

*Calvinism and
Evangelization*

*Farewell to the
Rev. C.
VanderVelde
Family*



*Finding Hope
in Haiti*



R. Aasman

Rev. R. Aasman is minister of the Providence Canadian Reformed Church in Edmonton, Alberta.
raasman@canrc.org

Calvinism and Evangelization

The question is whether the doctrine of God's predestination conflicts with evangelization.

Spread of the Gospel

For some time *Clarion* has been publishing a column written by Rev. Dick Moes on evangelism. The column is entitled *reformedevangelism.com*. It is just one example that within the Canadian Reformed Churches and our sister churches, there is a love and appreciation for the spreading of the gospel. It is seen as our calling. We take our cue from our Lord Jesus Christ who said at his ascension in Matthew 28, **all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** Moreover, mission work, evangelization and personal witnessing is not something new to the Reformed or Calvinistic churches. History shows that John Calvin and the early Reformed churches were heavily involved in mission work throughout Europe and as far away as Brazil.

An alleged problem

The Reformed churches also hold firmly to the decrees of election and reprobation. It is in our confession, as we read in the Canons of Dort I. 6:

That God in time confers the gift of faith on some, and not on others, proceeds from His eternal decree. For He knows all His works from eternity, and He accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will. According to this decree He graciously softens the hearts of the elect, no matter how hard they may be, and inclines them to believe; those not elected, however, He leaves in their own wickedness and hardness by a just judgment. And here especially is disclosed to us the profound, merciful, and at the same time just distinction

between men equally worthy of condemnation, or that decree of election and reprobation which has been revealed in God's Word.

Before the world was made God elected some men to salvation by grace alone, but others are reprobated and eternally condemned due to their own hardness of heart. These teachings are irrefutable if you hold to an infallible, inerrant and authoritative Word of God. Romans 9, Ephesians 1 and 1 Peter 2 speak clearly about these decrees of election and reprobation.

The question is whether the doctrine of God's predestination conflicts with evangelization. There are those of an Arminian or pseudo-Calvinistic position who object that the Reformed, Calvinistic teaching about election negates all evangelism endeavour. To believe in a sovereign decree of election where God determines who will be his children, even before the world was made and by grace alone, is to render any need of evangelization null and void. The reasoning goes something like this: how can you seriously, sincerely and generously proclaim the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ to anyone when it is predetermined who will be saved? If it is known by God who will be saved, then what have we to do as the church of Jesus Christ? God will save the elect in spite of us and without us. Moreover how can anyone evangelize on the basis of the decree of election and reprobation? What are you going to do, go to people and say: here is the gospel, after you hear it, sit back and wait to see whether you are elect and then you can be saved? How ineffective is that? How can anyone evangelize in that way? I think we will all agree: you cannot evangelize in that way. But is that what Calvinism does? Or is this a pathetic caricature of how a Calvinist evangelizes?

God's way

From Scripture we see that God elects people to salvation even before the world was made, and He does that

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Editor: J. Visscher; Managing Editor: R. Aasman
Coeditors: N.H. Gootjes, W.B. Slomp, Cl. Stam

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION, 26 Inverness Crescent, St. Albert, AB T8N 5J3
Fax: (780) 418-1506 E-Mail: raasman@canrc.org

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by grace alone on the basis of Christ's blood alone. But how He works out that election in time and history is his way and his program.

Think of Paul's letter to the Romans. He writes in chapter 1 that **the gospel... is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.** We will all agree with that. Then Paul goes on to outline that we are all sinners who have no hope except in the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed to us through faith. In Romans 9 he writes about election and reprobation, stating unequivocally, **"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."** But then comes Romans 10 where Paul writes about the good news of Jesus Christ and the absolute necessity to believe Jesus Christ in the heart and confess him with the mouth. There he writes:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they

Inside . . .

Does the Calvinistic teaching on election and reprobation render evangelization null and void? Some would say it does. Some would say that this is the reason that Arminian churches flourish over Calvinist churches. See what the editorial in this issue has to say about this. See also our column called *reformedevangelism.com* which takes a very positive view toward evangelization.

There has been some movement of late of ministers leaving their congregation and starting a new charge. One of them is Rev. C. VanderVelde and his family. In this issue we read of both his departure and inauguration. We also read in the press release of Classis Alberta that candidate Reuben Bredenhof passed his peremptory examination. This paves the way for his ordination in the Church at St. Albert, Alberta.

We have a report from sister F. VanWoudenberg about her experiences in Haiti. In this troubled part of the world there is still hope!

We have our regular columns *Treasures, New and Old*, *Children's Catechism*, *Ray of Sunshine* and *Education Matters*. We also have two letters to the editor.

RA

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial – Calvinism and Evangelization — R. Aasman	586
Treasures New and Old – Immeasurable Love — W.M. Wielenga	589
reformedevangelism.com — D. Moes	590
Children's Catechism — J. Wiskerke van Dooren	591
Farewell to the Rev. C. VanderVelde Family — W. Pleiter	592
Installation, Inaugural Sermon, and Welcome of Rev. VanderVelde — C. VandenBurg	594
Ray of Sunshine — C. Gelms and E. Nordeman	596
Letters to the Editor	597
Finding Hope in Haiti — F. VanWoudenberg	598
Education Matters — K. Sikkema	601
Press Release of Classis Alberta	602

have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

In other words, God elects his people before the world was made, but the manner in which He works out his election in time is in sending his Son to die for sinners and then sending heralds of good tidings who call for the response of a believing heart and a credible confession of faith.

We might in an intemperate moment declare: this can never be a child of God!

This is Calvinism. This is the Reformed faith (which simply means we go back to what the Bible says). We confess, for instance, in Canons 2.5:

The promise of the gospel is that whoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life. This promise ought to be announced and proclaimed universally and without discrimination to all peoples and to all men, to whom God in His good pleasure sends the gospel, together with the command to repent and believe.

We see here how God's election is worked out in evangelization or the preaching of the gospel. From our point of view we have no idea whom God has elected. We might meet a bum on the downtown streets of our local city and even shudder in horror at his lost condition. We might in an intemperate moment declare: this can never be a child of God! But for all we know, God has elected him. We don't know. We have one task and that is to bring the good news of salvation to this lost soul. All we can do is sow. It is God who in his power and grace decides whether our ministry will draw this person to Him or drive him deeper into darkness. It is God who decides whether the gospel will be a fragrance of life or death. We preach or share the gospel. And in that gospel proclamation, it is God who will work out his decree, either saving or not saving. But it should be very clear to us as Calvinists or Reformed churches: Jesus Christ has left us with the great commission to preach the gospel to all, indiscriminately and well meant! And we have the comfort and assurance that as we proclaim the gospel, it does not depend on our abilities to save anyone – what a scary thought that is – but it is God in his sovereign power who will bring his elect to faith and salvation!

Real power!

