

Clarion

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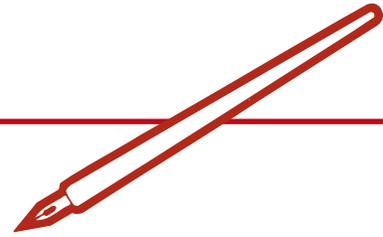


Numbers

10:1-10

*Theological
College:
A New Season*

INSIDE!



By J. De Jong



Reformation: The Holy Spirit is no Sceptic

As we approach Reformation day, we may reflect on God's goodness in leading his church back to the pure preaching of his word. His first and foremost instrument in the sixteenth century was Martin Luther, who as a monk in the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt became increasingly sceptical of the religious lives and practices of the Roman clerics of his day. The Reformation began with a cry against the sale of indulgences – a means used by the clergy to fill their own pockets with worldly gain. Yet once the wheel of Reformation began to turn, Luther was also God's instrument to follow through on the first principles and underscore the sovereignty of God in the work of redemption.

The new opponent

It was not all that long after the initial thrust of the Reformation (1517) that attacks on the reformatory position came from other quarters. A chief opponent to the new reformatory perspective was Erasmus of Rotterdam, a tempered and balanced humanist who essentially wanted to reserve due place for human effort in the work of redemption. He did not deny God's initiative, nor did he dispute the cardinal truths of the New Testament: how Christ came into the world to save sinners, how he rose from the dead, and how redemption was to be preached by God's servants since the time of the apostles. However, he insisted on leaving one aspect of salvation in human hands: the freedom of the human will to choose for or against God's gospel.

The Reformation began with a cry against the sale of indulgences.

Erasmus' position

The view of Erasmus on the human will can be briefly summarized as follows: it is the power of the will by which a person can turn towards that which leads to eternal salvation, or turn away from it. The initial steps activating the will is God's work, as well as the final steps leading to triumph and glory. But, in Erasmus' view, between those bookends, people have the ability to choose what they will, and to contribute something to their own salvation. Anything less than that would in his view be a degradation of true humanity, as well as a detraction from God's true divinity.

Erasmus' position was then a carefully balanced one. Through the fall man became weak. Being *weak* here must be understood as a sort of "middle position:" man is neither absolutely good nor totally evil. He is not corrupt by nature, he remains fully the natural man. But he lacks wisdom, he becomes the *fool*. He has the tendency to wander off and to lose his way. However, through the use of his free will and through the appropriation of God's law he is able to come back to the right road again. Man originally could walk by natural light. After the fall, he can still use the light of reason. The law of God is in itself a big help, since it is adapted to human reason. God's law is reasonable, and that all the more when it is coupled with the gospel. The gospel, according to Erasmus, is really God's reasonable law in a new and richer form.

The Reformed church today is called to continually reflect on, confirm and hold to these chief insights of Luther and Calvin at the time of the great Reformation.

The end result of this position is that there is always a margin of uncertainty and conjecture to the gospel. It depends primarily on God, but partly on people. Given the random character of people's choices, Erasmus opened the door to doubt and scepticism. All the work of the cross ends with a "maybe so, maybe not."

The critique on Luther

Erasmus' central critique of Luther's view was that Luther pictured God as a tyrant that refused to allow any input from the human side. In his view, Luther was so strong on the idea of original sin that any view of man as created in the image and likeness of God was completely buried under the power of sin. In his desire to extol God's grace at its highest level, he pictures man's fallen nature as so corrupt that there was not one possibility of human involvement in the work of salvation. There was hardly any room for people to act at all! People here were nothing more than pawns!

Luther's response

Luther responded to Erasmus' *Diatribes or Discourse concerning Free Choice* with one of his most famous treatises,

The Bondage of the Will. What is the characteristic mark of this treatise? Next to Luther's powerful use of reason, the chief mark is the use of the Scriptures! He uses the Scriptures to refute the passages Erasmus introduces in order to defend the free will; he also brings forward his own passages of Scripture against free will. The entire argument is based on a careful reflection and elucidation of key texts, especially from the apostles Paul and John.

Luther hauls out his full artillery right at the outset of his treatise. The Holy Spirit is no sceptic! "Nothing is better known or more common among Christians than assertion. Take away assertions and you take away Christianity."¹ In other words, it is God's choice that drives us to a clear and forthright assertion of the truths of the gospel!

Overstated?

Did Luther overstate his case? Did he end up viewing man as a helpless pawn in God's hand? I do not think we can call Luther a determinist. His central theme was reformational: our salvation lies completely in God's hand! Erasmus not only extolled the human will; he also, in

What's inside?

The editorial by Dr. J. De Jong reflects on the significance of the Reformation for us today. He focuses particularly on the opposition to the new reformatory perspective by Erasmus of Rotterdam. Dr. De Jong writes, "The Reformed church today is called to continually reflect on, confirm and hold to these chief insights of Luther and Calvin at the time of the great Reformation. There is currently a steady stream of evangelical literature that opens the door, however marginally, for the Erasmian position." Since many of our readers might be reading evangelical literature, it would be good to take this editorial to heart.

There has been recent discussion in *Clarion* about science and general revelation. Our professor of dogmatics and coeditor, Dr. N.H. Gootjes, offers some insights into this discussion.

The start of a new season at the Theological College is covered in an article by Dr. C. Van Dam. This issue also contains the press release of a Board of Governors meeting.

We have the final installment of a series of articles by Rev. W.L. Bredenhof on the topic of pride and idolatry. We have four press releases from ecclesiastical assemblies, and our regular columns *Treasures, New and Old* and *Ray of Sunshine*. We also have a book note of Hermanus Knoop's *A Theatre in Dachau*.

The London congregation recently said farewell to the Ludwig family. A report on the departure of Rev. J. Ludwig and his family to Grand Rapids, along with some pictures, can be found in this issue.

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Visscher

Managing Editor: R. Aasman

Coeditors: J. De Jong, N.H. Gootjes, Cl. Stam

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION

26 Inverness Crescent, St. Albert, AB T8N 5J3

Fax: (780) 418-1506 E-Mail: raasman@canrc.org

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

(subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.

One Beghin Avenue

Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5

Phone: (204) 663-9000 Fax: (204) 663-9202

Email: clarion@premier.mb.ca

World Wide Web address: premier.mb.ca/clarion.html

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Luther's view, compromised God's sovereignty. Erasmus' God was too human for Luther, and his position was also echoed later by Calvin. Indeed, it was Calvin who, in balancing out Luther's view, coupled God's sovereignty with the divine activation of the human will through grace alone in such a way that human thoughts and actions are directed to God's praise and glory.

Today's battle

The Reformed church today is called to continually reflect on, confirm and hold to these chief insights of Luther and Calvin at the time of the great Reformation. There is currently a steady stream of evangelical literature that opens the door, however marginally, for the Erasmian position. Even if it is only a matter of the tiniest percentage, that is, even if current writers only attribute one percent to man and the remaining ninety-nine to God, we're still opening the door to compromising God's sovereignty.

Let me give one example. Max Lucado, the popular evangelical writer says in his book, *A Gentle Thunder: Hearing God through the Storm*: "The first time you had no choice about being born; this time you do. The power is God's. The effort is God's. The pain is God's. *But the choice is yours*" (emphasis added). He does not discount God's role and favour, but the door is opened to human input. He

says many good things as well, but true discernment calls parents to warn where warning is due. A margin, be it ever so small, is given to human effort. Ultimately Luther's protest against Erasmus in 1525 is compromised, and one step towards human involvement will soon lead to another.

Reformation joy

The joy of the gospel of the Reformation is precisely the message which Luther uncovered: *solī Deo gloria*. Our wills are locked in bondage because of sin. Only the work of the Holy Spirit through the power of the word can free the will from bondage and redirect it to living service. That's fully a *divine* work, through which we may be activated to living service for one another, and for the needs of people everywhere. We are all agents of God's choice, crafted by his hand of redemption in such a way that we can also be God's agents to pass on his gift of choice to others – all according to his good pleasure!

