cloverdale	1,566.00	Smithville	1,046.60
Coaldale	1,160.00	Surrey	1,312.50
Edmonton, Imm.		Toronto	176.00
Edmonton, Prov.	1,320.14	Vernon	377.08
Elora	92.00	Watford	80.00
Fergus	221.71	Winnipeg	
Grand Rapids	94.09	Personal Donation	27.50
Grand Valley	163.35		
Guelph	474.45	Total Collected	<u>\$23,380.59</u>

Please note: Our fiscal year runs from June 1 to May 31. A number of contributions came in after May 31, 1992 and will not appear on the financial statement until the following book year.

Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Mrs. E. Mulder	Mrs. J. Van Dam	Mrs. C. Zietsma
2372 Cavendish Drive	642 Ramsgate Road	54 Como Place
Burlington, ON L7P 3B8	Burlington, ON L7N 2Y1	Hamilton, ON L9B 1Y4
(416) 332-3285	(416) 634-0593	(416) 389-8314

we were made very much aware of the fact that purchasing items for the library is a very costly affair; not only do we have the GST to contend with, but the cost of books, especially books from outside Canada, continues to rise. The average cost of a book this past year was \$35.00. Need we say anymore?

Future expansion

Last year we had promised to donate \$1500.00 towards new shelving for the library. For a variety of reasons these have not as yet been completed; we expect this to be done in the coming year. Let us also take this opportunity to remind you that the need for more library space continues to grow and we hope to be prepared financially for this eventuality by building up an expansion fund. Increasing one's facilities is an expensive proposition as I am

sure that you are all aware. We are thankful that we were able to put aside a little again this year.

Tax receipts


During this past year many tax receipts could again be given out; we are very thankful that we do receive so many donations of more than \$10.00. An organization as small as ours has to set a minimum limit because of the costs involved in the printing and mailing of receipts.

Heartfelt thanks

Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all the representatives and their co-workers for their dedicated efforts in once again collecting and counting. We also wish to thank each and every one of you for faithfully supporting this cause with your gifts, each in the way in which

the Lord has blessed you. Without your commitment and participation we could not carry on.

May our heavenly Father be with each one of you in your personal circumstances. We are thankful that the Lord has been with Mrs. Mulder during this past year when health problems did arise and pray that He will also continue to be with her and her husband. Earlier this year the Lord took to Himself His child, Mrs. C. Lindhout. With gratefulness we remember the work which she has done so faithfully for many years as treasurer of the Women's Savings Action. May our heavenly Father continue to comfort and strengthen her husband.

Above all, we thank the Lord for providing us with the willingness and the means to continue to be able to support in this way the furtherance of His kingdom. 

Presentation of the Women's Savings Action

at the College Evening

September 11, 1992

*It gives us great pleasure to come before you tonight,
As a new school year at the College comes into sight.
On behalf of the Women's Savings Action we speak,
Only a few moments of your attention we seek.*

*During this past year much has taken place,
But above all, our heavenly Father has kept us in His
grace.*

*He has been with us in health and sickness.
He has been with us in times of joy and distress.*

*We do not come with a treatise profound,
Nor do we any deep theology expound.
We would just like to show in a simple way
How we, as Women's Savings Action, a role may play.*

*Once again the work of the Women's Savings Action
Under the blessing of the Lord could go on in its usual
fashion.*

*Throughout this beautiful land and beyond many again
did save.*

*For the library of the Theological College they joyfully
gave.*

*Once or twice a year each representative did collect in
her own way*

*With one or two others or more she was busy for many a
day.*

First an announcement in the bulletin would appear

"It is again that time of the year

We will soon be at your door

Please do not our request ignore."

Every year many teams of ladies faithfully collect.

In all kinds of weather one can expect

That they enthusiastically do their task.

From each address on their list they a donation ask.

On foot, by bicycle or by car they to work do go

Until their bag or purse does overflow.

As many a tin or jar is emptied of its content

*Or a cheque is given which does easily the total
supplement.*

A few weeks later an evening is set

When around the kitchen table they do get.

The pennies, nickles and so on over the table do scatter

Accompanied you can be sure by much chatter.