Unlike Arminianism which can easily become a gentle prodding or plea to make one's decision for Christ in response



to the declaration that Jesus Christ died for everyone and loves everyone, there is real power in Reformed evangelism. The emphasis is on the sovereignty of God. The good news to a broken-hearted sinner is that it is not man's goodness or choice which saves, but the sovereign grace of God. This is what Paul makes clear in Romans 7 when he contemplates the wretched sinfulness and inclination to sin in his own life: **What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

The good news to a broken-hearted sinner is that it is not man's goodness or choice which saves, but the sovereign grace of God.

It is God in Jesus Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit who saves us through faith, from start to finish. He chose us, He redeemed us and He renews us for holy living before Him. To hear this gospel while trembling over sins is to stand in awe and comfort before God! Not only does his electing love save us, but it inspires us to go out with a heartfelt and well-meant gospel offer to let everyone know about Jesus Christ and his work of redemption. This will continue until all the elect are gathered in and our Lord Jesus Christ returns on the clouds of heaven to take us to himself for eternity. *Soli Deo Gloria!*





MATTHEW 13:52

Rev. W.M. Wielenga is
minister of the American
Reformed Church at
Lynden, Washington, U.S.A.
bwielenga@canrc.org

Immeasurable Love

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

The apostle Paul is making a comparison. It's a comparison between sufferings-now and glory-to-be. Paul's comparison also brings an evaluation. He is putting this beside that and then giving some sort of resulting value to the one thing as compared to the other. Comparison and evaluation.

We could approach this by presenting something of an analogy. Let's say on the one hand we have a plastic ring. It's one of those that you can't actually choose, because it falls randomly out of the 25 cent machine at the entrance to the grocery store. Let's say that on the other hand we have a gold ring. It's one that you would choose carefully from the jewellery store. Put them side-by-side. Comparing and evaluating is quite easy.

At least, it's easy for the trained eye. It's probably not so easy for a young child to compare and evaluate this properly. A child has to learn to evaluate by learning value. A child has to grow wise in order to weigh this over against that. Once the art of valuing things is learned, it's quite easy. The plastic ring, with all its 25 cent random thrills, is not worthy to be compared to the gold ring chosen with deliberate care at the jewellers. Once we know how to compare and evaluate, we don't even

glance at the plastic ring anymore. It's quickly out of the picture. The attention, the focus, the weight, the value is with the gold ring.

When the apostle Paul is speaking about suffering and glory, he really means to evaluate like that. The one – sufferings – is not worthy to be compared to the other – glory. For us it's easy to make the comparison between the plastic ring and the gold ring. For Paul it's just as non-complex to make the comparison between sufferings-now and glory-to-be. It's not a question for him. It's quite straightforward. The sufferings of now are not worthy to be compared to the glory to be. It's not even close.

This means for the apostle that the sufferings of now quickly fall away from his focus. They lose his attention. His attention, his focus, is on the glory. Not that the sufferings are not real. Not that the sufferings are not necessary (cf. 8.17!). But there is a certain value system in place, solid and immovable. The sufferings of now lose their dominance in Paul's life-picture. Put sufferings-now and glory-to-be beside each other, and the attention, the focus, goes way over to the glory-to-be.

How can the apostle do this? How can he think and live that way? He has

learned to judge, to discern, by learning Christ and his way for us, who went before us (cf. Heb 12.2). He has learned, come to know, Jesus Christ, Man of sorrows, King of glory, our Wisdom incarnate. Paul knows Christ through the Spirit of wisdom and glory who dwells in him. We have the first fruits of the Spirit (8:23).

This makes Paul wise about life today and tomorrow. He has learned the truth of Jesus Christ to live it out, to think things through in a new way. Paul has learned true life in Christ, who has dealt with sin definitively. Paul is now well equipped to evaluate life in this broken world rightly: the sufferings of now are not the thing to get all worked up about.

When we follow Christ, sufferings are necessary. But there is a limit to our sufferings. In the way that birth pangs are necessary and yet limited (8.22-23). Do we evaluate this life of sorrows consistently in light of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do we know Christ such that we can operate in this life from the dominating perspective of glory? The only way is for us to hear and keep hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ. May Wisdom incarnate, by the working of the Spirit, be formed in us as he was in Paul, as we approach our King of glory.

D. Moes

*Rev. Dick Moes is minister of
the Surrey Covenant
Reformed Church (URC) in
Cloverdale, British Columbia.
dickmoes@shaw.ca*



reformedevangelism.com

Part 2: How Christians Grow – Reading the Bible

The goal of this lesson is to give a basic introduction to why the Scriptures are important, to give some historical background to the Old and New Testaments, and to give group members some practical ideas about how to read and study the Bible.

The Bible and you

Ask people to reflect on their experience of prayer since the last session. Have they made any changes in their routine of prayer? Did they find this easy or difficult? Once some sharing has taken place, have the group divide into small groups to discuss their own experience of reading the Bible. Have them focus on how much they have read, how often they read the Bible, whether they find reading the Bible easy or difficult and what questions they have about the Bible.

Why is the Bible special?

Establish that the Bible is special. Do this by focusing on the following facts: (1) the Bible is the world's number one best-seller each year; (2) the Bible has been translated into more languages than any other book in history; (3) millions of Christians the world over come to the Bible each week and each day in church services, in small groups and on their own; the Bible's teachings about God and humanity lie at the root of our entire civilization; and (4) Christians believe that, through the Bible, God has spoken to them in a unique way and, through the Bible, He still speaks to them today. Once

these points have been talked about together, have the group look up a number of Scripture passages to see what the Bible says about its own uniqueness.

Reading the Old Testament

Many Christians have great difficulty understanding and reading the Old Testament. That is why it is worth the trouble to give a more detailed introduction to this section of the Bible. Do this, for instance, by pointing out that the Old Testament is a library of books written and collected over more than 1,000 years and that gradually during these 1000 years many of the books were collected. Mention that the Old Testament tells the story of the creation of the world, God's relationship with people and nations, the history of the people of Israel and God's relationship with this nation. Be sure to show how the Old Testament point to and prophecies of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not forget to point out that the different sorts of books in the Old Testament need to be read in different ways and that every Bible reader needs help to understand the Old Testament because of the different cultures from which it comes.

As a means of sharing ignorance rather than knowledge, but also as a means of giving perspective on biblical history, have the groups do a simple history lesson. Draw a time line on a very large piece of paper stuck on the wall. Then, have each group mark on the

time line on their handout when they think certain famous people from the Bible lived, or when certain events happened. Focus on David, Abraham, Paul, Moses, Jesus, the exodus from Egypt and Jeremiah. This exercise can also be used as an introduction to telling the story of the Old Testament around the characters and events of Abraham, Moses and the Exodus, David and the Exile.