¹P.S. Watson (ed) *Luther's Works: Vol. 33*, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1972) p. 21



Dr. J. De Jong is professor of Diaconiology and Ecclesiology at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Hamilton, Ontario. jdejong@canrc.org



Photo courtesy Cor Lodder

By D. Poppe

Do not forget the Word of the LORD

"Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God . . ."
Deuteronomy 8:11

Forgetfulness causes problems. It's a nuisance to forget your keys in your car. It's embarrassing to forget an appointment. Constant forgetting, such as happens to an Alzheimer's patient is even more destructive. Havoc rules in the life of a person who turns the stove on and forgets about it, wanders off and gets lost or forgets his own name.

But there is even a more destructive form of forgetfulness than forgetting our keys, an appointment or even our own name. Our greatest peril is forgetting about the LORD and his Word. It is this danger that Moses warned against when he gave the Israelites his final address before they crossed over the Jordan to take possession of the land of Israel: "Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God."

Up to this point the Israelites had depended completely on the LORD. They needed Him for deliverance from Egypt, for provisions in the desert and for the defeat of their enemies. He was very real to them. But their situation was about to change. God had promised them the prosperous land of Canaan (Deut 8:12-14). And prosperity can lead to self-sufficiency. Moses warned the people to be on guard against thinking, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me" (8:17).

Is this a real danger? Are we also in danger of forgetting the LORD? Certainly! History has repeatedly demonstrated that when you are prosperous, it is easy to forget about God. At various times in Israel's history their wealth and prosperity led them to for-

get about the LORD (cf. Ezek 16:10ff, Hos 2:8ff).

The solution is not to get rid of our wealth. Prosperity is not the real problem. The problem is forgetting the LORD. So the solution lies in remembering the LORD! To this end, Moses repeatedly called the people to hold onto the Word of God. They had to remember his Word and meditate on it. They had to teach it to their children in any and every situation (Deut 6:6-9, 11:18-20). God's people have always needed to be firmly grounded in his Word.

This has never changed! Whenever God's people have forgotten Him it is always because they have neglected his Word. And whenever the people of God have remembered Him, it has always been because in his mercy the LORD has turned his people back to his Word.

In the days of Josiah (1 Kgs 21) and Ezra (Neh 8) the LORD worked a great Reformation among his people by giving them his Word once again. We also see this in the great Reformation of the sixteenth century. The reformers diligently searched the Scriptures and on the basis of Scripture called the people back to the true service of the LORD.

We also need the Word of God to keep us from drifting. As we celebrate the Reformation we must remember that God used his Word to call his people back to Himself. Let us continue in the way of the Reformation by giving the Word a central place in our lives. To do this, we must guard against the influences that threaten to undermine the place of the Word in our lives.

In our homes, one danger is that we make our lives very busy, and do not leave time for the reading of Scripture. Another danger is that reading in general has increasingly been sidelined by television, movies and the computer. There is a real danger that we turn away from the written word to the electronic media. The problem is that we are losing the love for reading and the ability to read. This has serious implications for the reading of God's Word. Losing the desire and ability to read in general will certainly not encourage the reading of Scripture.

We must also be careful to maintain the centrality of the Word in the worship services. We live in a time when many are trying to make the worship services more relevant and user friendly. Sadly enough this is often done by cutting back on the proclamation of God's Word and introducing new elements into the worship service. Let us never follow this trend. The Word of God may never be sidelined. The only way that we will not forget about the LORD is if the preaching of God's Word remains a central aspect of our lives.

Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God. Plead upon the mercy of the LORD that He may hold us fast to his Word. Let us give his Word a central place in our lives and teach it to our children so that we may never forget the LORD our God.



Rev. D. Poppe is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Houston, British Columbia. dpoppe@canrc.org

Science and General Revelation

By N.H. Gootjes

In recent years, God's creation of the world has been discussed several times in the pages of *Clarion*. This interest in creation is valuable. Who can deny that this is one of the greatest works which God has performed? In the brief summary of the Christian faith, the Apostles' Creed, it is mentioned as the first work of God, before several aspects of his salvation work are confessed. Creation has its own place in our faith, and considering this particular work in biblical light can only increase our knowledge and admiration for God and his work.

The view that God reveals his creation work in creation itself cannot be derived from our confessional statements on general revelation.

However, it is possible that a foreign element enters the discussion. This happened in the debate between R. Duker and Dr. T. Jelsma in the *Clarion* of September 27, 2002. Dr. Jelsma referred to general revelation when he stated that the data derived from nature "are means by which God reveals Himself in creation." Later, he warned against binding to particular interpretations when he says that "we run the very real danger of having General Revelation and Special Revelation contradict each other." These statements suggest that scientific data are means by which God reveals himself. Scientific data, resulting from diligent and careful study, appear to be identified with general revelation. This leads the discussion in the wrong direction.

General revelation

General revelation is well known as it is confessed in one of the confessional statements we have adopted, the

Belgic Confession. Article 2 describes two means by which we know God. First, God is known by the creation, preservation and government of the universe. Second, God makes himself more clearly and fully known by his holy and divine Word. The Reformed churches, following Calvin, have confessed general revelation for a long time, and they still maintain this doctrine. But what exactly does this doctrine refer to?

That is clearly expressed in the beginning of this article, when it says: "We know Him by two means . . ." the first being creation. We should carefully note what the confession states and what it does not state. It does not say that we know how God created the world by the creation, preservation and government of the world. Rather, it is dealing with our knowledge of God. Article 1 of the Belgic Confession confesses God in his greatness and goodness. Article 2 continues that this God is made known in two ways, in general revelation and even more in the Bible. Dr. Jelsma cannot appeal to the Belgic Confession to support the statement that God reveals in creation itself how he created the world. That is not what the confession teaches. Rather, the Belgic Confession emphasizes that we know from creation that God exists, and that He is simple, spiritual, eternal . . . The view that God reveals his creation work in creation itself cannot be derived from our confessional statements on general revelation.

Calvin

Dr. Jelsma does not refer to the Belgic Confession in his explanation that necessarily had to be rather brief. He does refer to Calvin's *Institutes*, emphasizing that Scripture accommodates to our understanding. In the same book, Calvin also speaks about what God reveals in the creation, but this is different from Jelsma's presentation. According to him, "we must humbly listen to

what He tells us in creation," but Calvin means something different from Jelsma.

Calvin deals with this at the very beginning of his *Institutes*, in book one. The title of this book already points in a different direction. Here, Calvin is not concerned with the doctrine of creation, he is dealing with the doctrine of God. That can be seen in the title of this book: "The knowledge of God the Creator." Two quotations will be enough to show what Calvin is discussing in these sections. The first deals with the existence of this knowledge:

There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. (*Institutes*, I, iii, 1).¹

Calvin is not speaking about the general revelation concerning the origin of the world, but about the knowledge of God.

Calvin did not use general revelation in connection with our knowledge of the world or its origin, but in connection with God.

The second statement concentrates on the result of this revelation:

As experience shows, God has sown a seed of religion in all men. But scarcely one man in a hundred is met with who fosters it, once received, in his heart, and none in whom it ripens, much less shows fruit in season (*Institutes*, I, iv, 1).

Calvin did not use general revelation in connection with our knowledge of the world or its origin, but in connection with God. All people have always

known God through general revelation, but as the result of sin, they have not honoured or worshipped him. Calvin acknowledges that God does reveal Himself in creation, but He does not speak of the data of science in this connection.

Scripture

The most important question is, of course, how God in Scripture speaks about general revelation. There are several passages dealing with this issue. We will only discuss the three most important texts, trying to find an answer to the question what is revealed in this general revelation. Since Calvin is appealed to in this discussion on creation, it would be worthwhile to also consult his interpretation on these texts.

Acts 14 records part of Paul's preaching to the gentiles in Lystra. Among other things, he said:

Yet [God] has not left Himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your heart with joy (Acts 14:17).

These words were directed toward the gentile population of Lystra, which had not received God's revelation of the Old Testament as Israel had. Paul emphasized that God had given them revelation concerning himself, without mentioning that there is general revelation concerning the origin of this world.

