

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE  
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*Pentecost!*  
*Arrival of "the Spirit of Truth"*

By C. Van Dam



## Wanted: More Christian vision in politics

With Canada in election fever, questions arise as to a Christian's involvement in the political process. The present state of politics in our beloved country is not an encouraging one. The field is dominated by political parties which spend more time analyzing opinion polls than giving principled leadership. The parties go as the population goes. So, because the population has shifted to the right of late, the parties have followed suit.

Unfortunately, this pragmatism and self-serving way of making political decisions is not limited to the major political parties. Sad to say committed Christians are also infected with the pragmatism bug. Consider for example that since the arrival of the populist Reform Party, Christians who formerly were members and even candidates for the Christian Heritage Party (CHP), have hurried to join the new kid on the block and even to run on the Reform platform. After all, the Reform Party was small "c" conservative and it definitely had the prospect of attracting more votes. And not only has the Reform Party proven attractive, but even the Conservative Party has recently enjoyed an increase of members who had formerly supported the CHP. Indeed, there is at least one former CHP candidate who is now running for the Conservative Party.

What to make of all of this? On the one hand there is the understandable frustration that belonging to the CHP can be experienced as condemning yourself into the political wilderness of never having a realistic hope of getting elected. Generally speaking, Canadians are not in a mood to embrace a Christian world and life view. So, is it then not better to soft pedal your principles and join a party which follows the will of the people? Could one not make a contribution as a Christian within that context? I do not deny that a contribution could be made and indeed we should support those Christians who try to be active in major political parties in a Christian way. However, in the light of the strict party discipline which is part of Canadian political reality the Christian contribution would be a rather limited one, unnoticed politically for the most part, and essentially restricted to such actions as raising points of Christian conscience in the confines and privacy of a caucus meeting. To publicly oppose the party policy on Christian or any other grounds is to invite expulsion from the party. It's as simple as that.

Well, one could say, Christians may be able to make the party accept policies that are consistent with the Gospel. Theoretically this is true, but it is not realistic. Even the Reform Party which includes a significant number of Christians has not got the political courage to take a stand on a clear moral issue like abortion. Surely, if there is one area about which Scripture (and for that matter Canada's own past) speaks so clearly today, it is the need to protect un-

born life. If the Reform Party cannot bring itself to do the obvious, but prefers to listen to the people, then will the Conservative party under Charest be more sensitive to such issues? "You must be kidding!" I hear someone say. And such a person would be right on the mark.

Where does this leave the consistent Christian in the political process? On the face of it, the situation is not very attractive. Consider for example the fact that we have a system of sending representatives to Ottawa which often does injustice to true voting patterns. In the last federal election in 1993, the Liberals garnered 41% of the votes and won 59 per cent (177) of the seats of the House of Commons, while the Reform Party took 52 seats (or 17%) on the basis of 19% of the vote and the Bloc Québécois took 54 seats (or 18%) on the basis of 14% of the vote. However, the Conservatives ended up with only 2 seats (or less than 1%) although they received 16% of the vote! The NDP took 9 seats on the basis of 7% of the vote. The Liberals formed a majority government. The present system has the winner take all. If a candidate wins by a few votes, he is in and all the other votes for his opponent basically count for nothing. There has been of late a growing opposition to this system and the *Toronto Globe and Mail* has editorialized for change. We should support such efforts wherever possible. It will open up possibilities that are apparently out of reach now. However, even if some form of proportional representation should be introduced, the challenge will remain considerable. New Zealand adopted proportional representation in 1993, but in a subsequent election the CHP in that country just missed out on the minimum of 5% of the popular vote needed to send a representative to Parliament.

Another negative factor is that the present move to the conservative side of the political spectrum may make Christians more complacent since their political desires are generally conservative, that is to the right of the spectrum. However, is that all we as Christians want? Are we satisfied with a right wing fiscal and business policy? What is Christian politics?

Is Christian politics not proposing and defending an integrated platform that reflects and defends Biblical principles for all of our life as a nation? Is not Christian politics in this way to bear testimony to the Lord our God and his will for public life? There is only one party that has explicitly stated that it wants to have such a platform. This party is the CHP. They deserve our hearing and support in making this their aim. It, after all, has gone on record as wishing to mould policy consistently according to Biblical norms. Indeed, this party specifically states that all civil governments derive their authority from God and not from the people and the secular humanistic world-view is rejected.

Surely these issues beg for study and discussion on the local level lest we unwittingly become infected by the principles of pure pragmatism and possibly even mistake them for distinctively Christian principles. We must never lose sight of the wonderful opportunities we have in this country to publicly defend the Biblical world view, also in politics. That is the bright spot in what otherwise could be a completely gloomy and discouraging political situation.

Local Associations for Reformed Political Action should be active in continuing discussions on our political responsibilities. If there is a local CHP candidate he could also be invited to speak. It would be one way of finding out more about the principles governing this party and the need for a country wide Christian testimony.

As those who confess Christ as Lord and King, we must never be complacent and content with the current shift to the right, as if having "conservative" governments is sufficient for Christians. We cannot simply resign ourselves to being happy with this situation. Not conservative pragmatism, but Christian vision and action is what is needed. We should strive to translate our specific Christian commitments into political action and involvement. The Lord will use in His own way every faithful testimony in politics that directs the attention to His rights, privileges and commands!

## JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING

by John Newton

Sometimes a light surprises  
The Christian while he sings;  
It is the Lord, who rises,  
With healing in His wings:  
When comforts are declining,  
He grants the soul again  
A season of clear shining,  
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation,  
We sweetly then pursue  
The theme of God's salvation,  
And find it ever new;  
Set free from present sorrow,  
We cheerfully can say-  
E'en let the unknown morrow  
Bring with it what it may.  
It can bring with it nothing,  
But He will bear us through;  
Who gives the lilies clothing,  
Will clothe His people too;  
Beneath the spreading Heavens  
No creature but is fed;  
And He who feeds the ravens,  
Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig-tree neither  
Their wonted fruit shall bear,  
Though all the field should wither,  
Nor flocks nor herds be there:  
Yet God the same abiding,  
His praise shall tune my voice;  
For, while in Him confiding,  
I cannot but rejoice.



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By J. Moesker

## A dangerous yet attractive Church

*No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.*

*(Acts 5:13-14)*

The Lord sometimes did shocking things in the Bible to teach people something. That is the case with the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. Their deaths were meant to teach everyone in a very dramatic way that in the church of the Lord, you have to do with the Holy Spirit. The church that keeps the Word is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22). And no one can fool the Spirit of God. He knows the deeds and hearts. He displayed that in the young New Testament church with the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira.

What happened? They lied to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit who took up residence in the church at Pentecost, is a person of the Godhead. You can grieve Him, or withstand Him. You can also lie to Him. Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, lied to Him. They let everyone know that they were giving the complete proceeds of a sale of land to the church. In the meantime, though, they secretly put some of the money aside for themselves.