Reading the New Testament

Point out that the New Testament is a library, like the Old Testament. However, it was composed within only sixty years of Jesus' death and resurrection and has fewer books. Mention that the New Testament was not written by Jesus, but by his disciples and those associated with them. Mention that the New Testament is the story about Jesus and the early church. Point out that the letters were the first part of the New Testament to be written down. Since the apostles who founded churches could not easily revisit them, they wrote to encourage, teach and correct them. As the generation of disciples who had known Jesus began to grow older, their teachings about Jesus, which had been given by word of mouth, began to be written down in different church centres in different parts of the Roman Empire and became what we know as the four Gospels. Acts, telling the story of the early church, was written by Luke. Revelation was the last part of the New Testament to be written.

How to read the Bible

Now it is time for some simple, practical guidance in how to read the Bible. Point out that when you read the Bible, you should read it in a translation that you can understand. In addition, don't try to read through from Genesis to Revelation. Furthermore, take your time when you are reading. In addition, try to listen to what God is saying to you as you read. Be sure to begin your reading with prayer. Those who do not

have much experience in reading the Bible should be encouraged to begin with a book that is more accessible than others, for instance, one of the Gospels.

Other tips for reading the Bible include using a Study Bible with notes, reading one book at a time, using your imagination and thinking yourself into a passage, and meditating on a single verse.

At the close of the lesson, thank God for the Scriptures. Encourage each participant to work out their way of

praying and building regular Bible reading in some form into their prayer time.

If you would like to view the outline for this lesson, go to www.reformedevangelism.com and follow the links. We have added two articles to our Emmaus library: John MacArthur on "How to Study the Bible" and Thomas Watson on "A Godly Man is a Lover of the Word." Next time, we hope to introduce "Belonging to the Church."



J. Wiskerke van Dooren

Lord's Day 24.

Mrs. J. Wiskerke van Dooren published a Children's Catechism in Dutch. This has been translated with her permission.

Before you go to sleep, you say your prayers. You pray for many things. But one thing you always mention is forgiveness. You ask God: Please forgive my sins, for Jesus' sake. It is good that you do that. Asking for forgiveness belongs to prayer. Does that mean we only commit sins? Do we never do anything good? Thankfully, we do.

When you got that chocolate bar, you gave half of it to your little sister. When your mother told you to clean up your room, you did that. You helped your father wash the car, when you would much rather have played outside. You were mad at your friend. But you made up. You see, there are good things in your life.



Children's Catechism



How is that possible? That is the work of the Holy Spirit. He helps you with that. Look back in Lord's Day 20, and then you will see it.

We may be children of our heavenly Father. That is because of Jesus Christ. And it makes you happy. Now you want to show God that you are happy. You want to do things that are good. And you also begin to do things that make other people happy. And that is what we call: good works.

But don't get it wrong. Don't forget that you need help from the Holy Spirit. We mentioned that before. You can only do good works because the Holy Spirit works in you. He makes you willing to do good works.

It would also be wrong if you would become proud of your good works. If you would think God likes you better because you are nice and obedient. If you would think that you deserve to be called a child of God. But be honest, you know how you are. When you do something that is good, you secretly hope other people will notice it.

You see? It is true you do good things. But at the same time you still do wrong.

But you should go on with doing good. Pray for that. Our Father in heaven likes it. He remembers it, too. Even on the new earth!



Farewell to the Rev. C. VanderVelde Family

On August 1st, 2004, the traffic on Yarrow Central was nearly at a standstill. Everyone was trying to escape the searing heat, as it was a long, hot summer and beautiful B.C. was brown! On this warm Sunday afternoon, most vehicles, filled with youthful sun-worshippers, drove on through Yarrow to continue their pilgrimage to the cool waters of Cultus Lake. However, some four hundred people went against the flow of traffic. They had come to the air-conditioned comfort of the Yarrow church to worship the Son! Today was the farewell message of our pastor and teacher, Rev. C.J. VanderVelde.

Rev. VanderVelde's parting message was based on the text of Hebrews 10:23-25, where the Spirit directs us to "hold to the confession of our hope." As congregation we were reminded that we must hold fast to the confession with confidence since it is a confession in Christ. Being in Christ ensures that there is nothing uncertain about the Christian confession. Holding fast to the confession is holding fast to Christ, and we can only do so because of God's faithfulness to his children. Rev. VanderVelde emphasized our responsibility in holding onto our confession, since the text clearly speaks of congregational involvement. We are to consider how to spur one another to love and good works, to encourage each other to live out of our confession, and to do so out of thankfulness for Christ's redeeming work. Finally, Rev. VanderVelde urged the congregation to live out of

our confession with the correct perspective, a perspective that the Day is drawing near. We are to look forward to, and prepare for Christ's return – we are to see it in the history of redemption, to see it through church history. Having our eyes fixed on Christ speaks of the warning of the judgment of sin, but also the gracious comfort of the promise of salvation.

Later in the day, as the heat began to subside, we enjoyed a festive evening in which the Yarrow congregation could say goodbye and farewell to the VanderVelde family. Br. Jake VanLaar, our M.C., began the evening promptly at 7:43 p.m. Why 7:43, you ask? While some assumed it had something to do with Rev. VanderVelde's reputation for promptness, the real answer remains a mystery. The evening was opened with prayer and the reading of Psalm 119:89-112. After congregational singing, Br. VanLaar spoke some opening words, noting that it was some eleven years earlier that he was in the same role, but that time welcoming Rev. VanderVelde.

The first presentation for the evening was from the Tuesday Morning Bible Study group. They provided a verbal virtual tour of the congregation, starting at the top of Mt. Cheam, with Rev. VanderVelde overlooking the congregation. Sisters Minnie Huttema, Marcelle Togeretz and Karen Gelderman each took a different route around the eastern end of the valley that covered the complete congregation, providing

interesting and humorous anecdotal comments along the way.

Afterward, the young people of the congregation gathered together in the front of the church to say their personal goodbye. After a few words on behalf of the Young People's Society, the group waved and exclaimed "Farewell!"

The Yarrow choir sang three beautiful pieces of music under the capable direction of Mrs. Nel Schouten. This choir first came together for the opening of our church building some four years ago, so their performance on this evening seemed very fitting.

Next was the memorable presentation from the Women's Society. In their special but not so subtle way, the women reminded Rev. VanderVelde of his inexperience as a new minister (and a single minister at that...) when he first arrived in Yarrow. Those first baby visits were particularly nerve-wrecking experiences, especially when he was expected to hold the baby! Some items were presented to Rev. VanderVelde to help him learn from the past and to assist him as he settles in his new congregation. He was given a pack of marbles (to make sure that his new manse is level), a net (to catch birds that enter into the auditorium), a menu planner (to avoid eating pasta all week when visiting families), and saran wrap (to ensure that the apple pie wasn't taste tested by the young boys that delivered it – which was re-enacted by the same boys, who are now teenagers) and a map of Rockway (to help find the nearest walking routes).



Church News

Called to Vineyard Canadian Reformed Church of Lincoln, Ontario:

Candidate John Smith

Please forward all items for bulletin announcements to:
mail@lincolnvineyard.org

Rev. VanLuik spoke on behalf of Classis Pacific East, and reminded Rev. VanderVelde of former school days. When Rev. VanLuik was bus driver for the school, he reminisced how Rev. VanderVelde was the studious young boy who always sat in the back of the bus reading his book. Rev. VanLuik also expressed his appreciation for the work Rev. VanderVelde contributed at classis, and wished him the Lord's blessing in Rockway.

