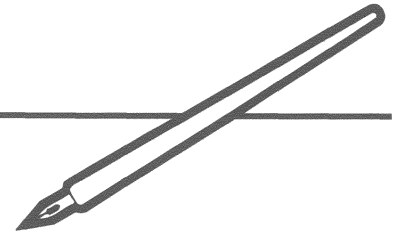




**Clarion**  
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## Something "Huge!"

The Pentecostals are active. They are also serious and mostly conservative. Seeking to live by the Bible, they emphasize the need to bring the gospel of salvation to others, and stress the attitude of loving care to those in need. Who would object to such activities? We confess in the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism that doing these things is our Christian calling.

However, there is also another side to Pentecostalism. For a number of critical notes I may refer the reader to the booklet *Test the Spirits*.<sup>1</sup> In this booklet Rev. Van Dooren writes about Neo-Pentecostalism. It is good to read what he writes. Pentecostals are not only Arminian; they are often quite superficial and mistaken on points of doctrine. They have an unbiblical view on baptism and on what they call the gifts of the Spirit, namely, speaking in tongues and healing. Their ideas about the Bible's teaching regarding regeneration and sanctification are often incorrect. They can say: "Doctrine divides, but the Spirit unites," as if the doctrine of the Scriptures is not a gift from the Spirit, and as if the Spirit does not teach us to keep and guard what is taught in Scripture.

My writing about these things is caused by what I read not so long ago in an uncritical, unbalanced article in a Reformed paper in the Netherlands about evangelistic activities of a (Neo-) Pentecostal organization in New York. The author was very impressed by the work of this organization in Brooklyn, New York, and its roughest subdivision, Bushwick. Bushwick is populated by black people who live in very poor circumstances resulting in much criminality.

One can be critical in the wrong manner, and simply condemn what one does not like. Such criticism is unbiblical and wrong. Christ warns us always to look first at ourselves and notice the log in our own eyes. It is easy to criticize others while doing nothing yourself. At the same time, we must not be indiscriminating either. God's Word is and remains the norm for all activities, our own and those of others. Our Lord tells us also to test the spirits and to examine whether things that are said or done are in agreement with His Word. Besides, there is always the danger that the spectacular and the sensational strikes us and makes a great impression on us, while we lose sight of the simple, the often invisible and uneventful but, nevertheless, important aspects of a life in Christ.

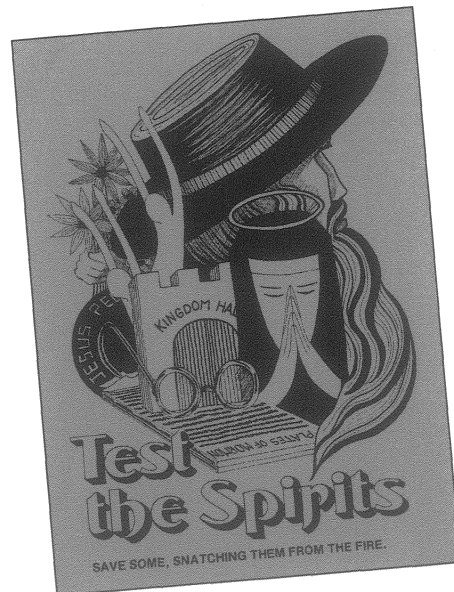
In this article the author describes how, every Saturday, this (Neo-) Pentecostal organization brings about six thousand children together in three "Sunday" school sessions, while the co-workers visit some twelve thousand children every week, to talk, to invite, to teach. With this activity the

organization tries to break the vicious circle of desperation and crime in which these youths live.

The description of the activities makes clear that the organization uses psychology and human emotion to reach its goal. There is, for instance, the repeated reciting of a line from a song: "Ha-ha-ha-leluja, He-He-He-He saved me." The children receive presents for good behaviour and for coming. Almost as a psychological slogan it is impressed on the minds of the children that faith in Jesus breaks the pattern of poverty and crime.

The article calls what this organization does "enormous" and "fabulous." It concludes with the following paragraph: One can imagine that a handful of people is willing for one week to work hard in order to reach so many children who live on the refuse dump of New York. But week after week after week, no that is unimaginable. Fabulous. Huge.

It is not my intention to condemn what this Pentecostal organization is doing. These people show their concern regarding the enormous need of the black youths and they try to break the pattern of poverty and crime. This effort is worthy of our appreciation. However, what struck me in the article is the indiscriminating and unbalanced praise for what is characterized as "fabulous" and "huge." Not only do the readers receive this enthusiastic description without any critical note about Pentecostal Arminian and other unbiblical teachings, but also there is no discerning warning against the typically American psychological-religious






business-like methods of evangelism in which the expertise of the professional salesman has to do the trick, The gospel must be preached and it must be lived. Word and life have to be one. But the gospel is not to be treated as a profitable article that good sales people have to sell by the use of psychologically effective means.

What I further notice in an unbalanced article as this is the danger that we see the spectacular and become impressed and enthused by it, while we lose sight of that biblical calling that we are to live our daily life in simple and humble obedience of faith. Such a life of faith is practically always the opposite of "huge" and "fabulous." It does not strike the eye. It goes rather unnoticed.

Let me make clear with an example what I mean. Imagine that there is somewhere a humble Christian baker. Day after day, week after week, year after year, he bakes his bread and pastries. Because he believes in Christ, he sees his daily labour as done for the Lord. Through this faith, he puts his heart in his toiling, every day again. He works hard to present a good product to his clients. He seeks their well-being with his bread, day after day. He does not cheat those who buy his products. Sometimes he gets tired. His work becomes a monotonous pattern. He has to get up very early, every day, and work hard, while the earnings are quite low. In spite of all this he continues faithfully in his daily occupation, since he does it for his Lord and Saviour. Him he wants to honour with his work and with the way he does it. And when there is, let us say: an unemployed, poor neighbour who cannot pay the weekly bill, then he tells him to forget about the debt. He erases the debt from his books. Also in this way he shows his Christian love. He does not talk about it, for there is nothing to talk about. He just does what he sees as his duty. Indeed, there is nothing spectacular, nothing sensational, nothing "huge," in it. It is a simple daily Christian life dominated by the love of the Lord.

Let me give another example. There is a mother with a growing family. She, too, loves the Lord. She gives herself to her growing family with all the love of her heart, toiling every day. She wants her children to be dressed and go to school in a decent Christian way. She teaches them to act properly and speak politely. In one word, she instructs them to behave as Christian children. She reads the Bible with them and sings Psalms with them. And every day she is busy with keeping her house clean and in order and cooking meals for husband and children. At the same time, she is always ready and willing to help her neighbours when they have difficulties. Also here the love of Christ leads her. She shows this in her actions and in her words. All this keeps her busy, day after day, month after month, year after year. And it is not always easy. This is her life, and she does not complain or murmur but just fulfils her God-given task.

Once again, this is not spectacular or sensational or emotional. It is not "huge." But this quiet, yet busy, life out of faith, this life for the Lord and for the family, in the communion of the church, is a truly Christian life. Let us not forget it. Let us all live such Christian lives, each in our own place and in our own situation, and in our own calling. Let us so, at the same time, have an open eye for those in need around us, and let us, with Christian compassion, try to help where we can and in the biblical way.

<sup>1</sup>This is a publication of Premier Printing, with contributions by Dr. C. Van Dam, Rev. G. Van Dooren, Dr. J. Faber, and so on, and dealing with present-day sects and trends. 



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# Parish Development – A New Discipline?<sub>2</sub>

By J. De Jong

In my first article I introduced the new subject being taught in the Theological University in the Netherlands called “Gemeenteopbouw” or “Parish Development.” We saw that the leading ideas of this new discipline are organization, planning, and functionality. Te Velde clearly wants to develop a more streamlined and integrated approach to all church activities.

In this article I will give a brief overview of the second booklet in the series, and add some critical comments to the approach that Te Velde has taken.

## The Ten Principles

In Volume 2 of his booklets on “Gemeenteopbouw” Te Velde deals with the ten basic principles required for the proper functioning of the congregation. These ten principles help to give an overview or “total vision” of the work done in the congregation. They are:

1. **Place:** the congregation functions in a certain place or locality. Its functioning can be pictured in terms of concentric circles that reach out toward the outside world in ever-widening concentric circles. Te Velde uses different images to make his point. The congregation can be like a rock, so fixed in its position against the world that it is totally cut off from the world; or it can be like a sponge, drinking the influences of the world in. It ought to be like a *magnet*, fixed in its position, but drawing the world to itself, 2/19.

2. **Basis:** The basis should be clear: all “gemeenteopbouw” must be seen as rooted in God and His word. Te Velde quotes Ps. 127: “Unless the Lord builds the house the labourers labour in vain.” Christ also said: “On this rock I will build my Church.” The building of the church is God’s work in Christ.