They wanted to look good in the eyes of others, and still do what they wanted. The other church members would look up to them for giving such a large sum, making such a sacrifice. At the same time, they still had some, for they had not given away all the money raised by the sale of the land. They could still keep some for themselves.

The Holy Spirit, however, through the apostle Peter, exposed their sanctimony. By the end of the worship on that day, both Ananias and Sapphira were dead. They fell down dead when they maintained their lie over against Peter. The Spirit showed in dramatic fashion that He cannot be lied to in the place where He dwells.

This incident was written for our instruction too. In the post-Pentecost church of Christ we have to do with the Holy Spirit in all we do. He sees our hearts. He also sees all sanctimony and hypocrisy. That should make us very humble. God hates it when we make ourselves look more pious than we are.

God may not strike us down on the spot like Ananias and Sapphira, but He is the same then as now. All sanctimony is sin before Him, and He will condemn us for it if we do not repent.

That is the message the general public in Jerusalem got when the news of Ananias' and Sapphira's deaths spread. It says in Acts 5:14 that no one else dared join them, though they were highly regarded by the people. The people understood that the church of Christ is a dangerous place. They were sympathetic to the church for all kinds of reasons, good or not so good. But they were afraid to join. They realized that joining the church means that your life is an open book before the Spirit. You can fool people by acting pious while still holding on to sin, but you cannot fool the Spirit of God. The post-Pentecost church is a dangerous place.

You might think, now, that would also make the church an unpopular place, and that people would not want to join it. But look at Acts 5:15. It says

### What's inside?

After having studied Greek for two years at University, and even sitting in on the second year class an extra year "to keep my Greek up," I thought I knew the language of the NT rather well. I was under that delusion until I met the late Prof. Selles, NT prof. at our Theological College. Upon receiving my first test back, I knew that my Greek needed a bit of work. This most gentle of men was a ruthless marker! It had to be perfect. My debt of gratitude to Prof. Selles is immense. Once we graduated four years later, we knew our Greek. It is still like that at the College. This is no less true for the graduate's proficiency in Hebrew. Our graduating students know Greek and Hebrew! The churches may be thankful for that. Ever since the Reformation, Reformed churches have insisted that their preachers be able to work with the Bible in its original languages. Dr. Riemer Faber writes about this – about the importance of learning the Biblical languages for the training for the ministry.

The 35th Parliament has been dissolved. Canadians go to the polls on June 2 to elect a government. In the lead editorial, Dr. Van Dam calls for a re-awakening of principled political consciousness among the readers of *Clarion*, and warns against being swept away by the current tide of "conservative" pragmatism.

On May 18th, the church celebrates Pentecost. We have included contributions on the theme of Pentecost – one by the Rev. J. Moesker, another by the Rev. J. VanRietschoten.

Mr. Vanderven addresses the question of whose responsibility schooling is.

You will find a few more contributions in this pages. Blessed reading!

GvP

there that nevertheless more and more people believed in the Lord and joined the church. The Holy Spirit makes people afraid, but he also makes people want to join the church in faith. How can that be?

Well, a church which is a dwelling place of the Spirit, where the Gospel is proclaimed and kept, and where the members realize that they have to do with the Spirit who sees everything in their lives, is a church where people are honest and humble. If we know we cannot fool the Spirit, we will also give up trying to fool people and the Spirit Himself with false piety. The result will be a church that is dangerous, but at the same time one in which there are open, unpretentious, natural, unobtru-

sive people. They know they have to do with the Spirit of God in the church

Many churches today think they can make themselves attractive to others by giving others the impression that everything is nice and happy and friendly in their church. And in the meantime the Gospel is watered down and Biblical discipline is no longer maintained. It is too harsh, too scary.

But Acts 5 gives a different way to be an attractive church. Be conscious of the fact that in the church we have to do with the Holy Spirit. And act accordingly. In preaching and discipline. Also in our personal lives. Then as church we will be attractive. The outsiders will see people who are not all pious talk but impious walk. There is nothing that

turns outsiders off to the church more than people who speak and act piously on Sunday, but who curse and act selfishly during the week. But if we know ourselves to be the dwelling place of the Spirit, we will show that we are a dangerous church, but also an attractive one – attractive to people who are looking for the home of the Spirit. They will realize, this is the real thing.

It is a high and difficult calling to be such a church. This calling can only be fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit. May the Holy Spirit make us such a church.

*Rev. J. Moesker is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church in Cloverdale, BC.*

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## Bible translations and Reformed training for the ministry<sup>1</sup>

By R. Faber

### Introduction

Recent months have witnessed continued discussion concerning the best translation of the Bible for use in public worship services. The gravity with which church members, councils, and ecclesiastical assemblies treat this matter attests to the place which Scripture occupies in the life of the believers and the church. Whereas some may find it tedious, the ongoing discussion bears happy witness to an important tenet of the Reformed faith: the infallibility and authority of Scripture. Thanks to God's work in the Reformation especially, the church of Christ professes the Bible as the sole rule of faith. The Bible alone preserves the Gospel; it alone is the source for the doctrine of the Christian faith and the guide for right living. Since the infallible Word of God fulfils these functions, believers desire that the most accurate translation of the original texts be used in public worship services and family devotions.

Throughout the twentieth century, however, serious challenges have been mounted against the profession of the



*Luther – “dreadful abominations arose because of ignorance of languages.”*

supremacy of Scripture. Modern interpretative models seek to place above or beside Scripture norms which diminish the authority of God's revelation. There are those who falsely claim that the Bible does not answer all questions of modern life, or that the current

age is better placed to interpret Scripture than the apostolic era. Others argue that in addition to God's Word one must rely on knowledge gained in spheres of human activity. This attack upon God's Word affects also the training for the ministry; especially in North



*Luther – we have the gospel “as pure and undefiled as the apostles had it.”*

America the number of colleges that place little emphasis upon a thorough knowledge of the Bible is increasing. Whereas the study of human institutions and teachings is promoted, learning of the Hebrew and Greek testaments suffers. More and more preachers cannot, or will not, appreciate the value of knowing God’s Word as it was recorded by the inspired authors.

The recent discussions about the most suitable English Bible translation reveal a commitment to the profession of the supremacy of Scripture and a resistance to the pressures of diminishing the role of the Bible in family and church. Directing the church away from human institutions to the source of the Christian faith was one of the contributions of the Reformation. To turn believers toward the Bible, the reformers studied the Hebrew and Greek languages in the desire to appropriate the Word of God as it was first recorded. New, more accurate editions of the Old and New Testaments were published, commentaries on the Greek and Hebrew texts replaced obsolete and inaccurate glosses on the Latin translations, and grammars of the Hebrew and Greek languages appeared in print. To promote the return to the original Bible further, the reformers instituted schools and institutions of higher learning which would prepare the coming generation to read Scripture for itself. “Trilingual Colleges” which stressed knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, were established, and throughout Germany Luther and especially his collaborator Philip Melancthon erected such schools. The University of Wittenberg

became famous for its emphasis upon knowing the Bible, and students flocked there to benefit from the lectures on Scripture. For an increased knowledge of the Old Testament the humanist Johann Reuchlin strove to promote appreciation of Jewish culture and the Hebrew language. Manuscripts of the Bible were eagerly collected and collated so that the original texts might be restored as accurately as possible. In short, the reformers’ call to “return to the sources” meant above all a return to Scripture.