A highlight of the evening was a pictorial presentation that reviewed the many heart-warming moments over the past eleven years within the congregation and Rev. VanderVelde's ministry in Yarrow. Many special occasions were captured, including Rev. VanderVelde's ordination and installation, as well as his marriage to Theresa. Pictures of the numerous babies that were born and baptized were displayed, including several sets of twins, and the two VanderVelde children. Class pictures of the young people who professed their faith were also shown, one for each year of ministry in Yarrow. One of the memorable events during Rev. VanderVelde's ministry, which began as "Operation TopHat," was the church building project. It was great to see the work and progress of the church building as it gave reason to reflect upon the rich blessing we have received with a suitable church building for worship. Perhaps the most moving moments of the evening were the pictures of the members of the congregation who had been promoted to eternal glory. Not only have we experienced the death of a few of our older members, our congregation has also lost a middle-aged man, a young man and several younger children. Throughout this presentation, it was good to reflect upon the Lord's grace and faithfulness to our congregation and to the minister.

On behalf of the congregation, Sr. Susan Onderwater presented Rev. and Mrs. VanderVelde with a photo album

featuring a page from each family. During the coffee social it was rather fascinating to compare this album with the one he received when he first arrived in Yarrow – it's amazing how much we have all changed in eleven years!

On behalf of the council, br. Dick Schouten provided the minister with a special toolkit to equip him for his work in Rockway. This included a pack of marbles and a level (again, the house must be level!), a pair of slippers (in case the manse floor is as cold as his first manse), and bottle of cherry wine (to help calm himself after long meetings). Actually the wine was so that we could collectively fill our (imaginary) glasses and toast the minister for his faithful ministry in Yarrow.

Br. Wayne Pleiter also addressed the minister and his family on behalf of council. Initially, as he talked with fondness about the minister, he appeared to be rather choked up, and we were left to wonder whether he was becoming emotional. However, once br. Tony Togeretz removed the flowers from the pulpit it became clear that br. Pleiter apparently suffered from the same allergies that plagued Rev. VanderVelde on the opening of the church building. J. Council thanked Rev. VanderVelde and his family for their contribution to the spiritual growth of the congregation, and it was noted how Rev. VanderVelde himself personified this growth in his own ministry. The brothers also thanked Rev. VanderVelde for his good guidance and leadership throughout his years in Yarrow and noted that "he was the best minister we ever had!" Sr. VanderVelde was also thanked for her contribution to congregational life, particularly with her involvement in the Tuesday Morning Bible Study, and her visits within the congregation.

Rev. VanderVelde was given the opportunity to address the congregation,

which he did by sharing an experience he had in his ministry in Yarrow. When visiting a young family, a little boy answered the front door to see the minister standing there. Without hesitation, the little boy called out to his mother saying "The Lord is here!" This humorous experience highlighted to Rev. VanderVelde the seriousness of the calling to represent the Lord before his people. It was with this seriousness that Rev. VanderVelde approached his work in Yarrow, and he expressed his desire that the Lord would continue to bless this work in the years to come.

The farewell evening concluded with congregational singing of the "evening song" (Hymn 63) and by prayer by Rev. VanderWel, our minister emeritus. After this the congregation had the opportunity to socialize and say a personal farewell to Rev. and Mrs. VanderVelde.

"For everything there is a season, and time for every matter under heaven" say the Scriptures. Indeed, it was a long hot summer, but slowly the season changed into some cooler fall weather. The realization that the VanderVelde family has moved on slowly dawns on our congregation. It was a wonderful season, a time which we will all cherish, and an experience which we thank God for. Yet a new season begins for our congregation, another time in which we may look with confidence to our heavenly Father for his guidance and blessing.

Installation, Inaugural Sermon, and Welcome of Rev. VanderVelde

It was a beautiful sunny day in Jordan on the 12th of September, but no one from Rockway was outside enjoying the sunny warm weather; instead we were inside rejoicing in the arrival and installation of our new minister, Rev. C. VanderVelde (and family).

In his installation sermon, Professor J. Geertsema taught us that Christ is to be the content of all preaching and teaching. His text was 1 Corinthians 2:2. His theme: Paul's apostolic decision to preach only Christ and Him crucified. He showed us how the Greeks of that time wanted a god in their image, there was a lust after success and power. Paul puts forth Christ over against this lust for power. We must be humble as Christ is humble. We all are sinners who must look to Christ for salvation. Paul tells the church of Corinth to preach Christ and Him crucified; shame, not fame, not human power, but utter human weakness. Paul preaches a Christ who is humble but mighty. We must see ourselves in light of Christ, a mighty Lord who sent his Son for us. This is the Christ who must be the focus of all preaching. This is the gospel Rev. VanderVelde must bring to Rockway every Lord's Day. After the sermon Rev. VanderVelde signed the subscription form in front of the congregation. And then various delegates spoke on behalf



Rev. VanderVelde

of their congregations, some congratulatory words and some advice to the congregation. Also several letters from other congregations were read. This part of the morning was closed with Hymn 64. Then we were all invited to a coffee social to fellowship with one another, and to congratulate and welcome the new minister, and his wife.

Rev. VanderVelde had his inaugural sermon in the afternoon. He chose as text 1 Peter 2:2, 3. "Crave pure spiritual milk." We were told in the morning's service what the minister must preach. In the afternoon we were taught what we as congregation must do with this

preaching. We must crave this pure preaching. This life of service is not easy given the many distractions in life. Yet we must immerse ourselves in that Word. He gave us two points: the basis and the purpose of this command. The conclusion was, the more we crave that pure milk, the more we will grow and be able to put off that old nature, and then we shall gain the inheritance that will never fade.

On September 25th, another beautiful day in Jordan, found us all once again in the Heritage gym. This time the hall was festively decorated, and there were tables and chairs arranged. One



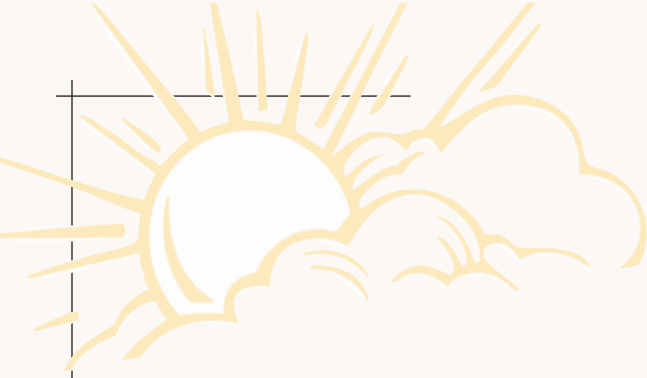
Kids singing

table in particular was decked out with cushioned chairs and an oak table. This was special for the guests of honour. You can imagine their surprise when later they were told that they were allowed to take this particular set of furniture home with them as a welcome gift from their new congregation! One member noted the lack of promptness of some late arrivals at the gym. He gently pointed out to Rev. VanderVelde that if he wanted us to once again be a prompt congregation, he should take lessons from Rev. Wieske. (No-one dared be late with our former minister). Many of the different study groups endeavoured to acquaint the new minister and his wife with all the quirks, personalities, and characters found in Rockway. We all had an enjoyable afternoon and supper in fellowship together. May God continue to guide and bless us together as congregation and minister to his glory.