*Gradually as the evening wears on
And almost every topic has been touched upon
A neat pile of rolled change and sorted bills grows.
Finally the counting comes to a close.*

*With stiff and blackened fingers they head home
After thanks for a job well done has been shown.
Soon the representative everything in the bank
does deposit.
From all the money the library will sure profit.*

*A money order or cheque to the treasurer is sent
Who as always is happy with every dollar and cent.
Many a book and periodical can once again be bought
As over the world the best deals are sought.*

*The treasurer faithfully keeps in touch.
Every representative gets a "thank you very much."
At the end of May the financial statement is put together
Then it is time again for the trustees to confer.*

*In Mulder's cosy living room we meet
Now that the financial year is complete.
Where important decisions have to be made
In which way the library we this year will aid.*

*Earlier in the year we to the Library Committee Meeting
did go
So that we the needs of the faculty do know.
The library must always be kept up to date.*

*There is no end to the books and periodicals they
accumulate.*

*Buying books is a costly affair.
We count on each of you to do your share.
This past year a total of 23 thousand 508 dollars we did
collect.
Our thanks to all of you we do direct.*

*We may all contribute through God's grace
By collecting, counting or giving each in his or her own
place.
Every year the Lord our work together has blessed.
Your dedication and enthusiasm has once again been
manifest.*

*We thank you for giving of your time and energy.
The fruits of your labours we can clearly see.
We thank you for giving so faithfully.
Above all, we thank our heavenly Father for blessing us
abundantly.*

*Mr. Principal, the time has now come
To give you a cheque for 22 thousand dollars, quite a sum
And we also from you did hear
To have a slide projector would make some subjects
more clear
Gladly for that we the money provide.
Above all, may the Lord all of you in your work bless
and guide.*

C



*L. to r. Mrs. C. Zietsma,
Mrs. E. Mulder, and
Mrs. J. Van Dam*

Burlington West Welcomes a New Pastor

After a time of vacancy, the Lord has blessed the congregation at Burlington West with another pastor. On Dec. 8th, 1991, Rev. G.H. Visscher announced to his congregation at Surrey, British Columbia, that he had accepted the call he had received from the church at Burlington West. After sad words of farewell, the G.H. Visscher family left on May 26th for their new home. Several weeks and four flat trailer tires later the family arrived late Thursday afternoon, June 11th.

On Sunday June 14, Rev. Mulder, the minister emeritus of Burlington West, installed Rev. G.H. Visscher as pastor. Rev. Mulder chose Mark 4:26-29, the parable of the growing seed, as the text for his sermon. He stressed that the kingdom of heaven is not only about harvest but also about sowing and maturing. The kingdom of heaven is not first and foremost about judgment and a new heaven and new earth, but about bearing fruit, some forty fold, some sixty and some a hundred. The field cannot be harvested until the fruit is full nor can the weeds be cut down lest the unripened wheat be damaged. Thus, just as the servants were not allowed to cut down the weeds, so we must live with our weeds and be patient that God is letting the harvest ripen to its fullest. In determining the time of Christ's return, the crucial factor is not our impatience, but God's love. Thus, we rejoice in the sowing and growing that God works in this world, also through us, so that the harvest may be full and complete.

That afternoon Rev. G.H. Visscher preached his inaugural sermon on the same text that he had used in the service in December 1991 in Surrey when he announced that he had accepted Burlington West's call. The text was 2

Rev. and Mrs.
G.H. Visscher



Samuel 23:13-17. David, hiding from the Philistines who are deep in Israelite territory, expressed his longing for some of the waters of Bethlehem, his hometown. Three of his mighty men immediately sneak through the Philistine lines and bring back some water for David. David is pleased with his soldier's enthusiasm and desire to please him, but yet distressed by their reckless action. Only God has the right to require blood, and only to God may we show such devotion; thus David pours out the water upon the ground as a libation to the Lord. So too today. We must have great *enthusiasm* in our service of the Lord, but that enthusiasm must also be tempered with *real obedience*. Rev. Visscher exhorted the congregation not to remain passive, especially when Satan is encamped in the midst of the church, as the Philistines were in Israel. The church must be made of people who spontaneously deny themselves, trusting that anything is possible in the Lord. We are to ask ourselves if we have the same devotion to our great King that these men had for theirs. Christianity is not about finding the bare minimum of service and getting away with as many ungodly pleasures as possible. It is about enthusiasm directed to God in obedience to His will. We are not to pledge our devotion to a man, be he a minister, for

that leads to destruction and division, but rather to the great Son of David who is King today on His heavenly throne. There lies the growth and the unity of the church.

After the service Rev. Mulder addressed the congregation and Rev. Visscher asking that the congregation would first strive to know Rev. Visscher not personally, but as a pastor and shepherd of God's flock. He prayed that the task of a minister, to sow the seed – preach repentance – would continue.

Pastor R.N. Gleason, speaking on behalf of the churches in Classis North, welcomed the Visscher family. He urged us and Rev. Visscher to consider holiness most important in our lives.