Despite their zeal in rediscovering the value of knowing the Biblical languages, however, the reformers did not exaggerate the importance of the Hebrew and Greek testaments. Luther and his contemporaries knew that those who had access to the Bible via translations were able to receive the message of salvation fully, and that the Holy Spirit employs such translations in convicting people of their sins and turning them to God. For this reason one of the foremost tasks of the reformers was to render Scripture in the common languages. They desired to make the Gospel available to all people. Nevertheless the reformers realized that the errors of doctrine and practice which had crept into the church were due in part to a misunderstanding or misapplication of the Bible in translation. Therefore they promoted a return to the original testaments, as these contained the inspired words of God. Bible translations, they learned, must be as accurate as possible, so that the faith of believers and the wellbeing of the church may be grounded rightly.

While it is useful to learn by what means the reformers promoted the knowledge of Scripture, it is arguably more relevant today to consider the grounds for such efforts. The purpose of this article is to examine the reasons given by the reformers for promoting the knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek testaments and to ask whether these reasons remain valid today. At a time when the churches consider how they may best preserve the Word of God in clear and modern English, it is useful also to examine the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek testaments and renditions of them in the vernacular. The first instalment of this article deals with the three basic grounds on which the reformers advanced knowledge of Scripture in the original languages: 1) the Bible is God’s Word; 2) the Bible was written by men inspired by God; and 3) the Bible is the Gospel of salvation. The second instalment considers the importance of Scripture for the advancement of true teaching and the rejection of heresy. Moreover, it will examine the connections the reformers made between the knowledge of Scripture and the increase of piety and true Christian living. All of these reasons affect especially the ministers of God’s Word who must shepherd the flock of Christ in preaching, teaching and counselling. We shall conclude, therefore, that the reformers’ reasons for advancing the knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek testaments do remain in force today, and that especially reformed training of the ministry should continue to place God’s Word in the centre.

### **1. The Bible is God’s Word**

The simple confession that the Bible is the Word of God is the first reason the Reformers give for knowing the Hebrew and Greek testaments. Scripture is the inspired revelation of God; all other writings are fallible. Strictly speaking, therefore, only the Hebrew and Greek testaments are the infallible Word of God. Translations are human, uninspired renderings of that perfect Word. As the reformers note, a fine but crucial distinction exists between the testaments in the original languages and the vernacular versions. Whereas the latter are sinful reworkings of the inspired sources, the former contain the words of God Himself. To quote the Belgic Confession, which refers to 2 Peter 1:21: “we confess that this Word of God did not come by the impulse of man, but that men moved by the Holy Spirit



profession that the Holy Spirit moved men to record God's Word, we must appreciate to the full our possession of the testaments in Hebrew and Greek. Luther expresses it concisely: we have "the Gospel as pure and undefiled as the apostles had it (C361)." If God saw fit to preserve His Word in Hebrew and Greek, writes Luther, then surely we too must honour those languages above all others and seek to know God by reading His inspired Word in them (C359). We should not treat lightly the fact that we have God's Word in the very form in which it was inspired. It is for our own salvation that God wrote His Word.

### 3. The Bible is the Gospel

Closely related to the profession that the Hebrew and Greek testaments are the inspired Word of God is the conviction that the Bible comprises the Gospel. While the text is the form of God's Word, the substance is the message of salvation. In other words, the two testaments are the vehicle for the Gospel message. Philip Melanchthon makes this link between the form and substance of the Gospel when he states, "the Greek language . . . is absolutely necessary to help us read and correctly understand . . . the message of Christ (Rummel 145)." Since the Gospel is conveyed through human languages, we must learn those languages well if we desire to receive the Gospel most directly. Luther expresses the same sentiment with the following metaphor: "the languages are the sheath in which the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) is contained (C360)." In order to grasp the *contents* of Scripture, one must know also its *form*. This form is the original text of Scripture.

Luther observes that one of the many blessings in the Reformation was the return to the Gospel. And according to him, the contemporary recovery of Hebrew, Greek and Latin was related to this return. Pursuing a redemptive-historical line of reasoning, Luther notes that God used the ancient languages to disseminate His Word (C359) at the time of the patriarchs and the apostles. The fact that the decline in the knowledge of the Biblical languages during the Middle Ages was accompanied by the loss of the Gospel is proof for Luther that study of these languages must be promoted. Indeed, Luther states, during the Reformation God saw fit to cause a rebirth in the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek "for the sake of the Gospel, which He intended to bring to light

and use in exposing and destroying the kingdom" of the Romish pope (C359). What is more, Luther argues, believers who have been granted to know the Bible in the form in which God gave it, have the obligation to preserve it in that form. For "we will not long preserve the Gospel without the languages. . . . It is inevitable that unless the languages remain, the Gospel must finally perish (C360)." Luther concludes that just as the recovery of the original languages is linked to the recovery of the Gospel, so too the future loss of them will be coupled with the loss of the Gospel itself. If this reasoning is correct, one hesitates to imagine what may be in store should the true church be

deprived of her knowledge of the languages of Scripture.

(To be continued and concluded in the next issue.)

*Dr. Riemer Faber is professor in the Department of Classical Studies, University of Waterloo.*

<sup>1</sup>Quoted from E. Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 103. Further references to this book appear in the text.

<sup>2</sup>M. Luther, *To the Councilmen of All the Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*, tr. A. Steinhaeuser, in H. Lehman, ed., *Luther's Works*. Vol. 45 (Philadelphia, 1962), 364. Further quotations from this Letter will be noted in the text with "C."

## IN MEMORY OF MY GRANDPA

by Karilyn

I knew a kind and gentle man,  
I loved with heart and soul  
Us kids all called him Grandpa George  
He played the perfect role.

It was always so important  
That we all must love the Lord.  
Indeed that was his heart's desire,  
That we should strive toward.

No matter when you saw him,  
He always wore a smile.  
To help a friend or neighbor  
He would go the extra mile.

He was always quick to listen,  
And to lend a helping hand.  
He spoke his words of wisdom,  
That we all could understand.

I never will forget the way  
In church he'd stand so proud,  
Lifting up his voice to God  
So humble yet so loud.

His family was so dear to Him;  
He treasured them with pride.  
He loved them all in his own way,  
And we on him relied.

We'll always have his memories;  
So we never will forget,  
And now we can be comforted  
That he his Maker meet.

This poem was written by Karilyn Leffers of Houston, BC, after her grandfather passed away.