Signing the Form





Ray of Sunshine

By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Erna Nordeman

“Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God his Saviour.”

As we continue with our series on the Beatitudes, we will pay particular attention to those who are pure in heart. Who are these people? Why do you think that the pure in heart will be able to see God? As we learn more about this Beatitude, let us keep in mind its context.

The first three Beatitudes emphasize the importance of our needs. We must be poor in spirit, mourning because of our sinfulness, and being meek through humility. Having realized our need and having hunger and thirst, God then comes with a provision for our needs. He will fill and satisfy us. From there on we look at the result of being filled. We become merciful, pure in heart, and peacemakers.

So then, what does it mean to be pure in heart? This is something that belongs to those who are mourning about the impurity of their hearts. For the only way to have a pure heart is to realize that you by nature have such an impure heart and your mourning will lead to cleansing and purity.

We begin of course with the “heart.” The heart is the centre of one’s being and personality. It is the fount out of which everything else comes. It includes the mind; it includes the will; it includes the heart. Here we may also note the very characteristic of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the heart. All its emphasis is on the heart throughout the Old and New Testaments. This teaching was surely something that went against the teachings of the Pharisees. For they were always more concerned about their outward conduct and actions.

From the heart also comes a lot of misery and evil. All our troubles arise out of this human heart. This is also foretold by Jeremiah in chapter 17:9 “the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”

So then, “having a pure heart” is having a heart that is no longer divided. As David says in Psalm 86:11, “Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.” Let it be one, let it be sincere

and entirely free from any hypocrisy. Purity also refers to being cleansed, with no dirt or evil. John speaks about those who will enter the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:27: “Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will any one who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

To be pure in heart, in other words, means to keep the first and greatest commandment, which is “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” Further it is a striving to be like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth – perfect, spotless and pure. We must in every respect live to the glory of God. This should be the supreme desire of our life.

But what is necessary before we see God? Holiness, a pure heart with no mixed conditions. We can only see Him through God’s grace. We can now already experience and see God’s goodness and grace to us. When we humbly and sincerely worship and honour Him with all our heart, soul and mind, then we also will see the rich blessings from Him alone.

Another way that we see Him is through his gracious dealings with us. But that is of course nothing compared with what is yet to be. For then we shall see face to face. As John says in 1 John 3:2,3: “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.”

In order for us to be pure in heart we must realize the sinfulness of our heart as it is by nature. As we do so we can join David in the prayer “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Ps 51:10).

Yes indeed, it is God alone, through the working of the Holy Spirit, who can clean and purify our heart, and He has promised

to do so. We must let the Holy Spirit find a dwelling place within our hearts. We must all long and look forward to that Great Day when Christ will return and we will be like Him. At times we can get so caught up with meaningless matters of this earth. Yet we all need to be reminded and encouraged to be busy with the matters of our heart. How do we stand before the Lord? Let us all keep our hearts dedicated to the Lord, working in his service and to his glory. All praise to Him alone who works so mightily with his Holy Spirit!

*O God, hide Thou Thy face from all my sins,
Blot out all my iniquities that grieve Thee.
Create in me a clean heart; do not leave me.
Renew my spirit, make it strong again.
O from Thy presence cast me not away;
Let nought me from Thy Holy Spirit sever.
Let joy of Thy salvation with me stay,
Uphold me with a willing spirit ever.*

Psalm 51:4

Birthdays in December:

10 JAMES KAMMINGA will be 20

Box 1125, Carman, MB R0G 0J0

16 JULIE KAMMINGA will turn 16

Box 1125, Carman, MB R0G 0J0

Congratulations to you James and Julie with your birthdays. May our heavenly Father continue to be with you in this new year. May He also grant you much health and happiness. Have an enjoyable day!

Till next month,

Mrs. C. Gelms and Mrs. E. Nordeman
548 Kemp Road East
RR 2, Beamsville, ON LOR 1B2
Phone 905-563-0380

Letters to the Editor

Dear editor,

In the May 7, 2004 issue of *Clarion*, Rev. J. Visscher wrote an editorial in which he supported the use of the organ to lead the congregational singing. The problem he identified is a shortage of organists in our churches. What can be done to reverse the trend?

It may interest others to know that in our relatively small congregation in Houston we currently have three young organists who lead us in worship, besides our two elderly organists who retired from the bench.

How is it that we have three organists in our small congregation? In the first place, just as Rev. Visscher suggested, these young people have received a great deal of encouragement from their parents to develop their musical abilities and to be willing to use those gifts in the service of the LORD. But beyond this I am also grateful to several members in our congregation who have also played an active role in developing their talents. On three occasions in the year – at Christmas, Easter and with the graduation of our high school students – we celebrate the gifts which the LORD has given to us. We call it an evening of “Praise and Fellowship.” Besides listening to a mediation and singing, an important part of the evening is that we are also given the treat of listening to the “up and coming musicians.” The organizers of these evenings invite all the children who are currently in music lessons to play a piece they have learned on the organ or

piano. Since this happens three times per year, these children become accustomed to playing in church before the congregation. They also have the opportunity to lead the congregation in song during these evenings.

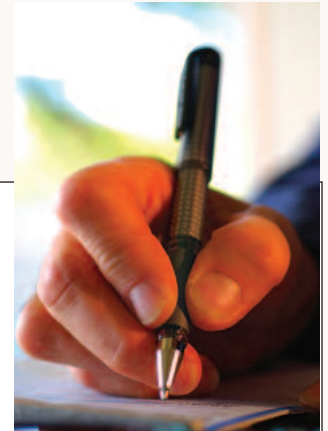
This has been very helpful in encouraging our children to bring their talents out of their living rooms and into the worship services. Perhaps other congregations want to pursue a similar arrangement so that church organists do not go the way of the *tyrannosaurus rex!*

*Dirk Poppe
Houston, B.C.*

Dear editor,

In the past year you've printed various articles and letters to the editor in which pros and cons were expressed of the involvement of Christians in politics. Please allow me to ask those in favour of supporting the Conservative Party the following: How effective do you think any Christian can be in the Conservative Party, either as candidate or (board) member, if that Party allows Gary Mitchell (a homosexual activist who describes himself as “an openly gay-man”) to run as their candidate in their Vancouver-Centre riding?