3. **Goals:** The third basic principle for church growth is setting the goals.

Goals are necessary to give one a good orientation in the work to be done. Also, they help to avoid the pitfalls of a strictly managerial approach to congregational life. Also, they serve in formulating specific operational goals for various concrete projects.

What is the overall goal that you are trying to reach? This must be kept in mind in all activities. Primary goal areas should be: to know Christ, to grow in communion with Him, to grow in fellowship with each other, to promote the renewal of creation, to give God the glory and to be “a dwelling place of God in the Spirit,” Eph. 2, 22, (2/33).

4. **Tasks:** A proper approach demands a good overview of the various tasks to be performed in the congregation. Te Velde isolates six areas of service: proclamation, self-offering, instruction, oversight, communion of saints and ministry of mercy. This configuration of six key areas of service is divided into two parts: the first three dealing with service to God and the following covering service to fellow human beings. Te Velde also sees this as a logical and systematic deduction from the various terms for service as found in God’s Word.

5. **Norm:** The norm for all work is directly connected with the basis. The norm is God’s Word as confessed in the Reformed confessions. Many activities involved in “gemeenteopbouw” have a confessional qualification. Some are also determined by the church order, which includes both confessional and non-confessional provisions.

6. **Heart:** God’s Word has priority. Therefore the heart of all “gemeenteopbouw” is: preaching. Te Velde wants to see more preaching on passages like Rom. 12, 1 Cor. 12-14, and Eph. 4. The key is: keep your heart pure. Many activities that do not have

one’s heart in the right place will prove to be fruitless.

7. **Power:** All “gemeenteopbouw” begins with the zeal of the indwelling Spirit. The energy of the Spirit manifests itself in faith, hope and love!

8. **The Way of Functioning:** The church is compared to a body in Scripture. Christ is called the head of the body. All the members must be ingrafted into Him, and only in Him can they adequately work in good harmony with each other. Five integral elements make up the life in the body: information, communication, action, reception, therapy.

9. **Gifts:** All believers have *charismata*, gifts of the Spirit. Borrowing from the American church growth expert, C.P. Wagner, Te Velde gives a list of twenty seven gifts described in Scripture, cf. Rom. 12: 1-7, 1 Cor. 12: 8-18, 28; Eph. 4, 1 Cor. 13 and 14, 1 Cor. 7, 1 Pet. 4, and Eph. 3. Te Velde also posits that there is continuity between natural and supernatural gifts, i.e., the Holy Spirit makes use of natural gifts, and employs these for His purposes. There is also a marked discontinuity in the relationship between natural and supernatural gifts. The natural gifts never work of themselves in a wholesome way, but can only work fruitfully through regeneration and renewal of the Spirit. Some gifts tend to the special office (*ambt*), others do not.

Te Velde sees a degree of unnecessary poverty in our church life on this point as well. He intimates that we live below our standards, because gifts are not adequately transferred into actual deeds of service in the congregations. Too often gifts are hidden under bushels, or in the ground, rather than capitalized for service and growth in the congregation.

10. **Offices:** The offices are a gift of God to the congregations. They are no



to be seen as a hindrance but a help to the work of "gemeenteopbouw." The officers in the church have a connecting and coordinating function with respect to "gemeenteopbouw," like ligaments and arteries in a body. Officers should take initiatives, give instruction, give examples, encourage steadfastness, stimulate, coordinate, correct, guard and decide.

I think these ten points give us a flavour of the object and goals that Te Velde has in mind with respect to this new discipline. While it represents a development in a new direction, he wishes to build the discipline up from Scripture.

### Critical Comments

Let me at this point make some critical remarks with respect to what has been introduced by Te Velde, and then conclude with some indications as to the direction we should take in this matter.

#### 1. Grounds for a New Discipline

All in all I do not see the introduction of this discipline to be well-founded in the approach Te Velde has taken. He says that in the scheme of Kuyper, "gemeenteopbouw" would combine elements of cybernetics (a course on church government dealing with the task of the elders) with organic laics (the activities of the congregation in the general "office of believers" with respect to advancing the cause of the gospel). His critique of Kuyper is that cybernetics never really has enough "body" in his encyclopedic system. Indeed, cybernetics later was simply treated as "church polity."

However, there is no indication that this discipline lacked body in Kuyper's encyclopedic division of the subjects in diaconology. It is true that on this continent it became another term for "church polity." But it is clear that this was not Kuyper's intention. He defines "cybernetics" as the art of governing the church, which is something different than a consideration of its various laws.<sup>4</sup> That the subject never was taught does not mean Kuyper gave the wrong task description for it. I think it was not introduced simply for practical reasons. In our College, that which Kuyper called cybernetics is dealt with in poimenics, the science dealing with the care of the flock. Is not care directed to mutual upbuilding and proper, practical government?



Rainbow Falls, Ontario

The important point is that Kuyper built up his various disciplines out of the Word of God as the sole principle of division (*principium divisionis*) regarding the various subjects of theology. Kuyper also attempted to formulate the logical necessity of the various disciplines as derived from Scripture. But in the case of "gemeenteopbouw" it is not clear whether we are dealing with a need born out of the encyclopedic questions themselves, or whether Te Velde only seeks to answer a need from the side of the practical concerns in the congregations, i.e. from practical life. Te Velde has not sufficiently answered the question why the discipline is needed today.

This raises the question concerning the integration of this new subject in the family of diaconological subjects. Even though it keeps its eye on the whole congregation, diaconology has always considered the *special offices* in the church. Even in the case of evangelistics and missiology, the disciplines are approached from the point of view of the "ambten," the special offices in the church. It is clear that in Te Velde's view, we have a much broader scope to deal with in this discipline. The role of the special officers is very limited in his perspective, and the focus is on activating the congregation as a whole, and on the application of systemic study and techniques to the integrated harmony of the efforts of the congregation as a whole. The question can be

raised whether this fits at all in the specific focus of diaconology as that branch of theology which considers the service of the special offices for the congregation.

The duty of all believers in their various tasks in the world has never been a part of diaconology as such. The perspective of this department – which deals with ministry in the congregation – is concerned with all the members of the church only in so far as their activities fall under the direct supervision of the special officers of the church. This, roughly speaking, comes down to being the ecclesiastical component of these activities.

#### 2. Reasons for "Gemeenteopbouw"

A second area of concern I have is the reason why Te Velde feels this discipline must be introduced, not only in the theological curriculum, but also in the practical life of the congregations. These reasons include a number of pointed criticisms directed against his own church federation. It is not for me to judge the accuracy of these criticisms, although they seem to be overstated, considering the fact that Te Velde nowhere introduces actual evidences for his assertions. As strong as these criticisms are, I still wonder whether they in themselves warrant the introduction of a new discipline in a theological program, or the implementation of a new strategy in congrega-

tional life. For example, it may be true that in our Dutch sister churches too much work is left to the ministers. But cannot this be corrected within the existing framework that we have in the Church Order? He also says that there is a lack of missionary consciousness in the churches. But here one might ask: does this require the introduction of a new discipline? It may be true that too often gifts are hidden under bushels, rather than transferred into actual deeds of service. But again – will a new approach to the operation of the congregation correct this fault?<sup>5</sup>

### 3. “Gemeenteopbouw” and Church Order

A third area of concern for me is how to place this new approach to the congregation in the context of the Church Order. This focuses not so much on the theory as on the practice of “gemeenteopbouw.” Te Velde mentions that a work group has been formed in Kampen which serves to provide congregations and consistories with advice on forming a congregational “work-plan” that would serve to make all activities more productive and streamlined for the whole congregation, 1/74. The work group is a kind of consulting agency, seeking to eliminate blockages and inefficiencies in church life. But should consistories open their internal affairs to such an outside group? Does this not involve an intrusion upon their work as the leaders and pastors in the congregation?

One can envision the possibility of officebearers seeking advice in difficult circumstances and bringing in church visitors or a senior minister to assist them in certain pastoral difficulties. But to subject the church to a plan which is mutually binding on both the consistory and congregation is a different matter. The agency deals with questions like: the work load and “job description” of the minister, the relationship between organizations in the church, and so on. Here I foresee certain misgivings, at least on the part of some consistories, who would rightly question to what extent they may share their leadership duty with outside agencies.

This also raises the question of the appropriateness of an overall “master plan” for a local church. The classical Reformed view on this matter is: Christ Himself fulfils the master plan, through the execution of the duties of the various offices, each one in his own office. In other words, there is no person in

the local church who has the overall “plan” for the church in mind. The minister more than elders will try to exercise an all-round oversight. But he too can only do so in the context of his office. And God’s oversight is effected in the church through the faithful exercise of the various limited offices and tasks in the church. To be sure, Te Velde does not want to turn the minister into a manager. But has he sufficiently guarded himself against the modern tendencies in this direction?