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# Pentecost! Arrival of “the Spirit of Truth”

By J. VanRietschoten

## Quotation marks

Possibly you have noticed that some of the words in the heading of this article are between quotation marks. That is done to assure you that it is not a human invention to speak of Pentecost as the arrival of the Spirit of truth. The Lord Jesus Christ spoke these words (John 14:17; 16:13).

## Time of arrival promised but not dated

When the Lord Jesus announced His departure He promised that the empty place would be filled. At His ascension into heaven the Lord charged His disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait there for the arrival of the promise of the Father, which, He said, “You have heard from Me” (Acts 1:4).

The disciples and the women did as the Lord had charged them. Not knowing how many days they had to wait, they spent the time in prayer, trusting that the number of days was known to their ascended Lord. The number of days would become full and the promised Spirit of truth would arrive.

## “When the day of Pentecost was fully come” (AV Acts 2:1)

The disciples and the women, with Mary the mother of Jesus and His brothers had been right in their expectation. Their trust was not misplaced. Ten days after the Lord ascended into heaven the promised Spirit of truth was poured out from heaven by the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

## Arrival true to His nature

Immediately upon His arrival it became crystal clear that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth: He filled the apostles exactly as promised. Every word the Spirit spoke through them was taken out of Christ. Just as Christ had foretold, saying,

*“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own authori-*

*ty, but what ever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is Mine; therefore I said that He will take what is Mine and declare it to you”* (John 16:13-15).

When you read the words the apostle Peter spoke on the day of Pentecost you taste and see that the Spirit who filled him is the Spirit of truth. For Peter proclaimed Christ and no one else. Every word was in harmony with what Christ had foretold. When the Spirit of truth confronted the hearers with their sin the truth convicted them with saving power.

*“Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

*“Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’. ... So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls”* (Acts 2:36-42).

## The Spirit of truth makes promises come true

From the exalted title which the Lord gave to the Spirit we conclude that the Spirit never lies. God the Spirit is truly one with the Father and with the Son. What the Father speaks, the Son speaks. What the Father and the Son speak the Spirit of truth speaks.

But there is more. As the Spirit of Christ the Spirit of truth makes true what He could not make true before. There was a time that the Spirit of God was not yet the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In the Old Covenant the Spirit of God could not yet “take it all out of Christ.” The Old Covenant was full of promises and foreshadowing. But the reality was not yet

there. Christ had not yet borne the curse of the sin of His people. Neither had the Christ yet been raised; nor was He seated in power at the right hand of the Father. Christ had not yet become “the life-giving Spirit” (1Cor.15:45).

When the Lord Jesus had fulfilled His task on earth He ascended and sent His Spirit down to bring the fruit of His suffering and death to us. When we are brought to faith in Christ it is the Spirit of truth who makes true the promise of renewal. He renews us so that we believe the truth of the Gospel.

When we stand convicted of our sin it is the Spirit of truth who has convicted us of our sin so that our hearts say ‘amen’ and we confess our sin.

When we rejoice in the grace of God it is the Spirit of truth within us who assures us of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of truth is the Spirit of Him who is the way, the truth and the life. The “Spirit of truth” is synonymous with the “Spirit of Christ.” We now live in the new era of the Spirit of Christ who makes true on us all what Christ earned for us. “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

## Test the spirits

Our spirits must be subject to the Word of the Spirit of truth. What our spirits produce must be tested. Human spirits only then produce truth when the product, idea, plan, is in harmony with the Word of the Spirit of truth given to us in the Bible. Since Christians live in the new age of the Spirit of truth Christians have the means to test themselves whether they are in the truth. Our Lord God will not withhold the Spirit of truth from whoever asks Him. But we must ask in faith, celebrating Pentecost as the arrival of the Spirit of truth who leads us into all the truth.

*Rev. J. VanRietschoten is minister-emeritus of the Canadian Reformed Church in Chatham, ON. He and his wife reside in Carman, MB.*



## Help for Russia

Last summer *Nederlands Dagblad* ran an article indicating that religious freedom in Russia was coming under increasing pressure. The climate is worsening for Christians who are not members of the Russian Orthodox Church. Two Dutch relief organizations, *Open Doors* and *Friedenstimme* were concerned about future developments. The article goes on to say:

Formally the freedom of religion remains unlimited in Russia. Proposed legislation has been around for years seeking to limit the activities of foreign evangelists and organizations. According to *Open Doors*, on the local level there are already all kinds of curtailing regulations. Anybody who would protest the laws could be justified in his appeal. But the juridical road is too long and requires too much energy from Christian organizations that are struggling to keep their head above water.

Acceptance of the proposed legislation is still a real threat. . . . *Open Doors* understands that Russia wants to set limitations with regard to the work of foreign sects. But right now everything which is not Russian orthodox is a sect. "Whoever wins the election, the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church will increase" says *Open Doors*.

A co-worker for *Open Doors* still received permission to visit Russia last April (1996, JDJ). She wants to go again soon, but now notices that suddenly it is much more difficult to get a visum. She was informed that an organization that wants to invite foreigners first must have an interview with Foreign Affairs in Moscow, even if the organization is far away in Siberia. These rules only apply to guests of religious organizations. Someone invited by a business run by the Mafia is not questioned.

The *Open Doors* co-worker acknowledges that not all foreign aid to Christians has been great. "I have met a lot of people who no longer

want to work with the western organizations." Cultural errors have been made. Follow up has often been wanting. Promises have not been kept. If there were "so many people who came to the Lord," it was unclear after a while where all those people went to.

She was especially shocked by the style of the American mission organizations. "Russian Christians prefer to work with western organizations from Europe."

I only pass on these statements for the interest of our readers. They clearly illustrate that also in religious respects the situation in Russia is very volatile. This country, and especially its struggling believers, needs our prayers and support.

### Calvin for Russia

In a more recent issue *Nederlands Dagblad* reports on a project initiated by the CRC to make *Calvin's Institutes* available in Russian. With the help of a Dutch work group, the CRC committee hopes to get 20,000 copies of Calvin's standard work into Russia throughout this year.

The paper reports:

Since 1992 a group of translators has been active in translating the *Institutes* from French to Russian. The instigator of the project, the well known CRC minister Dr. Joel Nederhood (of the radio program *The Back to God Hour*, JDJ), originally wanted the standard work to be translated from the Latin. When suitable persons were not found for that project, the decision was made to translate it from the French.

According to the philosopher Dr. Konstantin Ivanov, this new edition is not just of importance to Reformed people in Russia. "Especially we orthodox Christians miss that rational clarity and consciousness in the understanding of faith as it is taught us by Calvin. And without that a modern person, living in this new culture and society, cannot develop himself."

### Financial Support


Meanwhile the CRC has brought together a lot of money and has been on the lookout for other Christians willing to support this project. John De Jager of the CRC recently had contact with the Reformed Church (Liberated) in Hattem, which carries on mission work in Kiev, (Ukraine). This led to the formation of the *Calvin for Russia* work group, which is now organizing a financial campaign from out of Hattem.