The next day, Monday June 15th, the congregation was given a more informal chance to welcome the family and make them feel at home. The evening was flavoured with musical selections from the Young Peoples, the Women's Societies, the Parents Choir, the Covenant Christian School Choir, and the B. Hordyk family musicians. The family was first acquainted with not the consistory but with the most needed man, Mr. L. Dekker, who presented them with a new spare tire, in light of the fact that the family had some tire problems on the journey; next came Mr. Gerald Hoeksema, a locksmith, because the family had some problems with keys

before they set out on the journey. Rev. and Mrs. Visscher were given an opportunity to match 10 children with 10 mothers, a task Rev. Visscher immediately passed completely to his wife who got at least half correct. A poem from the Men's Society suggested renovations might be needed to the pulpit to support the gesticulating pastor. Rev. Visscher received a new sheep tie, one befitting a shepherd of the flock. Several house plants were given as well as a gift for Rev.

Visscher's newly renovated study. Rev. Mulder presented Rev. Visscher the key to the archives and also a binder containing catechism material and council information. Thinking of an earlier sermon of Rev. Visscher's, he expressed the desire for himself and Rev. Visscher to be like Jonathan and David, willing to help each other in the service of the Lord. In his final words, the Rev. Visscher thanked everyone for the warm welcome received. He acknowledged that

his arrival meant that Rev. Mulder now could *really* retire, but he urged him not to go too far away as his advice and assistance with pastoring such a large congregation would certainly be appreciated. Rev. Visscher urged the congregation to give him their prayerful support, their patience, and good cooperation.

The congregation at Burlington West thanks the Lord for a new shepherd and prays that through the grace of God he will be a rich blessing in our midst. **C**

Alcoholism and Child Protection Laws

Women's League Day in Carman, Manitoba, June 9, 1992

On a beautiful June day we were presented with two informative speeches. The first, entitled "A Christian Perspective on Alcohol," was presented by Mr. Moes of Winnipeg. The second speech "Civil Government and Child Protection," was given by Rev. de Boer of Carman.

Mr. Moes, who served as a counselor in an Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre, explained that "as soon as alcohol touches our lips it is absorbed." The entire body is affected by its consumption. Judgment becomes impaired as well as vision, coordination and hearing. People think it's a stimulant but actually it's a depressant.

Alcohol affects women differently than men. It takes a woman 1 1/2 hours to eliminate a drink opposed to one hour for a man.

"The use of alcohol during pregnancy can affect the unborn," said Mr. Moes. A baby can be born with fetal alcohol syndrome. What happens is the alcohol absorbed by the placenta can impair the growth of the brain. The temporary effect of alcohol on the mother becomes permanent in the child. Such a child cannot make friends, isn't dependable and must learn by experience rather than example. These mental deficiencies are not corrigible. There is also the possibility of physical deformity.

We also learned that being an alcoholic is a chronic illness, a behavioural disorder. A person is an alcoholic when he drinks in such a way that it causes

major problems in his life and yet he keeps on drinking.

Mr. Moes showed us what the Word of God had to say about alcoholism. "God did not regard alcohol to be evil in itself, the sin is in the way we use alcohol." Psalm 104:14, 15 says there is "wine to gladden the hearts of men." In Isaiah 55:1, the wine along with the water points to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wine and strong drink can also be a curse upon man because instead of acknowledging that he is a sinner he tries to drink his sorrows away. However, being a Christian does not make a person immune to alcohol. No one is immune to sin. It's wise to be informed because today's youth drink more than they did years ago because they have more money and more time.

Mr. Moes ended his speech by saying, "Wine is a gift from God that gladdens the heart. We must use it wisely and carefully."

During question period Alcoholics Anonymous was discussed. It's a valuable tool, however it must be used in conjuncture with the church. No Christian should attend AA alone. A friend should be with him because it's almost a religious organization.

After discussion we had a delicious buffet lunch and we played a few games.

In the afternoon Rev. de Boer spoke to us about Child Protection. Our Child Protection laws have come about because of feminism. Feminism makes a distinction between sexual activity and sexual violence. This thinking perme-

ates society and has led to the principle of consensual sex even if it involves two people of the same gender. This line of thinking effects the Canadian Child Protection laws.

Our provincial premiers signed this legislation which in some instances does children more harm than good. For example, a parent that doesn't let his child listen to certain types of music or go to certain places is considered a child abuser. Cases are brought forward where juveniles charge their parents or teachers with abuse and the adult is believed guilty until proven innocent.

Not once is the authority of the parents mentioned and the fifth commandment, to honour your father and mother, is completely ignored.