### 4. Terminology

At this point, the discipline is already loaded with a terminological baggage that begs certain questions. Te Velde speaks of “functions and processes.” What is a function? Or a process? Are these terms sociologically qualified, or biblically qualified? Te Velde is very explicit about the use of the humanities in this discipline. In itself that is not necessarily a fault. Theology always makes use of “lehnsatzen” or “borrowed principles” from other disciplines. But are those disciplines from which one borrows adequately characterized by a Christian approach to science?

In this area I think that Te Velde has been rather uncritical in his approach. In many parts, his booklets form an apology for charting new courses based on conclusions essentially introduced from outside the life of the church. Te Velde seems to be aware of the dangers, but when he takes recourse to the positive gains to be appropriated, (as he sees them) he minimizes the threat of these dangers for the church.

### 5. The Office!

Coupled with the new emphasis on process and function I detect a corresponding lack of attention to the concept of *office*. For the most part, the term “office” is reserved for the special officers in the church, and all the rest of the people are called the “ordinary members.” But what about the office of all believers? It is barely mentioned in an area of study in which I would have thought it deserved much more attention. Kuyper may have misused this concept of the “office of all believers” for his purposes, but this does not detract from the valuable Scriptural concepts associated with this term. Furthermore, the concept of an overall plan does not fit well with the idea that each must serve in his own office.

Notwithstanding these critical remarks, I do not want to withhold my

appreciation for the work that is being done in this area. Regardless of the names given to the subject, the attention to looking for ways and avenues to assist in the building of the church of Christ can only be positive, as long as these ways stand the scrutiny of Scripture. An important positive point is that organizations and projects should be so stream-lined that everyone in the church has an idea of what the other organization, club or committee is doing. We should also be helping and serving each other as societies and organizations!

Will we bring in the discipline “gemeenteopbouw” into our College curriculum? Our own resources and other constraints make that impossible for now. But this area will receive attention in the discipline called *poimenics*, i.e. that subject that deals with the care and oversight of the flock. To be sure, matters are dealt with that go beyond the limits of poimenics per se, but the disciplines of diaconology overlap in other areas as well. Thus, from our point of view I do not see the need for this discipline at present. But it is a good thing if each and everyone (each in his office!) expends his efforts for the building up of the congregation of Christ.

### Note:

The titles of the two booklets reviewed in these articles are:

Dr. M. Te Velde, *Gemeenteopbouw 1: Doelgericht en samenhangend werken in de christelijke gemeente* and

Dr. M. Te Velde, *Gemeenteopbouw 2: Bijbelse basisprincipes voor het functioneren van de christelijke gemeente*. Both publications are from De Vuurbaak in Barneveld, 1992.

<sup>4</sup>See A. Kuyper, *Encyclopaedie der heilige Godgeleerdheid*, III, (2nd ed., Kok, Kampen, 1909), p. 531

<sup>5</sup>In this connection it should be mentioned that Te Velde’s Scriptural justification for “renewal” in the structure of the congregation (i.e. introducing “gemeentemopbouw”) is rather weak. He uses Matt. 5:21ff., Rom. 12: 2 and Acts 6:14. But the first and last of these texts deal specifically with the church on the threshold of a new dispensation, and cannot be loosely transported to the category of “ongoing renewal”; the middle text, Rom. 12:2, focuses on individual sanctification, and not on ongoing structural reorganization of the church’s life, cf. Te Velde, 1, 37. C



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# What does God reveal in the Grand Canyon?<sup>3</sup>

By N.H. Gootjes

In connection with general revelation we are discussing the Report of the Committee on Creation and Science, submitted to Synod 1991 of the Christian Reformed Church. This Report not only called general revelation the primary revelation, but also stated that correct results of science should be seen as revelations from God. Two Reformed scholars in particular were appealed to in support of this view: Calvin and Bavinck. We dealt with Calvin in the previous article, in this article we will begin with Bavinck's view. Finally we will draw the conclusion, on the basis of God's revelation in Scripture.

## Bavinck

H. Bavinck was a Reformed theologian around the turn of the century, who wrote a complete survey of Reformed doctrine. It is a four volume set, entitled *Reformed Dogmatics*. If Bavinck is appealed to in a discussion concerning general and special revelation, one would expect that the section on revelation in the *Reformed Dogmatics* is used. That does not happen, however. A different book is appealed to, his study on *Common Grace*. The quotation taken out of this book is:

There is thus a rich revelation of God even among the heathen – not only in nature but also in their heart and conscience, in their life and history, among their statesmen and artists, their philosophers and reformers. There exists no reason at all to denigrate or diminish this divine revelation.<sup>21</sup>

This quotation of Bavinck (and the two of Calvin given before) form the basis for the conclusion that the Reformed tradition does not allow us to dismiss secular or unbelieving scholarship.

Bavinck, however, does not at all speak about science in this passage, he speaks about religion. Bavinck is dealing with God's self-revelation: "The revelation of God in nature and history is

never a mere passive pouring forth of God's virtues but is always a positive act on the part of God." Therefore this flows over in a discussion of religion. "The specific difference between the religion of Israel and the religions of the world cannot lie in the concept of revelation . . . . All religions are positive: they rest upon real or supposed revelation."<sup>22</sup> Within the context it is obvious that Bavinck does not speak about the relation between general revelation and science, but about the relation between (natural and supernatural) revelation and religion.<sup>23</sup>

But, as we said previously, we actually should look in Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics* if we want to know whether Bavinck sees correct results of science as general revelation. The content of general revelation is God, according to Bavinck. "All that is and happens is a work of God in the proper sense, and for the pious a revelation of His virtues and perfections. That is how Scripture sees nature and history. Creation, preservation and government are one glorious, continuous revelation of God . . . . Everything in nature tells the pious about God."<sup>24</sup>

At one occasion Bavinck indicates that much is connected with general revelation: "No one escapes the force of general revelation. Religion belongs to the essence of man. The idea and existence of God, the spiritual independence and eternal destination of man, origin and goal of the world, moral world order and its final triumph are altogether problems that leave the human spirit no rest."<sup>25</sup> But whatever Bavinck connects with general revelation, not the results of science.<sup>26</sup>

There is, however, one quotation from Bavinck's *Dogmatics* that time and again crops up in this connection. It is a long quotation but I will give it here in installments:<sup>27</sup>

In a certain sense it can be said that also all knowledge of nature

and history as it is acquired and applied in professions and trades, in commerce and industry, in science and art, is due to divine revelation. For all these elements of culture exist only because God puts thoughts and powers in His creation, which man gradually comes to understand under His guidance. Scripture itself testifies to this, when it says that it is God who instructs and teaches the farmer concerning the way in which he should work the soil (Is. 28:23-29).

Bavinck, indeed, says here that knowledge we have could be seen as the result of revelation. At the same time, however, it is remarkable that the quotation begins with a qualifier: "in a certain sense." To understand this quotation we have to see it in its context. Bavinck has first stated that the content of general revelation is God. "All revelation of God is obviously self-revelation." The quotation given above is an objection against Bavinck's general rule that all general revelation is self-revelation. This is indicated in the opening words: "in a certain sense." If this is an objection, how does Bavinck answer it?

However, because creation has a being that is distinct from God, and because nature and history can also be investigated by themselves and for their own sake, the knowledge of God and that of His creatures do not coincide, and we usually do not speak in the latter case of revelation as the source of knowledge.

Here we have Bavinck's first counter argument: We usually do not call this knowledge of nature and history "revelation." The reason is that they can be studied separate from God.

But as soon as creatures are brought into relation with God, and are considered *sub specie aeternitatis*,<sup>28</sup> they take on the character of revelation for us and they

cause us in a greater or lesser degree to know God.

Bavinck then explains when the creatures can be called “revelation”: when they are connected with God, when we know God through them. This is his decisive counter argument. According to Bavinck something may only be called “revelation” when it reveals something about God.

In revelation God becomes known and that is always the goal of revelation as well, that man should know, serve and honour God. It is true that God is author and content of revelation and therefore also its ultimate goal; God does everything for His own sake; of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things. But the subordinate goal of revelation is nevertheless always that the rational creature might know and serve God. This is also true of general revelation, Acts 14:17, 17:27, Rom. 1:19,20. There is a *vocatio realis*, a calling of God, which comes to man through nature and history in order that he should seek and find, know and serve God, and which renders him without excuse if he does not obey his calling.

Bavinck has reached his conclusion: revelation makes God known (not: facts from nature or history). And he strengthens his conclusion by emphasizing the goal of revelation: that man should know God (not: facts from nature or history) in order to serve Him.