The second text can be found in Acts 17. Paul explained to the scholars of Athens that God had done two things: He gives them everything (17:25), and he made every nation on earth from one man, that they should inhabit the earth (17:26). The purpose is that they would seek him: "God did this that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him" (17:27). There is no trace in this traditional text for general revelation that we must listen to what God is telling us in creation.

The third text is Romans 1, where Paul explained that God has given revelation to the gentiles. This revelation is self-revelation, as is clearly stated in vs 20: "For since the creation of the world his invisible qualities – his eternal

power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, understood from what has been made." Again, general revelation concerns God Himself. It does not have a scientific purpose, rather, it has the religious purpose of bringing all people to serving God who created them and sustains them.

There is no Scriptural basis for using general revelation in a discussion on creation. We have to deal with the results of science and Scriptural revelation concerning creation. This revelation should not be discounted in our discussions on the origin of the world. Rather, it should be integrated.

¹Quotations from Calvin's *Institutes* are taken from J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (transl. R.L. Battles, ed. J.T. McNeill; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960).



Dr. N.H. Gootjes is professor of Dogmatics at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Hamilton, Ontario. nhgootjes@canrc.org

COLLEGE CORNER

By C. Van Dam



A New Season Has Started!

Meetings and conferences

The first week of September is traditionally a time when a flurry of meetings takes place. Members of the Board of Governors arrive from far and near and the committees of the Board of Governors meet, both the Academic as well as the Property and Finance Committee. During these meetings all aspects of the work of the Theological College and the upkeep of the property are discussed and the necessary decisions made. The climax of all this effort is the College Evening which was held for the thirty-third time this year. During that evening we had the twenty-eighth

convocation at which the graduates Edwer Dethan, Walter Geurts and Julius Van Spronsen received their Master of Divinity degrees. This joyous event was reported on in the previous issue of *Clarion*.

This first week was especially noteworthy this year because on the following day, September 7, a special symposium was held on the occasion of the recent retirement of Professor J. Geertsema as Professor of New Testament. Dr. R. Faber, son-in-law of the honoured professor, had done an excellent job organizing this successful conference. Five speeches by specialists in New Testa-

ment studies provided much food for thought and discussion under the theme: New Testament Studies and the Reformed Faith. You will find a more detailed report of this conference in a later issue of *Clarion*.

Students

We are happy to welcome four new students to the College. Two new arrivals from Ontario are in the regular program for the Master of Divinity: Hendrik Alkema of Hamilton, and Richard Horlings of Attercliffe. In addition we are privileged to have two special students from Korea: Rev. Hyuk Ki

Kim, who is here for two years of study and Kyung Min Kim, who is auditing selected courses for one year. He has completed his first year of theological studies in Korea and will finish his training there.

This brings our total to ten students, of which six hope to be available for a call from the Canadian Reformed Churches or the Free Reformed Churches in Australia within the next four years. The Lord willing, one student, David de Boer, will graduate at the end of this year, and the year after that four expect to graduate.

Our present enrollment is down from last year and we are at a considerably lower level compared with years prior to that. May the Lord give workers to labour in his vineyard. Let us not forget in our prayers the need for students and let us encourage young men who wish to serve as future ministers and missionaries.

Foreign Student Bursary Fund

From time to time the Theological College receives serious applications from the developing world for admission to our degree program. One of the obstacles that is often encountered is the necessary financial means for qualified students to actually come into Canada to study here. To help overcome this hurdle the Board of Governors has established the Foreign Student Bursary Fund. This fund is designed to help competent students who on graduation will return to their country of origin. Since all money for this Fund needs to be raised outside the operating budget, money is now being gathered together. The collection that was taken at the last College evening yielded \$4,673.15. In addition other funds have come in for a total of \$6,103.15 as of September 24.

We're excited about the possibilities of this fund. The Lord willing, it will eventually allow us to export Reformed theology to other countries, countries where there is often a great hunger for the true preaching of the gospel. Those who wish to be part of this beautiful work can send their cheque (payable to the Foreign Student Bursary Fund) to the Theological College (110 West 27th Street, Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5A1 Canada). A tax receipt will be issued.

A new stained glass window

At the Theological College we know that we are carried on the prayers of



God's people and this is most encouraging for our work. The contact with the churches takes many forms. One very special expression of the love for the College was made by brother A. Van Sydenborgh of Orangeville who has a hobby working with glass. He recently presented the College with a beautiful stained glass rendition of the College logo. (See the picture with this article.) This finely crafted work of art is framed in an elegant oak frame which matches the woodwork in the stairwell in the centre of our building where it is prominently displayed. Here it shines day and night the wonderful message of "*lucerna mea verbum tuum*," that is "your Word is my light" (Ps 119:105), the motto of our work here.

Children visit

Another expression of the interest the Canadian Reformed community takes in the Theological College is the visiting of our institution by school groups. We really appreciate those inquisitive and eager children! On Monday, September 23 we were honoured with a visit of forty-two grade four children from John Calvin School in Smithville, along with their teachers Mr. J. Van Iperen, Mrs. W. Bos and Mrs. C. Van Aniel. They were safely bussed to our College by Mrs. Schulenberg. We hope that school trips such as this one may help familiarize the young

children with the work of the Theological College and the importance of the ministry of the Word. Perhaps we'll see some again?

Special lecture on mission among seafarers

On Friday, September 27 we were treated to a special lecture by Rev. H. Uittenbosch, a thirty-seven year veteran of ministering to those who work on boats and cruise ships. His engaging presentation clearly outlined the challenges of this difficult ministry but also underlined the unique opportunities that exist to bring the true gospel to those who work on the seas. He also noted how the Reformed Churches (Liberated) in The Netherlands used to have such a ministry, but no longer do, although these churches are now investigating whether they should start it again. Also, Mrs. Uittenbosch spoke for a while about the opposition to spreading the gospel among seafarers that comes from liberal churches. This stimulating presentation was much appreciated and made us think again of how many the opportunities are and how few the labourers.



Dr. C. Van Dam is professor of Old Testament at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
cvandam@canrc.org



Press Release of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches held on September 5, 2002

Opening

Rev. R. Aasman opened the meeting with the reading of Psalm 142 and led in prayer. All governors were present as well as the outgoing principal, Dr. J. De Jong, and the principal for the next three years, Dr. C. Van Dam.

Election of officers

The present executive was re-appointed, consisting of Rev. R. Aasman as chairman of the board, Rev. B.J. Berends as vice-chairman, Rev. R.A. Schouten as secretary and brother W. Oostdyk treasurer.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of January 25, 2002 were tabled, and after making a minor change were adopted.

Matters from minutes

To the question whether the "Pastoral Training Program" was optional, it was pointed out that all the students must follow the PTP, and that exceptions to this would only be made for "foreign" students.

Agenda

The Agenda was established after adding a document from the Finance and Property Committee, dealing with the "Foreign Student Bursary."

Report of the Academic Committee

A short but positive report could be given of its meeting held earlier that day on such matters as reports of visits to the lectures, report of the Senate, of the Principal, of the Registrar and of the Report on the Pastoral Training Program.

Report of Finance and Property Committee

A report was presented on the financial affairs and property of the Theological College. Financial statements and a budget for 2003 were discussed and approved. The Lord enabled the five members to meet five times over

the past year. The meetings were also attended by the principal, Dr. J. De Jong, in keeping with the Authorization Act, and by Dr. Van Dam, as the principal-designate. It was decided to keep the assessment per communicant member at \$63. The tuition fees for the academic years 2002-2005 have been set at \$1800.00 per year.

Special mention was made of the ongoing commitment and dedication displayed by Ms Catharine Mechelse as the College's Administrative Assistant and by Ms Margaret VanderVelde as the College's Librarian.

The Finance and Property Committee concluded its report as follows: "With thankfulness and in humility, we render all honour and glory to Christ, the Head of the Church, who again was pleased to enable the entire College community to work for the benefit of our congregations, especially in Canada, the United States, Australia, and abroad in the mission fields."