*Magdalene Vanderlinde
Abbotsford, B.C.*



Finding Hope in Haiti

Welcome to Haiti! The small airport in the capital, Port-au-Prince, was full of signs announcing Haiti's 200th anniversary. I'd arrived just in time for the festivities, but in the following weeks they were quickly forgotten as political turmoil resumed, resulting in President Aristide having to leave the country. God graciously protected me so that I was never in any danger. The location and time of manifestations (violent, anti-government demonstrations) were generally announced on the news beforehand, so one simply made it a point not to be in that area at that time. The only evidence I ever witnessed were the smoldering tires, after a manifestation was over.

While the whole world was momentarily absorbed in Haiti's political developments, God's army worked on – quietly, faithfully. Although this country was officially dedicated to Satan upon its conception years ago, he has not been able to stop God from accomplishing his work of setting his people free from slavery to sin. Baptist missions have had a tremendous impact on this impoverished country, but unfortunately there is no strong Reformed presence.

Coram Deo

I was picked up by Karen Bultje, founder and director of *Coram Deo*. This ministry offers education to many Haitian children who would otherwise never get to go to school. We slowly worked our way through the maze of repair-deprived streets, as I took in so many new sights: women carrying 10 kg loads on their heads, and *tap-taps* (brightly decorated



Mdme. Node, the kindergarten teacher, is a solid Christian and loved by the children.

pick-up trucks used for public transportation). I was greeted at the house by several enthusiastic kids, all asking me questions in Creole.

Karen taught me so much during the following weeks. For instance, the meaning of dedication: unless she could take them all with her, she wasn't going to leave the country, no matter what the political situation, because she could not leave her "family" of fifteen living with her at *Coram Deo*. They include energetic 5-year olds, tough teenage guys, an elderly woman. . . and "Mama Luc." (Every organization needs a "Mama Luc!" She keeps everything running smoothly.)

At *Coram Deo* I also met Beth, an 18-year old girl from Florida, with a passion to work for God in Haiti. She

already has a basic command of the language, and puts her heart into whatever work she can find here. She taught me most of the Creole I now know, and I will be eternally grateful!

Despite a lengthy "Christmas break" (partly due to the political problems), the new semester finally started. Each school day began with students forming perfect lines in front of their flag, singing the national anthem, a hymn, and reciting the Lord's Prayer. Then they'd all go to their respective classes. These outdoor classrooms consisted of a table and benches, a double-sided wooden chalkboard (which did double-duty as the divider between classrooms). Teachers had to compete with the noise of other classes in progress, barking dogs, and even the welders on the street!

Some of the teachers, including Mackenson, the principal, live at *Coram Deo*. Mackenson does not have an easy job; this is a big responsibility for someone his age (early twenties). He has studied computer skills, but desires to study theology in the future. Karen offers some the opportunity to finish high school or pursue post-secondary education in exchange for their services, rather than a salary. So they teach in the morning and go to school in the afternoon.

One teacher, Miss Node, has been a real blessing to the school. She is gentle, has a radiant smile, and is very intelligent. Her dream is to be a pharmacist, and she was well on her way – but she has a physical handicap. Unfortunately, it is very, very difficult for anyone with a disability to get a good education, much less a good job there, because of discrimination. So for her this job is a true blessing!

I taught an English class every afternoon open to staff and students alike. (Even the cook joined in!) One unforgettable afternoon, after the formal class was over, I was talking with a teenage girl named Yslande. She mentioned that her family didn't have a Creole Bible. I'd been given just such a Bible by a volunteer who had left, but knew I'd never be fluent enough to make use of it myself. She was overjoyed when I passed it on to her! Before I left, she gave me a painting she'd made herself, along with a letter which read:

I am very happy, because God touched your heart about the bible.

I thank God for that... I want to offer you three verses: Colossians 4:2; Hebrews 13:1; I Corinthians 13:2
...May God bless you. Yslande.

What a humbling experience to be even just one person in the line of others used by God to provide his Word specifically to this girl and her family!

There are people who come in to teach various skills outside of school hours. One offers music theory. Another teaches karate. Some of the older guys have become very good at

karate! Perhaps they will even achieve a level at which they could get a job teaching others in the future. We did go through a rather tense time in the school, however, with a new volunteer. Although we initially trusted that his intentions were to help, he became very overbearing as he tried to control the school and even functions of the house, among other issues. Consequently, he had to be dismissed. But during the time he was here, he initiated art and physical education classes, which were a big hit.

Free time at *Coram Deo* was filled with all kinds of fun activities: colouring pictures and eating candies with younger ones; basketball games, serious and not-so-serious conversations, playing guitar or keyboard, card games (introduced to us by Sara, whom I'll introduce to you in a moment), and they trying to teach us Creole. I sometimes had to play nurse, like when Cadeau took a spill off his bike and needed extensive first-aid. Sometimes I was the tutor, when Gethro needed help with Spanish homework. One big achievement was organizing the whole "depot," (storage room). That is a full-time job in itself!

More than education...

A service that Karen has been very effective in is finding medical aid for individuals in need. Sometimes, it's as simple as acquiring a prescription. Other times, however, she ends up having to seek foreign aid, and has become very efficient at finding doctors in Haiti, Canada, or the USA who are willing to donate their skills to perform surgeries free. I saw this first-hand in the case with little Gerald, who needed heart surgery. Karen arranged for his and his mother's passport, visa, and airline ticket to go to New York, where the surgery was successfully done. Although it was a hard decision to make, the mother left her baby girl, Judelca, in our care that month, so she could better care for her son. When they returned, Gerald pulled me aside and lifted his shirt, proudly displaying his scar!

Sometimes the decision to help is not so easy, especially in the case of children. It's necessary for parents to commit to do their part in caring for their child, but sometimes they do not want to accept that responsibility. Karen had to turn away a mother with a hydrocephalus



Samuel, 16, recently returned from the US where he underwent surgery. Scoliosis was causing his spine to put too much pressure on his lungs. He receives tuition assistance from Coram Deo, so he can continue his post-secondary education.



Karen takes down information from the mother of a baby with hydrocephalus, so she can arrange for a cat scan, and possible surgery to insert a shunt to drain the fluid. Treatment for hydrocephalus is too expensive for most Haitians, and many children die after a great deal of suffering.

baby, simply because when she'd found care in a hospital in the past the mom took her home, without waiting until the hospital discharged the baby, and her condition worsened. As Karen was explaining all this to the mother, Beth (another volunteer) had taken little Yolanda and quickly bathed her (she clearly needed it), tears rolling down her cheeks. It sure is hard to say "no," but a ministry cannot encourage parental neglect. . . and there are still so many other children (with caring parents) waiting to be helped!

Coram Deo has also facilitated in placing deaf children in a special school. I was able to visit the facility, and I was very impressed! I spent an interesting morning with some of the deaf students. Junior loved my photos from Canada and taught me sign language for the people and things in my pictures. When I saw 13-year old Menushka sitting alone in a doorway, I sat down beside her. Suddenly she put her head on my shoulder as a tear escaped from her eye. She put her head on my lap and the tears kept flowing. I wished with all my being that I could ask her what was wrong, and actually understand. I wished I could make her pain go away. All I could do was just be there, hold her, and pray for her.