In conclusion, the statement that all knowledge of nature and history are the result of revelation functions in Bavinck’s exposition as an objection. He rejects this statement, however, and maintains that general revelation makes God known.

### Isaiah 28

The texts most often used for general revelation, support the view of Bavinck (which is also the view of Art. 2 of the Belgic Confession) that general revelation reveals God. A quick survey of the most important texts will show that:

Psalm 19:1: “The heavens are telling the glory of *God*; and the firmament proclaims *His handiwork*.”<sup>29</sup>

Acts 14:16 ff: “In past generations He allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways; yet He did not leave *Himself* without witness, for He did good . . . .”

Acts 17:26ff: “And He made from one every nation of men to live on all

the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek *God*, in the hope that they might feel after *Him* and find *Him*.”

Rom. 1:19ff: “For what can be known about *God* is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.” These texts all say that God revealed Himself in His general revelation.

The exception to this rule is Rom. 2:14ff: “When gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that *what the law requires* is written in their hearts . . . .” This exception, however, is the law of God. Not one of these says that some results of science are revelations from God.

The previous texts are all texts traditionally used for general revelation. One text, however, began to be used in this connection only fairly recently: Is. 28. This is a passage about a farmer who sows different seeds in different places and who harvests the different grains in different ways. The conclusion is: “This also comes from the Lord of hosts; He is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.” This text has a central place in the Report.<sup>30</sup> The conclusion drawn from it is: “God instructs the farmer not directly from the Scriptures, for that is not their purpose, but through the wisdom embedded in the creation itself.”

We can easily agree with the first half of this statement. Isaiah 28 does not

say that God instructs the farmer through the Scriptures how to farm. The problem is in the second half of this statement, the positive side of it. Does Is. 28 teach that God instructs the farmer through the wisdom embedded in the creation itself?

Before we answer this question we have to see the importance of it within the context of the Report. The Report draws a parallel between a farmer and a scientist. When a farmer has it right, his God teaches him. Similarly, when a scientist discovers DNA we may say with Isaiah: “His God teaches him, this also comes from the Lord.”<sup>31</sup> This teaching of God is seen as revelation.<sup>32</sup> Scientific results, if they are correct, have the status of revelations from God.

This application of Is. 28, however, is not in agreement with the text. In the first place, the text does not say that God teaches facts concerning the world. It says instead that God teaches practical things: how to plow (v. 25); where to sow (v. 26); with what to thresh (v. 27); how long to thresh (v. 28). God teaches the farmer, no doubt through experience, how to act in His creation. Not the scholar’s scientific results (like DNA) but the farmer’s practical actions are taught by God.

In the second place, the text does not speak about “wisdom of God embedded in creation.” It says, in v. 29, that the practical insight of the farmer “comes from the Lord.” God has given this to the farmer. After that the text continues to speak about God: “He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom.” The wisdom meant here is an attribute of God. The reasoning is: If God gives this insight to the farmer, how great is then the wisdom of God.

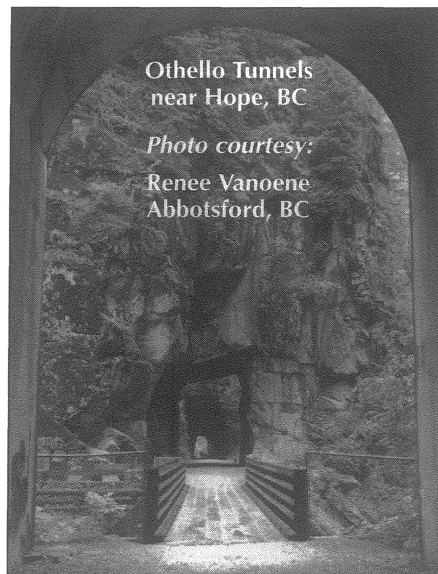
This text does not belong to the traditional proof texts for general revelation. It should not become a proof text for general revelation, either. Isaiah 28 does not speak about general revelation at all.

### Conclusion

We have investigated a modern claim that the correct results of science should be seen as general revelations from God. This view disagrees not only with Art. 2 of the Belgic Confession, it also disagrees with what Scripture says about revelation.

Several elements show this. Scripture limits the content of general revelation to knowledge about God and in one instance, knowledge of God’s will (Rom. 2:14,15). It does nowhere indi-

## OUR COVER







Grand Canyon

cate that (scientific) discoveries should be considered as revelations.

Further, all men have always received this revelation (see especially the texts from Acts 14 and Acts 17). In distinction from special revelation which increased in content as the canon grew, general revelation has in content always been the same. Scripture does not support the view that general revelation increases.

Neither does Scripture say that we need an interpreter (the scientist) to get to know this general revelation. General revelation, as Scripture speaks about it, is always accessible to all men, and all do receive it (see especially Acts 14 and Rom. 1).

Scientific results never have the status of revelation. What God reveals in the Grand Canyon is not facts about the world (how it was made and when) but His own power and glory. For that reason not even correct scientific results

should be seen as revelations from God. A qualitative difference exists between revelation and scientific results.

Problems between Scripture and science should not be discussed as if they are problems between special and general revelation. Problems between Scripture and science are problems between divine revelation and human investigation.

<sup>21</sup>Report 377, referring to the complete translation of this study on "Common Grace," in *Calvin Theological Journal*, 24/1, April 1989.

<sup>22</sup>H. Bavinck, *Common Grace* p. 41.

<sup>23</sup>Another misunderstanding of Bavinck's article occurs on p. 372 of the Report. The statement: "Special revelation does not intend to create a new supernatural order of things or a new world" is supported by this quote from Bavinck: "It creates no new cosmos but rather makes the cosmos new." In Bavinck's speech, however, 'it' does not refer to special revelation but to the Christian religion: "Christianity does not introduce a

single substantial foreign element into the creation. It creates no new cosmos but rather makes the cosmos new." See H. Bavinck, "Common Grace" in *Calvin Theological Journal* 24/1 (1989), p. 61.

<sup>24</sup>H. Bavinck, *Gereformeerde dogmatiek*, (4th ed.; Kampen: Kok, 1928) Vol. 1, p. 278.

<sup>25</sup>H. Bavinck, *Gereformeerde dogmatiek*, (vol. 1, p. 292).

<sup>26</sup>The same can be seen in the brief dogmatics which Bavinck published under the title *Magnalia Dei*. He discusses general revelation in chapter 3, which begins with the following sentence: "if it is true that man can have knowledge of God then this fact presupposes that God on His part voluntarily chose to make Himself known to man in some way or other." The content of the chapter, too, shows that Bavinck sees general revelation as revelation of God concerning Himself. "Every revelation which proceeds from God is self-revelation. God is the origin and He is also the content of His revelation." See the English translation: H. Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith: A Survey of Christian Doctrine* (translator H. Zylstra; Grand Rapids: Baker, reprinted 1977). The quotations can be found on pp. 32 and 35.

<sup>27</sup>The Dutch text in H. Bavinck, *Gereformeerde dogmatiek*, Vol. 1, pp. 313 ff. I borrowed the translation from a paper "Creational Revelation, Scriptural Revelation and science," presented by M. Goheen at the Pascal Center International Conference on Science and Belief, in 1992.

<sup>28</sup>This Latin expression means literally "under the aspect of eternity." "Eternity" is a designation of God. The whole expression means the same as the previous: "in relation with God."

<sup>29</sup>For our topic are important the articles of C. Van Dam, "How does God reveal Himself in His Works and Word," in *Clarion* Vol. 41, Nos. 8-10. See on Psalm 19 especially the second installment.

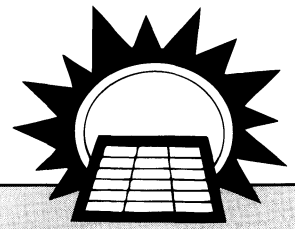
<sup>30</sup>Report, pp. 374ff. See also A. Wolters, *Creation Regained* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1985) pp. 28ff.

<sup>31</sup>The complete sentence is: "In other words, we discover embedded in it [creation] the wisdom of God. That is why, when the farmer has it right, when he discovers contour plowing and proper crop rotation, or when a scientist discovers DNA, that marvellous arrangement of the genetic code that controls the development of organic life, we may say with Isaiah, ". . . his God teaches him, this also comes from the LORD of hosts; He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom." Report, p. 375.

<sup>32</sup>This can be seen from two clear indications. In the first place, Is. 28 is discussed in the section on "general revelation and science" Report, p. 373. In the second place, the discussion of Is. 28 is introduced with this sentence: "Certainly this perspective on general revelation as a manifestation of the thought of God or, more particularly, of the wisdom of God is a clear teaching of Scripture" Report, p. 374.



# RAY OF SUNSHINE



By Mrs. R. Ravensbergen

And this is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us.