Rev. de Boer said prevention should be first in the minds of parents. In the feminist view the victim is never at fault even if wearing suggestive clothing. As Christians we disagree with this and so must make sure our children are dressed modestly.

"Regardless of legislation the Lord's ways must be taught." The Reverend closed his speech by warning us to be aware of the way the world and civil government is trying to instruct us.

During discussion afterward it was noted that there are provisions in place so if there is a victim of abuse from one of our churches there is a place where they can stay in Carman.

It is also acceptable for a victim of abuse to seek professional help but never without the guidance of the pastor and consistory.

C. van Dijk **C**

Report of the 1992 Graduation Ceremonies



From left to right: Elizabeth Barendregt, Marilyn Van de Velde, Karin Vanderveen, Marjorie Barendregt, Deborah Hofsink. Absent: Clifford Devries

Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School, Smithers, BC

Friday, June 26 was the day of the 17th graduation of the oldest Canadian Reformed High School in Canada.

Five young and beautiful ladies were to be promoted this evening from graduands to graduates (one student graduated in absentia).

The evening began with a procession of the 5 graduands. After they and their escorts were duly admired and welcomed, the Chairman of the Board, Jack Vanderveen, opened the evening with prayer and Scripture reading. After some words of welcome we were invited to sing two stanzas of our national anthem.

The learned speaker for this year was Rev. B.J. Berends. In his address he pointed out to the graduands the privilege of having received a Christ-centred

education. It is not for this life only but has eternal value. The education they received at home, in church, and at school was not given to them for its own sake; it was to equip them for service and thus to enable them to glorify God. The speaker exhorted the graduands to hold on to the truth they were taught and to use their heritage in whatever position they may be in the future. They are to put on the armour provided by home, church and school and to rejoice in their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

After this food for thought, Mr. Henk Van Beelen, the principal of the school, introduced the graduands to the public. He highlighted special characteristics of the graduands and recounted incidents illustrative of those characteristics. He closed the introduction by giving a last assignment to the graduands. They

were asked to look down and count their feet. After correctly observing they had two feet, they were urged from now on to indeed stand on their own two feet, to be confident in who and what they are.

That this exhortation of Mr. Van Beelen did not have immediate effect was clear from the fact that after this introduction there was not one valedictorian but two. Deborah Hofsink and Elizabeth Barendregt read the valedictory address highlighting memorable incidents from their twelve years of Ebenezer and expressing thanks for the education they could receive.

After this valedictorian address the chairman of the board and the principal proceeded with the actual graduation ceremony – the handing out of the diplomas. After much applause and many pictures it was time for the award ceremonies, the results of which are as follows:

Pacific Inland Resources Bursary (\$100) – Marilyn Van de Velde

Bulkley Valley Hospital Auxiliary Bursary (\$500) – Marilyn Van de Velde
VanderGaag and Sons Construction Scholarship (\$500) – Deborah Hofsink

Premier School Agendas Scholarship (\$500) – shared by Marilyn Van de Velde and Deborah Hofsink

Governor General's Academic Award – Deborah Hofsink

In addition to these awards for the graduates the Helping Hands Ladies Auxiliary awarded a study grant of \$100 to David Doornbos, a grade 11 student who had been accepted by Simon Fraser University for their summer advanced placement program.

At the time of writing it has also become known that Deborah Hofsink has become a winner of a provincial scholarship award of \$1000 as her score on the provincial scholarship exams was well over 1700 points, the minimum re-



From left to right: Neil Barendregt, Aleida Dejong, Hermann Dejong, Randy Dykstra, Jonathan Penninga, Jonathan Slomp, Jeremy Van Beelen, Jeffrey Van der Gaag, Collin Van Veldhuizen. Absent: Dirk Barendregt

quirement. We can also report that four of our six graduates satisfied provincial requirements with honours, which reflects their excellent working habits.

Next the graduates were given the floor for a presentation. They entertained us with a student view of the high school teachers and janitor of our school and dramatized a staff meeting. They must have bugged the staff room for their interpretation was right on (well?!).

Then it was time for the grade 7 students to graduate from the elementary to high school division of Ebenezer School. The vice-principal, Mr. John Jongsma, and the chairman of the board handed out the diplomas and extended congratulations to these graduates.

After a number of "end of year" matters were dealt with such as goodbye to departing teachers by both students and Board and the handing out

of the Mrs. VanDonselaar Memorial Award to our students of the year, Rev. Berends closed the evening in prayer.

It is our prayer that the theme for this evening chosen by the high school graduates "let what you heard from the beginning abide in you" (1 John 2:24) will indeed be fulfilled in the lives of the graduates of Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School of Smithers, BC.