The action is recommended by the committee consisting of Dr J. Van der Graaf, Rev. C. Harinck, Prof. Drs. B. Kamphuis, Prof. Dr. W. Schuurman, and Prof. Dr. W. Van 't Spijker.

The Back to God Hour is sponsoring a worthwhile project here! Calvin intended his *Institutes* to be a guide to the understanding of the Scriptures. If they are seen and read in that light, with the Scriptures at hand, then the gain is immeasurable! Dr. Ivanov can be sure that reading the *Institutes* is a great source for seeking directives on how to function in church and society. A Calvinist world and life view is a healing salt to the land!

Yet we wonder how far the philosopher will get. For Calvin should not be seen as a more rationally coloured antidote to the predominately mystical emphases of eastern Christianity. If you approach Calvin as simply a good counterbalance, one might as well not begin. For that will end up closing not only Calvin himself, but also the Scriptures, and so closing the door to true and lasting social reform.

A last comment: I am thankful to Dr. Joel Nederhood and others who initiated this project. But if we are going to promote Calvin, should we not follow the Calvinist approach in our own church and societal life? A church that champions Calvin without living by the principles he defended is only busy burying the fathers, and making museum pieces of their works.

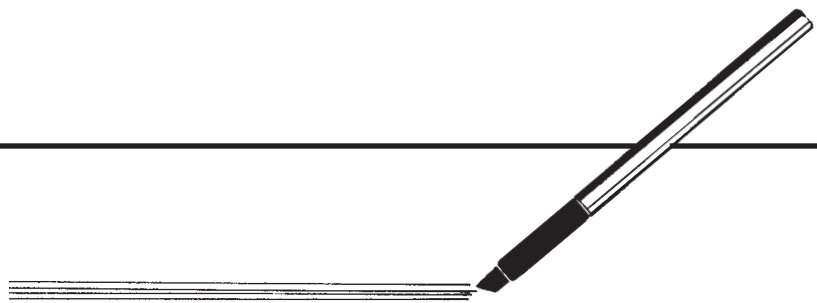
There is not one of us that can repair the damage in the CRC. But from leaders like Joel Nederhood and his colleagues, we are still hoping for something better and something more. 

# THE HI-LITER

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## News from Here and There

By C. Van Spronsen



In Rockingham W.A. they had the privilege of officially opening their brand new facilities on April 5th. Space galore, as we gather from the following comment: "Now with the larger building we have a great empty void between the pulpit and the first persons of the congregation. It would be so nice if the front of the church would fill up first, and nicer still if you would do this voluntarily, without the COM having to close off pews or remove them."

\*\*\*

A similar event took place in the Willoughby Heights Church of Langley, BC (formerly Port Kells). The opening of their new church building took place on April 11th. This fine building is beautifully finished in and out, grounds included.

\*\*\*

In the Bethel Church in Toronto the use of musical instruments other than the organ in the worship services was discussed. An earlier decision not to allow other instruments was rescinded. The implications are that now there is no decision. "All desires to perform, other than in the established manner, before, during or after the service, should be presented to Consistory in good time and in some detail . . . for prior approval."

\*\*\*

In Albany W.A. the new officebearers will from now sign the subscription form at the end of the ordination service with the congregation present."

\*\*\*

In Burlington West the matter of splitting the congregation again came up. The previously appointed committee came with a detailed proposal. Council decided to divide the one church of West into two churches (Burlington/Waterdown and Flamborough) each with their own council, minister and catechism classes. This is subject to approbation of the congregation and classis Ontario North and would be effective as of Sunday, September 7. For the time being they will share the present facilities.

\*\*\*

The Church in Hamilton adopted changes in the election process. "Voting stations" will be set up downstairs on the Sunday designated for the election. Eligible voters will fill out a ballot after the morning or before the afternoon service. The election committee will open the ballots on the following Monday evening at a meeting open to all members of the congregation. If the procedure is to be repeated, due to a lack of majority, this will be done the following Sunday following the same procedure.

\*\*\*

The Covenant Teacher's College in Hamilton for some time has been planning expansion since their building was very cramped. An unexpected solution arose when the Timothy School building came up for sale and a deal could be made. During the summer the building will be renovated and, if all goes as planned, Covenant students can occupy their new facility by September, 1997. It is expected that after completing the renovations the mortgage will be zero!

\*\*\*

In Grand Valley, ON, the consistory "decided to rescind the decision to implement the NIV in our worship service. This decision does not reflect the consistory's view on the NIV, but rather, the unrest in the congregation over this matter. It was thought better that we approach the matter afresh."

\*\*\*

In a bulletin the editor begins his column by saying: "The most holy season in the church's calendar is upon us." It struck me as being a rather unusual statement to make in reformed circles. Do we have "holy seasons" and "most holy seasons?"

\*\*\*

Hamilton's missionary in Brazil, the Rev. J.G.R. Kroeze, let it be known that he wishes to repatriate by 1999/2000. Council recommended that a call be extended by the fall of 1997 in order to have the candidate in the mission field by the spring of 1999.

\*\*\*

The mission field in Brazil will see more changes. Rev. R.F. Boersema, missionary in Recife, sent out by Surrey, will be retiring as of July 1, 1997 because of severely impaired vision. His intention is to remain in Brazil at least for one more year where he will continue to do what he can to serve the mission work. Due to financial constraints no immediate replacement will be sought.

\*\*\*

In Australia an action is underway to enable Frank Dong and his family (one of the "Australian" theological students at Hamilton) to spend the summer in Australia. The Kelmscott consistory is exploring the possibilities of mission work in South East Asia, having regard to the possibility of engaging br. Dong in this work. The Dong family is originally from China. Spending some time in Australia would be most beneficial for encouragement and further consultation.

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## Schooling: whose responsibility is it?

In most countries of the world, education is, by law, the responsibility of the state. In Canada, this responsibility is given to the provincial government. Although there is consultation among the ten provincial Ministries of Education, there is no federal Ministry of Education which decrees what ought to happen in the schools across the country.<sup>1</sup> In turn, the responsibility for and control over the schools is delegated to regional school boards. These local Boards of Education<sup>2</sup> are responsible for establishing schools and support services in their region. The Hamilton Board of Education controls all public schools in the City of Hamilton; the Halton Board of Education does the same for the political region of Halton, which includes the City of Burlington. Each Board has appointed a Director of Education who oversees the schools on behalf of the Board. In this manner a hierarchical system has been developed from the Minister of Education (in Ontario located in Toronto), right down to the classroom teacher. This pattern<sup>3</sup> is followed across Canada, and is generally accepted as an appropriate and efficient way to provide all Canadian citizens with a good education. Canadian public education is government-controlled and therefore also, in all aspects, government funded.<sup>4</sup> This means, of course, that a portion of the taxes paid by citizens (property owners) is used for education.