1 John 5:14

## Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Lord God has given us a beautiful gift. He wants us to use that gift every day. It is the gift of prayer. What would we do if we could not pray? We would be totally on our own!

The Lord, our Father, knows His children. He knows what we need. Therefore He gave us the gift of prayer. He also taught us how to pray. And now He wants us to use that prayer. It is a part of our thankfulness to Him. We are thankful, because God gave us His Son, who saved us from all our sin and misery.

We may come to God in prayer every day. Not only when we feel like it, or when we need help because we are sick, or have difficulties. No, continually, always, also when we feel happy and when everything seems to be going quite well. The Lord wants us to pray, for our lives depend on it!

In our prayer we tell our Father how happy we are because of His love and grace for us. We do not beg the Lord to get this or that; in our prayer we must in the first place glorify and praise the Lord because of the fact that we may serve Him.

The Lord is not happy with every prayer. If we just "say" a prayer, but our heart is not in it, then the Lord will not listen to that prayer. We have to be careful about that. Even when we pray the Lord's Prayer, the prayer that the Lord Jesus taught His disciples, the Lord may not hear it. If we just say the words without thinking, our heart is not in it. The Lord does not like that kind of prayers. They are not signs of our thankfulness, they are spoken by the mouth, but they do not come out of the heart. If we pray like that, we are lying to the Lord.

To pray with the heart is to count on the promise of God's covenant. God keeps His promises, we are sure of that. We are also sure that the Lord will hear us. We do not know how and when He will show us that He heard our prayer. We do not know if God will hear our prayer just as we expect it. But we are a hundred per cent sure of this: all God's promises are really true.

So when we pray, we may bring all our needs before the Lord. We may tell Him about our disappointments, our frustrations, our difficulties. The Lord understands and knows us. When we go to Him with our needs, He will help us. But we will

get more than that. If we expect from His almighty power everything we need, then the Lord will make us understand that there is much more than our own life. Then we will not only see our own needs, but also those of the people around us. We will learn to pray for our family, for the lonely and the sick people, for the heathen and those who are persecuted. Also for the Church's struggle to be true and holy to the Lord, and that there may be freedom to worship the Lord. We will pray for the schools and the colleges and for the Anchor Home. And the Lord will help us to do that. Even when we cannot say it too well, the Lord will help, and He will understand and hear us. Through Jesus Christ, the Saviour, all our true prayers will be perfect to the Lord.

The Lord is our strength, and therefore praying to Him gives us strength. With God's help we will be able to live our lives of obedience and thankfulness, and to His honour and glory. That we may do so all the days of our lives, until our prayers will be heard for the return of God's Kingdom.

*But when the righteous cry,  
The LORD in mercy hears their pleas;  
He graciously delivers them  
From all their miseries.  
The LORD is always near;  
The brokenhearted He will heal.  
Those crushed in spirit He will save,  
To them His love reveal.*

Psalm 34:7

## Birthdays in June:

**Joan Koerselman** will be 36 on June 17.  
Box 1312

Coaldale, AB TOK OLO

**Daniel Stroop** will be 12 on June 20.  
193 Diane Drive  
Orangeville, ON L9W 3N3

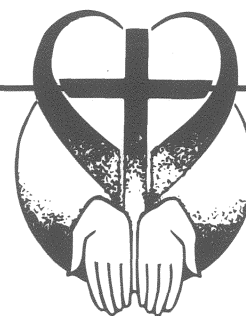
**Beverly Breukelman** will be 31 on June 30.  
2225 - 19 Street  
Coaldale, AB T1M 1G4

Happy birthday to all three of you.  
Until next month,

*Mrs. R. Ravensbergen*  
7462 Hwy. 20, RR 1  
Smithville, ON LOR 2A0



# Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund



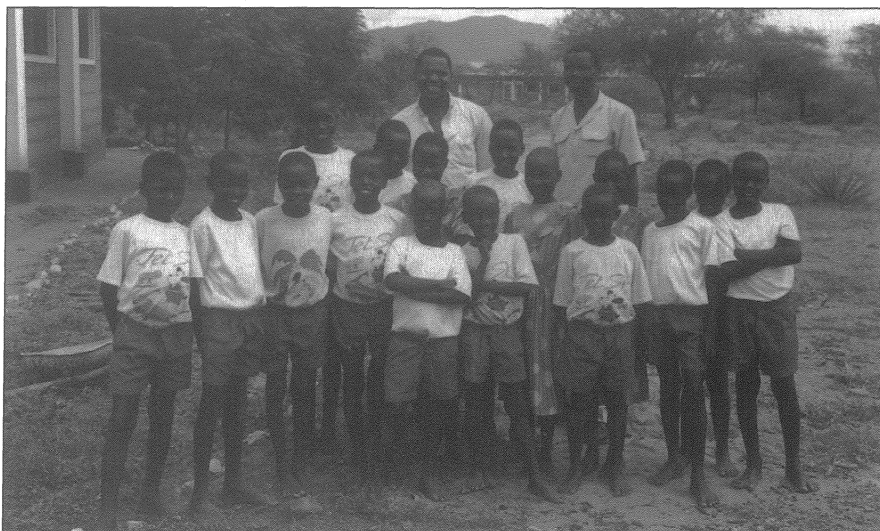
## Kenyan Update

Despite apprehension on the part of many, the recent (Dec. 29th) multi-party elections held in Kenya were peaceful. Sloppy election day procedures did not prevent international observers from concluding that the election results did reflect the broad will of the people. Kenya's president, Daniel Arap Moi, unchallenged for 14 years, was returned to power.

Mr. Moi never hid his dislike of the elections forced on him by the international community – and on January 27th, he suspended the new multi-party Parliament after it had sat only a single day. He intimated that Parliament would be recalled in several months.

Such disregard for the democratic process does nothing to help solve the country's problems including unemployment, double-digit inflation, and increasing insecurity. Bandit attacks, especially in the northeast are becoming alarmingly common.

We may be thankful, however, that this country, home to the two Chil-



*Some of the children at Kodich – together with Pastor Berger (back left) and the headmaster of the Christian Primary School*

dren's Homes which we support and to the children many of you sponsor, remains basically stable. Kenya may no longer warrant the title, "Pearl of

Africa," yet compared to most of Africa, it remains a jewel in many ways.

Still, we must be in prayer that the stability it presently enjoys will not be eroded. If the democratic process continues to be scorned, unrest will undoubtedly ensue. Let us pray that the Kenyan people will enjoy true democracy, and that Kingdom work may continue unhindered. May the Good News continue to impact mightily on the people of this beautiful country.

Reports on Kodich Children's Home assure us that Pastor Joel Bergen is an active and very capable manager. The children are well and daily life continues uninterrupted by major concerns – except, of course, for the concern over water. Thankfully, there has been rain of late and the gardens are quite green again.

However, water remains a persistent problem. At present, the Kodich area is served by one borehole installed by the government several years ago and operated by solar panels. A few of the panels



*Pastor Berger (manager at Kodich) with his wife and children*

have been broken for some time and the supply of water has become erratic and insufficient to meet the needs of those who queue up there . . . .

We decided therefore, to have a borehole constructed after geologists found good water at 80 metres. A reliable contractor has been found who is willing to undertake the work in this remote area. When this is completed, the situation for our home will be vastly improved.

Kees Rookmaaker who oversees the children's homes on our behalf writes that Florence Randa is doing well as manager of the Achego Home. Being relatively new to the work of administration, she finds there is much to learn; however, she is a willing "student" and the home is in good hands.

After her husband's sudden death, we sent some money to enable Mrs. Randa to complete work on her own home. She writes that the work is "proceeding nicely" and looks forward to its completion. The children "are also fine and are doing well with life."

The past few years have seen the departure of several who are now "of age," having entered the home when it first opened its doors in 1978 or the years following that, when we were

**Dear Sponsor,**

*It is my pleasure to have this chance of communicating to you through writing this letter. But my great gratitude goes to the loving and Almighty God for the tender care He has been taking over us.*

*At this moment, I'm back to the Children's Home after accomplishing the Computer Programming course which I've been pursuing since last year. The course has been quite interesting and I've been very happy to carry out my daily studies and duties. The course itself is in two stages, that is Certificate plus Diploma plus packages such as Lotus 1-2-3, D-base and Word Perfect.*

*I want to give great thanks to you for your support you have been offering me since I came to Achego, and it is my prayer that through God's guidance and love you are still going to continue helping other people. May God's name be praised for that.*

*By now, I've completed both Certificate and Diploma and also packages on Lotus 1-2-3, Word Star, Word Perfect and D-base III+. So I'm out to look for a job which I believe through God's grace I'll find.*

*Otherwise, I'm very happy and would ask you to pass my sincere greetings to everybody in Canada and tell them we love them and are always praying for them. We also would like you to pray for us always. May God bless you.*

*Yours faithfully,  
Mary Achieng*

able to expand Achego to its present capacity of 75. These young people leave, educated in the ways of the Lord, and prepared to take their place

in Kenyan society. (see insert letter) What a joy that through our gifts and prayers we can help to make this possible! Thank you so much for your ongoing support!

