

## The Purpose of the College

September is the time that the school doors open again. This counts for the Theological College as well. In this issue a brief report is presented of the twenty-fourth College Evening and nineteenth Convocation. We take this opportunity to say a few things with regard to the purpose of the College.

There is a strong link between the College and the churches. The College is the College of the churches. It is set up by the churches for the churches. Twenty-five years ago the churches belonging to our federation met together by way of their delegates in the General Synod of Orangeville. Then our churches made the decision to establish this Theological College for the training of their ministers. When the churches set up our College, this did not only mean the institution of a theological school as such. This synodical decision included also the study as a whole. For the churches, meeting in that synod and in following synods, made decisions about the program of the study, the curriculum, too.

The Synod of Edmonton, 1965 (Acts, Art.199,6,1) said, as first point of the "Rules and Regulations": "The churches shall take care of a Theological College through Governors who shall be appointed and instructed by the General Syn-



od" ("De Kerken verzorgen de Opleiding tot de dienst des Woords door middel van Curatoren, die benoemd en geïnstrueerd worden door de Generale Synode"). Sub III, the last sentence reads that the Governors, with the advice of the teaching staff, will set up a curriculum. We continue to act in this way. If changes in the curriculum are proposed by the Faculty, the Board of Governors will discuss them and, after approval, bring them to the forthcoming general synod of the churches for final adoption.

It is clear then that the program of study at the College is the program of study of which the churches together have said and continue to say: this is the training we want our future ministers to receive. This is what we as churches together think that they need to become good Reformed ministers to lead the churches in the way of God's Word in adherence to the Reformed standards and the adopted Church Order. At the same time, the teachers, the Board of Governors, and the churches, want to maintain high academic standards.

In this respect I may pass on the judgment of a former student who received his Master of Divinity degree at our College a number of years ago and then continued his studies elsewhere because he wanted to obtain a doctor's degree. His judgment was that our College showed an academic level in its teaching that was certainly not less than the seminary where he went for his further education. It was nice to hear this positive judgment. We have always maintained in all our Reformed schools (going back to Calvin's Academy in Geneva) that biblical and confessional Reformed teaching goes together with, even includes, maintaining high academic standards.

But let me go back to the time of the Synod at Orangeville. At that time, in 1968, one student was studying in the Netherlands, three in Philadelphia at Westminster Theological Seminary, and one received his training from a number of ministers in the federation in Canada.

The churches did not want this situation to continue. They wanted uniformity in the training of their future ministers in order to build and maintain the unity in the Reformed faith and practice among the churches in the federation. Unity in training will promote the unity and peace of the churches under the blessing of the LORD. It will serve the goal that the churches are guarded and kept by the Word of God and by the Reformed standards and Church Order, again, under God's blessing.

The College, with the training program as it is set up, is of and by and for the churches. Therefore, the churches themselves want to stay in control of this training of their minis-



ters. This is not only their right. It is rather their calling, based on 2 Tim. 2:2, where the apostle Paul instructs his student and fellow worker in the gospel to "entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" the things that Timothy "heard from (Paul) before many witnesses." We are here in line with the Reformed Churches from the days of Calvin and the Reformation. This same principle led the churches of the Secession, and a century later the churches of the Liberation, to establishing their own seminary. It was their care for the churches of Christ, for their unity of faith, for their peace.

Now it is well-known that Calvin's Academy attracted students from near and far away. The principle that the theological training at the College is provided by and is for the churches themselves living in one federation, does not mean that others, from outside the federation, are excluded. On the contrary, just as Calvin did and as was and is the policy in the Theological School or University in Kampen, the Netherlands, so we gladly receive students from "elsewhere" who come with the right motivation and want to receive a Reformed training. We were glad that one of our graduates this year was a student from Italy. Christ gathers His church over the whole world. And it is a joy to share with others what we have received as a pure gift of grace.

Keeping in mind the principle of having a training provided by and for the churches, we have started a new year of study at the College in recognition of and submission to God's Holy inerrant Word, in faithful adherence to the confessional standards, and holding on to the adopted Church Order. All this is in order to serve the churches who called us to this task of teaching and learning for their unity of faith and their peace. **C**



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# Report College Evening

By J. Geertsema

The comments I heard on the nineteenth Convocation and twenty-fourth College Evening were positive. "It was a very nice evening." As chairman of the Board of Governors, Rev. J. Visscher opened the meeting with reading from Scripture and prayer. We sang three stanzas from Psalm 8. In his word of welcome Rev. Visscher mentioned the presence of one of the members of the Board of Governors in the Netherlands, br. A. Vreugdenhil and his wife, parents of one of the new students. There were a number of letters of congratulations from Australia. The deputies for the training for the ministry sent us congratulations and wished us God's blessing for the coming year. And so did five Australian sister churches. They were those at Albany, Armadale, Byford, Kelmscott, and Rockingham. We received also a letter from grade four students of the John Calvin school in Armadale. Their letter was based on the communion of saints, they wrote, which was discussed in class. They addressed their congratulations specifically to our five graduating students. This letter hangs in the College on the announcements board. Elsewhere in this issue a number of quotations are given from the letters. It is good to see the bond between Australia and Canada (including the United States) become more intense. We need each other as sister churches. This intensity is also visible in the fact that of the fifteen students at our College five are from Australia.

But let me return to what the chairman said. He pointed out that we are again seeing a transition. The five graduating students leave the College. (One other student continued his studies elsewhere in order to receive a training in Bible translation work.) Six new students have been admitted to the College which means six new faces. Their names are mentioned in the principal's report. One of them is enrolled in the



Diploma of Theological Studies program. He is the first one in this program. It will be new for him as well as for us all at the College. The transition, this time, is in particular the change in principal. After three and a half years of running the College smoothly and capably, Dr. C. Van Dam leaves this position, according to the synodical decision to rotate the principal's position, and gives it in the hands of Professor J. Geertsema. Other functions at the College, too, were passed on. Dr. N.H. Gootjes handed his function of recording secretary in the Senate and of Dean of Students over to Dr. J. De Jong, while he took over the task of corresponding secretary and registrar from Professor Geertsema. For the coming three years, Dr. Van Dam has no specific function in the Senate and, thus, has the opportunity to use the time that comes free for concentrating on his studies.