In many countries across the world, Christian parents have joined forces to establish parent-controlled Christian schools. These parents desire an education for their children which is in agreement with their own – Biblically based – view of education. These schools have been established at great cost and with great effort, and their maintenance requires even greater ef-

forts, particularly in those areas where there is no government funding of any kind, as is the case in Ontario.<sup>5</sup> Why are such parent-controlled schools not the usual pattern for the educational system in Canada, as is the case in the Netherlands, for example?<sup>6</sup> The answer to this question must come from history.

From the early settlement days in North America, the pioneers were vitally interested in all societal activities, including schooling. The economic survival, the very livelihood of each settlement depended very much on the cooperation of all citizens. Having a school became an economic status symbol for many a settlement. Higher education was provided eventually on the basis of financial cooperation between a number of settlements, an arrangement which in basic outline is still in place. In the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries such cooperation among citizens was made possible, among many other things, by the fact that, despite differences, there was a general acceptance of Judaeo-Christian values. The United States and Canada have always been considered Christian nations because the citizens accepted Christian values and morality as the standard for societal behaviour. Thus it did not take Ryerson<sup>7</sup> much to convince the people that it was the government's responsibility to provide its citizens with a good education based on the principles of Judaeo-Christian morality.<sup>8</sup> Public schools were established from the late seventeenth century onwards. In Lower Canada (now Quebec province), predominantly Roman Catholic, these schools were under the control of the Roman Catholic Church. The priests were often the only literate persons in a settlement. In Upper Canada (now Ontario), the prevailing religion was Protestant, and thus the early public schools

were Protestant schools. Eventually this arrangement became enshrined in the unwritten Canadian constitution, the British North American Act (1867), and remains so to this day. The Protestant public school system changed over time into the secular system we know today. The Protestant churches apparently did not have the dominating interest in education as demonstrated by the Roman Catholic Church.

The history of Canada's educational system shows that Canadian society has always considered that the state has responsibility for education. The state acts on behalf and in the interest of the common good, the good of all citizens, rather than the religious interest of some. In North America, the very idea of a Christian school is rather unusual, often considered with suspicion since such a school serves the partisan needs of an elite group. This explains why, at least in Ontario, Christian parents have found it impossible to convince the courts via legal argument of the first right of parents to choose the kind of education they wish for their children. The Ontario courts have maintained that the prior obligation for providing education rests with the state, and that the state is not obligated to assist those parents that wish not to make use of the public school system. In other provinces, private (or independent) schools have been more successful in their quest for some government funding because of the political pressure brought to bear on the governments with the help of the Roman Catholic school communities. However, in most cases such funds come with requirements, often in terms of curriculum and staff certification.

A more recent (1985) government report<sup>9</sup> underscored this view quite strongly: public schools have a most

important role in strengthening the social fabric by providing a common acculturation experience for children. Compulsory schooling is necessary for the good of society, the commissioner argues, and schooling should be made available to provide, among other things,

for the shared responsibility of the government and family; the family exercising its natural interest in and responsibility for the welfare of the child and the government acting on behalf of the wider interest of society and as protector of the rights of the children.<sup>10</sup>

The great diversity of Canada's society is in itself considered to be a good thing, but it also underlines the importance of the schools' responsibility to seek a common unifying core. Within this context there may be a place for private schools, but only as an alternative form of public education. Based on the argument that it is the public, government-controlled, school which exemplifies best the educational goals appropriate for all citizens, funding of private schools is denied unless these schools are willing to become associated schools, essentially privately operated but government-controlled schools. The Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario have not been able to accept such conditions.

It will be clear that the question, Who educates our children?, will be answered in different ways, depending on what educational roles are accorded to the government and to parents. Whatever the arguments, as reformed people we maintain that "to be educated" is not merely a right of citizenship, but that "to educate" is the divine calling of parents. Therefore the responsibility for schooling cannot be the sole responsibility of the government. The government does not have a control task with respect to education; it has an enabling task. As Christian parents we desire that the government would enable us to exercise our God-given educational responsibilities. This not only means that we value a freedom of choice, but also that this parental freedom be enshrined in legislation. May the time come that the government of Ontario acknowledges that the schooling provided by Christian schools is, indeed, legitimate, and therefore worthy of at least taxation concessions.<sup>11</sup>

#### Notes:

1. This is one of the reasons why the educational system differs somewhat from province to province. Taken altogether, the similarities are far greater than the differences.
2. The members of these Boards are elected by the taxpayers of the region. These members have a political rather than an educational function. Parents can exert influence by approaching the local Board of Education directly if they are not satisfied with their local school. Recently, parental action to ban a novel used in a local high school was front page news. Most public schools have a parent committee to facilitate the contact between home and school. In this way parents can actively influence the school's educational programs.
3. More recently, this pattern has been broken by the emergence of charter schools. These types of schools are essentially public schools operated by private interest groups and funded in full by the provincial government. They have come about as a result of political pressure: parents desiring to have much greater control over the education of their children. The idea of charter schools is not without controversy: public school supporters, including teachers' unions, consider them a threat to the public school system.
4. The attempts of the various provincial governments to restructure its financial commitments in order to combat the deficit have not left the public schools and their organization untouched. We might well see important changes that will have an impact for years to come.
5. In Ontario Christian parents do have to pay an educational tax to help fund the public schools, as well as contribute substantially to their own Christian school. To date, all lobbying efforts to remove this "double taxation" have failed. Today, Christian parents who send children to a Christian elementary and a Christian high school must contribute almost \$10,000 per year to these schools.
6. AN INVITATION: It may be of interest to our readers to hear how

school systems have developed in other countries, particularly the history of the development of Christian schools.

7. Egerton Ryerson (1803-1882) is considered the father of modern, state-controlled public education in Ontario. In 1846 he founded the first teachers' college: the Toronto Normal School.
8. The phrase is taken from the current Ontario Education Act (1993). The relevant paragraph reads: It is the duty of a teacher and a temporary teacher, . . . *to inculcate by precept and example respect for religion and the principles of Judeo-Christian morality and the highest regard for truth, justice, loyalty, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance and all other virtues*; . . . Would the originator have read what the apostle Paul had to say about Christian living?
9. The Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario. Bernard J. Shapiro, Commissioner. Submitted to the Minister of Education in Ontario on October 31, 1985.
10. The state as protector of children is a notion which goes against the responsibility accorded by Scripture to the parents. This is not to deny that the state has a responsibility to oppose evil within society, including the evil of child neglect and abuse. May the Lord give us, as Christian community, the fortitude to deal with these problems in a truly Scriptural manner.
11. It would already be very helpful if the "double taxation" were removed, and if the full parental contribution to the schools could be tax deductible, as is the case with those who do not have children in school. Full funding will undoubtedly come with a great deal of government control, risking the very reason for having Christian schools in the first place.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please address questions directly to:  
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 Covenant College  
 856 Upper James St., Box 20179  
 Hamilton, ON, L9C 7M5  
 e-mail: tmpvdp@hookup.net



# CD REVIEW

By G.Ph. van Popta

## Psalms and Hymns from the *Book of Praise*

*Children of Asaph – Sing to the LORD*  
– CDN \$21.99; US \$18.99

Combined Choirs – *God's Truth Abideth Still*  
– CDN \$21.99; US \$18.99

Both titles available from any Christian Book Store, or directly from Inheritance Publications, Box 154, Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada T0G 1R0.