Outside these walls. . .

One day I was given a tour of a fairly poor slum area. Because of the person I was with, it was relatively safe (nearly all the families we spoke to knew and trusted my guide). I was also aware that this was *nothing*, compared to certain cities where even police might not dare enter. We walked through a maze of concrete. Houses were built against or on top of each other. There was garbage scattered everywhere we went, piled up especially near the most visible water source. Half-naked children played listlessly in the doorways of their homes. Mothers were busy cooking over open fires. I also saw a Dominican family, refugees most likely. Ironically there are also many Haitians who, in desperation, cross into the Dominican Republic, hoping for a better future there.

But in the midst of such depressing circumstances one also find the Haitian churches. Their services were unforgettable. Although I couldn't understand the sermons, I could certainly appreciate the *a cappella* singing. It was absolutely beautiful! Karen sometimes went to Quequeya Chapel, and English church, so there at least I could understand the preaching and be encouraged in my spiritual walk.

Sara

I promised to tell you about Sara Versteeg. She is a dear friend who'd planned to travel with me through Haiti (and Mexico) for about four months. She arrived a few weeks after I did.

Just as we were starting to feel at home in Haiti, Sara suddenly got sick. Now I'd been sick a day here and there, but this was different. We went through some scary days (and nights!) trying to control her symptoms and seeing various doctors. No one knew for sure what she was suffering from. We finally had to admit it was too serious for her to stay in Haiti, much less travel on to Mexico with me. So, she made the arduous journey alone, back to Calgary. (It wasn't until months later, however, that she was properly diagnosed as having dengue fever.) It was a huge disappointment for both of us, as I had to continue on to Mexico alone. What an unexpected change of plans, and what a lesson in learning to say, "Thy will be done. . ." She was very brave through the whole ordeal, and the people in Haiti will never forget her!

What about you?

There is so much more I could go into detail about: a week-end trip to *Children of the Promise* (a C.R.C. baby orphanage in northern Cap Haitien) and visits to various other orphanages to try to learn what I could about their adoption processes, and operating procedures. I encourage you to find out whether it is God's will for you also to some day see first-hand the situation of our dear brothers and sisters in Haiti or elsewhere. But whether you continue supporting these ministries financially from Canada or volunteer your time and skills, please remember that the most important thing is to remember the orphans, widows, disabled, and unloved people of the world in your prayers. Because our efforts alone don't make any difference, but God can change lives for eternity!



Keith Sikkema

Mr. Keith Sikkema is a grade 8 teacher and vice-principal at John Calvin School in Smithville, Ontario. ksikkema@juno.com

Peregrine Survey



The first flurry of school magazines that crosses my desk, usually around the end of September, always make note of improvements made to the schools during the summer. Some schools obtained new computers, photocopiers, desks, shelves, blackboards, bulletin boards, or textbooks; other schools fixed a roof, redid the flooring, lights, ceilings, colour schemes, pavement, playground, intercom, or the phone system. School magazines also welcome new students, families, teachers, volunteers, or para-professionals, and they also remind people of ongoing expenses during the summer as well as the ongoing need for good communication. The opportunity is used to announce new bus-routes, and explain the year's school theme (or even a theme song), and new policies. They further provide an overview of the year's planned special events, highlighting those that are extra special. As evidenced in many reports, schools offer many opportunities to share one's gifts gratefully within the communion of saints – whether during the summer or throughout the year.

Also, no matter where the school magazine originates, August and

September issues always breathe the freshness of a new start, of new energy, gratitude for a good summer, the blessing of being able to start another year of teaching covenant children, and prayerful expectation of the Lord's blessing on these endeavours. As Credo Christian High's principal notes, "We're excited about the new year that lies ahead. We pray for a good year of teaching and learning and an atmosphere of harmony."

Meanwhile, teachers continue their development personally and professionally. One avenue for such development is the teachers' conventions that are organized in east and west. Some B.C. schools make mention of the Christian Teachers' Association Convention, under the theme *Telling the story we love; Loving the story we tell*. Clearly story telling would be central (but far from the only course) in this convention. In Ontario, the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association organizes its annual convention towards the end of October. This year, the theme is *In Christ Alone*, with reference to Exodus 15:2. It will be held in Hamilton.

Timothy Christian School in Hamilton is looking for larger facilities as its student body continues to increase and the current site does not allow for expansion. As the public board is building a number of new schools, one of the buildings it no longer needs may be a solution.

I hesitate to write about John Calvin School in Smithville, but it is seeing good progress on its addition of six classrooms, a gym, as well as office, staff room, and washroom facilities. On the day its 40th anniversary was celebrated with gratitude (October 1), the flag could also be planted for reaching the highest point on the building. The children celebrated the anniversary with a flag-raising, balloon release, special lunch, and old-time games for the afternoon.

The school year is well underway. Report cards may already have gone home, and patterns of teaching and learning have been well established. It may also be the time that issues begin to emerge that need careful consultation and consideration to find a solution. Do we continue with the same enthusiasm, gratitude, and supportive prayer we started with in September? Do we still seek and find opportunities to use our various gifts and talents to help parents in their task to teach their children, as we did in the summer? Schools, teachers, parents, and students benefit if the effort of education is carried by the whole church community. The whole church community benefits.

The Education Matters column is sponsored by the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association East. Anyone willing to respond or interact to an article or anyone willing to write an article for us is kindly asked to send materials to Clarion or to Otto Bouwman (bouwman@surepost.net)



Pictures of JCS festivities and building progress are courtesy of Emily Breukelman.

Press Release of Classis Alberta in Neerlandia, October 19, 2004

Opening

On behalf of the convening Church of Neerlandia elder Harry Peters opened the assembly by inviting us to sing Psalm 101:1, reading Psalm 121 and leading in prayer. A warm welcome was extended to the delegates of the Alberta churches, to the deputies of Regional Synod West, Rev. Rob Schouten and Rev. James Visscher, to Candidate Reuben Bredenhof, to the URCNA fraternal observer, Rev. Theo Hoekstra, and to the guests. Under memorabilia he mentioned the recent death of Dr. Jelle Faber, for whom we give thanks for a faithful and cheerful servant who trained many of the ministers present, and who will be missed in the churches. He also noted with thankfulness that Candidate Bredenhof had accepted the call to the St. Albert Church, and Rev. John Louwerse to the Neerlandia Church. He reminded Classis that the Coaldale Church remains vacant, and of the special circumstances of Rev. John van Popta and his family.

Classis was declared constituted.

Appointed as chairman, vice-chairman and clerk were Rev. Bill Slomp, Rev. Theo Lodder and Rev. Richard Eikelboom, respectively. Rev. Slomp thanked the Neerlandia Church for their fine job of convening and hosting the meeting.

The agenda was adopted.

Peremptory Examination of Candidate Reuben Bredenhof

All the documents needed to proceed with the exam were provided by the St. Albert Church and found to be sufficient.