Dr. Van Dam presented a somewhat abbreviated form of his principal's report. The complete text can be read in this issue. After Psalm 118:8 was sung, Professor Geertsema presented his address on the function and meaning of "the Trust of Christ Jesus in Hebrews 2:13a." Some time later this address will appear, D.V., in our magazine. The singing of Psalm 22:2 and 8 led us to the high point of the evening, the conferring of the degree of Master of Divinity to the five graduates. They were Mr. Alfonso d' Amore (from Italy), Mr. James Slaa (future minister of the church at Elora, Ontario), Mr. Clarence VanderVelde (future minister of the church at Yarrow, British Columbia), Mr. John Van Popta (future minister of the church at Ottawa, Ontario), and Mr. John Van Woudenberg (future minister of the church at Watford, Ontario). Mr.

d'Amore, who joined one of the Free Reformed churches when he came to Canada, hopes to go back to Italy soon and enter the ministry there. It was a great moment, indeed, for the five graduates and their relatives and families. Four (or rather seven) years of hard work, of much struggling and sometimes anxieties, came to an end in this official crown upon their labours. Their degree of Master of Divinity opened the way to the classical examinations and so to the ministry. We are thankful to see that our four Canadian Reformed students are now preparing for the last hurdle, the peremptory examination, as a spring board into the ministry of the Word in

one of the churches of the Lord. It is our hope and prayer that Mr. d'Amore may reach that same point soon, back in Italy. The audience sang the prayer of Psalm 134:1 and 3 to them in praise to God.

The committee of the Women's Saving Action, displayed a large sign with their wish for the College and presented a poem in which this wish was further explained. They concluded their contribution again with a large cheque for the library in the amount of twenty-two thousand dollars. The College library depends on this annual contribution. Dr. Van Dam expressed the great thankfulness and appreciation of the college community for receiving once again

such a great gift coming specifically through and from the sisters in the churches.

A collection was held for the Theological College Library Expansion Fund. We received from those present the greatly appreciated amount of \$1,858.30. The singing of Psalm 27:1 and 6 was followed by a closing prayer by Rev. D. G. J. Agema and the singing of Hymn 43:1 and 3.

The opportunity to congratulate the graduates and to chat together for a while was used from ten o'clock to about eleven thirty. We went home with great thankfulness to the LORD for His grace and blessings seen in and for the College of the churches. **C**



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## Principal's Report 1993

By C. Van Dam

It is with deep gratitude to the Lord our God whose blessings the entire College community experienced this past year that I may report on the various activities of the past academic year.

### College evening

Last September, on the eleventh to be exact, the Eighteenth Convocation and the Twenty-third Anniversary Meeting of the Theological College took place. The principal delivered an address on Psalm 133 entitled "When Brothers Dwell in Unity." The degree of Master of Divinity was conferred on Candidate J. E. Ludwig who now serves as minister of the Canadian Reformed congregation in London, Ontario.

### Students

Five new students could be admitted last September: Mr. James Baartse from Burlington, ON; Mr. T. Kelly De Vries from Cloverdale, BC; Mr. Richard Eikelboom from Byford, Australia; Mr. Theodore Lodder of Ancaster, ON; and Mr. Jason Van Vliet from Cloverdale,

BC. Besides these freshmen, we had two sophomores, three juniors, and five senior students, for a total of fifteen.

Since we are often asked about the incoming students, let me also mention now that we have admitted six new students: three from Australia!, Mr. Stephen Andrew 't Hart, Mr. Roelf Christiaan (Karlo) Janssen, and Mr. Richard Edwin Pot, two from Canada, Mr. Stephen Carl Van Dam and Mr. Arie Pieter Vreugdenhil, and one from the Netherlands, Mr. Hilco Arjen De Haan, who is the first student to be admitted into the Diploma of Theology program. Since Mr. Baartse is pursuing linguistic studies elsewhere we will have a total of fifteen students this year.

Once again it was possible to extend financial aid from the Faber-Holwerda Bursary and from the Christian Disciple Fund. We are very thankful for these provisions.

### Professors and special events

This past year the entire College and church community was saddened with

the sudden loss of our dear colleague, Professor L. Selles on March 4 of this year. Since his retirement in 1986, at the age of 71, he stayed very much involved in the life of the College and participated fully in the meetings of the Senate. We give thanks and praise to the Lord our God who called him from his earthly task to Himself in glory for the many gifts that we could receive through our brother. He was a pioneer. He was one of the first ministers in our midst and he opened the first national synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Homewood, Manitoba in 1954. He was also the first Professor of New Testament at the Theological College when its doors were first opened in September of 1969, and for years he served as chairman of the officebearers Conference in Ontario. His love for the churches and the College was evident in the fact that he and Mrs. Selles organized the Women's Savings Action which has been of great benefit for the College. In all of his many and varied capacities and duties, he served the

churches with integrity and wholeness of heart, and scrupulously and with humility. His example will not easily be forgotten and his exegetical work as found in his outlines will continue to be a blessing for many. May our gracious God also be with the next generation of the family that is left behind.

Turning to special activities, it can be mentioned that Dr. J. De Jong visited the churches in B.C. during October, 1992, where he spoke on the Union of 1892, and through his presence strengthened the bond of the College with the churches. At the College some special lectures were given. Dr. C. Venema, Associate Professor of Doctrinal Studies at Mid-America Reformed Seminary gave a lecture on the infallibility of Holy Scripture on October 16, 1992, and on November 10, Rev. R. E. Grossman, Assistant Professor of Ministerial Studies at Mid-America spoke on redemptive history and liturgy. On November 30, 1992, Rev. H. Versteeg, missionary in Irian Jaya, spoke to the students and gave a video presentation about the mission work in that country and so brought the needs and joys of that work close to the College community in a graphic way.

At the Ministers' Workshop held on June 4, 1993, Dr. C. Van Dam spoke on "Clean and Unclean in the History of Revelation."

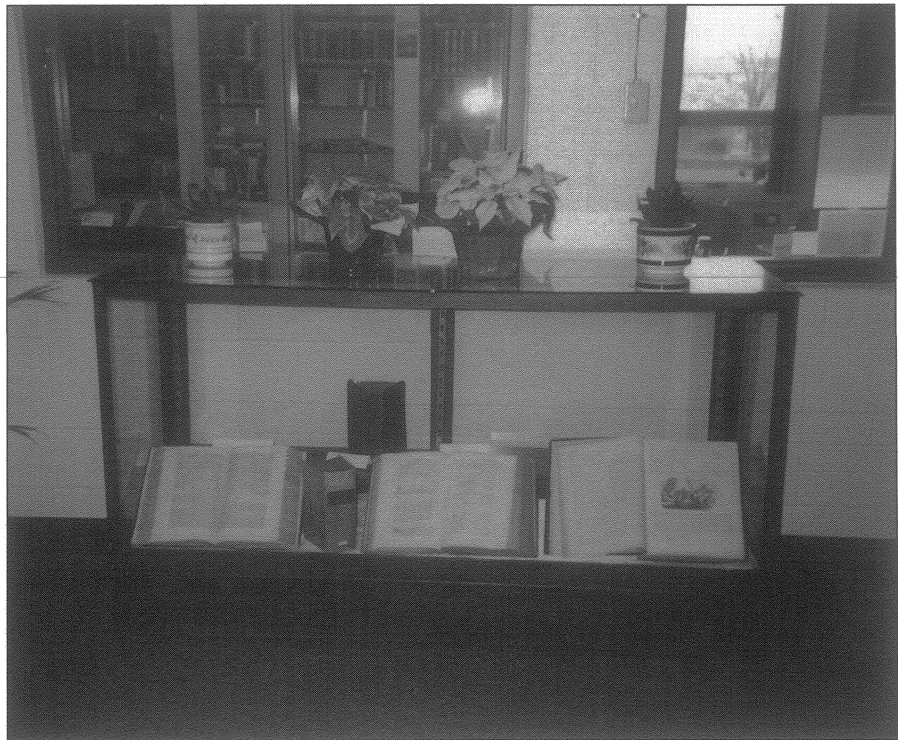
After some delays, work is proceeding on the first publication of the Publication Foundation, namely, a volume on the work of K. Schilder, which hopefully will be published within the next half year or so.