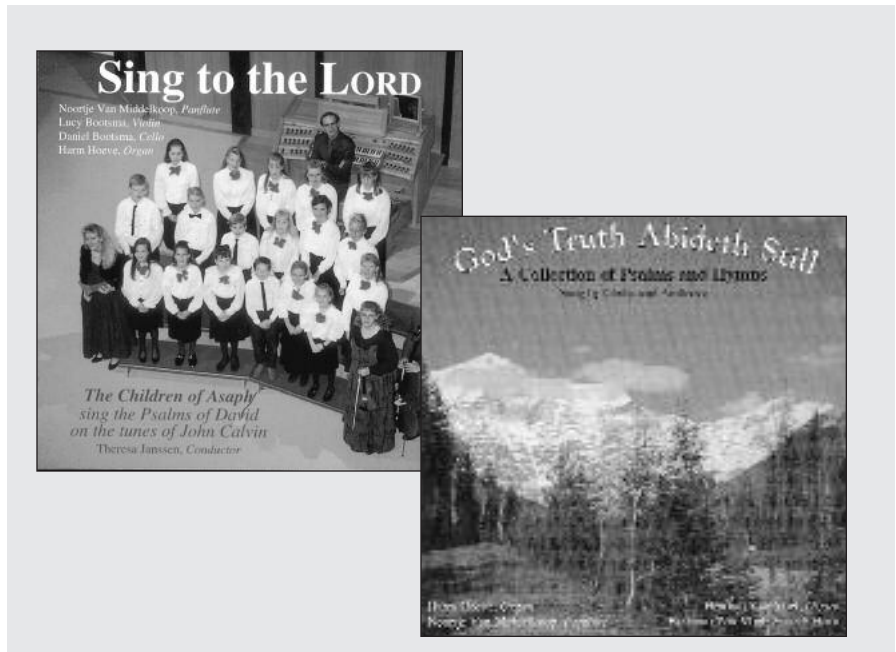
In the USA and Canada: toll free order number (Tel. & Fax) 1-800-563-3594.

Church Music & Records of Neerlandia has produced another two wonderful compact discs of Psalms and Hymns found in the *Book of Praise: Anglo-Genevan Psalter*. One is of a children's choir while the other is a collection of Psalms and Hymns sung by several choirs with audience participation.

### **Children of Asaph – *Sing to the LORD***

The Children of Asaph is a small children's choir organized in 1994 conducted by Theresa Janssen. The self-declared focus of the choir is to sing Psalm settings and Biblical songs to the glory of God. I am very impressed by the calibre of the singing. The voices of the children though, perhaps, untrained, are pure, well-controlled and pleasant. There is a good balance of full choir and solo. The soloists, Hester Barendregt, Cynthia Van Leeuwen, Karina Van Laar, and Felicia Amy Barendregt, are to be commended for their fine singing. The selections are accompanied by Harm Hoeve (organ), Noortje Van Middelkoop (panflute), Lucy Bootsma (violin), and Daniel Bootsma (cello).

My favourite selection is Ps. 124 arranged by Harm Hoeve. His accompaniment on the organ is nothing short of brilliant and very moving. As the children are singing the second stanza, one can hear, through the organ, the tide threatening to spread its wave over God's people, the raging stream trying to drown them, and the surging flood in proudly swelling roll nearly overwhelming them. The interlude between



the second and third stanzas continues this theme of danger and the threat of destruction at the hands of the enemy of God's people. But then as the Gospel of salvation is proclaimed in the third stanza, one can hear the bird set free flying away from the fowler's net.

Harm and Noortje also play their show stopper, Psalm 68, the Battle Hymn of the Reformation. This rendition on pipe organ and panflute sends shivers up and down one's spine.

Ps. 25 is a nice surprise. The first stanza is sung a *cappella*, the second is sung with all half-notes, while the third is sung as set in the *Book of Praise*. The contrasts make for a very pleasing arrangement.

Congratulations to Theresa Janssen, the Children of Asaph, and Roelof Janssen, producer, for presenting us with a very special CD.

### ***God's Truth Abideth Still***

This CD holds another collection of Psalms and Hymns from the *Book of Praise*. They are sung by the combined

choirs of the Canadian Reformed Churches of the Fraser Valley, BC, and by the combined choirs of the Canadian Reformed Churches of Barrhead, Neerlandia, and Edmonton. The conductors are Hester Schouten, Diane Jansen, Peter Selles, and Dave Terpsma. The singing is accompanied by Harm Hoeve and Herman Van Vliet (organ), Noortje Van Middelkoop (panflute), and Bastiaan Van Vliet (French horn).

This album contains a nice variety of choir, choir with audience participation, and musical accompaniment. The soaring notes of the panflute and the mellow sounds of the French horn provide tone and colour making this CD a pleasure to listen to.

I unreservedly recommend both these compact discs. In a day of much insipid hymnody, we can be thankful that Church Music & Records of Neerlandia is promoting the majestic Psalms which speak so powerfully of God's faithfulness and of our obligation to live for His glory.

# Dedication of the Owen Sound Canadian Reformed Church

On July 5, 1992, almost five years ago, the Canadian Reformed Church of Chatsworth, (now of Owen Sound), was instituted. Three months later, Rev. Peter Feenstra was installed as the first minister of the congregation consisting of some eighteen families. They worshipped together in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church of Chatsworth – a small but cosy church – a shelter provided by the Lord at this time.

The church grew in number. More families were added in the ensuing years – individuals from diverse backgrounds and places. In spite of these diverse backgrounds the church also grew in spirit. God blessed the unity that has been prevalent and it was with great joy that on February 7, 1997 the Canadian Reformed Church of Owen Sound (formerly of Chatsworth) could dedicate their own church building to the honour and glory of God.

Located on an eight acre piece of donated land, the building is a monument to the providence of God. Not only does it function as a place for church services, but it has been constructed in such a unique way that a Christian school can (and does) operate separately on the lower floor.

February 7 saw the church building crowded to capacity. The singing almost lifted the new roof off its rafters and the words, "Now thank we all our God, with hearts and hands and voices," rose in gratitude.

May God's name be praised!  
(C. Farenhorst)



Picture courtesy: Christian Renewal



Picture courtesy: Christian Renewal



*Rev. Feenstra being presented with a church key by Fred Hoekstra as the consistory (brothers Farenhorst and Werkman) watch.*



*School choir under the direction of Diane Jonker*



*Church choir – a choir which meets after every afternoon service, under the direction of Julie Kruisselbrink.*

\* Reprinted from Christian Renewal with permission

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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## Dear Editor:

Prof. J. DeJong in his book review on *Marriage and the Family* touches on the subject of home schooling and feels that more attention should be given to this issue. We would like to raise a few points.