Foreign Student Bursary Fund

In January 2002, the Board of Governors adopted the Senate's proposed guidelines for this Fund. At this meeting, September 2002, it adopted the following proposal/amendment: The financial need of applicants for the Foreign Student Bursary shall be determined by a Foreign Student Bursary Committee composed of two members of the Senate (principal and vice-principal) along with one member of the Finance and Property Committee. Mr. Wm. Smouter was appointed as a member of this Committee, who informs the meeting that ads have been placed and that funds are coming in.

Report of the Convocation Committee – June 2002

All arrangements have been made for the Convocation Evening of September 6, 2002. The main speaker will be Prof. G. Visscher, who will speak on "So What does Separate the Sheep from the Goats?" (Matthew 25:31-46). The Master of Divinity will be conferred on: Edwer Yaner Dethan, Walter Geurts, and Julius VanSpronsen.

Report on visit to the lectures.

The Revs. R. Aasman and R. Schouten attended the lectures delivered on January 24 and 25, 2002. Their report was received with thankfulness to the Lord because the visiting governors were able to conclude that the instruction given at our Theological College is faithful to the Word of God and thus truly edifying for the training of future ministers of the divine Word.

Report of the Senate

With gratitude to the Lord the Board of Governors received the Senate's report on their course work and activities during the year 2001-2002. It was able to observe that the professors have been very busy and that they have acquitted themselves very well of the task with which the churches have charged them. The Board also wants to join in with the concluding sentence of this Senate's report: "May the Lord in his mercy continue to grant labourers in the harvest and grant a steady growth in and among the churches, spiritually first of all, but also in strength and numbers – all for the glory of his holy name!"

Principal's report

The principal's report (which would be read at the convocation and published in *Clarion*) was read and approved. It was observed that it was very informative, as well as clear and to the point.

Report on visits to the churches

Prof. C. Van Dam presented a written report on his trip to the churches in Alberta, from May 1-6. The topic of his speech was "The Year of Jubilee." It was noted that the attendance level was rather low at times. Those who did attend, however, "were enthusiastic, attentive listeners who generated very interesting discussions." It was also noted that all the evenings in Alberta attracted attendance from the United Reformed Churches, which can be seen as an encouraging development. In response to a plea in this report to discuss ways and means of having these visits reach more people, the Board spent some time on this matter

and discussed the importance of: the interest of the subjects (on request or own choice?); the advance printing and distribution of outlines and pamphlets; the involvement of consistories to promote the visits, etc. It was agreed that also in view of the work, time and expense that goes into these trips, more should be done to make the members see the benefit of attending the speeches of the professors of their own Theological College.

Library report

The library contains approximately 24,963 volumes in a variety of languages, including English, Dutch, German, French, Afrikaans, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. It subscribes to more than 100 periodicals, and receives another fifteen periodicals free of charge. In total, some 170 different periodical titles are available to the library users.

The Women's Saving's Action donated \$27,000 at the convocation of 2001, allowing the purchase of many more books. 593 new books have been added to the library since June 1, 2001, and many more are on order.

During the academic year 2001-2002, numerous individuals donated books to the College. Of the books which were donated, 248 books were added to the Library collection. Thirty-two CDs and two videos were added as well. Two of these donations are unique. Mrs. Norma Fiddes donated the library of her late husband, Rev. Fiddes, who was a United Church minister. The College also received a donation by an American benefactor, who donated a copy of the *Puritan Bookshelf*, a large CD-collection of Puritan writings.

This report was received with much gratitude. May the Lord grant Ms. Margaret VanderVelde to keep up the good work.

Registrar's report

The registrar, Dr. C. Van Dam, reported that three new students had enrolled the Freshman Year in September, 2001. Of these, Dong Woo Oh from the Presbyterian Church (Kosin), Korea, has decided to continue the Master of Divinity program, while Francis Van Delden, who had attended the Freshman Year to study Hebrew and Greek, decided not to enroll in the Master of Divinity program. Kristen Alkema (nee Kottelenberg) was en-

rolled in the Diploma of Theological Studies program.

Other returning students are Reuben Bredenhof, Albert Gootjes, Pila Njuka and Ian Wildeboer, who were enrolled in the Junior Year, while David de Boer was enrolled in the Senior Year of the Master of Divinity program.

Hendrik Alkema (from the Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton) and Richard E. Horlings, (from the Canadian Reformed Church of Attercliffe) were enrolled in the Freshman Year of the Master of Divinity program (This took place upon the favourable outcome of their respective interviews with a professor and governor).

Hyuk I Kim (Minister of the Word in the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Hapshin) was enrolled in a two year study in theology, while Kyung Min Kim, who completed his first year at Korea Theological Seminary (Kosin), will sit in on the lectures as an auditor for one year.

Inquiries regarding the admission to and study at the Theological College were made by persons from the Canadian Reformed Churches or their sister churches, from other churches in Canada, and from churches outside Canada.

Other matters

A written report and financial statement was given on the Faber-Holwerda Bursary Fund, to invite students for interviews at which monies are distributed. Instead, the Dean of Students was encouraged to monitor the situation closely. Although no funds were distributed during the 2001-2002 year, the Dean of Students was encouraged to monitor the need for financial support closely.

The Board of Governors spent quite some time on a lengthy draft prepared by the newly established Governance Committee on the College's By-Laws and Regulations, specifically on the content of the Board Member Handbook. Good progress was made. A final draft of this Handbook will be presented before the next meeting of the Board of Governors.

The Governance Committee was also charged to seek legal advice on the request by our sister churches in Australia to have ministers of these churches appointed to the Board of Governors.

The report on the Practical Training Program, presented by Rev. J. De Gelder, disclosed that the students are very



Called to the Free Reformed Church of Albany, Western Australia:

Rev. J.L. Louwerse

of Fergus, Ontario.

* * *

Called to the Church of Vernon, British Columbia:

Rev. J. Moesker

of Carman, Manitoba.

* * *

Examined by Classis Pacific West on October 8, 2002, and declared eligible for ordination:

Candidate Julius M. Van Spronsen

The Ordination will take place October 20, 2002, D.V., in Smithers, British Columbia.

positive about the practical experience they gained from this program. The ministers (mentors) involved were able to give very positive evaluations and assessments of the students' work. This report was received with much gratitude.

A written report was received on the attendance by Professor G.H. Visscher of a conference organized by *Tyndale Seminary in conjunction with the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies*. The topic at this conference was: *Reading Romans: Encounters with the Epistle to the Romans through the Centuries*. Professor Visscher reports that this conference was very beneficial, especially in view of the doctoral dissertation he is preparing: *The Role of Romans Four in the discussions around the New Perspective*.

Closing

The next meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2003, 6 p.m. at the Theological College. Br. M. Kampen led in thanksgiving and prayer. The chairman, Rev. R. Aasman, closed the meeting.

*For the Board of Governors,
B.J. Berends*

Pride and Our Idol Factories: The Disturbing Relationship Between Pride and Idolatry (3)

By W.L. Bredenhof

A godly pride?

Before we finish off, I would like to make some brief remarks about some of the statements of the apostle Paul in the New Testament, particularly in 2 Corinthians 11. In this chapter, Paul seems to do a lot of boasting. He speaks about his ministry and all that he has done and suffered for the Lord. Doesn't this show that there can be a pride which is not sinful, a pride which is not directly connected with idolatry? But before we take this chapter and use it to excuse any pride which we may have, we need to look closer at the context. What led Paul to this point?

False apostles with a false gospel were threatening the Corinthian church. This is clear even from chapter 11, verse 13, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ." Part of the strategy of these false apostles was to undermine the authority of Paul, his apostolic status, and so also undermine the gospel that Paul preached. The true apostle of Christ is addressing this problem in 2 Corinthians 11.

In addressing this problem, he engages in what he calls "boasting." This is his defense of the gospel. It's clear that he does it rather tongue-in-cheek. Paul is not being completely serious – though he is deadly serious about defending the gospel. That he is not serious is clear when he repeats more than once that he is engaging in folly – verse 1, verse 17, verse 21, and then again in chapter 12, verse 11. In other words, what we find here is not true pride on the part of Paul – this is a rhetorical pride, pride used as a literary device. This is to make a point to the Corinthi-

ans regarding the status and authority of the one who taught them the true gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is doing this against the background of the claims of the false apostles who are threatening to lead the church astray.