*Ruth Meerveld*  
**C**



*Office wing at Achego Children's Home*

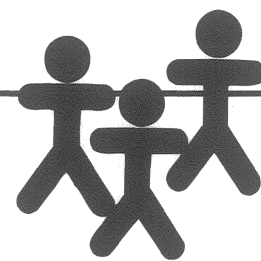
All 40 of the children cared for at Kodich Children's Homes have now been sponsored, as have 38 of the 75 at Achego. Many thanks to those of you who so faithfully support these children each month!

If you are interested in sponsorship, please write to us at the address below.

*Gifts for the works of CRWRF may be directed to:*

**Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund**  
PO Box 85225  
Burlington, ON L7R 4K4

*All gifts are gladly received. Donors of \$10.00 or more will be issued a receipt for tax deduction.*



## News from the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies

On March 26, 1993, the League met for the fourth time this school year at the Teachers' College in Hamilton.

### **CARE – Curriculum Assistance for Reformed Education**

At the CRTA Convention in February, CARE sponsored a math workshop related to the Math Conference introduced last summer. This topic will be continued with the Mathematics '93 Conference to be held at CCRTC (Hamilton) from July 5 - 9. One aspect of the conference will be the review of the recent Ontario Ministry of Education *Benchmarks* document.

One of CARE's current activities is the work of a Geography subcommittee. It is finalizing the rationale and the aims and objectives of Geography. CARE will also be reviewing the *Common Curriculum Document* just released from the Ministry of Education. This review will involve making suggestions about its implications and relevance to our schools. CARE also continues its contact with publishers to get material for the Resource Center.

### **ASC – Assistance to the Special Child**

At a recent League meeting and from various other corners, there has been a plea to revive this committee, which is a standing committee in the League's constitution. It appears that many parents of children with special needs are frustrated by the lack of services offered at our schools. Teachers are equally frustrated when access to support services is limited. Board members are at a loss when our students are denied access to diagnostic services offered by the local public school boards.

As a result, a proposal which outlines this committee's mandate and function, with actual proposed procedures, was presented to the meeting.

Briefly, this committee would raise the level of "public awareness" and "professional teachers' awareness"

within our school community concerning the needs of children with special needs. It would pursue political avenues to gain access to services offered by the public school system and other government agencies.

To carry out this mandate, ASC would organize public meetings featuring speakers, panel discussions, etc., on selected topics. It would use avenues such as CRTA conventions to organize workshops for teachers. Besides collecting testing material, made available to schools on request, it would collect articles, books, reports, etc., for parents and teachers. The committee of four would consist of two teachers and two parents.

### **OPA – Ontario Principals' Association**

Regularly at our meetings, a member of OPA keeps the league informed of its major dealings. At this meeting, the member provided a package on "child abuse policy" for each local school board. Among other relevant material, it included two defined policies in place at JCCS/CCS (Burlington/Flamborough) and Ebenezer School (Smithers).

At its upcoming meeting, two main topics the principals will be discussing are "Teaching Evaluation, Documentation and Record Keeping" and "The Common Curriculum."

### **GCC – Government Contact Committee**

During 1992, the League prepared a report on four areas for which the committee sought input. Having a league policy on funding, Bible credits, school inspection and staff development would help the GCC, in participation with FISA (Forum of Independent School Associations), when dealing with these issues with the Ministry of Education (MOE).

The staff development committee, now appointed, would have the mandate to "develop a League of Canadian Reformed School Societies' staff devel-

opment policy document and to update such a document periodically; to advise school boards and teachers regarding staff development; to function as liaison for matters related to staff development; prepare a budget and report annually to the League.


The school inspection committee will have the task of establishing the criteria and procedure for implementing a school evaluation system. At the present time, regular inspection is carried out by the Ministry of Education for grades 9 to 12 and OAC only. Since the usefulness of a MOE inspector depends on the relationship between the principal and the inspector, as well as the attitude of the inspector to private schools, there are concerns with the present system. As done in B.C., the ideal would be an inspection carried out by the MOE inspector with our own. The GCC, in conjunction with FISA, is encouraged to work on this.

The main purpose of the evaluation system will be to provide a service and a report to the schools in order to give schools a clearer picture of their strengths and possible areas for improvement.

A report from the School Inspection Committee will come back to the boards so that they will become aware of what this all involves and for implementation approval.

Under Bible Credits, the League was informed that on Feb. 8, 1993, a settlement was reached by which the MOE approved that private schools be allowed to issue "two courses in religious studies offered at the grades 9 and 10 level as applicable towards the completion of the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma." The court case on school funding is on line at the Court of Appeal and not expected to be heard until fall.

The Lord willing, the League will hold its last meeting for the school year on June 4 at CCRTC in Hamilton.

M. Spithoff 



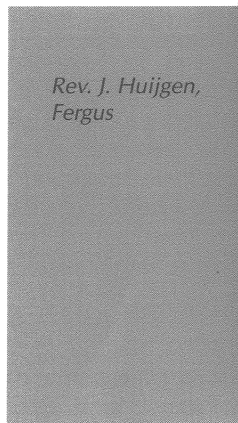
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# Annual Men's League Day, Ontario

On Saturday, March 27, 1993, the League of Men's Societies of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches held its annual league day in the Maranatha Canadian Reformed School of Fergus. Some 200 brothers and sisters had come from across Ontario (and even from Coaldale) for a morning of instruction, learning, fellowship, and bonding. The spring thaw had set in with truly mild temperatures and blue skies, making it a beautiful day in every sense of the word.

Brother G. Schutten, the chairman of the league, opened the meeting at ten o'clock with the singing of Psalm 78:1 and 2, reading of Ephesians 5:21 - 6:20 and prayer. After some introductory remarks, including a special welcome to the sisters – who had come in greater numbers than usual – he gave the floor to the Reverend J. Huijgen of Fergus, Ontario.

Reverend Huijgen addressed his audience on the role of the father in the family under the title, *Father, where are*



Rev. J. Huijgen,  
Fergus

*you?* (The text of his address will be made available to *Clarion* for publication.) After the speech, we sang Hymn 8:1 and 2, and enjoyed coffee during

intermission. The meeting was reopened with the singing of Psalm 103:5 and 7, after which the speaker entertained several written and verbal questions. Rev. Huijgen closed the morning session with the singing of Psalm 119:4 and 40, and prayer.

A soup and bun lunch had been prepared with pie and ice cream dessert. During the meal, there was ample opportunity to further discuss the role of the father and other issues that keep our minds occupied. It also provided an opportunity to enjoy and experience the bond of a common purpose in studying Scripture and Confession and the ramifications these have for our lives.

Throughout the day, interested people could look at and buy books published by the Inter League Publication Board. The ILPB publishes primarily outlines for the study of Scripture and Confessions, although some other books have been produced as well. The ILPB has a sales representative in all Canadian Reformed Churches.



Captive audience



Maranatha Christian School, Fergus

After lunch, a council meeting was held of the delegates of the represented societies. Some changes concerning the organization of the league day, the timing of the delegates meeting, and a revised constitution were discussed and adopted. The delegates will now meet after the league day morning session, and the executive is given more freedom to organize the league day. Societies are encouraged to suggest suitable topics for league days to the executive. G. Helder was reelected, and U. Krikke was chosen to replace G. Schutten as members of the league executive. Brother Schutten was thanked for his years of service as league chairman.

Keith Sikkema,  
for the League of Men Societies



## Report of the Annual League Day of the Canadian Reformed Women's Societies of Alberta, held on May 27, 1992.

*Note: The rally last year was hosted by the Coaldale Ladies Aid, and held at Trinity United Church in Calgary.*

The bright, sunny morning seemed to have encouraged many to get off to an early start, as the ladies began arriving at 9 a.m. However, the Calgary ladies were ready for them: the coffee was ready, and the baked goodies provided by the Coaldale ladies were neatly arranged. Until 10 o'clock there was time to register, renew/make acquaintance with those of other societies, admire new babies!, etc.

Just before 10 everyone was asked to start moving upstairs to the meeting hall, where Jackie Leffers would open the meeting. Together we sang Psalm 150:1 and 3, after which Jackie led us in prayer. All the ladies, about 70, were heartily welcomed as they rose in groups as a response to the roll call.

The Bible was read, Matthew 19:1-12, in connection with the day's topic. Jackie then took the opportunity to introduce our speaker, Rev. Wielenga.