### Extra-curricular activities

In a series of meetings last October on Reformed Identity and Ecumenicity sponsored by the Burlington Reformed Study Centre, Dr. J. De Jong spoke on "Is There a Lesson in the Union of 1892 for Today?" and Dr. Faber addressed the topic "Former Christian Reformed and Canadian Reformed. What Should be Done?"

Dr. De Jong also spoke to an office-bearer's conference in March, 1993, in Carman, MB, on "Parish Development" as well as speaking for the congregations in Carman and Winnipeg on redemptive historical preaching and the Union of 1892, respectively.

Dr. J. Faber and Dr. N. H. Gootjes were both present at the International Conference of Reformed Churches which met in Zwolle from September 1 to 10. Dr. Faber, as chairman of the



A display of rare books in the foyer

Committee for Theological Affirmation, presented the report of this committee and Dr. Gootjes spoke on "Catechism Preaching."

Besides writing in *Clarion*, members of the Senate published elsewhere as well. A festschrift for retiring Dr. C. Trimp, Professor of Diaconology in Kampen, was published with the title *Ambt en aktualiteit* in which were an article by Dr. J. Faber entitled "Ministerium: Roma et Lima," dealing with the Roman Catholic response to the World Council of Churches' report *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry* on the issue of office and an article by Dr. N. H. Gootjes on the Spirit in Bezalel (Ex. 31:3). Articles by Dr. C. Van Dam on "Origins and Character of Sacrifice in Scripture," "The Incense Offering," and "The Burnt Offering" appeared in the *Mid-America Journal of Theology*. Dr. Van Dam also contributed to and edited *The Challenge of Church Union*, a volume containing the speeches and discussions on Reformed identity and ecumenicity that took place last fall under the auspices of the Burlington Reformed Study Centre.

Finally, it can be mentioned that the Theological College was invited to and represented at the institution service of the Free Reformed Church of Brantford on June 21, 1993, in the person of Dr. C. Van Dam.

### Synod Lincoln

Since the Theological College is the seminary of the churches, the convening of a general synod is always a highlight for us. Decisions are made which are of great importance for the College. That happened also this time. Let me mention some of them.

The synod appointed governors for the College. Last year we bade farewell to the governors who were present for the last time in their current term. This year we may welcome the following new governors: Rev. D. G. J. Agema, Rev. W. den Hollander, Rev. P. G. Feenstra, br H. J. Sloots, and Rev. J. Visscher who has also been elected as chairman of the Board. It is clear that just as the faculty has experienced quite a transformation in the last few years, also the composition of the Board of Governors is more and more reflecting a new generation. We wish the brothers the blessing and guidance of the Lord in their important work for the churches.

Synod granted Prof. Geertsema tenure and also appointed him as principal of the Theological College from September 1993 to 1996 and designated Prof. Gootjes as principal for September 1996 to 1999.

In response to a proposal from the Board of Governors, synod also decided to approve a sabbatical policy. Un-

der this policy, a professor who has served as principal can receive a sabbatical of one or two semesters for the purpose of doing scholarly work. If the condition of finding a suitable replacement can be met, each professor could receive a sabbatical every twelve years and on average there could be one professor on sabbatical every three years. All involved hope that this provision will further stimulate and enable publishing by the professors.

### The library

We can again report with joy that the money (\$22,000) donated by the sisters throughout the federation of churches and even from Australia could be used for purchasing books and journals. Sometimes questions are raised whether we really need such amounts year after year. Let me assure you that it is absolutely necessary in order to have the required tools for studying, teaching, and effectively confronting the spirits of this age. And of course, scholarly books are very expensive, especially considering that the vast majority must come from outside the country. It is therefore with great gratitude that we acknowledge the work of the Women's Savings Action. Your efforts are daily rewarded as we make use of the material purchased by you. Besides books, the ladies have also purchased a slide projector which is useful for several courses as well as additional shelving for the library.

This past year we again benefited from spontaneous gifts from members of the churches. These gifts are acknowledged in *Clarion*, but we do want to note that fact here, for we are very grateful for this evidence of love for the school of the churches.

We gratefully acknowledge the continued services of Miss Catherine Mechelse, Dip. Lib. Tech., and Ms. Marian Van Til, M.L.S., as pertains to the library. As visitors to the College know, Miss Mechelse's responsibilities cover much more than the library and we also gratefully acknowledge these gifts as well. We also note with pleasure the fact that Miss Margaret Van der Velde could work at the College part-time as an Associate Librarian. As one who has recently earned the degree of Master of Library and Information Science, she brings with her a great deal of expertise for which we are grateful.

Last, but certainly not least, the volunteers should be mentioned. The library could not run smoothly without

the unpaid, but valuable effort that the volunteers represent. Mrs. Allison Schutten continues to come in on a regular basis and also works part-time in the summer. We appreciate very much her work in organizing the periodical section and other necessary tasks that she performs. Mr. Y. Krikke also comes in regularly and besides other tasks, he has become our expert in-house leather restorer. Preparing professional mixes, he treats the leather volumes and the results are remarkable. This summer a complete inventory was taken of the Dewey part of our library holdings. We gratefully acknowledge the volunteer work of Shanna Bartels and students Richard Eikelboom, Karlo Janssen, and Richard Pot. Last but not least we would also like to mention the volunteer effort of Rev. G. H. Visscher of Burlington West who has donated generously of his holiday and free time to help with computer work at the College.

### Library facilities and college building

Our library is growing and books take up space. This means that within five years or so we will need more room if the library is to be effective. This matter receives the attention of the governors and the Senate and you will undoubtedly be hearing more about it as information becomes available.