Were this not the case, we would have a hard time reconciling what Paul writes here with what he wrote in 2 Timothy 3. This is the same man who claimed to be the chief of sinners in 1 Timothy 1:15. If Paul was bragging in 2 Corinthians 11, he would have contradicted what he wrote in Galatians 6:14, "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ."

The general principle of defending the gospel against all false teachers is a task that remains for the church today.

No, beloved sisters, it is quite clear that we would be on the wrong track if we tried to appropriate what Paul does in 2 Corinthians 11 for ourselves. The general principle of defending the gospel against all false teachers is a task that remains for the church today. However, this passage does not give any reason for a person to feel secure in his or her pride, thinking that Scripture allows for a pride that is not sinful and idolatrous.

To draw this out a little bit further, there is a common practice today, also in the church, which sees parents speaking about being "proud of their

children." I would like to raise the question with you today whether this practice can be supported with Scripture. Does it not rather seem that we have no reason to be proud? Does it not seem that we should carefully avoid all language associated with pride? Every time we read about pride in the Bible, it is in a negative way. Pride is never described as something good in the Bible. So, wouldn't it be better to speak about being *thankful* for all that God has blessed us with in our children? No, sisters, the Scriptures do not appear to support any kind of pride on the part of believers. Everything we have, we have by grace – and that means we always give credit where credit is due.¹

Conclusions

The time has come to draw some conclusions from our look at this topic. In the first place, we can conclude that pride and idolatry are indeed like inseparable Siamese twins. They will always be joined together. The idolatry of pride exists in making human standards into divine standards. We make our own standards – which we always meet – into what God expects and so we also recreate God. We make the standards of others – which we seldom meet – into what God expects, and so we recreate God again. Over top of this, we idolize both ourselves and others. The idolatry of pride works therefore works three ways: ourselves, others around us, and then toward God.

Second, we can say that idolatry is symptomatic of pride and vice-versa. Where you see idolatry, whether in believers or unbelievers, there will be pride. Where you see pride, whether in

Christians or non-Christians, there will be idolatry. To be proud is to be an idolater and the reverse holds true as well. This simply follows from the inseparable character of these sins. Idolatry inevitably issues forth from the proud heart. Pride is always at the root of the "idola-tree."

Third, we have noted already that the way to shut down the idol factory and the pride which keeps it running is to fear God. Nehemiah Rogers, a Puritan writer, put it another way: "Humility is the repentance of pride."² And that means, humility first of all before God. We must humble ourselves before Him daily and realize what poor, wretched sinners we truly are, undeserving of anything good from the hand of a holy and just God. But as those who fear God, we know from the Scriptures the glorious revelation of Jesus Christ. He

is revealed to us especially in Philippians 2 as the One who humbled Himself for our sakes. The idol factory tempted Him, but it never ran in his heart or life. It could not run, for the

To be proud is to be an idolater and the reverse holds true as well.

pride that energizes the factory was nonexistent for Him. And so, He never broke the first or the second commandments. His life was one of perfect obedience – and that was for us! Thus, we are obliged ever more to humility before the God of our salvation! Moreover, we are likewise obliged to humility before one another. As we do this

day by day, lead by the Holy Spirit of Christ, we will increasingly put to death that old sinful nature which enjoys the humming of the busy idol factory. Sisters in Christ, let us be here resolved to shut those factories down! Thank you.

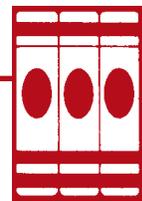
¹For the thoughts expressed here, I acknowledge my indebtedness to br. Norman Terpsma of Neerlandia who wrote a letter to the editor concerning this in *Clarion* 44.8 (April 21, 1995), p.188. Among other things he wrote, "When one is thankful one is not proud. When a person is proud he or she is not thankful. . . Those who receive all should be proud of nothing."

²*A Puritan Golden Treasury*, p.147.



Rev. W.L. Bredenhof is missionary in Fort Babine, British Columbia.
wbredenhof@canrc.org

BOOK NOTE



A Must Read!

Hermanus Knoop, *A Theatre in Dachau*, trans. Andrew Petter, Neerlandia: Inheritance Publications, 2001. 143 pages.

By C. Bouwman

The book stood for years on the shelf of my parental home, somewhat formidable with its Dutch language and obscure title. It's now appeared in English, with an equally mysterious (and very accurate!) title: *A Theatre in Dachau*. I read it, and am sorry I did not read it in my youth. What a treasure of encouragement is tucked away in this gem of a book!

How so? Hermanus Knoop was an ordained preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the Reformed Churches of The Netherlands at the time Hitler's hordes overran Holland (1940). Rev. Knoop understood that Nazism was ungodly and – if embraced by God's people – would result in the emasculation and ultimate death of the church. So Rev. Knoop did not hesitate in his preaching to warn against Nazism and to beseech the Lord in prayer to deliver Holland from the oppressors – even though he knew that this conduct would certainly

land him eventually in a concentration camp and/or a grave. Knoop relates in the first half of his book the struggles he had in order to give good leadership in the face of this threat. The difficulties were made so much greater by the fact that he received so little support from other ministers and office bearers. Therefore many urged him to pipe down for the sake of peace. These brothers, he writes, were more interested in saving their own skin than standing up to defend the gospel of grace. No wonder, he adds, that a Liberation had to come in the church (1944).

Once arrested (April 1942) Knoop was moved to the Nazi concentration camp of Dachau. The second half of the book is devoted to describing this "hell on earth" – as Knoop calls it. And no, he does not shirk away from telling us some of the horrors he experienced in this "city of total heathendom" where "the throne of Satan stood" (p. 126). Yet, despite the terrors of Dachau – and here is why I urge today's Christians to read this book – Knoop can pen an amazing testimony to the grace of God: "in Dachau the God of all grace did wonders of grace by his Word and Spirit every day. Oh, it was indeed a dreadful

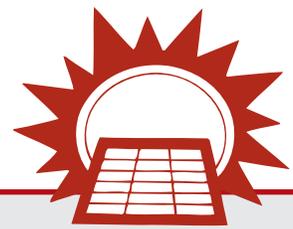
time for me that I spent there, and yet it is not at all a hollow phrase when I say that I would for no amount of money have missed this time of my life, since it was so unspeakably rich in grace. I saw God there" (p. 127).

No, Knoop didn't have to explain what he meant anymore. After reading all he had written about his God and ours, I could understand. Oh to learn that same lesson today: even when we have nothing left on earth, the child of God is still full as long as he has his God.

Yes, parents and youth alike, Inheritance Publications has done the English-speaking world a great service by publishing this very readable English translation of this original Dutch work. I encourage you strongly to read it! In fact, I read portions of it to our children because of its wonderful testimony to God's grace.

Two more notes: this book is not to be confused with a book of similar title, *Faith and Victory in Dachau*, by Jan Overduin. Further, anyone who has read this book can no longer say that the fathers did not know what the experience of faith was.





By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Erna Nordeman

Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, and Aaron told them everything the Lord had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshipped. Exodus 4:29-31

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Deliverance for God's people. This is something which we know all so well. But do we really realize how much this has an impact on our lives? Is this something that we just take for granted as a child of God? Let us see how God has revealed this throughout his Word.

Throughout the Bible, we are shown how the Lord has shown concern for his children, and has surrounded them with his love and care. He has delivered them. In Exodus 3 we read of the well-known account of how the Lord spoke to Moses at the burning bush. In verse 7 the Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey. . . ."

When the slaves were freed from Egypt, God led them by pillars of cloud and fire. God made such appearances to encourage his new nation, and to guide them. God was with them on their journey to the promised land. What has God given us today, so that we can have the same assurance? The Bible which is something the Israelites did not have. God has also given us his Holy Spirit to work this assurance and faith in our hearts.