- 1) It is argued that home schooling places too much strain on the mother. This depends on how you look at it. For many mothers, spending a few hours per day supervising one's own children's learning is less stressful than leaving the home for a few hours per day to raise money to pay for Christian Education. Sure, home schooling is hard work, but hard work keeps us healthy and happy.
- 2) To develop a balanced and harmonious family life the family unit should spend much time together and do activities together to learn to work as a team. It is ludicrous to ar-

gue that home schooling does not promote this, as this is exactly the reason many chose to home school.

- 3) Abraham Kuyper is one example of someone who was home schooled throughout his entire grade school years. (See biography written by Frank Vandenberg). He is cited as the grand visionary of the Christian life, and seems to have been well prepared for the broad cultural task, and did not suffer from "other worldliness." One could cite many, many other examples of great leaders who were home schooled. To be inwardly directed is more desirable than to be peer-directed.
- 4) As far as the argument that home schooling weakens the schools, maybe it's time to re-examine the way schools are run, to make sure that they are not becoming an end

in themselves, rather than the means to an end. We do not believe home schooling is a "cure-all" or that "everyone has to do it." But it is just the beginning of the way in which education is being revolutionized. A lot of this has to do with modern technology. Educational opportunities are exploding: a wealth of Biblical resources in the form of books, magazines, audio-visual materials, internet tutorial services and various teaching aids are appearing on the market. God is providing us with marvellous opportunities, and whether we like it or not, the schools of tomorrow are going to be vastly different from the schools we see today.

Sincerely yours,  
Jan and Yvonne Harink,  
Neerlandia, AB

Please mail, e-mail or fax letters for publication to the editorial address. They should be 300 words or less. Those published may be edited for style or length.

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Short report of Classis Pacific, April 8, 1997 in the Langley Canadian Reformed Church building.

1. The Rev. H. Boersma calls the meeting to order and requests the singing of Psalm 98: 1,2. He reads Colossians 1: 1-23. He then leads us in prayer and extends a hearty welcome, especially to the deputies of Regional Synod, the Rev. R. Aasman and B. Tiggelaar and to Dr. K. Deddens, visiting Canada. He mentions the fact that two ministers, Moesker and Wielenga have declined calls.

2. All credentials are in order. Rev. Wielenga cannot attend due to emigration procedures.
3. The classis is constituted. The appointed moderamen takes its place. The agenda is adopted with minor additions.
4. Correspondence received.
  - a) A letter from a sister out of a sister church is declared admissible and subsequently dealt with. A response is formulated.
  - b) A letter from a brother and sister out of a sister church. Classis appoints a committee to formulate a response. Classis decides

- to respond according to the committee's advice.
5. The church at Surrey requests classis to give concurring advice with her decision to grant Rev. R.F. Boersema his retirement due to medical reasons. Classis gives this concurring advice. The deputies for Regional Synod are concurring with this decision of classis. The retirement of Rev. R.F. Boersema will commence D.V. in July of 1997.
6. A proposal of the Willoughby Heights Canadian Reformed Church to reorganize the classical regulations is discussed. The proposal is carried over to the next classis.



7. The church at Vernon requests per instruction advice on a matter of discipline. Advice is given.
8. The church at Abbotsford requests per instruction advice on a matter of discipline. Advice is given.
9. The report of the treasurer of classis, over 1996, is read and approved.  
Then the report for the inspection of the archives is read. The archives are in good order.  
The church visitation reports to the churches at Abbotsford, Aldergrove and Chilliwack are read and received.
10. The question period acc. to art. 44 CO is held. The ministry of the office-bearers is being continued. The decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured. One church notifies classis to appeal to Regional Synod a decision of the December classis 1996. One church makes use of the opportu-

- nity to ask advice of classis for the proper government of their church.
11. Appointments  
The convening church for next classis is: Chilliwack. Place: Langley. Time: June 10, 1997 at 9:00 a.m. Alt. date: October 7, 1997  
Suggested officers,  
chairman: Rev. J. Huijgen;  
vice-chairman: Rev. J. Visscher;  
clerk: Rev. E. Kampen.  
Committee for examinations: as before.  
Church visitors: Revs. E. Kampen, D. Moes, J. Moesker, M. Vanluik.  
C. Vanspronsen, J. Visscher. Alternates: J. Huijgen; R. Schouten.  
Church of care of the archives:  
the church at Smithers  
Church to inspect the archives:  
the church at Houston  
Classical Treasurer:  
R. Leyenhorst (Vernon)  
Church for auditing the books of the treasurer:  
the church at Vernon

- Committee for financial aid to students in the ministry:  
br. K.F. Huttema, Revs. J. Moesker and M. Vanluik (convener).  
Committee for needy churches:  
brs. E.C. Baartman, H.A. Berends (convener) and G. Boeve.  
Deputies for preaching arrangements: Revs. C. Vanspronsen and J. Visscher.  
Appointment of counsellors to vacant churches is not needed.
12. The question period is made use of.
  13. Censure acc. to art. 34 CO is not needed.
  14. The acts of classis are adopted and the press release is approved.
  15. The chairman makes closing remarks and requests us to sing: Hymn 46: 1,2. He then leads us in closing prayer. The meeting is closed.

For classis,  
Rev. J. Huijgen.  
Vice-chairman. e.t.

## CLARION

### ADVERTISEMENTS

#### *Births*

*Yet, O LORD, You are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter, we are all the work of your hand. Isaiah 64:8*

The Lord has blessed us with a baby girl.

#### **JESSICA KAREN**

Born April 15th, 1997

A sister for *Nathan Jacob* and *Rachael Michelle*.

#### **Dave and Heather Bosma (nee Kuik)**

668 Woodburn Road, Hannon, ON L0R 1P0

With thankfulness to the Lord we announce the birth of our fourth daughter

#### **SHANNON MARIE**

Born February 28, 1997

#### **Herman and Jane Driegen**

*Lynn, Christina, Cheryl*

32nd grandchild for Hooge and Joanna Driegen

13th grandchild for Sid and Tina Kobes

2060 Windsor Street, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9

*Psalm 103:17,18*

We thank our heavenly Father! He has again entrusted to our care one of His children

#### **DEBORAH ROSANNAH**

Born: 10 March 1997

#### **Rev. and Mrs. J. Huijgen**

A sister for *Rieneke, Henk, Feikje, Lars* and *Jolien*

Box 2229, Smithers BC Canada V0J 2N0

*I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, higher than the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Psalm 108: 3,4*

With great joy and thanksgiving we praise God for entrusting into our care another child

#### **STEPHEN MARK**

Born March 1, 1997.

A brother for *Joel, Meagan, Joshua* and *Karina*

#### **Phil and Terri VanAndel**

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