As was reported earlier in *Clarion*, the late Mrs. C. L. van der Kulk-Oosters of our sister church at Rotterdam-Noord, the Netherlands, remembered us in her will and the money (over \$19,000) was received in September, 1992. This was placed in a special account with a view to starting a fund for future expansion. We thus have the beginning of what we hope will be a growing amount for future expansion. The Women's Savings Action has also expressed interest in contributing to this fund. Other donations to it are always welcome for expansion will need to take place and the churches should not be burdened more than absolutely necessary.

As was reported last year, the present building needs continual upkeep. This has continued to take place under the expert supervision of the Property and Finance Committee of the Board of Governors. New windows were installed in the library and the back entrance to the College was repaired. Other improvements will need to take place, but these are being studied in

connection with possible expansion so that money is not spent unnecessarily.

Once again br. and sr. K. Post could continue the cleaning of the building and we acknowledge their contribution with thanks.

### In the midst of the churches


We continue to enjoy the tremendous blessings of being the school of the churches. Our task is clear and our energies can all be directed toward our purpose, namely, to train young men for the preaching of the gospel in the churches. Tonight we may present our graduates to you.

Also in other ways we experience the bond with the supporting community very concretely. We receive visitors from our churches regularly, as well as from far away Australia. We are thankful for the strengthening bonds with the Australian brothers and sisters and for the fact that we now have five Australian students in our midst.

It is becoming an annual tradition that elementary school teachers bring their students to the Theological College in connection with their school work. Also this year we could welcome grade school children for a tour and explain our work to them. We cherish the hope that some will return as students!

### Transition

As you know, the Theological College has a system of rotating offices. Tonight is the end point of my current term as principal and when the Theological College officially opens next week, Prof. J. Geertsema will be the principal, Dr. Gootjes will be vice-principal, and Dr. De Jong will be Dean of Students. I would like to use this opportunity to thank my colleagues and college staff, as well as the governors for the excellent cooperation I could experience with them in the last three and a half years. Without diminishing the input of the others, I would especially like to single out Prof. Geertsema in my thanks for his help and support as vice-principal and I want to wish him the Lord's blessing on his duty as principal in the next three years.

Indeed, may the Lord our God continue to bless us all as we continue in His service: the ministers and elders and deacons and congregations and we in the Theological College, each with our own task. Without His blessing our labours would be in vain. Praised be His great and Holy Name! 



# Presentation of the Women's Savings Action at the College Evening



September 10, 1993

**W** stands for the women whom we represent  
On this annual festive event.  
On behalf of the Women's Savings Action we speak,  
From us you will hear no Hebrew, Latin or Greek.

**O** stands for the object of our presence here,  
The same as it has been every former year.  
Again we saved and collected as much as we could  
For our Theological College brotherhood.

**M** stands for more, because there is never an end  
Of books to be bought and money to be spent.  
And when the library is getting too small,  
Shelves are added to accommodate them all.

**E** stands for expansion which is necessary  
To keep up to date the College Library.  
Therefore we continue to look for means and ways,  
And keep on planning for future days.

**N** stands for none, because complaints we have none,  
What we achieved we could not have done  
Without the continued support and dedication  
Of our dear sisters from every congregation.

**S** stands for the Staff of the Theological College,  
Every year our assistance to them we pledge.  
To show their gratitude they are never remiss  
Nor do they our work lightly dismiss.

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**S** stands for the students, present here,  
Some for the first time, others for yet another year.  
We are sure that they will be very delighted  
With the study material we, women, provided.

**A** stands for accounts which have to be kept up to date,  
The total collected the treasurer must calculate.  
This year a grand total of 27,894 dollars was collected  
For your good cooperation our thanks to all of you must  
be said.

**V** stands for volunteers from the East and the West,  
Who altogether again have done their very best,  
So that we again could fulfill our obligation,  
And tonight present our yearly donation.

**I** stands for investment we made for our organization,  
To be kept for future consideration.  
For you must agree, it is always wise  
To be ready when other needs arise.

**N** stands for the newsletter which every September is sent,  
To inform our representatives how the money has been  
spent.

Our needs for the future we let them know,  
Our appreciation and thanks for work well done we also  
bestow.

**G** stands for the graduates, who have finished their study,  
And now could receive their well-deserved degree.  
On behalf of all women we pass on our congratulation,  
On this for you so joyous occasion.

**S** stands for serving, which we as women try to do,  
But we also rely and count on all of you.  
Do continue to show your support,  
So that the funds for the library never run short.

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**A** stands for addition to the College Library,  
Which eventually will become necessary.  
The governors will have to decide what to do,  
All the different possibilities will be looked into.

**C** stands for the College which we all serve,  
With great enthusiasm and much verve.  
For this institution we, women, do our part,  
Its welfare always lies close to our heart.

**T** stands for thankfulness which we declare,  
For the Lord's continual help and care.  
In our endeavours to succeed,  
Every day His guidance we need.

**I** stands for interest which all of you have shown,  
Your yearly contributions have steadily grown.  
We hope that, also in the future, you will do your share  
For buying books is an increasingly costly affair.

**O** stands for onward, for onward we go from here,  
Looking forward to another successful year,  
Of supporting the College where ministers of the Word  
are trained,  
So that throughout the world the gospel may be  
proclaimed.

**N** stands for now, Mr. principal, when the moment has  
come  
To present our cheque of 22,000 dollars, quite a sum!  
May our heavenly Father bless you richly in the new  
school year.  
May His love and guidance always for all of you be near.



# News from the Women's Savings Action

## Presentation at the College Evening

With great gratitude to our heavenly Father we may report that during this past fiscal year a total of \$27,894.48 was collected. On the College evening Mrs. Carla Zietsma, on behalf of all of us, handed over a cheque for \$22,000 to be used to buy books and periodicals for the College library. As always this was received with great thankfulness by the College community.

The slide projector which was purchased last year has been well used for history and geography courses. The additional shelving which was completed early last fall was immediately put to good use.

## Future expansion

The money remaining after the annual cheque has been presented for the library will be carefully invested so that we may be able to assist financially when expansion plans become a reality. At this year's Library Committee meeting we heard extensively how discussions about the need to expand the library are beginning to take place at faculty meetings and meetings of the Board of Governors. As projected at the present time, for the next four years there will be sufficient room in the existing library; after that time the shelves can be put closer together as an interim measure. With projects such as building an addition, long term planning is imperative. This is true also financially, and we are very grateful that we have been and once again are able to build up reserves for such time as they will be needed.

## 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.

## Sincere appreciation

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all the representatives and their co-workers for the time and energy which they have once again put into this important work. We also thank each and every one of you for faithfully supporting this cause with your gifts. Without your commitment and participation we could not carry on. Above all, we thank our Lord in heaven who has placed us in a peaceful and prosperous part of the world. While we still have the opportunity and the means may we do all we can for the glory of His Name and the furtherance of His kingdom.