Throughout the Psalms we can also read how David pleads with the Lord for deliverance from his enemies, and the sins and temptations all around him. Indeed, there are endless examples throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Do we also take time to pray for our deliverance from sin and evil, and all the temptations around us? The Heidelberg Catechism says it so beautifully in Lord's Days 5 and 6, that our deliverance can only be found in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who had to be a true and righteous man and at the same time true God. "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption." 1 Corinthians 1:30.

Jesus Christ knows how hard it is to live on earth. He was here and lived on earth, and was tempted, just like we are. In Hebrews 4:15,16 we read: "For we do not have a priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so

that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Christ delivered us from our sins through his death on the cross. By his death He cleanses us from all our sins and daily renews our lives. Through Christ's redemption our sins are now forgiven. We constantly are tempted by Satan. However we know we have continual forgiveness of our many sins. He delivered us from the evil one in a sense that Satan does not control our lives as long as we cling to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us never go a day without beginning in prayer. The Lord has even commanded us to pray for deliverance in the Lord's prayer, ". . . and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

We are so weak that we cannot even stand for a moment. Thus we must pray for the Holy Spirit to strengthen and uphold us, so that in this spiritual war we may always resist our enemies, until we finally obtain the complete victory.

Continue to pray for the Holy Spirit to work mightily in us. The Holy Spirit alone will enable us to stand, resist, and overcome the evil one. Thanks be to God alone for sending us his Son. Through his death on the cross we have been given complete deliverance!

*O God, when'er I cried to Thee
Thou heardest me and didst deliver;
For by Thy strength, when sore afraid,
My soul was stayed, O gracious Giver.
The kings of earth in one accord
Shall thank Thee, LORD, with praise unbroken,
When over all the earth is heard
The wondrous Word which Thou hast spoken.*

Psalm 138:2

Birthdays in November:

3: WILMA VAN DRONGELEN will be 45
B306-33375 Mayfair Avenue,
Abbotsford, BC V2S 1P4

Congratulations with your birthday, Wilma. May our heavenly Father be with you in this new year, and give you an enjoyable day together with your family and friends. Till next time,

Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Erna Nordeman
Mailing correspondence:
548 Kemp Road East
RR 2 Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2
1-905-563-0380

London Says Farewell to the Ludwig Family

By Thea Heyink

On the warm evening of July 20, 2002, the majority of the London congregation came together for an evening of fellowship to say farewell to the Ludwig family, as they were preparing to take up a new calling in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A number of the congregation could not be there due to vacation or other commitments. However the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. The master of ceremonies was brother Jeff Temple, and he opened the evening in the usual Christian manner, speaking some words of welcome.

The evening was made up of singing, playing instruments, poetry and greetings and farewells from neighbouring churches. A humorous game was played entitled "How well do you know your pastor?" in which the facts of the Ludwig family and pastoral life were examined, and the teams ended in a tie.

A gift of an original painting by a London artist was made to the Ludwigs, and in response, Rev. Ludwig gave gifts to a number of the congregation. His gifts were items such as certificates to the "Gab King," a smiley key chain, a plastic police play set, two rolls of pennies, a bucket of nuts and bolts, a jar of marmalade and so on. Each gift was given in acknowledgment of a special quality of the specific congregant.

Rev. Ludwig ended with a walk down memory lane of his pastoral and familial experiences. He spoke highly of the good co-operation and brotherly atmosphere during council meetings. In closing he presented the ceremonial gavel back to the council, which was received by the new chairman, brother B. Vanderwerf. It was his wish that "the gavel would continue to collect dust," and not be needed at council meetings. Br. Pete Engbers closed the evening with the Scripture reading of Hebrews 13:7,8 and led in thanksgiving prayer.

On a sunny, warm Saturday July 27, we gathered beneath the tall trees in



Doing the honours.



Audience

the front yard at Covenant Christian School, to enjoy a day of fun and activities together at a special church picnic. Adults and children alike enjoyed many varied games. The weather was beautiful, the coffee aromatic and the company congenial. The day ended in a rousing game of water balloon toss. It was late afternoon when everyone finally packed up their lawn chairs and sticky children and went home.

In the afternoon of July 28, 2002, Rev. Ludwig delivered his farewell sermon to the congregation. The sermon was based on Acts 20:17-38, and the text was Acts 20:32: "So, now brethren, I commend you to God and to the Word of grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." He stated that the apostle Paul, from whose parting words to the elders of Ephesus Rev. Ludwig chose his text, had been commissioned by the ascended Lord Jesus to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Together with the prophecy of Isaiah (and others) Paul's teaching forms the foundation of the holy catholic church. Rev.

Ludwig said, "As we part ways this afternoon, let us submit to what the Holy Spirit revealed through Paul in his farewell to the Ephesian believers."

Therefore the theme was: *In his parting words to the church at Ephesus Paul commits them to the Lord and to his Word of grace.* He points out:

1. the abiding source for all their needs
2. the necessary activity during their "vacancy"
3. the rich blessing upon their steadfastness.

Rev. Ludwig exhorted the congregation to study God's Word, at home, in school and in society. We are to pray for the illumination, the insight and the guidance of the Spirit. He commended the congregation at London to God and to the Word of his grace.

Rev. Ludwig's ten years of service has been received with thankfulness by the congregation at London. We pray that the Lord will richly bless the Ludwig family, that they may be useful instruments in his service among our brothers and sisters in Grand Rapids. To God alone be the glory! 



Press Release Regional Synod East 2002, held on September 4, 2002 in Burlington Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church

Opening and constitution

Rev. C. Bosch, chairman of the convening church – Fellowship Canadian Reformed Church of Burlington South – called the meeting to order. He asked the delegates to sing Hymn 31:1, 4 and 5. Scripture reading was Colossians 1:15-23. Rev. Bosch spoke some words in connection with this passage. In prayer a blessing was asked over this meeting. Rev. Bosch and Rev. W. den Hollander reported that they examined the credentials and all were found to be in good order. The delegates elected the following moderamen:

Chairman: Rev. C. Bosch

Vice chairman: Rev. D.G.J. Agema

Clerk: Rev. W. den Hollander.

Regional Synod East is declared constituted. After some changes the agenda is adopted.

Overtures

Regional Synod decided that it cannot deal with two overtures of Classis Northern Ontario because not all the churches had the opportunity to deal with them. These overtures will be forwarded to the convening church of the next Regional Synod to be included in the Agenda of Regional Synod East 2003.

Appeal

An appeal was dealt with in closed session. The appeal was denied.

Reports

A report of Deputies ad Article 48 CO of the deputies for Classis Ontario Central and Classis Ontario West was received. There is no report of the other deputies.

A report of the treasurer covering November 1, 2000-July 31, 2002 was received with thankfulness. Regional Synod adopted the suggested assessment for \$2.00 per communicant member.

Regional Synod received a report of the Church at Lincoln that the books of the treasurer were found to be in good order.

Appointments

Deputies ad Art 48 CO:

From Classis Central Ontario (as deputy for Classes Northern Ontario and Niagara): Rev. G. Nederveen, Rev. den Hollander (alt).

From Classis Niagara (as deputy for Classes Central Ontario and Ontario West): Rev. D.G.J. Agema, Rev. G. Wieske (alt).

From Classis Northern Ontario (as deputy for Classes Central and Ontario West): Rev. P.G. Feenstra, Rev. B.J. Berends (alt).

From Classis Ontario West (as deputy for Classis Northern Ontario and Niagara): Rev. C. Stam, Rev. J. Ludwig (alt).

Treasurer: br. VanAmerongen.

Church to audit the books: Grassie.

Church to keep the archives: Toronto.

Church to inspect the archives: Brampton.

Convening church for next Regional Synod: Elora.

Time of next Regional Synod: Nov. 12, 2003.

Closing

The chairman concluded with thankfulness that censure ad Article 34 was not necessary. The acts were read and adopted, the press release was approved. The chairman requested that Psalm 96:1, 2, 8 be sung. The vice chairman led in prayer of thanksgiving. Regional Synod is declared closed.