An Observer 

CHURCH NEWS

CALLED AND DECLINED to
Launceston, Tasmania

Rev. C. Bosch
of Kelmscott, WA

* * *

DECLINED to Abbotsford, BC and
Grand Rapids, MI, U.S.A.

Rev. W. den Hollander
of Orangeville, ON

PRESS RELEASE

Classis (Contracta) Alberta/ Manitoba, held on September 1, 1992 at Neerlandia, AB

Elder C. Hamoen, representative of the convening church at Neerlandia, called the meeting to order and requested the singing of Psalm 119:1,3, read 1 Thess. 5 and lead in prayer. Delegates from the convening church checked the credentials and found them to be in good order. The churches of Neerlandia and Barrhead were present. Elder J. Vanderdeen was appointed chairman and Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar was appointed clerk.

Classis Contracta was convened to deal with the release of the Rev. G. Wieske, minister of the church at Neerlandia.

All the documents for the release of the Rev. G. Wieske from the church at Neerlandia were read and found to be in order. Classis approved the release. A certificate of release was read, approved and signed. A request to have the Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar as counselor to the church at Neerlandia was approved.

Question period was held. The church at Barrhead was appointed to send a delegate to represent classis at the farewell service.

Censure ad. Art. 44 C.O. was not needed. The acts were read and approved. Elder W. Van Laar ended in prayer and the chairman closed the meeting.

E.J. Tiggelaar, clerk e.t.

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



Hello Busy Beavers,

One Busy Beaver wrote:

"One day in September on Sunday, my Dad and I had a game of chess, and I said, 'If I win I can go with you to work tomorrow.' And my Dad said, 'No.' And that night my Dad said to me, 'You can come with me to work.' So that night I got my clothes ready and went to bed at 8 o'clock. So that morning I put on my clothes and went to the kitchen and we had fried eggs for breakfast, and then we left and we went to a very very very very far away place."

How about you?
Do you get to watch your Dad work?
Do you get to help your Dad?
Would you like to go to work with your Dad for a day?
How do you feel about your Dad's work?
Do you have a story about helping your Dad?

We would love to hear your story about
Dad & Me
c/o The Busy Beaver Club
Premier Printing Ltd.
One Beghin Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2J 3X5

BIRTHDAY WISHES

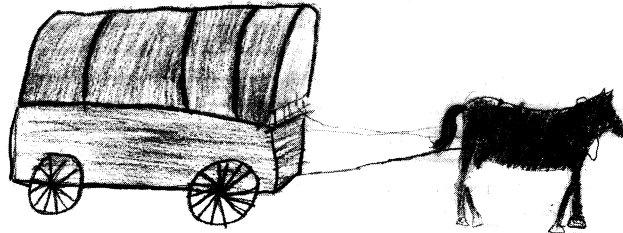
We all join in wishing you a very, very happy birthday if you have an October birthday! Here's hoping you have an excellent day celebrating with your family and friends. Above all, may our heavenly Father bless and keep each one of you in His care.

OCTOBER

Jaelyn Bartels	1	Amy Vander Horst	18
Laura Harsevoort	2	Jenny Stroop	20
Crystal Dekker	2	Will Van Oene	20
Alyssa Lodder	2	Laura Aasman	21
Arlene Winkelaar	3	Mary-Lynn Lof	23
Gerard Van Woudenberg	5	Sharon De Vries	26
Karissa Veldman	5	Alisha Dokter	28
Krista Werkman	13	Bryan Eelhart	28
Erin Siebenga	17	Denise Elliott	31
Anne Van Laar	18		

PIONEER DAYS

by Busy Beaver Jason Vandeburgt



Quiz Time!

1	2	3
2		
3		

MAGIC SQUARE

by Busy Beaver
Rachel Wierenga

1. a kind of tree
2. a large monkey
3. unlocks doors

DESIRES

Everybody has his own desires he/she would like to see fulfilled.

Can you match the person with what he/she wants?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Certain Greeks | a. wanted to understand the Scriptures |
| 2. Bartimaeus | b. wanted crumbs from a table |
| 3. Paul | c. wanted to save her people |
| 4. Mother of John and James | d. wanted his sight |
| 5. Pilate | e. wanted to see Jesus |
| 6. Hannah | f. wanted wisdom and knowledge |
| 7. Lazarus | g. wanted the salvation of Israel |
| 8. Solomon | h. wanted to eat the food of his choosing |
| 9. Esther | i. wanted to prove the innocence of Jesus' blood |
| 10. Daniel | j. right and left seats for sons |
| 11. Eunuch | k. wanted a child |

(See answers)