**Please note:** Our fiscal year runs from June 1 to May 31. A number of contributions once again came in after May 31, 1992 and will not appear on the financial statement until the following book year. It has been decided that as of next year our fiscal year will run from July 1 to June 30.

## Theological College Women's Savings Action Contributions June 1, 1992 to May 31, 1993

Abbotsford .....	\$3,101.39
Ancaster .....	898.52
Attercliffe .....	1,211.96
Barrhead .....	465.00
Brampton .....	157.50
Burlington East .....	1,217.90
Burlington South .....	690.25
Burlington West .....	1,220.00
Calgary .....	
Carman .....	611.40
Chatham .....	625.00
Chilliwack .....	983.00
Cloverdale .....	1,685.00
Coaldale .....	
Edmonton, Imm. ....	2,040.47
Edmonton, Prov. ....	1,437.33
Elora .....	131.20
Fergus .....	268.95
Grand Rapids .....	151.20
Grand Valley .....	117.00
Guelph .....	355.94
Hamilton .....	1,115.69
Houston .....	
Langley .....	2,010.00
Lincoln .....	170.15
London .....	
Lynden, Wash. ....	438.36
Neerlandia .....	
Orangeville .....	438.75
Ottawa .....	
Port Kells .....	1,080.00
Rockway .....	146.02
Smithers .....	876.50
Smithville .....	1,075.00
Surrey .....	1,196.00
Taber .....	415.00
Toronto .....	
Vernon .....	538.50
Watford .....	92.50
Winnipeg .....	933.00
Total collected .....	<b>\$27,894.48</b>

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# Congratulations for the College

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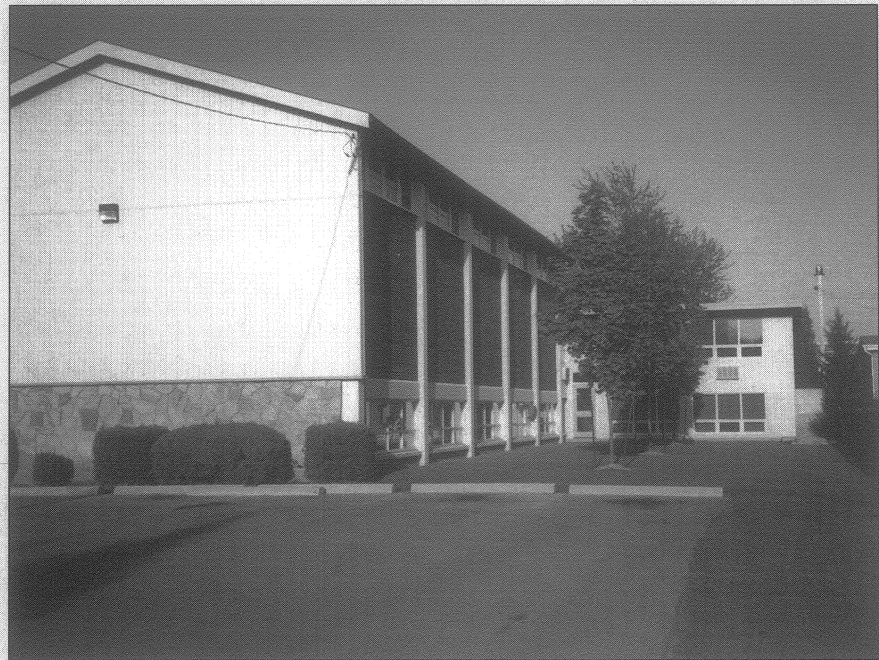
**The Australian deputies** for the training for the ministry write on behalf of the Australian sister churches to the College community and the brothers and sisters present at the twenty-fourth Anniversary Meeting and nineteenth Convocation, "We join you in magnifying the goodness of God on this festive evening." Referring to Romans 10:14, how will men believe in Him of whom they never heard, and how will they hear without a preacher . . . , the deputies add, "Our prayer is that the Spirit of God may continue to bless your work, that men may be equipped for the beautiful task of preaching the gospel of reconciliation. We send our congratulations to the five brothers who have completed their studies. We wish them the Lord's blessing. . . . We also send a special greeting to our five Australian brothers who are studying at the College, and to their wives and children. . . ."

**The church at Albany** writes, ". . . we congratulate you with this 24th anniversary. Also congratulations are extended to the graduates. . . . May the Lord of the Covenant bless you all in this so important work in His Kingdom. . . ."

**The church at Armadale** wishes "to pass on our hearty congratulations to those theological students who graduate. . . . Four hard but fruitful years lie behind and, D.V., many years of service lie ahead. . . ."

**The church at Byford** ". . . extends warm congratulations and brotherly greetings. . . ." and expresses the wish that "the God of all grace (may) continue to surround you . . . with His care and love. . . ."

**The church at Kelmscott** wishes us "on this joyful occasion . . . a splen-



did evening and God's rich blessing on the academic year which is ahead." They "give thanks for what the Lord has given in the Theological College" to the Canadian Reformed and Australian Free Reformed Churches. It also suggests that "With the growing contingent of students from 'down under' Board and Senate will no doubt consider adding 'Advance Australia Fair' (if not 'Waltzing Matilda') to the college's repertoire."

(At the College we shall discuss this suggestion very extensively.)

**The church at Rockingham** thanks us, just as the others, for the invitation but is not able to send a representative because of the distance. But they "hope and pray that the Lord will con-

tinue to care for the Theological College."

## Response:

From this place we greet you "down under" in our Lord Jesus Christ. May He care also for you, our Australian sister churches, as well as for the churches on this continent and wherever He gathers them in this world. May our work and life and yours, through His Spirit, be done in obedience to His will and please Him and serve the coming of His Kingdom and the glory of His Name.

On behalf of the College community,

J. Geertsema, principal, h.t.

# REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By G.Ph. van Popta

## Friends

In this column I have been writing a few things about the various names we find in the book of Acts to describe Christians. One of these names is "Friends." In Acts 27:3 Luke spoke of "the friends" (see also Acts 4:23; 24:23). Luke did not use this name often; however, it is an important one for Christians. A Christian's relationship to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is one of friendship. Further, Christians are one another's friends by way of their common friendship with God.

Central to the idea of "Friendship" is loyalty. Through good times and bad times, friends are loyal and committed to each other. Friendship binds them together. The Bible contains some classic examples of friendship. 1 Sam. 18:1 says that the souls of David and Jonathan were knit together. They were kindred spirits. Jonathan, a faithful friend, protected David's life when Saul tried to kill David. Their mutual loyalty extended to the next generation. David was kind to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth for the sake of his friendship with Jonathan.