For Regional Synod East 2002, D.G.J. Agema, vice-chairman

Press Release of Classis Central Ontario, September 13, 2002, held in the Burlington Ebenezer Church building

On behalf of the Burlington Fellowship Church, the Rev. C. Bosch called the meeting to order. He welcomed the delegates as well as student Carl Van Dam who had requested permission to speak an edifying word in the churches. After the singing of Psalm 33: 1 & 6 and reading Colossians 1: 1-14 Rev. Bosch led in prayer.

All the churches were duly represented. Classis was then constituted. The officers suggested by last classis were appointed, namely: Rev. W. den Hollander – chairman, Rev. C. Bosch, – vice chairman, and Rev. J. de Gelder – clerk.

The agenda was adopted. The necessary documents were found to be in good order and brother Carl Van Dam presented his sermon proposal on Joshua 1. This was discussed in closed session. In open session he was then examined as to knowledge of the confessions with Christology being the focus. In closed session Classis deliberated and decided Br. Van Dam was successful in sustaining the exam. In open session the chairman congratulated him on behalf of classis.

Brother Van Dam then signed the Subscription Form and also received a certificate allowing him to speak an edifying word in the churches for a period of one year. Classis sang Psalm 134:3 and Rev. de Gelder led in thanksgiving prayer. An opportunity was given to the delegates to congratulate brother Van Dam.

Correspondence received:

- a. Council Bethel Can. Ref. Church, Toronto re. request for assistance from Classis Northern Ontario for the support of the needy church of Ottawa.
- b. Classis Ontario West (June 12, 2002) – information re decision of this classis re inviting fraternal delegates to Classes.
- c. Classis Niagara (Aug.7, 2002) re request of Classis Central Ontario (June 14, 2002) concerning sending of observers to URC classes.
- d. Committee for needy churches re request for assistance from the church of Ottawa and suggested assessment, \$22.50 for 2003.
- e. Burlington Fellowship re Inspection of Archives.

Classis dealt with the following Reports:

- a. Church to Inspect the Archives – Burlington Fellowship. The archives were found to be in good order.
- b. Treasurer's Report: J. Dykstra. Classis decided to set the classical assessment at \$4.00 per communicant member for the year 2003. (\$2.00 for both classis and regional synod). Classis also approved brother Dykstra's request to be released from his appointment as treasurer. A letter of appreciation will be sent.

- c. Church to Audit the books of the treasurer – Burlington Waterdown. These books were also found to be in good order.
- d. Church for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry – Flamborough. While no request for financial assistance had been received the assessment was set at \$1.00 per communicant member as classis decided to proceed with the plan to build up the fund. Cheques to be sent to the treasurer, Mr. Richard Vanderlaan, 24 Maryvale Ave., Dundas, ON, L9H 5X2.
- e. Church for Auditing the Books of the Fund Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry – Burlington Waterdown. The books were found to be in good order.
- f. Committee for Needy Churches Classis set the assessment for assisting the church of Ottawa at \$22.50 per communicant member for the year 2003. An overture of the Bethel Canadian Reformed Church at Toronto proposing Classis Northern Ontario be asked to share the cost of supporting the church at Ottawa was defeated.
- h. Church to Audit the Books of the Fund for Needy Churches – Burlington Waterdown. These books were also found to be in excellent order. An oral report of a church visitation report to Burlington Ebenezer was given in closed session.

Question period ad Church Order Article 44 was held. With thankfulness Classis noted that the work of the office bearers is being continued and the decisions of the broader assemblies are being upheld.

A decision of Classis Central Ontario West, June 12, 2002 re inviting of fraternal delegates to Classis was read. This Classis decided *“to appoint the Church of Kerwood to function as contact for ecumenical relations to facilitate contact with neighbouring classes or presbyteries of churches with whom we have ecclesiastical fellowship.”* Classis took note of this decision.

A letter of Classis Niagara, August 7, 2002 informing Classis Central Ontario of its agreement with a decision of Classis Central Ontario (June 14, 2002) was read. The latter had decided to, “adopt a schedule so that the two Classes nearest to the location of the URC Classes each send an observer who extend the fraternal greetings on behalf of all the Canadian Reformed

Churches in the four Classis.” Classis took note also of this decision.

Classis made the following appointments for next classis:

- Convening church: Burlington Waterdown
- Suggested officers: chairman: Rev. M. Jagt
- Vice chairman: Rev. J. deGelder
- Clerk: Rev. W. den Hollander

Other appointments made were:

- a. Committee of Examiners: Coordinators – C. Bosch and W. den Hollander. Exegesis O.T. – G. Nederveen. Exegesis N.T – M. Jagt. Knowledge of Scripture – M. Jagt. Doctrine and creeds – J. deGelder. Church History – W. den Hollander. Ethics – J. deGelder. Church Polity – G. Nederveen. Diaconiology – C. Bosch.
- b. Church Visitors – J. deGelder, W. den Hollander, G. Nederveen.
- c. Church for taking care of the Archives – Burlington Ebenezer.
- d. Church to Inspect the Archives – Burlington Fellowship.
- e. Treasurer – H. J. Sloots.
- f. Church to Audit the Books of the Classical Treasurer – Burlington Waterdown.
- g. Church for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry – Flamborough.
- h. Church for Auditing the Books of Fund Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry – Burlington- Waterdown.
- i. Committee for Needy Churches – H. Sloots (2004); Fred Lodder (2003); Barry Hordyk (2005).
- j. Church to Audit the Books of the Fund for Needy Churches – Burlington Waterdown.
- k. Observers Free Church of Scotland – G. Nederveen.

Question period: was made use of. Censure ad Art 34 CO was not deemed necessary. The Acts were adopted and the Press Release was approved. The chairman some words of appreciation for the good cooperation of classis after which Hymn 58 was sung and Rev. den Hollander led in closing prayer

*C. Bosch,
Clerk at the time*

Press Release of Classis Alberta, September 19, 2002

On behalf of the convening Church at Calgary, Rev. R.A. Eikelboom opened the meeting by reading Proverbs 16:1-16 and prayer. He welcomed the brothers and noted that this *Classis Contracta* was convened because Rev. W.B.

Slomp, minister of the Church at Neerlandia, had accepted a call to the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton. Rev. Eikelboom informed classis that all the churches in Alberta had been informed of this meeting and invited to send delegates.

After the credentials were examined, Rev. J. van Popta was appointed chairman and Rev. Eikelboom was appointed clerk. The agenda was adopted, and then the documents were examined. They were all found to be in good order. Consequently classis approved the call and thereby opened the way for Rev. Slomp to be installed in Edmonton. Since Rev. Slomp is remaining in this classis a Classical Certificate of Release was not required. At the request of the Church at Neerlandia, Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar was appointed counsellor under Article 45 of the Church Order. The acts were adopted and the press release was approved. The chairman led in closing prayer.

R.A. Eikelboom

Press Release of Classis Pacific East of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches held on September 26, 2002 in Yarrow, BC

1. Opening on behalf of the convening Church at Yarrow

The Chairman of the convening church of Yarrow, Rev. C.J. VanderVelde, opened the meeting by requesting the delegates to sing Psalm 2:1, 4, by reading Psalm 2 and leading in prayer.

2. Report on the examination of the credentials by the delegates of Vernon

The credentials were examined and all primi delegates were present with proper credentials with the exception of Abbotsford, which had sent an alternate delegate. It was also noted that the Church at Lynden did not send their minister (as per CO 44) because he has been granted a sabbatical at this time. All brothers were welcomed and a special welcome was extended to Rev. J. Merica of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) who was present by way of invitation as a fraternal observer. Classis was then declared constituted.

3. Appointment of officers

The following brothers assumed their positions as recommended by the previous Classis:

- Chairman: Rev. M.H. VanLuik
- Vice-chairman: Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer
- Clerk: Rev. R.A. Schouten

4. Opening Remarks from the Chairman

Rev. VanLuik thanked the convening Church at Yarrow for its preparatory work. He also took note that the Church at Vernon has, since the last classis meeting, called two ministers, both of which declined. Rev. R.A. Schouten of Abbotsford was one of the ministers called. It was also noted that for the first time the classis meeting could be held in Yarrow, in their new facilities.

5. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted after several modifications. It was at this time proposed and decided to seat Rev. J. Merica of the Reformed Church in the United States as fraternal observer with rights of the floor.

6. Correspondence received

Two separate appeals concerning the exclusive use of grape juice (in place of wine) at the celebration of the Lord's Supper were received and declared admissible. Classis decided that the appellants are correct that, as a norm, wine should be made available at the Lord's Supper.

7. Address from Rev. J. Merica of the RCUS

Rev. Merica began by thanking the classis for the invitation. He extended greetings to us from the Western Classis of the RCUS of which he is a delegate. He briefly outlined some common points of history. Since the mid 1980s our respective federations have had contact in the mid-west to get to know each other. Both federations found each other holding fast to the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions. A common root was found in the eighteenth century Dutch churches, since at that time the RCUS was under the classical oversight of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. In 1997 an extension was made by the RCUS Synod to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship. This was accepted by Synod Neerlandia 2001.

He went on to give a description of the current make-up of the RCUS. At present it is made up of four classical regions, forty-one churches, some forty-five ministers, and over 4000 baptized members. As a federation, the RCUS does not have its own seminary but it is looking into designating one seminary to function as such. Moreover, all office bearers must subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity and promise to uphold them. They are en-

couraged to know us as fellow labourers in the Lord's Kingdom.

Being asked, Rev. Merica elaborated on the practice of wine/juice at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. In the RCUS wine is considered the normal element in usage. Those who cannot take wine are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and grape juice is made available by way of exception.

Rev. VanderVelde responded by thanking Rev. Merica for travelling the great distance from California and expressing the desire that the contact and fellowship will grow.

8. Proposals or instructions from the churches

No proposals or instructions were forthcoming.

9. Reports received

a. Church for auditing the books of the treasurer

The books were audited by members of the Church at Vernon and the books were found to be in good order. This was gratefully received by classis.

b. Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Students for the Ministry.

The committee had no need to meet and so no report to submit.

c. Committee for Needy Churches

The committee's report was received with gratitude and adopted as presented. Regarding the future status of the current co-commitment of support for the Church at Vernon with Classis Pacific West (which extends till the end of 2003), it was decided that this matter would be decided on at the next meeting of classis after all consistories have had the opportunity to discuss it.

d. Church Visitation reports

The church visitors (Revs. VanLuik, Schouten) reported on a visit to the Church of Lynden which Classis received with thanksgiving.

10. Question Period according to Article 44, CO

All churches answer yes, yes, and no to the questions of Article 44 posed by the chairman.

11. Arrangements for Next Classis

The next Classis is scheduled for Dec 12, 2002, to be convened by the Church of Abbotsford in Abbotsford. The alternate date for Classis is March 06, 2003. The following officers are suggested:

Chairman: Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer
Vice-chairman: Rev. R.A. Schouten
Clerk: Rev. C.J. VanderVelde

12. Personal Question Period

Several questions were raised regarding the ongoing relationship with the RCUS. It was decided that the Acts of classis will be sent to the RCUS as a matter of course and they will be notified of and invited to all forthcoming meetings. It was also decided that Rev. Holtvlüwer would function as deputy for contact with the RCUS. It was further decided to delegate Rev. Holtvlüwer to take up any forthcoming invitation to attend a meeting of the Western Classis of the RCUS.

13. Censure according to Article 34, CO

It was noted with thankfulness that censure was not needed.

14. Adoption of the Acts of Classis

The Acts were read and adopted.

15. Approval of the Press Release

The press release was read and approved.

16. Closing

The chairman, Rev. VanLuik, after offering parting remarks to all especially to Rev. Merica, asked Classis to sing Hymn 40:1, 2, led the assembly in prayer and closed the meeting.

For Classis Pacific East

September 26, 2002,

P.H. Holtvlüwer (vice-chair at that time)



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By Aunt Betty

Dear Busy Beavers

Doesn't it seem like time flies? One minute you're on holidays, and then all of a sudden school is starting again. It seems the holidays have simply disappeared, sometimes. Did you have a really fun holiday, doing lots of excellent activities with your family, or with your friends? And did you help mom and dad doing lots of chores around the house, as well?

I hope you all had really great holidays. Now that you're back at school, please remember to always do your best, even if your best is not very good compared to others. Just know that God only requires us to do the best we can, and He is always satisfied with that. He does not expect us to do better with the talents He gives us than the best we can do.

Also show respect for others, parents, teachers and your fellow students. They all deserve to have the respect of others, including yourself. And the respect isn't just for the people, you should also have respect for other people's things.

Have a good year at school, won't you.

Lots of love, Aunt Betty

Puzzles

Colour Scheme

Joseph had a coat of many colours. Which colours, sometimes being used, however, with a different meaning, are needed to complete each of the following?

1. The _____ Sea.
2. "What are these which are arrayed in _____ robes?"
3. "He makes me lie down in _____ pastures."
4. "_____ You can not make one hair _____ or _____."
5. Lydia, a seller of _____.
6. "Do not look at wine when it is _____."
7. "_____ and _____ I do not have," said Peter.
8. "Lo, in her mouth was an _____ leaf."
9. "_____ though your sins are like _____, they shall be as _____ as snow; though they are _____ like _____, they shall become like wool."
10. "Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in _____, and in _____, and in brass, and in iron, and in _____, and _____ and _____."

Dedicated Pen Pals Wanted

Chantelle Tuininga and Roseanne deLeeuw would both really like to have pen pals who will write letters in return for theirs. They are both 11 years old and go to the Covenant Canadian Reformed School in Neerlandia. If you would like to be a dedicated pen pal, please write to one or both of them at the following addresses:

Chantelle Tuininga

Box 59
Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0

Roseanne deLeeuw

R R #1
Barrhead, AB T7N 1N2

Select a Person

From the answers given, select the correct person.

1. The father of John the Baptist was, Luke 1:13:
a. Zechariah b. Zacchaeus, c. Zephaniah
2. Moses' sister was, Numbers 26:59:
a. Mary b. Miriam c. Milcah
3. Jesus' mother was, Luke 2:4-5:
a. Elizabeth b. Joanna c. Mary
4. The woman who was eaten by dogs was, 2 Kings 9:36-37:
a. Jochebed b. Jezebel c. Joanna
5. A woman who served as a judge was, Judges 4:4:
a. Delilah b. Deborah c. Dinah
6. A woman who lied to the church was, Acts 5:1-3, 9:
a. Sapphira b. Salome c. Serah
7. A man who had a vineyard Ahab wanted was, 1 Kings 21:1:
a. Noah b. Naboth c. Nicodemus
8. A woman who left her family to live with her mother-in-law was, Ruth 1:16:
a. Rachel b. Rebekah c. Ruth
9. A young man who had a great Christian heritage was, 2 Timothy 1:5:
a. Titus b. Troas c. Timothy
10. The family of this priest was rejected by God, 1 Samuel 3:14:
a. Elimelech b. Eli c. Eliphaz



FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver club, *Faythe Helder*. Thank you for your letter. You must be very musical to play three different instruments. Wow! Did you have fun at the Mass Band in Edmonton? That would have been really neat, I must say. Where does your pen pal live? Does she live a

long way away from you, so that you can tell lots of different things about where you live? Write again, won't you, Faythe?

Thanks, *Chantelle Tuininga*, for your letter. It was very lengthy, but very interesting. You must really like your teacher, Chantelle. You seem to have lots of incentive in your classroom to do your best. I hope you do that. You must be the youngest in your family. You are very lucky to already have nephews and nieces. They are always fun to play with, aren't they. Till you write again, Chantelle.

Thank you also to *Roseanne deLeeuw* for your letter. It was very interesting to read as well. Sounds like you and Chantelle have a really good time together at school. You must have had a lot of fun during the school holidays, to have had to go to BC twice. And to have two aunts getting married while you were there. Were you in any of the wedding parties? Bye for now, Roseanne.



Aunt Betty

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One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2J 3X5

Email: clarion@premier.mb.ca