Br. Bredenhof presented his sermon proposal on John 12:27-33, after which Classis went into closed session. Classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies of Regional Synod West, having judged that this sermon was faithful to God's Word, and that this brother shows much promise to conduct a fruitful ministry among God's people, decided to proceed with the exam.

Rev. R. Aasman led the examination on Old Testament Exegesis (Psalm 100 and Jeremiah 7), Rev. R. Eikelboom on New Testament Exegesis (Colossians 1 and 1 John 3), Rev. T. Lodder on Knowledge of the Contents of Holy Scripture, Rev. W. Slomp on Doctrine and Creeds, Rev. E. Tiggelaar on Church History, Rev. R. Eikelboom on Ethics, Rev. E. Tiggelaar on Church Polity, and Rev. W. Slomp and Rev. T. Lodder on Diaconology. During each examination the delegates and deputies were given the opportunity to ask questions of the candidate.

In closed session Classis decided, in consultation with the deputies of Regional Synod, with thanksgiving to God, to sustain the examination of Candidate Bredenhof. This brother was congratulated by the chairman, and requested to sign the Form for Subscription for Ministers of the Word in Classis Alberta which the chairman had just publicly read. He did so. The assembly was invited to praise God with Hymn 64:1, and the chairman led in thanksgiving prayer. Elder M. Hooimeyer of St. Albert Church addressed the assembly and invited the churches to the ordination of their minister-elect on the Lord's Day of October 31, 2004. Opportunity was given to personally congratulate Br. Bredenhof.

Fraternal Greetings

During the examination Rev. Theo Hoekstra of Neerlandia had been given the opportunity to speak on behalf of the federation of the United Reformed Churches of North America. Speaking words of encouragement, he conveyed that among the URCNA brothers there is overall a growing desire to proceed with unity, also locally. Rev. Richard Aasman reciprocated with fitting words.

RCUS South-Central Classis had delegated Rev. Hans Kalkman to attend the meeting, but it was assumed that he could not make it on account of the inclement weather conditions.

Reports

Classis accepted the Report of the Committee for Needy Churches, and the Report on the Spring Meeting 2004 of

the Reformed Church in the United States, South-Central Classis from the fraternal delegate, Rev. Lodder.

Proposals and Instructions from the churches

The Neerlandia Church requested Classis to discuss protocol concerning Classis contracta, since nothing is spelled out about it in the Church Order. Classis confirmed the importance of due diligence by the churches. In response to an instruction from the Taber Church, Classis reiterated that it is the responsibility of the convener of the church visitors to ensure that each church receives a church visitation annually.

Question Period as per Art 44 Church Order

The chairman asked "whether the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured, and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church." Each church answered accordingly. Advice was offered to the churches requesting it.

Correspondence

A letter was received by a brother informing Classis of an appeal he is sending to Regional Synod West. A reply will be sent.

A letter was gratefully received from Rev. Ted Van Raalte reporting his visit to the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian.

The Coaldale Church requested and was granted pulpit supply every three weeks, beginning in January.

Appointments

The following elders were delegated to Regional Synod West: Elders Marion Bareman of Taber and Martin Hooimeyer of St. Albert (primi), Elders Gerald Van Seters of Coaldale and Henry Ostermeier of Calgary (secundi), in that order. As ministers, Revs. Eikelboom and Tiggelaar (primi), Revs. Lodder and Slomp (secundi), in that order.

Convening church for next Classis will be St. Albert on December 7, 2004,

with an alternate date of March 8, 2005, 9:00 AM, if the Lord allows. Suggested executive officers: Rev. Tiggelaar (chairman), Rev. Slomp (vice-chairman), Rev. Lodder (clerk).

Rev. Aasman was delegated to represent Classis Alberta at the ordination of Minister-Elect Bredenhof, since he will be conducting his ordination.

Rev. Eikelboom was appointed as delegate to RCUS South-Central Classis.

Personal Question Period

The Barrhead Church thanked Classis Alberta for the financial support that has been willingly given. The Coaldale, Neerlandia and St. Albert Churches thanked Classis for faithful provision of pulpit supply.

Closing

After the Acts and Press Release were adopted, the chairman invited the vice-chairman to close. He invited the assembly to stand and sing God's praises with Psalm 134, after which he led in closing prayer.

Theo Lodder
For Classis Alberta



Advertisements:

Announcements of Weddings, Anniversaries (with Open House) should be submitted six weeks in advance.

BIRTHS

With joy and thanksgiving, we praise our heavenly Father for entrusting into our care our first little miracle, a covenant child

HAILEY JAY-LYNN KELLY

daughter of **Edward and Maria Kelly**

Born July 31, 2004

13th grandchild for John and Mary Van Eerde

3rd grandchild for Edward and Alice Kelly

20 Marshagan Road, Dunnville, Ontario N1A 2W2

With great happiness and also much thankfulness to our Heavenly Father who made everything well, we wish to announce the birth of our sixth child, a healthy girl whom we have named

DOMINIQUE SASHA

Born on August 31, 2004 to grateful parents and siblings

Henry and Dianne Moesker (nee VanderLeest)

Alexander, Dylan, Tia, Ashley, and Aria

28 Alice Road, Cardup, W.A., Australia, 6122

hdmoe@amitar.com.au

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

With thankfulness and praise to God, the Giver of life we announce the birth of our son

REUBEN JAMES

Born October 15, 2004

Don and Monica Bos (nee Nordeman)

Anna, Joseph, Benjamin

2106 Regional Road 20, St. Anns, ON LOR 2A0

With joy and thankfulness to our Heavenly Father we announce the birth of our second child, a son

ZION GERRIT

Zion was born on September 22, 2004 and is a little brother for
Maxwell

Jeff and Melanie Jans

16 Church Street, Waterdown, ON LOR 2H0

The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

Psalm 127:3

With thankfulness to the Lord who made all things well, we **Tim and Leah Sieders** joyfully announce the birth of our twin girls

MYA LYNN

and

KENDRA GRACE

They were born on September 27th, 2004

Sisters for big brother *Caleb*

9th and 10th grandchild for Henry and Grace Sieders

177 West 18th Street, Hamilton, Ontario L9C 4G6

He remembers his covenant forever, the word He commanded, for a thousand generations. Psalm 105:8

A new covenant child to treasure and train! The Lord, in His abounding goodness, has blessed us with the birth of a healthy son

QUINTON BLAKE

Born October 4, 2004

A welcome addition for

Arnie and Marcy Schulenberg

Austin, Connor, Levi, Hudson

23rd grandchild for the late Ann Buikema and John and Henrietta Buikema

22nd grandchild for Ernie and Jane Schulenberg

4984 May Street, PO Box 283, Beamsville, ON LOR 1B0

ENGAGEMENTS

In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

Proverbs 16:9

With thankfulness to the Lord who brought us together, we

NADIA OSTERMEIER

and

MATT POORT

announce our engagement on October 8, 2004.

2372 Binbrook Road East, RR 1, Binbrook, Ontario LOR 1C0