Rev. Wielenga's topic was "Divorce and Remarriage." In his opening re-

marks the reverend mentioned that according to books and statistics divorce is very damaging: physically, emotionally, and economically. Everything must be done to keep the marriage together. There may be a slight increase in divorce rates in our churches, while in the world the rate seems to be going down at present.

The question we needed to deal with was: how does the traditional view of divorce (grounds being desertion or adultery) relate to Scripture.

Even this question can be hazardous. We were referred to a book review by Rev. Nederveen in the January 17, 1992 issue of *Clarion* (*Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views*). The book is written by four Bible scholars, and has four different views. We may ask ourselves if people are maybe "over-asking" Scripture for what Scripture does not mean to tell us, while at the same time "under-hearing" Scripture in what it does mean to tell us.

In examining what Jesus replied to a question concerning divorce, see Matthew 5:31, 32, and considering also

the original law of God concerning adultery, and again looking at 1 Corinthians 7, we saw that divorce and remarriage were in reality two topics.

1 Corinthians 7 was examined at some length, ending with a look at Matthew 19, which teaches to view marriage in the N.T. in the perspective of the coming Kingdom of God. That perspective should rule all of life, and in so far it doesn't, marriages of believers are as vulnerable as marriages in the O.T. and of the unbelievers. A total life view, dominated by the Kingdom perspective, is the key for healthy marriages and for the question if remarriage after divorce is desirable. Divorce cannot always be avoided. After the speech there was opportunity for questions. Due to the length and nature of the topic, the program for the day included a continuation of the discussion after lunch. (For the sake of continuity, I will record the notes from the afternoon discussion right away here. J.V.) There were many questions and comments. As we talked different points came out, for instance, 1. People that are divorced

are often shunned in the church community. These people suffer, and need our compassion and pity. 2. A circumstance for divorce may be marrying too early. It is being said that the problem of our time is not so much easy divorce as easy marriage. 3. Experts say: before going steady, have friendship with someone of the same age and sex as yourself, to learn about trust and communication. 4. Husband and wife should never stop praying together: it may be a symptom of estrangement and leads to further estrangement. 5. Young couples, and older ones, who are friends, should help one another and speak up if they see attitudes or actions harmful to the marriage relationship. 6. Marriage was not meant to, and cannot, "fulfill all life's needs"; only a living relationship with God can. Too often couples enter marriage with unrealistic, only romantic, expectations of marriage. 7. In our churches the gift of "singleness" is not enough appreciated as a gift.

Our discussion could easily have gone on for another hour, but it was time to stop.

At the end of the morning discussion, we sang Psalm 101: 1,2,3 together. Reverend Wielenga led us in prayer, and we all went downstairs for lunch.

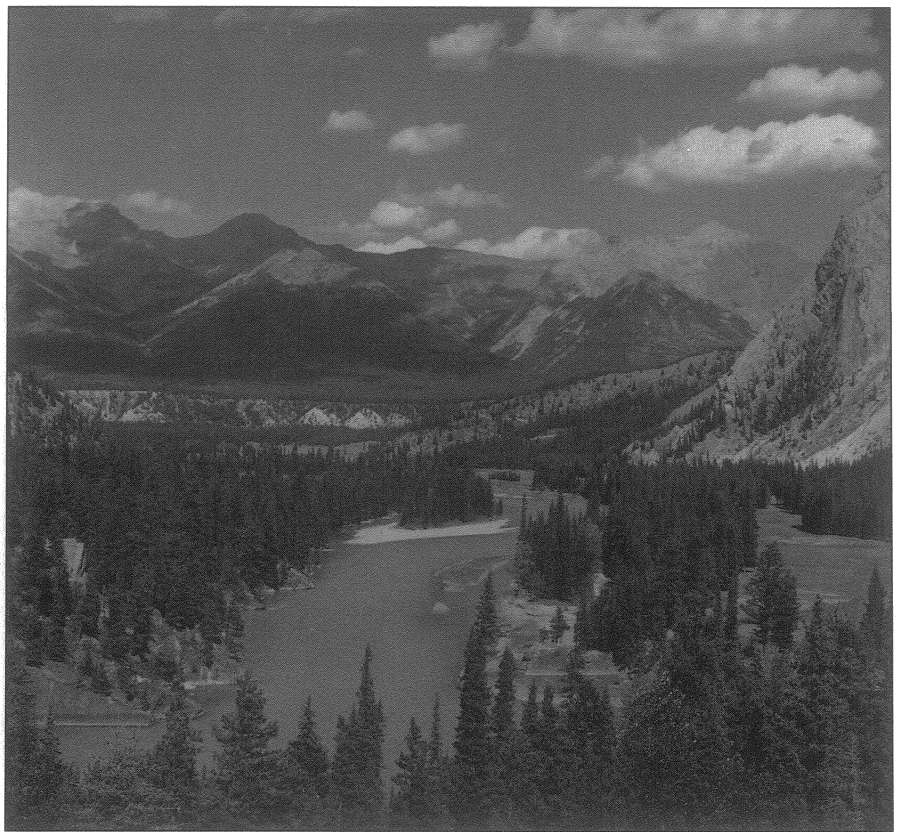
The leadership of the day was turned over to Harriet VanRaalte.

Lunch! What a meal that was. Delicious soup, buns, a variety of salads and cold meats, and at the end of the meal a yummy dessert. To solve the perpetual question of "Who goes first?" each "table" was asked to compose a poem of four lines that told about the trip to Calgary. When the poem was accepted by Harriet, the people at that table could go join the line for food.

After eating there was enough time to go outside for a walk, but most of the ladies were content to sit and visit.

When it was time to begin again, Harriet had something to get everyone out of their seats for at least a few minutes. Using the middle of the room as a divider, each side of the room was asked to line up in order of age. This was done with much hilarity! We returned to our own places, and the afternoon was officially opened with the singing of the League Song. As the afternoon would be more informal than the morning, we remained downstairs.

The discussion started in the morning was continued. We stopped with reluctance, it was time to get on to other things. Reverend Wielenga was



*Bow Valley, AB*

thanked for coming, we had all received much food for thought, I am sure.

Much to their surprise, the ladies heard that the various spring flowers adorning their name tags had a purpose. Each flower was represented only five or six times, and each flower group had to get together. The various groups, 12 or more of them, each received a card with a nursery rhyme on it. Ten or fifteen minutes of time were given to prepare a pantomime, and these were presented in turn to the rest of the groups. Who could guess what the name of the nursery rhyme was in each case? This too was lots of fun, and a great way to get to meet some of the ladies from other congregations!

Our day was slowly coming to a close. We sang together Hymn 24: 6,7, and the question period was opened. The Calgary ladies were thanked by the Coaldale ladies for their willingness to again aid us in setting up the rally in Calgary. Organizing a place to hold the meeting, preparing a lunch, setting up first thing on the morning of the day itself, the last cleaning at the end of the day. All these things are difficult to arrange from a distance. The various societies present in turn

thanked Coaldale for hosting the meeting. Griet VanDijk was thanked for playing the organ for us; it is always much appreciated!

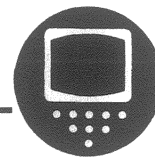
It was asked if the date for the rally could be changed. This point has come up before, it is very difficult to balance things like possible winter weather, farmers busy in the fields, etc. The present date seems to work for most of the ladies. A request was made for the host congregation to please get the pertinent information to the other congregations on time. A concern was expressed by some of the ladies that during the question period some of the questions were not heard clearly, as well as remarks from other women in the group. Should a mike be purchased? Each society was requested to consider this problem as their turn came up to be the host.

Our question period being over, we all rose to sing O Canada, and a prayer of thankfulness closed the day.

The Coaldale rally committee,  
Jackie Leffers  
Harriet VanRaalte  
Diane Versteeg  
Joanne Vegter







## Meeting of the Inter-League Publication Board with the Administration Committee, held on March 26, 1993; at Pilgrim Canadian Reformed Church in London, ON.

### Present at the meeting:

George Helder and Keith Sikkema for the Men's League, Lies Schutten and Jane Oosterhoff for the Women's League, Theo Beijes and Ted VanRaalte for the Young People's League, Pete Engbers, Rennie Pieterman, Heather VanMiddelkoop, and Elaine Spriensma of the Administration Committee, and Bonita VanderLinde, member of the Marketing Committee.

The chairman, G. Helder, opened the meeting by reading Jeremiah 17: 5-18. He led in prayer, and all were welcomed. The agenda was adopted, and the minutes of the combined meeting of October 2, 1992, were read. Minutes of Administration Committee meetings of January 15, 1993, and February 26, 1993, were read.

The Administration Committee will take care of official correspondence concerning the estate of the late Prof. Selles.