Another beautiful example of friendship is that of Naomi and Ruth. Ruth revealed her love, loyalty and devotion to Naomi when she said:

Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you (Ruth 1:16,17).

Friends are loyal, helpful, supportive. They share material things as well as happiness and grief. It is no surprise that several texts link friendship with covenant (Psalm 25:14; 55:20). Betray-

al of friendship is breaking covenant. The greatest human friendship, marriage, is called a covenant (Mal. 2:14). Divorce is breaking covenant between husband and wife. And that is something which God hates (Mal. 2:16).

God established a covenant with Abraham. Abraham is called "the friend of God" (2 Chron. 20:7; Is. 41:8; Jas. 2:23). Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, was a friend of God (Ex. 33:11). Jesus Christ has fulfilled the demands of the covenant. Through faith in Him we are heirs of the benefits of the covenant. Because of His work, God extends His covenant friendship to us.

In John 15:13ff, the Lord Jesus said that a man could have no greater love than that he should lay down his life for his friends. Then he said: "You are my friends." Jesus Christ calls us His friends. He proved His friendship to us

by laying down His life for us. As Prov. 18:24 says: "There are friends who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." That friend is Jesus Christ. He is loyal. He is faithful. He shares good things with us – righteousness and everlasting life.

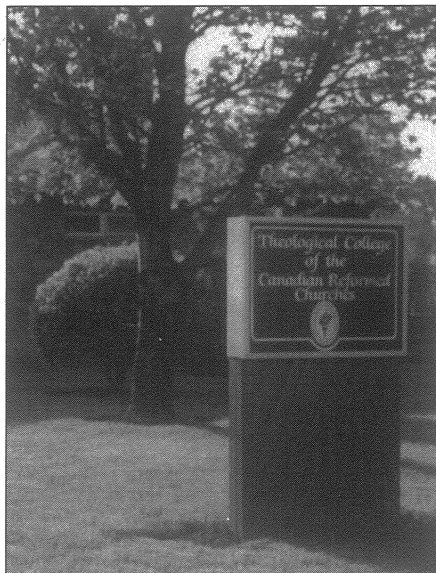
The friendship Christ has with us is not a buddy-buddy friendship. It is not a friendship between two equals. Christ is the greater; we are the lesser. And yet, surprisingly, Christ calls His people "friends."

Through our faithful Friend Jesus Christ, we may enjoy covenantal friendship with God. But being a friend of God means that we no longer have friendship with the world. You cannot be a friend of the world and a friend of God. As James wrote: "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). Friendship with Christ means that we will obey His commands. "You are my friends if you do what I command you," said Christ (John 15:14). Psalm 25:14 says: "The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear Him, and He makes known to them His covenant."

Choose now! What will it be? Friendship with God through Jesus Christ, or friendship with the world?

Friendship with God through our Friend Jesus Christ means that we will also be friends with the other friends of Christ. The common friendship of God which Christ extends to us also binds us together in friendship. By the time John wrote his third letter, "friends" was a common title for Christians. John ended his third letter with the words: "Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them."

### OUR COVER



What does it mean for us to be friends? In Lord's Day 40 of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Answer 107, we confess that the Sixth Commandment, You shall not kill, requires that we, among other things, show friendliness towards each other. If we go to the proof texts given under the answer, we see what it means to be friendly to one another. We love one another with brotherly affec-

tion and outdo one another in showing honour (Rom. 12:10). We correct each other in a spirit of gentleness rather than of haughtiness (Gal. 6:1). We put up with one another in love (Eph. 4:2). We are compassionate, kind, meek and patient towards each other. We are sympathetic and tender to our brothers and sisters, children of God who are our friends in Christ.

Perhaps there are members of your congregation whom you do not really like. Maybe you don't like some of your fellow young people. That is beside the point. They are your friends – friends in Christ. They are your friends because Christ has extended the friendship of God to them as well as to you. Be friendly for the sake of Christ your Friend. **C**

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# Catechism Preaching<sup>1</sup>

By N.H. Gootjes

*At the recent meeting of the ICRC in Zwolle, the Netherlands, I spoke about catechism preaching. I had chosen this topic because there is a difference among the member churches of the ICRC on this issue. For churches with a continental background catechism preaching is a living reality. It is even prescribed in their church orders. Churches who find their origin in the Reformation in Great Britain, however, do not know this kind of preaching. Some even object strongly to catechism preaching. In my speech I dealt with the objections and problems they have with catechism preaching. I tried to show the importance of this type of preaching for the upbuilding of the congregations in the faith.*

## Is preaching from a human text possible?

The most important objection follows from the fact that catechisms are human documents. Doesn't that mean that preaching on the catechism is preaching from a human text? Is preaching on a section from the catechism not a contradiction in terms? For all of us will agree that good preaching is by definition administration of the Word of God.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones has formulated this objection in a straightforward and inoffensive manner:

The function of a catechism, I would have thought, ultimately, is not to provide material for preaching: it is to safeguard the correctness of the preaching, and to safeguard the interpretations of the people as they read their Bibles. As that is the main function of creeds and catechisms, it is surely wrong therefore to just preach constantly year after year on the Catechism, instead of preaching the Word directly from the Scripture itself, with the Scriptures always open before you, and the minds of the people directed to that rather than to men's understanding of it.<sup>1</sup>

This criticism is based on the conviction that preaching is preaching the Word of God. This leads Lloyd-Jones to reject catechism preaching. This kind of preaching would be preaching on human understanding of that Word, instead of preaching on a text from that Word.

The interesting thing is that defenders of catechism preaching have exactly the same starting point and yet do not come to the conclusion that catechism preaching is impossible. Dr. T. Hoekstra who wrote a Dutch standard text on homiletics defines preaching as the explication and application of the Word of God revealed in Holy Scripture.<sup>2</sup> Yet Hoekstra does not think that catechism

preaching is inappropriate. His book on preaching has a section on catechism preaching, where he says:

In catechism preaching the Lord comes to his people and discloses the mysteries of his covenant of grace for his congregation. Therefore catechism preaching is administration of the Word. Strictly speaking it is not preaching from the catechism but from the Word.<sup>3</sup>

Defenders of catechism preaching maintain that in these sermons, too, the Word of God is preached.

Using basically the same definition of preaching these theologians come to a different conclusion concerning the scriptural justification of catechism preaching. We can, therefore, not easily decide the whole matter on the basis of a definition. We will have to dig deeper and ask the question: What is the character of a creed or confession? What is its relation to Scripture?

## The character of a confession

Let us begin to answer this question by looking at one of the creeds: the Apostles' Creed. This creed was not bodily taken out of Scripture. There is no passage in either the Old or the New Testament where this creed is given in extenso. That does not make this creed unscriptural, however. Its content is taken out of Scripture. Revela-

tions given in different places of Scripture have been collected and brought together in an organized way. The structure of the Apostles' Creed is trinitarian, based on the baptismal command of Mt. 28:19. And the content of God's revelation is summarized as the trinitarian God and His work. The Apostles' Creed presents the doctrine of Scripture, a systematical summary of the biblical truth.

The same can be said for the later, more extensive confessions of the Reformation period. They, too, give a summary of scriptural content. To give an example, it became important in the struggle of the 16th Century to define the basis for our belief in God. Many Reformed Confessions organized and summarized the scriptural revelation about itself. The summary form as such cannot be found in Scripture, yet these confessions insert lines from Scripture in their formulations and prove their doctrine with texts appended to the articles.

The question which we have to answer in connection with catechism preaching is, what is the character of this doctrine, this summary given in the catechism. There is no doubt that the formulation of the doctrine is made by man. But what about the doctrine itself? Is the doctrine present in Scripture, or is the doctrine man-made?

A Reformed theologian like Ch. Hodge sees the doctrines as human products. Scripture contains isolated facts. Those facts cannot be pieced together at random, the relations between them are in the facts. Still, we have to make the connections. This does not mean, however, that the doctrine is of lesser value, according to Hodge. Actually, the doctrine is on a higher level than Scripture:

A much higher kind of knowledge is thus obtained, than by the mere accumulation of isolated facts. . . . We cannot know what God has revealed in his Word unless we understand, at least in some good measure, the relation in which the separate truths therein contained stand to each other. It cost the Church centuries of study and controversy to solve the problem concerning the person of Christ; that is, to adjust and bring into harmonious arrangement all the facts which the Bible teaches on that subject.<sup>4</sup>

A similar opinion can be found in A. Kuyper when he describes theology as

that science which has the revealed knowledge of God as the object of its investigation and raises it to understanding.<sup>5</sup>

He compares the revealed knowledge of God with ore, which has to be melted to become shining gold, or with grain that has to be turned into bread before it can be eaten.<sup>6</sup>

Both Hodge and Kuyper speak about theology rather than about the creeds. Their view, however, has implications for the creeds. If this is true, then the catechism, summarizing the doctrine of Scripture, may be "a higher kind of knowledge" but this knowledge goes beyond the revelation in Scripture. For Scripture gives only bare facts.

It is at this point that we have to disagree with these theologians.<sup>7</sup> The Bible does not reveal merely bare facts. It does not give grain that has yet to be worked into edible bread. The Bible itself provides insight into the meaning of the facts. The relations between the truths of Scripture are indicated in that same Scripture. To borrow Hodge's expression: the "higher knowledge" is present in God's Word. Or: God's Word in Scripture is the bread of life.

To give a few examples in connection with the Apostles' Creed:

– Mt. 28:19ff. connects Trinity with baptism and the obligation to keep Christ's commands.

– Eph. 1:3-14 speaks about the many ways in which the Trinity is involved in our salvation.

– Gen. 17:1 shows that God's omnipotence is not a mere fact but is of tremendous importance in the life of Abraham (and of every believer). All that Abraham has to do is walk in uprightness before God, for God is able to take care of Abraham's life.

– Gen. 1 tells us about God's creation work, and how God determined man's place in creation (v. 26).

Or, to give examples concerning the doctrine of Scripture:

– 2 Tim. 3:16 connects the inspiration of Scripture with the importance of the Old Testament for teaching, reproof, etc. The goal is also indicated: that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

– 2 Pet. 1:20ff. shows that the divine origin of Scripture is important for the interpretation of it.

– Ps. 19:7 does not just mention the fact that the law of the Lord is perfect, but also says what this perfect law is for: it revives the soul.



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And so we can go on, but it will be clear by now that Scripture is not a collection of loose thoughts which we somehow have to piece together. The connections between the doctrines are given in Scripture. The church did only two things in making the creeds. 1. It brought together revelations that were spread out over Scripture. And 2. It often expressed these truths in its own words. But it did not construct the doctrine, rather, it read the doctrine as it is present in Scripture. The creeds and confessions bring together and formulate the doctrines that are present in Scripture itself. The doctrine is not the higher understanding of revelation (Hodge) or the finished product of what is given in a raw form in Scripture (Kuyper) but the underlying structure in revelation.

At this point the decision has to be made whether catechism preaching is possible in principle. If a catechism is a human system of amorphous elements in Scripture, then preaching the catechism is impossible. But if the catechism formulates a doctrine that is present in Scripture, preaching the catechism is possible. The wording of the catechism is not infallible, to be sure. But the truths expressed are still those of Scripture, not of theology. Catechism preaching is preaching the Word of God.

#### **The advantage of catechism preaching**

Actually, catechism preaching is a good way to do justice to what the apostle Paul calls: the whole counsel of God. When he said farewell to the elders of Ephesus he said that he "did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God." This counsel, or plan<sup>8</sup>

can be identified with what Paul in the same speech calls the gospel of the grace of God (v. 24) and the preaching of the kingdom (v. 25). When this is called "counsel" or "plan" it proves that God's work for salvation is not an improvisation but according to His plan and His divine will. Paul in this context emphasizes in particular the word "whole": he has preached the whole counsel of God. No part of God's work of salvation has been neglected by him in his preaching. Therefore Paul cannot be blamed when a hearer is condemned and punished by God. For Paul did not give a reduced version of the gospel.

This expression of Paul has been used, correctly to my view, as a rule for preaching. No part of the whole plan of God's salvation for sinners should be neglected in the preaching. It is very easy, however, to neglect some part of the full plan of God. When a minister chooses a text he can handle or he has an idea about, he can easily be one-sided in his choice of a text. When a minister has the need of the congregation foremost in his mind he can choose

texts he thinks the congregation needs and again be one-sided. The catechism, concentrating on the doctrinal structure of God's revelation contains a survey of the content of Scripture. As such the catechism is helpful for the congregation to grasp the central content of God's revelation. It is helpful for the minister, too, since it can prevent one-sidedness in his preaching. Just as continued text preaching is beneficial to keep catechism preaching fresh, so continued catechism preaching is beneficial to keep text preaching well rounded.

<sup>1</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972) pp. 187ff.

<sup>2</sup>T. Hoekstra, *Gereformeerde homiletiek* (Wageningen: Zomer & Keuning, n.d.) p. 157; see also on p. 160: The administration of the Word in the congregation of the believers is the explanation and the application of the Word of God.

<sup>3</sup>T. Hoekstra, *Gereformeerde homiletiek*, p. 371. See also C. Trimp, *De preek: Een praktisch verhaal over het maken en houden van preken* (3. ed.; Kampen: Van den Berg, 1986) p.9.