### Committee Personnel:

H. VanMiddelkoop informs us that she will be leaving the committee in

August for the happy reason of her recent engagement. Congratulations were extended. Heather has served the ILPB for many years.

### Progress Report:

*Hebrews*, Prof. L. Selles. Typesetting is complete. Committee is reviewing the galley proofs. The Administration Committee will work towards a standard cover that will incorporate the ILPB logo prominently.

*Church in the Last Judgment*, B. Holwerda. We will continue with plans to publish without "The Harlot of Revelations," an appendix that was reviewed by ILPB.

*Colossians*. Editorial corrections will be typed in.

*Luke*. Outlines will be looked at in English and Dutch versions before the next Board meeting.

*Acts*. An editor has been contacted; awaiting a reply.

*1 Corinthians*, L. Selles. Being edited  
*2 Corinthians*, L. Selles. Prof. Selles could not conclude it; arrangements will be made for completion.

*Christ In the Family*. Editing may be complete by end of June.

*Believe and Confess I*. A translator will be contacted for this project.

*James and 1 & 2 Peter*. The entire work has to be retyped to disk because of computer problems.

### Sales Report:

Sales income is still increasing.  
*Genesis* is out of stock. It will be reprinted.

### Marketing Report:

The committee will send consistories a list of books deemed suitable as a gift for profession of faith. This will be done annually.

Sales representatives should make sure their name is listed in their area church telephone directories as the local ILPB representative.

### Financial Report:

Canada Post has changed its pricing policy, which makes our mailings more expensive. The Committee is still pursuing the matter further by contacting management of Canada Post.

### New Projects:

Pro Ecclesia Publishers have been working on some of the same books as we had considered for translation.

*Sprekende Beelden*, P.J. Trimp is being done. (study material on "parables")

They may be doing *God's Liedboek Voor Zijn Volk*, Drs. G. Kwakkel and Drs. B. Vuyk. (study material on "Psalms") We will inquire if they are definite on this project.

We will look at a translation of Numbers from *Almond Branch*.

Professor VanDam is committed to writing an outline on "Leviticus."

### Miscellaneous:

Press Release will be submitted after each combined meeting.


K. Sikkema family was congratulated on the birth of a healthy daughter in January '93.

October 8, 1993, will be the next combined meeting.

May 28, 1993, will be the next Board meeting at the T. VanRaalte residence.

R. Pieterman led in closing prayer.

Jane Oosterhoff  
secretary for the  
InterLeague Publication Board **C**

**C**HURCH NEWS 

ACCEPTED to Brampton, ON  
**Rev. B.J. Berends**  
of Smithers, BC

\*\*\*

DECLINED to Neerlandia, AB  
**Rev. R.A. Schouten**  
of Calgary, AB

THE  
CANADIAN  
REFORMED CHURCH  
OF WINNIPEG

cordially invites you to celebrate with us the church-gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ in commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the institution of the Church at Winnipeg.

Date: May 14, 1993  
Time: 8:00 p.m.  
Place: 211 Rougeau Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2C 3Z9  
Phone 1-204-654-3040

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers,

I love going for nature walks.  
Birds singing make me smile.  
I love watching for plants coming up  
and checking out fat, sticky and pointy buds.

Now I want to ask you a question.  
It's about Mother's Day.  
What does your Mom like to do?  
Does she have a hobby?  
How does she like to spend her spare time?  
One Busy Beaver wrote to me that her Mom likes traveling!  
Another Busy Beaver's Mom likes birdwatching.

And your Mom?  
She has her own ideas, right?  
Right! Every Mom is different.  
And your Mom is special to  
you.  
I hope you and your special  
Mom have a happy Mother's  
Day!



## Quiz Time!

### PICTURE CODE

from Busy Beaver *Miranda Hulst*

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

## BUILD A SCORE

by Busy Beaver *Jeremy Koopmans*

10 q, z 9 f, g 8 k, j 7 w, v 6 s, d 5 t, h 4 y, l 3 c, x 2 a, u 1 e, i

B \_\_\_\_\_  
U \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
L \_\_\_\_\_  
D \_\_\_\_\_  
S \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_  
O \_\_\_\_\_  
R \_\_\_\_\_  
E \_\_\_\_\_

### Remember!

- No score for letters not listed here
- No score for beginning letters given

My score was 196.

How did you do?

## SPRING WORDSEARCH

by Busy Beaver *Amy Vanderhorst*

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

- Look for:
- Easter
  - nests
  - bird
  - rain
  - flower
  - buds
  - blooming
  - robin
  - tree
  - leaves
  - tulips
  - crocus



## PEN PALS WANTED!

Lots of Busy Beavers enjoy writing letters to *other* members of the Club.

Would you like to exchange letters with someone?  
The following people would love to hear from you!

Earle Veenendaal  
Box 50  
Homewood, MB  
ROG OYO

Crystal DeJong (age 12)  
RR 1, Site 6, Box 9  
Barrhead, AB  
T7V 1V2

Jeremy Koopmans (age 11)  
Box 1263  
Houston, BC  
VOJ 1ZO

Marian Wierenga (age 11)  
Box 156  
Neerlandia, AB  
TOG 1RO

Deanna Wierenga (age 9)  
Box 156  
Neerlandia, AB  
TOG 1RO



## TONGUE TWISTERS

from Busy Beaver *Pamela Hulst*

How fast can you say them?

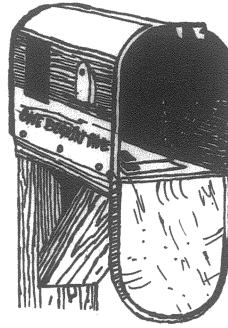
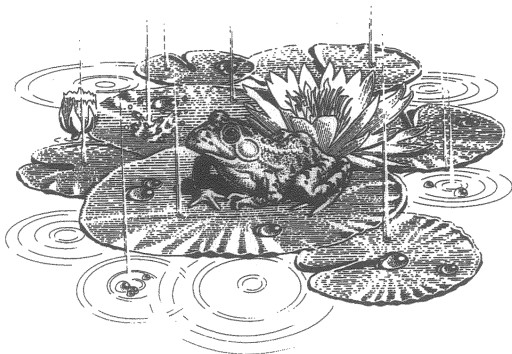
The pale proud pink peacock pecked pepper.

Seven silly spiders sat silently side by side.

Five fat frogs fought for four flies.

Eight elephants ate eight enormous eggs.

This thistle seems the same as that thistle.



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Amanda Tamminga*. I hope you'll really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Thank you for the letter and the picture, Amanda. Will you write and tell us about the farm you live on?

Welcome to the Club, *Amanda DeBoer*. Do you play baseball on a team, Amanda? And what kind of

bird is your pet? Bye for now.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Tim Burger*. Thank you for your letter. And thank you for sharing with the other Busy Beavers. Write again soon, Tim.

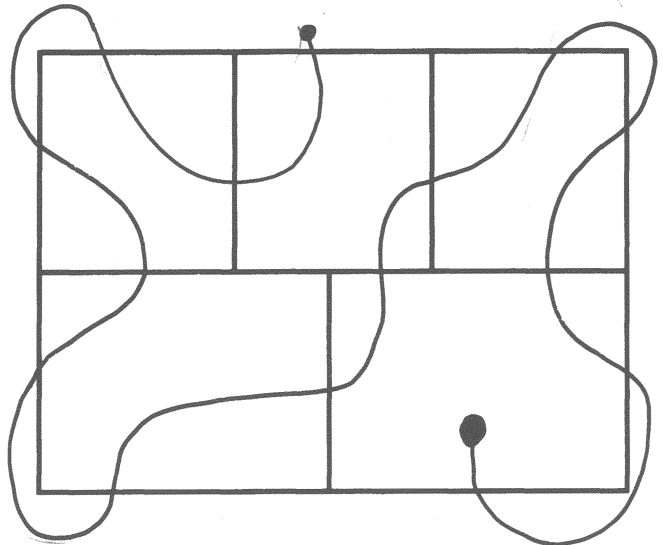
I hope you get the pen pals you are looking for, *Crystal DeJong*. Which do you like better, writing letters or getting them? I'm looking forward to your letter about California, Crystal!

How did your Easter concert go, *Amy Vanderhorst*? I would have loved to have heard you! And how is your house coming along? Thank you for sharing with the Busy Beavers, Amy. Bye for now.

Hello, *Jeremy Koopmans*. I hope you get that pen pal you are looking for. See what you can do! Thank you, Jeremy, for an interesting puzzle. You're lucky to have a smart Dad, Jeremy.

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

Answer to last time's puzzle by Busy Beaver *Marcia Rook*:



Bye for now, Busy Beavers.  
Keep up the good work!

Love to you all,  
*Aunt Betty*