<sup>4</sup>Ch. Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and sons,

1883) vol. 1, pp. 1-17, the quotation on p. 2. Hodge speaks here about the task of (systematic) theology, but from his reference to Christology it appears that he sees the creeds as standing on the same (high) level.

<sup>5</sup>A. Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology* (tr. J.H. De Vries; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) p. 299.

<sup>6</sup>A. Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology*, pp. 296; 597ff; see also p. 567 and p. 570.

<sup>7</sup>See for criticism on Hodge, J. M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) pp. 77ff. I agree particularly with Frame's criticism that the facts in Scripture are not brute facts without interpretation. Rather, the Bible describes and interprets its own facts.

See for criticism on A. Kuyper: J. Douma, "Encyclopedic," in J. Douma, ed., *Oriëntatie in de theologie* (2. ed.; Barneveld: Vuurbaak, 1987) p. 19.

<sup>8</sup>The word is "boule," used in Acts for a human decision or plan in Acts 5:38, 27:12, 42, and for God's plan concerning David in 13:36. The word is used three times for God's plan concerning Jesus Christ, in Acts 2:23, 4:28 and 20:28. The first two of these texts are more limited in scope; they emphasize that Christ's death is according to God's plan. The third speaks of the comprehensive plan of God.

C

## OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



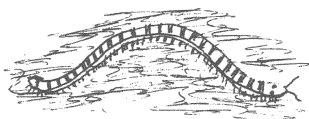
### Hello Busy Beavers,

We have some more stories to share. I think you will enjoy them!

"In September our school had a walk-a-thon. We walked 30 kilometers to raise money for our school. We got lots of sponsors this year. It's pretty fun because they have checkpoints where you can get candy, and because we do it with another school. But when we're almost done we really have sore legs!

Another thing that happened was there was the Fall Fair. It was fun. We entered our rabbits Rover and Thumper in the pet show. We also entered my millipede Joe. He's about 10 centimeters long. I found him, but I never pick him up. At the fair we also went on rides.

But just a while ago Thumper died. My brother made a gravestone for him. . . ."



My pet Joe.

### SUMMER MEMORIES

by Busy Beaver Margaret Nyenhuis

"This summer me and my family went out East for our holiday. We went out there for two weeks. We first went to Ottawa for the Sunday. Then we headed through Quebec. It definitely is strange to be there. All signs are French and most people can only speak French. Every night we were at a different camp spot because we were travelling all the time. We headed into New Brunswick. There is really beautiful scenery out there, lots of huge hills, and millions of trees. There were lots of interesting things to see. Next we went to Nova Scotia. It is simply lovely!! We went down to Halifax by the docks and got to walk on the Bluenose II! We took a ferry to Prince Edward Island. The first thing you notice is the red soil. It is definitely different from our ugly, brown soil. We got to see the 'Anne of Green Gables' house, Lucy Maud Montgomery's house and birthplace and gravestone. It was great to see. From P.E.I. we headed to N.B. on the ferry, and drove till we reached our home in Elora, Ontario."

# Quiz Time!

## PICTURE CODE

by Busy Beaver Joanne Jans

A ♣	G †	K ○	O ☹	U ⚡
D =	H -	L ♥	R ☒	Y ☺
E x	I □	M ♣	S ☁	
F £	J ♀	N ☾	T ⚡	

♣ ♣ ○ x ♣ ♀ ☹ ☺ £ ⚡ ♥ ☾ ☹ □ ☁ x

♣ ☹ † ☹ = ♣ ♥ ♥ ⚡ - x x ⚡ ☒ ⚡ - !

## FOR YOU TO DO

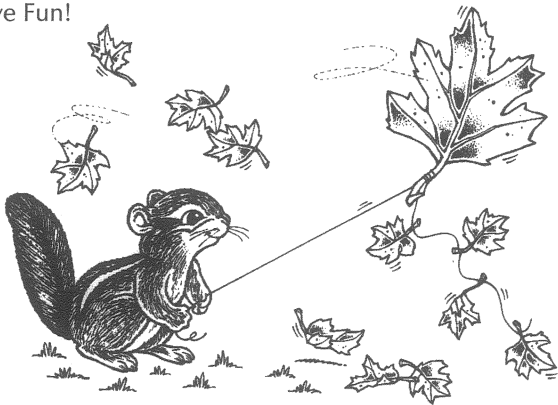
Yes, you can save those pretty leaves.

Little flowers, big petals, you can save them all!

Arrange them between sheets of paper towels.  
Put a pile of books on top.

Presto! Summer souvenirs to decorate your letters, cards, pictures. Whatever!

Let your imagination run wild!  
Have Fun!



## BRAIN TEASERS

### The New Kids

A new family had moved into the neighbourhood. The four kids were playing ball in the yard when Mrs. Ames, a neighbour passed the house.

"My, what a nice big family," she exclaimed. "What are your names and ages?"

"I'm Kevin," said a boy. He pointed at a girl beside him. "This is Jessica. I'm a year older than she is."

"I'm Greg," said another boy. "I'm a year younger than my sister Sarah."

"I'll be eight next month," announced Jessica. "I'm three years younger than Sarah."

How old is each of the kids?

### The Scientist's Brother

Mr. Smith proudly told everyone that he is the brother of a famous scientist. But Mr. Smith doesn't have a brother. Even so, he was telling the truth!

How is this possible?

(Answers next time!)

## !! OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS !!

Very best wishes for the Lord's blessing in the year ahead, to all Busy Beavers about to celebrate a birthday.

We all join in wishing you one super day with your family and your friends, too.

Many happy returns of the day!

Jaclyn Bartels	1	Anne Van Laar	18
Laura Harsevoort	2	Amy Vander Horst	18
Crystal Dekker	2	Jenny Stroop	20
Alyssa Lodder	2	Laura Aasman	21
Richelle Kruisselbrink	3	Colette Vanden Bos	25
Arlene Winkelaar	3	Sharon De Vries	26
Laura Kanis	4	Alisha Dokter	28
Gerald Van Woudenberg	5	Bryan Eelhart	28
Trevor Vander Velde	7	Denise Elliott	31
Erin Siebenga	17		

## KNOCK, KNOCK

by Busy Beavers Elisa and Karen Vandergaag

Knock, Knock.  
Who's there?  
Emile.  
Emile who?  
Emile fit for a king!



Knock, Knock.  
Who's there?  
Alma.  
Alma who?  
Alma cookies are gone and  
I want some more!

Knock, knock.  
Who's there?  
Robin,  
Robin who?  
Robin the cookie jar is a No-No!



Knock, knock.  
Who's there?  
Celia.  
Celia who?  
Celia later, alligator!

I am curious to hear about your success pressing fall's leaves and flowers!

We all love to hear about your summer memories.

So keep those letters coming!

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

I love you all,  
Aunt Betty

